

ANSWERS & EXPLANATIONS

GENERAL STUDIES (P) TEST – 4710 (2025)

Q 1.A

- **The table of precedence determines the relative ranking of different offices as recognised by the President of India.**
- At rank one, comes the office of the President, followed by the office of the Vice President.
- The Chief Justice of India comes at number 6 (along with the Speaker of the Lok Sabha).
- The Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is ranked 9A.
- The Cabinet Secretary (along with the Attorney General of India) is ranked 11
- **Extra information: First 15 dignitaries**
 - President
 - Vice-President
 - Prime Minister
 - Governors of States within their respective States
 - Former Presidents
 - Deputy Prime Minister
 - **Chief Justice of India; Speaker of Lok Sabha**
 - Cabinet Ministers of the Union, Chief Ministers of States within their respective States, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Former Prime Ministers, Leaders of Opposition in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha
 - Holders of Bharat Ratna decoration
 - Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and High Commissioners of Commonwealth countries accredited to India, Chief Ministers of States outside their respective States, Governors of States outside their respective States)
 - Judges of Supreme Court
 - **Chairperson, Union Public Service Commission; Chief Election Commissioner, Comptroller & Auditor General of India**
 - Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, Deputy Chief Ministers of States, Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, Members of the Planning Commission, Ministers of State of the Union {and any other Minister in the Ministry of Defence for defence matters}
 - Attorney General of India, **Cabinet Secretary**, Lieutenant Governors within their respective Union Territories
 - Chiefs of Staff holding the rank of full General or equivalent rank.
 - Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary accredited to India.
 - Chairmen and Speakers of State Legislatures within their respective States, Chief Justices of High Courts within their respective jurisdictions
 - Cabinet Ministers in States within their respective States, Chief Ministers of Union Territories and Chief Executive Councillor, Delhi within their respective, Union Territories, Deputy Ministers of the Union
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

Q 2.C

- **Recently, the reclassification of the Asiatic lion from 'endangered' category to 'vulnerable' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. IUCN marks a moment of pride for Gujarat, highlighting a positive shift in conservation efforts.**
- The **Asiatic Lion (Panthera leo persica)** is a magnificent and endangered subspecies of lion.
 - **Asiatic lions are currently listed as Vulnerable**, which means they face a high risk of extinction in the wild. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- **Habitat and Distribution:**
 - **Originally**, Asiatic lions were found throughout the Middle East, South Asia, and parts of Southern Europe.
 - **Today, they are restricted to a single population in the Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat, India. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - They inhabit a variety of habitats within the Gir Forest, including open grasslands, scrub forests, and thorn forests.

Q 3.B

- **Nature of Advice by Ministers:**
 - **Article 163** of the Indian Constitution provides for a council of ministers with the chief minister at the head to aid and advise the governor in the exercise of his functions, except the discretionary ones.
 - The Constitution specifies that if any question arises regarding whether a matter falls within the governor's discretion or not, the decision of the governor is final, and the validity of anything done by him cannot be questioned on the ground that he ought or ought not to have acted in his discretion.
 - Furthermore, the nature of advice tendered by ministers to the governor cannot be enquired by any court, emphasizing the intimate and confidential relationship between the governor and the ministers.
 - In 1971, the **Supreme Court** ruled that **a council of ministers must always exist to advise the governor, even after the dissolution of the state legislative assembly or the resignation of a council of ministers.** This implies that the existing ministry may continue in office until its successor assumes charge. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - In 1974, the Court further clarified that **except in areas where the governor is to act in his discretion**, the governor has to act on the aid and advice of the council of ministers in the exercise of his powers and functions. He is not required to act personally without the aid and advice of the council of ministers or against the aid and advice of the council of ministers. **There are constitutional discretionary powers to the Governor. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - Wherever the Constitution requires the satisfaction of the governor, **the satisfaction is not the personal satisfaction of the governor but the satisfaction of the council of ministers. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 4.B

- **Distribution of Executive Powers**
 - The executive power has been divided between the Centre and the states **on the lines of the distribution of legislative powers**, except in a few cases.
 - **Executive power of the Centre extends to the whole of India:**
 - ✓ to the matters on which the Parliament has exclusive power of legislation (i.e., the subjects enumerated in the Union List); and
 - ✓ **to the exercise of rights, authority and jurisdiction conferred on it by any treaty or agreement. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - **Executive power of State:**
 - ✓ The executive power of a state extends to its territory in respect of matters on which the state legislature has exclusive power of legislation i.e., the subjects enumerated in the State List.
 - **Executive power of state and Centre with respect to Concurrent List:**
 - ✓ **The executive power over matters listed in the Concurrent List primarily rests with the states**, unless explicitly conferred upon the Centre by a Constitutional provision or parliamentary legislation. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - ✓ Therefore, a law on a concurrent subject, though enacted by the Parliament, is to be executed by the states except when the Constitution or the Parliament has directed otherwise.

Q 5.A

- To ensure fiscal federalism in India, the Constitution has an elaborate scheme of levying, collecting, and appropriating taxes and duties between the Union and State governments. There are also similar enabling provisions for states and their local governments. In 1993, through an Amendment (under Articles 243H and 243X), the Constitution mandated the States to (i) authorize their respective Panchayats and Municipalities to levy, collect, and appropriate such taxes, duties, tolls, and fees as they deem fit, (ii) assign such taxes, duties, tolls and cess as they deem fit, and (c) provide for making grants-in-aid from Consolidated Fund of the State. **Economic Survey, in its study, pointed out that low levels of tax collections by the local Governments in rural areas pose a challenge in reconciling fiscal federalism and accountability. Hence statement I is correct.**

- Panchayats received 95 percent of their revenues from the devolved funds from the Centre/State while generating only 5 percent from their resources. Similarly, the aggregate revenue of all ULB(urban local bodies) in India is meager at around 0.75 percent of the country's GDP. Panchayats in states like Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka collect some direct taxes, while villages in states like Uttar Pradesh almost entirely depend on transfer funds. **This is because some State Governments have not devolved enough taxation powers to the Panchayats- permissible taxes for Panchayats include Property and Entertainment Taxes but not Land Taxes or Tolls on roads.** In some other instances, even though the rural local governments have been given powers to tax, land revenue collection remained low, between 7 to 19 percent, due to low base values applied to properties and low rates of taxes levied. **Hence statement II is correct and is a correct explanation of statement I.**

Q 6.B

- **Charged expenditure refers to the expenses that are not subject to the vote of the Parliament of India and are automatically charged upon the Consolidated Fund of India.** These expenditures are considered crucial for maintaining the independence and integrity of certain key constitutional offices and functions.
- Here are the primary expenses that are charged upon the Consolidated Fund of India:
 - **Emoluments and Salaries of High Constitutional Offices:**
 - ✓ The President and the Vice President of India
 - ✓ The Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts
 - ✓ The Comptroller and Auditor General of India
 - ✓ The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha
 - ✓ The Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha
 - **Pensions:**
 - ✓ Pensions payable to or in respect of judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts.
 - ✓ Pensions of the Members of Parliament are *not* charged upon the Consolidated Fund of India.
 - **Debt Charges:**
 - ✓ Interest payments and other charges relating to the debts of the Government of India.
 - **Election-related Expenditures:**
 - ✓ The administrative expenses of the Election Commission of India
 - **Administrative Expenses:**
 - ✓ Administrative expenses of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India
 - Any Sums Required to Satisfy Judgements, Decrees, or Awards:
 - ✓ Any sums required to satisfy judgments, decrees, or awards of any court or arbitral tribunal
 - Any other expenditure declared by the Constitution or by Parliament by law to be charged upon the Consolidated Fund of India
- **The Administrative expenditure of the Election Commission is not a 'charge' on the Consolidated Fund of India and is a voted expenditure.** The Commission has proposed to the government that its administrative expenditure should also be a 'charge' on the Consolidated Fund of India, like the expenditure of some other constitutional authorities, namely the Union Public Service Commission and the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India. This proposal did not find favor with the **Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms in 1990.**
 - However, the government subsequently accepted the Commission's proposal and **introduced a Bill titled the Election Commission (Charging of Expenses on the Consolidated Fund of India) Bill 1994, in the House of the People, but it lapsed** without being passed on the dissolution of that House in 1996. Thus, the expenditure of the Commission continues to be voted by Parliament.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 7.A

- **Constitutional and Situational Discretion of the Governor:**
 - The Constitution of India provides the governor with both constitutional and situational discretionary powers. The nature and extent of these powers are defined and elaborated upon in various articles and interpretations.
- **Constitutional Discretion:** The Constitution makes it clear that if any question arises as to whether a matter falls within the governor's discretion, the decision of the governor is final. **The validity of anything done by the governor cannot be called into question on the ground that he ought or ought not to have acted in his discretion.** The governor has constitutional discretion in the following cases:
 - **Reservation of a bill for the consideration of the President:** The governor can reserve certain bills passed by the state legislature for the President's consideration. **Hence option 1 is not correct.**

- **Recommendation for the imposition of President's Rule in the state:** The governor can recommend to the President that the governance of the state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. **Hence option 2 is not correct.**
- **While exercising his functions as the administrator of an adjoining union territory (in case of additional charge):** The governor may act in a dual capacity as the administrator of a union territory.
- **Determining the amount payable by the Government of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram to an autonomous Tribal District Council as royalty accruing from licenses for mineral exploration.**
- **Seeking information from the chief minister with regard to the administrative and legislative matters of the state:** The governor can seek information regarding the functioning of the state government.
- **Situational Discretion:** In addition to the constitutional discretion explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, the governor, like the President, also has situational discretion, which is derived from the exigencies of a prevailing political situation. The governor enjoys situational discretion in the following cases:
 - **Appointment of chief minister when no party has a clear-cut majority in the state legislative assembly or when the chief minister in office dies suddenly and there is no obvious successor:** The governor must use his judgment to appoint a chief minister in such situations.
 - **Dismissal of the council of ministers when it cannot prove the confidence of the state legislative assembly:** The governor can dismiss the council of ministers if it loses majority support in the assembly. **Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - **Dissolution of the state legislative assembly if the council of ministers has lost its majority:** The governor can dissolve the assembly and call for fresh elections if the government loses its majority.

Q 8.B

- **Appointment of Ministers**
 - The chief minister is appointed by the governor, and the other ministers are appointed by the governor on the advice of the chief minister. This means that the governor can appoint only those persons as ministers who are recommended by the chief minister.
 - There is a specific provision for the appointment of a tribal welfare minister in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha. Originally, this provision was applicable to Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha.
 - Tribal Welfare Minister
 - ✓ **Requirement:** There must be a Tribal Welfare Minister in the states of **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha. Hence options 2, 4, and 5 are correct.**
 - ✓ **Historical Context:** Originally, this provision applied to Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Odisha.
- The 94th Amendment Act of 2006 provides for the ninety-fourth amendment of the Constitution of India, officially known as The Constitution (Ninety-fourth Amendment) Act, 2006, made provisions for the appointment of a Minister in charge of tribal welfare in the states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.
 - **It excluded Bihar from the obligation due to the absence of Scheduled Areas and a small Scheduled Tribes population. Hence option 3 is not correct.**
 - Extended the provision to the newly formed states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.

Q 9.C

- In the Indian Parliament, there are several circumstances under which a seat can be vacated. These include:
 - **Resignation:** A Member of Parliament (MP) can resign by submitting a written resignation to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha (House of the People) or the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha (Council of States). The resignation must be accepted to be effective.
 - **Death:** An MP's seat is automatically vacated upon their death.
 - **Disqualification under Anti-Defection Law:** MPs can be disqualified for defection under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution if they voluntarily give up membership of their party or disobey the directives of their party on a vote. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Disqualification under Article 102:** An MP can be disqualified if they:
 - ✓ Hold any office of profit under the Government of India or a state government (other than an office declared by Parliament by law not to disqualify its holder).
 - ✓ Are of unsound mind, as declared by a competent court.
 - ✓ Are an undischarged insolvent.
 - ✓ Are not a citizen of India, or have voluntarily acquired the citizenship of a foreign State, or are under any acknowledgment of allegiance or adherence to a foreign State.
 - ✓ Are disqualified under any law made by Parliament.

- **Inactivity:** An MP's seat can be declared vacant if they are absent from all meetings of the House for a period of 60 days without permission. Hence statement 3 is not correct.
- **Election Declared Void:** If an MP's election is declared void by a competent court due to corrupt practices, irregularities, or any other valid reason as prescribed by law, the seat is vacated. Hence statement 4 is correct.
- **Expulsion:** The Parliament has the power to expel members for misconduct or breach of privilege, leading to the vacation of the seat.
- **Criminal Conviction:** An MP can be disqualified if convicted of certain offenses and sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more, as per Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. Hence statement 2 is not correct.
- **Ineligibility Due to Change in Circumstances:** If an MP becomes subject to any disqualification that did not apply at the time of their election, such as a change in citizenship status or acquiring an office of profit, their seat can be vacated.
- **Double Membership:** If an MP is elected to both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) or if an MP is elected to both Parliament and a State Legislature, they must vacate one of the seats as per Article 101 of the Constitution. The MP must resign from one of the seats within the prescribed period, failing which both seats may be declared vacant.

Q 10.B

- **The anti-defection law in India, enacted through the Tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, aims to prevent political defections and ensure stability within the elected government.** Here are the various scenarios in which the anti-defection law will apply:
- **Voluntary Resignation from Party:**
 - If an elected member voluntarily resigns from the political party on whose ticket they were elected to the legislature, they will be disqualified under the anti-defection law.
 - The first scenario involves an elected Member of Parliament (MP) from Party A who joins Party B. This situation falls under the anti-defection law because it pertains to a legislator switching parties after being elected. Hence statement 1 is correct.
- **Voting Against Party Directives:**
 - If a member votes or abstains from voting in the House contrary to any direction issued by their political party or anyone authorized to issue such directions, they will be disqualified. However, this does not apply if the member has obtained prior permission or is condoned by the party within 15 days of the voting or abstention.
 - The third scenario features a cabinet minister from Party Z who disagrees with a major policy decision and refuses to follow the party whip during a crucial vote in Parliament. This situation also falls under the anti-defection law because it involves a member of the ruling party openly defying party discipline. Hence statement 3 is correct.
 - In the second scenario, Party C forms the government with the support of independent MPs. However, during a crucial floor test, two independent MPs vote against Party C, leading to its defeat. The anti-defection law does not directly apply here because independent MPs are not bound by party whips. They can vote freely without facing disqualification. Hence statement 2 is not correct.
- **Joining Another Political Party:**
 - If an independent member joins a political party after the election, they will be disqualified.
 - If a nominated member joins any political party after the expiry of six months from the date they take their seat in the House, they will be disqualified.
- **Party Mergers:**
 - The anti-defection law does not apply in cases of mergers where two-thirds of the members of a legislative party decide to merge with another party. The member is not disqualified if they become a member of the new party or remain with the original party.
- The original provision for splits (which allowed a split if one-third of the members formed a new group) was removed by the 91st Amendment Act of 2003. Now, a split is not recognized as a defense against disqualification.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 11.D

- The Attorney General of India is one of the offices placed on a special footing by the Constitution. He is the first law officer of the Government of India. He is constitutionally bound to give advice on such legal matters or to perform such other duties of a legal character referred to or assigned to him by the President.
- **The President appoints the Attorney General of India and holds office at the pleasure of the President.** So, the appointment of the Attorney General need not to be confirmed by the Parliament of India. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- He must have the same qualifications as are required to be a judge of the Supreme Court. He shall receive such remuneration as the President may determine.
- He is neither a whole-time counsel for the government nor a government servant. He is not barred from private practice except that he cannot advise or hold briefs against the Government of India.
- **Unlike England, the Attorney-General of India is not a member of the Cabinet.** But at the same time, he has the right to speak in the House of Parliament or any committee of it, but without the right to vote. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**

Q 12.C

- **A motion is a formal proposal made by a member of a legislative body seeking to obtain the opinion or decision of the House on a specific matter.**
- **Resolutions are formal expressions of the opinion or intention of the parliamentary body. They serve to address specific issues, express views, or make recommendations on matters of public concern. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - It is a type of motion that is used to express the collective opinion or decision of the House on a specific matter.
 - All resolutions come in the category of substantive motions, that is to say, every resolution is a particular type of motion. All motions need not necessarily be substantive. Further, all motions are not necessarily put to vote of the House, whereas all the resolutions are required to be voted upon. **All resolutions are motions, but not all motions are resolutions. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Other differences:**
 - Motions are broader and can seek actions, decisions, or expressions of opinion; resolutions typically express a collective decision or opinion.
 - Motions often have more complex procedures and implications; resolutions are generally simpler and declaratory.
 - Motions can lead to various outcomes, including legislative action or government accountability; resolutions primarily convey opinions or recommendations without immediate binding effects.

