

ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS

GENERAL STUDIES (P) TEST – 4136 (2024)

Q 1.D

- **The Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968** empowers the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** to recognise political parties and allot symbols. The Paragraph 15 of the Order allows ECI to decide disputes among rival groups or factions of a recognised political party staking claim to its name and symbol. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Paragraph 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968** says the **ECI is the only authority to decide issues** over claims of Party symbol in case of split. Even the Supreme Court in **Sadiq Ali and another vs. ECI case (1971)** had upheld its validity. However, in case of splits in registered but unrecognised parties, the ECI usually advises the warring factions to resolve their differences internally or to approach the court. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 2.C

- **Ram Prasad Bismil**
 - **Context:** The 126th birth anniversary of Ram Prasad Bismil, a revered symbol of patriotism and Hindu-Muslim unity, was commemorated recently
 - He joined the Arya Samaj and became a prolific writer and poet.
 - He wrote patriotic verses in Hindi and Urdu under pen names like 'Agyat', 'Ram', and the one that is most known 'Bismil'.
 - He wrote the poem Mera Janm (My Birth), venting out his anger over the death sentence handed out to Arya Samaj missionary Bhai Parmanand.
 - **The Mainpuri Conspiracy, 1918**
 - ✓ Bismil **started a revolutionary organization called Matrivedi** (The Altar of the Motherland) and joined forces with fellow revolutionary Genda Lal Dixit. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ Dixit was well-connected with the dacoits of the state and wanted to utilize them in the armed struggle against the British.
 - ✓ In 1918, Bismil wrote the **famous poem, Mainpuri ki Pratigya**. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - ✓ In order to collect funds for their parties, he carried out at least 3 instances of looting at government offices in the Mainpuri district.
 - **Hindustan Republican Association, 1923**
 - ✓ **Ashfaqullah Khan and Bismil found the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)** in 1923. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ Aim: Winning freedom for the country through an armed revolution.
 - ✓ HRA published a manifesto titled "The Revolutionary" in 1925.
 - ✓ It was renamed the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army (HSRA), in 1928.
 - **Kakori Conspiracy, 1925**
 - ✓ **In August 1925**, an armed robbery took place on board the Kakori Express which was going from Shahjahanpur to Lucknow. It was carrying money that had been collected at various railway stations and was to be deposited in Lucknow.
 - ✓ In this planned robbery, carried out to fund the activities of the HRA, Bismil, Khan and over 10 other revolutionaries stopped the train and fled with the cash they found in it.
 - ✓ Within a month of the robbery, many members of the HRA were arrested.
 - ✓ In September 1926, Bismil was arrested. After 18 month's trial, Bismil was sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out on December 19, 1927.
 - ✓ **Ghulam Mita Do** was his famous poem that denotes he was not willing to negotiate or beg for his country's freedom, if the British did not accede, he was willing to take it by force.

Q 3.B

- **Myristica swamps**
 - **Context:** Climate change and human intervention threaten the Myristica swamps of Kerala.
 - Myristica swamps **are freshwater swamps** predominated by members of the Myristicaceae family.
 - The evergreen trees have evolved to live in the waterlogged conditions of the swamps.
 - They have two types of roots, **knee roots** (pneumatophores) and **stilt roots**.
 - They have evolved over millions of years and are comprised of old-growth trees.
 - **Location:** In India, these unique habitats **occur in the Western Ghats** and a smaller distribution exists in the **Andaman and Nicobar Islands**. **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
 - Myristica swamps are seen next to rivers and help in retaining water and act as a sponge, ensuring perennial water availability.
 - Important Species: *Gymnocranthera canarica* and *Myristica fatua* — belonging to the primitive Myristicaceae family.

Q 4.B

- **Zardosi Embroidery**
 - **Context:** Zardosi artisans made two lakh car hangers designed like a crown for King Charles III's coronation.
 - Zardozi comes from two Persian words - zar or zarin meaning 'gold', and dozi meaning 'sewing'.
 - It is a type of heavy and elaborate metal embroidery on a silk, satin, or velvet fabric base.
 - Designs are often created using gold and silver threads and can incorporate pearls, beads, and precious stones.
 - **Other names**
 - ✓ Zardozi: Bhopal, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Uttar Pradesh (Lucknow). **Hence pair 1 is correctly matched.**
 - ✓ Kamdani or Badla: Lucknow. **Hence pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
 - ✓ Dank and gotta-patti: Rajasthan. **Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**
 - ✓ Tilla: Jammu & Kashmir and parts of western India. **Hence pair 4 is not correctly matched.**
 - Historically, it was used to embellish the attire of the royals. It is found in Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, Turkey, Central Asia, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.
 - Main Centers in India: Lucknow, Farrukhabad, Chennai, Bhopal, etc.
 - Zardosi embroidery has been in existence in India since the time of the Rig Veda. The Delhi Sultanate era further boosted this craft. It attained its summit in the 17th century, under the patronage of Mughal Emperor Akbar.
 - In 2013, the Geographical Indication Registry (GIR) accorded Geographical Indication (GI) registration to the Lucknow Zardozi.

Q 5.B

- **Finance Commission**
 - **Article 280(1)** provides that the President shall at the expiration of every fifth year or at such earlier time as the President considers necessary by order constitute a Finance Commission.
 - ✓ **It also provides that the commission shall consist of a Chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President. Hence statement 1 correct.**
 - **Article 280(2)** provides power to the **Parliament to determine the qualifications** which shall be requisite for appointment as members of the Commission and the manner in which they shall be selected. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **Article 280(3)** provided that it shall be duty of commission to make certain recommendations to the president. They include
 - ✓ the distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes
 - ✓ the principles which should govern the grants- in-aid of the revenues of the States
 - ✓ **the measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Municipalities and panchayats in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State. Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 6.A

- **Hiroshima AI Process (HAP)**
 - **Context:** The annual Group of Seven (G7) Summit, hosted by Japan, took place in Hiroshima and initiated the Hiroshima AI process (HAP)
 - HAP is **an effort by G7 countries to determine a way forward to regulate artificial intelligence (AI)**. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

- Hiroshima AI process (HAP) made a plan for ministers from the respective countries to meet by the end of the year to establish common rules for promoting trustworthy AI.
- HAP will work in cooperation with the OECD and Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) and will discuss generative AI by the end of this year.
- **Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)**
 - It is an international initiative to support responsible and human-centric development and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
 - Aim: To bridge the gap between theory and practice on AI by supporting cutting-edge research and applied activities on AI-related priorities.
 - It is built around a shared commitment to the OECD Recommendation on Artificial Intelligence.
 - GPAI is **a group of 25 member countries. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - India joined the group as **a founding member** in 2020.
 - It brings together engaged minds and experts from science, industry, civil society, governments, international organizations, and academia to foster international cooperation.
- **G7**
 - It is an intergovernmental economic group consisting of 7 largest IMF-advanced economies such as Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the US.
 - EU is also represented within the G7 as an invitee.
 - These countries are the 7 major advanced economies as reported by the IMF.
 - Formerly called G8 with Russia in it, but due to the Crimean crisis, Russia was ejected from the group.
 - It has no binding impact on policy, and all decisions and commitments made at G7 meetings need to be ratified independently by governing bodies of member states.
 - India's membership: India is **not a member of G7.**

Q 7.C

- Centrally Sponsored Schemes are different from Central Sector Schemes in the sense that Central Sector Schemes are implemented by the Center directly while Centrally Sponsored Schemes are implemented by states.
- CSS are extended by the Union Government to States under Article 282 of the Constitution. The main cover items are listed in the state's list. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Under Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) a certain percentage of the funding is borne by the States in the ratio of 50:50, 70:30, 75:25, or 90:10 and the implementation is by the State Governments.
- Centrally Sponsored Schemes are formulated in subjects from the State List to encourage States to prioritize in areas that require more attention. Funds are routed either through consolidated funds of States or are transferred directly to State/ District Level Autonomous Bodies/Implementing Agencies.
- As per the Baijal Committee Report, April 1987, CSS have been defined as the schemes which are funded directly by Central Ministries/Departments and implemented by States or their agencies, irrespective of their pattern of financing, unless they fall under the Centre's sphere of responsibility i.e., the Union List.
- Conceptually both CSS and Additional Central Assistance (ACA) Schemes have been passed by the Central Government to the State governments. The difference between the two has arisen because of the historical evolution and the way these are being budgeted and controlled and the release of funds takes place. **In the case of CSS, the budgets are allocated under the ministries concerned themselves, and the entire process of release is also done by them. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- In 2014, the central government approved the Planning Commission's proposal to merge the 147 Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and bring it down to 66 across various sectors for effective implementation and monitoring of the 12th Five-Year Plan. The merger proposal was in line with the recommendations of the Chaturvedi committee, which had suggested bringing down CSS to avoid overlap. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - In BE 2014-2015 after the restructuring of centrally-sponsored schemes (CSSs), existing CSSs have been restructured and plan schemes under which central assistance is provided to states/UTs have been classified as central assistance to state/UT Plans. Central assistance to states/UTs under Plan expenditure is reflective of this.

Q 8.B

- The **Election Commission registers political parties for the purpose of elections and grants them recognition as national or state parties on the basis of their poll performance.** The other parties are simply declared as registered-unrecognized parties. The recognition granted by the Commission to the parties determines their right to certain privileges like allocation of the party symbols, provision of time for political broadcasts on the state-owned television and radio stations and access to electoral rolls.

- Every national party is allotted a symbol exclusively reserved for its use throughout the country. Similarly, every state party is allotted a symbol exclusively reserved for its use in the state or states in which it is so recognized. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - A registered-unrecognized party, on the other hand, can select a symbol from a list of free symbols. In other words, the Commission specifies certain symbols as ‘reserved symbols’ which are meant for the candidates set up by the recognized parties and others as ‘free symbols’ which are meant for other candidates.

The number of recognised parties keeps on changing on the basis of their performance in the general elections. Hence statement 1 is correct.

Recognised National Parties and State Parties

General Elections (Year)	Number of National Parties	Number of State Parties
First (1952)	14	39
Second (1957)	4	11
Third (1962)	6	11
Fourth (1967)	7	14
Fifth (1971)	8	17
Sixth (1977)	5	15
Seventh (1980)	6	19
Eighth (1984)	7	19

- Hence statement 2 is not correct.

Q 9.B

- Why in the news?
 - The Supreme Court directed lower courts to decide pending default bail applications without relying on its own judgment of the Ritu Chhabaria case.
 - **What is default bail?**
 - ✓ **Default bail:** The right to statutory bail, often known as default bail or compulsive bail, is granted because of the default of the investigating agency in not completing the investigation within the specified time. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ **CrPC:** Under Section 167(2) of CrPC, a Magistrate can order an accused person to be detained in the custody of the police for 15 days. Beyond 15 days, the Magistrate can authorize the detention of the accused person in judicial custody (jail) if necessary. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ **The maximum period of detention:** However, the accused cannot be detained for more than
 - **90 days** (when an authority is investigating an offense punishable with death, life imprisonment, or imprisonment for at least 10 years). **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
 - **60 days** (when the authority is investigating any other offense)
 - ✓ **Right, to bail:** After the period of 90/60 days, if the investigation has not been completed and the charge sheet has not been filed, the accused person has the right to be released on bail.
 - ✓ **Judicial custody:** the default bail prevents the misuse of judicial custody by the investigation agency.
 - ✓ **Article 21:** The court in multiple judgments has held that the default bail flows from the Article 21 of the Constitution which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty.

Q 10.C

- There have been multiple communist governments throughout the World including in Russia, China, Vietnam, etc. Yet, the **first communist ministry ever to come to office through “democratic elections”**, was the ministry headed by E.M.S. Namboodiripad in Kerala (India) in 1957. **Hence Statement I is correct.**
- There were other national parties as well before 1977 and during 1977 elections like Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Bhartiya Jan Sangh (1971), Janata Party (1977), Indian National Congress (O), etc. The 1977 elections saw rise of opposition political parties such as the Congress (O), Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Bharatiya Lok Dal as well as defectors from the Indian National Congress joined to form the Janata party, which won a sweeping majority in the Indian Parliament. **Hence, Statement II is not correct.**

Q 11.C

- The original Constitution did not contain provisions with respect to tribunals. The 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 added a new Part XIV-A to the Constitution. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- This part is entitled 'Tribunals' and consists of only two Articles—Article 323 A dealing with administrative tribunals and Article 323 B dealing with tribunals for other matters. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

Q 12.B

- **The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 :**
 - The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 deals with sexual offences against persons **below 18 years of age**, who are deemed as children. Hence **statement 1 is not correct**.
 - The Act for the first time, defines “penetrative sexual assault”, “sexual assault” and “sexual harassment”.
 - The offence is considered graver if it is committed by a police officer, public servant, any member of the staff at a remand home, protection or observation home, jail, hospital or educational institution, or by a member of the armed or security forces.
- **The act empowers the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and State Commission for Protection of Child Rights for monitoring the implementation of the provisions of this Act in such manner as may be prescribed. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- In discharge of its duties NCPCR has been taking up the matter with regard to implementation of the POCSO Act in respect of following aspects:
 - **Designation of Special Courts. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - Appointment of Special Public Prosecutors.
 - Designation and implementation of modules for training of various stakeholders.
 - Steps taken for spreading the awareness on the provisions of the POCSO Act.
 - Setting up of child Welfare Committees (CWCs), District Child Protection Units (DCPUs) and Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU)s).

Q 13.D

- **Context: A feud over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region has simmered between Armenia and Azerbaijan for 30 years.**
- **What is Nagorno-Karabakh?**
- **Nagorno-Karabakh, known as Artsakh by Armenians, is a landlocked mountainous area in the South Caucasus. Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
- It was claimed by both Azerbaijan and Armenia after the fall of the Russian Empire in 1917 and has remained a point of tension ever since. The territory is internationally recognized as part of oil-rich Azerbaijan, but its inhabitants are predominantly ethnic Armenians and have their own government which has enjoyed close links to the government in neighboring Armenia but has not been officially recognized by it or other U.N. member states.
- Armenians, who are Christians, claim a long historical dominance in the area, dating back to several centuries before Christ. Azerbaijan, whose inhabitants are mostly Muslim, links its historical identity to the territory too. It accuses the Armenians of driving out Azeris who lived nearby in the 1990s. It wants to gain full control over the enclave, suggesting ethnic Armenians take Azeri passports or leave.



