



# IAS PARLIAMENT

*Information is a Blessing*

A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

## MONTHLY PRESTORMING

### APRIL 2020

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**01-04-2020**

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Tablighi Jamaat*

1. It is a reformist Muslim organization set up in 1926 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
2. The movement is based on six principles and its roots lie in the Deobandi version of the Hanafi school of jurisprudence.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *SARS-CoV-2*

1. Like other coronaviruses, SARS-CoV-2 particles are spherical and have proteins called spikes protruding from their surface.
2. These SARS-CoV-2 spikes bind to receptors on the human cell surface called angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Sodium hypochlorite*

1. It is corrosive and is not recommended to be used on human beings, certainly not as a spray or shower.
2. The diluted form of sodium hypochlorite is commonly used as an antacid to treat heartburn, indigestion, and upset stomach.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) Which of the following tribal groups is/are *not* the inhabitants of the state of *Arunachal Pradesh*?

1. Adi Tribe
2. Galos Tribe
3. Mikir Tribe
4. Nyishi Tribe
5. Banjara Tribe

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 5 only
- b. 3 and 5 only
- c. All except 4
- d. None

5) *Operation Namaste*, often seen in the news recently is associated with which of the following?

- a. Indian Army
- b. National Disaster Response Force
- c. Indian Council of Medical Research
- d. None of the above

## Answers

1. b

- Over 200 have tested positive for COVID-19 from among 4,000-odd who had gathered in Delhi's Markaz Nizamuddin, the headquarters of the *Tablighi Jamaat*. A look at what the movement is about:

**What is *Tablighi Jamaat*?**

- Tablighi Jamaat, which literally means a society for spreading the faith, is a **Sunni Islamic missionary movement**.
- The proselytising movement aims to reach out to ordinary Muslims and revive their faith, particularly in matters of ritual, dress, and personal behaviour.

#### **How did the movement begin?**

- Its roots lie in the **Deobandi version of the Hanafi school** of jurisprudence.
- It was launched by Deoband cleric and prominent Islamic scholar **Maulana Muhammad Ilyas Khandhalaw** in 1927 in Mewat.
- Its emergence also coincided with Hindu proselytising movements.
- While Maulana Ilyas taught at the Mazaharul Uloom in Saharanpur in the mid-1920s, a few hundred kilometers away were the economically and educationally backward Meo peasants, mostly Muslims who were largely practicing Hindu traditions.
- Maulana Ilyas began bringing Meo Muslims back into the fold of traditional Islam; he trained several young men from Deoband and Saharanpur and sent them to Mewat, where the Tablighi Jamaat established a network of madrasas and Mosque.

#### **How wide is its reach?**

- In two decades after its launch, the Tablighi Jamaat had spread beyond the Mewat region.
- In the first Tablighi conference held in 1941, approximately 25,000 people from across North India attended.
- After Partition in 1947, a Pakistan chapter was started in the town of Raiwind, Lahore.
- Currently, Bangladesh has one of the largest chapters.
- The Tablighi Jamaat also has a significant base in the United States and Britain, which has a large Indian subcontinent diaspora.
- It also has a presence in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.

#### **How does it promote Islam?**

The Tablighi Jamaat is based on **six principles**.

- The first is the **kalimah**, an article of faith in which the Tabligh accepts that there is no God but Allah and that Prophet Muhammad is his messenger.
  - The second is **salaat**, or prayer five times daily.
  - The third is **ilm and dhikr**, the knowledge and remembrance of Allah conducted in sessions in which the congregation listens to preaching by the imam, performs prayers, recites the Quran and reads the Hadith; the congregation also uses these sessions to dine together, thus fostering a sense of community and identity.
  - The fourth principle is **ikram-i-Muslim**, the treatment of fellow Muslims with honour.
  - The fifth is **ikhlas-i-niyat**, or sincerity of intention.
  - And the sixth is **dawat-o-tabligh**, or proselytisation.
2. c
- *Alcohol's function in killing the virus is much the same as that of the common soap, which has emerged the greatest weapon against COVID-19 with the limited availability of sanitisers.*
  - Handwashing for 20 seconds at least kills the virus.
  - When using a sanitiser, it should ideally have an alcohol content of 60% or more.
  - The novel coronavirus has a lipid envelope. Soap being a detergent destroys the envelope. The same is true for alcohol

#### **How it kills the virus?**

- Like other coronaviruses, SARS-CoV-2 particles are spherical and have proteins called spikes protruding from their surface.
- These spikes latch onto human cells, then undergo a structural change that allows the viral membrane to fuse with the cell membrane.
- The viral genes can then enter the host cell to be copied, producing more viruses.
- Recent work shows that, like the virus that caused the 2002 SARS outbreak, SARS-CoV-2

spikes bind to receptors on the human cell surface called angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2).”

- All of this is held together by a fatty layer, called an envelope.
- That is the layer that is disrupted when it comes into contact with soap or a hand sanitiser with more than 60% alcohol.
- Disruption of the envelope causes the virus to come undone, and kills it.

3. a

- *In several places, migrant workers travelling to their home states, or their belongings, were sprayed with a disinfectant, apparently to sanitise them.*
- The chemical in the spray was a **Sodium Hypochlorite** solution.
- Sodium hypochlorite is commonly used as a **bleaching agent**, and also **to sanitise swimming pools**.

**Is the chemical safe?**

- As a common bleaching agent, sodium hypochlorite is used for a variety of cleaning and disinfecting purposes.
- **It releases chlorine**, which is a disinfectant.
- The concentration of the chemical in the solution varies according to the purpose it is meant for.
- Large quantities of chlorine can be harmful.
- A normal household bleach usually is a 2-10% sodium hypochlorite solution.
- At a much lower 0.25-0.5%, this chemical is used to treat skin wounds like cuts or scrapes.
- An even weaker solution (0.05%) is sometimes used as a handwash.
- If it gets inside the body, it can cause serious harm to lungs.
- Sodium hypochlorite is corrosive, and is meant largely to clean hard surfaces.
- **It is not recommended to be used on human beings, certainly not as a spray or shower.**

- Even a 0.05% solution could be very harmful for the eyes.

4. b

#### **Tribal Lockdown Rituals**

- Tribes in Arunachal Pradesh have revived indigenous lockdown rituals to contain the spread of COVID-19.
- It is to be noted that state of Arunachal Pradesh is geographically closest to China's Hubei province where the COVID-19 outbreak began.
- The tribes which follow self-quarantine are as follows

#### **Galos Tribe**

- The Galos, which are one of the 26 major tribes of Arunachal Pradesh that dominate West Siang district practised the Arr-Rinam ritual.
- The Galo community has been recognized as a Scheduled Tribe in the Amendment to the Constitution (ST), Order, 1950, Part-XVIII.
- Mopin is the main festival in Galos which is celebrated for the prosperity of the villages.
- The Galos perform Popir dance.
- Arr-Rinam is the Galo equivalent of lockdown imposed by consensus for 48 hours whenever an epidemic strikes.
- The Arr-Rinam follows the Ali-Ternam (the word Ali means epidemic and Ternam means forestall) ritual to ward off an epidemic.
- These rituals were last performed almost four decades ago when a water-borne disease had affected many members of the community.
- However, these rituals have been performed periodically for livestock, primarily the semi-wild animal mithun, that are prone to contagious diseases.
- This is for the first time in 30-40 years that the rituals were performed for the safety of humans.
- The Bos or deputy priests performed the Ali-Ternam under the guidance of a Nyibo (shaman).
- The ritual ended with the community leaders sealing five major entry points of the district.



### Adi Tribe

- The Adi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh is believed to have come from southern China in the 16th century.
- They are the Tibeto-Burman language speaking population.
- They reside in the far north inhabiting East Siang and Lower Dibang Valley districts of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Adis are experts at making cane and bamboo items.
- Solung (harvesting festival where animal sacrifices and rituals are performed) and Aran (a hunting festival where all the male members of the family go for hunting) are two major festivals of the Adi tribes.
- The Adi community perform lock down ritual called the motor or pator system in the Adi (tribe) dialect.
- This is a customary self-restriction, where the locals lock down several villages by erecting barricades to prevent the entry of outsiders.
- No person is allowed to enter or leave the villages.
- They believe that this ritual lets shamans with legendary powers to locate wild herbs to combat an epidemic.

### Nyishi Tribe

- Nyishi Tribes also called Bangni are the tribal people of eastern Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh (formerly North East Frontier Agency).
- Nyishi is a Scheduled Tribe.
- It is the single largest tribe of Arunachal Pradesh.
- They speak the Tibeto-Burman language of the Sino-Tibetan family.
- The Nyishi support themselves with slash-and-burn agriculture and with hunting and fishing.
- They live together in a longhouse without partitions but with a separate fireplace for each conjugal family.

- Aside from a patrilineal household there is no formal social organization or village government.
- Their religion involves belief in spirits associated with nature.
- In districts such as Papum Pare and East Kameng, the dominant Nyishi community observed Arrue involving self-quarantine.

5. a

### Operation Namaste: Indian Army

- The Indian Army has code-named its anti-COVID-19 campaign as Operation Namaste to help the government in its fight against the pandemic.
- Soldiers are advised to follow the lockdown, wherever they do not have any operational role, and stay fit.
- Under the operation soldiers are assured that their families will be well taken care of.

02-04-2020

1) COVID-Net often seen in the news recently is?

- a. A deep neural network that will look at chest radiography images to determine whether a patient is infected
- b. A database maintained by the World Health Organisation to monitor the pandemic COVID-19
- c. A National level testing agency launched by the Government of India
- d. None of the above

2) For which of the following diseases, bats are the natural reservoir of the viruses that causes the disease?

