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	QUESTION	SOLUTION
	June 1, 2017	
1.	<p>Members of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes, apart from its chairman, are appointed by the</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> President of India Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Speaker, Lok Sabha 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>PIB; Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p>
2.	<p>A “fish ladder” is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A man-made structure considered to be critical in conservation of certain fish species Sections of rivers where the river bed has a relatively steep gradient, causing an increase in water velocity and turbulence A structure used by fishermen to catch fish Responsible for the decline of anadromous fish species 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>A fish ladder, or fishway, is essentially a structure that allows migrating fish passage over or around an obstacle — dams, culverts, waterfalls — on a river. Fishways give anadromous fish — whose survival depends on migration — a detour, and have been considered critical in keeping up fish stocks. Fish ladders are common in the US, and are of designs that depend on the obstruction, river flow, and species of affected fish. The general principle, however, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the US Department of Commerce, is the same for all: “the ladder contains a series of ascending pools that are reached by swimming against a stream of water. Fish leap through the cascade of rushing water, rest in a pool, and then repeat the process until they are out of the ladder.”</p> <p>Improvisation: PIB;</p>
3.	<p>Three rivers – the Ganga and Yamuna in India, and the Whanganui in New Zealand (NZ) – were recently declared to be “living people”. What is/are the key differences in the two declarations?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In the case of the Whanganui, it was the NZ Parliament that passed a bill recognising it as a living entity, whereas in India, it was a judicial pronouncement The custodians appointed to act on behalf of the rivers in India are only government authorities, whereas in NZ, the custodians include a local representative <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 only Both 1 and 2 Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is though a fundamental difference between New Zealand’s (legislative) recognition of their third largest river as a living entity and that of Uttarakhand High Court according the status to two of India’s prominent rivers. It has led to questions being raised by various stakeholders here. It pertains to the custodians appointed to act on behalf of the rivers. New Zealand has appointed two guardians — one from the crown and one from the Whanganui iwi tribe itself. In India, the three custodians are solely government authorities: the chief secretary of the state of Uttarakhand, the advocate general of the state of Uttarakhand and the director of the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG). <p>IE Explained;</p>

4. Which of the following countries are contiguous with Afghanistan?

1. Iran
2. Turkmenistan
3. Tajikistan
4. Uzbekistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: d.

“The diplomatic challenge before Mr. Ghani is to cut off the Taliban’s supplies from abroad. It is an open secret that Pakistan is supporting the insurgency. There were reports recently that Iran and Russia may also be arming them for geopolitical reasons.”



Improvisation: [TH: Uncertain times;](#)

5. INS Kalvari, a Scorpene Submarine named after a deep-sea tiger shark, is going through the final phase of trials. The selection of names of ships and submarines of the Indian Navy is done by the

- a) A separate nomenclature committee of the Ministry of Defence
- b) The President of India
- c) A committee consisting of the Chief of the Naval Staff and all 4-star rank naval officers
- d) Chiefs of Staff Committee

Solution: a.

- The **selection of names** of ships and submarines of the Indian Navy is done by the Internal Nomenclature Committee (INC) at the Defence Ministry. The INC is headed by the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff (Policy & Plans), and has representatives from the historical section of the Defence Ministry, Department of Archaeology in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, and the Ministry of Surface Transport, among others. As per the policy guidelines, the recommendations of this committee are approved by the Navy Chief. Names, crests and mottos of major war vessels require the assent of the President as well.
- To maintain uniformity in the names of vessels of one type, the Internal Nomenclature Committee follows certain broad parameters, which have been enumerated in the policy guidelines. So, a cruiser or a destroyer is named after a state capital, a large city, or a great king or warrior from India’s history — for example, INS Delhi and INS Ranjit.
- Names of vessels in a certain class begin with the same letter, and describe similar/related objects.

[IE: Explained;](#)

Improvisation: [TH: First scorpene sub to be commissioned by July;](#)

June 2, 2017

1. A cultural contingent from Haryana will be the “special attraction” in the celebrations of Telangana’s third anniversary of its formation. Under which programme is this “special attraction” being facilitated?

- a) Bharat Ek Khoj
- b) Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat
- c) Swadesh Darshan
- d) Bharat Darshan

Solution: b.

[TH: State tops in national integration initiatives;](#)

[TH: Celebrations for Telangana Formation Day;](#)

2. In the Index of Eight Core Industries, which one of the following is given the highest weight?

- a) Coal production
- b) Electricity generation
- c) Petroleum Refinery production
- d) Steel production

Solution: c.

- The Base Year of the Index of Eight Core Industries has been revised from the year 2004-05 to 2011-12 from April, 2017. The shift is in line with the new base year of Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- Industries covered in the revised index remain the same as in the 2004-05 series. **The revised Eight Core Industries have a combined weight of 40.27 per cent in the IIP.**

NOTE: Images attached include the old index (totalling 37.9, because the weights used were of the individual items as given in the IIP) and revised index (totalling 100, making the index of core industries a separate index altogether).

Sector	Weight
Coal	10.3335
Crude Oil	8.9833
Natural Gas	6.8768
Refinery Products	28.0376
Fertilizers	2.6276
Steel	17.9166
Cement	5.3720
Electricity	19.8530
Overall Index	100.0000

Sector	Weight
Coal	4.379
Crude Oil	5.216
Natural Gas	1.708
Refinery Products	5.939
Fertilizers	1.254
Steel	6.684
Cement	2.406
Electricity	10.316
Overall Index	37.903

3. The acquisition of a Polar Research Vehicle (PRV) by India will

- a) Help sustain and widen research in both, Antarctica as well as the Arctic regions
- b) Enable the deployment of a remote-controlled polar vehicle in the polar regions
- c) Both a and b
- d) Neither a nor b

Solution: a.

Statement ‘b’ refers to the PROVe, the remotely operated polar vehicle in the Antarctic region.

- A PRV, or the ‘ice-breaker,’ as these ships are colloquially called, can cut through a 1.5-metre thick wall of ice. With a lifespan of 30 years, the ship is expected to be central to India’s ambitions in the Arctic and Antarctica in coming years.
- The vessel is expected to contribute to India’s scientific expeditions and to sustain research at two Indian bases in Antarctica (Maitri and Bharti) and also dovetail research initiatives in the Southern Ocean domain in the proximal regions of the Antarctic continent.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It could also widen the thrust on Arctic research disciplines, undertaken through Indian Station Himadri (located at Svalbard, Norway, where also the Global Seed Vault is), in addition to providing a suitable research platform for other ocean research programmes. <p>PIB: Taking into consideration (i) the growing need of the scientific community to initiate studies in the frontier realms of ocean sciences, (ii) the uncertainty in the charter-hire of polar vessels and the ever-escalating chartering costs, and (iii) the expansion of our scientific activities into the Arctic and Southern Ocean, it was decided to explore the feasibility of constructing and commissioning a polar research vessel which can cater to both the scientific and logistics aspects of the polar and Southern Ocean programmes.</p> <p>Th: India's polar ship still a long way off;</p>
4.	<p>In what way/s is the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard important for India?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research has set up a research station in one of the islands The National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources has deposited seeds in the Global Seed Vault <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 only Both 1 and 2 Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCAOR: HIMADRI, 'the abode of snow', is India's first research station located at the International Arctic Research base, NyÅlesund, Svalbard, Norway. <p>Additional information: IndARC is the country's first underwater moored observatory located in the Kongsfjorden fjord, half way between Norway and the North Pole. This fjord is an inlet on the coast of one of the islands which forms a part of the Svalbard archipelago.</p> <p>Improvisation: Th: India's polar ship still a long way off;</p> <p>From 2014: India joins Svalbard Global Seed Vault;</p>
5.	<p>The United States of America recently announced its decision to withdraw from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement. Which of the following countries did not sign up to the deal in the first place?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Syria Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council North Korea <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 1 and 2 1 and 3 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Only Syria and Nicaragua did not sign up to the deal (Yes, North Korea has ratified the Paris Agreement!).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syria didn't sign the agreement because the country remains locked in a protracted civil war that the United Nations estimates may have displaced 12 million people and resulted in more than 250,000 deaths. Meanwhile, Nicaraguan leaders said they declined to enter the Paris agreement not because they didn't want to abide by new emissions standards but because those standards weren't strict enough and didn't require enough sacrifice from wealthier countries with larger economies, according to Reuters. By 2015, renewables were generating about half of Nicaragua's electricity, but government officials say the number is on track to

		<p>reach 90 percent by 2020, according to the World Bank.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Information: Following President Trump's decision, former Secretary of State John Kerry announced the launch of a movement by name "Live By Paris". <p>BBC; WP;</p>
6.	<p>The Paris Climate accord is meant to limit the global rise in temperature attributed to emissions. Countries that signed up to the deal agreed to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review each country's contribution to cutting emissions every five years 2. Keep global temperatures "well below" the level of 2°C Centigrade 3. Limit the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity to the same levels that trees, soil and oceans can absorb naturally, latest by 2050 <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Yes, the numbers here are important. Countries, as per the final accord, agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep global temperatures "well below" the level of 2C (3.6F) above pre-industrial times and "endeavour to limit" them even more, to 1.5C • Limit the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity to the same levels that trees, soil and oceans can absorb naturally, beginning at some point between 2050 and 2100 • Review each country's contribution to cutting emissions every five years so they scale up to the challenge • Enable rich countries to help poorer nations by providing "climate finance" to adapt to climate change and switch to renewable energy <p>BBC;</p>
7.	<p>The 'Non-Accelerating Inflation Rate Of Unemployment – NAIRU'</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Represents equilibrium between the state of the economy and the labour market 2. Is the specific level of unemployment at which inflation does not rise in an economy 3. Is also referred to as the long-run Phillips curve <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only c) 1, 2 and 3 d) None 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>All three statements are correct.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1958, New Zealand born economist William Phillips wrote a paper titled The Relation between Unemployment and the Rate of Money Wage Rates in the United Kingdom. In his paper, Phillips described the supposed inverse relationship between unemployment levels and the rate of inflation. This relationship was referred to as the Phillips curve. • However, during the severe recession of 1974 to 1975, inflation and unemployment rates both reached historic levels and people began to doubt the theoretical basis of the Phillips curve. Milton Friedman and other critics argued that government macroeconomic policies were being driven by a low unemployment target and that caused the expectations of inflation to change. This led to accelerated inflation rather than reduced unemployment. It was then agreed that government economic policies should not be influenced by unemployment levels below a critical level also known as the "natural rate of unemployment."

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NAIRU was first introduced in 1975 as the noninflationary rate of unemployment (NIRU), which was an improvement of the concept of “natural rate of unemployment” by Milton Friedman. <p>Investopedia: What is NAIRU;</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: What is hysteresis;</p>
8.	<p>In economics, “hysteresis” arises when</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A single disturbance affects the course of the economy Unemployment increases and people subsequently become accustomed to a lower standard of living <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 only Both 1 and 2 Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>In economics, hysteresis arises when a single disturbance affects the course of the economy. An example of hysteresis in economics is the delayed effects of unemployment. As unemployment increases, more people adjust to a lower standard of living. As they become accustomed to the lower standard of living, people may not be as determined to achieve the previously desired higher living standard. In addition, as more people become unemployed, it becomes more socially acceptable to be or remain unemployed. After the labor market returns to normal, some unemployed people may be disinterested in returning to the work force.</p> <p>Investopedia: Hysteresis;</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: What is hysteresis;</p>
June 3, 2017		
1.	<p>The Green Climate Fund has been established by the</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> World Bank United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Bonn Convention 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At COP 16 held in Cancun, Parties established the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention. The Fund is governed by the GCF Board and it is accountable to and functions under the guidance of the COP to support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties using thematic funding windows. <p>UNFCCC GCF Background;</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: We need Paris;</p>
2.	<p>The “Rajamannar Committee” was set up to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the federal provisions of the Constitution and recommend measures to effectively implement them Suggest amendments to the Constitution so as to secure utmost autonomy to the Indian states Review the existing arrangements between the Centre and states in only the administrative sphere Specifically review the emergency powers of the President and 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>“Whether in office or out of it, Mr. Karunanidhi has posited Tamil Nadu as the flag-bearer of federal dialogue in a highly monocratic atmosphere, of republican sharing in an autocratic ethos. He has, through the compass of the Rajamannar Committee’s far-sighted report, steered Tamil Nadu away from the rod of centralisation. In this he has been a champion of democratic rights, of representative government.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1969, the Tamil Nadu Government (DMK) appointed a three-member committee under the chairmanship of Dr P V Rajamannar to examine the entire question of Centre–state

	<p>recommend measures to restrict the use of it</p>	<p>relations and to suggest amendments to the Constitution so as to secure utmost autonomy to the states.</p> <p>Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: A journey to reckon with;</p>
3.	<p>In which of the following States/Union Territories has the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council held at least one meeting?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Delhi 2. Rajasthan 3. Jammu and Kashmir <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 1 and 3 only c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The only intention of this question was to bring to your notice THIS TH article.</p>
4.	<p>She has become the first woman in the world to scale Mount Everest twice in five days. She also is the first Indian woman to scale it for the fourth time. She is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Anshu Jamsenpa b) Premlata Agarwal c) Anita Yomso d) Bachendri Pal 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Vikaspedia: May 2017 Current Affairs;</p>
5.	<p>The recently launched premier train “Tejas Express” will run between</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Hyderabad and Pune b) Mumbai and Goa c) Delhi and Jaipur d) Bangalore and Chennai 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Vikaspedia: May 2017 Current Affairs;</p>
6.	<p>Known popularly as the “Green Oscars”, two Indians recently were recently bestowed with this award for their efforts in wildlife conservation. This award refers to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Whitley Award b) Champions of the Earth Award c) Goldman Environmental Prize d) IUCN Heritage Heroes Award 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Sanjay Gubbi of Karnataka and Purnima Barman of Assam have won the prestigious Whitley Award for their efforts in wildlife conservation. This award is popularly known as Green Oscars.</p> <p>Vikaspedia: May 2017 Current Affairs;</p>