Q 14.C

- **Article 323 A provides for the adjudication or trial by administrative tribunals of disputes and complaints with respect to recruitment and conditions of service of persons appointed to public services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of any State or of any local or other authority within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India or of any corporation owned or controlled by the Government.**
- **Under Article 323 B, the Parliament and the state legislatures are authorized to provide for the establishment of tribunals for the adjudication of disputes relating to the following matters:**
 - Taxation
 - Foreign exchange, import, and export
 - Industrial and labor
 - Land reforms
 - Ceiling on urban property
 - Elections to Parliament and state legislatures
 - Foodstuffs
 - Rent and tenancy rights
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 15.D

- **Inter-State Council:**
 - It is a mechanism that was constituted **“to support Centre-State and Inter-State coordination and cooperation in India”**.
 - The Inter-State Council was **established under Article 263 of the Constitution**, which states that the President may constitute such a body if a need is felt for it.
 - The Council is basically meant to **serve as a forum for discussions** among various governments.
 - In 1988, **the Sarkaria Commission** suggested the Council should exist as a permanent body, and in 1990 it came into existence **through a Presidential Order. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Functions of the Council**
 - The main functions of the Council are **inquiring into and advising on disputes between states**, investigating and discussing subjects in which two states or states and the Union have a common interest, and **making recommendations for the better coordination of policy and action. Its recommendations are only advisory in nature, Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- **Composition of Council:**
 - **The Prime Minister is the chairman of the Council**, whose members include the Chief Ministers of all states and UTs with legislative assemblies, and Administrators of other UTs. Six Ministers of Cabinet rank in the Centre’s Council of Ministers, nominated by the Prime Minister, are also its members. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 16.B

- **Recent Context:** The Chief Election Commissioner had asked the Ministry of Law and Justice to limit the number of seats from which a candidate can contest to just one. In this regard, the **Supreme Court has refused to set aside a provision** (Section 33 (7)) of the Representation of People Act and has left it to the wisdom of the Parliament.
- **As per Section 33(7) of the RPA** (Representation of the People Act), **1951 (and not the Constitution), one candidate can contest from a maximum of two constituencies. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **More constituencies were allowed until 1996**, when the RPA was amended to set the cap at two constituencies. Thus, in the past, **candidates have contested from three Constituencies as well. For example: Shri Devi Lal**, deputy chief minister of Haryana contested from three Lok Sabha seats.
- According to the **Indian Constitution**, **an individual cannot simultaneously be a member of either House of Parliament (or a state legislature), or both Parliament and a state legislature, or represent more than one seat in a House.**
 - If a **candidate is elected from two constituencies**, he/she has to **resign one seat within 14 days** of the declaration of the result. If **failed to do so, both his seats shall fall vacant. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - Additionally: The members of state legislatures elected to the Lok Sabha must resign their seats within 14 days from the date of the publication of the result in the Gazette of India, failing which the seats in Lok Sabha shall automatically fall vacant.

Q 17.B

- **The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal was established as the first Tribunal in India in the year 1941.** The objective was to reduce the workload of courts, expedite adjudication of disputes, and build expertise on tax matters within the Tribunal. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The Finance Act, of 2017 reorganised the tribunal system by merging tribunals based on functional similarity. The number of Tribunals was reduced from 26 to 19. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It delegated powers to the central government to make Rules to provide for the qualifications, appointments, removal, and conditions of service for chairpersons and members of these tribunals. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 18.B

- The Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has taken steps to put in place Sevottam Compliant Citizen's Charter and Grievance Redress Mechanism. **The Sevottam framework was designed by DARPG in 2006 as an assessment improvement framework for public service delivery. Hence statements 1 and 2 are correct.**
- Sevottam literally is the combination of the Hindi words 'SEWA + UTTAM', meaning uttam sewa i.e. excellence in services. The Sevottam model was developed with expert support after studying international best practices, stakeholder consultations and field validity. It has basically three modules - Citizen Charter, Public Grievance Redress Mechanism and Service Delivery Capability.
- The Seven Steps to Sevottam are - Define all services which a department provides and identify clients; Set standards and norms for each service; Develop the capability to meet the set standards; Perform to achieve the standards; Monitor performance against the set standards; Evaluate the impact through an independent mechanism and Continuous improvement based on monitoring and evaluation results.
- As the State Governments provide a very large number of pro-poor services, **the Quality Management System Sevottam was piloted in four States** in four different sectors, namely – (i) Water supply and Sanitation, (ii) Women and Child Development for Integrated Child Development Services through Anganwadi Centres, (iii) Food Supplies and Consumer Affairs, and (iv) Public Health and Family Welfare through Primary Health Centres. These states are **Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 19.D

- **Deregistration means the cancellation of the registration of a political party.** In India, the **Election Commission (ECI) is not empowered to de-register parties. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **The ECI can only derecognize a political party.** Derecognition means the **withdrawal of the recognition** of a political party by the ECI. Such parties are known as **registered unrecognized parties.**
- **ECI derecognizes a political party if it violates either:**
 - the Indian **Constitution** or
 - the **Representation of the People Act, 1951.**
- Recently, the **ECI derecognized the TMC, NCP and CPI as national parties. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **The grounds for such derecognition (as per ECI) include:**
 - If the party has failed to secure at least 6% of the total votes polled in the general election to the Lok Sabha or the legislative assembly of the state concerned, and if it fails to have at least 4 MPs elected in the last LS polls (also, if it doesn't win 1 seat in the LS from the same state),
 - If it has failed to win at least 2% of the total seats in the LS from at least 3 states
 - If it has failed to secure 8% of the total valid votes polled in the state at a General Election to the LS from the state or to the State LA.
 - If the party has failed to submit its audited accounts to the ECI on time.
 - If the party has failed to hold its organizational elections on time.

Q 20.D

- The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has been given the responsibility to enforce the **provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002** by conducting investigation to trace the assets derived from proceeds of crime, to attach the property provisionally and to ensure prosecution of the offenders and confiscation of the property by the Special court.
- **Under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA),** ED has been given the responsibility to conduct investigations into suspected contraventions of foreign exchange laws and regulations, and to adjudicate and impose penalties on those convicted to have contravened the law.

- **Under The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 (FEOA)**, the ED is mandated to attach the properties of fugitive economic offenders who have escaped from India warranting arrest and provide for confiscating their properties to the Central Government.
- **Under the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974 (COFEPOSA)**, the ED is empowered to sponsor cases of preventive detention with regard to the contraventions of FEMA.
- **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 21.C

- **Dharma Vira Commission:** The Government of India appointed a National Police Commission in 1977, as it felt that “far-reaching changes have taken place in the country” since independence but “there has been no comprehensive review at the national level of the police system after independence despite radical changes in the political, social and economic situation in the country”.
- The Commission even drafted a model Police Bill which could be enacted. Its recommendations, however, received no more than a cosmetic treatment at the hands of the Government of India.
- Other Committees: Apart from the National Police Commission, several other bodies were constituted from time to time to go into the question of police reforms. These were:
 - **Gore Committee on Police Training (1971-73)**
 - **Ribeiro Committee on Police Reforms (1998)**
 - **Padmanabhaiah Committee on Police Reforms (2000)**
 - **Group of Ministers on National Security (2000-01)**
 - **Malimath Committee on Reforms of Criminal Justice System (2001-3)**
- **The Gore Committee** was constituted to review the state of police training in the country and suggest improvements. The Ribeiro Committee was set up by the Supreme Court while it was deliberating over the Public Interest Litigation filed for police reforms; the Court wanted the Committee to examine if the National Police Commission’s recommendations, which formed the core of the PIL, were still relevant or that any modifications were called for.
- **The Padmanabhaiah Committee** examined the requirements of policing in the new millennium. The Group of Ministers examined the reports of various Committees which were set up in the wake of Pakistan’s aggression in Kargil, including the one dealing with internal security, and suggested comprehensive measures to strengthen the internal and external security apparatus. The Malimath Committee made far-reaching recommendations to reform the criminal justice system.
- **Hence, 1, 2, and 3 are related to police reforms.**
- **Richard Strachey Commission of 1880** was created to develop a general strategy and principles to deal with famines. It was the first Famine commission and was constituted during the period of Lord Lytton.
- **Hence, 4 is not related to police reforms.**
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 22.B

- **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989:** The main objectives of the act includes:
 - To prevent the commission of offences of atrocities against the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes
 - **To provide for Special Courts and the Exclusive Special Courts for the trial of such offences. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - **To provide relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **Punishment for neglect of duties by Public servant:**
 - Whoever, being a public servant **but not being a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe**, wilfully neglects his duties required to be performed by him under this Act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term minimum of six months but which may extend to one year. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - **The duties of public servant referred in the act include:**
 - ✓ To read out to an informant the information given orally, and reduced to writing by the officer in charge of the police station, before taking the signature of the informant;
 - ✓ To record the statement of the victims or witnesses;
 - ✓ To conduct the investigation and file charge sheet in the Special Court or the Exclusive Special Court within a period of sixty days.

- Provided that the charges in this regard against the public servant shall be booked on the **recommendation of an administrative enquiry.**
- The cognizance in respect of any neglect of duty referred to above duties by a public servant(**be it member of a scheduled caste or a scheduled tribe**) shall be taken by the Special Court or the Exclusive Special Court and shall give **direction for penal proceedings against such public servant.**

Q 23.B

- In order to **curb black money** and other malpractices, the **electoral bond scheme** was introduced in **2017**. It will **allow donors to pay political parties using banks as intermediaries.**
- It is a **banking instrument** resembling **promissory notes. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Although called bonds, these do **not bear any interest.** They can be **given directly to the political party of choice**, which can then encash them. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- The electoral bonds are a **bearer's instrument** and do **not carry the name of the payee.** These are available for purchase by any citizen of India. These can be bought for any value, in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh, or Rs 1 crore. Their purchase is **anonymous**, and they are **valid for 15 days from the date of issue.**
- The electoral bonds can **only be given to a registered political party that has secured at least 1% of the vote in the last Lok Sabha or state assembly elections (not all parties).** Hence, **statement 1 is not correct.**
- As per a report by the **SBI**, for **national parties**, there was a **743% increase in donations** from electoral bonds between FY 2017–18 and FY 2021–22, while for corporate donations, this increase is only 48%. In this regard, the total donations declared by the BJP are more than three times the total donations declared by all other national parties, the report said.

Q 24.B

- **District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committees (DISHA), have been constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development** at district levels under the Chairpersonship of concerned Member of Parliament to monitor proper implementation of key Central Schemes/ Programmes and to ensure better coordination at all levels of elected representatives for efficient and time-bound development of districts. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Similarly, State Development Coordination and Monitoring Committees have also been constituted under the chairpersonship of the concerned Chief Minister/Administrator to attend to the matters which need to be resolved at the highest level in the State/UT.
- DISHA is an important step towards participatory governance with the mantra of ‘Minimum Government, Maximum Governance’ and to attain the global agenda for 2030 including SDGs based on inclusiveness and universality- ‘Leave No One Behind’.
- **The main objective of DISHA is to ensure the quality of expenditure - optimization of public funds; monitor programme implementation; promote synergy and convergence** between different layers of governance and review intra- State disparities for greater time-bound impact. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The **Chairperson of the DISHA should be a Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)** elected from the district, nominated by the Ministry of Rural Development. The other Members of Parliament (Lok Sabha) representing the district should be designated as Co-Chairpersons. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- The Member Secretary is the District Collector/Deputy Commissioner/ the CEO Zilla Parishad or a Senior ADM to be the Member Secretary for a particular meeting to ensure that meetings of the DISHA are held as scheduled.
- The other Members of the Committee are members of the State Legislative Assembly elected from the district, one representative of the State, all Mayors/ Chairpersons of Municipalities including one woman and five elected heads of Gram Panchayat including two women, Chairperson and CEO of the Zilla Panchayat and Chairpersons of block panchayat, Head of the Autonomous District Council in districts having Schedule VI Areas and Project Director of DRDA.
- Moreover, one member from a reputed NGO, SC, ST and women, lead bank officer of the district, senior superintendent of the postal department and District level nodal functionaries of all programmes that will be under the purview of Disha.

Q 25.C

- **Fuel cell AIP Vs Stirling AIP**
 - **Context:** The German shipbuilders signed an agreement with India’s Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) to cooperate in building 6 state-of-the-art submarines for the Indian Navy.

- **Conventional diesel-electric submarines:** They can operate underwater silently for up to 48 hours.
- **AIP-driven submarines:** They remain underwater for up to 2 weeks before they must surface for battery charging.
- **Fuel cell AIP**
 - ✓ Fuel cell-based AIP generates power through the reverse electrolysis of oxygen and hydrogen. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ This process does not need air but requires the storage of highly inflammable hydrogen on board.
 - ✓ Fuel cell AIP systems are associated with German submarines of Class 212A and Class 214 and will power the Project 75-I submarines too.
 - ✓ Other fuel cell AIPs are being developed in other countries, such as Russia (alkaline fuel cells) and India (phosphoric-acid fuel cells).
 - ✓ Class 212A submarines are 3 times larger than previous German Navy Class 206 submarines.
 - ✓ In addition, fuel cell-based AIP systems require meticulous crew training and dedicated infrastructure.
 - ✓ A key problem in fuel cell development was to master hydrogen storage.
- **Stirling AIP**
 - ✓ The 2nd type of AIP, based on the Stirling engine, is the first modern combat-ready system.
 - ✓ It is a simple system that uses diesel fuel (typical for the submarine) and liquid oxygen, discharging the plant overboard at small and medium depths. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ Low-power Stirling engines are much quieter than the main diesel generators of submarines, providing considerable tactical gains.
 - ✓ It took less than 15 years for the creation of this system from concept to implementation.
 - ✓ Although this system lacks stealth, it has proved relatively good in small areas, shallow depths, complex hydrology, and heavy traffic, which require a submarine's acoustic signature to be minimized.
 - ✓ The Stirling engine is compact enough for small submarines.

Q 26.A

- **Submersible vs Submarine**
- **Context:** The Titan, one of the crewed submersibles operated by OceanGate, went missing in the area of the Titanic wreck in the North Atlantic.
 - **Titan:** Titan is the only crewed submersible in the world that can take 5 people as deep as 4,000 meters enabling it to reach almost 50% of the world's oceans. It is made of carbon fiber and titanium. The submersible was part of an 8-day journey conducted by OceanGate Expeditions to reach the Titanic wreck site.
 - **Submersible**
 - ✓ A submersible is a **small boat or other craft, designed especially for research and exploration. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ It **does not function as an autonomous craft** and needs a mother ship that can launch and recover it.
 - ✓ The submersibles have a top speed of 3 knots.
 - ✓ It **can't stay underwater for as long** compared to submarines.
 - ✓ Since **there is no GPS underwater**, the submersible is only guided by text messages from the surface ship. The pilot steers the sub using a video game controller but if that fails, a hard-wired system can control the propellers. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **Submarines**
 - ✓ A submarine is a **watercraft capable of independent operation underwater.** It refers to any **naval vessel that is capable of propelling itself beneath the water as well as on the water's surface.**
 - ✓ When the submarine is to dive, water is filled in water tanks and it is made heavier.
 - ✓ Since the average density of a submarine becomes greater than the density of seawater, it sinks.
 - ✓ To make the submarine rise to the surface of the water, water tanks are emptied.