1. Nipah
2. Rabies
3. Marburg
4. Hendra viruses

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. All except 2



- b. All except 2 and 4
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. All of the above

- c. West Pacific Ocean
- d. South Pacific Ocean

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Price Monitoring & Resource Unit (PMRU)*

1. It will be setup by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) and each unit will be function under the direct supervision of NPPA.
2. The major objective of setting up the PMRUs are to provide necessary technical assistance to the State Drug Controllers and NPPA.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *India VIX Index*

1. India VIX index is the first of its kind in the world and was introduced in 1993.
2. It is an index used to measure the near term volatility expectations of the markets.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) *Natuna Island* sometimes seen in the news recently is located in which of the following regions?

- a. Adriatic Sea
- b. South China Sea

## Answers

1. a

- **COVID-Net** is a deep neural network that will look at chest radiography images to determine whether a patient is infected with COVID-19.
- Researchers part of the Canadian startup DarwinAI Corp along with researchers Linda Wang and Alexander Wong at the University of Waterloo, Canada have designed this AI-system to help with the detection of COVID-19 cases, and published details in a research paper.

2. d

- Many studies over the years have found bats to be a natural reservoir for a large number of zoonotic viruses that have caused outbreaks in many countries in the past.
- These include **rabies, Marburg, Nipah and Hendra viruses**.
- According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), SARS-CoV was transmitted to humans from civet cats, and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels.
- Both the viruses, however, are believed to have originated from bats and subsequently passed on to other animals.
- While researchers are yet to conclude how the novel coronavirus, which was first detected in China's Wuhan, originated, many believe it could be traced back to bats.

3. b

- *Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory has become 12th State, where the Price Monitoring & Resource Unit (PMRU) has been set up by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA).*
- PMRUs have already been set up by NPPA in 11 States, including, Kerala, Odisha, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Mizoram.

- Each unit will be function under the direct supervision of the **concerned State Drug Controller**.
- The major objective of setting up the PMRUs are to provide necessary technical assistance to the State Drug Controllers and NPPA.
- PMRU will also collect samples of medicines, collect and analyse data and make reports with respect to availability and over-pricing of medicines for taking action under the provisions of Drug Price Control Order (DPCO).

4. b

- *In the current calendar year, the India VIX index has jumped fivefold, from around 12 levels to the current 67 levels, which clearly hints that the market perceives that volatility will only increase in the coming days.*
- *India VIX index is not the first of its kind in the world.*

#### Volatility Index (VIX)

- VIX (Volatility index) is an index used to measure the near term volatility expectations of the markets.
- Volatility signifies the rate and magnitude of change in the stock price or index value.
- The movement in the VIX index reflects the overall market volatility expectations over the next 30 days.
- Given the nature of the index, it is also known as 'fear gauge' or 'fear index'.
- The VIX index was first created by the Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE) and introduced in 1993 based on the prices of S&P 500 index.

#### India VIX Index

- It was launched by National Stock Exchange (NSE) in 2010 and is based on the computation methodology of CBOE though amended to align with the Indian markets.
- India VIX indicates the Indian market's volatility from the investor's perception.
- Volatility and the value of India VIX move parallel. i.e a spike in the VIX value means the

market is expecting higher volatility in the near future and vice versa.

- India VIX also has a strong negative correlation with Nifty. i.e every time India VIX falls, Nifty rises and when India VIX rises, Nifty falls.
- VIX value is among the important parameters that are taken into account for pricing of options contracts, which are one of the most popular derivative instruments.

5. b

- *China has sparked a major maritime confrontation with Indonesia recently near the South China Sea with dozens of Chinese fishing vessels, along with a coast guard escort, entering waters off the **Natuna Islands**, which are within Indonesia's exclusive economic zone but are also claimed by China.*



**03-04-2020**

**1) AarogyaSetu, a mobile app developed in public-private partnership to bring the people of India together in a resolute fight against COVID-19 was launched recently by?**

- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with WHO





2) Consider the following statements with respect to *High Courts*

1. The territorial jurisdiction of a high court is co-terminus with the territory of a state.
2. Among the union territories, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir has a separate high court.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) '*Stranded in India*' portal was launched recently by?

- a. Ministry of Tourism
- b. Ministry of Home Affairs
- c. Ministry of External Affairs
- d. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Counter Cyclical Capital Buffer (CCyB)*

1. CCyB is the capital to be kept by a bank to meet business cycle related risks.
2. It is aimed to protect the banking sector against losses from changes in economic conditions like recession.
3. It is an important theme of the Basel III norms.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Book Trust, India*

1. It is the national body for book publishing and book promotion in India.
2. It also act as a repository of the non-current records of the Government of India and holds them in trust for the use of administrators and scholars.
3. It works under the Department of Culture, Ministry of Culture.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

### Answers

1. c

- The **Ministry of Electronics and Information and Technology (MeitY)** has recently launched a mobile app called **AarogyaSetu** which will help people in identifying the risk of getting affected by the CoronaVirus.
- The app built through public private partnership assesses themselves the risk for their catching the Corona Virus infection.
- It will calculate this based on their interaction with others, using cutting edge Bluetooth technology, algorithms and artificial intelligence.
- Once installed in a smart phone, the app detects other nearby devices with AarogyaSetu installed.
- The app can then calculate the risk of infection based on sophisticated parameters if any of these contacts is tested positive.
- The App's design ensures privacy-first.
- The personal data collected by the App is encrypted using state-of-the-art technology and stays secure on the phone till it is needed for facilitating medical intervention.



2. a

- The Constitution of India provides for a high court for each state, but the Seventh Amendment Act of 1956 authorised the Parliament to establish a common high court for two or more states or for two or more states and a union territory.
- **The territorial jurisdiction of a high court is co-terminus with the territory of a state.**
- **Similarly, the territorial jurisdiction of a common high court is co-terminus with the territories of the concerned states and union territory.**
- Among the eight union territories, Delhi alone has a separate high court (since 1966).
- The union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have a common high court.
- *Justice Rajnesh Oswal was sworn in as a permanent Judge of the common High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh recently.*
- *He is the first Judge of the High Court to take oath under the Indian Constitution.*
- *All previous Judges of High Court had taken oath under the constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, which ceased to have effect since August 5, 2019.*

3. a

- The **Ministry of Tourism** has launched a portal 'Stranded in India' to help foreign tourists who are stuck in various parts of the country.
- The portal will disseminate information regarding the services that can be availed by foreign tourists who are stuck far away from their home land.
- The portal consists of information around Covid-19 helpline numbers and call centres that foreign tourists can reach out for help, information around Ministry of External Affairs control centers along with their contact information and information around state-based/regional tourism support infrastructure.

4. d

- *Recently RBI has deferred the implementation of Counter Cyclical Capital Buffer (CCyB) for banks.*
- *It has decided that it is not necessary to activate CCyB for a period of one year or earlier, as may be necessary.*

#### Counter Cyclical Capital Buffer (CCyB)

- CCyB is the capital to be kept by a bank to meet business cycle related risks.
- It is aimed to protect the banking sector against losses from changes in economic conditions like recession.
- This is an important theme of the Basel III norms.

5. a

- **National Book Trust, India**, the national body for book publishing and book promotion under the **Ministry of Human Resource Development**, Government of India.
- The **National Archives of India (NAI)** is a repository of the non-current records of the Government of India and holds them in trust for the use of administrators and scholars.

04-04-2020

#### 1) Which of the following is not true regarding Cytokines?

- Cytokines are signaling proteins that are released by cells at local high concentrations
- A Cytokine Storm Syndrome (CSS) is characterized by the overproduction of immune cells and the cytokines themselves
- Secretion of too many cytokines enhances the surge of activated immune cells into the lungs, thereby helps in improving the immune response
- None of the above

#### 2) Consider the following statements with respect to Red Flag Exercise

- It is a series of Pacific Air Forces-sponsored field training exercises for U.S. and its partner nation forces.



2. India has participated in every edition of this biennial exercise since its first participation in 2008.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following pairs

**Projects – Purposes**

- Project Isaac – Development of Indigenous Ventilator prototype
- Project Praana – Development of Border roads in the state of Arunachal Pradesh

Which of the pair(s) given above is/are *incorrectly* matched?

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

4) Article 324 of Indian Constitution deals with which of the following?

- Reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the House of the People
- Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission
- Power of Parliament to legislate with respect to a matter in the State List in the national interest
- None of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)*

- It is a quasi judicial institution specializes in dealing with appeals under the Direct Taxes Acts.

2. The orders passed by the ITAT are final, an appeal lies to the High Court only if a substantial question of law arises for determination.

3. It functions under the Department of Financial Services in the Ministry of Finance.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

**Answers**

1. c

- A subset of the infected patients develop severe COVID-19 because of an overreaction of their immune systems, which triggers what is known as a “**Cytokine Storm Syndrome**” (CSS).

**Working of Immune System**

- The immune systems in our bodies protect us from bacteria, viruses, and parasites by removing them from our systems.
- The immune system gets activated by things that the body does not recognise as its own.
- These things are called **antigens**, and include **bacteria, fungi and viruses**.
- An effective immune system response involves inflammation, an important and indispensable part of the process.
- This is visible when, for example, you hurt your knee or ankle — the area of this external injury becomes red and swollen, and the immune system in response deploys white blood cells to the injured area to begin work on repairs.
- Without such an immune response, injuries would not heal, and infections would become deadly.
- Inflammation has an important protective function. The release of inflammatory mediators increases the blood flow to the area,

which allows larger numbers of immune system cells to be carried to the injured tissue, thereby aiding the repairing process.

- However, if this inflammatory response is not regulated, very dangerous consequences can follow.
- This is when a 'cytokine storm' can be triggered.
- The damage to the surrounding cells can be catastrophic, leading to sepsis and potentially, death.

### **Cytokine Storm Syndrome**

- **Cytokines** are signalling proteins that are released by cells at local high concentrations — a cytokine storm or **CSS is characterised by the overproduction of immune cells** and the cytokines themselves because of a dysregulation in the process.
- A severe immune reaction, leading to the **secretion of too many cytokines** in the bloodstream, can be **harmful** since an excess of immune cells can attack **healthy tissue as well**.

