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## BASIC SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Consider the following statement about Covid 19 :-

1. It belongs to the group Corona Virus which has crown like feature on its surface .
2. It is a DNA virus .
3. It's a zoonotic disease .

Which of the statements about corona virus are correct.

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

ANSWER: B

The Corona virus is named after the crown like spike that protrudes from its surface . COVID 19 one such example of corona virus . Other examples of corona virus are Middle east respiratory syndrome(MERS) which was transmitted to Humans from Camels and Severe Acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) which was transmitted from civets to humans . COVID 19 , MERS and SARS are examples of Zoonotic diseases . Zoonotic diseases are those diseases which can be transmitted from animals to humans or vice versa . A very common example of Zoonotic disease is Rabies which is transmitted from Dogs to Humans . Virus is connecting link between living and non-living being . It behaves as a living being inside a living system whereas outside the living system its like a crystal or non-living being . The Virus outer covering is made of protein and lipid . The inner core is made of Genetic material . The genetic material is either DNA or RNA . The genetic material in case of Corona virus is RNA .It is surrounded by layer of fat .

2. ACE-2 receptor has been in news in the recent times in the context of Corona virus .

Which of these statements is correct about it.

1. It is found on the surface of Covid Virus 19.
2. ACE 2 are receptors present on the cell membrane of human .
3. COVID 19 virus attaches to ACE 2 receptors to gain entry into the human cell

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

ANSWER: B

ACE 2 receptors are present on the surface of Human cells . COVID 19 virus gets attached to these receptors present on the cell surface to gain entry into the cell .

Most Covid 19 viruses cause fever as the immune system fights to clear the virus . In severe cases the immune system can overact and start attacking the lung cells . the lungs become obstructed with fluid and dying cells , making it difficult to breathe . A small percentage of infection can lead to acute respiratory distress syndrome and possibly death .

3. Consider the following statements –

1. Hydroxychloroquine is being used in some countries for treatment of covid 19 infection.
2. Hydroxychloroquine is not being used for prophylaxis purpose .



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3. It is an old drug used in the treatment of Rheumatoid Arthritis .
4. India is the largest producer of Hydroxychloroquine in the world.

Which of these statement is/are correct .

- a) 1 , 2 and 3
- b) 2 , 3 and 4
- c) 1 , 3 and 4
- d) All the above statement

ANSWER: C

Hydroxychloroquine is used to prevent or treat malaria caused by mosquito bites. This medication is also used to treat certain auto-immune diseases (lupus, rheumatoid arthritis). It belongs to a class of medications known as disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (DMARDs). It can reduce skin problems in lupus and prevent swelling/pain in arthritis.

Quinine and Hydroxychloroquine are the first line of drugs used in the treatment of Malaria . Malaria caused by Protozoa Plasmodium . There are different species of the Malaria parasite –Plasmodium Ovale, plasmodium Vivax, Plasmodium falciparum , Plasmodium tertian etc . Hydroxychloroquine, a derivative of chloroquine, which is supposedly 40 per cent less toxic, has been found to be effective in treating the coronavirus.

Rheumatoid arthritis can cause pain, swelling and deformity. As the tissue that lines your joints (synovial membrane) becomes inflamed and thickened, fluid builds up and joints erode and degrade.

Lupus is a systemic autoimmune disease that occurs when your body's immune system attacks your own tissues and organs. Inflammation caused by lupus can affect many different body systems — including your joints, skin, kidneys, blood cells, brain, heart and lungs.

Malarial disease is quite common in the tropical and subtropical areas . Malaria occurrence is low in the United states and European areas . Hydroxychloroquine is an off patent generic drug . India is one of the largest manufacturer of generic drugs . About 70 % of the Hydroxychloroquine is manufactured in India . Indian firm Ipca Labs and Zydus Cadila are among the major producer of this drug. Indian government had imposed restriction on the export of this drug. But India government agreed to export these drugs on humanitarian ground to more than 30 countries around the globe . Even the American , Brazilian , Israeli heads of state made personal request to Indian Prime minister for export of the drug.

Studies in some countries have given indication that it has beneficial effect in the treatment of corona virus .Therefore the demand for this drug has suddenly spiked .

Prophylaxis means use for prevention purpose . Indian council of medical research (ICMR) has suggested the use of Hydroxychloroquine for prophylaxis use among the health workers.

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4 . Consider the following statement about Nipah Virus

1. It is a RNA virus.
2. It has been spread through Bats and Swine .
3. It was first reported in Malaysia .

Which of the following statement are correct about Nipah virus ?

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



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- c) 1 and 3
- d) All the above statement.

ANSWER –D

Nipah virus is an RNA virus that was first identified as a zoonotic pathogen after an outbreak involving severe respiratory illness in pigs and encephalitic disease in humans in Malaysia and Singapore in 1998 and 1999.

