UPSC CIVIL SERVICES (PRELIMINARY) EXAMINATION 2025

Question 1 | Science & Technology / Environment

Consider the following types of vehicles:
I. Full battery electric vehicles
II. Hydrogen fuel cell vehicles
III. Fuel cell electric hybrid vehicles
How many of the above are considered as alternative powertrain vehicles?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) All the three
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. A full battery electric vehicle (BEV) runs only on a battery and an electric motor; it replaces the internal combustion engine (ICE) completely, so it is an alternative powertrain.
- **Statement II** – Correct. A hydrogen fuel cell vehicle makes electricity on board by combining hydrogen with oxygen; the only tailpipe emission is water vapour.
- **Statement III** – Correct. A fuel cell electric hybrid uses a fuel cell together with a battery (and sometimes a small engine) – a mix of two non-conventional power sources.
- ➤ **Key idea**: 'Alternative powertrain' means any drive system other than a pure petrol/diesel engine – BEV, hybrid (HEV), plug-in hybrid (PHEV), fuel cell (FCEV), CNG/LPG, ethanol flex-fuel and hydrogen engines.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static:** Chemistry of the electrochemical cell and fuel cell (Class 12 Chemistry, Electrochemistry). Current affairs: the PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovation Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) Scheme (2024) supports electric buses, trucks, two- and three-wheelers; the National Green Hydrogen Mission (2023) targets 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen a year by 2030 and hydrogen pilot buses/trucks.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – Electrochemistry
2. Ministry of Heavy Industries – heavyindustries.gov.in
3. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy – mnre.gov.in (National Green Hydrogen Mission)
4. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 2 | Science & Technology / Defence

With reference to Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), consider the following statements:
I. All types of UAVs can do vertical landing.
II. All types of UAVs can do automated hovering.
III. All types of UAVs can use battery only as a source of power supply.
How many of the statements given above are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) None
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Incorrect. Only rotary-wing and vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) hybrids land vertically. Fixed-wing UAVs need a runway, a launcher, a net, a parachute or a belly landing.

- **Statement II** – Incorrect. Hovering needs rotors (multi-rotor, single-rotor/helicopter type). A fixed-wing UAV must keep moving forward to stay aloft, so it cannot hover.
- **Statement III** – Incorrect. UAVs also use petrol/jet engines, hybrid systems, solar cells and even hydrogen fuel cells. Large military drones such as the MQ-9B use turboprop engines.
- **Remember**: the word 'All' in a statement is usually a red flag in UPSC questions – one exception breaks it.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Types of drones – fixed-wing, multi-rotor, single-rotor, hybrid VTOL. Current affairs: Drone Rules 2021 and the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for drones; Drone Shakti; wide use of drones in Operation Sindoor (May 2025) and the procurement of MQ-9B armed drones from the United States.

SOURCES

1. Ministry of Civil Aviation – civilaviation.gov.in (Drone Rules, 2021)
2. Ministry of Defence – mod.gov.in / PIB
3. Defence Research and Development Organisation – drdo.gov.in

Question 3 | Science & Technology / Economy

In the context of electric vehicle batteries, consider the following elements:
I. Cobalt
II. Graphite
III. Lithium
IV. Nickel
How many of the above usually make up battery cathodes?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Only three
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Cobalt** – Part of cathode chemistries such as lithium cobalt oxide (LCO) and nickel-manganese-cobalt (NMC).
- **Graphite** – Forms the ANODE (negative electrode) of most lithium-ion cells, where lithium ions are stored while charging.
- **Lithium** – Present in the cathode as lithium metal oxide or lithium iron phosphate; lithium ions shuttle between the electrodes.
- **Nickel** – Raises energy density in NMC and NCA (nickel-cobalt-aluminium) cathodes.

Three of the four are cathode materials – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Electrochemistry – cathode (reduction) and anode (oxidation) during discharge. Current affairs: National Critical Mineral Mission (January 2025); Khanij Bidesh India Limited (KABIL) lithium blocks in Argentina; lithium inferred resources at Salal–Haimana, Reasi (Jammu and Kashmir, 2023); Production Linked Incentive scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell batteries.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – Electrochemistry
2. Ministry of Mines – mines.gov.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in (National Critical Mineral Mission)
4. NITI Aayog reports on battery storage

Question 4 | Environment / Science & Technology

Consider the following:
I. Cigarette butts
II. Eyeglass lenses
III. Car tyres
How many of them contain plastic?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) All the three
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Cigarette butts** – The filter is made of cellulose acetate, a plastic. It is among the most commonly littered items on beaches.
- **Eyeglass lenses** – Most modern lenses are polycarbonate or CR-39 (an allyl diglycol carbonate polymer) – plastics.
- **Car tyres** – Made from synthetic rubber (styrene-butadiene) and other polymers; tyre wear is a leading source of microplastics.

➤ **Plastics are not only 'bags and bottles'** – synthetic polymers hide in many daily objects.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Polymers and plastics (Class 12 Chemistry – Polymers). Current affairs: Single-use **plastic** ban from 1 July 2022 under the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules; Extended Producer Responsibility; UN Global Plastics Treaty negotiations (Busan, December 2024; Geneva, August 2025) did not reach agreement.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – Polymers
2. Central Pollution Control Board – cpcb.nic.in
3. UN Environment Programme – unep.org (plastics treaty)
4. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change – moef.gov.in

Question 5 | Science & Technology / Energy

Consider the following substances:
I. Ethanol
II. Nitroglycerine
III. Urea
Coal gasification technology can be used in the production of how many of them?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only two
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Ethanol** – Coal is converted to synthesis gas (carbon monoxide + hydrogen); syngas can be catalytically converted to methanol and ethanol.
- **Nitroglycerine** – Made by nitrating glycerol with nitric and sulphuric acid; it has no link with coal gasification.
- **Urea** – Syngas gives hydrogen, which is combined with nitrogen to form ammonia; ammonia + carbon dioxide gives urea (the Talcher coal-gasification fertiliser project).

➤ **Only two** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Fuels – coal, gasification, syngas. Current affairs: National Coal Gasification Mission (target of 100 million tonnes of coal gasified by 2030); a financial incentive scheme of ₹8,500 **crore** approved in 2024; coal-to-urea and coal-to-methanol projects.

SOURCES

1. Ministry of Coal – coal.gov.in
2. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in (Coal Gasification Mission)
3. NCERT Class 8 Science – Coal and Petroleum
4. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – Chemistry in Everyday Life

Question 6 | Science & Technology / Defence

What is the common characteristic of the chemical substances generally known as CL-20, HMX and LLM-105, which are sometimes talked about in media?

(a) These are alternatives to hydro-fluorocarbon refrigerants
(b) These are explosives in military weapons
(c) These are high-energy fuels for cruise missiles
(d) These are fuels for rocket propulsion

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) These are explosives in military weapons

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – CL-20 (hexanitrohexaazaisowurtzitane), HMX (octogen) and LLM-105 are high-energy explosive compounds used in warheads, shaped charges and munitions.
- **Option (a)** – Hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) alternatives are refrigerants such as hydrofluoroolefins; unrelated.
- **Options (c) and (d)** – Fuels burn with an oxidiser; these compounds are detonating explosives (the oxidiser and fuel are built into the molecule), not engine fuels.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Chemistry of explosives – TNT, RDX, HMX, nitroglycerine. Current affairs: indigenous production of high-energy materials by the Defence Research and Development Organisation's High Energy Materials Research Laboratory (Pune) and private industry under Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence.

SOURCES

1. DRDO – drdo.gov.in (High Energy Materials Research Laboratory)
2. Ministry of Defence – mod.gov.in
3. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – Organic compounds containing nitrogen

Question 7 | Science & Technology

Consider the following statements:

I. It is expected that Majorana 1 chip will enable quantum computing.
II. Majorana 1 chip has been introduced by Amazon Web Services (AWS).
III. Deep learning is a subset of machine learning.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I and III only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Majorana 1 is a quantum processor built on 'topological qubits' using Majorana zero modes; it is meant to scale towards a million qubits on one chip.
- **Statement II** – Incorrect. Majorana 1 was introduced by MICROSOFT (February 2025), not Amazon. Amazon's quantum chip is called Ocelot; Google's is Willow.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Artificial intelligence ⊃ machine learning ⊃ deep learning (multi-layer neural networks).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Qubits, superposition, entanglement. Current affairs: National Quantum Mission (**approved** April 2023, ₹6,003.65 crore for 2023-31); Quantum Valley in Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh; international quantum chip race of 2025.

SOURCES

1. Microsoft Azure Quantum announcement (February 2025) – news.microsoft.com
2. Department of Science and Technology – dst.gov.in (National Quantum Mission)
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 8 | Science & Technology / Biology

With reference to monoclonal antibodies, often mentioned in news, consider the following statements:

I. They are man-made proteins.

II. They stimulate immunological function due to their ability to bind to specific antigens.

III. They are used in treating viral infections like that of Nipah virus.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) I and II only

(b) II and III only

(c) I and III only

(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I, II and III

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-produced antibody proteins cloned from a single parent B-cell (hybridoma/recombinant technology).
- **Statement II** – Correct. Each binds one specific antigen, marking the pathogen/cell for destruction by the immune system or neutralising it.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Monoclonal antibodies (e.g. m102.4) have been used on a compassionate-use basis against Nipah; the Indian Council of Medical Research arranged them during Kerala's outbreaks.

➤ **Others in news**: cancer therapy, COVID-19, and the long-acting RSV antibody nirsevimab.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Immunity – antigen, antibody, B-cells (Class 12 Biology, Human Health and Disease). **Current** affairs: recurrent Nipah outbreaks in Kerala (2018, 2021, 2023, 2024, 2025); ICMR's work on monoclonal antibodies and vaccines.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Biology – Human Health and Disease
2. Indian Council of Medical Research – icmr.gov.in
3. World Health Organization – who.int (Nipah virus fact sheet)

Question 9 | Science & Technology / Biology

Consider the following statements:

I. No virus can survive in ocean waters.

II. No virus can infect bacteria.

III. No virus can change the cellular transcriptional activity in host cells.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

(a) Only one

(b) Only two

(c) All the three

(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) None

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Incorrect. Oceans contain enormous numbers of viruses (about 10 million per millilitre of seawater); they control bacterial and algal populations.
- **Statement II** – Incorrect. Bacteriophages are viruses that infect bacteria.
- **Statement III** – Incorrect. Viruses hijack the host machinery – they reprogramme host transcription and translation to make viral proteins.

➤ **All three use the absolute 'No virus'** – none is correct.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Viruses – structure, bacteriophage (Class 12 Biology). Current affairs: phage therapy **against** antibiotic-resistant bacteria; role of marine viruses in the ocean carbon cycle ('viral shunt').

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Biology – Microbes in Human Welfare; Molecular Basis of Inheritance
2. NCERT Class 11 Biology – Biological Classification (viruses)

Question 10 | Environment / Science & Technology

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: Activated carbon is a good and an attractive tool to remove pollutants from effluent streams and to remediate contaminants from various industries.
Statement II: Activated carbon exhibits a large surface area and a strong potential for adsorbing heavy metals.
Statement III: Activated carbon can be easily synthesized from environmental wastes with high carbon content.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement II** – Correct. Activated carbon is highly porous; surface area can exceed 500 square metres per gram, giving strong adsorption of heavy metals and organics. This is the technical reason it removes pollutants.
- **Statement III** – Correct. It can be made from coconut shells, rice husk, bamboo, sawdust and other carbon-rich waste. Cheap raw material makes it 'attractive' for industries.
- **Both explain Statement I** – II explains why it is GOOD (performance) and III explains why it is ATTRACTIVE (low cost). Hence (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Adsorption versus absorption (Class 12 Chemistry, Surface Chemistry). Current affairs: effluent treatment in the Namami Gange programme; waste-to-wealth approach and use of agricultural residue.

SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – Surface Chemistry
2. Central Pollution Control Board – cpcb.nic.in
3. Ministry of Jal Shakti – jalshakti-dowr.gov.in (Namami Gange)

Question 11 | Environment / Economy

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: Studies indicate that carbon dioxide emissions from cement industry account for more than 5% of global carbon emissions.
Statement II: Silica-bearing clay is mixed with limestone while manufacturing cement.
Statement III: Limestone is converted into lime during clinker production for cement manufacturing.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Correct. Cement contributes about 7–8% of global carbon dioxide emissions.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Raw meal = limestone + clay (silica, alumina, iron). But mixing materials does not itself release carbon dioxide, so it does not explain the emissions.