June 5, 2017

1.	<p>The “Muktijoddha Scholarship Scheme” is offered by the Government of India to which one of the following category of students?</p> <p>a) Citizens of Bangladesh</p> <p>b) Linguistic Minorities in Eastern and North Eastern India</p> <p>c) Children of refugees from East Pakistan, settled in India</p> <p>d) Children of surrendered insurgents belonging to North Eastern India</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>For the children of freedom fighters (muktijoddhas) of Bangladesh, the Government of India offers “Muktijoddha Scholarship Scheme”.</p> <p>HCI Dhaka;</p> <p>Vikaspedia: May 2017 Current Affairs;</p>								
2.	<p>The most powerful astronomical events can today be witnessed by human beings with the aid of the</p> <p>a) Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimetre Array Observatory</p> <p>b) Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory</p> <p>c) Spitzer Space Telescope</p> <p>d) TanSat</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>In the news: Once again, it is a merger of black holes, and once again the energy scales involved are extraordinary. The analysis suggests the two black holes that coalesced had starting masses that were just over 31 times and 19 times that of our Sun. And when they finally came together, they produced a single object of a little under 49 solar masses. It means the unison radiated a simply colossal quantity of pure energy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At present, there are only two detectors, one each at Hanford, Washington and Livingston, Louisiana tuned to detect gravitational waves.• The drawback is that they cannot accurately figure out where in the sky the signal is coming from. Just as in the case of a GPS, they need at least three non-collinear detectors to do this.• The Italy-based VIRGO detector is almost in place and will join in to collect data later in 2017.• The LIGO-India facility, which is making immense progress will join the club in 2024. <p>TH: LIGO makes third GW detection;</p>								
3.	<p>Consider the following pairs:</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>ISRO Missions recently in the news</i></th><th><i>Spacecraft classification</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1. AstroSat</td><td>: Space Science and Exploration</td></tr><tr><td>2. ResourceSat</td><td>: Earth Observation</td></tr><tr><td>3. Cartosat</td><td>: Communication</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?</p> <p>a) 1 and 2 only</p> <p>b) 2 and 3 only</p> <p>c) 1 and 3 only</p>	<i>ISRO Missions recently in the news</i>	<i>Spacecraft classification</i>	1. AstroSat	: Space Science and Exploration	2. ResourceSat	: Earth Observation	3. Cartosat	: Communication	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Cartosat too is an Earth Observation Satellite.</p> <p>Improvisation and In the News: “India’s ASTROSAT mission did a related sensitive search for short duration x-ray flashes associated with the event and did not detect any. These results will be published soon by the scientists from ASTROSAT.”</p> <p>Additional Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In its thirty ninth flight (PSLV-C37), ISRO’s Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle successfully launched the 714 kg Cartosat-2 Series Satellite.• Of the 103 co-passenger satellites carried by PSLV-C37, two – ISRO Nano Satellite-1 (INS-1) –
<i>ISRO Missions recently in the news</i>	<i>Spacecraft classification</i>									
1. AstroSat	: Space Science and Exploration									
2. ResourceSat	: Earth Observation									
3. Cartosat	: Communication									

	<p>d) 1, 2 and 3</p>	<p>are technology demonstration satellites from India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining 101 co-passenger satellites carried were international customer satellites from USA (96), The Netherlands (1), Switzerland (1), Israel (1), Kazakhstan (1) and UAE (1). <p>ISRO: Spacecrafts;</p>
4.	<p>Which of the following tiger reserves are located in the state of Arunachal Pradesh?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Orang Kamlang Corbett <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 1 and 2 only 2 only 2 and 3 only 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>In the news: Orang, the tiger reserve in Assam (the 49th such reserve to be notified in India) with the smallest core among 50 nationally protected areas, has presented wildlife scientists doing a census with a surprise: a high density of 28 big cats. This is the highest density of tigers nationally. Kamlang Tiger Reserve in Arunachal is the 50th and latest to be notified.</p>
5.	<p>The “Broadbased Trade and Investment Agreement”, sometimes in the news, is related to the economic affairs of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> India and the European Union SAARC and APEC India and the African Union ASEAN+6 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>“Mr. Modi’s assurance in Berlin that the suspended India-EU free trade talks for the Broadbased Trade and Investment Agreement would resume soon has raised the hope that progress will be made before the EU-India summit in Delhi this year.”</p> <p>TH: European Variation;</p>
6.	<p>Which of the following pairs is/are correctly matched?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Administration of commodity boards such as coffee, tea and spices boards : Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare Formulation of Foreign Trade Policy : Ministry of Commerce and Industries Implementation of Foreign Trade Policy : Central Board of Excise and Customs <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 and 2 only 2 only 1 and 3 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>At present, all three tasks belong to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.</p> <p>TH: Commerce ministry to redefine focus;</p>

June 6, 2017

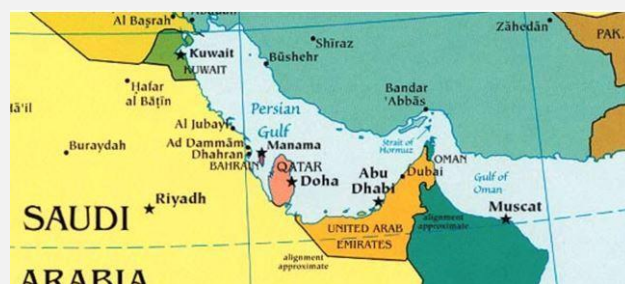
1. Arrange the following cities of West Asia as they would appear on a globe from West to East:

1. Doha
2. Kuwait City
3. Manama
4. Abu Dhabi

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Solution: b



Improvisation: [TH: Five Arab powers sever ties with Qatar;](#)

2. According to the “Plant Discoveries 2016”, brought out by the Botanical Survey of India, most discoveries of new plant species last year were made in which one of the following geographical regions?

- a) Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- b) Western Ghats
- c) Eastern Himalayas
- d) Western Himalayas

Solution: b.

- Most of the new **animal species** were from the four biological hotspots of the country — the Himalayas, the northeast, the Western Ghats and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- The geographical distribution of the new **plant species** reveals that most discoveries were made in the Western Ghats (17%), followed by the Eastern Himalayas (15%), the Western Himalayas (13%), the Eastern Ghats (12%) and the west coast (8%).

[Th: India's biodiversity riches grow by 499 species;](#)

3. If you were travelling in space and positioned yourself at any of the “Lagrange points”, then, conclusively, you will

- a) Be positioned on Earth's orbit either behind or in front of the planet
- b) Be orbiting the sun at a faster pace than Earth
- c) Not be able to communicate with Earth
- d) Remain in a constant location relative to Earth and the Sun

Solution: d.

Space: There's a whole lot of it. But if you want a spacecraft to stick around your celestial neighbourhood, there are only five places (two of which are referred to in option 'a') to consider. These are the **“Lagrange points”, which are locations in space where objects sent there tend to stay put** (option 'd').

- Typically, a spacecraft sent from the Earth into the vacuum of space will continue moving in the direction we send it, unless it's affected by the gravity of a celestial object, like a star or a planet. Even if we stopped a spacecraft in the middle of space, the gravity of objects around it would eventually pull it in some direction.
- Enter Joseph-Louis Lagrange. He theorized that at certain points the gravity of two bodies, combined with the third body's centripetal force, would keep the third body in a constant location relative to the other bodies. Lagrange was right. And now, NASA is using those points in space as

		<p>parking spots for spacecraft which are discovering the secrets of the universe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A little push or bump, and the spacecraft at these L-points starts moving away. Thus it must use frequent rocket firings to stay in so-called 'halo orbits' around the L-point. <p>NASA: About Lagrange Points; ESA: About Lagrange Points;</p> <p>Improvisation and In the news: "Work is on to launch two approved missions – Aditya-L1 and Chandrayaan-II... The 'Aditya-L1' will be placed in the halo orbit around the 'Lagrangian point of the Sun-Earth system, according to ISRO".</p>
4.	<p>The "Aviation Thermobaric Bomb of Increased Power", recently seen in the news, is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Defence Research and Development Organisation's latest creation, that burns its target area upon impact Russia's "Father Of All Bombs", regarded as the most powerful non-nuclear explosive A three-stage explosive device that generates a pressure wave in its final stage that creates a partial vacuum in its vicinity The United States of America's Mother of All Bombs 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Information regarding the ATBIP appeared in The Hindu and on the websites of several media outlets around when the US dropped its biggest non-nuclear device, the GBU-43 Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb (nicknamed the Mother of All Bombs) in Afghanistan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlike the MOAB, which uses conventional ordnance, the FOAB aka "Big Daddy" is Thermobaric — meant to burn its targets. It uses oxygen from the atmosphere, rather than carrying an oxidising agent in its explosives. It produces more energy than normal weapons but is harder to control. Such devices generally detonate in two stages. First a small blast disperses a main load of explosive material into a cloud, which then either spontaneously ignites in air or is set off by a second charge. This explosion generates a pressure wave that reaches much further than that from a conventional explosive. The consumption of gases in the blast also generates a partial vacuum that can compound damage and injuries caused by the explosion itself. "The main destruction is inflicted by an ultrasonic shockwave and an incredibly high temperature. All that is alive merely evaporates," news agency Reuters reported in 2007 quoting Russian media reports.
5.	<p>The Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY) is a flagship programme of the</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports Ministry of Rural Development 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>A general question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) announced the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) on Antyodaya Diwas, 25th September 2014. DDU-GKY is a part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), tasked with the dual objectives of adding diversity to the incomes of rural poor

		<p>families and cater to the career aspirations of rural youth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DDU-GKY is uniquely focused on rural youth between the ages of 15 and 35 years from poor families. As a part of the Skill India campaign, it plays an instrumental role in supporting the social and economic programs of the government like the Make In India, Digital India, Smart Cities and Start-Up India, Stand-Up India campaigns.
6.	<p>The “Hargila Army”, seen recently in the news, is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A voluntary organisation of biotech engineers, offering training and education opportunities to rural women towards leading a sustainable livelihood The Indian Armed Forces’ first division of the Mountain Strike Corps An all-female team of conservationists dedicated to protecting a species of an endangered stork None of the above 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>HP: Purnima Barman, a recipient of the Whitley Awards 2017, has mobilised followers into the ‘Hargila Army’, an all-female team of conservationists dedicated to protecting the greater adjutant stork which, through this programme, are offered sustainable livelihood, training and education opportunities. The project is giving marginalised women a voice. Together they are changing local perceptions and numbers of stork nests have risen from 30 seven years ago to over 150 today.</p> <p>TH: Sanjay Gubbi has been awarded (the Whitley Award) for his work to protect tiger corridors in Karnataka. He works with the Mysuru-based Nature Conservation Foundation. Mr. Gubbi works with authorities and stakeholders to secure and connect tiger habitat. In 2012, working closely with the State government, he secured the largest expansion of protected areas in India since 1970 — increasing the size of protected areas in Karnataka by 37% and enhancing connectivity across 23 sites.</p> <p>Improvisation: Q6, 3rd June Quiz;</p>
7.	<p>“Rentier States”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Have a tendency to yield to demands of corporates as against those of its citizens Are susceptible to becoming more tyrannical than other governments Both a and b Neither a nor b 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Rentier State: A government that derives its revenues predominantly from the sale of valuable resources it owns to clients in other countries. The idea was first proposed by Iranian economist Hossein Mahdavy in 1970. Saudi Arabia’s government, which earns almost all revenue by selling its oil to the rest of the world, is a good example of a rentier state. Some social scientists have argued that rentier states are unlikely to be accountable to their citizens as they are not dependent on tax revenues for their survival. This can lead them to be more tyrannical than other governments.</p> <p>TH: Rentier State;</p>

June 7, 2017

1.	Chief Ministers belonging to which one of the following states have never gone on to become hold the office of the Prime Minister? a) Andhra Pradesh b) Karnataka c) Madhya Pradesh d) Uttar Pradesh	Solution: c. Morarji Desai – erstwhile Bombay State; Charan Singh – UP; VP Singh – UP; PV Narasimha Rao – Andhra Pradesh; HD Deve Gowda – Karnataka; Narendra Modi – Gujarat; Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth; IE: No desire to become PM: Nitish Kumar;
2.	The “Barnase-Barstar system” was recently in the news in the context of a) Bharat Biotech’s Zika virus vaccine b) A genetically modified variety of mustard c) ISRO’s cryogenic upper stage of its GSLV MK-III d) An exoplanet hotter than most stars, presumed earlier to be earth’s twin	Solution: b. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “DMH-11” stands for “Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11”. The Barnase-Barstar system (BB system) is a system for the production of hybrid seeds. Production of DMH-11 seeds utilises this system. In the BB system, genes from soil bacterium (or ‘trans genes’ that don’t naturally occur in a species) are used. An earlier version of the DMH (DMH-1) utilised the CMS (Cytoplasmic Male Sterility) system – this refers to a mutation that occurs naturally in plants or can be induced. With CMS, large-scale seed production isn’t possible. It has problems with stability and cannot be used in many mustard lines. With the BB system, one can keep making newer hybrids for traits such as disease resistance and productivity. TH: Deepak Pental Interview;
3.	With the successful developmental flight of ISRO’s GSLV MK-III that almost doubles India’s current launch capacity, which one of the following countries’ rockets will see lesser orders for launch from India? a) Russia b) Europe c) USA d) Japan	Solution: b. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> So far, India has relied on the French (European) ARIANE 5 rocket to launch its heavy satellites and it has remained an important component of India-France space cooperation. A successful GSLV Mk III test makes India somewhat self-reliant in launching heavier communication satellites. Some of the other launchers in the market, such as Ariane 5 and the Delta IV Heavy, can launch even heavier payloads, of course. BS: Why the GSLV Mk III is a big deal; TH: In a new orbit;
4.	The Government of India’s “Inclusive India Initiative” specifically caters to a) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes	Solution: d. The ‘ Inclusive India Initiative ’ of the National Trust (M.o. Social Justice and Empowerment) is specifically catering to persons with intellectual and

	b) Rural youth c) Unbanked rural populace d) Persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities	developmental disabilities; with an objective to include these people in the mainstream and in all important aspects of social life, namely education, employment and community, 'Inclusive India' is about changing the attitudes. PIB ;
5.	"Mission Innovation", a global initiative, seeks to a) Develop solutions to the most pressing social problems across democracies b) Promote research particularly in areas of efficient energy storage systems c) Accelerate clean energy innovation d) Revolutionise space technology, with the ultimate goal of enabling people to live on other planets	Solution: c. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission Innovation (MI) is a global initiative of 22 countries and the European Union to dramatically accelerate global clean energy innovation. As part of the initiative, participating countries have committed to double their governments' clean energy research and development (R&D) investments over five years, while encouraging greater levels of private sector investment in transformative clean energy technologies Mission Innovation was announced on November 30, 2015, as world leaders came together in Paris to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change. India was also one of the countries which took initiative in sowing the seed of 'Mission Innovation'. About Mission Innovation ; Improvisation: PIB ;

June 8, 2017

1.	Consider the following statements: 1. In case of any delay in conducting the election of new President by any reason, the Vice President acts as President until a new President is elected 2. When a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice President for any reason other than sickness, the Chief Justice of India acts as the Vice President until a new Vice President is elected 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: d. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In case of any delay in conducting the election of new President by any reason, the outgoing President continues to hold office until his successor assumes charge. When a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice President by resignation, removal, death or otherwise, then election to fill the vacancy should be held as soon as possible after the occurrence of the vacancy. Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth Improvisation: TH: Presidential election on July 17th ;
2.	The Repatriation of Prisoners Act, 2003 enables 1. The transfer of foreign prisoners to the country of their origin to serve the remaining part of their sentence	Solution: c. The Repatriation of Prisoners Act, 2003 was enacted for achieving the above purpose (statement 1 and 2). For achieving the objectives of the Act, a treaty/agreement is required to be signed with countries having mutual interest with us on this