Q 13.B

- **Context: Pandavula Gutta and Ramgarh Crater** were recognised as Geo-Heritage Sites.
- **About Pandavula Gutta**
 - Pandavula Gutta, a geological marvel in the Deccan plateau older than the Himalayas, has been recognised as the first geo-heritage site in Telangana's Jayashankar Bhupalpally district by the Geological Survey of India.
 - It houses Palaeolithic Paintings which depict:
 - ✓ Wildlife (Bison, Antelope, Tiger, and Leopard etc.),
 - ✓ Geometric shapes (swastika symbol, circles and squares) and
 - ✓ Weapons (bows, arrows, swords and lancers etc.)
- **About Geo-Heritage Sites**
- Geo-heritage sites are sites of rare and unique geological, geomorphological, paleontological, and stratigraphic significance.
 - These include caves, natural rock sculptures, sediments, rocks, minerals, meteorites or fossils.
 - The Geological Survey of India (GSI) recognizes, declares and maintains the Geo-heritage sites in India.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 14.A

- **Governor's Power to Make Ordinances: Limitations and Procedures**
 - The power vested in the Governor of a state to promulgate ordinances is an important executive function, akin to the President's power at the national level. However, this power is not absolute and is subject to certain constitutional limitations and procedural requirements.

- **Constitutional Constraints on Governor's Ordinance Making Power**
 - According to the Constitution of India, the Governor cannot make an ordinance without the instructions from the President in the following cases:
 - ✓ **Requirement of Previous Sanction:** If a bill containing the same provisions as the proposed ordinance would have required the previous sanction of the President for its introduction, the Governor cannot promulgate such an ordinance without the President's instructions. This ensures that ordinances do not bypass the need for presidential scrutiny where such scrutiny would otherwise be required. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - ✓ **Need for Presidential Reservation:** Similarly, if the Governor deems it necessary to reserve a bill containing the same provisions for the consideration of the President, then an ordinance with similar provisions cannot be promulgated without the President's instructions. This ensures consistency in the process of lawmaking and executive action between the state and the Union.
 - ✓ **Validity of State Legislation:** If an act of the state legislature containing the same provisions as the proposed ordinance would have been invalid without receiving the President's assent, then the Governor cannot promulgate such an ordinance without the President's instructions. This upholds the hierarchical relationship between central laws and state legislation, preventing conflicts and ensuring legal harmony.

Q 15.A

- **Budget, as outlined in Article 112 of the Constitution of India**, is the government's annual financial statement detailing projected revenues and expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year, presented and approved by Parliament.
- The passage of the budget in India involves several stages, each critical for the approval and implementation of the financial plan for the government. The process ensures thorough scrutiny and approval by the Parliament. Here are the main stages in the passage of the budget:
 - **Presentation of the Budget**
 - ✓ **Union Budget Presentation:** The Finance Minister presents the Union Budget in the Lok Sabha, typically on the 1st of February each year. The budget includes the government's revenue and expenditure proposals for the upcoming financial year.
 - ✓ **Budget Speech:** The Finance Minister delivers a speech outlining the key highlights and objectives of the budget.
 - **General Discussion**
 - ✓ **Initial Discussion:** After the budget is presented, a general discussion takes place in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Members discuss the budget's overall principles and policies without getting into the specifics of individual allocations.
 - ✓ **Duration:** This stage usually lasts for 3-4 days.
 - **Scrutiny by Departmental Standing Committees**
 - ✓ **Detailed Examination:** The budget proposals are referred to various departmental standing committees, each dealing with a specific ministry or department.
 - ✓ **Committee Reports:** These committees examine the budget in detail and submit their reports and recommendations to the Parliament.
 - **Demand for Grants**
 - ✓ **Detailed Consideration:** The Lok Sabha considers the demands for grants, which are detailed requests for funds by each ministry or department.
 - ✓ **Voting:** Members of the Lok Sabha discuss and vote on each demand for grants. The Rajya Sabha can discuss but not vote on these demands.
 - ✓ **Guillotine:** If the demands for grants are not completed by the deadline, the remaining demands are put to vote without discussion (a process known as guillotine).
 - **Appropriation Bill**
 - ✓ **Authorization of Expenditure:** After the demands for grants are voted, the government introduces the Appropriation Bill to authorize the withdrawal of funds from the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the expenditures.
 - ✓ **Passage:** The bill is discussed and must be passed by the Lok Sabha. The Rajya Sabha can recommend amendments, but the Lok Sabha may accept or reject these recommendations.
 - **Finance Bill**
 - ✓ **Taxation Measures:** The Finance Bill contains the government's proposals for new taxes, modifications of existing tax rates, and other fiscal measures.
 - ✓ **Debate and Passage:** The Finance Bill is debated and must be passed by both houses of Parliament. Since it is a Money Bill, the Rajya Sabha can only make recommendations, which the Lok Sabha may accept or reject.

- **Presidential Assent**
 - ✓ Final Approval: Once the Appropriation Bill and the Finance Bill are passed by the Parliament, they are sent to the President for assent. Upon receiving the President's assent, they become laws, allowing the government to withdraw funds and implement the budget proposals.
- **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**

Q 16.D

- **Recent Context:** NASA has announced that the Dragonfly mission to Saturn's massive moon Titan will launch in 2028.
- It will reach Titan in 2034. Its goal is to explore the chemistry and habitability of multiple surface sites covering a large area.
- It will help in investigating Titan's habitability. The spacecraft is an eight-bladed drone-like craft called a quadcopter that will make short flights around the surface.
- Titan's atmosphere is similar to Earth's when life arose here 3.5 billion years ago. By studying chemicals in Titan's atmosphere and on the surface, Dragonfly will help us understand possible starting ingredients for life on Earth and elsewhere.
- Dragonfly builds on the legacy of NASA and the European Space Agency's legendary Cassini-Huygens mission. Cassini orbited Saturn and buzzed the ringed planet's moons from 2004 to 2017, while Huygens landed on Titan in 2005. Together, the spacecraft mapped the moon, studied the composition of Titan's atmosphere, and discovered evidence of a water ocean beneath the surface.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 17.C

- India has a **bicameral** system of legislature. While the Parliament has two Houses, it is optional for the states.
- At the state level, the **equivalent of the Lok Sabha is the Vidhan Sabha or Legislative Assembly** and that of the **Rajya Sabha is the Vidhan Parishad or Legislative Council**.
- States, **if they choose**, can have a **Legislative Council or Vidhan Parishad as the upper house in addition to the Legislative Assembly**.
- At present, **only six states of our country** have a **legislative council**. They are: **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh**.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 18.C

- **MethaneSAT, a satellite launched in March 2024, is now orbiting Earth to provide high-resolution data on global methane emissions.** MethaneSAT is a **dedicated satellite mission** designed to **detect and measure methane emissions** from various sources around the world
- **Methane**
 - Methane (CH₄) is a potent **greenhouse gas** – 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period.
 - It contributes significantly to **climate change**.
- **MethaneSAT was launched aboard a SpaceX Falcon9 rocket from California. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - **SpaceX** is a private American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation services company founded in 2002 by Elon Musk.
- **MethaneSAT uses a spectrometer to measure the amount of methane gas in the atmosphere. It scans the Earth's surface, collecting data on methane concentrations. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **The data collected by MethaneSAT can be used to:**
 - **Identify Major Methane Emitters:** By pinpointing specific regions with high methane emissions, MethaneSAT helps identify responsible industries and activities.
 - **Track Emission Trends:** The satellite can monitor changes in methane emissions over time, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of mitigation efforts.
 - **Verify Emissions Reports:** MethaneSAT can independently verify the accuracy of emissions reported by industries and countries.
 - **Develop Mitigation Strategies:** The data can be used to develop targeted strategies to reduce methane releases.
- **One of the key features of MethaneSAT is its open data policy. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
 - Data generated from the mission will be made public for free in near real-time.
 - This means anyone can access and use the data to conduct research, develop applications, or support decision-making processes.

Q 19.D

- **Conditions for the Governor's Office**
 - The Constitution of India specifies several conditions for the office of the Governor to ensure the integrity and independence of the position. Below is a detailed explanation of these conditions and the associated privileges and immunities of the Governor:
 - ✓ **Non-Membership of Legislatures:** The Governor should not be a member of either House of Parliament or a House of the state legislature. If any such person is appointed as Governor, they are deemed to have vacated their seat in that House on the date they assume office as Governor.
 - ✓ **No other office of Profit:** The Governor should not hold any other office of profit
 - ✓ **Official Residence:** The Governor is entitled to the use of their official residence (the Raj Bhavan) without payment of rent.
 - ✓ **Emoluments, Allowances, and Privileges:** The Governor is entitled to emoluments, allowances, and privileges as determined by Parliament. Hence statement II is correct.
 - ✓ **Shared Emoluments for Multiple States:** When the same person is appointed as the Governor of two or more states, the emoluments and allowances payable to them are shared by the states in such proportion as determined by the President. This was as per the 7th Constitutional Amendment which was enacted in 1956. Hence statement I is not correct.
 - ✓ **Non-Diminishable Emoluments:** The Governor's emoluments and allowances cannot be diminished during their term of office.

Q 20.A

- **The Vice-President of India has two primary functions:**
 - **Ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha**
 - ✓ In this role, the Vice-President's powers and functions are similar to those of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. This responsibility is comparable to the role of the American Vice-President, who acts as the Chairman of the Senate—the Upper House of the American legislature. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Acting President of India**
 - ✓ The Vice-President assumes the role of the President under specific circumstances:
 - **Vacancy in the Office of the President:** The Vice-President acts as President when the office becomes vacant due to resignation, removal, death, or any other reason. In such a situation, the Vice-President can act as President for a maximum period of six months, within which a new President must be elected.
 - **Temporary Absence of the President:** When the sitting President is unable to discharge his functions due to absence, illness, or any other cause, the Vice-President discharges these functions until the President resumes office.
 - ✓ The Vice-President can act as President for a maximum period of six months only when there is a vacancy in the office of the President due to resignation, removal, death, or otherwise. **This does not apply under all circumstances, such as when the President is temporarily unable to discharge his functions due to illness or absence. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 21.C

- **The District Planning Committee (DPC) is a constitutional body established to facilitate planning at the district level in India. The establishment and functioning of the DPC are guided by Article 243ZD of the Indian Constitution, introduced through the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Key aspects of the DPC:**
 - **Composition of DPC:** The legislature of a state may, by law make provision with respect to the composition of DPC. **Provided that:**
 - ✓ Not less than four-fifths of the total number of members of the DPC are elected by, and from amongst, the elected members of the Panchayat at the district level and the Municipalities in the district.
 - ✓ The representation in the DPC is proportionate to the population of rural and urban areas in the district.
 - **Functions of DPC:**
 - ✓ **The primary function of the DPC is to consolidate the plans prepared by the Panchayats and Municipalities in the district. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ **The DPC prepares a draft development plan for the district as a whole, considering matters of common interest between the Panchayats and Municipalities, including spatial planning, sharing of water and other physical and natural resources, the integrated development of infrastructure, and environmental conservation. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

- **Chairperson of DPC:**
 - ✓ **The manner of election or appointment of the Chairperson of the DPC is determined by state legislation.** There is no uniform rule across states, and it is not necessarily the case that the Chairperson is elected by the elected members of the district. Hence, statement 4 is not correct.
- **Submission of Plans:** The draft development plan prepared by the DPC is forwarded to the state government for approval and integration into the overall state development plan.

Q 22.D

- **Reservation of Seats for SC and ST Candidates:**
- **Article 332:** Reservation of seats for **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** in the Legislative Assemblies of the State.
 - Seats **shall be reserved** for the **Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes**, except the **Scheduled Tribes in the autonomous districts of Assam**, in the Legislative Assembly of every State.
 - The number of **seats reserved** for the **Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes** in the Legislative Assembly of any State under clause (1) **shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats in the Assembly** as the population of the Scheduled Castes in the State or of the Scheduled Tribes in the State or part of the State, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are so **reserved bears to the total population of the State.** Hence **Statement-II is correct.**
 - He must be **a member of a scheduled caste or scheduled tribe if he wants to contest a seat reserved for them.** However, a **member of scheduled castes or scheduled tribes can also contest a seat not reserved for them.** Hence **Statement-I is not correct.**

Q 23.C

- **Recent context:** UNESCO's addition of 18 new Global Geoparks expands the global list to 213 sites across 48 countries.
- The **Global Geoparks Network (GGN)** is a **UNESCO program** that recognizes and promotes areas with outstanding geological heritage. Hence **statement 1 is correct.**
- **Purpose:**
 - To promote the conservation of geological heritage
 - To enhance education and awareness about geosciences
 - To support sustainable economic development through geotourism and other initiatives
- **Benefits of being a UNESCO Global Geopark:**
 - **International recognition and visibility:** This boosts tourism and attracts investment.
 - **Access to technical assistance and resources:** UNESCO provides support for geoparks' development initiatives.
 - **Collaboration opportunities:** Geoparks can connect with other members of the GGN, sharing knowledge and best practices.
 - **Strengthened conservation efforts:** The recognition motivates geoparks to protect their geological heritage.
- India **does not currently** have any geoparks listed in the **UNESCO Global Geoparks Network (GGN).** Hence **statement 2 is correct.**

Q 24.D

- **ISRO is building a second rocket launchport in Tamil Nadu's Kulasekarapattinam. The foundation stone for the facility was laid 2024 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**
- It is developed as India's **second** satellite launch facility, after the established Sriharikota spaceport. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**
 - **Sriharikota:** Located on an island off the coast of Andhra Pradesh, it's ISRO's primary launch center.
 - **Kulasekarapattinam:** Situated on the southeastern coast of Tamil Nadu, specifically in the Tuticorin district. Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
- **Need for a Second Spaceport:**
 - **Increased Launch Demand:** ISRO is experiencing a surge in satellite launches, both domestic and international. Sriharikota is reaching its capacity limit, leading to the need for another facility.
 - **Strategic Advantages:** Kulasekarapattinam offers strategic advantages:
 - **Equatorial Location:** Its closer proximity to the equator allows for more efficient launches, especially for geostationary satellites. Hence, **statement 3 is correct.**
 - **Favorable Weather:** The region enjoys relatively calm weather conditions, conducive for launches.

- **Development Status:**
 - **Still Under Development:** The Kulasekarapattinam Spaceport is in the early stages of development. ISRO is currently conducting feasibility studies and environmental assessments.
 - **Expected Launch Pad:** The spaceport is expected to feature a dedicated launch pad for small-satellite launches, potentially using a new, smaller launch vehicle.
- **Kulasekarapattinam Spaceport: Geographical Advantages**
 - The location is close to the equator, offering a significant advantage in terms of **launch efficiency and fuel savings**.
 - The region has **relatively low air traffic**, which minimizes the risk of airspace conflicts and potential hazards during launches.
 - The area experiences **stable weather conditions** with minimal cloud cover, providing a favorable environment for launches.
 - The spaceport will be located on the coast, offering **direct access to the Bay of Bengal**. This allows for safe and controlled splashdown of spent rocket stages and recovery of valuable components.

Q 25.A

- **Constitutional Qualifications for the Appointment of a Governor**
 - The Constitution of India specifies only two qualifications for the appointment of a person as a Governor. These qualifications ensure that the individual holding the office meets certain basic criteria necessary for the role. Additionally, there are certain conventions that have developed over the years, although they are not mandated by the Constitution.
- **Constitutional Qualifications**
 - **Citizenship:** The person must be a citizen of India. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Age:** The person must have completed the age of 35 years.
- **Conventions (Not Constitutional Requirements)**
 - In addition to the constitutional qualifications, two conventions have developed over the years regarding the appointment of a Governor:
 - ✓ **An outsider to the State:**
 - Traditionally, the Governor should be an outsider, meaning they should not belong to the state where they are appointed. This convention aims to ensure that the Governor remains free from local politics and can function impartially. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - ✓ **Consultation with the Chief Minister:**
 - It is customary for the President to consult the Chief Minister of the state concerned before appointing the Governor. This practice helps ensure the smooth functioning of the constitutional machinery in the state. However, both of these conventions have been violated in some cases.
 - There is no such qualification for a Governor as there is for a candidate contesting for the office of the President (he/she should be eligible to be a member of Lok Sabha). **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 26.A

- **Cabinet Committees:**
 - The cabinet works through various committees called cabinet committees. They are of two types—standing and ad hoc. The former are of a permanent nature while the latter are of a temporary nature.
 - **They are set up by the chief minister** according to the exigencies of the time and requirements of the situation. Hence, their number, nomenclature, and composition vary from time to time. **Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
 - They not only sort out issues and formulate proposals for the consideration of the cabinet but also take decisions. However, the cabinet can review their decisions.

