

# INSIGHTSONINDIA



## DAILY QUIZ JULY 2017

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Q.No.	QUESTION	SOLUTION
JULY 1, 2017		
1.	<p>‘COMMIT’ programme, recently in the news, is</p> <p>(a) A capacity-building programme for officials of the Union Government</p> <p>(b) A PRAGATI-like platform for state governments</p> <p>(c) An sub-component of India’s Universal Immunisation Programme in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new training programme Comprehensive Online Modified Modules on Induction Training (COMMIT) for <b>State Government officials</b> (not ‘officials of the Union Government’, as has been mentioned in option ‘a’) was recently launched.</li> <li>The objective of this training programme is to <i>improve the public service delivery mechanism and provide citizen centric administration</i> through capacity building of officials who interact with the citizens on day-to-day basis.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
2.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Productivity of parliament sessions has steadily decreased since economic reforms</li> <li>No legislative institution in India has a mandated ‘minimum-number-of-days’ to meet annually</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>a) 1 only</p> <p>b) 2 only</p> <p>c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Source and Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: For a more representative house</a>;</p> <p>Both statements are incorrect. See image (it is from 2015 and specific to parliament’s budget sessions, but it helps negate statement</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regarding statement</li> <li>Odisha has mandated a minimum of 60 days for the State Assembly to sit.</li> </ol>
3.	<p>‘Advanced Landing Grounds’ sometimes appears in the news related to the affairs of</p> <p>(a) High altitude solar-powered wi-fi beaming drones</p> <p>(b) Driverless cars</p> <p>(c) India’s border infrastructure</p> <p>(d) ISRO’s Reuseable Launch Vehicle Technology Platform</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Not all rosy with border infrastructure</a>;</p>
4.	<p>Which country’s lawmakers most recently approved a bill aimed at cracking down on hate speech on social networks, and also a bill legalising same-sex marriage?</p> <p>(a) Turkey</p> <p>(b) Canada</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>A GK question.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Germany legalises gay marriage</a>;</p>

	<p>(c) Netherlands</p> <p>(d) Germany</p>	
5.	<p>The first newspaper to be published in the country was</p> <p>(a) The Bengal Gazette</p> <p>(b) Sambad Kaumudi</p> <p>(c) Indian Mirror</p> <p>(d) Sudharak</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>James Augustus Hickey in 1780 started The Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser, the first newspaper in Indian which was seized in 1872 because of its outspoken criticism of the Government.</p> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>; A brief history of Modern India, Spectrum;</p>
6.	<p>The Logistics Performance Index, in the latest edition of which India moved up nineteen places, is released by the</p> <p>(a) World Bank</p> <p>(b) World Economic Forum</p> <p>(c) UN Conference on Trade and Development</p> <p>(d) World Trade Organisation</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>“More than seven thousand reforms have been implemented to improve the ease of doing business. Processes have been simplified and made transparent. Government has repealed over twelve hundred outdated laws. These are just a few examples. Consequently, India has moved up by thirty two places in the last two years in the Global Competitiveness Index of the World Economic Forum. This is the highest for any country. India moved up nineteen places on the World Bank Logistics Performance Index of 2016. We have also moved up sixteen places on the <i>Global Innovation Index of the World Intellectual Property Organisation</i> in 2016. We are third among the top ten FDI destinations listed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.”</p> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
7.	<p>Of the following list of countries, which one should be prioritised by India to cooperate with in regulation of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and combating drug trafficking?</p> <p>(a) Russia</p> <p>(b) Nigeria</p> <p>(c) Congo Republic</p> <p>(d) Thailand</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Asia — comprising <i>Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka</i> — is wedged between the world’s two largest areas of illicit poppy cultivation, commonly referred to as the Golden Crescent (mainly Afghanistan and Pakistan) and the Golden Triangle (mainly Myanmar, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam).</li> <li>• Most of these countries in South Asia have a long history of psychotropic substance use with opium and cannabis being the most popular traditional drugs available and used. Epidemics of heroin use and injecting in this sub-region, which took off in the early 1980s, have expanded in the recent past with the addition of pharmaceutical injecting.</li> </ul>

		Improvisation: <a href="#">PIB</a> ; <a href="#">UNODC</a> ;
8.	<p>Following the circulation of videos on social media platforms showing bouncing 'plastic rice balls', the Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Development Agency (APEDA) recently issued a clarification. While refuting the 'plastic rice' tag, it attributed the 'bouncing' nature of the rice balls to</p> <p>(a) The elastic nature of the surface on which they were dropped</p> <p>(b) High levels of a particular species bacteria</p> <p>(c) Variation in the percentages of starch constituents in rice germ plasm</p> <p>(d) Moisture content of raw rice</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>"According to APEDA, the buoyancy of rice balls dropping on a hard surface is its natural property and it depends on the amylose content. Rice starch consists of two main components — amylose and amylopectin — generally in a proportion of 25:75. However, there exists a lot of variation in germ plasm with respect to proportion of amylose and amylopectin. If, amylose is low (&lt;10%), the rice on cooking tends to become very sticky and the rice balls made of such cooked rice will have no buoyancy on dropping to a surface. However, the rice balls made up of cooked rice from intermediate to high amylose (22-30%) type rice, will have buoyancy and these balls will jump for three-four times when dropped on hard surface."</p> <p><a href="#">Insights Daily Current Affairs</a>;</p>
JULY 2, 2017		
1.	<p>Which one of the following properties, classified specifically as 'natural', is the latest to be inscribed on the World Heritage List?</p> <p>(a) Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks</p> <p>(b) Khangchendzonga National Park</p> <p>(c) Western Ghats</p> <p>(d) Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <div> <p>Natural (7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (2014)</li> <li>Kaziranga National Park (1985)</li> <li>Keoladeo National Park (1985)</li> <li>Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)</li> <li>Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988)</li> <li>Sundarbans National Park (1987)</li> <li>Western Ghats (2012)</li> </ul> <p>Mixed (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)</li> </ul> </div> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Sunderbans steadily losing its famed mangroves</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">WHC: India</a>;</p>
2.	<p>Why is the Indian Sunderbans steadily losing its famed mangroves?</p> <p>(a) Prop roots of the mangrove trees are increasingly being cut by local communities to construct</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How climate change and sea level rise has contributed to the phenomenon of losing land, including mangrove forests in the Sunderbans, in the last part of the 21st century: This is because there is less fresh water flow and sediment</li> </ul>

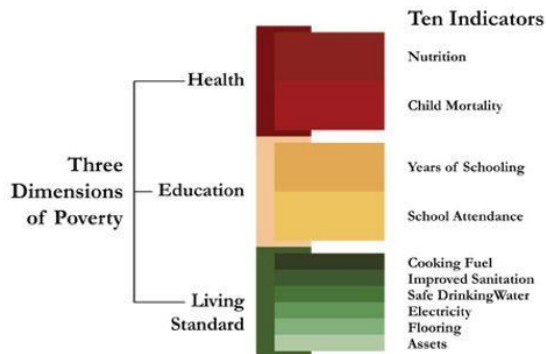
	<p>impermeable fencing against attacks by an increasing population of tigers</p> <p>(b) There is less fresh water flow, while the rate of sea level rise is increasing</p> <p>(c) Over-fishing is depriving the mangroves of its natural eco-balance</p> <p>(d) Dumping of toxic material into the river waters in Bangladesh find their way into the Indian side due to the mild variation in elevation of the entire Sunderbans</p>	<p>supply in the western (Indian) part of the delta, so we have starvation of sediment and the rate of sea level rise is higher than sediment supply. Hence we are losing land, including mangrove forest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The eastern (Bangladesh) side of the delta is gaining land because of the huge amount of sediment and water flow from the Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Sunderbans steadily losing its famed mangroves;</a></p>
3.	<p>The Vijay Kelkar Task Force's report from 2003 was recently in the news. It is associated with</p> <p>(a) Indirect taxes</p> <p>(b) Border Infrastructure</p> <p>(c) Parliamentary privileges</p> <p>(d) Merging the railway budget with the general Union budget</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>2003: The Vajpayee government forms a task force under Vijay Kelkar to recommend tax reforms.</p> <p>2004: Vijay Kelkar, then advisor to the Finance Ministry, recommends the GST to replace the existing tax regime.</p> <p>GST FAQ: <a href="#">Ministry of Information and Broadcasting;</a></p> <p><a href="#">TH: GST Timeline;</a></p>
4.	<p>The Changthang plateau, where the the Changpa nomads reside, is in</p> <p>(a) Sikkim</p> <p>(b) Arunachal Pradesh</p> <p>(c) Himachal Pradesh</p> <p>(d) Jammu and Kashmir</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>"As winter descends on the Changthang plateau in Ladakh, the world of the Changpa nomads transforms as drastically as the landscape of this high-altitude cold desert... And yet, for these guardians of the Changthangi, or pashmina goats, retreating to lower altitudes and more merciful climes is no option. Rather, they seek out the cold, the elemental ingredient essential to triggering the growth of the fine coat of the goats. And for it, they embrace a lifestyle honed to perfection over centuries and based on a beautiful symbiosis."</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Pashmina Plateau;</a></p>
5.	<p>'Deep Blue' and 'Deep Mind' are terms sometimes seen in the news in the context of</p> <p>(a) Mining Deep Seabed Mineral Resources</p> <p>(b) Artificial Intelligence</p> <p>(c) India's Polar Regions Research Programme</p> <p>(d) Defense indigenisation</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>"I was 15 years old when Garry Kasparov" ... was defeated by ... "IBM's Deep Blue in 1997. The idea of man versus machine sounded outlandish at the time: we didn't have a personal computer at home and my exposure to computers was limited to the neat row of five computers in the new computer lab at school..."</p>

		<p><a href="#">THBL</a>: Google AI beats Chinese master in ancient game of GO;</p> <p><a href="#">TH</a>: <a href="#">Checkmated by machine</a>;</p>
6.	<p>With reference to a 'dead zone', consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Less oxygen dissolved in the water is often referred to as a 'dead zone'</li> <li>2. Such zones can occur naturally</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p><b>Widening dead zone</b> The dead zone of a sea is a region of low oxygen content where no living organism can survive. This can be caused by algal bloom, when it dies and sucks up the oxygen in the waters. The intensifying algal bloom in the Gulf of Mexico suggests that this year will see the largest spread of dead zone in its waters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypoxic zones are areas in the ocean of such low oxygen concentration that animal life suffocates and dies, and as a result are sometimes called "dead zones."</li> <li>• Hypoxic zones can occur naturally, but scientists are concerned about the areas created or enhanced by human activity. There are many physical, chemical, and biological factors that combine to create dead zones, but nutrient pollution is the primary cause of those zones created by humans.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">NOAA: What is a dead zone?</a>;</p> <p>TH, 2nd July 2017;</p>
JULY 3, 2017		
1.	<p>Consider the following statements about a country:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is an important supplier of defence equipment to India</li> <li>2. Despite being an extremely water scarce region, it exports high-value agri-produce to many parts of the world</li> <li>3. It is known as the land of innovations in water management</li> </ol> <p>The statements given above refer to which one of the following countries?</p> <p>(a) Netherlands</p> <p>(b) UAE</p> <p>(c) Russia</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Indo-Israeli partnership is likely to extend to new areas. Israel is already an important supplier of defence equipment to India; the cooperation is likely to extend to water and agriculture. In the run-up to the PM's visit, <a href="#">ICRIER</a> and the Israeli Embassy in India collaborated on a brainstorming session on a potential partnership between the two countries on water.</li> <li>• It is well-known that India is water stressed: The country's annual per capita availability of water is less than 1,500 cubic meters (cum). But Israel has per capita water availability of less than 200 cum. It is an extremely water scarce region. Yet, the country exports high-value agri-produce to Europe and many other parts of the world. If</li> </ul>

	(d) Israel	India has to learn about augmenting water supplies and using water efficiently, there is nothing better than learning from Israel's experience.  <a href="#">IE: Irrigation tips from an arid country;</a>
2.	<p>The 'Jainsem' is a traditional attire that some women belonging to which state regard as regular, everyday wear?</p> <p>(a) Rajasthan (b) Meghalaya (c) Himachal Pradesh (d) Telangana</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>"So, what exactly is the jainsem — the traditional attire that Lyngdoh said she had worn without problems in London and Abu Dhabi, but which the club's employees allegedly found "maid-like", and "Nepali-like"? A jainsem is made out of a piece of cloth that is typically 2.75 m or 3 m in length, and which is cut into two equal pieces to create a garment that Khasi women wear with a blouse and skirt... For the Khasi women who wear it, the jainsem is not a ceremonial dress; rather, it is regular, everyday wear... A jainsem can be made of silk, polyester or other fabric, and almost all jainsems have intricate embroidery along their lower edge.."</p> <p><a href="#">IE: Meghalaya Khasi garment Jainsem;</a></p>
3.	<p>Eggs of owls are spherical, of hummingbirds elliptical. Why are bird eggs not all quite as oval as a chicken's?</p> <p>(a) Evolution has shaped them – for instance, cliff-nesting birds lay eggs that are conical in shape to prevent them from rolling off (b) Birds that fly 'better' have evolved their bodies in a way that their eggs will be less symmetrical and more elliptical than those of lesser fliers (c) It is roughly related to the shape of brains of birds (d) It is shaped so as to fit well into the natural design that each species of bird imparts to their nest</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On a broad scale across birds, egg shape is related to flight ability. Birds that fly better have evolved their bodies in a way that their eggs will be less symmetrical and more elliptical than those of lesser fliers.</li> <li>Birds, to maintain sleek bodies for flight, have evolved elliptical and asymmetric eggs to increase egg volume without increasing egg width — this is advantageous for narrow, streamlined bodies.</li> <li>"We do not suggest that a female's flight behaviour during the egg formation period directly affects egg formation," the researchers clarified, "nor do we suggest that egg shape so strongly influences the flight abilities of female birds during their egg-laying period that selection has produced an aerodynamic egg... there are exceptions — kiwis are flightless, for example, but they lay elliptical eggs.."</li> </ul> <p>IE: Why bird eggs aren't all egg-shaped;</p>



<p>4.</p>	<p>'Depsang' and 'Demchok' were in the recent past in the news in the context of</p> <p>(a) The standoff between India-China troops</p> <p>(b) Chinese incursions in Sikkim-Bhutan-China tri-junction</p> <p>(c) Opening up of alternative routes to Kailash Manasarovar for Indian pilgrims</p> <p>(d) The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>"For its part, India would be keen to show that it recognises that the face-off is in Bhutanese territory, and the rules of engagement could be different from those of previous India-China bilateral clashes — at Depsang and Demchok in the western sector, for example."</p> <p><a href="#">From 2013-14: Border standoff – understanding Chinese motives</a>: "The last year's (2013) incident in Depsang Plains and the recent one (2014) almost 250-km South in Demchok and Chumar have some similarities and some differences. In both cases the PLA/People's Armed Police Forces personnel in sizeable strength had intruded into the territory controlled and claimed by India.. there were some important differences as well. In the case of Depsang incident, although the area intruded was beyond the 1960 claim line of China and also beyond the farthest line up to which Chinese army had reached during 1962 War, the LAC in this area has not been mutually agreed upon. Chumar area, on the other hand, was never contested till recently and was beyond the Chinese claim line of 1960. This area has always been under the effective control of India.."</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH – Step Back</a>;</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>The 'Great Mosque of al-Nuri' often appears in the news in the context of the events related to</p> <p>(a) Uttar Pradesh</p> <p>(b) West Bank</p> <p>(c) Iraq</p> <p>(d) Mindanao</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Great Mosque of al-Nuri in Mosul was recently destroyed during fighting between Iraqi government forces and the jihadist group Islamic State (IS). The area has been recaptured by Iraqi forces.</li> <li>• It is where IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi made a rare public appearance in early July 2014 and gave a speech proclaiming the creation of a new "caliphate", only weeks after his fighters seized control of the city.</li> <li>• The Great Mosque was named after Nur al-Din Mahmoud Zangi, a Turkic ruler of Mosul and Aleppo who ordered its construction in 1172, two years before his death.</li> <li>• Nur al-Din is famous for mobilising and unifying Muslim forces to wage jihad, or war in the path of God, against the Christian Crusaders.</li> <li>• Nur al-Din is also revered by jihadists for his efforts to make Sunni Muslim orthodoxy prevail over Shiism.</li> </ul>

		<a href="#">BBC: Why Mosul's Great Mosque of al-Nuri mattered;</a> <a href="#">TH: Victory in Mosul;</a>
6.	<p>The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index was developed by</p> <p>(a) NITI Aayog with Amartya Kumar Sen</p> <p>(b) Oxford Poverty &amp; Human Development Initiative with the UN Development Programme</p> <p>(c) Department of Comparative Human Development, University of Chicago</p> <p>(d) The World Economic Forum with the World Bank</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p>  <p>The diagram illustrates the 'Three Dimensions of Poverty' as stacked horizontal bars. The 'Health' dimension (top, red) includes 'Nutrition' and 'Child Mortality'. The 'Education' dimension (middle, yellow) includes 'Years of Schooling' and 'School Attendance'. The 'Living Standard' dimension (bottom, green) includes 'Cooking Fuel', 'Improved Sanitation', 'Safe Drinking Water', 'Electricity', 'Flooring', and 'Assets'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <a href="#">GMPI</a> is an international measure of acute poverty covering over 100 developing countries. It complements traditional income-based poverty measures by capturing the severe deprivations that each person faces at the same time with respect to education, health and living standards.</li> <li>• The MPI assesses poverty at the individual level. If someone is deprived in a third or more of ten (weighted) indicators (see left), the global index identifies them as 'MPI poor', and the extent – or intensity – of their poverty is measured by the number of deprivations they are experiencing.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Climate-proofed and inclusive;</a></p>
7.	<p>The 'Catch Up Effect' is an economic theory that suggests</p> <p>(a) All economies in time will converge in terms of per capita income</p> <p>(b) Resource-rich countries' growth rates are far ahead than those of their resource-poor counterparts</p> <p>(c) Reverse engineering is key to improving per capita incomes rapidly</p> <p>(d) Consumers are forced in subtly ways to increase their overall power consumption so that the country can be classified as a rapidly growing economy</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>The most appropriate/accurate answer is option 'a'.</p> <p><b><a href="#">Investopedia: Catch Up Effect:</a></b> A theory speculating that, since poorer economies tend to grow more rapidly than wealthier economies, all economies in time will converge in terms of per capita income. In other words, the poorer economies will literally "catch-up" to the more robust economies. The catch-up effect is also referred to as the theory of convergence (a phrase very often used in India's Economic Survey).</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">Th: Catch-up growth;</a></p>