	<p>2. The transfer of prisoners of Indian origin convicted by a foreign court to serve their sentence in India</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>a) 1 only b) 2 only c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>matter. The said treaty/agreement is required to be notified in the Official Gazette.</p> <p>PIB: Cabinet approves agreement between India and Somalia on transfer of sentenced prisoners;</p>
3.	<p>Which one of the following island-countries is not located in the Indian Ocean?</p> <p>a) Seychelles b) Madagascar c) Comoros d) Cyprus</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Cyprus is located in the Mediterranean Sea.</p> <p>Improvisation: Cabinet approves agreement between India and Cyprus on merchant shipping;</p>
4.	<p>The “Mother’s Absolute Affection” programme will</p> <p>a) Ensure that the national child sex-ratio will improve drastically before the next round of the National Family Health Survey b) Promote awareness among the masses on the benefits of breastfeeding c) In collaboration with UNICEF, reduce instances of children being bought or sold d) Be the largest programme in the world that seeks to reunite trafficked children with their mothers</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Launched last year, MAA is the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare’s flagship programme to ensure adequate awareness is generated among masses, especially mothers, on the benefits of breastfeeding.</p> <p>Improvisation: PIB; PIB: MAA programme to promote breastfeeding;</p>
5.	<p>India’s top seafood item of export, both in quantity and value terms, is</p> <p>a) Frozen fish b) Frozen shrimp c) Fresh squid d) Fresh cuttlefish</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Frozen shrimp maintained its position as the top item of export, accounting for 38.28 per cent in quantity and 64.50 per cent of the total earnings in dollar terms. Frozen Fish was the second largest export item, accounting for a share of 26.15 per cent in quantity and 11.64 per cent in dollar earnings.</p> <p>PIB: India’s seafood export at an all-time high;</p>
6.	<p>An “exclusive Hill Area Development Programme” was recently announced for which one of the following regions?</p> <p>a) Nilgiris b) Nallamala Hills c) Northeast India d) Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and Odisha</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>“Elaborating on the new scheme, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the hilly areas of Manipur, Tripura and Assam have a distinct geo-physical entity and are lagging in socio-economic development. As a result of peculiar topography, he said, there is a wide gap between the hill and valley districts in terms of infrastructure, quality of roads, health and education etc. The Hill Development Programme, he said, is inspired with a serious research and deliberation of all these factors.”</p>

		PIB: HADP for Northeast;
7.	<p>The first project for rural LED street lighting in the country, under the Street Lighting National Project, will be implemented in the state of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Gujarat Andhra Pradesh Odisha Tamil Nadu 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>PIB;</p>
June 9, 2017		
1.	<p>It is being stated that the sustainability of India's SCO membership is in doubt. Which of the following facts lend credence to this argument?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The SCO has in the past endorsed China's Belt and Road initiative Pakistan may utilise the TAPI gas pipeline as political leverage against India Being a security alliance, the SCO commits itself to establishing a "fair and rational new international political and economic order" <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 and 2 only 2 and 3 only 1 and 3 only 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>A mains-oriented question. While any strain in relations between India and Pakistan can cast a shadow over any meet/forum that the two countries are important participants/members of, the second statement does not exactly answer the question; the following points from today's TH article do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To begin with, there is a basic contradiction between India's stand last month on China's Belt and Road Initiative (B&R) and the SCO's. Second, the SCO commits itself to "jointly preserving regional peace, security and stability; and establishing a democratic, fair and rational new international political and economic order". The 'new order' is a direct reference to a compact led by Russia and China, clearly aimed at the West. As a result, the SCO has been often called the "Anti-NATO", meant to counterbalance U.S. and Europe power structures. It would seem incongruous to reconcile this with India's close military ties with the U.S. today, or Mr. Modi's stated objective last week of a closer strategic partnership with the EU. The SCO executive speaks of counter-terror cooperation as a part of its Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), with joint exercises among member states, while also being guided by the "Shanghai spirit" of good-neighbourliness. Again, this would square badly with India's objective of "exposing" Pakistan's cross-border terror policy, and derail any progress.
2.	<p>Which of the following members of the SCO are participants in the TAPI gas pipeline project?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Tajikistan Afghanistan Turkmenistan 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Turkmenistan and Afghanistan which stand for the letters 'T' and 'A' in 'TAPI', are not members of the SCO. Tajikistan, a member of the SCO, is not a participant in the TAPI project.</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: Clouded Coherence;</p>

	<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) None</p>	
3.	<p>With reference to the election to the office of the President of India, which of the following statements is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Political parties cannot issue any whip to their MPs and MLAs in the matter of voting 2. Electronic Voting Machines are utilised in recording the choice of electors <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: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Constitution provides that the election shall be held in accordance with the System of Proportional Representation by means of single transferable vote and the voting at such election shall be by secret ballot. In this system, the elector has to mark preferences against the names of the candidates. Preference can be marked in the international form of Indian numerals, in Roman form, or in the form in any recognised Indian languages. Preference has to be marked in figures only. The elector can mark as many preference as the number of candidates. While the marking of the first preference is compulsory for the ballot paper to be valid, other preferences are optional. Electors have to mark the ballot only with the particular pen provided by the Election Commission and not with any other pen. The Constitution has expressly provided that election to the office of President shall be by secret ballot. Therefore, the electors are expected to scrupulously maintain secrecy of vote. There is no concept of open voting at this election and showing the ballot to anyone under any circumstances in the case of Presidential and Vice Presidential elections is totally prohibited. In this connection, it is also clarified that political parties cannot issue any whip to their MPs and MLAs in the matter of voting in the Presidential election. <p>PIB;</p>
4.	<p>Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016, recently passed by the Parliament, amends the Maternity Benefits Act, 1961. The bill does not make which one of the following provisions?</p> <p>a) Twenty-six weeks maternity leave to working women for the first child</p> <p>b) The employer may permit a new mother to work from home</p> <p>c) Every establishment with more than fifty employees to provide for crèche facilities for working mothers</p> <p>d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>‘a’, ‘b’ and ‘c’ are provisions made by the amended act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maternity leave available to working women is to be increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for the first two children. Naturally, 26 weeks maternity leave is available to the mother for the birth of her first child. Maternity leave of 12 weeks is to be available to mothers adopting a child below the age of three months as well as to the “commissioning mothers”. The commissioning mother has been defined as biological mother who uses her egg to create an embryo planted in any other woman.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every establishment with more than 50 employees to provide for crèche facilities for working mothers and such mothers will be permitted to make four visits during working hours to look after and feed the child in the crèche. • The Bill also gives provision for the employer to permit a new mother to work from home, if the nature of work assigned is of such nature. Work-from-home conditions and period would be mutually agreed upon by the employer and the mother. • Every establishment would be required to communicate — in writing or electronically — the availability of these benefits at the time of a woman's appointment. <p>TH: A level playing field;</p>
5.	<p>A new "Safe Harbour Regime" was recently notified by the</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Finance Ministry of Mines Ministry of Shipping Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to reduce transfer pricing disputes, to provide certainty to taxpayers, to align safe harbour margins with industry standards and to enlarge the scope of safe harbour transactions, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified a new safe harbour regime based on the report of the Committee set up in this regard. • Safe harbor refers to a legal provision to reduce or eliminate liability in certain situations as long as certain conditions are met. <p>PIB;</p>
June 10, 2017		
1.	<p>'Access', 'Reserve', and 'Watch' categorisation, recently in the news, were seen in the context of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> World Health Organisation's list of essential medicines World Trade Organisation's member countries' performance on adherence to and progress in implementing TRIPS provisions Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism Pre-stage membership to the Nuclear Suppliers' Group 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>In an effort to curb antibiotic resistance, the World Health Organization (WHO) has divided the drugs into three categories — access, watch and reserve — specifying which are to be used for common ailments and which are to be kept for complicated diseases. This is the biggest revision of the antibiotics section in the 40-year history of the essential medicines list (EML).</p> <p>TH: On antibiotics classification;</p> <p>TH: WHO revises antibiotics protocol;</p>
2.	<p>'Peshmerga', often seen in the news, refers to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A city in Syria occupied by the Islamic State 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The same question was posted here earlier.</p>

	<p>b) An ethnic community residing within the geographical area occupied by the Islamic State</p> <p>c) The military forces of the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan</p> <p>d) The Afghan province where the US dropped its 'Mother of All Bombs'</p>	<p>Peshmerga are the military forces of the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan (naturally, an armed force consisting of the Kurds).</p> <p>TH: Iraqi Kurds set to hold independence vote;</p>
3.	<p>"We Wear Culture", seen recently in the news, is</p> <p>a) A Google project that digitises the world's top fashion archives</p> <p>b) The Ministry of Department of North Eastern India's flagship programme to bring prominence to India's North East on the world cultural map</p> <p>c) A non-profit organisation, INTACH's initiative to create a digital museum of Indian textile heritage</p> <p>d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Showcasing material collected from 183 renowned cultural institutions across 42 countries including India, the digital project showcases 30,000 photographs, videos and other documents on what people wear, the craft of textiles, key fashion movements and the icons of haute couture.</p> <p>TH: New Google project digitises world's top fashion archives;</p>
4.	<p>The tradition of "Baluchari" sari weaving originated in the present-day state of</p> <p>a) Uttar Pradesh</p> <p>b) Odisha</p> <p>c) Madhya Pradesh</p> <p>d) West Bengal</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tradition of Baluchari sari weaving is as old as modern Bengal itself. Google's digital collection shows Baluchari saris dating back to 19th century, with some of the pieces from the Tagore family. The origins and growth of the Baluchari weaving tradition is fascinatingly shrouded in mystery and speckled with speculation – beginning with the town that gave it its name to issues of patronage and the reasons for its decline. Baluchari saris were first referenced by N. G. Mookerji, an official of the British Civil Service, who spent several years studying, documenting and trying to revive the textile industry in Murshidabad – classifying and comprehensively describing the various types of fabrics made in the district. Among them, the Baluchari saris were certainly unique: made from locally-grown mulberry silk, dyed in lustrous shades of red, crimson, dark blue and purple, and distinguished by their long and elaborate pallus or anchals. <p>Google: Woven tales from India;</p> <p>TH: New Google project digitises world's top fashion archives;</p>
5.	<p>India's first 2G (Second Generation) Bioethanol refinery will be set up in</p> <p>a) Gujarat</p> <p>b) Tamil Nadu</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIB, 23rd December 2016: The Government of India is encouraging production of Second Generation (2G) Ethanol from agricultural

<p>c) Maharashtra</p> <p>d) Punjab</p>	<p>residues to provide additional sources of remuneration to farmers, address the growing environmental concerns (farmers of Punjab, Haryana often left with no choice other than to resort to stubble-burning, which affects the quality of air in and around Delhi) and support the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme for achieving 10% Ethanol Blending in Petrol. The first such refinery is set to come up at Bathinda, Punjab.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 2G Ethanol: Second generation (2G) ethanol draws on previously unused (ligno-) cellulosic plant parts, such as straw or corn cobs. The core area of the new developments (2G refineries) is the preparation of the raw material. The support structure of the plant, lignocellulose, must be broken down in order to then make the cellulose accessible to the classical process of ethanol production. <p>Improvisation and In the news: “The Centre will shortly unveil a policy on the production of second-generation ethanol from biomass, which will be a “game changer” for farmers..”</p>
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June 12, 2017

<p>1. The “Six-Day War”, in the context of modern world history, refers to</p> <p>a) The breakup of Yugoslavia</p> <p>b) A nationwide revolt against the Communist government of Hungary</p> <p>c) The second Indochina war</p> <p>d) An Arab-Israeli war</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Six-Day war, also known as the June War, was the third in the long line of Arab-Israeli wars that started in 1948, around the time of the creation of the Israeli state. • Beginning on June 5, 1967, the war spanned only six days during which Israel almost decimated Egypt’s air force and captured new territory. • Israel fought against a combined force of Egypt, Jordan, Syria. The war ended on June 10, 1967. <p>TH: Six days of war, 50 years of occupation;</p>
<p>2. ‘Tele-Law’, recently launched by the Government of India, is</p> <p>a) A channel that will educate the public regarding their Constitutional and legal rights</p> <p>b) A web portal for the Higher Judiciary to conduct legal proceedings online</p> <p>c) A scheme that makes legal aid easily accessible to marginalised communities living in rural areas</p> <p>d) An annual conference to be organised by judges of the Supreme Court to deliver courses to judges of the lower rungs of judiciary</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In its effort to make legal aid easily accessible to the marginalized communities and citizens living in rural areas, the Government of India has launched the ‘Tele-Law’. • The Ministry of Law and Justice partnered with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), which anchors the Digital India programme, to provide legal aid services through its Common Service Centres (CSC) at the panchayat level, spread across the country. • In the first phase, the ‘Tele-Law’ scheme will be tested as a pilot across 500 Common service Centres (CSC) in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar to understand the challenges and make necessary

		<p>corrections to the scheme before it is scaled up and rolled out across the country in a phased manner.</p> <p>PIB;</p>
3.	<p>A 'bacteriophage'</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is a virus 2. Can help reduce the risk of emergence of antibiotic resistant bacteria 3. Is used in 'Phage Therapy' <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 1 and 2 c) 2 only d) 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers ... have shown that it might be possible to develop an alternative to antibiotics for treating diseases in pigs. They have identified a range of viruses, called bacteriophages, that can be used to kill common pig infections. • The aim is to reduce the risk of antibiotic resistant bacteria emerging on farms that could also infect humans. • Scientists have been trying to develop phage treatments for more than a century but they have mostly proved to be unreliable. But.. now.. more precise ways of isolating phages and assessing their effectiveness have been found. The researchers have shown that phage therapy can in principle offer a viable alternative to antibiotics. <p>BBC: Therapy could stop superbugs on farms;</p>
4.	<p>In a particular village in India, the popularity of chess has over the past few decades flourished, while drinking and gambling declined. The game, say local people, has protected them from modern pitfalls. This village can be found in</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tamil Nadu b) Kerala c) Bihar d) Uttar Pradesh 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>"Fifty years ago, Marottichal was a very different place. Like many villages in northern Kerala, alcoholism and illicit gambling were rife among its small population. Having developed a zeal for chess while living in the nearby town of Kallur, Unnikrishnan moved back to his afflicted hometown and opened his teashop, where he began teaching customers to play chess as a healthier way to pass the time.... Here 4,000 of the 6,000 population are playing chess, almost daily.... Miraculously, the game's popularity flourished while drinking and gambling declined. The village's enthusiasm for the ancient pastime, which is believed to have originated in India in the 6th Century, has now become so great that Unnikrishnan estimates one person in every Marottichal household knows how to play."</p> <p>BBC: the ancient game that saved a village;</p> <p>Th;</p>
5.	<p>Which one of the following statements about the Attorney General of India (AG) is incorrect?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The term of his office is not fixed by the Constitution b) The Union Executive consists of the AG c) The AG can be made a member of certain Parliamentary Committees d) None of these 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Statements 'a', 'b' and 'c' are correct about the AG.</p> <p>Indian Polity, M Laxmikanth;</p>

June 13, 2017

1. Which one of the following European countries does **not** open out to the Adriatic Sea?

- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Montenegro
- Croatia
- Serbia

Solution: d.



Improvisation: [Th: Montenegro joins Nato](#)

2. The Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary, Navelim Wetlands and Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary can all be found in the state of

- Maharashtra
- Goa
- Odisha
- Jharkhand

Solution: b.

BirdLife International, a conservation organisation, has recognised three new sites (mentioned in question) in Goa as hotspots for protection. The sites have been added to their list of "Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas". Goa earlier had four recognised biodiversity areas: Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary and Mollem National Park, Carambolim Wetlands, Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary and Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary.

[TH: Three new sites recognised as biodiversity hotspots in Goa;](#)

3. In the context of the 'e-way bill' related to the affairs of the Goods and Services Tax regime, consider the following statements:

- A single e-way bill will be valid for a consignment from its point of origin to its destination regardless of the mode of transportation
- The bill allotted for a consignment will be valid for a duration depending on the distance that the consignment needs to move

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: b.

