

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Sunita Williams in 2013 revealed she had the unique opportunity to witness 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets in a day aboard the International Space Station (ISS). Astronauts onboard the ISS experience a surprising and unusual variation of day and night, completely different from Earth. While on Earth, we experience one sunset and sunrise every day, astronauts in space can encounter up to 16 sunrises and sunsets in a period of just 24 hours. When Sunita Williams was felicitated at the University of Gujarat in the presence of then Chief Minister Narendra Modi, she reflected on this surreal experience. "Because I had wanted to go to space and worked hard for it, I was lucky to see 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets in a day in a fast-moving space shuttle," the seasoned astronaut shared. Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore's return to Earth were delayed due to delays in the Boeing Starliner spacecraft's return schedule, keeping her in orbit until February 2025. Their stay was extended to around eight months after NASA deemed it "too risky" to bring them back on Starliner. Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore will continue their ISS works and are expected to return to Earth in February next year.

- How long does it take for the International Space Station (ISS) to complete one full orbit around the Earth?
(a) 1 hour
(b) 90 minutes
(c) 24 hours
(d) 16 hours
- What causes the day and night cycle on Earth?
(a) The movement of the ISS
(b) The Earth's orbit around the Sun
(c) The Earth's rotation
(d) The position of the Moon
- What do astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS) use to stay on schedule and maintain communication with Earth?
(a) Local time based on the ISS's position
(b) Atomic clocks set to Coordinated Universal Time
(c) Earth's time zones
(d) A digital clock that adjusts based on their position
- Why do astronauts on the ISS follow a rigid schedule despite having no natural day-night cycle?
(a) To ensure they get enough rest and maintain mental and physical health
(b) To synchronize their activities with Earth time zones
(c) To comply with a space agency mandate
(d) To adapt to the sunlight and darkness cycles in space
- What specific issue do astronauts face on the ISS due to its fast movement between sunlight and darkness?
(a) Disorientation during navigation
(b) Lack of sunlight for exercise
(c) Inconsistent food supply
(d) Disrupted sleep patterns
- What is the average speed of the ISS as it orbits Earth?
(a) 7,000 km/h
(b) 28,000 km/h
(c) 15,000 km/h
(d) 45,000 km/h

Passage – 2

The delimitation of constituencies for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies is to be carried out on the basis of the first Census after 2026. The 2021 Census was originally postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently due to delays on the part of the Central government. Delimitation means the process of fixing the number of seats and boundaries of territorial constituencies in each State for the Lok Sabha and Legislative assemblies. It also includes determining the seats to be reserved for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in these houses. Article 82 and 170 of the Constitution provide that the number of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative assemblies as well as its division into territorial constituencies shall be readjusted

after each Census. This 'delimitation process' is performed by the 'Delimitation Commission' that is set up under an act of Parliament. Such an exercise was carried out after the 1951, 1961 and 1971 Census.

'Democracy' means 'rule or government by the people'. It follows that the government is elected by a majority with the broad principle of 'one citizen-one vote-one value'. The number of seats in the Lok Sabha based on the 1951, 1961 and 1971 Census was fixed at 494, 522 and 543, when the population was 36.1, 43.9 and 54.8 crore respectively. This broadly translated to an average population of 7.3, 8.4 and 10.1 lakh per seat respectively.

However, it has been frozen as per the 1971 Census in order to encourage population control measures so that States with higher population growth do not end up having higher number of seats. This was done through the 42nd Amendment Act till the year 2000 and was extended by the 84th Amendment Act till 2026. Hence, the population based on which the number of seats is allocated refers to the population as per the 1971 Census. This number will be re-adjusted based on the first Census after 2026. The boundaries of territorial constituencies were readjusted (without changing the number of seats) and seats for SC and ST were determined as per the 2001 Census and will again be carried out after 2026.

In a normal course of events, the delimitation process for the number of seats, boundaries of territorial constituencies and determining the reserved seats for SC and ST would have happened based on the Census of 2031 as it would have been the first Census after 2026. However, with the 2021 Census now being postponed and the year 2026 nearing, there have been talks about the impending delimitation exercise.

7. What is the primary function of the Delimitation Commission in India?
 - (a) To elect members of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies
 - (b) To regulate the voting system in elections
 - (c) To demarcate the boundaries of the Constituencies
 - (d) To determine the reservation of seats for women in the legislature
8. How many times has the Delimitation Commission been constituted in India so far?
 - (a) 3 times
 - (b) 4 times
 - (c) 5 times
 - (d) 6 times
9. What is the legal status of the orders passed by the Delimitation Commission?
 - (a) They are recommendations and can be modified by the Parliament
 - (b) They have the force of law and cannot be challenged in court
 - (c) They are subject to judicial review by the Supreme Court
 - (d) They are only advisory in nature and can be ignored
10. Which of the following Constitutional amendment acts extended the freeze on delimitation until 2026?
 - (a) 84th Amendment Act
 - (b) 42nd Amendment Act
 - (c) 93rd Amendment Act
 - (d) 77th Amendment Act
11. What was the main reason behind freezing the number of seats for the Lok Sabha based on the 1971 Census?
 - (a) To provide more representation for underrepresented states
 - (b) To allow for more political parties to be included
 - (c) To reduce the overall size of the parliament
 - (d) To encourage population control measures
12. According to the Constitution of India, which of the following articles provide for the delimitation process?
 - (a) Article 81 and 161
 - (b) Article 82 and 170
 - (c) Article 100 and 200
 - (d) Article 75 and 123

Passage – 3

In response to India's decision to suspend the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, Pakistan's government said it could hold the 1972 Simla Agreement and "all other bilateral agreements with India" in abeyance. The agreement was signed in Shimla on July 2, 1972 after three days of talks between Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, victorious from the 1971 Bangladesh War, and Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who had suffered a crushing defeat and the division of Pakistan in the war. The talks, for which the Soviet Union did much of the preparatory discussions through Indian and Pakistani envoys in Moscow, focused on two major issues. First, the future of post-war ties between India and Pakistan, including the return of more than 93,000 Pakistan prisoners of war; second, the resolution of the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, where they agreed to "settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them". In addition, the Simla agreement saw the first formal recognition of Bangladesh as a sovereign entity in a bilateral treaty. The Simla Agreement led to severe criticism of Mrs. Gandhi in India, for not forcing Pakistan to make the ceasefire line the International Border, instead renaming it the Line of Control (LoC); and of Mr. Bhutto in Pakistan for agreeing to resolve the dispute peacefully and without recourse to the United Nations or other third-party mediators. In Srinagar, Sheikh Abdullah's criticisms stemmed from the fact that neither side had consulted the Kashmiri people.

13. Which of the following was a major outcome of the Simla Agreement?
 - (a) The division of Kashmir between India and Pakistan
 - (b) The return of prisoners of war captured during the 1971 war
 - (c) The establishment of a new Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and Pakistan
 - (d) The formal recognition of Bangladesh by United Nation

14. The Indus Waters Treaty was indeed signed on September 19, 1960. It was a water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan, mediated by the _____.
 - (a) Asian Development Bank
 - (b) USA
 - (c) Russia
 - (d) World Bank

15. What significant provision does the Indus Waters Treaty include regarding India's usage of water from the western rivers?
 - (a) India can construct dams and utilize water freely from the western rivers
 - (b) India is restricted from using any water from the western rivers
 - (c) India can use water from the western rivers for irrigation, but must adhere to specified guidelines
 - (d) India is allowed to store water in the western rivers but cannot use it for any purpose

16. The Indus Waters Treaty has survived numerous political and military tensions between India and Pakistan. Which of the following provisions allows the treaty to remain functional despite conflicts?
 - (a) The establishment of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) to resolve disputes
 - (b) It allows the construction of any dams on the western rivers by either party
 - (c) It permits both parties to unilaterally alter the treaty's provisions based on security needs
 - (d) The World Bank directly enforces the terms of the treaty during conflicts

17. In which year was the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation signed?
 - (a) 1965
 - (b) 1971
 - (c) 1980
 - (d) 1962

18. What was the significant diplomatic principle that the Simla Agreement emphasized regarding bilateral relations between India and Pakistan?
 - (a) International arbitration for all unresolved issues
 - (b) A mutual declaration of peace and non-aggression
 - (c) The resolution of all disputes through peaceful bilateral negotiations
 - (d) The establishment of a neutral third-party commission for mediation

Passage – 4

During the Non-Cooperation Movement thousands of Indians were put in jail. Gandhiji himself was arrested in March 1922, and charged with sedition. The judge who presided over his trial, Justice C.N. Broomfield, made a remarkable speech while pronouncing his sentence. "It would be impossible to ignore the fact," remarked the judge, "that you are in a different category from any person I have ever tried or am likely to try. It would be impossible to ignore the fact that, in the eyes of millions of your countrymen, you are a great patriot and a leader. Even those who differ from you in politics look upon you as a man of high ideals and of even saintly life." Since Gandhiji had violated the law it was obligatory for the Bench to sentence him to six years' imprisonment, but, said Judge Broomfield, "If the course of events in India should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I".

By 1922, Gandhiji had transformed Indian nationalism, thereby redeeming the promise he made in his BHU speech of February 1916. It was no longer a movement of professionals and intellectuals; now, hundreds of thousands of peasants, workers and artisans also participated in it. Many of them venerated Gandhiji, referring to him as their "Mahatma". They appreciated the fact that he dressed like them, lived like them, and spoke their language. Unlike other leaders he did not stand apart from the common folk, but empathised and even identified with them. This identification was strikingly reflected in his dress: while other nationalist leaders dressed formally, wearing a Western suit or an Indian bandgala, Gandhiji went among the people in a simple dhoti or loincloth. Meanwhile, he spent part of each day working on the charkha (spinning wheel), and encouraged other nationalists to do likewise. The act of spinning allowed Gandhiji to break the boundaries that prevailed within the traditional caste system, between mental labour and manual labour.

19. What was the Rowlatt Act?
 - (a) A law that allowed the British to implement tax reforms
 - (b) A law that legalized the arrest and detention of Indians without trial
 - (c) A law that created new provinces for Indians
 - (d) A law that granted political autonomy to Indian states

20. What did Judge C.N. Broomfield say about Gandhiji during his trial?
 - (a) Gandhiji was a lawbreaker and a criminal.
 - (b) Gandhiji was a terrorist and a threat to British rule.
 - (c) Gandhiji's actions were justified due to the circumstances of the time.
 - (d) Gandhiji was a man of high ideals and even saintly life.

21. How did Gandhiji transform Indian nationalism by 1922?
 - (a) It included participation from peasants, workers, and artisans.
 - (b) It became more focused on the demands of intellectuals and professionals.
 - (c) It became a movement led only by political leaders.
 - (d) It was restricted to only the urban elites.

22. Who among the following leaders died on the day the Non-Cooperation Movement was launched?
 - (a) Lala Lajpat Rai
 - (b) Subhas Chandra Bose
 - (c) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
 - (d) Bipin Chandra Pal

23. Why did Mahatma Gandhi call off the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922?
 - (a) The British government agreed to all demands of the movement
 - (b) Gandhi's health deteriorated and he had to retreat
 - (c) The movement failed to gather mass support
 - (d) The movement was becoming violent after the Chauri Chaura incident

24. Which movement did Mahatma Gandhi support as part of the Non-Cooperation Movement?
(a) Khilafat Movement (b) Quit India Movement
(c) Salt March (d) Civil Disobedience Movement

Passage – 5

The Khelo India Youth Games 2025 started from from May 4 to 15 in Bihar and New Delhi with around 5000 participants set to take part. Swimming, shooting and football start on May 5 while athletics begins on May 12. Hockey will be held from May 7 to 13 at the Rajgir Sports Complex. Patna, Rajgir, Gaya, Bhagalpur and Begusarai will host most of the sports, while three events - shooting, gymnastics and track cycling - will be held in Delhi. The seventh edition of India's premier youth sports tournament, under the Khelo India initiative, will begin with an Opening Ceremony at the Patliputra Sports Complex on May 4. Archery, kabaddi and volleyball competitions will also kick off on the same day. The KIYG 2025 will feature 28 disciplines, featuring Olympic, non-Olympic and indigenous sports like mallakhamb, yogasana and kho kho. The Khelo India Youth Games are contested as a team championship, where individual and team performances contribute to each state or Union Territory's overall medal tally. The contingent with the most gold medals is crowned champion. At the previous edition hosted by Tamil Nadu across four cities - Chennai, Madurai, Trichy, and Coimbatore - over 5,600 athletes competed. Maharashtra defended their title with 57 gold, 48 silver and 53 bronze medals, securing their fourth overall championship.

25. What is the official mascot of the Khelo India Youth Games 2025?
(a) Mahashakti (b) Gajasimha
(c) Veer Bhairav (d) Yodha
26. Where were the Khelo India School Games 2018 inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi?
(a) Mumbai (b) Pune
(c) Delhi (d) Chennai
27. Identify the correct pairing of the 2024 Khel Ratna awardee with their sport:
(a) Gukesh D - Shooting (b) Praveen Kumar - Wrestling
(c) Manu Bhaker - Gymnastics (d) Harmanpreet Singh - Hockey
28. Which of the following states won the overall championship in the previous edition of Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2024?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Delhi
(c) Tamil Nadu (d) Uttar Pradesh

Test - 1

Answers and Explanations

1. b The International Space Station completes a full orbit around the Earth at a speed approximately 28,000 km/h, which is 17,500 miles per hour, every 90 minutes. This means astronauts see a sunrise or sunset every 45 minutes. Astronauts aboard the ISS experience 16 day-night cycles in a single Earth day. Because of its rapid orbital speed, the ISS moves between the bright side of Earth and the shadow every 45 minutes, causing astronauts to witness a sunrise or sunset every 45 minutes and experience 16 day-night cycles in one Earth day.
2. c On Earth, the day and night cycle is caused by the rotation of the Earth on its axis, which takes approximately 24 hours. This rotation causes different parts of the Earth to move into sunlight or darkness.
3. b Astronauts aboard the ISS use atomic clocks set to Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) because there are no regular day-night cycles in space. This helps them maintain a strict schedule for work, exercise, food, and rest. Astronauts follow UTC because Earth's time zones do not apply in space, and UTC provides a universal reference for time, allowing for clear communication and coordination between the ISS and Earth-based teams.
4. a Since astronauts aboard the ISS experience constant transitions between light and dark due to their rapid orbit, they follow a strict schedule to ensure they get adequate rest and maintain both their mental and physical health despite the lack of a natural day-night cycle.
5. d Astronauts on the ISS face disrupted sleep patterns due to the station's rapid movement between sunlight and darkness. Since they experience multiple sunrises and sunsets in one day, it becomes difficult to maintain a natural sleep-wake cycle.
6. b The ISS orbits Earth at a speed of 28,000 km/h (17,500 miles per hour), which allows it to complete one full orbit every 90 minutes.
7. c Delimitation Commission Under Article 82 of the Constitution, the Parliament by law enacts a Delimitation Act after every census. After coming into force commencement of the Act, the Central Government constitutes a Delimitation Commission. This Delimitation Commission demarcates the boundaries of the Parliamentary Constituencies as per provisions of the Delimitation Act. The present delimitation of constituencies has been done on the basis of 2001 census figures under the provisions of Delimitation Act, 2002. Notwithstanding the above, the Constitution of India was specifically amended in 2002 not to have delimitation of constituencies till the first census after 2026. Thus, the present Constituencies carved out on the basis of 2001 census shall continue to be in operation till the first census after 2026.
8. b The Delimitation Commission has been constituted four times in India: in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002, each under a different Delimitation Act to adjust constituencies based on census data. The seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were reserved as per the Constitutional and Legal provisions i.e. articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution of India read with sections 9(1)(c) and 9(1)(d) of the Delimitation Act, 2002. The State Governments have no role in redesigning the borders of constituencies.
9. b The orders of the Delimitation Commission have the force of law and cannot be challenged in court. These orders come into effect on a date specified by the President of India. The copies of its orders are laid before the House of the People and the State Legislative Assembly concerned, but no modifications are permissible therein by them.
10. a The 84th Amendment Act extended the freeze on the delimitation process till 2026, ensuring that the number of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies would remain the same as determined by the 1971 Census. The delimitation process was frozen based on the 1971 Census through the 42nd Amendment Act and extended till 2026 by the 84th Amendment Act. This was done to control the population growth and to maintain a balance in seat allocation.
11. d The number of seats for the Lok Sabha was frozen based on the 1971 Census to encourage population control measures. This was done so that states with higher population growth would not automatically get more seats, which could lead to unequal representation.
12. b The delimitation process for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies is governed by Article 82 (for Lok Sabha) and Article 170 (for State Assemblies) of the Indian Constitution.
13. b A major outcome of the Simla Agreement was the return of prisoners of war captured by both countries during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war, and it emphasized peaceful resolution of issues through dialogue. The establishment of a new Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and Pakistan: The Simla Agreement did not establish a new Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and Pakistan. The agreement emphasized the Line of Control (LoC), which was the existing military line post-1971 war. The LAC is a term more commonly associated with the border between India and China.
14. d The Indus Waters Treaty was indeed signed on September 19, 1960. It was a water-sharing agreement between India and Pakistan, mediated by the World Bank, defining how they would use the waters of the Indus River system. The treaty allocated specific rivers to each country, with Pakistan receiving the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) and India receiving the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej).
15. c The Indus Waters Treaty allows India to use water from the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) for non-consumptive purposes, such as irrigation and hydroelectric power generation, but with restrictions. India must adhere to specific guidelines on the construction of dams and reservoirs. This was a major aspect of the treaty's balance between India's needs and Pakistan's rights.
16. a The Permanent Indus Commission (PIC), established by the Indus Waters Treaty, is the key mechanism that allows both India and Pakistan to resolve disputes over water usage. The commission consists of delegates from both countries and addresses technical issues and disagreements, thereby ensuring the treaty's functionality despite political and military tensions.
17. b The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation was a treaty signed between India and the Soviet Union in August 1971 that specified mutual strategic cooperation. This was a significant deviation from India's previous position of non-alignment during the Cold War and was a factor in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war. The treaty was caused by increasing Pakistani ties with China and the United States and played an important role in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.

18. c The Simla Agreement emphasized that India and Pakistan would resolve all disputes, including Kashmir, through peaceful bilateral negotiations, without involving external mediation or arbitration. The Simla Agreement explicitly stated that any territorial disputes, including the Kashmir issue, would be addressed through direct talks between India and Pakistan, without involving third-party mediation or military action.
19. b The Rowlatt Act was passed in 1919, allowing the British to arrest and detain Indians without trial. It was seen as repressive and a violation of Indian rights, fueling anger and contributing to the launch of the Non-Cooperation Movement. Mahatma Gandhiji was arrested in 1922 and charged with sedition because he was a key figure in the Non-Cooperation Movement, which aimed to resist British rule through nonviolent means. The immediate causes for the Non-Cooperation Movement were the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, which outraged the Indian public and galvanized support for the movement. The central demand of the Non-Cooperation Movement was to achieve Swaraj (self-rule) for India and to end British colonial rule through peaceful non-cooperation.
20. d During the trial, Judge C.N. Broomfield acknowledged that Gandhiji was seen as a great patriot and a man of high ideals by millions of Indians, despite his violation of the law.
21. a By 1922, Gandhiji had transformed Indian nationalism by including not just professionals but also peasants, workers, and artisans, making it a mass movement that reached across all sections of society.
22. c On 1 August 1920, the Non-Cooperation Movement was officially launched. It was a solemn day, as the news of Bal Gangadhar Tilak's death arrived early in the morning. Gandhi, along with a crowd of approximately 2 lakh people, paid tribute to this prominent leader, who is often referred to as the "Maker of Modern India." The movement began with widespread strikes and processions across the country.
23. d Gandhi called off the Non-Cooperation Movement after the Chauri Chaura incident in 1922, where violence broke out between police and protesters, violating the movement's principle of non-violence.
24. a The Khilafat Movement, led by Indian Muslims, was supported by Gandhi during the Non-Cooperation Movement. Both movements converged in 1920, with Gandhi advocating for non-cooperation to address British policies against the Ottoman Caliphate.
25. b Gajasimha, the official mascot of the Khelo India Youth Games 2025, Bihar, is a powerful symbol of athletic excellence and cultural heritage. Inspired by ancient temple sculptures from Nalanda and Bodh Gaya during the Pala period, this mythical creature—an extraordinary fusion of lion and elephant—captures the essence of strength, wisdom, endurance, and fearless leadership.
26. c On 31 January 2018, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, inaugurated Khelo India School Games at the opening ceremony based on Guru-shishya tradition held at Indira Gandhi Arena, from the 2019 events, Khelo India School Games were renamed to Khelo India Youth Games after Indian Olympic Association came on board earlier in September 2018. The second edition of the event was kicked off in Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex, a sports complex situated in Balewadi, Pune, by Sports Minister, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, and, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis. On 22 February 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first edition of the Khelo India University Games in Cuttack to give athletes the exposure of multi-disciplinary events at the university level.
27. d World Chess champion Gukesh D and Paris Olympics and Paralympics medallists - Manu Bhaker (shooting), Harmanpreet Singh (hockey) and Praveen Kumar (para-athlete) are conferred with Major Dhyani Chand Khel Ratna Award 2024 by President of India Droupadi Murmu at a specially organised function at Rashtrapati Bhavan on January 17, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced. Gukesh recently became the youngest-ever World Chess Champion after outclassing China's Ding Liren in the title battle in Singapore. Manu became the first Indian athlete to win twin medals in a single edition of the Games in Paris, following a double bronze in the 10 m air pistol and 10 m air pistol mixed team event. On the other hand, Harmanpreet led India to their second successive bronze medal in men's hockey while Praveen bagged gold in the high jump T64 in the Paralympics.
28. a In the previous edition of Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) 2024, Maharashtra defended their title by securing 57 gold, 48 silver, and 53 bronze medals, making them the overall champions for the fourth time.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a historic opportunity for illegal aliens to receive both financial and travel assistance to facilitate travel back to their home country through the CBP Home App. Any illegal alien who uses the CBP Home App to self-deport will also receive a stipend of \$1,000 dollars, paid after their return to their home country has been confirmed through the app. Self-deportation is a dignified way to leave the U.S. and will allow illegal aliens to avoid being encountered by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Even with the cost of the stipend, it is projected that the use of CBP Home will decrease the costs of a deportation by around 70 percent. Currently the average cost to arrest, detain, and remove an illegal alien is \$17,121. The first use of travel assistance has already proven successful. An illegal alien that the Biden Administration allowed into our country recently utilized the program to receive a ticket for a flight from Chicago to Honduras. Additional tickets have already been booked for this week and the following week.

"If you are here illegally, self-deportation is the best, safest and most cost-effective way to leave the United States to avoid arrest. DHS is now offering illegal aliens financial travel assistance and a stipend to return to their home country through the CBP Home App," said Secretary Kristi Noem. "This is the safest option for our law enforcement, aliens and is a 70% savings for US taxpayers. Download the CBP Home App TODAY and self-deport." Illegal aliens submitting their intent to voluntarily self-deport in CBP Home will also be deprioritized for detention and removal ahead of their departure as long as they demonstrate they are making meaningful strides in completing that departure. Participation in CBP Home Self-Deportation may help preserve the option for an illegal alien to re-enter the United States legally in the future.

- Which part of the Indian Constitution deals with the provisions related to citizenship?
(a) Part I (b) Part II
(c) Part III (d) Part IV
- According to the Constitution of India, which of the following has the exclusive power to legislate on citizenship matters?
(a) State Governments (b) Supreme Court of India
(c) President of India (d) Parliament of India
- According to the U.S. Constitution (Amendment XIV, Section 1, Clause 1), who qualifies as a U.S. citizen at birth?
(a) All persons born in the U.S., regardless of parents' immigration status
(b) Only persons born in the U.S. to parents with legal status
(c) Persons born outside the U.S. only if both parents are U.S. citizens
(d) Only persons born in the U.S. to U.S. citizen parents
- Under the Indian Citizenship Act, how must the birth of a child born outside India be registered to acquire citizenship by descent?
(a) Registration is optional
(b) Within one year at an Indian Mission/Post abroad
(c) After five years of birth, with special permission
(d) Only if both parents are Indian citizens
- The Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) scheme provides which of the following benefits?
(a) Right to vote in Indian elections
(b) Eligibility to hold Indian constitutional posts
(c) Government employment rights
(d) Lifelong multiple-entry visa to India

6. The Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 primarily provides citizenship to which groups?
- (a) All Refugees from neighboring countries
 - (b) Illegal immigrants from any country
 - (c) Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan
 - (d) All immigrants residing in India for over 10 years

Passage – 2

The three new Criminal laws came into force on July 1, 2024, replacing the three old criminal laws, and they were repealed, by the legal implication of new laws in force. The criminal justice system has had its own share of challenges with questions over infrastructure, laws being punishment centric, over-stretched trials, pendency, gaps and elongated investigations, overcrowded prisons with under-trial prisoners. The old laws were very much in need of changes to match up to the new age requirements, technological advancements and to fill in the identified gaps, hence, the new laws brought in an entire overhaul. Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA), displaced the existing Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively and brought in the new criminal law legislations in its place. The blog ahead, discusses the features and the important provisions of the three new laws. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 replaced the Indian Penal Code that was drafted by the first law commission chaired by Thomas Babington Macaulay.

7. What new form of punishment is introduced for minor offences such as small theft and defamation?
- (a) Community service
 - (b) One year imprisonment
 - (c) Life imprisonment
 - (d) Only fines
8. What type of recording is mandatory for statements of rape victims?
- (a) Written only
 - (b) Audio-video recording
 - (c) Only audio recording
 - (d) No recording required
9. What is the punishment for mob lynching committed by five or more persons on grounds like caste, race, or community?
- (a) Fine and 10 years imprisonment
 - (b) Up to 5 years imprisonment
 - (c) Death or life imprisonment and a fine.
 - (d) Community service
10. What new trial provision is introduced for fugitive criminals?
- (a) Trial in absentia
 - (b) Trial by jury
 - (c) No trial unless present
 - (d) Trial only after capture
11. Under the new laws, when can a first-time offender be released on bail?
- (a) After serving half the jail term
 - (b) After serving one-third of the jail term
 - (c) Immediately after arrest
 - (d) After serving two-third of the jail term
12. Clause 69 of the BNS penalizes sexual intercourse obtained through:
- (a) Physical force and false promises of employment only
 - (b) Consensual relationships only
 - (c) Any sexual relationship without marriage
 - (d) Deceitful means such as false promises of employment, inducement, or marrying after suppressing identity

Passage – 3

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the prestigious Padma Shri awards on three eminent Odias for the year 2025 at the Civil Investiture ceremony-I held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi. They are sculptor Adwaita Charan Gadanayak, neurosurgeon Dr Ashok Kumar Mahapatra and artiste Durga Charan Ranbir. While Gadanayak and Ranbir were honoured for their contributions to the field of art, Dr Mahapatra received the award for his work in the field of medicine.

Gadanayak, the vice-president of Indian Council for Cultural Relations, is known for his monumental sculptures 'Dandi March' at Rajghat, National Police Memorial and statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at the India Gate, New Delhi. Dr Mahapatra is an acclaimed neurosurgeon who in 2017, had led one of the most successful separation surgeries in the world at AIIMS, New Delhi, by separating Jaga and Balia, conjoined twins from Kandhamal district. Meanwhile, Odissi Guru Ranbir is credited for creating new training techniques in Odissi and counted among one of the most celebrated disciples of late Odissi Guru Deba Prasad Das.

At the Civil Investiture ceremony-I, the awards were conferred in three categories - Padma Vibhushan for exceptional and distinguished service, Padma Bhushan for distinguished service of higher order, and Padma Shri for distinguished service. The President presented four Padma Vibhushan, 10 Padma Bhushan and 57 Padma Shri awards on the day. Odia writer Pratibha Satpathy will receive the Padma Shri at the Civil Investiture ceremony-II. A noted poet of Odia literature, Satpathy's poetry focuses on human relationship.

13. The individuals Smt. Kumudini Rajnikant Lakhia, Shri Lakshminarayana Subramaniam, and Smt. Sharda Sinha were awarded the Padma Vibhushan in the field of _____.
(a) Medicine (b) Public Affairs
(c) Trade and Industry (d) Art
14. Shri Osamu Suzuki was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in the field of _____.
(a) Trade and Industry (b) Medicine
(c) Public Affairs (d) Art
15. Padma Shri is the _____ highest civilian award in India.
(a) First (b) Second
(c) Third (d) Fourth
16. When was the Padma Shri award instituted?
(a) 15 August 1947 (b) 26 January 1950
(c) 2 January 1954 (d) 26 January 1954
17. Which of the following statements is true about returning the Padma Shri?
(a) It is not allowed under any circumstances
(b) Some recipients have returned the award after initially accepting it
(c) Once awarded, it cannot be returned
(d) Returning the award leads to legal consequences
18. Who among the following is NOT one of the four people who have received all four civilian honors (Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri)?
(a) Satyajit Ray (b) Bhimsen Joshi
(c) M. S. Subbulakshmi (d) Bhupen Hazarika

Passage – 4

In the wake of the tragic terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22, which claimed the lives of 26 innocent civilians, India has mounted a decisive and strategic response aimed at dismantling cross-border terrorism. The attack, which drew widespread condemnation and grief across the country, prompted immediate and firm action by the Government of India, with the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approving a range of diplomatic and military measures targeting Pakistan's continued support for terrorism. As part of a precise military strategy, India launched "Operation Sindoor," a calibrated campaign designed to neutralize key terror camps across the border. Based on multi-agency intelligence, nine significant terror infrastructure sites, including those in Bahawalpur and Muridke, were identified and targeted through coordinated air and ground strikes. The operation was executed with high operational ethics, focusing exclusively on terrorist camps while taking all precautions to prevent civilian casualties.

Indian strikes successfully eliminated more than 100 terrorists and destroyed 11 air bases within Pakistan. Among those neutralized were high-value individuals linked to the 1999 IC-814 hijacking and the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, including Yusuf Azhar, Abdul Malik Rauf, and Mudassir Ahmad. The strikes marked a shift in India's strategy by targeting deep into Pakistani territory, including critical radar installations in Lahore and Gurjanwala. Additionally, coordinated missile attacks were carried out on terror hubs in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), including Muzaffarabad and Kotli. Military bases housing Pakistan's F-16 and JF-17 fighter jets at Sargodha and Bholari were hit, leading to the destruction of nearly 20 percent of Pakistan's air force infrastructure. India's retaliatory operations were launched in response to not only the Pahalgam attack but also subsequent Pakistani provocations, including drone and missile attacks on Indian civilian and religious areas on the nights of May 7, 8, and 9. Indian forces successfully intercepted and neutralized these threats, reinforcing the country's operational readiness and commitment to defending its sovereignty.

19. What was the name of the Indian military operation launched in response to the Pahalgam terrorist attack?
(a) Operation Balakot (b) Operation Shakti
(c) Operation Sindoor (d) Operation Vijay
20. What was a key distinguishing feature of India's Operation Sindoor?
(a) Use of naval assets in deep-sea combat
(b) Focused targeting of terrorist camps while avoiding civilian casualties
(c) Deployment of nuclear submarines
(d) Exclusive use of drones for all strikes
21. Which of the following two Pakistani cities housed key terror sites targeted during Operation Sindoor?
(a) Karachi and Islamabad (b) Lahore and Sialkot
(c) Bahawalpur and Muridke (d) Rawalpindi and Peshawar
22. The Cabinet Committee on Security is chaired by _____.
(a) President of India (b) Home Minister of India
(c) Defence Minister of India (d) Prime Minister of India
23. What was the primary target of the Indian airstrike conducted on 26 February 2019 in Balakot, Pakistan?
(a) Lashkar-e-Taiba (b) Hizbul Mujahideen
(c) Jaish-e-Mohammed (d) Al-Qaeda
24. Which of the following events occurred after the Balakot airstrike?
(a) Pakistan launched a ground invasion
(b) Indian forces captured a Pakistani air base
(c) UN sanctions were imposed on India
(d) Indian pilot Abhinandan Varthaman was captured by Pakistani forces

Passage – 5

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport worth Rs. 8,800 crore to the nation in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Addressing the gathering on the auspicious occasion of the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Adi Shankaracharya, the Prime Minister highlighted that three years ago, in September, he had the privilege of visiting the revered birthplace of Adi Shankaracharya. He expressed his joy that a grand statue of Adi Shankaracharya has been installed in the Vishwanath Dham complex in his parliamentary constituency, Kashi. He emphasized that this installation stands as a tribute to the immense spiritual wisdom and teachings of Adi Shankaracharya. He further highlighted that he also had the honor of unveiling the divine statue of Adi Shankaracharya at the sacred Kedarnath Dham in Uttarakhand. The Prime Minister noted that today marks another special occasion as the doors of the Kedarnath temple have been opened to devotees. Prime Minister Modi underscored that Adi Shankaracharya, originating from Kerala, established monasteries in different corners of the country, awakening the consciousness of the nation. He emphasized that his efforts laid the foundation for a unified and spiritually enlightened Bharat. Shri Modi highlighted the vast ocean, rich with immense possibilities, standing on one side, while on the other, nature's breathtaking beauty adds to the grandeur. Amidst all this, he emphasized that the Vizhinjam Deep-Water Sea Port has now emerged as a symbol of new age development. He extended his congratulations to the people of Kerala and the entire nation on this remarkable achievement.

25. Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport is country's first dedicated container transshipment port located in [1]. Which of the following states has been redacted with in the passage above?
- (a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Kerala
(c) Gujarat (d) Tamil Nadu
26. Vadhvan Port Private Limited (VPPL) is the _____ major port of India, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) formed between Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB). Which of the following has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) 10th major port of India (b) 11th major port of India
(c) 13th major port of India (d) 14th major port of India
27. Which is the India's first private port and largest commercial port?
- (a) Mundra Port (b) Ennore Port
(c) V.O. Chidambaranar port (d) Port Blair
28. The oldest operating port in India is _____.
- (a) Jawaharlal Nehru Port (b) Chennai Port
(c) Visakhapatnam Port (d) Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port

Test - 2

Answers and Explanations

1. b Part II of the Indian Constitution, comprising Articles 5 to 11, specifically deals with the provisions of Indian citizenship.
2. d Citizenship is listed in the Union List under the Seventh Schedule, which means only the Parliament of India has the exclusive authority to make laws on citizenship.
3. a Amendment XIV, Section 1, Clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution directs that all persons born in the United States are U.S. citizens. This is the case regardless of the tax or immigration status of a person's parents. Furthermore, a person born outside the United States may also be a U.S. citizen at birth if at least one parent is a U.S. citizen and has lived in the United States for a specified period. The 14th Amendment grants citizenship to anyone born on U.S. soil, regardless of whether their parents are legal residents or undocumented.
4. b Birth registration of children born abroad must be done within one year at an Indian Mission/Post for citizenship by descent; otherwise, permission from MHA is needed. If a child's birth abroad is not registered within one year, permission from the MHA is required to register the birth and confer citizenship.
5. d OCI cardholders get a lifelong visa with multiple entries and exemptions from foreign registration requirements but do not have political rights or government employment eligibility. The Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme was introduced by amending the Citizenship Act, 1955, in August 2005. The Person of Indian Origin Card Scheme has been withdrawn by the Government of India and has been merged with the Overseas Citizen of India Card Scheme effective from 9 January 2015. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2015 was passed, substituting the words, "Overseas Citizen of India" with the words "Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder" and enabling provisions for registration of OCI cardholders, conferment of certain rights of such citizens, renunciation of overseas citizenship and cancellation of registration as OCI cardholder.
6. c A special provision exists for the submission of applications for Indian Citizenship under the Citizenship Amendment Act of 2019. It is specifically for individuals who entered India on or before 31st December, 2014, and belonging to Hindu or Sikh or Buddhist or Jain or Parsi or Christian community from Pakistan or Afghanistan or Bangladesh.
7. a Community service: The new laws introduce community service for minor offences promoting personal growth and social responsibility of an individual. Under community service, the offenders get the chance to positively contribute to society, learn from their mistakes, and build stronger community bonds.
8. b Audio-Video Recording of Statements: In order to provide more protection to the victim and enforce transparency in investigation related to an offence of rape, the statement of the victim shall be recorded through audio video means by police.
9. c The law imposes the most severe penalties-death or life imprisonment alongwith a fine for mob lynching by groups of five or more targeting protected grounds such as race or caste.
10. a Fugitive criminals can now be tried and convicted even in their absence, a provision criticized for potentially bypassing due process. Shri Amit Shah said that the Modi Government has introduced the provision of Trial in Absentia in the three new criminal laws, enabling the prosecution of fugitive criminals even in their absence through court orders while ensuring a fair judicial process. He explained that this provision will simplify the process of extraditing convicted criminals from foreign countries to India.
11. b First-time offenders who serve a third of their sentence are eligible for bail, encouraging rehabilitation. Under Section 479 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, first-time offenders who have served one-third of their jail term are entitled to bail, except in cases where the punishment is death or life imprisonment. This provision aims to reduce the number of undertrials in prisons and is expected to encourage rehabilitation.
12. d Clause 69 of the BNS: Whoever, by deceitful means or by making promise to marry a woman without any intention of fulfilling the same, and has sexual intercourse with her, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of rape, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine. "Deceitful means" shall include the false promise of employment or promotion, inducement or marrying after suppressing identity.
13. d The individuals Smt. Kumudini Rajnikant Lakhia, Shri Lakshminarayana Subramaniam, and Smt. Sharda Sinha were awarded the Padma Vibhushan in the field of Art. These distinguished artists were recognized for their exceptional and distinguished service in the realm of performing arts.
14. a Shri Osamu Suzuki was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in the field of Trade and Industry, and he was from Japan. He was recognized posthumously for his significant contributions to the automotive industry, particularly for his role in founding Suzuki Motor Corporation.
15. d The Padma Shri is the fourth-highest civilian award in India, following Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, and Padma Bhushan.
16. c Padma Shri award was instituted on 2 January 1954 to honor distinguished contributions in various fields.
17. b While the Padma Shri is one of India's highest civilian honors, there is no legal prohibition against returning the award once it has been conferred. Several recipients have, in fact, chosen to return their Padma Shri awards as a form of protest or to express dissatisfaction with certain political or social developments. Returning the award is a symbolic act rather than a legally regulated process. It often draws public attention to the reasons behind the return, which can range from disagreement with government policies, perceived injustice, or to highlight specific causes. This act does not invalidate the award or require any official procedure for renunciation. Options (a) and (c) are incorrect because there is no official rule preventing recipients from returning the award. Option (d) is incorrect as returning the award does not lead to any legal consequences; it is a personal decision made by the awardee. Thus, the practice of returning the Padma Shri is recognized as a legitimate, peaceful means of expressing dissent or protest.
18. c India's highest civilian awards are, in descending order of prestige: Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri. These awards recognize exceptional contributions across various fields such as arts, literature, music, science, and public service. Only four distinguished individuals have received all four of these civilian honors during their lifetime: Satyajit Ray - Renowned filmmaker and writer, celebrated internationally for his contributions

- to cinema. Bismillah Khan - Legendary shehnai maestro known for bringing Indian classical music to global attention. Bhimsen Joshi - Eminent vocalist and a leading figure in Hindustani classical music. Bhupen Hazarika - Esteemed singer, composer, and filmmaker, noted for his work in Assamese culture and Indian music. While M. S. Subbulakshmi received several prestigious awards, she is not among the four individuals who have received all four civilian honors listed.
19. c India launched "Operation Sindoor" as a strategic military response aimed at neutralizing terror camps following the Pahalgam attack.
20. b The operation emphasized high operational ethics, focusing only on terror infrastructure and minimizing risk to civilians.
21. c The two cities Bahawalpur and Muridke were identified through intelligence as hosts to major terrorist infrastructure and were among the targets of the operation.
22. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security on May 14, 2025. The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) is a cabinet committee of the Government of India that discusses debates and is the final decision-making body on senior appointments in the national security apparatus, defence policy and expenditure, and generally all matters of India's national security.
23. c The 2019 Balakot airstrike was a bombing raid conducted by Indian warplanes on 26 February 2019 in Balakot, Pakistan, against an alleged training camp of the terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed. Open source satellite imagery revealed that no targets of consequence were hit. The following day, Pakistan shot down an Indian warplane and took its pilot, Abhinandan Varthaman, prisoner. Indian anti-aircraft fire accidentally downed an Indian helicopter killing six airmen on board and one civilian on the ground, their deaths receiving little or no coverage in the Indian media, and remaining officially unacknowledged until seven months later.
24. d The day after the Balakot strike, Pakistan shot down an Indian warplane and captured Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, who was later released.
25. b Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport worth Rs 8,800 crore is country's first dedicated container transshipment port that represents the transformative advancements being made in India's maritime sector as part of the unified vision of Viksit Bharat. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated Vizhinjam International Deepwater Multipurpose Seaport worth Rs 8,800 crore to the nation today in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
26. c Vaduvan Port Private Limited (VPPL) is the 13th major port of India, a special purpose vehicle (SPV) formed between Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and the Maharashtra Maritime Board (MMB). Strategically located in Palghar district, near Dahanu, Maharashtra, VPPL is poised to be among the top 10 ports globally. The foundation stone for the port was laid on August 30th, 2024, by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi.
27. a Mundra Port is India's first private port, largest container port in India and largest commercial port, located on the northern shores of the Gulf of Kutch near Mundra, Kutch district, Gujarat.
28. d The oldest operating port in India is the Kolkata Port, also known as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port. It was established by the British East India Company and is located in Kolkata, West Bengal. While not the oldest in terms of ancient history, it is the oldest port currently in operation in India. Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT), also known as Nhava Sheva Port, is the second largest container port in India. It's located east of Mumbai, in Navi Mumbai's Raigad district, and is a crucial hub for containerized trade, handling a significant portion of India's containerized cargo volume. The port is managed by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA).

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has joined Project Nexus, a multilateral international initiative to enable instant cross-border retail payments by interlinking domestic Fast Payments Systems (FPSs). India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and FPSs of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand will be interlinked through Nexus. Going ahead, the platform can be extended to more countries. Project Nexus is conceptualised by the Innovation Hub of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS). It seeks to enhance cross-border payments by connecting multiple domestic instant payment systems (IPS) globally. It is the first BIS Innovation Hub project in the payments area to move towards live implementation.

The Reserve Bank of India has been collaborating bilaterally with various countries to link India's Fast Payments System (FPS) - UPI, with their respective FPSs for cross-border Person to Person (P2P) and Person to Merchant (P2M) payments. While India and its partner countries can continue to benefit through such bilateral connectivity of FPS, a multilateral approach will provide further impetus to the RBI's efforts in expanding the international reach of Indian payment systems.

In over 70 countries today domestic payments reach their destination in seconds at near-zero cost to the sender or recipient. This is thanks to the growing availability of instant payment systems. Connecting these IPS to each other can enable cross-border payments from sender to recipient within 60 seconds (in most cases), according to the BIS. Project Nexus is designed to standardise the way IPS connect to each other. Rather than a payment system operator building custom connections for every new country that it connects to, the operator can make one connection to the Nexus platform. This single connection allows a fast payments system to reach all other countries on the network. Nexus could significantly accelerate the growth of instant cross-border payments.