Q 27.B

- Article 355 of the Indian Constitution provided a duty on the Union to ensure that the government of every state is carried on in accordance with the provision of the Constitution. So, the President, under Article 356, is empowered to make a proclamation when he is satisfied that the government of a state cannot be carried on in accordance with the provision of the Constitution.
- By such proclamation, the President may assume to himself all or any of the functions of the executive of the State and declare that the power of the legislature of the State shall be exercisable by or under the authority of Parliament. Further Article 357(2) makes the Parliament competent to confer on the President the power of the legislature of the state to make laws. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- As per Article 356, the duration of such proclamations shall ordinarily be for two months. The two-month duration of such proclamation can be extended by resolutions passed by both Houses of Parliament for a period of six months at a time, subjected to a maximum duration of three years. The 44th Amendment Act of 1978 added one more caveat that if the duration is short enough to be extended beyond one year, the two other conditions have to be satisfied:
 - if a proclamation of national emergency is in operation
 - If the Election Commission of India certifies that there are difficulties in holding a general election to the Legislative Assembly of the state concerned. **Hence statement 2 is not correct**
- In S. R. Bommai's case, it has been pronounced that till the proclamation is approved by both Houses of Parliament, it is not permissible for the President to take any irreversible action under Article 356. Hence, the Legislative Assembly of a State cannot be dissolved before the proclamation is approved by both Houses of Parliament.
- Further, if the court holds the proclamation to be invalid, then in spite of the fact that it has been approved by the parliament, the court has the power to restore the dissolved ministry and assembly. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 28.A

- **A day in the Indian Parliament includes Question Hour, where members query the government, followed by Zero Hour for urgent matters, and legislative agenda sessions** for debating and passing bills, fostering transparency, accountability, and legislative efficacy.
- **Question Hour:**
 - Question Hour is **the first hour of every parliamentary sitting session**. It takes place from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM when the Parliament is in session. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - It is dedicated to questions that Members of Parliament (MPs) raise about any aspect of administrative activity. This period allows MPs to seek information on various governmental policies and decisions.
 - Question Hour is an essential tool for ensuring the accountability of the executive to the legislature. Ministers are required to be present and provide accurate and detailed answers.
- **Zero Hour:**
 - **Zero Hour begins immediately after Question Hour and lasts until the agenda for the day is taken up.** Typically, it lasts from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM, though its duration can vary.
 - It provides an opportunity for MPs to raise issues of urgent public importance without prior notice. This is not officially recognized in the parliamentary rules but has evolved through practice.
 - **Unlike Question Hour, MPs do not need to give prior notice to raise issues during Zero Hour. This allows for immediate discussion on pressing matters. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - MPs can bring up various topics, including grievances of the public, issues requiring urgent government intervention, and other significant matters.
 - Each MP usually gets a short period, often around 2-3 minutes, to raise their issue. The total duration of Zero Hour depends on the discretion of the Speaker and the business of the House.
 - Zero Hour ensures that urgent matters can be brought to the government's attention without delay, enabling prompt responses and action.
- **Key Differences:**
 - **Formal Recognition: Question Hour is formally recognized and structured within the parliamentary rules, whereas Zero Hour is an informal convention.**
 - **Notification Requirement: Questions for Question Hour require prior notice and are scheduled, whereas issues raised during Zero Hour do not require prior notice.**

Q 29.A

- Article 164 (1) of the Indian Constitution says that the Chief Minister shall be appointed by the Governor and the other Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister, and the Ministers shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Article 156 (1) of the Indian Constituion says that the Governor shall hold office during the pleasure of the President. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The Constitution of India says that even after the expiration of his term the governor can hold the office if no successor has been chosen. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 30.A

- **The recent Bitcoin halving took place in April 2024.**
- Bitcoin is a **decentralized digital currency** operating on a blockchain network.
- **Key Features of Bitcoin:**
- **Decentralized**
 - No central authority controls Bitcoin. It's managed by a global network of computers called "nodes."
 - This means there's no bank or government controlling it.
- **Digital**
 - Bitcoin exists only as digital data, not physical coins. Transactions are recorded on the blockchain.
- **Currency**
 - Bitcoin can be used as a medium of exchange for goods and services, just like traditional currencies.
- **The Bitcoin Halving is a programmed event in the Bitcoin protocol that reduces the block reward paid to miners by 50%. This happens roughly every four years. Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.**
- **Working of bitcoin halving:**
 - **Block Rewards:** When a Bitcoin miner successfully verifies and adds a block of transactions to the blockchain, they are rewarded with a certain amount of Bitcoin.
 - **Halving:** The initial block reward was 50 Bitcoin. Every 210,000 blocks mined (approximately every four years), this reward is halved. So, after the first halving, the reward became 25 Bitcoin.
- **Reason for bitcoin halving:**
 - **Limited Supply:** Bitcoin is designed to be a scarce asset. The halving mechanism ensures that the total supply of Bitcoin will never exceed 21 million. This scarcity is a key factor driving Bitcoin's value.
 - **Maintaining Inflation Control:** The halving helps control Bitcoin's inflation rate. As the block reward decreases, the rate at which new Bitcoin enters circulation slows down.

Q 31.A

- **Context:** Recently, the Ministry of Heavy Industries announced the Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024.
- **Electric Mobility Promotion Scheme 2024 (EMPS 2024)** scheme is being introduced by the **Ministry of Heavy Industries**, Government of India with the approval of the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance to further accelerate the adoption of EVs in the country. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- This is a fund-limited scheme with a total outlay of Rs. 500 crores for the period of 4 months, w.e.f. 1st April 2024 till 31st July 2024, for faster adoption of **electric two-wheeler (e-2W) and three-wheeler (e-3W)** to provide further impetus to the green mobility and development of electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing eco-system in the country. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- EMPS 2024 is **fund-limited, with a restricted number of vehicles and a term-limited Scheme**, i.e., the subsidies for demand incentive are eligible for e-2w and e-3w sold and registered until the funds are available or the number of vehicles supported reaches the maximum number defined category-wise or until July 31, 2024, whichever comes first. The EVs eligible for incentivisation under EMPS 2024 scheme must be manufactured and registered within the validity period of EMPS -2024 certificate.

Q 32.B

- The Articles 358 and 359 of the Indian Constitution lay down the effect of the proclamation of emergency upon the fundamental rights.
- Article 358 states that the state would be free from the limitations imposed by Article 19, which means that the rights under Article 19 would not apply against the state during a state of emergency. In contrast, **Article 359 limits the right to move the court for the enforcement of all other fundamental rights except for the rights under Articles 20 and 21. This means that except for the rights under Article 19, the state is still bound by fundamental rights even during a state of emergency. Hence statement 1 is not correct**
- **According to Article 358** of the Indian Constitution, with the commencement of proclamations of emergency on the ground of war or external aggression, **the operation of fundamental rights under Article 19 is automatically suspended in whole the country.** On the other hand, Article 359 does not automatically suspend any fundamental right. It only empowers the President to suspend the enforcement of the specified fundamental rights. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **During a national emergency under Article 352, both the legislative and executive branches of the government have expanded power and can interfere with most of the fundamental rights except those guaranteed by Articles 20 and 21.** This means that not only laws made by the parliament but also the executive action taken during the emergency period cannot be challenged on the grounds of contravention of fundamental rights. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 33.A

- **All the members of a municipality shall be elected directly by the people of the municipal area.** For this purpose, each municipal area shall be divided into territorial constituencies to be known as wards. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The 74th Amendment Act provides for the **reservation of seats for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in every municipality in the proportion of their population to the total population in the municipal area.** Further, it provides for the reservation of not less than one-third of the total number of seats for women (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the SCs and the STs). The state legislature may provide for the manner of reservation of offices of chairpersons in the municipalities for SCs, STs, and women. It may also make any provision for the reservation of seats in any municipality or offices of chairpersons in municipalities in favour of backward classes. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls and the conduct of all elections to the municipalities are vested in the **state election commission.** **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 34.B

- **Parastatals are institutions/organizations** wholly or partially owned and managed by the government. They may be formed under specific State enactments or the Societies Registration Act. These bodies are generally formed to deliver particular services and implement specific schemes or programs sponsored by the State/Union Government/international donor agencies.
- Even though the 74th constitution amendment directed state governments to devolve 18 functions to the urban local government—including urban planning, regulation of land use, and water supply, many of these functions are still being performed by state government-controlled parastatal agencies.
- However, in most Indian cities including Bengaluru, a majority of these functions are carried out by parastatals. For example, in Bengaluru, the Bengaluru Development Authority is responsible for land regulation and the Karnataka Slum Clearance Board is responsible for slum rehabilitation. **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 35.A

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is India's space agency. The organization is involved in science, engineering, and technology to harvest the benefits of outer space for India and mankind. ISRO is a major constituent of the Department of Space (DOS), Government of India. DOS is directly overseen by the Prime Minister of India.** The department executes the Indian Space Programme primarily through various Centres or units within ISRO. ISRO was previously the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR), set up by the Government of India in 1962, as envisioned by Dr. VikramA Sarabhai. **ISRO was formed on August 15, 1969, and superseded INCOSPAR with an expanded role to harness space technology. DOS was set up and ISRO was brought under DOS in 1972. Hence, pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **The Archaeological Survey of India is the premier organization for archaeological research and protection of cultural heritage in India. Its task includes protection, conservation, discovery and maintenance of our most cherished tangible and intangible heritage. It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham during the British Raj who also became its first Director-General.**
- **The Archaeological Survey of India is an attached office of the Ministry of Culture.** Under the provisions of the AMASR Act of 1958, the ASI administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites, and remains of national importance. **Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
- **The India Meteorological Department (IMD) established in 1875, is an agency of the Ministry of Earth Sciences of the Government of India.** It is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting, and seismology. IMD is headquartered in Delhi and operates hundreds of observation stations across India and Antarctica. Regional offices are at Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata, Nagpur, Guwahati, and New Delhi. **Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.**
- **IMD is also one of the six Regional Specialised Meteorological Centres of the World Meteorological Organisation.** It has the responsibility for forecasting, naming and distribution of warnings for tropical cyclones in the Northern Indian Ocean region, including the Malacca Straits, the Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf.

Q 36.B

- To limit the misuse of the extraordinary power given under Article 352 of the Indian Constitution the Janata government enacted the 44th Constitutional Amendment Act of 1978, which brought significant changes to the provision regarding the national emergency under the Indian Constitution. Some of the changes brought by the 44th Constitutional Amendment Act are:
 - The words internal disturbance under Article 352 were substituted by the new term armed rebellion.
 - **A written communication of the decision by the Union Cabinet was made an essential precondition for the issue of a proclamation by the President.** It was the written communication of the Union Cabinet and not of the Council of Ministers. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - The amendment confined the suspension of Article 19 only to situations of war or external aggression, not to armed rebellion.
 - The amendment ensured that under no circumstances could the enforcement of rights under Articles 20 and 21 be denied even during an emergency.
 - The 38th Amendment Act of 1975 made the declaration of a national emergency immune from judicial review, but this provision was subsequently deleted by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978.
 - The amendment made it possible for the President to modify the proclamation without revoking subject to the approval of Parliament. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - If approved by both the Houses of Parliament, the emergency continues for 6 months and can be extended to an indefinite period, with an approval of Parliament for every 6 months. This provision for periodical Parliament approval was also added by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - The 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 enabled the President to proclaim a national emergency for the entire country or only a part of it. **Hence statement 4 is not correct.**
 - The 38th Amendment Act of 1975 added that the President can also issue different proclamations on grounds of war, external aggression, armed rebellion, or imminent danger thereof, whether or not there is a proclamation already issued by him/her and such proclamation is in operation.

Q 37.B

- **Context:** The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has entered into a record 125 Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs) in FY 2023-24 with Indian taxpayers.
- An Advance Pricing Agreement (APAs) is an agreement between a taxpayer and tax authority determining the transfer pricing methodology for pricing the taxpayer's international transactions for future years. The methodology is to be applied for a certain period of time based on the fulfilment of certain terms and conditions (called critical assumptions).
- Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) provisions were introduced in the Income-tax Act, 1961 (Act) w.e.f. 1 July 2012. The rules in respect of the APA scheme have been notified by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) by way of insertion of Rule 10F to Rule 10T and Rule 44GA in the Income-tax Rules, 1962 (Rules).
- An APA can be unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral.
 - Unilateral APA: an APA that involves only the taxpayer and the tax authority of the country where the taxpayer is located.
 - Bilateral APA (BAPA): an APA that involves the taxpayer, the associated enterprise (AE) of the taxpayer in the foreign country, the tax authority of the country where the taxpayer is located, and the foreign tax authority.
 - Multilateral APA (MAPA): an APA that involves the taxpayer, two or more AEs of the taxpayer in different foreign countries, the tax authority of the country where the taxpayer is located, and the tax authorities of AEs.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 38.C

- After 1987, a thorough review of the functioning of local government institutions was initiated. In 1989 the **P.K.Thungon Committee recommended constitutional recognition for the local government bodies**. A constitutional amendment to provide for periodic elections to local government institutions, and enlistment of appropriate functions to them, along with funds, was recommended.
- The Committee on Policy and Programmes was constituted in 1988 by the Congress party under the chairmanship of **V.N. Gadgil**. **This committee was asked to consider the question of "how best Panchayati Raj institutions could be made effective"**. In this context, the committee made the following recommendations :
 - A constitutional status should be bestowed on the Panchayati Raj institutions.
 - A three-tier system of Panchayati Raj with panchayats at the village, block, and district levels.

- The term of Panchayati Raj institutions should be fixed at five years.
- The members of the Panchayats at all three levels should be directly elected.
- Reservation for SCs, STs, and women.
- The above recommendations of the Gadgil Committee became the basis for drafting an amendment bill aimed at conferring constitutional status and protection to the Panchayati Raj institutions.
- **Mani Shankar Aiyar-led Expert Committee on “Leveraging Panchayat Raj Institutions for effective delivery of public goods and services,”** suggested that the Gram Sabha should be empowered to monitor and make decisions on all the social sector schemes.
- Government of India had set up a Committee in January 2000 under the Chairmanship of Shri **K.Padmanabhaiah**, former Union Home Secretary, to suggest the **structural changes in the police** to meet the challenges in the new millennium.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct option.**

Q 39.D

- **Legislative Powers of the President of India**
 - The President of India plays a crucial role in the legislative process as an integral part of the Parliament. The President’s legislative powers include the following:
 - ✓ **Summoning and Proroguing Parliament**
 - The President can summon or prorogue the Parliament and dissolve the Lok Sabha. Additionally, the President can summon a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament, presided over by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.
 - ✓ **Addressing the Parliament**
 - The President addresses the Parliament at the commencement of the first session after each general election and the first session of each year. This address outlines the government's policies and plans.
 - ✓ **Sending Messages to Parliament**
 - The President can send messages to either House of Parliament concerning any pending bill or other matter. This allows the President to communicate directly with the legislative bodies.
 - ✓ **Appointment of Presiding Officers**
 - The President can appoint any member of the Lok Sabha to preside over its proceedings when the offices of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker fall vacant.
 - In the absence (but not vacancy) of both the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, a member from the panel of Chairpersons presides over the House. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - However, if both the Speaker and Deputy Speaker's offices are vacant, the President must appoint a member to preside.
 - ✓ **Nominating Members to Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha**
 - The President nominates 12 members to the Rajya Sabha from persons having special knowledge or practical experience in literature, science, art, and social service.
 - Additionally, the President can nominate two members to the Lok Sabha from the Anglo-Indian community. However, the Anglo-Indian reserved seats were discontinued by the 104th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 40.A

- **Mutual delegation of powers:**
 - Mutual delegation of powers refers to the process wherein the Centre and the states agree to entrust certain administrative or executive functions to each other, either through bilateral agreements or by legislation.
 - **Provision for Mutual Delegation:**
 - ✓ To mitigate rigidity and avoid deadlock, the Constitution provides for inter-government delegation of executive functions. **This allows the President to entrust certain executive functions of the Centre to state governments with their consent, and vice versa.**
 - **Delegation by Parliament:**
 - ✓ **The Constitution also allows for delegation of executive functions of the Centre to a state without its consent, through legislation by Parliament.** This enables Parliament to confer powers and impose duties on a state, irrespective of the state's consent. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **Delegation by state Legislature:**
 - ✓ Article 252 of the constitution provides that if the legislatures of two or more states pass resolutions requesting the Parliament to enact laws on a matter in the State List, the Parliament can make laws for those states on that subject.