- An e-way bill is in fact the underpinning of GST which talks about the seamless movement of goods and services. If you want to move goods worth more than Rs 50,000 under GST, you will need prior online registration of the consignment and secure an 'e-way bill' that tax officials can inspect anytime during the transit to check tax evasion. In a nutshell, without an e-way bill, goods worth over Rs 50,000 simply cannot move.
- One of the key issues around e-way bills is that the validity of the bill depends on the distance that the goods were to travel. If, for example, you have to transport heavy machinery like a Boiler on a specialized truck, the number of days it may take for it to cover 500 km can be much more than the e-way bill-specified-validity of 10 days.
- Unless a company has the IT system to support and generate way bills in real time, it will be a huge issue. The time for companies to get the necessary infrastructure up for this purpose is little.
- A new e-way bill should be generated whenever the mode of transport of a consignment is

changed. This can be a serious problem for e-commerce companies that use various modes of transport for delivery of the same item.

[ET: E-way bill concerns;](#)

[TH: Centre seeks to defer e-way bill;](#)

4. A 'Cash Recycling Machine'

1. Reduces the cost of handling cash to financial institutions
2. Recycles soiled and mutilated notes

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.

- A CRM 'recycles' cash, in the sense that it is a machine that accepts deposits and uses the deposited money to offer a conventional ATM-service of cash withdrawal. It does not 'recycle' soiled, mutilated or imperfect notes.
- Also, deployment of CRMs in areas that do not have physical bank branches will go a long way in easing transactions that would otherwise have to be conducted at the physical branches.

[TH: CRMs, the true future of ATMs;](#)

5. Which one of the following Indian states does **not** share its borders with Myanmar?

- a) Arunachal Pradesh
- b) Nagaland
- c) Mizoram
- d) Tripura

Solution: d



[TH: Panel to study free movement along Myanmar border;](#)

Clarification

13th June, Q3, Quiz (Click HERE): Statement 1 of question 3 should have been worded differently. As has been pointed out in the comments section, the statement should have read, "A single e-way bill will be valid for a consignment from its point of origin to its destination irrespective of any change in the mode of transportation of the consignment".

June 14, 2017

1. The 'Panglong Union Peace Conference', recently in the news, is related to the affairs of

- a) Myanmar

Solution: a.

"The 20th century **Panglong peace agreement** was masterminded by Aung San — the architect of modern Burma. By ensuring the cooperation of key ethnic

	<p>b) South China Sea</p> <p>c) Afghanistan</p> <p>d) Morocco</p>	<p>minorities, he won Myanmar’s independence. But at the age of 32 he was assassinated, leaving the challenge of nation-building to his successors. They all failed. Now, his daughter, Aung San Suu Kyi — de facto leader of Myanmar — pilots the project to weld together 135 ethnic races into a democratic and federal state.”</p> <p>TH: The United States of Myanmar?;</p> <p>TH: Waiting for reconciliation in Myanmar;</p>										
2.	<p>The ‘Anuyatra’ campaign, by the Government of Kerala, will create a conducive environment for the holistic development of</p> <p>a) Differently-abled children</p> <p>b) Transgenders</p> <p>c) Non-resident Keralite returnees</p> <p>d) Farmers engaged in organic farming</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>‘Anuyatra’ is envisaged as a comprehensive life cycle approach for disability management.</p> <p>Vice-President Hamid Ansari declared as many as 23 children suffering from various challenges, ranging from autism, cerebral palsy to depression and hyperactivity, as the ambassadors of the government’s ‘Anuyatra’ programme.</p> <p>The innovative initiative is aimed at transforming the southern state to a disabled-friendly one and empower differently-abled children by bringing them to the forefront of the mainstream society.</p> <p>‘MPower’ (read ‘empower’) programme: The ‘Magic Academy’ has imparted free magic training for 23 differently-abled children with an objective of creating confidence and self esteem among them under a special programme titled “M-Power”, which is a part of the Anuyatra campaign.</p> <p>IE: Differently-abled children to be ambassadors of ‘Anuyatra’;</p> <p>PIB;</p>										
3.	<p>Consider the following pairs with reference to the history of journalism in India:</p> <table><thead><tr><th><i>Journal</i></th><th><i>Founder</i></th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>1. Hindu</td><td>: G. Subramaniya Iyer</td></tr><tr><td>2. Voice of India</td><td>: Jawaharlal Nehru</td></tr><tr><td>3. Sudharak</td><td>: Gopal Krishna Gokhale</td></tr><tr><td>4. Swadesamitram</td><td>: Surendranath Banerjea</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?</p> <p>a) 1, 2 and 3</p> <p>b) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>c) 1 and 4 only</p> <p>d) 2, 3 and 4</p>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Founder</i>	1. Hindu	: G. Subramaniya Iyer	2. Voice of India	: Jawaharlal Nehru	3. Sudharak	: Gopal Krishna Gokhale	4. Swadesamitram	: Surendranath Banerjea	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Voice of India – Dadabhai Naoroji;</p> <p>Swadesamitram – G. Subramaniya Iyer;</p> <p>Improvisation: PIB: VP launches commemorative edition of National Herald;</p> <p>Modern India, Spectrum;</p>
<i>Journal</i>	<i>Founder</i>											
1. Hindu	: G. Subramaniya Iyer											
2. Voice of India	: Jawaharlal Nehru											
3. Sudharak	: Gopal Krishna Gokhale											
4. Swadesamitram	: Surendranath Banerjea											

4. Special status under Part XXI of the Constitution are **not** available for which one of the following states?

- Jammu and Kashmir
- Assam
- West Bengal
- Sikkim

Solution: c

Article No.	Subject-matter
371.	Special provision with respect to the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat
371A.	Special provision with respect to the state of Nagaland
371B.	Special provision with respect to the state of Assam
371C.	Special provision with respect to the state of Manipur
371D.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Andhra Pradesh
371E.	Establishment of Central University in Andhra Pradesh
371F.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Sikkim
371G.	Special provision with respect to the state of Mizoram
371H.	Special provision with respect to the state of Arunachal Pradesh
371-I.	Special provision with respect to the state of Goa
371J.	Special provisions with respect to the state of Karnataka

Add to the table, **Article 370** (of the same part XXI of the Constitution) which grants the state of J&K a special status.

Improvisation: [TH: A Shattered Peace](#);

5. Which one of the following African countries opens out to both, the Atlantic Ocean as well as the Mediterranean Sea?

- Algeria
- Spain
- Western Sahara
- Morocco

Solution: d.



Question mentions, "African countries". Only option 'd' is correct

June 15, 2017

1. The Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017 will

- Help resolve insolvency in financial sector entities such as insurance companies
- Set up an insurance pool which provides capacity for insurance coverage to non-financial sector entities for any insolvency-related issues

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Solution: a.

- The Bill would provide for a comprehensive resolution framework for specified financial sector entities to deal with bankruptcy situation in banks, insurance companies and financial sector entities.
- It will pave the way for setting up of the Resolution Corporation. It would lead to repeal or amendment of resolution-related provisions in sectoral Acts as listed in Schedules of the Bill. It will also result in the repealing of the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961 to transfer the deposit insurance powers and responsibilities to the Resolution Corporation.
- The Government has recently enacted the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 ("Code")

		<p>for the insolvency resolution of non- financial entities. The proposed Bill complements the Code by providing a resolution framework for the financial sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It also aims to inculcate discipline among financial service providers in the event of financial crises by limiting the use of public money to bail out distressed entities. It would help in maintaining financial stability in the economy by ensuring adequate preventive measures, while at the same time providing the necessary instruments for dealing with an event of crisis. <p>PIB: Cabinet approves proposal to introduce the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill 2017; ET;</p>
2.	<p>As per the Interest Subvention Scheme for the year 2017-18,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers can access interest-free short-term crop loans Loans availed from private sector banks are ineligible for this scheme Interest subvention will be provided also for restructured loans of farmers affected by natural calamities <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 and 3 only 3 only None of the Above 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Central Government will provide interest subvention of 5 per cent per annum to all prompt payee farmers for short term crop loan upto one year for loan upto Rs. 3 lakhs borrowed by them during the year 2017-18. Farmers will thus have to effectively pay only 4% as interest. In case farmers do not repay the short term crop loan in time they would be eligible for interest subvention of 2% as against 5% available above. In order to give relief to small and marginal farmers who would have to borrow at 9% for the post harvest storage of their produce, the Central Government has approved an interest subvention of 2% i.e. an effective interest rate of 7% for loans upto 6 months. To provide relief to the farmers affected by natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% will be provided to Banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The interest subvention will be given to Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Private Sector Banks, Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) on use of own funds and to NABARD for refinance to RRBs and Cooperative Banks. It will be implemented by NABARD and RBI. <p>PIB: Cabinet approves ISS to banks on Short-Term crop loans to farmers; TH;</p>
3.	<p>The 'Carmichael Mine', recently in the news, is located in</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Meghalaya Odisha Goa 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>This is going to be the biggest investment in Australia by an Indian company ever, and will generate many jobs across the Queensland state.</p>

d) None of the Above



[BBC: Adani gives 'green light' for controversial Australia coal mine;](#)

Critics including environmentalists have warned that the vast quantities of coal expected to be extracted from the mine will exacerbate global warming and threaten the already ailing Great Barrier Reef.

4. 'ANUGA' and 'SIAL', recently in the news, are

- Investors' summits exclusively for India's North Eastern Region
- Deep Ocean Mission's underwater unmanned probes
- India's seed banks that will complement the Svalbard Global Seed Vault
- International Food Exhibitions

Solution: d.

".. Brand India will be standing parallel with Brand ANUGA in Cologne, Germany", said the Minister. Smt Badal said infact Germany could be invited to partner in World Food India to be organized shortly by the Government of India. The Minister recognised the importance for India to be showcasing its strength in Food Processing Industries by participating in various International Food Exhibitions like SIAL in France and ANUGA in Germany..."

[PIB: India to be co-partner country in ANUGA 2017;](#)

5. 'Mission Retro-fitment' was recently launched by

- Ministry of Railways
- Ministry of Urban Development
- Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
- Ministry of Power

Solution: a.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister of Railways Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu said, "Mission Retro-Fitment is an ambitious program to upgrade the level of furnishing & amenities in the coaches of Indian Railways. This is one of the largest retro fitment project in the world as Indian Railways' 40,000 coaches will be refurbished and retrofitted in the next five years.."

[PIB;](#)

6. With reference to the Hoysala temple architecture, which of the following statements is/are correct?

- It coexisted with the architectural works of the Mughals
- The exterior walls having been built using granite, these temples lack ornamentation and decoration

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- 1 only

Solution: d.

- The temples built in the 12-13th centuries under the patronage of the Hoysalas of Mysore, are at **Somnathpur, Belur and Halebid**.
- The well-known **Kesava temple** at Somnathpur, and the Hoysala temple at Halebid and Belur are veritable treasure houses of ornamental and decorative elements, carved in niches, and intricate vegetal and floral carvings.
- The materials used are soapstone, granite, schist stone and wood; sculptures are carved on schist

<p>b) 2 only</p> <p>c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<p>stone which is soft when quarried but hardens when exposed to air, thus preserving the fine details for a long period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vimana is of a star shaped plan with salients and reentering angles with mouldings, multiplication and over-decoration. Not an inch of space is left uncarved and there are animals and other denizens of the forest shown on the lower most three or four mouldings, interspersed with floral and creeper designs and, above them all, in more than life size, are shown huge sculptural representations of gods and goddesses, completely covered with by lavish decorations and rich ornaments. <p>Mrunal; CCRT;</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: A monumental tribute to Hoysala architecture, in size and time;</p>
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June 16, 2017

<p>1. The U.S. Federal Reserve's recent decision to raise the federal funds rate, for a third time in six months, is in all probability, an indicator of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Federal Reserve's concerns of spiralling inflation A near-future increase in India's export earnings <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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fed Chair Janet Yellen emphasised the factors underpinning this rebound in economic activity — an “ongoing improvement in the job market and relatively high levels of consumer sentiment and wealth” that have spurred household spending, an expansion in business investment, and most significantly, a global pickup in demand. This offers more reassurance that the global economy may have finally re-emerged from the post-financial crisis doldrums. And while Ms. Yellen reiterated that the American central bank remained on alert in monitoring inflation developments, given a recent softening in price gains, the Fed's decision to announce the contours of a programme to gradually pare the size of its \$4.5 trillion balance sheet is another sign that the U.S. economic engine is warming up. (Inflation has been more problematic, having long stayed below the central bank's 2 per cent target rate. Recent data have suggested that inflation may even be slowing further. But Fed officials have said they think inflation will soon pick up along with the economy). India's exporters can take heart that demand in one of the largest markets for their goods and services is likely to continue to strengthen in the coming months. <p>TH: Shoots take root;</p> <p>TH: Fed raises key rate;</p>
<p>2. Consider the following statements:</p> <p>Assertion (A): Despite ratifying the International Labour Organisation Conventions 138 and 182, India's Child</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p>

<p>Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 condones the employment of children below 14 years in specific instances</p> <p>Reason (R): The ILO Conventions 138 and 182 leave it to the member-states to determine what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable work for children at different ages</p> <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>a) A is correct, and R is an appropriate explanation for A</p> <p>b) A is correct, but R is not an appropriate explanation for A</p> <p>c) A is incorrect, but R is correct</p> <p>d) A and R both are incorrect</p>	<p>TH: No time to work;</p>
<p>3. 'Taoiseach', a term recently seen in the news, refers to</p> <p>a) The Republic of Ireland's Prime Minister</p> <p>b) A Chinese term for 'unbreakable secret communications channels'</p> <p>c) The traditional chief of, and appointed by, the Gorkhas residing in the Darjeeling hills</p> <p>d) A swimming robot, to explore flooded parts of the Fukushima nuclear power plant</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>PIB;</p> <p>BBC: Leo Varadkar becomes Republic of Ireland's Taoiseach;</p>
<p>4. With reference to 'Botulinum', consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is a poison that can cause total body paralysis and difficulty in breathing 2. Botox, known widely for its use in temporarily removing facial wrinkles, is nothing but botulinum 3. Food stored in anaerobic conditions can contain this poison <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>a) 1 and 3 only</p> <p>b) 2 only</p> <p>c) 1, 2 and 3</p> <p>d) None of the Above</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>What is botulism?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Botulism is a type of poisoning which can cause total body paralysis, difficulty in breathing and death in some cases. • It's caused by the clostridium botulinum bacteria, but the symptoms of botulism are not from the bacteria themselves. Instead, the microscopic organisms produce a powerful toxin which attacks the nervous system and causes paralysis. • That poison is called botulinum – which you may know for its commercial use in Botox, which removes wrinkles by paralyzing facial muscles. • Botulism is contracted in two ways in adults – by eating food contaminated with the toxin, or through wounds. • The food-borne method happens when the bacteria are tinned or stored in food in another

		way that deprives them from air (which is when they produce the poison).
5.	<p>It is said that opening of new cinema screens across the country, especially in the remote areas, would improve India's ranking in the Global Innovation Index (GII). Under which one of the following indicators of the GI would India's position improve eventually, if this recommendation is followed through?</p> <p>a) Human capital and research b) Infrastructure c) Market sophistication d) Creative outputs</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The answer won't be 'b' or 'c'. Setting up more cinema screens is in itself not a contributor to improvement in innovation, but the 'spillover effects' of more cinemas being produced in order to satisfy the increased demand for cinemas, will contribute to improvement in innovation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A task force was set up by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to suggest measures to enhance the innovation ecosystem in India and thus improve India's ranking in the the GI. Noting India's ranking of 54 out of 128 countries in the GI 2016 in the parameter of 'national feature films produced', the task force recommended that in order to improve the country's prospects, steps should be taken by State governments to incentivise new screens as also conversion of single screen theatres into multi-screen complexes. Indicator #7 'Creative Output' -> 'Creative Goods and Service' -> 'National Feature Films Produced'; for reference – GII: Rankings by Indicator; GII Framework: Five input pillars capture elements of the national economy that enable innovative activities: (1) Institutions, (2) Human capital and research, (3) Infrastructure, (4) Market sophistication, and (5) Business sophistication. Two output pillars capture actual evidence of innovation outputs: (6) Knowledge and technology outputs and (7) Creative outputs. <p>TH: It's time to raise the silver screen strength;</p>