Nipah virus (NiV) is an emerging zoonotic virus (a virus transmitted to humans from animals). In infected people, Nipah virus causes a range of illnesses from asymptomatic (subclinical) infection to acute respiratory illness and fatal encephalitis. NiV can also cause severe disease in animals such as pigs, resulting in significant economic losses for farmers.

It was first reported in Siliguri area of Bengal in 2001 .

Last year there was outbreak of this disease in Kerala . It was supposed to have been transmitted to Human from fruit bats . There is no direct transmission of the disease from fruit bat to Human. The urine and saliva of the bat contaminated the fruit . Thus the virus got transmitted to the humans . Kerala government advised the people to be careful in consuming fruits and fruit product .

There is no specific treatment of Nipah virus . symptomatic and supportive treatment is given in case of Nipah virus . There is no vaccine at present for the disease .

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5. With reference to Canine distemper Virus, which of the following statements is correct?

- 1. This virus affect only lion and cats .
- 2. The recent large scale death of lions in Gir forest was due to Canine distemper only

Which of the following statement are correct .

- a) Only 1
- b) Only 2
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither of the statement

ANSWER—D

Canine distemper is a contagious and serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the respiratory, gastrointestinal and nervous systems of puppies and dogs.

The virus can also be found in wildlife such as foxes, wolves, coyotes, raccoons, skunks, mink and ferrets and has been reported in lions, tigers, leopards and other wild cats as well as seals.

Puppies and dogs most often become infected through airborne exposure (through sneezing or coughing) to the virus from an infected dog or wild animal. The virus can also be transmitted by shared food and water bowls and equipment. Infected dogs can shed the virus for months, and mother dogs can pass the virus through the placenta to their puppies.



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Because canine distemper also impacts wildlife populations, contact between wild animals and domestic dogs can facilitate the spread of the virus. Canine distemper outbreaks in local raccoon populations can signal increased risk for pet dogs in the area.

This lethal virus spreads from dogs in the wild. This is the same virus which had wiped out nearly 1,000 lions from Tanzania's [Serengeti Reserve](#) in 1994.

The recent large scale death of lions in the Gir reserve was due to two disease—Canine distemper and Babesiosis. Babesiosis is a protozoal disease of cattle which transmitted by Ticks. Many of the lions were killed by Babesiosis also.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

**Q1.** With reference to the recently released Gender Social Norms Index, consider the following statements:

1. It was released by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
2. It measures how social beliefs obstruct gender equality in areas like politics, work, and education.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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

Answer-B

Explanation-The first Gender Social Norms Index was recently released by the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.

This index measures how social beliefs obstruct gender equality in areas like politics, work, and education, and contains data from 75 countries, covering over 80 percent of the world's population. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

**Q2.** With reference to the Global Innovation & Technology Alliance (GITA), consider the following statements:

1. It has been established by the Technology Development Board (TDB).
2. It is a joint venture between Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and TDB with an equity contribution of 50:50 respectively.
3. The GITA will assist the Department of Science & Technology (DST) in implementing industrial research and development programmes with different countries under bilateral and multilateral science and technology cooperation agreements.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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

Answer-B

Explanation- In order to stimulate private sector's investment in R&D, Technology Development Board (TDB) has established Global Innovation & Technology Alliance (GITA). Hence, statement 1 is correct.

It is a joint venture between Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and TDB with an equity contribution of 51:49 respectively. Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.



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The GITA will assist the Department of Science & Technology (DST) in implementing industrial research and development programmes with different countries under bilateral and multilateral science and technology cooperation agreements. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

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Q3. Which of the following statements is not correct about the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) scheme?

- (a) The scheme is fully funded by the Government of India
- (b) The annual MPLADS fund entitlement per MP constituency is Rs. 5 crore
- (c) The scheme comes under the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
- (d) The funds released under the scheme are non-lapsable

Answer- C

Explanation- Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) scheme was launched in December, 1993, to provide a mechanism for the Members of Parliament to recommend works of developmental nature for creation of durable community assets and for provision of basic facilities including community infrastructure, based on locally felt needs.

The MPLADS is a Plan Scheme fully funded by the Government of India.

The annual MPLADS fund entitlement per MP constituency is Rs. 5 crore.

The scheme comes under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

Funds are released in the form of grants in-aid directly to the district authorities.

The funds released under the scheme are non-lapsable. The MPs have a recommendatory role under the scheme. The district authority is empowered to examine the eligibility of works and sanction funds.

Q4. World Happiness Report is published by which of the following?

- (a) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- (b) Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) for the United Nations
- (c) World Bank
- (d) World Economic Forum

Answer-B

Explanation- World Happiness Report is released by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network for the United Nations by the UN General Assembly.

It is a survey of the state of global happiness that ranks 156 countries by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be.

India is placed at 144th position. Finland is the world's happiest nation.