- Which of the following countries' payment systems are being interconnected through Project Nexus?
 - India, Japan, Australia, and the United States
 - India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand
 - India, China, Russia, and Brazil
 - India, Saudi Arabia, Germany, and Canada
- How is Project Nexus different from previous cross-border payment initiatives?
 - It connects payment systems globally with a single connection to the Nexus platform
 - It uses a new type of cryptocurrency for transactions
 - It only supports cross-border business payments
 - It focuses on payments between major global financial institutions
- What are the Basel Banking Accords?
 - Guidelines for banking operations set by the World Bank
 - National banking regulations in Switzerland
 - A set of rules for financial aid distribution
 - Global rules for best practices in banking set by the Basel Committee
- When was the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) established?
 - 1920
 - 1930
 - 1945
 - 1950
- Which of the following countries were involved in the signing of the convention to establish the BIS in 1930?
 - Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK, and Switzerland
 - United States, France, Germany, Japan, and the UK, and Switzerland
 - Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and Switzerland
 - Belgium, France, Russia, Italy, Japan, United States and Switzerland

6. What was the original role of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS)?
- (a) To facilitate international trade
 - (b) To manage reparation payments following World War I
 - (c) To provide loans to developing countries
 - (d) To serve as the central bank for Europe

Passage – 2

Mahatma Gandhi found in salt a powerful symbol that could unite the nation. On 31 January 1930, he sent a letter to Viceroy Irwin stating eleven demands. Some of these were of general interest; others were specific demands of different classes, from industrialists to peasants. The idea was to make the demands wide-ranging, so that all classes within Indian society could identify with them and everyone could be brought together in a united campaign. The most stirring of all was the demand to abolish the salt tax. Salt was something consumed by the rich and the poor alike, and it was one of the most essential items of food. The tax on salt and the government monopoly over its production, Mahatma Gandhi declared, revealed the most oppressive face of British rule.

Mahatma Gandhi's letter was, in a way, an ultimatum. If the demands were not fulfilled by 11 March, the letter stated, the Congress would launch a civil disobedience campaign. Irwin was unwilling to negotiate. So Mahatma Gandhi started his famous salt march accompanied by 78 of his trusted volunteers. The march was over 240 miles, from Gandhiji's ashram in Sabarmati to the Gujarati coastal town of Dandi. The volunteers walked for 24 days, about 10 miles a day. Thousands came to hear Mahatma Gandhi wherever he stopped, and he told them what he meant by swaraj and urged them to peacefully defy the British. On 6 April he reached Dandi, and ceremonially violated the law, manufacturing salt by boiling sea water.

This marked the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement. How was this movement different from the Non-Cooperation Movement? People were now asked not only to refuse cooperation with the British, as they had done in 1921-22, but also to break colonial laws. Thousands in different parts of the country broke the salt law, manufactured salt and demonstrated in front of government salt factories. As the movement spread, foreign cloth was boycotted, and liquor shops were picketed. Peasants refused to pay revenue and chaukidari taxes, village officials resigned, and in many places forest people violated forest laws - going into Reserved Forests to collect wood and graze cattle.

7. What was the primary purpose of Mahatma Gandhi's Salt March?
- (a) To demand an end to the British monopoly on salt
 - (b) To protest against the arrest of Congress leaders
 - (c) To promote the Round Table Conference
 - (d) To encourage the manufacturing of salt
8. What did Mahatma Gandhi do upon reaching Dandi on 6 April 1930?
- (a) He held a public rally
 - (b) He called off the civil disobedience campaign
 - (c) He negotiated with the British government
 - (d) He broke the salt law by manufacturing salt
9. How was the Civil Disobedience Movement different from the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921-22?
- (a) People were asked to cooperate with the British
 - (b) People were only asked to boycott British goods
 - (c) It focused solely on the independence of India
 - (d) People were asked to break colonial laws

10. What was the outcome of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931?
 - (a) The Congress was granted full independence
 - (b) Gandhi agreed to participate in the Round Table Conference
 - (c) The British government recognized Indian sovereignty
 - (d) All Congress leaders were released from jail
11. What was the result of the Round Table Conference in London for Mahatma Gandhi?
 - (a) The negotiations were successful, and India gained independence
 - (b) Gandhi returned with increased support for the Congress
 - (c) The negotiations broke down, and Gandhi returned disappointed
 - (d) Gandhi negotiated a peace agreement with the British government
12. Why did Mahatma Gandhi relaunch the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932?
 - (a) The British government had agreed to all demands
 - (b) Congress had gained independence
 - (c) The government had resumed its cycle of repression
 - (d) The movement had lost momentum and needed revival

Passage – 3

National Investigation Agency (NIA) and Intelligence Bureau (IB) officials questioned YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra, arrested over espionage charge, on her alleged links with Pakistani Intelligence Operatives (PIOs), people familiar with the probe said on Monday, adding that her recent trips to Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and Dubai are also under the scanner. So far, 14 people have been arrested in multiple north Indian states over the past two weeks - including four in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in the last 24 hours - for allegedly sharing sensitive information with Pakistani operatives, officers said.

An officer declining to be named said that besides NIA, Malhotra was also questioned by IB and other central intelligence agency officials. "Information gathered so far reveals she got her passport made in 2018, which is valid till 2028, and that she has since travelled to Pakistan, China, Dubai, Thailand, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Indonesia and other countries. We are gathering more details about her visits, particularly to Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and Dubai," the officer added. Elaborating on the involvement of NIA, a second officer also declining to be named said: "The ministry of home affairs (MHA) may consider handing over the case to the federal anti-terror investigation agency for a larger conspiracy probe where Pakistan high commission officials in Delhi and PIOs across the border used Indian influencers/YouTubers for propaganda and to get information from them."

13. Under which Act was the National Investigation Agency (NIA) established?
 - (a) National Security Act, 1980
 - (b) Anti-Terrorism Act, 1999
 - (c) Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967
 - (d) National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act, 2008
14. What major event led to the establishment of the NIA?
 - (a) The 2001 Parliament Attack
 - (b) The 26/11 Mumbai Terror Attack
 - (c) The Kargil War
 - (d) The 2002 Gujarat Riots
15. Which of the following offences was added to the NIA's schedule after the 2019 amendment?
 - (a) Human trafficking
 - (b) Money laundering
 - (c) Environmental crimes
 - (d) Corporate fraud

16. Who can direct the NIA to investigate a scheduled offence in any state of India?
 (a) The Chief Minister of the state (b) The Ministry of External Affairs
 (c) The Central Government (d) National Security Adviser
17. What new power does the NIA have regarding crimes committed outside India under the 2019 amendment?
 (a) To engage in military action against terrorists outside India
 (b) To investigate terrorism-related offences committed abroad as if they occurred within India
 (c) To negotiate with foreign governments for terrorism-related investigations
 (d) To prosecute foreign nationals for domestic crimes
18. Which of the following is a key difference between the NIA and CBI?
 (a) The NIA operates under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions
 (b) The CBI investigates terrorist attacks without the state government's consent
 (c) The NIA does not have jurisdiction over terrorism cases outside India
 (d) The NIA investigates terrorism-related offences, while the CBI investigates economic crimes

Passage – 4

Using the unique infrared sensitivity of NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, researchers can examine ancient galaxies to probe secrets of the early universe. Now, an international team of astronomers has identified bright hydrogen emission from a galaxy in an unexpectedly early time in the universe's history. The surprise finding is challenging researchers to explain how this light could have pierced the thick fog of neutral hydrogen that filled space at that time. The Webb telescope discovered the incredibly distant galaxy JADES-GS-z13-1, observed to exist just 330 million years after the big bang, in images taken by Webb's NIRCam (Near-Infrared Camera) as part of the James Webb Space Telescope Advanced Deep Extragalactic Survey (JADES). Researchers used the galaxy's brightness in different infrared filters to estimate its redshift, which measures a galaxy's distance from Earth based on how its light has been stretched out during its journey through expanding space.

The NIRCam imaging yielded an initial redshift estimate of 12.9. Seeking to confirm its extreme redshift, an international team led by Joris Witstok of the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, as well as the Cosmic Dawn Center and the University of Copenhagen in Denmark, then observed the galaxy using Webb's Near-Infrared Spectrograph instrument. In the resulting spectrum, the redshift was confirmed to be 13.0. This equates to a galaxy seen just 330 million years after the big bang, a small fraction of the universe's present age of 13.8 billion years old. But an unexpected feature stood out as well: one specific, distinctly bright wavelength of light, known as Lyman-alpha emission, radiated by hydrogen atoms. This emission was far stronger than astronomers thought possible at this early stage in the universe's development.

19. What is the key discovery made by the James Webb Space Telescope in relation to the galaxy JADES-GS-z13-1?
 (a) Discovery of the oldest galaxy (b) Bright hydrogen emission from the galaxy
 (c) Evidence of black holes (d) Discovery of a planet orbiting the galaxy
20. What does the redshift of a galaxy indicate?
 (a) The temperature of the galaxy (b) The speed at which the galaxy is moving
 (c) The distance of the galaxy from Earth (d) The size of the galaxy
21. How does the discovery of the galaxy JADES-GS-z13-1 contribute to our understanding of the early universe?
 (a) It provides evidence of life in the early universe.
 (b) It shows the formation of the first stars.
 (c) It suggests that galaxies were already highly developed shortly after the Big Bang.
 (d) It helps astronomers understand how light could have pierced the fog of neutral hydrogen.

22. According to the Big Bang Theory, how did the universe begin?
(a) As a small, hot, and dense point that rapidly expanded
(b) From a collision between two galaxies
(c) As a vast, cold, and empty space
(d) From a single atom that split into multiple parts
23. What is the primary function of the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)?
(a) To study the Sun
(b) To conduct infrared astronomy
(c) To map the surface of Mars
(d) To monitor Earth's atmosphere
24. When was the James Webb Space Telescope launched?
(a) 25 December 2021
(b) 1 January 2021
(c) 25 December 2022
(d) 11 July 2022

Passage – 5

Teenager Gukesh Dommaraju became the youngest-ever undisputed classical chess world champion after beating Ding Liren 7.5-6.5 in their best-of-14 final in Singapore. The 18-year-old Gukesh and defending champion Ding entered the last game tied and things appeared to be headed to rapid chess tiebreaks, but it was the youngster who was able to claim the crucial point after a blunder from Ding. As his victory was confirmed, Gukesh broke into tears as the emotion of his victory appeared to wave over him, while Ding could only sit with his head in his hands in disbelief. After standing with his arms aloft in celebration, Gukesh was escorted out the building where he shared a long embrace with his father. Social media clips showed fans back in India celebrating Gukesh's victory wildly, cheering and hugging as he became the 18th world chess champion and just the country's second world champion after Viswanathan Anand.

25. Gukesh Dommaraju surpassed a FIDE rating of 2750 at the age of:
(a) 16
(b) 17
(c) 18
(d) 19
26. At what age did Abhimanyu Mishra become the world's youngest-ever chess grandmaster?
(a) 11 years, 6 months, and 25 days
(b) 13 years, 2 months, and 25 days
(c) 10 years, 8 months, and 25 days
(d) 12 years, 4 months, and 25 days
27. Who was the previous record holder that Gukesh Dommaraju surpassed to become the top-rated Indian chess player in the September 2023 rating list?
(a) Viswanathan Anand
(b) Shakhriyar Mamedyarov
(c) Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa
(d) Vidit Gujrathi
28. Which prestigious award did Gukesh Dommaraju receive in January 2025?
(a) Padma Bhushan
(b) Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna
(c) Arjuna Award
(d) Rajiv Gandhi Bal Puraskar Award

Test - 3

Answers and Explanations

1. b The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) from India and the Fast Payment Systems (FPSs) of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand are being interconnected through Project Nexus. The main goal of Project Nexus is to enable instant cross-border retail payments by interlinking domestic Fast Payment Systems (FPSs) from different countries. Project Nexus was conceptualized by the Innovation Hub of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS).
2. a Project Nexus connects payment systems globally with a single connection to the Nexus platform, simplifying the process and avoiding custom connections for each country. Project Nexus is designed to enable cross-border Person to Person (P2P) and Person to Merchant (P2M) payments. Project Nexus standardizes the connections between payment systems, which makes cross-border payments faster and more cost-effective.
3. d The Basel Banking Accords are global rules set by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) under the BIS, providing guidelines for best practices in banking.
4. b Established in 1930, the Bank for International Settlements is the oldest international financial institution. Its head office is in Basel, Switzerland and it has two representative offices (Hong Kong SAR and Mexico City), as well as Innovation Hub Centres around the world. From its inception to the present day, the BIS has played a number of key roles in the global economy, from settling reparation payments imposed on Germany following the First World War, to serving central banks in their pursuit of monetary and financial stability.
5. c The BIS was created in the context of the Young Plan, adopted on 20 January 1930 at the Hague Conference. A convention respecting the establishment of the BIS in Switzerland was signed on the same date between the governments of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom on the one hand and Switzerland on the other.
6. b The BIS was originally set up to manage the collection, administration, and distribution of reparation payments imposed on Germany following World War I. Established in 1930, the Bank for International Settlements is the oldest international financial institution. From its inception to the present day, the BIS has played a number of key roles in the global economy, from settling reparation payments imposed on Germany following the First World War, to serving central banks in their pursuit of monetary and financial stability.
7. a The primary purpose of the Salt March was to protest against the British monopoly on salt and to demand its abolition, which was one of the key demands in Gandhi's letter to Viceroy Irwin.
8. d On 6 April 1930, Mahatma Gandhi ceremonially violated the salt law by manufacturing salt through boiling sea water.
9. d Unlike the Non-Cooperation Movement, which involved refusing cooperation with the British, the Civil Disobedience Movement also encouraged breaking colonial laws, such as the salt law.
10. b The Gandhi-Irwin Pact resulted in Gandhi agreeing to attend the Round Table Conference in London and the release of political prisoners by the British government.
11. c The negotiations at the Round Table Conference broke down, and Gandhi returned disappointed, as the Congress's demands were not met.
12. c Gandhi relaunches the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932 after discovering that the British government had resumed its repression of Congress leaders and imposed measures to prevent protests.
13. d The National Investigation Agency (NIA) was established under the NIA Act, 2008, and is a statutory body with powers to investigate terrorist-related crimes.
14. b The NIA was established in the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack, which exposed limitations in the existing intelligence agencies.
15. a The 2019 amendment to the NIA Act added human trafficking, counterfeit currency, cyber-terrorism, and other crimes to the list of scheduled offences.
16. c The Central Government can order the NIA to investigate scheduled offences in any state, even without permission from the state government.
17. b The 2019 amendment empowered the NIA to investigate terrorism-related offences committed outside India, subject to international treaties and the domestic laws of other countries.
18. d The NIA was specifically established to investigate terrorism-related crimes, such as terror attacks, financing of terrorism, and other national security threats. The CBI, on the other hand, is primarily tasked with investigating economic crimes, such as corruption, financial frauds, and organized crime, though it also handles serious crimes like murder and organized crime (but not terrorism-related offences). This makes the NIA focused on terrorism and related threats, while the CBI handles a broader range of crimes, including corruption and economic offences. The NIA operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs, not the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions. The Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for internal security, law and order, and national security, which aligns with the NIA's role in investigating terrorism and related offences. The CBI, on the other hand, operates under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions.
19. b The James Webb Space Telescope identified bright hydrogen emission from the galaxy JADES-GS-z13-1, which was an unexpected finding, considering the early stage of the universe at the time.
20. c The redshift of a galaxy is a measure of how much its light has been stretched due to the expansion of space, which is used to estimate the galaxy's distance from Earth. The redshift of galaxy JADES-GS-z13-1 was confirmed to be 13.0, which indicates that it existed just 330 million years after the Big Bang.

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| 21. d The discovery of bright hydrogen emission from JADES-GS-z13-1 challenges researchers to explain how this light could have pierced the thick fog of neutral hydrogen that filled space in the early universe, contributing to understanding the conditions of the early universe. | 1968 and played a key role in the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo programs. The JWST is located at a solar orbit near the Sun-Earth L2 Lagrange point, about 1.5 million kilometers (930,000 miles) from Earth. The first image released to the public on 11 July 2022 was an image of the first stars and galaxies, showcasing the telescope's capabilities in deep-space observation. |
| 22. a The Big Bang Theory proposes that the universe began as an infinitely small, hot, and dense point, which rapidly expanded and continues to stretch over time. The cosmic microwave background (CMB) is considered evidence of the Big Bang, as it is a faint "echo" of the universe's early expansion that scientists can study in detail. Around 13.7 billion years ago, everything in the entire universe was condensed in an infinitesimally small singularity, a point of infinite denseness and heat. | 25. b Gukesh surpassed a FIDE rating of 2750 at the age of 17. He became the youngest player to achieve this milestone. |
| 23. b The primary function of the JWST is to conduct infrared astronomy, allowing scientists to observe distant, faint, and old objects in the universe. The JWST's mirror diameter is 2.7 times larger than that of the Hubble Space Telescope, which allows it to gather more light and observe objects in greater detail. | 26. d Abhimanyu Mishra (born February 5, 2009) is an American chess grandmaster. A chess prodigy, he holds the record for the world's youngest ever grandmaster, having qualified for the title at the age of 12 years, 4 months, and 25 days. |
| 24. a The JWST was launched on 25 December 2021 on an Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana. The JWST is named after James E. Webb, who was the administrator of NASA from 1961 to | 27. a In September 2023, Gukesh Dommaraju surpassed Viswanathan Anand to become the top-rated Indian chess player. This marked the end of Anand's 37-year reign as India's top-ranked player. Gukesh's achievement was recognized by the International Chess Federation (FIDE) and was widely publicized. |
| | 28. b Gukesh Dommaraju was conferred with the prestigious Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna award by President Droupadi Murmu on 17 January 2025. |

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

India has overtaken [1] to become the world's fourth-largest economy and is now poised to surpass Germany to claim the third position within the next 2.5 to 3 years, according to NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R. Subrahmanyam. "We are the fourth-largest economy as I speak. We are a USD 4 trillion economy, and this is not my data-it's IMF data. India today is larger than Japan," said Subrahmanyam during a press conference following the 10th NITI Aayog Governing Council Meeting. "Only the United States, China, and Germany are currently ahead of us. If we stick to what is being planned and thought through, it's just a matter of another 2 to 3 years before we become the third-largest economy," he added. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its World Economic Outlook report released earlier this month, stated that India is set to become the fourth-largest economy in 2025. India's nominal GDP is projected to rise to \$4,187.017 billion, surpassing [1]'s estimated \$4,186.431 billion. India continues to be the world's fastest-growing major economy and is the only country expected to record over 6% growth over the next two years. This rapid growth is expected to push India's GDP to \$5,584.476 billion by 2028, enabling it to overtake Germany and become the third-largest economy.

Germany, meanwhile, is projected to see no GDP growth in 2025, followed by a modest 0.9% in 2026. The country is anticipated to be among the hardest hit in Europe due to the ongoing global trade war. Its GDP is forecast to reach \$5,251.928 billion by 2028. Japan is also expected to suffer due to the trade war, with its economic growth stagnating at 0.6% in both 2025 and 2026. The United States, which remains the world's largest economy, is projected to have a GDP of \$30,507.217 billion in 2025, followed by China at \$19,231.705 billion. However, the US-widely viewed as the catalyst of the current global tariff tensions-is expected to see its GDP growth slow to 1.8% in 2025, and further to 1.7% in 2026, according to the IMF. The Euro Area is projected to grow by just 0.8% in 2025, with a mild recovery to 1.2% in 2026. France is forecast to post growth rates of 0.6% and 1% for those two years, respectively. Spain is expected to outperform most European peers with a growth rate of 2.5% in 2025, though it is forecast to slow to 1.8% in 2026. The United Kingdom is projected to grow by 1.1% in 2025 and 1.4% in 2026.

1. According to NITI Aayog CEO B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, which of the following countries did India overtake to become the world's fourth-largest economy which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) Germany (b) Japan
(c) United Kingdom (d) France
2. Which of the following sectors had the highest share in India's economic growth?
(a) Manufacturing (b) Agriculture
(c) Services (d) Construction
3. What does the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measure?
(a) Total government revenue collection and expenditure incurred during a financial year.
(b) Total money in circulation in the economy at any given point of time.
(c) It is a measure of income distribution and inequality within a country.
(d) Broadly understood as the final value of the goods and services produced within the geographic boundaries of a country during a specified period of time.
4. In terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), India economy is _____ largest economy in the world.
(a) Second (b) Third
(c) Fourth (d) Fifth
5. Which of the following countries is the world's largest economy in terms of GDP (nominal)?
(a) China (b) Germany
(c) United States (d) United Kingdom

6. The largest employment provider sector in India is _____.
- (a) Agriculture and allied activities (b) Industrial Sector
(c) Service Sector (d) Quinary sector

Passage – 2

Ukraine recently carried out a massive AI drone attack - Operation [1] - deep inside Russian territory. This co-ordinated drone assault destroyed over a third of Russia's strategic long-range bombers situated at air bases in Belaya, Olenya, and Ivanovo, located deep within Russian territory and far from the frontlines. According to a new report, Ukraine used a nearly 20-year-old open-source autopilot software to carry out this operation. According to a report by 404 Media, the attack was powered by ArduPilot, a free software system originally developed by hobbyists for remote-controlled aircraft. ArduPilot was launched in 2007 by Chris Anderson, the former editor-in-chief of WIRED, who built the first version using a Lego Mindstorms kit. Anderson later teamed up with Jordi Munoz and Jason Short to refine the project, which then grew into a community-driven platform for autonomous drone flight. In a LinkedIn post following the attack, Anderson revealed that the ArduPilot software had been used.

Originally designed to work with Arduino hardware, ArduPilot has now been upgraded into a robust platform that can guide drones, boats, submarines, and even rovers. It allows drone pilots to set GPS-guided waypoints, automate take-off and landing, and keep the craft stable in the air. While the software was created for peaceful and recreational purposes-like search and rescue, agricultural use, or 3D mapping-the use of this software in warfare has shown its adaptability for military use. The project's website notes that ArduPilot is maintained by a global community and emphasises ethical development, stating that its mission is to build tools "for the peaceful benefit of all." It also includes a pledge not to knowingly support weaponisation-but being open source, the software can be freely modified and repurposed by anyone.

Video footage from Ukraine' operation Operation [1] shared online shows drones running ArduPilot during the attack. According to the report, Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) smuggled quadcopters into Russian territory hidden in trucks and storage sheds. When triggered, the roofs of these hidden compartments opened, releasing drones already loaded with explosives. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has revealed that 117 drones were involved in the operation and confirmed that the attack had been in planning for over a year. "Thirty-four percent of the strategic cruise missile carriers stationed at air bases were hit. Our personnel operated across multiple Russian regions - in three different time zones," he said in a post on X. "And the people who assisted us were withdrawn from Russian territory before the operation; they are now safe."

7. What was the name of the Ukrainian AI drone attack that took place deep inside Russian territory which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above ?
- (a) Operation Blackout Web (b) Operation Thunderstrike
(c) Operation Iron Shield (d) Operation Spider Web
8. Who was the original creator of the ArduPilot software?
- (a) Chris Anderson (b) Jordi Munoz
(c) Jason Short (d) Elon Musk
9. What was the original purpose of the ArduPilot software before its use in military operations?
- (a) Military reconnaissance (b) Remote-controlled aircraft
(c) Peaceful and recreational purposes (d) Maritime navigation
10. Which of the following types of vehicles can be guided using ArduPilot?
- (a) Drones only (b) Boats and submarines only
(c) Airplanes only (d) Drones, boats, submarines, and rovers
11. How were the drones involved in Operation [1] smuggled into Russian territory?
- (a) Through submarines (b) Hidden in trucks and storage sheds
(c) By airlift via military helicopters (d) Via underground tunnels

12. Which of the following was a notable outcome of Ukraine's Operation [1]?
- (a) Destruction of the Russian Navy
(b) Capture of a key Russian air base
(c) The loss of all Ukrainian drones
(d) Destruction of strategic long-range bombers

Passage – 3

Mineral-rich Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Goa and Jharkhand have emerged as top-performing 'achievers' among the States listed in NITI Aayog's first Fiscal Health Index (FHI) report released January 24, 2025. The report titled 'Fiscal Health Index 2025' ranked States for 2022-23, covering 18 major States that drive the Indian economy in terms of their contribution to India's GDP, demography, total public expenditure, revenues, and overall fiscal stability. According to the report, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Kerala were the worst-performing States in Fiscal Health Index (FHI), each focusing significant fiscal challenges, and listed under 'aspirational' category. The report aims to evolve an understanding of the fiscal health of States in the country and it has listed Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka under 'front-runners' category. Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Rajasthan and Haryana were classified as performers.

As per the report, released by 16th Finance Commission Chairman Arvind Panagariya, Odisha excelled in fiscal health with the highest overall index score of 67.8. Referring to top five achiever States, NITI Aayog said these States have higher capital outlay of up to 4% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), effective mobilisation of non-tax revenue, are revenue surplus and have low interest payments, which is up to 7% of revenue receipts. The report noted that the aspirational States of Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab are struggling to meet the fiscal and revenue deficit targets, have low revenue mobilisation, witnessing a growing debt burden with debt sustainability a concern in these States.

As per the report, Odisha tops the debt index (99.0) and debt sustainability (64.0) rankings with better than average scores under quality of expenditure and revenue mobilisation. Odisha has maintained low fiscal deficits, a good debt profile, and an above average capital outlay/GSDP ratio. While Kerala and Punjab struggle with low quality of expenditure and debt sustainability, the report said, West Bengal faces revenue mobilisation and debt index issues. Andhra Pradesh has high fiscal deficit and Haryana has a poor debt profile, it said. According to the report, Odisha, Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh scored the highest average FHI score for 2014-15 to 2021-22 period. The data used to calculate the Fiscal Health Index (major variables and sub-components under each variable) is sourced from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

13. Which of the following states emerged as the top-performing 'achievers' in NITI Aayog's first Fiscal Health Index (FHI) report for 2022-23?
- (a) Punjab, West Bengal, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh
(b) Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Jharkhand
(c) Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka
(d) Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana
14. Which of the following states were categorized under the 'worst-performing' States in the FHI report?
- (a) Odisha, Goa, Jharkhand
(b) Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana
(c) Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Rajasthan
(d) Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala
15. What is one of the key characteristics of the top-performing 'achiever' states in the FHI report?
- (a) High fiscal deficit
(b) Low interest payments
(c) Low capital outlay
(d) High debt-to-GSDP ratio
16. Which of the following states was classified under the 'performers' category in the FHI report?
- (a) Tamil Nadu
(b) Kerala
(c) Punjab
(d) Uttar Pradesh

17. Which of the following states tops the debt index and debt sustainability rankings in the FHI report?
(a) Maharashtra (b) Goa
(c) Odisha (d) Kerala
18. Which of the following states was identified as having high fiscal deficits in the FHI report?
(a) Punjab (b) Jharkhand
(c) Maharashtra (d) Andhra Pradesh

Passage – 4

Indian writer, lawyer and activist [1] has made history by becoming the first author writing in the Kannada language to win the International Booker prize with her short story anthology, Heart Lamp. It is the first short story collection to win the prestigious prize. Judges praised her characters as "astonishing portraits of survival and resilience". Featuring 12 short stories written by [1] between 1990 and 2023, Heart Lamp poignantly captures the hardships of Muslim women living in southern India. The stories were selected and translated into English from Kannada, which is spoken in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, by [2] who will share the £[3]prize. In her acceptance speech, [1] thanked readers for letting her words wander into their hearts. "This book was born from the belief that no story is ever small; that in the tapestry of human experience, every thread holds the weight of the whole," she said. "In a world that often tries to divide us, literature remains one of the last sacred spaces where we can live inside each other's minds, if only for a few pages," she added. [2], who became the first Indian translator to win an International Booker, said that she hoped that the win would encourage more translations from and into Kannada and other South Asian languages. Manasi Subramaniam, Editor-in-chief of Penguin India, the book's publisher in India, told that the award was a significant win for regional literature.

19. Who among the following became the first Kannada-language author to win the International Booker Prize whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) Arundhati Roy (b) Banu Mushtaq
(c) Kiran Desai (d) Vikram Seth
20. Who translated the stories in Heart Lamp into English?
(a) Kiran Desai (b) Arundhati Roy
(c) Meena Kandasamy (d) Deepa Bhasthi
21. What was the prize money for the International Booker Prize that [1] and [2] will share which has been redacted with [3] in the passage above?
(a) £25,000 (b) £50,000
(c) £100,000 (d) £10,00,000
22. Which of the following Geetanjali Shree's novels won the International Booker Prize?
(a) Mai (b) New Samadhi
(c) Tomb of Sand (d) The Sand of Time
23. The International Booker Prize (formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize) is an international literary award hosted in the _____.
(a) United Kingdom (b) Canada
(c) Australia (d) USA
24. Who was the first Indian citizen to win the Booker Prize?
(a) Chetan Bhagat (b) Arundhati Roy
(c) Vikram Seth (d) R. K. Narayan

Passage – 5

Klaus Schwab, founder of the World Economic Forum which gathers the world's business and political elite in the Swiss mountain village of Davos every year, has resigned as chair of its board of trustees, the WEF said on April 21, 2025. The Geneva-based institution had announced earlier this month that Mr. Schwab would be stepping down, without indicating a timeframe. "Following my recent announcement, and as I enter my 88th year, I have decided to step down from the position of Chair and as a member of the Board of Trustees, with immediate effect," Mr. Schwab said in a statement released by the WEF. The WEF board said in the statement that it had accepted Mr. Schwab's resignation at an extraordinary meeting held on April 20, and that Vice Chairman Peter Brabeck-Letmathe would become the interim chairman. A committee to appoint a future chair has been established. Mr. Schwab established the WEF in [1] with the aim of creating a forum for policymakers and top corporate executives to tackle major global issues. Widely regarded as a cheerleader for globalisation, the WEF's annual Davos gathering has in recent years drawn disapproval from critics as elitist and removed from ordinary people.

25. What position does Peter Brabeck-Letmathe currently hold at the World Economic Forum?
- (a) Chairman (b) Vice Chairman
(c) Chairman ad interim (d) CEO
26. What type of platform does the World Economic Forum provide?
- (a) A commercial platform for business networking
(b) A global, impartial, and not-for-profit platform
(c) A political platform for advocacy
(d) A social media platform for global leaders
27. When was the World Economic Forum established which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) 1971 (b) 1980
(c) 1990 (d) 2000
28. Where is the headquarters of the World Economic Forum (WEF) located?
- (a) Geneva, Switzerland (b) Oslo, Switzerland
(c) Zurich, Switzerland (d) Cologne, Switzerland

Test - 4

Answers and Explanations

1. b India has overtaken the U.K. to become the world's fifth-largest economy and is now behind only the US, China, Japan and Germany, according to IMF projections. A decade back, India was ranked 11th among the large economies while the U.K. was at the fifth position. The reason for the rise in the tally is due to various reasons. This includes rapid urbanisation, technological advancement, production rise, and others.
2. c 'The service sector has been fuelling growth both domestically and globally. In FY25 so far, services propped up GDP growth when manufacturing has been affected by dampening global merchandise trade. The critical role of services exports in strengthening India's external balance and the increasing 'servicification' of the industrial sector adds to its importance to the Indian Economy', highlights the Economic Survey 2024-25. India's services sector has been the steadiest contributor to the Gross Value Added (GVA) in the economy. Its contribution to the total GVA at current prices has increased from 50.6% in FY14 to about 55% in FY25.
3. d Gross Domestic Product measures the aggregate production of final goods and services taking place within the domestic economy during a year.
4. b The economy of India is characterised as a middle income developing market economy. Although being a poor country, it is still the world's fifth-largest economy by nominal GDP and the third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), on a per capita income basis, India ranked 142nd by GDP (nominal) and 124th by GDP (PPP) in 2020.
5. c The United States remains the world's largest economy, with a projected GDP of \$30,507.217 billion in 2025.
6. a The largest employment provider sector in India is agriculture and allied activities. Its share in employment was 44.1 per cent in 2017-18, which has increased to 46.1 per cent in 2023-24. That means, during the last six years, dependence on agriculture for employment has increased by two per cent.
7. d Ukraine recently carried out a massive AI drone attack - Operation Spider Web - deep inside Russian territory. This co-ordinated drone assault destroyed over a third of Russia's strategic long-range bombers situated at air bases in Belaya, Olenya, and Ivanovo, located deep within Russian territory and far from the frontlines.
8. a Chris Anderson, the former editor-in-chief of WIRED, was the original creator of the ArduPilot software. Ukraine used ArduPilot, an open-source autopilot software, to carry out the drone attack.
9. c The ArduPilot software was originally created for peaceful and recreational purposes like search and rescue, agriculture, and 3D mapping.
10. d Originally designed to work with Arduino hardware, ArduPilot has now been upgraded into a robust platform that can guide drones, boats, submarines, and even rovers. It allows drone pilots to set GPS-guided waypoints, automate take-off and landing, and keep the craft stable in the air. While the software was created for peaceful and recreational purposes-like search and rescue, agricultural use, or 3D mapping-the use of this software in warfare has shown its adaptability for military use.
11. b The drones were smuggled into Russian territory hidden in trucks and storage sheds.
12. d The passage clearly states that the notable outcome of the Operation Spider Web was the destruction of over a third of Russia's strategic long-range bombers, which were stationed at various air bases in Russia.
13. b Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Goa, and Jharkhand emerged as the top-performing achievers in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI) for 2022-23.
14. d The worst-performing States as per the FHI report were Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and Kerala, which faced significant fiscal challenge.
15. b The top-performing achiever states (like Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Goa, and Jharkhand) have a high capital outlay of up to 4% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) and low interest payments (up to 7% of revenue receipts).
16. a The 'performers' category includes states like Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Rajasthan, and Haryana.
17. c According to the FHI report, Odisha tops the debt index (99.0) and debt sustainability (64.0) rankings.
18. d Andhra Pradesh has a high fiscal deficit, and Haryana has a poor debt profile according to the FHI report.
19. b Indian writer, lawyer and activist Banu Mushtaq has made history by becoming the first author writing in the Kannada language to win the International Booker prize with her short story anthology, Heart Lamp. It is the first short story collection to win the prestigious prize.
20. d Indian writer, lawyer and activist Banu Mushtaq has made history by becoming the first author writing in the Kannada language to win the International Booker prize with her short story anthology, Heart Lamp. It is the first short story collection to win the prestigious prize. The stories were selected and translated into English from Kannada, which is spoken in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, by Deepa Bhashti who will share the £50,000 prize.
21. b The International Booker Prize awarded a prize money of £50,000, which is shared equally between the author and the translator of the winning book. Additionally, each shortlisted author and translator receives £2,500.
22. c Geetanjali Shree is an Indian Hindi-language novelist and short-story writer based in New Delhi, India. She is the author of several short stories and five novels. Her 2000 novel Mai was shortlisted for the Crossword Book Award in 2001, while its English translation by Nita Kumar was published by Niyogi Books in 2017. In 2022, her novel Ret Samadhi (2018), translated into English as Tomb of Sand by Daisy Rockwell, won the International Booker Prize. On 26 May 2022, Tomb of Sand won the International Booker Prize, becoming the first book in Hindi and the first from an Indian writer to receive the accolade.
23. a The International Booker Prize (formerly known as the Man Booker International Prize) is an international literary award hosted in the United Kingdom. The introduction of the International Prize to complement the Man Booker Prize, as the Booker Prize was then

known, was announced in June 2004. Sponsored by the Man Group, from 2005 until 2015 the award was given every two years to a living author of any nationality for a body of work published in English or generally available in English translation.

- 24. b The first Indian citizen to win the Booker Prize was Arundhati Roy for her novel "The God of Small Things" in 1997.
- 25. c Peter Brabeck-Letmathe is an Austrian businessman serving since 2025 as chairman ad interim of the World Economic Forum. He is the chairman emeritus, former chairman and CEO (1997-2008) of the Nestlé Group, and former chairman of the Formula One Group.
- 26. b The World Economic Forum is the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation. It provides a global, impartial and not-for-profit platform for meaningful connection between stakeholders to establish trust, and build initiatives for cooperation and progress.

At the heart of our mission of improving the state of the world lies the belief in the power of human ingenuity, entrepreneurship, innovation and cooperation.

- 27. a In a world marked by complex challenges, the World Economic Forum engages political, business, academic, civil society and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas. Established in 1971 as a not-for-profit foundation, it is independent, impartial and not tied to any special interests, upholding the highest standards of governance and moral and intellectual integrity.
- 28. d The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international advocacy non-governmental organization and think tank, based in Cologne, Canton of Geneva, Switzerland. It was founded on 24 January 1971 by German engineer Klaus Schwab.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

India announced launching 'Operation Sindhu' to evacuate Indian nationals from Iran as fears of an all-out Israeli-American military strikes on Iran increased. The first batch of 100 students are returning from Armenia to Delhi. As India is starting its evacuation, the Iranian embassy officials said that some Indian students have sustained injuries in a strike and the Iranian foreign ministry was in close touch with the Indian mission in Tehran. An official statement of the Ministry of External Affairs said, "In view of the deteriorating situation as a result of the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel, the government of India has been taking various steps over the last several days for the safety and security of Indian nationals in Iran." "As a first step, the Indian Embassy has evacuated 110 Indian students from northern Iran, assisting them in safely crossing over into Armenia on 17th June 2025. The students have travelled by road to the Armenian capital, Yerevan, under the supervision of our Missions in Iran and Armenia. These students departed Yerevan on a special flight at 1455 hrs on 18th June 2025 and will arrive in New Delhi in the early hours of 19th June 2025 as part of the initial stages of Operation Sindhu," it said. It said that the government of India is grateful to the governments of Iran and Armenia for the smooth facilitation of the evacuation process. "India accords highest priority to the safety and security of Indian nationals abroad. As part of the ongoing operation, the Indian Embassy in Iran has been assisting large numbers of Indian nationals in moving from areas seeing increased hostilities to relatively safer areas within the country and to subsequently evacuate them using the available and feasible options," it said, adding that Indian nationals in Iran are advised to stay in touch with the Indian Embassy in Tehran through its emergency helpline, and with the 24x7 Control Room established by the MEA in New Delhi.

1. What was the primary purpose of the Vande Bharat Mission launched in 2020?
(a) Repatriate Indians stranded abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic
(b) Resettle Afghan refugees in India
(c) Evacuate Indian citizens from Ukraine
(d) Support earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria
2. Which of the following Indian Armed Forces led Operation Samudra Setu?
(a) Indian Army
(b) Indian Air Force
(c) National Disaster Response Force
(d) Indian Navy
3. Which of the following operations was launched by India after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in 2021?
(a) Operation Kaveri
(b) Operation Ajay
(c) Operation Devi Shakti
(d) Operation Dost
4. Operation Ganga (2022) was launched to evacuate Indians from which war-affected country?
(a) Yemen
(b) Sudan
(c) Ukraine
(d) Israel
5. What was the main objective of Operation Dost launched in 2023?
(a) To evacuate Indians from Turkey
(b) To deliver humanitarian aid to Syria and Turkey
(c) To rescue Indians from Afghanistan
(d) To repatriate Indians affected by the COVID-19 Delta variant
6. Which Indian operation was launched to help citizens return from Israel amidst conflict in 2023?
(a) Operation Kaveri
(b) Operation Raahat
(c) Operation Israel
(d) Operation Ajay

Passage – 2

India has for the first time secured a place among the top 100 out of 167 countries ranked for their progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), according to a report published on Tuesday. According to the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's 10th and latest Sustainable Development Report (SDR), India ranks [1]th on the 2025 SDG Index with a score of 67, while China ranks 49th with 74.4 and the US 44th with

75.2 points. India ranked 109th in 2024, 112th in 2023, 121st in 2022, 120th in 2021, 117th in 2020, 115th in 2019, 112th in 2018 and 116th in 2017. Among India's neighbours, Bhutan takes 74th place with 70.5 points, Nepal ranks 85th with 68.6, Bangladesh 114th with 63.9 and Pakistan 140th with 57 points. India's maritime neighbours, Maldives and Sri Lanka, stood at 53rd and 93rd places, respectively. SDGs were adopted in 2015 with the idea that to save the planet, no one should be left behind in the overall development matrix by 2030. The score measures progress on a scale of 0 to 100 where 100 indicates a country has achieved all 17 goals and 0 means no progress has been made. The report's authors flagged that SDG progress has stalled at the global level, with only 17 percent of the 17 targets projected to be achieved by 2030. "Conflicts, structural vulnerabilities and limited fiscal space impede SDG progress in many parts of the world," said the report, with world-renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs as its lead author. European countries, especially the Nordic nations, continue to top the SDG Index, with Finland ranking first, Sweden second and Denmark third. A total of 19 out of the top 20 countries are in Europe. Yet even these countries face significant challenges in achieving at least two goals, including those related to climate and biodiversity, largely due to unsustainable consumption, the authors said. East and South Asia have outperformed all other global regions in terms of SDG progress since 2015 largely due to rapid socioeconomic development. The countries in East and South Asia that have demonstrated the fastest progress since 2015 (in points) include Nepal (+11.1), Cambodia (+10), the Philippines (+8.6), Bangladesh (+8.3) and Mongolia (+7.7).

7. What is India's rank in the 2025 Sustainable Development Report (SDR) as per the SDG Index which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
 - (a) 85
 - (b) 99
 - (c) 89
 - (d) 92
8. What is the significance of the score on the SDG Index used in the Sustainable Development Report?
 - (a) It shows fiscal strength of countries in relation to UN funding.
 - (b) It measures geopolitical stability using a scale of 1 to 10.
 - (c) It reflects the level of achievement of 17 SDGs on a 0–100 scale.
 - (d) It ranks countries based on their carbon neutrality by 2030.
9. According to the 2025 SDR, what percentage of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are projected to be fully achieved globally by 2030?
 - (a) 35%
 - (b) 50%
 - (c) 17%
 - (d) 75%
10. Despite topping the SDG Index, what are the key challenges faced by Nordic countries like Finland, Sweden, and Denmark?
 - (a) Slow progress in healthcare infrastructure
 - (b) Weak performance in education and gender equality
 - (c) Lack of clean drinking water in rural areas
 - (d) Significant challenges in climate and biodiversity goals
11. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in which year and session?
 - (a) 2015, Rio+20 Conference
 - (b) 2015, 70th session of the UNGA
 - (c) 2014, 69th session of the UNGA
 - (d) 2015, UN Habitat III
12. Which of the following best explains the principle of "Leave No One Behind" in the SDG framework?
 - (a) Prioritizing economic development over social policy
 - (b) Ensuring data is collected from high-income countries
 - (c) Focusing on average national indicators for progress
 - (d) Prioritizing the needs of the most marginalized populations

Passage – 3

Eighteen years spent in the belief that ee sala cup namde (this year the cup is ours), 17 of them ending in wretched disappointment for one of the IPL's biggest and most passionate fan bases, three of them ending with defeat at the final hurdle. Eighteen seasons in, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) are finally IPL champions. Their victory in their fourth final came at the expense of another trophy-less team that had put together a heartwarming IPL 2025 campaign;

it wasn't to be for Punjab Kings (PBKS), but their time will surely come too. It's a sign of how far T20 has come that 190 beating 184 was a bowler-dominated game. PBKS did brilliantly to restrict RCB to 190 after sending them in, but RCB's bowlers did even better, with Krunal Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Yash Dayal - who have all won IPL titles at other teams - bringing their experience and nous to play on an unusual Ahmedabad surface. The margin of victory was narrow - six runs - and while it showed how closely matched these two teams have been over the season, it was also deceptive. Shashank Singh, who finished on an unbeaten 30-ball 61, hit Josh Hazlewood for 6, 4, 6, 6 to end the match and the season. But those hits came just a touch too late; PBKS went into the final over needing 29, and Hazlewood had started with a pair of dots that all but ended the contest mathematically.