Q 27.A

- **Da Vinci glow**
 - **Context:** The experts predicted that a 'da Vinci glow' would be visible around the new moon on May 19, 2023.
 - The da Vinci glow is a phenomenon in which the crescent moon is on the horizon, but the **outline of a full moon is visible. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

- The phenomenon **usually happens close to sunset. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- On some days, this happens after the sun sets, and the sky is dark but not completely dark.
- This glow is also called earthshine since it occurs due to light reflected from the earth and not the sun.
- The earthshine is the sunlight first reflected by the earth's surface, and then it's reflected by the moon before it reaches our eyes.
- Since it is reflected twice, it is dimmer than the visible part of the moon and thus appears as a faint glow, called the da Vinci glow. Earth's clouds are the primary source of this earthshine.
- According to NASA, earthshine makes night on the moon 50 times brighter than a full-moon night on the Earth.
- Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) was the first person to describe the phenomenon in the 16th century and it was named after him. Before da Vinci's theory, the 'ashen glow' of the moon was often called the 'old moon in the new moon's arms'.

Q 28.C

- **Recent Context-**Delegates of the G20 summit visited Hemis and Thiksey Monasteries.
- **Hemis Monastery is the largest monastic institution in Ladakh. It is situated on the western banks of the Indus River. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **It belongs to the Dragon Order of Mahayana Buddhism (or the Drupka Lineage). Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- Hemis has more than 200 branch monasteries in the Himalayas.
- The monastery was first established in the 11th century and later re-established in the 17th century by the Ladakhi King Sengge Namgyal.
- **It is also famous for its 2-day religious ceremony known as the Hemis Festival. This festival is celebrated in honour of Padmasambhava which is observed here in Hemis Monastery. It is the biggest and very richly endowed monastery. Hence statement 3 is correct.**



Q 29.D

- On September 22, 2006, the Supreme Court passed a judgment in a Writ Petition filed by former DGP Prakash Singh and others on several issues concerning police reforms.
- The main directions issued by the Supreme Court are:
 - **Constitute a State Security Commission on any of the models recommended by the National Human Right Commission, the Ribeiro Committee or the Sorabjee Committee.**
 - Select the DGP of the state from amongst three senior-most officers of the department impaneled for promotion to that rank by the UPSC and once selected, provide him a minimum tenure of at least two years irrespective of his date of superannuation.
 - Prescribe a minimum tenure of two years to the police officers on operational duties.
 - **Separate investigating police from law & order police, starting with towns/urban areas having a population of ten lakhs or more, and gradually extending to smaller towns/urban areas also.**
 - **Set up a Police Establishment Board at the state level for inter alia deciding all transfers, postings, promotions and other service-related matters of officers of and below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police.**
 - **Constitute Police Complaints Authorities at the state and district level for looking into complaints against police officers.**
 - The Supreme Court also directed the central government to set up a National Security Commission at the Union Level to prepare a panel for being placed before the appropriate Appointing Authority, for the selection and placement of chiefs of the Central Police Organisations (CPOs), who should also be

given a minimum tenure of two years, with additional mandate to review from time to time measures to upgrade the effectiveness of these forces, improve the service conditions of its personnel, ensure that there is proper coordination between them and that the forces are generally utilized for the purposes they were raised and make recommendations in that behalf.

- **Therefore, all four form a part of the judgement.**
- In July 2018, the Supreme Court clarified that:
 - All states shall send their proposals in anticipation of the vacancies to the UPSC, well in time at least three months prior to the date of retirement of the incumbent on the post of Director General of Police.
 - The state shall immediately appoint one of the persons from the panel prepared by the UPSC.
 - None of the states shall ever conceive of the idea of appointing any person on the post of DGP on acting basis for there is no concept of acting Director General of Police.
- **Hence, option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 30.A

- In India, **general elections** are held on the basis of the **Universal Adult Franchise**. Herein, all adult citizens of India are allowed to participate. E.g., **Lok Sabha Elections or State Assembly elections**. For such general elections, the **First Past the Post system** is followed. **Hence Statement II is correct.**
- In this kind of voting system, the **candidate with the most votes in a constituency is declared elected. Hence Statement I is correct.**
- Further, since India follows the **FPTP system**, the **candidate securing the most votes in a general election is declared elected. Hence, Statement II is the correct explanation of Statement I.**

Q 31.C

- **Global Slavery Index 2023**
 - **Context:** G20 countries including India are fuelling modern slavery, says a new report. The Global Slavery Index 2023 shows the world's 20 richest countries account for more than half the estimated 50 million people living in modern slavery.
 - Among the G20 nations, India tops the list with 11 million people working as forced laborers, followed by China, Russia, Indonesia, Turkey, and the U.S.
 - **The Index** is published by the Australia-based human Rights Group **Walk Free Foundation. Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
 - It includes data on **three key variables:**
 - ✓ Prevalence of modern slavery in each country
 - ✓ Vulnerability
 - ✓ Government responses to modern slavery
 - **NOTE:** Modern slavery refers to situations of exploitation that a person cannot leave because of threats, violence, coercion, and abuse of power or deception.

Q 32.D

- **State List - 7th Schedule**
 - **Entry 32 - Corporation, other than those specified in List I, and universities; unincorporated trading, literary, scientific, religious, and other societies, and associations; co-operative societies. Hence, statement II is correct.**
- The 97th Amendment Act was challenged in several High Courts across the country. The Gujarat High Court was pleased to rule that the aforementioned Act was unconstitutional in *Rajendra N. Shah v. Union of India*. The petitioner in the aforementioned case, among other things, contested the constitutionality of the 97th Amendment because 'Co-operative Societies' are solely a matter for state legislatures to pass laws. In other words, only the State Legislature has the power to pass legislation governing Cooperative societies. The petitioner based his argument on Entry 32 in List II of Schedule VII.
- With Parliament having control over Multi-State Co-operative Societies and State legislatures responsible for enacting laws governing "other Co-operative Societies," the scheme governing Multi-State Co-operative Societies differs from the scheme governing "Other Co-operative Societies." Thus in the case of multi-state cooperatives (with aims and objectives not confined to one state), the Centre or the Union can make laws. **Hence Statement I is not correct.**
- There is no question, in the Court's opinion, that Multi-State Co-operative Societies would not be covered by Article 246(3) or Entry 32 List 2 of the 7th Schedule which is specific to only Co-operative Societies and not Multi-State Co-operative Societies.

Q 33.A

- **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA):**
 - MGNREGA is one of the largest work guarantee programmes in the world launched in 2005 by the **Ministry of Rural Development**.
 - The primary objective of MGNREGS is to provide **100 days of unskilled work** per year for **every rural household** that wants it, covering **all districts in the country except those with a 100% urban population**. Hence statement 1 is correct and statement 2 is not correct.
- **Demand-Driven Scheme:**
 - **If work is not provided within 15 days from when it is demanded, the worker has to be given a daily unemployment allowance. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - Additionally, the wages of unskilled workers also have to be paid within 15 days and in case of a delay, the Centre has to compensate them.
 - Wages must be paid according to the statutory minimum wages specified for agricultural labourers in the state under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948.
 - At least one-third of beneficiaries have to be women.
 - The act mandates Gram sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them.

Q 34.D

- The Supreme Court stayed the Election Commission's order of revoking the star campaigner status of a person in the recently concluded Madhya Pradesh state assembly elections, observing the poll body "has no power" to decide who is a star campaigner. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- A recognized political party can have forty (40) star campaigners and an unrecognized (but registered) political party can have 20. As per the revised guidelines due to the pandemic, the maximum limit on the number of star campaigners for recognized National/State political parties shall be **30 in place of 40**, and for unrecognized registered political parties it shall be **15 in place of 20 during the period of the pandemic**.
- The list of the star campaigners has to be **communicated to the Chief Electoral Officer and Election Commission** within a week from the date of notification of an election. As per the revised guidelines due to the pandemic, the period of submission of the list of star campaigners is **extended from 7 days to 10 days from the date of notification**. Political parties, which have already submitted a list of star campaigners shall resubmit a revised list within the stipulated period. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 35.D

- **Forest Rights Act, 2006 :**
 - The act recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in Forest land in forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD) who have been residing in such forests for generations.
 - It seeks to rectify colonial injustice to the FDST and OTFD who are integral to the very survival and sustainability of the forest ecosystem.
- The act identifies four types of rights:
 - **Title rights**
 - ✓ It gives recognised scheduled tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers the **right to ownership to land** farmed by tribals or forest dwellers subject to a **maximum of 4 hectares**. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - ✓ Ownership is only for land that is actually being cultivated by the concerned family and no new lands will be granted.
 - **Use rights:**
 - ✓ The rights of the dwellers extend to extracting Minor Forest Produce, grazing areas, to pastoralist routes, etc.
 - **Relief and development rights:**
 - ✓ The rehabilitation rights in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement and to provision of basic amenities. The rights subject to restrictions for forest protection.
 - **Forest management rights:**
 - ✓ It includes the right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.
- **Who can claim these Rights?**
 - Members or community of the Scheduled Tribes who primarily reside in and who depend on the forests or forest lands for bona fide livelihood needs.

- It can also be claimed by any member or community who has for at least three generations (75 years) prior to the 13th day of December, 2005 primarily resided in forests land for bona fide livelihood needs. Hence statement 2 is not correct.
- The **Gram Sabha (not Gram Panchayat)** is the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of Individual Forest Rights (IFR) or Community Forest Rights (CFR) or both that may be given to forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD). **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - The Gram Panchayat consists of ward members and Sarpanch.
 - The Gram Sabha consists of every person whose name is registered in the voter list of the village.
 - The members of the Gram Panchayat are directly elected by the members of the Gram Sabha.
 - The members of Gram Sabha are not elected.

Q 36.B

- Recently, Election Commission (EC) proposed to permit Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to cast their votes from overseas through postal ballots.
- EC informed the government that it is ready to extend the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) to voters abroad for elections in 2021 in Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry.
- To extend ETPBS to overseas voters, the government only needs to amend the Conduct of Election Rules 1961. It doesn't require Parliament's nod.
- **Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System**
 - It is a type of voting whereby Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Papers (ETPB) are distributed to electors and returned by post.
 - **Under ETPBS, the postal ballot is dispatched electronically and returned via ordinary mail and it is currently only available to service voters like**
 - ✓ members of the Armed Forces
 - ✓ people employed by the government outside India
 - ✓ people under preventive detention etc.
- **The government has not yet given nod to this proposal by Election Commission.**
- **But the procedure of voting if granted approval is as follows.**
 - Any NRI interested in voting through the postal ballot will have to inform the Returning Officer (RO) not later than five days after the notification of the election.
 - On receiving such information, the RO will dispatch the ballot paper electronically.
 - NRI voters will mark their preference on the printout and send it back along with a declaration attested by an officer appointed by the diplomatic or consular representative of India in the country where the NRI is resident.
- NRIs or an Overseas Elector is "a person who is a citizen of India, absent from the country owing to employment, education etc, has not acquired citizenship of any other country and are otherwise eligible to be registered as a voter in the address mentioned in your passport.
- According to estimates of the Ministry of External Affairs, there are about 3.10 crore NRIs living in different countries across the world. In the last Lok Sabha elections, roughly 25,000 of them flew to India to vote.
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 37.C

- **Context:** The Supreme Court has ruled that an accused person's fundamental right (under Article 21) to receive default bail cannot be violated by probe agencies by filing supplementary charge sheets in cases where the investigation is yet to be completed. The violation of such a right directly attracts consideration under Article 32 of the Constitution.
- Bail is the release of an accused person from custody, on the undertaking that they will appear in court for their trial.
- **Legal Basis-**Bail in India is governed by the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), which provides for the granting of bail by police and courts.
- **Statutory Bail-**Statutory bail is a right to bail that accrues when police fail to complete the investigation within a specified period in respect of a person in judicial custody. It is enshrined in the CrPC and is available for most offences. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The time limit for statutory bail-60 days to complete the investigation and file a final report (in most cases). 90- or 180-day limit for some cases.

- **Regular Bail-Regular bail is granted to an accused person who is in custody and is usually granted on the basis of surety or personal bond. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Anticipatory Bail-** Anticipatory bail is granted before arrest and is meant to protect an accused person from arrest.
- **Conditions for Bail-** Bail may be granted with conditions, such as surrendering of passport, attending court hearings regularly, not contacting witnesses, etc.
- **Eligibility-** Bail eligibility depends on several factors, including the nature of the crime, severity of the offence, likelihood of fleeing from justice, past criminal record, and the strength of evidence against the accused.

Q 38.D

- The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC) was set up by a resolution of the Government of India in 2000. The 11-member Commission was headed by M.N. Venkatachaliah, the former Chief Justice of India. It submitted its report in 2002. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Even before the appointment of this Commission in 2000, certain attempts were already made to review the working of the Constitution. The commission itself summarized the previous attempts such as a total of eighty-five amendments till the formation of the commission, the living and organic nature of the constitution, various commissions to review the center-state relations, etc. A document titled 'A Fresh Look at Our Constitution - Some Suggestions' surfaced at the time of the 1975 All India Congress committee session and was circulated but, after the recommendations contained in it had drawn stringent criticism from diverse quarters, it was not pursued. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- According to the terms of reference, the commission was required to examine, in the light of the experience of the past fifty years, as to how far the existing provisions of the Constitution are capable of responding to the needs of an efficient, smooth and effective system of governance and socio-economic development of modern India and to recommend changes, if any. **The terms of reference clearly specified that the commission should recommend changes that are required to be made in the Constitution within the framework of parliamentary democracy and without interfering with the 'basic structure' or 'basic features' of the Constitution.**

Q 39.B

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India lists the official languages of India. Although there are hundreds of languages spoken across the country, the eighth schedule recognizes a total of 22 languages as the official languages. While 14 of these languages were included in the Constitution at first, the rest of the languages were added to the Constitution through subsequent amendments.
- **Sindhi was added by the 21st Amendment Act of 1967; Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were added by the 71st Amendment Act of 1992; and Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali were added by the 92nd Amendment Act of 2003. 42nd Amendment did not add any new official language. Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 40.C

- **Chiral Bose-liquid State**
- **Context:** Recent research shows that the chiral bose-liquid state may be an entirely new state of matter.
 - **States of matter:** There are 3 classical states of matter in day-to-day life- solid, liquid, and gas. But, exotic or quantum states of matter, such as **plasma, time crystals, and Bose-Einstein condensate** also exist at the atomic scale, and at extremely low temperatures approaching absolute zero.
 - **Chiral Bose-liquid state:**
 - ✓ The chiral Bose-liquid state is a new phase discovered by physicists **in a frustrated quantum system**, where infinite possibilities result from the interaction of particles.
 - ✓ The team developed a bilayer semiconductor device or a frustration.
 - ✓ The top layer of the device was made to be electron-rich, in which the electrons can freely move about.
 - ✓ The bottom layer only had holes, which are slots an electron can occupy.
 - ✓ Then the two layers are brought extremely close together.
 - ✓ The machine is then triggered to create a local imbalance resulting in electrons not having enough holes to fill (similar to the game of musical chairs).
 - ✓ This kicks off the novel state called the chiral bose-liquid state.