JULY 4, 2017

<p>1.</p>	<p>What is the difference between a dam and a barrage?</p> <p>(a) While a dam is an impervious barrier constructed across a river valley to form a storage reservoir, a barrage refers to a section of a river between consecutive and relatively closely-spaced river bridges designed so as to minimise river turbulence</p> <p>(b) A barrage is a small dam</p> <p>(c) Both refer to impervious barriers; while water levels in a dam can be adjusted at different times, the same cannot be done in the case of a barrage</p> <p>(d) Both refer to impervious barriers; while water in the case of a dam is made to flow through specially designed spillways, in the case of a barrage it is allowed to overflow</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p><b>Improvisation and In the news:</b> “The Sundarbans present a stark example of what loss of ecology can do to a landscape and its people, as islands shrink and sediment that normally adds to landmass is trapped upstream in rivers by dams and barrages..”</p> <p><b>What is a weir?</b> It is an impervious barrier constructed across a river to raise the water level on the upstream side. The water is raised up to the required height and the water then flows over the weir.</p> <p><b>What is a dam?</b> It is a high impervious barrier constructed across a river valley to form a deep storage reservoir. The surplus water is not allowed to flow over the dam, but it flows through the spillways provided at some level built into the dam. In a weir the water overflows the weir.</p> <p><b>What is a barrage?</b> It is a weir that has adjustable gates installed over top of it, to allow different water surface heights at different times. The water level is adjusted by operating the adjustable gates.</p> <p><a href="#">GreenBugEnergy: What is the difference between a dam, a weir and a barrage?;</a></p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Fortification against erosion on the lines of the dikes in The Netherlands is one of many suggestions made to preserve the ecology of the Sundarbans. Dikes in the Netherlands have been used for prevention of flooding by which of the following water sources in The Netherlands?</p> <p>1. Sea</p> <p>2. Rivers</p> <p>3. Lakes</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(c) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p><a href="#">Dutchdikes: Typology of Dikes:</a> ‘God created the world, but the Dutch created Holland’. Dutch people like to explain how their country has been shaped by the struggle against the water. The construction of dikes is one of the key factors in this heroic story. Without dikes, half of the Netherlands would be regularly flooded by the sea and the rivers.... The lake dike separates the land from a lake, in places where a lake was formed by the closing off of the sea. In many cases, these are former sea dikes that now hold back water from a lake, instead of water from the sea.</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: The delta miracle;</a></p>

<p>3.</p>	<p>A 'National Data Repository (NDR)' was recently launched by the Government of India. The term NDR is particularly used in the context of</p> <p>(a) Exploration of Hydrocarbons</p> <p>(b) Immunisation programmes</p> <p>(c) Human clinical trials</p> <p>(d) Statistical weather and climate information</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>"The recently unveiled Open Acreage Licensing Policy and the National Data Repository together are a significant and welcome step towards opening up the hydrocarbon exploration and production industry in India."</p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regulatory agencies all over the world have the shared problem of receiving, storing and releasing huge quantities of data – initially seismic and log data. This problem increases every year as the technology of the oil industry suppliers delivers more and more data.</li> <li>To overcome these problems, National Data Repositories (NDRs) began to emerge.</li> <li>As NDRs emerged about 20 years ago, some of the early adopters in the UK and Norway started an embryonic movement to get Regulators to cooperate in developing these repositories. This was very informal until 2008 when <b>Energistics</b> created the <a href="#">NDR Work Group</a> (there are Indian entities that are members of this group).</li> <li>The <a href="#">NDR Work Group</a> focuses on promoting collaboration amongst regulatory agencies on oil and natural gas data management standards, with a particular focus on national data repositories.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>; <a href="#">TH: Open Acres</a>;</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>The 'Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas' concept has been developed and is applied by</p> <p>(a) IUCN</p> <p>(b) World Wide Fund for Nature</p> <p>(c) The Nature Conservancy</p> <p>(d) Birdlife International</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p><a href="#">Insights Daily Current Affairs</a>: The <a href="#">IBAs</a> are "places of international significance for the conservation of birds and other biodiversity" and are "distinct areas amenable to practical conservation action," according to BirdLife International.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Declaring a site as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area does not ensure that the site gets legal protection or becomes inaccessible to people. Instead BirdLife International encourages national and State governments to recognise the areas as sites of vital importance for conservation of wildlife and to empower local community-based conservation initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Nine more bird, biodiversity areas in Kerala</a>;</p>

5. It is claimed to be the costliest irrigation project to be taken up by any state till date. Following severe opposition from a section of farmers against land acquisition for the project, the state amended the 2013 land acquisition act to speed up the process. Known as the 'Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project', it is coming up in the state of

- (a) Andhra Pradesh
- (b) Telangana
- (c) Maharashtra
- (d) Karnataka

Solution: b.

Insights Daily Current Affairs: The Kaleshwaram project is an off-shoot of the original Pranahitha-Chevella Lift Irrigation Scheme taken up by the Congress government in 2007 when Andhra Pradesh was not divided. After the formation of Telangana in 2014, the TRS government redesigned the project on the ground that the original plan had too many environmental obstacles and had very low water storage provision — only about 16.5 tmc ft.

- According to engineers, KLIP has many unique features, including the longest tunnel to carry water in Asia, running up to 81 km, between the Yellampally barrage and the Mallannasagar reservoir.
- The project would also utilise the highest capacity pumps, up to 139 MW, in the country to lift water.

TH: Why is Telangana's Kaleshwaram Project important?

JULY 5, 2017

1. With reference to Internet Connectivity, measured as the percentage of a country's population with access to internet, India is better connected to the internet than

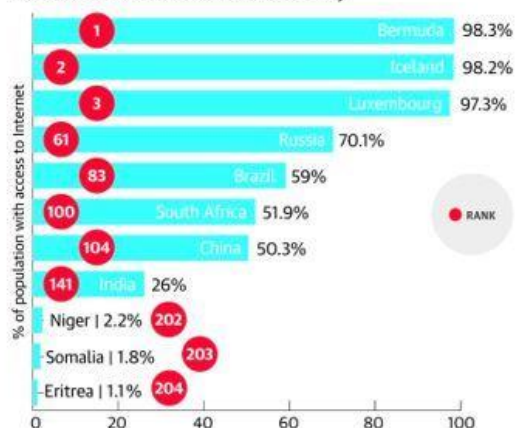
- (a) Russia
- (b) Eritrea
- (c) South Africa
- (d) Brazil

Solution: b.

#### DATA POINT

##### Online & offline

Despite making a leap in Internet connectivity, India still lags behind other BRICS nations, data from 2015 show. Bermuda tops the list of nations while many countries in sub-Saharan Africa are at the bottom when ranked on Net connectivity

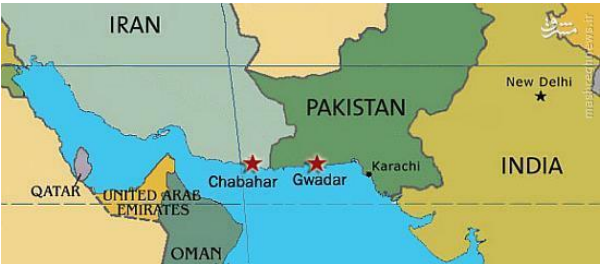


Notes: North Korea, if ranked, would have featured among the worst as only a select few citizens are reportedly authorised to access the Internet. But the country's connectivity data was not available.

SOURCE: ITU, INT

"India still lags behind other BRICS nations".. see graphic.

Op-ed Page, TH, 5th July;

2.	<p>The Chabahar port opens out to the</p> <p>(a) Gulf of Aden</p> <p>(b) Strait of Hormuz</p> <p>(c) Persian Gulf</p> <p>(d) Gulf of Oman</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p>  <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">Th: Signs of a Persian gulf;</a></p>
3.	<p>The new 'Bond Connect Scheme', an effort to liberalise and strengthen the country's capital market, was recently launched by</p> <p>(a) Russia</p> <p>(b) India</p> <p>(c) China</p> <p>(d) South Africa</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>"China opened itself to foreign investors on Monday by liberalising rules that regulate participation in its massive bond market. The new Bond Connect scheme, which was keenly awaited for months, allows large foreign investors such as banks and pension funds to buy and sell mainland Chinese bonds through offshore accounts in Hong Kong. China's bond market, the third largest in the world, is estimated to be over \$9 trillion in value and is expected to double in size over the next five years."</p> <p><a href="#">Th: Open to Capital;</a></p>
4.	<p>With the this city expressing its inability to host the 2017 edition of the Asian Athletics Championships, Bhubaneswar (Odisha) took over the responsibility. Which city was to originally host it?</p> <p>(a) Delhi</p> <p>(b) Pune</p> <p>(c) Vishakapatnam</p> <p>(d) Ranchi</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>A GK quesiton.</p> <p>Improvisation: Advertisements in many newspapers;</p> <p><a href="#">IE: Odisha presents itself as a global destination;</a></p> <p>From March: <a href="#">TH: Jharkhand opts out;</a></p>
5.	<p>The 'Customer Obsession Award' is the first of its kind instituted by this 'entity', to be given to companies who adopted consumer friendly practices in their trade. The 'entity' being referred to here is</p> <p>(a) Confederation of Indian Industry</p> <p>(b) Consumers International</p> <p>(c) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution</p> <p>(d) NITI Aayog</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>"We are trying to promote an atmosphere of self-regulation and discipline by manufacturers and dealers in their trade practices. The resultant outcome of such efforts is that the confederation of Indian Industry (CII) who has a membership of around 8300 Industries and corporates, has recently launched its first Award for 'Customer Obsession' which was given to companies who adopt consumer friendly practices in their trade.."</p> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>



<p>6.</p>	<p>The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 are framed to regulate pre-packaged commodities. As per these rules, every package shall bear which of the following declarations?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Name and address of the manufacturer</li> <li>2. Name and address of the importer in case of any imported package</li> <li>3. Common or generic name of the commodity contained in the package</li> <li>4. Maximum Retail Price</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1, 2 and 3 only (b) 2, 3 and 4 only (c) 1, 2 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011 are framed to regulate the pre-packaged commodities. Rule 6 of the said rules provides that every package shall bear thereon the following declarations:</p> <p><b>Name and address of the manufacturer/packer/importer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common or generic name of the commodity contained in the package;</li> <li>• Net quantity, in terms of standard unit of weight or measure or in number;</li> <li>• Month and year of manufacture/ pack/ import;</li> <li>• Retail sale price in the form of Maximum Retail Price (MRP) Rs..... Inclusive of all taxes</li> <li>• Consumer care details.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>
JULY 6, 2017		
<p>1.</p>	<p>The 'Beijing Declaration', 'Brasilia Declaration', 'Moscow Declaration' and 'New Delhi Declaration', all of which are related to education, have been adopted by members of</p> <p>(a) BRICS (b) G20 (c) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (d) ASEAN K-12</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>The most recent of these is the Beijing Declaration on Education, adopted on July 5th, 2017.</p> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In India, community policing was prevalent in ancient India</li> <li>2. During the Mughal era, policing was the primary concern of the government, followed by revenue collection and military preparedness</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In India, community policing was prevalent in ancient India. In fact, the key feature of ancient police system was its community orientation. The references to police organisation and specific powers of law enforcement with preventive, investigative and prosecuting duties can be traced back to Maurya era.</li> <li>• During later era of Sultanate and Mughal era, the policing became secondary. The primary concerns of the government forces was militaristic and collection of revenue.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">GKToday: Community Policing;</a></p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">PIB;</a></p>

3.	<p>The recently-launched 'MERIT' app is related to the</p> <p>(a) Ministry of Human Resource Development</p> <p>(b) Ministry of Culture</p> <p>(c) Ministry of Mines</p> <p>(d) Ministry of Power</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The Union Minister of State (IC) for Power, Coal, New &amp; Renewable Energy and Mines launched the 'MERIT app (Merit Order Despatch of Electricity for Rejuvenation of Income and Transparency)' and the e-bidding portal for providing e-Bidding solution to States to select Independent Power Producers (IPPs) for procurement of power by transferring their domestic coal under the scheme of flexibility in utilization of domestic coal. The app and the web portal would result in optimum utilization of Coal, leading to lower generation costs and ultimately lesser cost of electricity for the consumers.</p> <p><a href="#">PIB: MERIT App and e-bidding portal launched;</a></p>
4.	<p>Of the following list of offices, the appointment process to which office can today be considered most transparent?</p> <p>(a) A Judge of the Supreme Court</p> <p>(b) Governor, Reserve Bank of India</p> <p>(c) Attorney General of India</p> <p>(d) Members of the Election Commission</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Option 'b' is the most appropriate answer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regarding appointment of a Judge to the Supreme Court:</b> The collegium system is not a transparent process. <a href="#">TH: Re-examine collegium system;</a></li> <li>• <b>Regarding Governor, RBI:</b> 'The government set up the Financial Sector Search and Recruitment Committee — headed by the Cabinet Secretary — to choose the members and heads of the RBI, the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority.'</li> <li>• <b>Regarding AG of India:</b> The Attorney General (AG) is appointed by the president. He must be a person who is qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court. In other words, he must be a citizen of India and he 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.</li> <li>• <b>Regarding the Chief Election Commissioner:</b> "Who should be shortlisted? Who shortlists these names? What is the eligibility? There is nothing to show the procedure followed in selecting them," Chief Justice Khehar observed. He said that even the selection procedure of the CBI Director is formalised by a written law, but not that of Election Commissioners. The court was hearing a PIL petition... contending that successive governments failed in the</li> </ul>



constitutional obligation to set up a “fair, just and trans- parent process” for selection of ECs.

[TH: Selection of ECs must be transparent, SC tells Centre;](#)

5. What has the traditionally accepted levels of inflation levels (per year) been in developed countries such as the United States of America and countries of the European Union?

- (a) 1 - 2 %
- (b) 4 - 6 %
- (c) 0 or negative
- (d) 8 - 10 %

Solution: a.

[Investopedia](#) (a website which provides information, usually, from the perspective of developed countries): ‘Inflation levels of 1-2% per year are generally considered acceptable (even desirable in some ways), while inflation rates greater than 3% represent a dangerous zone that could cause the currency to become devalued.’

Improvisation and [In the news](#): ‘Paradoxically, policymakers are toying with the idea of tweaking up the inflation target for the industrialised economies though most central banks have consistently fallen short of the current 2% rate in the last 10 years.. The Basel-based Bank for International Settlements (BIS) is the most recent to sound a note of caution. Its annual report points to the risks to financial stability from low inflation and the consequent asset price bubbles, unless central banks moved away from their persistence with ultra-low cost of lending.’

6. The Western Ghats is recognised as one of the 34 hotspot ecosystems in the world in terms of species and endemism. Which of the following group of states account for the richest biodiversities of the Western Ghats?

- (a) Maharashtra and Gujarat
- (b) Karnataka and Kerala
- (c) Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh
- (d) Karnataka and Telangana

Solution: b.

### Why Western Ghats

- The Western Ghats has been recognised as one of the 34 hotspot ecosystems in the world in terms of species and endemism. Among the 5,500 flowering plants there, 2,015 species are endemic
- The Southern Western Ghats consisting of southern parts of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu are the richest in terms of bio-diversity
- In terms of plant diversity, over 4,500 flowering plants are present, of which 1,500 are endemic to the Ghats

[TH: Of plant species few and far between;](#)

JULY 7, 2017

1. The recent visit to Israel by an Indian Prime Minister (PM) was the first since its birth in 1948. The India-Israel Joint Statement issued during this visit of the PM does **not** specifically include references to which one of the following issues?

- (a) Cyber security
- (b) 'Make in India' initiative
- (c) Israeli-Palestinian peace process
- (d) Principle of collective defence

Solution: d.

Cooperation on cybersecurity issues, discussed by officials during Mr. Modi's visit, constitutes a breakthrough of sorts, given that Israel tends to limit cooperation in this area to a few countries.

The [Joint Statement](#) reads, "Reaffirming the importance of bilateral defence cooperation over the years, it was agreed that future developments in this sphere should focus on joint development of defence products, including transfer of technology from Israel, with a special emphasis on the 'Make in India' initiative."

The same Joint Statement also mentions, "The two Prime Ministers discussed the developments pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process."

**Additional Information** (regarding option 'd', based on [THIS](#) TH article): [Article 5](#) of NATO's founding treaty (Washington Treaty) "remains a unique and enduring principle that binds its members together, committing them to protect each other and setting a spirit of solidarity within the Alliance." It means that an attack against one Ally is considered as an attack against all Allies.

Source and Improvisation: [TH: Modi in Israel](#);

2. The 'Wari-Warkari' tradition is more than 700 years old. It is celebrated by some people in the state of

- (a) Gujarat
- (b) Maharashtra
- (c) Goa
- (d) Karnataka

Solution: b.