June 19, 2017

1.	<p>Where can one come across the endangered Sonoran Pronghorn?</p> <p>a) North America b) Africa c) Europe d) Australia</p>	<p>Solution: a</p>  <p>The Sonoran pronghorn is an endangered animal that is endemic to the Sonoran Desert</p>
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		BBC: Wildlife at the border wall;
2.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> As early as 1917, the Indian National Congress had committed itself to the creation of linguistic provinces in a free India Following the formation of the state of Telangana, no movement for a separate state in India is being driven by language <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 only Both 1 and 2 Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Statement 1 (Page 180, India After Gandhi) is correct.</p> <p>In the news: “Darjeeling, ceded by Nepal to the British East India Company back in 1815, continues to be the centrepiece of the bond between people who speak Nepali on either side of the border. Today, it is language that is now driving the Gorkhaland movement in Darjeeling.”</p>
3.	<p>Which one of the following languages is not mentioned under the Eighth Schedule to the Indian Constitution?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Nepali Kashmiri Kokborok Santhali 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>These are Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri (Dongri), Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Mathili (Maithili), Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Odia, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Santhali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.</p> <p>Improvisation: IE: Darjeeling, India's Nepali language hub;</p>
4.	<p>Operation of the ‘spy satellite’, or ‘Micius’, has certain drawbacks. Which of the following is/are among them?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Clouds can disrupt the communication lines established by it with base stations The satellite’s functionality is best utilized only when it is not in sunlight <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 only Both 1 and 2 Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Justification for Statement 1: “...owing to clouds, dust and atmospheric turbulence, most of the photons created on the satellite failed to reach their target: only one pair of the 10 million photon pairs generated each second actually completed the trip successfully... But that was enough to complete the test successfully. It showed that the photons that did arrive preserved the quantum properties needed for quantum crypto-circuits.”</p> <p>Justification for Statement 2: “... Not that it is easy. The satellite passes 500km over China for just less than five minutes each day – or rather each night, as bright sunlight would easily swamp the quantum signal.”</p> <p>BBC: China's quantum satellite in big leap;</p> <p>TH: A quantum steep to a great wall for encryption;</p> <p>You can read the basics about China's Quantum Satellite HERE and HERE;</p>
5.	<p>Helmut Kohl, who passed away recently, was known widely for being</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The only person to ever have been the President of two countries The architect of German reunification 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>TH: Helmut Kohl – the unifier</p>


	<p>c) The only head of a European Union member country government as well as chief of the EU at the same time</p> <p>d) The man who formulated the first Eurozone budget</p>	
6.	<p>Which one of the following statements in the context of the election of the President is/are correct?</p> <p>Political parties cannot issue any whip to their MPs and MLAs in the matter of voting</p> <p>A candidate, in order to be declared elected to the office of President, must secure more votes than her challenger/s</p> <p>Electronic Voting Machines are not used</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, 2 and 3</p> <p>d) None of the Above</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>All statements are correct. Expect many more questions on this topic (and simply, on the President) in this daily quiz over the next few weeks.</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: Contest vs. Consensus; PIB: Election to office of President;</p>
7.	<p>The 'lone wolf' syndrome is often seen in the news in the context of</p> <p>a) International Space Station returnees</p> <p>b) Grouping of independents in the Indian Parliament</p> <p>c) Right to Information activists</p> <p>d) Asymmetric warfare</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The most appropriate answer is option d.</p> <p>Terrorist tactics, such as hijackings and suicide bombings, are also considered to be asymmetrical, both because they tend to involve a smaller, weaker group attacking a stronger one and also because attacks on civilians are by definition one-way warfare.</p> <p>Radicalisation via the Internet has attained a whole new dimension. Propaganda via the Internet today involves far more than mere recruitment imperatives, even though elaborate recruitment videos continue to be distributed via the social media, which depict the IS fighters as 'knights'. All this still remains highly appealing to some Muslim youth. Nevertheless, a far more dangerous aspect today is the arrival of 'Internet-enabled' terrorism. This has introduced a far greater degree of indeterminate complexity into an already difficult scenario. The result is that the 'lone wolf' is no longer alone. Internet-enabled terror involves violence conceived and guided by "controllers" thousands of miles away.</p> <p>TH: New playground for non-state actors;</p>

Clarification

19th June Quiz ([Click HERE](#)): "A candidate, in order to be declared elected to the office of President, must secure a fixed quota of votes." .. this 'fixed quota of votes' is naturally more than the number of votes the challenger will receive. As to how many votes more than her challenger it eventually is, is decided by determination of what the fixed quota of votes is. The statement is incomplete, but correct.

June 20, 2017

1.	<p>With reference to the Puranas, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. These can be classified as Mahapuranas and Upapuranas 2. All Puranas deal only with either one, or a combination of, five topics 3. Their content have purely mythical and no historical value <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 2 and 3 only c) 1, 2 and 3 d) None of the Above 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 18 Mahapuranas and many more Upapuranas. • The Puranas are supposed to have five characteristics – Sarga (creation of the world), Pratisarga (re-creation), Vamsha (genealogies of gods and rishis), Manvantara (periods of the various Manus) and Vamshanucharita (genealogy of kings). Not all Puranas deal with all these five topics, and most of them deal with much more. • The earliest parts of the Puranic genealogies are either entirely or partly mythical. The later genealogies of kings of the kali age have historical material. <p>‘A history of ancient and early medieval India’ by Upinder Singh;</p> <p>Improvisation: PIB;</p>
2.	<p>If a really ripe banana is placed right next to a bunch of green bananas, the unripe bananas will turn yellow (ripen) much faster than would have been the case otherwise. Which plant hormone is responsible for this phenomenon?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Gibberellin b) Cytokinin c) Auxin d) Ethylene 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Ethylene is a plant hormone that affects ripening and rotting in plants. It is a particularly interesting plant hormone because it exists as a gas. No other plant hormone is gaseous.</p> <p>Ethylene can be produced in almost any part of a plant, and can diffuse through the plant’s tissue, outside the plant, and travel through the air to affect a totally different plant.</p> <p>BBC: How is it possible to buy apples all year round?;</p> <p>Plant Hormones;</p>
3.	<p>The Startup India Virtual Hub, an online platform, will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be a startup exchange programme amongst the SAARC nations 2. Host various stakeholders – startups, investors, mentors and academia, among others <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 2 only c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Startup India Virtual Hub is an effort to create a marketplace where all the stakeholders can interact, exchange knowledge, and enable each other to grow. It will streamline the lifecycle of existing and potential startups, helping them access the right resources at the right time.</p> <p>The portal will host startups, investors, funds, mentors, academia, incubators, accelerators, corporates, Government bodies and more. The Hub attempts to solve the problem of information asymmetry and lack of access to knowledge, tools, & experts, especially in the nascent ecosystems across Tier II and III towns.</p> <p>The Minister also announced a new initiative, wherein a Startup exchange program amongst the SAARC nations would be organized.</p> <p>PIB;</p>

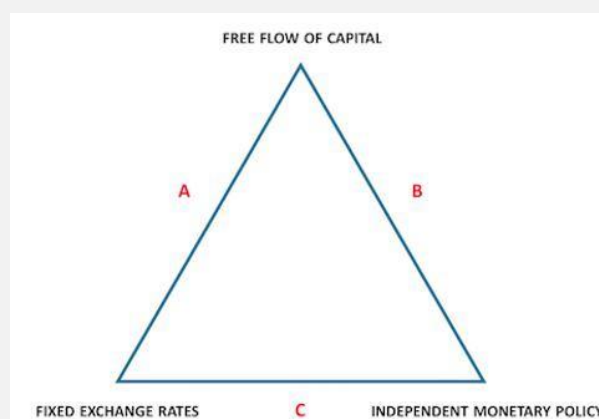
4.	<p>Which one of the following statements about the National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSrC) is not correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Secretary of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the Chairman of the council The oldest member of the Lok Sabha and the oldest member of the Rajya Sabha are members of the council Members of the Council include representations from central ministries such as Ministries of Finance and Home Affairs The NCSrC earlier was the National Council for Older Persons 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership: The Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment – Chairman; Minister of State SJ&E – Vice-Chairman of the Council. Members of the Council include: Secretary (SJ&E), Joint Secretary (Social Defence), related central ministries such as Finance, Rural Development, Home Affairs, Law and Justice, Human Resource Development etc., National Commissions like NHRC, NCW etc., State Governments (on rotation), Oldest member of the Lok Sabha, Oldest member of the Rajya Sabha, along with representatives of Senior Citizens Associations, Pensioners' Associations, eminent senior citizens working on issues related to senior citizens etc. In order to have a definite structure as well as regional representation, the National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) has been reconstituted and renamed as National Council of Senior Citizens (NCSrC) vide a resolution dated 17th February, 2012. <p>PIB;</p>
5.	<p>The proposed National Anti-Profiteering Authority, to be set up under the Goods and Services Tax regime, can</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Take suo moto action against erring companies Order reduction in prices of goods and services Cancel a company's registration if it doesn't pass on tax rate cuts to consumers <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 and 3 only 2 only 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <div data-bbox="837 1055 1401 1467"> <p>Focus on customers</p> <p>The proposed National Anti-Profiteering Authority has been given wide-ranging powers to protect the interests of consumers</p>  <p>Powers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can take suo motu action, besides acting on complaints of profiteering Can order a reduction in prices Can cancel a company's registration if it doesn't pass on tax rate cuts to consumers Can levy a penalty or call for a refund from an erring company <p>Composition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five-member panel to be headed by a retired Secretary </div> <p>TH: Anti-profiteering body can take suo moto action;</p>
6.	<p>New research suggests that the idea that modern people evolved in a single "cradle of humanity" in East Africa some 200,000 years ago is no longer tenable. Fossils of early humans, at least 100,000 years earlier than previously recognised, were found in which one of the following regions?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Antarctica Eastern South America North Africa Southern Europe 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fossils of five early humans have been found in North Africa that show Homo sapiens emerged at least 100,000 years earlier than previously recognised. It suggests that our species evolved all across the continent, the scientists involved say. Prof Hublin's excavation has further revealed that these ancient people had employed stone tools and had learned how to make and control fire. So, not only did they look like Homo sapiens, they acted like them as well.

[BBC: 'First of our kind' found in Morocco;](#)

[TH: Origins of us;](#)

June 21, 2017

1.	<p>Which one of the following statements is not correct?</p> <p>a) All doubts and disputes in connection with the election of the President are inquired into and decided by the Supreme Court</p> <p>b) A sitting Governor is deemed to have vacated his office on the date his nomination is filed for election to the office of the President</p> <p>c) The Governor of a state and a minister of the Union is not deemed to hold any office of profit</p> <p>d) In India both a citizen by birth as well as a naturalised citizen are eligible for the office of President</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Based on THIS press communique, option 'b' is incorrect (a sitting governor is not deemed to have vacated his office on the date his nomination is filed for election to the office of the President). Other statements are correct.</p> <p>Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p>
2.	<p>With reference to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, consider the following statements:</p> <p>1. It is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument</p> <p>2. India is not a signatory to the convention as it considers the envisaged enforcement mechanism to be weak</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: a.</p> <p>The United Nations Convention against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. The Convention's far-reaching approach and the mandatory character of many of its provisions make it a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem. The vast majority of United Nations Member States are parties to the Convention. India ratified the convention in 2011.</p> <p>UNODC: UNCAC;</p> <p>Improvisation: PIb;</p>
3.	<p>The Mundell-Fleming trilemma expresses</p> <p>a) The limited options available to countries in setting monetary policy</p> <p>b) The impossibility of achieving free flow of capital in a rapidly developing country</p> <p>c) The conflicts between central banking authorities, independent economists and the government in establishing consensus on monetary policy</p> <p>d) The inconsistencies in approaches involved in establishing 'free', 'fixed', and 'managed' type of exchange rate regimes</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>The impossible trinity, also called the Mundell-Fleming trilemma or simply the trilemma, expresses the limited options available to countries in setting monetary policy. According to this theory, a country cannot achieve the free flow of capital, a fixed exchange rate and independent monetary policy simultaneously. By pursuing any two of these options, it necessarily closes off the third.</p>



TH: What is impossible trinity in economics?