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Q5. Consider the following statements about the Overseas Citizen of India (OCI):

- 1. It was launched by the Government of India under the Citizenship Act, 1955.
- 2. OCI cardholders have the right to vote.
- 3. OCI cardholders cannot own agricultural property.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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



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Answer-C

Explanation- Government of India launched the 'Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme' by making amendments to Citizenship Act, 1955 in 2005.

Anyone who is applying for an OCI card should hold a valid Passport of another country. Individuals whose parents or grandparents hold citizenship of Pakistan and Bangladesh are not eligible to apply. Restrictions placed on OCI card holders: Do not have right to vote, do not have right to any public service/government jobs, cannot hold offices of – Prime Minister, President, Vice -President, Judge of Supreme Court and High Court, member of Parliament or Member of state legislative assembly or council and cannot own agricultural property.

## ECONOMY

**Q.1."Evergreening of Loans"** the term often reflects in newspapers ,what is the correct meaning of this term, select from the following options,

- paperless loan extended by the banks to their customers
- banks give additional loans to its borrowers
- anytime loan to any borrower
- loans by the govt. to the banks

**Ans. B**

**Explanation;**

It was pointed in the case of Yes Bank issue as this bank had resorted to evergreening of loans to keep its NPAs under control. As part of evergreening of loans, a bank gives additional loans to its borrowers so that they do repay back previous loans and do not default on their repayments. This goes against the RBI's guidelines that caution banks not to evergreen their loans.

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**Q.2.** Recently one of the largest private sector banks of the country was engulfed under the vicious circle of financial problems and posed question mark on the functioning of whole financial sector. Consider the following root causes of this problem and select the correct answer,

- bad lending practices
- poor corporate governance
- delays in insolvency proceedings
- failure of RBI

Select the correct answer from the given code,

- only 1 & 2
- only 2 & 3
- only 3 & 4
- All the above

**Ans: D**

**Explanation:**

The Balance sheet of Yes Bank came to be dominated by the loans to certain high risk corporate borrowers such as IL&FS, Anil Ambani group, DHFL etc. It is to be noted that other banks reduced their exposure to these high-risk corporate entities after they defaulted on their loan repayments. However, economists





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The Yes Bank had under-reported bad assets by over Rs 10,000 crores for two consecutive years between 2016-2018. By under-reporting its NPAs, it had managed to maintain provisioning requirements.

Delays in Insolvency proceedings, because the continued inability of several corporates to repay their loans has resulted in insolvency proceedings against such borrowers.

The RBI has come up with the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework in order to address the Weak financial position. As part of PCA, the RBI monitors the financial health of the Banks in terms of certain parameters such as CAR, Net NPAs, Return-on-Assets etc. When these parameters cross a particular threshold, the bank is placed under various restrictions. In case of Yes Bank, even though the parameters had not crossed threshold, but still considering the fact that it was under-reporting its NPAs, the RBI should have made appropriate changes in the PCA framework and then taken a pre-emptive action such as placing Yes bank under the PCA.

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**Q.3.** With respect to Additional Tier-1 bonds, consider the following statements:

1. These Bonds are issued by the Banks to meet the regulatory capital requirements under BASEL III norms.
2. These Bonds are perpetual bonds and do not carry any interest.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Ans. A**

**Explanation:**

The AT-1 Bonds are the unsecured and perpetual bonds which are issued by the Banks to meet regulatory capital requirements of 1.5% of Additional Tier 1 Capital under the BASEL III norms. However, they are quite different from the normal bonds in a number of ways:

1. The AT-1 Bonds are considered to be hybrid of shares and bonds. Just like shares, there is no obligation to return the money or pay the dividend. Just like bonds, the bank pay interest on such AT-1 bonds.

2. These Bonds do not have maturity period. Instead, these bonds carry call options i.e. the banks have an option to redeem them after five or 10 years. But banks are not obliged to use this call option and they can opt to pay only interest on these bonds for perpetuity. That is why they are called as Perpetual Bonds.

3. Investors do not have put option i.e. the investors cannot return back the AT-1 bonds to the banks.

However, the investors can sell these bonds in the secondary market.

4. Skip Interest Payments: The Banks issuing the AT-1 bonds can skip payment of interest for a particular year. They can also reduce the face value of the bond. However, the banks can do so only when their regulatory capital ratio falls below certain threshold levels. These threshold levels are clearly specified when Banks issue AT-1 bonds.

5. If the RBI feels that any bank is under a financial crunch, it can waive off the liability of the banks to redeem the AT-1 bonds and completely write it off. The RBI has used this option in the case of Yes Bank.



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**Q.4.** Which among the following is/are the likely impacts of Foreign Exchange Sell/Buy Swap carried out by RBI?