13. Which of the following teams did South Africa defeat to win their first ICC trophy in 27 years during the 2025 WTC Final?
(a) England (b) India (c) Australia (d) New Zealand
14. Who was the captain of Royal Challengers Bengaluru during their first-ever IPL title win in 2025?
(a) Faf du Plessis (b) Rajat Patidar (c) Virat Kohli (d) Glenn Maxwell
15. How many goals did PSG score in the 2025 UEFA Champions League final?
(a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) 5
16. What major domestic trophy did Newcastle United win in 2025, ending a 70-year drought?
(a) FA Cup (b) Community Shield (c) Premier League (d) Carabao Cup
17. Which team did Crystal Palace defeat to win their first-ever major trophy?
(a) Manchester City (b) Liverpool (c) Arsenal (d) Chelsea
18. What major personal achievement did Harry Kane accomplish in 2025?
(a) Premier League Golden Boot (b) First international hat-trick
(c) First league title (d) Ballon d'Or

Passage – 4

Rajasthan's [1] in Phalodi and [2] in Udaipur have been designated as Ramsar Sites, bringing the total number of internationally recognised wetlands in India to [3]. Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav congratulated the people of Rajasthan while announcing the update on social media platform X on June 4, just a day ahead of World Environment Day. Ramsar Sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. This intergovernmental treaty was established in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran and aims to conserve and promote the optimum use of wetlands for sustainable development. The Ramsar List, known as the List of Wetlands of International Importance currently includes over 2,500 sites across the world. As of June 5, 2025, there are over 2,500 Ramsar Sites in the world, covering more than 2.5 million square kilometres. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi planted a 'sindoor' sapling, presented to him by a group of women who had showed outstanding courage during the 1971 war. The gesture is being seen as an ode to Indian armed forces who recently conducted Operation Sindoor against terrorists in Pakistan. This plant will remain a strong symbol of the valour and inspiration of women of the country, Modi said on X. He said during his recent visit to Kutch, a group of women who had shown remarkable courage during the 1971 war met and presented him with the saplings during his recent tour of Gujarat. Touched by their gesture, the prime minister promised that he would plant the sapling at his 7, Lok Kalyan Marg residence. The choice of sapling holds significance as India had named its military response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack as Operation Sindoor to convey its commitment to avenge the targeted killings of men by terrorists, who did a religious profile of their victims.

19. Which of the following two wetlands from Rajasthan were newly designated as Ramsar Sites in June 2025 which has been redacted with [1] and [2] in the passage above?
(a) Khichan and Menar (b) Sambhar Lake and Keoladeo National Park
(c) Tal Chhapar and Sariska (d) Kumbhalgarh and Bassi

20. What is the total number of Ramsar Sites in India as of June 5, 2025 which has been redacted with [3] in the passage above?
 (a) 89 (b) 91 (c) 95 (d) 85
21. What of the following major international days is observed on June 5, the day after the Ramsar Site announcement?
 (a) World Water Day (b) International Day for Biological Diversity
 (c) World Environment Day (d) Earth Day
22. On which date is World Wetlands Day observed each year?
 (a) January 26 (b) February 2 (c) March 22 (d) April 7
23. Which of the following two Indian states got their first Ramsar Sites in 2025?
 (a) Chhattisgarh and Mizoram (b) Nagaland and Himachal Pradesh
 (c) Tripura and Haryana (d) Sikkim and Jharkhand
24. What is the symbolic importance of the 'sindoor' sapling planted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi?
 (a) It represents religious harmony
 (b) It commemorates World Environment Day
 (c) It honours brave women from the 1971 war
 (d) It marks the foundation of a wetland conservation centre

Passage – 5

Donald Trump was expected to fly into the NATO summit in The Hague on 24 June 2025 to perform a victory lap. After decades of complaining about European defence spending, with the help of Mark Rutte, NATO's new secretary general, allies are ready to sign up to a target to raise, in most cases, core defence spending to 3.5% of GDP by 2035. On top of that, it is just a few days since the first major military intervention of Trump's second term – the bombing of Iran's nuclear sites at Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan over the weekend – and hours since his declaration of a ceasefire between Israel and Iran. Barring a dramatic breakdown in that ceasefire, Trump is likely to arrive in a self-congratulatory mood, which most NATO leaders are unlikely to want to puncture at a cut-down summit, designed for leaders with short attention spans. It will begin with a dinner hosted by the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on Tuesday evening, to be followed by a single working meeting on Wednesday morning with press conferences thereafter. Concerns from earlier this year about whether Trump would reject NATO, withdraw US troops from Europe, abandon Ukraine and pursue a close relationship with Moscow have eased, though none have gone away. Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, is invited to the dinner, but not to a working meeting with NATO leaders, reflecting the softening US support for Kyiv, where fresh military aid has been halted under Trump.

25. What is the significance of the 2025 NATO Summit being held in The Hague, Netherlands?
 (a) It is the first summit to exclude the European Union
 (b) It marks the first time NATO has held a summit in the Netherlands
 (c) It launched NATO's official expansion into Asia-Pacific
 (d) It was held due to NATO headquarters moving to The Hague
26. Who among the following is currently serving as NATO Secretary General?
 (a) Jens Stoltenberg (b) Kristen Michal (c) Mark Rutte (d) Petr Pavel
27. Which of the following was the primary policy focus discussed at the 2025 NATO Summit?
 (a) Admitting Ukraine and Georgia into NATO
 (b) Setting a timeline for U.S. troop withdrawal from Europe
 (c) Creating a joint space defense agency
 (d) Increasing member states' defense spending to 5% of GDP
28. As of July 2025, which of the following countries is the newest member of NATO?
 (a) Sweden (b) Croatia (c) Finland (d) Georgia

Test - 5

Answers and Explanations

1. a The Vande Bharat Mission was India's largest repatriation operation to bring back Indian nationals stranded abroad due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.
2. d Operation Samudra Setu (2020-2021) was the Indian Navy's effort to bring back Indian citizens from overseas using naval ships as part of the Vande Bharat Mission.
3. c Operation Devi Shakti was initiated to evacuate Indian citizens and Afghan partners from Afghanistan after the Taliban took control in August 2021.
4. c Operation Ganga was a major evacuation effort launched in early 2022 to rescue Indian students and citizens stuck in Ukraine during the Russia-Ukraine war.
5. b Operation Dost was a search and rescue and humanitarian assistance mission launched after the devastating 2023 Turkey-Syria earthquake.
6. d Operation Ajay was launched to ensure the safe return of Indians from Israel amid escalating violence in 2023.
7. b India has ranked 99th out of 167 countries in the 2025 SDG Index, marking the first time it has entered the top 100. This is an improvement from previous years (109th in 2024, 112th in 2023, and so on).
8. c The SDG Index score ranges from 0 to 100, where 100 means all 17 SDGs have been fully achieved, and 0 means no progress. India scored 67, while top countries like Finland scored higher (above 85).
9. c The report highlights that only 17% of the 17 SDG targets are projected to be achieved globally by 2030, largely due to conflicts, fiscal constraints, and structural vulnerabilities across countries.
10. d While Nordic countries lead globally in overall SDG performance, they struggle particularly with goals related to climate change and biodiversity, due to unsustainable consumption patterns.
11. b The SDGs were adopted on 25 September 2015 during the 70th session of the UN General Assembly.
12. d The "Leave No One Behind" (LNOB) principle emphasizes the importance of including all individuals, particularly the most vulnerable, in progress and development initiatives. It means ensuring that no one is excluded from accessing resources, opportunities, and basic services due to factors like poverty, gender, disability, or other forms of marginalization. This principle is central to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and requires targeted interventions and inclusive monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
13. c South Africa beat Australia in the 2025 World Test Championship final at Lord's to win their first ICC trophy since 1998, ending a 27-year drought.
14. b Rajat Patidar captained RCB to their maiden IPL title in 2025, a remarkable rise for a player who once entered the league as an injury replacement.
15. d PSG defeated Inter Milan 5-0 in the UCL final-an emphatic win that secured their first Champions League title and marked a new team-oriented era. PSG won their first UCL after Mbappe's departure, underlining that the victory came not from individual brilliance but team cohesion.
16. d Newcastle United defeated Manchester City in the Carabao Cup Final, winning their first domestic trophy since the 1955 FA Cup.
17. a In a stunning upset, Crystal Palace beat Pep Guardiola's Manchester City to win the FA Cup-an iconic moment in their history.
18. c After years without silverware, Harry Kane lifted his first-ever league title by winning the Bundesliga with Bayern Munich.
19. a On June 4, 2025, Khichan in Phalodi and Menar in Udaipur, both in Rajasthan, were declared Ramsar Sites, increasing India's total to 91.
20. b With the addition of Khichan (Phalodi) and Menar (Udaipur) in Rajasthan, India's total number of internationally recognised Ramsar Sites reached 91 as of June 5, 2025.
21. c World Environment Day is celebrated on June 5 every year, and the announcement of new Ramsar Sites came on June 4, 2025, just ahead of this important day.
22. b World Wetlands Day is observed on 2nd February every year to mark the signing of the Ramsar Convention in 1971 at Ramsar, Iran. The theme for World Wetlands Day 2025 is "Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future", highlighting the need for collective action to preserve wetland ecosystems.
23. d In 2025, Sikkim (Khecheopalri Lake) and Jharkhand (Udhw Lake) received their first Ramsar Site recognitions, marking an important milestone for these states.
24. c The 'sindoor' sapling, planted by PM Modi, was a gift from women who displayed courage during the 1971 war, symbolising valour and inspiration, and aligning with Operation Sindoor's spirit.
25. b The 2025 summit is the first NATO summit to be hosted by the Netherlands, specifically in The Hague. This is symbolic, as Mark Rutte, the new NATO Secretary General, is both a native of The Hague and a former Dutch Prime Minister.
26. c Mark Rutte, the former Prime Minister of the Netherlands, succeeded Jens Stoltenberg as the Secretary General of NATO. The 2025 summit was his inaugural summit as Secretary General.
27. d A key discussion at the 2025 summit was the proposal for NATO members to increase their defense spending to 5% of GDP, a significant escalation from the long-standing 2% guideline. This move is in response to rising security threats and geopolitical tensions.
28. a Sweden officially joined NATO in March 2024, becoming the 32nd member after Turkey and Hungary dropped objections. Finland joined earlier, in April 2023. Ukraine and Georgia are not NATO members yet, though Ukraine is a close partner.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Leaders of the BRICS group of developing nations prepared to address the shared challenges of climate change on Monday, the final day of their summit in Rio de Janeiro, demanding that wealthy nations fund global mitigation of greenhouse emissions. Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has touted the importance of the Global South in tackling global warming as he prepares to host the United Nations climate summit in November. Still, a joint statement from BRICS leaders released, argued that fossil fuels will continue to play an important role in the global energy mix, particularly in developing economies. "We live in a moment of many contradictions in the whole world. The important thing is that we are willing to overcome these contradictions," Brazil's Environment Minister Marina Silva said on the sidelines of the summit, when asked about the plans to extract oil off the coast of the Amazon rainforest.

In their joint statement, BRICS leaders underscored that providing climate finance "is a responsibility of developed countries towards developing countries," which is the standard position for emerging economies in global negotiations. Their declaration also mentioned the group's support for a fund that Brazil proposed to protect endangered forests - the Tropical Forests Forever Facility - as a way for emerging economies to fund climate change mitigation beyond the mandatory requirements imposed on wealthy nations by the 2015 Paris Agreement. China and the UAE signaled in meetings with Brazilian Finance Minister Fernando Haddad in Rio that they plan to invest in the fund, two sources with knowledge of the discussions. The joint statement from BRICS leaders also blasted policies such as carbon border taxes and anti-deforestation laws, which Europe has recently adopted, for imposing what they called "discriminatory protectionist measures" under the pretext of environmental concerns.

1. What was the theme of the 17th BRICS Summit?
 - (a) Global Financial Reform and Climate Justice
 - (b) Deepening BRICS Engagement with Western Democracies
 - (c) Toward Multipolarity: Reforming Global Institutions
 - (d) Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance
2. Which major declaration was adopted at the conclusion of the 17th BRICS Summit?
 - (a) The Shanghai Accord
 - (b) The Global South Pact
 - (c) The Rio de Janeiro Declaration
 - (d) The Brasilia Initiative
3. How did Russian President Vladimir Putin participate in the 17th BRICS Summit?
 - (a) He attended in person.
 - (b) He participated virtually.
 - (c) He did not participate at all due to ICC restrictions.
 - (d) He sent a representative instead.
4. What demand did BRICS leaders make regarding climate finance at the summit?
 - (a) That wealthy nations must fund global mitigation efforts.
 - (b) That all countries, regardless of economic status, contribute equally.
 - (c) That climate finance should come primarily from developing countries.
 - (d) That multinational corporations replace states in funding climate action.
5. What contradiction is acknowledged by the BRICS joint statement?
 - (a) Support for both nuclear and coal energy.
 - (b) Promotion of anti-deforestation laws and logging permits.
 - (c) Advocacy for climate action while recognizing fossil fuels' ongoing role.
 - (d) Calls for sanctions while promoting fossil fuel exports.

6. How did BRICS leaders view recent European environmental policies like carbon border taxes?
- (a) As crucial for promoting fairness in trade
 - (b) As examples of effective global leadership
 - (c) As minor and largely irrelevant to developing countries
 - (d) As discriminatory and protectionist in nature

Passage – 2

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on July 7, 2025 said that the ambitious Kaladan project between India and Myanmar, which is aimed at reducing the Northeast's distance from the rest of the country, will be operational by 2027. Addressing a press conference in Guwahati, Mr. Sonowal said the distance between Aizawl and Kolkata will be shortened by 700 km once the project is ready. "The Sittwe port in Myanmar is ready. Now work is going on to develop the road connectivity to Aizawl. The entire Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project will be operational by 2027," he added. Mr. Sonowal, the minister of ports, shipping and waterways, said that his ministry is investing Rs.1,000 crore in developing the waterways of the project, while other agencies are taking care of the rest. He said that the Northeastern region will play a critical role in reviving the economic prosperity of India. "PM Narendra Modi said that transformation should be done through transportation. As per his direction, we want to develop Northeast as the business hub of South Asia. For that, waterways will play a crucial role," Mr. Sonowal said. The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport project was jointly identified by the two countries to create a multi-modal mode of transport for the shipment of cargo from the eastern ports of India to Myanmar, as well as to the Northeast, through the Southeast Asian country.

7. Which of the following two locations are directly mentioned as benefiting from a 700 km reduction in distance due to the Kaladan project?
- (a) Sittwe and Silchar
 - (b) Kolkata and Aizawl
 - (c) Guwahati and Yangon
 - (d) Imphal and Mandalay
8. Which of the following statements best reflects the strategic purpose of the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project?
- (a) It is designed to ensure energy security by directly connecting oil pipelines to Indian refineries from Southeast Asia.
 - (b) It aims to strengthen maritime military presence in the Bay of Bengal by enabling port-based defense logistics.
 - (c) It is a trade and connectivity initiative to transport cargo between eastern India and the Northeast via Myanmar.
 - (d) It serves to develop aviation corridors for medical and disaster-relief logistics across northeastern states.
9. The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project connects India with Myanmar through which port?
- (a) Kyaukpyu
 - (b) Sittwe
 - (c) Myeik
 - (d) Dawei
10. What is the currency of Myanmar?
- (a) Kyat
 - (b) Kip
 - (c) Riel
 - (d) Baht
11. The Rohingya crisis in Myanmar is mainly concentrated in which state?
- (a) Shan State
 - (b) Kayin State
 - (c) Rakhine State
 - (d) Kachin State
12. India and Myanmar are members of which of the following regional organizations?
- (a) SAARC only
 - (b) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) only
 - (c) ASEAN only
 - (d) BIMSTEC only

Passage – 3

In a landmark collaboration, NASA and ISRO are gearing up to launch the NISAR satellite. It is an ambitious \$1.5 billion Earth-observation mission that could redefine how we track changes on our planet. The satellite is scheduled to launch this July from India's Satish Dhawan Space Centre. NISAR (NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar) is designed to monitor Earth's surface with unprecedented centimetre-level precision, day or night, rain or shine. Equipped with a massive 12-meter radar antenna and weighing nearly three tonnes, NISAR is built to deliver near-real-time data on critical challenges like agricultural trends, climate shifts, natural disasters, and environmental changes. Its insights are expected to benefit scientists, farmers, and disaster-response teams globally, making it one of the most anticipated Earth science missions in recent memory. Most Earth-observing satellites rely on sunlight to capture surface images, limiting their use to daylight hours and clear skies. This makes them less effective in cloudy regions, like the tropics, or during nighttime events. The NASA-ISRO partnership aims to bridge this gap. With NISAR's advanced radar system, the mission will provide continuous, all-weather imaging, delivering more accurate and timely insights into environmental conditions, natural calamities, and agricultural developments. At the core of NISAR is Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)—a technology originally developed for military reconnaissance in the 1950s. Unlike traditional optical sensors, SAR actively sends radar signals to the Earth's surface and captures the reflections. It functions like a camera flash in the dark, allowing it to "see" through clouds, smoke, and dense vegetation, regardless of the time of day or weather conditions.

13. What major technological feature enables NISAR to function effectively in all weather and lighting conditions?
 - (a) Dual-solar panel design
 - (b) Synthetic Aperture Radar
 - (c) Optical Imaging Sensors
 - (d) Laser Interferometry
14. How often will NISAR revisit most land and ice surfaces?
 - (a) Every 12 days
 - (b) Every 6 hours
 - (c) Every 24 hours
 - (d) Every 3 months
15. Which of the following is NOT a function or capability of the NISAR satellite?
 - (a) Monitoring forest biomass
 - (b) Detecting oil spills
 - (c) Tracking glacier movement
 - (d) Conducting military surveillance
16. What is a unique hardware milestone achieved by NISAR?
 - (a) First satellite with onboard AI
 - (b) First NASA-ISRO mission using a cryogenic engine
 - (c) First satellite to carry dual-frequency radars
 - (d) First weather satellite using geostationary radar
17. Why is NISAR considered especially valuable for tropical regions?
 - (a) Because it is unaffected by cloud cover and rain
 - (b) Because it uses ultraviolet imaging, ideal for humid areas
 - (c) Because it is optimized for equatorial orbital inclination
 - (d) Because it uses thermal imaging instead of radar
18. How will NISAR benefit disaster response efforts?
 - (a) By predicting tsunamis through ocean floor scanning
 - (b) By enabling real-time 3D video feeds of disasters
 - (c) By detecting millimetre-level ground shifts during events like earthquakes or landslides
 - (d) By relaying emergency alerts through satellite phones

Passage – 4

The dissatisfaction with British rule intensified in the 1870s and 1880s. The Arms Act was passed in 1878, disallowing Indians from possessing arms. In the same year, the Vernacular Press Act was also enacted in an effort to silence those who were critical of the government. The Act allowed the government to confiscate the assets of newspapers including their printing presses if the newspapers published anything that was found "objectionable". In 1883, there was a furore over the attempt by the government to introduce the Ilbert Bill. The bill provided for the trial of British or European persons by Indians, and sought equality between British and Indian judges in the country. But when white opposition forced the government to withdraw the bill, Indians were enraged. The event highlighted the racial attitudes of the British in India. The need for an all-India organisation of educated Indians had been felt since 1880, but the Ilbert Bill controversy deepened this desire. The Indian National Congress was established when 72 delegates from all over the country met at Bombay in December 1885. The early leadership - Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, W.C. Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerji, Romesh Chandra Dutt, S. Subramania Iyer, among others - was largely from Bombay and Calcutta. Naoroji, a businessman and publicist settled in London, and for a time member of the British Parliament, guided the younger nationalists. A retired British official, A.O. Hume, also played a part in bringing Indians from the various regions together.

19. What was the primary restriction imposed by the Arms Act of 1878?
 - (a) Indians could no longer manufacture firearms.
 - (b) British officials had exclusive rights to use armed forces.
 - (c) Indians were prohibited from possessing arms without license.
 - (d) Arms trading between Indian states was banned.

20. What did the Vernacular Press Act of 1878 empower the government to do?
 - (a) Nationalize all Indian newspapers.
 - (b) Enforce censorship over British newspapers.
 - (c) Promote newspapers in regional Indian languages.
 - (d) Confiscate printing presses of newspapers publishing "objectionable" content.

21. What did the Ilbert Bill of 1883 propose?
 - (a) Abolishing the zamindari system.
 - (b) Allowing Indian judges to try European/ British persons.
 - (c) Granting voting rights to Indians.
 - (d) Establishing Indian control over the press.

22. What was the reaction of the British government to the opposition to the Ilbert Bill?
 - (a) The bill was passed with minor modifications.
 - (b) The bill was expanded to include Indian women judges.
 - (c) The bill was withdrawn under white opposition pressure.
 - (d) The government punished protestors against the bill.

23. What major political development took place in December 1885?
 - (a) Partition of Bengal
 - (b) Formation of the Indian National Congress
 - (c) Resignation of British Viceroy
 - (d) Adoption of the Constitution of India

24. Who among the following was not among the early leaders of the Indian National Congress?
 - (a) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
 - (b) Badruddin Tyabji
 - (c) Surendranath Banerji
 - (d) Romesh Chandra Dutt

Passage – 5

For most tennis players in history, a defeat as excruciating as Jannik Sinner's brutal loss to [1] in the French Open final would have taken years to recover from. In Sinner's case, the pain he endured simply made him stronger. One month on from the toughest night of his life on a tennis court, Sinner turned the tables at the earliest possible opportunity, demonstrating his resilience by recovering from a set down to win his first Wimbledon title with a phenomenal performance, toppling the two-time defending champion, [1], 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 6-4. Sinner is the first Italian player to win a Wimbledon singles title and he now stands as a four-time grand slam champion. He breaks his overall tie with an assortment of famous names, including Arthur Ashe, Andy Murray and Stan Wawrinka. Perhaps most important, he ends his great rival's run of five consecutive wins against him, adding a new dimension to a rivalry that seems set to decide the majority of major tournaments in the near future. In their own personal grand slam race, which still feels like it has only just begun, Sinner's victory ensures that [1], who owns five major titles, remains within touching distance. This is also Sinner's first slam title away from hard courts, after two victories at the Australian Open and last year's US Open title.

25. Who among the following did Jannik Sinner defeat to win his first Wimbledon title whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) Novak Djokovic (b) Daniil Medvedev
(c) Carlos Alcaraz (d) Andy Murray
26. Who among the following holds the all-time record of 24 major singles titles, making him the most successful men's singles player in Grand Slam history?
- (a) Roger Federer (b) Novak Djokovic
(c) Rafael Nadal (d) Pete Sampras
27. Who among the following won the Wimbledon 2025 women's singles title?
- (a) Iga Swiatek (b) Amanda Anisimova
(c) Aryna Sabalenka (d) Elena Rybakina
28. Who among the following holds the record for the most Grand Slam singles titles in women's tennis history?
- (a) Steffi Graf (b) Serena Williams
(c) Martina Navratilova (d) Margaret Court

Test - 6

Answers and Explanations

1. d The 17th BRICS Summit took place in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil on 6th and 7th July 2025. The theme this year was "Strengthening Global South Cooperation for a More Inclusive and Sustainable Governance".
2. c At the end of this summit, the "Rio de Janeiro Declaration" was adopted to represent a strategic shift towards expansion, inclusivity and strong south-south cooperation.
3. b The 2025 BRICS summit was the seventeenth annual BRICS summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Chinese leader Xi Jinping did not attend the summit for the first time since succeeding Hu Jintao as CCP General Secretary in 2012. Russian president Vladimir Putin participated virtually. In March 2023, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin for war crimes during the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
4. a The passage clearly states that BRICS leaders demanded wealthy nations fund the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions, emphasizing a long-standing position of the Global South in climate negotiations.
5. c While emphasizing climate action, the BRICS joint statement acknowledges that fossil fuels will continue to be important, especially for developing economies - highlighting internal policy contradictions.
6. d The joint statement criticized carbon border taxes and anti-deforestation laws as "discriminatory protectionist measures" imposed under the pretext of environmental protection.
7. b Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal stated that the distance between Aizawl and Kolkata would be reduced by 700 km after the completion of the project.
8. c The passage emphasizes that the Kaladan project is a commercial and connectivity project that will facilitate cargo transport from India's eastern ports to Myanmar and the Northeast, not a defense or aviation initiative.
9. b Sittwe Port, developed with Indian assistance, is the maritime entry point in the Kaladan project, aimed at improving connectivity between India's Northeast and Southeast Asia through Myanmar.
10. a The official currency of Myanmar is the Myanmar Kyat (MMK).
11. c The Rohingya Muslim minority primarily lives in Rakhine State, which has been the center of humanitarian and refugee crises due to ethnic conflict and displacement.
12. d BIMSTEC only (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation): Both India and Myanmar are full members of BIMSTEC. Other members include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation): India is a member. Myanmar is NOT a member of SAARC. Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO): India is a full member of SCO. Myanmar is NOT a member of SCO. ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations): Myanmar is a member of ASEAN. India is NOT a member; India is a dialogue partner of ASEAN.
13. b Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) allows NISAR to capture high-resolution images through clouds, smoke, and at night, unlike traditional optical satellites.
14. a NISAR will revisit almost all land and ice surfaces every 12 days, ensuring frequent updates and improved monitoring.
15. d While SAR technology was originally developed for military use, NISAR is a civilian Earth-observation mission and is not intended for military surveillance.
16. c NISAR is the first satellite equipped with dual-frequency radar systems, enhancing its ability to detect subtle surface changes and vegetation structures.
17. a Traditional satellites struggle with cloudy or rainy tropical conditions, but SAR-equipped NISAR works in all weather, making it ideal for such regions.
18. c NISAR's radar can detect minute changes in the Earth's surface, such as ground shifts from earthquakes or landslides, providing timely data for disaster response teams.
19. c The Arms Act (1878) disallowed Indians from possessing arms, aiming to curb potential resistance. It reflected a repressive colonial policy targeting Indian autonomy and self-defense.
20. d In the same year, the Vernacular Press Act was also enacted in an effort to silence those who were critical of the government. The Act allowed the government to confiscate the assets of newspapers including their printing presses if the newspapers published anything that was found "objectionable".
21. b The Ilbert Bill aimed at legal equality, proposing that Indian judges could try British subjects, which angered European residents and led to racist opposition.
22. c Due to strong racial opposition by the European community, the government withdrew the Ilbert Bill, provoking Indian outrage and deepening the call for self-representation.
23. b In December 1885, 72 Indian delegates from across the country gathered in Bombay to establish the Indian National Congress (INC), marking the birth of a national political movement. A.O. Hume, a retired British civil servant, played a key role in bringing Indian leaders together, encouraging early political organization among educated Indians.
24. a Bal Gangadhar Tilak joined the Congress later, emerging as a radical leader in the 1890s. He was not among the founding members listed in 1885.
25. c The passage states that Sinner defeated Carlos Alcaraz, the two-time defending champion, in the Wimbledon final, turning around a past loss in the French Open.
26. b Novak Djokovic holds the all-time record of 24 major singles titles, including a record 10 Australian Open titles. He is the only singles player to hold all four majors simultaneously across three different surfaces (2016), and the only one to complete a triple Career Grand Slam (2023). Novak Djokovic holds the all-time record of 24 Grand Slam singles titles, surpassing both Federer (20) and Nadal (22), making him the most successful men's player in Grand Slam history. Rafael Nadal: Has 22 Grand Slam titles, including a record 14 French Open wins, but still trails Djokovic.
27. a The passage states that Iga Swiatek won her maiden Wimbledon title, defeating Amanda Anisimova in the final with a dominant performance.
28. d The woman who has won the most Grand Slam singles titles in tennis history is Margaret Court, with a total of 24 titles. She achieved this feat across the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, and US Open. Serena Williams is second with 23 titles.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

The Supreme Court on July 10 declined to restrain the Election Commission of India (ECI) from going ahead with its Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, but advised it to consider allowing Aadhaar, voter ID cards, and ration cards as valid documents for updating the rolls. There is widespread political opposition and significant confusion on the ground in the poll-bound state over the ECI's new requirement that even existing electors, if enrolled after 2003, must furnish documentary proof to establish their date and/ or place of birth, which is then used to determine citizenship. An intensive revision involves a full, fresh preparation of electoral rolls through house-to-house enumeration. Enumerators visit every household to record eligible electors as of a qualifying date, without reference to existing rolls.

This is done when the ECI determines that the current rolls are outdated, inaccurate, or require complete rebuilding - typically before major elections or after administrative exercises such as delimitation of constituencies. A second type of revision is a "summary" revision. This is routine annual updating, in which existing rolls are published as drafts, and citizens file claims for inclusion, deletion, or correction. There are no door-to-door visits. A third type, "special" revision, is undertaken in exceptional cases such as missed areas, large-scale errors, or legal or political exigencies. The ECI may, under Section 21(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, conduct a special revision using either summary or intensive methods, or a combination of both.

Each kind of revision has a specific purpose: intensive is for comprehensive overhaul; summary for routine maintenance; special for addressing specific deficiencies or extraordinary circumstances requiring tailored approaches. The nomenclature "Special Intensive Revision" (SIR) indicates that the ECI is exercising its discretionary powers under Section 21(3) of the 1950 law, which permits it to revise electoral rolls "in such manner as it thinks fit". For this exercise, the ECI has adopted a hybrid approach - combining door-to-door field verification that is characteristic of an intensive revision with elements of a summary revision, such as the reliance on existing electoral rolls to distribute enumeration forms.

1. Under which legal provisions has the Election Commission of India invoked its authority to carry out the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in Bihar?
 - (a) Article 323 of the Constitution and the Census Act, 1948
 - (b) Article 324 of the Constitution and the Representation of People Act, 1950
 - (c) Article 326 of the Constitution and the Citizenship Act, 1955
 - (d) Representation of People Act, 1951 and Election Symbols Order, 1968
2. Which of the following is not listed as a component of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in Bihar?
 - (a) Introduction of EVMs in gram sabhas
 - (b) Physical verification of electors
 - (c) Restructuring of polling stations
 - (d) Final publication of electoral rolls
3. What historic electoral milestone did Bihar achieve on June 28, 2025?
 - (a) It became the first state to implement blockchain-based voting.
 - (b) It introduced facial recognition for polling booth access.
 - (c) It became the first state where voters cast their votes using mobile phones.
 - (d) It conducted state assembly elections entirely online.
4. Why has the Election Commission of India (ECI)'s move triggered public concern and criticism?
 - (a) Because it mandates online-only registration.
 - (b) Because it may lead to mass disenfranchisement and fears of NRC-like implementation.
 - (c) Because it excludes urban residents from verification.
 - (d) Because it reduces the voting age to 16.

5. Which category of voters must provide proof of both their date/place of birth and that of both parents?
(a) Those born before July 1, 1987
(b) Those born between July 1, 1987 and December 2, 2004
(c) Those born after December 2, 2004
(d) All existing voters regardless of birth year
6. What is unique about the "Special Intensive Revision" (SIR) currently being conducted in Bihar?
(a) It is based solely on digital Aadhaar data.
(b) It is the first revision after the delimitation exercise.
(c) It uses only satellite mapping to locate electors.
(d) It combines features of both intensive and summary revision methods.

Passage – 2

The Axiom-04 mission has successfully concluded with the return of ISRO Gaganyatri Shubhanshu Shukla, marking a proud moment both for ISRO and India as he returned after a historic 18-day scientific mission aboard the International Space Station (ISS). Launched on June 25, 2025, aboard the SpaceX Dragon spacecraft, the mission was conducted in collaboration with NASA, Axiom Space, ESA, and other international partners. During his stay aboard the ISS, Shubhanshu Shukla adapted exceptionally well to the microgravity environment. Despite the physical and psychological challenges of spaceflight, he maintained optimal health throughout the mission. He captured a wide array of photographs and videos documenting life and work in orbit. Gaganyatri Shubhanshu Shukla completed a suite of seven microgravity experiments developed by Indian research institutions under the Human Space Flight Centre's (HSFC) coordination. These experiments explored muscle regeneration, algal growth, crop viability, microbial survivability, cognitive performance in space, and the behaviour of cyanobacteria—each aimed at enhancing understanding of human spaceflight and microgravity science. All experiments were completed successfully, and samples have been returned for detailed post-flight analysis. Shubhanshu Shukla worked in close partnership with members of Axiom-04 Crew and Expedition 73, contributing to the daily rhythm of ISS operations and supporting joint science, maintenance, and outreach efforts. He participated in integrated crew timelines, shared resources aboard the Harmony module, and coordinated multiple crossover activities, fostering international cooperation in space.

7. Who among the following served as the commander of the Axiom-04 mission?
(a) Michael Lopez-Alegría
(b) Shubhanshu Shukla
(c) Peggy Whitson
(d) Tibor Kapu
8. Which of the following countries had astronauts on Axiom-04 mission conducting their first government-sponsored ISS mission?
(a) India, Poland, Hungary
(b) India, Germany, Hungary
(c) Brazil, India, Japan
(d) USA, Hungary, Poland
9. Where did the Axiom-04 spacecraft splash down after returning from space?
(a) Gulf of Mexico
(b) Arabian Sea
(c) Atlantic Ocean near Florida
(d) Pacific Ocean off San Diego
10. What was the total duration of the Axiom-04 mission in space?
(a) 10 days
(b) 18 days
(c) 14 days
(d) 21 days
11. Which Indian initiative did Axiom-04 mission directly contribute to?
(a) Mangalyaan 3
(b) Chandrayaan-4
(c) Gaganyaan
(d) Shukrayaan

12. Which of the following experiments was designed to study muscle regeneration in microgravity?
- (a) Myogenesis
 - (b) Voyager Tardigrade
 - (c) Space Microalgae
 - (d) Cyanobacteria in Microgravity

Passage – 3

U.S. President Donald Trump announced new weapons for Ukraine on 14 July 2025, and threatened sanctions on buyers of Russian exports unless Russia agrees a peace deal, a major policy shift brought on by frustration with Moscow's ongoing attacks on its neighbor. But Trump's threat of sanctions came with a 50-day grace period, a move that was welcomed by investors in Russia where the rouble recovered from earlier losses and stock markets rose. Sitting with NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte in the Oval Office, Trump told reporters he was disappointed in Russian President Vladimir Putin and that billions of dollars of U.S. weapons would go to Ukraine. "We're going to make top-of-the-line weapons, and they'll be sent to NATO," Trump said, adding that Washington's NATO allies would pay for them. The weapons would include Patriot air defence missiles Ukraine has urgently sought. "It's a full complement with the batteries," Trump said. "We're going to have some come very soon, within days... a couple of the countries that have Patriots are going to swap over and will replace the Patriots with the ones they have."

Some or all of 17 Patriot batteries ordered by other countries could be sent to Ukraine "very quickly", he said. Rutte said Germany, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Canada all wanted to be a part of rearming Ukraine. Trump's threat to impose so-called secondary sanctions on Russia, if carried out, would be a major shift in Western sanctions policy. Lawmakers from both U.S. political parties are pushing for a bill that would authorise such measures, targeting other countries that buy Russian oil. Throughout the more than three-year-old war, Western countries have cut most of their own financial ties to Moscow, but have held back from taking steps that would restrict Russia from selling its oil elsewhere. That has allowed Moscow to continue earning hundreds of billions of dollars from shipping oil to buyers such as China and India. "We're going to be doing secondary tariffs," Trump said. "If we don't have a deal in 50 days, it's very simple, and they'll be at 100%."

13. What does the acronym "Patriot" stand for in the context of the US Army's missile defense system?
- (a) Passive Tracking and Radar Intercept Operation Technology
 - (b) Phased Array Tracking Radar for Intercept on Target
 - (c) Precision Aerial Target Radar and Intercepting Optical Technology
 - (d) Projectile Advanced Targeting and Rapid Interception Operations Technology
14. What types of aerial threats can the latest Patriot interceptors engage?
- (a) Short-range ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, and drones
 - (b) Only intercontinental ballistic missiles
 - (c) Only helicopters and fighter jets
 - (d) High-orbit satellites and meteorological rockets
15. What key condition did President Donald Trump place before imposing secondary sanctions on Russian oil buyers?
- (a) A guarantee that China stops oil purchases from Russia
 - (b) Withdrawal of NATO troops from Eastern Europe
 - (c) Complete disarmament of Ukraine
 - (d) A peace deal between Ukraine and Russia within 50 days
16. Why did Russian markets react positively to Donald Trump's sanctions announcement despite its tough tone?
- (a) Because it offered Russia unrestricted military trade
 - (b) Because the U.S. lifted all existing sanctions temporarily
 - (c) Because the announcement included a 50-day grace period before sanctions take effect
 - (d) Because Ukraine agreed to halt counterattacks

17. What is meant by "secondary sanctions" as used in the passage?
(a) Direct sanctions placed on Russian defense companies
(b) Penalties on U.S. companies for trading with non-NATO countries
(c) Sanctions targeting third-party countries that continue to buy Russian exports, especially oil
(d) Sanctions affecting citizens of countries supporting Ukraine militarily
18. In the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, frequent references have been made to the 'Iron Dome'. What does it refer to?
(a) A network of geospatially distributed radar domes used for atmospheric monitoring and early warning detection.
(b) A next-generation electromagnetic barrier system designed to neutralize cyber and electronic warfare attacks.
(c) A subterranean detection array developed for identifying cross-border tunneling and seismic disturbances.
(d) A multipurpose missile defense system designed to protect against a wide range of indirect and aerial threats.

Passage – 4

In a remarkable decision taken at the 47th Session of the World Heritage Committee, India's official nomination for 2024-25 cycle, 'Maratha Military Landscapes of India' got inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, becoming India's 44th property to receive this recognition. This global accolade celebrates India's enduring cultural legacy, showcasing its diverse traditions of architectural brilliance, regional identity, and historical continuity. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Minister of Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat along with Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Devendra Fadnavis lauded the historic milestone and congratulated the people of India for this achievement. Spanning from the 17th to 19th centuries CE, this extraordinary network of twelve forts demonstrates the strategic military vision and architectural ingenuity of the Maratha Empire. The proposal was sent to the consideration of World Heritage Committee in Jan 2024 and after a rigorous eighteen-month long process involving several technical meetings with the advisory bodies and visit of ICOMOS's mission to review the sites, this historic decision was taken by the members of the World Heritage Committee today evening at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. Spread across the states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, the selected sites, include Salher, Shivneri, Lohgad, Khanderi, Raigad, Rajgad, Pratapgad, Suvarnadurg, Panhala, Vijaydurg, and Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, along with Gingee Fort in Tamil Nadu.

19. Which of the following sets includes only forts from Maharashtra that are part of the Maratha Military Landscapes World Heritage listing?
(a) Shivneri, Raigad, Gingee, Sindhudurg
(b) Salher, Khanderi, Rajgad, Gingee
(c) Lohgad, Rajgad, Vijaydurg, Shivneri
(d) Gingee, Raigad, Panhala, Khanderi
20. Which Indian site was inscribed in the World Heritage List at the 46th Session of the Committee held in New Delhi?
(a) Moidams of Charaideo
(b) Hoysala Temples
(c) Rakhigarhi Harappan Site
(d) Ramappa Temple
21. What rank does India hold globally in terms of the number of World Heritage Sites?
(a) 5th
(b) 3rd
(c) 6th
(d) 7th
22. Who is the nodal agency for all World Heritage-related matters in India?
(a) Ministry of Culture
(b) National Monument Authority
(c) UNESCO India Chapter
(d) Archaeological Survey of India

23. The purpose of including these heritage sites in UNESCO's list is _____.
- (a) to increase international tourism and boost local economies.
 - (b) to preserve and promote shared heritage based on Outstanding Universal Values.
 - (c) to ensure national governments gain complete control over heritage sites.
 - (d) to prioritize modern constructions over ancient monuments.
24. The Maratha Military Landscape of India was nominated under criteria of which of the following?
- (a) recognizing their exceptional testimony to a living cultural tradition
 - (b) their architectural and technological significance, and their deep associations with historic events and traditions
 - (c) recognizing their exceptional military power and ports building skills
 - (d) Both (a) and (b) are correct

Passage – 5

An NGO, Population Foundation of India, has urged a shift away from fear-driven debates on overpopulation or fertility decline, calling instead for policies that centre on dignity, rights, and opportunities, particularly for women, youth, and the elderly. The NGO, in a statement on World Population Day 2025 on [1], asserted that India's population challenges are not about numbers but about justice, equity, and investment in human potential. "India's population story is not a crisis, it's a crossroads," Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director of the Population Foundation of India, said during a function marking the occasion. World Population Day is being observed under the global theme: [2]. India, now the world's most populous country, reflects the full range of demographic experiences, from high fertility and unmet reproductive needs in States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to ageing populations and below-replacement fertility in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the statement added. While India's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) stands at 2.0, more than 24 million married women still lack access to contraceptives and early marriages and unsafe abortions further restrict reproductive choices. The foundation urged policymakers to abandon fear-based narratives and called for strengthened care systems and a rights-based approach to the population. "If we centre people, especially women, youngsters, and the elderly in our policies, population trends will not be a crisis, but a path to a more just and resilient future," the statement concluded.

25. The World Population Day is an annual event observed on [1], which of the following has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) July 11
 - (b) June 11
 - (c) August 15
 - (d) September 21
26. What is the theme for World Population Day 2025, which has been redacted with [2] in the passage above?
- (a) Building a sustainable population future for all.
 - (b) Equal access to health and education for every child.
 - (c) Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world.
 - (d) Managing urban population growth through smart cities.
27. Why was Varsha Deshpande awarded the 2025 United Nations Population Award in the individual category?
- (a) For pioneering environmental conservation programs across South Asia.
 - (b) For her decades-long work promoting gender equality and reproductive rights.
 - (c) For developing India's first national census on maternal health.
 - (d) For her contributions to population genetics and fertility research.
28. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which age group is considered the working-age population in the context of demographic dividend?
- (a) 12-60 years
 - (b) 18- 65 years
 - (c) 20-70 years
 - (d) 15-64 years

Test - 7

Answers and Explanations

1. b Invoking the Constitution's Article 324 and the Representation of People Act, 1950, the ECI has directed a 'revision' of the electoral rolls in Bihar, marking July 1, 2025 as the qualifying date. Split in multiple phases, the SIR will comprise physical verification of Bihar's eligible electors, restructuring of polling stations, updation and preparation of revised electoral rolls, decide on claims and final publication of electoral rolls.
2. a ECI lists physical verification, polling station restructuring, revision of electoral rolls, and publication of final rolls as part of the SIR. EVMs in gram sabhas is not mentioned and is unrelated to the revision process.
3. c Bihar on June 28, 2025 became the first State in India where voters exercised their franchise through mobile phones. The voting was part of the municipal bypolls and election in six Nagar Panchayats in the State. The districts where the polls were held include Patna, Buxar, Rohtas and East Champaran.
4. b EC's decision has triggered concerns about disenfranchisement, exclusion, and whether this might serve as a backdoor for NRC, due to the strict proof-of-citizenship requirements.
5. c The EC guidelines specify that voters born after December 2, 2004 must provide proof of their own date/place of birth and that of both their parents, making this group subject to the strictest documentation requirement.
6. d The passage calls the current revision a "hybrid approach": combining door-to-door field verification (from intensive revision) with elements like distribution of forms based on existing rolls (from summary revision). Hence, it is termed Special Intensive Revision (SIR).
7. c Peggy Whitson, an experienced astronaut and Axiom Space employee, was the commander of Axiom-04 mission and was on her fifth spaceflight. The spacecraft used for Axiom-04 mission was Crew Dragon Grace (C213), marking its maiden flight. In addition to the rocket's liquid oxygen leak, a leak in the ISS's Zvezda module caused an additional two-week delay in launch. The original launch was scheduled for June 11, but due to a liquid oxygen leak and issues with the ISS module, the final launch happened on June 25, 2025.
8. a The mission marked the first ISS mission sponsored by the governments of India, Hungary, and Poland, though each had one prior Interkosmos astronaut in the past.
9. d The mission ended with a splashdown off the coast of San Diego in the Pacific Ocean on July 15, 2025.
10. b The crew stayed on the ISS for 18 days before undocking and splashing down in the Pacific Ocean.
11. c The mission supported ISRO's Gaganyaan initiative, offering practical experience in human spaceflight operations.
12. a The Myogenesis experiment, conducted by InStem, focused on muscle regeneration using metabolic supplements in a microgravity environment.
13. b The Patriots, short for Phased Array Tracking Radar for Intercept on Target, are the US Army's key missile defense system. They most recently proved their worth last month, when they helped shoot down 13 out of 14 incoming Iranian missiles that were launched at the US Air Force's Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar.
14. a The latest versions of Patriot interceptors are capable of engaging incoming short-range ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and drones at altitudes up to 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) and distances of up to 35 kilometers.
15. d President Donald Trump announced a 50-day grace period before imposing secondary sanctions on buyers of Russian oil, making it contingent on Russia agreeing to a peace deal.
16. c The 50-day delay before any sanctions would be imposed gave investors confidence and short-term relief, causing the rouble to recover and markets to rise.
17. c Secondary sanctions are penalties imposed not on the primary target (Russia), but on other countries (like China or India) that continue buying Russian oil, potentially cutting Moscow's largest source of revenue.
18. d The Iron Dome is a mobile, all-weather missile defense system developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries. It is designed to intercept and destroy short-range rockets, artillery shells, and mortars that are fired from distances of 4 to 70 kilometers and are headed toward populated areas in Israel. (a) is incorrect because it refers to radar domes or weather monitoring systems, not missile defense. (b) is misleading-it sounds plausible but refers to cyber/electronic warfare, not physical projectile interception. (c) refers to tunnel or seismic detection, which is a separate defense capability unrelated to the Iron Dome.
19. c The passage lists Gingee Fort as the only site in Tamil Nadu, while the others listed-Lohgad, Rajgad, Vijaydurg, Shivneri-are all in Maharashtra. Thus, (c) is the only set entirely from Maharashtra.
20. a Last year, the Moidams of Charaideo, Assam were inscribed in the World Heritage List at the 46th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in New Delhi.
21. c India ranks 6th globally and 2nd in Asia Pacific Region for the most number of World Heritage Sites. 196 nations have ratified the World Heritage Convention, 1972.
22. d On behalf of Government of India, Archaeological Survey of India is the nodal agency of all the World Heritage related matters in the country.
23. b The purpose of including these heritage sites in UNESCO's list is to preserve and promote shared heritage based on OUVs (Outstanding Universal Values) found in cultural, natural as well as mixed properties across 196 countries. On its part, India became a member of the World Heritage Committee from 2021-25.
24. d The Maratha Military Landscape of India was nominated under criteria (iv) and (vi), recognizing their exceptional testimony to a living cultural tradition, their architectural and technological significance, and their deep associations with historic events and traditions.