4.	<p>‘PACE’, recently seen in the news, is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A program between the United States of America and India to jointly work on a range of issues related to energy security and clean energy An immunisation programme for children belonging to remote areas across some states of India A pilot safe water and sanitation project being implemented by the World Bank in the state of Bihar A global research collaboration between Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) and its partner countries to develop local solutions to critical development challenges 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Developed by Ministry of Power and Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), the Energy Conservation Building Code 2017 prescribes the energy performance standards for new commercial buildings to be constructed across India.</p> <p>ECBC 2017 was developed by BEE with technical support from United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the U.S.-India bilateral Partnership to Advance Clean Energy – Deployment Technical Assistance (PACE-D TA) Program.</p> <p>PIB: Energy Conservation Building Code;</p>
5.	<p>Section 24 of the Right to Information Act (RTI)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lists the exemptions for disclosure of information Details the procedure to be followed by an applicant seeking information Exempts security and intelligence agencies from provisions of RTI The RTI Act has only 8 sections 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Section 24 of the Right to Information Act (RTI) exempts security and intelligence agencies from RTI provisions, except in the case of allegations of human rights violations and corruption.</p> <p>In the news – “In its reply to an RTI application, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has said that no human rights were violated in the brutal killing of 25 CRPF personnel by left-wing extremists in Chhattisgarh’s Sukma district on April 24, 2017.”</p>
6.	<p>With reference to the International Court of Justice, which of the following statements is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One-half of the court is elected every four years Judges are eligible for re-election All state parties to the statute of the court have the right to propose candidates <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The International Court of Justice is composed of 15 judges elected to nine-year terms of office by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.</p> <p>In order to be elected, a candidate must receive an absolute majority of the votes in both bodies.</p> <p>In order to ensure a measure of continuity, one third of the Court is elected every three years.</p> <p>TH: Dalveer Bhandari gets renominated;</p>

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

[ICJ: Members of the Court;](#)

June 22, 2017

1.	<p>Which of the following is/are the possible outcomes if the 'anti-profiteering' clause under the Goods and Services Tax regime is strictly enforced?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The prices of some products will reduce There will be a shortage of some products It will act as a deterrent for investments in some businesses <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 1 and 2 c) 2 only d) 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>All three are possible outcomes (for either the short, medium or long term) due to implementation of the anti-profiteering mechanism under the new GST regime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses that receive the benefit of paying lower taxes under the new goods and services tax (GST) regime can't keep it with them. Instead, according to the GST Act, they must pass it on to consumers by reducing the price of the products they sell. Contrary to the intention of the anti-profiteering clause, this will not benefit consumers. Shortages are likely to follow as prices fall without a commensurate increase in supply. This is because profit-capping will distort business returns, thus discouraging new investment that could help ramp up production. In contrast, when the tax rate is reduced without a cap on profits, it usually leads to a similar fall in prices, but without shortages. This is because higher profit margins — due to lower taxes — attract new investment and increase supply. Another fallout will be corruption and inefficiency as the government begins implementation of the clause. This does not portend well for doing business in India. <p>TH: Too much profit?;</p>
2.	<p>'Poramboke', associated with which a protest song in Tamil was recently composed, is most aptly related to which one of the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Rent-seeking, a practice of manipulating public policy for increasing profits b) Cosmopolitanism, the ideology that all human beings belong to a single community c) Commons, a resource to be enjoyed by all d) Materialism, a tendency to consider material possessions and physical comfort as more important than spiritual values 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>"... Even after man felt that there was need for fences and certificates of ownership, he still recognised that some lands must be kept in common for use by all or for the sake of all. In medieval England they were called commons, a resource to be enjoyed by all. These lands and the non-arable lands were classified in Tamil as "<i>poramboke</i>". The protest song "<i>Porambokku enakku illai porambokku unakku illai porambokku oorukku porambokku bhoomikku</i>" is about this commons and how the commons are diminishing..."</p> <p>TH: Where are the commons?;</p>

3.	<p>In the azure waters of this sea grows what scientists consider to be the planet's most unique coral – one that can survive global warming, at least for now. The sea in question is?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Red Sea Java Sea Azov Sea Alboran Sea 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>Global warming has in recent years caused colourful coral reefs to bleach and die around the world — but not in the Gulf of Eilat, or Aqaba, part of the northern Red Sea.</p> <p>Corals fare well in heat thanks to their slow journey from the Indian Ocean through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, between Djibouti and Yemen, where water temperatures are much higher. Over the past 6,000 years, they underwent a form of selection through a very, very hot body of water, and only those that could pass through that hot water body reached here, the northern Red Sea and Gulf of Eilat.</p> <p>TH: Evolutionary secrets help Red Sea corals withstand heat;</p>
4.	<p>When ocean temperatures get too hot, corals often experience 'bleaching' events. What does this mean?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Plants and animals living in the vicinity of corals die Corals move towards cooler waters The symbiotic nature of the relationship between a certain plant and animal breaks down Corals submerge themselves completely under water, starving themselves of sunlight and air to breathe 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Often mistaken for a form of vegetation, corals “are in fact an animal that lives in symbiosis with an algae, a plant,” said Jessica Bellworthy, a Ph.D student under Mr. Fine’s supervision taking part in the Eilat research.</p> <p>Corals and algae “provide services for each other,” with the algae providing “up to 90% of the coral animal’s food” through photosynthesis, said Ms. Bellworthy.</p> <p>“When ocean temperatures get too hot, this symbiosis, this relationship, breaks down,” she said. “The algae is lost from the coral and causes the coral to look white,” effectively “starving” it.</p> <p>Additional Information: When a coral bleaches, it is not dead. Corals can survive a bleaching event, but they are under more stress and are subject to mortality.</p> <p>TH: Evolutionary secrets help Red Sea corals withstand heat;</p> <p>What is Coral Bleaching?;</p>
5.	<p>The Gulf of Eilat (or Aqaba) is a border of which of the following countries?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Egypt Saudi Arabia Israel Jordan <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1, 2 and 3 only 1 and 2 only 3 and 4 only 	<p>Solution: d</p>  <p>Improvisation: TH: Evolutionary secrets help Red Sea corals withstand heat;</p>

d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

June 23, 2017

1.	<p>According to the Kuznet's curve,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is an optimum level of tax rate that will maximise revenues for the government Economic growth initially leads to greater inequality, followed later by a reduction in of the same With economic growth comes inflation, which in turn leads to more jobs and less unemployment Unemployment and economic growth share an inverse relationship 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Kuznet's curve: A curve used to demonstrate the hypothesis that economic growth initially leads to greater inequality, followed later by the reduction of inequality. The idea was first proposed by American economist Simon Kuznets.</p> <p>As economic growth comes from the creation of better products, it usually boosts the income of workers and investors who participate in the first wave of innovation. The industrialisation of an agrarian economy is a common example. This inequality, however, tends to be temporary as workers and investors who were initially left behind soon catch up by helping offer either the same or better products. This improves their incomes.</p> <p>TH: What is Kuznet's curve?;</p>
2.	<p>Should the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-third Amendment) Bill, 2017 be passed by the Parliament, it effectively will become the 102nd Amendment to the Constitution. In this context, arrange the following amendments to the constitution in their order of enactment by the Parliament:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ratifying the land-boundary agreement between India and Bangladesh Establishing the National Judicial Appointments Commission Paving the way for setting up the Goods and Services Tax regime <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - 2 - 3 1 - 3 - 2 2 - 1 - 3 2 - 3 - 1 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was established by the Union government of India by amending the constitution of India through the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014. However, the Supreme Court declared the Amendment unconstitutional and void.</p> <p>Constitution (100th Amendment) Act 2015 ratified the land boundary agreement between India and Bangladesh.</p> <p>There are several articles in the constitution of India which define the financial relations between Union and States. Since GST bills involve a huge interest of the state governments, such a historical tax reform cannot take place without making suitable changes into the constitution. For this purpose, 101st amendment of the constitution was passed.</p> <p>Source: http://www.gktoday.in;</p> <p>Improvisation: Inclusion in the backward list;</p>
3.	<p>In granting constitutional status to the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), the present Constitution Amendment Bill may encroach on the domain of States. Which one of the following provisions of the bill have given rise to such a situation?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The President alone has the power to notify 'backward classes', and the list cannot be varied except by a law enacted by the Parliament 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>A clause in the 123rd Amendment says the President may by public notification specify the socially and educationally backward classes in relation to a State or a Union Territory. In respect of States, it will be done after consultation with the Governor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One reason for the apprehension is that the language of the newly introduced sections, pertaining to specifying Backward Classes, is exactly the same as that used in Articles 341 and

	<p>b) That the NCBC is being given constitutional status at par with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes</p> <p>c) The 'backward classes' list for every state will not be prepared in consultation with State Governments</p> <p>d) Both a and b</p>	<p>342 in respect of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Constitution Bench judgment, in E.V. Chinniah vs. Andhra Pradesh, ruled in 2004 that the President alone has the power to notify Scheduled Castes/Tribes, and when it comes to varying the lists, the State legislatures do not have legislative competence. Applying the same yardstick to Backward Classes may mean that the President alone may notify the list of BCs for every State, and that it cannot be varied except by a law enacted by Parliament. The Centre has sought to allay these fears, saying the powers of the States would remain unaffected. In any case, the list for every State will be prepared only in consultation with the State government. <p>TH: Inclusion in the backward classes list;</p>
4.	<p>Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code states that</p> <p>a) Whoever speaks against the nation has committed the offence of sedition</p> <p>b) Whoever means to excite or attempts to excite disaffection by words – spoken or written – towards the nation has committed the offence of sedition</p> <p>c) Whoever promotes enmity between different groups on grounds of religion shall be has committed the offence of sedition</p> <p>d) None of the above</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>A similar question has been posted here earlier.</p> <p>Section 124A in the IPC: Whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law (and not “the nation”) in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.</p> <p>TH: It's not sedition;</p>
5.	<p>Also known as the 'dancing deer', this deer faces threat from steadily degenerating habitat of 'phumdi' as a result of continuous inundation and flooding. This is the</p> <p>a) Swamp deer</p> <p>b) Brow-antlered deer</p> <p>c) Indian Sambar</p> <p>d) Indian hog deer</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWF: Brow-antlered deer: The deer walks on the hind surface of its pasterns with mincing hops over floating foliage, and is hence also called the Dancing Deer. Sangai faces threat from steadily degenerating habitat of phumdi as a result of continuous inundation and flooding caused due to artificial reservoir. Water quality of the reservoir is degrading due to pollution and stoppage of nutrient supply. There is also invasion of non-native plants like 'Paragrass'. About 'Phumdi': The brow-antlered deer is found in Keibul Lamjao National Park in Manipur. It is largely seen over the floating biomass, locally called “<i>phumdi</i>” in the South Eastern part of Loktak Lake inside the park. Phumdi is the most important and unique part of Sangai's habitat. It is the floating mass of entangled vegetation formed by

		<p>the accumulation of organic debris and biomass with soil. Its thickness varies from few centimeters to two meters. It floats with 4/5 part under water.</p> <p>Additional information: The Manipur Forest Department plans to translocate a section of the rare species of the endemic deer to 'Pumlen Pat', which is close to its existing habitat in Loktak.</p> <p>TH: Meet on preserving Sangai held;</p>
6.	<p>In the context of the 'e-way bill' related to the affairs of the Goods and Services Tax regime, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A single e-way bill will be valid for a consignment regardless of any change in the mode of its transportation once it has left its point of origin for its destination 2. The bill allotted for a consignment will be valid for a duration depending on the distance that the consignment needs to move <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 2 only c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>The same question was posted here a few days ago.</p> <p>For some of the issues associated with the e-way bill in its present form, refer to THIS ET ARTICLE.</p> <p>Improvisation: TH;</p>
7.	<p>The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, in its thirty ninth flight (PSLV-C37), launched 104 satellites. Which one of the following was among them?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Resourcesat-2A b) Cartosat-2 series satellite c) INSAT-3DR d) SARAL 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>"This will be the second highest number of satellites to be launched by ISRO using a single rocket", says PSLV project director B. Jayakumar. In February this year, the PSLV-C37 mission launched 104 satellites into orbit, in a milestone achievement.</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: PSLV will lock heavy weight Cartosat-2 into orbit today;</p> <p>ISRO: List of Earth Observation Satellites;</p>
June 24, 2017		
1.	<p>Consider the following statements about ISRO's PSLV-XL launcher:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chandrayaan-1 was the first spacecraft to be launched using the XL launcher 2. No satellites made by university students are permitted to be launched aboard this version of the PSLV launcher due to the critical nature of the payloads <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 2 only 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSLV-C11, chosen to launch Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft, was an updated version of ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle standard configuration. Weighing 320 tonne at lift-off, the vehicle used larger strap-on motors (PSOM-XL) to achieve higher payload capability. • Improvisation and In the news: "When the PSLV-C38 rocket (XL version) lifts off from the Satish Dhawan space port, it will carry with it a nano-satellite made by over 200 students of the Noorul Islam University."

	<p>c) Both 1 and 2</p> <p>d) Neither 1 nor 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the news: “PSLV-C38 will be the 17th flight of the four-stage PSLV in the XL (extended) version with strap-on motors.” <p>Scroll down if you want to see the table: ISRO PSLV;</p>
2.	<p>With reference to the Smart Cities Mission, consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It uses a ‘challenge’ or competition method to select cities for funding 2. Retrofitting is not a concept that receives support under this mission <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> <p>In the news: Announcing the new batch of smart cities at a National Workshop on Urban Transformation here today, Minister of Urban Development and Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation Shri M.Venkaiah Naidu said that 45 cities contested for 40 available smart city slots but only 30 were selected to ensure feasible and workable plans that match the aspirations of the citizens as directed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi while launching the mission. The Minister said that 20 cities will be contesting for the remaining 10 slots under smart city mission</p>
3.	<p>Under the Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin, rural Uttarakhand and rural Haryana have declared themselves as the 4th and 5th Open Defecation Free (ODF) states of India. Which one of the following states under this mission has not already been declared an ODF-free state?</p> <p>a) Sikkim</p> <p>b) Kerala</p> <p>c) Odisha</p> <p>d) Himachal Pradesh</p>	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>As more states are declared ODF, it becomes unnecessary to remember the list. We asked this question only because the topic (rural areas of states being declared ODF-free) has appeared only a few times in the news in recent times.</p> <p>PIB: Under the Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin (SBM-G), rural Uttarakhand and rural Haryana have declared themselves as the 4th and 5th Open Defecation Free (ODF) States of India. The two today joined the league of Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala, which were the first three states to be declared ODF.</p>
4.	<p>Should India seek bilateral cooperation in the field of water resources management, it would be most appropriate to sign an agreement for the same with which one of the following countries?</p> <p>a) United Arab Emirates</p> <p>b) Netherlands</p> <p>c) Yemen</p> <p>d) Kazakhstan</p>	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>A GK question, and one which can be answered if you are in touch with current affairs in recent times even if you did not read THIS PIB release.</p> <p>United Arab Emirates (largely a desert), as you would in all probability know, cannot be the answer. Some argue that the civil war in Yemen was triggered by water scarcity. The Aral Sea, once a vast expanse of a water body lying in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, has shrunk massively from its original size. Regardless of all these facts, if you have read about Netherlands’ experience with water management, you could have straightaway guessed the answer</p>
5.	<p>Consider the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. India is a signatory to the Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) 2. India is not party to the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals but it is party to the Convention for the 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>The Ministry of Earth Sciences is the nodal agencies for issues related to Antarctica and the ATS. Statements 1 and 2 are correct.</p>

	<p>Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources</p> <p>3. The Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change are tasked with handling all matters related to Antarctica</p> <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>a) 1 only b) 1 and 2 c) 2 and 3 d) 1 and 3</p>	<p>An important article: TH: A law, this time for Antarctica;</p> <p>Parties to the ATS;</p>
6.	<p>A recently initiated scheme, 'VAJRA'</p> <p>a) Allows foreign-based scientists to work part-time in Indian laboratories b) Allows maps made by the Survey of India to be downloaded for free c) Seeks to indigenize production of howitzers for the Indian Army d) Seeks to attract foreign investment in the diamond exploration sector</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Union Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India has initiated a novel scheme VAJRA (Visiting Advanced Joint Research), Faculty Scheme of Science & Engineering Research Board, that allows foreign-based scientists to contribute to the Indian growth by working part-time in Indian laboratories and academic institutions. The portal VAJRA will not only help India to boost the global ranking of Indian institutions but also draw the best of research personnel to the country. <p>PIB;</p>
7.	<p>The 'Survey of India'</p> <p>a) Is the principal mapping agency of the country b) Is under the aegis of the Ministry of Science and Technology c) Has the motto, 'A Setu Himachalam' d) a, b and c</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Setu Himachalam – From Setu to the Himalaya The origin of Survey of India can be traced back to Year 1767, when Major James Rennell was appointed as the Surveyor General of Bengal. It is the oldest scientific department in India and one of the oldest survey establishments in the world. Survey of India also has the distinct honour of printing the first Postage Stamp of India and the first copy of the Constitution of India. The Sol maps —prepared for defence and civilian purposes — are considered a standard reference for the shape, extent and geographic features of the country. <p>PIB;</p>
June 26, 2017		
1.	<p>With reference to the 'Special Purpose Vehicle', to be created for the purpose of implementation of the Smart Cities Mission at the city-level, consider the following statements:</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SPV will plan, appraise, approve, release funds, implement, manage, operate, monitor and evaluate the Smart City development projects.