1. Increase in the value of Rupee (Rupee Appreciation)
2. Increase in Forex Reserves
3. Check Exchange Rate Volatility

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Ans. B**

**Explanation:**

- The swap will be in the nature of a simple sell/buy foreign exchange swap from the RBI side.
- Under the swap, RBI would buy sell dollars to the banks and simultaneously agree to buy the same amount of US dollars at the end of the swap period. This particular mechanism shall involve mainly 2 steps:
  - In the first leg of the transaction, the bank will buy US Dollars from the Reserve Bank at prevailing exchange rate.
  - In the second leg of transaction, the Bank would be required to sell the same amount of dollars in order to get back the Rupee.
- Hence, this mechanism essentially works as a swap mechanism wherein the dollars with the RBI would be swapped with Indian rupees with the Banks for a specified duration. RBI has decided to conduct a USD/INR Sell/Buy swap of USD 2 billion for tenor of 6 months. Possible impacts would be
  - Increase in the dollar supply and consequently increase in value of Rupee (Rupee Appreciation)
  - Check Exchange rate volatility
- Decrease in the forex reserves of RBI (for 6 months)

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**Q.5.** With reference to Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), consider the following statements:

1. The KVIC is a company registered under Companies Act and works under the administrative control of Ministry of MSME.
2. The KVIC is presently implementing Prime Ministers Employment Generation Program (PMEGP).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Ans. B**

**Explanation;**

KVIC is a statutory body created by Parliament under the Khadi and Village Industries Commission Act, 1956. It functions under the administrative control of Ministry of MSME. Mandate: Planning, promotion, organization and implementation of programs for the development of Khadi and other village industries in the rural areas. It has launched a scheme called Solar Chakra Mission.





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## POLITY

1. Consider the following statements about the recently passed Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.
  1. The amended provisions do not apply to tribal area of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram or Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and the area covered under "The Inner Line" notified under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873'.
  2. The decision of the Foreigners tribunal can be overturned by an executive decree from the Union government.
  3. It defines an illegal migrant as a foreigner: (i) who enters India without a valid passport or travel documents, or (ii) stays beyond the permitted time.

Which of these statements is correct?

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

### Answer – B

Recently, the Parliament passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019 which received the President's assent to become an Act. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955. The Citizenship Act, 1955 provides various ways in which citizenship may be acquired. It provides for citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalization and by incorporation of the territory into India.

An illegal migrant is prohibited from acquiring Indian citizenship. An illegal immigrant is a foreigner who either enters India illegally, i.e., without valid travel documents, like a visa and passport, or enters India legally, but stays beyond the time period permitted in their travel documents. An illegal migrant can be prosecuted in India and deported or imprisoned.

**Applicability of the Amended Act** - These provisions on citizenship for illegal migrants will not apply to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura, included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution. These tribal areas include Karbi Anglong (in Assam), Garo Hills (in Meghalaya), Chakma District (in Mizoram), and Tripura Tribal Areas District.

Further, it will not apply to the "Inner Line" areas notified under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873. In these areas, visits by Indians are regulated through the Inner Line Permit. Currently, this permit system is applicable to Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, and Nagaland. Manipur has also been brought under the Inner Line Permit (ILP) regime through a Gazette Notification on the same day the bill was passed in the parliament.

Supreme Court held that a Foreigners' Tribunal's order would prevail over the government decision to exclude or include the name from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam. Once the final NRC is published, those excluded can approach Foreigners' Tribunal, followed by further appeals from Guwahati High Court and Supreme Court. The decision of FTs cannot be abrogated through executive action.

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2. Consider the following statements about National Pension Scheme for Traders, Shopkeepers and Self-Employed Persons.
    1. It is a compulsory and contribution based central sector scheme.



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2. The government launched the scheme, entailing monthly minimum assured pension of ₹5,000 for the entry age group of 18-40 years after attaining the age of 60 years.
3. Under the scheme, the government makes matching contribution in the subscribers' account.
4. The scheme is based on self-declaration as no documents are required except bank account and Aadhaar Card.

Which of these statements are correct?

- a. 1 & 4 only
- b. 2 & 3 only
- c. 1 & 2 only
- d. 3 & 4 only

### Answer – D

It is a voluntary and contribution based central sector scheme. The government launched the scheme, entailing monthly minimum assured pension of ₹3,000 for the entry age group of 18-40 years after attaining the age of 60 years, with effect from July 22, 2019. Under the scheme, the government makes matching contribution in the subscribers' account. The scheme is based on self-declaration as no documents are required except bank account and Aadhaar Card.

**Eligibility** - All small shopkeepers, self-employed persons and retail traders aged between 18-40 years and with Goods and Service Tax (GST) turnover below Rs.1.5 crore can enrol for pension scheme. To be eligible, the applicants should not be covered under the National Pension Scheme, Employees' State Insurance Scheme and the Employees' Provident Fund or be an Income Tax assessee.