### Fact check

- Pandharpur yatra tradition is more than 700 years old

- Three different sets of pilgrimages begin from Alandi, Dehu and Paithan for Pandharpur in Sholapur

- The journey takes 21 days



[Th: A famous Yatra has a social face online](#);

[Q70, CS\(P\) 2017](#);

<p>3.</p>	<p>As per the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010</p> <p>(a) A Nationally Protected Monument is one which has been listed for submission for recognition as a World Heritage Site</p> <p>(b) Persons having buildings or houses within a hundred metres from any centrally-protected monument shall be resettled outside the regulated zone</p> <p>(c) Construction activities pertaining to Infrastructure of National Importance may be permitted within the regulated zone by the National Monuments Authority</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The <b>Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2010</b> was passed with provisions to protect ancient monuments and antiquities and regulate all construction activity around them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It specified a 'prohibited area', which meant that no construction activity (erection or a building, including any addition or extension thereto either vertically or horizontally) could take place within 100 m in all directions of a monument.</li> <li>However, persons having buildings or houses in the prohibited area (100 metres from protected monuments) of any Centrally -protected monument may undertake repairs and renovation after obtaining permission from the Competent Authority on the recommendation of the National Monuments Authority. (<a href="#">PIB</a>)</li> <li>There was another regulated area, which was 200 m beyond the prohibited area where persons may undertake construction, reconstruction, repairs and renovation, but only after obtaining permission from the competent authority on the recommendation of the National Monuments Authority.</li> <li>Prior to this amendment, the prohibitions and regulations related to construction activities around nationally protected monuments were provided for in rules, not the legislation itself.</li> </ul> <p>From February: <a href="#">TH: Monumental mistakes</a>;  <a href="#">TH: Making of a monumental crisis</a>;</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>The temples of Odisha, most of which are located in the geographical expanse of ancient Kalinga, constitute a distinct sub-style within which one of the following orders of temples?</p> <p>(a) Nagara</p> <p>(b) Dravida</p> <p>(c) Vesara</p> <p>(d) It is considered altogether a different temple order</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main architectural features of Odisha temples are classified in three orders, i.e., rekhapida, pidhadeul and</li> <li>Most of the main temple sites are located in ancient Kalinga—modern Puri District, including Bhubaneswar or ancient Tribhuvaneshvara, Puri and Konark.</li> <li>The temples of Odisha constitute a distinct sub-style within the nagara order.</li> <li>In general, here the shikhara, called deul in Odisha, is vertical almost until the top when it suddenly curves sharply inwards. Deuls are</li> </ul>

preceded, as usual, by mandapas called jagamohana in Odisha.

Pg 78, An Introduction to Indian Art;

Improvisation: Asian Athletics Championships Advertisement in newspapers today.

5. In its Three Year Action Agenda, the Niti Aayog's solution to the issue of municipal solid waste includes

1. Setting up of biomethanation plants and incinerators for large cities
2. Composting method for smaller towns and rural areas
3. Setting up a 'Waste to Energy Corporation of India', that will play a role akin to the National Highway Authority of India albeit in the Solid Waste Management sector

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: b.

7.35. On methods of final disposal, options such as biogas and composting are not sustainable solutions in larger cities

55

since they generate by-products or residues in large volumes that these cities will find difficult to dispose of efficiently. Only incineration (also called Waste to Energy), thermal pyrolysis and plasma gasification technologies offer the sustainable disposal solutions. However, pyrolysis is not suitable for MSW due to its diverse composition and plasma technology remains too costly to adopt so far. Hence, incineration or "Waste to Energy" is the best

"...There are, however, mixed reports on existing waste to energy plants operating in the country on technical and environmental grounds. At the core of the problem is the nature of urban waste in the country, it contain a mix of materials that is unsuitable for efficient incineration. Since 80 per cent of urban waste consists of organic materials such as damp food scraps, the existing plants have found it difficult in meeting prescribed air quality standards."

Improvisation: PIB: [Confronting the challenge of mounting waste](#);

[NITI Aayog Three Year Action Agenda](#);

A critical review of NITI Aayog's proposals on SWM – [IE: Don't just light the fire](#);

JULY 8, 2017

1. The 'JIGYASA' programme will help some citizens perform which one of the following fundamental duties?

- (a) Understanding religious, linguistic or sectional diversities to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst the people of India
- (b) Learning about the noble ideals that inspired the national struggle for freedom, in order to cherish and follow them
- (c) Acknowledging the rich heritage of the country's composite culture, thereby valuing and preserving it

Solution: d.

- "Jigyasa", a student- scientist connect programme was officially launched in the national capital recently.
- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), has joined hands with Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) to implement this programme.
- The focus: Connecting school students and scientists so as to extend student's classroom learning with that of a very well planned research laboratory based learning.
- "JIGYASA" would inculcate the culture of inquisitiveness on one hand and scientific temper on the other, amongst the school students and their teachers.

	(d) Developing scientific temper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“JIGYASA” is one of the major initiative taken up by CSIR at national level, during its Platinum Jubilee Celebration Year.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB: “JIGYASA” student-scientist connect programme launched;</a></p> <p>Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p>
2.	<p>India’s first legislative assembly (Vidhan Sabha) to have become paperless belongs to the state of</p> <p>(a) Karnataka</p> <p>(b) Himachal Pradesh</p> <p>(c) Madhya Pradesh</p> <p>(d) Tripura</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>“..In the first session on July 7, 2017, two presentations will be made: one on the Paperless Himachal Legislative Assembly and another on Good Governance Index..”</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">PIB: Regional conference on good governance and replication of best practices in governance;</a></p> <p>From 2014: <a href="#">IE: India gets its first paperless assembly;</a></p>
3.	<p>India declared itself free from Bird Flu (H5N1 and H5N8 strains), and notified the same to the organisation ‘OIE’. This refers to a body that is recognised as a reference organisation by the</p> <p>(a) World Trade Organisation</p> <p>(b) World Health Organisation</p> <p>(c) European Society for Animal Welfare</p> <p>(d) TRAFFIC, the global wildlife trade monitoring network</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>India has declared itself free from Bird Flu (highly pathogenic Avian Influenza – H5N1 and H5N8) and notified it to the World Organisation for Animal Health. The move will help it resume export of poultry products to the countries which had banned trade in such items early this year.</p> <p><a href="#">About OIE:</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to fight animal diseases at global level led to the creation of the Office International des Epizooties through the international Agreement signed on January 25th 1924. In May 2003 the Office became the World Organisation for Animal Health but kept its historical acronym OIE.</li> <li>It is an intergovernmental organisation (181 member countries) responsible for improving animal health worldwide.</li> <li>It is recognised as a reference body by the World Trade Organization</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Insights Daily Current Affairs;</a></p> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>
4.	<p>With reference to the extant provisions related to voting in a Presidential Election in India, consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. Voting in defiance of a political party’s decision can attract disqualification on the ground of</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>“..in the (Election) Commission’s opinion, voting or not voting as per his/her own free will at the Presidential election will <b>not</b> come within the ambit of disqualification under the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution of India, and the electors are at liberty</p>

	<p>defection under the Tenth Schedule to the Constitution of India</p> <p>2. Voting is compulsory, viz. there is no option of refraining from voting at the election</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p><b>to vote or not to vote</b> at the Presidential election as per their own free will and choice..”</p> <p><a href="#">PIB: Clarification regarding right to vote or not to vote;</a></p>
5.	<p>‘Human Challenge’ and ‘Controlled Human Infection Models’, terms seen sometimes in the news, are related to studies in which</p> <p>(a) Healthy adult volunteers are infected with a pathogen to assess a vaccine’s ability to protect against it</p> <p>(b) Antimicrobial Resistance is purposely aided in a community of individuals to understand its various mechanisms and stages of development</p> <p>(c) Drug efficacy, whose tests on animals have failed, are tested on humans under controlled conditions</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ‘human challenge’ and ‘controlled human infection models (CHIM)’ can help vaccine developers evaluate the protective efficacy of vaccines outside of large, costly clinical trials.</li> <li>• Studies using these models are conducted in highly controlled conditions and involve intentionally infecting healthy adult volunteers with a pathogen to assess a vaccine’s ability to protect against it.</li> <li>• However, not all strains are amenable to a human-first, or CHIM approach. The strain of parasite, for instance, must only induce as much infection as can be treated by available medicines and only healthy, human volunteers — completely aware of the risks and have given informed consent — ought to be recruited for trials.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PATH: Advancing Vaccine Science;</a></p> <p><a href="#">TH: Central labs moot ‘human first’ approach to test malaria vaccine;</a></p>
6.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. The Global Electric Vehicles Outlook Report 2017 is periodically released by the International Energy Agency</p> <p>2. Tesla is a company that focuses on energy innovation and which manufactures battery packs and solar roof tiles</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Both statements are correct.</p> <p><a href="#">About Tesla;</a></p> <p><a href="#">Tesla Solar Roof;</a></p> <p>Source and Improvisation: <a href="#">Th: Electric Horses</a></p>



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

JULY 10, 2017

1. India's Trademark Registry has assigned trademarks for which of the following?

1. An image trademark for a structure
2. A trademark for a uniform (garment worn by members of the same organisation)
3. A brand of bottled mineral water

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

Knowing about options 1 and 2 (recently in the news) would help one answer this question.

- [TH: Saint Teresa's blue-bordered sari an IP now:](#)  
The famous blue-bordered sari of Mother Teresa, who has been canonised as Saint Teresa of Calcutta by the Vatican, has been recognised as an Intellectual Property of the Missionaries of Charity. It is the first time ever that a uniform has been protected under the Intellectual Property rights.

From 24th June, 2017: [Taj Palace gets an image trademark;](#)

[IPIndiaOnline: Well Known Marks;](#)

2. Arrange the following list of Mediterranean Sea-littoral countries in a clockwise manner, as they would appear on a map:

1. Turkey
2. Lebanon
3. Syria
4. Greece
5. Israel

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 4 - 1 - 3 - 5 - 3  
(b) 1 - 4 - 5 - 2 - 3  
(c) 4 - 1 - 3 - 2 - 5  
(d) 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

Solution: c.



Improvisation: [TH: Divided island;](#)

3. India's first World Heritage City, declared by the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO, is

- (a) Jaipur  
(b) Ahmedabad  
(c) Delhi  
(d) Mumbai

Solution: b.

- The walled city of Ahmadabad, founded by Sultan Ahmad Shah in the 15th century, on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati river, presents a rich architectural heritage from the sultanate period, notably the Bhadra citadel, the walls and gates of the Fort city and numerous mosques

		<p>and tombs as well as important Hindu and Jain temples of later periods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The urban fabric is made up of densely-packed traditional houses (pols) in gated traditional streets (puras) with characteristic features such as bird feeders, public wells and religious institutions.</li> <li>• The city continued to flourish as the capital of the State of Gujarat for six centuries, up to the present.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Ahmedabad becomes India's first WHCity;</a></p> <p><a href="#">UNESCO;</a></p>
4.	<p>'WINGS' forum, the first edition of which was recently organised in the capital, will assist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Growth of the civil aviation sector</li> <li>(b) Reduction of air pollution in the National Capital Territory region</li> <li>(c) Creation of environment-friendly public transportation systems</li> <li>(d) In provisioning of open spaces across Indian cities for children to play</li> </ul>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This event brought together the key stakeholders of the Aviation Sector such as States, Tourism Departments and Tour Operators as a Group representing airline consumers to facilitate interaction with various airlines, airport operators, cargo operators and other ecosystem players at a common forum.</li> <li>• WINGS-2017 lived up to expectations and served as a unique outcome oriented platform for the stakeholders of the entire ecosystem in the Civil Aviation sector. Some notable outcomes expected from the forum are identification, marketing of new routes, destination and most importantly making flying accessible to the citizens across the country.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>
5.	<p>Which one of the following reasons is considered to be the cause of the resentment and subsequent outbreak against the British on July 10th, 1806 by sepoys at Vellore?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) New regulations that ordered changes in shaving style and prohibition of ornaments and caste marks for Indian troops</li> <li>(b) Severity of punishments meted out by the British to sepoys who conspired with the many sons of Tipu Sultan of Mysore, who had been lodged in the Vellore Fort, to recapture Mysore</li> <li>(c) Sepoys were by now expected to serve in 'foreign' regions without any</li> </ul>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>The incident began when the sepoys broke into the fort where the many sons and daughters of Tipu Sultan of Mysore and their families had been lodged since their surrender at Seringapatam (now Shrirangapattana) in 1799 during the fourth Mysore War.</p> <p>The July 10 outbreak, though encouraged by the Mysore princes, was basically caused by resentment at new British regulations that ordered changes in headgear and shaving style and the prohibition of ornaments and caste marks for the Indian troops. Little effort was made by the British to reassure the men or listen to their grievances, which included the belief that the regulations were detrimental to the religious practices of both Hindus and Muslims.</p>



	<p>'foreign service' remuneration that they earlier used to receive</p> <p>(d) Indian sepoy's were given lesser quantity of food compared to their European counterparts</p>	<p>There were also complaints about the sepoy's pay.</p> <p>July 9th, 'Life' Page, Section 2, <a href="#">TH</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">Britannica: Vellore Mutiny</a>;</p>
6.	<p>Which one of the following projects does <b>not</b> qualify to be termed a 'moonshot' project?</p> <p>(a) Google Glass</p> <p>(b) The world's largest lithium-ion battery that will serve as emergency back-up power for South Australia</p> <p>(c) Hyperloop One</p> <p>(d) Driverless car projects</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p><a href="#">What is a moonshot?</a> A moonshot, in a technology context, is an ambitious, exploratory and ground-breaking project undertaken without any expectation of near-term profitability or benefit and also, perhaps, without a full investigation of potential risks and benefits. The term "moonshot" derives from the Apollo 11 spaceflight project, which landed the first human on the moon in 1969. "Moonshot" may also reference the earlier phrase "shoot for the moon" meaning aim for a lofty target.</p> <p>"The Tesla technology is very mature. It's very well understood," said Haresh Kamath, a battery researcher at the Electric Power Research Institute in California. "It's not a moonshot."</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Tesla wins battery contract in Australia</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">IE: An energy warning and lesson</a>;</p>
7.	<p>What is the difference between Aerosols and Particulate Matter?</p> <p>(a) Aerosols are particles that are larger in size than Particulate Matter whose maximum size category is 2.5 microns</p> <p>(b) Aerosols refer specifically to liquid droplets suspended in air while Particulate Matter specifically refer to solid particles found in air</p> <p>(c) Whereas aerosols are suspensions of solid or liquid particles in a gas, particulate matter is a generic term for a mixture of liquid droplets or solid particles found in the air</p> <p>(d) The two mean the same and are used interchangeably</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aerosols are suspensions of solid or liquid particles in a gas (usually air). The particulate portion of an aerosol is referred to as Particulate Matter, or PM. Particulate Matter is a generic term applied to chemically heterogeneous discrete liquid droplets or solid particles. The PM in an aerosol can range in size from 0.001 to greater than 100 microns in diameter.</li> <li>India has generally maintained that man-made carbon dioxide pollution is largely due to the years of pollution by the developed West. However, such an argument might weaken if aerosols were brought into the picture because this is a largely South Asian concern. Were carbon dioxide and aerosol interactions proven to be strongly linked, India could be under pressure to adopt more stringent climate-proofing policies.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">EPA: Particulate Matter</a>; <a href="#">Aerosols and Particulate Matter</a>;</p>

		<a href="#">TH: Why is our air becoming dangerous?;</a>
8.	<p>‘Swayam Prabha’, a Government of India initiative, is a project for</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online training of Yoga and Meditation practitioners</li> <li>Promoting entrepreneurship in the state of Bihar by way of the Government setting up state of the art skilling centres with support from the private industry</li> <li>Identifying new digital technology innovations to solve the many problems faced by our country</li> <li>Providing high quality educational content through DTH channels to teachers, students and citizens across the country</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>“The Centre will formally launch Swayam Prabha – a project for telecasting ‘High-quality educational programmes’ through 32 DTH channels on Sunday at a National Convention on Digital Initiatives for Higher Education.”</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Coming – direct to home coaching for students;</a></p>
JULY 11, 2017		
1.	<p>The ‘Black Blocs’, recently in the news, were seen in the context of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Doka La stand-off</li> <li>The G20 meet at Hamburg</li> <li>Dead zones in the Palk Bay</li> <li>Recapture of Mosul</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>A GK question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The balaclava-wearing radicals known as “black blocs” rampaging through the streets of Hamburg during the G20 summit trace their roots back to Cold War-era West Germany.</li> <li>Known for disrupting major international meetings across Europe for three decades, the far-left, black-clad anarchists are loosely organised with vague political demands but share a set of violent tactics.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: ‘Black bloc’ G20 rioters trace roots to Cold War;</a></p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: The Hamburg tussle;</a></p>
2.	<p>Sri Lanka’s legislative amendment to prohibit bottom trawling within its territorial waters is a move that comes at a time when</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Joint Working Group to deal with the fisheries conflict has declared its failure to arrive at a consensus as regards to an appropriate response to bottom trawling</li> <li>Tamil Nadu introduced a legislative provision to arrest Sri Lankan</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>A mains-oriented question.</p> <p>“Fishermen from both countries have been in talks for a long time to resolve the conflict. Sri Lankan fishermen want an immediate end to incursions by Indian trawlers, and those from Tamil Nadu insist on a three-year phase-out period. The proposal to ban bottom trawling is two years old, but the amendment has come at a time when a Joint Working Group set up by both countries last year is in place. Tamil Nadu fishermen are arrested from time to time by the Sri Lankan Navy, and their vessels</p>

	<p>fishermen for wading into its territorial waters</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>seized. If more are arrested and slapped with two-year jail terms after a summary trial, as the law now envisages, it may create new flashpoints.”</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Targeting trawling;</a></p>
3.	<p>‘XVII Corps’ or ‘17 Corps’, sometimes in the news, will</p> <p>(a) Build the Indian Armed Forces’ warfare capabilities in a new operational domain – the cyber domain</p> <p>(b) Be the first integrated theatre command of the Indian Armed Forces in the North East</p> <p>(c) Be a specialised division of the Indian Army authorised to both plan and execute cross-border surgical strikes across any of India’s borders</p> <p>(d) Enable the Indian Army to become effective at high-altitude warfare</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>“WITH AN eye on the massive restructuring of the Chinese military, the Indian army is moving to raise a second infantry division (72 Infantry Division) for its mountain strike corps (17th Corps) on the northern border... The other infantry division for the mountain strike corps — 59 Infantry Division — has been raised and will be fully operational this year.”</p> <p>From March 2017: <a href="#">IE;</a></p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Power games at the tri-junction;</a></p>
4.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the Total Fertility Rate declines to below replacement-level fertility, the proportion of young people reduces while there is an increase in the proportion of the elderly</li> <li>Most of the current and future demographic potential of India is locked in the southern states</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite the decline in total fertility rates (TFR) countrywide, 12 States continue to have TFR above 2.1 children per woman, known as replacement-level fertility. However, when the TFR declines, the drop does not stop at 2.1, as seen in Kerala (1.6), Tamil Nadu (1.7) and Karnataka (1.8). This leads to faster changes in the population structure characterised by a reduction in the proportion of young people and an increase in the proportion of the elderly</li> <li>Most of the current and future demographic potential is locked in the northern States, and largely located in Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh... The proportion of the elderly started increasing in the southern States several years ago. Now, the phenomenon has extended to the western, extreme northern and eastern States.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: The Great Indian Migration;</a></p>

5. Consider the following statements:
1. People generally do not accept paper as currency, as paper has very little intrinsic value
  2. In a situation that a country becomes stateless, fiat money then definitely will not sustain in it the confidence of people
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
  - (b) 2 only
  - (c) Both 1 and 2
  - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.