- **Significance:** In this state,
 - ✓ **Electrons can be frozen into predictable patterns. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ Electrons can be made resilient to changes in spin (a defining characteristic of subatomic particles)
 - ✓ **Electrons can even synchronize their movements. Hence statement 1 is correct.**

Q 41.C

- Social Audit is the examination and assessment of a programme/scheme conducted with the active involvement of people and comparing official records with actual ground realities. Social Audit is a powerful tool for social transformation, community participation and government accountability. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was the first law to mandate social audit as a statutory requirement. MGNREGA Audit of Schemes Rules was passed by the Central Government, in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) in 2011. Under MGNREGA scheme rules, apart from the ongoing process of social audit, it has been mandated to convene Social Audit Forum once every six months, which will serve as an institutional forum where people can conduct details public audits of all MGNREGA works that have been carried out in their area in the preceding six months. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Section 17 of the MGNREGA has mandated a Social audit of all Works executed under the MGNREGA.** Social Audit is different from Financial Audit. Financial audits involve inspecting and assessing documents related to financial transactions in an organization to provide a true picture of its profits, losses and financial stability. Social audits focus on the performance of a programme in fulfilling its intended social objectives and ethical vision through consultation with a range of stakeholders including social programme beneficiaries, community members, and government officials and verifying the information obtained with documents and physical evidence. Thus social audits examine and assess the social impact of specific programmes and policies.
- The process of Social Audit combines people's participation and monitoring with the requirements of the audit discipline. It is necessary to promote people's participation in the audit along with support provided by an independent social audit organization that facilitates the process.
- The Audit of Scheme Rules, 2011 were prepared by MoRD in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India. These rules are also called the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Audit of Schemes Rules, 2011. These rules define the process of social audit and the responsibilities of the Social Audit Unit (SAU), state government and the field functionaries of MGNREGA, to be followed across the country.
- These rules also emphasize the role of the SAU, its prerequisites, the process of social audit and the responsibilities of designated officials.
- Rule 4 of Audit of Schemes Rules, 2011 stipulates that **each State Government shall identify or establish an independent organization, "Social Audit Unit" (SAU) to facilitate the conduct of the Social Audit of MGNREGS works.**

Q 42.B

- The **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)** has been publishing the EGDI and survey report since 2001 biennially.
- The Survey is the only global report that assesses the e-government development status of all United Nations Member States. The assessment measures the e-government performance of countries relative to one another, as opposed to being an absolute measurement.
- **India ranked 105 in the E-Government Development Index and 61 in E-Participation Index**, down from the 2020 rank of 100 and 29 respectively. **Denmark ranked 1** in the E-Government Development Index while Japan ranked 1 in E-Participation Index.
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 43.B

- **Lightweight Payment and Settlement System (LPSS)**
- **Context:** RBI is planning to use the lightweight payment system for emergencies and as an alternative to UPI, NEFT, and RTGS.
 - **Details**
 - ✓ The proposed Lightweight and Portable Payment System (LPSS) will be independent of conventional technologies and can be operated from anywhere by a bare minimum staff, according to the central bank.

- ✓ It can be used for critical transactions during catastrophic events like natural calamities and war.
- **Need for the lightweight payment system**
 - ✓ Existing conventional payment systems like RTGS (Real Time Gross Settlement), NEFT (National Electronic Funds Transfer), and UPI (Unified Payments Interface) are designed to handle large volumes while ensuring sustained availability. These systems are dependent on complex wired networks backed by advanced IT infrastructure.
 - ✓ However, **catastrophic events like natural calamities and war have the potential to render these payment systems temporarily unavailable by disrupting the underlying information and communication infrastructure. Hence statement 2 is correct**
 - ✓ Therefore, it is prudent to be prepared to face such extreme and volatile situations.
 - ✓ Keeping this objective in mind, RBI has conceptualized the LPSS that will be independent of conventional technologies and can be operated from anywhere by a bare minimum of staff.
- **Features of LPSS**
 - ✓ It will **operate on minimalistic hardware and software** and would be made active only on a need basis. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - ✓ The system **can ensure near-zero downtime of the payment and settlement system in the country** and keep the liquidity pipeline of the economy intact by facilitating the uninterrupted functioning of essential payment services like bulk payments, interbank payments, and provision of cash to participant institutions. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 44.D

- **Fish Kill**

- **Context:** Recently thousands of dead fish washed up on multiple beaches in southeast Texas, USA due to a phenomenon called, “fish kill”.
- The fish kill is the sudden and unexpected death of many fish or other aquatic animals over a short period and mostly within a particular area.
- **Causes of fish kill**
 - ✓ **Low levels of dissolved oxygen:** When sea surface temperatures rise, it becomes difficult for the fish to breathe as oxygen dissolves easily in colder water compared to warmer water.
 - ✓ When many fishes get trapped in shallow water, they get warmer more quickly, leading to suffocation.
 - ✓ This causes fish to act more erratically, which in turn, further depletes the oxygen from the water, ultimately leading to the death of the fish.
 - ✓ **Calm Seas:** Oxygen enters the seawater by mixing with wind and waves. Very calm seas cause the depletion of dissolved oxygen and cause fish to kill.
 - ✓ **Overcast weather:** It refers to more than 95% of cloud coverage. Photosynthesis is driven by sunlight and it slows down on cloudy days, resulting in decreased dissolved oxygen concentration. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
 - ✓ **Other reasons:** Alteration in natural water chemistry, biological changes, rising temperatures of oceans, chemical pollution, or miscellaneous human activity.

Q 45.C

- **Tobacco Cultivation**

- **Context:** Farmers’ body questions WHO recommendations on substituting tobacco cultivation with alternative crops.
- *Nicotiana tabacum* and *N. rustica* are the two most commonly cultivated for producing commercial tobacco.
- **Origin:** The primary center of origin of *N. tabacum* is South America and that of *N. rustica* is Peru. In India, it is introduced by the Portuguese in the 17th century.
- **Area and production:** *N. tabacum* is widely cultivated in most countries of the world while *N. Rustica* is restricted to India, Russia, and a few other Asiatic countries.
- **Top production and productivity in India: Gujarat.**
- **Other producers:** Andhra Pradesh followed by Gujarat, Karnataka, UP, Bihar, etc.
- **Climate:** Mean temperature - 20° to 27°C.
- **Rainfall:** Not exceeding 1200 mm during the season.
- It is tropical in origin but successfully grown in temperate also. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It is sensitive to waterlogging. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Curing:** It is a carefully controlled process used to achieve the texture, color, and overall quality of a specific tobacco type. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **China is the largest tobacco producer** in the world followed by India.

- **Tobacco Board**
 - ✓ It was constituted as a statutory body under the Tobacco Board Act, of 1975.
 - ✓ **Headquarters:** Guntur, Andhra Pradesh.
 - ✓ **Ministry:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)**
 - ✓ It is the first global public health treaty on tobacco.
 - ✓ It is an evidence-based treaty that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health.
 - ✓ India is a party to the convention.

Q 46.B

- **The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India (CAG)** is an **independent authority** under the Constitution of India and is the **head of the Indian audit & account department** and **chief Guardian of the Public purse**.
- It is the institution through which the accountability of the government and other public authorities (all those who spend public funds) to Parliament and State Legislatures and through them to the people is ensured.
- **CAG is appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal and provided with tenure of 6 years or 65 years of age, whichever is earlier.**
- He can be **removed by the President only** in accordance with the procedure mentioned in the Constitution which is **the manner same as the removal of a Supreme Court Judge**.
- He is ineligible to hold any office, either under the Government of India or of any state, once he retires/resigns as a CAG and no minister can represent the CAG in Parliament. **Hence statement 1 is not correct and statement 2 is correct.**

Q 47.D

- The Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), the replacement of the ballot box is mainstay in the electoral process. First **conceived in 1977 in the Election Commission**.
 - **First time use of EVMs occurred in the general election in Kerala in May, 1982;** however, the absence of a specific law prescribing its use led to the Supreme Court striking down that election. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - Subsequently, in 1989, the Parliament amended the Representation of the People Act, 1951 to create a provision for the use of EVMs in the elections (chapter 3). A general consensus on its introduction could be reached only in 1998 and these were used in 25 Legislative Assembly constituencies spread across three states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi.
- **Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) is an independent system** attached with the Electronic Voting Machines that allows the voters to verify that their votes are cast as intended. When a vote is cast, a slip is printed on the VVPAT printer containing the serial number, name and symbol of the candidate and remains exposed through a transparent window for 7 seconds. Thereafter, this printed slip automatically gets cut and falls in sealed drop box of the VVPAT.
 - In the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, VVPATs were used in eight constituencies and in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, VVPATs were used in all the constituencies. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- NOTA, or "None of the Above", is the option which enables the voter to officially register a vote of rejection for all candidates who are contesting. If a voter chooses to press NOTA it indicates that the voter has not chosen to vote for any of the party.
- On 27 September 2013, the Supreme court of India ruled that the right to register a "none of the above" vote in elections should apply, while ordering the Election Commission to provide a button for the same in the electronic voting machines.
- The ECI introduced a particular symbol for 'None of the Above' option to allow the voters to exercise NOTA. This symbol appears in the last panel on all Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).
- In Lok Sabha elections, the None of the Above or NOTA option was first used in 2014. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

Q 48.A

- **East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes (EHAGL) region**
- **Horn of Africa**
 - It is a region in eastern Africa.
 - **Countries included:** Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia.
 - **Coastlines included:** the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the Indian Ocean.

- **Rivers flowing in the region:** Blue Nile, White Nile, and Dawa River.
- **Lakes present in the region:** Lake Tana, Lake Turkana.
- **Ogaden desert:** It is situated between the Somalia-Ethiopia border and the Ethiopian Eastern Highlands.
- The Horn of Africa, almost equidistant from the Equator and the Tropic of Cancer is an arid region.
- **Great Lakes Region**
 - The African Great Lakes are a series of lakes constituting part of the Rift Valley lakes in and around the East African Rift.
 - They include Lake Victoria, the 2nd largest freshwater lake in the world in terms of surface area.
 - Lake Tanganyika is the world's second-largest in volume as well as the second deepest.
 - Lists of the African Great Lakes - Lake Victoria, Lake Tanganyika, Lake Malawi, Lake Turkana, Lake Albert, Lake Kivu, and Lake Edward.
 - The 4 countries that make up the Great Lakes region are the Democratic Republic of the Congo (D.R.C.), Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

Q 49.B

- **The 2021 amendment to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act(MTPA), 1971:**
 - **The 2021 amendment to the MTP Act extends the time limit for termination of pregnancy from 20 to 24 weeks.** This extension is provided only to certain categories of women as prescribed under the Rules. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - The 2021 Rules list out the women eligible for termination of pregnancy up to 24 weeks and this includes
 - ✓ women who are survivors of sexual assault/rape/incest,
 - ✓ minors, women with disabilities,
 - ✓ **women with substantial foetal abnormalities,**
 - ✓ women in disaster or emergencies and women who have had a change of marital status during the pregnancy (widowhood and divorce).
 - Thus, technically, single or unmarried women would not get the benefit of the extension of the 24-week window for abortion under the act.
 - But, by giving a broad and purposive interpretation to Rule 3B, the **Supreme Court in its judgement held that the Rule could not be limited only to married women. Hence now all women irrespective of marriage can avail abortion rights up to 24 weeks of pregnancy.**
- **Marital rape as a condition for abortion up to 24 weeks:**
 - The Supreme Court has addressed the sexual violence within marriage and **recognised marital rape as a condition for abortion up to 24 weeks. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - Since the 2021 Rules allowing abortions up to 24 weeks include women who are survivors of sexual assault or rape, the Supreme Court held that for this purpose, it would include marital rape.
 - While this would not amount to recognition of marital rape or the removal of the exception under the Indian Penal Code, that it is only a matter of time till our courts strike down the marital rape exception. This judgment takes some steps towards that goal.

Q 50.B

- **Originally, the Constitution of India did not make any provision with respect to the Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Later, the States Reorganisation Commission (1953–55) made a recommendation in this regard.
- Accordingly, **the Seventh Constitutional Amendment Act of 1956 inserted a new Article 350-B in Part XVII of the Constitution.**
- **The Constitution does not specify the qualifications, tenure, salaries and allowances, service conditions, and procedure for removal of the Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- In pursuance of the **provision of Article 350-B of the Constitution, the office of the Special Officer for Linguistic Minorities was created in 1957. He is designated as the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities.**
- **At the Central level, the Commissioner falls under the Ministry of Minority Affairs.** Hence, he submits the annual reports or other reports to the President through the Union Minority Affairs Minister. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 51.A

- **Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act, 2013:**
 - The provisions of this Act relating to land acquisition, consent, compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement, shall also apply, when the appropriate Government acquires land for the following purposes, namely:
 - ✓ for public private partnership projects, where the ownership of the land continues to vest with the Government,
 - ✓ for private companies for public purpose.
- **Provided that in the case of acquisition for—**
 - private companies, **the prior consent of at least eighty per cent**, of those affected families.
 - **public private partnership projects**, the prior consent of **at least seventy per cent**. of those affected families. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Preparation of Social Impact Assessment study:**
 - Whenever the appropriate Government intends to acquire land for a public purpose, it shall consult the concerned Panchayat, Municipality or Municipal Corporation, as the case may be, at village level or ward level, in the affected area and carry out a Social Impact Assessment study in consultation with them, in such manner and from such date as may be specified by such Government by notification.
- **Exemption from Social Impact Assessment:**
 - Where land is proposed to be acquired **invoking the urgency provisions under section 40, the appropriate Government may exempt undertaking of the Social Impact Assessment study. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **Acquisition and requisitioning of property under Concurrent list.**
 - **Though land is a state subject, "acquisition and requisitioning of property" is in the concurrent list. Hence state governments can amend the act with the assent from president. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - Recently, the Odisha government has proposed to amend the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 to ease land acquisition process for various industrial and infrastructure projects.
 - Odisha will be the fourth state to amend the legislation as Gujarat (2016), Maharashtra (2018) and Karnataka (2019) have already made the amendment and received the assent of the President of India.