	<p>1. The State and the Urban Local Body will be the promoters having 50:50 equity shareholding and no private sector is permitted to take equity stake in it</p> <p>2. The Municipal Commissioner or the Chief Municipal Officer, as the case may be, is its ex-officio Chief Executive Officer</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each smart city will have a SPV which will be headed by a full time CEO (no mention of any “ex-officio” CEO) and have nominees of Central Government, State Government and ULB on its Board. The States/ULBs shall ensure that, (a) a dedicated and substantial revenue stream is made available to the SPV so as to make it self-sustainable and could evolve its own credit worthiness for raising additional resources from the market and (b) Government contribution for Smart City is used only to create infrastructure that has public benefit outcomes. The execution of projects may be done through joint ventures, subsidiaries, public-private partnership (PPP), turnkey contracts, etc suitably dovetailed with revenue streams. The SPV will be a limited company incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013 at the city-level, in which the State/UT and the ULB will be the promoters having 50:50 equity shareholding. The private sector or financial institutions could be considered for taking equity stake in the SPV, provided the shareholding pattern of 50:50 of the State/UT and the ULB is maintained and the State/UT and the ULB together have majority shareholding and control of the SPV. <p>About the Smart Cities Mission SPV;</p> <p>Improvisation: TH: Being smart about smart cities;</p>
2.	<p>The ‘Array of Things’, seen recently in the news, is</p> <p>a) An urban sensing project</p> <p>b) An extension of the PRAGATI platform to ensure timely follow-up studies, thereby enabling efficient monitoring of projects</p> <p>c) An app that provides information regarding all government schemes and programmes</p> <p>d) Google’s augmented reality project meant to simplify navigation services in Indian cities</p>	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>What if a light pole told you to watch out for an icy patch of sidewalk ahead? What if an app told you the most populated route for a late-night walk to the El station by yourself? What if you could get weather and air quality information block-by-block, instead of city-by-city?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Array of Things (AoT) is an urban sensing project, a network of interactive, modular sensor boxes that will be installed around Chicago to collect real-time data on the city’s environment, infrastructure, and activity for research and public use. AoT will essentially serve as a “fitness tracker” for the city, measuring factors that impact livability in Chicago such as climate, air quality and noise. <p>Improvisation: TH: Being smart about smart cities;</p>
3.	<p>Consider the following statements in the context of privileges in legislative institutions:</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>Improvisation and in the news: “The Karnataka Assembly’s resolution imposing a one-year prison</p>

<p>1. A privilege motion can be moved when any individual or authority disregards or attacks any of the privileges of a member individually or of the House in its collective capacity</p> <p>2. The Constitution does not explicitly mention any privileges that are available to legislative institutions or its members</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>sentence and ₹10,000 fine on the editors of two tabloids is indefensible and deserving of unsparing criticism... Unfortunately, breach of privilege is invoked for the ostensible reason of protecting the image of the House on the whole or its individual members; too often, it is a thinly disguised mechanism to insulate elected representatives from criticism.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A privilege motion is concerned with the breach of parliamentary privileges by a minister. It is moved by a member when he feels that a minister has committed a breach of privilege of the House or one or more of its members by withholding facts of a case or by giving wrong or distorted facts. Its purpose is to censure the concerned minister. • Articles 105/194 mention two privileges, that is, freedom of speech in Parliament/State Legislature and right of publication of its proceedings. <p>Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p>
<p>4. Parliamentary privileges are based on some sources which include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Various laws made by Parliament 2. Rules of both the Houses 3. Parliamentary conventions 4. Judicial interpretations <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) 4 only</p> <p>d) 1, 2, 3 and 4</p>	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>The Parliament, till now, has not made any special law to exhaustively codify all the privileges. They are based on five sources, namely,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constitutional provisions, 2. Various laws made by Parliament, 3. Rules of both the Houses, 4. Parliamentary conventions, and 5. Judicial interpretations. <p>Improvisation: TH: Whose privilege?</p>
<p>5. NASA's 'CHESS', recently in the news, is</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The world's most expensive earth-imaging satellite till date, being jointly made with ISRO b) A sounding rocket payload funded by NASA, that will provide crucial information for understanding the lifecycle of stars c) A vapour tracer to track the motions of upper atmospheric winds and ion drifts d) None of the above 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 'a' refers to 'NISAR' – the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar satellite (In the news). • NASA-funded CHESS: Deep in space between distant stars, space is not empty. Instead, there drifts vast clouds of neutral atoms and molecules, as well as charged plasma particles called the interstellar medium – that may, over millions of years, evolve into new stars and even planets. These floating interstellar reservoirs are the focus of the NASA-funded CHESS sounding rocket mission, which will check out the earliest stages of star formation. • Additional Information: Sounding rockets and tracers: Sounding rockets have been used since the 1950's to study the upper atmosphere and ionosphere and to aid in understanding the Earth's near-space environment. The rockets follow

parabolic or “U-shaped” trajectories, providing nearly vertical paths along their ascent and descent. There are some important regions of space that are too low to be sampled by satellite instruments (i.e., the lower ionosphere/upper atmosphere below 81 miles or 130 kilometers altitude) and thus sounding rockets provide the only platforms that can carry out direct in situ measurements in these regions.

[TH: NASA's CHES to study interstellar clouds;](#)

6. China 'A' shares are being included in the MSCI or the Morgan Stanley Capital International index. How will this potentially affect India?

- a) It reduces the attractiveness of the Indian market to foreign investors
- b) India's weightage in the MSCI will increase
- c) It enhances India's financial credibility
- d) There will be no impact on India

Solution: a.

Some may have been confused between selecting option 'a' and 'd'. The most appropriate option is 'a'.

- **MSCI and its importance:** MSCI is the world's biggest index compiler, with more than \$10 trillion in assets benchmarked to its products, with emerging markets alone accounting for \$2 trillion. The indices are closely tracked by global investors. Inclusion in MSCI Inc.'s stock indices opens up investment interest from foreign investors in a particular country and brings a stamp of financial credibility.
- **How will it affect India?** Most experts see only minimal impact on the Indian market in terms of outflows. However, MSCI has said it is open to adding more China A shares, provided it opens up its equity market further. If China continues to gain more weightage on the index, more money could well flow out of India.

[TH: China shares in MSCI index: what it means;](#)

June 27, 2017

1. Sikkim shares its borders with which of the following countries?

1. China
2. Nepal
3. Bhutan

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.

A simple map-based question.



- **In the news:** "It is not the first time that such a transgression has happened at the *Doka La*, a place at the Sikkim-Bhutan-Tibet tri-junction. The Chinese forces had in November 2008 destroyed some makeshift Indian army bunkers at the same place."
- **Additional Information:** The mountain chains which run southwards from the main Himalayan range form the natural boundaries of Sikkim. Located between these towering mountain ranges are passes like *Nathu-la*, *Jelep-la*, *Cho-la* and many others which were at one time important corridors of passage between Sikkim and Tibet.

2. Consider the following statements:
1. The GST rate for gold is lower than that for matchboxes
 2. The tax incidence on SUVs in the GST regime is the same as is on environment-friendly hybrid vehicles
 3. In the extant taxation system, the effective rate for SUVs is higher than that for hybrids
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 1, 2 and 3
 - d) None of the Above

Solution: c.

A question framed solely with a mains-perspective. These are examples one can cite while discussing flaws of the GST regime.

- More than sound economic, or political, logic, the GST seems driven by the deciding authorities' discretion. Some other examples (other than those provided in the statements above) include:
- The GST will be imposed at 18% on soaps and washing soaps, but at 28% on detergents
- Some moviegoers will pay 18% GST and, others, on the same movie, 28%, depending on the price of cinema ticket — not exactly the promised 'One nation, one tax'.

TH: An old new tax;

3.	<p>In economics, 'conditionality' is most often associated with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodative Monetary Policy Aid money Loan waivers Priority Sector Lending 	<p>Solution: b.</p> <p>Conditionality refers to the imposition of strict conditions on borrowing countries by international lenders like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.</p> <p>It is aimed at encouraging borrowing countries to implement serious structural reforms that can improve their economy as well as their credit-worthiness. Since international lending is tied to fulfilling predetermined conditions, it is believed that conditionality can be used as an effective tool to enforce tough economic reforms.</p> <p>Critics have argued that the conditions for borrowing imposed on countries are influenced primarily by politics, rather than any genuine intent to improve the borrower's economic condition.</p> <p>The Hindu Explains; OPED page, 27th June, TH;</p>
4.	<p>Which of the following statements about neutrinos is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Trillions of neutrinos pass through our body every second They are created in nuclear reactions They never interact with particles of other matter <p>Select the correct answer using codes given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 only 2 and 3 1 and 3 1 and 2 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>About Neutrinos:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second most abundant particle in the Universe, after photons of light; In fact, neutrinos are so abundant among us that every second, there are more than 100 trillion of them passing right through each of us — we never even notice them. Means 'small neutral one' in Italian Uncharged, and created in nuclear reactions and some radioactive decay chains Shown to have a tiny mass, but hardly (and not 'never') interacts with other particles of matter Comes in three flavours, or types, referred to as muon, tau and electron These flavours are able to oscillate – flip from one type to another – during flight; <p>From 2015: BBC; TH: Going all out for neutrino research;</p> <p>Improvisation: Who is afraid of neutrinos?;</p>
5.	<p>The India-based Neutrino Observatory will try to find the answer to which one of the following unknowns?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ordering of the neutrino mass states Existence of a fourth kind of neutrino, the sterile neutrino The exact number of neutrinos that pass through our bodies per second The potential for neutrinos to be weaponised 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>"Do laws of physics treat matter and anti-matter exactly the same way as far as the neutrinos are concerned or do they treat them differently? While the INO will not by itself provide an answer to this question, its measurements will — by determining the order of the neutrino masses and thereby help other neutrino experiments that are already under way or being built in other parts of the world. The INO, by observing the rates at which neutrinos and anti-neutrinos oscillate, will make a substantial</p>

contribution to the quest to unravel the secrets of the ultimate laws of physics."

[Who is afraid of neutrinos?](#);

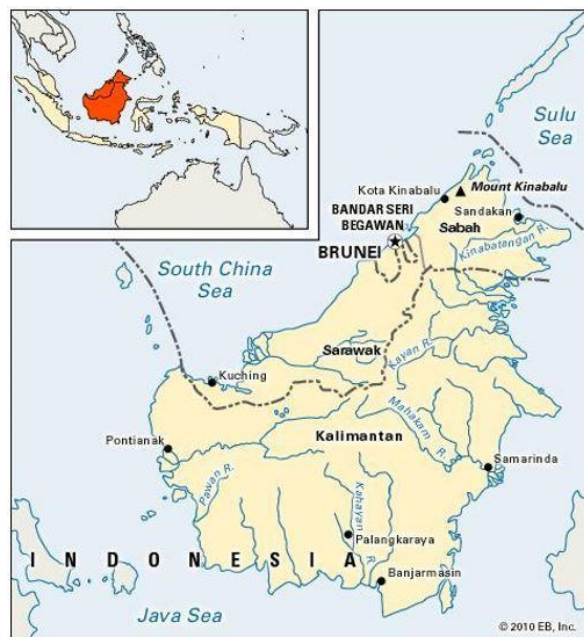
[TH: Going all out for neutrino research](#);

June 28, 2017

1.	<p>The 2017 India-U.S. joint statement 'has exceeded expectations', and is regarded by some as 'different, unlike the ones issued in the recent past'. Which of the following is/are aspects of the latest joint statement, that reflect what has been stated above?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It makes an explicit reference to 'cross-border terrorism' 2. The two sides have named 'South China Sea' for the first time in a joint-statement 3. U.S. has expressed its support for India's permanent membership on a reformed U.N. Security Council <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 2 and 3 only c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement 3 is included in the Joint Statement, but it is nothing 'unique' or 'different' from the joint statements of the past. On Pakistan and terror: Titled "Shoulder-to-Shoulder Against Terrorism", this paragraph makes an explicit reference to "cross-border terrorism" in a joint statement for the first time. "The leaders called on Pakistan to ensure that its territory is not used to launch terrorist attacks on other countries. They further called on Pakistan to expeditiously bring to justice the perpetrators of the 26/11 Mumbai, Pathankot, and other cross-border terrorist attacks perpetrated by Pakistan-based groups," it says. China and Asia Pacific: In 2014, the two sides, for the first (and only) time, named South China Sea in the joint statement. This time, the statement uses the term "Indo-Pacific" for the first time, which is a more contemporary term than "Asia-Pacific". It uses terms like "democratic stalwarts" and "responsible stewards" which are aimed at China, takes a common position against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and expresses reservations about the Belt and Road Initiative. <p>MEA: Joint Statement – Prosperity Through Partnership;</p> <p>IE: What makes Modi-Trump's joint statement different;</p> <p>TH: Warm in Washington;</p>
2.	<p>The regions known 'Finger Area' and 'Sora Funnel' sometimes appear in the news in the context of the events related to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sikkim b) North Afghanistan c) Red Corridor d) McMahon Line 	<p>Solution: a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvisation and In the news: A retired Lt. General who had commanded a corps in the area said, "Sikkim is a settled boundary barring the finger area in the plateau which came up during 2007." From 2008 – Tip of Sikkim latest flashpoint: Referred to as the "Finger Area" by Indian armed forces, this territory falls north of Gyangyong in Sikkim and overlooks a strategically important valley known as the "Sora Funnel". It contains several stone cairns, which are essentially heaps of stones that can be used for shelter. The area is in the northernmost tip of Sikkim, north of a place

		called Gyangyong, and appears like a protruding finger on the map — hence the name Finger Area.
3.	<p>Which of the following are issues considered to be responsible for the hitherto delayed resolution of Non-Performing Assets?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of bankers' commercial flexibility and autonomy to sell distressed assets 2. It was only recently that regulatory changes were made to address the problem of business promoters delaying resolution processes 3. The National Company Law Tribunal faces, as it is, severe capacity constraints in handling its backlog of cases <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 and 2 only b) 2 and 3 only c) 1 and 3 only d) 1, 2 and 3 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>Indian banks need to accept significant haircuts to resolve the NPA cases as several of them are in sectors where market conditions are in a slump, such as steel, power and textiles. The government will require immense political will to allow bankers to take the necessary haircuts (which will impact profitability negatively), without bankers fearing that their decisions will be questioned or investigated in the future. The tight resolution timelines envisaged under the IBC cannot be achieved if bankers do not have the commercial flexibility and the autonomy to sell distressed assets.</p> <p>Another issue not addressed by the recent regulatory changes is what role promoters play in delaying NPA resolution. The majority of businesses in India remain under the control of their founding promoters. Unlike more developed markets, in India, bankers cannot make significant management changes in distressed companies as promoters closely control key aspects of a business such as relationships with suppliers, customers and regulators. It becomes critical that promoters should agree to and be involved in any resolution process. However, the RBI does not regulate promoters and other shareholders, and hence cannot force resolutions on to them. Promoters understand this conundrum and have used it to their advantage in the past.</p> <p>Then there is the question of whether the institutional framework within which the NPAs will have to be resolved is ready to handle this complex task. The severe capacity constraints of the NCLT in handling the present and past backlog of cases is well recognised.</p> <p>TH: Pieces of a complex solution;</p>
4.	<p>Borneo, is an island in Southeast Asia. It is bounded by the South China Sea to the northwest, the Sulu Sea to the northeast, the Celebes Sea to the east, and the Java Sea to the south. Which of the following countries constitute its political components?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Philippines 2. Malaysia 3. Indonesia 4. Brunei <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1, 2 and 3 b) 2, 3 and 4 	<p>Solution: b.</p>

- c) 1, 3 and 4
d) 1, 2 and 4



- The Java Sea to the south separates Borneo from the island of Java. The Makassar Strait separates Borneo from the island of Celebes (Sulawesi) to the east and southeast, and a series of shallow seas and straits lie between Borneo and the island of Sumatra to the west.
- Indonesia constitutes the largest political component of the island (in Indonesian, this area is known as 'Kalimantan'). Along the northwest coast and northern tip lie two constituent states of Malaysia that are often collectively called East Malaysia, and between them is the Islamic sultanate of Brunei.

