UPSC Civil Services (Preliminary) Examination 2017

General Studies Paper I

Answer Key and Explanations · Set A

Answer Key

1	(d)	**21**	(c)	**41**	(d)	**61**	(b)	**81**	(a)
2	(c)	**22**	(b)	**42**	(a)	**62**	(d)	**82**	(a)
3	(a)	**23**	(a)	**43**	(a)	**63**	(d)	**83**	(a)
4	(a)	**24**	(b)	**44**	(a)	**64**	(b)	**84**	(c)
5	(a)	**25**	(d)	**45**	(d)	**65**	(b)	**85**	(d)
6	(b)	**26**	(d)	**46**	(c)	**66**	(b)	**86**	(c)
7	(b)	**27**	(a)	**47**	(a)	**67**	(b)	**87**	(b)
8	(c)	**28**	(d)	**48**	(a)	**68**	(b)	**88**	(a)
9	(a)	**29**	(c)	**49**	(b)	**69**	(a)	**89**	(b)
10	(b)	**30**	(b)	**50**	(d)	**70**	(a)	**90**	(d)
11	(a)	**31**	(c)	**51**	(b)	**71**	(c)	**91**	(a)
12	(b)	**32**	(a)	**52**	(a)	**72**	(b)	**92**	(a)
13	(c)	**33**	(c)	**53**	(b)	**73**	(d)	**93**	(c)
14	(c)	**34**	(c)	**54**	(c)	**74**	(c)	**94**	(d)
15	(d)	**35**	(d)	**55**	(d)	**75**	(a)	**95**	(b)
16	(b)	**36**	(d)	**56**	(b)	**76**	(d)	**96**	(b)
17	(d)	**37**	(b)	**57**	(c)	**77**	(b)	**97**	(c)
18	(c)	**38**	(b)	**58**	(b)	**78**	(c)	**98**	(a)
19	(c)	**39**	(c)	**59**	(c)	**79**	(c)	**99**	(c)
20	(b)	**40**	(a)	**60**	(b)	**80**	(b)	**100**	(d)

Answers follow the UPSC final answer key (Sets A, B, C and D). Each explanation gives the answer, the reasoning for every statement and option, how to crack the question and the sources.

1. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. A private member's bill is one introduced by any member of Parliament other than a minister. Whether the member was elected or nominated has nothing to do with it; an elected member of the Opposition or of the ruling party who is not a minister can bring one.

Statement 2 is wrong. Parliament has passed private members' bills before. The last one to become law was the Supreme Court (Enlargement of Criminal Appellate Jurisdiction) Bill, 1968, which became an Act on 9 August 1970. In 2015 the Rajya Sabha passed the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2014, a private member's bill, but that was one House, not Parliament. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: The test is 'minister or not', never 'elected or nominated'. And 'for the first time in its history' is a strong claim; one earlier example is enough to sink it.

Remember: Government bill: Introduced by a minister. Private member's bill: Introduced by any other member, elected or nominated.

Sources : Private member's bill (Wikipedia, India section)

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2. Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct. The Rigveda describes armour, the varman, sewn armour or a coat of mail covering the body, and its hymn on weapons of war speaks of warriors armed with mail. UPSC's key accepts the contrast with the Harappans as stated.

Statement 2 is wrong. The Harappans did use gold (a touchstone with gold streaks was found at Banawali, and gold jewellery has been excavated), and they did not know iron. Iron tools came only after the Harappan period, along with the horse.

Statement 3 is correct. Horses were central to Vedic life, and possession of horses was an important priority of Vedic leaders, needed for cavalry and for sacrifice. In the Harappan story the horse appears only in the later, post-urban phase. Answer (c), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: Statement 2 has two errors at once; it denies gold and silver to the Harappans and gives them iron. One wrong half is enough to drop it, which leaves (c).

Remember: Two quick markers separate the two cultures, the horse and iron. Both are linked with the Vedic and later period, not with the Harappan cities.

Sources : Indian armour (Wikipedia); Indus Valley Civilisation (Wikipedia); Vedic period (Wikipedia)

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3. Answer: (a) Certifying the skills acquired by construction workers through traditional channels.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is the part of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana that assesses and certifies skills a worker already has, learnt on the job or through informal channels, rather than in a training centre. The construction sector was a large user, because most of its workers belong to the informal economy, and RPL gave their existing skills formal recognition.

Option (a) matches this: Certifying skills that construction workers acquired through traditional channels. Option (b) is wrong; RPL has nothing to do with university admission for distance learning. Option (c) is wrong; it certifies skills and does not reserve jobs. Option (d) is wrong because certifying trainees of a training programme is ordinary certification, while RPL is about learning that happened before and outside such training. Answer (a).

How to crack it: Read the name: Recognition (certification) of prior (already acquired) learning. Only (a) speaks of certifying skills picked up outside formal training.

Remember: 'Prior learning' means learning already done, usually informally. That alone rules out (b) and (d).

Sources : NSDC, Impact Assessment of RPL under PMKVY 2.0 for the Construction Sector

4. Answer: (a) Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve

Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve in Erode district of Tamil Nadu straddles both the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats. It is a wildlife corridor in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve between the two ranges, and a genetic link with Mudumalai, Bandipur and the other protected areas it adjoins. That makes (a) the answer.

Option (b) is wrong. The Nallamala hills are a section of the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, far from the Western Ghats. Option (c) is wrong: Nagarhole in Kodagu and Mysore districts lies in the Western Ghats Nilgiri sub-cluster, on one side only. Option (d) is wrong. The Seshachalam hills are part of the Eastern Ghats in Tirupati district. Answer (a).

How to crack it: Ask which reserve sits where the two ranges meet. Nallamala and Seshachalam are wholly Eastern Ghats and Nagarhole wholly Western Ghats; only Sathyamangalam touches both.

Remember: Sathyamangalam adjoins the Sigur Plateau, Mudumalai and Bandipur National Parks, and the Billigiriranga Swamy Temple and Cauvery sanctuaries.

Sources : Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (Wikipedia); Nallamala Hills (Wikipedia); Nagarhole National Park (Wikipedia); Seshachalam Hills (Wikipedia)

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5. Answer: (a) Privileges

Equality in political theory begins by ending a formal system of inequality and privileges, under which some people enjoy rights, opportunities and rewards that the law or custom denies to others. A society with equality has no such special privileges for a few.

Option (b), restraints, is wrong; laws and rules restrain everyone, and equal laws apply the same restraints to all. Option (c), competition, is wrong; equality of opportunity is meant to let people compete on equal terms, not to remove competition. Option (d), ideology, is wrong; equality is itself an ideal people hold. Answer (a), Privileges.

How to crack it: Pair each concept with what it removes: Liberty removes constraints, equality removes privileges.

Remember: Freedom is linked with the absence of constraints; equality with the absence of privileges.

Sources : NCERT Class 11, Political Theory, Equality

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6. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. TRAFFIC is a non-governmental organisation working on the trade in wild species. It works with WWF and IUCN (with whom it has run joint campaigns and standards), but it is not a bureau of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Statement 2 is correct. Its mission is to ensure that trade in wild species is legal and sustainable, so that the trade does not become a threat to species and ecosystems. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: Ask whether TRAFFIC is an intergovernmental body. It is a non-governmental network, so 'a bureau under UNEP' fails; the mission statement is plainly its own.

Remember: Do not confuse TRAFFIC (an NGO watching wildlife trade) with CITES (the treaty that regulates that trade).

Sources : TRAFFIC (official site); TRAFFIC (Wikipedia)

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7. Answer: (b) Participation of workers in the management of industries

The 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 added three new Directive Principles: Equal justice and free legal aid (Article 39A), participation of workers in the management of industries (Article 43A), and protection of the environment, forests and wild life (Article 48A). So (b) is the answer.

Option (a), equal pay for equal work for men and women, is in Article 39 of the original Constitution. Option (c), the right to work, to education and to public assistance, is Article 41, also original. Option (d), a living wage and humane conditions of work, is Articles 42 and 43, also original. Answer (b).

How to crack it: The amendment added articles with letters. Of the four options, only 'participation of workers in management' carries a lettered article, 43A.

Remember: The 42nd Amendment added three lettered articles to Part IV: 39A, 43A and 48A.

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8. Answer: (c) Rights are claims of the citizens against the State.

A right is a justified claim, and rights place an obligation upon the state to act in certain ways; each right says what the state must do and what it must not do. Rights are therefore claims of citizens against the State, which is option (c).

Option (a) reverses the direction; the State does not hold rights against citizens. Option (b) is wrong because rights are not privileges; a right is due to everyone, and rights are claimed as conditions of a life of respect and dignity, not as favours written into a document. Option (d) is wrong for the same reason, since privileges of a few against the many is the opposite of a right held equally by all. Answer (c).

How to crack it: Two options call rights privileges; a right is not a privilege. Between the two 'claims' options, rights bind the State, not the citizen.

Remember: Rights also limit the authority of the state; that is why they are described as claims against it.

Sources : NCERT Class 11, Political Theory, Rights

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9. Answer: (a) World Economic Forum

The Global Gender Gap Report, with its index ranking countries on the gap between women and men, was first published in 2006 by the World Economic Forum. It assesses how well countries divide resources and opportunities between their male and female populations.

The UN Human Rights Council (b) reviews human rights records; it does not publish this index. UN Women (c) works on gender equality but the Gender Gap Index is not its report. The World Health Organization (d) deals with health. Answer (a), World Economic Forum.

How to crack it: Link each index to its publisher. The Global Gender Gap Report has come from the World Economic Forum since 2006.

Remember: The report assesses how well countries divide their resources and opportunities between their male and female populations.

Sources : Global Gender Gap Report (Wikipedia)

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10. Answer: (b) 2 only

Smart India Hackathon 2017 was a 36-hour non-stop competition for engineering college students, introduced through the All India Council for Technical Education, in which teams built technology solutions for real problems faced by the country.

Statement 1 is wrong; it was not a centrally sponsored scheme for building smart cities (that is the Smart Cities Mission). Statement 2 is correct; it was an initiative to find new technology innovations for the country's problems. Statement 3 is wrong; it was not a programme to make all financial transactions digital. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: A hackathon is a competition to solve problems in a short time. It cannot be a ten-year scheme, so 1 and 3 fall away.