25. a World Population Day is an annual event, observed on July 11 every year, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues. The event was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989.[2] It was inspired by the public interest in Five Billion Day on July 11, 1987, the approximate date on which the world's population reached five billion people.
26. c July 11th marks World Population Day. The date that has gained significance since 1989 when the United Nations established it to spotlight critical population issues. This year's theme is "Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world". This theme is relevant for India as it navigates one of the most complex demographic transitions in human history.
27. b Indian women's rights activist Varsha Deshpande has been awarded the 2025 United Nations Population Award in the individual category, in recognition of her decades-long work promoting gender equality and reproductive rights. The announcement was made by the United Nations in New York on July 10, 2025, marking the 40th edition of the prestigious global honour. Ms. Deshpande, secretary of the Maharashtra-based Dalit Mahila Vikas Mandal, was recognised for her pioneering work over more than 35 years to combat gender-based violence and discrimination, particularly gender-biased sex selection. She founded the organisation in 1990 to champion gender justice and empower marginalised women through legal reform, education, and grassroots mobilisation.
28. d According to the UNFPA, the working-age population falls within the 15 to 64 years age range, which is essential for generating economic productivity. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that occurs when the working-age population (15-64 years) becomes larger than the non-working-age groups (children under 15 and seniors over 65). This shift in age structure can lead to increased productivity and economic gains, provided there are supportive investments in health, education, and employment.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

India will start issuing tourist visas to Chinese nationals after a gap of five years, the Indian Embassy in Beijing announced. The announcement, that was called "positive" by the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, marks another step in normalising India-China ties ruptured by the military standoff at the Line of Actual Control and Galwan clashes in 2020. According to an official notice posted online and on Chinese social media, the visas can be applied for online beginning from July 24, 2025 and obtained after an appointment at the Indian Embassy in Beijing and consulates in Shanghai and Guangzhou. Amidst the bonhomie, Beijing rejected concerns in Delhi and Dhaka about China's latest dam project on the Yarlung Sangpo or Brahmaputra River in Tibet and said it had communicated with both the governments.

Responding to a question about the visa issuance, a Chinese MFA spokesperson said that Beijing had taken note of the "positive move". "Easing cross-border travel is widely beneficial. China will maintain communication and consultation with India to further facilitate travel between the two countries," said spokesperson Guo Jiakun in Beijing. After the Covid pandemic and then violence between the two militaries after China amassed troops at the LAC, both countries had cancelled all flights and most visa services between them. China restored visa applications for Indian students in 2022 and for business and tourism purposes subsequently. It issued an estimated 85,000 visas between January and June 2025. India had issued visas in business and student categories, but not for tourism until now. According to the Ministry of Tourism figures in 2019, before the lockdown, more than 3,00,000 Chinese tourists had visited India and about 8,69,000 Indian tourists had gone to China. After Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met in Kazan last October and agreed to restore ties, a series of high-level meetings discussed the next steps, including the start of the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra. Most recently, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar travelled to China on July 14-16, and met with his counterpart Wang Yi, and also called on Chinese President Xi Jinping and Vice-President Hang Zheng, before attending the SCO Council for Foreign Ministers.

- Which of the following events in 2020 contributed to the suspension of visa and travel services between India and China?
(a) China open support to terrorism at the SCO Summit.
(b) Military standoff at the LAC and Galwan clashes.
(c) A financial dispute over trade tariffs.
(d) India's withdrawal from the SCO summit.
- Who among the following visited China and met with top Chinese leaders including President Xi Jinping to discuss bilateral ties recently?
(a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(b) National Security Advisor Ajit Doval
(c) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
(d) External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar
- Which of the following river is at the center of environmental concerns between China, India, and Bangladesh?
(a) Mekong River
(b) Indus River
(c) Yarlung Sangpo
(d) Ganges River
- The Darbuk-Shyok-DBO Road is a strategic all-weather road in eastern Ladakh in India, close to the Line of Actual Control with China. The road has been constructed by _____.
(a) DRDO
(b) National Highway Development Authority
(c) Hindustan Construction Co. Ltd.
(d) Border Roads Organisation
- India and China share a _____ km border which runs from northwest of the Karakoram Pass and ends at Arunachal Pradesh.
(a) 2,488 km
(b) 3,488 km
(c) 4,488 km
(d) 5,488 km

6. The McMahon Line was negotiated during which historical event?
(a) Shimla Convention (1913-14) (b) Treaty of Tashkent
(c) Panchsheel Agreement (d) Sino-Indian War of 1962

Passage – 2

Former Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on July 22, 2025 expressed concern over the "omission" of the Paika Rebellion from the latest Class VIII history textbook of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), calling it a "huge dishonour" to the brave Paikas. The NCERT has clarified that the [1] rebellion will be included in the second volume of the textbook, set to be released in September-October. In March [1], some 400 Kondhs equipped with traditional arms marched from Ghumusar towards Khurda. They were joined by an army of Paikas led by [2], the former commander-in-chief of the king of Khurda and the erstwhile holder of the lucrative Rodanga estate. The rebels attacked the police station of Banpur, burnt government quarters, killed policemen, looted the government treasury, and proceeded towards Khurda. The Paikas fought bloody battles at several places over the next few months, and killed several British officials. The Company army gradually crushed the revolt. Bakshi Jagabandhu escaped to the jungles, and remained on the run till 1825, when he finally surrendered to the British under negotiated terms. The Paikas and their rebellion have long been used to invoke Odia sub-nationalism. The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) government in Odisha in 2017, the 200th anniversary of the rebellion, demanded that the Centre declare the Paika Bidroha as the "first war of independence", given it was launched four decades before the Mutiny of 1857. While this demand was not accepted, then Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy, in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha in 2021, said that rebellion would be included in Class VIII history textbooks, framing it as "one of the beginnings of popular uprisings against the British in India". In fact, the BJP too has the Paika Rebellion to strengthen its position in coastal Odisha. In 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi felicitated more than 200 descendants of Paika warriors in Bhubaneswar. In 2019, then President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone of the Paika Memorial at Barunei foothills. After BJP came to power in Odisha last year, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced that the Paika Academy and Paika Memorial would be established expeditiously at Barunei near Khurda. Amid the latest controversy, BJP ministers in Odisha have accused Patnaik of misleading people by making false claims. The NCERT has already clarified that "regional resistances" like the Paika Rebellion will be handled in the second volume of the textbook, expected to be released in September-October.

7. Which of the following Paika Rebellion years has been redacted with '[1]' in the passage above?
(a) 1816 (b) 1817
(c) 1818 (d) 1819
8. Who among the following led the Paika Rebellion whose name has been replaced with '[2]' in the passage above?
(a) Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mahapatra Bhramarabar Rai
(b) Purushottam Gajapati Narayan Deo
(c) Bira Padmanabh Narayan Deo II
(d) Krushna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Deo
9. Which of the following is a factually accurate statement with regard to Paikas?
(a) Peasant militias who rendered military service to the king during times of war while taking up cultivation during times of peace
(b) Long distance Traders
(c) Peasant laborers working under the king during times of floods and droughts
(d) Revenue collectors under the king
10. What symbolic role has the Paika Rebellion played in Odisha's political-cultural identity?
(a) It has promoted secular nationalism.
(b) It has discouraged armed resistance in the region.
(c) It has been used to invoke Odia sub-nationalism.
(d) It has remained largely unknown in Odia cultural discourse.

11. Which of the following rebellions is now considered as the first war of independence in Indian history by the Indian Government?
(a) Indian Rebellion of 1857 (b) Paika Rebellion
(c) Santhal Rebellion (d) Mysore Rebellion
12. Who among the following leaders is Not associated with Revolt of 1857?
(a) Kunwar Singh (b) Mangal Pandey
(c) Nana Saheb (d) Chittaranjan Lal

Passage – 3

In a surprising turn of events, the vice president of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar, tendered his resignation on July 21, 2025, citing "health reasons" creating a rare mid-term vacancy in the constitutional office. The Constitution of India, 1950 ("Constitution") provides clear guidelines for presidential vacancies. However, the provisions for the vice presidency are notably vague and not time bound. The Constitution outlines the structures of key offices to ensure continuity and stability in governance. Article 63 establishes the office of the Vice President, who also serves as the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha. When it comes to vacancies, the Constitution draws a stark contrast between the presidency and the vice presidency, at Articles 62 and 68 respectively. The Constitution mandates that an election to fill a vacancy in the office of the President, arising from death, resignation, removal, or otherwise, must be held "as soon as possible after the occurrence, but in no case later than six months" from the date of the vacancy. This upper limit ensures that the nation is not left without the head of state for an extended period. In contrast, for the Vice President, no such upper limit exists. It states that an election to fill a vacancy caused by death, resignation, removal, or otherwise shall be held as soon as possible after the occurrence of such an event. Absent is any maximum timeframe, leaving the phrase "as soon as possible" open to interpretation and open to strategy manoeuvres.

13. Who was the first Vice President of India to resign before completing the term?
(a) R. Venkataraman (b) V. V. Giri
(c) Mohammad Hidayatullah (d) Giani Zail Singh
14. After the Vice President resigns, who temporarily presides over the Rajya Sabha?
(a) Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha
(b) Speaker of Lok Sabha
(c) Chief Justice of India
(d) One of the member from panel of Vice Chairman
15. What is the term of a newly elected Vice President in the case of a mid-term resignation?
(a) The remaining term of the predecessor (b) Until the next general election
(c) Two years by default (d) Five years from the date of assumption
16. Who among the following elects the Vice President of India?
(a) Only the elected Members of Parliament from the Lok Sabha, excluding nominated members and members of the Rajya Sabha.
(b) The elected representatives of all State Legislative Assemblies along with the elected members of both Houses of Parliament, excluding nominated members.
(c) An electoral college consisting of both elected and nominated members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, with no role for State Legislatures in the voting process.
(d) The President of India, acting on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers, in consultation with the Election Commission of India.
17. Before becoming Vice President, what post did Jagdeep Dhankhar hold?
(a) Lok Sabha Speaker (b) Governor of West Bengal
(c) Chief Minister of Rajasthan (d) Finance Minister of India

24. Which of the following statements is Not true regarding Cambodia?
- (a) It does not share its border with Laos
 - (b) Norodom Sihamoni is King of Cambodia.
 - (c) Its capital and most populous city is Phnom Penh.
 - (d) The riel is the currency of Cambodia.

Passage – 5

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with 'The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago'-the nation's highest civilian honour. The award was presented by Her Excellency Christine Carla Kangaloo, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. PM Modi is the first foreign leader to receive this prestigious recognition. He was honoured for his statesmanship, his strong advocacy for the Global South, and for significantly strengthening the bilateral relationship between India and Trinidad and Tobago. Accepting the honour on behalf of the 1.4 billion citizens of India, the Prime Minister dedicated the award to the enduring bonds of friendship between the two nations. He highlighted the deep-rooted historical and cultural ties that trace back to the arrival of Indians in Trinidad and Tobago 180 years ago. "The legacy of shared heritage and mutual respect continues to guide our partnership," the PM Modi said. He reaffirmed his commitment to further strengthening the strategic and cultural ties between the two countries. The ceremonial event was attended by H.E. Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, along with members of her Cabinet, Parliamentarians, and other dignitaries.

25. Which of the following awards did Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi receive from Brazil?
- (a) Order of the Southern Cross - Grand Collar
 - (b) Order of the Brazilian Republic - Silver Star
 - (c) Knight of the Amazon - Gold Class
 - (d) Order of Pedro I - Commander
26. What honour was conferred upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi by the President of Ghana?
- (a) Companion of the Order of the Black Star
 - (b) Grand Commander of the Republic of Ghana
 - (c) Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana
 - (d) Member of the Pan-African Honour Council
27. What is the name of Namibia's highest civilian honour received by Modi in July 2025?
- (a) Order of the Baobab
 - (b) Order of the Namib Desert
 - (c) Order of African Unity
 - (d) Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis
28. Which honour did Prime Minister Narendra Modi receive from the President of Cyprus?
- (a) Order of the Republic of Cyprus
 - (b) Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III
 - (c) Grand Commander of the Mediterranean Order
 - (d) Order of the Phoenician Sun

Test - 8

Answers and Explanations

1. b The military standoff and clashes in Galwan Valley in 2020 led to severe tensions and the suspension of visa and flight services between the two nations.
2. d The passage notes that S. Jaishankar, India's External Affairs Minister, visited China from July 14-16, 2025 met Chinese leaders including President Xi Jinping, and attended the SCO Council for Foreign Ministers.
3. c The passage mentions that Beijing rejected concerns raised by Delhi and Dhaka over a dam project on the Yarlung Sangpo (Brahmaputra) in Tibet.
4. d Daulat Beg Oldi (also Oldie, DBO) is a traditional campsite and current military base located in the midst of the Karakoram Range in northern Ladakh, India. It is on the historic trade route between Ladakh and Central Asia, forming the last campsite before reaching the Karakoram Pass. It is said to be named after Sultan Said Khan ("Daulat Beg"), who died here on his return journey after an invasion of Ladakh and Kashmir. Chip Chap River, the main headwater of the Shyok River, flows just to the south. The Line of Actual Control with Chinese-controlled Aksai Chin is 5 miles to the east. An Indian border outpost was established here in summer 1960 and remains till this day. An Advance Landing Ground was also constructed here, which is famed as one of the world's highest airstrips. DBO now has a road link, the 235 km-long Darbuk-Shyok-DBO Road, completed by the Border Roads Organisation in 2019 on a new improved alignment. It connects Ladakh's capital city Leh, via the villages of Darbuk and Shyok at southern Shyok River Valley, with the Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) post near the northern border.
5. b India and China share a 3,488 km border which runs from northwest of the Karakoram Pass and ends at Arunachal Pradesh. The border is neither demarcated nor delineated on maps. The absence of an internationally accepted boundary as well as the lack of an agreement over the de facto "Line of Actual Control" (LAC), has transformed the issue into a "territorial dispute" between India and China. The border is disputed in three distinct areas: the western sector (Aksai Chin), the middle sector (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand) and the eastern sector (Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh). In pursuit of their territorial claims, India and China have fought a war in 1962 and since then have engaged in periodical escalations. These have impacted all sectors in the disputed areas, with varying degrees of gravity and intensity.
6. a McMahon Line, de facto boundary between India and China in northeastern India, specifically marking the border between the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh and the Chinese autonomous region of Tibet. It was negotiated between Tibet, China and the British Empire at the end of the Shimla Convention (1913-14) and was named for the chief British negotiator, Sir Henry McMahon. The line is 550 miles (890 km) and runs from the eastern border of Bhutan along the crest of the Himalayas to the great bend in the Brahmaputra River where that river emerges from its Tibetan course into the Assam Valley. The line continues eastward and ends at the northwestern tip of Myanmar (Burma).
7. b The then President Ram Nath Kovind visited Odisha's Khorda district to lay the foundation of a memorial dedicated to the 1817 Paika Rebellion.
8. a Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mahapatra Bhramarabar Rai popularly known as "Buxi Jagabandhu" was the commander of the forces of the king of Khordha. He is one of the earliest freedom fighters of India. The great Paika rebellion in 1817 was under his leadership.
9. a Paikas were essentially the peasant militias of the Gajapati rulers of Odisha who rendered military service to the king during times of war while taking up cultivation during times of peace.
10. c The passage mentions that the Paikas and their rebellion have long served as a symbol of Odia sub-nationalism, reinforcing regional pride and identity.
11. a The First War of Independence, also known as the Indian Rebellion of 1857 or the Sepoy Mutiny, was a major, yet ultimately unsuccessful, uprising against British rule in India. It began on May 10, 1857, in Meerut and spread throughout northern and central India. While initially a revolt by Indian soldiers (sepoys) in the British East India Company's army, it quickly gained support from various Indian rulers and civilians.
12. d The British faced many instances of resistance from Indians throughout their occupation of India. One such popular resistance was the incident of the Revolt of 1857. The storm-centres of the revolt were Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Bareilly, Jhansi and Arrah. All these places threw up their own leaders who, for all practical purposes, remained independent, even though they accepted the suzerainty of Emperor Bahadur Shah. Mangal Pandey was born in a high caste Hindu family in Uttar Pradesh (Ballia). He joined the 34th Bengal native infantry as a sepoy at a young age. In Delhi, Bahadur Shah was the leader. But the real power lay with the soldiers. Bakht Khan, who had led the revolt of the soldiers at Bareilly, arrived in Delhi on 3rd July 1857. At Kanpur, the revolt was led by Nana Saheb, the adopted son of Peshwa Baji Rao II. Rani Lakshmi Bai/Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi was another great popular leader. Kunwar Singh was a local zamindar in Arrah in Bihar. Under his leadership, the military and civil rebellion were so completely fused that the British dreaded him the most.
13. b The first Vice President of India to resign before completing their term was VV Giri. VV Giri took over as acting president due to the death of Zakir Hussain in May 1969. On July 20, 1969, Giri stepped down from the post of VP in order to contest the presidential election as an independent candidate.
14. a In the Vice President's absence, the Deputy Chairman (currently Harivansh Narayan Singh) presides over Rajya Sabha.
15. d A newly elected Vice President serves a full five-year term, regardless of how much time was left in the predecessor's term.
16. c The Vice President of India is elected by an electoral college composed of members of both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha), including nominated members. Unlike the Presidential election, state legislatures do not participate in the Vice Presidential election. Voting is conducted using a secret ballot and proportional representation system.
17. b Jagdeep Dhankhar was elected as the Vice President of India in 2022 after he secured a historic win in the elections. Before his tenure as the Vice President, Dhankhar served as the Governor of West Bengal from 2019 to 2022.

18. c According to Article 66(3) of the Constitution of India, the eligibility criteria for becoming the Vice President are: 1. He must be a citizen of India. 2. He must have completed the age of 35 years. 3. He must be qualified to be elected as a member of the Rajya Sabha. 4. He must not hold any office of profit under the Government of India or any state government or local/public authority. Now, let's evaluate the correct option (c): The Constitution does not require the candidate to be a sitting member of the Rajya Sabha. It only requires the person to be "qualified to be elected" as a Rajya Sabha member. That means the candidate must meet the constitutional qualifications (citizenship, age, etc.) necessary to contest a Rajya Sabha seat - but they don't need to be an actual member at the time of nomination or election. Hence, option (c) is not a correct requirement, and that's why it is the correct answer to the question (i.e., not part of the eligibility criteria).
19. c The latest clash began with gunfire, with both sides blaming each other, and escalated into rockets and air strikes, as stated in the passage.
20. d The 2008 escalation occurred when Cambodia tried to register the 11th-century Preah Vihear temple, provoking strong opposition from Thailand.
21. c The Preah Vihear Temple, located in a disputed area, has long been contested despite an ICJ ruling in 1962 awarding it to Cambodia.
22. b Cambodia became a French colony in 1863 and was part of French Indochina, which also included Vietnam and Laos.
23. d Thailand officially the Kingdom of Thailand and historically known as Siam (the official name until 1939), is a country in Southeast Asia on the Indochinese Peninsula. Bangkok is the state capital and largest city. Thailand is bordered to the northwest by Myanmar, to the northeast and east by Laos, to the southeast by Cambodia, to the south by the Gulf of Thailand and Malaysia, and to the southwest by the Andaman Sea; it also shares maritime borders with Vietnam to the southeast and Indonesia and India to the southwest. The baht is the official currency of Thailand. Vajiralongkorn is King of Thailand. He is the tenth Thai monarch of the Chakri dynasty since ascending the throne in 2016 with the regnal name Rama X.
24. a Cambodia, officially the Kingdom of Cambodia, is a country in Mainland Southeast Asia. It is bordered by Thailand to the northwest, Laos to the north, and Vietnam to the east, and has a coastline along the Gulf of Thailand in the southwest. Its capital and most populous city is Phnom Penh. The riel is the currency of Cambodia. Norodom Sihamoni is King of Cambodia.
25. a On July 8, 2025, President Lula da Silva awarded Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi the Order of the Southern Cross, Brazil's highest honour to foreign dignitaries, with the Grand Collar rank.
26. c Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was conferred the national honour of Ghana - Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana - by the President of Ghana, H.E. John Dramani Mahama in recognition of his distinguished statesmanship and influential global leadership. Accepting the award on behalf of 1.4 billion Indians, Prime Minister dedicated the honour to the aspirations of the youth of India, its cultural traditions and diversity, and to the historical ties between Ghana and India.
27. d Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is paying a State Visit to Namibia. On the occasion, the President of Namibia, H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah conferred on Prime Minister the highest civilian award of Namibia - Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis. He is the first Indian leader to be given this award.
28. b The President of Cyprus, H.E. Nikos Christodoulides, today conferred upon Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Cyprus's honour - the "Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III".

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

The United States announced July 22, 2025 that it will again pull out of the U.N.'s educational, scientific and cultural agency because of what Washington sees as its anti-Israel bias, only two years after rejoining. "President Trump has decided to withdraw the United States from UNESCO - which supports woke, divisive cultural and social causes that are totally out-of-step with the commonsense policies that Americans voted for in November". This will be the third time that the United States has left UNESCO, which is based in Paris, and the second time during a Trump administration. President Donald Trump had already pulled out during his first term and the United States returned after a five-year absence after the Biden administration applied to rejoin the organisation. The decision will take effect at the end of December 2026.

The decision will come as no surprise to UNESCO officials, who had anticipated such a move following the specific review ordered by the Trump administration earlier this year. They also expected that Mr. Trump would pull out again since the return of the US in 2023 had been promoted by a political rival, former President Joe Biden. The Trump administration in 2017 announced that the U.S. would withdraw from UNESCO, citing anti-Israel bias. That decision took effect a year later. The U.S. and Israel stopped financing UNESCO after it voted to include Palestine as a member state in 2011. The United States previously pulled out of UNESCO under the Reagan administration in 1984 because it viewed the agency as mismanaged, corrupt and used to advance the interests of the Soviet Union. It rejoined in 2003 during George W Bush's presidency.

- Which of the following best explains the primary reason cited by the United States for its latest withdrawal from UNESCO in 2025?
 - Alleged anti-Israel bias within UNESCO.
 - Concerns over UNESCO's financial mismanagement.
 - Disputes over UNESCO's role in climate change policy.
 - Opposition to UNESCO's stance on nuclear disarmament.
- In 2011, the US and Israel stopped financing UNESCO after which of the following events?
 - UNESCO criticized Israel's settlement policies.
 - UNESCO voted to include Palestine as a member state.
 - The US lost voting rights in UNESCO.
 - UNESCO expelled Israel from membership.
- The official full form of UNESCO is _____.
 - United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
 - United Nations Environment, Science and Communication Organization.
 - United Nations Engineering, Science and Communication Organization.
 - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Audrey Azoulay's leadership at UNESCO is notable because she is:
 - The first African Director-General of UNESCO.
 - The second female leader in UNESCO's history.
 - The youngest person ever to lead UNESCO.
 - The only Director-General to serve more than three terms.
- UNESCO's programmes are aligned with which global framework adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015?
 - Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
 - Paris Climate Agreement.
 - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
 - Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

6. What was the primary vision behind creating UNESCO?
- (a) To coordinate global research and technological innovation for peaceful socio-economic development.
 - (b) To establish an international framework for managing cross-border economic and monetary policies.
 - (c) To facilitate cooperative agreements aimed at expanding cultural trade and heritage-based economic exchange.
 - (d) To build lasting peace using education, culture, science, and information.

Passage – 2

The process to remove Justice Yashwant Varma from his office was set in motion on July 21, 2025, with members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha submitting notices to the presiding officers of their respective Houses, and Chairman of Rajya Sabha Jagdeep Dhankhar taking note of the move. While the notice submitted to Mr. Dhankhar had signatures of 63 Opposition members, the one submitted to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla received bipartisan backing, with 152 members, including Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi, signing the notice.

Justice Varma's responsibilities were taken away and he was transferred from the Delhi High Court to the Allahabad High Court after burnt currency notes were found at his official residence in Delhi on March 14. A notice for the removal of a judge has to be signed by not less than 100 members in the Lok Sabha and 50 in the Rajya Sabha. The motion can either be accepted or rejected by the Speaker or the Chairman.

Stating that he had received notices for removal of Justice Varma, Mr. Dhankhar said, "It is signed by more than 50 members of the Council of States and thus, meets the numerical requirement of signing by Members of Parliament for setting in motion a process for removal of a high court judge".

The Rajya Sabha Chairman informed the House that according to the Judges (Inquiry) Act, when notices of a motion are submitted on the same day in both the Houses of Parliament, a committee to examine the charges levelled against the judge will be constituted jointly by the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha Chairman. The Act also states that no inquiry committee shall be constituted unless the motion has been admitted in both Houses.

A committee comprising a senior judge of the Supreme Court, a sitting Chief Justice of a High Court and a distinguished jurist will then probe the charges levelled against Justice Varma. It will be asked to come out with a report in three months. The inquiry report will be tabled in Parliament, followed by a discussion in both Houses, after which there will be voting on the motion for the removal of Justice Varma.

7. Under which Articles of the Indian Constitution can a High Court judge be removed?
- (a) Article 124 and Article 217
 - (b) Article 124 and Article 219
 - (c) Article 125 and Article 219
 - (d) Article 124 and Article 218
8. Which of the following are the only two grounds for removal of a High Court or Supreme Court judge?
- (a) Proven misbehaviour and corruption.
 - (b) Proven misbehaviour and incapacity.
 - (c) Incapacity and moral turpitude.
 - (d) Dereliction of duty and incapacity.
9. What happens if Parliament is dissolved after a removal motion is introduced but before it is passed?
- (a) The motion is carried over to the next session.
 - (b) The President may still remove the judge.
 - (c) The Supreme Court decides whether the process continues.
 - (d) The motion automatically lapses.
10. If a removal motion is introduced in both Houses on the same day, when will an inquiry committee be formed?
- (a) As soon as either House admits the motion.
 - (b) As soon as the Speaker admits the motion.
 - (c) Only if both Houses admit the motion.
 - (d) After the President's approval.

11. Once the inquiry committee finds the judge guilty, what is the next step?
- (a) The judge is automatically removed.
 - (b) The motion is placed before both Houses of Parliament for voting.
 - (c) The matter is referred to the Supreme Court for final decision.
 - (d) The President issues a removal order immediately.
12. Which of the following statements is true regarding judicial impeachment in India?
- (a) Several judges have been removed through this process in Indian history.
 - (b) Judges can be removed by the Prime Minister without Parliament's approval.
 - (c) The Chief Justice of India can unilaterally remove a High Court judge.
 - (d) No judge has been removed through this process so far.

Passage – 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to New Delhi after concluding a five-nation tour that spanned July 2 to 9, 2025 covering Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia. The visit also included his participation in the 17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro under Brazil's chairmanship. The Prime Minister began his tour with a visit to Ghana on July 2-3- the first by an Indian Prime Minister to the West African nation in over three decades. In Accra, he held bilateral talks with President John Mahama to review the existing partnership and explore new areas of cooperation in economic development, defence, maritime security, energy, and critical minerals. Both leaders agreed to elevate ties to a Comprehensive Partnership. President Mahama also conferred on PM Modi The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana, the country's highest civilian award.

On July 3-4, PM Modi travelled to Trinidad and Tobago- the first Prime Ministerial visit since 1999. He met Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and addressed the Parliament. During the visit, India announced that Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) cards will now be issued to the sixth generation of the Indian diaspora in the Caribbean nation. PM Modi was also honoured with The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the nation's highest civilian honour. The third leg of the tour took PM Modi to Argentina on July 4-5- the first standalone bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the South American country in nearly six decades. He held discussions with President Javier Milei to strengthen cooperation in defence, agriculture, mining, energy, trade, and investment. Describing the visit as productive, PM Modi said the talks would help deepen India-Argentina ties. He was also presented with the Key to the City of Buenos Aires by the city's Chief, Jorge Macri.

In the fourth leg of his visit, Prime Minister Modi attended the 17th BRICS Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from July 6 to 7. He then travelled to Brasília, the capital of Brazil, for a State Visit and held bilateral talks with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. The two leaders discussed ways to expand the Strategic Partnership between India and Brazil in areas such as trade, defence, energy, space, technology, agriculture, health, and people-to-people exchanges. During the visit, President Lula conferred on Prime Minister Modi Brazil's highest civilian honour, The Grand Collar of the National Order of the Southern Cross. In the final leg of his tour on July 9, Prime Minister Modi visited Namibia - marking the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the country in 27 years. He addressed the Namibian Parliament, where he received a standing ovation from the members. During the visit, President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah conferred upon him The Order of the Most Ancient Welwitschia Mirabilis, Namibia's highest civilian honour.

13. Which of the following countries was NOT part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's five-nation tour in July 2025?
- (a) Ghana
 - (b) Trinidad and Tobago
 - (c) South Africa
 - (d) Namibia
14. Which of the following was announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Trinidad and Tobago?
- (a) India will start direct flights between the two nations.
 - (b) Visa-free travel for Indian citizens.
 - (c) Establishment of a new Indian consulate.
 - (d) OCI cards will now be issued to the sixth generation of the Indian diaspora.

15. In Argentina, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was presented with which symbolic honour?
(a) Key to the City of Buenos Aires (b) Order of the May
(c) Presidential Medal of Honour (d) National Order of Merit
16. In which Brazilian city did Prime Minister Narendra Modi attend the 17th BRICS Summit?
(a) Brasília (b) Sao Paulo
(c) Rio de Janeiro (d) Fortaleza
17. Which of the following was NOT a focus area of discussion during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bilateral talks with Ghana?
(a) Space cooperation (b) Maritime security
(c) Critical minerals (d) Defence cooperation
18. Who among the following leaders conferred Ghana's highest civilian honour on Prime Minister Narendra Modi?
(a) Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (b) Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah
(c) John Mahama (d) Javier Milei

Passage – 4

India and the United Kingdom have signed the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), a bilateral free trade agreement marking a major milestone in their longstanding partnership. The agreement was signed by Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal and UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Mr. Jonathan Reynolds in the presence of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer. This follows the successful conclusion of negotiations announced on May 6, 2025, and reflects the shared ambition of two major economies to deepen economic ties. Bilateral trade has already reached USD 56 billion, with a target to double this by 2030. CETA provides an unprecedented duty-free access to 99 per cent of India's exports to the UK, covering nearly 100% of the trade value. This includes labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, leather, marine products, gems and jewellery, and toys as well as high-growth sectors like engineering goods, chemicals, and auto components. This will spur large-scale employment generation, empowering artisans, women-led enterprises, and MSMEs. The agreement includes a wide-ranging package covering Information Technology /IT enabled services, financial and professional services, business consulting, education, telecom, architecture, and engineering that will unlock high-value opportunities and job creation. The agreement goes beyond goods and addresses services, a core strength of India's economy. India exported over USD 19.8 billion in services to the UK in 2023, and CETA promises to expand this further. In a first by UK, mobility for professionals across IT, healthcare, finance, and education is being eased with CETA providing for streamlined entry for Contractual Service Suppliers, Business Visitors, Intra-Corporate Transferees, Independent Professionals. Another major breakthrough is the Double Contribution Convention that will save Indian firms and workers more than INR 4,000 crore by removing the need for dual social security contributions. India has opened 89.5 % of its tariff lines, covering 91 % of UK's exports, safeguarding sensitive sectors and strategically important products where domestic capability is being built. Elimination of duties will make a range of imported products more affordable for consumers, offering greater variety and quality at competitive prices.

19. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between India and the UK is primarily a:
(a) Preferential trade agreement. (b) Bilateral free trade agreement.
(c) Customs union agreement. (d) Multilateral trade agreement.
20. The Double Contribution Convention under CETA is expected to save Indian firms and workers how much annually?
(a) INR 2,000 crore (b) INR 3,000 crore
(c) INR 4,000 crore (d) INR 5,000 crore

21. Which of the following is NOT specifically mentioned as a labour-intensive sector to benefit from CETA?
(a) Pharmaceuticals (b) Marine products
(c) Gems and jewellery (d) Leather
22. What percentage of India's exports to the UK will receive duty-free access under CETA?
(a) 85% (b) 91%
(c) 99% (d) 100%
23. Which of the following is a key protection mentioned for India under CETA?
(a) Safeguarding sensitive sectors and strategically important products.
(b) Complete elimination of duties on all agricultural products.
(c) Allowing unrestricted imports in all manufactured goods.
(d) Removing all non-tariff barriers without exceptions.
24. Which of the following best describes the consumer benefit from CETA?
(a) Higher prices due to increased import duties.
(b) Restricted choice due to protection of domestic industries.
(c) Limited availability of foreign goods.
(d) Greater product variety and better quality at competitive prices.

Passage – 5

In Georgia, a country that birthed some of the earliest pioneers of women's chess, India has discovered its own world-beater: Divya Deshmukh, aged just 19, became the FIDE Women's World Cup champion by defeating the veteran [1], in the final via the tiebreakers. Divya winning the Women's World Cup also makes her eligible to be India's fourth woman to become a grandmaster, which is significant because before the event started, she had none of the three norms required for it. But in one fell swoop, thanks to a regulation in the FIDE rules, Divya has now bypassed the criterion to earn three norms and is now a grandmaster as well. India's 88th. By reaching the final, along with [1], Divya ensured that at least two Indians will play the Candidates tournament next year, where eight players fight it out to earn the right to play in the women's World Championship against current world champion Ju Wenjun. The Divya vs Humpy finale was a battle of generations, with the 19-year-old Divya being half the age of the veteran [1], who is India's first woman to become a grandmaster. But more importantly, it was a battle between two Indians while two Chinese stars, Tan Zhongyi and Lei Tingjie, fought for the third spot. Having two Indians make it to the final from a field of 107 players was an indicator that just like in the open section, where the likes of Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa have started to assert themselves, India could drive women's chess in the immediate future after decades of dominance by Chinese and Russian grandmasters.

25. Divya Deshmukh became the FIDE Women's World Cup champion in 2025 by defeating who among the following players whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) Harika Dronavalli (b) Tan Zhongyi
(c) Koneru Humpy (d) Lei Tingjie
26. IM Harikrishnan A Ra became which numbered Indian to achieve the Grandmaster title?
(a) 87th (b) 85th
(c) 86th (d) 88th
27. How many Indian women have held the Grandmaster title including Divya Deshmukh?
(a) Three (b) Four
(c) Five (d) Six
28. Globally, Divya Deshmukh is the _____ female to achieve the Grandmaster title.
(a) 40th (b) 42nd
(c) 46th (d) 44th

Test – 9

Answers and Explanations

1. a The passage states clearly that Washington views UNESCO as having an anti-Israel bias, which is the stated reason for the 2025 withdrawal. Incorrect options: (b) While financial mismanagement was a reason in 1984 under Reagan, it is not cited for 2025. (c) Climate change policy is not mentioned in the context of this withdrawal. (d) UNESCO's nuclear disarmament stance is not a factor in the current decision.
2. b The passage clearly mentions that in 2011 UNESCO voted to include Palestine as a member, leading to funding cessation by the US and Israel. Incorrect options: (a) No specific reference to settlement criticism as the funding cutoff trigger. (c) The loss of voting rights was a consequence of non-payment, not the trigger. (d) Israel was never expelled from UNESCO.
3. d UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, is a specialized agency dedicated to strengthening our shared humanity through the promotion of education, science, culture, and communication.
4. b Audrey Azoulay became the second female leader since UNESCO's founding. Incorrect options: (a) She is French, not African. (c) She is not the youngest. (d) She has not yet served more than three terms.
5. c UNESCO's programs are integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in Agenda 2030. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015, Agenda 2030 includes 17 interconnected SDGs that address global challenges. UNESCO's work, spanning education, science, culture, and communication, directly contributes to several of these goals.
6. d UNESCO was created to decide what kind of society we wanted to build together after the destruction of two World Wars. As early as 1942, global leaders began imagining an organization that would use education, culture, science and information to build lasting peace.
7. a Article 124(4): Pertains to the removal of judges of the Supreme Court, but is also applicable by procedure to High Court judges under Article 217. Article 217(1)(b): Specifies that a High Court judge can only be removed by the President on grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity, following a procedure similar to Article 124(4).
8. b Article 217(1)(b): Specifies that a High Court judge can only be removed by the President on grounds of proved misbehaviour or incapacity, following a procedure similar to Article 124(4). The Constitution specifies only these two grounds for judicial removal; no other ground, even if serious, qualifies unless it falls under these categories. Incorrect options: (a), (c), (d) mention terms not explicitly used in the Constitution for this process.
9. d If Parliament's term expires or is dissolved, any pending removal motion lapses and the process must start afresh. Incorrect options: (a) The Constitution does not allow automatic carry-over. (b) President cannot act without fresh parliamentary approval. (c) Supreme Court has no role in reviving a lapsed motion.
10. c As per the Judges (Inquiry) Act, if motions for removal are submitted in both Houses on the same day, no inquiry committee shall be formed unless both Houses admit the motion. Incorrect options: (a) One House's admission is not enough in this scenario. (b) Speaker's acceptance alone is insufficient. (d) President's role comes after Parliament votes, not before inquiry.
11. b A guilty finding by the inquiry committee is not self-executing; it must be followed by special-majority approval in both Houses before the President can act. Incorrect options: (a) Automatic removal is not provided for. (c) Supreme Court has no final vote in this process. (d) President acts only after Parliament's approval.
12. d Though the process has been initiated in a few cases, no judge has been successfully removed through parliamentary impeachment in India's history. Incorrect options: (a) Factually incorrect; none removed so far. (b) PM has no such constitutional power. (c) CJI cannot remove judges; removal is solely a parliamentary process.
13. c The tour covered Ghana, Trinidad and Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia. South Africa was not included. Incorrect options: (a), (b), (d) were visited during this tour.
14. d On July 3-4, PM Modi travelled to Trinidad and Tobago- the first Prime Ministerial visit since 1999. He met Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar and addressed the Parliament. During the visit, India announced that Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) cards will now be issued to the sixth generation of the Indian diaspora in the Caribbean nation.
15. a The third leg of the tour took PM Modi to Argentina on July 4-5- the first standalone bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the South American country in nearly six decades. He held discussions with President Javier Milei to strengthen cooperation in defence, agriculture, mining, energy, trade, and investment. He was also presented with the Key to the City of Buenos Aires by the city's Chief, Jorge Macri.
16. c The summit was held in Rio de Janeiro, while bilateral talks with President Lula were in Brasília. Incorrect options: (a) Capital of Brazil where state visit took place. (b), (d) not the host cities for 2025 summit.
17. a Space cooperation was discussed with Brazil, not Ghana. Incorrect options: (b), (c), (d) were specifically mentioned for Ghana.
18. c President John Mahama conferred The Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana on PM Modi. Incorrect options: (a) Brazil's president. (b) Namibia's president. (d) Argentina's president.
19. b CETA is a bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the UK, aimed at removing or reducing tariffs on most goods and facilitating trade in services. Incorrect options: (a) Preferential agreements cover fewer goods/services and offer partial concessions. (c) Customs unions involve common external tariffs, not applicable here. (d) Multilateral agreements involve multiple countries, unlike this bilateral deal.
20. c The agreement removes the need for dual social security contributions, saving Indian firms and workers more than INR 4,000 crore. Incorrect options: (a), (b), (d) are incorrect figures.
21. a Pharmaceuticals are not explicitly listed in the passage's labour-intensive sector examples, though they may benefit indirectly. Incorrect options: (b), (c), (d) are clearly listed as benefiting sectors.
22. c CETA provides duty-free access to 99% of India's exports to the UK, covering nearly 100% of trade value. Incorrect options: (a), (b) are lower than the stated percentage. (d) Slightly inaccurate since it's 99%, not an absolute 100%.

23. a India has opened 89.5 % of its tariff lines, covering 91 % of UK's exports, safeguarding sensitive sectors and strategically important products where domestic capability is being built. India has selectively opened tariff lines to protect sensitive sectors where domestic capacity is being built. Incorrect options: (b) Complete elimination is not done for all agriculture. (c) & (d) contradict the idea of safeguarding sensitive sectors.
24. d Duty elimination makes imported products more affordable, improving variety and quality for consumers. Incorrect options: (a), (b), (c) contradict the stated consumer benefits in the agreement.
25. c Divya Deshmukh defeated veteran Koneru Humpy in the final via tiebreakers to win the title. Incorrect options: (a) Harika was beaten by Divya earlier in the tournament. (b) & (d) are strong Chinese players but did not face Divya in the final.
26. a IM Harikrishnan A Ra became the 87th Indian to achieve the Grandmaster title on Friday 11th July 2025 at 5th La Plagne Masters 2025. A draw against the reigning National Rapid 2025 champion, GM Iniyana Pa in the final round secured his final GM-norm.
27. b Indian teenage chess prodigy Divya Deshmukh, who clinched the FIDE Women's World Cup 2025 title after brushing aside compatriot Koneru Humpy in tiebreaks of the title-clash in Batumi. The 19-year-old thus qualified for the 2026 Candidates Tournament and became the 88th Grandmaster of India. Divya is the fourth Indian woman to become a GM after Koneru Humpy, Harika Dronavalli, and R. Vaishali. Incorrect options: (a) Would be correct only before Divya achieved the title. (c), (d) overstate the number of Indian female GMs at the time.
28. d Divya is the fourth Indian woman to become a GM after Koneru Humpy, Harika Dronavalli, and R. Vaishali. She is also the 44th female to get a Grandmaster title in the world.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

On eve of sixth anniversary of abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, BJP said that it's revocation brought progress and development in Jammu and Kashmir. Congress, meanwhile, will hold protests at different places in Jammu and Kashmir. On August 5, the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir marks the sixth anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A. On August 5, 2019, Indian Parliament revoked Article 370 and bifurcated J&K into two UTs. BJP J&K spokesperson Altaf Thakur said that August 5, 2019, will be remembered as a defining moment that ended decades of uncertainty and paved the way for peace, prosperity, and equal rights in the region. "Prior to the abrogation, J&K remained trapped in a vicious cycle of hartals, stone pelting, and terrorism. Shops remained shut for days, schools were forced to close, and normal life was frequently disrupted due to the fear spread by separatists and terrorist sympathizers. But after August 5, 2019, that chapter has closed for good," he said, adding that incidents of stone pelting have come down to zero and local recruitment of youth into terrorist ranks has almost stopped. "This shift is proof that the youth of J&K have chosen books over bullets and laptops over stones," he said. Thakur said the last six years have witnessed unprecedented development across all regions of J&K. "Whether it's the construction of roads in far-flung areas, expansion of health and education infrastructure, return of tourism, or rising investor interest-J&K is on a new path of progress," he said. Meanwhile J&K Congress is planning to declare August 5 as black day and has been running a protest campaign for restoration of J&K's statehood. J&K Congress president Tariq Hameed Karra had asked political leaders of all the parties to join their protest on August 5.