- **Statement III** – Correct and explains Statement I. Heating limestone (calcium carbonate) at about 1,450 °C to make lime (calcium oxide) releases carbon dioxide (calcination). Roughly 60% of process emissions come from this step; the rest from fuel burning.

➤ **So both II and III are correct but only III explains I** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Chemical reactions – decomposition, $CaCO_3 \rightarrow CaO + CO_2$. Current affairs: India's **Carbon** Credit Trading Scheme (notified 2023) with greenhouse-gas intensity targets for cement; use of fly ash, slag and calcined clay (LC3) to lower clinker; Global Cement and Concrete Association roadmap.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 10 Science – Chemical Reactions and Equations
2. Bureau of Energy Efficiency – beeindia.gov.in (Carbon Credit Trading Scheme)
3. International Energy Agency – iea.org (Cement tracking report)

Question 12 | Environment / International Relations

Consider the following statements:

Statement I: At the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), India refrained from signing the 'Declaration on Climate and Health'.

Statement II: The COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health is a binding declaration; and if signed, it becomes mandatory to decarbonize health sector.

Statement III: If India's health sector is decarbonized, the resilience of its health-care system may be compromised.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I

(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I

(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. At COP28 (Dubai, December 2023) over 120 countries signed the Declaration on Climate and Health; India did not.
- **Statement II** – Incorrect. The declaration is voluntary and non-binding; signing does not make decarbonisation mandatory.
- **Statement III** – Correct and explains Statement I. India's concern was that a push to decarbonise the health sector (hospital energy, supply chains) could compromise the resilience of a stretched public health system with large unmet needs.

➤ **Hence only one of II and III is correct and it explains I** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities. Current affairs: COP28 outcomes – first Global Stocktake, 'transition away from fossil fuels', **Green** Credit Programme proposed by India; the first COP health day.

SOURCES

1. UNFCCC – unfccc.int (COP28 outcomes)
2. World Health Organization – who.int (Climate and health)
3. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change – moef.gov.in / PIB

Question 13 | Geography / Environment

Consider the following statements:

Statement I: Scientific studies suggest that a shift is taking place in the Earth's rotation and axis.

Statement II: Solar flares and associated coronal mass ejections bombarded the Earth's outermost atmosphere with tremendous amount of energy.

Statement III: As the Earth's polar ice melts, the water tends to move towards the equator.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Studies (for example in Geophysical Research Letters, 2023) show the rotation axis has drifted because of redistribution of mass – melting ice and groundwater pumping.
- **Statement II** – Correct as a fact (the May 2024 solar storm), but it affects the magnetosphere and upper atmosphere, not the Earth's rotation or axis. It does not explain I.
- **Statement III** – Correct and explains I. Melt water flows towards the equator, where the Earth bulges; mass moves away from the poles, as a skater slows by extending arms, changing the spin and the axis position.

➤ **Only III explains I** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Earth's shape (geoid), rotation and revolution (Class 11 Geography). Current affairs: **Gannon** geomagnetic storm of 10–11 May 2024 – strongest in two decades, auroras seen from Ladakh; India's Aditya-L1 solar mission observed coronal mass ejections.

SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography, Chapter 2 (Origin and Evolution of Earth) and Chapter 3
2. Indian Space Research Organisation – isro.gov.in (Aditya-L1)
3. NASA – climate.nasa.gov

Question 14 | Environment / International Relations

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: Article 6 of the Paris Agreement on climate change is frequently discussed in global discussions on sustainable development and climate change.
Statement II: Article 6 of the Paris Agreement on climate change sets out the principles of carbon markets.
Statement III: Article 6 of the Paris Agreement on climate change intends to promote inter-country non-market strategies to reach their climate targets.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Statement I – Correct. Article 6 (voluntary cooperation) is a centre-piece of every recent COP.

- **Statement II** – Correct. Articles 6.2 (bilateral trading of Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes) and 6.4 (Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism, successor to the Clean Development Mechanism) set up carbon markets.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Article 6.8 recognises non-market approaches – technology transfer, capacity building, finance.
- Both II and III describe what Article 6 does, and hence explain why it is much discussed – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Kyoto Protocol mechanisms (Clean Development Mechanism, emissions trading). **Current** affairs: COP29 Baku (November 2024) finalised Article 6 rules and the new crediting mechanism; India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme; New Collective Quantified Goal of $300 billion a year by 2035.

SOURCES
1. UNFCCC – unfccc.int (Paris Agreement, Article 6)

2. Ministry of Power / Bureau of Energy Efficiency – beeindia.gov.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in (COP29)

Question 15 | Economy / International Organisations

Which one of the following launched the 'Nature Solutions Finance Hub for Asia and the Pacific'?
(a) The Asian Development Bank (ADB)
(b) The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)
(c) The New Development Bank (NDB)
(d) The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) The Asian Development Bank (ADB)
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – The Asian Development Bank launched the hub at COP28 in Dubai (4 December 2023) to attract at least $2 billion into projects with nature-based solutions, using guarantees, blended finance and impact-linked payments.
- **Options (b), (c), (d)** – The AIIB (Beijing), NDB (Shanghai, BRICS bank) and IBRD (World Bank) did not launch this regional hub.

➤ **ADB**: headquartered in Manila, established 1966; India is a member.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: International financial institutions and their headquarters. Current affairs: finance for nature – Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (2022) with the 30x30 target; ADB's climate finance goal of $100 billion from 2019 to 2030.

SOURCES
1. Asian Development Bank – adb.org (news release, 4 December 2023)
2. Convention on Biological Diversity – cbd.int
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (international institutions)

Question 16 | Science & Technology / Environment

With reference to 'Direct Air Capture', an emerging technology, which of the following statements is/are correct?
I. It can be used as a way of carbon sequestration.
II. It can be a valuable approach for plastic production and in food processing.
III. In aviation, it can be a source of carbon for combining with hydrogen to create synthetic low-carbon fuel.
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) I and II only
(b) III only
(c) I, II and III
(d) None of the above statements is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I, II and III
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Direct Air Capture (DAC) pulls carbon dioxide from ambient air with chemical sorbents and stores it underground (DACCS).
- **Statement II** – Correct. Captured carbon dioxide can be a feedstock for plastics and a source for beverage carbonation and greenhouse enrichment in food processing.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Carbon dioxide + green hydrogen gives synthetic e-kerosene (power-to-liquid sustainable aviation fuel).

➤ DAC is costly and energy-intensive; leading plants are Climeworks' Orca and Mammoth in Iceland.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Carbon cycle; sequestration. Current affairs: NITI Aayog's Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage framework (2022); India's sustainable aviation fuel blending targets (1% in 2027 and 2% in 2028 for international flights); Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage Mission announced in Budget 2024-25.

SOURCES
1. International Energy Agency – iea.org (Direct Air Capture)
2. NITI Aayog – niti.gov.in (CCUS policy framework)
3. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas – mopng.gov.in (sustainable aviation fuel)

Question 17 | Environment / Biodiversity

Regarding Peacock tarantula (Gooty tarantula), consider the following statements:
I. It is an omnivorous crustacean.
II. Its natural habitat in India is only limited to some forest areas.
III. In its natural habitat, it is an arboreal species.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) I and III
(c) II only
(d) II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) II and III
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Incorrect. Tarantulas are ARACHNIDS (spiders), not crustaceans; they are carnivorous (insects, small vertebrates).
- **Statement II** – Correct. The Gooty tarantula (Poecilotheria metallica) is endemic to a tiny patch of deciduous forest in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh (Nandyal–Gooty area).
- **Statement III** – Correct. It lives in tree holes and is arboreal.

➤ **IUCN status**: Critically Endangered; it is also in the pet trade, hence a target of poaching.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- **Static**: Classification of Arthropoda – insects, arachnids, crustaceans. Current affairs: Eastern Ghats conservation, Nallamala region; efforts to protect critically endangered species under the Wildlife (Protection) Act amendments of 2022.

SOURCES
1. IUCN Red List – iucnredlist.org
2. NCERT Class 11 Biology – Animal Kingdom
3. Wildlife Institute of India – wii.gov.in

Question 18 | Environment / Economy

Consider the following statements:
I. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions in India are less than 0.5 t CO_2/capita.
II. In terms of CO_2 emissions from fuel combustion, India ranks second in Asia-Pacific region.
III. Electricity and heat producers are the largest sources of CO_2 emissions in India.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I and III only
(b) II only
(c) II and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) II and III only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Incorrect. India's per-capita emissions are about 2 tonnes of carbon dioxide, far above 0.5 t (though well below the world average of around 4.7 t).
- **Statement II** – Correct. China is first in Asia-Pacific, India second.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Coal-based power and heat generation is the largest source (roughly half of India's carbon dioxide emissions from fuel combustion).

➤ **Answer**: II and III only.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Greenhouse gases and the greenhouse effect. Current affairs: India's net-zero 2070 **pledge**; 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030; Panchamrit commitments at COP26; India's rank as third-largest total emitter.

SOURCES

1. International Energy Agency – iea.org (CO2 Emissions report)
2. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change – moef.gov.in (India's NDC)
3. Economic Survey – indiabudget.gov.in (Climate chapter)

Question 19 | Biology / Agriculture

Consider the following pairs:

Plant	Description
I. Cassava	Woody shrub
II. Ginger	Herb with pseudostem
III. Malabar spinach	Herbaceous climber
IV. Mint	Annual shrub
V. Papaya	Woody shrub

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

(a) Only two
(b) **Only three**
(c) Only four
(d) All the five

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only three

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I. Cassava – Correct. Manihot esculenta is a woody shrub grown for starchy tuberous roots.
II. Ginger – Correct. A perennial herb; the 'stem' above ground is a pseudostem formed by tightly rolled leaf sheaths, and the true stem is an underground rhizome.
III. Malabar spinach – Correct. Basella alba is a fast-growing herbaceous twining climber.
IV. Mint – Incorrect. Mint is a perennial herb, not an annual shrub.
V. Papaya – Incorrect. Papaya is a large, soft-stemmed, tree-like herb (not a woody shrub).
➤ **Three correct** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Plant morphology – herb, shrub, tree, climber, pseudostem (Class 11 Biology). Current affairs: millet and spice promotion; India is the largest producer of ginger; cassava in Kerala and Tamil Nadu (Salem – Sago).

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 Biology – Morphology of Flowering Plants
2. Indian Council of Agricultural Research – icar.org.in
3. Spices Board of India – indianspices.com

Question 20 | Environment / Geography

With reference to the planet Earth, consider the following statements:

I. Rain forests produce more oxygen than that produced by oceans.
II. Marine phytoplankton and photosynthetic bacteria produce about 50% of world's oxygen.
III. Well-oxygenated surface water contains several folds higher oxygen than that in atmospheric air.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I and II
(b) **II only**
(c) I and III
(d) None of the above statements is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) II only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Incorrect. Oceans produce about half of the oxygen; rainforests such as the Amazon consume almost as much through respiration and decay, so their net output is small. The 'lungs of the Earth' idea is a myth.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Phytoplankton, cyanobacteria (e.g. Prochlorococcus) and other marine photosynthesisers produce about 50% of Earth's oxygen.
- **Statement III** – Incorrect. Air has about 21% oxygen; even well-oxygenated surface water holds only a small fraction (roughly 1/20th or less) of the oxygen concentration of air.

➤ **Only II** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Photosynthesis, primary productivity (Class 11 Biology and Geography – Biodiversity). Current affairs: ocean deoxygenation due to warming; UN Decade of Ocean Science; Amazon deforestation debates.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 Biology – Photosynthesis in Higher Plants
2. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – noaa.gov
3. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography (Biodiversity and Conservation)

Question 21 | Modern History

Consider the following statements about Raja Ram Mohan Roy:
I. He possessed great love and respect for the traditional philosophical systems of the East.
II. He desired his countrymen to accept the rational and scientific approach and the principle of human dignity and social equality of all men and women.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Both I and II
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Roy studied Vedanta and the Upanishads, translated them into Bengali and English, and defended Hindu philosophy against missionary criticism while rejecting idolatry.
- **Statement II** – Correct. He argued for modern, rational, scientific education (supported English education, the Hindu College of 1817), human dignity, women's rights and abolition of Sati (1829).