Remember: Smart Cities Mission (urban development), Digital India (digital services) and Smart India Hackathon (student problem-solving) are different programmes with similar names.

Sources : AICTE, Smart India Hackathon 2017; Smart India Hackathon (official site)

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11. Answer: (a) 1 only

Statement 1 is correct. The Monetary Policy Committee fixes the benchmark interest rate in India, the policy repo rate, and publishes its decision after each meeting.

Statement 2 is wrong on both counts. The committee has six members, three officials of the Reserve Bank and three external members nominated by the Government of India, and the external members hold a four-year term; it is not a 12-member body reconstituted every year.

Statement 3 is wrong. The Governor of the Reserve Bank is the ex officio chairperson. The Finance Minister is not a member at all; keeping the government's influence limited was the point of the design. Answer (a), 1 only.

How to crack it: Remember 'six, Governor, four years'. That alone removes statements 2 and 3.

Remember: MPC: Six members, the Governor as chair, meetings at least four times a year.

Sources : Monetary Policy Committee (India) (Wikipedia)

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12. Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Sankirtana of Manipur is ritual singing, drumming and dancing, performed in temples and homes, through which the performers narrate the many stories of Krishna. UNESCO inscribed it on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2013.

Statement 1 is correct; it is a song and dance performance. Statement 2 is wrong, since the drum is central to it, so cymbals are not the only instruments. Statement 3 is correct; the life and deeds of Krishna are its theme. Answer (b), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: 'Only' is the warning word. A devotional performance with drumming cannot have cymbals as its only instrument.

Remember: UNESCO's own title for it names the three elements: 'Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur'.

Sources : Meitei Sankirtan (Wikipedia)

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13. Answer: (c) 2 and 3 only

The ryotwari system was first tried on a small scale by Captain Alexander Read in areas taken over after the wars with Tipu Sultan, and then developed by Thomas Munro, who extended it across south India. Read and Munro held that the south had no traditional zamindars, so the settlement had to be made directly with the cultivators (ryots).

Lord Cornwallis is linked with the Permanent Settlement of 1793 in Bengal, a settlement with zamindars, which is the opposite approach. So 2 and 3 are correct and 1 is not. Answer (c), 2 and 3 only.

How to crack it: Cornwallis belongs to the Permanent Settlement, so any option with 1 is out. Only (c) is left.

Remember: Permanent Settlement: Cornwallis, zamindars, Bengal. Ryotwari: Read and Munro, ryots, south India.

Sources : NCERT Class 8, Our Pasts III, The Munro system; Permanent Settlement (Wikipedia)

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14. Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct. Bioremediation uses the natural ability of organisms to break down pollutants, and much of it involves native organisms; research focuses on stimulating that process by adding organisms or nutrients.

Statement 2 is wrong. Heavy metals such as cadmium and lead cannot be degraded; they can only be oxidised, reduced or immobilised. So contaminants with heavy metals cannot be 'readily and completely' treated by microbes.

Statement 3 is correct. Genetic engineering is used to create organisms designed for bioremediation, by inserting genes that degrade pollutants or genes that report pollution levels. Answer (c), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: 'Any contaminant', 'readily and completely' are absolute words. Metals are elements and cannot be broken down, so statement 2 must go.

Remember: Organic pollutants biodegrade; heavy metals and radionuclides do not, though metals can sometimes be immobilised.

Sources : Bioremediation (Wikipedia)

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15. Answer: (d) a system of tribunals and a ban on strikes.

The Trade Disputes Act of 1929 was passed when the government, alarmed at the growing strength of the trade union movement, turned to legislative restrictions. It made compulsory the appointment of Courts of Inquiry and Consultation Boards to settle industrial disputes, and it made strikes in public utility services such as posts, railways, water and electricity illegal unless each worker gave a month's notice.

That is a system of tribunals with a ban on strikes, option (d). Option (a) is wrong; it did not give workers a share in management. Option (b) is wrong; the powers went to state-appointed bodies, not to the management. Option (c) is wrong; there was no British court in the scheme. Answer (d).

How to crack it: Place the Act in 1929, a year of repression of the labour movement. Of the options, only (d) curbs labour.

Remember: The same year (1929) the government also passed the Public Safety Ordinance against the growing labour movement.

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16. Answer: (b) Democratic decentralisation

Local government is government at the village and district level, the government closest to ordinary people, run by their elected representatives. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee (1957) called its scheme for this 'democratic decentralisation', which came to be known as Panchayati Raj. Power and decision-making move down from the State to elected local bodies.

Option (a), federalism, is a division of power between the Union and the States, set by the Constitution. Option (c), administrative delegation, only passes work to officials who stay answerable to their superiors, with no elected body. Option (d), direct democracy, means citizens decide laws themselves; panchayats and municipalities are representative bodies. Answer (b), Democratic decentralisation.

How to crack it: Local bodies are elected and have their own powers. That is decentralisation (power moves down) and democratic (to elected people).

Remember: Decentralisation that hands power to elected local bodies is democratic decentralisation; handing tasks to field officers is deconcentration or delegation.

Sources : NCERT Class 11, Indian Constitution at Work, Local Governments

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17. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

The Directive Principles are positive directions; they require the State to do certain things. Limitations on what the State may do are the Fundamental Rights, which are negative and prohibit the State from doing certain things.

The directives are also non-justiciable; no court enforces them, so they cannot work as a legal limit on the legislature (statement 1) or on the executive (statement 2). They are fundamental in the governance of the country and the State has a duty to apply them in making laws, but that is guidance, not limitation. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: Ask whether a court can strike down an act for breaching a directive. It cannot, so the directives limit nobody.

Remember: Fundamental Rights limit the State; Directive Principles direct it. Ambedkar compared the directives to the Instrument of Instructions under the 1935 Act.

18. Answer: (c) EU

The Digital Single Market is a European Commission policy; it aims to remove national and other barriers to online transactions so that the European Union works as one market for digital goods and services. It is an EU strategy. Answer (c).

ASEAN (a), BRICS (b) and the G20 (d) are not single markets with a common commission making market rules, and the strategy belongs to none of them. Answer (c), EU.

How to crack it: Only one of the four groups is a single market with a supranational commission, the European Union.

Remember: The Digital Single Market is a European Commission policy for the EU's online economy.

Sources : Digital Single Market (Wikipedia)

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19. Answer: (c) Chandipur

Chandipur, in Balasore district of Odisha on the Bay of Bengal, has a beach where the water recedes up to 5 kilometres at low tide. Visitors can walk out on the exposed sea floor, and the sea returns with the next tide. Answer (c).

Bhavnagar (a) is a port city in Gujarat, Bheemunipatnam (b) a coastal town near Visakhapatnam and Nagapattinam (d) a port in Tamil Nadu; none of them is the beach where the sea withdraws kilometres from the shore. Answer (c), Chandipur.

How to crack it: The question describes a very flat beach where the sea goes out kilometres at low tide. That is Chandipur in Odisha.

Remember: Chandipur is on the Odisha coast at the head of the Bay of Bengal, in Balasore district.

Sources : Chandipur (Wikipedia)

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20. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Act, as amended in 2016, expressly includes in 'benami transaction' a transaction in respect of a property where the owner of the property is not aware of, or denies knowledge of, such ownership.

Statement 2 is correct. Section 5 says any property which is the subject matter of a benami transaction shall be liable to be confiscated by the Central Government.

Statement 3 is wrong. The Act names four authorities (the Initiating Officer, the Approving Authority, the Administrator and the Adjudicating Authority), not three, and it does provide an appeal, to an Appellate Tribunal, and from it an appeal to the High Court on a question of law. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: Statement 3 says 'does not provide for any appellate mechanism'; a law that takes away property without an appeal would be unusual. With 3 gone and 1 wrong, (b) remains.

Remember: Benami means 'without name'; the property stands in one person's name while another paid for it. The 2016 amendment renamed the law the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988.

Sources : Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016, Gazette of India; Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 (Wikipedia)

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21. Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct. Some butterflies are agents of pollination of some plants, so a crash in their numbers could hurt the pollination of those plants.

Statement 2 is wrong. Butterflies do not keep fungal diseases of crops in check; if anything, their own caterpillars suffer from bacterial, viral and fungal diseases. Losing butterflies gives no reason for crop fungal infections to rise sharply.

Statement 3 is correct. Predators of butterflies include ants, spiders, wasps and birds, and parasitoid wasps develop inside caterpillars. A fall in the prey can bring down the populations of species that depend on it. Answer (c), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: Think of the butterfly's two roles, pollinator and prey. Statements 1 and 3 follow from those roles; nothing links butterflies to fungal disease.

Remember: For any 'what if this species declines' question, trace the food web both ways: What it does for plants (pollination, herbivory) and who eats it.

Sources : Butterfly (Wikipedia)

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22. Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only

Statement 1 is wrong. Algae for fuel are grown in open ponds and in closed photobioreactors on land, and can even use land unsuitable for crops, such as arid land and land with saline soil. They are not limited to the sea.

Statement 2 is correct. Algae fuel needs costly engineering; photobioreactors are expensive, and studies found the capital, labour and operating costs too high to compete with conventional fuel. For a developing country, that technology and expertise is a real barrier.

Statement 3 is correct. Production pays only at large scale, and large facilities raise concerns of their own, since algae cultivation is highly water-intensive (life-cycle studies put it at 607 to 1,944 litres of water for one litre of biodiesel) and needs large areas. Answer (b), 2 and 3 only.

How to crack it: 'Possible in seas only' is the false absolute. Ponds and reactors are on land. Drop 1 and the answer is (b).

Remember: Algae can use land unfit for crops and even saline water, which is their appeal; cost and water use are what hold them back.

Sources : Algae fuel (Wikipedia)

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23. Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

The National Nutrition Mission, later run as POSHAN Abhiyaan, aims to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, low birth weight and anaemia among young children, women and adolescent girls, and to create awareness about nutrition among the masses.

Statement 1 is correct. Creating awareness of malnutrition among pregnant women and lactating mothers is part of its awareness aim. Statement 2 is correct. Reducing anaemia among young children, adolescent girls and women is one of its targets. Statements 3 and 4 are wrong. Promoting millets and unpolished rice, or poultry eggs, are not among its stated objectives. Answer (a), 1 and 2 only.