- Which of the following was a key aspect of the Supreme Court's reasoning for upholding the abrogation of Article 370?
 - Article 370 was permanent and its abrogation violated India's constitutional framework.
 - The abrogation of Article 370 was essential for the full integration of Jammu and Kashmir into India's constitutional fabric.
 - Article 370 was a non-justiciable provision and could not be challenged in court.
 - The abrogation of Article 370 violated the Instrument of Accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh.
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 came into effect on:
 - July 5, 2019
 - August 5, 2019
 - October 31, 2019
 - August 15, 2019
- Which of the following constitutional articles now apply to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation?
 - Only Articles related to federal governance
 - Only Articles related to state governance
 - Only Articles related to fundamental duties
 - All Articles of the Indian Constitution
- Article 370 was based on the terms of which agreement signed by the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947?
 - Instrument of Accession
 - Lahore Pact
 - Shimla Agreement
 - Tashkent Agreement
- What change did the abrogation of 35A make regarding Jammu and Kashmir's citizenship status?
 - Allowed dual citizenship
 - Reintroduced state-specific citizenship
 - Abolished dual citizenship
 - Granted citizenship to foreign nationals
- Which of the following subjects remain under Union Government control in Jammu & Kashmir despite having a legislative assembly?
 - Finance and Education
 - Public order and Police
 - Agriculture and Industries
 - Defense and foreign policy

Passage – 2

US President Donald Trump has ordered the deployment of two nuclear submarines near Russia, warning of severe consequences for Russia. Trump took this step following a statement by Dmitry Medvedev, a close associate of Russian President Vladimir Putin, that was described as a "dead hand" threat. However, the US has not disclosed the exact location of the deployment of these two nuclear-capable submarines.

It is believed that the US administration was taken aback by former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's "dead hand" statement. Trump stated that he has ordered two nuclear-powered submarines to be deployed to an appropriate location. The US has taken this decision to ensure preparedness for any eventuality. In essence, "Dead Hand" was an old Russian nuclear weapons control system. It was capable of launching retaliatory strikes even after the country's leadership was eliminated. Dmitry warned Trump to remember the power of "Dead Hand," even though it no longer exists. He stated that the US President should remember his favourite film, "The Walking Dead."

Earlier, during his visit to Scotland on 28 July, Trump issued an ultimatum to Russia to end the war with Ukraine. Trump stated that Russia had 10 to 12 days left to end the war. Russia reacted sharply to this statement by Trump. Dmitry stated that Russia is not Iran or Israel, which would remain silent after American rhetoric and accept its demands. He said that Trump's statements are bringing America closer to all-out war. Trump should not become like former US President Joe Biden. Trump also responded to Dmitry's statement. Trump said that he was a failed president and still considers himself president. He should restrain his tongue.

7. Why did President Donald Trump order the deployment of two nuclear submarines near Russia?
 - (a) To show support for Ukraine
 - (b) In response to Dmitry Medvedev's "dead hand" threat
 - (c) As a demonstration of military superiority over China
 - (d) To reinforce the US-Russia peace agreement

8. What is the "Dead Hand" system that Dmitry Medvedev referred to in his statement?
 - (a) A nuclear weapons control system that can launch retaliatory strikes after leadership is eliminated
 - (b) A missile defense system to protect Russian territory
 - (c) A method for deploying nuclear submarines in times of war
 - (d) A military tactic used to intimidate foreign powers

9. What was Donald Trump's ultimatum to Russia during his visit to Scotland on 28 July?
 - (a) To reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles
 - (b) To join the Paris Agreement on climate change
 - (c) To withdraw troops from Syria
 - (d) To end the war with Ukraine within 10 to 12 days

10. Russia has officially declared it no longer considers itself bound by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. What did the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty specifically ban?
 - (a) Ground-launched missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometres
 - (b) Nuclear submarines
 - (c) All types of nuclear weapons
 - (d) Long-range missile testing

11. The New START treaty was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague between _____.
 - (a) United Kingdom and the Russian Federation
 - (b) United Nations and the Russian Federation
 - (c) European Union and the Russian Federation
 - (d) United States and the Russian Federation

12. What is the primary aim of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)?
- (a) To limit the number of nuclear weapons in stockpiles
 - (b) To regulate the use of nuclear power plants
 - (c) To ban all nuclear test explosions for military or civilian purposes
 - (d) To establish a global nuclear weapons ban

Passage – 3

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Arya Samaj, a pivotal reform movement initiated by Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati in [1] in Mumbai. Far more than the commemoration of an organization, this milestone is being observed as a tribute to a transformative ideological, social, and cultural revolution that reshaped Indian society.

In the 19th century, Indian society grappled with deep-rooted issues such as superstition, ritualism, caste discrimination, child marriage, gender inequality, and widespread ignorance. Amidst this backdrop, Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati emerged as a fearless reformer, proclaiming the powerful message: "Back to the Vedas." He asserted that the Vedas are the source of all true knowledge, laying the foundation for the Arya Samaj's core philosophy - a return to spiritual and moral clarity grounded in ancient wisdom.

Established in 1875, the Arya Samaj aimed to revive truth, morality, and rational thought based on Vedic teachings. Through its Ten Principles, it charted a path that was scientific, spiritual, and socially uplifting. The organization took a strong stand against religious dogma and social injustice, striving to restore Dharma (righteousness) in personal and public life.

The Arya Samaj led some of the most impactful social reforms in India's history. It championed women's education, widow remarriage, and the abolition of untouchability and caste-based discrimination. A significant aspect of its work was the Shuddhi Movement, which helped individuals return to the Vedic fold, reclaiming both their dignity and cultural identity.

One of the most lasting contributions of Arya Samaj has been in the field of education. The establishment of DAV (Dayanand Anglo Vedic) institutions, Gurukul Kangri University, and several other educational centers created a model that fused Vedic culture with modern science. These institutions have educated millions across generations, continuing to spread Vedic values globally.

The Arya Samaj also played a notable role in India's struggle for independence. Influential leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and Swami Shradhdhanand, inspired by Arya philosophy, actively participated in the national movement. The Samaj's teachings promoted Swadeshi, Swaraj, and national pride, aligning with the broader goal of self-rule and cultural resurgence.

13. When was the Arya Samaj founded which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) 1870
 - (b) 1875
 - (c) 1880
 - (d) 1885
14. What was the central philosophy of the Arya Samaj?
- (a) "Back to the Vedas"
 - (b) "Reform the existing religions"
 - (c) "Promote equality for all religions"
 - (d) "Establish a new religion based on science"
15. What was the Shuddhi Movement associated with the Arya Samaj?
- (a) Promoting Hindu-Muslim unity
 - (b) Establishing new temples
 - (c) Encouraging foreign converts to Hinduism
 - (d) Helping people return to Vedic fold and reclaim their dignity

16. The first DAV (Dayanand Anglo-Vedic) High School was established in _____.
- (a) Lahore (b) Bombay
(c) Madras (d) Calcutta
17. Who among the following was inspired by Arya Samaj's teachings and actively participated in India's independence movement?
- (a) Mahatma Gandhi (b) Subhas Chandra Bose
(c) Lala Lajpat Rai (d) Jawaharlal Nehru
18. How did the Arya Samaj contribute to India's struggle for independence?
- (a) By supporting the British colonial rule
(b) By promoting the Swadeshi movement and national pride
(c) By focusing only on religious reform
(d) By advocating for military resistance against the British

Passage – 4

While defining the obligations of countries in the global fight against climate change, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) made a crucial clarification regarding the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and its validity in a landmark ruling last week. The ICJ has said the Kyoto Protocol not only continues to remain in force, but is also legally relevant, and that countries remain under a legal obligation to comply with its provisions. The ICJ ruling is the first time that an authoritative assertion has been made on the legal status of the Kyoto Protocol in the post-Paris Agreement period. The common understanding so far has been that the Kyoto Protocol was replaced and superseded by the 2015 Paris Agreement. In other words, the Kyoto Protocol had ceased to exist, or at least became non-operational or defunct, once the Paris Agreement came into effect in 2016, or at the most when the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period ended in 2020. But the Kyoto Protocol was never terminated or abrogated by any process. The ICJ has now clarified that it continues to remain in force and has the status of international law.

19. What was the main goal of the Kyoto Protocol?
- (a) To reduce greenhouse gas emissions from rich and developed countries
(b) To eliminate all greenhouse gas emissions
(c) To provide financial aid to developing countries
(d) To allocate emission reduction targets for all countries equally
20. Which principle underpinned the Kyoto Protocol, particularly with regard to emission reduction responsibilities?
- (a) Equal distribution of emission targets for all countries
(b) Common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities
(c) Universal accountability for all nations
(d) Voluntary commitment to emission reductions by developing countries
21. Why did the validity of the Kyoto Protocol come into question?
- (a) The US did not ratify it, and several other large emitters like Canada and Japan walked out later
(b) It was superseded by the Paris Agreement
(c) It was not legally binding for any country
(d) All developing countries refused to sign the treaty
22. How did the Paris Agreement differ from the Kyoto Protocol?
- (a) It set specific emission reduction targets for all countries
(b) It assigned responsibility for emission reductions to only developing countries
(c) It required countries to decide their own climate actions through nationally-determined contributions (NDCs)
(d) It was a legally binding treaty with binding targets for all countries

23. What did the ICJ ruling state regarding the Kyoto Protocol's legal status?
- (a) The Kyoto Protocol was superseded by the Paris Agreement
 - (b) The Kyoto Protocol remains in force, and non-compliance with its provisions constitutes an internationally wrongful act
 - (c) The Kyoto Protocol became irrelevant after 2020
 - (d) The Kyoto Protocol only applies to developed countries
24. Which of the following countries are subject to legally binding emission reduction commitments under the Kyoto Protocol?
- (a) Only developing countries
 - (b) Only countries that ratified the Paris Agreement
 - (c) Developed countries listed in Annex-I of the UNFCCC
 - (d) All countries that signed the UNFCCC

Passage – 5

India has emerged as the global leader in fast payments, according to a recent note by the International Monetary Fund titled Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability. At the heart of this transformation is the Unified Payments Interface, better known as UPI. Launched in [1] by the National Payments Corporation of India, UPI has changed how people send and receive money in the country. It brings all your bank accounts together in one mobile app. You can transfer money instantly, pay merchants, or send funds to friends with just a few taps. Its appeal lies in its speed and ease of use. Today, UPI processes over 18 billion transactions every month in India. This shift has taken India away from cash and card-based payments and pushed it towards a digital-first economy. Millions of individuals and small businesses now rely on UPI for safe and low-cost transactions. By making payments quick and accessible, UPI has become a powerful tool for financial inclusion. India's leadership in real-time payments is not an accident. It reflects years of bold digital groundwork and a vision to use technology for inclusive growth. UPI is no longer just a payment system. It is a global benchmark for innovation in public digital infrastructure. The scale of UPI today is remarkable. In June 2025 alone, it handled over Rs.24.03 lakh crore in payments. This was spread across 18.39 billion transactions. Compared to the same month last year, when there were 13.88 billion transactions, the growth is clear. There is an increase of about 32 per cent in just one year. The UPI system now serves 491 million individuals and 65 million merchants. It connects 675 banks on a single platform, allowing people to make payments easily without worrying about which bank they use. Today, UPI accounts for 85 percent of all digital transactions in India. Its impact goes beyond national borders, powering nearly 50 percent of global real-time digital payments.

25. When was the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) launched which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) 2014
 - (b) 2015
 - (c) 2016
 - (d) 2017
26. What is the main benefit of UPI that makes it widely used in India?
- (a) It allows for payments only between large businesses
 - (b) It does not require an internet connection to process payments
 - (c) It is a cash-only system
 - (d) It brings together multiple bank accounts in one mobile app
27. What is the impact of UPI on India's economy?
- (a) It has shifted the country back to cash-based transactions
 - (b) It has helped create a digital-first economy
 - (c) It has limited access to financial services for small businesses
 - (d) It has reduced the number of digital transactions in India
28. Which of the following countries is NOT listed as one of the countries where UPI is already in operation?
- (a) UAE
 - (b) Singapore
 - (c) France
 - (d) United Kingdom

Test – 10

Answers and Explanations

1. b The Supreme Court held that the decision to abrogate Article 370 was made to enhance constitutional integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India, as opposed to disintegration. The Court emphasized that Article 370 was never intended to be a permanent provision and that its abrogation was necessary for national unity.
2. c The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 is an act of the parliament of India containing provisions to split the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories: Ladakh and the residuary Jammu and Kashmir, and becoming effective on 31 October 2019.
3. d Post-abrogation, all Articles of the Indian Constitution, including Fundamental Rights, apply to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. With the abrogation of Article 370, Jammu and Kashmir's separate constitution was abolished.
4. a Article 370 was based on the terms of the Instrument of Accession signed by the ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh, in 1947 to join India after an invasion by Pakistan.
5. c The abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A resulted in the removal of dual citizenship for residents of Jammu and Kashmir. The abrogation of Article 35A resulted in the elimination of dual citizenship for residents of Jammu and Kashmir.
6. b The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 created two Union Territories: Ladakh Union Territory without legislature. Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory with legislature. The Act amended the First Schedule to the Constitution, which lists all states and union territories. It also amended Article 3 of the Constitution, relating to the formation of new states and alteration of areas, boundaries or names of existing states. While the Jammu and Kashmir assembly can legislate on most state matters, public order and police remain under Union Government control.
7. b Donald Trump ordered the deployment of two nuclear submarines in response to Dmitry Medvedev's "dead hand" statement, which was a threat describing Russia's nuclear retaliation system. This move was to ensure preparedness for any eventuality.
8. a The "Dead Hand" was a Russian nuclear weapons control system capable of launching retaliatory strikes even if Russia's leadership was eliminated. Dmitry Medvedev warned Trump to be cautious of its power, despite it no longer being in use.
9. d During his visit to Scotland on 28 July, Donald Trump issued an ultimatum to Russia, demanding it end the war with Ukraine within 10 to 12 days.
10. a Russia has officially declared it no longer considers itself bound by the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. The 1987 arms control deal had banned ground-launched missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometres. Moscow blamed the West for creating what it called a direct threat to its national security. The Russian Foreign Ministry said the treaty's conditions had disappeared and confirmed it will no longer follow restrictions on missile deployments.
11. d The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) is a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation with the formal name of Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms. It was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague, and after ratification it entered into force on 5 February 2011. New START replaced the Treaty of Moscow (SORT), which was to expire in December 2012. It follows the START I treaty, which expired in December 2009; the proposed START II treaty which never entered into force; and the START III treaty, for which negotiations were never concluded. The treaty calls for halving the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers. A new inspection and verification regime will be established, replacing the SORT mechanism. It does not limit the number of operationally inactive nuclear warheads that can be stockpiled, a number in the high thousands.
12. c The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) bans all nuclear test explosions, whether for military or civilian purposes. The Treaty was opened for signature in 1996 to stop the development of new nuclear weapons and prevent upgrades to existing ones, supporting global efforts in non-proliferation and disarmament. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 September 1996, but has not entered into force, as nine specific nations have not ratified the treaty.
13. b The Arya Samaj was founded in 1875 by Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati in Mumbai to bring about social, cultural, and religious reforms based on Vedic teachings.
14. a The Arya Samaj's core philosophy was based on the slogan "Back to the Vedas," emphasizing the importance of the Vedas as the ultimate source of true knowledge and moral guidance.
15. d The Shuddhi Movement was aimed at helping individuals return to the Vedic fold, reclaiming their cultural identity and dignity by renouncing conversions and embracing Vedic principles.
16. a The first DAV (Dayanand Anglo-Vedic) High School was established in Lahore on June 1, 1886. This school was founded by Mahatma Hansraj, who also served as its honorary headmaster.
17. c Lala Lajpat Rai, an influential leader, was inspired by the Arya Samaj's teachings and played a key role in India's freedom struggle through active participation and leadership.
18. b The Arya Samaj contributed to India's struggle for independence by promoting Swadeshi, Swaraj, and national pride, with leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and Swami Shradhdhanand participating in the freedom movement.
19. a The Kyoto Protocol, which was finalised in 1997 and came into effect in 2005, was the first legal instrument under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The agreement sought to operationalise the provisions of the UNFCCC through specific climate actions from countries. It assigned specific targets to rich and developed countries to reduce their emissions in particular time frames, called commitment periods. Developing countries did not have any such targets, and were encouraged to take "nationally appropriate" actions to help the fight against climate change. This was in keeping with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), one of the foundational tenets of international climate law.

20. b The Kyoto Protocol was based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), which assigned more responsibility to developed countries for reducing emissions due to their historical contribution to climate change.
21. a The Kyoto Protocol faced challenges because the United States did not ratify it, and countries like Canada and Japan either withdrew or refused to accept binding targets during the second commitment period. This undermined the treaty's effectiveness.
22. c The Paris Agreement took a bottom-up approach where countries set their own emission reduction targets through nationally-determined contributions (NDCs), unlike the Kyoto Protocol, which had top-down binding targets.
23. b The ICJ ruled that the Kyoto Protocol remains in force, and failure to comply with its emission reduction commitments can constitute an internationally wrongful act. The Court reaffirmed that the Protocol continues to be relevant for assessing compliance with previous commitments.
24. c Under the Kyoto Protocol, developed countries listed in Annex-I of the UNFCCC had legally binding commitments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions based on 1990 baseline values.
25. c The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched in 2016, is the core innovation that has propelled India to become a global leader in fast payments. It has revolutionized the way people send and receive money in India.
UPI was launched in 2016 by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to simplify digital payments and enhance financial inclusion in India.
26. d The main benefit of UPI is that it integrates multiple bank accounts into one mobile app, enabling users to transfer money, pay merchants, and send funds instantly with ease.
27. b UPI has played a key role in transitioning India towards a digital-first economy, reducing dependence on cash and card-based payments while promoting financial inclusion.
28. d The success story does not stop at home. UPI is making its presence felt across borders. It is already live in seven countries, including the UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France and Mauritius. Its entry into France is a milestone because it is UPI's first step into Europe. This allows Indians travelling or living there to pay seamlessly without the usual hassles of foreign transactions. The United Kingdom is not mentioned in the list provided. UPI accounts for 85% of all digital transactions in India, highlighting its dominant role in the country's digital payment ecosystem.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Armenia and Azerbaijan have committed to a lasting peace after decades of conflict; US President Donald Trump said that as he hosted the leaders of the South Caucasus rivals at a White House signing event. President Donald J. Trump, Azerbaijani President [1], and Armenian Prime Minister [2] sign peace and economic agreements at the White House. Armenian Prime Minister [2] and Azerbaijan's longtime President [1] said Trump's mediation should earn him a Nobel Peace Prize – an award the US leader has been vocal about seeking. The two former Soviet republics "are committing to stop all fighting forever, open up commerce, travel and diplomatic relations and respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity," Trump said at the event. However, the fine print and binding nature of the deal between the long-time foes remained unclear. The two leaders would have a "great relationship," Trump said. "But if there's conflict... they're going to call me and we're going to get it straightened out," he added. Christian-majority Armenia and Muslim-majority Azerbaijan have feuded for decades over their border and the status of ethnic enclaves within each other's territories. The nations went to war twice over the disputed Karabakh region, which Azerbaijan recaptured from Armenian forces in a lightning 2023 offensive, sparking the exodus of more than 100,000 ethnic Armenians. The Armenian leader said the "breakthrough" would not have been possible without "peacemaker" Trump, adding that the US president deserved the Nobel. The agreement also includes establishing a transit corridor passing through Armenia to connect Azerbaijan to its exclave of Nakhchivan, a longstanding demand of Baku. The United States will have development rights for the corridor – dubbed the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIPP) – in the strategic and resource-rich region. Trump has repeatedly praised his own diplomatic efforts to help halt deadly conflicts, notably between Cambodia and Thailand, as well as arch-foes India and Pakistan. However, months of efforts have yet to solve the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war and the hunger plaguing Gaza during Israel's offensive.

1. What are the names of Azerbaijani President and Armenian Prime Minister whose names have been redacted with [1] and [2] in the passage above?
(a) Ali Akbar Velayati and Serge Sarkisian
(b) Ilham Aliyev and Nikol Pashinyan
(c) Rahmon and Levon Ter-Petrosyan
(d) Nikolai Tsvetkov and Anwar Rizaev
2. What did Azerbaijani President and Armenian Prime Minister suggest regarding President Donald Trump's role in the peace agreement?
(a) He should be named as world peaceful President
(b) He should take the credit for the conflict
(c) He should lead the peacekeeping forces in the region
(d) He should be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize
3. Which region is at the center of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan?
(a) Nagorno-Karabakh
(b) Nakhchivan
(c) Caucasus Mountains
(d) Caspian Sea
4. What is the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIPP)?
(a) A new trade route between Armenia and Azerbaijan
(b) A road built through Azerbaijan for economic growth
(c) A transit corridor passing through Armenia connecting Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan
(d) A diplomatic initiative for regional peace and Armenia connecting Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan
5. How many former Soviet republics participated in the Alma-Ata Protocols?
(a) 12
(b) 10
(c) 15
(d) 9

6. Which of the following statements is Not true regarding the Armenia and Azerbaijan?
- (a) Armenia is a landlocked country while Azerbaijan is not.
 - (b) The Dram is the currency of Azerbaijan while Manat is the currency of Armenia.
 - (c) Baku is the capita of Azerbaijan while Yerevan is the capital of Armenia.
 - (d) Both countries share border with Turkey

Passage – 2

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi addressed the Aadi Thiruvathirai Festival at Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple in Tamil Nadu today. Bowing to the almighty Lord Shiva, reflecting on the profound spiritual energy experienced through the divine Shiva Darshan in the holy land of Raja Raja Chola, accompanied by the music of Shri Ilaiyaraaja and the sacred chanting of the Odhuvars, Shri Modi remarked that the spiritual atmosphere deeply moved the soul. Noting the significance of the holy month of Sawan and the historic occasion marking 1,000 years since the construction of the Brihadeeswarar Shiva Temple, Shri Modi expressed his privilege in being present at the feet of Lord Brihadeeswarar Shiva during such an extraordinary moment and performing worship at the revered temple. He prayed at the historic Brihadeeswarar Shiva Temple for the welfare of 140 crore Indians and the continued progress of the nation and expressed his wish that Lord Shiva's blessings reach everyone, invoking the sacred chant of Lord Shiva. "The historians consider the Chola period to be among the golden eras of India, an era distinguished by its military strength", stated the Prime Minister, underlining that the Chola Empire advanced India's democratic traditions, often overlooked in global narratives. He noted that while historians speak of Britain's Magna Carta in the context of democracy, the Chola Empire had implemented democratic election practices centuries earlier through the Kudavolai Amaippu system. Shri Modi pointed out that global discourse today often centers around water management and ecology preservation, emphasising that India's ancestors understood the importance of these issues long ago. He cited that while many kings are remembered for acquiring gold, silver, or livestock from other regions, Rajendra Chola is recognized for bringing sacred Ganga water. The Prime Minister recalled that Rajendra Chola transported Ganga water from North India and established it in the South. He referred to the phrase "Ganga Jalamayam Jayastambham," explaining that the water was channeled into the Chola Ganga Lake, now known as the Ponneri Lake. Emphasizing that India's heritage and the influence of Shaiva philosophy are no longer confined to its geographic borders, Shri Modi recalled that when India became the first country to land on the Moon's South Pole, the designated lunar site was named "Shiv-Shakti" and is recognized globally.

7. Who among the following Chola emperor's reign saw the empire's greatest territorial expansion, including successful naval expeditions to Southeast Asia?
- (a) Rajendra Chola I
 - (b) Rajaraja Chola I
 - (c) Kulothunga Chola I
 - (d) Aditya Chola I
8. Which of the following temples did Rajendra Chola establish?
- (a) Srirangam Temple
 - (b) Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple
 - (c) Brihadeeswarar Temple
 - (d) Kedarnath Temple
9. What is the significance of the Chola Empire in terms of India's democratic traditions?
- (a) First to establish secularism
 - (b) First to establish the concept of federalism
 - (c) Introduced the Kudavolai Amaippu system
 - (d) Introduced modern democracy
10. What did Prime Minister Narendra Modi cite as a significant environmental contribution of the Chola rulers?
- (a) They pioneered solar energy use
 - (b) They protected forests across India
 - (c) They established the first national park
 - (d) They created the Ponneri Lake using Ganga water
11. What was the core theme of the Aadi Thiruvathirai festival mentioned by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi?
- (a) Victory over colonial rule
 - (b) Unity in diversity
 - (c) Devotion to Lord Shiva
 - (d) Agricultural prosperity

12. Which global initiative reflects India's ancient philosophy according to Prime Minister Modi's speech?
(a) Global Peace Summit (b) G-20 Summit
(c) UNESCO Heritage Preservation Program (d) Shiv-Shakti lunar site

Passage – 3

Taiwan has seen few protest mobilizations on the scale of what came to be known as the Bluebird Movement in the past decade. Consequently, it may not be surprising that the Bluebird Movement demonstrations were quickly compared to the 2014 Sunflower Movement. Certainly, the comparison seems apt. Both movements experienced explosive growth in a short period of time. The Bluebird Movement quickly went from several hundred demonstrators for the spontaneous protest that broke out on the night of May 17th to what organizers claimed to be over 100,000 on May 24th. This is not so different from how the Sunflower Movement occupation of the Legislative Yuan began on March 18th, 2014, and reached a peak of 500,000 demonstrators on March 30th, 2014. The three major dates of protest after the initial night on May 17th all involved tens of thousands of participants. It has been relatively rare for multiple days of protest to take place within the same few weeks for most social movements in the last decade, outside of demonstrations against textbook changes in 2015 that led to the weeklong occupation of the Ministry of Education, demonstrations regarding the return of Indigenous traditional territories in 2016 and after, against the Labor Standards Act in 2017 and 2018, solidarity rallies for Hong Kong in 2019, and solidarity rallies for Ukraine in 2022.

The Bluebird Movement demonstrations were in themselves highly conscious of history, with early framings for the movement terming it in the vein of the Sunflower Movement by commentators and participants themselves. Sunflowers began to be a frequent sight at demonstrations starting on May 21st. At subsequent protests, one began to see allusions to Taiwan's broader history of protest, with lilies also distributed en masse along with sunflowers on May 24th as an allusion to the 1990 Wild Lily Movement. Indeed, the Bluebird Movement had a similar framing as to the perceived sense of threat as with the Sunflower Movement. Part of this was because of the legacy of the preceding movement casting a long shadow over a decade of political discourse, with terms such as "black box"-referring to the way in which the KMT was seen as circumventing review and oversight mechanisms in the legislature to try and push the Cross-Strait Services Trade Agreement (CSSTA) that the movement protested into law-making since become ubiquitous as a term in Taiwanese politics. The "black box," too, came up in the Bluebird Movement. That is the means by which the KMT party caucus, in collaboration with the TPP caucus, circumvented committee review to advance the bill to its second reading, angered the public and was again termed a "black box".

13. Which of the following movements is the Bluebird Movement often compared to?
(a) Wild Strawberry Movement (b) Sunflower Movement
(c) 1990 Wild Lily Movement (d) Taiwan Independence Movement
14. What was the primary issue that sparked the Bluebird Movement protests?
(a) The passage of a controversial trade agreement
(b) Taiwan's education reforms
(c) Changes in the Labor Standards Act
(d) Military presence in Taiwan
15. Which of the following terms became ubiquitous in Taiwanese politics after the Sunflower Movement and was used again during the Bluebird Movement?
(a) Democracy deficit (b) Black box
(c) Transparency crisis (d) Economic liberalization
16. Which of the following did the Bluebird Movement explicitly link the KMT's actions to?
(a) Economic reform in Taiwan (b) A desire for peace with Taiwan's neighbors
(c) A new free trade agreement (d) The authoritarian influence of China

17. What was the primary demand of the Umbrella Movement during the 2014 Hong Kong protests?
 - (a) Transparency in the election of the Chief Executive
 - (b) Greater economic independence for Hong Kong
 - (c) Immediate independence of Hong Kong from China
 - (d) Removal of the Hong Kong Police Force
18. What happened to the Republic of China government after losing mainland China to the Communists?
 - (a) It dissolved peacefully.
 - (b) It moved to Taiwan in 1949 under the Kuomintang (KMT).
 - (c) It reformed and integrated with the People's Republic of China.
 - (d) It established a new capital in Hong Kong.

Passage – 4

The moment seismologists got word that a magnitude 8.8 earthquake had struck near Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, they felt an acute sense of anxiety. This location-where the Pacific plate is plunging below an arm of the North American plate and in the vicinity of the Eurasian plate-can produce widespread, highly destructive tsunamis. It did just that in 1952, when a magnitude 9.0 quake effortlessly washed away a nearby Russian town while also causing extensive damage in far-off Hawaii. When the seafloor next to Kamchatka violently buckled at 11:24 A.M. local time on Wednesday (7:24 P.M. EDT on Tuesday), everything seemed primed for a dangerous tsunami. Early forecasts by scientists (correctly) predicted that several countries around the Pacific Ocean would be inundated to some degree. Millions of people were evacuated from coastal Japan, and many in Hawaii were ordered to seek higher ground. People across swaths of Central and South America were also advised to flee from the receding ocean. And as an initial smaller tsunami formed on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido, there was some preliminary concern that waves could reach a height of nearly 10 feet. But for the most part (at the time of writing), plenty of countries in the firing line didn't get hit by an extremely lethal wall of water. It appears that waves of just more than four feet hit Japan and Hawaii-two locations that have now significantly downgraded their tsunami alerts and rescinded some evacuation notices. One tourist in Hawaii told BBC News that "the disaster we were expecting did not come." Parts of California have seen water up to eight feet but without considerable damage.

19. What is the point on the surface directly above the focus called?

(a) Epicentre	(b) Focus
(c) Hypocenter	(d) Seismic centre
20. What is the primary characteristic of S-waves?

(a) They travel through all types of materials	(b) They are the fastest waves
(c) They can only travel through solid materials	(d) They cause minimal damage
21. Which waves are the first to arrive at the surface?

(a) S-waves	(b) P-waves
(c) Surface waves	(d) All of the above
22. Which waves are the most destructive in an earthquake?

(a) P-waves	(b) S-waves
(c) Surface waves	(d) Body waves
23. What does the Richter scale measure?

(a) The intensity of the earthquake	(b) The energy released during the earthquake
(c) The amount of damage caused	(d) The duration of the earthquake
24. What does the Mercalli scale measure in relation to earthquakes?

(a) The energy released by the earthquake	(b) The number of people affected by the earthquake
(c) The depth of the earthquake's focus	(d) The amount of damage caused by the earthquake

Passage – 5

The winners of the 71st National Film Awards for the year 2023 were announced today by the respective juries. This year, the awards saw 332 entries in the feature film category, 115 in non-feature films, 27 books, and 16 critics' submissions. [1] has been honoured with the Best Feature Film award at the 71st National Film Awards. Flowering Man won the Best Non-Feature Film award, while God Vulture and Human was recognised as the Best Documentary. Both films earned their first National Film Award. [2] (Jawan) and Vikrant Massey (12th Fail) have been awarded the Best Actor award. This is the first National Film Award of [2] in his career. [3] was honoured with the Best Actress award for her powerful performance in Mrs. Chatterjee Vs Norway. This is also her first-ever National Film Award. Veteran actor Vijayaraghavan and Muthupettai Somu Bhaskar were awarded Best Supporting Actor. The announcement was made by Shri Ashutosh Gowariker (Feature Film Jury Chairperson), Shri P. Sheshadri (Non-Feature Film Jury Chairperson), and Dr. Ajay Nagabhushan MN, Joint Secretary (Films). Ms. Mattu J. P. Singh, Director General, PIB, was also present on the occasion.

25. Which of the following films won the Best Feature Film award at the 71st National Film Awards for 2023 which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) Flowering Man (b) Jawan
(c) 12th Fail (d) Mrs. Chatterjee Vs Norway
26. Which of the following actors received their first-ever National Film Award at the 71st National Film Awards whose name has been redacted with [2] in the passage above?
- (a) Allu Arju (b) Shah Rukh Khan
(c) K Pawan Kalyan (d) Prabhas Raju
27. Who among the following won the Best Actress award at the 71st National Film Awards for their performance in Mrs. Chatterjee Vs Norway whose name has been redacted with [3] in the passage above?
- (a) Rani Mukerji (b) Priyanka Chopra
(c) Deepika Padukone (d) Kangana Ranaut
28. Who administers the National Film Awards since 2021?
- (a) Directorate of Film Festivals
(b) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
(c) Ministry of Culture
(d) National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC)

Test – 11

Answers and Explanations

1. b Armenia and Azerbaijan have committed to a lasting peace after decades of conflict; US President Donald Trump said that as he hosted the leaders of the South Caucasus rivals at a White House signing event. President Donald J. Trump, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan sign peace and economic agreements at the White House.
2. d The leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan, after signing the peace agreement, suggested that President Trump deserved the Nobel Peace Prize for his mediation efforts in resolving the conflict between the two nations.
3. a Nagorno-Karabakh is the disputed region that has been the center of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The passage mentions that Azerbaijan recaptured Nagorno-Karabakh from Armenian forces during a 2023 offensive.
4. c President Trump mentioned the establishment of the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIPP), a transit corridor, as part of his efforts to mediate peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, allowing for improved commerce and diplomatic relations. TRIPP is the transit corridor mentioned in the agreement, passing through Armenia to connect Azerbaijan to its exclave of Nakhchivan. The United States will have development rights over this corridor.
5. a The Belovezha Accords, signed on December 8, 1991, by the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, declared the dissolution of the Soviet Union and laid the foundation for the formation of the CIS. The Alma-Ata Protocols were a declaration by the leaders of former Soviet republics on December 21, 1991, which formally established the CIS and recognized the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The CIS was meant to be a loose association of former Soviet republics. On 21 December 1991, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan agreed to the Alma-Ata Protocols, formally establishing the CIS.
6. b Armenia is a landlocked country, but Azerbaijan is not. Azerbaijan has a coastline along the Caspian Sea, making it not landlocked. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan share a border with Turkey, though Armenia shares a short border with Turkey, and Azerbaijan shares a longer border with Turkey through its Nakhchivan exclave. Armenia is a landlocked country in the Armenian highlands of West Asia. It is a part of the Caucasus region and is bordered by Turkey to the west, Georgia to the north and Azerbaijan to the east, and Iran and the Azerbaijani exclave Nakhchivan to the south. Yerevan is the capital, largest city and financial center. The Armenian dram is the currency of Armenia. Azerbaijan is a transcontinental at the boundary of West Asia and Eastern Europe. It is a part of the South Caucasus region and is bounded by the Caspian Sea to the east, Russia's republic of Dagestan to the north, Georgia to the northwest, Armenia and Turkey to the west, and Iran to the south. Baku is the capital and largest city. The manat is the currency of Azerbaijan.
7. a The Chola Empire was founded by Vijayalaya. The reign of the Cholas began in the 9th century when they defeated the Pallavas to come into power. Rajendra Chola I's reign (1014-1044 AD) marked the greatest territorial expansion of the Chola Empire, including successful naval expeditions to Southeast Asia, which solidified its position as a maritime power.
8. b Rajendra Chola established the Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple, which is globally recognized for its architectural brilliance and historical significance.
9. c The Chola Empire is credited with introducing the Kudavolai Amaippu system, a form of local democratic elections that predates many modern democratic systems, including the Magna Carta.
10. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned how Rajendra Chola brought sacred Ganga water from North India and established it in the South, notably in the Ponneri Lake, as part of the Chola Empire's environmental contributions.
11. c The core theme of the Aadi Thiruvathirai festival was the devotion to Lord Shiva, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasizing the spiritual and cultural significance of the festival.
12. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted that India's philosophical influence has expanded beyond borders, citing the lunar site on the Moon's South Pole named "Shiv-Shakti," a reflection of India's spiritual legacy.
13. b The Bluebird Movement is often compared to the Sunflower Movement due to its explosive growth, the similarity in how both movements gained traction in a short period, and the fact that both were driven by perceived threats to Taiwan's sovereignty.
14. a The Bluebird Movement protests were sparked by the KMT's attempt to pass a trade agreement without proper review, similar to the actions that led to the Sunflower Movement a decade earlier, where the Cross-Strait Services Trade Agreement (CSSTA) was pushed through the legislature.
15. b The term "black box" became widely used in Taiwanese politics after the Sunflower Movement and was referenced again during the Bluebird Movement, referring to the KMT's efforts to pass laws without transparency or oversight.
16. d The Bluebird Movement explicitly linked the KMT's actions to the "China factor", viewing them as potentially aligning with China's authoritarian methods to bypass democratic processes in Taiwan.
17. a The Umbrella Movement was a political movement that emerged during the 2014 Hong Kong protests. Its name arose from the use of umbrellas as a tool for passive resistance to the Hong Kong Police Force's use of pepper spray to disperse the crowd during a 79-day occupation of the city demanding more transparent elections, which was sparked by the decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPCSC) of the People's Republic of China of 31 August 2014 that prescribed a selective pre-screening of candidates for the 2017 election of Hong Kong's chief executive.
18. b After losing mainland China to the Communists in 1949, the Republic of China (ROC) government, led by the Kuomintang (KMT), retreated to and established its capital in Taipei, Taiwan. This marked the end of the ROC's control over mainland China and the beginning of the "Two Chinas" political landscape, with the People's Republic of China (PRC) governing the mainland. Taiwan, officially known as the Republic of China, has not been a charter member of the United Nations (UN) since 1971. Lai Ching-te has been serving as the current President of the Republic of China since 2024. A member of

the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), he has also served as the chairman of the Democratic Progressive Party since 2023. The New Taiwan dollar is the official currency of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

- 19. a The point on the earth's surface nearest to the focus of an earthquake is called the epicenter. The point where the energy is released in an earthquake is called the focus or hypocenter.
- 20. c S-waves can only travel through solid materials, which is an important characteristic, as highlighted in the passage. This helped scientists understand the Earth's interior.
- 21. b P-waves (Primary waves) are the first to arrive at the surface because they travel the fastest among earthquake waves.
- 22. c Surface waves are the most destructive because they move along the surface and cause significant displacement of rocks, leading to the collapse of structures.
- 23. b The Richter scale measures the magnitude, or the energy released during an earthquake, on a scale from 0 to 10.
- 24. d The Mercalli scale measures the intensity of an earthquake based on the observable damage caused by the event, with a range from 1 to 12.

- 25. c The film 12th Fail won the Best Feature Film award at the 71st National Film Awards for 2023, as mentioned in the passage.
- 26. b Shah Rukh Khan received his first-ever National Film Award for his role in Jawan.
- 27. a Rani Mukerji was honoured with the Best Actress award for her powerful performance in Mrs. Chatterjee Vs Norway.
- 28. d Since 2021, the National Film Development Corporation of India (NFDC) administers the National Film Awards. The National Film Awards are awards for artistic and technical merit given for excellence within the Indian film industry. Established in 1954, it has been administered, along with the International Film Festival of India and the Indian Panorama, by the Indian government's Directorate of Film Festivals from 1973 until 2020, and by the NFDC since 2021. The Awards were first presented in 1954. The Government of India conceived the ceremony to honor films made across India, on a national scale, to encourage the furthering of Indian art and culture. From 1973 until 2020, the Indian Directorate of Film Festivals administers the ceremony along with other major film events in India annually. Since then, National Film Development Corporation of India administers the ceremony.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi remembered the freedom fighters involved in the Kakori train conspiracy on its 100th anniversary, highlighting how the freedom fighters' courage showed the resentment among people against colonial rule. "They were angry at the manner in which people's money was being used to further colonial exploitation. Their valour will always be remembered by the people of India," the Prime Minister wrote in a post on X. Reiterating the resolve to build a prosperous India, PM Modi added, "We will keep working to fulfil their dreams for a strong and prosperous India."

Earlier, Union Home Minister Amit Shah paid tribute to Ram Prasad Bismil, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Asfaqullah Khan and other freedom fighters involved in the historic event. Shah stated that the freedom fighters ignited the "torch of revolution" against the "British looting" and shook the foundation of the British Empire by robbing the train with the aim of giving the nation's wealth back to its people. In a post on X, HM Shah said, "The 'Kakori Train Action' is a symbol of courage, sacrifice, and patriotism in the Indian freedom struggle. On August 9, 1925, brave heroes like Ram Prasad Bismil Ji, Chandra Shekhar Azad Ji, and Ashfaqulla Khan Ji ignited the torch of revolution against British looting, shaking the foundations of the British Empire."

The Kakori Train Action or Kakori Conspiracy was a train robbery that took place at Kakori, a village near Lucknow, on 9 August 1925 during the Indian Independence Movement against the British colonial rule. The robbery was organised by the Hindustan Republican Association, and more than 40 persons were arrested in this incident. They were finally sentenced to death by the British government, and severe punishments were also given to those people who helped with the incident. The main purpose of the robbery was to protest against the heavy tax that was collected from the Indians and use the money to fund the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) rather than leaving it with the Britishers.

- Who among the following was not directly involved in the Kakori Train Conspiracy?
(a) Ram Prasad Bismil (b) Ashfaqulla Khan
(c) Bhagat Singh (d) Chandra Shekhar Azad
- Which of the following organisations was behind the Kakori Train Conspiracy?
(a) Indian National Congress (b) Hindustan Republican Association
(c) Ghadar Party (d) Swaraj Party
- What was the primary objective of the Kakori Train robbery?
(a) To assassinate a British official.
(b) To release imprisoned revolutionaries.
(c) To disrupt railway communication in British India.
(d) To protest against heavy taxation and fund revolutionary activities.
- Which of the following trains was targeted during the Kakori incident?
(a) Howrah-Delhi passenger (b) Saharanpur-Lucknow passenger
(c) Kanpur-Allahabad express (d) Bombay-Calcutta mail
- Who was the chief planner of the Kakori Train Robbery?
(a) Ram Prasad Bismil (b) Sachindra Nath Sanyal
(c) Chandrashekhar Azad (d) Ashfaqulla Khan
- Who among the following revolutionaries evaded arrest after the Kakori incident and remained underground until his death in 1931?
(a) Rajendra Lahiri (b) Chandrashekhar Azad
(c) Ashfaqulla Khan (d) Roshan Singh

Passage – 2

President Donald Trump announced that he has begun preparations for a face-to-face meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to explore a possible pathway to end Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The announcement followed a phone call with Putin, even as Trump hosted Zelensky and top European leaders at the White House for talks on his peace push. The discussions were marked by unease in Europe, with concerns that Trump could press Ukraine into concessions that might embolden Putin.

"I called President Putin and began the arrangements for a meeting, at a location to be determined, between President Putin and President Zelensky," Trump said in a social media post after the talks. "After that meeting takes place, we will have a Trilat - the two Presidents plus myself. This was a very good, early step for a War that has been going on for almost four years." It remains unclear if Putin has agreed to the proposal. Russia's state news agency Tass quoted Putin's foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov as saying both Trump and Putin "spoke in favor" of continuing direct talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegations. Ushakov said they also discussed "the idea of raising the level of the direct Russian-Ukrainian negotiations." Zelensky told reporters after the White House meeting, "If Russia does not demonstrate a will to meet, then we will ask the United States to act accordingly."