➤ **Spectrum**: 'a synthesis of Eastern and Western thought' – both statements are right.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Socio-religious reform movements – Brahmo Sabha (1828), Atmiya Sabha (1815), **Sambad** Kaumudi (1821), Mirat-ul-Akhbar. Current affairs: 250th birth anniversary celebrated from 22 May 2022 (Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav).

SOURCES

1. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India (Socio-religious reform movements)
2. NCERT Class 8 – Our Pasts III (Women, Caste and Reform)
3. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence

Question 22 | Modern History

Consider the following subjects with regard to Non-Cooperation Programme:
I. Boycott of law-courts and foreign cloth
II. Observance of strict non-violence
III. Retention of titles and honours without using them in public
IV. Establishment of Panchayats for settling disputes
How many of the above were parts of Non-Cooperation Programme?
(a) Only one

(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Only three
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Boycott of government courts, schools and foreign cloth was a core element.
II – Strict non-violence was the creed (it led to withdrawal after Chauri Chaura, February 1922).
III – The programme required SURRENDER of titles and honorary offices, not retention.
IV – Private arbitration courts and panchayats were set up to settle disputes.
➤ **Three** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Non-Cooperation Movement, Khilafat Movement; Calcutta special session (September 1920) and Nagpur session (December 1920). Current affairs: centenary of Chauri Chaura (2021–22) marked by the Government of India.

SOURCES
1. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India (Gandhian phase)
2. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence
3. NCERT Class 12 – Themes in Indian History III (Mahatma Gandhi and the Nationalist Movement)

Question 23 | Ancient/Medieval History & Culture

The irrigation device called 'Araghatta' was
(a) a water bag made of leather pulled over a pulley
(b) a large wheel with earthen pots tied to the outer ends of its spokes
(c) a larger earthen pot driven by bullocks
(d) a large water bucket pulled up by rope directly by hand

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) a large wheel with earthen pots tied to the outer ends of its spokes
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Option (b)** – Araghatta (Persian wheel, 'arhat') was a large wheel with pots attached to its rim, turned by bullocks; pots dipped in the well, filled, rose and emptied into a trough.
- **Option (a)** – A leather bag over a pulley is the 'charas/mot' (Punjab) device.
- **Options (c) and (d)** – not descriptions of the wheel; (d) is simple hand-lifting (a bucket).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Irrigation technology in ancient and medieval India (Satish Chandra, Medieval India; Nitin **Singhania**, Art and Culture); Persian wheel linked to Delhi Sultanate agricultural expansion. Current affairs: traditional water structures and 'Catch the Rain' campaign; Jal Shakti Abhiyan.

SOURCES
1. Satish Chandra – Medieval India (Agriculture)
2. R. S. Sharma – India's Ancient Past
3. Ministry of Jal Shakti – jalshakti.gov.in

Question 24 | Ancient History / Art

Who among the following rulers in ancient India had assumed the titles 'Mattavilasa', 'Vichitrachitta' and 'Gunabhara'?
(a) Mahendravarman I
(b) Simhavishnu
(c) Narasimhavarman I
(d) Simhavarman

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Mahendravarman I
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – Mahendravarman I (c. 600–630 CE), a Pallava king of Kanchipuram, bore these titles. He wrote the Sanskrit farce 'Mattavilasa Prahasana' and initiated rock-cut temples (Mandagapattu), also called Chitrakarapuli, Chaityakari.
- **Option (b)** – Simhavishnu was his father, who revived the Pallava line.
- **Option (c)** – Narasimhavarman I (Mamalla) was his son, who founded Mamallapuram and defeated Pulakeshin II.
- **Option (d)** – Simhavarman is an earlier Pallava name.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Pallava art – cave temples, monolithic rathas, Shore Temple. Current affairs: Mamallapuram UNESCO site; the informal Modi–Xi summit of 2019 at Mamallapuram.

SOURCES

1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture (South Indian temple architecture)
2. NCERT Class 11 – An Introduction to Indian Art
3. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri – A History of South India

Question 25 | Ancient History

Fa-hien (Faxian), the Chinese pilgrim, travelled to India during the reign of

(a) Samudragupta
(b) Chandragupta II
(c) Kumaragupta I
(d) Skandagupta

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Chandragupta II

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Fa-hien came to India about 399–414 CE during Chandragupta II (Vikramaditya). He came for Buddhist texts, travelled by land and returned by sea, and wrote 'Fo-kuo-ki' (Record of Buddhist Kingdoms).
- **Samudragupta** – earlier; the Allahabad Pillar Inscription (Harishena).
- **Kumaragupta I and Skandagupta** – later; Nalanda was founded by Kumaragupta I; Skandagupta faced the Hunas.

➤ **Other pilgrims**: Hiuen Tsang (Harsha), I-tsing (7th century).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Gupta Age – administration, art, science. Current affairs: revival of Nalanda University (2014 onwards; new campus inaugurated June 2024); Buddhist circuit.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 6 and Class 12 (Themes in Indian History I)
2. Romila Thapar – Early India
3. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture

Question 26 | Ancient / Medieval History

Who among the following led a successful military campaign against the kingdom of Srivijaya, the powerful maritime State, which ruled the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java and the neighbouring islands?

(a) Amoghavarsha (Rashtrakuta)
(b) Prataparudra (Kakatiya)
(c) Rajendra I (Chola)
(d) Vishnuvardhana (Hoysala)

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Rajendra I (Chola)

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (c)** – Rajendra I (1014–1044 CE) sent a naval expedition against Srivijaya about 1025 CE and defeated its king, Sangrama Vijayottungavarman, to protect Chola trade with China. He took the title 'Gangaikonda Chola' and built Gangaikonda Cholapuram.
- **Others** – Rashtrakuta, Kakatiya and Hoysala rulers had no naval power of this kind.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Chola administration, village autonomy (Uttaramerur), bronze art, naval power. Current affairs: In July 2025, the Prime Minister attended the Aadi Thiruvathirai festival at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, marking Rajendra Chola's birth anniversary and the 1,000 years of the maritime expedition to South-East Asia.

SOURCES

1. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri – The Cholas
2. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in (Gangaikonda Cholapuram, July 2025)

Question 27 | Ancient History / Geography

With reference to ancient India (600–322 BC), consider the following pairs:

Territorial region	River flowing in the region
I. Asmaka	Godavari
II. Kamboja	Vipas
III. Avanti	Mahanadi
IV. Kosala	Sarayu

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

(a) Only one
(b) **Only two**
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only two

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Asmaka** – Correct. Asmaka (Assaka) lay on the Godavari with Potana (Paudanya) as capital.
- **Kamboja** – Incorrect. Kamboja was in the north-west (Hindu Kush region, Rajauri); the Vipas (Beas) is in Punjab.
- **Avanti** – Incorrect. Avanti was in Malwa (capitals Ujjayini and Mahishmati), near the Narmada, Shipra; not the Mahanadi.
- **Kosala** – Correct. Kosala was on the Sarayu with capitals Shravasti and Ayodhya.

➤ **Two** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Sixteen Mahajanapadas (Anguttara Nikaya) and rise of Magadha. Current affairs: consecration of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya on the Sarayu (22 January 2024).

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 6 – Our Pasts I; Class 12 – Themes in Indian History I
2. Romila Thapar – Early India
3. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture

Question 28 | Art and Culture

The first Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, a music training school, was set up in 1901 by Vishnu Digambar Paluskar in

(a) Delhi
(b) Gwalior
(c) Ujjain
(d) **Lahore**

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) Lahore

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (d)** – Vishnu Digambar Paluskar founded the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya in Lahore in 1901; a branch opened in Bombay in 1908 and the main school moved to Bombay later.

➤ Paluskar standardised music notation and popularised bhajan singing in the Hindustani tradition; it moved music from courts to the middle class.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Hindustani music – gharanas, Bhatkhande. Current affairs: Sangeet Natak Akademi awards; UNESCO listings of Indian cultural heritage.

SOURCES

1. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture (Music)
2. Centre for Cultural Resources and Training – ccrtindia.gov.in
3. Sangeet Natak Akademi – sangeetnatak.gov.in

Question 29 | Ancient History

Ashokan inscriptions suggest that the 'Pradeshika', 'Rajuka' and 'Yukta' were important officers at the

(a) village-level administration
(b) district-level administration
(c) provincial administration
(d) level of the central administration

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) district-level administration

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Rock Edict III (and Pillar Edicts) tells the Yuktas, Rajukas and Pradeshikas to go on tour every five years to teach dhamma along with their other duties. They were district-level officials – Pradeshika as district head, Rajuka for land/revenue and justice, Yukta as subordinate officer.
- Provincial administration was under princes (Kumaras) or Aryaputras; central level had mahamatras.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Mauryan administration (Arthashastra, Megasthenes). Current affairs: Emblem of India derived from the Lion Capital of Sarnath (Ashoka); Ashoka Chakra in the national flag.

SOURCES

1. Romila Thapar – Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas
2. R. S. Sharma – India's Ancient Past
3. NCERT Class 12 – Themes in Indian History I (Kings, Farmers and Towns)

Question 30 | Modern History

Consider the following statements in respect of the Non-Cooperation Movement:

I. The Congress declared the attainment of 'Swaraj' by all legitimate and peaceful means to be its objective.

II. It was to be implemented in stages with civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes for the next stage only if 'Swaraj' did not come within a year and the Government resorted to repression.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Both I and II

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. The Nagpur Congress (December 1920) changed the creed to Swaraj by 'all legitimate and peaceful means'.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Gandhi promised Swaraj within a year; the programme was staged – boycott and surrender of titles first, then civil disobedience and refusal to pay taxes if repression came (Bardoli resolution, 1922, was a planned mass civil disobedience).

➤ **Both correct** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Gandhi's techniques – Satyagraha, hartal, non-cooperation. Current affairs: Chauri **Chaura** centenary; Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 under Sardar Patel.

SOURCES

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

Question 31 | Economy

With reference to investments, consider the following:

I. Bonds
II. Hedge Funds
III. Stocks
IV. Venture Capital

How many of the above are treated as Alternative Investment Funds?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only two

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Bonds and [F] Stocks** – traditional (conventional) investments, not Alternative Investment Funds.
- **Hedge funds** – Category III Alternative Investment Fund under the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012.
- **Venture capital** – Category I Alternative Investment Fund (venture capital, SME, social venture and infrastructure funds).

➤ **Category II covers private equity and debt funds. Two** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Capital market – primary and secondary markets, SEBI. Current affairs: a new Fund of Funds with ₹10,000 crore for start-ups (Budget 2025-26); SEBI introduced 'Specialised Investment Funds' (2025).

SOURCES

1. SEBI – sebi.gov.in (AIF Regulations 2012)
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (Money and Capital Market)
3. Union Budget – indiabudget.gov.in

Question 32 | Economy

Which of the following are the sources of income for the Reserve Bank of India?

I. Buying and selling Government bonds
II. Buying and selling foreign currency
III. Pension fund management
IV. Lending to private companies
V. Printing and distributing currency notes

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

(a) I and II only
(b) II, III and IV
(c) I, III, IV and V
(d) I, II and V

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I and II only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Interest earned on holdings of government securities and gains from open market operations.
II – Gains from foreign exchange operations and interest on foreign securities.

III – RBI does not earn income from pension fund management (pension funds are regulated by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority).
IV – RBI lends to banks and the Government, not to private companies.
V – Printing currency is a COST for the RBI, not an income source.
➤ **I and II only** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Functions of the RBI – monetary authority, banker's bank, issuer of currency, manager of forex. Current affairs: RBI transferred a record surplus of ₹2.69 lakh crore to the Government in May 2025 (for 2024-25); revised Economic Capital Framework.