How to crack it: A national mission states outcomes (less anaemia, more awareness), not the promotion of particular foods. Keep 1 and 2.

Remember: The Mission's targets are stated as reductions in stunting, under-nutrition, anaemia and low birth weight. Promoting particular foods is not among them.

Sources : New India Samachar (PIB), POSHAN Abhiyaan; India Science and Technology portal, POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)

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24. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Indian Factory Act, 1881 dealt mainly with child labour; it banned the employment of children under seven, limited children's working hours to nine a day and gave them four holidays a month. It neither fixed wages nor allowed workers to form trade unions.

Statement 2 is correct. Narayan Meghaji Lokhande started the newspaper Deenbandhu in 1880 and set up the Bombay Mill Hands Association, the first labour association in India, and won rights such as a weekly holiday on Sunday for mill workers. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: An 1881 colonial Act allowing trade unions should sound wrong; the first Factory Act was about children in factories.

Remember: Trade unions got legal recognition only with the Trade Union Act, 1926.

Sources : Narayan Meghaji Lokhande (Wikipedia)

25. Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Geological sequestration stores carbon dioxide underground in depleted oil and gas reservoirs, in saline formations, or in deep coal beds unsuitable for mining.

So all three listed sites qualify: Abandoned and uneconomic coal seams (1), depleted oil and gas reservoirs (2) and subterranean deep saline formations (3). Saline formations have a larger potential storage capacity than depleted oil wells. Answer (d), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: Each site is porous rock or coal sealed deep underground. Nothing in the list is implausible, so pick the option with all three.

Remember: Most captured CO2 today is used for enhanced oil recovery, injected into partly depleted oil reservoirs to push out more oil, and largely left underground.

Sources : Carbon sequestration (Wikipedia); Carbon capture and storage (Wikipedia)

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26. Answer: (d) Improve the relationship between the Government of India and the Indian States.

The Butler Committee of 1927 was set up to examine the nature of the relationship between the Indian (princely) States and the Government of India. It recommended that paramountcy must remain supreme. That is option (d).

Option (a) is wrong; the jurisdiction of the Central and Provincial Governments was not its subject. Option (b) is wrong; the Secretary of State's powers were not its subject. Option (c) is wrong; it had nothing to do with the press. Answer (d).

How to crack it: The committee is remembered for one word, paramountcy, which concerns the princely States.

Remember: Butler Committee (1927): Princely States and paramountcy.

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27. Answer: (a) Developing solar power production in our country

The Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission's guidelines required solar cells and modules for crystalline-silicon photovoltaic projects to be manufactured in India. This domestic content requirement in Phase II was challenged by the United States at the World Trade Organization as discrimination against its exports. The term belongs to solar power. Answer (a).

Options (b), (c) and (d) are wrong. Licences for foreign television channels, food exports and foreign university campuses were not the subject of the domestic content requirement in the news. Answer (a), Developing solar power production in our country.

How to crack it: 'Domestic content' means part of a product must be made locally. That fits manufacturing, and among the options only solar equipment is a manufactured good.

Remember: India defended the requirement as a way to build local manufacturing and reduce dependence on imports.

Sources : National Solar Mission (Wikipedia)

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28. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. The Nuclear Security Summits were a series of four summits started by US President Obama, who hosted the first in Washington in 2010; the others were in Seoul (2012), The Hague (2014) and Washington (2016). They were not held under the aegis of the United Nations.

Statement 2 is wrong. The International Panel on Fissile Materials, set up in 2006, is a group of independent nuclear experts from 17 countries, including India. It is not an organ of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: 'Panel' made of independent experts and 'summits' hosted by heads of government are not UN or IAEA organs. Both statements tie them to the UN system wrongly.

Remember: The four Nuclear Security Summits ran from 2010 to 2016, two of them in Washington.

Sources : Nuclear Security Summit (Wikipedia); International Panel on Fissile Materials (Wikipedia)

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29. Answer: (c) All State Government employees joining the services after the date of notification by the respective State Governments

Almost all State Governments have adopted the National Pension System and made it mandatory, through Gazette notifications, for their employees joining on or after their own cut-off dates. Option (c) states exactly this.

Option (a) is wrong; a non-resident Indian can also open an NPS account. Option (b) is wrong; the scheme was opened to citizens between 18 and 65, not 21 to 55. Option (d) is wrong; NPS is mandatory for Central Government employees joining on or after 1 January 2004 except the Armed Forces, and the option wrongly includes them (and gives the wrong date). Answer (c).

How to crack it: Option (d) has two traps (the Armed Forces and the date). Options (a) and (b) use 'only', which a scheme open to all citizens and NRIs cannot carry.

Remember: NPS is regulated by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), created by an Act of Parliament.

Sources : PFRDA, Subscriber Information Brochure for Government Subscribers; National Pension System (Wikipedia)

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30. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Teesta rises from the Teesta Khangtse glacier in the Sikkim Himalaya, while the Brahmaputra (Yarlung Tsangpo) rises on the Angsi glacier near Mount Kailash in Tibet. They do not share a source.

Statement 2 is correct. The Rangeet originates in the Himalayas of West Sikkim district and is a tributary of the Teesta.

Statement 3 is wrong. The Teesta enters Bangladesh and joins the Brahmaputra (Jamuna) there; the combined waters reach the Bay of Bengal much further south. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: Recall that the Teesta is a tributary of the Brahmaputra. A tributary cannot share its parent's source in Tibet, and it ends in the parent, not in the sea.

Remember: The Teesta is the largest river of Sikkim; it then crosses West Bengal into Bangladesh.

Sources : Teesta River (Wikipedia); Rangeet (Wikipedia); Brahmaputra River (Wikipedia)

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31. Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Statement 1 is correct. Zika is spread mainly by Aedes mosquitoes, chiefly Aedes aegypti, the same mosquito that carries dengue; Zika and dengue viruses even belong to the same genus.

Statement 2 is correct. Besides mosquito bites, Zika can be transmitted through sexual contact and through blood transfusion. Answer (c), Both 1 and 2.

How to crack it: Zika is an Aedes-borne virus like dengue, and unlike most mosquito-borne viruses it can also pass through sexual contact. Both statements hold.

Remember: The virus takes its name from the Ziika Forest of Uganda, where it was first isolated in 1947.

Sources : Zika virus (Wikipedia)

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32. Answer: (a) 1 only

Statement 1 is correct. Pneumatic tyres and tubes for automotive vehicles are under BIS compulsory certification through the Pneumatic Tyres and Tubes for Automotive Vehicles (Quality Control) Order, 2009, so they must carry the BIS Standard Mark.

Statement 2 is wrong. AGMARK is a certification mark for agricultural products issued by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection of the Government of India, not by the Food and Agriculture Organization. Answer (a), 1 only.

How to crack it: AGMARK is an Indian mark (AGriculture MARKeting), so it cannot come from a UN body. That leaves 1 only.

Remember: BIS Standard Mark: Compulsory for the products listed in quality control orders. AGMARK: Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, farm produce.

Sources : BIS, Products under compulsory certification (Scheme I); Agmark (Wikipedia)

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33. Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Statement 1 is correct. The National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal that networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.

Statement 2 is correct. It gives the farmer access to a nationwide market, with prices commensurate with the quality of the produce, and supports this with common quality standards and assaying (quality testing) in every market. Answer (c), Both 1 and 2.

How to crack it: Both statements are lifted from eNAM's own description; neither has an absolute or a wrong agency. Pick (c).

Remember: eNAM was launched on 14 April 2016 and is implemented by the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) under the Ministry of Agriculture.

Sources : eNAM, About National Agriculture Market (archived official page); National Agriculture Market (Wikipedia)

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34. Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Statement 1 is correct. The National Intellectual Property Rights Policy approved in May 2016 reiterates India's commitment to the Doha Development Agenda and the TRIPS agreement, while using the flexibilities of the international regime for its development concerns.

Statement 2 is correct. The policy makes the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) the nodal department to coordinate, guide and oversee the implementation and future development of IPRs in India. Answer (c), Both 1 and 2.

How to crack it: India stays inside TRIPS while defending its flexibilities, and a single department coordinating all IPRs was the policy's main administrative change. Both hold.

Remember: Its slogan is 'Creative India; Innovative India'. DIPP is now called the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

Sources : PIB, National Intellectual Property Rights Policy (12 May 2016); Quality Council of India (Wikipedia)

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35. Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Section 9 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 says no person shall hunt any wild animal specified in Schedules I, II, III and IV, except as provided under sections 11 and 12, which deal with special cases.

All three animals are listed in Schedule I: The Indian wild ass (Equus hemionus khur) and the wild buffalo (Bubalus bubalis) among the mammals, and the gharial (Gavialis gangeticus) among the reptiles. So none of them may be hunted except under those provisions. Answer (d), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: Gharial, Indian wild ass and wild buffalo are all rare Indian species, and all three sit in Schedule I. Pick the option with all three.

Remember: Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II give absolute protection and carry the highest penalties.

Sources : Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (Legislative Department); Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (Wikipedia)

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36. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. The Fundamental Duties are non-justiciable; the Constitution does not provide for their direct enforcement by the courts and there is no legal sanction against their violation. Parliament is free to enforce them by suitable legislation, but the Constitution itself provides no legislative process for enforcing them.

Statement 2 is wrong. Legal duties are enforceable and carry penalties; the Fundamental Duties are moral and civic obligations without legal sanction. They are not correlative to legal duties. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: Both statements give the duties a legal character. The one fact to remember is 'no legal sanction', which rules out both.

Remember: The Fundamental Duties (Article 51A, Part IVA) were added by the 42nd Amendment, 1976 on the recommendation of the Swaran Singh Committee.

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37. Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Pair 1 is correct. The British Indian Association was established in Calcutta on 29 October 1851 with Radhakanta Deb as its first President.

Pair 2 is wrong. Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty founded the Madras Native Association in 1852 and died in 1868. The Madras Mahajana Sabha was founded in 1884 by M. Viraraghavachari, B. Subramaniya Aiyer and P. Anandacharlu.

Pair 3 is correct. The Indian Association of Calcutta was founded in 1876 by younger nationalists of Bengal led by Surendranath Banerjee and Ananda Mohan Bose. Answer (b), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: Pair 2 mixes up the two Madras associations, 32 years apart. Pairs 1 and 3 are the standard textbook pairings.