Earlier in the day, Trump and Zelensky held one-on-one talks at the White House. Their meeting came just days after Trump's summit with Putin in Alaska, part of the US president's efforts to broker a ceasefire. Ahead of his Washington visit, Zelensky praised Trump on social media, saying only the United States had the power "to force Russia into peace." Trump, in a series of Truth Social posts, insisted he "knows what he is doing" on the negotiations, stressing that his goal is "to stop the war, not to prosecute it any further." This marked Zelensky's return to the White House six months after a heated public spat with Trump and US Vice President JD Vance. This time, he was joined by European leaders, including German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, French President Emmanuel Macron, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Finnish President Alexander Stubb, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, and NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte.

7. What was the immediate context in which Donald Trump announced preparations for a Putin-Zelensky meeting?
 - (a) After a NATO summit in Brussels
 - (b) After a phone call with Putin and White House talks with Zelensky and European leaders
 - (c) Following a UN Security Council resolution
 - (d) During his earlier meeting with Putin in Alaska
8. What concern did European leaders express about Donald Trump's peace initiative?
 - (a) That it would permanently isolate Russia.
 - (b) That NATO's role would overshadow U.S. diplomacy.
 - (c) That Ukraine might be pressed into concessions favoring Vladimir Putin.
 - (d) That Zelensky might refuse to participate in any talks.
9. How did Donald Trump describe the planned trilateral arrangement after the Putin-Zelensky meeting?
 - (a) A joint NATO-EU-U.S. summit
 - (b) A Geneva convention on peace enforcement
 - (c) A bilateral U.S.-Russia accord on Ukraine
 - (d) A Trilat including Putin, Zelensky, and himself
10. What was significant about Donald Trump's recent summit with Vladimir Putin in Alaska?
 - (a) It was the first direct U.S.-Russia meeting since 2014.
 - (b) It formed part of his broader push to broker a ceasefire in Ukraine.
 - (c) It resulted in a formal peace treaty.
 - (d) It included participation of EU leaders.

11. How did Zelensky characterize U.S. influence ahead of his Washington visit?
- Only the United States could force Russia into peace
 - Only NATO could stop Russia
 - Only the EU had the economic leverage for peace
 - India should act as a neutral mediator
12. The Minsk agreements were primarily intended to _____.
- End the Donbas war between Russian-backed separatists and Ukraine
 - Strengthen Ukraine's presence in Eastern Europe.
 - Facilitate Ukraine's accession to the European Union
 - Annex Crimea into Ukraine and end the NATO Eastward expansion

Passage – 3

The INDIA bloc is considering a motion against Chief Election Commission (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, seeking his removal. The idea was mooted at the meeting of the Opposition's Parliamentary floor leaders on August 18, 2025). According to sources, the Opposition discussed whether it should continue with protests against the Election Commission, especially after the Supreme Court, in an interim order, directed the poll body to publish the details of 65 lakh voters excluded from the draft electoral roll published on August 1, following the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in poll-bound Bihar. The leaders concurred that after the CEC's press conference on August 17, 2025, in which he accused the Opposition of "spreading misinformation", the protests had to continue. Congress leaders suggested that the Opposition should step up the pressure by moving a motion against Mr. Kumar for making 'politically charged accusations.'

Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal told that there was a consensus in the INDIA bloc on the issue. "He (Mr. Kumar) spoke not like the Chief Election Commissioner but like a BJP politician. In the entire press conference, he did not answer the questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and the other parties. Instead, he ridiculed the Opposition for raising the questions," he said. "Is it the duty of the CEC to indulge in politics?" Mr. Venugopal, who said that the Opposition has enough numbers to move the motion, flagged the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, which provides immunity to the CEC and Election Commissioners for all decisions taken by them in present and the past. He said that one should "read between the lines" why such an immunity was extended. According to the Act, the CEC can be removed in the same manner and grounds as a Supreme Court judge. Parliament can dismiss the CEC by a motion with two-thirds majority in both the Houses. In order for the motion to be accepted, at least 50 members have to sign in its favour.

13. The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is a constitutional authority under which Article of the Indian Constitution?
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| (a) Article 320 | (b) Article 324 |
| (c) Article 326 | (d) Article 327 |
14. On what grounds can the Chief Election Commission (CEC) be removed from office?
- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| (a) Loss of confidence in Election Commission | (b) Violation of Constitution |
| (c) Proved misbehaviour or incapacity | (d) Insolvent and bankruptcy |
15. The removal process of the Chief Election Commission (CEC) is the same as that of _____.
- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| (a) A Governor | (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) |
| (c) A Member of Parliament | (d) A Judge of the Supreme Court |
16. What type of majority is required in Parliament to approve the removal of the Chief Election Commission (CEC)?
- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| (a) Special majority of two-thirds in both Houses | (b) Simple majority in both Houses |
| (c) Majority in Lok Sabha only | (d) Joint sitting majority |

17. How can other Election Commissioners be removed?
(a) By a simple majority in Parliament
(b) By a Presidential order on advice of the Prime Minister
(c) Only on recommendation of the Chief Election Commission (CEC)
(d) By Supreme Court order
18. How many Chief Election Commissioners have been removed since Independence?
(a) None
(b) One
(c) Two
(d) Five

Passage – 4

The much-anticipated "next-generation" Goods and Services Tax (GST) reforms, proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day speech, have sparked widespread excitement as the biggest tax overhaul in eight years. Intended to simplify the complex GST system and reduce rates on everyday goods and small cars, the reform promises cheaper products and a boost to consumption. However, despite the fanfare, the reforms are far from a done deal due to the intricate structure of the GST framework and the myriad stakeholders involved.

Since its launch in [1], the GST regime has unified more than a dozen state and central levies into a single tax system under the slogan "one nation, one tax, one market." The GST currently operates with [2] main tax slabs-5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%-each encompassing a range of goods and services. And some luxury and sin items attracted additional levies beyond the 28% slab.

Yet, even after more than eight years, the GST remains complex, with confusing classifications where minor variations in products can incur widely different tax rates. For instance, pre-packaged salted popcorn is taxed at 12% while caramel popcorn is at 18%, and simple Indian flatbread (roti) faces 5% GST, versus 18% on layered varieties. This complexity has drawn criticism and calls for rationalisation.

The government aims to simplify GST by slashing the highest 28% slab entirely and collapsing over 99% of products currently taxed at 12% into the lower 5% rate. Small cars and other items like air conditioners, refrigerators, and televisions are proposed to move from 28% down to 18%, potentially lowering prices significantly and boosting demand.

Economists expect these changes to ease inflation and sustain consumption-a key driver of India's economy, which accounts for about 60% of GDP. However, the reforms would also reduce GST collections by an estimated Rs 1.74 lakh crore, impacting government revenues.

19. When was the GST regime first launched in India which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) 2014
(b) 2015
(c) 2017
(d) 2018
20. Currently, how many main GST tax slabs are in operation which has been redacted with [2] in the passage above?
(a) Three
(b) Four
(c) Six
(d) Seven
21. Economists expect the GST reforms to help in which of the following ways?
(a) Increase fiscal deficit
(b) Reduce demand by discouraging spending
(c) Encourage more imports
(d) Ease inflation and sustain consumption

22. Which of the following best describes the slogan under which GST was originally launched?
(a) One market, one economy, one people (b) One country, one policy, one growth
(c) One law, one tax, one India (d) One nation, one tax, one market
23. Which of the following items are not taxed under GST but remain under state taxation?
(a) Automobiles and textiles
(b) Food grains and medicines
(c) Petroleum products, alcoholic beverages, and electricity
(d) Gold and silver
24. The constitutional basis for GST implementation in India was provided by _____.
(a) The 101st Amendment (b) The 99th Amendment
(c) The 100th Amendment (d) The 102nd Amendment

Passage – 5

The Ministry of Home Affairs announced the list of bravehearts honoured with the Gallantry and Service medals in recognition of their exceptional bravery, distinguished service, and meritorious contributions to the nation. "The total of 1090 Personnel of Police, Fire, Home Guard & Civil Defence (HG&CD) and Correctional Services have been awarded Gallantry and Service Medals on the occasion of the Independence Day, 2025," read a notification released by the government. The awards are divided into three main categories, namely Medal for Gallantry (GM), President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM) and Medal for Meritorious Service (MSM). This year, a total of 1,090 personnel from police, fire, home guard & Civil Defence (HG&CD) and correctional services have been awarded the Gallantry and Service medals.

Medal for Gallantry (GM): 233 personnel have been awarded Medal for Gallantry (GM) this year. These include 226 from the Police, six from the Fire Service, and one from the HG&CD. Among the majority of the 233 Gallantry Awards, 54 personnel from Left Wing Extremism affected areas, 152 personnel from Jammu & Kashmir region, three personnel from North-East and 24 personnel from other regions are being awarded for their gallant action. This medal is awarded on the ground of Rare Conspicuous Act of Gallantry and Conspicuous Act of Gallantry respectively in saving life and property, or in preventing crime or arresting criminals, the risk incurred being estimated with due regard to the obligations and duties of the officer concerned.

President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM): 99 personnel have been awarded President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM) for their distinguished service. This includes 89 from the Police, five from the Fire Service, three from HG&CD, and two from Correctional Services. President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM) is awarded for special distinguished record in Service.

25. As of August 2025, how many times has the Param Vir Chakra been awarded?
(a) 14 (b) 16
(c) 20 (d) 21
26. The Ashok Chakra is the peacetime equivalent of which of the following awards?
(a) Kirti Chakra (b) Param Vir Chakra
(c) Maha Vir Chakra (d) Shaurya Chakra
27. Which of the following groups received the highest number of Medal for Gallantry (GM) awards in 2025?
(a) Police (b) Fire Service
(c) Home Guard & Civil Defence (d) Correctional Services
28. Which of the following regions accounted for 54 Gallantry Awards in 2025?
(a) North-East (b) Northern region
(c) Left Wing Extremism-affected areas (d) Southern region

Test – 12

Answers and Explanations

1. c While Bhagat Singh was a revolutionary active in the same period, he was not directly involved in the Kakori Conspiracy. The prominent leaders involved included Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, and Chandra Shekhar Azad.
2. b The train robbery was organised by the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA), a revolutionary group that later evolved into the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).
3. d The revolutionaries targeted government funds being transported by train. Their intention was to use the money for the Hindustan Republican Association's revolutionary activities, rather than allow it to fuel British exploitation.
4. b The revolutionaries boarded the Saharanpur-Lucknow passenger train near Kakori station and stopped it at Bajnagar to carry out the robbery.
5. a Ram Prasad Bismil, one of the founders of the HRA, was the chief planner of the Kakori Train Robbery.
6. b Chandrashekhar Azad, a prominent Indian revolutionary, successfully evaded capture after the Kakori train robbery, remaining underground until his death in Alfred Park, Allahabad (now Prayagraj) in 1931. He chose to shoot himself rather than be taken alive by the British police, fulfilling his vow to remain "azad" (free).
7. b Donald Trump's announcement came after speaking to Putin by phone and hosting Zelensky and European leaders at the White House, highlighting his attempt to push forward a peace initiative.
8. c European leaders were uneasy that Donald Trump might pressure Ukraine into concessions, which could embolden Putin rather than restrain him.
9. d Donald Trump said that after a Putin-Zelensky face-to-face, there would be a "Trilat" involving the two leaders plus himself, marking the next stage of the process.
10. b The Alaska summit was explicitly mentioned as part of Donald Trump's efforts to broker a ceasefire before the Washington talks with Zelensky.
11. a Zelensky praised Trump on social media, declaring that only the U.S. had the power to compel Russia into peace.
12. a The Minsk agreements were a series of international agreements which sought to end the Donbas war fought between armed Russian separatist groups and Armed Forces of Ukraine, with Russian regular forces playing a central part. After a defeat at Ilovaik at the end of August 2014, Russia forced Ukraine to sign the first Minsk Protocol, or the Minsk I. It was drafted by the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine, consisting of Ukraine, Russia, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with mediation by the leaders of France (François Hollande) and Germany (Angela Merkel) in the so-called Normandy Format.
13. b Article 324 vests the superintendence, direction, and control of elections in the Election Commission of India, making the CEC a constitutional authority.
14. c The Constitution specifies that the CEC can only be removed on the grounds of proved misbehaviour (such as corruption or abuse of office) or incapacity.
15. d The CEC enjoys the same removal safeguards as a Supreme Court Judge, ensuring independence and neutrality.
16. a Removal requires a two-thirds majority of members present and voting in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, ensuring a very high threshold.
17. c To further strengthen independence, the Constitution provides that other ECs can only be removed on the recommendation of the CEC.
18. a Despite political pressures, no CEC has ever been removed, mainly due to the stringent constitutional safeguards.
19. c The Goods and Services Tax was rolled out in July 2017, unifying more than a dozen central and state levies into a single system under the idea of "one nation, one tax, one market."
20. b GST has four main slabs: 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28%. In addition, luxury and sin items attract extra cess above 28%.
21. d Economists believe lowering GST rates will reduce prices, ease inflation, and sustain consumption - crucial since consumption makes up about 60% of India's GDP.
22. d The GST was launched in 2017 with the slogan "one nation, one tax, one market," symbolising its unifying intent.
23. c Goods and services are divided into four different tax slabs for collection of tax: 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. However, petroleum products, alcoholic beverages, and electricity are not taxed under GST and instead are taxed separately by the individual state governments, as per the previous tax system.
24. a The One Hundred and First Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016 paved the way for the introduction of GST in India. The tax came into effect from 1 July 2017 through the implementation of the One Hundred and First Amendment to the Constitution of India by the Government of India. 1 July is celebrated as GST Day. The GST replaced existing multiple taxes levied by the central and state governments.
25. d The Param Vir Chakra (PVC) is India's highest military decoration, awarded for displaying distinguished acts of valour during wartime. Param Vir Chakra translates roughly as the "Wheel of Supreme Bravery", and the award is granted for "most conspicuous bravery in the presence of the enemy". As of August 2025, the medal has been awarded 21 times, of which 14 were posthumous and 16 arose from actions in Indo-Pakistani conflicts. Of the 21 awardees, 20 have been from the Indian Army and one has been from the Indian Air Force. Major Somnath Sharma was the first recipient. Post-independence, new awards were instituted on 26 January 1950, with retroactive effect from 15 August 1947.
26. b The Ashok Chakra is India's highest peacetime gallantry award. It is awarded for "most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent valour or self-sacrifice" other than in the face of the enemy. It is the peacetime equivalent of the Param Vir Chakra, which is the highest wartime gallantry award. Peacetime gallantry awards were established on 4 January 1952, but effective from 15th August 1947.
27. a Out of 233 Gallantry Awards, 226 were awarded to Police personnel - the overwhelming majority.
28. c 54 personnel from Left Wing Extremism affected areas were honoured with the Medal for Gallantry.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

India has said it successfully test-fired an intermediate-range ballistic missile that, when operational, should be capable of carrying a nuclear warhead to any part of China. The Agni-5 missile was successfully launched in India's eastern Odisha state, and authorities said it "validated all operational and technical parameters". India and China, the world's two most populous nations, are intense rivals competing for influence across south Asia and relations plummeted in 2020 after a deadly border clash. India is also part of the Quad security alliance with the US, Australia and Japan, which is seen as a counter to China.

India's bitter rival, Pakistan, has nuclear weapons as well and the two countries came close to war in May after militants killed 26 people in Jammu and Kashmir, an attack New Delhi blamed on Islamabad. Pakistan denied any involvement. Caught in global trade and geopolitical turbulence triggered by Donald Trump's tariff war, New Delhi and Beijing have moved to mend ties. Last October, the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, met the Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, for the first time in five years at a summit in Russia. Modi is expected to make his first visit to China since 2018 this month to attend the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation - a regional security bloc.

Ties between New Delhi and Washington, meanwhile, have been strained by Trump's ultimatum that India end its purchases of Russian oil, a key source of revenue for Moscow as it wages its military offensive in Ukraine. The US says it will double new import tariffs on India from 25% to 50% by 27 August if New Delhi does not switch crude suppliers. The Agni-5 is one of a number of indigenously produced short- and medium-range Indian ballistic missiles aimed at boosting its defence posture against Pakistan, as well as China.

1. Agni-5 missile is part of which major Indian missile development programme?
(a) Prithvi Defence Programme (b) Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme
(c) Advanced Weapons Modernisation Mission (d) Strategic Forces Missile Programme
2. The range of Agni-5 missile is closest to which of the following?
(a) 1,000 km (b) 2,500 km (c) 5,000 km (d) 10,000 km
3. Agni-5 is significant because it is capable of _____.
(a) Launching satellites into orbit.
(b) Destroying low-flying aircraft.
(c) Serving as India's primary anti-missile interceptor.
(d) Carrying Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles.
4. Agni-5 belongs to which category of missiles?
(a) Surface-to-Air Missile (b) Surface-to-Surface Ballistic Missile
(c) Anti-Tank Missile (d) Air to Air Ballistic Missile
5. With the successful test of Agni-5, India joined a select group of nations that possess advanced MIRV-capable IRBM/ICBM technology. Which of the following countries are parts of this group?
(a) USA, Russia, China, France (b) USA, UK, Japan, Israel
(c) Russia, North Korea, Pakistan, Iran (d) USA, Germany, Italy, Australia
6. Who among the following is considered the chief architect of India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP)?
(a) Vikram Sarabhai (b) Homi J. Bhabha
(c) Satish Dhawan (d) APJ Abdul Kalam

Passage – 2

In a renewed push to gain global recognition for India's Buddhist heritage, the Uttar Pradesh tourism department has intensified its efforts to secure UNESCO World Heritage status for Sarnath, one of the most sacred Buddhist pilgrimage sites. A high-level joint meeting between the state tourism department and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was held in Lucknow on Thursday to finalise preparations ahead of UNESCO's nomination review scheduled for September.

India has officially nominated Sarnath for inclusion under the 2025-26 UNESCO World Heritage nomination cycle. Located near Varanasi, Sarnath is revered as the site where Gautam Buddha delivered his first sermon after attaining enlightenment, making it a foundational pillar of Buddhist history.

The joint meeting focused on aligning documentation, strengthening site management, and ensuring compliance with UNESCO's stringent selection criteria. Key topics included sustainable tourism, ecological preservation, and community engagement. Officials also agreed to organise a stakeholder consultation in Varanasi, involving local communities and tourism stakeholders.

Sarnath is currently on UNESCO's tentative list, and the upcoming review could determine its elevation to full World Heritage Site status. If successful, it would become Uttar Pradesh's fourth UNESCO site-and the first outside Agra. Experts say the move would not only enhance heritage conservation but also promote sustainable tourism across the region.

7. Why is Sarnath considered a sacred site in Buddhist heritage?
 - (a) It was the birthplace of Gautam Buddha.
 - (b) It is where Gautam Buddha attained enlightenment.
 - (c) It is where Gautam Buddha delivered his first sermon.
 - (d) It is where Gautam Buddha passed away.
8. India's nomination of the Maratha Military Landscapes was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List during which session of the World Heritage Committee?
 - (a) 47th Session
 - (b) 45th Session
 - (c) 46th Session
 - (d) 48th Session
9. Which of the following were the India's first UNESCO World Heritage Sites inscribed in 1983?
 - (a) Khajuraho Temples and Konark Sun Temple
 - (b) Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves
 - (c) Sanchi Stupa and Hampi
 - (d) Elephanta Caves and Mahabalipuram
10. Khangchendzonga National Park, inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2016, holds which unique distinction in India?
 - (a) First cultural World Heritage Site in Northeast India
 - (b) First mixed World Heritage Site (natural and cultural) in India
 - (c) Largest national park in India
 - (d) First natural site to be jointly managed by UNESCO and India
11. Ahmedabad became India's first UNESCO World Heritage City in which year?
 - (a) 2015
 - (b) 2016
 - (c) 2017
 - (d) 2018
12. The first Harappan site from India to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site is _____.
 - (a) Lothal
 - (b) Rakhigarhi
 - (c) Banawali
 - (d) Dholavira

Passage – 3

The NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite was successfully launched on July 30, 2025 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle [1] rocket carrying the earth observation satellite lifted off from the second launch pad of the space centre. Eighteen minutes later, it injected the satellite into a sun-synchronous orbit. "The GSLV-F16 vehicle has successfully and precisely injected the NISAR satellite weighing [2] kg into its intended orbit," Indian Space Research Organisation

(ISRO) Chairman V. Narayanan said after the launch. "NISAR can detect even small changes on the earth's surface, such as ground deformation, ice sheet movement, and vegetation dynamics. Further applications include sea ice classification, ship detection, shoreline monitoring, storm characterisation, changes in soil moisture, mapping and monitoring of surface water resources, and disaster response," the ISRO stated. NISAR is the first satellite to observe the earth with a dual-frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) - NASA's L-band and ISRO's S-band - both using NASA's 12-metre unfurlable mesh reflector antenna, integrated with ISRO's modified I3K satellite bus.

13. The NISAR satellite was launched on July 30, 2025, using which launch vehicle redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) GSLV-F16 (b) PSLV-C57 (c) GSLV Mk III (LVM3) (d) SSLV-D4
14. What is the weight of the NISAR satellite redacted with [2] in the passage above?
(a) 2,393 kg (b) 1,200 kg (c) 3,850 kg (d) 4,100 kg
15. Which of the following will host a corner reflector for the NISAR mission to aid in calibration and course correction?
(a) IIT-Madras (b) IIT-Kanpur (c) IIT-Patna (d) Both (b) and (c)
16. What is the maximum duration of the NISAR mission?
(a) 1 year (b) 2 years (c) 7 years (d) 5 years
17. What is the primary objective of the NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) mission?
(a) Launching astronauts into orbit
(b) Measuring Earth's changing ecosystems, surfaces, and ice masses
(c) Providing internet connectivity worldwide
(d) Studying deep space and exoplanets
18. NISAR is the first satellite to observe Earth with dual-frequency SAR. Which frequency bands does it use?
(a) C-band and S-band (b) L-band and X-band (c) S-band and Ku-band (d) L-band and S-band

Passage – 4

The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, is the Central government's response to political corruption and a move to ensure Ministers, including Prime Ministers and Chief Ministers, do not run governments from jail. The Bill primarily banks on the power of arrest and even runs the risk of politicising the power. The Opposition has termed the Bill "unconstitutional" with an ability to bring elected governments down. The Bill proposes that Ministers arrested for serious offences punishable with imprisonment of five years and above, and incarcerated as undertrials for 30 days, would lose office either by default on the 31st day or on the order of the President/Governor. The Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee, is the Central government's response to political corruption and a move to ensure Ministers, including Prime Ministers and Chief Ministers, do not run governments from jail. The Bill primarily banks on the power of arrest and even runs the risk of politicising the power. The Opposition has termed the Bill "unconstitutional" with an ability to bring elected governments down. The Bill proposes that Ministers arrested for serious offences punishable with imprisonment of five years and above, and incarcerated as undertrials for 30 days, would lose office either by default on the 31st day or on the order of the President/Governor.

19. The Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025 was introduced under which Article of the Indian Constitution?
(a) Article 356 (b) Article 75 (c) Article 239AA (d) Article 368
20. Which of the following articles are proposed to be amended by the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025?
(a) Articles 75, 164, and 239AA (b) Articles 72, 161, and 368
(c) Articles 101, 102, and 103 (d) Articles 243, 243A, and 243B

21. According to the Bill, a Minister detained for how many consecutive days will lose office?
 (a) 15 days (b) 45 days (c) 60 days (d) 30 days
22. What is the minimum punishment threshold for offences under which a Minister may be removed according to the Bill?
 (a) 2 years' imprisonment (b) 3 years' imprisonment
 (c) 5 years' imprisonment (d) Life imprisonment
23. Why has the Opposition termed the One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment Bill "unconstitutional"?
 (a) It restricts voting rights of the public
 (b) It allows unelected officials to assume power
 (c) It risks politicisation of the power of arrest and can destabilise elected governments
 (d) It removes parliamentary privileges of MPs
24. Before this Bill, disqualification of legislators was mainly governed by which legal provision?
 (a) Article 324 of the Constitution (b) Section 8 of the Representation of People Act, 1951
 (c) 44th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1978 (d) Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988

Passage – 5

The country's foreign exchange reserves, which stood at close to \$700 billion in the latest reporting week, can cover 95% of external debt outstanding at the end of March 2025, and also take care of over 11 months of goods imports cover, according to the Reserve Bank's July bulletin. "The external sector remained resilient, backed by ample foreign exchange reserves and a moderate external debt-to-GDP ratio. At the current level, the reserves cover 95% of external debt outstanding at the end of March 2025, and can also provide over 11 months of goods imports cover," said the RBI bulletin released.

Forex reserves stood at \$699.74 billion for the week to July 18, down by \$3.04 billion, according to the RBI data, which attributed the fall to the reduction in foreign currency assets, while gold reserves saw a slight increase. The foreign exchange reserves had stood at \$702.78 billion as of June 27, up by \$4.8 billion from the previous week and had peaked at \$704.885 billion for the week to September 27, 2024.

Meanwhile, the RBI made net forex purchases of \$1.76 billion in the spot forex market in May, according to the bulletin. This comes after it remained the net seller of \$1.66 billion in April. According to the bulletin, the RBI gross purchased \$9.12 billion and sold \$7.36 billion in the spot market in May. This was because the rupee was under pressure depreciating by 1% in June against the dollar. The RBI's net outstanding forward dollar sale stood at \$65.2 billion in April, compared to a net sale of \$72.6 billion in March, the data showed.

25. India has the world's _____ largest foreign exchange reserves.
 (a) Second (b) Third (c) Fourth (d) Fifth
26. Which of the following is NOT a direct cause of India's 1991 BoP crisis?
 (a) Gulf War and oil price shock
 (b) High import dependence and rising current account deficit
 (c) Political instability and fiscal mismanagement
 (d) Excessive foreign direct investment inflows
27. Who was the Prime Minister of India during the 1991 Balance of Payments (BoP) crisis?
 (a) Rajiv Gandhi (b) P. V. Narasimha Rao
 (c) Atal Bihari Vajpayee (d) V. P. Singh
28. Which of the following components forms the largest part of India's foreign exchange reserves?
 (a) Foreign Currency Assets (FCAs) (b) Gold reserves
 (c) Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) (d) Reserve position with the IMF

Test – 13

Answers and Explanations

1. b Agni-5 was developed under IGMDP, which also produced Prithvi, Trishul, Nag, and Akash missiles. This programme was launched in 1983 to make India self-reliant in missile technology.
2. c Agni-5 has a range of around 5,000-5,500 km, placing it in the class of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) by international definition, though India officially calls it an advanced IRBM.
3. d Agni-5 has Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) capability, meaning one missile can carry multiple nuclear warheads aimed at different targets. This places India alongside the USA, Russia, China, and France in advanced missile capability.
4. b Agni-5 is a surface-to-surface ballistic missile (SSBM), meaning it is launched from the ground and strikes targets on land or sea.
5. a Agni-5's MIRV capability places India in the league of major nuclear powers with advanced long-range missile systems: the USA, Russia, China, and France. Other countries listed in options do not currently possess MIRV-capable long-range ballistic missiles.
6. d Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, later President of India, led the IGMDP in the 1980s, earning him the title "Missile Man of India" for his contribution to the indigenous missile programme.
7. c Sarnath, near Varanasi, is revered as the place where Buddha delivered his first sermon (Dhammachakra Pravartan) after attaining enlightenment, marking the beginning of the Buddhist Sangha (community).
8. a The 47th Session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) inscribed the Maratha Military Landscapes on the UNESCO list as India's 44th World Heritage Site.
9. b India's first UNESCO World Heritage Sites, all inscribed in 1983, were the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Ajanta Caves, and Ellora Caves. These four sites were recognized for their exceptional cultural and architectural significance, marking India's entry into the prestigious list of world heritage sites.
10. b Khangchendzonga National Park in Sikkim is a UNESCO World Heritage Site inscribed in 2016, recognized as India's first mixed World Heritage Site for both its outstanding natural and cultural significance. The site encompasses the sacred Mount Kanchenjunga, glaciers, forests, and valleys that are rich in biodiversity and are sacred to indigenous communities like the Lepchas.
11. c Ahmedabad was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage City in 2017, becoming the first Indian city to receive this distinction. The city was recognized for its well-preserved historical buildings and unique urban architecture, reflecting a vibrant cultural and social landscape. The walled city, with its 600-year history, showcases a rich multicultural heritage, particularly evident in its architecture and the traditional 'pol' system (gated residential neighborhoods).
12. d The first Harappan site from India to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site is Dholavira in Gujarat, which was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2021. Dholavira is a well-preserved archaeological site of the Indus Valley (Harappan) Civilization, located on Khadir Bet Island in the Kutch district of Gujarat. It is significant for its advanced town planning and a sophisticated water conservation system with well-structured reservoirs.
13. a The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV)-F16 carried NISAR into orbit from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre. PSLV and SSLV are used for lighter payloads, while LVM3 is for heavy-lift missions.
14. a According to ISRO, the GSLV-F16 precisely injected NISAR, weighing 2,393 kg, into a sun-synchronous orbit.
15. d The National Centre of Geodesy facilities at IIT-Kanpur and IIT-Patna will host the corner reflector for NISAR. This will be crucial during the satellite's in-orbit checkout phase to calibrate its radar systems accurately. With ascending and descending passes every 12 days, NISAR provides an average 6-day revisit cycle, ensuring consistent monitoring for its 3-year baseline mission.
16. d NISAR's life span is for 5 years, during which it will provide critical Earth-observation data on ecosystems, ice sheets, biomass, and hazards, with possibilities of mission extension.
17. b NISAR's key aim is to monitor Earth's dynamic processes, including biomass, ice movement, sea level rise, groundwater, and natural hazards, not space exploration or communication.
18. d NISAR combines NASA's L-band radar and ISRO's S-band radar, making it the first Earth-observing satellite with such dual-frequency SAR capability. NISAR uses NASA's 12-metre unfurlable mesh reflector antenna, integrated with ISRO's modified I3K satellite bus, to enable precise dual-frequency radar observations of Earth.
19. d The Bill was introduced as a constitutional amendment under Article 368, which provides the procedure for amending the Constitution.
20. a The Bill specifically seeks to amend Articles 75 (Union Ministers), 164 (State Ministers), and 239AA (Delhi government) to remove detained ministers under certain conditions.
21. d The Bill sets a 30-day detention threshold. If a Minister is in custody for 30 days for a serious offence, they will lose office by default.
22. c The Bill applies only if the Minister is charged with an offence punishable by 5 years or more of imprisonment, ensuring it targets serious crimes.
23. c The Opposition argues that the Bill is "unconstitutional" because it banks heavily on the power of arrest, which can be politically misused to destabilise elected governments, undermining democratic processes.
24. b Section 8 of the RPA, 1951 disqualifies legislators upon conviction (and a minimum 2-year sentence). The limitation was that Ministers could remain in office during pre-conviction detention.
25. c India has the world's fourth largest foreign exchange reserves. As of July 2025, China's foreign exchange reserves totaled US\$3.292 trillion, which is the highest foreign exchange reserves of any country. In 1991, India faced a severe BoP crisis due to rising oil prices, high fiscal deficits, and dwindling forex reserves (barely enough to cover 2 weeks of imports). To tackle this, India pledged its gold reserves and initiated economic liberalisation reforms.
26. d India in 1991 actually faced low foreign investment inflows and heavy external debt. The crisis was caused by oil price shocks from the Gulf War, high current account deficit, and political/fiscal

mismanagement-not excessive FDI. Foreign exchange reserves provide a capacity to intervene in support of the national currency and limit external vulnerability by maintaining foreign currency liquidity to absorb shocks during crises.

27. b During the 1991 Balance of Payments (BOP) crisis, P. V. Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister of India, and Dr. Manmohan Singh was the Finance Minister. Together, they led the nation through significant economic liberalization reforms to address the crisis and steer India toward a modern, globalized economy.

28. a Foreign Currency Assets (FCAs) are the largest component of India's forex reserves, valued in dollar terms, and include the effects of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound, and yen. As of July 2025, China's foreign exchange reserves totaled US\$3.292 trillion, which is the highest foreign exchange reserves of any country.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

The first Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT-01) conducted successfully at Sriharikota on August 24, 2025 marks an important step for Gaganyaan, India's keenly watched programme for sending humans to space, A. Rajarajan, senior scientist with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), said on August 25, 2025. The ISRO will follow up IADT-01 with the second Test Vehicle Mission (TV-D2) and the un-crewed Gaganyaan-1 (G1) flight - two of the critical trials lined up before the actual mission carrying astronauts - soon, Mr. Rajarajan told. He described the upcoming TV-D2 as a "complex mission" that will put to test the crew escape system (CES) under critical conditions. The ISRO had successfully accomplished the Gaganyaan TV-D1 mission in October 2023. Such tests are vital as safety is of paramount importance in manned missions, he said. For the uncrewed Gaganyaan-1 (G1) mission, the spacecraft will be launched aboard a human-rated LVM3 rocket. The mission will also have on board Vyommitra, the humanoid robot developed by the ISRO. An expert in composite materials, Mr. Rajarajan took charge as the VSSC's Director on August 1, 2025 after a six-year stint as the Director of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota (SDSC-SHAR). On the success of IADT-01, Mr. Rajarajan said that as VSSC Director, he was happy that the test went as expected. The VSSC had a major role in IADT-01, being responsible for "90%" of the activities alongside the Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC) and SDSC-SHAR and other agencies, including the Indian Air Force, he said. IADT-01 successfully demonstrated the parachute-based crew module deceleration system for Gaganyaan. The 4.8-tonne dummy module was dropped from a height of 3 km from a Chinook helicopter operated by the IAF.

- Which of the following launch vehicles will carry the uncrewed Gaganyaan-1 (G1) mission?
(a) PSLV-III (b) GSLV Mk-III
(c) Human-rated LVM3 (d) RLV-TD
- Vyommitra in the Gaganyaan mission is _____.
(a) A space-based telescope designed by ISRO
(b) A humanoid robot developed for human spaceflight simulation
(c) A crew escape system for astronauts
(d) A next-gen cryogenic upper stage engine
- The Gaganyaan project aims to demonstrate India's human spaceflight capability by:
(a) Landing astronauts on the Moon for 7 days
(b) Conducting Mars flyby with a robotic crew
(c) Keeping astronauts in space for 30 days in LEO
(d) Sending a 3-member crew into a 400 km orbit for 3 days
- Which of the following tests are precursor missions for Gaganyaan?
(a) Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT) (b) Pad Abort Test (PAT)
(c) Test Vehicle (TV) missions (d) All of the above
- Which of the following cities houses the Astronaut Training Facility for Gaganyaan?
(a) Hyderabad (b) Bengaluru
(c) Thiruvananthapuram (d) Ahmedabad
- Which of the following is NOT a part of astronaut training under Gaganyaan?
(a) Artificial Intelligence programming courses (b) Microgravity training through parabolic flights
(c) Training on Crew Training Simulators (d) Recovery & Survival training

Passage – 2

India acknowledged the heroism of its soldiers who took part in Operation Sindoor and played a pivotal role in hitting terror and military targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir three months ago, with President Droupadi Murmu approving scores of wartime honours for them. Among the [1] gallantry medals and 40 distinguished service awards cleared by the President on the eve of the 79th Independence Day are awards are four Kirti Chakras, 15 Vir Chakras, [2] Shaurya Chakras, two bar to Sena Medals (Gallantry), 58 Sena Medals (Gallantry), six Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry), 26 Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry), seven Sarvottam Yudh Seva medals, nine Uttam Yudh Seva medals and 24 Yudh Seva medals, the defence ministry said.

Vir Chakra is India's third-highest wartime honour, and has been awarded to soldiers who demonstrated uncommon valour during Operation Sindoor --- India's direct military response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror strike. The Vir Chakra awardees include Colonel Koshank Lamba, Lieutenant Colonel Sushil Bisht, Naib Subedar Satish Kumar, Rifleman Sunil Kumar, Group Captain Ranjeet Singh Sidhu, Group Captain Manish Arora, Group Captain Animesh Patni, Group Captain Kunal Kalra, Wing Commander Joy Chandra, Squadron Leader Sarthak Kumar, Squadron Leader Siddhant Singh, Squadron Leader Rizwan Malik, Flight Lieutenant Aarshveer Singh, BSF Sub Inspector Mohd Imteyaz (Posthumous) and Constable Deeapk Chingakham (Posthumous).

7. How many total Gallantry awards were approved by President Droupadi Murmu on the eve of Independence Day 2025 which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) 40 (b) 127
(c) 167 (d) 290
8. Which of the following awards is the second-highest peacetime gallantry award?
(a) Shaurya Chakra (b) Vir Chakra
(c) Kirti Chakra (d) Sena Medal
9. Who among the following did Not receive the Kirti Chakra in 2025?
(a) Captain Lalrinawma Sailo (b) Lieutenant Shashank Tiwari
(c) Colonel Koshank Lamba (d) Sepoy Janjal Pravin Prabhakar
10. Who among the following CAPF personnel were awarded the Vir Chakra (Posthumous) in 2025?
(a) Mohd Imteyaj and Deepak Chingakham (b) Satish Kumar and Sunil Kumar
(c) Rizwan Malik and Aarshveer Singh (d) Lalrinawma Sailo and Shashank Tiwari
11. How many Shaurya Chakras were approved in 2025 which has been redacted with [2] in the passage above?
(a) 4 (b) 15
(c) 16 (d) 26
12. Who among the following was Not conferred the Vir Chakra in 2025?
(a) Group Captain Ranjeet Singh Sidhu (b) Group Captain Manish Arora
(c) Squadron Leader Siddhant Singh (d) Colonel Neetesh Bharti Shukla

Passage – 3

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) launched SabhaSaar, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered meeting summarization tool designed to automatically generate structured Minutes of Meeting (MoM) from Gram Sabha or other Panchayat meetings' audio and video recordings. The launch took place in New Delhi in the presence of Union Minister of Panchayati Raj, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh and Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj, Prof. S.P.Singh Baghel in New Delhi.

SabhaSaar uses advanced AI and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies to transcribe spoken discussions, identify key decisions and action points, and produce well-formatted meeting minutes. Integrated with Bhashini, the Government of India's National Language Translation Mission, the tool currently supports 13 Indian languages, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for Panchayat functionaries across linguistic backgrounds. The number of languages supported will also gradually be increased in future.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has urged all States/UTs to utilize the SabhaSaar tool for generating Minutes of Meetings for the Special Gram Sabhas scheduled on 15th August 2025. As a first step all the 1194 GPs of Tripura (including traditional local bodies) shall be using the tool to generate the Minutes for these Special Gram Sabhas. SabhaSaar is an initiative that harnesses digital innovations to further strengthen participatory democracy and enhance efficiency in local governance. By significantly reducing the time and effort required for manual documentation, SabhaSaar enables Panchayat officials to focus on governance and service delivery while ensuring transparency and accountability.

13. The recently launched SabhaSaar tool is primarily designed for _____.
 - (a) Monitoring rural infrastructure projects
 - (b) Generating structured Minutes of Meetings from Gram Sabha proceedings
 - (c) Translating government schemes into regional languages
 - (d) Tracking attendance of Panchayat members
14. Which of the following states has been chosen as the first to adopt SabhaSaar for its Gram Sabhas?
 - (a) Sikkim
 - (b) Himachal Pradesh
 - (c) Uttarakhand
 - (d) Tripura
15. SabhaSaar is integrated with Bhashini, which is a part of _____.
 - (a) National e-Governance Plan
 - (b) Digital India Programme
 - (c) National Language Translation Mission
 - (d) BharatNet Project
16. Which of the following Constitutional Amendments gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)?
 - (a) 42nd Amendment Act, 1976
 - (b) 44th Amendment Act, 1978
 - (c) 73rd Amendment Act, 1992
 - (d) 74th Amendment Act, 1992
17. Which of the following states was the first to introduce the Panchayati Raj system in India?
 - (a) Rajasthan
 - (b) Uttar Pradesh
 - (c) Andhra Pradesh
 - (d) Maharashtra
18. The three tiers of the Panchayati Raj system are _____.
 - (a) Gram Sabha, Panchayat Samiti, District Collector
 - (b) Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, Zila Parishad
 - (c) Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat, Nagar Palika
 - (d) Gram Panchayat, Taluka Panchayat, District Panchayat

Passage – 4

Astronomers have used a new type of extreme supernova in which a massive star was stripped right "down to the bone" to better understand the process of stellar life and death. When other massive stars die in supernova explosions, astronomers detect strong signals of light elements like hydrogen and helium that existed at the surface of the star. However, in this supernova, designated SN2021yfj and located 2.2 billion light-years from Earth, this team found a different chemical signature. This contained traces of heavier elements like silicon, sulfur, and argon that originate from deeper within the progenitor star.

If dying stars have onion-like structures with lighter elements at their surfaces and heavier elements toward their iron cores as astrophysicists currently theorize, then this star must have somehow lost its outer layers, thus exposing inner silicon and sulfur-rich layers before it "went nova." This would not only confirm the layered structure of massive stars, but it also give stellar scientists a rare glimpse at the interior of a star prior to it exploding in a supernova.

"This is the first time we have seen a star that was essentially stripped to the bone," team leader and Northwestern University scientist Steve Schulze said in a statement. "It shows us how stars are structured and proves that stars can lose a lot of material before they explode. Not only can they lose their outermost layers, but they can be completely stripped all the way down and still produce a brilliant explosion that we can observe from very, very far distances." SN2021yjf, first spotted in September 2021 by the Zwicky Transient Facility (ZTF), suggests that while our models of stellar life and death and star structure may be correct, they may not fully describe the explosive death throes of all stars.

19. What makes supernova SN2021yjf unique compared to other known supernovae?
 - (a) It was the brightest supernova ever observed.
 - (b) It contained traces of hydrogen and helium at its surface.
 - (c) It showed signatures of heavier elements like silicon and sulfur instead of light elements.
 - (d) It collapsed directly into a black hole without an explosion.
20. What does the observation of SN2021yjf confirm about stellar evolution?
 - (a) Stars always explode with intact outer layers.
 - (b) Stars can lose their entire outer envelopes before going supernova.
 - (c) Supernovae cannot be observed from far distances.
 - (d) The presence of hydrogen is necessary for a supernova.
21. Where was supernova SN2021yjf first detected in September 2021?
 - (a) Zwicky Transient Facility (ZTF)
 - (b) Hubble Space Telescope
 - (c) James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)
 - (d) Very Large Telescope (VLT)
22. Which of the following phenomena provided the first direct observational evidence for black hole mergers?
 - (a) Gamma-ray bursts
 - (b) X-ray emissions from accretion disks
 - (c) Neutrino bursts from supernova explosions
 - (d) Gravitational waves detected by LIGO
23. The general theory of relativity provides the modern framework for cosmology, leading to _____.
 - (a) Discovery of heliocentrism
 - (b) Discovery of blackbody radiation
 - (c) Theories of the Big Bang and cosmic microwave background radiation
 - (d) Proof of quantum gravity
24. Which of the following statements about black holes is correct?
 - (a) Black holes are regions where gravity is absent.
 - (b) Black holes are regions where spacetime is distorted so strongly that even light cannot escape.
 - (c) Black holes can only form from small stars.
 - (d) Black holes emit light as they trap matter.