### **What causes the severe immune reaction in the first place?**

- The United States National Cancer Institute (NCI) says on its website that a cytokine storm can occur due to an infection, auto-immune condition, or other diseases.
- Signs and symptoms include high fever, inflammation (redness and swelling), severe fatigue, and nausea.
- Cytokine storms are **not exclusive to coronavirus** patients.
- It is an immune reaction that can occur during other infectious and non-infectious diseases as well.

### **Impact of CSS in a COVID-19 patient**

- In the case of any flu infection, a cytokine storm is associated with a surge of activated immune cells into the lungs, which, instead of fighting off the antigen, leads to lung inflammation and fluid build-up, and respiratory distress.
- CSS is seen as a likely major cause of mortality in both the 1918-20 Spanish Flu that killed

more than 50 million people worldwide, and the H1N1 (swine flu) and H5N1 (bird flu) outbreaks in recent years.

- Increased pro-inflammatory cytokine responses against human coronaviruses such as SARS-CoV-1 (which caused SARS), SARS-CoV-2 (which is responsible for the current COVID-19 pandemic), and MERS can result in acute lung injury and acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).
- If the clinical features of CSS are not recognised and adequate treatment is not promptly instituted, multiple organ failure can result.

2. a

- *The U.S. Air Force has cancelled Phase-I of its flagship multilateral air exercise, **Red Flag**, scheduled in Alaska from April 30.*
- *The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** was to take part in the exercise with its Sukhoi Su-30 fighter jets, defence sources said.*

### **Red Flag-Alaska Exercise**

- It is a series of Pacific Air Forces-sponsored field training exercises for U.S. and partner nation forces
- It enables joint and international units to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures while improving interoperability in a realistic threat environment.
- It meant to provide realistic training in a simulated combat environment over the Joint Pacific Alaska range complex.

### **India and Red Flag**

- The IAF joined Red Flag for the first time in 2008 in Nevada.
- However, it had said **it would not take part in every edition of the biennial exercise** because of the high cost involved.

3. c

### **Project Isaac**

- Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IITGN) has launched Project Isaac to engage its students in creative projects to enhance their critical skills while they are confined to their homes because of Corona virus.

- The official release said, the project is inspired by Sir Isaac Newton, who was similarly sent home by Trinity College, Cambridge, because of the Great Plague of London in 1665.
- During this year, Newton, then a 22-year-old college student developed some of his most profound discoveries, including early calculus, as well as his theories of optics and gravity.
- As part of the project, four different competitions are being organized by IIT, Gandhinagar to cultivate new skills among students regarding writing, painting, coding, music, creative expression, and so on. Students can take part in competitions online.
- Nearly 40 per cent of IITGN students are already participating in various activities, which are entirely voluntary.
- Project Isaac is a model for academic institutions worldwide to explore ways to engage students in the midst of the pandemic.

#### **Project Praana**

- IISc Bengaluru has developed an indigenous ventilator prototype under project Praana in view of COVID-19 crisis.
- The project is a voluntary effort to help the nation at the time of crisis.
- The ventilator has been developed using materials readily available in India.
- The prototype has mass flow sensors and controllers which accurately tell how much oxygen is flowing and what volume the patient is inhaling in one breath.
- Pneumatics is built around mass produced water filter hardware.
- The control system is built around open source industrial controller.
- In a large country like India, the biggest challenge is the manufacturing of such ventilators on a mass-scale due to limited access to pneumatic and electronic hardware, sensors and actuators in the global marketplace.
- The indigenous ventilator prototype build under Project Praana will address the issue.

4. b

- In view of COVID-19 situation, Election Commission of India invoking its powers under Article 324 of the Constitution of India read with section 153 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 has further extended the period of Rajya Sabha election beyond the prescribed term(s) of 18 seats across seven States.
- Article 324 deals with the Superintendence, direction and control of elections to be vested in an Election Commission

5. a

- ITAT works under the **Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice.**

**06-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Pathalgadi Movement**

- 1. The Movement was founded in 1840 by Bhagat Jawahar Mal in Western Punjab.**
- 2. Its basic tenets were abolition of caste and similar discriminations among Sikhs.**

**Which of the following statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to CAWACH**

- 1. It is a Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH) launched by the Department of Science & Technology.**
- 2. It is mandated to extend timely support to potential startups by way of the requisite financial assistance targeting innovations that are deployable in the market within the next 6 months.**





3. Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE) is the Implementing Agency of the CAWACH.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3
- None

3) Operation Sanjeevani is associated with which of the following?

- Indian Air Force and Indonesia
- Indian Navy and Maldives
- Indian Army and Nepal
- None of the above

4) Consider the following statements with respect to Solomon Islands

- It is located in the South-Western Pacific Ocean.
- It consists of a double chain of volcanic islands and coral atolls in Melanesia.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) Consider the following statements

- At the age of 30, he left his family and royal household, gave up his worldly possessions.
- He attained Keval-Jnana under a Sal tree.
- He organized his followers, into a four fold order, namely monk (Sadhu), nun (Sadhvi), layman (Shravak), and laywoman (Shravika).

Identify the personality who correctly matches with the above description:

- Ramanuja
- Mahavira
- Gautama Budha
- Ramakrishna Paramahansa

### Answers

1. d

- The Pathalgadi Movement, gained popularity in several villages of Jharkhand's Khunti district in late 2016.
- The district is widely known for being the birthplace of tribal freedom fighter and folk hero Birsa Munda.
- Since 2016, the movement has gained popularity in Chhattisgarh, Odisha, other districts of Jharkhand and parts of West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.
- Historically, the word 'Pathalgadi' comes from a tribal custom of positioning a stone on a dead person's tomb.
- The custom is more frequently practised among tribes from the "Austro-Asiatic linguistic family such as the Mundas, Khasis, etc."
- Contemporarily, drawing from this custom, Adivasi communities display messages on large stones, known locally as Pathalgadi, that are painted green and measure about 15 feet and 4 feet.
- The movement seeks to replace the power of the central and state government with that of the local gram sabha.
- Thus, the messages they display include excerpts from the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) as well as warnings to outsiders that inform them not to enter the villages.

2. c

**Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH)**

- Department of Science & Technology, in a rapid response to combat COVID-19 global pandemic approved setting up of a Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH).
- CAWACH will scout, evaluate and support the innovations and start-ups that address COVID-19 challenges.
- The Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), a technology business incubator at IIT Bombay supported by DST has been identified as the Implementing Agency of the CAWACH.
- The CAWACH's mandate will be to extend timely support to potential startups by way of the requisite financial assistance and fund deployment targeting innovations that are deployable in the market within next 6 months.
- CAWACH will identify upto 50 innovations and startups that are in the area of novel, low cost, safe and effective ventilators, respiratory aids, protective gears, novel solutions for sanitizers, disinfectants, diagnostics, therapeutics, informatics and any effective interventions to control COVID-19.
- It will provide access to pan India networks for testing, trial and market deployment of these products and solutions in the identified areas of priority COVID-19 solutions.
- This will help to address various challenges faced by country due to severe impact of Covid-19.

3. d

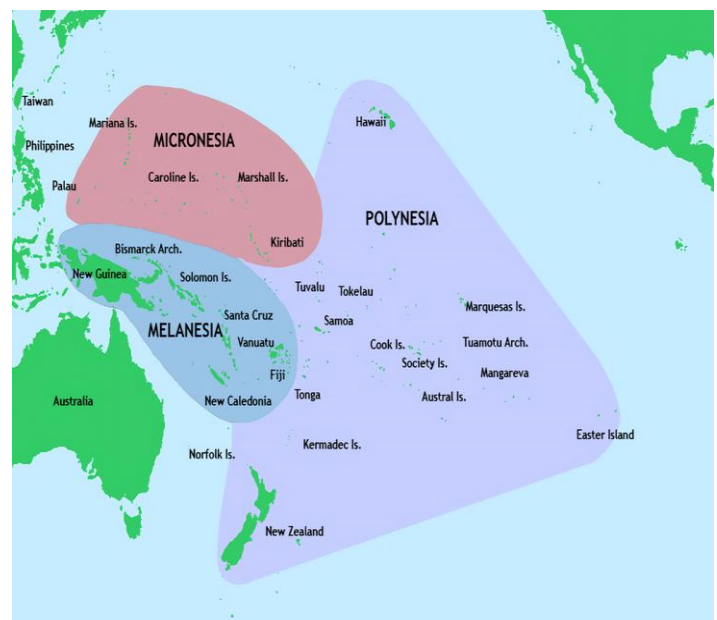
#### **Operation Sanjeevani**

- Under **Operation Sanjeevani**, an **Indian Air Force** (IAF) C-130J transport aircraft delivered 6.2 tons of essential medicines and hospital consumables to **Maldives**.
- These medicines and consumables were procured from eight suppliers in India but couldn't be transported through any other means due to the 21-day lockdown imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19.
- At the request of the government of Maldives, the IAF aircraft activated Operation Sanjeevani and lifted these medicines from airports in

New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Madurai before flying to the Maldives.

- Among other things, these medicines include influenza vaccines, anti-viral drugs such as lopinavir and ritonavir which have been used to treat patients with COVID-19 in other countries.

4. c





5. b

- Mahavir Jayanti is celebrated annually on the 13th day of the Hindu month of Chaitra.
- Mahavir Jayanti 2020 will be celebrated on April 6, 2020.