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3. Which of the following is not true about UNESCO world heritage sites?
    - a. Government of India has submitted two nomination dossiers namely 'Dholavira: A Harappan City' and 'Monuments and Forts of Deccan Sultanate' for inclusion in the World Heritage List for the year 2020.
    - b. The Sites fall into three categories: cultural heritage, natural heritage, and mixed heritage.
    - c. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee meets at least once every year, generally in June/July, to deliberate the addition, removal, or modification of items on the list of World Heritage Sites.
    - d. After getting featured on the list of World Heritage Sites, the location becomes eligible for an annual financial grant from UNESCO for its upkeep

### Answer – D

Government of India has submitted two nomination dossiers namely 'Dholavira: A Harappan City' and 'Monuments and Forts of Deccan Sultanate' for inclusion in the World Heritage List for the year 2020. The list contains world heritage sites.

**World Heritage Site** - It is a location having an "Outstanding Universal Value". According to the World Heritage Convention's Operational Guidelines, an Outstanding Universal Value signifies "cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all



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humanity.” The Sites fall into three categories: cultural heritage, natural heritage, and mixed heritage (cultural as well as natural).

**Selection of sites** - The UNESCO World Heritage Committee meets at least once every year, generally in June/July, to deliberate the addition, removal, or modification of items on the list of World Heritage Sites. According to the Guidelines, the State Parties prepare a Tentative List, or the “inventory of those properties situated on its territory which each State Party considers suitable for nomination to the World Heritage List”. A nomination document is then prepared in this regard based on which the application is considered by the Committee. In India, the Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO (INCCU), and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) are the bodies which play a key role in this regard. After getting featured on the list of World Heritage Sites affords the location a coveted status, driving up demand for travel and tourism from around the world geared towards it. At the same time, a heavy onus is placed on the government of the country in which the Site is located for its conservation and upkeep.

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4. Which of the following lakes was recently declared as a “living entity” or “legal person” with rights, duties and liabilities of a living person by the Punjab and Haryana high court?
- Harike
  - Sukhna
  - Ropar
  - Kanjli

## Answer – B

The Punjab and Haryana high court has declared Sukhna Lake a “living entity” or “legal person” with rights, duties and liabilities of a living person. It also declared all citizens of Chandigarh as loco parentis (in the place of a parent) to save the lake from extinction. The order was passed in a 2009 suo motu petition initiated amid depleting water level in the lake. The Chandigarh administration has been directed to declare it a wetland within a period of three months. Chandigarh should ensure that the average capacity of the lake is increased by at least about 100-150 hectare by one-time large scale desilting.

**Polluter pays principle** - Invoking the ‘polluter pays’ principle of environmental law, the Court said in its order: “The States should have taken precautionary measures to save the catchment of Sukhna lake. It is the duty of the States of Punjab and Haryana to restore the catchment area. The State government has also failed to take precautionary measures to save the catchment area. The damage caused to the catchment area is enormous.”

**What is legal entity** - A legal entity means entity which acts like a natural person but only through a designated person, whose acts are processed within the ambit of law. The man-made Sukhna Lake was built in 1958 by Le Corbusier, the architect of Chandigarh. Located in the foothills of the Shivalik Hills, it was designed to collect runoff water from the Hills. The Lake, which is in the process of being officially notified as a wetland, also has a nearby wildlife sanctuary that is home to sambar, pangolin, wild boars, red jungle fowl, cobras and other species. In 2018, a bench presided over by justice Sharma had accorded the status of “legal person or entity” to animals in Haryana. In 2017, Uttarakhand high court declared the Ganga and Yamuna as living entities, a verdict that was later stayed by the Supreme Court. In June 2019, the Punjab and Haryana High Court had ruled that all animals, birds and aquatic life in Haryana would be accorded the status of legal persons or entities.



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5. In March 2020, privilege motion was moved against Shiromani Akali Dal MLA Pawan Kumar Tinu in the Punjab Assembly for his remarks. In this context, which of the following is statements are correct?
1. Parliamentary privileges are defined in Article 105 of the Indian Constitution and those of State legislatures in Article 194.
  2. In the Rajya Sabha, the chairperson heads the committee of privileges having 10 members.
  3. No member can be taken to task anywhere outside the four walls of the House (e.g. court of law) or cannot be discriminated against for expressing his/her views in the House and its Committees.
- a. 1 only  
b. 1 & 2 only  
c. 1 & 3 only  
d. 3 only

## Answer – C

Parliamentary privileges are certain rights and immunities enjoyed by members of Parliament, individually and collectively, so that they can “effectively discharge their functions”. Parliamentary privileges are defined in Article 105 of the Indian Constitution and those of State legislatures in Article 194. When any of these rights and immunities are disregarded, the offence is called a breach of privilege and is punishable under law of Parliament.

### Privileges of Parliamentarians –

**Freedom of Speech:** According to the Indian Constitution, the members of Parliament enjoy freedom of speech and expression. No member can be taken to task anywhere outside the four walls of the House (e.g. court of law) or cannot be discriminated against for expressing his/her views in the House and its Committees.