- ✓ However, a single state cannot independently request the Parliament to make a law on a state subject without involving other states. Hence statement 1 is Correct.
- **Methods of Mutual Delegation:**
 - ✓ Mutual delegation of functions between the Centre and the state can take place either under an agreement or by legislation. While the Centre can utilize both methods, a state is limited to using only the agreement method. In other words, state can delegate functions only with the consent of the Centre government. Hence statement 3 is not correct.

Q 41.B

- **The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA Act) is a landmark legislation aimed at extending the provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (Part IX) to the Scheduled Areas of India.** These areas are predominantly inhabited by tribal populations and are listed under the Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The PESA Act was enacted to enable self-governance through traditional Gram Sabhas (village assemblies) for people living in the Scheduled Areas.
- **Key Features of the PESA Act:**
- **Extension of Part IX to Scheduled Areas:** The PESA Act extends the provisions of Part IX of the Indian Constitution, which deals with Panchayats, to the Scheduled Areas with certain modifications.
- **Powers and Functions of Gram Sabha:**
 - **Powers exclusive to Gram Sabha-** Every village shall have its own Gram Sabha. A village shall consist of one or more habitations or hamlets comprising a community and managing its affairs in accordance with traditions and customs. [Sections 4(b) and 4(c) of PESA Act] (In Part IX, all electors of Village Panchayat constitute a Gram Sabha)
 - **Gram Sabha is "competent" to safeguard and preserve the** (a) traditions and customs of the people, and their cultural identity, (b) community resources, and (c) customary mode of dispute resolution. [Section 4(d) of PESA Act]
 - **Gram Sabha has mandatory executive functions to** (a) approve plans, programs, and projects for social and economic development. [Section 4(e)(i) of PESA Act] (b) identifies persons as beneficiaries of poverty alleviation and other programs. [Section 4(e)(ii) of PESA Act] (c) issue a certificate of the utilization of funds by the Panchayat for the plans; programs and projects referred to in section 4(e) of the PESA Act. [Section 4(f) of PESA Act]
 - **Powers exclusive to Gram Sabha/Panchayat at the appropriate level-**
 - ✓ **Right to mandatory consultation in land acquisition, resettlement, and rehabilitation of displaced persons.** [Section 4(i) of PESA Act]. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
 - ✓ Panchayat at an appropriate level is entrusted with planning and management of minor water bodies. [Section 4(j) of PESA Act]
 - ✓ Mandatory recommendations by Gram Sabha or Panchayat at the appropriate level before granting of prospecting licenses, mining leases, and concessions for minor minerals. [Sections 4(k) and 4(l) of PESA Act]
 - **Powers endowed to Gram Sabha and Panchayat at the appropriate level to:**
 - ✓ regulate the sale/consumption of intoxicants. [Section 4(m)(i) of PESA Act]
 - ✓ **ownership of minor forest produce.** [Section 4(m)(ii) of PESA Act]. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
 - ✓ prevent land alienation and restore alienated land. [Section 4(m)(iii) of PESA Act]
 - ✓ manage village markets. [Section 4(m)(iv) of PESA Act]
 - ✓ control over money lending to STs. [Section 4(m)(v) of PESA Act]
 - ✓ control over institutions and functionaries in the social sector, local plans including Tribal sub plans and resources [Sections 4(m)(vi) and 4(m)(vii) of PESA Act]
- **However, The PESA Act does not grant the Gram Sabha the power to control the sale of arms and ammunition. This is regulated by national and state laws related to arms and ammunition. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 42.C

- **Cut motions are parliamentary procedures in India that allow Members of Parliament (MPs) to debate and potentially vote against specific demands for grants proposed in the budget. These motions aim to reduce the proposed allocation or even reject the demand altogether.**
- There are three types of cut motions:
 - **Policy Cut Motion:** In this type of motion, an MP moves to reduce the amount of a demand to ₹1.
 - ✓ It represents the disapproval of the policy underlying the demand. Hence pair 1 is correctly matched.

- ✓ The MP giving notice of such a motion must indicate the precise particulars of the policy they propose to discuss.
- ✓ The discussion is confined to the specific point(s) mentioned in the notice, and members can advocate an alternative policy.
- **Economy Cut Motion: An Economy Cut motion is moved to reduce the amount of demand by a specified amount.**
 - ✓ **The specified amount can be either a lump-sum reduction in the demand or the omission/reduction of an item within the demand. Hence, pair 2 is correctly matched.**
 - ✓ The notice for an Economy Cut motion must briefly and precisely indicate the particular matter for discussion on how economy can be achieved.
- **Token Cut Motion: In a Token Cut motion, the amount of the demand is reduced by ₹100.**
 - ✓ **This motion is used to ventilate a specific grievance within the sphere of the responsibility of the Government of India. Hence, pair 3 is correctly matched.**
 - ✓ The discussion is confined to the particular grievance specified in the motion.
- These cut motions provide MPs with a mechanism to scrutinize government spending and express their views on specific budgetary allocations.

Q 43.A

- Survey of India, The country's National Survey and Mapping Organization, is the oldest **scientific department of the Government of India**. It was set up in 1767 and has evolved rich traditions. The history of the Survey of India dates back to the 18th Century. Forerunners of the East India Company army and Surveyors had an arduous task of exploring the unknown. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Survey of India comes under the Department of Science & Technology.** Faced with the requirement of digital topographical data, the department created three Digital Centers during the late eighties to generate a Digital Topographical database for the entire country for use in various planning processes and creating a geographic information system. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- The **Survey of India is headquartered in Dehradun, Uttarakhand**. Organized into only 5 Directorates in 1950, mainly to look after the mapping needs of Defence Forces in North West and North East, the Department has now grown into 22 Directorates spread over approximately all parts (states) of the country to provide the basic map coverage required for the country's development. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 44.B

- **Context:** The Climate Promise 2025 Launch took place in the Economic and Social Council chamber in New York.
- The UN Development Programme (UNDP) has launched 'Climate Promise 2025' – **an initiative to support developing countries as they prepare their climate action plans under the Paris Agreement on climate change.** The next round of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) is due in 2025.
- The Climate Promise is UNDP's flagship initiative that aims "to ensure that any country wishing to increase the ambition of their national climate pledge is able to do so." According to UNDP, Climate Promise 2025 "marks the beginning of renewed efforts on climate action across the UN system ahead of 2025" when countries are due to submit the second round of commitments under the Paris Agreement. It seeks to help developing countries align the next generation of their NDCs to the goals of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C and increasing resilience to climate change impacts.
- The initiative extends support to over 120 countries, with collaboration from more than 35 partners, making a significant contribution to the NDC Partnership.
- It focuses on five key technical areas to assist countries in taking decisive action: reducing emissions, enhancing resilience to climate impacts, and supporting sustainable development priorities. **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 45.C

- The provisions of Part IX of the constitution relating to the Panchayats do not apply to the Fifth Schedule areas.
- However, the Parliament may extend these provisions to such areas, subject to such exceptions and modifications as it may specify. Under this provision, the Parliament enacted the "Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act", 1996, popularly known as the PESA Act or the Extension Act.

- **At present (2024), ten states have Fifth Schedule Areas.** These are:
 - Andhra Pradesh,
 - Telangana
 - Chhattisgarh,
 - **Gujarat,**
 - **Himachal Pradesh,**
 - Jharkhand,
 - Madhya Pradesh,
 - Maharashtra,
 - Odisha and
 - **Rajasthan.**
- All the ten states have enacted requisite compliance legislation by amending the respective Panchayati Raj Acts.
- **Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**

Q 46.A

- As per Article 74 of the Indian Constitution, there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head to aid and advise the President. Article 75 of the Indian Constitution explicitly mentions that the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People.
- Article 75 held that the ministers shall hold office at the pleasure of the President. The result of this provision is that the ministers shall be individually responsible to the executive head i.e. the President. The ministers are liable to dismissal even when they may have the confidence of the legislature. However, the President can only dismiss a minister individually on the advice of the Prime Minister. Hence, it can be assumed that this power of the President will virtually be the power of the Prime Minister against his colleague. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The Council of Ministers comprises three types of Ministers: Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State, and Deputy Ministers. However, the Constitution of India does not classify the members of the Council of Ministers into different ranks. All this has been done informally following the English practice.
- The Prime Minister is the “keystone of the cabinet arch”. Article 74 of the Indian Constitution expressly states that the Prime Minister shall be “at the head” of the Council of Ministers. Hence, the other ministers cannot function when the Prime Minister dies or resigns. While the resignation of other ministers merely creates a vacancy, the resignation or death of the Prime Minister dissolves the Cabinet. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 47.B

- The 73rd and the 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992 enjoin upon the states to establish a **three-tier system** of Panchayats at the village, intermediate, and district levels and Municipalities in the urban areas respectively. States are expected to devolve adequate powers, responsibilities, and finances upon these bodies so as to enable them to prepare plans and implement schemes for economic development and social justice. These Acts provide a basic framework of decentralisation of powers and authorities to the Panchayati Raj/Municipal bodies at different levels.
- The Amendment stipulates for certain compulsory provisions which are obligatory on the part of the State Governments to incorporate in their respective Acts. Some aspects have, however, been left at the discretion of State legislatures to make suitable provisions in their Act.
- **Compulsory provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**
 - **Establishing the State Elections Commission for 5 years to conduct elections of PRIs.**
 - **Constituting Gram Sabha in villages. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
 - Establishing panchayats at three levels: village, intermediate, and district level.
 - To conduct a direct election for all members of panchayats and an indirect election for the chairman at the intermediate and district level.
 - The minimum age to contest elections of panchayats is decided to be at 21 years of age and the reservation of seats for SCs and STs will depend upon the population and the reservation of seats for women is one-third of the total seats.
 - **State Finance Commission is to be established after every five years for reviewing the financial position of panchayats. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - The tenure of panchayats is for five years and a fresh direct election is to be arranged within six months of the suspension of the panchayat.

- **Voluntary provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992**
 - Providing representation to the MPs and MLAs in the Panchayats at different levels.
 - Reservation for backward classes.
 - **Granting financial powers to the panchayats.**
 - **Providing autonomy to the panchayats to function as a unit of self-government.**
 - **Giving power and responsibility to panchayats to prepare plans regarding economic development and social justice and to perform all the functions specified in 29 subjects of the Eleventh Schedule. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - **In terms of Article 243H, the state legislatures may, by law, authorize, the panchayats to levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees; assign to the panchayats such taxes, duties, tolls and fees subject to conditions and limits; provide for grants-in-aid to the panchayats from the consolidated fund of the state, and create its fund to credit its money to. Hence statement 4 is correct.**

Q 48.B

- The Indian Parliament has several key leadership positions that play vital roles in its functioning. These include the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Whip.
 - **Leader of the House**
 - ✓ Leader of the House in Lok Sabha: Typically, this position is held by the Prime Minister if they are a member of the Lok Sabha. If not, a senior member of the ruling party or coalition is appointed.
 - ✓ Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha: Usually, a senior minister from the government serves this role if the Prime Minister is a member of the Lok Sabha.
 - ✓ The Leader of the House is responsible for ensuring the smooth conduct of government business in the house.
 - ✓ **The position is mentioned in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in both houses of Parliament.** The rules outline the responsibilities and the procedural role of the Leader of the House. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ **The Leader of the House arranges government business, schedules debates, and ensures that the legislative agenda is followed.** They also play a key role in negotiations with the opposition to maintain order and efficiency in the house's proceedings.
 - **Leader of the Opposition**
 - ✓ **This position is held by the leader of the largest party in opposition to the government that has the necessary strength (10% of the total membership) to be recognized as such.**
 - ✓ The Leader of the Opposition plays a crucial role in providing constructive criticism of the government, leading debates from the opposition side, and presenting alternative policies.
 - ✓ **The position of the Leader of the Opposition is recognized by the Salary and Allowances of Leaders of Opposition in Parliament Act, 1977. This statute defines the recognition, roles, and remunerations associated with the position. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ Besides leading the opposition in debates, the Leader of the Opposition also participates in key committees, such as the Selection Committee for appointments to various statutory bodies, thereby ensuring a check on executive power.
 - **Whip**
 - ✓ The Whip is a party-appointed position responsible for ensuring discipline and decorum among party members in the house. The Whip's duties include ensuring members attend sessions, vote according to party lines and generally maintain party cohesion.
 - ✓ **The position of the Whip is neither mentioned in the Constitution of India nor in the Rules of the House and in a parliamentary statute. It is a party-designated role that operates within the parliamentary system. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 49.A

- **The Global Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a worldwide citizen science project that collects bird sightings and helps scientists track bird populations and distributions.**
- **The GBBC takes place every year over a four-day period in February.**
 - The GBBC 2024 is organized by:
 - ✓ **Cornell Lab of Ornithology:** A leading institution for bird research, conservation, and education.
 - ✓ **National Audubon Society:** A non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting birds and their habitats.
 - ✓ **Birds Canada:** A national charity focused on avian conservation and research. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**

- **Data collected during the GBBC is analyzed by scientists to:**
 - Track changes in bird populations over time.
 - Identify areas with high bird diversity or conservation concerns.
 - Inform policies and conservation strategies for birds.
 - Provide insights into bird behavior, migration patterns, and habitat use.
- **India Participation**
 - **India has been participating in the GBBC since its inception in 1998. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - In recent years, India has consistently ranked among the top countries in terms of bird observations submitted.
 - **West Bengal in India reported the highest number of species (538) among all Indian states. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Q 50.A

- **Recent context: Sudha Murty is recently nominated by President Droupadi Murmu to become the 12th nominated member in the Rajya Sabha.**
- The Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament, consists of members who are indirectly elected or nominated. Nominated members represent various fields of expertise and contribute specialized knowledge and experience to the House.
- **Term**
 - Nominated members serve a six-year term. However, their membership may be terminated earlier in certain circumstances.
- **Resignation**
 - Removal by the President for misconduct or other reasons
 - Death
- **Article 80(1):**
 - Under Article 80(1) of the Indian Constitution, the President of India nominates 12 members to the Rajya Sabha for a six-year term. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - These nominated members are individuals with expertise in various fields such as literature, science, art, and social service.
 - The purpose of this provision is to bring specialized knowledge and expertise into the legislative process.
 - These members are not affiliated with any political party and are expected to contribute to the debates and discussions in the Rajya Sabha with their independent perspectives.
- **Election of the President**
 - Article 54 states that the President is elected by an electoral college comprising elected members of both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) and the Legislative Assemblies of all states and Union Territories.
 - Nominated members of the Rajya Sabha are excluded from this electoral college. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- **Election of the Vice President:**
 - Article 66 states that the Vice President is elected by the members of both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) in a joint sitting.
 - Nominated members of the Rajya Sabha are included in this electoral college.

Q 51.C

- **Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, founded in 1961 by the Government of India for arranging, conducting, and analyzing the results of the demographic surveys of India including the Census of India and Linguistic Survey of India. It operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **The office of RGI is primarily responsible for the following functions:**
 - **Housing & Population Census:** The Census Commissioner, India is the statutory authority vested with the responsibility of conducting the decadal Housing & Population Census in India under the Census Act, 1948, and the Rules framed thereunder. Planning, coordination, and supervision of the field activities; data processing; compilation, tabulation, and dissemination of Census results are the primary duties of this office. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - **Civil Registration System (CRS):** The Census Commissioner, India is also designated as Registrar General, India under the Registration of Births & Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969, which provides for the compulsory registration of births and deaths. In this role, the RGI coordinates the functioning of the civil registration and vital statistics system in the country through all States and UTs.