**Lord Mahavira**

- Lord Mahavir was the twenty-fourth and the last Tirthankara of the Jain religion.
- Mahavir was born in 599 B.C. as a prince in Bihar, India.
- At the age of 30, he left his family and royal household, gave up his worldly possessions, including clothing and become a monk.
- He spent the next twelve years in deep silence and meditation to conquer his desires and feelings.
- He went without food for long periods. He carefully avoided harming or annoying other living beings including animals, birds, and plants.
- His ways of meditation, days of austerities, and mode of behavior furnish a beautiful example for monks and nuns in religious life.
- His spiritual pursuit lasted for twelve years. At the end he realized perfect perception, knowledge, power, and bliss. This realization is known as **keval-jnana**.
- He spent the next thirty years travelling on bare feet around India preaching to the people the eternal truth he realized.
- He attracted people from all walks of life, rich and poor, kings and commoners, men and women, princes and priests, touchables and untouchables.
- He organized his followers, into a **four fold order**, namely monk (Sadhu), nun (Sadhvi), layman (Shravak), and laywoman (Shravika). Later on they are known as Jains.
- The ultimate objective of his teaching is how one can attain the total freedom from the cycle of birth, life, pain, misery, and death, and achieve the permanent blissful state of one's self. This is also known as liberation, nirvana, absolute freedom, or Moksha.

**07-04-2020**

**1) The Members of Parliament or State Legislature who has been expelled from the Party membership by the Party's high command?**

1. Must resign their membership from the office
2. Cannot attend the proceedings of the legislature

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to UN Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation**

1. It is also called as Washington Convention on Mediation.
2. India has ratified the convention and became party since 2013.
3. Under the convention, a party seeking enforcement of a mediated settlement agreement can apply directly to the courts of countries that have signed and ratified the treaty.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to District Mineral Foundation (DMF) Funds**

1. Setting up of DMF was mandated through the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Amendment Act, (MMDRA) 2015.

2. Its manner of operation comes under the jurisdiction of the Central Government under the Ministry of Mines.
3. It is solely funded through the contributions from miners.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO)*

1. It is one of the specialized agencies of United Nations (UN).
2. It promotes sustainable tropical timber supply chains and also helps develop capacity in tropical forestry.
3. India is a member to this Organisation.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) Consider the following statements

1. It is one of the major Protected Areas of Satpura-Maikal ranges of the Central Highlands.
2. It is among the sites notified as important bird areas of India.
3. Mixed Dry deciduous forests occupy over one third of the area.

Identify the *Tiger Reserve* that correctly matches with the above description:

- a. Bor Tiger Reserve
- b. Pench Tiger Reserve

- c. Satkosia Tiger Reserve
- d. Udanti-Sitanadi Tiger Reserve

## Answers

1. d

- The relationship between an individual member and the political party does not affect his membership in the legislature unless it is under the provisions of defection mentioned under Schedule X of the Constitution.

2. a

### *Singapore Convention on Mediation*

- The Singapore Convention on Mediation is a United Nations (UN) treaty named after the country, will come into force on Sept 12 this year.
- It is also known as the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation.
- Qatar has ratified the international treaty, it is the third country to do so, following Singapore and Fiji.
- According to the convention's provisions, the treaty comes into force when at least three countries have ratified it.
- The convention makes it easier for commercial parties in a dispute to seek enforcement of international mediated settlement agreements by applying directly to the courts of countries that have ratified the treaty.
- Through mediation, parties in a cross-border dispute can attempt to negotiate a new deal, facilitated by a neutral third-party mediator, to salvage a commercial relationship which would otherwise disintegrate if the litigation or arbitration routes are taken.
- Presently, because a settlement agreement made in one country has no legal force in another, a party seeking to enforce a mediated settlement agreement in another country or multiple countries will have to commence legal proceedings in each country.
- This can potentially be costly and time-consuming, especially for international settlement agreements.



- Under the convention, a party seeking enforcement of a mediated settlement agreement can apply directly to the courts of countries that have signed and ratified the treaty.
- This allows businesses to easily enforce such settlement agreements across borders.
- As of now 52 countries has signed the convention, including economic heavyweights the United States and China.
- In recent years, Singapore plans to establish as an international dispute resolution center, including setting up the Singapore International Arbitration Centre and the Singapore International Commercial Court.

3. b

- **District Mineral Foundation (DMF)** is a trust set up as a non-profit body, in those districts affected by the mining works, to work for the interest and benefit of persons and areas affected by mining related operations.
- It is funded through the **contributions from miners**.
- Its manner of operation comes under the jurisdiction of the **relevant State Government**.
- Setting up of District Mineral Foundations (DMFs) in all districts in the country affected by mining related operations was mandated through the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Amendment Act, (MMDRA) 2015.

4. c

- The **International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)** is an **intergovernmental organization** promoting the sustainable management and conservation of tropical forests and the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests.

**ITTO:**

1. Develops internationally agreed policy guidelines and norms to encourage sustainable forest management (SFM) and sustainable tropical timber industries and trade.

2. Assists tropical member countries to adapt such guidelines and norms to local circumstances and to implement them in the field through projects and other activities.
3. Collects, analyzes and disseminates data on the production and trade of tropical timber.
4. Promotes sustainable tropical timber supply chains.
5. Helps develop capacity in tropical forestry.

5. b

- **Pench Tiger Reserve**, Seoni (**Madhya Pradesh**) is one of the major Protected Areas of **Satpura-Maikal** ranges of the Central Highlands, which is among the most important tiger habitats of the world.
- Pench Tiger Reserve is among the sites notified **as important bird areas of India**.
- This is one of the highest herbivores densities in India.
- Contiguous forest cover with Kanha Tiger Reserve and Pench Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra).
- Pench Tiger Reserve comprises the Indira Priyadarshini Pench National Park, the Pench Mowgli Sanctuary and a buffer.
- The Tiger Reserve nestles in the Southern Slopes of the Satpura ranges of Central India.
- The river Pench, which splits the National Park into two, forms the lifeline of the Park.
- To the south of the tiger reserve lies the Pench Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra, the first inter-state project tiger area of the country.

The forests in Pench tiger reserve are classified into three types:

1. South Indian Tropical Moist Deciduous (slightly moist)
2. Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Teak Forests and
3. Southern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest

Mixed Dry deciduous forests occupy over one third of the area.



**08-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *World Health Organisation (WHO)***

1. Its secretariat is located in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. World Health Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of WHO, attended by delegations from all member states.
3. Every year, April 7 is celebrated as "World Health Day" to commemorate the enforcement of WHO's Constitution in 1948.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

**2) *State of the World's Nursing Report, 2020* was recently published by?**

- a. Nurses International
- b. International Council of Nurses
- c. Sustainable Development Solutions Network
- d. All of the above

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Jan Aushadhi Sugam App***

1. It is a platform designed for people to get information regarding high-quality generic medicines which are being sold at lower prices in Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK).
2. The application is developed under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP).

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)***

1. It is a campaign launched by the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses.
2. National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) is the implementation agency for PMBJP.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Samadhan Challenge Initiative*, which was launched recently**

1. It provides facility to the users to call Branch Managers for any query and also to register their complaints and can track the status of resolution of these complaints as well.
2. It was launched by the State Bank of India (SBI).

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

## Answers

1. d

- WHO's Constitution came into force on 7 April 1948 – a date which was celebrated every year as World Health Day.
- WHO is the first global health organization, replacing many regional and national health bodies.
- It has 194-member countries, and its secretariat is in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- It has the authority of directing and coordinating matters related to International health.
- World Health Assembly is the supreme decision-making body of WHO, attended by delegations from all member states.
- The Executive Board of WHO implements the decisions and policies of the World Health Assembly.

### World Health Assembly

- It is the forum through which WHO is governed by its 194 member states.
- It is the world's highest health policy setting body and is composed of health ministers from member states.
- The members of the World Health Assembly generally meet every year in May in Geneva, the location of WHO Headquarters.
- The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed program budget.

2. b

- On World Health Day, **World Health Organisation (WHO)** is launching the first ever **State of the World's Nursing Report 2020**.
- The report provides a global picture of the nursing workforce and support evidence-based planning to optimize the contributions of this workforce to improve health and wellbeing for all.
- The report sets the agenda for data collection, policy dialogue, research and advocacy, and

investment in the health workforce for generations to come.

- Findings identify important gaps in the nursing workforce and priority areas for investment in nursing education, jobs, and leadership to strengthen nursing around the world and improve health for all.
- The report was launched by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** in partnership with the **International Council of Nurses (ICN)** and **Nursing Now**.

3. c

- For ensuring availability of Quality Generic Medicines at affordable prices for all, "**JAN AUSHADHI SUGAM**" application is developed under "**Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)**" on behalf of Department of Pharmaceuticals under Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India.
- It is an evolving platform designed for people to get information regarding high-quality generic medicines which are being sold at lower prices in Kendra i.e. Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendra (PMBJK).

4. d

### Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP)

- It is a campaign launched by the **Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers** to provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses.
- PMBJP stores have been set up to provide generic drugs, which are available at lesser prices but are equivalent in quality and efficacy as expensive branded drugs.
- It was launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals in November 2008 under the name Jan Aushadi Campaign.
- **Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI)** is the implementation agency for PMBJP.
- The Main objective of the scheme includes making quality medicines available at affordable prices for all, particularly the poor and disadvantaged, through exclusive outlets

"Jan Aushadhi Medical Store", so as to reduce out of pocket expenses in healthcare.

5. d

- The Innovation Cell of the **Ministry of Human Resources Development** and **All India Council for Technical Education** in collaboration with Forge and Innovatio Curis launched a mega online challenge - **SAMADHAN** - to test the ability of students to innovate.
- Under the "Samadhan" challenge, the students and faculty will be motivated for doing **new experiments** and new discoveries and provide them with a strong base leading to spirit of experimentation and discovery.
- The students participating in this challenge will search and develop such measures that can be made available to the government agencies, health services, hospitals and other services for quick solutions to the Coronavirus epidemic and other such calamities.
- Apart from this, through this "Samadhan" challenge, work will be done to make citizens aware, to motivate them, to face any challenge, to prevent any crisis and to help people get livelihood.