SOURCES

1. Reserve Bank of India – rbi.org.in (Annual Report)
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (Banking)
3. RBI Act, 1934

Question 33 | Polity / Governance

With reference to the Government of India, consider the following information:

Organization	Some of its functions	It works under
I. Directorate of Enforcement	Enforcement of the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018	Internal Security Division-I, Ministry of Home Affairs
II. Directorate of Revenue Intelligence	Enforces the Provisions of the Customs Act, 1962	Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance
III. Directorate General of Systems and Data Management	Carrying out big data analytics to assist tax officers for better policy and nabbing tax evaders	Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance

In how many of the above rows is the information correctly matched?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Only one

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Row I** – The Directorate of Enforcement does enforce the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 (also PMLA and FEMA), but it works under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of FINANCE – not the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Row II** – Correct. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence is the apex anti-smuggling agency; it enforces the Customs Act, 1962 under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (Department of Revenue).
- **Row III** – The Directorate General of Systems and Data Management runs the IT systems of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs. The data analytics and risk management role belongs to the Directorate General of Analytics and Risk Management.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Ministry of Finance – Departments (Economic Affairs, Revenue, Expenditure, Financial Services, DIPAM). Current affairs: new Income-tax Act, 2025 (effective 1 April 2026); **Enforcement** Directorate actions under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act; Fugitive Economic Offenders cases.

SOURCES

1. Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs – cbic.gov.in
2. Enforcement Directorate – enforcementdirectorate.gov.in
3. Ministry of Finance – finmin.nic.in

Question 34 | Economy

Consider the following statements:
I. The Reserve Bank of India mandates all the listed companies in India to submit a Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR).
II. In India, a company submitting a BRSR makes disclosures in the report that are largely non-financial in nature.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) II only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Incorrect on two counts: the regulator is the Securities and Exchange Board of India (not RBI), and it is mandatory for the top 1,000 listed companies by market capitalisation (since 2022-23), not all.
- **Statement II** – Correct. BRSR covers environmental, social and governance disclosures against the nine principles of the National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (2019) – largely non-financial.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Corporate Social Responsibility under Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013. Current affairs: BRSR Core with assurance and value-chain disclosures; ESG investing.
SOURCES
1. SEBI – sebi.gov.in (BRSR circulars)
2. Ministry of Corporate Affairs – mca.gov.in (NGRBC)
3. Economic Survey – indiabudget.gov.in

Question 35 | Economy

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: In India, income from allied agricultural activities like poultry farming and wool rearing in rural areas is exempted from any tax.
Statement II: In India, rural agricultural land is not considered a capital asset under the provisions of the Income-tax Act, 1961.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I
(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I
(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct
(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Incorrect. Only 'agricultural income' (rent or revenue from land, or from agricultural operations on land) is exempt. Poultry, wool rearing and dairy are not exempt as they are not land-based.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Rural agricultural land (outside specified municipal limits and distance) is excluded from 'capital asset' under Section 2(14), so no capital gains tax on its sale.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Taxation of agricultural income is a State subject (Entry 46, List II); Union cannot tax it. **Current** affairs: Income-tax Act 2025 and Budget 2025-26 changes.

SOURCES
1. Income-tax Act, 1961 – incometaxindia.gov.in
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (Taxation)
3. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Seventh Schedule)

Question 36 | Economy / Geography

Consider the following statements:
I. India has joined the Minerals Security Partnership as a member.
II. India is a resource-rich country in all the 30 critical minerals that it has identified.
III. The Parliament in 2023 has amended the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 empowering the Central Government to exclusively auction mining lease and composite license for certain critical minerals.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I and III only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Correct. India joined the US-led Minerals Security Partnership in June 2023.
- **Statement II** – Incorrect. India is import-dependent for lithium, cobalt, nickel and rare earths; its 30-mineral list (2023) includes many where reserves are small.
- **Statement III** – Correct. The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023 lets the Centre auction mining leases and composite licences for critical minerals listed in Part D of the First Schedule.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Mineral distribution in India. Current affairs: National Critical Mineral Mission (January 2025, ₹16,300 crore); KABIL's overseas assets; Chinese export controls on rare earths in 2025.

SOURCES
1. Ministry of Mines – mines.gov.in
2. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in (Critical Minerals)
3. MMDR Amendment Act, 2023

Question 37 | Economy

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: As regards returns from an investment in a company, generally, bondholders are considered to be relatively at lower risk than stockholders.
Statement II: Bondholders are lenders to a company whereas stockholders are its owners.
Statement III: For repayment purpose, bondholders are prioritized over stockholders by a company.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement I explains Statement II
(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION
- **Statement I** – Correct. Bonds pay fixed interest; equity returns vary.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Bondholders are creditors; shareholders are part-owners with residual claims.
- **Statement III** – Correct. In payment of dividends and in liquidation, creditors rank ahead of equity holders.

➤ **II and III both explain why bonds are less risky** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Capital market instruments. Current affairs: inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Government Bond Index–Emerging Markets (June 2024); deepening corporate bond **market**.

SOURCES
1. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (Capital Market)

2. SEBI – sebi.gov.in
3. NCERT Class 12 – Accountancy

Question 38 | Economy

Consider the following statements:
I. India accounts for a very large portion of all equity option contracts traded globally thus exhibiting a great boom.
II. India's stock market has grown rapidly in the recent past even overtaking Hong Kong's at some point of time.
III. There is no regulatory body either to warn the small investors about the risks of options trading or to act on unregistered financial advisors in this regard.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I and II only
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. The National Stock Exchange is the world's largest derivatives exchange by number of contracts, mostly index options.
- **Statement II** – Correct. India's market capitalisation overtook Hong Kong's around December 2023–January 2024 to become the fourth-largest.
- **Statement III** – Incorrect. SEBI regulates, issues investor warnings (a 2024 study showed most individual traders lose money in futures and options) and acts against unregistered advisers under the Investment Advisers Regulations.

➤ **I and II** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Derivatives – futures, options. Current affairs: SEBI's October 2024 measures to curb retail speculation (one weekly expiry per exchange, larger contract size).

SOURCES
1. SEBI – sebi.gov.in
2. Futures Industry Association annual survey
3. Economic Survey 2024-25

Question 39 | Environment / Economy

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: Circular economy reduces the emissions of greenhouse gases.
Statement II: Circular economy reduces the use of raw materials as inputs.
Statement III: Circular economy reduces wastage in the production process.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I
(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I
(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Reuse, recycling and remanufacturing replace virgin raw material; extraction and processing is energy-intensive.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Waste is designed out – by-products become inputs.

➤ Both lower energy use and waste decomposition emissions, hence explain I – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle; sustainable development. Current affairs: NITI Aayog's circular economy action plans for steel, aluminium, tyres, lithium-ion batteries; Battery Waste Management Rules 2022; Mission LiFE.

SOURCES

1. NITI Aayog – niti.gov.in
2. Ministry of Environment – moef.gov.in
3. Ellen MacArthur Foundation – ellenmacarthurfoundation.org

Question 40 | Economy

Consider the following statements:

I. Capital receipts create a liability or cause a reduction in the assets of the Government.
II. Borrowings and disinvestment are capital receipts.
III. Interest received on loans creates a liability of the Government.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I and II only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Borrowing creates a liability; recovery of loans or disinvestment reduces assets.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Capital receipts include borrowings, loan recoveries and disinvestment proceeds.
- **Statement III** – Incorrect. Interest received on loans is a REVENUE (non-tax) receipt; it neither creates a liability nor reduces an asset.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Government budget – revenue and capital receipts (Class 12 Macroeconomics). Current **affairs**: Budget 2025-26 fiscal deficit target 4.4% of GDP; shift to debt-to-GDP anchor from 2026-27.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 – Macroeconomics, Chapter 5 (Government Budget)
2. Union Budget – Budget at a Glance, indiabudget.gov.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 41 | International Relations

Consider the following countries:

I. Austria
II. Bulgaria
III. Croatia
IV. Serbia
V. Sweden
VI. North Macedonia

How many of the above are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization?

(a) Only three
(b) Only four
(c) Only five
(d) All the six

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only four

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Austria** – militarily neutral by constitutional law; not a NATO member.
- **Bulgaria** – joined 2004.
- **Croatia** – joined 2009.

- **Serbia** – only a Partnership for Peace partner.
- **Sweden** – became the 32nd member on 7 March 2024 (after Finland, April 2023).
- **North Macedonia** – joined March 2020.

➤ **Four members** – option (b).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: NATO (1949, Washington Treaty, Article 5 collective defence). Current affairs: Russia–**Ukraine** war drove Finland and Sweden to join; at The Hague Summit (June 2025) allies agreed to raise defence spending to 5% of GDP by 2035.

SOURCES

1. NATO – nato.int
2. NCERT Class 12 – Contemporary World Politics
3. Ministry of External Affairs – mea.gov.in

Question 42 | Geography

Consider the following countries:
I. Bolivia
II. Brazil
III. Colombia
IV. Ecuador
V. Paraguay
VI. Venezuela
Andes mountains pass through how many of the above countries?
(a) Only two
(b) Only three
(c) Only four
(d) Only five

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Only four

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **The Andes run through seven countries**: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina.
- **Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela** – yes (four).
- **Brazil and Paraguay** – no; they lie east of the range.

➤ **Four** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: World mountain systems; Aconcagua (6,961 m), the highest peak outside Asia. Current **affairs**: the 'Lithium Triangle' of Chile, Argentina and Bolivia in the Andes – central to the global battery race.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography; Class 11 – India: Physical Environment
2. Atlas – Oxford School Atlas
3. Geography of the world – Certificate Physical and Human Geography, G. C. Leong

Question 43 | Geography

Consider the following water bodies:
I. Lake Tanganyika
II. Lake Tonlé Sap
III. Patos Lagoon
Through how many of them does the equator pass?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) None

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Lake Tanganyika** – lies about 3°S to 8°S; the equator misses it. (Equator crosses Lake Victoria.)
- **Lake Tonlé Sap** – Cambodia, about 13°N.
- **Patos Lagoon** – southern Brazil, about 31°S.

➤ **None** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Latitudes and longitudes; the Equator passes through Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Gabon, **Republic** of the Congo, DR Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Indonesia. Current affairs: Great Lakes of Africa and the Nile basin.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 6 – The Earth in the Solar System; The Globe
2. Oxford School Atlas
3. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography

Question 44 | Economy / Agriculture

Consider the following statements about turmeric during the year 2022-23:
I. India is the largest producer and exporter of turmeric in the world.
II. More than 30 varieties of turmeric are grown in India.
III. Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are major turmeric producing States in India.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I, II and III
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. India produces about 75–80% of the world's turmeric and is the top exporter.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Over 30 varieties (e.g. Salem, Erode, Rajapuri, Sangli) are grown.
- **Statement III** – Correct. Telangana, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu (and Andhra Pradesh) lead production.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Spices of India; Geographical Indications (Erode turmeric). Current affairs: National Turmeric Board launched in January 2025 with headquarters in Nizamabad, Telangana.

SOURCES

1. Spices Board of India – indianspices.com
2. Ministry of Commerce and Industry – commerce.gov.in / PIB
3. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.gov.in

Question 45 | Geography

Which of the following are the evidences of the phenomenon of continental drift?
I. The belt of ancient rocks from Brazil coast matches with those from Western Africa.
II. The gold deposits of Ghana are derived from the Brazil plateau when the two continents lay side by side.
III. The Gondwana system of sediments from India is known to have its counterparts in six different landmasses of the Southern Hemisphere.
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) I and III only
(b) I and II only
(c) I, II and III
(d) II and III only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I, II and III
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct (rock belt matching, about 2,000 million years old).

II – Correct. Placer gold deposits of Ghana's coast have source rocks in the Brazil plateau.
III – Correct. Gondwana sequences occur in India, South Africa, South America, Falkland Islands, Antarctica and Australia.

➤ **Other evidence**: jig-saw fit, fossils (Mesosaurus, Glossopteris), tillite deposits.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Wegener's continental drift (1912), seafloor spreading, plate tectonics. Current affairs: Indian plate northward drift and Himalayan seismicity; Antarctic research stations.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography, Chapter 4 (Distribution of Oceans and Continents)
2. Certificate Physical and Human Geography – G. C. Leong
3. Geological Survey of India – gsi.gov.in

Question 46 | Geography

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: The amount of dust particles in the atmosphere is more in subtropical and temperate areas than in equatorial and polar regions.
Statement II: Subtropical and temperate areas have less dry winds.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I
(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I
(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct
(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct (NCERT). Dust is more in subtropical and temperate regions.
- **Statement II** – Incorrect. The reason is the OPPOSITE: these regions have MORE dry winds (deserts, steppes), which lift dust.