- **Sample Registration System (SRS):** Implementation of Sample Registration System, wherein large scale sample survey of vital events is conducted on a half-yearly basis, is also the responsibility of the organization. **SRS is an important source of vital rates like Birth Rate, Death Rate, Infant Mortality Rate, and Maternal Mortality Rate at the State level in the country. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- **National Population Register (NPR):** In pursuance to provisions contained in Citizenship Rules, 2003 framed under the Citizenship Act, 1955, **the National Population Register is prepared by collecting information relating to all persons who are usually residing in the country. Hence, statement 4 is correct.**
- **Mother Tongue Survey:** The project surveys the mother tongues, which are returned consistently across two or more Census decades. The research program documents the linguistic features of the selected mother tongues.

Q 52.B

- **Doctrine of Repugnancy:**
 - The Doctrine of Repugnancy resolves conflicts between state and central laws on concurrent subjects, giving precedence to the latter.
 - It maintains legal uniformity by ensuring that central laws prevail in cases of inconsistency, preventing jurisdictional clashes and promoting harmony in the Indian federal structure.
- **Doctrine of Colourable Legislation:**
 - **The doctrine of Colourable Legislation is based on the maxim ‘what cannot be done directly, cannot be done indirectly’.**
 - It restricts legislatures from indirectly doing something which, due to want of jurisdiction, they can not do directly.
 - This encroachment may be direct or indirect.
 - In the case of the latter, the expression ‘colourable legislation’ is applied. **Hence Option (b) is the correct answer.**
- **Doctrine of Pith and Substance:**
 - Doctrine of Pith and Substance determines the constitutional validity of legislation based on its true purpose and essential nature, rather than its incidental effects.
 - It ensures that laws are evaluated according to their main objective, preventing misuse of legislative powers and promoting legal clarity.
- **Doctrine of Harmonious Construction:**
 - Doctrine of Harmonious Construction mandates interpreting conflicting laws or provisions in a way that reconciles their meanings and preserves their intended purposes.
 - It promotes coherence in legal interpretation, resolves ambiguities, and fosters consistency in statutory application to uphold the legislative intent.

Q 53.C

- **Closure Motion:** It is a motion moved by a member to cut short the debate on a matter before the House. If the motion is approved by the House, the debate is stopped forthwith and the matter is put to vote.
- There are four kinds of closure motions :
 - **Simple Closure:** It is one when a member moves that the ‘matter having been sufficiently discussed be now put to vote’.
 - **Closure by Compartments:** In this case, the clauses of a bill or a lengthy resolution are grouped into parts before the commencement of the debate. The debate covers the part as a whole and the entire part is put to vote.
 - **Kangaroo Closure:** **Under this type, only important clauses are taken up for debate and voting and the intervening clauses are skipped over and taken as passed. Hence option (c) is the correct answer.**
 - **Guillotine Closure:** It is one when the undiscussed clauses of a bill or a resolution are also put to vote along with the discussed ones due to want of time (as the time allotted for the discussion is over).

Q 54.B

- **Unitary features of the constitution:**
 - Unitary features of the Indian Constitution are those characteristics that emphasize the centralization of power in the central government, as opposed to federal features, which emphasize the distribution of power between the central and state governments.

- **Unitary Features**
 - **Integrated Audit Machinery:**
 - ✓ The Comptroller and Auditor-General of India audits the accounts of not only the Central government but also those of the states. But, his appointment and removal is done by the president without consulting the states. Hence, this office restricts the financial autonomy of the states. thus displaying unitary character. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - **All-India Services:**
 - ✓ All-India services (IAS, IPS, and IFS) are common to both the Centre and the states. The members of these services are recruited and trained by the Centre which also possess ultimate control over them. Thus, these services violate the principle of federalism under the Constitution. **Hence option 2 is correct.**
 - **Other unitary Features include**
 - ✓ Strong Centre
 - ✓ Single Constitution:
 - ✓ Single Citizenship
 - ✓ Integrated Judiciary
- **Federal Features:**
 - Federal features of a constitution refer to those characteristics that emphasize the division and sharing of power between a central (national) government and various state (regional) governments. The Federal features of Indian Constitution are as follows:
 - ✓ **Independent Judiciary:**
 - The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary to settle the disputes between the Centre and the states or between the states. The Constitution contains various measures like security of tenure to judges, fixed service conditions and so on to make the judiciary independent of the government. **This represents the federal spirit of the Constitution. Hence option 3 is not correct.**
 - ✓ **Other Federal Features include**
 - Written Constitution
 - Bicameral Legislature
 - Division of Powers

Q 55.A

- The Indian Constitution does not specify a detailed procedure for the selection and appointment of the Prime Minister. Article 75 states that the Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President. However, this does not mean the President has complete discretion to appoint anyone.
- In accordance with the conventions of the parliamentary system:
 - **Majority Party Leader:** The President appoints the leader of the majority party in the Lok Sabha as the Prime Minister.
 - **No Clear Majority:** When no party has a clear majority, the President can exercise personal discretion. Typically, the President appoints the leader of the largest party or coalition and asks them to seek a vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha within a month. This occurred for the first time in 1979 when President Neelam Sanjiva Reddy appointed Charan Singh after the fall of the Janata Party government.
- **Delhi High Court (1980): The Constitution does not require a person to prove their majority in the Lok Sabha before being appointed as Prime Minister.** The President can appoint them and then ask them to prove their majority within a reasonable period. This was the case with Charan Singh (1979), VP Singh (1989), Chandrasekhar (1990), PV Narasimha Rao (1991), AB Vajpayee (1996), Deve Gowda (1996), IK Gujral (1997), and AB Vajpayee again (1998). **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Supreme Court (1997):** A person who is not a member of either House of Parliament can be appointed as Prime Minister for six months. Within this period, they must become a member of either House, or they will cease to be Prime Minister. This was not explicitly mentioned in the constitution. Also as per Article 75 (5),) a minister who, for any period of six consecutive months, is not a member of either House of Parliament shall at the expiration of that period cease to be a minister. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The Prime Minister can be a member of either House of Parliament. For instance, Indira Gandhi (1966), Deve Gowda (1996), and Manmohan Singh (2004) were members of the Rajya Sabha. In contrast, in the UK, the Prime Minister must be a member of the House of Commons.
- **The resignation or death of an incumbent Prime Minister automatically dissolves the Council of Ministers and creates a vacuum.** Conversely, the resignation or death of any other minister merely creates a vacancy, which the Prime Minister may or may not fill. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 56.B

- **Context:** The renowned Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi (Silver Filigree) has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag, marking its distinct heritage and craftsmanship.
- **Geographical Indication**
 - A GI is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.
- **International Recognition:**
 - Under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, GI is covered as an element of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).
 - Also covered under the WTO's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement.

State	Product and Description
Odisha	Cuttack Rupa Tarakasi (Silver Filigree): It was incorporated into jewellery around 3500 BCE in Mesopotamia where it is practised even today as Telkari work. It reached Cuttack from Persia through Indonesia. Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.
Bengal	Banglar muslin which is a traditional handloom craft made of cotton. Hence pair 2 is not correctly matched.
Andhra Pradesh	Narasapur crochet lace products were brought by missionaries to Narsapur.
Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam Riyawan Lahsun (Garlic)
Assam	Majuli Mask and Majuli Manuscript Painting.
Tripura	Risa Textile. Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.
Telangana	Hyderabad Lac Bangles.
Gujarat	Kutch rogan craft a.k.a. Nirona Ambaji White Marble: formed when limestone is re-crystallised under the earth's crust

Q 57.C

- The Speaker is **elected** by the **assembly itself** from **amongst its members**. Usually, the Speaker remains in office **during the life of the assembly**. However, he **vacates his office earlier in any of the following three cases**:
 - if he **ceases** to be a member of the assembly;
 - if he **resigns** by writing **to the deputy speaker**;
 - if he is removed by a resolution passed by **a majority of all the then members of the assembly**. Such a resolution can be moved only **after giving 14 days advance notice**.
- **The Speaker has the following powers and duties:**
 - He maintains **order and decorum** in the assembly for conducting its business and regulating its proceedings. This is his primary **responsibility and he has final power in this regard**.
 - He is the final interpreter of the provisions of (a) **the Constitution of India**, (b) the rules of procedure and conduct of business of assembly, and (c) the legislative precedents, within the assembly. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - He **adjourns the assembly or suspends the meeting in the absence of a quorum**.
 - He does **not vote in the first instance**. But, he **can exercise a casting vote in the case of a tie**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - He can allow a 'secret' sitting of the House at the **request of the leader of the House**.
 - He decides **whether a bill is a Money Bill or not** and **his decision on this question is final**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - He decides the questions of **disqualification** of a member of the assembly, arising **on the ground of defection under the provisions of the Tenth Schedule**.
 - He appoints the **chairman of all the committees** of the assembly and **supervises their functioning**.
 - He himself is the **chairman of the Business Advisory Committee, the Rules Committee and the General Purpose Committee**.

Q 58.C

- **Transfer of Subjects in State List to Concurrent List:**
 - The 42nd Amendment Act of 1976, also known as the "Mini-Constitution," brought about significant changes in the Indian Constitution. One of the important changes was the transfer of several subjects from the State List to the Concurrent List.
- **The Amendment had transferred five subjects from the State List to the Concurrent List, which are:**
 - **Education:**
 - ✓ **Status Before 1976:** Education was in the State List, meaning only state legislatures could make laws on this subject.
 - ✓ **Change by 42nd Amendment:** Education was transferred to the Concurrent List. This change allowed both the Parliament and state legislatures to legislate on education, promoting a more uniform educational policy across the country while still allowing for regional variations. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - **Weights and Measures:**
 - ✓ **Status Before 1976:** Weights and measures were in the State List.
 - ✓ **Change by 42nd Amendment:** Weights and measures were transferred to the Concurrent List. This allowed the central government to establish uniform standards across the country, which is crucial for trade and commerce. **Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - **Protection of Wild Animals and Birds:**
 - ✓ **Status Before 1976:** Protection of wild animals and birds was in the State List.
 - ✓ **Change by 42nd Amendment:** This subject was moved to the Concurrent List. This transfer enabled the central government to take measures for wildlife conservation, ensuring a standardized approach across all states. **Hence option 4 is correct.**
 - **Forests:**
 - ✓ **Status Before 1976:** Forests were initially under the State List, meaning that only state governments had the authority to legislate on forest-related matters. This arrangement often led to inconsistent conservation efforts and exploitation of forest resources.
 - ✓ **Change by 42nd Amendment:** The 42nd Amendment Act transferred forests from the **State List to the Concurrent List**. This shift allowed both the central and state governments to legislate on forest conservation, management, and protection, ensuring a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to forest management.
 - **Administration of justice; constitution and organization of all courts except the Supreme Court and the high courts:**
 - ✓ **Status Before 1976:** The administration of justice and the constitution and organization of courts, except the Supreme Court and high courts, were initially under the jurisdiction of the State List. This meant that each state had its own judicial system and court structure.
 - ✓ **Change by 42nd Amendment:** The 42nd Amendment Act transferred the administration of justice and the constitution and organization of all courts, except the Supreme Court and high courts, from the State List to the Concurrent List. This transfer allowed both the central and state governments to legislate on matters related to the administration of justice and the establishment and organization of lower courts.
 - **Public Health and Sanitation:**
 - ✓ Public health and sanitation remained in the State List both before and after the 42nd Amendment.
 - ✓ There was no change; it continued to be a subject solely under the jurisdiction of state governments currently. **Hence option 2 is not correct.**

Q 59.C

- The deputy prime minister of India, although not a Constitutional post, is the second-highest ranking minister of the Union in the executive branch of the Government of India and is a senior member of the Union Council of Ministers. The office holder also deputises for the prime minister in their absence. In the table of precedence, he is ranked at 5A.
- The office has since been only intermittently occupied, having been occupied for a little more than 10 years out of the 75 years since its inception. Since 1947 India has had 7 deputy prime ministers, of which none having at least one full term. **The first was Vallabhbhai Patel of the Indian National Congress party**, who was sworn in on 15 August 1947, when India gained independence from the British Raj. Serving until his death in December 1950, Patel remains India's longest-serving deputy prime minister. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
- The post was vacant until **Morarji Desai became the second deputy prime minister in 1967** and has the second-longest tenure. Morarji Desai and Charan Singh were the deputy prime ministers who later became Prime Minister of India. Jagjivan Ram and Yashwantrao Chavan became deputy prime ministers consecutively without the break in different ministries. **Hence option 2 is correct.**

- **Devi Lal is the only deputy prime minister to represent both parties in the same post.** Lal Krishna Advani was the seventh and last person to serve as the deputy prime minister of India until the post became vacant. **Hence option 3 is correct.**
- George Fernandes was the Defence Minister of India under the primer ministership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He never served as the Deputy Prime Minister. **Hence option 4 is not correct.**

Q 60.D

- Context: India launched 'Operation Indravati to evacuate its nationals from Haiti.
- **Operation Indravati**
 - India launched Operation Indravati to evacuate its nationals from Haiti to the Dominican Republic.
 - As part of the ongoing operation, 12 Indians were evacuated.
 - Haiti has been under a state of emergency after some armed groups attacked the country's largest prison in Port-au-Prince earlier this month.
- **Operation Ganga (2022):** Evacuated Indian citizens stranded in Ukraine during the Russia-Ukraine war.
- **Operation Devi Shakti (2021):** Evacuated Indians and Afghan minorities from Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover.
- **Operation Raahat (2015):** Evacuated Indian citizens and foreign nationals during the conflict in Yemen.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 61.D

- **A no-confidence motion is a parliamentary procedure that allows Members of Parliament (MPs) to express their lack of confidence in the government. If the motion is passed, the government must resign.**
- **Key Features:**
 - **Exclusive to Lok Sabha:** The motion of No-Confidence can only be moved in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of India's Parliament. This is because the government is directly accountable to the Lok Sabha. **Hence statement (a) is correct.**
 - **Provision in Rules of Business:** The Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha include provisions for moving a no-confidence motion. It is a formal mechanism to challenge the legitimacy of the government. **Hence statement (b) is correct.**
 - **A motion of no-confidence need not set out any grounds on which it is based.** It simply reflects the belief that the government no longer has the support of the majority of the House. **Hence statement (c) is correct.**
- **Procedure:**
 - Any member of the Lok Sabha can give notice of a no-confidence motion.
 - The Speaker of the Lok Sabha decides whether the motion is in order. It requires the support of at least 50 members of the Lok Sabha for it to be admitted.
 - Once admitted, the motion is debated. The Prime Minister or relevant ministers will respond to the debate. The motion is then put to a vote.
 - **If the motion is passed by a majority of the members present and voting, the government must resign.**
 - **If the motion is rejected, the government continues in office.**
- **After a no-confidence motion has been discussed and negated by the House, another no-confidence motion cannot be moved in the same session. This restriction prevents repetitive challenges and ensures the stability of the government within a session. Hence statement (d) is not correct.**
- The no-confidence motion is a crucial tool for parliamentary oversight, ensuring that the government remains accountable to the elected representatives of the people.
- While it allows for the removal of an ineffective government, procedural restrictions help maintain political stability by preventing frequent challenges.
- **Hence option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q 62.C

- Ministry of Cooperation was created by transferring the existing entries related to cooperation and cooperation in the business of the erstwhile Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare vide Cabinet Secretariat's Gazette Notification dated 6th July 2021.
- The Ministry is headed by the Minister for Cooperation. The Secretary, of Cooperation is the administrative head of the Ministry. Secretary, Cooperation is assisted by one Additional Secretary, two Joint Secretaries, and one Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies.

- **The Ministry is responsible for providing a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for strengthening the cooperative movement in the country. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Its aims to deepen co-operatives as a true people-based movement reaching up to the grassroots and develop a cooperative-based economic model where each member works with a spirit to responsibility.
- The principal activities of the Ministry include streamlining processes for 'Ease of doing business' for co-operatives and enabling the development of Multi-State Co-operative Societies. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It lays emphasis on strengthening, bringing transparency, modernization, computerization, creating competitive cooperatives, working constantly to meet the challenge of accessibility to development for every underprivileged in rural areas and on connecting every village with cooperatives, making every village prosperous with the **mantra of "Sahakar se Samriddhi"** and through this making the country prosperous.