#### **Samadhaan App**

- It was launched by the State Bank of India (SBI).
- Customer can download Account Statement for last 6 months, which will be e-mailed at customer's e-mail id registered with the Bank.
- App provides facility to the users to call Branch Managers/ controllers for any query/issue.
- Customers can generate Housing Loan and Education Loan Interest Certificates, which will be sent to their email IDs registered with the bank.
- Customers can also register their complaints through this app and can track the status of resolution of these complaints as well.
- FAQs including relevant videos for Deposits, Advances, ATM, Internet Banking, Mobile Banking and Mobile Wallet are available for customer convenience and imparting knowledge.

**09-04-2020**

**1) "Madhuban Gajar", often seen in the news recently is?**

- A variety of Silk Saree from the state of Bihar
- A tribal folk dance prevalent in the State of Gujarat
- A bio-fortified carrot variety with high iron content
- A method of dance painting prevalent in the region of Western Himalayas

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Minor Forest Produce (MFP)***

- Minor Forest Produce is defined as an all non-timber forest produce of plant origin.**
- It includes fodder, leaves, gums, honey and even bamboo and canes.**
- There is no Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minority Forest Produce (MFP).**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- 1 only
- 2 only
- 1 and 2 only
- None

**3) Which of the following is an anti-malarial drug that is being touted as 'game-changer' in the fight against COVID-19?**

- Cyclosporine
- Hydrochlorothiazide
- Fluoroquinolones
- Hydroxychloroquine

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Outer Space Treaty, 1967***

- It prohibits only weapons of mass destruction in outer space, not ordinary weapons.**

**2. India is a signatory to this treaty, and ratified it in 198**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to Moon Agreement, 1979**

- 1. It bans all explorations and uses of celestial bodies without the approval or benefit of other states.**
- 2. United States of America (USA) signed and ratified the Agreement.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

## Answers

1. c

- **Madhuban Gajar** is a **biofortified carrot variety with high  $\beta$ -carotene and iron content** developed by Shri Vallabhhai Vasrambhai Marvaniya, a farmer scientist from Junagadh district, Gujarat.
- Shri Vallabhhai Vasrambhai Marvaniya was conferred with **Padma Shri** in the year 2019 for his extraordinary work.
- The Madhuban Gajar is a highly nutritious carrot variety developed through the selection method with higher  $\beta$ -carotene content (277.75 mg/kg) and iron content (276.7 mg/kg) dry basis and is used for various value-added products like carrot chips, juices, and pickles.

2. c

- The Union Minister for Tribal Affairs has written a letter to the Chief Ministers of 15

States to advise the State Nodal Agencies for undertaking procurement of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) at Minimum Support Price (MSP) in right earnest.

- An important source of livelihoods for tribal people are non-wood forest products, generally termed '**Minor Forest Produce (MFP)**' means **all non-timber forest produce of plant origin** and will include **bamboo, canes**, fodder, leaves, gums, waxes, dyes, resins and many forms of food including nuts, wild fruits, Honey, Lac, Tusser etc.
- The Minor Forest Produces provide both subsistence and cash income for people who live in or near forests.
- They form a major portion of their food, fruits, medicines and other consumption items and also provide cash income through sale.
- The scheme of Government of India "**Mechanism for Marketing of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and development of value chain**" is designed as a social safety net for improvement of livelihood of MFP gatherers by providing them fair price for the MFPs they collect.

3. d

- *India had recently banned all exports of the drug "Hydroxychloroquine" without exception and later revoked its order.*

### Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ)

- It is an anti-malarial drug similar to chloroquine, one of the oldest and best-known anti-malarial drugs, but with lesser side-effects.
- It can be bought over the counter and is fairly inexpensive.
- **It is being touted as 'game-changer' in the fight against COVID-19.**
- The drug is also used to auto-immune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and lupus.
- India is the biggest manufacturer of Hydroxychloroquine.
- According to Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), India manufactures 70% of the world's supply of hydroxychloroquine.

- **The drug is not manufactured in developed nations such as the US because of non-existent malaria.**
- India gets the active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) that is used to manufacture HCQ from China and supplies so far have been steady.
- As much as 70 per cent of all the APIs needed by India to manufacture drugs come from China.

4. c

- In 1963, the **UN General Assembly** approved two resolutions on outer space that subsequently became the basis for the Outer Space Treaty.
- The United States and Soviet Union submitted separate draft outer space treaties to the UN General Assembly in June 1966. A mutually agreed treaty text was worked out over the next six months, and the UN General Assembly gave its approval of the treaty on December 19, 1966. The treaty opened for signature in Washington, Moscow, and London on January 27, 1967 and entered into force.
- The treaty forbids countries from deploying "nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction" in outer space.
- The term "weapons of mass destruction" is not defined, but it is commonly understood to include nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.
- The treaty, however, **does not prohibit the launching of ballistic missiles**, which could be armed with WMD warheads, through space.
- 105 countries are states-parties to the treaty, while another 26 have signed it but have not yet completed ratification.
- India is a signatory to this treaty, and ratified it in 1982.
- This Executive Order establishes US policy toward the recovery and use of space resources, such as water and certain minerals, in order to encourage the commercial development of space.
- The executive order titled '**Encouraging International support for the recovery and use of space resources**' will create long-time suitability in the human exploration of Moon, Mars and other celestial bodies.
- The order reaffirms US support for the 1967 Outer Space Treaty while continuing to **reject the 1979 Moon Agreement**, which only 17 of the 95 Member States of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space have ratified in the past four decades.
- The order further clarifies that the United States does not view outer space as a 'global commons,' and it reinforces the 2015 decision by Congress that Americans should have the right to engage in the commercial exploration, recovery, and use of resources in outer space.
- The order also says that the US is not part of the moon agreement.
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Moon Resolution says that Moon and other celestial bodies should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and their environments should not be disrupted.

#### **Moon Agreement (1979)**

- The treaty also known as 'Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies' bans all explorations and uses of celestial bodies without the approval or benefit of other states.
- The Moon Treaty provides that the Moon and its natural resources are the common heritage of mankind and the harvesting of those resources is forbidden except through an international regime established to govern the exploitation of such resources when it becomes feasible to do so.
- It covers all celestial bodies including orbits. Very few countries are signatories to it.

5. a

- *US President Donald Trump has signed a new executive order aimed at encouraging international support for its policy allowing private industry for recovery and use of space resources from the Moon, Mars and other celestial bodies.*





**11-04-2020**

1) Consider the following statements with respect to “*Bharat Padhe Online Campaign*”

1. It is an online campaign that aims to crowd source ideas for improving Online Education Ecosystem in India.
2. It was launched by the Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Swachhata-MoHUA App*

1. It is a grievance redressal tool for citizens under the ambit of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban).
2. The app enables a citizen to post a complaint which is then forwarded to the city corporation concerned and thereafter assigned to the sanitary inspector of the particular ward.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *iGOT portal*

1. It is an integrated online training module that aims to enhance capacity building of front line workers to handle the pandemic COVID-19 efficiently.
2. The platform will be hosted on the Human Resources Development Ministry’s DIKSHA platform.

3. It was launched by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) Consider the following statements:

1. He is considered as the father of Indian Chemistry.
2. He authored the book: *The History of Hindu Chemistry – From the Earliest Times to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century AD*.
3. The British Government honoured him with the Knighthood in 1919.

Identify the character who correctly matches with the above description:

- a. Sir C. V. Raman
- b. Satyendranath Bose
- c. Venkatraman Ramakrishnan
- d. Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAID)*

1. It is a public platform started by the United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) in 2008.
2. It only includes data associated with Human viruses and does not include avian and other animal viruses.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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



## Answers

1. c

- **Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD)** has recently launched a week long 'Bharat Padhe Online' campaign for **Crowd sourcing of Ideas for Improving Online Education ecosystem of India** in New Delhi.
- This campaign aims to invite all the best brains in India to share suggestions/solutions directly with HRD Ministry to overcome constraints of online education while promoting the available digital education platforms.

2. c

- The Swachhata-MoHUA is the official app of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India (GoI).
- The app enables a citizen to post a civic-related issue (eg; a garbage dump) which is then forwarded to the city corporation concerned and thereafter assigned to the sanitary inspector of the particular ward.
- The app has been built by IChangeMyCity – a division of Janaagraha, a Bengaluru based non-profit working to improve the quality of life in India's cities and towns.

3. d

- To take care of the training needs of the frontline workers, the Government of India has launched a **training module** for management of **COVID-19** named **Integrated Govt. Online training' (iGOT)** portal on **Ministry of HRD's DIKSHA platform**.
- The **Department of Personnel and Training** has launched this learning platform.
- It was launched to enhance capacity building of frontline workers to handle the pandemic efficiently.
- Courses on iGOT have been launched for Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, Hygiene Workers, Technicians, Auxiliary Nursing Midwives (ANMs), State Government Officers, Civil Defence Officers, Various Police Organisations, National Cadet Corps(NCC), NehruYuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS),

National Service Scheme, Indian Red Cross Society, Bharat Scouts and Guides and other volunteers at the stage.

4. d

- **Hydroxychloroquine** or **HCQ**, the anti-malarial drug touted by some as a potential weapon against Covid-19, has put the spotlight on a company founded by **Prafulla Chandra Ray**
- The Kolkata-based Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited, the only public sector unit that manufactures anti-malarial drug in India, said it will apply for a licence to produce HCQ soon.
- Bengal Chemicals had started HCQ's production but was stopped decades ago.

### Prafulla Chandra Ray

- Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray is known as "**Father of Indian Chemistry**".
- Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944) was a well-known Indian scientist and teacher and one of the first "modern" Indian chemical researchers.
- He discovered the stable compound mercurous nitrite in 1896.
- The British Government first honoured him with the imperial title of CIE (Companion of the Indian Empire) and then with the Knighthood in 1919.
- In 1920, he was elected General President of the Indian Science Congress.
- As a nationalist he also wanted that the Bengalis should come up in the world of enterprise.
- He himself set an example by establishing a chemical firm called the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works (1901).
- He was completely against the caste system and other irrational social systems and carried on work of social reformation till his death.
- Prafulla Chandra Ray authored, among other books, the 'History of Hindu Chemistry – From the Earliest Times to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century AD', a book that documented India's indigenous chemical practices starting from the Vedic era.