Improvisation: [TH: The Marawi Siege](#) (Second Paragraph);

5. With 20% of India's exports to Europe entering through this country, the two Prime Ministers discussed the role of it as India's 'Gateway to Europe'. This country is

- a) Germany
b) United Kingdom
c) Netherland
d) France

Solution: c.

They assessed that this position is only expected to grow in the coming years as a result of developments in both India and Europe. In this context, India and the Netherlands have the intention to strengthen their cooperation in the field of mobility and migration.

[TH: Netherlands backs India's UNSC and NSG bids;](#)

[MEA: India-Netherlands Joint Communiqué;](#)

6. The 'Global Entry Program', recently seen in the news, refers to

- a) A United Nations' 'World Citizen Passport' initiative
b) An international expedited traveler initiative of the U.S.A.
c) An agreement under the aegis of the International Civil Aviation

Solution: b

- Organisation to minimize and expedite clearance procedures at airports
- d) None of the above

June 29, 2017

1. 'White Shipping Agreement', sometimes in the news, refers to

- a) Joint offshore patrols to foil any potential threat from the sea to the security of the participating countries
- b) An agreement that aids the effective implementation of LSA, CISMOA and BECA defence agreements signed between India and the U.S.A.
- c) An arrangement for the exchange of advance information on the identity and movement of commercial non-military merchant vessels
- d) Anti-piracy beats in the Gulf of Aden

Solution: c.

- Being aware of the identity of these vessels is imperative to preventing any potential threat from the sea from impinging on the coastal and offshore security of the country. The 26/11 Mumbai terrorist attack is a case in point. Indian Navy has thus been working towards achieving complete Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) along with all other concerned agencies like the coast guard, customs, ports, fisheries, etc.
- The seas of the entire world are inter-linked and vessels can sail routinely around the globe in pursuit of cargo. Thus a vessel that is in Indian waters today maybe sailing towards a distant destination and similarly several vessels set sail from ports around the globe could be bound for India. Having advance information of the vessel, its destination and planned itinerary, etc. is thus extremely helpful towards collating an effective MDA as it can then be properly identified when detected. This information is likely to be available with the country from whose port it sails. The information is equally relevant for the destination country and those it passes enroute. Thus mutual exchange of such information, called white shipping information, is extremely useful for all concerned.
- India has signed white shipping agreements with several countries including United States, Singapore, recently Israel, and is seeking similar agreement with more countries as part of its ongoing effort at developing an effective regional MDA.

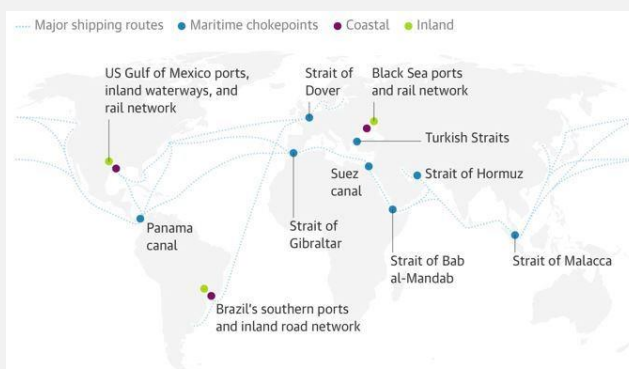
[IDSA: What is a 'White Shipping Agreement'?](#)

[MEA: Joint Statement – India and U.S.;](#)

2. Increasingly vulnerable 'chokepoints' are threatening the security of the global food supply, according to a new report. These critical bottlenecks are increasingly at risk from climate change. Which one of the following is **not** one of the 'chokepoints'?

- a) Black Sea ports
- b) Brazil's inland road network
- c) Strait of Malacca
- d) Northeast passage

Solution: d.



- With climate change bringing more incidents of extreme weather, analysts at the Chatham House thinktank warn that the risk of a major disruption is growing but that little is being done to tackle the problem. Food supply interruptions in the past have caused huge spikes in prices which can spark major conflicts. [BBC 2016](#): Shipping routes across the Arctic (which includes the Northeast Passage and the Northwest Passage) are going to open up significantly this century even with a best-case reduction in CO2 emissions, a new study suggests. Researchers have investigated how the decline in sea-ice, driven by warmer temperatures, will make the region more accessible.
- The chokepoints identified are locations through which exceptional amounts of the global food trade pass. More than half of the globe's staple crop exports – wheat, maize, rice and soybean – have to travel along inland routes to a small number of key ports in the US, Brazil and the Black Sea. On top of this, more than half of these crops – and more than half of fertilisers – transit through at least one of the maritime chokepoints identified.

[BBC: World food security risks growing;](#)

[The Guardian: Vulnerable 'chokepoints' threaten global food supply;](#)

3. The nodal ministry for drug demand reduction (drug abuse prevention) is the

- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports

Solution: a.

- Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment recently organized a function on the occasion of 'International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking'.
- The Ministry coordinates and monitors all aspects of drug abuse prevention which include assessment of the extent of the problem, preventive action, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts, dissemination of information and public awareness.
- It provides community based services for the identification, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts through Voluntary Organizations. The Ministry provides financial assistance to approximately 400 NGOs across the country for running de-addiction centres. The Ministry has also set up a 24 x 7 National Toll Free drug de-addiction helpline number 1XXX-XX-0031 to help the victims of drug abuse, their family and society at large.

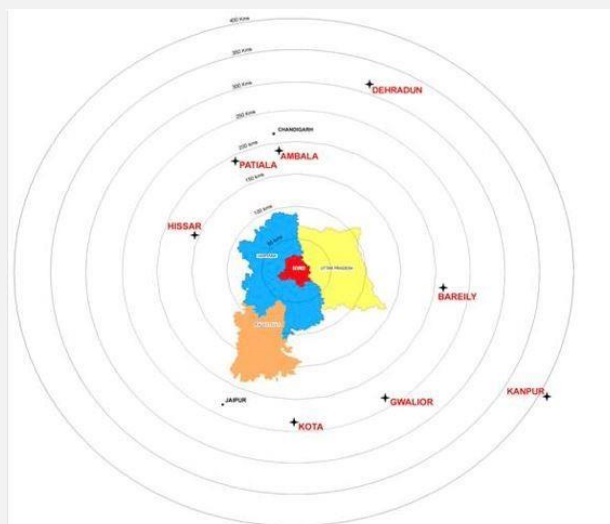
[PIB;](#)

4.	<p>The recently launched programme 'Innovate in India', or 'i3', is related to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerate biopharmaceutical development in India ISRO's efforts to provide a fillip to India's electric vehicles push The National Campaign for Water Conservation in India The Office of the President of India's Festival of Grassroots Innovation 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India has been an active player in the pharmaceutical industry and has contributed globally towards making life saving drugs and low cost pharmaceutical products accessible and affordable for those in need. Be it the Rotavirus vaccine, heart valve prosthesis or affordable insulin, India has been a forerunner in these and many more. Despite these advances, the Indian biopharmaceutical industry is still 10-15 years behind their counterparts in the developed countries and faces stiff competition from China, Korea and others. The lacuna primarily exists due to disconnected centres of excellence, less focus on translational research (application of basic sciences) and staggered funding. i3, a flagship programme of the GoI in collaboration with the World Bank, is committed to addressing these gaps with a Mission to make India a hub for design and development of novel, affordable and effective biopharmaceutical products and solutions. The Mission will be implemented by the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a Public Sector Undertaking of the Department of Biotechnology, MoS&T. <p>PIB: Launch of national biopharma mission;</p>
5.	<p>Under the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution, which of the following functional items have been placed within the purview of Panchayats?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Poverty Alleviation Programmes Drinking water Education, including primary and secondary schools Roads, bridges and other means of communication <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1, 2 and 3 only 2 and 3 only 4 only 1, 2, 3 and 4 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>"The Minister highlighted that in the context of huge fiscal transfer to Gram Panchayats of about Rs.2,00,292 Crore in five years, by the way of the Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) award, recent years have seen a significant increase in public expenditure through Panchayats in the areas of sanitation, civic amenities etc. He pointed out the importance of peoples' participation and advised that Panchayats should take a proactive role in addressing poverty, social issues and needs of vulnerable groups. Through the local leadership of the Gram Panchayats, many villages have been able to successfully resolve difficult problems like availability of water, connectivity, open defecation, education for all and have brought about transformational changes in the lives of poor persons belonging to vulnerable groups"</p> <p>PIB;</p> <p>Panchayati Raj, Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;</p>

6. Which of the following is **not** one of the 'Counter-Magnet Areas' to the National Capital Region (NCR) as identified by the NCR Planning Board?

- a) Shimla, Himachal Pradesh
- b) Dehradun, Uttarakhand
- c) Kota, Rajasthan
- d) Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh

Solution: a.



The NCR Planning Board Act, 1985 empowers the Board to select any area outside the NCR having regard to its location, population and potential for growth as a 'Counter Magnet Area' in consultation with the State Government concerned. At present the NCR Planning Board has identified the following nine counter magnet areas to NCR:

- Hissar and Ambala in **Haryana**
- Bareilly and Kanpur in **Uttar Pradesh**
- Kota and Jaipur in **Rajasthan**
- Patiala in **Punjab**
- Gwalior in **Madhya Pradesh**
- Dehradun in **Uttarakhand**

The Board also decided that these Counter-Magnet Areas shall be an area of about 120 kms radius around above identified towns as *zone of influence for migration*. The concerned State Governments shall notify their respective Counter Magnet Areas proposed to be developed in & around these towns and prepare Development Plan and Plan of Action for its implementation.

[NCR Constituent Areas;](#)

Improvisation: [PIB;](#)

June 30, 2017

1. The Doklam Plateau overlooks the

- a) Zaskar valley
- b) Mihir Hills
- c) Chumbi valley
- d) Lug Valley

Solution: c.



The Diplomat: The Doklam Plateau lies immediately east of Indian defences in Sikkim. Chinese occupation of Doklam would turn the flank of Indian defences completely. This piece of dominating ground not only has a commanding view of the Chumbi Valley but also overlooks the Silguri Corridor further to the east.

TH: [Rawat in Sikkim as China demands troop withdrawal;](#)

2. Consider the following statements:

1. The Indian Constitution explicitly states that parliamentary privileges shall be the same as those of the British House of Commons
2. The Indian Parliament has examined the issue of codification of privileges in the past and concluded that there was no need for it

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.

- Originally, the Constitution (Article 105) expressly mentioned two privileges, that is, freedom of speech in Parliament and right of publication of its proceedings. With regard to other privileges, it provided that they were to be the same as those of the British House of Commons, its committees and its members on the date of its commencement (ie, 26 January, 1950), until defined by Parliament.
- The 44th Amendment Act of 1978 provided that the other privileges of each House of Parliament, its committees and its members are to be those which they had on the date of its commencement (i.e., 20 June, 1979), until defined by Parliament.
- This means that the position with regard to other privileges remains. In other words, the amendment has made only verbal changes by dropping a direct reference to the British House of Commons, without making any change in the implication of the provision.
- In 2008, the Committee of Privileges of Lok Sabha felt that there was no need for codification. It noted that the House had recommended punishment only five times since the first Lok Sabha, and that allegations of misuse of its powers were due to a lack of understanding of its procedures.

TH: [Making the house rules;](#)

Indian Polity by M Laxmikanth;

<p>3.</p>	<p>Consider the following statements with reference to the Finance Act, 2017, the passage of which by the Parliament, was a part of enactment of the budget:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It amended the provisions under different laws to allow the executive to determine the qualifications, tenure, conditions of service and removal of members of some tribunals 2. It merged several tribunals <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 1 only b) 2 only c) Both 1 and 2 d) Neither 1 nor 2 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The controversy over the Finance Bill, 2017, being passed as a money bill may have died down, but questions about the legality of the merger of several tribunals remain alive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill included amendments to legislation on multiple subjects, in an attempt to rationalise the functioning of multiple tribunals. • As a result, what used to be 26 tribunals are now down to 19. For instance, the Telecom Dispute Appellate Tribunal will also do the work of the Cyber Law Appellate Tribunal and the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority Appellate Tribunal. • The bill (now act) also allows the central government to specify the appointments, tenure, removal, and reappointment of chairpersons and members of Tribunals through Rules (and not laws, as is the current method). <p>IE: How Finance Bill amendments affect tribunals; TH: Cutting tribunals to size;</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Recent cyberattacks, the 'NotPetya' and 'WannaCry' ransomware, are both closely related to which one of the following software vulnerabilities?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Stuxnet b) Shamoon c) RedOctober d) EternalBlue 	<p>Solution: d.</p> <p>At the centre of these ransomware outbreaks is a Microsoft Windows security vulnerability called EternalBlue. All other options given in the question refer to cyberattacks that have taken place in the past.</p> <p>Wired: EternalBlue; Improvisation: TH: Held to ransomware;</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>'Statistics Day' seeks to create public awareness about the importance of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation. This special day celebrated every year at the national level is a recognition of the notable contributions made by</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis b) Debabrata Roy c) TCA Anant d) Raghu Raj Bahadur 	<p>Solution: a.</p> <p>In recognition of the notable contributions made by Late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics, statistical system and economic planning, Government of India in 2007, designated 29th June the birth anniversary of Prof. Mahalanobis as the "Statistics Day" in the category of Special Days to be celebrated every year at the National level. TCA Anant is the present Chief Statistician of India.</p> <p>PIB: 11th Statistics day celebrated;</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>The latest amendments in the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, to come into force with effect from 1st January, 2018 will ensure that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No person shall declare different MRPs on an identical pre-packaged commodity 2. Consumers can easily contact the manufacturer in case they have a 	<p>Solution: c.</p> <p>The legal metrology rules were framed to regulate pre-packaged commodities. Under these rules, manufacturers are required to comply with certain labelling requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the recent amendments, the government has forbidden companies from selling the same product at different 'maximum retail prices' (unless allowed under any law), bringing relief to

complaint regarding medical devices that have been declared as drugs

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

customers who have complained against a higher MRP being charged at airports, malls and cinemas (but not restaurants).

- The consumer affairs department has also ordered that medical devices such as stents, valves, orthopaedic implants, syringes and tools for operations will have to display MRP.
- So far, it was not mandatory for all medical devices declared as drugs to make mandatory declarations under the legal metrology rules. Even after capping of MRPs, many companies were not displaying (the MRP).
- The amendments will ensure that hospitals and chemists do not have a blank cheque to charge patients indiscriminately because the products did not carry an MRP on their label earlier.

[ET: One product, one MRP;](#)

[PIB: Amendments in the Legal Metrology \(Packaged Commodities\) Rules, 2011;](#)