➤ **Statement I correct, II not correct** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Composition and structure of the atmosphere – solid particles. Current affairs: Saharan dust over the Atlantic; West Asian dust storms and Delhi's air quality; Thar desert.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography, Chapter 8 (Composition and Structure of Atmosphere)
2. India Meteorological Department – mausam.imd.gov.in

Question 47 | Geography

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: In January, in the Northern Hemisphere, the isotherms bend equatorward while crossing the landmasses, and poleward while crossing the oceans.
Statement II: In January, the air over the oceans is warmer than that over the landmasses in the Northern Hemisphere.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I
(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I
(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct
(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. In January, land cools quickly, so isotherms dip toward the equator over land; oceans stay warmer, so isotherms bend poleward.
- **Statement II** – Correct, and it is the reason: water heats and cools slowly, so winter air over oceans is warmer than over land.

➤ Option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Heat budget and temperature distribution (differential heating of land and water). Current affairs: Winter 2024–25 cold waves in India; Siberian high.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography, Chapter 9 (Solar Radiation, Heat Balance and Temperature)

2. India Meteorological Department – imd.gov.in

Question 48 | Geography

Consider the following statements:

Statement I: In the context of effect of water on rocks, chalk is known as a very permeable rock whereas clay is known as quite an impermeable or least permeable rock.

Statement II: Chalk is porous and hence can absorb water.

Statement III: Clay is not at all porous.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I

(b) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct but only one of them explains Statement I

(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement II** – Correct and explains I: chalk's connected pores allow water to pass through.
- **Statement III** – Incorrect. Clay IS porous (it holds a lot of water); but its pores are tiny and not well connected, so water cannot flow – it is impermeable.

➤ Porosity (storage) ≠ permeability (flow). Option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Aquifers and groundwater – porous and permeable rocks. Current affairs: Atal Bhujal Yojana for groundwater management; Central Ground Water Board reports on depletion.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography (Geomorphic Processes); Class 7 Science – Water

2. Central Ground Water Board – cgwb.gov.in

Question 49 | Geography / Environment

Consider the following statements:

I. Without the atmosphere, temperature would be well below freezing point everywhere on the Earth's surface.

II. Heat absorbed and trapped by the atmosphere maintains our planet's average temperature.

III. Atmosphere's gases, like carbon dioxide, are particularly good at absorbing and trapping radiation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) I and III only

(b) I and II only

(c) I, II and III

(d) II and III only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I, II and III

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Correct. Without the natural greenhouse effect the Earth's average would be about –18 °C instead of about +15 °C.
II – Correct. Greenhouse gases absorb and re-radiate heat, maintaining the temperature.
III – Correct. Carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour and nitrous oxide absorb outgoing long-wave radiation.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Greenhouse effect and heat budget. Current affairs: 2024 was the warmest year on record, the first calendar year above 1.5 °C over pre-industrial level (World Meteorological Organization).

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography, Chapter 9
2. World Meteorological Organization – wmo.int
3. IPCC Sixth Assessment Report – ipcc.ch

Question 50 | Economy / Agriculture

Consider the following statements about the Rashtriya Gokul Mission:
I. It is important for the upliftment of rural poor as majority of low producing indigenous animals are with small and marginal farmers and landless labourers.
II. It was initiated to promote indigenous cattle and buffalo rearing and conservation in a scientific and holistic manner.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Both I and II

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Statement I** – Correct. Indigenous breeds are mostly held by small and marginal farmers, so breed improvement helps the rural poor.
- **Statement II** – Correct. Launched in December 2014 to develop and conserve indigenous bovine breeds scientifically (Gokul Grams, IVF, sex-sorted semen, Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Livestock census; Operation Flood and the White Revolution. Current affairs: Union Cabinet approved continuation of the mission in 2025; India is the world's largest milk producer.

SOURCES

1. Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying – dahd.nic.in
2. Economic Survey – indiabudget.gov.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 51 | Polity / Governance

Consider the following statements:
I. Panchayats at the intermediate level exist in all States.
II. To be eligible to be a Member of a Panchayat at the intermediate level, a person should attain the age of thirty years.
III. The Chief Minister of a State constitutes a commission to review the financial position of Panchayats at the intermediate levels and to make recommendations regarding the distribution of net proceeds of taxes and duties, leviable by the State, between the State and Panchayats at the intermediate level.
Which of the statements given above are not correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I, II and III

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Not correct. Article 243B(2): States with population below 20 lakh need not constitute the intermediate tier.

II – Not correct. Article 243F: minimum age is 21 years.

III – Not correct. The State Finance Commission is constituted by the GOVERNOR (Article 243I), every five years.

➤ **All three are not correct** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 – Part IX, Eleventh Schedule (29 subjects). **Current** affairs: 16th Finance Commission under Dr Arvind Panagariya (constituted December 2023) for the 2026–31 period; National Panchayati Raj Day (24 April).

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity, Chapter on Panchayati Raj
2. Ministry of Panchayati Raj – panchayat.gov.in
3. Finance Commission of India – fincomindia.nic.in

Question 52 | International Relations

Consider the following statements in respect of BIMSTEC:

I. It is a regional organization consisting of seven member States till January 2025.

II. It came into existence with the signing of the Dhaka Declaration, 1999.

III. Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Nepal are founding member States of BIMSTEC.

IV. In BIMSTEC, the subsector of 'tourism' is being led by India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I and II

(b) II and III

(c) I and IV

(d) I only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Correct. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

II – Incorrect. BIMSTEC began with the Bangkok Declaration of 6 June 1997 (as BIST-EC).

III – Incorrect. Founders: Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Myanmar joined in December 1997; Nepal and Bhutan in 2004.

IV – Incorrect (as per the official key). Under the reorganised sectors of the Bangkok Vision 2030, tourism sits within 'People-to-People Contact', whose culture and tourism sub-sectors are led by NEPAL. India led tourism under the older 14-sector system; it now leads the Security pillar.

➤ **Only I** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Regional groupings – SAARC, BIMSTEC, BBIN. Current affairs: 6th BIMSTEC Summit (Bangkok, 3–4 April 2025) adopted the Bangkok Vision 2030 and a Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement; India is building a BIMSTEC Disaster Management Centre at Gandhinagar; Secretary-General is from India (since 2023).

SOURCES

1. BIMSTEC Secretariat – bimstec.org
2. Ministry of External Affairs – mea.gov.in (India in BIMSTEC)
3. NCERT Class 12 – Contemporary World Politics

Question 53 | Polity / Awards

Who amongst the following are members of the Jury to select the recipient of 'Gandhi Peace Prize'?

I. The President of India

II. The Prime Minister of India

III. The Chief Justice of India

IV. The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha

Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) II and IV only
(b) I, II and III
(c) II, III and IV
(d) I and III only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) II, III and IV
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **The jury of the Gandhi Peace Prize consists of**: the Prime Minister (chair), the Chief Justice of India, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, and one **eminent** person.

I – The President is not on the jury.
II, III and IV – members.
➤ Option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Awards – Bharat Ratna, Padma awards; the Gandhi Peace Prize was instituted in 1995 for Gandhi's 125th birth anniversary. Current affairs: Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021 to Gita Press, Gorakhpur (announced 2023); for 2020 to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (posthumous).

SOURCES
1. Ministry of Culture – indiaculture.gov.in
2. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in
3. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Appendix)

Question 54 | Science & Technology / Governance

GPS-Aided Geo Augmented Navigation (GAGAN) uses a system of ground stations to provide necessary augmentation. Which of the following statements is/are correct in respect of GAGAN?
I. It is designed to provide additional accuracy and integrity.
II. It will allow more uniform and high quality air traffic management.
III. It will provide benefits only in aviation but not in other modes of transportation.
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) I, II and III
(b) II and III only
(c) I only
(d) I and II only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I and II only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. GAGAN is a satellite-based augmentation system (SBAS) giving GPS signals better accuracy and integrity.
II – Correct. It supports precision approaches and efficient air traffic management; IndiGo first used it for a landing at Kishangarh in 2022.
III – Incorrect. Its signals also benefit railways, maritime navigation, surveying, mapping, agriculture and disaster management.
➤ Developed by the Airports Authority of India with ISRO.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Navigation – GPS, NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation). Current affairs: NavIC satellite launches (NVS-01, May 2023; NVS-02, January 2025).

SOURCES
1. Airports Authority of India – aai.aero (GAGAN)
2. Indian Space Research Organisation – isro.gov.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 55 | International Relations / Technology

Consider the following statements regarding AI Action Summit held in Grand Palais, Paris in February 2025:

I. Co-chaired with India, the event builds on the advances made at the Bletchley Park Summit held in 2023 and the Seoul Summit held in 2024.
II. Along with other countries, US and UK also signed the declaration on inclusive and sustainable AI.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. France and India co-chaired; the summit followed Bletchley Park (2023) and Seoul (2024).
II – Incorrect. About 60 countries, including India and China, signed; the United States and the United Kingdom did NOT sign.
➤ India announced it would host the next AI summit (AI Impact Summit).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Artificial intelligence basics. Current affairs: IndiaAI Mission (₹10,372 crore, March 2024); Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023; Global Partnership on AI.
SOURCES
1. Ministry of External Affairs – mea.gov.in
2. Ministry of Electronics and IT – meity.gov.in (IndiaAI)
3. Elysée / AI Action Summit declaration – elysee.fr

Question 56 | International Organisations / Current Affairs

Consider the following pairs:

International Year	Year
I. International Year of the Woman Farmer	2026
II. International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism	2027
III. International Year of Peace and Trust	2025
IV. International Year of Asteroid Awareness and Planetary Defence	2029

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) All the four
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – 2026 is the International Year of the Woman Farmer.
II – 2027 is the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism.
III – 2025 was declared International Year of Peace and Trust (also Quantum Science and Technology; Glaciers' Preservation).
IV – 2029 is the International Year of Asteroid Awareness and Planetary Defence (asteroid Apophis passes close in April 2029).
➤ **All four** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: United Nations General Assembly proclaims international years/decades. Current **affairs**: International Year of Millets 2023 (India-led); International Year of Camelids 2024; 2025 – Quantum Science.

SOURCES
1. United Nations – un.org (General Assembly resolutions)
2. Food and Agriculture Organization – fao.org

3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 57 | International Relations

Consider the following statements with regard to BRICS:
I. 16th BRICS Summit was held under the Chairship of Russia in Kazan.
II. Indonesia has become a full member of BRICS.
III. The theme of the 16th BRICS Summit was 'Strengthening Multiculturalism for Just Global Development and Security'.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I and II
(b) II and III
(c) I and III
(d) I only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I and II
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. Kazan, 22–24 October 2024.
II – Correct. Indonesia became a full member in January 2025.
III – Incorrect. The theme was 'Strengthening MULTILATERALISM for Just Global Development and Security', not multiculturalism.
➤ Option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- **Static**: BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, then Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE (2024) and Indonesia (2025); New Development Bank. Current affairs: Rio de Janeiro summit (July 2025); India chairs BRICS in 2026.

SOURCES
1. BRICS Russia 2024 – brics-russia2024.ru
2. Ministry of External Affairs – mea.gov.in
3. New Development Bank – ndb.int

Question 58 | Polity

Consider the following statements about Lokpal:
I. The power of Lokpal applies to public servants of India, but not to the Indian public servants posted outside India.
II. The Chairperson or a Member shall not be a Member of the Parliament or a Member of the Legislature of any State or Union Territory, and only the Chief Justice of India, whether incumbent or retired, has to be its Chairperson.
III. The Chairperson or a Member shall not be a person of less than forty-five years of age on the date of assuming office as the Chairperson or Member, as the case may be.
IV. Lokpal cannot inquire into the allegations of corruption against a sitting Prime Minister of India.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) III only
(b) II and III
(c) I and IV
(d) None of the above statements is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) III only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Incorrect. Lokpal's jurisdiction covers public servants in India and abroad.
II – Incorrect. The Chairperson must be a former Chief Justice of India, a former Supreme Court judge, or an eminent person of impeccable integrity – not only a former Chief Justice.
III – Correct. Minimum age is 45 years.