- Statement 1 is correct. Because it is straightforward – you and I won't accept paper, in general, as currency.
- **Page 38, Introductory Macroeconomics, Class XII, NCERT:** The value of the paper itself is negligible. Similarly, the value of the metal in a five-rupee coin is probably not worth Rs 5. Why then do people accept such notes and coins in exchange of goods which are apparently more valuable than these? The value of the currency notes and coins is derived from the guarantee provided by the issuing authority of these items. Every currency note bears on its face a promise from the Governor of RBI that if someone produces the note to RBI, or any other commercial bank, RBI will be responsible for giving the person purchasing power equal to the value printed on the note. The same is also true of coins.
- The second statement is incorrect because one cannot be certain about how people will respond to such a situation. History has been witness to a situation in which fiat money (paper) continued to be used as currency despite the country becoming stateless – Somalia's currency, the shilling, continued to be exchanged for goods in the market, even as the Somalian government broke down and the country became stateless in 1991.

[TH: Why is your money worth so much?;](#)

JULY 12, 2017

1. The latest Indian site to be accorded the 'World Heritage' tag by UNESCO was for fulfilment of which of the following criterions?
1. To represent a masterpiece of human creative genius
  2. To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time on development of architecture, monumental arts, town planning and landscape
  3. To be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement and land use

Solution: b.

The inscription has been done under Criteria (ii) and (v) as defined in the UNESCO's Operational Guidelines, 2016. Criterion (ii) refers to the important interchange of human values, over a span of time on development of architecture, monumental arts, town planning and landscape while Criterion (v) refers to being an outstanding example of human settlement and land use. Thus, the acceptance of the proposal highlights historic city of Ahmedabad's exemplary settlement architecture and town planning.

[WHC: Criteria;](#)

	<p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p><a href="#">PIB: Declaration of historic city of Ahmadabad as a UNESCO's world heritage property;</a></p>
2.	<p>'Aaykar Setu', recently launched by the Ministry of Finance, will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance the experience of taxpayers and reduce taxpayer grievances</li> <li>2. Reduce the physical interface between assesses and tax assessing authorities</li> <li>3. Enable payment of taxes online</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The online facility will enable payment of taxes, tracking of tax deducted at source and filing of applications for permanent account numbers (PAN).</li> <li>• The facility known as 'Aaykar Setu,' launched by finance minister Arun Jaitley, will also help people link their 12-digit biometric identifier Aadhaar with PAN.</li> <li>• Central Board of Direct Taxes will make it available as a desktop service and as an app for Android mobile phones, providing a range of informative and useful tax services.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB: 'Aaykar Setu' launched; ET;</a></p>
3.	<p>'BBNJ' is an acronym coined by the United Nations. This is related to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Promoting sustainable farming practices</li> <li>(b) Protection of biodiversity of the open seas</li> <li>(c) Preventive actions to be taken by countries in the event of declaration of health emergencies of international concern</li> <li>(d) Promotion of ethical practices in research and development of the renewable energy sector</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>"A report to a UN ocean conference in New York points out that more than 60% of the ocean has no rules because it's outside national jurisdiction. It says the open ocean is at risk from climate change, over-fishing, deep sea mining, farm pollution and plastics." ... The UN is focusing discussion on three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up a legal framework for marine conservation areas on the high seas – or other spatial measures like banning destructive fishing gear in vulnerable places;</li> <li>• A more rigorous environmental impact before industrial activities are undertaken;</li> <li>• Developing rules around marine genetic resources so all nations get a share of the wealth of the seas.</li> </ul> <p>Together they are categorised under a new UN acronym – BBNJ. That's Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction.</p> <p><a href="#">BBC: 'Make new rules' to save oceans;</a></p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <p>Assertion (A): Continued depletion of oxygen levels in the Bay of Bengal can, eventually, greatly reduce nitrogen content in oceans elsewhere</p> <p>Reasons (R): Ocean currents carry water away from the Bay of Bengal</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) A is true, and R is the correct explanation for A.</p> <p>(b) A is true, but R is the NOT the correct explanation for A.</p> <p>(c) A is correct, R is incorrect.</p> <p>(d) A is incorrect, R is correct</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Remove the last amount of oxygen, and the Bay of Bengal could become a major global player in nitrogen removal from the oceans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nitrogen performs a positive role in fertilising algae at the bottom of the food chain, but can also have negative effects if there's too much of it in the water.</li> <li>One area – the Bay of Bengal – is at a tipping point which could impact on global fish stocks. At the moment, nitrogen fertilisers in the Bay of Bengal are running off farmland and over-fertilising algae. This in turn encourages bacteria, which capture oxygen. Slowly marine life in the area disappears.</li> <li>But the Bay of Bengal is now on the verge of going one destructive stage more. The report says if oxygen levels decrease further as a result of run-off or increasing water temperatures, then the entire ocean basin may flip to a no-oxygen status.</li> </ul> <p>In one of Nature's paradoxes, this would then lead to different bacteria actually removing nitrogen from the water. The de-nitrified water would then be carried away by ocean currents, and greatly reduce ocean productivity elsewhere.</p> <p><a href="#">BBC: 'Make new rules' to save oceans;</a></p> <p>From 2016 – <a href="#">TH: Huge 'dead zone' discovered in BoB;</a></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Which one of the following statements about the 'Golden Peacock Awards' is <b>not</b> correct?</p> <p>(a) All institutions, whether public, private or non-profit are eligible to apply for the award</p> <p>(b) It is an award bestowed to institutions for their efforts only in the sphere of eco-innovation</p> <p>(c) They have been instituted by the Institute of Directors, India in 1991</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Statement 'b' is incorrect.</p> <p>In the news: "Indian Railways achieves a major landmark in the field of Eco friendly fuel technologies at Indian Railways Organization for Alternate Fuel (IROAF) which has been awarded the coveted National level "Golden Peacock Award for the Year 2017 for Eco-Innovation" for substitution of fossil fuels (Diesel) by environment friendly CNG..."</p> <p><a href="#">PIB: Golden Peacock Awards;</a></p>



JULY 13, 2017

1.	<p>A project for the upgradation and widening of a national highway was recently approved by the Cabinet under the 'Road Connectivity Investment Program (RCIP)'. Under the RCIP, which region of India can receive loans for the purpose of improving road connectivity?</p> <p>(a) North east India (b) BIMARU states (c) Jammu and Kashmir (d) All border regions of India</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for upgradation and widening of 65 kms of Imphal-Moreh Section of NH-39 in Manipur.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <a href="#">SASEC Road Connectivity Investment Program</a> will improve road connectivity and efficiency of the international trade corridor, by expanding about 500km of roads in the North Bengal and Northeastern Region (NB-NER) of India.</li> <li>• The project area under SRCIP is a key strategic thoroughfare integrating South and South East Asia, bordering Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar and Nepal.</li> <li>• It will enable efficient and safe transport within India and regionally with other South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) member countries.</li> <li>• Ultimately, SRCIP will pave the way from India and other South Asian countries to Myanmar, and further afield to other member countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
2.	<p>If you travel by road from Moreh to Solapur, what is the minimum number of States within India through which you can travel, including the origin and the destination?</p> <p>(a) 6 (b) 7 (c) 8 (d) 9</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Manipur and Maharashtra are the origin and destination states. Moreh is an important border town in Manipur, often in the news in the context of India-Myanmar connectivity and the Act/Look East Policy.</p> <p><a href="#">Map of India</a>;</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">PIB</a> and <a href="#">PIB2</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">Q49 CS(P) 2017</a>;</p>
3.	<p>Which of the following is/are projects of the Government of India that is/are related to/deal with cloud computing at the moment?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meghdoot</li> <li>2. MeghRaj</li> <li>3. Rail Cloud</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>To achieve the goal of single digital platform for IR a few foundational projects need to be implemented first, establishment of RailCloud is one such project.</p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b> 'NIVARAN-Grievance Portal' is the first IT application to be launched on the RailCloud. It is the platform for resolution of service related grievances of serving and former</p>

	<p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>railway employees. The existing application was hosted on a conventional server; it has been made cloud-ready and being migrated as the first cloud application of Indian Railways. It will save significant revenue and at the same time user experience will also improve.</p> <p>NIC's 'National Cloud': <a href="#">MeghRaj</a>;</p> <p>C-DAC: <a href="#">Meghdoot</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">In the news: Rail Cloud</a>;</p>
4.	<p>'CERT-In' is a national nodal agency under the</p> <p>(a) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology</p> <p>(b) Ministry of Home Affairs</p> <p>(c) Ministry of Finance</p> <p>(d) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>CERT-In is a national nodal agency under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, with the objective of securing Indian cyber space. Hence, CERT-In collaborates with overseas Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) for incident response and resolution.</p> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
5.	<p>The Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana was announced in 2003 with the objectives of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Early identification of defects at birth, deficiencies, diseases and development delays and early intervention, for children</li> <li>2. Augmenting facilities for quality medical education in the country</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>The Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) was announced in 2003 with objectives of correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/ reliable tertiary healthcare services and also to augment facilities for quality medical education in the country. PMSSY has two components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Setting up of AIIMS like institutions</li> <li>2. Upgradation of Government Medical Colleges/Institutions.</li> </ol> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
6.	<p>A mix of methods, including satellite monitoring, cloud-based data collection and remote sensors, is being employed to help map and predict pollution trends in the Godavari. This project will also</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Help identify the feasibility of sustained and widespread implementation of behavioural interventions to restrict activities that pollute the river</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team's (a group of U.S. researchers) long-term objective is to be able to inform State officials and citizens of a probable spike in, say, levels of dangerous microbes or effluents, similar to weather and air pollution forecasts.</li> <li>• That apart, it is to be able to access "raw data" that could be used to inform the efficacy of a proposed faecal sludge treatment plant and whether behavioural interventions — including</li> </ul>



2. Ascertain the efficacy of proposed faecal sludge treatment plants

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

incentives or punishments — to restrict activities that pollute the river could actually work.

#### Raising the bar

The region adjoining the Godavari stands to benefit from this first-of-its-kind sensor network installation, which will use a boat-based mobile sensing platform to cull data

**AIM**

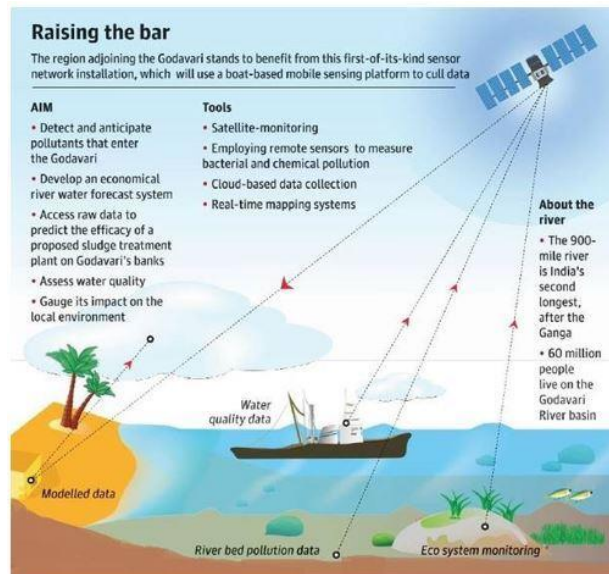
- Detect and anticipate pollutants that enter the Godavari
- Develop an economical river water forecast system
- Access raw data to predict the efficacy of a proposed sludge treatment plant on Godavari's banks
- Assess water quality
- Gauge its impact on the local environment

**Tools**

- Satellite-monitoring
- Employing remote sensors to measure bacterial and chemical pollution
- Cloud-based data collection
- Real-time mapping systems

**About the river**

- The 900-mile river is India's second longest, after the Ganga
- 60 million people live on the Godavari River basin



[TH: Sensor network to map and predict pollution;](#)

7. The country-wide reach of the advancing monsoon winds usually takes place in the month of

- (a) June
- (b) July
- (c) August
- (d) September

Solution: b.



[TH: Monsoon to cover entire country this week;](#)

Image source: Class 9 NCERT;

JULY 14, 2017

1. 'Bihugeet' songs

- Are a distinctive type of folk song of Mizoram
- Celebrate the life-sustaining character of the Brahmaputra

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

Solution: b.

"Assam's Bihugeet songs celebrate the many colours of the Brahmaputra and its life-sustaining character, with stirring renditions by Bhupen Hazarika in praise of the grit of its people in their most challenging moment — when the river turns furious during the monsoon and floods the plains."

	<p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p><b>CCRT:</b> Bihu songs (bihu geet) are the most distinctive type of folk songs of Assam, both for their literary content and for their musical mode. Bihu songs are blessings for a happy new year and the dance is associated with an ancient fertility cult. It is Bihu time when an opportunity is there for marriageable young men and women to exchange their feelings and even to choose their partners.</p> <p><b>TH:</b> <a href="#">Sorrowful song;</a></p>
2.	<p>Apart from bitcoins, there are other virtual or crypto currencies. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ethereum</li> <li>2. Ripple</li> <li>3. Litecoin</li> <li>4. Ribero</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1, 2 and 4 only</p> <p>(b) 1, 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 3 and 4 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>A similar question was included in Prelims Test Series 2017.</p> <p>Other important cryptocurrencies include – Litecoin, Ethereum, Ripple, Monero, Dash and Zcash.</p> <p><b>TH: Bitcoins may come under SEBI:</b> “There are multiple such currencies — bitcoin, ethereum, ripple are some of the popular ones. Currently, they are neither illegal nor legal in India..”</p> <p><b>Investopedia;</b></p>
3.	<p>China’s first overseas military base has come up at/in</p> <p>(a) The western-most point of what earlier was British India</p> <p>(b) The mouth of the Red Sea</p> <p>(c) The chokepoint between the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean</p> <p>(d) An island in the only sea where incidents of piracy are rising in the world today</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>We will post another question on the same topic tomorrow.</p> <p>“This week, as Beijing sent personnel to Djibouti, its first military base overseas, it marked the formal return of Chinese maritime expansionism — and sent a few shivers of concern in capitals around the world, including in New Delhi.”</p> <p><b>IE: <a href="#">Reading signals from China’s new military base;</a></b></p>
4.	<p>‘Joint Interpretative Notes’ or ‘JIN’ recently appeared in the news in the context of affairs related to</p> <p>(a) Participatory Notes</p> <p>(b) Indian Ocean Naval Symposium</p> <p>(c) Demonetisation</p> <p>(d) Investment Treaties</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>“The JIN would impart clarity to the interpretation of the existing agreement between India and Bangladesh for the Promotion and Protection of Investments.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Interpretative Statements, in general, play an important supplementary role in strengthening the investment treaty regime.</li> </ul> <p><b>TH: <a href="#">Nod for Bangladesh JIN pact;</a></b></p>

5. The recent decision of the National Green Tribunal to declare a 'No Development Zone' along a stretch of River Ganga extends from- to

- (a) Haridwar-Unnao
- (b) Kanpur-Allahabad
- (c) Varanasi-Begusarai
- (d) Bijnor-Patna

Solution: a.

"An area of 100 metres from the edge of the Ganga between Haridwar (Uttarakhand) and Unnao (UP) has been declared a 'No Development Zone,' with the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Thursday prohibiting dumping of waste within 500 metres of the river."

[TH: Tribunal prohibits dumping of waste near Ganga banks;](#)

6. Which of the following are data sources for estimates on employment growth in India?

- 1. Labour Bureau
- 2. National Sample Survey
- 3. Annual Survey of Industries
- 4. Census

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (b) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (c) 1 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Solution: d.

If the new GDP estimates have raised questions about our understanding of recent economic developments, deciphering patterns of employment growth is no less a challenge. There is almost a bewildering variety of estimates on employment growth in India. Data come from multiple sources, for different time periods, coverage and sample sizes, with varying methodologies. These are described in the table below.

**Table : Periodicity, Coverage and Population size of different Data Sources**

Sl.	Data Source	Periodicity	Sector Coverage	Population/Sample
1	Census	Decadal	All	Population
2	Labour Bureau (LB)	Annual	All	Sample (1.37 lakh households, 6.80 lakh persons in 2013-14 survey)
3	National Sample Survey (NSS)	Quinquennial	All	Sample (1.02 lakh households, 4.57 lakh persons in 2011-12 round)
4	Economic Census (EC)	No fixed periodicity	All establishments including the unorganized sector and excluding crop production, plantation, public administration, defence and compulsory social security.	Sample (25 lakh households, 56 million establishments in 2014 EC)
5	Annual Survey of Industries (ASI)	Annual	All factories registered under Sections 2m(i) and 2m(ii) of the Factories Act, 1948 + all electricity undertakings engaged in generation, transmission and distribution of electricity registered with the Central Electricity Authority (CEA)	2.17 lakh factories in 2012-13 survey

Notes: 1. Census classifies employed as main and marginal.

[THIS](#) article touches upon the job surveys of National Sample Survey and Labour Bureau. You are left with options 'a' and 'd' to choose the answer from.

[Box 1.3](#), Economic Survey 2014-15 Volume 1;

JULY 15, 2017

1. Apart from China, which other country/countries has/have military bases in Djibouti, a country at the Horn of Africa?

- 1. USA
- 2. Japan
- 3. France

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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


Solution: d.

China says the support base will be used for peacekeeping and humanitarian aid in Africa and West Asia.

It will also be used for military co-operation, naval exercises and rescue missions, Xinhua said.

Chinese state-run Global Times pointed out that the US, Japan and France also have military bases in Djibouti.