Q 63.A

- **Attorney General:**
 - **Appointed By:** President
 - **Removal By:** The Attorney General is not removed by Parliament. The correct process involves the President, who appoints and can remove the Attorney General. **Hence pair 1 is not correctly matched.**
- **State Election Commissioner:**
 - **Appointed By:** Governor
 - **Removal By:** The State Election Commissioner can be removed by the Governor, but only in the manner and on the grounds similar to that of a High Court judge. **Hence pair 2 is not correctly matched.**
- **Chairman of State Public Service Commission:**
 - **Appointed By:** Governor
 - **Removal By:** The Chairman and members of the State Public Service Commission are appointed by the Governor but can only be removed by the President. **Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**

Q 64.B

- Before adopting the portfolio system in the government of India, all Government business was disposed of by the governor-general in the council, which functions as a joint consultative board. As the amount and complexity of the business of the Government increased, the work of the various Departments was distributed amongst the members of the Council, only the more important cases being dealt with by the Governor-General or the Council collectively. This procedure was legalized by the Indian Councils Act, 1861, during the time of Lord Canning, leading to the introduction of the portfolio system and the inception of the Executive Council of the Governor-General. **The constitution of the Interim Government in September 1946 brought a change in the name of this Office.** On 5th September 1946, the Secretariat of the Executive Council was designated as Cabinet Secretariat, and the Secretary to the Executive Council as the Cabinet Secretary. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- The Cabinet Secretariat functions directly under the Prime Minister. The administrative head of the Secretariat is the **Cabinet Secretary who is also the ex-officio Chairman of the Civil Services Board.** The Cabinet Secretariat is responsible for the administration of the **Government of India (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1961 and Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961** facilitating smooth transaction of business in Ministries/ Departments. The Secretariat assists in decision-making in Government by ensuring Inter-Ministerial coordination, ironing out differences amongst Ministries/Departments and evolving consensus through the instrumentality of the standing/adhoc Committees of Secretaries. Management of major crisis situations in the country and coordinating activities of various ministries in such a situation is also one of the functions of the Cabinet Secretariat. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India (O/o of PSA) was set up in November 1999, primarily to evolve policies, strategies, and missions for the generation of innovations and support systems for multiple applications, Generate science and technology tasks in critical infrastructure, economic and social sectors in partnership with Government. **Office of PSA was placed administratively under the Cabinet Secretariat in August 2018. Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 65.B

- **Context:** The sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) took place on 26 February to 1 March 2024 at the UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.
- The United Nations Environment Assembly is the world's highest-level decision-making body for matters related to the environment. It sets priorities for global environmental policies and international environmental law. It sets the global environmental agenda, provides overarching policy guidance, and defines policy responses to address emerging environmental challenges. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- UNEA was created in 2012, as an outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Brazil. Since its establishment, the Assembly has ushered in a new era of multilateralism with environmental issues given the same level of importance as such global concerns as peace and security, and health. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) has a universal membership of all 193 Member States of United Nations. Every two years, all 193 UN Member States have an opportunity to collectively address critical environmental issues facing the planet. It undertakes policy review, dialogue and the exchange of experiences, sets the strategic guidance on the future direction of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), and fosters partnerships for achieving environmental goals and resource mobilization. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 66.C

- Recently, the **Women, Business and the Law Report 2024** was published by the **World Bank**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - It is an annual report that measures the legal and regulatory framework governing women's economic participation in countries. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Significance**
 - The Women, Business and the Law Report provides valuable insights into the legal and regulatory landscape that shapes women's economic opportunities.
 - It helps governments, policymakers, and businesses understand the challenges and opportunities for women in the workforce.
 - The report is also used to track progress towards gender equality in economic participation.
 - It provides a benchmark for countries to measure their performance and identify areas where improvements can be made.
- **World Bank**
 - The World Bank is a global financial institution that plays a crucial role in promoting development and reducing poverty in developing countries.
 - It is a part of the World Bank Group, which also includes the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).
 - Activities
 - ✓ Lending: Provides loans for infrastructure, education, healthcare, and other development projects.
 - ✓ Grants: Offers grants to low-income countries for specific programs, such as disease control or disaster relief.
 - ✓ Technical Assistance: Provides advice and expertise to governments and organizations on economic and development issues.
 - ✓ Knowledge Sharing: Disseminates research and best practices on development topics.

Q 67.C

- **Electoral College for the Election of the President of India**
 - The President of India is elected by an Electoral College, which is composed of specific members as outlined by the Constitution of India. The details regarding the formation and members of this Electoral College are as follows:
 - Constitutional Provisions
 - ✓ **Article 54:** The President of India is elected by an Electoral College consisting of:
 - The elected members of both Houses of Parliament.
 - The elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States, including the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Puducherry, as per the Constitution (Seventieth Amendment) Act, 1992.
 - ✓ Thus, the nominated members of both of Houses of Parliament, the nominated members of the state legislative assemblies, the members (both elected and nominated) of the state legislative councils (in case of the bicameral legislature) and the nominated members of the Legislative Assemblies of Delhi and Puducherry do not participate in the election of the President. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- Constitution (Seventieth Amendment) Act, 1992: Section 2 of this amendment act modified the explanation under Article 54 of the Constitution. The revised explanation states:
 - ✓ "State" in this Article and in Article 55 includes the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the Union Territory of Puducherry. This amendment came into effect from June 1, 1995.
 - ✓ As a result, the Electoral College for the Presidential Election now comprises:
 - The elected members of both Houses of Parliament.
 - The elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States, including NCT of Delhi and the Union Territory of Puducherry. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - The Constitution explicitly includes elected members of NCT of Delhi and Puducherry as part of the Electoral College, **but it does not mention Jammu & Kashmir in this context.**

Q 68.C

- **A bill is deemed to be a money bill if it falls under the provisions specified in Article 110 of the Indian Constitution which includes:**
 - **Imposition, abolition, remission, alteration, or regulation of any tax: If a bill deals with any aspect related to taxation (such as introducing a new tax, changing tax rates, or abolishing an existing tax), it qualifies as a money bill. Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - **Regulation of borrowing of money by the Union government: Bills related to borrowing funds by the central government fall under the category of money bills. Hence option 4 is correct.**
 - Custody of the Consolidated Fund of India or the contingency fund of India, payment into or withdrawal from such funds: Bills concerning the management and utilization of these funds are considered money bills.
 - Appropriation of money out of the Consolidated Fund of India: Bills that allocate funds for specific purposes from the Consolidated Fund of India fall within this category.
 - Declaration of any expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund of India or increasing such expenditure: Bills that declare certain expenditures as "charged" on the Consolidated Fund of India or propose an increase in such expenditures are money bills.
 - Receipt of money on account of the Consolidated Fund of India or the public account of India, custody or issue of such money, or audit of accounts: Bills related to financial transactions, receipts, custody, or audit of accounts are also considered money bills.
 - Any matter incidental to the above matters: If a bill is related to financial aspects and is incidental to the matters mentioned above, it qualifies as a money bill.
- **A Bill is not deemed to be a Money Bill when it provides for**
 - **Imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties. Hence option 1 is not correct.**
 - **Demand or payment of fees for licenses or fees for services rendered. Hence option 2 is not correct.**
 - Imposition, abolition, remission, alteration, or regulation of any tax by any local authority or body for local purposes.

Q 69.B

- **Quorum is the minimum number of members required to be present in the House before it can transact any business.**
- **It is ten members or one-tenth of the total number of members of the House (including the presiding officer), whichever is greater. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
- According to **Article 170(1)** " Subject to the **provisions of article 333**, the Legislative Assembly of each State **shall consist of not more than five hundred**, and **not less than sixty**, members chosen by direct election from territorial constituencies in the State." Hence **one-tenth of five hundred will be fifty. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- If there is no quorum during a meeting of the House, it is the duty of the presiding officer either to adjourn the House or to suspend the meeting until there is a quorum.
- **Article 189(3) : " Until the Legislature of the State by law otherwise provides, the quorum to constitute a meeting of a House of the Legislature of a State shall be ten members or one-tenth of the total number of members of the House, whichever is greater. Hence the word Quorum is mentioned in the constitution itself. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**

Q 70.A

- **The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, added Part IXA to the Indian Constitution, which deals with the municipalities.** The purpose of this amendment was to provide constitutional status to the municipalities and to ensure a more decentralized and participatory urban governance structure.

- **Types of Municipalities:**
- **According to Article 243Q of the Indian Constitution, there are three types of municipalities:**
 - **Nagar Panchayat (NP):**
 - ✓ **For areas in transition from rural to urban.**
 - ✓ These are typically established in regions that are in the process of becoming urbanized but have not yet acquired the full characteristics of urban areas. **Hence, option 1 is correct.**
 - **Municipal Council (MC):**
 - ✓ For smaller urban areas.
 - ✓ These are established in towns and smaller cities. **Hence, option 3 is correct.**
 - **Municipal Corporation (MCorp):**
 - ✓ For larger urban areas.
 - ✓ These are established in large cities with significant populations and economic activities. **Hence, option 4 is correct.**
- **There is no provision for a "Mahanagar Panchayat" in the Constitution. Hence, option 2 is not correct.**

Q 71.A

- The Central Council of Local Government was set up in 1954.
- **Statement 1 is not correct:** It was constituted under Article 263 of the Constitution of India by an order of the President of India and is not a constitutional body. Originally, it was known as the Central Council of Local Self-Government. However, the term 'self-government' was found to be superfluous and hence was replaced by the term 'government' in the 1980s.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Till 1958, it dealt with both urban as well as rural local governments, but after 1958 it has been dealing with matters of urban local government only.
- **Statement 3 is not correct:** The Council is an advisory body. It consists of the Minister for Urban Development in the Government of India and the ministers for local self-government in states. The Union minister acts as the Chairman of the Council.
- The Council performs the following functions with regard to local government:
 - Considering and recommending the policy matters.
 - Making proposals for legislation.
 - Examining the possibility of cooperation between the Centre and the states.
 - Drawing up a common programme of action.
 - Recommending Central financial assistance.
 - Reviewing the work done by the local bodies with the Central financial assistance

Q 72.A

- **ISRO inaugurates a massive wind tunnel at VSSC, Thiruvananthapuram, India.**
- **Wind Tunnels**
 - Wind tunnels are controlled airflow facilities used to study the aerodynamic characteristics of objects in motion, such as aircraft, vehicles, and buildings.
 - They consist of a large enclosed tube with a fan that generates a continuous stream of air.
- **Purpose and Applications:**
 - **Aerodynamic Analysis:** Measuring drag, lift, and moment coefficients on aircraft, vehicles, and buildings.
 - **Boundary Layer Studies:** Examining the flow of air over surfaces to understand phenomena such as separation and turbulence.
 - **Flow Visualization:** Using smoke or other techniques to visualize air currents and identify areas of disturbance.
 - **Performance Testing:** Evaluating engine performance, fuel efficiency, and noise levels for vehicles and aircraft.
 - **Structural Integrity Testing:** Assessing the ability of structures to withstand wind loads and dynamic forces. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Trisonic Wind Tunnel**
 - **A trisonic wind tunnel is a specialized facility designed to simulate three distinct flight regimes: subsonic, transonic, and supersonic.**
 - ✓ **Subsonic:** Speeds below the speed of sound ($Mach < 1$)
 - ✓ **Transonic:** Speeds near the speed of sound ($0.8 < Mach < 1.2$)
 - ✓ **Supersonic:** Speeds above the speed of sound ($Mach > 1$)

- **Now, India has 3 hypersonic wind tunnels**
 - **This is India's third hypersonic wind tunnel (HWT)** after the Defence Research and Development Organisation's HWT at the APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex in Hyderabad, and the 1.2 metre TWT at National Aerospace Laboratories in Bengaluru. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 73.C

- **Context:** Recently, the NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) launched the 'Vocal for Local' initiative under its Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP).
- The **NITI Aayog** (National Institution for Transforming India) launched the 'Vocal for Local' initiative under its **Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP)**. This initiative aims to encourage a spirit of self-reliance among the populace of Aspirational Blocks, propelling them towards sustainable growth and prosperity. By nurturing a conducive ecosystem for local businesses to flourish, the 'Vocal for Local' initiative is poised to usher in a new era of economic empowerment and self-sufficiency. **Hence statement 1 is not correct but statement 2 is correct.**
- The initiative aims to **bolster local economies and promote grassroots entrepreneurship**. It is being implemented in partnership with Government e-Marketplace (GeM) and Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platforms. GeM and ONDC will provide technical and operational support for e-commerce onboarding, establishing linkages, enhancing financial and digital literacy, facilitating documentation and certification, and promoting skill development, among other supportive measures. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- Initiative aims to boost sustainable growth by showcasing indigenous products through 'Aakanksha.' A dedicated window on the GeM portal facilitates e-commerce for local products. As a part of this initiative, indigenous local products from 500 Aspirational Blocks have been mapped and consolidated under Aakanksha. The launch was attended by all 329 Districts and Block Level Officials under Aspirational Blocks Programme who connected virtually for the event.

Q 74.D

- **The Electoral College for the Presidential Election, therefore, consists of:**
 - the elected members of both Houses of Parliament, and
 - the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States, including NCT of Delhi and the Union Territory of Puducherry.
- Furthermore, **the Constitution mandates that there should be uniformity in the representation of different States in the Presidential election. This uniformity is achieved through a formula based on the population of each State, as given in Article 55. Hence statement-II is correct.**
- The value of the vote of each elected Member of Parliament and each elected Member of the Legislative Assembly is determined based on this population formula.
 - **Population-Based Formula:** According to Article 55 of the Indian Constitution, the value of votes of MPs and MLAs in the Presidential election is determined based on a formula that aims to achieve uniformity in representation among states.
 - ✓ This formula takes into account the total population of the state and divides it by the number of elected representatives (MPs and MLAs). The actual calculation involves dividing the total value of votes of all MLAs of a state by the number of MLAs.
 - **Uniformity in Representation:** The objective of this formula is to ensure that states with larger populations do not dominate the electoral process solely based on population size.
 - ✓ Therefore, the value of each MLA's vote is not directly proportional to the population of his constituency but rather to the total population of the state.
 - **Illustration:** For instance, **if a state has a higher population based on the 1971 census, each MLA from that state would have a higher value for their vote compared to an MLA from a state with a lower population, regardless of the constituency-specific population.**
- Thus the value of the vote of each MLA in a state is determined by a formula based on the **total population of the state** as per the 1971 census. **Hence statement-I is not correct.**
- The Constitution (Eighty-fourth) Amendment Act, 2001, provides that until the population figures from the first census taken after the year 2026 are published, the population figures from the 1971 census will be used for calculating the value of votes in Presidential elections.