Remember: Two Madras bodies, two generations: Madras Native Association (1852, Lakshminarasu Chetty) and Madras Mahajana Sabha (1884, Viraraghavachari, Subramaniya Aiyer, Anandacharlu).

Sources : British Indian Association (Wikipedia); Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty (Wikipedia)

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38. Answer: (b) Economic liberty

The Preamble secures to all citizens LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship. Liberty of thought (a), of expression (c) and of belief (d) are all named there.

Economic liberty is not among them. The Preamble does speak of economic justice (JUSTICE, social, economic and political), which is a different idea from economic liberty. Answer (b), Economic liberty.

How to crack it: Recite the liberty clause: Thought, expression, belief, faith, worship. 'Economic' belongs to the justice clause, not the liberty clause.

Remember: Preamble triads: Justice (social, economic, political); liberty (thought, expression, belief, faith, worship); equality (of status and of opportunity).

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39. Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Statement 1 is correct. The Quality Council of India was set up in 1997 as a public-private partnership of the Government of India together with the apex industry associations ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI, registered as an autonomous society. Its Governing Body has equal representation of government and industry.

Statement 2 is correct. The Chairman of QCI is nominated by the Prime Minister, and the post is non-executive; UPSC's key accepts the statement that this is done on the industry's recommendation. Answer (c), Both 1 and 2.

How to crack it: QCI is the textbook example of a government-industry partnership in quality, and the Prime Minister names its chairman. Nothing in either statement is false.

Remember: QCI's boards include NABL (laboratories), NABH (hospitals), NABCB (certification bodies), NABET (education and training) and NBQP (quality promotion).

Sources : Quality Council of India (Wikipedia); Quality Council of India, About QCI

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40. Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

The Reserve Bank's guidelines say small finance banks are set up to further financial inclusion by providing savings vehicles to the unserved and underserved, and by supplying credit to small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and other unorganised sector entities.

So 1 (credit to small business units) and 2 (credit to small and marginal farmers) are among the stated purposes. Statement 3 is not. Encouraging young entrepreneurs to set up business in rural areas is not an objective in the guidelines. Answer (a), 1 and 2 only.

How to crack it: Small finance banks are about financial inclusion through deposits and credit to small borrowers. Statement 3 is a start-up promotion goal, not a banking one.

Remember: In the RBI's words, small finance banks are to work through high technology-low cost operations.

Sources : RBI, Guidelines for Licensing of Small Finance Banks in the Private Sector

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41. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. The first Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development was indeed held in New Delhi, from 13 to 16 December 2006, but its theme was 'A vision for sustainable urbanization in the Asia-Pacific by 2020', not 'Emerging Urban Forms'.

Statement 2 is wrong. The conference is biennial, not annual, and it moves between member countries; after New Delhi it met in Tehran (2008), Solo in Indonesia (2010) and Amman in Jordan (2012). India does not host all of them, and it is promoted by UN-Habitat, not run with ADB, APEC and ASEAN. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: 'India hosts all the Annual' conferences carries two red flags: 'all' and 'annual'. Statement 1 fails on the theme, a detail UPSC changed on purpose.

Remember: APMCHUD is an inter-governmental body of housing ministers of the Asia-Pacific, set up in 2006 through UN-Habitat's Governing Council resolutions.

Sources : UN-Habitat, The 4th APMCHUD (2013 report)

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42. Answer: (a) the intelligence and character of ordinary men and women.

Democracy rests on political equality and enhances the dignity of citizens, because ordinary people, as rulers themselves, take part in decisions through discussion and voting. Its special virtue is that it draws in the intelligence and character of ordinary men and women. Answer (a).

Option (b) is wrong; strengthening executive leadership is not democracy's distinctive claim. Option (c) is wrong; reliance on one superior individual is the opposite of rule by ordinary citizens. Option (d) is wrong; a band of party workers is a narrow group, while democracy's case is about all citizens. Answer (a).

How to crack it: Three options praise a leader or a small group; only (a) speaks of ordinary citizens, which is what sets democracy apart.

Remember: NCERT's arguments for democracy: It promotes equality among citizens, enhances the dignity of the individual, improves the quality of decision-making, resolves conflicts, and allows room to correct mistakes.

Sources : NCERT Class 9, Democratic Politics, Why democracy; NCERT Class 10, Democratic Politics, Outcomes of democracy

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43. Answer: (a) Mobile wallets will not be necessary for online payments.

The Unified Payments Interface, launched in April 2016, lets a user transfer money instantly between two bank accounts from a mobile phone using only a UPI ID. Money moves straight from bank account to bank account, so a separate pre-loaded mobile wallet is no longer needed for online payments. Answer (a).

Option (b) is wrong: UPI is a payment channel for bank money and says nothing about replacing cash within two decades. Option (c) is wrong. A domestic payment system has no direct link with foreign direct investment. Option (d) is wrong: UPI is a way for users to pay each other; it does not decide how the government transfers subsidies. Answer (a).

How to crack it: Look for the immediate, mechanical effect. UPI links bank accounts directly, so the middleman wallet becomes unnecessary; the other options are sweeping predictions.

Remember: UPI runs on top of the Immediate Payment Service (IMPS).

Sources : Unified Payments Interface (Wikipedia)

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44. Answer: (a) Observation and understanding of the Universe

All four terms belong to physics and cosmology. An event horizon is the boundary of a black hole, and the singularity is the point at its centre. String theory is a candidate theory of quantum gravity applied to black holes and early-universe cosmology. The Standard Model of particle physics describes three of the four fundamental forces in the universe and classifies the known elementary particles. Together they are about observing and understanding the Universe. Answer (a).

Eclipses (b), satellite orbits (c) and the origin of life on Earth (d) do not use these terms. Answer (a).

How to crack it: Black holes (event horizon, singularity) and particle physics (Standard Model, string theory) point to one field, the study of the Universe.

Remember: Event horizon and singularity: Black holes. Standard Model: Particle physics. String theory: An attempt to unify gravity with the other forces.

Sources : Event horizon (Wikipedia); String theory (Wikipedia); Standard Model (Wikipedia)

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45. Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Statement 1 is correct. Knowing a crop's genome sequence lets breeders find DNA markers linked to traits such as disease resistance and abiotic stress tolerance (drought is one such stress), and select plants by the marker instead of waiting for the trait to show.

Statement 2 is correct. Selecting seedlings by DNA analysis is more precise and faster than conventional breeding, so it shortens the time needed to develop a new variety.

Statement 3 is correct. Sequencing data from infected host cells is used to analyse host-pathogen interactions, which is how the relationship between a crop and its pathogen is deciphered. Answer (d), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: All three uses follow from reading DNA: Find markers (1), select early and faster (2), study pathogen and host together (3). Nothing is overstated.

Remember: Marker-assisted selection is the practical bridge between genome sequencing and new crop varieties.

Sources : Marker-assisted selection (Wikipedia); Host–pathogen interaction (Wikipedia)

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46. Answer: (c) the executive remains responsible to the legislature.

The parliamentary system establishes a responsible government; ministers are responsible to Parliament for all their acts of omission and commission, and Parliament controls them through question hour, discussions, adjournment motions and no-confidence motions. That is option (c).

Option (a) is wrong; in a parliamentary system the executive is part of the legislature and the two work together, while independence of the two is the presidential model. Option (b) is wrong; continuity of policy is a demerit of the parliamentary system, which can bring unstable government and policy changes with each new ruling party. Option (d) is wrong; the head of government can be changed by a no-confidence motion without an election. Answer (c).

How to crack it: Responsibility of the executive to the legislature is the defining feature; options (b) and (d) actually describe the presidential system's advantages.

Remember: Parliamentary merits: Harmony between legislature and executive, responsible government, prevents despotism, wide representation. Demerits: Unstable government, no continuity of policies, against separation of powers.

47. Answer: (a) Rights are correlative with Duties.

Rights and duties go together. A right I claim for myself requires that I respect the same right of others, and the rights and duties of citizens are described as correlative and inseparable. Option (a) is the answer.

Option (b) is wrong; rights exist only in society and are recognised by others, so they are not independent of society or of duties. Options (c) and (d) are wrong because each keeps one side and drops the other, when both are needed for the citizen and the State alike. Answer (a).

How to crack it: Three options say 'one, not the other'. Only (a) keeps both together, which is the standard view.

Remember: The original Constitution contained only the Fundamental Rights; the Fundamental Duties were added later, in 1976.

Sources : NCERT Class 11, Political Theory, Rights

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48. Answer: (a) The Preamble

In the Berubari Union case (1960), the Supreme Court said the Preamble shows the general purposes behind the provisions of the Constitution and is therefore a key to the minds of the makers of the Constitution. Alladi Krishnaswami Iyer said the Preamble expresses what the framers had thought or dreamt so long. Answer (a).

The Fundamental Rights (b), Directive Principles (c) and Fundamental Duties (d) are specific provisions; each carries out part of the Preamble's purposes. The Fundamental Duties were not even in the original Constitution, being added in 1976. Answer (a), The Preamble.

How to crack it: 'Mind of the makers' is a phrase from the Berubari case about the Preamble.

Remember: Preamble descriptions to remember: 'key to the minds of the makers' (Berubari), 'horoscope of our sovereign democratic republic' (K M Munshi).

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49. Answer: (b) 7

Kohima is the capital of Nagaland and Kottayam is in Kerala. Count the shortest chain of neighbouring States. Nagaland borders Assam; Assam borders West Bengal; West Bengal borders Odisha; Odisha borders Andhra Pradesh; Andhra Pradesh borders Tamil Nadu; and Tamil Nadu borders Kerala.

That is Nagaland, Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala: 7 States, including the origin and the destination. A shorter chain is not possible, because the road must leave the North-East through Assam and West Bengal and then run down the east coast. Answer (b), 7.

How to crack it: Draw the route mentally along the east coast: NE exit via Assam and West Bengal, then Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala. Count seven.

Remember: West Bengal touches Odisha directly, so the route need not pass through Jharkhand or Bihar; Andhra Pradesh touches Tamil Nadu, so it need not pass through Telangana or Karnataka.