Q 52.C

- **How is the CAG in India Different from the CAG in Britain?**
 - CAG of India is only performing the role of an Auditor General and not of a Comptroller but in Britain it has the power of both Comptroller as well as Auditor General.
 - In India, the CAG audits the accounts after the expenditure is committed i.e., ex post facto. In the UK no money can be drawn from the public exchequer without the approval of the CAG. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - In India, CAG is not a member of the parliament while in Britain; CAG is a member of house of the Commons. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 53.D

- In India's developmental plan exercise, we have two types of schemes viz; central sector and centrally sponsored scheme. The nomenclature is derived from the pattern of funding and the modality for implementation.
- While the Union government fully funds the central sector schemes, centrally sponsored schemes are jointly funded by the Centre and states.
- Under Central sector schemes, it is 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the Central Government machinery. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Central sector schemes are mainly formulated on subjects from the Union List. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- In addition, the Central Ministries also implement some schemes directly in States/UTs which are called Central Sector Schemes but resources under these Schemes are not generally transferred to States.

Q 54.C

- Voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) or verified paper record (VPR) is a method of providing feedback to voters using a ballotless voting system.
 - A VVPAT is intended as an independent verification system for voting machines designed to allow voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly, to detect possible election fraud or malfunction, and to provide a means to audit the stored electronic results.

- It contains the name of the candidate (for whom the vote has been cast) and the symbol of the party/individual candidate.
- While it has gained in use in the United States compared with ballotless voting systems without it, it looks unlikely to overtake hand-marked ballots.
- **Voter-verifiable paper audit trail was first used in an election in India in September 2013 in Noksen (Assembly Constituency) in Nagaland.**
- An electronic voting machine is a voting machine based on electronics.
 - First-time use of EVMs occurred in the general election in Kerala in May 1982; however, the absence of a specific law prescribing its use led to the Supreme Court striking down that election.
 - Subsequently, in 1989, the Parliament amended the Representation of the People Act, of 1951 to create a provision for the use of EVMs in the elections. **A consensus on its introduction could be reached only in 1998 and these were used in 25 Legislative Assembly constituencies spread across three states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Delhi.**
- The **Sixty-first Amendment of the Constitution of India, officially known as The Constitution (Sixty-first Amendment) Act, 1988**, lowered the voting age of elections to the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies of States from 21 years to 18 years.
- The existence of the Code dates back to the 1960 Kerala State Legislative Assembly Elections when the State Administration for the first time, issued a set of instructions, regulating the conduct of the participating political institutions. The Code was then taken into national cognizance during the **1962 Lok Sabha Elections** and the State Legislative Assembly elections. It was widely circulated to all the recognized states and national political parties. As a result, the Code was voluntarily embraced and accepted in furtherance of securing a free and fair elections regime.
- **Hence, option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 55.B

- The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, in al, made 249 recommendations. Of them, 58 recommendations involve amendments to the Constitution, 86 involve legislative measures and the remaining 105 recommendations could be accomplished through executive action. Some of the important recommendations are given below:
- On Fundamental Rights:
 - The scope of the prohibition against discrimination (under Articles 15 and 16) should be extended to include ‘ethnic or social origin, political or other opinions, property or birth’.
 - The freedom of speech and expression (under Article 19) should be expanded to include explicitly ‘the freedom of the press and other media, the freedom to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas’.
 - **The protection from judicial review afforded by Article 31-B to the Acts and Regulations specified in the Ninth Schedule should be restricted to only those which relate to (i) agrarian reforms, (ii) reservations, and (iii) the implementation of Directive Principles specified in clause (b) or (c) of Article 39. Thus option 1 is not a recommendation.**
- On Directive Principles
 - The heading of Part-IV of the Constitution should be amended to read as ‘Directive Principles of State Policy and Action
 - **A new Directive Principle on control of the population should be added. Thus option 2 was a recommendation.**
 - An independent National Education Commission should be set up every five years.
- On Fundamental Duties
 - The recommendations of the Justice Verma Committee on the operationalization of Fundamental Duties should be implemented at the earliest.
 - **Duty to vote at elections, actively participate in the democratic process of governance, and pay taxes. Thus option 3 was a recommendation.**
 - To foster a spirit of family values and responsible parenthood in the matter of education, physical and moral well-being of children
- On Parliament and State Legislatures
 - The privileges of legislators should be defined and delimited for the free and independent functioning of Parliament and state legislatures.
 - **The domiciliary requirement for eligibility to contest elections to Rajya Sabha from the concerned state should be maintained. This is essential to ensure the federal character of the Rajya Sabha. Thus option 4 is not a recommendation.**

- The Election Commission should be empowered to identify and declare the various offices under the central and state governments to be ‘offices of profit’ for the purposes of being chosen, and for being, a member of the appropriate legislature. **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 56.C

- Article 19 (1) of the Indian Constitution guarantees us the right to freedom of speech and expression and as recognized by the Supreme Court this also implies a full right to information. The Right to Information Act, 2005 (“the Act”) has established the necessary practical regime of the right to information. Right to information can empower citizens to take charge by participating in decision-making and by challenging corrupt and arbitrary actions at all levels. With access to government records, citizens can evaluate and determine whether the government they have elected is delivering the results that are expected.
- **Application should be submitted in English, Hindi or in the official language of the area in which the application is made. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- In the normal course, information to an applicant is to be supplied within 30 days from the receipt of the application by the public authority. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- If the information sought concerns the life or liberty of a person, it shall be supplied within 48 hours.
- In case the application is sent through the Assistant Public Information Officer or it is sent to the wrong public authority, five days shall be added to the period of thirty days or 48 hours, as the case may be.
- **Application can be handwritten or typed. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Q 57.B

- The **National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)**, is an **autonomous body under the University Grants Commission (UGC)** responsible for **assessing the quality of higher educational institutions in India**. It was established in **1994** and awards grades ranging from **A++ to C** based on parameters such as **curriculum, faculty, infrastructure, research, and financial well-being**. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
- Accreditation by NAAC is **voluntary**, and **only institutes that are at least 6 years old or from where at least two batches of students have graduated can apply** for accreditation, which is **valid for 5 years**. Hence **statement 2 is not correct and 3 is correct**.
- Efforts to expedite accreditation include the **UGC launching a scheme named 'Paramarsh'** in 2019 to **mentor institutes aspiring to get accredited**, NAAC exploring the possibility of issuing **Provisional Accreditation for Colleges (PAC)** to one-year-old institutes, and the **National Education Policy (2020)** setting an ambitious target of **getting all higher educational institutes to obtain the highest level of accreditation over the next 15 years**.
- However, **India's higher education system** faces several **challenges**, including **limited access, gender inequality, and employability issues**. The use of **digital technology** can help make **education** more **accessible, cost-effective, and efficient**.

Q 58.B

- **Foreign Contribution Regulation Act** regulates the **acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution** by individuals, associations and companies. Foreign contribution is the donation or transfer of any currency, security or article (of beyond a specified value) by a foreign source.
- Under the Act, any person/entity/NGO receiving foreign contribution must use it only for the purpose for which the contribution is received. Further, they **must not use more than 20%** (amended in 2020) of the contribution for **meeting administrative expenses**. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct**.
- Under the Act, **certain persons are prohibited** to accept any foreign contribution. These include: **public servants** (as defined under the Indian Penal Code), **election candidates, editor or publisher of a newspaper, judges, government servants, members of any legislature, and political parties**, among others. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.

Q 59.A

- The Consumer Protection Act was enacted in 1986 with the objective of providing better protection of consumers’ interests. The Act provides for effective safeguards to consumers against various types of exploitation and unfair dealings.
- The Act enshrines six rights of consumers, namely,
 - **Right to Safety:** It is the right to be protected against the marketing of goods and services which are hazardous to life and property.
 - **Right to Information:** It is the right of consumers to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods or services, with a view to protecting the consumer against unfair trade practices.

- **Right to Choose:** The right to choose can be made meaningful by ensuring access to a variety of goods and services at competitive prices.
- **Right to Represent:** It is the right to be heard and to be assured that consumers' interests will receive due consideration at appropriate forums.
- **Right to Redressal:** It is a right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices or restrictive trade practices or unscrupulous exploitation of consumers.
- **Right to Consumer Education:** The right to consumer education is a right which ensures that consumers are informed about the practices prevalent in the market and the remedies available to them.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

Q 60.A

- The President can remove the chairman or any other member of UPSC from office under the following circumstances:
 - If he is adjudged insolvent (that is, has gone bankrupt);
 - If he engages, during his term of office, in any paid employment outside the duties of his office; or
 - If he is, in the opinion of the president, unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body.
 - **The president can also remove the chairman or any other member of UPSC for misbehaviour but the President has to refer the matter to the Supreme Court for an enquiry.** If the Supreme Court, after the enquiry, upholds the cause of removal and advises so, the president can remove the chairman or a member.
 - **Under the provisions of the Constitution, the advice tendered by the Supreme Court in this regard is binding on the President. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Defining the term 'misbehaviour' in this context, the Constitution states that the chairman or any other member of the UPSC is deemed to be guilty of misbehaviour if he is concerned or interested in any contract or agreement made by the Government of India or the government of a state, or participates in any way in the profit of such contract or agreement or in any benefit therefrom otherwise than as a member and in common with other members of an incorporated company.**
- **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 61.D

- An **election petition** refers to the procedure for **challenging the result of a Parliamentary election**. To hear these petitions, prior to the 19th Amendment, India had a mechanism of **Election Tribunals**. The decision of such Election Tribunals would be final. **Hence Statement I is not correct.**
- The **Nineteenth Amendment** of the Constitution of India, officially known as **The Constitution (Nineteenth Amendment) Act, 1966, abolished Election Tribunals** in India and **enabled the trial of election petitions by High Courts**. **Hence Statement II is correct.**

Q 62.D

- Under the First Past the Post (FPTP) system, a candidate who gets one vote more than other candidates is declared as the winner. In proportional representation, the number of seats won by a party or group of candidates is proportionate to the number of votes received.
- Proportional representation (PR) is a complicated system which may work in a small country but would be difficult to work in a sub-continental country like India. **Hence option (a) is correct.**
- The reason for the popularity and success of the FPTP system is its simplicity. The entire election system is extremely simple to understand even for common voters who may have no specialized knowledge about politics and elections. **Hence option (b) is correct.**
- There is also a clear choice presented to the voters at the time of elections. Voters have to simply endorse a candidate or a party while voting. Depending on the nature of actual politics, voters may either give greater importance to the party or to the candidate or balance the two.
- The FPTP system offers voters a choice not simply between parties but specific candidates. In other electoral systems, especially PR systems, voters are often asked to choose a party and the representatives are elected on the basis of party lists. As a result, there is no one representative who represents and is responsible for one locality. In a constituency-based system like the FPTP, the voters know who their own representative is and can hold him or her accountable. **Hence option (c) is correct.**
- More importantly, the makers of our Constitution also felt that a PR-based election may not be suitable for giving a stable government in a parliamentary system. This system requires that the executive has a majority in the legislature. The PR system may not produce a clear majority because seats in the legislature would be divided on the basis of the share of votes. **Hence option (d) is not correct.**

Q 63.B

- **Context:** A five-judge Bench led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud is hearing petitions filed in the wake of last year's political crisis in Maharashtra.
- **About the Role of a Whip:**
 - A whip is an official of a political party whose task is to ensure party discipline in the legislature. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - Whips are the party's "enforcers".
 - The whip ensures that the members of the political party vote according to the party, rather than according to their own individual ideology or the will of their donors or constituents.
 - **Every political party, whether ruling or Opposition has its own whip in the Parliament.** He is appointed by the political party and serves as an assistant floor leader. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - Under the **Tenth Schedule** (anti-defection law) a political party has a **constitutional right to issue a whip** to its legislators. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - **Kihoto Hollohan vs Zachillhu case, 1992**
 - ✓ The Supreme Court held that the application of the Tenth Schedule is limited to a vote on a **"motion of confidence" or "no-confidence"** in the government or where the motion under consideration relates to a matter which was an integral policy and program of the political party.
 - ✓ Paragraph 2(1)(b) provides for a lawmaker's disqualification "if he votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to any direction."
 - **Defiance of Whip**
 - ✓ A legislator may face **disqualification proceedings if they disobey the whip of the party** unless the number of lawmakers defying the whip is 2/3rds of the party's strength in the house.
 - ✓ This disqualification is decided by the Speaker/Chairman of the house.

Q 64.D

- The Central Vigilance Commission was set up by the Government in February 1964 on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by Shri K. Santhanam, to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance. It was not set up under the Prevention of Corruption Act, of 1988. **Hence statement I is not correct and statement II is correct.**
- The CVC is not controlled by any Ministry/Department. It is an independent body that is only responsible for the Parliament. The Commission shall consist of A Central Vigilance Commissioner - Chairperson;
- Not more than two Vigilance Commissioners - Members; The Central Vigilance Commissioner shall hold office for a term of four years from the date on which he enters upon his office or till he attains the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier.
- The Central Vigilance Commissioner, on ceasing to hold the office, shall be ineligible for reappointment in the Commission or for further employment under the Central or state government.
- The CVC is not an investigating agency. The CVC either gets the investigation done through the CBI or through the Departmental Chief Vigilance Officers. Secondly, the CVC orders investigation into cases of officials of Central Government Departments/Companies/Organisations only.