IV – Incorrect. Lokpal can inquire into allegations against the Prime Minister, except those relating to international relations, security, public order, atomic energy and space; a full bench of Lokpal must approve with a two-thirds majority, proceedings in camera.

➤ **Only III** – option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 following the Anna Hazare movement. Current affairs: **Justice** A. M. Khanwilkar became Lokpal Chairperson in March 2024.

SOURCES

1. Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013
2. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Central Vigilance Commission, Lokpal)
3. Lokpal of India – lokpal.gov.in

Question 59 | Current Affairs – Sports

Consider the following statements in respect of the first Kho Kho World Cup:

I. The event was held in Delhi, India.

II. Indian men beat Nepal with a score of 78–40 in the final to become the World Champion in men category.

III. Indian women beat Nepal with a score of 54–36 in the final to become the World Champion in women category.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I only

(b) II and III only

(c) I and III only

(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Correct. Held 13–19 January 2025 at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi.

II – Incorrect. The men beat Nepal 54–36.

III – Incorrect. The women beat Nepal 78–40.

➤ **The scores were swapped between the genders** – only I is correct.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Traditional Indian sports; Khelo India. Current affairs: India's 2025 sports achievements; Sports Governance Act 2025; Olympics 2036 bid.

SOURCES

1. Kho Kho Federation of India – kkfi.org
2. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports – yas.nic.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 60 | Current Affairs – Sports

Consider the following statements:

I. In the finals of the 45th Chess Olympiad held in 2024, Gukesh Dommaraju became the world's youngest winner after defeating the Russian player Ian Nepomniachtchi

II. Abhimanyu Mishra, an American chess player, holds the record of becoming world's youngest ever Grandmaster.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I only

(b) II only

(c) Both I and II

(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) II only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Incorrect. Gukesh became the youngest World Chess Champion (December 2024, Singapore) by beating China's Ding Liren, not Nepomniachtchi; and that was the World Championship, not the Olympiad. At the 45th Olympiad (Budapest, September 2024) India won both the open and women's team gold.

II – Correct. Abhimanyu Mishra (USA, of Indian origin) became the youngest Grandmaster at 12 years, 4 months, 25 days in 2021.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: FIDE and chess titles. Current affairs: Divya Deshmukh won the FIDE Women's World Cup in July 2025 and became a Grandmaster; India's chess rise.

SOURCES

1. International Chess Federation – fide.com
2. All India Chess Federation – aicf.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 61 | Science & Technology

Consider the following statements:

Statement I: Some rare earth elements are used in the manufacture of flat television screens and computer monitors.

Statement II: Some rare earth elements have phosphorescent properties.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

DETAILED EXPLANATION

Statement I – Correct. Europium, terbium and yttrium are used in phosphors for colour screens.

Statement II – Correct. Rare earth ions emit light after absorbing energy (luminescence/phosphorescence).

II explains I – the luminous property is why they are used in displays. Option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Lanthanides and the periodic table. Current affairs: China's export controls on rare **earths** (April 2025); India's National Critical Mineral Mission and incentive plans for rare-earth permanent magnets; IREL (India) rare earth production.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 Chemistry – d- and f-block elements
2. Ministry of Mines – mines.gov.in
3. Indian Rare Earths Limited – irel.co.in

Question 62 | Science & Technology / Governance

Consider the following statements:

I. Indian Railways have prepared a National Rail Plan (NRP) to create a 'future ready' railway system by 2028.

II. 'Kavach' is an Automatic Train Protection system developed in collaboration with Germany.

III. 'Kavach' system consists of RFID tags fitted on track in station section.

Which of the statements given above are not correct?

(a) I and II only

(b) II and III only

(c) I and III only

(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I and II only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Not correct. The National Rail Plan targets a future-ready railway system by 2030.
II – Not correct. Kavach was developed indigenously by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation with Indian firms.
III – Correct (so it is not among the 'not correct' ones). Kavach uses RFID tags on tracks, loco units and station units with radio communication.

➤ Option (a).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Railways in India. Current affairs: Kavach 4.0 approved in 2024; Kavach rollout on high-density routes after the 2023 Balasore accident.

SOURCES

1. Ministry of Railways – indianrailways.gov.in
2. Research Designs and Standards Organisation – rdso.indianrailways.gov.in
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 63 | Science & Technology / Space

Consider the following space missions:
I. Axiom-4
II. SpaDeX
III. Gaganyaan
How many of the space missions given above encourage and support micro-gravity research?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only two

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Axiom-4 (June 2025, Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla) carried several Indian microgravity experiments to the International Space Station.
II – SpaDeX is a technology demonstrator for autonomous space docking (PSLV-C60, 30 December 2024; docking 16 January 2025 – India became the fourth country). The official key does not count it as a microgravity research mission, although its secondary payloads included plant growth experiments.
III – Gaganyaan, India's human spaceflight programme, plans microgravity experiments.

➤ **Only two** – option (b)

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Microgravity and weightlessness. Current affairs: Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035; Gaganyaan's uncrewed test flights.

SOURCES

1. Indian Space Research Organisation – isro.gov.in
2. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in
3. Axiom Space – axiomspace.com

Question 64 | Defence / Current Affairs

With reference to India's defence, consider the following pairs:

Aircraft type	Description
I. Dornier-228	Maritime patrol aircraft
II. IL-76	Supersonic combat aircraft
III. C-17 Globemaster III	Military transport aircraft

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three

(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only two
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Dornier-228 is a light aircraft used by the Navy and Coast Guard for maritime surveillance.
II – The Ilyushin IL-76 'Gajraj' is a heavy strategic transport aircraft, not a supersonic combat aircraft.
III – The C-17 Globemaster III is a strategic military transport aircraft (IAF has 11).
➤ **Two** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Indian Air Force fleet. Current affairs: C-295 transport aircraft at Vadodara (Tata–Airbus); Tejas Mk1A orders; Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence.

SOURCES
1. Indian Air Force – indianairforce.nic.in
2. Ministry of Defence – mod.gov.in
3. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited – hal-india.co.in

Question 65 | Environment / Science

Artificial way of causing rainfall to reduce air pollution makes use of
(a) silver iodide and potassium iodide
(b) silver nitrate and potassium iodide
(c) silver iodide and potassium nitrate
(d) silver nitrate and potassium chloride

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) silver iodide and potassium iodide
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Option (a) – Cloud seeding uses silver iodide (ice nuclei) and potassium iodide; also sodium chloride and dry ice.
Others – silver nitrate and potassium nitrate/chloride are not used as seeding agents.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Condensation nuclei and precipitation. Current affairs: Delhi government with IIT Kanpur **carried** out cloud-seeding trials in October 2025 to combat pollution; Mission Mausam (2024) includes weather modification.

SOURCES
1. Ministry of Earth Sciences – moes.gov.in (Mission Mausam)
2. India Meteorological Department – imd.gov.in
3. NCERT Class 11 – Fundamentals of Physical Geography (Atmospheric Circulation and Weather)

Question 66 | Polity

Consider the following statements with regard to pardoning power of the President of India:
I. The exercise of this power by the President can be subjected to limited judicial review.
II. The President can exercise this power without the advice of the Central Government.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. Courts review only for arbitrariness, mala fides or irrelevant considerations (Maru Ram, Kehar Singh, Epuru Sudhakar).
II – Incorrect. Under Article 74 the President acts on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Article 72 – pardon, reprieve, respite, remission, commutation; Governor's power under Article 161. Current affairs: Supreme Court on delay in mercy petitions (Shatrughan Chauhan, 2014).

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (President)
2. Constitution of India, Articles 72 and 74
3. Supreme Court of India – sci.gov.in

Question 67 | Polity

Consider the following statements:

I. On the dissolution of the House of the People, the Speaker shall not vacate his/her office until immediately before the first meeting of the House of the People after the dissolution.

II. According to the provisions of the Constitution of India, a Member of the House of the People on being elected as Speaker shall resign from his/her political party immediately.

III. The Speaker of the House of the People may be removed from his/her office by a resolution of the House of the People passed by a majority of all the then Members of the House, provided that no resolution shall be moved unless at least fourteen days' notice has been given of the intention to move the resolution.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I and III only

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Correct. Article 94 proviso.

II – Incorrect. The Constitution does not require it; resignation from party is a convention (borrowed from Britain).

III – Correct. Articles 94(c) and 96 – effective majority, 14 days' notice.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Speaker – election, role, Tenth Schedule decisions. Current affairs: Om Birla re-elected Speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha on 26 June 2024.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Parliament – Speaker)
2. Constitution of India, Articles 93–96
3. Lok Sabha – sansad.in

Question 68 | Polity

Consider the following statements:

I. If any question arises as to whether a Member of the House of the People has become subject to disqualification under the 10th Schedule, the President's decision in accordance with the opinion of the Council of Union Ministers shall be final.

II. There is no mention of the word 'political party' in the Constitution of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) Neither I nor II

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Incorrect. Under the Tenth Schedule, the SPEAKER decides defection disqualification (para 6), subject to judicial review (Kihoto Hollohan, 1992). The President decides Article 103 disqualifications after consulting the Election Commission.

II – Incorrect. The Tenth Schedule (52nd Amendment, 1985) repeatedly uses 'political party'.

➤ **Neither** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Anti-defection law; 91st Amendment (2003). Current affairs: Supreme Court in July 2025 directed the Telangana Speaker to decide disqualification petitions within three months; Shiv Sena split case.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Anti-defection law)
2. Constitution of India – Tenth Schedule
3. Supreme Court of India – sci.gov.in

Question 69 | Polity / Economy

Consider the following statements:

Statement I: In India, State Governments have no power for making rules for grant of concessions in respect of extraction of minor minerals even though such minerals are located in their territories.

Statement II: In India, the Central Government has the power to notify minor minerals under the relevant law.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

DETAILED EXPLANATION

Statement I – Incorrect. Section 15 of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 empowers State Governments to make rules for minor minerals.

Statement II – Correct. Section 3(e): the Central Government may notify minor minerals by notification in the Official Gazette.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Seventh Schedule – Entry 54 Union List (regulation of mines), Entry 23 State List. Current affairs: Sustainable Sand Mining Guidelines, 2016 and Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines, 2020; Mines and Minerals reforms.

SOURCES

1. Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957
2. Ministry of Mines – mines.gov.in
3. Ministry of Environment – moef.gov.in

Question 70 | Environment / International

Which organization has enacted the Nature Restoration Law (NRL) to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss?

(a) The European Union

(b) The World Bank

(c) The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

(d) The Food and Agriculture Organization

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) The European Union

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (a)** – The EU adopted the Nature Restoration Law in June 2024 (in force August 2024), the first continent-wide law to restore degraded ecosystems: at least 20% of EU land and sea by 2030 and all ecosystems in need by 2050.
- **Others** – World Bank, OECD, FAO issue policy and finance, not binding laws.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Biodiversity conservation. Current affairs: Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity **Framework** (30x30); EU Green Deal; EU Deforestation Regulation.

SOURCES

1. European Commission – environment.ec.europa.eu
2. Convention on Biological Diversity – cbd.int

Question 71 | Economy

Suppose the revenue expenditure is ₹80,000 crores and the revenue receipts of the Government are ₹60,000 crores. The Government budget also shows borrowings of ₹10,000 crores and interest payments of ₹6,000 crores. Which of the following statements are correct?

I. Revenue deficit is ₹20,000 crores.
II. Fiscal deficit is ₹10,000 crores.
III. Primary deficit is ₹4,000 crores.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I, II and III

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Revenue deficit = revenue expenditure – revenue receipts = 80,000 – 60,000 = ₹20,000 crore.

II – Fiscal deficit equals total borrowing requirement = ₹10,000 crore (as the budget shows borrowings of this amount).

III – Primary deficit = fiscal deficit – interest payments = 10,000 – 6,000 = ₹4,000 crore.

➤ **All correct** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Fiscal deficit, revenue deficit, primary deficit (Class 12 Macroeconomics). Current affairs: Budget 2025-26 estimates – fiscal deficit 4.4% of GDP, revenue deficit 1.5%, primary deficit 0.8%.