Sources : Nagaland (Wikipedia); Kohima (Wikipedia); Assam (Wikipedia); West Bengal (Wikipedia); Andhra Pradesh (Wikipedia); Tamil Nadu (Wikipedia); Kottayam (Wikipedia)

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50. Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Parliament controls the Council of Ministers through devices such as question hour, discussions, the adjournment motion and the no-confidence motion. The adjournment motion (1) draws the attention of the House to a definite matter of urgent public importance and involves an element of censure against the government. Question hour (2) makes ministers answer for their departments.

Supplementary questions (3) follow a starred question, which needs an oral answer, and let members press the minister further. All three are tools of parliamentary control. Answer (d), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: Each listed item makes a minister answer to the House. With no wrong item, pick (d).

Remember: Starred question: Oral answer, supplementaries allowed. Unstarred: Written answer, no supplementaries. Short notice: Less than ten days' notice.

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51. Answer: (b) Motupalli

Motupalli, a village on the coast of present-day Andhra Pradesh, was the primary port of the Kakatiya realm. Marco Polo referred to the Kakatiya state as the Kingdom of Motupalli, and the Kakatiya king Ganapati Deva is said to have imported Arabian horses through this port. Answer (b).

Kakinada (a), Machilipatnam (c) and Nellore (d) are coastal towns of the same region, but none of them was the great Kakatiya seaport that the travellers wrote about. Answer (b), Motupalli.

How to crack it: Remember Marco Polo's name for the Kakatiya kingdom, 'the Kingdom of Motupalli'. The port gave its name to the kingdom in his account.

Remember: Motupalli is also mentioned as a port in the writings of Ptolemy and Pliny, and was later ruled by the Reddys, Vijayanagara and the Qutb Shahis.

Sources : Motupalli (Wikipedia)

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52. Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Statement 1 is correct. The Global Climate Change Alliance was established by the European Union in 2007 to strengthen dialogue and cooperation on climate change with developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.

Statement 2 is correct. It acts as a source of technical and financial support for the most climate-vulnerable countries, and one of its priority areas is mainstreaming climate change, so that climate becomes an integral consideration in national development plans, policies and budgets.

Statement 3 is wrong. It is an EU programme funded by the European Union, not coordinated by the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. Answer (a), 1 and 2 only.

How to crack it: If statement 1 says it is an EU initiative, statement 3 naming two other organisations as coordinators is unlikely to be true too. Keep 1 and 2.

Remember: In 2014 the GCCA became GCCA+ (Global Climate Change Alliance Plus), an EU flagship initiative.

Sources : GCCA, What is the GCCA/GCCA+? (archived official page)

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53. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Sautrantika was an early Buddhist school, and the Sammitiya was a sub-school of the Pudgalavada, also Buddhist. Neither was a sect of Jainism.

Statement 2 is correct. Sarvastivada means 'the theory of all that exists'; it held that all dharmas (the constituents of phenomena) exist in the past, present and future, the 'three times'. So they were not wholly momentary but existed always. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: Sautrantika and Sammitiya are schools of early Buddhism, not Jainism, and the doctrine in statement 2 is exactly what Sarvastivada ('all exists') means.

Remember: Sarvastivada was particularly strong in Kashmir and North India; its Abhidharma tradition had seven canonical texts.

Sources : Sautrantika (Wikipedia); Pudgalavada (Wikipedia); Sarvastivada (Wikipedia)

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54. Answer: (c) 3 and 4 only

The countries with a Mediterranean coast in West Asia are Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine (Gaza Strip). So Lebanon (3) and Syria (4) border the Mediterranean.

Jordan (1) does not; apart from a 26 km shoreline on the Gulf of Aqaba in the Red Sea it is landlocked. Iraq (2) does not; its only coast is a 58 km stretch on the northern Persian Gulf. Answer (c), 3 and 4 only.

How to crack it: Picture the eastern shore of the Mediterranean from north to south: Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Gaza. Jordan and Iraq lie inland behind them.

Remember: Jordan touches the Red Sea (Aqaba) and the Dead Sea, Iraq the Persian Gulf; neither reaches the Mediterranean.

Sources : Mediterranean Sea (Wikipedia); Jordan (Wikipedia); Iraq (Wikipedia)

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55. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund was announced in the Union Budget, approved in August 2015 by the Department of Economic Affairs (Ministry of Finance) and registered with SEBI as a Category II Alternative Investment Fund. It is not an organ of NITI Aayog.

Statement 2 is wrong. It was planned with ₹20,000 crore from the Government of India, the government's commitment being 49 per cent of the total corpus. That makes a corpus of about ₹40,000 crore, not ₹4,00,000 crore. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: Statement 2 has one zero too many. If ₹20,000 crore is 49 per cent, the whole is about ₹40,000 crore.

Remember: NIIF is registered with SEBI as an Alternative Investment Fund; the government's share is 49 per cent.

Sources : National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (Wikipedia)

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56. Answer: (b) World Bank collaboration that facilitates the preparation and structuring of complex infrastructure Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) to enable mobilization of private sector and institutional investor capital.

The Global Infrastructure Facility is a global, open platform that facilitates the preparation and structuring of complex infrastructure PPPs, to enable mobilisation of private sector and institutional investor capital. It was designed as a partnership of the World Bank Group, other multilateral development banks, governments and private investors, and its first partners signed on at the World Bank and IMF Annual Meetings in October 2014. That is option (b).

Option (a) is wrong; it is not an ASEAN initiative financed by Asian Development Bank credit (the ADB joined as one partner). Option (c) is wrong; it is not a collaboration of major banks with the OECD. Option (d) is wrong; it is not funded by UNCTAD. Answer (b).

How to crack it: Option (b) is long, specific and technical, the World Bank's own wording about PPPs and institutional investors; the others pair the facility with the wrong institution.

Remember: The first multilateral bank partners alongside the World Bank Group were the Asian Development Bank, the EBRD, the European Investment Bank and the Islamic Development Bank.

Sources : Global Infrastructure Facility: Update for G20, September 2014; GIF update for G20 leaders, November 2014

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57. Answer: (c) any citizen of India whose name appears in the electoral roll of a constituency.

Under the Representation of the People Act, 1951, a candidate for Parliament must be registered as an elector for a parliamentary constituency, besides being a citizen of India of at least 25 years of age (for the Lok Sabha). The roll can be of any constituency in India. That is option (c).

Option (a) is wrong; residence alone is not enough, and a non-citizen cannot contest. Option (b) is wrong; the candidate need not live in, or be a voter of, the constituency being contested. Option (d) is wrong; citizenship alone is not enough without being on an electoral roll. Answer (c).

How to crack it: Two filters apply together: Citizen and registered voter somewhere in India. Only (c) states both.

Remember: The same rule (registered as an elector for a parliamentary constituency) applies to both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

58. Answer: (b) 3 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Indian Himalayan Region spans thirteen States and Union Territories: Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya and Assam. Even counting only the main ranges, they cover more than five States.

Statement 2 is wrong. The Western Ghats run through six States: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Statement 3 is correct. Pulicat Lake lies on the Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu border, on the Coromandel Coast, so it is spread over these two States only. Answer (b), 3 only.

How to crack it: Count the Western Ghats States (six) and statement 2 falls; with 2 out, only (b) remains.

Remember: Western Ghats States from north to south: Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu.

Sources : Indian Himalayan Region (Wikipedia); Western Ghats (Wikipedia); Pulicat Lake (Wikipedia)

59. Answer: (c) Pollution assay in aquatic ecosystems

Biochemical (biological) oxygen demand is the amount of dissolved oxygen that micro-organisms need to break down the organic matter in a water sample, usually measured over 5 days at 20 °C. It is used as a surrogate of the degree of organic water pollution, and to judge how well wastewater treatment plants work. So it is a standard for pollution assay in aquatic ecosystems. Answer (c).

Option (a) is wrong; BOD is a test on water samples, not on blood. Options (b) and (d) are wrong; BOD is measured on water samples, not on forests or the air at high altitude. Answer (c).

How to crack it: 'Demand' for oxygen by microbes decomposing organic waste in water, so the term itself points to water pollution.

Remember: The standard test is BOD5, the oxygen consumed per litre over 5 days at 20 °C.

Sources : Biochemical oxygen demand (Wikipedia)

60. Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct. UN-Habitat is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities.

Statement 2 is wrong. Its partners are not only governments and local authorities; it collaborates with governments, intergovernmental bodies, UN agencies, civil society organisations, foundations, academic institutions and the private sector.

Statement 3 is correct. Its work serves the UN system's goals of reducing poverty and of access to safe drinking water and sanitation; it works for reduced inequality and poverty and for urban systems that ensure safe drinking water and sanitation. Answer (b), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: 'Either governments or local urban authorities only' is the false restriction; a UN programme works with NGOs, academia and business too.

Remember: UN-Habitat is the focal point for all urbanisation and human settlement matters within the UN system.

Sources : UN-Habitat, About us

61. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The NSQF arranges qualifications by levels defined in terms of learning outcomes, which the learner must possess regardless of whether they were acquired through formal, non-formal or informal learning. Certification is therefore not limited to formal learning; recognition of prior learning is one of the framework's expected gains.

Statement 2 is correct. General education and vocational training had worked as separate verticals in India, and the NSQF was meant to facilitate mobility from vocational to general education and back, through pathways among vocational education, vocational training, general education and technical education. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: 'Only through formal learning' contradicts the whole idea of a skills framework that recognises prior learning. Drop 1.

Remember: The NSQF was notified on 27 December 2013 and organises qualifications into ten levels.

Sources : NSQF Notification (Ministry of Finance, 2013; AICTE copy)

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62. Answer: (d) Division of the subjects delegated to the provinces into two categories

The Government of India Act, 1919 divided the provincial subjects into two parts, transferred and reserved. Transferred subjects were run by the Governor with ministers responsible to the legislative council; reserved subjects by the Governor and his executive council, who were not responsible to it. This dual scheme was called dyarchy, from the Greek di-arche, 'double rule'. That is option (d).

Option (a) describes bicameralism, which the same Act introduced at the Centre but which is a different principle. Option (b), Central and State governments, describes federalism. Option (c), rulers in London and Delhi, is not what the term meant. Answer (d).

How to crack it: Dyarchy was a provincial arrangement, with the provincial subjects split into reserved and transferred. Only (d) speaks of provincial subjects.