5. d

- **GISAID** is a public platform started by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** in 2008 for countries to share genome sequences.
- The GISAID Initiative promotes the international sharing of all influenza virus sequences, related clinical and epidemiological data associated with **human viruses**, and geographical as well as species-specific data associated with **avian and other animal viruses**.
- This helps researchers understand how the viruses evolve, spread and potentially become pandemics.
- It actively promotes the development of novel research tools for the analysis of influenza data by helping developers to facilitate the integration or connection of their tools to analyze GISAID data.

**13-04-2020**

1) Consider the following statements with respect to **YUKTI Portal**

1. It's a unique portal and dashboard to monitor and record the efforts and initiatives of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
2. The portal will cover both qualitative and quantitative parameters for effective delivery of services to the academic community at large.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

2) Consider the following statements

1. Contribution made to 'PM CARES Fund' shall qualify as CSR expenditure.
2. Contribution to Chief Minister's Relief Fund' or 'State Relief Fund for COVID-

19' is not qualify as admissible CSR expenditure.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to **Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)**

1. The Chairman and the members of CAT are drawn from both judicial and administrative streams and are appointed by the President.
2. The CAT is guided by the principles of natural justice and not bound by the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code of 1908.
3. The jurisdiction of CAT does not extend to members of the defence forces, officers and servants of the Supreme Court and the secretarial staff of the Parliament are not covered by it.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None

4) Consider the following statements with respect to **World Trade Agreement (WTO)**

1. WTO officially commenced under the Marrakesh Agreement, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).
2. There are no WTO definitions of "developed" and "developing" countries and members themselves declared whether they are developed or developing.

3. No other members can challenge the decision of a member to make use of provisions available to developing countries.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)*

- 1. It is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture.
- 2. It was founded by Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of Independent India in 1950.
- 3. Its mandate is to actively participate in formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's external cultural relations.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

## Answers

1. b

- **Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD)** has recently launched a web-portal **YUKTI (Young India Combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation)** in New Delhi.
- It's a unique portal and dashboard **to monitor and record the efforts and initiatives of MHRD.**

- The portal intends to cover the different dimensions of COVID-19 challenges in a very holistic and comprehensive way.
- It will cover the various initiatives and efforts of the institutions in academics, research especially related to CoVID, social initiatives by institutions and the measures taken for the betterment of the total wellbeing of the students.
- The portal will cover **both qualitative and quantitative parameters for effective delivery of services to the academic community** at large.
- The portal will also allow various institutions to share their strategies for various challenges which are there because of the unprecedented situation of COVID-19 and other future initiatives.

2. c

- Contribution made to 'PM CARES Fund' shall qualify as CSR expenditure under item no (viii) of Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013.
- **"Chief Minister's Relief Fund" or 'State Relief Fund for COVID-19'** is not included in Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013 and therefore any contribution to such funds shall not qualify as admissible CSR expenditure.
- Contribution made to **State Disaster Management Authority** to combat COVID-19 shall qualify as CSR expenditure under item no (xii) of Schedule VII of the 2013.

3. c

### Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)

- It was set up in 1985 with the principal bench at Delhi and additional benches in different states.
- At present, it has 17 regular benches, 15 of which operate at the principal seats of high courts and the remaining two at Jaipur and Lucknow.
- These benches also hold circuit sittings at other seats of high courts.
- The CAT exercises **original jurisdiction in relation to recruitment and all service matters of public servants** covered by it.

- Its jurisdiction extends to the all-India services, the Central civil services, civil posts under the Centre and civilian employees of defence services.
- However, **the members of the defence forces, officers and servants of the Supreme Court and the secretarial staff of the Parliament are not covered by it.**
- The CAT is a multi-member body consisting of a chairman and members.
- Originally, the CAT consisted of a Chairman, Vice- Chairman and members.
- Later, in 2006, the provision for the Vice-Chairman was removed by the Administrative Tribunals (Amendment) Act, 2006.
- Hence, **there are now no Vice-Chairman in the CAT.**
- At present (2019), the sanctioned strength of the Chairman is one and sanctioned strength of the Members is 65.
- They are drawn from **both judicial and administrative streams** and are **appointed by the President.**
- They hold office for a term of five years or until they attain the age of 65 years in case of chairman and 62 years in case of members, whichever is earlier.
- The appointment of Members in CAT is made on the basis of recommendations of a high powered selection committee chaired by a sitting Judge of Supreme Court who is nominated by the Chief Justice of India.
- After obtaining the concurrence of Chief Justice of India, appointments are made with the approval of Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).
- The CAT is **not bound by the procedure laid down in the Civil Procedure Code of 1908.**
- It is **guided by the principles of natural justice.**

4. b

- WTO officially commenced under the Marrakesh Agreement, replacing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

- It is created by Uruguay round of negotiations and established in 1995.
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- There are no WTO definitions of “developed” and “developing” countries.
- Members announce for themselves whether they are “developed” or “developing” countries.
- However, other members can challenge the decision of a member to make use of provisions available to developing countries.
- Over two-thirds of WTO’s 164 member countries are developing countries.

#### **Advantages of being a developing country**

- Some WTO agreements give developing countries special benefits and rights, which are referred to as “**Special and Differential Treatment Provisions**”.
- These provisions include a longer time period for implementing agreements and commitments or measures to increase trading opportunities for developing countries.
- The **Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR)** was founded in 1950 by **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**, independent **India’s first Education Minister**.
- Its objectives are to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India’s external cultural relations; to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries; to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people, and to develop relations with nations.
- It is an autonomous organization function under the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**.

**14-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to SATYAM Program**

- 1. It aims to foster scientific research on the effects of yoga and meditation on physical & mental health.**



2. The Programme was initiated by the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

2) "South Asia Economic Focus Report" was released recently by?

- a. World Bank
- b. KPMG International
- c. World Economic Forum
- d. International Monetary Fund

3) Which of the following books were written by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar?

- 1. Hind Swaraj
- 2. The Hindu view of life
- 3. The Annihilation of Caste
- 4. The Buddha and his Dhamma

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to CollabCAD

- 1. It is a collaborative network, computer enabled software system, providing a total engineering solution from 2D drafting & detailing to 3D product design.
- 2. It was jointly launched by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and National Informatics Centre (NIC).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) Nihangs often seen in the news recently is?

- a. A tribal community native to the state of Jharkhand
- b. It is a Sunni Islamic missionary movement aims to revive their faith
- c. An order of Sikh warriors, characterized by blue robes and antiquated arms
- d. A fabric native to the state of West Bengal, famous for its high quality and design

### Answers

1. c

### SATYAM Program

- Recently, the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** has initiated the **Science and Technology of Yoga and Meditation (SATYAM) programme**.
- It was conceptualized in 2015 by the DST under its Cognitive Science Research Initiative (CSRI).
- **To foster scientific research on the effects of yoga and meditation on physical & mental health** and on cognitive functioning in healthy people as well as in patients with disorders.
- Investigations on the effect of Yoga and Meditation on physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Investigations on the effect of Yoga and Meditation on the body, brain, and mind in terms of basic processes and mechanisms.
- Scientists/academicians with research background in 'Yoga and Meditation' and having regular positions are invited to participate in this initiative.

- Practitioners actively involved in yoga and meditation practices are also encouraged to apply in collaboration with academic and research institutions of repute.
- The project is tenable for a maximum period of three years.
- *Under SATYAM, DST has recently invited proposals to study appropriate intervention of yoga and meditation in fighting Covid-19 and similar kinds of viruses.*

2. a

- According to a report: **South Asia Economic Focus**, released by the **World Bank**, India is likely to record its worst growth performance since the 1991 liberalisation this fiscal year as the coronavirus outbreak severely disrupts the economy.
- India's economy is expected to grow 1.5% to 2.8% in the 2020-21 fiscal which started on April 1.
- It estimated India will grow 4.8% to 5% in the 2019-20 fiscal that ended on March 31.

3. b

- Hind Swaraj was written by M.K. Gandhi.
- The Hindu View of Life was written by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

4. c

- **CollabCAD** is a collaborative network, computer enabled software system, providing a total engineering solution from 2D drafting & detailing to 3D product design.
- It was jointly launched by **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and National Informatics Centre (NIC)**.
- The aim of this initiative is to provide a great platform to students of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) across country to create and modify 3d designs with free flow of creativity and imagination.
- This software would also enable students to create data across the network and concurrently access the same design data for storage and visualization.

- ATLs established across India, provide tinkering spaces to children to hone their innovative ideas and creativity.
- AIM's collaboration with NIC's CollabCAD is a great platform for students to utilize indigenous, state-of-the-art made-in-India software for 3D modeling/slicing to use 3D Printing.

#### About AIM

- Atal Innovation Mission housed at NITI Aayog is the Government of India's flagship initiative to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.
- At the school level, AIM is establishing ATLs in all districts across India.
- As of today, AIM has selected a total of 14,916 schools across the country spread across 33 different states and union territories, for the establishment of ATLs.

5. c

- *A group of Nihangs attacked the Punjab police party and chopped off the hand of an assistant sub-inspector when stopped for a curfew pass*

#### Nihang

- It is an order of Sikh warriors, characterized by blue robes, antiquated arms such as swords and spears, and decorated turbans surmounted by steel quoits.
- The grouping can be traced back to the creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699.
- Nihangs use the slogans 'chhardi kala' (forever in high spirits) and 'tiar bar tiar' (state of ever preparedness) for unforeseen events.
- The Nihangs are fond of a popular drink called shardai or sharbati degh (sacrament drink) which contains grounded almonds, cardamom seeds, poppy seeds, black pepper, rose petals and melon seeds.