[BBC](#); [TH](#);

2.	<p>The Antarctic Peninsula is a branch or an arm of Antarctica that sticks out towards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South America</li> <li>Africa</li> <li>Australia</li> <li>India</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: a.</p>  <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Adrift at Sea</a>;</p>
3.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Icebergs calving from the Antarctic Peninsula is generally a process of balancing the accumulation of mass from snowfall and the feeding glaciers on land</li> <li>The calving of the Larsen C Ice Shelf is expected to directly contribute to sea level rise</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 only</li> <li>2 only</li> <li>Both 1 and 2</li> <li>Neither 1 nor 2</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p><b>Regarding Statement 1:</b> The calving of bergs at the forward edge of the shelf is a very natural behaviour. The shelf likes to maintain an equilibrium and the ejection of bergs is one way it balances the accumulation of mass from snowfall and the input of more ice from the feeding glaciers on land.</p> <p><b>Regarding Statement 2:</b> The 'Ice Shelf' is already floating – the calving of the iceberg from the ice shelf does not imply any direct contribution to sea level rise. The glaciers, though, that earlier fed the ice shelf will now feed the water directly. Besides, the restraining force offered by the ice shelf is no longer present, affecting the rate of flow of the glaciers. Not only will the glaciers now feed the water, their rate of feeding increases. Thus, the iceberg calving event will indirectly contribute to sea level rise.</p> <p><a href="#">BBC: Giant iceberg splits from Antarctic</a>;</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Adrift at Sea</a>;</p>
4.	<p>The Judiciary has time and again referred to the 'triple test' in the context of admission procedures to professional educational institutions. Accordingly, to pass this 'triple test', an admission procedure must</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be transparent</li> <li>Provide affirmative action for students from rural areas</li> <li>Be free from exploitation</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>"..The political leadership at the Centre as well as in the States would do well to work together to evolve a flexible admission policy that gives some leeway to the States and meets the triple goals of <b>fairness, transparency and freedom from exploitation</b> in admissions.."</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Unsurprising verdict</a>;</p> <p>From February: <a href="#">TH: Testing times on NEET</a>;</p>

	<p>(a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	
5.	<p>The “Asia Africa Growth Corridor”, recently in the news, was proposed by India and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The African Development Bank</li> <li>2. Japan</li> <li>3. United States of America</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 2 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Indian and Japanese governments recently (May, 2017) unveiled a vision document for the Asia Africa Growth Corridor, proposed by the two countries’ Prime Ministers last November.</li> <li>• Unlike China’s One Belt One Road (OBOR) project, about which India has raised several concerns, the Asia Africa Growth Corridor is conceived as a more open and inclusive programme that will be based on more consultations and keep people as the centre piece rather than just trade and economic ties, said officials who worked on the vision document.</li> <li>• The vision document proposes four key elements that leverage the strengths of India and Japan – enhancing capacity and skills; building quality infrastructure and connecting institutions; development and cooperation projects in health, farming, manufacturing and disaster management; and people-to-people partnerships.</li> </ul> <p>From May 2017: <a href="#">TH: Abe-Modi plan unveiled</a>;  <a href="#">TH: Malabar drills aim at giving regional security</a>;</p>
JULY 17, 2017		
1.	<p>The ‘Investment Facilitation Mechanism’ was recently established in India with an aim to promote and facilitate investment by</p> <p>(a) Japan</p> <p>(b) European Union</p> <p>(c) South Korea</p> <p>(d) Israel</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>European Union (EU) and India on Friday announced the establishment of an Investment Facilitation Mechanism (IFM) for EU investments in India.</p> <p>“The mechanism will allow for a close coordination between the European Union and the Government of India with an aim to promote and facilitate EU investment in India,” an official statement said.</p> <p>The IFM will cover new investors as well as those already established in India.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: EU, India set up fund for investments</a>;  <a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>



2.	<p>'FASTag', recently in the news, is</p> <p>(a) A component of the ports modernisation programme to reduce the turnaround time</p> <p>(b) An electronic toll collection programme on toll plazas of national highways</p> <p>(c) The proposal to set up electric vehicle charging stations located at regular intervals along national highways</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p><b>What is FASTag?</b></p> <p>FASTag is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly from the prepaid account linked to it. It is affixed on the windscreen of your vehicle and enables you to drive through toll plazas. FASTag has a validity of 5 years and after purchasing it, you only need to recharge/ top up the FASTag as per your requirement.</p> <p>Refer document to read more about it: <a href="#">NHAI: FASTag</a>;</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
3.	<p>'Ganga Avahan', recently in the news, refers to</p> <p>(a) The revamped Namami Ganga Programme</p> <p>(b) An initiative to set up Sewage Treatment Plants and ancillary infrastructure in the catchment area of River Ganga</p> <p>(c) The set of guidelines to expand and implement the National Green Tribunal's order on 'No Development Zones' related around River Ganga</p> <p>(d) The first human effort to swim down the entire stretch of River Ganga</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'Ganga Avahan' was a pioneering and historic exploratory open-water swim expedition on the Ganga River.</li> <li>• The expedition, a nine-member team of three swimmers and the rest rafters from the three Services of the Indian Armed Forces, commenced on 08 October 2015, at Devprayag, where Bhagirathi and Alaknanda merge and the Ganga begins. It continued for 43 days, through Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal and culminating on 19 November 2015 at Bakkhali Beach, Frazerganj covering a total distance of 2,800 kms.</li> <li>• Throughout the swim, the team campaigned extensively for Swachh Bharat, Clean Ganga and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, reaching out to the villagers, townsfolk, civic authorities and NGOs, managing to interact with tens of lakhs of people all along the route as they undertook their extraordinary and highly challenging odyssey.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
4.	<p>'Rail SAARTHI' is, a mobile application of the Indian Railways (IR), is</p> <p>(a) A mobile application that integrates several other IR applications</p> <p>(b) A wheelchair booking service for the elderly and infirm people</p> <p>(c) A data trove related to the Indian Railways to satisfy the curiosity of its patrons</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently, there are multiple mobile applications by Indian Railways to cater various passenger requirements including onboard cleaning. Most of the apps cater to one service only. To use different services, users need to search and download each application separately. In order to provide better customer experience, there is</li> </ul>

(d) A complaint management system

a need for an integrated application which will give a single window interface for these services.

- Inline with the above concept, Minister of Railways had announced integration of all existing ticketing digital solutions under one App in his Budget Speech 2016-17.
- Rail SAARTHI is an app under development to integrate 8 independent mobile applications of the IR.

[PIB](#);

5. Which of the following steps, if implemented, can enable agriculture in Punjab to become sustainable?

1. Eradication of Foot and Mouth Disease
2. Moving away from paddy cultivation to maize cultivation
3. Building a modern expressway from Punjab to Kandla

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

A question with slightly roundabout statements.

- **Statement 1:** More than 67 per cent of milch animals in Punjab are buffaloes. If the state can eradicate the foot and mouth disease, buffalo meat from Punjab can be sold at premium rates in international markets, ultimately benefiting the state's dairy farmers.
- **Statement 2:** Diversification from common rice to hybrid maize is one option, which can save power subsidy and groundwater, and yet give farmers almost the same income as paddy.
- **Statement 3:** This is related to the potential of agriculture in Punjab to diversify towards fresh fruits and vegetables, which can enable the state to tap the market for fresh and processed produce in West Asia and Central Asian countries. A modern expressway from Khanna to Kandla could be helpful in the faster transportation of fruit and vegetables.

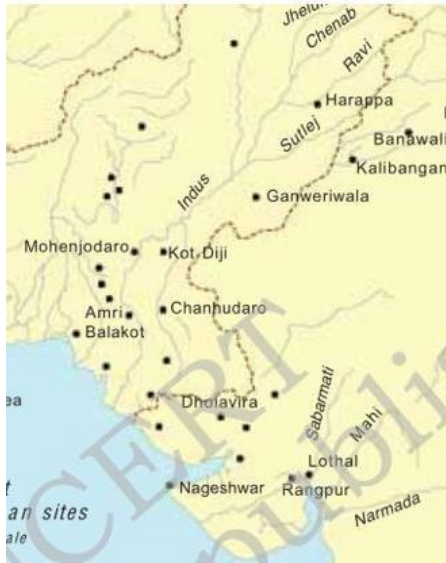
[IE: Lessons for the field](#);

6. Which one of the following countries is a constituent of Indochina and also does *not* share its border with China?

- (a) Vietnam
- (b) Myanmar
- (c) Laos
- (d) Cambodia

Solution: d.



		<p><b>Indochina, also called (until 1950) French Indochina:</b> The three states of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia formerly associated with France, first within its empire and later within the French Union. The term Indochina refers to the intermingling of Indian and Chinese influences in the culture of the region.</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: China's gateway to SE Asia;</a></p>
7.	<p>Which of the following National Parks is unique in being a swamp with floating vegetation that supports a rich biodiversity?</p> <p>(a) Bhitarkanika National Park</p> <p>(b) Keibul Lamjao National Park</p> <p>(c) Keoladeo Ghana National park</p> <p>(d) Sultanpur National park</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is the <b>only</b> floating park in the world, located in Manipur, North East India, and an integral part of Loktak Lake.</li> <li>The national park is characterized by many floating decomposed plant materials locally called phumdis.</li> <li>The park is a swamp with floating mass of vegetation created by accrual of organic garbage and biomass with soil particles that has been thickened into a solid form called phumdis, at the south-eastern side of the Loktak Lake, which has been declared a Ramsar site. Two third's to three fourth's of the total park area is formed by phumdis.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Q 59, CS(P) 2015;</a></p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Can hope float Loktak's Phumdis?;</a></p>
8.	<p>Of the following list of Harappan sites in India, which one is <b>not</b> a part of the present-day state of Gujarat?</p> <p>(a) Gujarat</p> <p>(b) Nageshwar</p> <p>(c) Kalibangan</p> <p>(d) Lothal</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p>  <p>The map shows the Indus Valley Civilization sites across northern and western India. Sites in Gujarat include Lothal, Rangpur, Nageshwar, Dholavira, Chanhudaro, Amri, Balakot, and Mohenjodaro. Sites in Rajasthan include Kalibangan, Ganweriwala, and Kot Diji. Sites in Punjab include Harappa, Banawali, and Sutlej. Other sites shown include Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, and Sabarmati. The Narmada river is also marked.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: life on the Tropic of Cancer;</a></p>



<p>9.</p>	<p>The capital/s of which of the following states, through which the Tropic of Cancer passes, lie/s above the aforementioned latitude?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Madhya Pradesh</li> <li>2. Jharkhand</li> <li>3. Tripura</li> <li>4. Mizoram</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 1 only</li> <li>(b) 1 and 2 only</li> <li>(c) 3 and 4 only</li> <li>(d) 2, 3 and 4</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The Tropic of Cancer passes through the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Tripura and Mizoram. The capitals only of the states of Rajasthan, Tripura and Mizoram lie above the Tropic of Cancer latitude.</p> <p>Source: Improvisation of title of <a href="#">THIS</a> article.</p>
JULY 18, 2017		
<p>1.</p>	<p>Apart from Sri Lanka, which other country in India's neighbourhood has the World Health Organisation officially declared as Malaria-free?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Bhutan</li> <li>(b) Nepal</li> <li>(c) Myanmar</li> <li>(d) Maldives</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>According to WHO's World Malaria Report 2016, India contributed 89% of the incidence of malaria in the South-East Asia region. The Indian record stands in sharp contrast to some of its neighbours — the Maldives was certified malaria-free in 2015, and Sri Lanka followed last year.</p> <p><a href="#">IE: Roadmap towards eliminating malaria;</a></p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>The 'North Natuna Sea', recently in the news, refers to the waters in the exclusive economic zone of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Indonesia</li> <li>(b) Peru</li> <li>(c) Ghana</li> <li>(d) Spain</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Indonesia has named waters in its exclusive economic zone that overlap with China's expansive claim to the South China Sea as the North Natuna Sea, an assertion of sovereignty that has angered Beijing.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Amid disputes, Indonesia renames part of South China Sea;</a></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>'Euratom', recently in the news, refers to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The nuclear industry regulator across Europe</li> <li>(b) A new class of 'magic atom clusters' discovered by CERN</li> <li>(c) The European Space Agency's Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer</li> <li>(d) The network of satellites responsible for monitoring the Antarctic Peninsula</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>On 29th March the UK PM sent a six-page letter notifying the EU of the UK's intention to leave. The Article 50 letter contained a clause little discussed at the time – notifying the EU of the UK's withdrawal from the European Atomic Energy Community, also known as Euratom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euratom regulates the nuclear industry across Europe, safeguarding the transport of nuclear materials, disposing of waste, and carrying out</li> </ul>

research. It was set up in 1957 alongside the European Economic Community (EEC), which eventually morphed into the EU. The 1957 treaty established a “nuclear common market” to enable the free movement of nuclear workers and materials between member states.

- It is a separate legal entity from the EU, but is tied up with its laws and institutions, and subject to the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). No country is a full member of Euratom without being a member of the EU.
- When EU countries transport nuclear materials or trade them with other countries, Euratom sets the rules.
- The body also co-ordinates research projects across borders. Euratom also reports to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). If the UK were to leave Euratom it would need to come to a new arrangement with the IAEA.

[BBC: UK to leave Euratom;](#)

4. Consider the following statements about ocean gyres:

1. They are large systems of circular ocean currents formed by the patterns of routine and rhythmic movement of marine life
2. These are known for their ‘garbage patches’ – sometimes also referred to as ‘plastic patches’

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Solution: b.

**Gyre circulation:** Three forces cause the circulation of a gyre:

- **Global wind patterns** – Wind drags on the ocean surface, causing water to move in the direction the wind is blowing.
- **Earth’s rotation** – The Earth’s rotation deflects, or changes the direction of, these wind-driven currents. This deflection is a part of the Coriolis effect.
- **Earth’s landmasses** – Earth’s continents and other landmasses (such as islands) also influence the creation of ocean gyres. The massive South Pacific Gyre, for instance, includes hundreds of kilometers of open ocean. In contrast, the northern Indian Ocean Gyre is a much smaller ocean gyre.
- **The Ocean Conveyor Belt:** The movement of the world’s major ocean gyres helps drive the “ocean conveyor belt.” The ocean conveyor belt circulates ocean water around the entire planet. Also known as thermohaline circulation, the ocean conveyor belt is essential for regulating temperature, salinity and nutrient flow throughout the ocean.
- **Garbage Patches:** Ocean gyres circle large areas of stationary, calm water. Debris drifts into these

areas and, due to the region's lack of movement, can accumulate for years. These regions are called garbage patches. The Indian Ocean, North Atlantic Ocean, and North Pacific Ocean all have significant garbage patches.

[NatGeo: Ocean Gyre;](#)

[BBC: The Pacific Plastic Patch;](#)

5. With reference to the 'High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development', which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a platform for the review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals
2. It is not associated with any of the United Nations Organs

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: a.

As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encourages member states to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven". These national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the high-level political forum (HLPF), meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC.

- The High-level Political Forum (HLPF – Click [HERE](#)) comprising the political representatives (heads of states or ministers) of the members meets every July at the UN in New York to review progress on Agenda 2030.
- Voluntary National Reviews (VNR – Click [HERE](#)), which are voluntary and country driven, form the basis of this review.

Improvisation: [TH: Masking the flaws;](#)

JULY 19, 2017

1. Consider the following statements:

1. According to the World Bank, India's gross spending on Research and Development as a percentage of its GDP is lesser than that of China and Brazil
2. In India, the government accounts for the majority share of overall spending in research

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Solution: c.

- The Global Innovation Index 2016 ranked us 66th out of 128 countries. Although this is a jump of 15 places over the last year's rank, India still lags behind China at 25, Russia at 43 and South Africa at 54.
- Such a dismal show is not surprising given our low levels of investment in Research and Development (R&D). According to the World Bank, in 2014, India's gross spending on R&D was about 0.63% of its GDP, against 1.5% by China and 1.1% by Brazil. Many developed countries, on the other hand, spend upwards of 4% on their R&D.
- India was described as a top destination for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in R&D, with our R&D market valued at US\$ 22.3 billion in 2016. The domestic investment in R&D by Indian

		<p>private sector, in contrast, remains minuscule as the government still accounts for 77% of all research spending in the country.</p> <p>Speech of the Vice President: <a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
2.	<p>Products used by differently-abled people are being taxed at the lowest GST rate of 5%. Which of the following is/are the consequences?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tax incidence will go up, resulting in higher expenditure incurred by the buyer</li> <li>2. Imported products of the same category of goods will be at an advantage as they are zero-rated</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 1 only</li> <li>(b) 2 only</li> <li>(c) Both 1 and 2</li> <li>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The government has clarified its decision to levy 5% goods and services tax on assistive devices for the physically challenged.</p> <p>Most of the inputs for such goods attract 18% GST.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nil GST on any goods zero rates inputs, while domestic goods continue to bear input taxes.</li> <li>• Further, for any goods which attract GST rate (other than Nil) which is lower than the inputs for such goods, the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 (GST law) provides for refund of accumulated input tax credit. Thus, 5% GST on assistive devices, rehabilitation aids, their manufacturers would enable their domestic manufacturers to claim refund of any accumulated Input Tax Credit. That being so, the 5% concessional GST rate on these devices/equipment would result in reduction of the cost of domestically manufactured goods, as compared to the pre-GST regime.</li> <li>• The second reason for the levy is that if such goods are exempt, then even imports will have to be at zero duty, which will increase competition for the domestic industry. This would mean that domestically manufactured devices and equipment would bear the burden of input taxes, increasing their cost and becoming uncompetitive to imports.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">ET</a>; <a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
3.	<p>The 'City Liveability Index' was recently launched by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs</li> <li>(b) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</li> <li>(c) Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation</li> <li>(d) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ministry of Urban Development (now Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs) launched the City Liveability Index. The index will be used to measure 116 cities, which include smart cities, state capitals, and cities with a population of above one million.</li> <li>• The index will be a common minimum reference framework that will help cities know where they stand in terms of quality of life. It would also help cities to understand the interventions required to improve these standards.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The cities will be assessed on a set of 79 parameters which would capture the extent and quality of infrastructure. These include availability of roads, mobility, education and health care, employment opportunities, emergency responses, mechanisms for grievance redressal, level of pollution, and availability of open spaces.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PRS MPR June 2017</a>; <a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
4.	<p>The 'M.P. Sharma' and 'Kharak Singh' refer to cases in which the Supreme Court ruled on the issue of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Right to livelihood</li> <li>Right to privacy</li> <li>Right to speedy trial</li> <li>Right to decent environment</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>While hearing the challenge to the Aadhaar Act recently, the Supreme Court decided that it must first consider the question of whether the right to privacy is a fundamental right guaranteed by the Constitution. The judges noted that two earlier judgements of the court — M P Sharma's case in 1954 and Kharak Singh's case in 1962 — had held that privacy was not a fundamental right.</p> <p><a href="#">IE: MP Sharma and Kharak Singh</a>;</p>
5.	<p>With reference to the Strategic Partnership Model released recently by the Ministry of Defence, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government will select only one strategic partner for manufacture of each category of defence equipment</li> <li>To be eligible for a strategic partnership, the organisation must be an Indian company, owned and controlled by resident Indian citizens</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 only</li> <li>2 only</li> <li>Both 1 and 2</li> <li>Neither 1 nor 2</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Building expertise:</b> The government will select one strategic partner for manufacture of each of the following defence equipment: fighter aircrafts, helicopters, submarines and main battle tanks. This is to ensure that each strategic partner maintains a core area of expertise. Addition of other defence equipments for strategic partnerships will be considered by the government in the future.</li> <li><b>Ownership and management:</b> An organisation must be an Indian company (as defined under the Companies Act, 2013), owned and controlled by resident Indian citizens, to be eligible for strategic partnerships. Indian citizens must have majority representation on the company's Board of Directors, and the chief executives of the company must be resident Indians. Maximum FDI permitted in such a company will be 49%.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PRS MPR June 2017</a>;</p>