**Freedom from Arrest:** It is understood that no member shall be arrested in a civil case 40 days before and after the adjournment of the House (Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha) and also when the House is in session. It also means that no member can be arrested within the precincts of the Parliament without the permission of the House to which he/she belongs.

**Exemption from attendance as witnesses:** The members of Parliament also enjoy freedom from attendance as witnesses.

### What is the privileges committee?

In the Lok Sabha, the Speaker nominates a committee of privileges consisting of 15 members as per respective party strengths. A report is then presented to the House for its consideration. The Speaker may permit a half-hour debate while considering the report. The Speaker may then pass final orders or direct that the report be tabled before the House. A resolution may then be moved relating to the breach of privilege that has to be unanimously passed. In the Rajya Sabha, the deputy chairperson heads the committee of privileges having 10 members.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India was recently accepted as an observer in the Indian Ocean Commission. In this context, consider the following statements about the commission.



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6. The COI is composed of five African Indian Ocean Nations - Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion (an overseas region of France), and Seychelles.
7. It was **institutionalized in 1984** by the **Victoria Agreement** in Seychelles.
8. The Commission has a **Secretariat which is located in Mauritius** and headed by a Secretary General.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

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

### Answer – D

India was recently accepted as an observer in the Indian Ocean Commission, getting a seat at the table of the organization that handles maritime governance in the western Indian Ocean. India's entry is a consequence of its deepening strategic partnership with France.

### About IOC:

It is an intergovernmental organization created in 1982.

It was institutionalized in 1984 by the Victoria Agreement in Seychelles. The COI is composed of five African Indian Ocean nations: Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion (an overseas region of France), and Seychelles.

COI's principal mission is to strengthen the ties of friendship between the countries and to be a platform of solidarity for the entire population of the African Indian Ocean region.

The Commission has a Secretariat which is located in Mauritius and headed by a Secretary General.

The Commission has four observers — China, EU, Malta and International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF).

2. Which of the following nations is not a member of OPEC+?
  - a. Kazakhstan
  - b. South Sudan
  - c. Malaysia
  - d. Saudi Arabia

### Answer – D

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, plans to raise its crude oil production significantly above 10 million barrels per day (bpd) in April, after the collapse of the OPEC+ supply cut agreement with Russia.

What's the issue?



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A three-year pact between OPEC and Russia ended in acrimony recently after Moscow refused to support deeper oil cuts to cope with the outbreak of the coronavirus and OPEC responded by removing all limits on its own production. Oil prices plunged 10% as the development revived fears of a 2014 price crash, when Saudi Arabia and Russia fought for market share with U.S. shale oil producers, which have never participated in output-limiting pacts.

## Why is OPEC+ more influential than OPEC?

The non-OPEC countries which export crude oil are termed as OPEC plus countries. OPEC's 13 members control nearly 35 percent of global oil supplies and 82 percent of proven reserves. With the addition of the 10 Non-OPEC nations, notable among them Russia, Mexico and Kazakhstan, those shares increase to 55 percent and 90 percent respectively. This affords OPEC+ a level of influence over the world economy never seen before.

3. Which of the following statements is/are incorrect about Sir Creek?
    1. Originally named Ban Ganga, Sir Creek is named after a British representative.
    2. Sir Creek is a **96-km strip of water disputed between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshlands.**
    3. Pakistan claims the entire creek as per paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 signed between then the Government of Sindh and Rao Maharaj of Kutch.
- a. 1 only
  - b. 3 only
  - c. 1 & 2 only
  - d. None of the above

## Answer – D

**Context** - The third edition of WION's global summit was held in Dubai recently. Theme: "Navigating and negotiating global imperatives". At the event, Former Pakistan Minister Kasuri recalled the plan for Sir Creek pact.

Sir Creek is a 96-km strip of water disputed between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshlands. Originally named Ban Ganga, Sir Creek is named after a British representative. The Creek opens up in the Arabian Sea and roughly divides the Kutch region of Gujarat from the Sindh Province of Pakistan.

The dispute lies in the interpretation of the maritime boundary line between Kutch and Sindh. Before India's independence, the provincial region was a part of the Bombay Presidency of British India. But after India's independence in 1947, Sindh became a part of Pakistan while Kutch remained a part of India.

1. Pakistan claims the entire creek as per paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Bombay Government Resolution of 1914 signed between then the Government of Sindh and Rao Maharaj of Kutch.
2. The resolution, which demarcated the boundaries between the two territories, included the creek as part of Sindh, thus setting the boundary as the eastern flank of the creek popularly known as Green Line.





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3. But India claims that the boundary lies mid-channel as depicted in another map drawn in 1925, and implemented by the installation of mid-channel pillars back in 1924.
4. In its support, it cites the Thalweg Doctrine in International Maritime Law, which states that river boundaries between two states may be divided by the mid-channel if the water-body is navigable.