Remember: The 1935 Act abolished dyarchy in the provinces, introducing provincial autonomy, and provided for dyarchy at the Centre, which never came into operation.

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63. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. The National Career Service is an initiative of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, not of the Department of Personnel and Training.

Statement 2 is wrong. It is a one-stop portal of employment and career services (job search and matching, career counselling, job fairs) open to all job seekers, employers, skill providers and others. It is not limited to uneducated youth. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: Employment services belong to the Labour Ministry, and a career portal serves all job seekers. Both statements narrow or misplace the scheme.

Remember: The NCS portal is free to use and lists job seekers, employers, skill providers and career counsellors among its users.

Sources : National Career Service, About us

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64. Answer: (b) It is a scheme of RBI for reworking the financial structure of big corporate entities facing genuine difficulties.

The Scheme for Sustainable Structuring of Stressed Assets was issued by the Reserve Bank of India in June 2016. Large borrower accounts in severe financial difficulty may need coordinated deep financial restructuring, often with a substantial write-down of debt. The scheme lets lenders work out how much of the debt is sustainable and restructure the rest. Eligible accounts are projects already in commercial operation with total institutional lending above ₹500 crore. That matches (b).

Option (a) is wrong; it is about bank loans, not ecological costs. Option (c) is wrong; it is not a disinvestment plan for public sector undertakings. Option (d) is wrong; it is an RBI scheme for banks, separate from the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. Answer (b).

How to crack it: 'Stressed assets' are bad loans; 'structuring' them is the RBI's and banks' business. Only (b) names the RBI and big corporate borrowers.

Remember: S4A came after the Strategic Debt Restructuring (SDR) mechanism, another RBI tool for stressed assets.

Sources : RBI notification, Scheme for Sustainable Structuring of Stressed Assets (13 June 2016)

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65. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Climate and Clean Air Coalition was launched on 16 February 2012 by the United Nations Environment Programme and six countries (Bangladesh, Canada, Ghana, Mexico, Sweden and the United States). It is a voluntary partnership of governments, organisations and businesses, not an initiative of the G20.

Statement 2 is correct. It works to reduce short-lived climate pollutants: Methane, black carbon, tropospheric ozone and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: The founders included Bangladesh and Ghana, which are not in the G20. The pollutant list in statement 2 is the coalition's own focus.

Remember: Short-lived climate pollutants stay in the air from a few days to a few decades but have a powerful warming effect, and many are also dangerous air pollutants.

Sources : Climate and Clean Air Coalition (Wikipedia)

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66. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The Indian Ocean Dipole is an oscillation of sea surface temperatures between the western and the eastern parts of the Indian Ocean (near Indonesia), not between the western Indian Ocean and the eastern Pacific.

Statement 2 is correct. The IOD affects the strength of the Indian monsoon and interacts with El Niño in the Pacific; research has shown that it changes the relationship between El Niño and Indian monsoon rainfall. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: A 'dipole' lies within one ocean, so the 'Pacific' in statement 1 gives it away.

Remember: Positive IOD: Warmer water and more rain in the western Indian Ocean, cooler water in the east. The IOD was first identified by Indian researchers in 1999.

Sources : Indian Ocean Dipole (Wikipedia)

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67. Answer: (b) Chambal River

The gharial is a river crocodile that lives in rivers in the plains of the north of the subcontinent and is the most thoroughly aquatic crocodilian. The Chambal River, protected as the National Chambal Sanctuary across three States, is one of its strongholds: 107 gharials were recorded there in 1974, and captive-bred gharials have been released into it since 1979. Answer (b).

Bhitarkanika (a) is a mangrove wetland known for saltwater crocodiles, not gharials. Pulicat Lake (c) is a coastal lagoon. Deepor Beel (d) is a freshwater lake (a Ramsar wetland) near Guwahati in Assam. None of them is gharial habitat. Answer (b), Chambal River.

How to crack it: Gharials need clean, flowing rivers with sandbanks. Of the four, only Chambal is a river.

Remember: The gharial has been listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List since 2007.

Sources : Gharial (Wikipedia); Bhitarkanika Mangroves (Wikipedia); Pulicat Lake (Wikipedia); Deepor Beel (Wikipedia)

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68. Answer: (b) 2 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The first Indian Ocean Naval Symposium was held in 2008, with India as host, not in 2015. Its chair then rotates among member States, each term lasting two years.

Statement 2 is correct. IONS is a voluntary initiative among the navies and maritime security agencies of the littoral States of the Indian Ocean region, meant to increase maritime security cooperation. Answer (b), 2 only.

How to crack it: Remember the start year, 2008, with India as host. That alone removes statement 1.

Remember: IONS is often compared to the Western Pacific Naval Symposium; it groups its members into four sub-regions.

Sources : Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (Wikipedia)

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69. Answer: (a) Ajanta

The two most famous individual painted images at Ajanta are the over-lifesize figures of the protective bodhisattvas Padmapani and Vajrapani on either side of the entrance to the Buddha shrine in Cave 1. Padmapani is the bodhisattva of compassion, shown holding a lotus. Answer (a).

Badami (b), Bagh (c) and Ellora (d) are other cave sites; the Padmapani painting is not at any of them. Answer (a), Ajanta.

How to crack it: Padmapani ('lotus in hand') is the signature painting of Ajanta Cave 1.

Remember: Ajanta Cave 1 holds both Padmapani and Vajrapani, flanking the shrine doorway.

Sources : Ajanta Caves (Wikipedia)

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70. Answer: (a) 1 only

Pair 1 is correct. Chaliho or Chaliha Sahib is a forty-day festival of the Sindhi Hindu community, linked with the worship of Jhulelal.

Pair 2 is wrong. The Nanda Devi Raj Jat is a long pilgrimage in Chamoli, Uttarakhand, observed by the Hindus of Garhwal and Kumaon, not by the Gonds.

Pair 3 is wrong. The Wari is the annual pilgrimage on foot to Pandharpur in Maharashtra in honour of Vithoba; a Varkari is one who performs the Wari. It has nothing to do with the Santhals. Answer (a), 1 only.

How to crack it: Place each tradition on the map: Sindhi (Chaliho), Uttarakhand (Nanda Raj Jat), Maharashtra (Wari). Gonds and Santhals live elsewhere.

Remember: Pandharpur Wari carries the padukas of the saints Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram in palkhis to Pandharpur.

Sources : Chaliho (Wikipedia); Nanda Devi Raj Jat (Wikipedia); Pandharpur Wari (Wikipedia)

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71. Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct. Reduced or zero tillage leaves the soil undisturbed, which increases the amount of water that infiltrates the soil.

Statement 3 is correct. Crop residue left on the field reduces evaporation, improves water infiltration and helps the soil retain moisture for the next crop.

Statement 2 is wrong. Gypsum is applied to reclaim sodic and saline soils (it lowers the exchangeable sodium) and to supply calcium and sulphur. That is a soil-chemistry treatment, not a water-conservation practice. Answer (c), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: Tillage and residue both act on soil moisture; gypsum acts on soil chemistry. Keep 1 and 3.

Remember: No-till farming also reduces soil erosion and the number of machinery passes.

Sources : No-till farming (Wikipedia); Gypsum (Wikipedia)

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72. Answer: (b) 3 only

The Soil Health Card Scheme, launched on 19 February 2015, gives farmers cards carrying crop-wise recommendations of nutrients and fertilisers for their own farms, based on tests of soil samples. It aims at soil-test-based, balanced use of fertilisers so that farmers get higher yields at lower cost.

Statement 3 is correct. Checking the overuse of fertilisers is the point of balanced, test-based use. Statement 1 is wrong. The scheme does not expand irrigated area. Statement 2 is wrong. The card advises the farmer on inputs; it is not a tool for banks to decide loan amounts. Answer (b), 3 only.

How to crack it: A soil card is about what the soil needs, that is, fertiliser. Irrigation and bank loans are outside its scope.

Remember: The card reports the soil's nutrient status, including micronutrient deficiencies, and suggests the dose of fertiliser for each crop.

Sources : Soil Health Card Scheme (Wikipedia)

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73. Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Pair 1 is correct. Lipsticks have been found to carry traces of lead; a US FDA study in 2009 found lead in all 20 samples it tested.

Pair 2 is correct. Brominated vegetable oil has been used since 1931 to emulsify citrus-flavoured soft drinks so that the flavouring does not separate.

Pair 3 is correct. Monosodium glutamate (MSG), a flavour enhancer, has long been controversial; the so-called 'Chinese restaurant syndrome' was blamed on it, though blinded studies have not shown such effects at normal amounts. Answer (d), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: Each pair is a well-known consumer-safety story (lead in lipstick, BVO in soft drinks, MSG in Chinese food). All three match.

Remember: 'Unwanted or controversial' is broad: MSG is controversial even though food regulators treat it as safe.

Sources : Lipstick (Wikipedia); Brominated vegetable oil (Wikipedia); Monosodium glutamate (Wikipedia)

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74. Answer: (c) 1, 2 and 3

OLED displays can be fabricated on flexible plastic substrates (statement 1). That opens the way to flexible OLEDs for new uses such as roll-up displays embedded in fabrics or clothing (statement 2). OLEDs can also be made transparent, and transparent OLED displays are already used, for example in phones with optical fingerprint scanners (statement 3).

Plastic substrates are also shatter-resistant, unlike glass. All three statements hold. Answer (c), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: Flexible substrates make roll-up and wearable displays possible, so 1 and 2 go together; transparency is a separate known OLED feature.

Remember: In an OLED, an organic film emits light when an electric current passes through it.

Sources : OLED (Wikipedia)

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75. Answer: (a) 1 only

Arasavalli, 1 km east of Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh, has a temple to Surya, the Sun god, believed to have been built in the 7th century by King Devendra Varma of the Eastern Ganga dynasty. So 1 is a Sun temple site.

Amarkantak (2) in Madhya Pradesh is a pilgrimage centre known as the source of the Narmada and the Son, with the Narmada Kund temples. Omkareshwar (3), also in Madhya Pradesh, is famous for its Shiva temple, one of the twelve Jyotirlingas. Neither is known for a Sun temple. Answer (a), 1 only.

How to crack it: Amarkantak and Omkareshwar are both pilgrimages on the Narmada (its source and a Jyotirlinga). Only Arasavalli is a Surya temple.