Passage – 5

China has agreed in principle to the proposal of resuming trade through Shipki-La in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh during the recent visit of its Foreign Minister Wang Yi to India, a statement by the State government said on August 24, 2025. Trade through the route was suspended in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has informed the State government that the Union government has initiated discussions with China for the resumption of border trade through all three designated points - Shipki-La

(Himachal Pradesh), Lipulekh (Uttarakhand) and Nathu La (Sikkim), the statement issued said. The Chief Minister had emphasised that Shipki-La, once an offshoot of the legendary Silk Route and formalised as a border trade point under the India-China bilateral agreement of 1994, played a vital role in trans-Himalayan economic and cultural exchanges. In addition to trade, the State government has also received a positive response regarding the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Shipki-La, the statement said. The State government had highlighted that the Shipki-La route, connecting via Gartok towards Darchen and Mansarovar, is comparatively shorter on the Tibetan side. Himachal Pradesh already has road connectivity up to Shipki-La via Rampur Bushahr and Pooh, making it feasible to develop necessary base camps and supporting infrastructure for the Yatra, the communication sent to the Union government had said. The External Affairs Minister, in a letter to the CM, conveyed that after a five-year gap, the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra has resumed through Lipulekh Pass (Uttarakhand) and Nathu La Pass (Sikkim), and discussions are under way with China on the possibility of adding Shipki-La as an additional route. The State government is hopeful that these initiatives will not only revive traditional border trade but also open new avenues for tourism, cultural exchange, and economic development in Himachal Pradesh, the statement added.

25. Trade through the Shipki-La pass between India and China was suspended in 2020 due to _____.
- (a) Border clashes in Galwan Valley (b) COVID-19 pandemic
(c) Lack of infrastructure on the Indian side (d) China's restrictions on Tibetan routes
26. Which of the following passes is Not officially designated India-China border trade points under the 1994 bilateral agreement?
- (a) Shipki-La (Himachal Pradesh) (b) Lipulekh (Uttarakhand)
(c) Nathu La (Sikkim) (d) Jelep La (Sikkim)
27. Which of the following is true regarding the Shipki-La route for the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra?
- (a) It connects via Gartok towards Darchen and Mansarovar.
(b) It is the longest route on the Tibetan side compared to Lipulekh and Nathu La.
(c) It has no road connectivity on the Indian side.
(d) It was first opened in 2006 under the India-China bilateral framework.
28. Why is the resumption of Shipki-La trade and pilgrimage route considered important for Himachal Pradesh?
- (a) It will provide direct rail connectivity to Tibet.
(b) It revives part of the historic Silk Route and promotes economic & cultural exchanges.
(c) It is India's only open border trade route with China.
(d) It replaces the Lipulekh and Nathu La routes permanently.

Test – 14

Answers and Explanations

1. c The human-rated LVM3 rocket will launch the uncrewed G1 mission, carrying the spacecraft and Vyommित्रा humanoid.
2. b Vyommित्रा is ISRO's humanoid robot developed to simulate human functions in uncrewed missions before sending astronauts in Gaganyaan. Woman Robot Astronaut "Vyommित्रा" will fly into Space ahead of ISRO's ambitious "Gaganyaan" mission, which will be India's first human manned Space Flight carrying Indian Astronauts into Space. "Vyommित्रा" is a name derived from two Sanskrit words namely, "Vyoma" (meaning Space) and "Mitra" (meaning Friend).
3. d Gaganyaan mission plans to send 3 astronauts to 400 km Low Earth Orbit (LEO) for 3 days and bring them back safely to Indian sea waters.
4. d ISRO plans IADT, PAT, and TV flights to validate crew escape, safety, and parachute recovery systems before manned flight.
5. b India's Astronaut Training Facility in Bengaluru provides simulator training, aero-medical sessions, microgravity familiarization, survival training, and yoga.
6. a Training includes physical fitness, parabolic flights, simulators, aero-medical modules, recovery & survival, but not AI programming. Training modules cover academic courses, Gaganyaan Flight Systems, Micro-gravity familiarization through Parabolic Flights, Aero-medical training, Recovery & Survival training, mastering of Flight Procedures and training on Crew Training Simulators. Aero medical training, Periodical flying practice and Yoga are also included as part of the training.
7. b The President approved 127 Gallantry awards + 40 Distinguished Service awards = 167 total awards. Separately, 290 Mention-in-Despatches were also approved.
8. c The second highest peacetime gallantry award is the Kirti Chakra, which is awarded in India for acts of valor, courageous action, or self-sacrifice away from the battlefield. It is awarded after the Ashoka Chakra, the highest peacetime gallantry award, and before the Shaurya Chakra. In 2025, 4 Kirti Chakras were conferred.
9. c Check Kirti Chakra awardees (2025), the 4 Kirti Chakra recipients are: Captain Lalrinawma Sailo (Army, 4 PARA SF), Lieutenant Shashank Tiwari (Army Service Corps, 1 Sikkim Scouts), Lance Naik Meenatchi Sundaram A (Regiment of Artillery, 34 Rashtriya Rifles), Sepoy Janjal Pravin Prabhakar (Mahar Regiment, 1 Rashtriya Rifles), So, A, B, and D all received the Kirti Chakra. Colonel Koshank Lamba was awarded the Vir Chakra (third-highest wartime gallantry award), not the Kirti Chakra (second-highest peacetime gallantry award).
10. a Sub Inspector Mohd Imteyaj (BSF) and Constable Deepak Chingakhm were conferred Vir Chakra posthumously.
11. c The President approved 16 Shaurya Chakras, which is the third-highest peacetime gallantry award.
12. d Group Captain Manish Arora (IAF), Squadron Leader Siddhant Singh (IAF), and Group Captain Ranjeet Singh Sidhu (IAF) were feature among the 15 Vir Chakra awardees from the Indian Air Force. IC-75018X Lt Colonel Neetesh Bharti Shukla, 19 SIKH (Army) was awarded the Shaurya Chakra (2025), not the Vir Chakra.
13. b SabhaSaar is an AI-powered meeting summarization tool launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (2025) to transcribe, identify key decisions, and generate structured Minutes of Meeting (MoM) from Panchayat and Gram Sabha discussions.
14. d All 1,194 Gram Panchayats of Tripura, including traditional local bodies, will be the first to use SabhaSaar to generate minutes of Special Gram Sabhas on 15th August 2025.
15. c Bhashini (launched 2022) is India's AI-based language translation platform under the National Language Translation Mission (NLTM), supporting multilingual inclusivity across government services.
16. c The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 added Part IX (Articles 243-243O) to the Constitution, giving constitutional recognition to Panchayati Raj.
17. a Rajasthan became the first state to establish Panchayati Raj in Nagaur district on 2 October 1959.
18. b The three tiers of the Panchayati Raj system are the Gram Panchayat at the village level, the Panchayat Samiti (or block) at the intermediate level, and the Zila Parishad at the district level. Lord Ripon is known as the "Father of Local Self-Government in India" for his landmark 1882 resolution on local self-government, which promoted democratic municipal governance and laid the foundation for grassroots-level administration by empowering local bodies and fostering public participation in governance.
19. c Unlike typical supernovae that reveal hydrogen and helium from the star's outer layers, SN2021yfj displayed heavier elements such as silicon, sulfur, and argon, suggesting the star was stripped down to deeper layers before exploding.
20. b The study shows that stars can be stripped "down to the bone," losing not only outermost hydrogen and helium layers but exposing inner silicon and sulfur layers before still producing a bright explosion.
21. a SN2021yfj was first spotted in September 2021 by the Zwicky Transient Facility, a sky survey project that detects cosmic explosions and transient events.
22. d In 2015, LIGO detected gravitational waves for the first time from merging black holes, confirming Einstein's general relativity predictions. Gamma-ray bursts and neutrino bursts are linked to other cosmic events. X-ray emissions suggest accretion but are indirect.
23. c General relativity's time-dependent solutions explain an expanding universe, predicting Theories of the Big Bang and cosmic microwave background radiation. General relativity, also known as the general theory of relativity, and as Einstein's theory of gravity, is the geometric theory of gravitation published by Albert Einstein in 1915 and is the accepted description of gravitation in modern physics. General relativity generalizes special relativity and refines Newton's law of universal gravitation, providing a unified description of gravity as a geometric property of space and time, or four-dimensional spacetime. In particular, the curvature of spacetime is directly related to the energy, momentum and stress of whatever is present, including matter and radiation.
24. b Black holes are regions where spacetime is distorted so strongly that even light cannot escape. General relativity predicts singularities where spacetime curvature becomes infinite, creating black holes as end-states for massive stars.

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| <p>25. b Trade through Shipki-La in Himachal Pradesh was suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. Now, in 2025, China has agreed in principle to resume it.</p> <p>26. d The three designated border trade points are Shipki-La, Lipulekh, and Nathu La. Jelep La is historically significant but not a designated trade route under the 1994 agreement.</p> | <p>27. a The Himachal Pradesh government highlighted that Shipki-La connects via Gartok towards Darchen and Mansarovar, and is shorter on the Tibetan side. India already has road connectivity up to Shipki-La through Rampur Bushahr and Pooh. The Yatra has resumed in 2025 through Lipulekh and Nathu La, but discussions are still underway for adding Shipki-La as a route.</p> <p>28. b Shipki-La was once an offshoot of the Silk Route. Its reopening will revive traditional trade, facilitate Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, and promote tourism, culture, and economic development in Himachal Pradesh.</p> |
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CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi participated in the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), held in [1], from 31 August to 1 September 2025. The Summit witnessed productive discussions on SCO Development Strategy, Reform of Global Governance, Counter-Terrorism, Peace and Security, Economic and Financial Cooperation, and Sustainable Development.

Addressing the Summit, Prime Minister highlighted India's approach to strengthening cooperation under the SCO framework. In this regard, he noted that India seeks greater action under three pillars - Security, Connectivity and Opportunity. Emphasising that peace, security and stability remain key to progress and prosperity, he called upon member countries to take firm and decisive action to fight terrorism in all its manifestations. Prime Minister underlined the need for coordinated action against terror financing and radicalization. Thanking member countries for their strong solidarity in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack, he emphasized that there should be no double standards in dealing with terrorism and urged the group to hold countries who perpetrate and support cross-border terrorism accountable.

Highlighting the role of connectivity in fostering development and building trust, Prime Minister stated that India strongly supported projects such as Chabahar port and International North-South Transport Corridor. He also spoke about opportunities in the fields of start-ups, innovation, youth empowerment and shared heritage, which must be pursued under the SCO umbrella. Prime Minister proposed commencing a Civilizational Dialogue Forum within the group to foster greater people-to-people ties and cultural understanding.

Prime Minister expressed support for the reform-oriented agenda of the group. In this regard, he welcomed the setting up of centres to deal with organized crime, drug trafficking and cyber security. He called for a similar approach by the group to reforming multilateral institutions, including the United Nations. Prime Minister thanked President Xi Jinping for his warm hospitality and congratulated him for the successful organization of the Summit. He also congratulated Kyrgyzstan on taking over the next Presidency of SCO. At the conclusion of the Summit, the SCO Member countries adopted the Tianjin Declaration.

1. Where was the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) held in 2025 which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) Beijing, China (b) Wuhan, China
(c) Tianjin, China (d) Tashkent, Uzbekistan
2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized India's approach to SCO cooperation under which of the following three pillars?
(a) Peace, Trade, Technology (b) Security, Connectivity, Opportunity
(c) Growth, Stability, Partnership (d) Development, Reform, Prosperity
3. Which of the following connectivity projects did India strongly support at the SCO Summit 2025?
(a) Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)
(b) Asia-Africa Growth Corridor
(c) Sagarmala and Bharatmala
(d) Chabahar Port and International North-South Transport Corridor
4. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was formally established in _____.
(a) 1995 (b) 1996
(c) 2000 (d) 2001

5. Which of the following two countries officially became full members of the SCO in June 2017 at the Astana Summit?
(a) India and Iran (b) India and Pakistan
(c) Iran and Belarus (d) Afghanistan and Mongolia
6. Which of the following countries most recently became the 10th full member of the SCO in 2024?
(a) Belarus (b) Iran
(c) Mongolia (d) Turkey

Passage – 2

India became the fourth country to land on the moon and the first to reach its southern polar region on [1]. To honour this landmark achievement, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced [1] as "National Space Day". India is celebrating its second National Space Day [NSpD-2025] on August 23, 2025 with the theme "Aryabhata to Gaganyaan: Ancient Wisdom to Infinite Possibilities" A myriad of events will unfold highlighting India's remarkable achievements in space, profound benefits to the society, and boundless opportunities for people from all walks of life to engage with the Indian space programme. These celebrations will culminate into the main event at New Delhi on [1]. The celebrations of National Space Day - 2025 at Bharat Mandapam on [1] will be streamed on ISRO Website & ISRO YouTube Channel. NSpD 2025 Theme: "[2]" India's National Space Day 2025 celebrates the enduring journey of exploration, innovation, and imagination from the profound astronomical insights of our ancient scholars to the cutting-edge frontiers of human spaceflight.

Aryabhata: Our Celestial Legacy Over 1,500 years ago, Aryabhata, India's pioneering astronomer and mathematician, gazed at the skies and calculated the mysteries of celestial bodies with astonishing precision. His ground-breaking contributions in key astronomical and mathematical concepts laid the intellectual foundation of Indian space science. These ancient insights reflect our civilization's timeless curiosity and reverence for the cosmos.

Our Voyage Beyond Today, as ISRO prepares for Gaganyaan, India's first human spaceflight mission, we honour not just a technological milestone but a historic leap that connects our past with our future. Gaganyaan symbolizes India's aspirations to enable Indian Gaganyatris to voyage beyond Earth, marking a new era of indigenous capability and global contribution in space exploration.

Bridging the Timeless and the Limitless The theme, "Aryabhata to Gaganyaan: Ancient Wisdom to Infinite Possibilities", is a celebration of continuity of: Ancient knowledge systems inspiring modern innovation. India's spirit of inquiry, unbroken across millennia. Technological progress fuelled by cultural pride and national ambition. From the Vedic sky-watchers to 21st-century space scientists, our journey reflects how heritage and high-tech can come together to unlock infinite possibilities.

7. Which of the following dates has been declared as National Space Day in India redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) July 22 (b) October 4
(c) December 18 (d) August 23
8. What is the theme of National Space Day 2025?
(a) "India's Journey Beyond Earth"
(b) "Chandrayaan to Mars Orbiter"
(c) "Aryabhata to Gaganyaan: Ancient Wisdom to Infinite Possibilities"
(d) "From Earth to the Cosmos"
9. What does the Gaganyaan mission represent for India?
(a) India's first interplanetary spacecraft (b) India's first lunar landing
(c) India's first human spaceflight mission (d) India's first reusable launch vehicle

10. The landing site of Chandrayaan-3 was named as _____.
- (a) Vikram Point (b) Shiv Shakti Point
(c) Pragyan Point (d) Bharat Point
11. Which of the following rovers was deployed after the successful Chandrayaan-3 landing?
- (a) Pragyan Rover (b) Mangalyaan Rover
(c) Vikram Rover (d) Aryabhata Rover
12. The cryogenic upper stage of which launch vehicle used in the Chandrayaan-3 mission made an uncontrolled re-entry into Earth's atmosphere on November 15, 2023?
- (a) PSLV-C55 (b) GSLV Mk II
(c) LVM3 M4 (d) SSLV-D2

Passage – 3

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day address from the Red Fort, unveiled an ambitious national security initiative titled 'Mission Sudarshan Chakra', aimed at protecting India's critical establishments over the next decade through indigenous technological development within the coming ten years. "Every citizen must feel protected," PM Modi said.

"This mission will be research-based and developed entirely with indigenous technology," PM Modi declared, emphasising self-reliance in strategic innovation. The initiative is expected to encompass a multi-layered security framework, integrating advanced surveillance, cyber protection, and physical infrastructure safeguards tailored to India's evolving threat landscape.

Drawing inspiration from the Mahabharata, PM Modi invoked the moment when Lord Krishna shielded the sun to enable Arjun to defeat Jayadrath. "We are taking inspiration from Lord Krishna, who once barred sunlight from reaching Earth. That divine intervention changed the course of battle. Today, we must similarly shield our vital institutions from emerging threats," he said, blending mythology with modern strategic vision.

Though specific details of Mission Sudarshan Chakra remain under wraps, sources suggest it will involve collaboration between India's premier research agencies, defence establishments, and private innovators. The mission aligns with the government's broader push for Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India), especially in defence and critical infrastructure. The announcement comes amid heightened global concerns over cyber warfare, hybrid threats, and sabotage of strategic assets.

PM Modi's emphasis on indigenous technology signals a move away from dependency on foreign systems, reinforcing national sovereignty in security architecture. The Prime Minister's speech also touched on India's historical vulnerabilities, including the 2008 Mumbai attacks, underscoring the need for proactive and integrated security planning. "We cannot afford to be reactive. We must anticipate and prepare," he said. As India celebrates its 79th year of independence, Mission Sudarshan Chakra stands as a symbolic and strategic commitment to safeguarding the nation's future. It reflects a fusion of cultural ethos and cutting-edge innovation, positioning India to meet the challenges of the next decade with resilience and technological prowess.

13. What is the primary aim of Mission Sudarshan Chakra, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech?
- (a) Launching India's first human spaceflight
(b) Protecting critical establishments through indigenous technology
(c) Developing renewable energy projects
(d) Reviving India's ancient weapon systems
14. Which epic story did Prime Minister Narendra Modi invoke while naming Mission Sudarshan Chakra?
- (a) Ramayana (b) Rig Veda
(c) Arthashastra (d) Mahabharata

15. Mission Sudarshan Chakra aligns with which broader national initiative of the Government of India?
(a) Digital India (b) Start-up India
(c) Aatmanirbhar Bharat (d) Make in India 2.0
16. When was Vande Mataram first sung at an Indian National Congress session?
(a) 1896, Calcutta (b) 1885, Bombay
(c) 1911, Calcutta (d) 1920, Nagpur
17. When did the Constituent Assembly adopt Vande Mataram as the national song and Jana Gana Mana as the national anthem?
(a) 15 August 1947 (b) 24 January 1950
(c) 26 January 1950 (d) 27 December 1911
18. Who wrote the patriotic song Sare Jahan se Accha (Tarana-e-Hindi)?
(a) Rabindranath Tagore (b) Bankimchandra Chatterji
(c) Subhas Chandra Bose (d) Muhammad Iqbal

Passage – 4

'[1]', an Indian non-profit that educates out-of-school girls in remote villages, has been named a 2025 Ramon Magsaysay Award winner, the foundation announced. Popularly known as '[1]', the Foundation to Educate Girls Globally has made history as the first Indian organisation to get the honour, the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) said in a statement. Individuals from India have got the prize in the past. Regarded as Asia's equivalent of the Nobel Prize, the Ramon Magsaysay Award honours individuals and organisations demonstrating exceptional courage and selfless service to the people of Asia.

The other 2025 awardees include Shaahina Ali from the Maldives for her environmental work and Flaviano Antonio L Villanueva from the Philippines for his efforts to uplift the poor and marginalised. Each awardee will receive a medallion bearing the likeness of President Ramon Magsaysay, a citation, and a cash prize, the foundation said. The 67th Ramon Magsaysay Award ceremony is scheduled for November 7 at the Metropolitan Theatre in Manila.

Founded by Safeena Husain, [1] has been named for the in recognition of "its commitment to addressing cultural stereotyping through the education of girls and young women, liberating them from the bondage of illiteracy and infusing them with skills, courage, and agency to achieve their full human potential," the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF) said.

Established in 2007, [1] was launched by Husain, a London School of Economics graduate, who returned to India from San Francisco to tackle female illiteracy. "Starting out in Rajasthan, [1] identified the neediest communities in terms of girls' education, brought unschooled or out-of-school girls into the classroom, and worked to keep them there until they were able to acquire credentials for higher education and gainful employment," the RMAF statement added.

In 2015, [1] launched the world's first Development Impact Bond (DIB) in education, linking financial aid directly to measurable outcomes. "It began with 50 pilot village schools and eventually reached over 30,000 villages across India's most underserved regions, benefiting more than two million girls, with a retention rate exceeding 90 percent," the Foundation said. The organisation also introduced Pragati, an open-schooling programme enabling young women aged 15-29 to complete their education and access lifelong opportunities. The programme started with 300 learners and has since expanded to over 31,500 participants.

19. Which of the following Indian organisations won the 2025 Ramon Magsaysay Award, becoming the first Indian organisation to receive this honour redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) Pratham (b) SEWA
(c) Educate Girls (d) Barefoot College

20. The Ramon Magsaysay Award is often regarded as _____.
- (a) Asia's Pulitzer Prize (b) Asia's Nobel Prize
(c) Asia's Booker Prize (d) Asia's Templeton Prize
21. Who among the following is a 2025 Ramon Magsaysay Awardee for environmental work?
- (a) Shaahina Ali (Maldives) (b) Flaviano Antonio L Villanueva (Philippines)
(c) Safeena Husain (India) (d) Muhammad Yunus (Bangladesh)
22. Which of the following innovative financial mechanisms pioneered by [1] directly linked funding to learning outcomes?
- (a) Social Enterprise Bonds (b) Education Futures Fund
(c) Development Impact Bond (d) Outcome Linked Grants
23. Who was the first Indian to win the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1958?
- (a) Vinoba Bhave (b) Verghese Kurien
(c) Jayaprakash Narayan (d) Mother Teresa
24. Who among the following Indians won the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Emergent Leadership in 2006 for his activism with Parivartan, which helped promote the Right to Information Act (RTI Act), 2005?
- (a) Anna Hazare (b) Satyarthi Kailash
(c) Harsh Mander (d) Arvind Kejriwal

Passage – 5

Parliament passed the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, which seeks to create a comprehensive legal framework for India's burgeoning online gaming sector. The Bill, which received the President's assent on August 22, aims to promote and regulate segments like e-sports and online social games while imposing a blanket prohibition on all online games involving money. The rationale for the ban, according to the Bill, is the "serious social, financial, psychological and public health harms, particularly among young individuals and economically disadvantaged groups" of online money gaming. These games "use manipulative design features, addictive algorithms, bots and undisclosed agents, undermining fairness, transparency and user protection, while promoting compulsive behaviour leading to financial ruin," the Bill says. The "unchecked expansion" of these games, according to the Bill, is "linked to unlawful activities including financial fraud, money-laundering, tax evasion, and in some cases, the financing of terrorism, thereby posing threats to national security, public order and the integrity of the State".

25. The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025 specifically prohibits which category of games?
- (a) E-sports only (b) Online social games
(c) Online money games (d) All video games
26. As per the new law, what is the maximum penalty for offering online money gaming services?
- (a) 1 year jail + Rs.10 lakh fine (b) 5 years jail + Rs.50 lakh fine
(c) 7 years jail + Rs.2 crore fine (d) 3 years jail + Rs.1 crore fine
27. What is the penalty for celebrities or influencers promoting prohibited online money games?
- (a) 1 year jail + Rs.25 lakh fine (b) 2 years jail + Rs.50 lakh fine
(c) 3 years jail + Rs.1 crore fine (d) 6 months jail + Rs.5 lakh fine
28. Which of the following enforcement powers does the new law grant to authorised officers?
- (a) Search premises and arrest without warrant (b) Conduct searches only with court approval
(c) Power to impose administrative fines only (d) Suspend internet services in the region

Test – 15

Answers and Explanations

1. c The SCO summit took place in Tianjin, China, from 31 August to 1 September 2025. At the conclusion of the Tianjin Summit, Kyrgyzstan took over the next SCO Presidency.
2. b India's SCO approach is based on the three pillars of Security, Connectivity, and Opportunity, reflecting priorities in counter-terrorism, infrastructure, and economic cooperation.
3. d India reaffirmed support for Chabahar Port and the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) as connectivity enhancers.
4. d The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a ten-member multilateral organization, established on 15 June 2001 by the leaders of Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. These countries, except Uzbekistan, had been members of the Shanghai-5 group formed in April 1996. In 2001, Uzbekistan was admitted as a member (thus transforming it into the Shanghai-6). At the July 2005 Astana Summit, India, Iran and Pakistan were granted Observer status. In July 2015 in Ufa, Russia, the SCO decided to admit India (and Pakistan) as full Member. In June 2017, at the Summit in Astana, India (and Pakistan) officially joined SCO as a full member. Iran was granted the status of a Member State at the SCO Summit hosted virtually by India on 4 July 2023. Belarus was admitted as a new member at the SCO Summit in Astana on 4 July 2024. Apart from the 10 Members, the SCO has 2 Observers (Afghanistan and Mongolia) and 14 Dialogue Partners (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Maldives, Bahrain, Myanmar, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar). As per the SCO Charter, Russian and Chinese are the only two official languages of the SCO.
5. b India and Pakistan were granted Observer status in 2005, and officially became full members at the 2017 Astana Summit.
6. a Belarus joined as the newest member during the SCO Summit in Astana on 4 July 2024, making the organization a 10-member body.
7. d Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi announced August 23 as National Space Day to commemorate Chandrayaan-3's lunar landing.
8. c The theme for India's National Space Day 2025 was "Aryabhata to Gaganyaan: Ancient Wisdom to Infinite Possibilities". This theme celebrates India's journey in space, connecting its rich astronomical heritage, personified by the ancient astronomer Aryabhata, with its ambitious future goals, such as the human spaceflight mission Gaganyaan. It highlights the integration of traditional knowledge with modern technology to address Earth-based challenges and achieve sustainable development.
9. c Gaganyaan will send Indian astronauts (Gaganyatris) into space, marking India's entry into human spaceflight.
10. b The landing site where the Chandrayaan-3 lander touched down was named Shiv Shakti Point by the Government of India.
11. a The Pragyan Rover was deployed successfully after the soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the Moon's surface.
12. c ISRO confirmed that the cryogenic upper stage of LVM3 M4, the heavy-lift vehicle that launched Chandrayaan-3, re-entered Earth's atmosphere on November 15, 2023.
13. b Mission Sudarshan Chakra is a national security initiative to safeguard India's vital institutions with a multi-layered security framework built on indigenous research and technology.
14. d Modi referred to the Mahabharata episode where Lord Krishna shielded the sun to aid Arjun against Jayadrath, symbolizing protection in battle.
15. c By emphasizing indigenous technology and self-reliance in defence/security, the mission aligns with Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).
16. a Vande Mataram was composed in Sanskrit and Bengali by Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay in his 1882 novel Anandamath. It soon became a rallying cry for Indian freedom fighters during the nationalist movement. First INC Session Performance (1896, Calcutta): At the 1896 session of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta, Rabindranath Tagore-then a rising poet and intellectual-sang Vande Mataram for the very first time in front of the Congress gathering. This performance elevated the song to the national stage, turning it into a symbol of resistance against British colonial rule. Its rendition electrified the session and gave it a spiritual-nationalist aura.
17. b On 24 January 1950, the Constituent Assembly adopted Vande Mataram as the national song and the first stanza of Jana Gana Mana as the national anthem.
18. d Sare Jahan se Accha was written in 1904 in Urdu by Muhammad Iqbal, later becoming a popular patriotic song for children.
19. c Educate Girls, founded by Safeena Husain, is the first Indian organisation (though individuals have won earlier) to win the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2025.
20. b The Ramon Magsaysay Award is popularly known as the "Nobel Prize of Asia" for its prestige in honouring service and leadership.
21. a Shaahina Ali, from the Maldives, was honoured in 2025 for her environmental work. The other 2025 awardees include Shaahina Ali from the Maldives for her environmental work and Flaviano Antonio L Villanueva from the Philippines for his efforts to uplift the poor and marginalised.
22. c In 2015, Educate Girls pioneered the world's first Development Impact Bond in education, where funding was tied to measurable outcomes.
23. a In 1958, Vinoba Bhave received the award for Community Leadership for his Bhoodan (land-gift) movement. He was the first Indian recipient of the award.
24. d Arvind Kejriwal was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Emergent Leadership in 2006 for his activism with Parivartan, which helped promote the Right to Information Act (RTI Act), 2005, at the grassroots level and empower citizens to combat corruption. Parivartan was a grassroots movement Kejriwal founded in New Delhi to empower citizens and fight corruption.
25. c The Bill imposes a blanket prohibition on online games involving money (played by paying fees/stakes in expectation of monetary gain), irrespective of skill or chance.
26. d Offering online money games can attract imprisonment up to 3 years and fine up to Rs.1 crore. Repeat offences may extend to 5 years and Rs.2 crore. Banks and financial entities cannot process payments related to online money games. Violation may lead to 3 years jail and Rs.1 crore fine.
27. b Endorsers of illegal online money games can face 2 years imprisonment and Rs.50 lakh fine; repeat offences can escalate.
28. a Authorised officers may conduct physical and digital searches and arrest without warrant on reasonable suspicion of offences.

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Chandrapuram Ponnusamy Radhakrishnan took oath as the 15th Vice President of India at a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi. President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of office to Radhakrishnan in the presence of senior government officials and dignitaries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Vice-Presidents Jagdeep Dhankhar and Venkaiah Naidu, former President Ram Nath Kovind, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and others were present during the oath taking ceremony. Radhakrishnan, the NDA nominee, was elected as the Vice President on September 9, after he secured 452 votes in comparison to Opposition candidate and former Supreme Court judge [1], who received 300 votes. Announcing the result, Rajya Sabha Secretary General and Returning Officer PC Mody said that 767 out of 781 MPs cast their votes, recording a turnout of 98.2 per cent. Of these, 752 ballots were valid and 15 were invalid, lowering the required majority of first preference votes to 377. While the NDA had the backing of 427 MPs on paper, 11 lawmakers from the YSRCP also supported Radhakrishnan. Interestingly, the NDA candidate received 14 votes more than expected, sparking speculation of cross-voting from the Opposition camp. Following the announcement of results, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated CP Radhakrishnan and expressed confidence that the newly elected Vice President would strengthen India's constitutional values and contribute positively to parliamentary discourse.

- Q1. What is the name of the opposition candidate in the Vice Presidential election whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) B. Sudershan Reddy (b) M. Venkaiah Naidu
(c) Jairam Ramesh (d) Gopalkrishna Gandhi
- Q2. Who among the following resigned from the post of Vice President to contest the Presidential election after Zakir Husain's death?
- (a) Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (b) Krishan Kant
(c) V.V. Giri (d) Venkaiah Naidu
- Q3. Who among the following Vice Presidents of India died during his tenure?
- (a) Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (b) Krishan Kant
(c) Zakir Husain (d) Varahagiri Venkata Giri
- Q4. How many Vice Presidents of India later became the President of India till date?
- (a) Four (b) Eight
(c) Six (d) Ten
- Q5. Who among the following constitutes the Electoral College for the election of the Vice-President of India?
- (a) Only the elected members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.
(b) Members of both Houses of Parliament, including nominated members.
(c) Members of both Houses of Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies.
(d) Only the members of the Rajya Sabha.
- Q6. What is the term of office of the Vice-President of India?
- (a) 4 years (b) 6 years
(c) Until the Vice President resigns (d) 5 years

Passage – 2

On September 4, 2025 in Nepal, the (then) ruling Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)'s K.P. Sharma Oli-led government banned 26 major social media platforms, citing non-compliance with registration requirements. This triggered widespread Gen Z-led protests from September 8, with demonstrators viewing it as an attempt to silence dissent. The protests quickly escalated from peaceful gatherings in Kathmandu to violent confrontations as demonstrators marched toward Parliament. At least 34 people have died and over 1,000 were hospitalised. The next day, multiple government buildings were attacked, including Parliament, the Supreme Court, and the Prime Minister's office complex. Politicians' homes were burnt down and prisoners freed from jails, including arrested politician and ex-minister Rabi Lamichhane of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP). Prime Minister Oli also resigned on September 9. After three days of negotiations involving the President, Army Chief General Ashokraj Sigdel, and Gen Z leaders, former Supreme Court Chief Justice [1] was appointed as interim Prime Minister with a mandate to conduct elections by March 2026. She immediately recommended dissolving Parliament. In recent years, many youngsters of Nepal have migrated out of the country for better job opportunities. Social media outlets are used by a bulk of such people and others, not just for venting about concerns on the nature of governance but also for communication and business. Shutting down these outlets, therefore, was seen as a major inconvenience. The youth, however, did not term the protests as something targeted at the social media ban, but as an agitation against corruption in governance. Ever since the 2015 Constitution, power has alternated between three veteran leaders - Mr. Oli, Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre), and Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress. Despite the relatively progressive Constitution, governments have been perceived as corrupt and unable to improve economic conditions, providing unstable governance through constantly changing alliances.

- Q7. Who was appointed interim Prime Minister after Oli's resignation whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) Rabi Lamichhane (b) Pushpa Kamal Dahal
(c) Sushila Karki (d) Sher Bahadur Deuba
- Q8. When did the current Constitution of Nepal come into effect?
- (a) 20 September 2015 (b) 20 September 2006
(c) 1 April 2015 (d) 1 January 2010
- Q9. What was the immediate trigger for the Gen Z-led protests in Nepal in September 2025?
- (a) Corruption in government and economic stability
(b) Banning of free speech and protest in Nepal
(c) Banning of 26 major social media platforms
(d) Dissolution of Parliament by the interim PM
- Q10. What was the main aim of the Madhesh Movement in Nepal?
- (a) To create a separate country or grant special status the Terai region of southern Nepal
(b) To demand equal rights, dignity, and identity for Madhesis and other groups
(c) To promote welfare and development in Terai region of southern Nepal
(d) To build infrastructure along the border
- Q11. Since the 2015 Constitution, who among the following have been the three main leaders alternating power in Nepal?
- (a) Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, and Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba
(b) Mr. Rabi Lamichhane, Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, and Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal
(c) Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Mr. Ramesh Mahato, and Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli
(d) Mr. Ram Chandra Poudel, Mr. K.P. Sharma Oli, and Mr. Ram Baran Yadav

- Q12. Which of the following statements is Not true regarding Nepal?
- (a) It is a landlocked country in South Asia.
 - (b) The Nepalese rupee is the official currency and legal tender of Nepal.
 - (c) Nepal shares a border with two countries: India to its south, east, and west, and China to its north.
 - (d) There are only three Indian states that share a border with Nepal.

Passage – 3

This year marks the centenary of the Self-Respect Movement, which changed the course of the political discourse in Tamil Nadu. Though the movement was recorded to have started in 1925, historians contend it did not possess a singular moment of origin. V. Geetha and S.V. Rajadurai, in their book, Towards a Non-Brahmin Millennium (From Iyothee Thass to Periyar), write: "The Self-Respect Movement comes to us, as it were, in process, as an ideological impulse, an energetic mobilising of men and women across castes and classes, a vision of a society that had erupted into rebellion, into acts of defiance, daring and, finally, as a time of great churning, when all things were subject to doubt and enquiry, when all matters, however sacred and inviolate were relentlessly interrogated... When women ignored the claims of family and the bonds of community; when young men willingly forsook personal fortunes and defied elders; a time when scores of hitherto despised and ignored peoples, until then, mere objects of charity, pity and paternalist benevolence, were asked to play protagonists in a struggle which, above all, was committed to running their world upside down." Social reformer 'Periyar' E.V. Ramasamy, who later founded the Dravidar Kazhagam, through the launch of Tamil weekly Kudi Arasu (Republic), paved way for the formal beginning of the Self-Respect Movement. Following his departure from the Indian National Congress in November 1925, Periyar utilised an opportunity to address a Justice Party special conference in Coimbatore, "to espouse a radical and militant non-Brahminism." According to the authors, "He observed that the Justice Party had been unable to attract popular support because it did not have a political programme which addressed the real needs of the people." He chided that its members and leaders seemed to labour under the illusion that an English education and a position in the services, in themselves, would bring cheer and good to the non-Brahmin commonweal. Periyar went on to assure his audience that he endorsed these objectives but did not consider them significant achievement in themselves. He warned, "They could very well go to constitute a non-Brahmin elite which, in the days to come, could prove as oppressive as a Brahmin oligarchy."

- Q13. Who among the following founded the Self-Respect Movement in 1925?
- (a) Jyotirao Phule
 - (b) EV Ramasamy
 - (c) BR Ambedkar
 - (d) Annai Meenambal
- Q14. Which of the following movements did Periyar participate in 1924 in Travancore?
- (a) Vaikom Satyagraha
 - (b) Salt Satyagraha
 - (c) Quit India Movement
 - (d) Self-Respect Movement
- Q15. Who among the following wrote a book named Gulamgiri?
- (a) Mahatma Gandhi
 - (b) Periyar
 - (c) Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
 - (d) Jyotirao Phule
- Q16. Periyar's views on religion were influenced by whom among the following Tamil saints?
- (a) Ramanuja
 - (b) Appar
 - (c) Thiruvalluvar
 - (d) Andal
- Q17. The Self-Respect Movement primarily aimed to _____.
- (a) Promote Brahminical traditions
 - (b) Uplift Dravidians and challenge Brahminical tyranny
 - (c) Support colonial policies in South India
 - (d) Encourage Sanskrit education among non-Brahmins
- Q18. According to Periyar, untouchables had to achieve social equality by _____.
- (a) Converting to Brahminical Hinduism
 - (b) Emulating upper-caste customs
 - (c) Joining the colonial administration
 - (d) Freeing themselves from all religions

Passage – 4

Poland invoked Article 4 of NATO's treaty after the alliance's fighter jets shot down Russian drones that entered its airspace in the early hours of the morning. Russian drones have crossed into Poland before, including twice last week, but this was the first time that Russian drones had been shot down over the territory of a NATO country. "What is clear is that the violation last night is not an isolated incident," said Mark Rutte, NATO's secretary general. "We will closely monitor the situation along our eastern flank, our air defenses continually at the ready." Article 4 allows a member state to start a formal discussion among the alliance about threats to its security. While invoking Article 4 does not commit NATO to any military action, it is a required step toward a NATO decision to invoke Article 5. (An invocation of Article 5 is often assumed to have military implications, but the NATO treaty says only that its members will "assist" the party that has been attacked. This can also mean economic or political action.)

Article 4 states that the alliance's members "will consult together whenever, in the opinion of any of them, the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties is threatened." Since NATO's founding in [1], Article 4 has been invoked eight times. Before Wednesday, the last was on Feb. 24, 2022, the day Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The joint NATO response showed how quickly the war in Ukraine could escalate into a military confrontation between Russia and NATO. Mr. Rutte said that the alliance's air defenses were activated to ensure Poland's protection. The response included fighter jets and air-defense systems from the Netherlands, Germany and Italy, he said. "The security situation of our airspace has been stabilized, and ground-based air defense and radar reconnaissance systems have returned to standard operational activities," the Polish military said on social media.

- Q19. Why did Poland invoke Article 4 of NATO's treaty?
- (a) To start formal discussions about threats to its security after Russian drones were shot down
 - (b) To immediately trigger NATO military intervention in its airspace
 - (c) To request economic sanctions against Russia without NATO involvement
 - (d) To dissolve its military alliances outside NATO
- Q20. What does invoking Article 4 of NATO's treaty guarantee?
- (a) Immediate deployment of NATO ground forces
 - (b) Automatic economic sanctions against the aggressor
 - (c) Full military retaliation against the attacking country
 - (d) Consultation among NATO members, but no automatic military action
- Q21. What was the last invocation of Article 4 before Poland's recent action?
- (a) February 24, 2022, when Russia invaded Ukraine
 - (b) January 1, 2021, during the Belarus crisis
 - (c) March 15, 2018, during tensions with Syria
 - (d) June 10, 2019, during Turkey's border conflict
- Q22. How many countries are NATO members as of 2025?
- (a) 30
 - (b) 28
 - (c) 32
 - (d) 35
- Q23. How many countries were original NATO members?
- (a) 14
 - (b) 10
 - (c) 16
 - (d) 12
- Q24. When was NATO founded which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) 1945
 - (b) 1949
 - (c) 1952
 - (d) 1955

Passage – 5

The royal rumble of teenage prodigies between Gukesh Dommaraju, the youngest world champion in chess history, and Abhimanyu Mishra ended with victory for the Indian-origin American GM in the fifth round of the FIDE Grand Swiss tournament in Samarkand. Mishra is already in the record books as the youngest player to become a grandmaster in chess history. But after the victory over Gukesh, he now has another claim to fame: at the age of 16, he is now the youngest player in history to ever defeat a reigning world champion in a classical game. The Gukesh versus Abhimanyu Mishra battle was so fascinating that as many as 16 grandmasters - from Ian Neopmniachtchi to Vasyl Ivanchuk - were spotted taking a break from their own games and intently checking out the action erupting on this board. In a remarkable game played out in Uzbekistan, Gukesh was forced to fire-fight for his life from the 13th move onwards after a puzzling decision to push his g pawn to g4 which was the start of his troubles. Defeat for Gukesh came three days after he had managed to stave off a spirited challenge from the 14-year-old Turkish phenom, Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus. In the middle game, by the 20th move, it seemed like the 19-year-old from Chennai had managed to pull off one of his trademark rescue acts. But Gukesh was in trouble once again by move 37 against Mishra, and despite trying hard to get out of jail like he has done on numerous occasions in the past year, Gukesh was not able to avoid a resignation on the 61st move.

- Q25. At what age did Abhimanyu Mishra become the world's youngest grandmaster?
- (a) 12 years, 4 months, 25 days (b) 11 years, 5 months, 12 days
(c) 13 years, 2 months, 18 days (d) 14 years, 1 month, 10 days
- Q26. Which of the following countries does Abhimanyu Mishra represent in chess?
- (a) India (b) United States of America
(c) Russia (d) Uzbekistan
- Q27. During which tournament did Abhimanyu Mishra defeat Gukesh Dommaraju?
- (a) Candidates Tournament 2025 (b) World Chess Championship 2025
(c) FIDE Grand Swiss Tournament 2025 (d) Chess Olympiad 2025
- Q28. Chess originated in which of the following countries?
- (a) Spain (b) Italy
(c) Greece (d) India

Test - 16

Answers and Explanations

1. a Chandrapuram Ponnusamy Radhakrishnan, the NDA nominee, was elected as the Vice President on September 9, 2025 after he secured 452 votes in comparison to Opposition candidate and former Supreme Court judge B. Sudershan Reddy, who received 300 votes. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan took oath as the first Vice President of India on 13 May 1952.
2. c After Zakir Husain's death in 1969, V. V. Giri resigned as Vice President to contest and won the Presidential election.
3. b Krishan Kant is the only Vice President of India to have died during his tenure.
4. c Out of the 15 Vice Presidents, six went on to serve as the President of India.
5. b The Vice-President is elected by an Electoral College consisting of all members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, both elected and nominated members, unlike the Presidential election which also involves State Legislative Assemblies.
6. d The Vice-President holds office for five years from the date of assuming office, but continues to hold office until a successor assumes charge.
7. c Former Supreme Court Chief Justice Sushila Karki was appointed interim Prime Minister with a mandate to hold elections by March 2026.
8. a The Constitution of Nepal is the present governing Constitution of Nepal. Nepal is governed according to the Constitution which came into effect on 20 September 2015, replacing the Interim Constitution of 2007. The constitution of Nepal is divided into 35 parts, 308 Articles and 9 Schedules.
9. c On September 4, 2025 in Nepal, the (then) ruling Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)'s K.P. Sharma Oli-led government banned 26 major social media platforms, citing non-compliance with registration requirements. This triggered widespread Gen Z-led protests from September 8, with demonstrators viewing it as an attempt to silence dissent.
10. b Madhesh Movement was a political movement launched by various political parties, especially those based in Madhes, for equal rights, dignity and identity of Madheshi Tharus, Muslims and Janjati groups in Nepal. In nearly a decade, Nepal witnessed three Madhesh Movements - the first Madhesh Movement erupted in 2007, the second Madhesh Movement in 2008 and the third Madhesh Movement in 2015. Ramesh Mahato was Madheshi martyr in 2007 at Lahan. "Madheshis" are people from the Terai region of southern Nepal, a historically fertile and populous area bordering India. The term refers to a diverse group of ethnic and cultural communities, many of whom share strong socio-cultural and linguistic ties with people in northern India.
11. a Ever since the 2015 Constitution, power has alternated between three veteran leaders - Mr. Oli, Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre), and Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress. Despite the relatively progressive Constitution, governments have been perceived as corrupt and unable to improve economic conditions, providing unstable governance through constantly changing alliances.
12. d Nepal is a landlocked country in South Asia. It is mainly situated in the Himalayas, but also includes parts of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. It borders the Tibet Autonomous Region of China to the north and India to the south, east, and west, while it is narrowly separated from Bangladesh by the Siliguri Corridor and from Bhutan by the Indian state of Sikkim. Nepal has a diverse geography, including fertile plains, subalpine forested hills, and eight of the world's ten highest mountains, including Mount Everest, the highest point above mean sea level on Earth. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and its largest city. The Nepalese rupee is the official currency and legal tender of Nepal. There are five Indian states that share a border with Nepal: Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Sikkim. These states form a significant part of India's nearly 1,800-kilometer border with Nepal. Nepal shares a border with two countries: India to its south, east, and west, and China to its north.
13. b The Self-Respect Movement was launched in 1925 by EV Ramasamy, popularly known as Periyar, in Tamil Nadu to promote rationalism, self-respect, and social reform. Jyotirao Phule and BR Ambedkar influenced him, but they were not the founders. Annai Meenambal was a prominent activist but not the founder.
14. a In 1924, E.V. Ramasamy took an active part in the Vaikom Satyagraha. The Vaikom Satyagraha (1924) was a non-violent protest in Kerala to allow untouchables to use public roads near temples, addressing caste-based restrictions.
15. d In 1873, Jyotirao Phule wrote a book named Gulamgiri, meaning slavery. Some ten years before this, the American Civil War had been fought, leading to the end of slavery in America. Phule dedicated his book to all those Americans who had fought to free slaves, thus establishing a link between the conditions of the "lower" castes in India and the black slaves in America.
16. c Periyar admired Thiruvalluvar, author of Thirukkural, for ethical, rational, and humanist teachings, and he maintained faith in a formless single God, rejecting ritualistic practices.
17. b The movement sought social equality for Dravidians, denouncing caste oppression and exposing Brahminical dominance in all aspects of Hindu life.
18. d Periyar argued that religion upheld social divisions, so untouchables needed to reject all religious authority to achieve equality.
19. a Article 4 allows a member to initiate formal discussion among NATO members regarding security threats, which Poland did after Russian drones entered its airspace.
20. d Article 4 starts discussions but does not obligate NATO to take military action; it is a precursor to any possible Article 5 action.
21. a Prior to Poland invoking Article 4 over Russian drone incursions, the last time Article 4 was invoked was on February 24, 2022, which coincides with the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This was a critical moment for NATO, as members needed to coordinate their security and support measures without immediately triggering collective military action under Article 5.
22. c NATO has 32 member countries after the inclusion of 20 more European states since its founding.