#### Role in Sikh History

- Nihangs had a major role in defending the Sikh panth after the fall of the first Sikh rule (1710-15) when Mughal governors were killing Sikhs, and during the onslaught of Afghan invader Ahmed Shah Durrani (1748-65).

- When the Khalsa army was divided into five battalions in 1734, one Nihang or Akali battalion was led by Baba Deep Singh Shahid.
- Nihangs also took control of the religious affairs of the Sikhs at Akal Bunga (now known as Akal Takht) in Amritsar.
- They did not consider themselves subordinate to any Sikh chief and thus maintained their independent existence.
- At Akal Takht, they held the grand council (Sarbat Khalsa) of Sikhs and pronounced the resolution (Gurmata) passed.
- Their clout came to an end after the fall of Sikh Empire in 1849 when the British authorities of Punjab appointed a manager (sarbrah) for the administration of the Golden Temple in 1859.

**15-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to CovidGyan**

1. It is a multi-institutional crowd funding initiative that aims to reduce the financial stress of roadside dwellers.
2. The initiative is the brainchild of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and Tata Memorial Centre (TMC).

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to SunRISE Mission**

1. SunRISE is an array of six CubeSats operating as one very large radio telescope.
2. It aims to study how the Sun generates and releases giant space weather storms into planetary space.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to the River Yamuna**

1. Yamuna originates from Yamunotri Glacier on the south western slopes of Banderpooch peak, in the Lower Himalayas in Uttarakhand.
2. Tons River is the largest tributary of the Yamuna and flows through Garhwal region in Uttarakhand.
3. River Ganga and River Yamuna meet at Dev Prayag, Prayagraj.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

**4) Yanomami is an indigenous tribal group native to which of the following regions?**

- a. Amazon Rainforest
- b. Miombo woodlands
- c. Sumatra Rainforest
- d. Andaman & Nicobar Islands

**5) TOI-849b often seen in the news recently is a/an?**

- a. Asteroid
- b. Exo-Planet
- c. Pulsating Star
- d. None of the above

## Answers

1. b

- To bring the scientific and factual aspects of this pandemic outbreak on to public domain, a multi-institutional, multi-lingual **science communication initiative**, called "**CovidGyan**" has been created recently.
- The initiative is the brainchild of **Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and Tata Memorial Centre (TMC)**.
- An outcome of this initiative is the launch of a website which is also named CovidGyan serves as a hub to bring together a collection of resources in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- These resources are generated by public supported research institutions in India and associated programs.
- The content presented here relies on the best available scientific understanding of the disease and its transmission.
- Apart from being an authentic source of information, the primary objective of this website is to create public awareness and bring in a holistic approach to the understanding of this disease and potential means to mitigate it.
- Further, it would aid as a 'go-to' repository of information regarding COVID-19.
- It is designed with multi-faceted aspects to 'right information' through talks from eminent scientists in audio/podcast formats, infographics, posters, videos, FAQs and mythbusters, and even links to scientific papers.

2. c

- NASA has selected a new mission called the **Sun Radio Interferometer Space Experiment** or simply the **SunRISE to study how the Sun generates and releases giant space weather storms into planetary space**.
- The SunRISE is an **array of six CubeSats operating as one very large radio**

**telescope** which will be built and launched by no earlier than July 1, 2023.

- The six small spacecrafts — each about the size of a toaster oven — will be stationed around 10 km apart into the **geosynchronous Earth orbit** and work together to capture radio images of low-frequency emissions from solar activity.
- These images will help create 3D maps of solar particle bursts to pinpoint where giant particle bursts originate on the Sun and how they evolve as they expand outward into space.

3. a

- The quality of water in the Delhi stretch of the Yamuna has increased due to "complete reduction in industrial pollutants" in the river during the COVID-19 lockdown, according to an analysis report of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB).*

### Yamuna River

- It is the largest tributary of Ganga River.
- It originates from **Yamunotri Glacier** at height 6,387 metres, on the south western slopes of Banderpooch peak, in the Lower Himalayas in Uttarakhand.
- It meets River Ganga at **Triveni Sangam** or **Prayag** at PrayagRaj (Allahabad).
- Its largest tributary Tons River flows through Garhwal region in Uttarakhand, and meets Yamuna near Dehradun.
- The other rivers such as Giri, Rishi Ganga, Kunta, Hanuman Ganga and Bata tributaries meet Yamuna, before it descends on to the plains of Doon Valley, at Dak Pathar near Dehradun.

4. a

- Recently, a Yanomami indigenous boy died in Brazil after contracting Covid-19, raising fears for the Amazon tribes.*
- Brazil is home to an estimated 8,00,000 indigenous people from more than 300 ethnic groups.
- Guarani, Kaingang, Pataxo Ha Ha Hae Tupinamba, Yanomami, Tikuna and Akuntsu are popular tribe of Amazon.



- Yanomami, also called South American Indians, live in the remote forest of the Orinoco River basin in **southern Venezuela and the northernmost reaches of the Amazon River basin in northern Brazil**.
- They numbered around 27,000 individuals throughout their range.
- Yanomami live in small, scattered, semi-permanent villages and speak the Xiriana language.
- They practice hunting and slash-and-burn agriculture.

5. b

- *Scientists claim that a previously found exoplanet, which is 40 times more massive than Earth, could be the remnant core of a giant planet.*
- NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) first detected the **exoplanet TOI-849b** in 2018.
- La Silla Observatory in Chile helped confirm its existence later on.
- The **exoplanet orbits the sun-like star TOI-849**, which is about 730 light-years from Earth.
- The exoplanet TOI-849b has around the same diameter as that of Neptune, which is around 3.45 times that of Earth.

**16-04-2020**

1) Consider the following statements with respect to **Harpoon Missile System**

1. It is an all-weather, over-the-horizon, anti-ship missile system.
2. Its warhead weighs over 500 pounds and uses GPS-aided inertial navigation to hit the designated target.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to funding of World Health Organisation (WHO)?

1. Assessed contribution is one way of contributing to WHO and it will be paid by countries in order to be a member of the Organization.
2. China is currently the WHO's second largest contributor after United States of America.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to **India Child Protection Fund (ICPF)**

1. It aims to support NGOs with funding resources for curbing exploitation of children.
2. The fund is managed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to **Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS): 2019–2023**

1. It provides a strategic roadmap for World Health Organisation (WHO) to work with India towards achieving its health sector goals.
2. It has been developed jointly by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and the World Health





**Organisation (WHO) India country office.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)**

1. It is a statutory body established in 1993 under an Act of Parliament.
2. The chairperson and members of NHRC are not eligible for further employment under the Central or a State government after their tenure.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

## Answers

1. c

- The US Department of State approved a possible Foreign Military Sale to India of 16 **MK 54 all round up lightweight torpedoes** and in another deal, approved ten **AGM-84L Harpoon Block II air-launched missiles**.

### Harpoon Missile System

- Harpoon was initially developed for the US Navy in 1983 and was later adapted for use on the B-52H bombers.
- The Harpoon was first deployed in 1977 and is an **all-weather, over-the-horizon, anti-ship missile system**.
- This missile is being used by Armed forces in over 30 countries across the world and Boeing

has delivered over 7,000 Harpoon missiles to date.

- Further, the Harpoon missile **uses GPS-aided inertial navigation** to hit the designated target.
- Its **warhead weighs over 500 pounds** and is capable of delivering lethal firepower against targets, including land-based targets, coastal defence sites, surface-to-air missile sites, exposed aircraft and industrial or port facilities.
- The Harpoon missile system will be integrated into the P-8I aircraft to conduct anti-surface warfare missions in defense of critical sea lanes while enhancing interoperability with the United States and other allied forces.

### P-8I Aircraft

- Boeing's P-8s are designed for long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions.
- The **P-8s India version is called the P-8I**, and helps the Indian Navy carry out important maritime operations.

### MK 54 lightweight torpedo

- Previously, the MK 54 lightweight torpedo was known as the Lightweight Hybrid Torpedo (LHT).
- It weighs around 608 pounds, while its warhead weighs around 96.8 pounds and is highly explosive.
- These torpedoes are used by US surface ships, fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters and are their primary anti-submarine warfare weapon.
- The primary use of this equipment is for offensive purposes when deployed by anti-submarine warfare aircraft and helicopters, and for defensive purposes when deployed by ships and against fast, deep-diving nuclear submarines and slow-moving, quiet, diesel-electric submarines.

2. a

- US President Donald Trump has recently halted US funding to the World Health Organization (WHO), days after he said the international body had "called it wrong" on

*COVID-19 and that it was very “Chinacentric” in its approach, suggesting that the WHO had gone along with Beijing’s efforts months ago to under-represent the severity of the outbreak.*

### **Funding of World Health Organisation (WHO)**

- There are four kinds of contributions that make up funding for the WHO.

These are

1. Assessed contributions
2. Specified voluntary contributions
3. Core voluntary contributions
4. PIP contributions

According to the WHO website:

#### **Assessed Contributions**

- These are the dues countries pay in order to be a member of the Organization.
- The amount each Member State must pay is calculated relative to the country’s wealth and population.

#### **Voluntary Contributions**

- It comes from Member States (in addition to their assessed contribution) or from other partners.
- They can range from flexible to highly earmarked.

#### **Core voluntary contributions**

- It allow less well-funded activities to benefit from a better flow of resources and ease implementation bottlenecks that arise when immediate financing is lacking.

#### **Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) Contributions**

- They were started in 2011 to improve and strengthen the sharing of influenza viruses with human pandemic potential, and to increase the access of developing countries to vaccines and other pandemic related supplies.

#### **WHO’s current funding pattern**

- In recent years, assessed contributions to the WHO have declined, and now account for less than one-fourth of its funding.