JULY 20, 2017

1.	<p>“It is not mentioned in the Rules of Procedure. It is an Indian innovation in the field of parliamentary procedures and has been in existence since 1962. With this device, members of the Parliament can raise matters without prior notice.” These statements refer to which one of the following devices of parliamentary proceedings?</p> <p>(a) Question Hour</p> <p>(b) Zero Hour</p> <p>(c) Calling Attention Motion</p> <p>(d) Half-an-Hour Discussion</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>The Calling Attention motion, unlike the zero hour, is mentioned in the rules of procedure. But like the zero hour, it also an Indian innovation in parliamentary procedure and has been in existence since 1954.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: China plans nuclear attack on India, says Mulayam;</a></p> <p>Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth</p>
2.	<p>What harm do microbeads, used in cosmetic products, cause?</p> <p>(a) They are little bits of plastic added for their abrasive properties, which eventually end up in water bodies</p> <p>(b) These microbeads consist of chemicals which have recently been identified to cause rapid eutrophication of lakes</p> <p>(c) Microbeads are manufactured using ivory, which the cosmetics industry by and large lacks proof of its ethical sourcing</p> <p>(d) Their application on human skin regularly over a long period of time causes cancer</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Microbeads is the term given to the little bits of plastic that are sometimes added to products for their abrasive properties.</li> <li>• Manufacturers use them because the beads can be made with uniform size and hardness.</li> <li>• As they're so small, collectively microbeads have a huge surface area. This allows them to absorb large quantities of toxins and other pollutants. Once they're out in the wild, microbeads can also be easily ingested by marine animals.</li> <li>• The pieces are small enough to pass through water filtration plants and therefore end up in lakes and rivers. They can even be found in Arctic sea-ice and on the ocean floor.</li> <li>• Countries such as the U.S., Canada and the Netherlands have already put in place regulations to stop the use of microbeads in personal-care products. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has recently classified the non-biodegradable microbeads as unsafe for use in consumer products.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Plastic realities;</a></p>
3.	<p>The 'Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action', issues related to which often appear in the news, is one that was reached between which of the following countries?</p> <p>1. USA</p> <p>2. Russia</p> <p>3. Germany</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>On July 14, 2015, the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the European Union (EU), and Iran reached a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to ensure that Iran's nuclear program will be exclusively peaceful.</p>

	<p>4. China</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 1, 2 and 3 only (c) 2, 3 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4</p>	<p><a href="#">US Department of State: JCPOA</a>;</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Target Tehran</a>;</p>
4.	<p>The annual 'World Investment Report' is published by</p> <p>(a) World Bank (b) World Trade Organisation (c) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (d) World Economic Forum</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The World Investment Report 2017 issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development points out that tax-related concerns are a deterrent for some foreign investors to invest in India.</li> <li>Each year's Report covers the latest trends in foreign direct investment around the World and analyses in depth one selected topic related to foreign direct investment and development.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">UNCTAD: WIR</a>;</p> <p><a href="#">TH: BITs and pieces of Trade with Israel</a>;</p>
5.	<p>The 'Joint International Taskforce on Shared Intelligence and Collaboration' is related to the issue of</p> <p>(a) Tax avoidance (b) Drug trafficking (c) Trafficking of women and children (d) "Lone wolf"-style terrorism</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The JITSIC brings together 37 of the world's national tax administrations that have committed to more effective and efficient ways to deal with tax avoidance.</li> <li>It offers a platform to enable its members to actively collaborate within the legal framework of effective bilateral and multilateral conventions and tax information exchange agreements – sharing their experience, resources and expertise to tackle the issues they face in common.</li> <li>India is a member.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">OECD: About JITSIC</a>;</p>
6.	<p>Which of the following statements refer to certain provisions in the model Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) of Israel, that are absent in the Indian BIT?</p> <p>1. Foreign investors can bring claims against a host state for alleged treaty breaches at international arbitral forums</p> <p>2. Israel's BIT model provides a broad asset-based definition of foreign</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>A mains-oriented question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regarding Statement 1:</b> The Israeli model gives an investor the choice to submit any investment dispute with a state to international arbitration if not resolved within six months through negotiations. The Indian model imposes many procedural and jurisdictional restrictions on an investor's right to bring an ISDS claim. These include a foreign investor having to litigate in domestic courts for five years before pursuing a</li> </ul>



	<p>investment unlike the Indian model which defines it narrowly</p> <p>3. It contains a broad, Most Favoured Nation (MFN) provision</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>claim under international law. These requirements make it very difficult for a foreign investor to make efficient use of the ISDS provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regarding Statement 2:</b> Israel's model provides a broad asset-based definition of foreign investment that covers both FDI and portfolio investment. The Indian model of 2016 defines investment narrowly as an enterprise (with its assets) that has to possess certain characteristics of investment including the investment having 'significance for the development' — words not defined in the BIT — of the host country.</li> <li>• <b>Regarding Statement 3:</b> The Israeli model contains a broad most favoured nation (MFN) provision — a cornerstone of non-discrimination in international economic relations — which is missing in the Indian model. The absence of MFN, from Israel's perspective, would mean that its businesses would have no remedy under international law if India were to discriminate against it, say, by offering greater incentives to another defence manufacturer over an Israeli one.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: BITs and pieces of Trade with Israel;</a></p>
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JULY 21, 2017

1.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. The majority of new HIV/AIDS cases worldwide in 2016 were concentrated in few countries, one of which is India</p> <p>2. The '90-90-90' target is often in the news with regard to malarial epidemics</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The idea behind the 90-90-90 target is to diagnose 90% of people who are HIV positive; get 90% of the diagnosed HIV+ people on antiretroviral treatment, and 90% of those on antiretrovirals should be virally suppressed. This is attained when an HIV+ patient's viral load reaches an undetectable level, curbing transmission.</li> <li>• For the first time since the global onset of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the scales have tipped in favour of patients. The latest UNAIDS report reveals that more than half of all People Living with HIV (PLHIV) now have access to HIV treatment.</li> <li>• Further, globally AIDS-related deaths have almost halved since 2005.</li> <li>• While India has made big progress with new infections dropping significantly, the emergence of HIV in some locations that were earlier</li> </ul>
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		<p>considered 'not high-burden' areas is a cause for concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the world seems to be on track to reach the global target of 30 million people on treatment by 2020, access to medicines remains a major barrier and India plays a special role.</li> <li>The global AIDS response, as of 2015, relied on the generic pharmaceutical industry in India which supplied nearly 90% of antiretroviral medicines in low-and-middle-income countries.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">Th: Half of HIV infected get treatment now;</a></p>
2.	<p>Many scholars, researchers and historians have opined that the Paika Rebellion of 1817 was India's first organized armed rebellion against British Raj. 'Paikas' were</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zamindars originally brought to the Deccan by Mughal emperors</li> <li>Peasants of Odisha who rendered military service to their king during times of war</li> <li>Hunters and gatherers living in the forests of Andhra Pradesh</li> <li>The ruling dynasty of West Bengal</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They revolted against the British after the latter took over their rent-free land, 14 years after Odisha came under British rule in 1803.</li> <li>Paikas were essentially the peasant-militias or traditional land-owning militia of the Gajapati rulers of Odisha who rendered military service to the king during times of war while taking up cultivation during times of peace. They unfurled the banner of rebellion against the British under the leadership of Baxi Jagandhu Bidyadhara as early as 1817 to throw off the British yoke.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p> <p><a href="#">TOI: National recognition to Paika revolt;</a></p>
3.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Satyagraha, as a form of struggle, was based on the active participation of the people and on the sympathy and support of the non-participating masses</li> <li>One of the lasting legacies of our freedom struggle was the creation of an Indian identity</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 only</li> <li>2 only</li> <li>Both 1 and 2</li> <li>Neither 1 nor 2</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regarding Statement 1:</b> Mahatma Gandhi, in employing satyagraha – the non-violent insistence for truth and justice – gave a political tool to the masses seeking to oppose a tyrannical rule. Satyagraha, as a form of struggle, was based on the active participation of the people and on the sympathy and support of the non-participating millions. Unlike a violent revolution, which could be waged by a minority of committed cadres and fighters, a non-violent revolution needed the political mobilization of millions and the passive support of the vast majority. He was the moral and ethical custodian of the movement, and a grateful nation rallied to his call, bequeathing on him the honorific – father of the nation.</li> <li><b>Regarding Statement 2:</b> One of the lasting legacies of our freedom struggle was the creation of an Indian identity. The people, who</li> </ul>

fought for India's freedom, came from all over our country. They began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle against colonial rule. They not only acknowledged but also appreciated India's rich cultural, linguistic, religious, ethnic and regional diversity. The diversity and multiple identities were not seen as obstacles to be overcome but as positive features that were sources of strength to Indian culture, civilization and the nation, and were integral to the emerging nationhood.

[PIB: VP delivers Shaheed Nanak Singh Memorial Lecture;](#)

4. Consider the following statements:
1. India has ratified the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of WTO.
  2. TFA is a part of WTO's Bali Ministerial Package of 2013.
  3. TFA came into force in January 2016.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
  - (b) 1 and 3 only
  - (c) 2 and 3 only
  - (d) 1, 2 and 3

Solution: a.  
TFA came into force on 22nd February, 2017.

[PIB;](#)

[Q83, CS\(P\) 2017;](#)

5. The 'Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana' is a scheme that will help further the cause of which one of the following broad categories of directive principles?
- (a) Gandhian
  - (b) Conservative
  - (c) Liberal-Intellectual
  - (d) Socialistic

Solution: d.

- Article 41 directs the state to secure the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, **old age**, sickness and disablement. This is classified as a Socialistic principle.
- PMVVY is a Pension Scheme announced by the Government of India exclusively for the senior citizens aged 60 years and above which is available from 4th May, 2017 to 3rd May, 2018.
- Scheme provides an assured return of 8% p.a. payable monthly (equivalent to 8.30% p.a. effective) for 10 years.
- Pension is payable at the end of each period, during the policy term of 10 years, as per the frequency of monthly/ quarterly/ half-yearly/ yearly as chosen by the pensioner at the time of purchase.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scheme is exempted from Service Tax/GST.</li> </ul> <a href="#">PIB</a> ; Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;
6.	<p>The 'Institution of Permanent Way Engineers' is a technical body set up under the auspices of the</p> <p>(a) Ministry of Railways</p> <p>(b) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways</p> <p>(c) Ministry of Shipping</p> <p>(d) Ministry of Communications</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>This is the Golden Jubilee year of establishment of the Institution. The Institution of Permanent Way Engineers (India) is a technical body set up under the auspices of Railway Ministry for sharing knowledge and experience of various Railway Engineers connected with Permanent Way (Railway track), bridges and other structures.</p> <p><a href="#">PIB</a>;</p>
7.	<p>Consider the following statements about Lalan Shah Fakir:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>He was a contemporary of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu</li> <li>His search for the divine was by way of blending Islamic and Hindu religious tenets and epics</li> <li>Folk songs of the Bauls in Bangladesh are called 'Lalon Geeti'</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In his lifetime, Lalan, who ran his famous institution, Lalon Akhrah, had at least 10,000 followers cutting across religious lines. His biggest strength was that he blended Islamic and Hindu religious tenets and epics freely in his search for the divine.</li> <li>A contemporary of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda, Lalan mixed the teachings Bengal's Vaishnav hero Sri Chaitanya and Lord Krishna with the Islamic quest for Allah. Even after more than a century of Lalan's demise, his songs continue to resonate on both sides of Bengal. Such is his influence that folk songs of the Bauls in Bangladesh continue to be called 'Lalon Geeti', in the same way as Rabindranath Tagore's songs are categorised as 'Rabindra Sangeet'.</li> <li>There have been debates among experts on whether Lalan's songs could be considered a work of art or an offer of prayer. However, there can be no debate over the fact that his poetry can be recited and sung both to evoke the divinity and to appeal to the humanity.</li> <li>Lalan's memories serve as a reminder that communal disturbances in Bengal — right from the Partition violence to the recent Basirhat riot — cannot erase the harmonious history and syncretic heritage that signify peaceful coexistence between Hindus and Muslims.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Lalan Shah Fakir's poems – a syncretic bridge in the two Bengals</a>;</p> <p>For those who are curious: <a href="#">About Baul Songs</a>;</p>

JULY 22, 2017

<p>1.</p>	<p>The drug Oseltamivir was moved from Schedule X to Schedule H1 recently. What does this mean?</p> <p>(a) The drug can be sold only based on the prescription of a registered medical practitioner</p> <p>(b) A copy of the prescription must be preserved by the drug retailer for a certain duration</p> <p>(c) The drug can be bought over the counter sans any prescription</p> <p>(d) All chemists can stock and sell this drug</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The most appropriate option is 'd'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drugs under Schedule X require three copies of prescription for the doctor, patient and chemist, and can be sold by a chemist who holds a special Schedule X licence. Also, the chemist has to preserve the prescription copy for up to three years.</li> <li>In Schedule H1, only one copy of the prescription is required, and drugs in this category can be sold by all chemists.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Easy access to H1N1 drugs raises fears of resistance build-up;</a></p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: H1N1 returns;</a></p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. The 'California strain' and 'Michigan strain', terms that sometimes appear in the news, are associated with Swine Flu</p> <p>2. Cooler temperatures imply drier air, offering favourable conditions for influenza viruses to flourish</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Regarding Statement 1:</b> The virus has undergone point mutations, which is normal and reflects its evolution, but this has no correlation with virulence. For instance, the California strain had been circulating around the world since the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. But as a result of point mutations, a new strain — the Michigan strain — emerged last year. India witnessed the circulation of both the California and Michigan strains in 2016. This year, surveillance revealed that the H1N1 virus found in India is only the Michigan strain.</li> <li><b>Regarding Statement 2:</b> Cold air can carry less water vapour before it reaches the "dew point" and falls as rain. So while the weather outside may seem wetter, the air itself is drier as it loses the moisture. Any time we splutter with a cold, we expel a mist of particles from our nose and mouths. In moist air, these particles may remain relatively large, and drop to the floor. But in dry air, they break up into smaller pieces — eventually becoming so small that they can stay aloft for hours or days. (It's a bit like the mist you get when you turn a hose pipe to its finest spray.) The result is that in winter, you are breathing a cocktail of dead cells, mucus and viruses from anyone and everyone.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">BBC: Why germs spread in winter;</a></p> <p><a href="#">TH: H1N1 returns;</a></p>

<p>3.</p>	<p>With reference to the National Committee on Trade Facilitation, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is chaired by the Minister of Finance</li> <li>2. It includes among its participants stakeholders from the private sector</li> <li>3. The 'TFA Plus' section of the Action Plan prepared by it goes beyond the ambit of the WTO-Trade Facilitation Agreement</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The World Customs Organisation emphasised the fact that as many as 51 of the 76 activities mentioned in India's NTFAP "go beyond" the implementation requirements of the World Trade Organisation's Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)"..</li> <li>• Earlier, under Article 23.2 of the TFA, a National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) headed by the Cabinet Secretary was constituted.</li> <li>• The NCTF comprises of stakeholders from the Government and the private sectors including trade community.</li> <li>• The NCTF has adopted 76 point National Trade Facilitation Action Plan (NTFAP) which is a reflection of the Government's commitment to implement the TFA.</li> <li>• The objectives to be achieved by National Action Plan are improvement in ease of doing business by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reduction in cargo release time and cost,</li> <li>• move towards paperless regulatory environment,</li> <li>• transparent and predictable legal regime and</li> <li>• improved investment climate through better infrastructure.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Action Plan not only covers the activities coming under the TFA but they go beyond the ambit of TFA per se, which have been defined as TFA Plus category.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a> <a href="#">TH: WCO backs India's trade facilitation plan;</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The World Customs Organisation (WCO) was established under the aegis of the World Trade Organisation</li> <li>2. The 'Revised Kyoto Convention' is related to the simplification and harmonisation of customs procedures globally</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>The same question was posted here earlier. Statement 1 is wrong, but keep in mind that the WTO and WCO cooperate on certain issues such as trade facilitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The WCO, established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC) is an independent intergovernmental body whose mission is to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of customs administrations.</li> <li>• The CCC was initially a Customs Committee set up by a group of a few European Governments</li> </ul>