SOURCES

1. NCERT Class 12 – Macroeconomics, Chapter 5
2. Union Budget – Budget at a Glance, indiabudget.gov.in
3. FRBM Act, 2003

Question 72 | International Relations / Economy

India is one of the founding members of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), a multimodal transportation corridor, which will connect

(a) India to Central Asia to Europe via Iran
(b) India to Central Asia via China
(c) India to South-East Asia through Bangladesh and Myanmar
(d) India to Europe through Azerbaijan

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) India to Central Asia to Europe via Iran

DETAILED EXPLANATION

Option (a) – INSTC links Indian ports (Mumbai/Jawaharlal Nehru Port) to Chabahar/Bandar Abbas in Iran, then through the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Russia and Central Asia to Europe – a roughly 7,200 km multimodal route of ship, rail and road. India, Iran and Russia signed it in 2000.

(b) China is not on the route; (c) describes the Trilateral Highway; (d) is a part, not the full corridor.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Chabahar port, Gwadar. Current affairs: Chabahar–Zahedan railway; Rasht–Astara link; Russia–India trade via INSTC after sanctions.

SOURCES

1. Ministry of External Affairs – mea.gov.in
2. Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways – shipmin.gov.in
3. India Ports Global Limited

Question 73 | Economy / Environment

Consider the following statements:
Statement I: Of the two major ethanol producers in the world, i.e., Brazil and the United States of America, the former produces more ethanol than the latter.
Statement II: Unlike in the United States of America where corn is the principal feedstock for ethanol production, sugarcane is the principal feedstock for ethanol production in Brazil.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I
(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I
(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct
(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Statement I – Incorrect. The United States produces more ethanol (about 55% of world output) than Brazil (about 27%).
Statement II – Correct. US uses maize; Brazil uses sugarcane.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Biofuels and the National Policy on Biofuels 2018. Current affairs: India reached 20% **ethanol** blending in petrol (E20) in 2025, five years ahead of the 2030 target; Global Biofuels Alliance (launched at G20 2023).

SOURCES
1. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas – mopng.gov.in
2. Renewable Fuels Association – ethanolrfa.org
3. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 74 | Environment / Geography

The World Bank warned that India could become one of the first places where wet-bulb temperatures routinely exceed 35 °C. Which of the following statements best reflect(s) the implication of the above-said report?
I. Peninsular India will most likely suffer from flooding, tropical cyclones and droughts.
II. The survival of animals including humans will be affected as shedding of their body heat through perspiration becomes difficult.
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) Both I and II
DETAILED EXPLANATION
II – Correct. A wet-bulb temperature of 35 °C is considered the limit of human survivability: the body can no longer cool by sweating.
I – Accepted as correct in the official key; it reflects the broader climate vulnerability of Peninsular India (long coastline, monsoon variability) flagged along with extreme heat.
➤ **Both** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Humidity, heat index and wet-bulb temperature. Current affairs: Heat Action Plans of the **National** Disaster Management Authority; record heatwaves of 2024.

SOURCES
1. World Bank – worldbank.org (South Asia climate report)
2. India Meteorological Department – imd.gov.in
3. National Disaster Management Authority – ndma.gov.in

Question 75 | Economy

A country's fiscal deficit stands at ₹50,000 crores. It is receiving ₹10,000 crores through non-debt creating capital receipts. The country's interest liabilities are ₹1,500 crores. What is the gross primary deficit?

(a) ₹48,500 crores
(b) ₹51,500 crores
(c) ₹58,500 crores
(d) None of the above

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) ₹48,500 crores
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Gross primary deficit = Gross fiscal deficit – interest payments = 50,000 – 1,500 = ₹48,500 crore.
The non-debt capital receipts (₹10,000 crore) are already accounted for in computing the fiscal deficit (it is a distractor).
➤ Option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Deficit concepts – revenue, fiscal, primary. Current affairs: Government's fiscal consolidation path towards 4.5% by 2025-26.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 12 – Macroeconomics, Chapter 5
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (Public Finance)
3. Union Budget documents – indiabudget.gov.in

Question 76 | Polity / Economy

Which of the following statements with regard to recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission of India are correct?
I. It has recommended grants of ₹4,800 crores from the year 2022-23 to the year 2025-26 for incentivizing States to enhance educational outcomes.
II. 45% of the net proceeds of Union taxes are to be shared with States.
III. ₹45,000 crores are to be kept as performance-based incentive for all States for carrying out agricultural reforms.
IV. It reintroduced tax effort criteria to reward fiscal performance.
Select the correct answer using the code given below.
(a) I, II and III
(b) I, II and IV
(c) I, III and IV
(d) II, III and IV

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I, III and IV
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct (₹4,800 crore for education outcomes).
II – Incorrect. The share of States was 41% for 2021–26 (42% earlier). 45% is the weight given to income distance in the devolution formula.
III – Correct. ₹45,000 crore performance-based incentives for agricultural reforms.
IV – Correct. A 2.5% weight was given to tax effort.
➤ Option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Article 280 – Finance Commission; Article 270 – tax devolution. Current affairs: 16th **Finance** Commission (Dr Arvind Panagariya) – report for 2026–31 submitted in 2025.

SOURCES
1. Finance Commission of India – fincomindia.nic.in
2. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Finance Commission)
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy

Question 77 | Economy / International Organisations

Consider the following statements in respect of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD):
I. It provides loans and guarantees to middle income countries.
II. It works single-handedly to help developing countries to reduce poverty.
III. It was established to help Europe rebuild after the World War II.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I and III only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. IBRD lends to middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries; it also offers guarantees and advisory services.
II – Incorrect. It works within the World Bank Group (with IDA, IFC, MIGA) and alongside partners.
III – Correct. Created at Bretton Woods (1944), initially to finance post-war reconstruction of Europe.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Bretton Woods institutions – IMF and IBRD. Current affairs: World Bank President Ajay **Banga** (since June 2023); World Bank's role in the Indus Waters Treaty framework, held in abeyance by India in April 2025.

SOURCES
1. World Bank – worldbank.org
2. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (International Institutions)
3. NCERT Class 12 – Contemporary World Politics

Question 78 | Economy

Consider the following statements in respect of RTGS and NEFT:
I. In RTGS, the settlement time is instantaneous while in case of NEFT, it takes some time to settle payments.
II. In RTGS, the customer is charged for inward transactions while that is not the case for NEFT.
III. Operating hours for RTGS are restricted on certain days while this is not true for NEFT.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) I and II
(c) I and III
(d) III only

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. RTGS settles individually in real time; NEFT settles in half-hourly batches.
II – Incorrect. Neither RTGS nor NEFT charges the beneficiary for inward transactions.
III – Incorrect. Both are available 24×7 (NEFT since December 2019, RTGS since December 2020).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Payment systems – RTGS, NEFT, IMPS, UPI. Current affairs: UPI crossing 20 billion monthly transactions; Payment and Settlement Systems Act.

SOURCES
1. Reserve Bank of India – rbi.org.in
2. National Payments Corporation of India – npci.org.in
3. Ramesh Singh – Indian Economy (Banking)

Question 79 | Economy / International Relations

Consider the following countries:

I. United Arab Emirates
II. France
III. Germany
IV. Singapore
V. Bangladesh

How many countries amongst the above are there other than India where international merchant payments are accepted under UPI?

(a) Only two
(b) Only three
(c) Only four
(d) All the five

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only three

DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **UAE** – accepted (2024). [T] France – accepted (Eiffel Tower, 2024). [T] Singapore – UPI–PayNow link (2023).
- **Germany** – not yet. [F] Bangladesh – not yet.

➤ **Three** – option (b). Others where UPI works include Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Qatar.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: Digital payment systems. Current affairs: NPCI International Payments Limited **expansion**; RuPay and UPI as soft power.

SOURCES

1. NPCI International – npci.org.in
2. Ministry of External Affairs – mea.gov.in
3. Reserve Bank of India – rbi.org.in

Question 80 | Economy / Energy

Consider the following statements about 'PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana':

I. It targets installation of one crore solar rooftop panels in the residential sector.
II. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy aims to impart training on installation, operation, maintenance and repairs of solar rooftop systems at grassroot levels.
III. It aims to create more than three lakh skilled manpower through fresh skilling, and up-skilling, under scheme component of capacity building.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) I and II only
(b) I and III only
(c) II and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I, II and III

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Launched 13 February 2024 with ₹75,021 crore outlay; target one crore households with up to 300 units free electricity a month.
II – Capacity building and training are scheme components.
III – It aims to create over 3 lakh skilled personnel.

➤ **All correct** – option (d).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Solar energy – International Solar Alliance. Current affairs: India crossed 100 GW of installed solar capacity in 2025.

SOURCES

1. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy – mnre.gov.in; pmsuryaghar.gov.in
2. Press Information Bureau – pib.gov.in

Question 81 | Polity

With reference to the Indian polity, consider the following statements:
I. An Ordinance can amend any Central Act.
II. An Ordinance can abridge a Fundamental Right.
III. An Ordinance can come into effect from a back date.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III
ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) I and III only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. An Ordinance has the same force as an Act of Parliament and can amend or repeal an Act.
II – Incorrect. It cannot take away or abridge Fundamental Rights (Article 13).
III – Correct. It can be given retrospective effect.
➤ Option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- **Static**: Article 123 (President), 213 (Governor); six-week rule. Current affairs: Delhi services ordinance of 2023; Supreme Court on re-promulgation (D. C. Wadhwa, Krishna Kumar Singh).

SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (President – Ordinance)
2. Constitution of India, Article 123
3. Supreme Court of India – sci.gov.in

Question 82 | Polity / Geography

Consider the following pairs:

State	Description
I. Arunachal Pradesh	The capital is named after a fort, and the State has two National Parks
II. Nagaland	The State came into existence on the basis of a Constitutional Amendment Act
III. Tripura	Initially a Part 'C' State, it became a centrally administered territory with the reorganization of States in 1956 and later attained the status of a full-fledged State

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) All the three
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Itanagar is named after the Ita Fort; national parks: Namdapha and Mouling.
II – Nagaland: State of Nagaland Act 1962 together with the 13th Constitutional Amendment (Article 371A); statehood in December 1963.
III – Part C State (1950) → Union Territory (1956) → State (1972, North-Eastern Areas Reorganisation Act, 1971).
➤ **All three** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Reorganisation of States – SRA 1956. Current affairs: Sela Tunnel in Arunachal (March 2024); Hornbill Festival, Nagaland.

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Formation of States)
2. Ministry of Home Affairs – mha.gov.in
3. NCERT Class 12 – Politics in India Since Independence

Question 83 | Polity

With reference to India, consider the following:
I. The Inter-State Council
II. The National Security Council
III. Zonal Councils
How many of the above were established as per the provisions of the Constitution of India?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Only one
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Inter-State Council: Article 263 (constituted in 1990 by presidential order).
II – National Security Council: created in 1998 by an executive resolution.
III – Zonal Councils: statutory, under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956 (Part III).
➤ **Only one** – option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Inter-state relations. Current affairs: Zonal Council meetings chaired by the Union Home Minister; National Security Advisory Board reconstitution.
SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Inter-State Relations)
2. Ministry of Home Affairs – mha.gov.in; Inter-State Council Secretariat – interstatecouncil.gov.in

Question 84 | Polity

Consider the following statements:
I. The Constitution of India explicitly mentions that in certain spheres the Governor of a State acts in his/her own discretion.
II. The President of India can, of his/her own, reserve a bill passed by a State Legislature for his/her consideration without it being forwarded by the Governor of the State concerned.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. Article 163 and the Sixth Schedule (para 9(2), para 18(3)) speak of the Governor's discretion.
II – Incorrect. A bill is reserved for the President only by the Governor under Article 200; the President has no power to call for a bill on his own.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Governor – appointment, powers, discretion. Current affairs: Supreme Court's April 2025 judgment in State of Tamil Nadu v. Governor on timelines for assent and the Presidential Reference under Article 143 (May 2025).
SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Governor)
2. Constitution of India, Articles 163, 200, 201
3. Supreme Court of India – sci.gov.in

Question 85 | Polity

Consider the following pairs:

Provision in the Constitution of India	Stated under
I. Separation of Judiciary from the Executive in the public services of the State	The Directive Principles of the State Policy
II. Valuing and preserving of the rich heritage of our composite culture	The Fundamental Duties
III. Prohibition of employment of children below the age of 14 years in factories	The Fundamental Rights

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) All the three

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Article 50 (Directive Principle).
II – Article 51A(f) (Fundamental Duty).
III – Article 24 (Right against Exploitation).