Q 65.C

- **Recently, the chairperson of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) resigned citing personal reasons.**
- **National Commission for Scheduled Castes**
 - The National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) is a **constitutional organization** in India that seeks to **protect the interests of scheduled castes.**
 - It aims to safeguard the SC people from prejudice and exploitation while also offering facilities to improve the SC community which is **addressed under Article 338 of India's constitution.**
 - Its duties include investigating and monitoring all matters relating to safeguards provided for them, inquiring into specific complaints, and participating and advising on the planning process of their socio-economic development etc.
- **It consists of a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and three other members. They are appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Functions:**
 - **Monitoring and investigating all issues concerning the safeguards provided for the SCs under the constitution.**
 - **Enquiring into complaints relating to the deprivation of the rights and safeguards of the SCs but its recommendations are non-binding in nature. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

- Taking part in and advising the central or state governments with respect to the planning of the socio-economic development of the SCs.
- Regular reporting to the President of the country on the implementation of these safeguards.
- Recommending steps to be taken to further the socio-economic development and other welfare activities of the SCs.
- Any other function with respect to the welfare, protection, development, and advancement of the SC community.
- **Wings of NCSC**



Q 66.B

- The National Disaster Management Authority has been constituted under the Disaster Management Act 2005, with the Prime Minister of India as its Chairman; a Vice Chairman with the status of Cabinet Minister, and eight members with the status of Ministers of State. NDMA, as the apex body, is mandated to lay down the policies, plans and guidelines for Disaster Management to ensure timely and effective response to disasters.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 67.A

- Corruption refers to misusing public power for personal gain. It can be done by an elected politician, civil servant, journalist, administrator of a school, or anyone in authority.
- India has the highest rate of bribery and use of personal links to access public services in Asia, according to a survey released by global civil society **Transparency International**.
- India is in the 85th position among 180 countries in the **Corruption Perception Index, 2021**.
- Public servants in India can be penalized for corruption under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860, and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, of 1988 prohibits Benami transactions. The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, of 2002 penalizes public servants for the offense of money laundering.
- The **Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988**:
 - The Act prohibits any benami transaction (purchase of property in the false name of another person who does not pay for the property) except when a person purchases property in his wife's or unmarried daughter's name.
 - Any person who enters into a benami transaction shall be punished with imprisonment of up to three years and/or a fine. All properties that are held to be benami can be acquired by a prescribed authority and no money shall be paid for such acquisition.
- **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The **United Nations Convention Against Corruption** is the only legally binding international anti-corruption multilateral treaty. Negotiated by member states of the United Nations it has been adopted by the UN General Assembly in October 2003 and entered into force in December 2005.
- **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 68.A

- **Number and Term of Members of the Board and its Office Bearers**
 - The board shall consist of such number of directors as may be provided by the state legislature. But, the maximum number of directors of a cooperative society shall not exceed twenty-one. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - The state legislature shall provide for the reservation of one seat for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes and two seats for women on the board of every cooperative society having members from such a category of persons. There is no provision for the reservation of seats for the backward classes. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
 - The term of office of elected members of the board and its office bearers shall be five years from the date of the election.
 - The state legislature shall make provisions for the co-option of persons having experience in the field of banking, management, finance or specialization in any other related field, as members of the board. But, the number of such co-opted members shall not exceed two (in addition to twenty-one directors). Further, the co-opted members shall not have the right to vote in any election of the co-operative society or be eligible to be elected as office bearers of the board.
 - The functional directors of a cooperative society shall also be the members of the board and such members shall be excluded for the purpose of counting the total number of directors (that is, twenty-one).

Q 69.B

- **As per Census-1931, Schedule tribes are termed as "backward tribes" living in the "Excluded" and "Partially Excluded" areas.** The Government of India Act of 1935 called for the first time for representatives of "backward tribes" in provincial assemblies.
- **The Constitution does not define the criteria for recognition of Scheduled Tribes** and hence the definition contained in the 1931 Census was used in the initial years after independence.
- However, **Article 366(25) of the Constitution only provides a process to define Scheduled Tribes:** "Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution." **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **342(1): The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes or tribal communities as Scheduled Tribe in relation to that State or Union Territory. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- There are over 700 tribes that have been notified **and the largest number of tribal communities (62) are found in Odisha.**
- **No Tribe was identified in Haryana, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Pondicherry. Hence statement 3 is correct**

Few Related Committees

- **The Lokur Committee (1965)** was set up to look into criteria for defining Schedule Tribes. **The Committee recommended 5 criteria** for identification, namely, primitive traits, distinct culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness.
- **Bhuria Commission (2002-2004)** focused on a wide range of issues from the 5th Schedule to tribal land and forests, health and education, the working of Panchayats, and the status of tribal women.
- A High-Level Committee (HLC) in 2013, under the chairmanship of Prof. Virginius Xaxa was constituted to **study the 5 critical issues related to tribal communities** : (1) livelihood and employment, (2) education, (3) health, (4) involuntary displacement and migration, (5) and legal and constitutional matters.

Q 70.D

- Recently it was reported in the news that 486 ASI antiquities have been missing since 1947.
- The **Antiquities and Art Treasures Act of 1972** defines an "antiquity" as an **object or article** that is **at least 100 years old** and represents science, art, crafts, customs, religion, literature, or anything of historical interest. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- An "art treasure" is a human work of art, other than antiquity, that is **declared to be a treasure by the Centre** for its artistic value **after the artist's death**. If it is a manuscript or record of any scientific, historical, literary, or aesthetic value, it should be **at least 75 years old**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- India's rich cultural heritage, bureaucratic apathy, and poor implementation of antiquities protection law have made India a fertile ground for the **smuggling of antiques** for sale in the international market, which

poses a risk to national security. Poor restoration and conservation of antiquities in museums, the lack of an integrated database of existing and stolen artifacts, and the absence of any centralized information are some of the major concerns.

- Preventive measures include the compulsory registration of notified categories of antiquities, regulating the export trade in antiquities and art treasures, and preventing smuggling and fraudulent dealings in antiques are taken under the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act. Hence statement 3 is not correct.
- Section 3 of the Act prohibits the export of antiquity by anyone other than the Centre or its agencies.

Q 71.B

- **Recent Context-**As the year 2024 marks the centenary of the Vaikom Satyagraha, the Chief Minister of Kerala and Tamil Nadu jointly inaugurated the centenary celebrations.
- **What is Vaikom Satyagraha? Background:** The princely state of Travancore had a feudal, militaristic, and ruthless system of custom-ridden government, some of the most rigid, refined and ruthless social norms and customs were seen in Travancore. Lower castes like the Ezhavas and Pulayas were considered polluting and various rules were in place to distance them from upper castes. These included a prohibition, not just on temple entry, but even on walking on the roads surrounding temples.
- **Beginning of Satyagraha:**
- On March 30, 1924, the Satyagrahis walked in procession toward the forbidden public roads. They were stopped 50 yards away from the place where a board cautioning the oppressed communities against walking on the roads (surrounding the Vaikom Mahadeva temple), was placed. Dressed in khadi and wearing khadi caps, Govinda Panikkar (Nair), Bahuleyan (Ezhava) and Kunjappu (Pulaya), defied the prohibitory orders. The police stopped them. In protest, the three men sat on the road and were arrested. **Then on, every day, three volunteers from three different communities were sent to walk on the prohibited roads. Within a week, the leaders of the movement were all arrested. The movement was non-violent in nature. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Contribution of Leaders:** In 1923, Madhavan presented the issue as a resolution at the Kakinada meeting of the All India Congress Committee. Subsequently, it was taken up by the Congress Untouchability Committee formed by the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee in January 1924. **Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy** was a great social reformer. In 1924, he took an active part in the Vaikom Satyagraha and provided leadership to the satyagraha.
- **E.V. Ramasamy Periyar led the famous Vaikom Sathya Graha in 1924, he was given the title of 'Vaikom Hero' for his leadership. The other associated leaders were T. K. Madhavan, K. Kelappan K. P. Kesava Menon, George Joseph. Mahatma Gandhi is also associated with vaikom satyagraha and he himself visited vaikom in 1925. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **In 1936, the historic Temple Entry Proclamation was signed by the Maharaja of Travancore which removed the age-old ban on the entry of temples. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 72.B

- **Criteria for grant of Maharatna status to CPSEs:** The CPSEs meeting the following criteria are eligible to be considered for grant of Maharatna status.
 - Having Navratna status
 - Listed on the Indian stock exchange with minimum prescribed public shareholding under SEBI regulations
 - An average annual turnover of more than Rs. 25,000 crores during the last 3 years
 - An average annual net worth of more than Rs. 15,000 crores during the last 3 years
 - An average annual net profit after tax of more than Rs. 5,000 crores during the last 3 years
 - Should have significant global presence/international operations.
 - **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Criteria for grant of Navratna status to CPSEs:** The CPSEs which are Miniratna I, Schedule 'A' and have obtained 'excellent' or 'very good' MOU rating in three of the last five years and have a composite score of 60 or above in following six selected performance indicators are eligible to be considered for grant of Navratna status.
- **Maximum Weight: 100**

○ Net Profit to Net worth	:	25
○ Manpower Cost to total Cost of Production or Cost of Services	:	15
○ PBDIT to Capital employed	:	15
○ PBIT to Turnover	:	15

- Earning Per Share : 10
- Inter Sectoral Performance : 20
- **Criteria for grant of Miniratna status to CPSEs:**
 - **Miniratna Category-I status:** The CPSEs which have made a profit in the last three years continuously, with pre-tax profit is Rs.30 crores or more in at least one of the three years, and have a positive net worth are eligible to be considered for grant of Miniratna-I status.
 - **Miniratna Category-II status:** The CPSEs which have made a profit for the last three years continuously and have a positive net worth are eligible to be considered for grant of Miniratna-II status.
 - Miniratna CPSEs should have not defaulted in the repayment of loans/interest payments on any loans due to the Government.
 - Miniratna CPSEs shall not depend upon budgetary support or Government guarantees.

Q 73.C

- **The Attorney General (AG) of India is a part of the Union Executive. AG is the highest law officer in the country. Article 76 of the Constitution provides for the office of AG of India. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- AG is appointed by the President on the advice of the government. S/he must be a person who is qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court, i.e. s/he must be a citizen of India and must have been a judge of some high court for five years or an advocate of some high court for ten years or an eminent jurist, in the opinion of the President.
- **Term of the Office: It is not fixed by the Constitution.**
- **Removal: Procedures and grounds for the removal of AG are not stated in the Constitution** so he holds office **at the pleasure of the President** (may be removed by the President at any time).
- **Duties and Functions:**
 - To give advice to the Government of India (GoI) upon such legal matters, which are referred to her/him by the President.
 - To perform such other duties of a legal character that are assigned to her/him by the President.
 - To appear on behalf of the GoI in all cases in the Supreme Court or in any case in any High Court in which the GoI is concerned.
 - To represent the GoI in any reference made by the President to the Supreme Court under Article 143 (Power of the President to consult the Supreme Court) of the Constitution.
 - **He should not defend accused persons in criminal prosecutions without the permission of the Government of India. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **Rights and Limitations:**
 - S/he has the **right to speak and to take part in the proceedings of both the Houses** of Parliament or their joint sitting and any committee of the Parliament of which s/he may be named a member, **but without a right to vote.**
 - S/he **enjoys all the privileges and immunities that are available to a member of Parliament.**
 - S/he **does not fall in the category of government servants and is not debarred from private legal practice. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 74.C

- **Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary:**
 - **Context:** As per recent reports, the Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary of Odisha recorded a high prey density. **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
 - Following the pre-monsoon sign survey in the Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, an herbivore or prey density of 46 animals per sq. km was recorded in the sanctuary.
 - Moreover, for the first time in the last many decades, a tiger has also been sighted in Debrigarh during Census.
 - About Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary:-
 - Location: Bargarh district of Odisha, near Hirakud dam.
 - Hirakud dam: it is on the Mahanadi River.
 - **Biodiversity:**
 - **Flora:** Dry deciduous forests
 - **Fauna:** Leopards, deer, sambar, elephants, gaur, wild boar, and a variety of birds and other creatures can be found in the Debrigarh sanctuary's vast and dense woodlands.
 - It is also known for easy wildlife sightings, including Indian bison, sambhar, wild boars, peacocks, etc.

- The four-horned antelope or Chousingha is one of the endangered animals that also inhabits this sanctuary.
- It is an Eco-sensitive Zone.
- **Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary**
 - **Citizen:** The tribal settlements in Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary are reviving the cultivation of millets and endemic crops through the Punarjeevanam scheme.
 - Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary in Idukki district of Kerala comes under Munnar Wildlife Division.
 - Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary is home to the Great Grizzled Squirrel of India.
 - There are 11 tribal settlements comprising Muduvan and Hill Pulaya communities under the Wildlife Division.
 - Punarjeevanam (revival or resurrection) scheme was launched in 2016 by Kerala Forest and Wildlife Department.
 - The scheme was launched to revive farming of millets and endemic crops in the tribal settlements under Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary.
 - It has revived 34 varieties of ragi, in addition to multiple kinds of beans, millets, amaranthus, maize, and pumpkin.
- **Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary**
 - **Context:** Recently, Indian Army generated a unique ecosystem for peaceful co-existence with wild elephants in Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam.
 - About Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary:
 - The Amchang Wildlife Sanctuary is located on the eastern fringe of Guwahati, Assam.
 - **It comprises three Reserve forests:**
 - Khanapara, amchang, and South Amchang
 - It stretches from the Brahmaputra River in the north to the hilly forests of Meghalaya in the south, forming a continuous forest belt through Meghalaya's Maradakdola Reserve
 - **Forests.**
 - It was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 2004 by the government of Assam.
 - **Flora:** Khasi Hill Sal Forests, East Himalayan Mixed Deciduous Forest, Eastern Alluvial Secondary Semi-Evergreen Forests and East Himalayan Sal Forests.
 - **Fauna:** It is home to Mammals (Flying Fox, Assamese Macaque, Slow Loris, etc.), Birds (Lesser and Greater Adjutant, White-backed Vulture, Slender-billed Vulture), Reptiles (Python, Monitor Lizard, Indian Cobra, etc.).
 - Tree yellow butterflies: found at the Amchang wildlife sanctuary, which are indigenous to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and northeast India.