Q 75.B

- **Solicitor-General is the second highest law officer of the Government of India** after the Attorney General (AG) of India. He/She assists the AG in the fulfillment of his/her official responsibilities.
- It should be noted here that **only the office of the AG is created by the Constitution**. In other words, Article 76 does **not mention the Solicitor general** and additional solicitor general. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The **SGI is appointed by the President** on the recommendations of the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet**. The SGI generally has a tenure of 3 years and is eligible for reappointment. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**

Q 76.C

- **Disqualification criteria for the members of the state legislature:** Under the **Constitution**, a person **shall be disqualified for being chosen as and for being a member** of the legislative assembly or legislative council of a state.
 - if he holds any office of profit under the Union or state government (except that of a minister or any other office exempted by state legislature). **Hence option 3 is correct.**
 - if he is of **unsound mind and stands so declared by a court**. **Hence option 1 is correct.**
 - if he is an **undischarged insolvent**.
 - if he is **not a citizen of India** or **has voluntarily acquired the citizenship of a foreign state** or is under any acknowledgement of **allegiance to a foreign state**. **Hence option 4 is correct.**
 - if he is **so disqualified under any law made by Parliament**.
- **A person convicted for any offence resulting in imprisonment for two or more years is not directly mentioned in the constitution. It is provided under THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1951. Hence option 2 is not correct.**

Q 77.B

- Established in 1944, the Directorate of Estates is an attached office of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**. It is mandated to administer and manage the estates of the Government of India in Delhi, its 8 Regional Offices located at Chandigarh, Chennai, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Nagpur and Shimla and 31 other locations across the country. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- The Estates of the Government of India include the Government Residential Accommodations, Government Office Space Accommodation, Government Commercial Space Accommodation, and Venues for conclaves and ceremonies. Estates also incorporate the Holiday Homes and Touring Officers' Hostels spread nationwide. Directorate of Estates administers the bookings of Venues such as Vigyan Bhawan, 5 Ashoka Road Bungalow and others. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Q 78.C

- **The SR Bommai case (1994):**
 - The Bommai case (1994) was a landmark judgment by the Supreme Court of India regarding the dismissal of state governments under Article 356 of the Constitution.
 - The Supreme Court, in its ruling, **emphasized the federal nature of the Indian Constitution and recognized federalism as one of its basic features. Hence statement I is correct.**
 - This declaration was significant as it underscored the importance of maintaining a balance between central and state powers, thereby upholding the federal structure of the Indian polity.
- **The basic principle of Federalism:**
 - Federalism, as a principle, entails the division of powers between the central (Centre) and state governments.
 - **This division of powers is not determined by any ordinary law enacted by the Centre but is inherently embedded in the Constitution itself.**
 - The Constitution of India delineates the powers and functions of the central and state governments through various provisions, including the distribution of legislative subjects in the Union List, State List, and Concurrent List.
 - **But the principle of federalism is not explicitly mentioned no where in the constitution or in Preamble. Hence statement II is not correct.**

Q 79.A

- **A joint sitting refers to a special session where both houses of a bicameral legislature convene together to deliberate on specific matters.**
- **Purpose of Joint Sittings:**
 - Joint sittings are convened when there is a deadlock between the two houses (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) regarding the passage of a bill.
 - The framers of the Indian Constitution anticipated such situations and provided for joint sittings to break the impasse. Summoning a Joint Sitting:
- The President of India calls for a joint sitting (as per Article 108 of the Constitution).
- The Speaker of the Lok Sabha presides over the joint session. If unavailable, the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha or the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha presides.
- If none of the above is available, any Member of Parliament (MP) can preside by consensus.
- **A joint sitting can be summoned when:**
 - **A bill is passed by one house and transmitted to the other house, but: The other house rejects the bill.**
 - **The houses disagree on amendments to the bill.**
 - **More than six months elapse without the bill being passed by the other house (excluding days of prorogation or adjournment).**
 - **However, if the Lok Sabha dissolves during this period, the bill cannot be considered.**
- **Joint sittings do not apply to money bills or constitution amendment bills. Hence statement I is correct.**
- Money bills are specifically related to financial matters (taxation, public expenditure, etc.).
- They require approval only from the Lok Sabha.
- The Rajya Sabha can only make recommendations, but the Lok Sabha need not accept them. If the Rajya Sabha doesn't pass a money bill within 14 days, it is deemed to have been passed by both houses. Therefore, the need for a joint session never arises for money bills. **Hence statement II is correct and is the correct explanation of statement I.**

Q 80.A

- **The lapsing of bills refers to the termination of legislative proposals that are under consideration but have not been passed into law within the stipulated time frame.** This typically happens when the Lok Sabha, the lower house of Parliament, is dissolved.
- **Situations Leading to Lapsing:**
 - **Bills Originating in the Lok Sabha:**
 - ✓ Pending in Lok Sabha: **If a bill is still under consideration in the Lok Sabha and the house is dissolved, the bill lapses. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ Passed by Lok Sabha but Pending in Rajya Sabha: If a bill is passed by the Lok Sabha but is pending in the Rajya Sabha, it lapses when the Lok Sabha is dissolved.
 - **Bills Originating in the Rajya Sabha:**
 - ✓ Pending in Rajya Sabha: **If a bill originates and is pending in the Rajya Sabha, it does not lapse upon the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. This is because the Rajya Sabha is a permanent body and is not subject to dissolution. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - ✓ Passed by Rajya Sabha but Pending in Lok Sabha: If a bill is passed by the Rajya Sabha but is pending in the Lok Sabha, it lapses upon the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.

Q 81.B

- **The Speaker of the Lok Sabha is a pivotal figure in the Indian parliamentary system**, responsible for maintaining order and decorum in the House, ensuring the smooth conduct of business, and safeguarding the rights and privileges of members. **The Speaker's duties include presiding over the meetings of the Lok Sabha, deciding on points of order, interpreting the rules of procedure, and ensuring that parliamentary traditions are upheld.**
- **Appointment**
 - Election by Members: **The Speaker of the Lok Sabha is elected by the members of the Lok Sabha from amongst themselves.** This election typically occurs after the general elections, when a new Lok Sabha is constituted. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - Procedure: **The election is conducted by the pro tem Speaker, who is appointed by the President of India.** The members of the Lok Sabha nominate candidates, and if there is more than one candidate, a vote is taken. The candidate who secures the majority of votes is declared elected as the Speaker.

- **Oath:** The Speaker does not make and subscribe to a separate oath. The Speaker, like all Members of Parliament, takes the same oath or affirmation as specified in the Constitution of India, which is administered by the President or some person appointed by him. Hence statement 1 is not correct.
- **Removal**
 - **Resolution for Removal:** The Speaker can be removed from office by a resolution passed by the Lok Sabha. This resolution must be passed by a majority of all the then members of the House, known as an effective majority. Hence statement 3 is not correct.
 - **Notice Period:** A notice of at least 14 days must be given before the resolution for the Speaker's removal is moved. This ensures that there is sufficient time for consideration and discussion.
 - **Opportunity to Defend:** The Speaker is given an opportunity to defend themselves and respond to the charges before the resolution is put to vote.
 - **Voting:** The resolution for removal is debated in the Lok Sabha, and members cast their votes. If the resolution is passed by the required majority, the Speaker is removed from office.
 - **Deputy Speaker:** In the absence of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, who is also elected by the members of the Lok Sabha, performs the Speaker's duties.
- **Resignation:** The Speaker may also resign from office by writing to the Deputy Speaker.
- The Speaker's position is critical for the independent functioning of the Lok Sabha, ensuring that parliamentary procedures are followed and that all members have an opportunity to participate in the legislative process.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 82.C

- The Blue Leaders High-Level Event on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction in Belgium on March 7, 2024, rallied nations to endorse a new treaty for safeguarding the high seas from pollution, climate change, and overfishing.
- **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty**
 - The BBNJ Treaty, formally titled the "**Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction**".
 - It is a landmark international agreement aimed at protecting biodiversity in the vast areas of the ocean that lie outside of any country's control - the high seas. The treaty concerns the ocean existing **beyond the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ)** that lie from the coast of a country to about 200 nautical miles (or 370 km into the sea), till where it has special rights for exploration. Waters beyond that are known as open seas or high seas. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Key Elements of the Treaty:**
 - **Environmental Impact Assessments:** The treaty requires parties to conduct environmental impact assessments for activities that may affect biodiversity in the high seas.
 - **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):** It establishes a framework for the creation and management of MPAs in the high seas, aimed at conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services.
 - **Access and Benefit-Sharing:** The treaty addresses the sharing of genetic resources found in the high seas, including potential commercial applications, ensuring equitable benefit-sharing among countries.
 - **Capacity Building:** It emphasizes the need for capacity building and technology transfer to support developing nations in implementing the treaty.
 - **Cooperation and Coordination:** The treaty fosters collaboration and coordination among countries, intergovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders.
- **The BBNJ Treaty is a legally binding international agreement aimed at conserving and sustainably using biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - States that ratify the treaty are obligated to comply with its provisions, including the adoption of national laws and regulations to implement its requirements.
- **India has not yet signed the BBNJ Treaty for the following reasons:**
 - **Concerns over Resource Sharing:** India is concerned that the treaty may require it to share its marine genetic resources and traditional knowledge without adequate compensation.
 - **Sovereignty and Economic Interests:** India maintains that it has sovereign rights over its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and that the treaty may infringe upon these rights.
 - **Need for Stronger Enforcement Mechanisms:** India believes that the treaty should include stronger enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with conservation measures.
 - **Lack of Clarity on Technology Transfer:** India wants clarity on the terms of technology transfer to developing countries for marine research and conservation.

- **Concerns about Dispute Resolution:** India prefers to settle disputes related to marine biodiversity through existing international mechanisms, rather than creating a new body under the treaty. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- **India recognizes the importance of protecting marine biodiversity but believes that the BBNJ Treaty should be balanced and equitable.**

Q 83.B

- **Context:** Israel's successful interception of drones and missiles launched by Iran, has been officially named Operation "Iron Shield". Israel is protected by a multi-layered defence array, **which includes Arrow-2, Arrow-3, David's Sling, and Iron Dome active defence systems.**
- **Iron Dome:** This system is like a superhero for short-range threats. Designed to counter rockets and mortars fired from Gaza, Iron Dome uses radar to detect incoming projectiles and launches interceptor missiles to destroy them in mid-air. Operational since 2011, this radar-guided system launches interceptor missiles to destroy threats in mid-air. Iron Dome was developed after the 2006 conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, a militant group based in southern Lebanon. Iron Dome was created by Israeli firms Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries, with some US support, external.
- **David's Sling:** This mid-range defence system tackles a wider range of threats. Developed with the US, David's Sling can shoot down ballistic missiles, drones, and cruise missiles travelling from farther distances. David's Sling system is designed to shoot down ballistic missiles fired from 100 km to 200 km (62 to 124 miles) away.
- **Arrow-2 and Arrow-3 System:** These missiles are designed to destroy ballistic missiles high in the atmosphere before they even reach Earth's atmosphere. This high-altitude intercept ensures any non-conventional warheads are safely destroyed. The long-range Arrow system (Arrow-2 and Arrow-3) are said to have been developed with Iran in mind, these interceptor missiles collide with incoming threats using a detachable warhead. This high-altitude intercept ensures any non-traditional explosives are safely detonated away from populated areas. Israel Aerospace Industries is the project's main contractor, while Boeing is said to be involved in producing the interceptors.
- **Hence option (b) is the correct answer.**

Q 84.B

- The Vice President is the highest dignitaries of India, coming next after the President. The normal function of the Vice President is to act as the ex officio chairman of the Council of States. However, the Indian constitution does not attach any function to the office of vice president as such. The Vice President may perform the duties or functions attached to the offices of the Chairman of Rajya Sabha and President, but there are no functions attached to the office of the Vice President as such. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The normal function of the Vice-President is to act as the ex-officio chairman of the councils of states, but if there occurs any vacancy in the office of the President by reason of his death, resignation, removal, or otherwise, the Vice-President shall act as President until a new President is elected and enter upon his office.
- According to Article 62, an election to fill the vacancy in the office of the President must be held within six months from the date of occurrence of the vacancy. The newly elected president will serve a full term of five years from the date on which they enter their office. So, the Vice President can discharge the function of the President being an acting President for a maximum of six months. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Article 71 of the Indian Constitution provides that all the doubt and dispute relating to the election of a President or Vice President is decided by the Supreme Court, whose jurisdiction shall be exclusive and final. If the election of a President or Vice President is declared void by the Supreme Court, acts done by him prior to the date of such decision of the Supreme Court shall not be invalidated. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 85.B

- **Exceptions to Equality:** The rule of equality before law is not absolute and there are constitutional and other exceptions to it. These are mentioned below:
- **The President of India and the Governor of States enjoy the following immunities (Article 361):**
 - The President or the Governor is not answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his office.
 - No criminal proceedings shall be instituted or continued against the President or the Governor in any court during his term of office.
 - No process for the arrest or imprisonment of the President or the Governor shall be issued from any court during his term of office.

- No civil proceedings against the President or the Governor shall be instituted during his term of office in any court in respect of any act done by him in his personal capacity, whether before or after he entered upon his office, until the expiration of two months next after notice has been delivered to him. **Hence 1 and 2 options are correct.**
- Constitutionally, only the President of India and Governors of states and Union Territories enjoy immunity from civil and criminal proceedings until the conclusion of their terms. Article 361 of the Constitution stipulates that these officials are not liable to any court for acts performed in the discharge of their official duties.
- **However, this immunity does not extend to Prime Ministers or Chief Ministers, who are subject to the principle of equality before the law as advocated by the Constitution. Despite this, arrest alone does not warrant disqualification. Hence 3 and 4 options are not correct.**

Q 86.B

- **Judicial Powers of the President of India**
 - The President of India holds significant judicial powers and functions, which include the following:
 - ✓ **Appointment of Judiciary**
 - The President appoints the Chief Justice and other judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts. This power is a critical aspect of the President's role in maintaining the independence and integrity of the judiciary.
 - ✓ **Seeking Advice from the Supreme Court**
 - The President can seek advice from the Supreme Court on any question of law or fact. However, it is important to note that the advice tendered by the Supreme Court is not binding on the President. This provision allows the President to gain clarity on complex legal matters while retaining discretion in decision-making.
 - ✓ **Pardoning Powers**
 - Under Article 72 of the Constitution, the President has the authority to grant pardons, reprieves, respites, and remissions of punishment, or to suspend, remit, or commute the sentence of any person convicted of any offence. The specific cases in which the President can exercise these powers are:
 - **In cases where the punishment or sentence is by a court martial:** This includes any conviction and sentence handed down by a military court. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **In cases where the punishment or sentence is for an offence against a Union law:** This pertains to offences that violate laws enacted by the Parliament.
 - The President can grant such relief only for offences against Union laws, not state laws. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - **In cases where the sentence is a sentence of death:** This is the power to commute or pardon death sentences, which applies regardless of whether the offence is under Union or State law. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 87.B

- **Context:** Agni-prime the new generation ballistic missile flight tested successfully.
- Agni-P is a new generation advanced variant of the Agni class (under IGMDP - Integrated Guided Missile Development Program). It is a **two-stage canisterised** ballistic missile. **Canisterisation of missiles reduces the time required to launch the missile while improving its storage and mobility. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Besides conventional warhead, it is a nuclear-capable advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles. Agni series of missiles constitute the backbone of India's nuclear weapons delivery which also includes the Prithvi short-range ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- It is a canisterised missile with a range capability between 1,000 and 2,000 km. It can be **transported by road and rail** and stored for longer periods, significantly reducing the time required for preparation and launch. The missile uses a **cold launch mechanism** and can be fired in salvo mode. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
- It is lighter than all the earlier Agni series of missiles and will be guided by inertial navigation systems (INS) based on advanced ring-laser gyroscopes. Many advanced technologies including composites, propulsion systems, innovative guidance and control mechanisms and state-of-the-art navigation systems have been introduced.

Q 88.C

- **Grants-in-Aid to the States:**
 - **Statutory Grants:**
 - ✓ **Article 275 empowers Parliament to make grants to states in need of financial assistance, charged to the Consolidated Fund of India. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - ✓ Different sums may be fixed for different states.
 - ✓ Specific grants for promoting the welfare of scheduled tribes or raising the administration level of scheduled areas are also provided.
 - **Discretionary Grants:**
 - ✓ **Article 282 empowers both the Centre and states to make grants for any public purpose, even beyond their legislative competence. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ Known as discretionary grants, as the Centre is not obligated to provide them; the purpose includes aiding states to fulfill plan targets and coordinating state action for national plans.
 - **Other Grants:**
 - ✓ Provision for temporary grants in lieu of export duties on jute and jute products to certain states for ten years from Constitution commencement.

Q 89.C

- **Grants refer to financial allocations provided by governments or organizations to support specific projects, programs, or activities, often to achieve particular objectives or address identified needs.** Grants are typically non-repayable funds awarded based on merit, need, or compliance with specified criteria, and they may come with conditions or reporting requirements.
- Various types of grants:
 - **Supplementary Grant: Additional funds sought when the amount authorized in the budget is insufficient for the year's expenditure. Hence pair 1 is correctly matched.**
 - **Additional Grant: Additional funds allocated beyond what was initially provided in the budget, typically to cover unforeseen or emergent expenditures not accounted for during the budgetary process. Hence pair 2 is correctly matched.**
 - **Vote-on-Account:** An advance grant that allows the government to meet its expenses until the full budget is passed, typically valid for two months.
 - **Vote of Credit:** A grant for meeting an unexpected demand upon the resources of India, such as a war or natural calamity, for which the details cannot be stated in advance.
 - **Exceptional Grant:** A grant made for a special purpose, which forms no part of the current service of any financial year.
 - **Excess Grant: Granted for expenditures that exceed the amount originally sanctioned through the Appropriation Act, requiring subsequent parliamentary approval. Hence pair 3 is correctly matched.**
 - **Token Grant:** A nominal amount (often one rupee) granted to meet new or additional expenditure for which savings are found within the same financial year.