➤ **All three** – option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- Static: **Part** III, IV and IVA of the Constitution. Current affairs: Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act amendment, 2016; Right to Education (Article 21A).

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Fundamental Rights; DPSP; Fundamental Duties)
2. Constitution of India, Articles 24, 50, 51A

Question 86 | Polity

Consider the following statements: With reference to the Constitution of India, if an area in a State is declared as Scheduled Area under the Fifth Schedule

I. the State Government loses its executive power in such areas and a local body assumes total administration

II. the Union Government can take over the total administration of such areas under certain circumstances on the recommendations of the Governor

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) Neither I nor II

DETAILED EXPLANATION

I – Incorrect. The State's executive power continues; the Governor administers with the Tribes Advisory Council. Autonomous districts with local control are a Sixth Schedule feature.

II – Incorrect. The Union's power is limited to giving directions to the State on administration of Scheduled Areas; it does not take over total administration.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Fifth and Sixth Schedules; PESA Act 1996; Forest Rights Act 2006. Current affairs: Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (2024).

SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Scheduled and Tribal Areas)

2. Ministry of Tribal Affairs – tribal.nic.in

Question 87 | Governance

With reference to India, consider the following pairs:

Organization	Union Ministry
I. The National Automotive Board	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
II. The Coir Board	Ministry of Heavy Industries
III. The National Centre for Trade Information	Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) None
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – National Automotive Board works under the Ministry of Heavy Industries.
II – Coir Board is under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.
III – National Centre for Trade Information is under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
➤ **None** – option (d). The pairs are cyclically shifted.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
- Static: Ministries and boards. Current affairs: PM E-DRIVE; Coir Vikas Yojana; MSME classification.

SOURCES
1. Ministry of Heavy Industries – heavyindustries.gov.in
2. Coir Board – coirboard.gov.in
3. Ministry of Commerce – commerce.gov.in

Question 88 | Polity

Consider the following subjects under the Constitution of India:
I. List I-Union List, in the Seventh Schedule
II. Extent of the executive power of a State
III. Conditions of the Governor's office
For a constitutional amendment with respect to which of the above, ratification by the Legislatures of not less than one-half of the States is required before presenting the bill to the President of India for assent?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I and II only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Matters in the Seventh Schedule lists need ratification (Article 368(2)).
II – Extent of the executive power of the Union and the States (Articles 73 and 162).
III – Conditions of the Governor's office (Article 158) are not in the list needing ratification; Parliament can amend them by the special majority alone.
➤ Option (a).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Federal amendments under Article 368. Current affairs: 101st Amendment (GST) was ratified by States; proposals on simultaneous elections.
SOURCES

1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Amendment of the Constitution)
2. Constitution of India, Article 368(2)

Question 89 | Polity

With reference to the Indian polity, consider the following statements:
I. The Governor of a State is not answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his/her office.
II. No criminal proceedings shall be instituted or continued against the Governor during his/her term of office.
III. Members of a State Legislature are not liable to any proceedings in any court in respect of anything said within the House.
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) I and II only
(b) II and III only
(c) I and III only
(d) I, II and III

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) I, II and III
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I and II – Article 361 gives immunity for official acts and criminal proceedings during term (civil proceedings only after two months' notice).
III – Article 194(2) gives legislators privileges for speeches in the House.
➤ **All correct** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Parliamentary privileges and executive immunities. Current affairs: In 2024 the Supreme Court examined the scope of Governor's immunity in a case involving the West Bengal Governor.
SOURCES
1. M. Laxmikanth – Indian Polity (Governor; State Legislature)
2. Constitution of India, Articles 194, 361

Question 90 | Economy / Energy

Consider the following activities:
I. Production of crude oil
II. Refining, storage and distribution of petroleum
III. Marketing and sale of petroleum products
IV. Production of natural gas
How many of the above activities are regulated by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board in our country?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only two
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I and IV – Production of crude oil and natural gas is excluded from PNGRB's remit (Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006) – handled by the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons.
II – refining, processing, storage, transportation, distribution regulated.
III – marketing and sale regulated.
➤ **Two** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Energy sector regulation. Current affairs: unified natural gas pipeline tariff (2023); city gas distribution bidding rounds.
SOURCES

1. Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board – pngrb.gov.in
2. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas – mopng.gov.in

Question 91 | Modern History

"Sedition has become my religion" was the famous statement given by Gandhiji at the time of
(a) the Champaran Satyagraha
(b) publicly violating Salt Law at Dandi
(c) attending the Second Round Table Conference in London
(d) the launch of the Quit India Movement

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) publicly violating Salt Law at Dandi
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Option (b) – In the Salt Satyagraha of 1930 Gandhi declared sedition had become his religion, as he broke the Salt Law at Dandi on 6 April 1930.
Others – Champaran (1917), Round Table Conference (1931) and Quit India (1942) are different episodes.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Civil Disobedience Movement. Current affairs: Supreme Court put Section 124A (sedition) in abeyance in May 2022; Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 replaced it with Section 152.
SOURCES
1. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
2. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence
3. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023

Question 92 | Ancient History / Art

The famous female figurine known as 'Dancing Girl', found at Mohenjo-daro, is made of
(a) carnelian
(b) clay
(c) bronze
(d) gold

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) bronze
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Option (c) – The Dancing Girl is a small bronze statuette (about 10.5 cm) made by the lost-wax (cire perdue) technique.
➤ Found by Ernest Mackay (1926); in the National Museum, New Delhi.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Indus Valley Civilisation – bronze casting, seals. Current affairs: Dholavira inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage Site (2021); Tamil Nadu's prize for deciphering the Indus script (2025).
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 12 – Themes in Indian History I (Bricks, Beads and Bones)
2. Nitin Singhania – Indian Art and Culture
3. Archaeological Survey of India – asi.nic.in

Question 93 | Modern History

Who provided legal defence to the people arrested in the aftermath of Chauri Chaura incident?
(a) C. R. Das
(b) Madan Mohan Malaviya and Krishna Kant
(c) Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Khwaja Hasan Nizami
(d) M. A. Jinnah

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Madan Mohan Malaviya and Krishna Kant
DETAILED EXPLANATION

- **Option (b)** – Madan Mohan Malaviya led the defence of the accused; about 170 were sentenced to death by the sessions court and after his appeal most were saved.
- **Others** – not associated with this case.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

- **Static**: Non-Cooperation Movement withdrawal, Gorakhpur. Current affairs: Chauri Chaura centenary (2021–22).

SOURCES

1. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
2. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence

Question 94 | Modern History

Subsequent to which one of the following events, Gandhiji, who consistently opposed untouchability and appealed for its eradication from all spheres, decided to include the upliftment of 'Harijans' in his political and social programme?

(a) The Poona Pact
(b) The Gandhi-Irwin Agreement (Delhi Pact)
(c) Arrest of Congress leadership at the time of the Quit India Movement
(d) Promulgation of the Government of India Act, 1935

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) The Poona Pact

DETAILED EXPLANATION

Option (a) – After the Poona Pact (September 1932) Gandhi founded the All India Anti-Untouchability League (Harijan Sevak Sangh), began the weekly 'Harijan' (1933) and did a Harijan tour (1933–34).
Others – later or earlier events.

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Communal Award (1932), Ambedkar–Gandhi. Current affairs: Samajik Nyay; Vaikom Satyagraha centenary.

SOURCES

1. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
2. Bipan Chandra – India's Struggle for Independence

Question 95 | Medieval History / Agriculture

Consider the following fruits:
I. Papaya
II. Pineapple
III. Guava
How many of the above were introduced in India by the Portuguese in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?

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

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) All the three

DETAILED EXPLANATION

All three – papaya, pineapple and guava reached India from the Americas through the Portuguese. Others: cashew, potato, tomato, chilli, maize, tobacco, groundnut.

➤ Option (c).

STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK

Static: Columbian exchange; Portuguese in Goa. Current affairs: Goa cashew GI tag; horticulture production.

SOURCES

1. Satish Chandra – Medieval India
2. Spectrum – Modern India (European arrival)

3. Ministry of Agriculture – agricoop.gov.in

Question 96 | Geography

Consider the following countries:
I. United Kingdom
II. Denmark
III. New Zealand
IV. Australia
V. Brazil
How many of the above countries have more than four time zones?
(a) All the five
(b) Only four
(c) Only three
(d) Only two

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (b) Only four
DETAILED EXPLANATION
United Kingdom (with overseas territories) – nine; [T] Denmark (Greenland, Faroe) – five; [T] New Zealand (with Chatham Islands, Tokelau, etc.) – more than four; [T] Australia (with territories) – more than four.
Brazil – four time zones (UTC–2 to UTC–5).
➤ **Only four** – option (b).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Time zones, IST at 82°30'E. Current affairs: debates on a separate time zone for North-East India.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Practical Work in Geography
2. Oxford School Atlas

Question 97 | Geography

Consider the following statements:
I. Anadyr in Siberia and Nome in Alaska are a few kilometers from each other, but when people are waking up and getting set for breakfast in these cities, it would be different days.
II. When it is Monday in Anadyr, it is Tuesday in Nome.
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) I only
(b) II only
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) I only
DETAILED EXPLANATION
I – Correct. The International Date Line runs through the Bering Strait between Siberia and Alaska; the places are on different calendar days.
II – Incorrect. Anadyr, west of the line, is AHEAD: when it is Tuesday in Anadyr it is Monday in Nome.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: International Date Line (180°). Current affairs: Samoa shifted the date line in 2011.
SOURCES
1. NCERT Class 11 – Practical Work in Geography
2. Certificate Physical and Human Geography – G. C. Leong

Question 98 | Modern History / Social Reform

Who among the following was the founder of the 'Self-Respect Movement'?
(a) Periyar' E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker

(b) Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
(c) Bhaskarrao Jadhav
(d) Dinkarrao Javalkar

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (a) Periyar' E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Option (a) – E. V. Ramasamy 'Periyar' founded the Self-Respect Movement in 1925 in Tamil Nadu against caste hierarchy and Brahminical dominance.
Others – Ambedkar (Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha), Jadhav and Javalkar were non-Brahmin movement leaders in Maharashtra.
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Anti-caste movements. Current affairs: Vaikom Satyagraha centenary (2024–25).
SOURCES
1. Spectrum – A Brief History of Modern India
2. NCERT Class 8 – Our Pasts III

Question 99 | Geography / Economy

Consider the following pairs:

Country	Resource-rich in
I. Botswana	Diamond
II. Chile	Lithium
III. Indonesia	Nickel

In how many of the above rows is the given information correctly matched?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (c) All the three
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Botswana – a leading diamond producer (Debswana).
Chile – one of the world's largest lithium reserves and producers (Atacama).
Indonesia – the world's largest nickel producer.
➤ **All three** – option (c).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: World resources. Current affairs: Khanij Bidesh India Limited's lithium blocks in Argentina; India–Chile trade agreement talks.
SOURCES
1. United States Geological Survey – Mineral Commodity Summaries, usgs.gov
2. Ministry of Mines – mines.gov.in

Question 100 | Geography

Consider the following pairs:

Region	Country
I. Mallorca	Italy
II. Normandy	Spain
III. Sardinia	France

In how many of the above rows is the given information correctly matched?
(a) Only one

(b) Only two
(c) All the three
(d) None

ANSWER: (UPSC Set B): (d) None
DETAILED EXPLANATION
Mallorca – Spanish island (Balearic Islands).
Normandy – region of France (D-Day beaches).
Sardinia – Italian island.
➤ **None** – option (d).
STATIC + CURRENT AFFAIRS LINK
Static: Europe's regions and islands. Current affairs: 80th anniversary of D-Day in June 2024.
SOURCES
1. Oxford School Atlas
2. NCERT Class 11 – India: Physical Environment (map work)