	<p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>based on the principles of the GATT. The name 'WCO' was adopted in 1994 to reflect its status as a truly global intergovernmental institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Today, the WCO represents 182 Customs administrations across the globe that collectively process approximately 98% of world trade. As the global centre of Customs expertise, the WCO is the only international organization with competence in Customs matters and can rightly call itself the voice of the international Customs community.</li> <li>• <b>Regarding Statement 2:</b> The 'Revised Kyoto Convention' (RKC) is the legal instrument of the WCO that aims to simplify and harmonize international customs procedures globally, in order to achieve faster, more predictable and efficient customs clearances.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: WCO backs India's NTFAP;</a></p> <p><a href="#">Britannica;</a></p>
5.	<p>Which one of the following statements is <b>not</b> related to the twelfth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 12)?</p> <p>(a) More than half of all children who have not enrolled in school live in sub-Saharan Africa</p> <p>(b) Each year, an estimated one third of all food produced is wasted</p> <p>(c) Man is polluting water faster than nature can recycle and purify water in rivers and lakes</p> <p>(d) Commercial and residential energy use is the second most rapidly growing area of global energy use after transport</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>In order to answer this particular question, you don't have to know what each SDG is associated with. The question is essentially asking you to pick the odd one out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statements 'b', 'c' and 'd' are related to discussions around resource efficiency (responsible consumption and production), dealt with by <a href="#">SDG 12</a> – 'Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns'.</li> <li>• Statement 'a' on the other hand is associated with <a href="#">SDG 4</a> – 'Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning'.</li> </ul> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">PIB: NITI Aayog's meeting on resource efficiency strategy;</a></p>
JULY 24, 2017		
1.	<p>'Gavkis', a term recently in the news, refers to</p> <p>(a) A panchayat, which acts like a Khap or Jat panchayat, existing in the interior parts of Maharashtra</p> <p>(b) Groups of Gujarati women who travel to different states, approach poor and illiterate parents to make an offer of marriage to their young girls against payment</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Maharashtra Prohibition of People from Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2016, received Presidential assent last week, paving the way for its implementation. The new law disallows social boycott in the name of caste, community, religion, rituals or customs.</li> <li>• The decision to have such a law was a reaction to pressures from growing incidents of atrocities on</li> </ul>



	<p>(c) Parents from the state of Andhra Pradesh who seek euthanasia for their children, infected with infant jaundice, due to their inability to raise money for treatment</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>individuals by jati panchayats or gavkis wielding extra-judicial powers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The highest number of incidents were reported from the districts of Raigad, Ratnagiri and Nashik; and the largest number of cases of social boycott were provoked by inter-caste marriages.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">IE: MH's new social boycott law;</a></p> <p><a href="#">TH: The boycott ban;</a></p>
2.	<p>'MPOWER', related to the affairs of the World Health Organisation, refer/s to</p> <p>(a) Measures under the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control intended to assist countries to implement and manage tobacco control</p> <p>(b) A programme to upend the unequal power relationships between men and women so as to enable women to attain the best possible level of health</p> <p>(c) A series of initiatives organised in association with UN Women to increase political participation of women, seen as a precondition to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030</p> <p>(d) Measures to be taken in order to achieve one of the three 90-90-90 HIV/AIDS treatment targets – viral suppression – so that people living with HIV/AIDS can lead a normal life</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and its guidelines provide the foundation for countries to implement and manage tobacco control. To help make this a reality, WHO introduced the MPOWER measures.</li> <li>These measures are intended to assist in the country-level implementation of effective interventions to reduce the demand for tobacco, contained in the WHO FCTC.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">WHO: MPower;</a></p> <p><a href="#">IE: Tobacco control WHO assessment;</a></p>
3.	<p>With reference to the head of the Indian State, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S/he is an integral part of the Parliament of India</li> <li>S/he has no constitutional discretion</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Both statements are correct.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The head of the Indian State is the President, whereas the head of the Indian Government is the Prime Minister.</li> <li>The President has no constitutional discretion, but s/he has some situational discretion (that is, s/he can act on his/her discretion in certain situations).</li> </ul> <p>Chapter 'President' -&gt; 'Constitutional position of the President' and 'Legislative Powers' -&gt; Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p> <p><a href="#">IE: President in the Constitution;</a></p>

4. 'Huvadhu Kandu' is a major international shipping passage controlled by

- (a) Seychelles
- (b) China
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) Maldives

Solution: d.

- The Huvadhu atoll is a relatively isolated atoll with the 97 km wide Huvadhu Kandu (One and a Half Degree Channel) to its north.
- Abdulla Yameen has allowed Beijing to build a port at Gaadhoo island in Laamu atoll, which sits at the entrance to the so-called One and a Half Degree Channel, a major international shipping passage.



[Map of the maldives;](#)

[IE: Indian Ocean churning;](#)

5. Where exactly is the standoff, which has been in the news in recent times, between Indian and Chinese troops ongoing?

- (a) Doka La pass
- (b) Doklam plateau
- (c) Donglang plateau
- (d) Dolam plateau

Solution: d.

**To begin with, where exactly is the standoff happening?**

- The location of the standoff is Dolam plateau.
- The Dolam plateau is in the Doklam area (as referred to in the statements of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Embassy of Bhutan in New Delhi).
- The Dolam plateau is different from Doklam plateau (which is a disputed area between Bhutan and China, but has no contiguity with India).
- The Doklam plateau lies around 30 km to the north east of Dolam plateau.
- Doklam is called Donglang in Mandarin.

**Is this region also a part of the Line of Actual Control?**

- The border between China and India in the Sikkim section is seen as 'settled', as the basis for alignment has been agreed between the two countries.

- Although work on delineating the boundary on the map and demarcating it on the ground has not even started, it is not included in the three sectors — eastern, middle and western — which are acknowledged by the two countries as disputed.
- The 220-km boundary in Sikkim is not the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as is the case with the rest of the 3,488 km India-China border.

[IE: Where things stand on the Dolam Plateau;](#)

JULY 25, 2017

1.	<p>The 2017 session of the “IAS Conference” is being held in Paris, France. This conference is related to which one of the following subjects/issues?</p> <p>(a) Administration</p> <p>(b) HIV/AIDS</p> <p>(c) Antarctic ice melt</p> <p>(d) Solar flares</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘IAS’ stands for ‘International Aids Society’</li> <li>• A nine-year-old infected with HIV at birth has spent most of its life without needing any treatment, say doctors in South Africa.</li> <li>• <b>In the news:</b> The results of this case are being presented at the IAS Conference on HIV Science.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">BBC: SA child ‘virtually cured’ of HIV;</a></p>
2.	<p>Biological darkening has not been built into scientists’ climate projections. Which of the following statements relate to the term ‘biological darkening’?</p> <p>(a) Reduction in the numbers of phytoplankton in the oceans</p> <p>(b) Ice sheets being covered with a range of contaminants carried on the winds including dust and soot from industrial heartlands of China, America and Europe</p> <p>(c) Algae and microbes living and reproducing in ice sheets</p> <p>(d) Increased cover of man-made structures over barren land</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White snow reflects up to 90% of solar radiation while dark patches of algae will only reflect about 35% or even as little as 1% in the blackest spots.</li> <li>• One concern now is that rising temperatures will allow algae to flourish not only on the slopes of the narrow margins of the Greenland ice-sheet but also on the flat areas in the far larger interior where melting could happen on a much bigger scale.</li> <li>• Earlier research had found that the Greenland ice sheet is covered with a range of contaminants carried on the winds including dust and soot from as far away as Canadian prairie fires and the industrial heartlands of China, America and Europe.</li> <li>• But studies over the past five years have shown that the majority of the dark material may be biological with different kinds of algae turning the ice black, brown, green and even mauve.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">BBC: Sea level fears as Greenland darkens;</a></p>
3.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. Seen from the perspective of possessing exclusive powers to levy</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This division of fiscal responsibility as provided for in our Constitution was made with a view to</li> </ul>

	<p>certain taxes, the introduction of the GST regime weakens states' fiscal independence</p> <p>2. While the Centre's nod is necessary for a decision to be arrived at by the GST council, a single State's refusal to vote in favour of a proposal does not imply that the GST council has failed to arrive at a decision</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>making States self-sufficient, and with a view to supplying to regional powers the flexibility needed to govern according to the respective needs of their people. The underlying idea here was that States should be uninhibited in tinkering taxation policies in whatever manner they desired so long as their laws conformed to the other constitutional diktats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of the GST, however, militates against this grand constitutional objective, against the aspiration set out in Article 1 of the Constitution, which declares India as a "Union of States". In endeavouring to pursue the goal of creating a single market through a homogenisation of the tax regime, the amendment grants to both the Union and the State governments concomitant powers over nearly all indirect taxes.</li> <li>• To further effectuate this effort, the law also creates a GST Council. In acting as a nodal agency of sorts, this council will recommend a number of things, among others the list of taxes that will be subsumed by the GST, the goods and services that will be exempt from the levy of tax, the rates at which tax shall be levied, and so forth. The council's decisions will require a three-fourths majority, but the Central government's votes will have a weightage of one-third of the total votes cast, according, thereby, to the Union a virtual veto.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: Taxing times for the states;</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Which of the following is most closely associated with the 'Outer Space Treaty'?</p> <p>(a) Kessler Syndrome (b) Cold War (c) Junk collectors (d) Use of animals for space tests</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Outer Space Treaty, which laid the foundation for an international space law, came into force in October 1967, following a feverish, decade-long space race between the Cold War rivals, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.</li> <li>• Formulated to bar its signatory countries from placing weapons of mass destruction in orbit of the Earth, on the Moon or any other celestial body or the outer space, the treaty aimed to get the countries to use space exploration for peaceful purposes.</li> <li>• The space race itself is an important segment in the history of mankind, one that intensified the Cold War rivalry as a fight for supremacy in space became a matter of pride for both the countries.</li> </ul>

		<a href="#">TH: Mankind's giant leaps;</a>
5.	<p>Which of the following projects involve participation of both India and the United States of America?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership to Advance Clean Energy</li> <li>NISAR Mission</li> <li>Laser Interferometer Gravitational Observatory</li> <li>Thirty Meter Telescope</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1, 2 and 3 only</li> <li>2 and 3 only</li> <li>1 and 4 only</li> <li>1, 2, 3 and 4</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>“Over the years, knowledge and technology have become central to most of the bilateral agreements and strategic dialogues between the two countries. Bilateral agreements such as the Partnership to Advance Clean Energy and joint participation in mega projects in the areas of fundamental science such as the High Intensity Superconducting Proton Accelerator, the Thirty Meter Telescope, the Laser Interferometer Gravitational Observatory and the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar Mission will have a far-reaching impact. Going forward, we can reap higher pay-offs if collaborative engagements are focused on sector-agnostic technologies, such as information technology, nanotechnology, and gene-editing technology..”</p> <p><a href="#">TH: Bilateral catalyst;</a></p>
JULY 26, 2017		
1.	<p>Consider the following statements about the ‘windrow’ form of management of fresh waste:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian cities widely employ this form of waste management</li> <li>Waste segregation is a must in order for this method of waste management to be effective</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 only</li> <li>2 only</li> <li>Both 1 and 2</li> <li>Neither 1 nor 2</li> </ol>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The correct way to manage fresh waste is to expose as much of it to air as soon as possible. Worldwide, the standard way of doing this is to unload the waste in windrows, not high heaps.</li> <li>Windrows are long low parallel heaps of waste, not more than two metres high, which are designed to achieve the best conditions for aerating the waste. Only parking-lot type management is required to guide incoming vehicles on where and how to unload their waste, moving slowly forward and leaving the waste behind in a long row. Enough space is left between rows for a lifting tractor or earthmover to drive through and turn the waste in the windrow.</li> <li>The outer aerated waste should form the inner core of a new windrow, and the airless centre of the old heap now on the outside. Weekly turning of the waste, repeated at least four times, ensures that all parts of the waste are fully decomposed, like leaves on a forest floor, turning dark brown and with a sweet earthy smell. The process can be speeded up by the addition of composting bio-cultures (fresh cow dung or substitutes available in the market).</li> </ul>

- Fresh waste windrows heat up inside, to about 55°C to 60°C in three to four days. After four turnings, there is about 40 per cent weight loss as moisture content declines and also about 40 per cent volume reduction. After this, no leachate or methane or smelly gases are released, and this fully stabilised waste is called compost, rich in microbes as well as humus, both wonderful for soil vitality.

[IE: Back to waste basics;](#)

2. 'Project Dantak' refers to

- The construction of road and telecommunications network by India's Border Roads Organisation, in Bhutan
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's programme to set up dental clinics through PPP mode in every district
- The Income Tax Department's initiative to e-verify large cash deposits made during the window provided for depositing high-denomination currency notes with banks
- An India Post virtual museum showcasing all philatelic items associated with India's Men in Uniform

Solution: a.

Project Dantak was raised in May 1961 in Eastern Bhutan. A humble beginning was made in bamboo huts and thatched roofs. Since then Project Dantak has not looked back. It has contributed to economic growth of Bhutan by not only developing roads and tele-communication networks but also other prestigious works throughout Bhutan. Over the years, Project Dantak has constructed 1500 Km of roads, airfields, a number of helipads, tele-communication network in Bhutan, Indo-Bhutan Microwave link, Bhutan Broadcasting Station, the prestigious India House Complex, Chukha Hydel Housing Complex, Hydel Sub-stations, river training works, Schools and Colleges.

[BRO: Project Dantak;](#)

[TH: Crossroads at the Doklam plateau;](#)

3. Where is the Hambantota port of Sri Lanka located?

- Northeast, opening out to the Bay of Bengal
- Northwest, opening out to the Palk Bay
- West, opening out to the Gulf of Mannar
- South, opening out to the Indian Ocean

Solution: d.



[TH: SL clears revised deal for Hambantota port;](#)



4. Which of the following country/ies share/s its/their borders with Iran?

1. Turkey
2. Kuwait
3. Turkmenistan
4. Uzbekistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Solution: b.



Know the countries that border Iran, either in a clockwise or anti-clockwise manner.

[NYT: For China's global ambitions, 'Iran is at the centre of everything';](#)

TH, World Page, 26th July 2017;

5. The first Indian satellite built in our country, was named after a 5th Century A.D. astronomer. Which of the following is/are texts authored by this astronomer?

1. Aryabhatibhashya
2. Brihatsamhita
3. Aryasiddhanta

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

The same question was posted here earlier.

- Aryabhata is the first Indian spacecraft that was built in the country.
- 'Bhashya', usually refers to commentary on a text. For instance, Patanjali's Mahabhashya is a commentary on Panini's Ashtadhyayi as well as on Katyayana's Varttika.
- Aryabhatibhashya, according to Wikipedia, is a commentary by Bhaskara I, a mathematician belonging to the 7th Century A.D., on Aryabhata's work.
- Aryabhata's work includes the Aryabhatiyam and the Aryasiddhanta.
- Brihatsamhita is Varahamihira's work.

Improvisation: [TH: Space Scientist UR Rao dead;](#)

JULY 27, 2017

1. This country's judicial system is widely seen as slow and reforms are necessary. However, its Parliament passed key judicial reforms which the President vetoed. One of the reforms required all its Supreme Court judges to step down and gave the country's justice minister the power to decide who should stay on. Which country is being referred to here?

- (a) Venezuela
- (b) Poland

Solution: b.

A GK question. Helpful, from a mains perspective.

The three reforms give the justice minister and MPs broad powers and have prompted alarm from the US, as well as the EU.

- The first reform requires all Supreme Court judges to step down and gives the justice minister the power to decide who should stay on (vetoed)



	<p>(c) Hungary</p> <p>(d) Zimbabwe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The second gives politicians control over who sits on the National Judiciary Council which nominates Supreme Court judges (vetoed)</li> <li>The third gives the justice minister the right to select and dismiss judges in lower courts</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">BBC: Poland's President vetoes judicial reforms;</a></p> <p><a href="#">TH: Poles apart;</a></p>
2.	<p>The Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme</p> <p>(a) Will help curb the import of gold</p> <p>(b) Will put to productive use idle gold holdings</p> <p>(c) Both a and b</p> <p>(d) Neither a nor b</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>The Gold Monetisation Scheme will put to productive use idle gold holdings, not the SGB scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main objective of the SGB scheme was to develop a financial asset as an alternative to purchasing metal gold.</li> <li>The target was to shift part of the estimated 300 tons of physical bars and coins purchased every year for Investment into 'demat' gold bonds.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB: Revision of guidelines of SGB scheme;</a></p>
3.	<p>Adherence to Codex Alimentarius will ensure that</p> <p>(a) Activities such as trophy hunting will enable protection of endangered species</p> <p>(b) Essential medicines will be available at all times in adequate amounts with assured quality and at a price that the individual and community can afford</p> <p>(c) Every spacefaring nation will contribute to alleviating the problems caused by space debris</p> <p>(d) Food is safe and can be traded</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p><a href="#">In the news:</a> In a major recognition of India's efforts to benchmark global spices trade, the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) has adopted three Codex standards for black, white and green pepper, cumin and thyme, paving the way for universal agreement on identifying quality spices in various countries. The Codex standards were adopted in the wake of India conducting three sessions of Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (<b>CCSCH</b>) at Kochi (2014), Goa (2015) and Chennai (2017).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Codex Alimentarius, or "Food Code" is a collection of standards, guidelines and codes of practice adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The Commission, also known as CAC, is the central part of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme and was established by FAO and WHO to protect consumer health and promote fair practices in food trade.</li> <li>Codex standards ensure that food is safe and can be traded. The 188 Codex members have negotiated science based recommendations in all areas related to food safety and quality: food hygiene; maximum limits for food additives; residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs; and maximum limits and codes for the prevention of chemical and microbiological contamination.</li> </ul>

		<p>Codex food safety texts are a reference in WTO trade disputes.</p> <p><b>About the CCSCCH:</b> The 36th session of CAC, which met in Rome from July 1-5, 2013, deliberated on the proposal from India for establishing an exclusive committee for spices and culinary herbs under the aegis of the CAC. The CAC later approved the proposal with unanimous support of the member-countries. It heralded the creation of CCSCCH, with India as the host country and Spices Board as the Secretariat. This was the first new Codex commodity committee to be approved in the past 25 years.</p> <p><a href="#">About Codex Alimentarius;</a></p>						
4.	<p>‘Atpati’, ‘Chugani’, ‘Dastar’ and ‘Jaapi’ all refer to</p> <p>(a) Painting styles of north and northeast India</p> <p>(b) Methods of ship building in early medieval India</p> <p>(c) Traditional headgear of India</p> <p>(d) Sculptural styles of Mughal India</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pagdi, pag, turban, topi, cap, headgear are the part of daily men’s attire, sometimes women too, along with Indian traditional wear. These were specially designed for occasional and ceremonial bases.</li><li>• Each phase of Indian history show some distinct or peculiar style of wearing pag. Maurya-Sunga period evidences show the tying of pag in two stages, top-knot for covering the hair bun and then covers the head. During the medieval period also we witnessed the interesting types of headgear such as; Akbar’s ‘atpati turban’, was famous which was like a loosely worn, carefree style turban. It is believed that Shah Jahan introduced the ‘turban band’, which was tied above the band to secure the turban. It is believed that Aurangzeb use to make his own cap. The last Mughal ruler Bahadurshah Zafar’s ‘Chugani’ or ‘Chaugoshia’ cap has four raised points.</li><li>• Jaapi is a traditional conical hat from Assam.</li></ul> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>						
5.	<p>Consider the following pairs:</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>Initiative/Legislation</i></th><th><i>Union Ministry</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1. SHe-Box online portal</td><td>: Ministry of Women and Child Development</td></tr><tr><td>2. Aarambh Mobile Application</td><td>: Ministry of Human Resource Development</td></tr></tbody></table>	<i>Initiative/Legislation</i>	<i>Union Ministry</i>	1. SHe-Box online portal	: Ministry of Women and Child Development	2. Aarambh Mobile Application	: Ministry of Human Resource Development	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>SHe-Box portal:</b> The Minister of Women &amp; Child Development recently launched an online complaint management system titled Sexual Harassment electronic-Box (SHe-Box) for registering complaints related to sexual harassment at workplace. The complaint management system has been developed to ensure the effective implementation of Sexual</li></ul>
<i>Initiative/Legislation</i>	<i>Union Ministry</i>							
1. SHe-Box online portal	: Ministry of Women and Child Development							
2. Aarambh Mobile Application	: Ministry of Human Resource Development							

3. Admiralty : Ministry of Law  
(Jurisdiction and Justice  
and Settlement  
of Maritime  
Claims) Bill,  
2017

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

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

Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (the SH Act), 2013.