Remember: The Arasavalli temple's main festival is Ratha Saptami.

Sources : Arasavalli Sun Temple (Wikipedia); Amarkantak (Wikipedia); Omkareshwar Temple (Wikipedia)

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76. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. Lok Sabha and Assembly elections use the first-past-the-post system; the candidate with the largest number of votes wins, even without 50 per cent of the votes polled. A 50 per cent plus one rule has been suggested for examination, but it is not the law.

Statement 2 is wrong. The Constitution only says the Lok Sabha shall elect a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker from among its members. Giving the Deputy Speaker's post to the main opposition party is a consensus followed since the 11th Lok Sabha, a convention and not a constitutional provision. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: Both statements turn a practice or a proposal into a rule. FPTP needs only the most votes; the Deputy Speaker arrangement is convention.

Remember: Up to the 10th Lok Sabha, both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker usually came from the ruling party.

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77. Answer: (b) 2, 3 and 4 only

Statement 1 is wrong. The share of agriculture in GDP has kept falling (from 55.4 per cent in 1950-51 to about 14 per cent), while industry and services gained; it did not rise after 1991.

Statements 2, 3 and 4 are correct. India's share in global exports improved from 0.8 per cent in 2004 to 1.7 per cent in 2013. Foreign investment (FDI and portfolio) rose from about US$100 million in 1990-91 to US$150 billion in 2003-04. Foreign exchange reserves, enough for barely two weeks of imports in 1991, rose from about US$6 billion to US$125 billion by 2004-05. Answer (b), 2, 3 and 4 only.

How to crack it: Growth in a developing economy shifts output away from farming. Any option with statement 1 is out, leaving (b) or (c); FDI and reserves both clearly rose, so (b).

Remember: 1991 began with a balance-of-payments crisis; the reserve position is the clearest before-and-after contrast of the reforms.

Sources : NCERT Class 11, Indian Economic Development, Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation

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78. Answer: (c) Reproductive cloning of animals

Somatic cell nuclear transfer takes an egg cell with its nucleus removed and implants the nucleus of a body (somatic) cell into it, creating a viable embryo. It is used in therapeutic and reproductive cloning; Dolly the sheep (1996) was the first mammal cloned this way from an adult cell. So its application is reproductive cloning of animals. Answer (c).

Biolarvicides (a), biodegradable plastics (b) and disease-free organisms (d) do not involve moving a body-cell nucleus into an egg to grow an embryo. Answer (c).

How to crack it: 'Nuclear transfer' into an egg to make an embryo is cloning; Dolly is the case to recall.

Remember: 'Somatic' means a body cell; the technique moves the nucleus of such a cell into an egg cell whose own nucleus has been removed.

Sources : Somatic cell nuclear transfer (Wikipedia)

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79. Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Statement 1 is correct. The National Payments Corporation of India runs retail payment systems such as IMPS, UPI and the *99# USSD service, which works on basic phones and was built for areas with poor internet connectivity; such services serve financial inclusion.

Statement 2 is correct. RuPay, the domestic card scheme of India, is one of NPCI's products, accepted at ATMs, point-of-sale terminals and online merchants across the country. Answer (c), Both 1 and 2.

How to crack it: NPCI's whole portfolio (RuPay, *99#, UPI) is aimed at cheap, wide payments. Both statements are standard facts.

Remember: NPCI's products include RuPay, IMPS, UPI, BHIM, *99# and National Electronic Toll Collection.

Sources : National Payments Corporation of India (Wikipedia)

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80. Answer: (b) Maintenance of Tiger Reserves

M-STrIPES (Monitoring System for Tigers: Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) is a software-based monitoring system launched across Indian tiger reserves by the National Tiger Conservation Authority in 2010. Forest guards carry handheld devices with GPS to record tiger sightings, deaths, wildlife crime and ecological observations while patrolling, and the software maps their patrol routes. Answer (b).

It has nothing to do with captive breeding (a), satellite navigation (c) or highway security (d). Answer (b), Maintenance of Tiger Reserves.

How to crack it: Read the acronym: 'Tiger' and 'stripes'. It is a tiger reserve management tool.

Remember: The name spells it out: Monitoring System for TIgers, with 'STrIPES' as the giveaway.

Sources : M-STrIPES (Wikipedia)

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81. Answer: (a) 1 only

Statement 1 is correct. GST, introduced on 1 July 2017, replaced a range of earlier taxes (VAT, service tax, central excise, entertainment tax, octroi and others) levied by the Centre and the States. One tax across the country removes the barriers those different taxes created and moves India towards a single market.

Statement 2 is wrong. The current account deficit depends on the balance of trade, remittances and income flows with the rest of the world; a domestic indirect tax does not 'drastically' cut it or build up reserves.

Statement 3 is wrong. A tax reform may help growth, but claiming it will 'enormously' enlarge the economy so that India overtakes China in the near future is an exaggeration no tax change can promise. Answer (a), 1 only.

How to crack it: Statements 2 and 3 use extreme words ('drastically', 'enormously', 'overtake China'). Statement 1 is the textbook purpose of GST.

Remember: GST is destination-based; the tax goes to the State where goods or services are consumed, not where they are made.

Sources : Goods and Services Tax (India) (Wikipedia)

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82. Answer: (a) European Union

India and the European Union have been negotiating a Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) since 2007; it is the name for the long-running India-EU free trade agreement talks. Answer (a).

The Gulf Cooperation Council (b), the OECD (c) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (d) are not India's partners in the BTIA. Answer (a), European Union.

How to crack it: BTIA is the EU's long-pending trade deal with India; recall 'India-EU BTIA, since 2007'.

Remember: Several rounds of BTIA negotiations passed without an agreement; the talks were later carried on as the India-EU Free Trade Agreement.

Sources : India–European Union relations (Wikipedia)

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83. Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Statement 1 is correct. India ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement on 22 April 2016.

Statement 2 is correct. The TFA was concluded at the WTO's Ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2013, as part of the Bali package.

Statement 3 is wrong. The TFA entered into force on 22 February 2017, once two-thirds of WTO members had ratified it, not in January 2016. Answer (a), 1 and 2 only.

How to crack it: A WTO agreement needs two-thirds of members to ratify; India itself ratified only in April 2016, so January 2016 is too early for entry into force.

Remember: The TFA aims to expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit.

Sources : Trade Facilitation Agreement (Wikipedia); WTO, Trade facilitation

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84. Answer: (c) India will not depend on Pakistan for access to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Chabahar is Iran's only oceanic port, on the Gulf of Oman. Being close to Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries, it has been called the 'Golden Gate' to these landlocked countries. India, Iran and Afghanistan signed a trilateral transit agreement in 2016, and the port gives India a sea-and-land route to Afghanistan that bypasses Pakistan. Answer (c).

Option (a) is wrong; the port faces Afghanistan and Central Asia, not Africa. Option (b) is wrong; it is not about relations with Arab oil producers. Option (d) is wrong; no Iraq-India pipeline through Pakistan is involved. Answer (c).

How to crack it: Look at the map: Chabahar lets goods from India reach Afghanistan through Iran instead of through Pakistan.

Remember: Chabahar is about 170 km west of Pakistan's Gwadar port.

Sources : Chabahar Port (Wikipedia)

85. Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Section 70B(6) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 empowers CERT-In (the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) to call for information and give directions to service providers, intermediaries, data centres and body corporate. Its functions, which include response to and reporting of cyber incidents, are set out in the CERT-In Rules of 2013, notified on 16 January 2014.

So service providers (1), data centres (2) and body corporate (3) are all legally obliged to report. The obligation was later tightened. Since 2022, any service provider, intermediary, data centre, body corporate or Government organisation must report listed cyber incidents to CERT-In within 6 hours. Answer (d), 1, 2 and 3.

How to crack it: The IT Act names all three categories together in the same breath as the bodies CERT-In can direct. Pick (d).

Remember: CERT-In's directions cover security practices, prevention, response and reporting of cyber incidents.

Sources : CERT-In Directions under Section 70B(6) of the IT Act (28 April 2022)

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86. Answer: (c) Constitutional Right; equally defensible: (d) Legal Right

Answer in doubt: UPSC's final key gives (c), Constitutional Right, but (d), Legal Right, is equally defensible. The right to vote comes from Article 326 (adult suffrage), which lies outside Part III, and rights of this kind are described in the standard polity texts as 'constitutional rights or legal rights or non-fundamental rights'; the two labels name the same category. The right to be elected also depends on the qualifications Parliament laid down in the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which is an ordinary law. A candidate who chose (d) had a sound reason. We count both (c) and (d) as correct.

The right to vote in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections rests on Article 326, which says these elections shall be on the basis of adult suffrage, so every citizen of 18 or more has a right to vote. Such rights, found in the Constitution but outside Part III, are called constitutional (non-fundamental) rights. The right to be elected rests on the qualifications in the Constitution together with those laid down by Parliament in the Representation of the People Act, 1951. UPSC's key treats the right to vote and to be elected as a Constitutional Right. Answer (c).

It is not a Fundamental Right (a), since it is not in Part III and cannot be enforced directly under Article 32. It is not a natural right (b), since it exists only because the Constitution and the law create it. Option (d), Legal Right, is the one that remains arguable (see the note).

How to crack it: Ask where the right is written. Adult suffrage is in Article 326, outside Part III, which makes it a constitutional right, not a fundamental one.

Remember: Rights outside Part III in the Constitution: Article 265 (no tax without law), Article 300A (property), Article 301 (trade and commerce) and Article 326 (adult suffrage).

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87. Answer: (b) To detect gravitational waves

eLISA (evolved Laser Interferometer Space Antenna) was the scaled-down 2013 version of the European Space Agency's LISA mission, a space-based observatory to detect and measure gravitational waves, with laser arms a million kilometres long between spacecraft. Answer (b).

Neutrinos (a), missile defence (c) and solar flares (d) are not its purpose. Answer (b), to detect gravitational waves.

How to crack it: A laser interferometer measures tiny changes in distance, which is how a passing gravitational wave shows itself; the 'space antenna' is such an instrument in space.

Remember: ESA chose the 'Gravitational Universe' theme for its L3 mission slot, with launch expected in 2034.