Q 75.A

- Recently, a Member of Parliament in India has urged the government to **include women from the Scheduled Tribe community in the inheritance rights provisions of the Hindu Succession Amendment Act, 2005**. Currently, **Section 2(2) of the Act excludes these women**, which results in the **denial of their equal rights** to inherit their father's or Hindu Undivided Family properties. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The M.P. argues that **this exclusion is discriminatory based on gender and against the Indian Constitution's Article 14**, which advocates for equality before the law. The **Hindu Succession Act, of 1956**, only recognized male descendants as legal heirs, but the **2005 amendment granted daughters equal rights to inherit their father's or HUF properties.**
- The **Hindu Succession Act** lays down a **comprehensive system of laws** for cases relating to conditions like intestate (**dying without a will**), or unwilling succession, among **Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs** including followers of **Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- However, tribal women were considered excluded from the scope of the Act, as **section 2 (2) of the Act states that** the provisions will not apply to the Scheduled Tribes unless the central government directs otherwise “by notification”.
- The **Hindu Succession Act of 2005** brought about significant changes to the Act by giving **daughters equal rights to ancestral property**, which was previously denied to them.
- The amendment also provides for the **devolution of a woman's property on her death**, in the same way as a man's property devolves, and for the **first time recognizes the rights of widows in a deceased husband's property**. The amendment has been hailed as a significant step towards gender equality in India and has helped to empower women by giving them greater control over their property and financial assets. The **law applies to ancestral property and to intestate succession in personal property**, where **succession happens as per law and not through a will**. In the case of Hindus, the laws relating to

the testamentary succession(through a Will) are applicable as per the Indian Succession Act, 1925. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

- It's important to note that the 2005 amendment only applies to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains. **Other religions have their own personal laws that govern inheritance rights.**

Q 76.C

- In 1901 the Famine Commission recommended the establishment of Rural Agricultural Banks through the establishment of Mutual Credit Associations, and such steps were taken by the Government of North Western provinces and Oudh. The underlying idea of a number of persons combining together was the voluntary creation of a new and valuable security. A strong association competent to offer guarantees and advantages of lending to groups instead of individuals were major advantages. The Commission also suggested the principles underlying Agricultural Banks.
- Cooperative Credit Societies Act, 1904 - The First Incorporation Taking cognizance of these developments and to provide a legal basis for cooperative societies, the **Edward Law Committee with Mr. Nicholson** as one of the members was appointed by the Government to examine and recommend a course of action. The Cooperative Societies Bill, based on the recommendations of this Committee, was enacted on 25th March 1904. As its name suggests, the Cooperative Credit Societies Act was restricted to credit cooperatives. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
- **MacLagen Committee on Cooperation (1914)** - The Banking Crisis and the First World War both affected the growth of cooperatives. Although member deposits in cooperatives increased sharply, the war affected the export and prices of cash crops adversely, resulting in increased over-dues of loans of primary agricultural societies. **Hence option 2 is correct.**
- In 1944, the **Gadgil Committee recommended** compulsory adjustment of debts and setting up of Agricultural Credit Corporations, wherever cooperative agencies were not strong enough. **Hence, option 3 is correct.**
- A major watershed initiative at this time was the appointment **by the Government of the Gorwala Committee, popularly known as the All India Rural Credit Survey Committee.** The Committee **was appointed in 1951 and submitted its report in 1954.** It observed that large parts of the country were not covered by cooperatives and in such areas where it had been covered, a large segment of the agricultural population remained outside its membership. **Hence, option 4 is correct.**

Q 77.B

- **Transformer in ChatGPT**
- **Context:** In recent times, Machine Learning (ML) is experiencing a transformative shift with the rise of transformer models.
 - The capital 'T' in ChatGPT stands for 'transformer'. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
 - Transformers are **tasked with translating a sentence from one language to another**, similar to what Google Translate does when converting from, say, English to Hindi. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - A transformer is a two-part neural network. The first part is an 'encoder' that ingests the input sentence in the source language (e.g. English); the second is a 'decoder' that generates the translated sentence in the target language (Hindi).
 - The encoder converts each word in the source sentence to an abstract numerical form that captures the meaning of the word within the context of the sentence and stores it in a memory bank.
 - Just like a person would write or speak, the decoder generates one word at a time referring to what has been generated so far and looking back at the memory bank to find the appropriate word.
 - Both these processes use a mechanism called 'attention'.
 - A key improvement over previous methods is the ability of a transformer to translate long sentences or paragraphs correctly.

Q 78.C

- **The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009:**
 - **The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A** in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of **all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right.**
 - Consequently **The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009**, which represents the legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, was passed in the parliament. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- **The RTE Act provides for the following:**
 - Right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school.
 - It makes provisions for a non-admitted child to be admitted to an age appropriate class.
 - It lays down the norms and standards relating inter alia to **Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school-working days, teacher-working hours.**
 - It provides for appointment of appropriately trained teachers, i.e. teachers with the requisite entry and academic qualifications.
 - It prohibits (a) **physical punishment and mental harassment**; (b) **screening procedures for admission of children**; (c) **capitation fee**; (d) **private tuition by teachers** and (e) **running of schools without recognition.**
 - **All private schools must keep 25% of seats reserved for children belonging to weaker sections of society. Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 79.B

- **The Consumer Protection Act, 2019:**
 - Act will empower consumers and help them in protecting their rights through its various notified Rules and provisions like Consumer Protection Councils, Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions, Mediation, Product Liability and punishment for manufacture or sale of products containing adulterant / spurious goods.
- **Provisions and rules regarding E-Commerce:**
 - The act recognises e-commerce platforms and provides following rules;
 - Under this act every e-commerce entity is required to provide information relating to **return, refund, exchange, warranty and guarantee, delivery and shipment, modes of payment, grievance redressal mechanism, payment methods, security of payment methods, charge-back options**, etc.
 - They need to provide **information regarding country of origin** which are necessary for enabling the consumer to make an informed decision at the pre-purchase stage on its platform.
 - The e-commerce platforms have to acknowledge the receipt of any **consumer complaint within forty-eight hours** and **redress the complaint within one month** from the date of receipt under this Act. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Product liability:**
 - New Act introduces the concept of product liability and brings within its scope, the **product manufacturer, product service provider and product seller, for any claim for compensation.** **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - The Act provides for punishment by a competent court for manufacture or sale of adulterant/spurious goods.
 - The court may, in case of first conviction, suspend any licence issued to the person for a period of up to two years, and in case of second or subsequent conviction, cancel the licence.
- **Fee for filing cases:**
 - **As per the Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission Rules, there will be no fee for filing cases upto Rs. 5 lakh. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - There are provisions for filing complaints electronically, credit of amount due to unidentifiable consumers to Consumer Welfare Fund (CWF).

Q 80.A

- **Recently, The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has operationalised the maximum residue limit (MRL) for five pesticides used in tea plantations. The five pesticides are emamectin benzoate, fenpyroximate, hexaconazole, propiconazole, and quinalphos.**
 - **Emamectin Benzoate** is widely used in controlling lepidopterous pests (larvae and insects including butterflies, moths, and skippers)
 - **Hexaconazole** is a systemic conazole (imidazole) fungicide used for the control of many seed-borne and soil-borne diseases and fungi.
 - **Fenpyroximate and Propiconazole** are pesticides with activity against various mites as well as a few whiteflies and psyllids.
 - **Quinalphos** is an organophosphorus insecticide and acaricide with contact and stomach action.
- **Hence, option(a) is the correct answer.**

Q 81.D

- Article 345 states that, subject to the provisions of Articles 346 and 347, the legislature of a state may by law adopt any one or more of the **languages in use in the State or Hindi as the language or languages** to be used for all or any of the official purposes of that State provided that, until the Legislature of the State otherwise provides by law, the English language shall continue to be used for those official purposes within the State for which it was being used immediately before the commencement of this Constitution. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- Hence, the 'in use' criteria do not impede any state to not to declare Hindi as the official language. This is complemented by Article 347 under which the president may direct the states to recognize a language as an official language if a substantial population demands so to be used all over the states or in some parts.
- Under this provision, most of the states have adopted the major regional language as their official language. For example, Andhra Pradesh has adopted Telugu, Kerala– Malayalam, Assam–Assamese, West Bengal–Bengali, Odisha–Odia. The nine northern states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, and Rajasthan have adopted Hindi. Gujarat has adopted Hindi in addition to Gujarati.
- **Article 343 (1) of the Constitution provides that Hindi in Devanagari script shall be the official language of the Union. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Article 343 (3) empowered the Parliament to provide by law for the continued use of English for official purposes even after January 25, 1965.

Q 82.D

- **National Commission for Backward Classes(NCBC)**
 - The **Supreme Court ordered the government to establish a permanent commission** to consider, examine, and recommend the inclusion and exclusion of various Backward Classes for the purposes of benefits and protection **in the Indra Sawhney case of 1992.**
 - The **National Commission for Backward Classes Act of 1993** was passed in response to these directives, and the NCBC was established.
 - Later, the **102nd Amendment Act of 2018 conferred a constitutional status on the Commission.**
 - The amendment inserted a new Article 338-B in the constitution. Hence, the Commission ceased to be a statutory body and became a constitutional body. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **The functions of the Commission are the following:**
 - **To investigate and monitor all matters relating to the constitutional and other legal safeguards** for the socially and educationally backward classes.
 - **To inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards** of the socially and educationally backward classes.
 - To participate and advise on the socio-economic development of the socially and educationally backward classes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union or a state.
 - **To present to the President, annually and at such other times as it may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **The Commission, while investigating any matter or enquiring into any complaint, has all the powers of a civil court trying a suit and in particular in respect of the following matters:**
 - **Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - Requiring the discovery and production of any document and receiving evidence on affidavits.
 - **Requisitioning any public record from any court or office**
 - Issuing summons for the examination of witnesses and documents and any other matter which the President may determine

Q 83.D

- The **Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation Program (SVEEP)** is the **flagship** program of the **Election Commission of India** for:
 - **voter education,**
 - **spreading voter awareness, and**
 - **promoting voter literacy** in India.
- It is a **multi-intervention program** that reaches out through different modes and **media** to **educate** citizens, electors, and voters **about the electoral process** in order to increase their awareness and promote their informed participation.

- The objectives envisaged for SVEEP as per the strategy document for 2022–25 are:
 - **Increase voter turnout to 75% in Lok Sabha elections in 2024** by:
 - ✓ Purifying the electoral roll of every polling booth
 - ✓ Bridging gender gap in enrolment and turnout
 - ✓ Ensuring inclusion of all non-voters and marginalized sections through targeted interventions, technological solutions and policy changes
 - ✓ Addressing urban and youth apathy in electoral participation
 - ✓ Turning around all low turnout constituencies and polling stations
 - To **enhance the quality of electoral participation** in terms of informed and ethical voting through continuous electoral and democracy education
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 84.D

- April 29 is the birth anniversary of the famed Indian painter Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906).
- **Key contributions:**
 - He is remembered for giving Indians their Western, classical representations of Hindu gods and goddesses. Through his printing press, Varma's humanised depiction of Hindu pantheon travelled beyond the surfaces of costly canvases, and into the prayer and living rooms of working-class homes. He achieved this by making affordable lithographs, which were accessible even to the poor.
 - Ravi Varma first started a press in Mumbai and later shifted it to a place near Lonavala. **Awards he won:**
 - His 1873 painting, Nair Lady Adorning Her Hair, won Varma prestigious awards including Governor's Gold Medal when it was presented in the Madras Presidency, and Certificate of Merit at an exhibition in Vienna.
 - In 1904, the British colonial government awarded Varma with the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal. In 2013, a crater on the planet Mercury was named in his honour.
- **His prominent works include:** A Family of Beggars, A Lady Playing Swarbat, Arjuna and Subhadra, Damayanti Talking to a Swan, Jatayu (a bird devotee of Lord Rama), Lady Lost in Thought, Shakuntala.
- **Criticisms:**
- Varma is often criticized for being too showy in his paintings. His paintings are also condemned for overshadowing traditional Indian art forms, especially the ones depicting Hindu gods and goddesses. His approach is said to lack the dynamism of expression seen in traditional paintings. Critics have also criticized him for modelling goddesses after prostitutes, saying that his representation of deities have reduced them to the level of mortals.



Q 85.A

- **River Kolak**
 - **Context:** Kolak fisherfolk living along the banks of River Kolak is in distress as chemicals from Vapi industries destroy river catch.
 - Kolak River is a river **in Gujarat** in western India.
 - The **west-flowing river** originates in Kaprada taluka. Kolak River **flows into the Arabian Sea** near Udwada.
 - It is also connected to the Madhuban reservoir of the Damanganga River.
 - It flows through the north side of Vapi city in Gujarat. Kolak village on the bank of River Kolak in Gujarat's Valsad district.
 - **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

Q 86.D

- All property and assets that were vested in the Dominion of India or a province or an Indian princely state, before the commencement of the present Constitution, became vested in the **Union or the corresponding state. Similarly, all rights, liabilities and obligations of the government of the dominion of India or a province or an Indian state would now be the rights, liabilities and obligations of the Government of India or the corresponding state. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **All lands, minerals, and other things of value under the waters of the ocean within the territorial waters of India, the continental shelf of India, and the exclusive economic zone of India vests in the Union.** Hence, a state near the ocean cannot claim jurisdiction over these things. India's territorial waters extend to a distance of 12 nautical miles from the appropriate baseline. Similarly, India's exclusive economic zone extends upto 200 nautical miles. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- The Parliament as well as the state legislatures are empowered to make laws for the compulsory acquisition and requisitioning of private property by the governments. Further, the 44th Amendment Act (1978) has also abolished the constitutional obligation to pay compensation in this regard except in two cases:
 - when the government acquires the property of a minority educational institution; and
 - **when the government acquires the land held by a person under his personal cultivation and the land is within the statutory ceiling limits. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 87.D

- **Zoonomia Project**
 - The ambitious genome project, **Zoonomia**, shows how humans fit with other mammals. **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**
 - The Zoonomia Project is an international collaboration to discover the genomic basis of shared and specialized traits in mammals.
 - Zoonomia project compares the genomes of 240 mammal species as well as people to trace evolutionary changes spanning 100 million years.
 - It aims at pinpointing genetic traits widely shared and those more uniquely human.
 - **Key Findings:**
 - ✓ The project identified parts of the genome functionally important in people and other mammals.
 - ✓ It showed how certain mutations can cause disease.
 - ✓ The project revealed the genetics of uncommon mammalian traits like hibernation and showed how the sense of smell varies widely.
 - Some mammals have a very keen sense of smell like the African savanna elephant while others have almost none like whales and dolphins.
 - Humans have an average sense of smell.

Q 88.B

- **Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS):** It is an online web-enabled system developed by the National Informatics Centre (Ministry of Electronics & IT [MeitY]), in association with the Directorate of Public Grievances (DPG) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The CPGRAMS provides the facility to lodge a grievance online from any geographical location. It enables the citizen to track online the grievance being followed up with the Departments concerned and also enables DARPG to monitor the grievance.