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| <p>23. d NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, was founded in 1949 as a collective defense alliance in response to the growing threat of the Soviet Union in Europe after World War II. The alliance's founding members included the United States, Canada, and 10 European countries, which together made 12 countries in total. United States and Canada: Representing North America and providing the backbone of military and economic support. 10 European countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom. These 12 countries signed the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949, committing themselves to mutual defense under Article 5, which states that an attack on one member is considered an attack on all.</p> | <p>25. a Abhimanyu Mishra (born February 5, 2009) is an American chess grandmaster. A chess prodigy, he holds the record for the world's youngest ever grandmaster, having qualified for the title at the age of 12 years, 4 months, and 25 days. In a game against Gukesh Dommaraju at the FIDE Grand Swiss Tournament 2025, Mishra, then 16 years old, became the youngest player to win a classical chess game against an incumbent World Chess Champion.</p> |
| <p>24. b The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was established in 1949, with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty on April 4, 1949, in Washington, D.C. This intergovernmental military alliance was formed by 12 North American and European countries to provide collective security and safeguard the freedom and security of its members through political and military means.</p> | <p>26. b Abhimanyu Mishra is identified as an American chess grandmaster, meaning he represents the USA in international chess.</p> |
| | <p>27. c The royal rumble of teenage prodigies between Gukesh Dommaraju, the youngest world champion in chess history, and Abhimanyu Mishra ended with victory for the Indian-origin American GM in the fifth round of the FIDE Grand Swiss tournament in Samarkand.</p> |
| | <p>28. d Chess originated in India around the 6th century CE as a game called Chaturanga, which means "four divisions" of the military. The game then spread to Persia, evolving into Shatranj, and later traveled to the Islamic world and medieval Europe, where it was refined into the modern game of chess we know today.</p> |

CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

Malayalam cinema veteran [1] was conferred with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in the field of cinema, at the National Film Awards 2025. At 65, [1] mentioned in his speech, "As a representative of the Malayalam film industry, I am deeply humbled to be the youngest recipient and only the second ever from the state to be bestowed with this national recognition." The first recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award from Kerala was filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan, who was honoured in 2004. The actor made his film debut in 1978 with a minor role in Thiranotham, which was released later in 2005. He rose to prominence in the 1980s and 1990s with versatile performances spanning drama, action, comedy, and thrillers. He is known for his natural acting style and expressive dialogue delivery. The senior actor has appeared in over 350 films across multiple Indian languages, including Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, and Kannada." The actor has received multiple accolades, including five National Film Awards and nine Kerala State Film Awards.

The 71st National Film Awards ceremony was held today at New Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan. President Droupadi Murmu presented the prizes to the winners, who were felicitated for their work released in 2023. Shah Rukh Khan, Rani Mukerji, and Vikrant Massey received their first National Awards in the acting category. Shah Rukh Khan and Vikrant Massey shared the Best Actor award for their stellar performances in Jawan and 12th Fail, respectively, while Rani Mukerji was named the Best Actress for her powerful performance in Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway.

- Q1. Who was conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award at the 71st National Film Awards ceremony in 2025 whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) Konidela Chiranjeevi (b) Shivaji Rao Gaikwad
(c) Kamal Haasan (d) Mohanlal
- Q2. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award was introduced by the Government of India to commemorate Dadasaheb Phalke's contribution to Indian cinema. What is the name of the India's first full-length feature film directed by him?
- (a) Bilwamangal (b) Raja Harishchandra
(c) Satyawadi Raja Harishchandra (d) Ayodhyecha Raja
- Q3. The first recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award was _____.
- (a) Devika Rani (b) Paidi Jairaj
(c) L. V. Prasad (d) Sohrab Modi
- Q4. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in the field of cinema. It is presented annually at the National Film Awards ceremony by the _____.
- (a) Films Division of India (b) National Film Development Corporation
(c) Directorate of Film Festivals (d) National Film Archive of India
- Q5. Who among the following were the only posthumous recipients of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award?
- (a) Prithviraj Kapoor and Vinod Khanna (b) Raj Kapoor and Shashi Kapoor
(c) Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle (d) B. R. Chopra and Yash Chopra
- Q6. When was the Dadasaheb Phalke Award first presented?
- (a) 1913 (b) 1944
(c) 1969 (d) 1980

Passage – 2

Protesters across France obstructed highways, burned barricades and clashed sporadically with police on Wednesday in a show of anger against President Emmanuel Macron, the political elite and planned spending cuts. Authorities deployed more than 80,000 security personnel across the country, removing barriers and spraying water hoses at demonstrators as tensions flared in several places. In Paris, riot police periodically used teargas to disperse crowds. Nearly 200 people were detained in the capital. The "Block Everything" movement - a broad expression of discontent that has spread on social media - sprang up online in May among right-wing groups but has since been co-opted by the left and far-left. The unrest added to the political turmoil on a day when conservative Sebastien Lecornu took office as President Emmanuel Macron's new Prime Minister, after his predecessor was ousted by parliament over his unpopular plans for sharp budget cuts. "It's the same shit; it's the same, it's Macron who's the problem, not the ministers," said Fred, a CGT union official at the Paris public transport company RATP. "He has to go."

France is under pressure to lower a budget deficit that stands at nearly double the European Union's 3% ceiling, and a debt pile equivalent to 114% of GDP. In Paris, students and school age youngsters swelled the protesters' ranks. Over 300 protesters were arrested across the country, though many rallies were peaceful. Nearly 200,000 people across France participated in the movement, a mobilisation outgoing Interior Minister Bruno Retailleau described as "significant" though he added that "those who wanted to block the country failed to do so." The movement reflects anger with what protesters say is a dysfunctional ruling elite bent on austerity - the discontent deepened after the last government proposed cuts of 44 billion euros (\$52 billion) in government spending. Outside the Gare du Nord train station in Paris, hundreds of youths chanted anti-Macron slogans. One carried a placard with the Tricolor flag and the slogan "The rich elite's Republic".

- Q7. What triggered the "Block Everything" protests in France?
- (a) Student unemployment (b) Presidential election results
(c) Rise in fuel prices only (d) Proposed austerity measures and budget cuts
- Q8. Which of the following is Not a joint defence exercises conducted between India and France?
- (a) SHAKTI (Army Exercise) (b) VAJRA PRAHAR (Army Exercise)
(c) GARUDA (Air Exercise) (d) TARANG SHAKTI (Multinational Air Exercise)
- Q9. Regarding the President of France, which of the following statements is Not correct?
- (a) The President of France is directly elected by citizens.
(b) The President appoints the Prime Minister.
(c) Emmanuel Macron was the third President of France.
(d) The President is the Commander-in-Chief of the French Armed Forces.
- Q10. Which of the following statements is Not correct regarding the powers/responsibilities held by both the President of India and the President of France?
- (a) Granting pardons and clemency (b) Appointing the Prime Minister
(c) Dissolving the Parliament (d) Acting as the head of state
- Q11. Which of the following are involved in implementing UPI in France?
- (a) NPCI and Lyra Network
(b) Reserve Bank of India and Banque de France
(c) Ministry of Finance, India and European Central Bank
(d) SBI and BNP Paribas
- Q12. How many Dassault Rafale jets are being procured by India for the Navy under the 2025 agreement with France?
- (a) 18 jets (b) 26 jets
(c) 32 jets (d) 40 jets

Passage – 3

The deep sea, still full of mysteries, holds not just the secrets of human origins but also clues to our long-term sustenance and preservation. To unlock its hidden potential, India's Deep Ocean Mission was launched on 07.09.2021 by the [1] with an aim to develop technologies for exploring and sustainably utilizing the deep ocean's living and non-living wealth. With an overall investment of Rs.4077 crore spread across five years, this mission isn't a one-time dive - it will unfold in phases and is designed as a full-throttle national project, driving forward India's Blue Economy, which includes all marine-based industries - from fishing and shipping to biotechnology and tourism. Exploring these depths could provide solutions to global challenges like climate change. Considering this, the United Nations named the 2021-2030 decade as the 'Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development'. India's unique geography, with 7517 km of coastline, nine coastal states, and 1382 islands, gives it an edge in the sector. This is why, in the Vision of New India by 2030, the Government has placed Blue Economy among the ten core growth dimensions. The MoES leads this multi-agency effort, steering India toward the goal of tapping into ocean resources and boosting the country's maritime economy to surpass Rs.100 billion. It's about turning deep-sea potential into sustainable prosperity.

- Q13. Which of the following ministries is the nodal agency for India's Deep Ocean Mission which has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) Ministry of Science & Technology
 - (b) Ministry of Earth Sciences
 - (c) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
 - (d) Ministry of Shipping
- Q14. Which of the following is primarily responsible for developing Matsya 6000?
- (a) National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)
 - (b) ISRO
 - (c) DRDO
 - (d) Indian Navy
- Q15. How long can MATSYA 6000 sustain life support in emergency scenarios?
- (a) 12 hours
 - (b) 24 hours
 - (c) 48 hours
 - (d) 96 hours
- Q16. Which of the following countries collaboration was involved in India's first deep-sea dive to 5000 meters?
- (a) USA
 - (b) Russia
 - (c) France
 - (d) Japan
- Q17. Which of the following is NOT a component of the Deep Ocean Mission?
- (a) Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining and Manned Submersible
 - (b) Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services
 - (c) Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology
 - (d) Offshore Oil Rig Development
- Q18. Which of the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) aligns with the Deep Ocean Mission?
- (a) SDG-6: Clean Water and Sanitation
 - (b) SDG-7: Affordable and Clean Energy
 - (c) SDG-14: Life Below Water
 - (d) SDG-15: Life on Land

Passage – 4

The GST regime, rolled out in July 2017, subsumed 17 indirect taxes and 13 cesses, has seen over a dozen rounds of rate tweaks so far. But this round of reforms focused on a major restructuring of GST slabs. The multiple slabs - 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent - were replaced with a broad two-slab structure - a merit rate of 5 per cent and a standard rate of 18 per cent - in addition to a special demerit rate of 40 per cent for sin and demerit goods such as pan masala, tobacco and cigarettes. Effective September 22, the GST rates are now 0.25 per cent for rough diamonds and precious and semi-precious stones; 1.5 per cent for cut and polished diamonds; 3 per cent for precious metals such as gold, silver and pearls; 5 per cent for 516 categories of goods and services including mostly food items, some medical devices, agricultural machinery, hydrogen vehicles based on fuel cell technology; and 18 per cent for 640 categories of items including industrial goods such as machines, boilers, chemicals, paints, automobile parts, small cars and bikes. The demerit rate of 40 per cent applies for now to 13 categories of items such as smoking pipes, aerated waters, non-alcoholic, caffeinated and carbonated beverages, yachts, aircraft for personal use, and bigger cars and bikes. Tobacco and tobacco-related products, which continue to be in the old rate structure of 28 per cent plus compensation cess, are also going to be in the topmost slab along with a yet-to-be finalised levy over and above the 40 per cent rate. Household budgets are expected to get a boost from the GST rate cuts and the ensuing price cuts by companies. Even as the government does not have a legal provision in force to act against profiteering by companies, the Finance Ministry has asked its officers in the field to compile monthly data reports on price change of commodities pre- and post-GST rate rationalisation. Monthly reports for the price change by companies will be compiled by the Ministry for the next six months in a bid to ensure that the benefits get passed on to the consumers.

- Q19. After the recent GST rationalisation, what are the broad two main GST slabs?
- (a) 5% and 12% (b) 12% and 18%
(c) 5% and 18% (d) 18% and 28%
- Q20. Which items fall under the demerit GST rate of 40%?
- (a) Food grains and vegetables
(b) Industrial goods like machines and chemicals
(c) Precious metals like gold and silver
(d) Sin goods such as pan masala, tobacco, smoking pipes, and big vehicles
- Q21. What is the GST rate on cut and polished diamonds after the rationalisation?
- (a) 0.25% (b) 1.5%
(c) 3% (d) 5%
- Q22. What mechanism has the Finance Ministry suggested to ensure that GST benefits reach consumers?
- (a) Monthly data compilation on pre- and post-GST price changes
(b) Legal provisions to punish companies for profiteering
(c) Annual audits by the GST Council
(d) Fixed maximum retail prices
- Q23. Which of the following has been introduced to reduce procedural uncertainty for businesses?
- (a) GST Council
(b) Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)
(c) Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)
(d) State Tax Departments
- Q24. Which of the following statements about GST is correct?
- (a) GST applies only to goods, not services (b) GST is a direct tax levied on income
(c) GST is a destination-based indirect tax (d) GST replaces only central taxes, not state taxes

Passage – 5

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on September 8, 2025 declared Himachal as a "fully literate State" on the occasion of International Literacy Day. The announcement was made in Shimla at an event organised by the Directorate of School Education. The Chief Minister said Himachal Pradesh had reached this goal well before the scheduled timeframe, adding that the journey from minimal literacy rate of around 7% to full literacy had been full of challenges, yet the State had consistently moved forward with the aim of providing quality education. He stressed on the importance of continuous reforms in line with modern requirements. Mr. Sukhu said the literacy rate in Himachal Pradesh had reached 99.30%, which is higher than the national benchmark of 95% with the hill State ranking first in the country in terms of student-teacher ratio. Union Education Secretary Sanjay Kumar, in a video message, congratulated Himachal Pradesh on this achievement and emphasised the importance of providing skill-based education to the newly literate.

- Q25. Which of the following states became the first fully digitally literate State in India in August 2025?
- (a) Goa (b) Tripura
(c) Mizoram (d) Kerala
- Q26. Which of the following states has become the first fully literate state in India, achieving a remarkable literacy rate of 98.2%, surpassing the 95% literacy rate threshold set by the Ministry of Education?
- (a) Kerala (b) Mizoram
(c) Nagaland (d) Manipur
- Q27. According to the 2011 census, India's overall literacy rate is _____.
- (a) 64.04% (b) 79.04%
(c) 74.04% (d) 71.04%
- Q28. The theme for International Literacy Day 2025 is:
- (a) Promoting literacy in the digital era (b) Literacy for All
(c) Eradicating Illiteracy Worldwide (d) Reading and Writing for Development

Test - 17

Answers and Explanations

1. d Malayalam cinema veteran Mohanlal received India's highest film honour, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, at the 71st National Film Awards ceremony in 2025.
2. b The Dadasaheb Phalke Award was introduced by the Government of India to commemorate Dadasaheb Phalke's contribution to Indian cinema. Phalke (1870-1944), who is popularly known as and often regarded as "the father of Indian cinema", was an Indian filmmaker who directed India's first full-length feature film, Raja Harishchandra (1913).
3. a The first recipient of the award was actress Devika Rani, who was honoured at the 17th National Film Awards.
4. c The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in the field of cinema. It is presented annually at the National Film Awards ceremony by the Directorate of Film Festivals, an organisation set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The recipient is honoured for their "outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian cinema" and is selected by a committee consisting of eminent personalities from the Indian film industry. The award comprises a Swarna Kamal (Golden Lotus) medallion, a shawl, and a cash prize of Rs.1,000,000 (US\$13,000). Presented first in 1969, the award was introduced by the Government of India to commemorate Dadasaheb Phalke's contribution to Indian cinema. Phalke (1870-1944), who is popularly known as and often regarded as "the father of Indian cinema", was an Indian filmmaker who directed India's first full-length feature film, Raja Harishchandra (1913).
5. a The Dadasaheb Phalke Award is India's highest award in the field of cinema. It is presented annually at the National Film Awards ceremony by the Directorate of Film Festivals, an organisation set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Presented first in 1969, the award was introduced by the Government of India to commemorate Dadasaheb Phalke's contribution to Indian cinema. As of 2021, there have been 51 awardees. Among those, actor Prithviraj Kapoor (1971) and actor Vinod Khanna (2017) are the only posthumous recipients.
6. c The correct answer is C) 1969. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award was first presented in 1969 to commemorate Dadasaheb Phalke's contribution to Indian cinema. The first recipient of the award was actress Devika Rani, who was honoured at the 17th National Film Awards.
7. d The "Block Everything" protests in France arose due to anger over Macron's planned spending cuts and broader austerity measures, affecting public services and citizens.
8. b SHAKTI, GARUDA, and TARANG SHAKTI are all established joint exercises between India and France. VAJRA PRAHAR is not a joint India-France exercise; it is a Special Forces exercise conducted by the Indian Army and USA Army, typically involving its elite units. The 15th edition of annual bilateral Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR was held between the Indian Army and US Army Special Forces, at the Orchard Combat Training Center in Boise, Idaho, from 02 Nov to 22 Nov 2024.
9. c Option (a) is correct. The President of France is directly elected by the people through a two-round voting system for a five-year term. Option (b) is correct. The President has the authority to appoint the Prime Minister, although the choice usually reflects the parliamentary majority. Option (c): Incorrect. Emmanuel Macron is not the third President of France; he is the 25th President (as of 2025) of the Fifth Republic. This statement is factually wrong. Option (d) is correct. The President serves as the Commander-in-Chief of the French Armed Forces, holding supreme authority over military matters.
10. c Option (a) is correct: Both Presidents have clemency powers. Option (b) is Correct: Both appoint the Prime Minister. Option (c) is Incorrect: In India, the President can dissolve the Lok Sabha; in France, dissolution of the National Assembly is at presidential discretion, but not Parliament as a whole. Option (d) is Correct: Both serve as the ceremonial head of state.
11. a India and France are collaborating to enable the use of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payment system in France, with the goal of facilitating seamless transactions for Indian tourists in French locations, starting with the Eiffel Tower and major shopping centers. This partnership between the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and France's Lyra Network represents a significant step in expanding UPI's global reach and strengthening digital ecosystem ties between the two nations
12. b On 28 April 2025, India and France signed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to procure 26 Dassault Rafale fighter jets for the Indian Navy, valued at around Rs 63,000 crores.[1] The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved the agreement on 9 April 2025 under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh and the French Minister of the Armed Forces, Sebastien Lecornu, formally signed the agreement on 28 April 2025. India is procuring 22 single-seat Rafale M jets and four twin-seat Rafale D variants, as part of a comprehensive package covering training, simulators, associated weaponry, and a five-year Performance-Based Logistics (PBL) support arrangement. The naval variant of the multirole Rafale fighter jet is an advanced 4.5-generation carrier-based platform and is expected to boost maritime operations significantly. This development underscores the deepening defence partnership between the two countries.
13. b Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) leads the multi-agency Deep Ocean Mission to harness ocean resources and promote the Blue Economy.
14. a National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai, an autonomous institute under MoES, is the nodal organization developing Matsya 6000 and overseeing deep-sea research.
15. d Matsya 6000 is equipped with emergency systems to support up to 96 hours of crew survival in case of contingencies during deep-sea operations.
16. c The 5000-meter deep-sea dive was conducted with IFREMER, the French marine research institute, supporting India's manned submersible trials. The expedition was conducted on August 5 and 6, 2025 in collaboration with IFREMER - the French marine research institute. It took place in the Atlantic Ocean aboard IFREMER's submersible Nautilie.
17. d Deep Ocean Mission (DOM) focuses on exploration, biodiversity, energy (OTEC), and the Blue Economy, but does not directly develop oil rigs. Here are the headings of the Mission Components for the Deep Ocean Mission: 1. Development of Technologies for Deep Sea Mining and Manned Submersible, 2. Development of Ocean Climate Change Advisory Services, 3. Technological Innovations for Exploration and Conservation of Deep-Sea Biodiversity, 4. Deep Ocean Survey and Exploration, 5. Energy and Freshwater from the Ocean and 6. Advanced Marine Station for Ocean Biology.

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| <p>18. c India's Deep Ocean Mission (DOM) directly supports Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG-14), "Life Below Water," through its focus on marine ecosystem protection, the sustainable use of ocean resources, and fostering scientific research. The mission's six primary components address key aspects of ocean health and conservation, aligning with the targets of SDG-14.</p> <p>19. c The government simplified the GST structure by introducing a merit rate of 5% and a standard rate of 18%, replacing the previous multiple slabs.</p> <p>20. d A special demerit rate of 40% is levied on products considered harmful or luxury items, including tobacco, pan masala, aerated drinks, yachts, and high-end vehicles.</p> <p>21. b GST on cut and polished diamonds has been set at 1.5%, while rough diamonds are taxed at 0.25% and precious metals at 3%.</p> <p>22. a Since there is no legal provision yet to act against profiteering, the Finance Ministry has directed officers to compile monthly reports on price changes over six months to track whether the reduced GST rates are passed to consumers.</p> <p>23. b Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) provides a dedicated forum for appeals, reducing uncertainty for businesses facing disputes or compliance issues. Small exporters benefit from eased rules, while low-risk small businesses enjoy simplified monthly filing, reducing compliance costs. By reducing compliance burdens and simplifying procedures, GST 2.0 aims to narrow India's tax gap and boost participation. The Laffer curve suggests reducing tax rates can boost compliance and economic activity, potentially increasing overall revenue.</p> | <p>24. c GST is collected at the point of consumption, making it a destination-based indirect tax, integrating both central and state levies.</p> <p>25. d On August 21, 2025, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan declared Kerala as the first fully digitally literate State in India, marking the completion of the first phase of the 'Digi Kerala' digital literacy programme, a grass-root level intervention across all local self-government bodies with an aim to bridge the digital divide.</p> <p>26. b Mizoram has become the first fully literate state in India, achieving a remarkable literacy rate of 98.2%, surpassing the 95% literacy rate threshold set by the Ministry of Education. According to the Census of India, a literate person is someone aged seven and above who can read and write with understanding in any language. This definition requires the ability for both reading and writing, and excludes those who can only read but not write, or children below the age of seven.</p> <p>27. c According to the 2011 census, India's overall literacy rate was 74.04%. This figure includes a male literacy rate of 82.14% and a female literacy rate of 65.46%. A person is defined as literate in the census if they can read and write with understanding in any language, and are aged seven years or above.</p> <p>28. a Since 1967, the annual celebrations of International Literacy Day (ILD) have taken place on 8 September around the world to remind policy-makers, practitioners, and the public of the critical importance of literacy for creating more literate, just, peaceful, and sustainable society. This year, International Literacy Day (ILD) will be celebrated under the theme of "Promoting literacy in the digital era."</p> |
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CURRENT AFFAIRS INCLUDING GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Passage – 1

On September 26, 2025, prominent educationist and climate activist of Ladakh, [1], was detained under the National Security Act (NSA), 1980 for disrupting public order. [1] was on the fifteenth day of a 35-day hunger strike when violent protests erupted in Leh city which led to the death of four people and injuries to around 150 people, including security personnel. For the past five years, civil society groups have been demanding protection of land, resources and employment for Ladakh. The special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 was read down by Parliament on August 5, 2019 and the State was split into two Union Territories - J&K and Ladakh, the latter without an Assembly. The fear of big businesses and conglomerates taking away land and jobs from the local people led to this demand. As per the 2011 Census, the total population of Ladakh was 2,74,289. On September 10, [1], on behalf of the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), announced a 35-day hunger strike along with 15 others to demand the resumption of talks with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). They had four demands: inclusion of Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution (tribal status), Statehood, separate Lok Sabha seats for Leh and Kargil, and filling of existing government vacancies. In January 2023, following campaigns by groups in Kargil and Leh demanding constitutional safeguards, protection of land, preservation of culture and demand for employment opportunities, the government formed a High-Powered Committee (HPC) headed by Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai. The committee comprised members of LAB and KDA and civil society representatives, who rejected the HPC, saying only pro-government members appeared to have been picked. The HPC was reconstituted on November 30, 2023.

- Q1. What is the name of the climate activist whose name has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
- (a) Jadav Payeng (b) Sonam Wangchuk
(c) Jamyang Tsering Namgyal (d) Morup Namgyal
- Q2. The Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution primarily provides for _____.
- (a) Autonomous governance in tribal areas (b) Reservation in educational institutions
(c) Land redistribution for farmers (d) Special status to Union Territories
- Q3. Which of the following northeastern states currently implement the Sixth Schedule?
- (a) Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram
(b) Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram
(c) Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland, Sikkim
(d) Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura
- Q4. Under which Articles of the Constitution is the Sixth Schedule enshrined?
- (a) Articles 370 and 371 (b) Articles 249 and 253
(c) Articles 300 and 301 (d) Articles 244(2) and 275(1)
- Q5. Which town is the largest in Ladakh?
- (a) Kargil (b) Aksai Chin
(c) Leh (d) Zaskar
- Q6. Who was the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh?
- (a) Kavinder Gupta (b) Radha Krishna Mathur
(c) G.C. Murmu (d) Manoj Sinha

Passage – 2

Following the deposit of ratification instruments by four new countries this week at the United Nations-Sri Lanka, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone and Morocco- the High Seas Treaty has reached the milestone of 60 state ratifications needed to trigger its entry into force. Formally known as the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (or BBNJ Agreement), the Treaty will become legally effective 120 days from today (17 January 2026).

"This historic moment is the culmination of years of dedication and global diplomacy by governments and stakeholders" said Rebecca Hubbard, Director of the High Seas Alliance. "The High Seas Treaty is a powerful testament to multilateralism- showing what the world can achieve when we come together for the common good for our ocean, which covers more than 70% of the planet. Today marks an important step when promises start becoming action."

The Treaty is the first legally binding international agreement safeguarding marine life in the High Seas, which covers two-thirds of the world's ocean and plays a critical role in ensuring a healthy planet. It provides new tools to halt biodiversity loss and ocean degradation through enabling the creation of marine protected areas (MPAs) in international waters and ensuring environmental impact assessments of planned human activities. It will also boost equity for developing countries through increasing knowledge and technology access, strengthening capacity, and ensuring the equitable access and sharing of the benefits of marine genetic resources.

These provisions are vital to achieving climate and biodiversity global goals, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 30×30 target to protect 30% of the planet's land and ocean by 2030. Adopted in June 2023, after nearly two decades of discussion and negotiations, the Treaty opened for signature on 20 September 2023. Palau became the first country to ratify on 22 January 2024, and since then States from every region have joined. In addition to the 60 ratifications, 142 countries plus the European Union have signed, signaling their intent to ratify.

Under the Treaty, the first Conference of the Parties (CoP) must convene within a year of entry into force, likely toward the end of 2026. Preparatory work is already underway at the UN to build the institutions and processes in time for CoP1 that will ensure the Treaty's ambition and long-term effectiveness. Governments and stakeholders are also laying the groundwork for developing High Seas MPA proposals to protect critical biodiversity sites once the Treaty is operational. These include the Salas y Gómez and Nazca Ridges, the Lord Howe Rise and South Tasman Sea, the Sargasso Sea and the Thermal Dome in the Eastern Pacific.

- Q7. The High Seas Treaty, formally known as the Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, primarily aims to_____.
- (a) Regulate fishing rights within national waters
 - (b) Safeguard marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction
 - (c) Promote tourism in coastal areas
 - (d) Facilitate maritime trade agreements
- Q8. What is the minimum number of state ratifications required for the BBNJ Agreement to enter into force?
- (a) 50
 - (b) 55
 - (c) 60
 - (d) 65
- Q9. Which of the following global biodiversity targets is supported by the High Seas Treaty?
- (a) Paris Climate Agreement
 - (b) Sustainable Development Goal 7
 - (c) Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
 - (d) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 30×30 target

- Q10. Which of the following mechanisms does the BBNJ Agreement provide to protect marine biodiversity?
- Creation of marine protected areas and mandatory environmental impact assessments
 - Subsidies for deep-sea fishing industries
 - Allocation of high seas territories to private companies
 - Exemptions from international law
- Q11. Palau holds which distinction related to the BBNJ Agreement?
- First country to propose the Treaty
 - First country to sign the Treaty
 - First country to ratify the Treaty
 - First country to oppose the Treaty
- Q12. When did India sign the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, also known as the High Seas Treaty?
- September 25, 2023
 - September 25, 2024
 - January 17, 2026
 - December 20, 2024

Passage – 3

Andhra Pradesh's Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Dunes) and the Natural Heritage of the Tirumala Hills, including the Eparchaeon Unconformity, have been included in the UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage Sites. Being on the Tentative List is a significant step, as it is the mandatory first stage for any site to be nominated for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The inclusion indicates the state's intent to protect and preserve these natural heritage sites. Erra Matti Dibbalu, also known as the Red Sand Dunes, is a notified National Geo-heritage Monument located along the coast near Visakhapatnam. Spread over 1,500 acres, the formations are composed of sand, silt, and clay, with their distinct reddish hue resulting from natural oxidation over thousands of years. The site contains dendritic drainage patterns and sediment layers that record fluctuations in sea level and climatic changes over the late Quaternary period. First documented by British geologist William King in 1886, these formations are regarded as rare coastal geomorphological features.

Only two other similar sites exist in the world, one in Sri Lanka and another in Tamil Nadu. The Geological Survey of India (GSI) declared Erra Matti Dibbalu a National Geo-heritage Monument in 2016. However, experts note that the site faces threats from tourism and filming activities, highlighting the need for stronger conservation measures. The Tirumala Hills in Tirupati district are equally significant for their geological, ecological, and cultural value. The region features the Eparchaeon Unconformity, a geological boundary where rocks over 2.5 billion years old meet younger Proterozoic formations of the Cuddapah Supergroup, marking an important gap in Earth's history. The area also includes the Natural Arch, or Silathoranam, a rare rock formation near the Tirumala temple believed to be over 1.5 billion years old.

- Q13. Which of the following statements about Erra Matti Dibbalu and Tirumala Hills is correct?
- Erra Matti Dibbalu is older than Tirumala Hills formations
 - Both sites are on the UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage Sites
 - Tirumala Hills are only culturally significant, not geologically
 - Erra Matti Dibbalu is man-made
- Q14. Which of the following Indian states has the highest number of World Heritage Sites?
- Maharashtra
 - Tamil Nadu
 - Uttar Pradesh
 - Rajasthan
- Q15. Who among the following was the first to document the Erra Matti Dibbalu formations?
- James Prinsep
 - Alexander Cunningham
 - John Marshall
 - William King

- Q16. Which of the following Indian sites was recently inscribed in 2025?
- (a) Hampi Monuments (b) Maratha Military Landscapes of India
(c) Red Fort (d) Ajanta Caves
- Q17. India's first and sole Mixed World Heritage Site is _____.
- (a) Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (b) Ajanta Caves
(c) Khangchendzonga National Park (d) Elephanta Caves
- Q18. The Preah Vihear temple is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located on the border between _____.
- (a) India and Pakistan (b) India and China
(c) India and Nepal (d) Thailand and Cambodia

Passage – 4

In the early hours of 25 September 2025, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) test-fired the Agni-Prime (Agni-P) missile from a rail-based mobile launcher. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated the DRDO and the Strategic Forces Command for the test, stating that it had put India in a "group of select nations" who have developed "canisterised launch systems" that can operate out of the railway network. Thus far, only Russia, the US, China, and possibly North Korea had the capability of launching long range ballistic missiles from rail-based platforms. Mobile launch platforms are crucial to a country's second strike capabilities: that is, a country's ability to survive a nuclear attack and then launch its own counterattack. This is especially important for India, which has a declared "no first use" nuclear doctrine, meaning that it will only use nuclear weapons in retaliation to an enemy nuclear attack.

Developments in satellite imagery, mobile sensing, and missile technology have made stationary launchers vulnerable to enemy attacks. "Silos are increasingly vulnerable to both nuclear and conventional strikes due to improvements in missile accuracy," Thomas MacDonald, of the Nuclear Policy Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, wrote in his paper 'Tracking mobile missiles'. This has put a premium on mobile launch platforms, which are seen by military strategists as much more survivable in case of all out war. Such platforms include submarines, aircraft, and ground-based mobile launchers that can be operated on roads or rail.

Rail-based platforms come with certain specific benefits. Road-based systems can only be operated in certain routes, where the dimensions of the road and its quality allow heavy missiles and launchers to be transported. While railway systems too are limited by the extent of a country's rail network, India's roughly 70,000-km route can carry missiles to all corners of the country without the need for preparation, like fixing potholes or widening bottlenecks. There are thousands of tunnels in India's railway network. These can be used by rail-based launchers to hide from enemy satellite surveillance. In fact, the capability to launch from the tracks means that the launcher can be kept in hiding till the very last moment before the missile is deployed. Compared with submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), rail-based platforms are significantly cheaper to construct and maintain. As such, it is far more efficient to scale up such platforms than to maintain a fleet of ballistic missile submarines.

- Q19. Which of the following organizations were involved in the successful rail-based launch of Agni-Prime missile?
- (a) ISRO and HAL (b) DRDO and SFC
(c) DRDO and BEL (d) DRDO and HAL
- Q20. What is the significance of rail-based missile launch systems?
- (a) They are cheaper than stationary silos
(b) Provide mobility and survivability from enemy strikes
(c) Enable deployment across a wide geographical area
(d) All of the above
- Q21. Which of the following doctrines of India emphasizes the importance of survivable second-strike capabilities?
- (a) No First Use (b) First Strike Doctrine
(c) Massive Retaliation (d) Flexible Response

- Q22. Besides rail-based platforms, which of the following are considered mobile launch systems?
(a) Submarines (b) Aircraft
(c) Road-based missile launchers (d) All of the above
- Q23. What is the maximum range of the Agni-Prime (Agni-P) missile tested from a rail-based mobile launcher?
(a) 500 km (b) 1000 km
(c) 2000 km (d) 3500 km
- Q24. After the Agni-Prime rail-based missile test, India joined a select group of countries with this capability. Which of the following countries are part of this group?
(a) Russia, US, China and North Korea (b) UK, France, Russia and China
(c) Pakistan, Iran, China and US (d) Japan, Russia, US and South Korea

Passage – 5

The 21st edition of the India-US joint military exercise Yudh Abhyas 2025 concluded at Fort Wainwright and the Yukon Training Area in Alaska, marking the successful completion of two weeks of intensive joint training between the Indian Army and the US Army. The exercise, which began on September 1 with a formal opening ceremony, saw 450 soldiers from each side participate. The Indian contingent was led by a battalion of the Madras Regiment, while the US side was represented by troops from the 11th Airborne Division. According to the Indian Embassy in Washington, Yudh Abhyas has grown significantly since its inception in 2002, evolving from a platoon-level peacekeeping drill into one of the most advanced bilateral military exercises India conducts with any partner nation. This year's edition was one of the largest for the Indian Army in terms of troop mobilization and featured a comprehensive training curriculum. The final phase focused on integrated operations under a joint command structure, involving infantry, artillery, aviation, electronic warfare, and counter-drone systems. Live-fire drills, including mortar exercises, were carried out at the Yukon Training Area to test precision targeting, fire control, and communication systems. Field training included small-unit manoeuvres, tactical patrols, sniper and reconnaissance training, counter-IED drills, and obstacle-laying and demolition exercises.

- Q25. The 21st edition of the India-US joint military exercise Yudh Abhyas 2025 concluded at [1], which of the following places has been redacted with [1] in the passage above?
(a) Alaska (b) California
(c) New York (d) Chennai
- Q26. Which of the following exercises is specifically a joint air force exercise between India and the United States?
(a) Yudh Abhyas (b) Cope India
(c) Vajra Prahar (d) Malabar
- Q27. Vajra Prahar is conducted for which purpose?
(a) Counter-terrorism and special forces operations
(b) Naval warfare and anti-submarine drills
(c) Fighter pilot tactical training
(d) Cyber warfare and electronic intelligence
- Q28. Malabar exercise, originally India-US, has expanded to include which other countries?
(a) Russia and Japan (b) Australia and Japan
(c) China and Japan (d) France and Australia

Test - 18

Answers and Explanations

1. b For a fortnight since September 10, 2025 when climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, supported by members of Leh Apex Body (LAB), started a hunger strike in Leh demanding statehood for Ladakh, scores of people from villages would descend to the protest site to show their support.
2. a The Sixth Schedule (Articles 244(2) and 275(1)) allows the creation of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) and Regional Councils for tribal areas, ensuring self-governance and protection of cultural identity.
3. b The Sixth Schedule applies to the tribal areas of the Northeastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram by providing for the establishment of autonomous districts and regions, each with its own District and Regional Councils for self-governance and protection of tribal rights, culture, and resources. Other northeastern states like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Manipur have different arrangements, and it does not apply to states outside the northeast. The councils have legislative, executive, judicial, and financial powers within their jurisdiction, subject to gubernatorial approval.
4. d The Sixth Schedule is enshrined under Article 244(2) and Article 275(1) of the Indian Constitution. These Articles provide for the administration of tribal areas in specific states-Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram-by creating autonomous district and regional councils with a degree of legislative, judicial, and administrative autonomy. Article 275(1): This Article provides for the implementation of the Sixth Schedule, including the powers granted to the state governments and the federal grants to these autonomous areas.
5. c Leh is the largest town in Ladakh and serves as the district headquarters; Kargil is the second-largest.
6. b Radha Krishna Mathur served as the first Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh from 2019 to 2023.
7. b The BBNJ Agreement is the first legally binding international treaty to protect marine life in the high seas (beyond national jurisdiction), allowing creation of MPAs and environmental impact assessments.
8. c The Treaty requires 60 ratifications to become legally effective; once this threshold is met, it enters into force 120 days later. Morocco, along with Sierra Leone, became the 60th and 61st countries to ratify the High Seas Treaty (BBNJ Agreement) on September 19, 2025, triggering its entry into force. This landmark treaty will become legally binding international law on January 17, 2026, establishing the first governing framework for marine biodiversity in the high seas - the two-thirds of the world's oceans beyond any nation's jurisdiction.
9. d The Treaty helps achieve the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) goal to protect 30% of the planet's land and ocean by 2030. These provisions are vital to achieving climate and biodiversity global goals, including the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) 30x30 target to protect 30% of the planet's land and ocean by 2030.
10. a The Treaty enables the establishment of High Seas marine protected areas (MPAs) and requires environmental assessments for human activities in these areas.
11. c Palau became the first country to ratify the High Seas Treaty on 22 January 2024. After nearly two decades of negotiations, the Treaty was opened for signature on 20 September 2023.
12. b India has taken a big step to protect ocean life by signing an important international agreement called the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, or the "Treaty of the High Seas". This agreement was signed by India's External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar, at the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 25, 2024. The goal of the BBNJ Agreement is to protect marine life in areas of the ocean that are not owned by any one country. These areas start 370 kilometres from any country's coastline and cover two-thirds of the world's oceans. India has not yet ratified the treaty, which is a separate legal step requiring parliamentary approval.
13. b Both Erra Matti Dibbalu and Tirumala Hills have been included in the Tentative List, a prerequisite for full UNESCO World Heritage nomination.
14. a Maharashtra currently has 7 UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the Ajanta Caves, Ellora Caves, Elephanta Caves, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, the Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai, and the Western Ghats, to which the Maratha Military Landscapes of India was added in 2025, making it the seventh.
15. d The formations of Erra Matti Dibbalu were first documented by British geologist William King in 1886, these formations are regarded as rare coastal geomorphological features.
16. b The latest addition in 2025, showcasing fortifications and strategic sites of the Maratha Military Landscapes of India.
17. c Khangchendzonga National Park in Sikkim, India, is India's first and sole Mixed World Heritage Site, recognized by UNESCO in 2016 for its outstanding natural beauty and profound cultural significance, including sacred sites and indigenous traditions. The park is home to the majestic Mount Khangchendzonga, the third-highest peak in the world.
18. d The Preah Vihear temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located on the border between Thailand and Cambodia, is the subject of a long-running territorial dispute between the two nations, with the International Court of Justice having ruled in favor of Cambodian sovereignty over the site and its surrounding land. Despite the ICJ's rulings in 1962 and reaffirming them in 2013, Thailand disputes the decision, leading to periods of heightened tension, border skirmishes, and even deadly clashes.
19. b The DRDO, in collaboration with the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), conducted the rail-based Agni-Prime test, integrating operational planning and launch capabilities under a realistic scenario.
20. d Rail-based platforms offer cost-efficiency, mobility, and survivability, allowing missiles to be hidden in tunnels and deployed across India's extensive railway network.
21. a India's NFU policy means nuclear weapons are used only in retaliation, making mobile launch platforms critical for assured second-strike capability.

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| <p>22. d Mobile launch platforms include submarines (SLBMs), aircraft, and ground-based road or rail systems, enhancing survivability against preemptive strikes.</p> <p>23. c The Agni-Prime (Agni-P) is an Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile designed to cover a range up to 2000 km, enhancing India's second-strike capability with rail-based mobility.</p> <p>24. a The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully test-fired the Agni-Prime (Agni-P) missile from a rail-based mobile launcher. This launch has placed India among a select group of nations - Russia, the US, China, and possibly North Korea - with the capability to launch long-range ballistic missiles from railway platforms using canisterised launch systems.</p> <p>25. a The 21st edition of the India-US joint military exercise Yudh Abhyas 2025 concluded at Fort Wainwright and the Yukon Training Area in Alaska, marking the successful completion of two weeks of intensive joint training between the Indian Army and the US Army.</p> | <p>26. b Cope India is an India-US Air Force exercise aimed at improving interoperability, combat readiness, and coordination between fighter aircraft. Yudh Abhyas is Army-to-Army, Vajra Prahar is Army-to-Army special forces, and Malabar is primarily a naval exercise.</p> <p>27. a Exercise Vajra Prahar 2024 concluded, with the 15th edition of the joint India-U.S. Special Forces exercise ending on November 23, 2024. The exercise took place from November 2 to November 22, 2024, at the Orchard Combat Training Centre in Idaho, USA. Vajra Prahar is an annual joint exercise between Indian and US special forces, focusing on counter-terrorism, tactical operations, and high-altitude warfare.</p> <p>28. b The Malabar Naval Exercise is a multilateral maritime exercise focusing on maritime security, anti-submarine warfare, and coordination. Initially India-US, it now includes Japan and Australia, forming part of the Quad naval collaboration.</p> |
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