- **Aarambh mobile app:** This Mobile Phone App aims at use of GIS based mapping for making road inventories, condition surveys, and producing cost estimates and other relevant data for preparation and monitoring of annual road maintenance plans. Its usage would greatly enhance the service delivery of the state level institutions in planning and implementing performance based rural roads maintenance contracts.
- **Admiralty (Jurisdiction and Settlement of Maritime Claims) Bill, 2017:** The Bill aims to establish a legal framework for consolidation of related laws to replace the age old archaic laws with modern Indian legislation and to confer admiralty jurisdiction on all High Courts of the coastal states of the country.
- As per the new Bill, High Courts of all the coastal states shall exercise admiralty jurisdiction over maritime claims which include several aspects not limited to goods imported and chattel as earlier, but also other claims such as payment of wages of seamen, loss of life, salvages, mortgage, loss or damage, services and repairs, insurance, ownership and lien, threat of damage to environment etc.
- The Bill accords highest priority to payment of wages of the seafarers. The Bill also provides for protection against wrongful and unjustified arrest and has provision for transfer of cases from one High Court to other High Court.

[PIB1](#); [PIB2](#); [PIB3](#);

JULY 28, 2017

1. Which one of the following statements with reference to the excavations carried out in recent times at Keezhadi, Tamil Nadu is correct?

- (a) Structures made of fired bricks here coexisted during the times of the Indus Valley Civilisation  
(b) As represented by the different items found across excavation sites, society is considered to have been hierarchical

Solution: b.

Keezhadi is to the southeast of Madurai. Historians suggest that the antiquity of Madurai – as a result of this find – could be pushed by well over a millennium. The excavation at Keezhadi has been carried out at two localities in the farm. Both the places have yielded different items and are presumed to represent a social hierarchy.

- The bigger of the two locations with more number of trenches is said to be a settlement of educated rich people, as many jewellery, fine

	<p>(c) The site is considered to have been a part of the Motupalle port</p> <p>(d) None of the above</p>	<p>game stones, semi-precious stones and a dozen Tamil Brahmi inscriptions have been found. Even the brick structures appear more refined. Beads of agate, Carnelian and quartz indicate that they had trade link with countries like Rome. The Tamil Brahmi letters found on pottery is all names of individuals such as, Thisan, Aadhan and Udhiran. They are typical Sangam Age Tamil names.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The second locality has more of graffiti on pottery, bone tools and iron weapons.</li> </ul> <p>Primary Source: <a href="#">TH: Keezhadi archaeological excavation</a>;</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: Carbon dating confirms TN site is from Sangam era</a>;</p>
2.	<p>Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code deals with</p> <p>(a) Dowry Harassment</p> <p>(b) Criminal Defamation</p> <p>(c) Sedition</p> <p>(d) Incitement to communal violence</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committees of social workers, homemakers, retired persons and other upstanding citizens will form the vanguard against frivolous complaints of dowry harassment in their localities.</li> <li><b>Family Welfare Committees:</b> The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered the setting up of 'family welfare committees' in all districts under the aegis of the National Legal Services Authority. The three-member family welfare committees will be set up by the district legal services authorities. Members can be appointed from para legal volunteers, social workers, retired persons, "wives of working officers" and other citizens.</li> <li><b>Their role:</b> They will sift the genuine cases from the trivial ones. No suspect shall be arrested in a dowry case immediately after a complaint is registered.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">TH: SC for panels to examine dowry cases</a>;</p>
3.	<p>'Capitol Hill' refers to a place that is often seen in the news. It is also a metonym for the</p> <p>(a) Federal Government of Australia</p> <p>(b) United States Congress</p> <p>(c) French National Assembly</p> <p>(d) British Government</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Some other such metonyms include the oval office (White House), India's South Block (which houses the Ministry of External Affairs + the PMO + the MoD, and thus is used as a metonym for either of these), etc.</p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: A crisis of trust</a>;</p>

4. Which one of the following rivers' discharge into the seas will a fish **not** come across, while traversing water bodies from Elephanta Island to A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island in the shortest possible route?

- (a) Subarnarekha
- (b) Ponnani
- (c) Kalinadi
- (d) Vaigai

Solution: a



Elephanta Island is located near Mumbai. So a fish using the shortest route to reach Abdul Kalam island from the Elephanta Island will have to traverse the Arabian Sea (and Lakshadweep Sea), Gulf of Mannar, Palk Bay and the Bay of Bengal.

The rivers mentioned in the options have been lifted from Class 11 NCERT (India: Physical Environment).

- River Kalinadi rises from Belgaum district and falls in the Karwar Bay
- River Ponnai rises in Annamalai hills and is the longest river of Kerala
- River Vaigai flows in Tamil Nadu

Improvisation and [In the news](#): The Odisha government has named the Outer Wheeler Island under Chandabali tehsil in Bhadrak district as A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Island as a tribute to the former President.

5. Which one of the following countries is **not** a participant in negotiations of the Regional Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (RCEP)?

- (a) China
- (b) South Korea
- (c) New Zealand
- (d) Papua New Guinea

Solution: d.

Members of ASEAN (Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Singapore), India, Australia, NZ, Japan, South Korea and China make up the 16 countries negotiating the RCEP.

Improvisation: [TH: What's at stake in Hyderabad](#);

JULY 29, 2017

1. Consider the following statements:

1. Qualifications for a person to be chosen a member of the Parliament, in addition to those laid down by the Constitution, can be prescribed by the Parliament itself
2. A candidate contesting an election to the Rajya Sabha from a particular state should be an elector in that particular state

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Solution: a.

Among the qualifications laid down by the Constitution for a person to be chosen a member of the Parliament, one is that "he must possess other qualifications prescribed by the Parliament."

Accordingly, The Representation of People Act lays down the following additional qualification:

- He must be registered as an elector for a parliamentary constituency. This is same in the case of both, the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha. The requirement that a candidate contesting an election to the Rajya Sabha from a particular state should be an elector in that particular state was dispensed with in 2003. In 2006, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of this change.

Improvisation: [TH: Shah, Smriti in the fray](#);

2. Consider the following statements:

1. The greatest concentration of volcanoes occur where foci of earthquakes are at shallow depths
2. The Pacific Ring of Fire is a hotspot for earthquakes

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Solution: c.

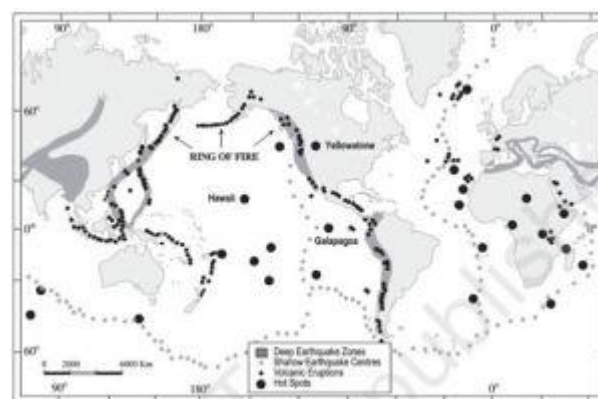



Figure 4. 2 : Distribution of earthquakes and volcanoes

One area of concentration of earthquakes coincides with the Alpine-Himalayan system and the rim of the Pacific Ocean. In general, the foci of the earthquake along the Alpine-Himalayan belt as well as the rim of the Pacific are deep-seated ones, whereas in the areas of mid-oceanic ridges the foci are at shallow depths.

Improvisation: [TH: Scientists set sail to unlock secrets of lost continent](#); CH-3, Goh Cheng Leong's Certificate Physical and Human Geography; Pg32, CH-4, Fundamentals of Physical Geography;



<p>3.</p>	<p>‘SVAROP’ is a national programme for the scientific validation of</p> <p>(a) Uniqueness of Indian cows</p> <p>(b) Panchagavya for medicine and health</p> <p>(c) Both a and b</p> <p>(d) Neither a nor b</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India has constituted a National Steering Committee to initiate a National Programme on “Scientific Validation and Research on Panchagavya” (SVAROP). This multi-disciplinary programme will cover the following five thematic areas: Scientific validation of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniqueness of Indian cows</li> <li>• Panchagavya for medicine and health</li> <li>• Panchagavya and its products for agriculture applications</li> <li>• Panchagavya for food nutrition</li> <li>• Panchagavya based utility products.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">SVAROP Programme;</a></p> <p><a href="#">PIB;</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>GSAT-17 was recently launched from the spaceport of Kourou. Where is Kourou located?</p> <p>(a) Europe</p> <p>(b) India</p> <p>(c) South America</p> <p>(d) Africa</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Kourou is located in French Guiana, South America.</p>  <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">Vikaspedia: Current Affairs June 2017;</a></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>The International Economic Association aims to</p> <p>(a) Promote personal contacts and mutual understanding among economists in different parts of the world</p> <p>(b) Help governments around the world to foster and support new sources of growth through innovation and environmentally friendly ‘green growth’ strategies</p> <p>(c) Establish a world where free and open trade and investment promote and accelerate economic integration</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IEA was founded in 1950 as a Non Governmental Organization, at the instigation of the Social Sciences Department of UNESCO. It has since its creation maintained information and consultative relations with UNESCO.</li> <li>• Its aim from the beginning has been to promote personal contacts and mutual understanding among economists in different parts of the world through the organization of scientific meetings, through common research programs and by means of publications of an international character on problems of current importance.</li> <li>• Kaushik Basu was recently appointed as President of the IEA.</li> </ul>

- (d) Foster global financial stability, facilitate international trade and reduce poverty around the world

Improvisation: [Vikaspedia: Current Affairs June 2017](#);

JULY 31, 2017

1. The 'sandbox approach', recently in the news, is most closely related to

- (a) Monetary Policy Committee's stance on inflation  
(b) Regulation in the context of innovation  
(c) Target Olympic Podium Scheme  
(d) Smart Cities Programme

Solution: b.

- [What is the 'sandbox approach'?](#) Fintech innovations are not risk-free, and their transformative implications are being scrutinized by regulators, including the Financial Stability Board. Regulators are exploring ways to apply innovation responsibly – ways to manage systemic risks that may arise from technological change.
- Although publicized as novel, the "sandbox" is not a new concept; it is just a new expression. Quite sometime back in many developing countries, regulators adopted a flexible "test and learn" approach to foster innovation.
- The sandbox approach gives limited authorization for fintech startups to test new products and models with a small number of actual users in a simulated environment.
- This gives them more time to build and test business ideas, instead of spending time navigating complex financial services regulations. Focusing on regulatory compliance eats up seed capital before anyone knows whether an idea could work and be scaled up.
- Piloting a product or business model in the sandbox will help companies manage their regulatory risk during testing. Restricting transaction size will limit any large adverse consequence of product or model failure.
- Globally, regulatory sandboxes have been introduced in the U.K., Singapore, Australia, Malaysia and UAE. All these countries have so far created a sandboxed environment to support financial institutions (FIs) and fintech firms.

[TH: Regulators shouldn't restrain innovation](#);

2. Which of the following is/are changes envisaged by the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) Bill, 2017?

1. They will be conferred with the power to grant degrees

Solution: a.

- **Regarding Statement 1:** The Bill declares 20 existing Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) as institutions of national importance and confers on them the power to grant degrees.
- **Regarding Statement 2:** Currently, the central government has a role in the functioning of IIMs

	<p>2. Each IIM's Board of Governors will appoint its Chairperson</p> <p>3. It grants the Board of Governors autonomy in determining faculty pay</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>(b) 2 only</p> <p>(c) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>(d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>which includes appointment of the Chairperson of their Boards, their Directors and pay to the Director. In contrast, the Bill extends greater autonomy to the Board in the performance of these functions. The Board will appoint its own Chairperson and also the Director of each IIM. Directors of IITs and AIIMS on the other hand, are appointed by the Central Government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regarding Statement 3:</b> Certain recommendations of expert committees have not been addressed in the Bill. These relate to, among others – the Board having the autonomy to determine faculty pay.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PRS Legislative Brief: The IIM Bill, 2017;</a></p> <p>Improvisation: <a href="#">TH: LS passes bill for more autonomy to IIMs;</a></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>The slogan 'Quit India' was coined by</p> <p>(a) M.A. Ansari</p> <p>(b) P. Tyagaraja Chetti</p> <p>(c) Yusuf Meher Ali</p> <p>(d) Mahatma Gandhi</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>"My dear countrymen, the month of August is the month of Revolution. We have been hearing this as a natural fact right from our childhood and the reason is, the Non-Cooperation Movement was launched on the 1st of August 1920; the Quit India Movement, which is also known as 'Agast Kranti' began on the 9th of August 1942; and on 15th August 1947 India became independent. In a way, there are many events in the month of August that are closely associated with the history of our freedom movement. This year, we are going to observe the 75th Anniversary of the Quit India Movement. But very few people know the fact that the slogan, 'Quit India' was coined by Dr. Yusuf Meher Ali.."</p> <p><a href="#">TH: It's Sankalp Parva on August 15;</a></p> <p><a href="#">PIB: Mann ki Baat;</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Which of the following vaccines have been introduced in the Universal Immunisation Programme since 2014?</p> <p>1. Rotavirus Vaccine</p> <p>2. Measles-Rubella Vaccine</p> <p>3. Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine</p> <p>4. Inactivated Poliovirus Vaccine</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1, 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>(c) 1 and 4 only</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Introduction of new vaccines is key to reducing childhood and infant mortality and morbidity in the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the last two years, through the UIP, Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV), Rotavirus vaccine (RVV) against diarrhoea, and the measles-rubella (MR) vaccine, to protect against both measles and rubella have been introduced.</li> <li>• The latest weapon in the arsenal being introduced is pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV). More than 130 countries worldwide have</li> </ul>

	<p>(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4</p>	<p>introduced PCV as part of their childhood immunization programmes, in line with World Health Organization (WHO) global recommendations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This vaccine provides protection against one of the most common causes of pneumonia—a bacterium called pneumococcus, which also causes other diseases such as ear infections, meningitis and blood infections, with some of these resulting in death or serious disabilities.</li> <li>• This vaccine has long been available in the private sector in India, so children of wealthy families who could afford it could be protected. But by introducing it in the UIP this vaccine will reach all children, especially those who need it the most, the underprivileged and underserved.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">PIB: A strike against Pneumonia;</a></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Global Vaccine Action Plan calls for all countries to establish or have access to NITAGs or National Immunisation Technical Advisory Groups by 2020</li> <li>2. India is yet to formally establish a NITAG</li> </ol> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National technical advisory bodies to guide immunization policies are often referred to as National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs).</li> <li>• A NITAG is a technical resource providing guidance to national policy-makers and programme managers to enable them to make evidence-based immunization-related policy and programme decisions.</li> <li>• The Global Vaccine Action Plan calls for all country to establish or have access to such a NITAG by 2020.</li> <li>• <b>India's NTAGI</b> (Click <a href="#">HERE</a> for source; no need to go through it): The National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI) was established in August 2001 by the Department of Family Welfare. The NTAGI was intended to provide technical advice to inform decision-making on both technical and operational matters pertaining to immunisation and choice and scheduling of existing and planned vaccines.</li> <li>• <b>Procedure for introduction of a new vaccine in UIP:</b> NTAGI reviews disease burden and epidemiology of a particular vaccine preventable disease and vaccine availability along with its cost effectiveness before making recommendations for any new vaccine introduction. The Ministry introduces new vaccines only when NTAGI recommendations are</li> </ul>

subsequently approved by the empowered programme committee and Mission Steering Group.

[WHO: NITAG;](#)

[PIB: A strike against Pneumonia;](#)

6. With which (one) of the following countries does India maintain diplomatic relations?

1. Taiwan
2. North Korea
3. Palestine

Select the correct answer using the code given below

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) None of the above

Solution: b.

- **India-Taiwan:** Over the last two decades, India-Taiwan relations have progressed considerably despite not having diplomatic status to their ties. Although because of the constraints of one-China policy the two sides do not have diplomatic ties, their bilateral working relations have always generated a political context.
- **India-North Korea:** Diplomatic relations between India and North Korea were established in 1973.
- **India-Palestine:** India was one of the first countries to recognise the State of Palestine in 1988.

Improvisation: [TH: US prods India on Pyongyang;](#)

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