## PT - HISTORY

- 1.** Consider the following statements about **Ahilya Bai**:
  1. Ahilya Bai was a great administrator of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
  2. She was crowned as the queen of Maratha Malwa Kingdom..
  3. She was a great builder of Hindu temples.

Select the correct code:

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

Ans. **D.** Explanation: ( SOURCE---NCERT, CHAPTER-1- BIPAN CHANDRA CLASS XII)

**IN NEWS BECAUSE IN DAINIK BHASKAR ( HINDI NEWSPAPER) ON 15 MARCH 2020, AN**

**ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED ON AHILYABAI.**

- She was the [Holkar Queen](#) of the [Maratha Malwa](#) kingdom, capital was at Indore.
- Ahilya Bai administered Indore with great success between 1766 and 1796 (18<sup>th</sup> Century).
- Ahilyabai was a great pioneer and builder of [Hindu temples](#). She built hundreds of temples and Dharmashalas throughout India.

- 2.** Which state of India has the highest number of protected monuments by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) ?
  - a. Uttar Pradesh.
  - b. Maharashtra.
  - c. Tamil Nadu.
  - d. Karnataka.

Ans. **A.** Explanation: March 1, 2020 (SOURCE: the Hindu Newspaper)

- As per the data released by the Ministry of Culture, the 'heartland of India' Uttar Pradesh, with a rich cultural heritage, has the highest number of historical monuments.
- It says that the state boasts of 743 monuments with the distribution area of 324 square kilometres per monument.



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- The second state that falls in the list of highest monuments is Karnataka with 506 monuments, Tamil Nadu, being a small state in terms of area has 413 monuments, Madhya Pradesh- 292, Maharashtra- 285 and Gujarat- 293.
- National Capital Delhi has 174 monuments with the distribution area of 9 square kilometres per monument. Rajasthan, India's largest state by area, has 162 monuments, followed by West Bengal with 136 monuments and Andhra Pradesh with 129 monuments.

**3.** Which among the following is / are correctly matched on Animal Sports in India and their states:

1. Jallikattu : Tamil Nadu.
2. Kamabala: Karnataka.
3. Eruthu Vidum Vizha : Kerela.

Code:

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| a. 1 only.       | b.1, and 3 only. |
| c. 2 and 3 only. | d..All the above |

Ans. A. ( source: Indian Express)

Explanation: After **Srinivas Gowda** created a storm by covering 100 metres in 9.55 seconds recently, another **Kambala runner** Nishant Shetty has now overtaken the former by completing the same distance in 9.51 seconds. **THEREFORE , IN PRELIMS THE ISSUE OF ANIMAL SPORTS HAS BECOME IMPORTANT.**

- **Jallikattu** - It is a traditional bull-chasing sport of Tamil Nadu which is organised during the harvest festival Pongal. There are references to Jallikattu in Sangam literature too. •
- **Kambala** - Its local name for bull race in Tamil Nadu. During the race bulls are made to run and the fastest wins the prize.
- **Eruthu Vidum Vizha** - It is an annual buffalo race held in Karnataka.

**4.** See the given image from Megalithic culture of South India and identify it:



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- a. Topikal.
- b. Menhir.
- c. Dolmen
- d. Urn Burial.

Ans. C. (Source: Indian Express)

Explanation: This issue is important in the context of recent findings of MENHIRS in Kerala and Tamil nadu border. Therefore, one may expect any question on Megalithic cultures.

- The word "megalith" comes from the Ancient Greek *megas* meaning "great" and *lithos* meaning "stone". Megalith also denotes an item consisting of rock(s) hewn in definite shapes for special purposes.
- Megalithic culture was a part of Neolithic- Chalcolithic culture.
- Researchers have spotted Kerala's 'biggest ever' menhir in Idukki. Earlier, dolmens were sighted in various parts of Idukki..
- A dolmen is a type of single-chamber megalithic tomb, usually consisting of two or more vertical megaliths supporting a large flat horizontal capstone or "table".
- A menhir, standing stone, orthostat, or lith is a large man-made upright stone.
- Topikal is a type of stone placement where on two perpendicular stones and a slab of a stone is placed.

**5. *Majma-ul-Bahrain*** OR the Mingling of two Oceans was authored by Dara Sukoh.

The two oceans here indicate:

- a. The mingling of two ideas wahadat-ul-wujud and wahadat-ul-sujud.
- b. The pluralistic and mystical correspondences between Vedism and Sufi Islam.
- c. The reintroduction of Din-i-illahi as a state policy.
- d. Bringing the best of ideas of Arab sea and Indian Ocean.

Ans. B. (Source: Indian Express.)

Explanation: ***In news because The Ministry of Culture recently set up a 7-member panel of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to locate the***



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*grave of the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh (1615-59), who is believed to be buried somewhere in the Humayun's Tomb complex in Delhi. Hence, any information on Dara Sukoh is important from prelims point of view.*

- It was devoted to a revelation of the mystical and pluralistic affinities between Sufic and Vedantic speculation.
- It was one of the earliest works to explore both the diversity of religions and a unity of Islam and Hinduism and other religions.
- The book was authored by Dara Sukoh as a short treatise in Persian in 1654–55.
- Its Hindi version is called Samudra Sangam Grantha.