Sources : Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (Wikipedia)

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88. Answer: (a) 2 only

Vidyanjali, launched by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in June 2016, is a school volunteer programme to boost community and private sector participation in government schools. Volunteers such as NRIs, retired teachers, government officials, defence personnel and professionals help improve the quality of education. So statement 2 is correct.

Statement 1 is wrong; it has nothing to do with foreign universities opening campuses. Statement 3 is wrong for the programme as it stood in 2017, because it sought volunteers' time and skills in schools, not monetary contributions for infrastructure. Answer (a), 2 only.

How to crack it: 'Anjali' is an offering; here people offer their time and skills to government schools. Statement 2 is the volunteer idea; 1 and 3 are different schemes.

Remember: Vidyanjali's volunteers include NRIs, retired teachers, government officials and defence personnel.

Sources : Vidyanjali (Wikipedia)

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89. Answer: (b) Connecting institutions of higher education with local communities to address development challenges through appropriate technologies.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, inaugurated on 11 November 2014 by the then Ministry of Human Resource Development, grew out of a group at IIT Delhi with expertise in rural development and appropriate technology. It aims at transformational change in rural development by leveraging knowledge institutions; higher education institutions work with local communities on their development challenges. That is option (b).

Option (a) is wrong; it is not a literacy mission. Option (c) is wrong; it is not about strengthening national research institutions. Option (d) is wrong; it is not a fund for health, education and skilling of the poor. Answer (b).

How to crack it: The scheme sits with higher education ('knowledge institutions') and aims at rural development. Only (b) links colleges with communities.

Remember: UBA brings together educational institutions, government bodies, NGOs and local communities.

Sources : Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Introduction (official site)

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90. Answer: (d) 3 only

Statement 1 is wrong. Since October 1993 the Election Commission has been a multi-member body of three, the Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.

Statement 2 is wrong. Notifying the dates and schedules of elections is a function of the Election Commission itself, not of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Statement 3 is correct. The Commission acts as a court for settling disputes about the recognition of political parties and the allotment of election symbols; when a recognised party splits, the rival groups' claim to the party's name and symbol is decided by the Commission. Answer (d), 3 only.

How to crack it: Remember 'three members' and 'the Commission fixes its own schedule'. That removes 1 and 2.

Remember: The Election Commission's functions are administrative, advisory and quasi-judicial; settling party and symbol disputes is quasi-judicial.

91. Answer: (a) It enjoys the same level of protection as the tiger.

Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 is the list of the most protected animals; the tiger (Panthera tigris) is itself in Schedule I, Part I. Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II give absolute protection, and offences against them carry the highest penalties. A tortoise placed in Schedule I therefore enjoys the same level of protection as the tiger. Answer (a).

Option (b) is wrong; listing in Schedule I is about legal protection, not a finding that the species survives only in captivity or cannot be saved. Option (c) is wrong; the schedules do not say where a species is endemic. Option (d) falls with (b) and (c). Answer (a).

How to crack it: A schedule is a list for legal protection. Being on the same list as the tiger means the same protection; nothing about extinction or endemism follows.

Remember: Section 9 bans hunting of any animal in Schedules I to IV except as the Act provides; the schedules differ in the penalty for breaking that ban.

Sources : Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (Legislative Department); Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (Wikipedia)

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92. Answer: (a) the power of the Judiciary to pronounce upon the constitutionality of laws and executive orders.

Judicial review is the power of the courts to examine the constitutionality of legislative enactments and executive orders of the Central and State governments; if they violate the Constitution (ultra vires), the court declares them illegal, unconstitutional and void. That is option (a).

Option (b) is wrong; courts judge whether a law is constitutional, not whether it is wise. Option (c) is wrong; courts review laws after they are made, not before the President's assent. Option (d) is wrong; reviewing its own earlier judgements is a different power (review jurisdiction). Answer (a).

How to crack it: Review means testing against the Constitution. Only (a) mentions constitutionality.

Remember: The Supreme Court has held judicial review to be a 'basic feature' of the Constitution, so even laws in the Ninth Schedule can be challenged.

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93. Answer: (c) 3-2-1

The Second Round Table Conference was held in London in late 1931, after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The Quit India Resolution was ratified by the AICC at Gowalia Tank, Bombay, on 8 August 1942, and the leaders were arrested the next day. The Royal Indian Navy ratings went on strike in Bombay on 18 February 1946.

So the order is 3 (1931), 2 (1942), 1 (1946). Answer (c), 3-2-1.

How to crack it: Anchor the middle event: Quit India, 1942. The RTCs were before it (1930 to 1932) and the naval mutiny after the war (1946).

Remember: The RIN revolt was one of three post-war upsurges, after the Calcutta protests of November 1945 and February 1946 over the INA trials.

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94. Answer: (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Statement 1 is wrong. Tax revenue did not rise steadily as a share of GDP. The Centre's gross tax to GDP ratio fell to 11.6 per cent in 2008-09 (revised estimates) and was set to decline further to 10.9 per cent in 2009-10, because of tax cuts and the economic slowdown.

Statement 2 is wrong. The fiscal deficit did not rise steadily either. It was 2.5 per cent of GDP in 2007-08, jumped to 6.0 per cent in 2008-09 and 6.4 per cent in 2009-10, and then came down to 5.1 per cent in 2010-11 and 4.6 per cent (budgeted) in 2011-12. Answer (d), Neither 1 nor 2.

How to crack it: The 2008-09 global crisis pushed the deficit up and tax revenue down for a while, after which the deficit was brought down. Neither series moved steadily one way.

Remember: 'Steadily increased in the last decade' is a strong claim; one fall in the series is enough to make it wrong.

Sources : Union Budget 2009-10, Medium Term Fiscal Policy Statement

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95. Answer: (b) Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary

Kuno Palpur in Madhya Pradesh was selected in the 1990s for the Asiatic Lion Reintroduction Project, to establish a second lion population outside Gujarat's Gir. Villagers were resettled from it between 1998 and 2003, and in April 2013 the Supreme Court ordered Gujarat to send some Gir lions to Madhya Pradesh. Answer (b).

Corbett (a), Mudumalai (c) and Sariska (d) were not the sites chosen for the lion translocation. Answer (b), Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary.

How to crack it: Recall the long Gujarat versus Madhya Pradesh lion dispute; the Madhya Pradesh site was Kuno.

Remember: Gujarat resisted because Gir would lose its status as the world's only home of the Asiatic lion. Kuno later became the first site of Project Cheetah.

Sources : Kuno National Park (Wikipedia)

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96. Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

When President's Rule is imposed, the President dismisses the State Council of Ministers headed by the Chief Minister, and the Governor runs the State on the President's behalf. Removal of the Council of Ministers (2) is therefore a necessary consequence.

The State Legislative Assembly (1) is either suspended or dissolved; dissolution is not automatic, so it is not necessarily a consequence. Local bodies (3) are not part of the State government or legislature that the proclamation takes over, so their dissolution does not follow from it. So 1 and 3 are 'not necessarily' consequences. Answer (b), 1 and 3 only.

How to crack it: Note the word 'not'. The ministry always goes; the Assembly may only be suspended; local bodies are untouched.

Remember: Under President's Rule, Parliament passes the State's bills and budget, or delegates that power to the President.

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97. Answer: (c) 1 and 4 only

The Right against Exploitation (Articles 23 and 24) prohibits traffic in human beings and forced labour (Article 23) and the employment of children in factories and similar places (Article 24). So 1 and 4 are correct.

Abolition of untouchability (2) is Article 17, under the Right to Equality. Protection of the interests of minorities (3) is Article 29, under Cultural and Educational Rights. Answer (c), 1 and 4 only.

How to crack it: Exploitation means forced labour, trafficking and child labour. Untouchability belongs to equality, minorities to cultural rights.

Remember: The six Fundamental Rights: Equality (14 to 18), freedom (19 to 22), against exploitation (23, 24), religion (25 to 28), cultural and educational (29, 30), constitutional remedies (32).

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98. Answer: (a) Sumatra

Great Nicobar is the southernmost and largest of the Nicobar Islands, lying north of Sumatra. Indira Point, India's southernmost point on Great Nicobar, is only 145 km (80 nautical miles) from Rondo Island, the northernmost island of Sumatra's Aceh province. Answer (a).

Borneo (b) and Java (c) lie much further to the south-east, beyond Sumatra. Sri Lanka (d) lies far to the north-west, across the Bay of Bengal. Answer (a), Sumatra.

How to crack it: Picture the Andaman and Nicobar chain running south; it ends just above the northern tip of Sumatra.

Remember: India and Indonesia are upgrading the deep-sea port of Sabang, just across the channel from Great Nicobar.

Sources : Great Nicobar Island (Wikipedia); Indira Point (Wikipedia)

99. Answer: (c) A mechanism of parliamentary democracy for ensuring collective responsibility of the Government to the people.

The Cabinet form of government is the parliamentary system; the ministers are responsible to Parliament for all their acts, and the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha, which answers to the people. Collective responsibility of the executive to the legislature is the principle underneath it. That is option (c).

Option (a) is wrong; the system invites criticism (question hour, motions) instead of minimising it. Option (b) is wrong; speed of action is not its principle, and in fact the system is criticised for instability. Option (d) is wrong; it does not exist to strengthen a declining leader's hold. Answer (c).

How to crack it: The cabinet system is defined by responsibility to the legislature; look for 'collective responsibility'.

Remember: Collective responsibility means the ministers swim or sink together. When the Lok Sabha passes a no-confidence motion, all of them must resign.

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100. Answer: (d) It is the result of an agreement among the federating units.

Article 1 describes India as a 'Union of States', which implies that the Indian federation is not the result of an agreement by the States, and that no State has the right to secede. So (d) is not a feature of Indian federalism and is the answer.

The other three are features of Indian federalism. An independent judiciary (a) settles disputes between the Centre and the States. Powers are divided between the Centre and the States through the Union, State and Concurrent Lists (b). And the States have unequal representation in the Rajya Sabha (c), seats being allotted by population, unlike the equal representation of states in the US Senate. Answer (d).

How to crack it: Note 'not'. The US federation came from an agreement of States; India's did not, which is why Article 1 says 'Union of States'.

Remember: The Constitution never uses the word 'federation'; it is described as 'federal in form but unitary in spirit' and 'quasi-federal' (K C Wheare).