- **e-Samiksha:** A real-time online system for monitoring and follow-up action on the decisions taken by the Government at the Apex level in respect of the implementation of important Government programs/projects. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Itat e dwar:** It is an e-filing portal of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
 - It will enable the online filing of Appeals, Applications, documents, etc. by various parties.
 - It would not only result in the economization of the use of paper, and savings in costs but also rationalization of the fixation of cases leading to quicker disposal of cases.
 - It seeks to bridge the divide between the digital haves and the digital have-nots leading to digital inclusion achieved by technology.
- **Hence, option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 89.B

- **Recent context:** According to a recent report by the Association of Democratic Reform (ADR), donations from unknown sources comprised more than half the funding received by eight national political parties.
- **Political parties are not required to reveal the name of individuals or organizations giving less than Rs. 20,000** nor those who donated via Electoral Bonds. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **No limit on political parties:** Under Section 77 of Representation of Peoples Act, 1951 and Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, there are limits on election expenditure only for candidates, **such a limit is absent in the case of political party expenditure. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Contributions received by the parties are also 100% exempted from income tax.
- **In the 2017, finance bill, the government included an amendment to the Companies Act of 2013 to do away with the 7.5% of net profits limit set on donations** and the requirement for a company to disclose the name of political parties to which they donate. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 90.B

- Social Audit is the audit of a scheme jointly by the Government and the people, especially by those who are affected by the scheme or its beneficiaries. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Social audit is different from financial audits which involve inspecting and assessing documents related to financial transactions in an organization to provide a true picture of its profits, losses and financial stability. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- Social audits, citizen feedback mechanisms, and sustainability reporting are some of the approaches being used by governments to evaluate their performance and ensure that they are meeting the needs of their citizens.
- It is a powerful tool that helps government bodies and civil society organisations to promote accountability, transparency, and good governance. It ensures true democracy by direct participation. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- It enhances mutual understanding and the legitimacy of government policies and programs. Moreover, Social Audit can help to identify areas of inefficiency and waste, and to promote best practices in resource allocation and management.
- It is a process of evaluating and assessing the impact of social and economic policies and programs. It involves collecting and analysing information from various stakeholders to understand the social, environmental, and economic effects of policies and programs.
- By involving stakeholders in the process, social auditing can also help to build trust and improve communication between the government, businesses, and communities.

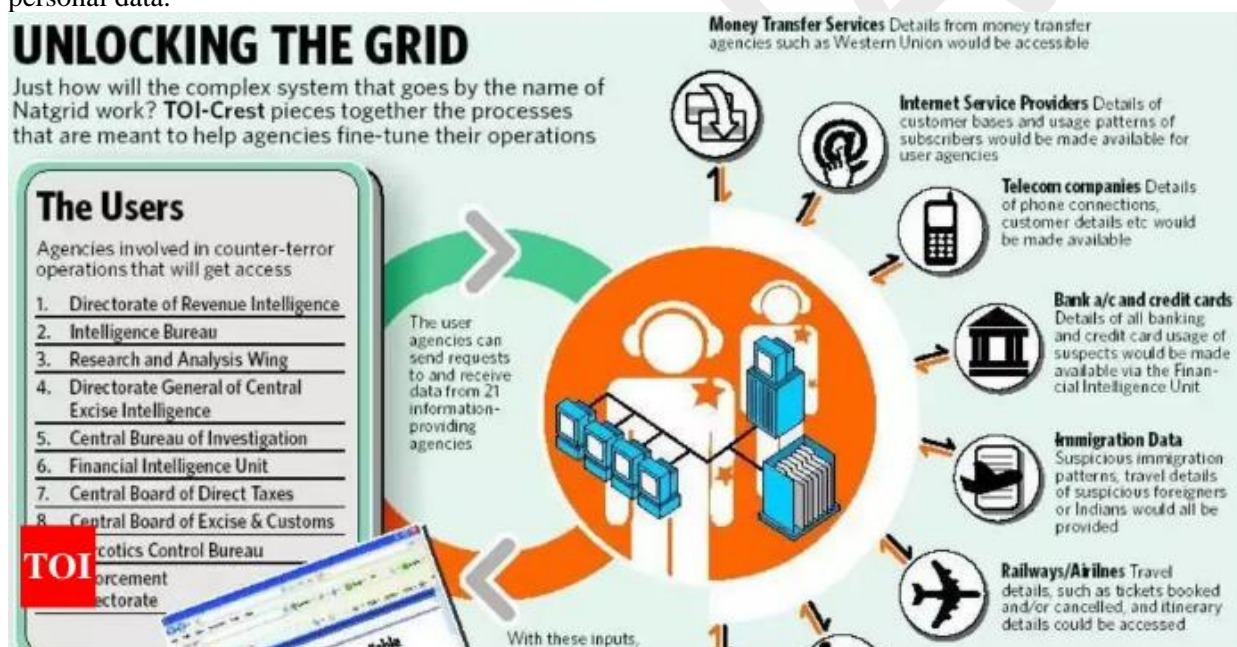
Q 91.D

- An electoral bond is like a promissory note that can be bought by any Indian citizen or company incorporated in India from select branches of the State Bank of India. The citizen or corporate can then donate the same to any eligible political party of his/her choice.
- The bonds under the Scheme shall be available for purchase for a period of 10 days each in the months of January, April, July, and October, as may be specified by the Central Government.
- Only the political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, and have secured not less than 1% of the votes polled in the last general election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly, are eligible to receive electoral bonds. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- State Bank of India is authorized to issue and encash these bonds.
- Electoral bonds are purchased anonymously by donors and are valid for 15 days from the date of issue. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**

- As debt instruments, these can be bought by donors from a bank, and the political party can then encash them.
- These can be redeemed only by an eligible party by depositing the same in its designated account maintained with a bank.
- The bonds are issued by SBI in denominations of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1 lakh, Rs 10 lakh, and Rs 1 crore. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- The bonds are available for purchase by any citizen of India for a period of ten days each in the months of January, April, July, and October as may be specified by the Central Government.

Q 92.C

- **NATGRID, attached office of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), is the integrated intelligence grid that connects databases of core security agencies. It was proposed after 2008 Mumbai terror attacks and approved in 2010. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It is conceptualised as a seamless and secure database for information on terrorists, economic crimes and similar incidents.
- It will help to track suspects with real-time data and access to classified information like immigration, banking, individual taxpayers, air and train travels.
- **NATGRID database will be available to prominent federal agencies including CBI, ED, IB, DRI (Directorate of Revenue Intelligence), NIA etc. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- NATGRID faced opposition on account of possible violations of privacy and leakage of confidential personal data.



Q 93.B

- **Statement 1 is not correct:** The Constitution makes a provision for the establishment of a Joint State Public Service Commission (JSPSC) for two or more states. While the UPSC and the SPSC are created directly by the Constitution, a JSPSC can be created by an act of Parliament on the request of the state legislatures concerned.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The chairman and members of a JSPSC are appointed by the president. They hold office for a term of six years or until they attain the age of 62 years, whichever is earlier.
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** A JSPSC presents its annual performance report to each of the concerned state governors. Each governor places the report before the state legislature.

Q 94.A

- **Civil Society 20 (C20), launched in 2013 as an official G20 Engagement Group, provides a platform for the Civil Society Organisations to bring forth non-governmental perspectives on the issues being taken up by the official G20. It gives them a forum to reflect on the primary & common concerns affecting the world and promote social & economic development. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

- India is holding the presidency of G20 this year and C20 Summit took place in **Jaipur, Rajasthan** on 30-31 July 2023. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 95.B

- Article 39 A of the Constitution of India provides for free legal aid to the poor and weaker sections of the society, to promote justice on the basis of equal opportunity. Article 14 and Article 22 (1), obligate the State to ensure equality before the law. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free Legal Services to the weaker sections of the society and to organize Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes.
- The Patron-in-chief is the Chief Justice of India.
- The Executive Chairman of the Authority is the second senior-most judge of the SC. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- At the state level, the State Legal Services Authority has been constituted to give effect to the policies of NALSA at the state level, and also to conduct Lok Adalats in the states. NALSA provides funds for the State Legal Services Authority for the implementation of various legal aids and programmes.
- At the district level also, the District Legal Services Authority has been established.
- Taluk Legal Services Committees are also constituted for each of the Taluk or Mandal or for a group of Taluk or Mandals to coordinate the activities of legal services in the Taluk and to organise Lok Adalats. Every Taluk Legal Services Committee is headed by a senior Civil Judge operating within the jurisdiction of the Committee who is its ex-officio Chairman.
- The sections of the society as enlisted under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act are entitled to free legal services, they are :
 - A member of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe;
 - A victim of trafficking in human beings or begar as referred to in Article 23 of the Constitution;
 - A woman or a child;
 - A mentally ill or otherwise disabled person;
 - A person under circumstances of undeserved want such as being a victim of a mass disaster, ethnic violence, caste atrocity, flood, drought, earthquake or industrial disaster; or
 - An industrial workman; or
 - In custody, including custody in a protective home within the meaning of clause (g) of Section 2 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956(104 of 1956); or in a juvenile home within the meaning of clause(j) of Section 2 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986 (53 of 1986); or in a psychiatric hospital or psychiatric nursing home within the meaning of clause (g) of Section 2 of the Mental Health Act, 1987(14 of 1987);or
 - a person in receipt of annual income less than the amount mentioned in the following schedule (or any other higher amount as may be prescribed by the State Government), if the case is before a Court other than the Supreme Court, and less than Rs 5 Lakh, if the case is before the Supreme Court.
 - A woman is entitled to free legal aid irrespective of her income or financial status. A woman is eligible to apply for free legal aid by virtue of Section 12(c) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
 - Senior citizens' eligibility for free legal aid depends on the Rules framed by the respective State Governments in this regard.
 - A child is eligible for free legal aid till the age of majority i.e. 18 years. This is effectuated by Section 12 (c) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

Q 96.A

- **Right to Information Act, 2005:**
 - The RTI Act is a powerful tool that allows Indian citizens to access information held by public authorities at the central and state government levels.
 - The Right to Information Act has significantly contributed to promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in India's governance system.
 - It enables citizens to exercise their right to know and hold public authorities accountable for their actions and decisions.
- **Private organizations as Public Authorities:**
 - According to a significant ruling by the Central Information Commission (CIC) in 2008, **private organizations that are involved in performing public duties, providing public services, or utilizing public funds can be considered "public authorities" under the RTI Act. Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- This means that they are also subject to the obligations and requirements of the Act, including the disclosure of information upon request. Enacting the RTI Act in India was a landmark decision for several reasons:
- **Disposal of request:**
 - **In the normal course, information to an applicant shall be supplied within 30 days from the receipt of the application by the public authority. If the information sought concerns the life or liberty of a person, it shall be supplied within 48 hours. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **Failure to dispose of Information:**
 - The applicant can appeal to the first appellate authority who is an officer senior in rank to the Public Information Officer;
 - ✓ **If the applicant is not supplied information within the prescribed time of thirty days or 48 hours, as the case may be,**
 - ✓ **If he is not satisfied with the information furnished to him.**
 - Such an appeal should be filed within a period of thirty days from the date on which the limit of 30 days of supply of information is expired or from the date on which the information or decision of the Public Information Officer is received.

Q 97.A

- **Sabang Port**
 - Sabang Port is located in the Aceh Province of **Indonesia**. It is roughly 700 km from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Sabang is at the entrance of the Strait of Malacca. **Malacca Straits is a narrow stretch of the sea between Indonesia and Malaysia.** The successful development of this vital port would allow India easier access to the Malacca Straits. **Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **Ekatha Harbour**
 - 'Ekatha Harbour' is a harbour for the Coast Guard of the **Maldives** National Defence Force (MNDF). It is located at Sifavaru in Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTF) atoll. The UTF Harbour Project is among the most significant Indian grant-in-aid projects in the Maldives. At UTF atoll India is assisting in the construction of a naval dockyard. **Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **Chittagong Port**
 - The Chittagong or Chhatogram port is one of the important **seaports of Bangladesh**, located in the region of Chittagong hill tracts. It is the main seaport of Bangladesh and is located on the bank of the Karnaphuli River. The port of Chittagong was known as Shetgang as early as the 4th century BC, and it received ships from the Middle East and China. **Hence pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
 - Almost 90% of Bangladesh's exports and imports are now handled by the Chittagong Port. In the colonial era, the Chittagong Port was one of the largest ports of eastern India through which cargo was carried to the borders of Myanmar through railways and roadways.

Q 98.B

- The **Parliament**, under **Article 327**, enacted certain provisions, namely:
 - **Representation of People Act, 1950:** The Act, provides for **allocation of seats and delimitation** of constituencies of the **Parliament and state legislatures**, officers related to **conduct of elections, preparation of electoral rolls, and manner of filling seats** in the Council of States allotted to Union Territories. **Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
 - **The Representation of People Act, 1951:** It provides for the **conduct of elections** of the **Houses of Parliament** and to the House or **Houses of the Legislature** of each State, the **qualifications and disqualifications for membership** of those Houses, the corrupt practices and other **offences** at or in connection with such elections and the decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections. **Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
 - **The Delimitation Commission Act, 1952:** It provides for the **readjustment of seats, the delimitation and reservation of territorial constituencies**, and other related matters. **Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
 - **The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Election Act of 1952:** It provides for the conduct of **Presidential and vice presidential elections** and mechanisms for the **settlement of any dispute** arising out of such elections. **Hence, pair 4 is correctly matched.**

Q 99.B

- Section 26 of the RTI Act, 2005 states that the appropriate government may develop and organize educational programmes to advance the understanding of the public towards the exercise of rights under the Act. **Hence option (b) is correct.**

- Central Information Commission has been set up under the RTI Act, 2005, and hence, is a statutory body. **Hence option (a) is not correct.**
- Official Secrets Act, 1923 is still in force, but the RTI Act contains provisions whereby in case of inconsistency, the RTI Act is to prevail. **Hence option (c) is not correct.**
- The annual reports of CIC are submitted to the Central Government which places them before the Houses of Parliament. Similarly, the State Information Commissions submit reports to the State Government which are then placed before the State Legislature. **Hence option (d) is not correct.**

Q 100.B

- **National Food Security Act, (NFSA) 2013 :**
 - The Act legally entitles upto **75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population** to receive subsidized foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System.
 - About two thirds of the population therefore is covered under the Act to receive highly subsidized foodgrains.
 - As a step towards women empowerment, the eldest woman of the household of age 18 years or above is mandated to be the head of the household for the purpose of issuing of ration cards under the Act.
- **Life-cycle approach:**
 - One of the guiding principles of the Act is its life-cycle approach **wherein special provisions have been made for pregnant women and lactating mothers** and children in the age group of 6 months to 14 years **by entitling them to receive nutritious meal free of cost. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - The act provides them nutritious meal free of cost through a widespread network of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) centres, called **Anganwadi Centres** under ICDS scheme and also through schools under **Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme.**
 - Higher nutritional norms have been prescribed for malnourished children upto 6 years of age.
 - **Pregnant women and lactating mothers are further entitled to receive cash maternity benefit of not less than Rs. 6,000 to partly compensate for the wage loss during the period of pregnancy and also to supplement nutrition. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **Coverage and Entitlement under the NFSA:**
 - Beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act fall into two categories: **Priority Households (PHH) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households.**
 - **While AAY households, which constitute poorest of the poor are entitled to 35 kg of foodgrains per family per month,** irrespective of size of family and priority households are entitled to 5 kg per person per month depending on the members of family. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**

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