## GEOGRAPHY

1) Consider the following statements on Contact Tracing :-

- (i) It is a technology to trace Covid 19 patients.
- (ii) It is described by WHO.
- (iii) Apple and Microsoft have joined hands to develop this technology.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) i and ii
- (c) i, ii and iii
- (d) all are wrong

**Answer b**

**Explanation :-**

WHO has defined Contact Tracing for Covid 19 checks and control to prevent its spread. So i and ii are correct. It has been announced jointly by Apple and Google so as to help the countries trace and prevent the spread. So statement iii is wrong.

2) Consider the following statements on Urban Haats :-

- (i) It is a plan by government to develop the urban centers to provide marketing facilities for handicrafts.
- (ii) It is to be implemented 100% by the funds from Central Government of India.
- (iii) It is an initiative of Ministry of Rural and Urban Development.

Choose the correct alternative :-



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- (a) only i
- (b) i and ii
- (c) ii and iii
- (d) all are correct

**Answer a**

**Explanation :-**

Urban Haat is an initiative of the Ministry of Textiles of the Government of India. The objective of the scheme "Infrastructure and Technology Support" is to setup a permanent marketing infrastructure in big towns/ metropolitan cities to provide direct marketing facilities to the handicraft's artisans/handloom weavers. The scheme is implemented through State Handicrafts/Handlooms Development Corporations/Tourism Development Corporations/ Urban Local Bodies with sufficient financial resources and organizational capacity to implement the project. The financial ceiling for Urban Haat is Rs. 300 lakh for each unit. 80% of the admissible amount is borne by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handicrafts) and 20% contributed by the implementing agency.

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- 3) Consider the following statements on SATAT (Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation) :-
- (i) It is to focus on bio fuels like jatropha plantation.
  - (ii) It is to be implemented by the State Governments.
  - (iii) It is to reduce the costing of refined diesel.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) only ii
- (c) only iii
- (d) none

**Answer d**

**Explanation :-**

SATAT stands for Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation is a developmental effort that would benefit both vehicle-users as well as farmers and entrepreneurs. Compressed Bio-Gas plants are proposed to be set up mainly through independent entrepreneurs. CBG produced at these



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plants will be transported through cascades of cylinders to the fuel station networks of OMCs for marketing as a green transport fuel alternative. The entrepreneurs would be able to separately market the other by-products from these plants, including bio-manure, carbon-dioxide, etc., to enhance returns on investment. This initiative is expected to generate direct employment for 75,000 people and produce 50 million tonnes of bio-manure for crops. There are multiple benefits from converting agricultural residue, cattle dung and municipal solid waste into CBG on a commercial scale.

4) What is meant by Anthropocene :-

- (i) It is a new epoch to be added in the geological history of the earth.
- (ii) It will be followed by Holocene.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) only ii
- (c) both
- (d) none

**Answer c**

**Explanation :-**

Anthropocene is the one which a team of scientists have voted to declare as a new chapter in the Earth's geological history- the new epoch. The result builds on an informal vote taken at the 2016 International Geological Congress in Cape Town, and lays the groundwork for a formal proposal by 2021 to the International Commission on Stratigraphy. Coined by Paul Crutzen and Eugene Stoermer in 2000 to denote the present geological time interval, Anthropocene has been used to describe humanity's large impact on the environment. The move signals the end of the Holocene epoch, which began 12,000 to 11,600 years ago. To show a clear transition from the Holocene, the scientists plan to identify a definitive geologic marker or 'golden spike', and would be technically called a Global boundary Stratotype Section and Point (GSSP). For this, the group will search for the marker from around the globe, including a cave in northern Italy, corals in the Great Barrier Reef and a lake in China.

5) Consider the following statements on Paddy Frog :-

- (i) It is a new species of frog found specifically in paddy fields.





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- (ii) It is named as Aishani.
- (iii) North East India is the region known for this variety.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) i and ii
- (c) ii and iii
- (d) i and iii

**Answer c**

**Explanation :-**

Paddy Frog is the name of new frog which the researchers have discovered from Northeast India, primarily in Assam. The newly discovered species has been named Aishani, which is derived from Sanskrit word 'aishani' or aisani meaning Northeast. The frog belongs to genus *Micryletta*, (a small genus of microhylid frogs). The microhylid genus is a group of narrow-mouthed frogs that are more commonly known as paddy frogs and are primarily and widely distributed in Southeast Asia (SEA). As of now, there are only 4 recognised species in this group and newly discovered *Micryletta aishani* becomes the 5th. It is likely to be more widely distributed in Northeast India, particularly Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot region.