Q 90.B

- **Context:** Recently, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has approved the project for the design and development of India's fifth-generation multirole fighter jet, Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA).
- Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) is India's fifth-generation fighter multirole fighter jet. The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) will be the nodal agency for executing the programme and designing the aircraft. It will be manufactured by state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The AMCA Mk1 variant will have the US-built GE414 engine of the 90 kilonewton (kN) class, while the more advanced AMCA Mk2 will fly on the more powerful 110kN engine, which will be developed indigenously by DRDO's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) in collaboration with a foreign defence major.
- It is a 25-tonne twin-engine aircraft, which will be bigger than other fighters in the Indian Air Force inventory, and will have advanced stealth features to avoid detection by enemy radar. The AMCA will initially be based on geometric stealth, the material stealth shall be focussed upon at a later stage. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- There are two major ways of making a military platform stealthier.
 - **Geometric stealth:** the shape of the aircraft is designed at such angles so as to deflect away maximum radar waves thereby minimising its radar cross-section.

- **Material stealth:** radar-absorbing materials are used in making the aircraft which will absorb the radio waves thus reducing the radar footprint.
- Only a few countries have built a fifth-generation stealth fighter aircraft. The list of the aircraft currently in service includes the F-22 Raptor and F-35A Lightning II of the US, the Chinese J-20 Mighty Dragon, and the Russian Sukhoi Su-57. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**

Q 91.C

- **The Attorney General (AG) of India is a part of the Union Executive. AG is the highest law officer in the country. Article 76 of the Constitution provides for the office of AG of India.**
- AG is appointed by the President on the advice of the government. S/he must be a person who is qualified to be appointed a judge of the Supreme Court, i.e. s/he must be a citizen of India and must have been a judge of some high court for five years or an advocate of some high court for ten years or an eminent jurist, in the opinion of the President. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- **Term of the Office: It is not fixed by the Constitution. Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Removal: Procedures and grounds for the removal of AG are not stated in the Constitution so he holds office at the pleasure of the President (may be removed by the President at any time).**

Q 92.B

- **Context:** PM has offered his reverence to the Shankaracharya Hill and the temple atop it, on his recent visit to Kashmir.
- Shankaracharya Temple is amongst the top religious attractions in Srinagar. It is named after the great philosopher Shankaracharya, who once visited Kashmir. The Hindu temple enjoys a strategic location from where devotees and tourists can see a panoramic view of Srinagar City. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It is also known as the Jyesteshwara temple or Pas-Pahar by Buddhists. Persians and Jews call it Bagh-i-sulaiman or the Garden of King Solomon. Persian inscriptions are also found inside the temple. **It is dedicated to Lord Shiva.** The temple is at a height of 1,000 feet above the plain and overlooks the city of Srinagar. The temple dates to 200 BC, although the present structure probably dates to the 9th century AD. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- **Feature:**
 - This ancient temple is built in the **indigenous early Kashmiri style of architecture** and embraces the techniques prevailing in those days. The early **Shihara style** is prominently evident in the building design and is indicative of a **horseshoe arch type of pattern. Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - It is a **massive stone structure built on a high octagonal plinth** about thirty feet high.
 - The **plinth is surmounted by a low parapet wall.** The shrine consists of a cell, circular inside, with a diameter of thirteen feet.
 - The **square building of the temple is supported by the basement.**

Q 93.B

- **Article 243E of part 9 of the Indian Constitution deals with the duration of the panchayats** constituted for the rural areas under Article 243B of the Indian Constitution.
- **As per Article 243E (1), Every Panchayat, unless sooner dissolved under any law for the time being in force, shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting and no longer. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- **Under Article 243E (4), A Panchayat constituted upon the dissolution of a Panchayat before the expiration of its duration shall continue only for the remainder of the period for which the dissolved Panchayat would have continued under Article 243 (1) had it not been so dissolved. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- **According to Article 243E (3), An election to constitute a Panchayat shall be completed:**
 - before the expiry of its duration specified in Article 243 (1).
 - before the expiration of a period of six months from the date of its dissolution.
- **Provided that where the remainder of the period for which the dissolved Panchayat would have continued is less than six months, it shall not be necessary to hold any election under this clause for constituting the Panchayat. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Q 94.A

- **Context:** Recently, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) marked 75 years of its formation and **Sweden has joined NATO as its 32nd member. Hence option (a) is the correct answer.**
- **About NATO**
- **Founded in 1949, with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty or Washington Treaty, with the aim of acting as a deterrent to the threat of Soviet expansion in Europe after World War II.**

- **Headquarters:** Brussels (Belgium)
- **Nature:** NATO is a political and military alliance of 32 countries from Europe and North America.
 - It is founded on the principle of collective defence (Article 5 of the Treaty), meaning that if one NATO Ally is attacked, then all NATO Allies are attacked.
 - So far, Article 5 has been invoked once – in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.
- **Founding members (12):** Belgium, Canada, Denmark, **France**, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States.
 - Finland joined NATO in 2023
 - Ukraine formally submitted an application to join NATO, in 2022 and it received assurances at Vilnius Summit in 2023.
 - EU members that are not a part of NATO are Austria, Cyprus, Ireland and Malta.
- **Purpose:** NATO provides a unique link between the Europe and North America (the transatlantic link), enabling them to consult and cooperate in the field of defence and security, and conduct multinational crisis-management operations together.
- **Funding:** Every NATO country contributes to the costs of running the Alliance, based on a cost-share formula derived from Gross National Income.

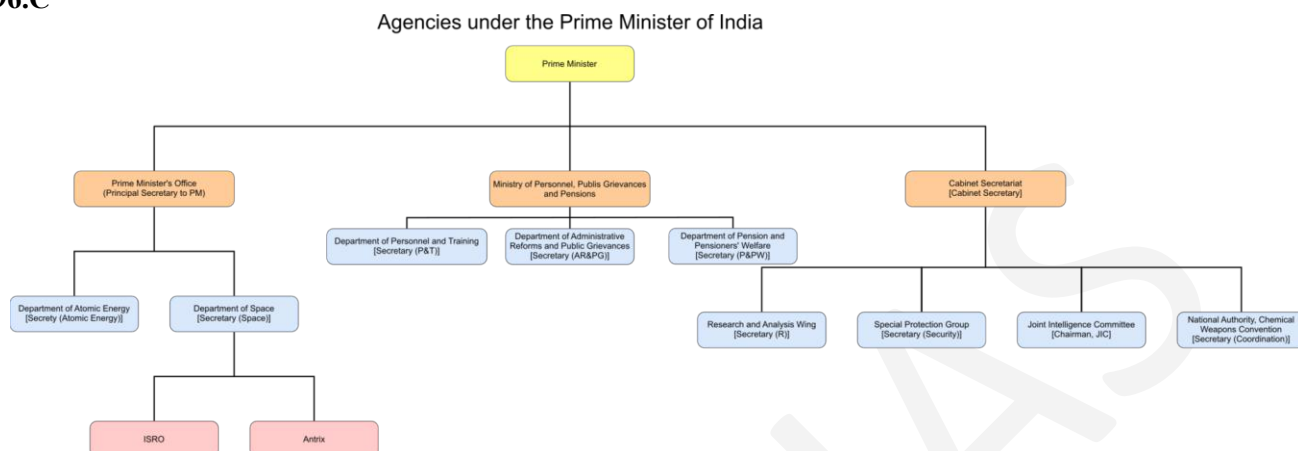


Q 95.B

- **A censure motion is a parliamentary procedure used to express strong disapproval or condemnation of the actions or policies of the government or a specific minister.**
- The motion must be submitted in writing by Members of Parliament (MPs) to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.
- The Speaker decides whether to admit the motion based on its relevance and adherence to parliamentary rules.
- If admitted, the motion is taken up for discussion. MPs debate the merits and demerits of the actions or policies under scrutiny.
- A representative of the government, typically the concerned minister, responds to the points raised during the debate, providing justifications and clarifications.
- The motion is put to a vote after the debate. Unlike a no-confidence motion, a censure motion can be passed by a simple majority of the members present and voting.
- **If the motion is passed, it expresses the disapproval of the House but does not necessarily lead to the resignation of the government or the minister concerned. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- **The motion must clearly state the reasons for censure, focusing on specific actions or policies rather than general dissatisfaction. Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- **A censure motion can be introduced in the Rajya Sabha (the upper house of the Indian Parliament) as well as in the Lok Sabha (the lower house). It is not restricted to a specific house. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

- The censure motion serves as an important tool for parliamentary oversight, holding the government accountable for its actions.
- It allows MPs to formally express their dissatisfaction with government policies or actions, thereby influencing public opinion and policy decisions.
- It reinforces the democratic process by ensuring that the government remains responsive to the concerns of elected representatives.

Q 96.C



- **The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) was set up under the direct charge of the Prime Minister through a Presidential Order on August 3, 1954.** As per this order, all businesses of the Government of India, related to Atomic Energy and to the functions of the Central Government under the Atomic Energy Act, 1948 (XXIX of 1948) were directed to be transacted in the Department of Atomic Energy.
- DAE encompasses all the areas related to power and non-power applications of atomic energy. The Department has the mandate of development of nuclear power technology which includes exploration, identification, and processing of uranium resources and atomic minerals, fabrication of nuclear fuel, production of heavy water, construction and operation of nuclear power plants, nuclear fuel reprocessing, and waste management.
- DAE is also responsible for research and development of fast reactor and fusion technologies, accelerator and laser technology, advanced electronics and instrumentation, materials science, biological sciences, etc. As part of non-power applications of atomic energy, the Department carries out cutting-edge research and development for the application of isotopes and radiation technologies for health care, food & agriculture, industry, and the environment. **Hence, option 1 is correct.**
- **The Department of Space (DoS) operates directly under the charge of the Prime Minister of India and is responsible for the administration of the space program in the country.** The Department of Space (DOS) has the primary objective of promoting development and application of Space Science and Technology to assist in all-round development of the nation. The Government of India constituted the Space Commission and established the DOS in June, 1972 and brought ISRO under DOS in September 1972.
- The Space Commission formulates the policies and supervises the implementation of the Indian space program to promote the development and application of space science and technology for the socio-economic benefit of the country. DOS implements its programs mainly through the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL), North Eastern-Space Applications Centre (NE-SAC) and Semi-Conductor Laboratory (SCL). The Antrix Corporation, a government-owned company, markets the space products and services. **Hence, option 2 is correct.**
- **The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister of India, is the apex body for Disaster Management in India.** Setting up of NDMA and the creation of an enabling environment for institutional mechanisms at the State and District levels is mandated by the Disaster Management Act, 2005. NDMA is mandated to lay down the policies, plans and guidelines for Disaster Management. India envisions the development of an ethos of Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, and Response. **Although chaired by the Prime Minister, NDMA operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs. Hence, option 3 is not correct.**
- **The Cabinet Secretariat functions directly under the Prime Minister.** The administrative head of the Secretariat is the Cabinet Secretary who is also the ex-officio Chairman of the Civil Services Board. The

business allocated to the Cabinet Secretariat under the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 includes (i) Secretarial assistance to the Cabinet and Cabinet Committees; and (ii) Rules of Business.

- **The Cabinet Secretariat is responsible for the administration of the Government of India (Transaction of Business) Rules, 1961 and Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 facilitating smooth transaction of business in Ministries/ Departments.** The Secretariat assists in decision-making in Government by ensuring Inter-Ministerial coordination, ironing out differences amongst Ministries/Departments, and evolving consensus through the instrumentality of the standing/adhoc Committees of Secretaries. Management of major crisis situations in the country and coordinating activities of various ministries in such a situation is also one of the functions of the Cabinet Secretariat. **Hence, option 4 is correct.**

Q 97.C

- **Explanation of Ministers' Salaries and Allowances:**
 - **The salaries and allowances of ministers in a state are determined by the state legislature.** This process ensures that the remuneration of ministers is aligned with the financial status and policies of the state government.
 - The state legislature periodically reviews and sets these salaries and allowances based on various factors, including economic conditions and the responsibilities of the ministers. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
 - **A minister receives the salary and allowances that are payable to a member of the state legislature. In addition to these basic remunerations, a minister is entitled to several other benefits. Hence statement 2 is not correct.**
 - These additional benefits include a sumptuary allowance (which varies according to the minister's rank), free accommodation, traveling allowance, and medical facilities, among others.
 - These extra benefits are provided to ensure that ministers can effectively perform their duties without personal financial constraints affecting their public responsibilities.

Q 98.A

- Recently, the Supreme Court emphasized the crucial role of State legislative Assemblies in electing Rajya Sabha members, stressing the need for free and fearless voting without persecution.
- The Rajya Sabha, also known as the Council of States, is the upper house of the bicameral Parliament of India. It plays a crucial role in the Indian political system, alongside the Lok Sabha
- **Rajya Sabha Elections**
 - Unlike the Lok Sabha, whose members are directly elected by the voters, Rajya Sabha members are elected by the elected members of state legislative assemblies and the Union Territories of Delhi and Puducherry.
 - **Election Process:**
 - ✓ **Nomination:** Candidates file nominations, which are scrutinised by the Returning Officer.
 - ✓ **Allotment of Symbols:** Candidates are allotted electoral symbols.
 - ✓ **Polling:** Voting takes place in the state legislative assemblies and the Union Territory legislative assemblies.
 - ✓ **Counting:** Votes are counted.
 - ✓ **Declaration of Results:** The Returning Officer declares the elected candidates.
- **Term of Office:**
 - Rajya Sabha members have a tenure of six years.
 - However, one-third of the members retire every two years, leading to a staggered election process.
- **Elections to the Rajya Sabha are held through a secret ballot system for the following reasons:**
 - The secret ballot ensures that members of the Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) can vote without fear of external pressure or intimidation.
 - The secrecy of the ballot prevents the creation of vote banks or political alliances, which could potentially lead to unfair or biased elections. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Anti-Defection Law and Rajya Sabha Cross-Voting.**
 - The anti-defection law, enshrined in the Tenth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, aims to prevent defections from political parties to promote political stability.
 - It prohibits members of elected bodies, including the Rajya Sabha, from switching parties.
 - However, a **key exception exists in the case of Rajya Sabha cross-voting. Under the Tenth Schedule, an MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) cannot be disqualified for voting against their party line in a Rajya Sabha election.**
 - ✓ **Reasons**
 - MLAs have the freedom to exercise their individual discretion in this indirect electoral process.

- This exception also fosters inter-party cooperation and reduces the rigid party line divisions that can sometimes hamper political dialogue and consensus-building. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

Q 99.B

- A cantonment Board is established to administer and manage the civilian population living in cantonment areas. It operates per the provisions of the **Cantonment Act of 2006** and falls under the jurisdiction of the Union Defence Ministry. Thus, unlike municipal corporations, notified area committees, and town area committees, which are created and administered by the state government, a cantonment board is created and administered by the central government. **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- A cantonment board consists of **eight elected members, three nominated military members**, three ex-officio members (station commander, garrison engineer and senior executive medical officer), and one representative of the district magistrate. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The executive officer of the cantonment board is **appointed by the President**. He implements all the resolutions and decisions of the board and its committees. He belongs to the central cadre established for the purpose. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q 100.C

- **Qualification for membership of state legislature:** The Constitution lays down the following **qualifications** for a person to be chosen a member of the state legislature.
 - He must be a **citizen of India**.
 - He must make and subscribe to an oath or affirmation before the person authorised by the Election Commission for this purpose. In his oath or affirmation, he swears: (i) **To bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution of India**; (ii) To uphold the **sovereignty and integrity of India**.
 - He must be not less **than 30 years of age in the case of the legislative council** and **not less than 25 years of age in the case of the legislative assembly**. **Hence statement 3 is not correct.**
 - He **must possess** other qualifications **prescribed by Parliament**. Accordingly, the Parliament has laid down the following additional qualifications in the **Representation of People Act (1951)**:
 - ✓ A person to be elected to the **legislative council** must be an **elector for an assembly constituency in the concerned state** and to be qualified for the governor's nomination, he must be a **resident in the concerned state**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - ✓ A person to be elected to the **legislative assembly** must be an **elector for an assembly constituency** in the concerned state.
 - ✓ He must be a member of a **scheduled caste or scheduled tribe** if he wants to contest a seat **reserved for them**. However, a member of scheduled castes or scheduled tribes can also contest a seat not reserved for them.
 - ✓ A retired member is eligible for re-nomination. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**