- These funds are important for the WHO, because they provide a level of predictability and minimise dependence on a narrow donor base.
- **Voluntary contributions make up for most of the remaining funding.**
- The **United States is currently the WHO’s biggest contributor**, making up 14.67 per cent of total funding by providing \$553.1 million.
- The US is followed by the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** forming 9.76 per cent or \$367.7 million.
- The third biggest contributor is the **GAVI Vaccine Alliance** at 8.39 per cent, with the UK (7.79 per cent) and Germany (5.68 per cent) coming fourth and fifth respectively.
- The four next biggest donors are international bodies: United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (5.09 per cent), World Bank (3.42 per cent), Rotary International (3.3 per cent), and the European Commission (3.3 per cent).
- **India makes up 0.48 per cent of total contributions, and China 0.21 per cent.**

3. a

- *According to the India Child Protection Fund (ICPF), consumption of child pornography after the lockdown in the country has gone up by 95% as compared to average traffic before the lockdown.*

#### **India Child Protection Fund (ICPF)**

- The ICPF was set up in January 2020 and aims to support NGOs with funding resources for curbing exploitation of children.
- The fund is managed by Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi’s son, Bhuwan Ribhu.

4. c

#### **WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy 2019–2023: A Time of Transition**

- The WHO India Country Cooperation Strategy (CCS) 2019-2023 has been developed jointly by the **Health Ministry and the WHO India country office.**

- The CCS, provides a strategic roadmap for WHO to work with the Government of India (GoI) towards achieving its health sector goals, improving the health of its population and bringing in transformative changes in the health sector.
- The CCS's strategic priorities are to accelerate progress on Universal Health Coverage, promote health and wellness by addressing determinants of health, better protect the population against health emergencies and enhance India's global leadership in health.
- The India CCS is one of the first that fully aligns itself with the newly adopted WHO 13th General Programme of Work and its 'triple billion' targets, the Sustainable Development Goals and the WHO South-East Asia Region's eight Flagship Priorities.
- The CCS also captures the work of the United Nations Sustainable Development Framework for 2018–2022.
- The CCS outlines how WHO can support the MoHFW and allied Ministries to drive impact at the country level.
- The CCS builds on other key strategic policy documents including India's National Health Policy 2017, the many pathbreaking initiatives India has introduced — from Ayushman Bharat to its National Viral Hepatitis Control Programme and promotion of digital health amongst others.
- This CCS not only builds upon the work that WHO has been supporting out in the last several years, but also expands to address complex challenges—such as the prevention of NCDs, the control of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the reduction of air pollution, and the prevention and treatment of mental illnesses.

5. c

- The National Human Rights Commission is a **statutory** (and not a constitutional) body.
- It was established in **1993** under a legislation enacted by the Parliament, namely, the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.
- The commission is a multi-member body consisting of a chairperson and five members.
- The chairperson and members are appointed by the president on the recommendations of a

six-member committee consisting of the prime minister as its head, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, leaders of the Opposition in both the Houses of Parliament and the Central home minister.

- They are eligible for re-appointment. After their tenure, the chairperson and members are not eligible for further employment under the Central or a state government.

**17-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC)**

- 1. It is the Ministerial-level committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).**
- 2. The meeting will be held annually to discuss matters of common concern affecting the global economy.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting**

- 1. The 2nd edition of G20 FMCBG meeting, 2020 was recently held in Japan.**
- 2. The meeting was held under the presidency of Saudi Arabia.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)*

1. Environment Impact Assessment in India is statutorily backed by the Environment Protection Act, 1986.
2. Projects falling under A2 Category are exempted from requirement of collection of Base line data, EIA Studies and public consultation.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) "*Trimeresurus Salazar*" is a new species of green pit viper found recently in?

- a. Rajasthan
- b. Western Ghats
- c. Arunachal Pradesh
- d. Andaman & Nicobar Islands

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)*

1. It is an autonomous society under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.
2. Its main objective is to encourage, promote and boost the Software Exports from India.
3. It has been implementing the Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) scheme for the promotion of IT/ITES industry.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3

d. None

## Answers

1. a

- Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has recently attended the Plenary Meeting of the **International Monetary and Financial Committee**.
- The discussions at the meeting were based on IMF Managing Director's Global Policy Agenda titled, "Exceptional Times – Exceptional Action".
- The members of the IMFC updated the committee on the actions and measures taken by member countries to combat COVID-19, and also remarked on IMF's crisis-response package to address global liquidity and members' financing needs.

## International Monetary and Financial Committee

- It is the **Ministerial-level committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)**.
- The **IMFC meets twice a year**, once during the Fund-Bank Annual Meetings in October, and again during the Spring Meetings in April.
- The **Committee discusses matters of common concern affecting the global economy and advises the IMF on the direction of its work**.
- This year, due to the COVID-19 Outbreak, the meeting took place through video-conference.

2. b

- Indian Finance Minister had recently represented India in the 2nd **Extraordinary Virtual G20 FMCBG Meeting** held on March 31, 2020.
- The meeting held under the presidency of **Saudi Arabia**.

3. a

## Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)

- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process of evaluating the likely environmental



impacts of a proposed project or development, taking into account inter-related socio-economic, cultural and human-health impacts, both beneficial and adverse.

- Environment Impact Assessment in India is statutorily backed by the Environment Protection Act, 1986 which contains various provisions on EIA methodology and process.
- To address unprecedented situation arising from global outbreak of Novel Corona Virus (COVID-19), and to ramp up availability or production of various drugs, MoEF&CC, has made an amendment to EIA Notification 2006.
- According to the amendment all projects or activities in respect of bulk drugs and intermediates, manufactured for addressing various ailments, have been **re-categorized from the existing Category 'A' to 'B2' category**.
- The re-categorization of such proposals has been done to facilitate decentralization of appraisal to State Level so as to fast track the process.

#### Classification of projects

- Category A projects require mandatory environmental clearance and thus they do not undergo the screening process.
- Category B projects undergoes screening process and they are classified into two types.
  1. Category B1 projects (Mandatorily requires EIA).
  2. Category B2 projects (Do not require EIA).

Thus, Category A projects and Category B, projects undergo the complete EIA process whereas Category B2 projects are excluded from complete EIA process.

4. c

- **Trimeresurus salazar** is the fifth variety of reptile to have been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh in a little more than a year.
- The other species found in Arunachal Pradesh were:
  1. The Crying keelback
  2. The Impressive Tortoise (so named because of the striking pattern on its back)

3. The Arunachal Pit Viper (India's fifth brown pit viper but with a reddish tinge)
4. The Natricid burrowing snake (similar to the shieldtail snake found in the Western Ghats)
  - **Trimeresurus salazars** are pit vipers which are venomous snakes distinguished by their heat-sensing pit organs between the eye and the nostril.
  - According to the researchers, Salazar's pit viper belongs to the genus Trimeresurus Lacedpede comprising "charismatic venomous serpents with morphologically as well as ecologically diverse species".
  - At least 48 species are known to be distributed across east and southeast Asia, of which at least 15 occur in India.
  - Of the species recorded from India, seven had been found in the northeast before the Salazar's pit viper, collected from the Pakke Tiger Reserve in Pakke-Kessang district, and was identified as a separate species.
  - The new species was found to have scales similar to three other pit viper species — Trimeresurus septentrionalis, Trimeresurus insularis Kramer and Trimeresurus albolabris.
  - What set it apart was a reddish orange lateral stripe on the head besides some other subtle variations.

5. c

- *In view of the challenges thrown by COVID19 outbreak and consequent lockdown, the Government took a major decision to provide relief from payment of rental to the small IT units operating out of the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI).*
- *Most of these units are either Tech MSMEs or startups.*

#### Software Technology Parks of India (STPI)

- It is an autonomous society under **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology**, Government of India in 1991, with the objective of encouraging, promoting and boosting the Software Exports from India.
- STPI acts as 'single-window in providing services to the software exporters.



- At present, it has 60 centers across the country.
- The services rendered by STPI for the software exporting community have been statutory services, data communications services, incubation facilities, training and value added services.
- STPI has been implementing the **Software Technology Park (STP) scheme** and the **Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) scheme** for the promotion of IT/ITES industry.

**18-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ways and Means Advances (WMA)***

1. It is a facility for both the Centre and states to borrow from the RBI.
2. The borrowings through WMA are meant purely to tide over temporary mismatches in cash flows.
3. The interest rate on WMA is the RBI's repo rate, which is basically the rate at which it lends short-term money to banks.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to *International Development Association (IDA)***

1. It is a part of World Bank that aims to reduce poverty by providing loans and grants.
2. India is one among the 76 borrowing countries that receives IDA's resources.
3. It complements the World Bank's original lending arm—the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**3) Kisan Rath Mobile App was launched recently by which of the following Ministries?**

- a. Ministry of Food Processing Industries
- b. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
- c. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- d. Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Long Term Repo Operations (LTRO)***

1. It is a tool under which the Reserve Bank of India provides money to banks at the prevailing repo rate.
2. Liquidity Adjustment Facility and Marginal Standing Facility offer banks money for their immediate needs ranging from 1-28 days, whereas the LTRO offers money for their 1 to 3 year needs.
3. LTRO operations are intended to prevent short-term interest rates in the market from drifting a long way away from the policy rate, which is the repo rate.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

**5) Kepler-1649c, sometimes seen in the news recently is a/an?**

- a. Asteroid

- b. Dwarf Star
- c. Exo Planet
- d. Space Telescope

## Answers

1. d

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently announced a 60% increase in the **Ways and Means Advances (WMA) limit** of state governments over and above the level as on March 31, with a view to enabling them “to undertake COVID-19 containment and mitigation efforts” and “to better plan their market borrowings”.

### Ways and Means Advances (WMA)

- **It is a facility for both the Centre and states to borrow from the RBI.**
- These borrowings are meant purely to help them to tide over temporary mismatches in cash flows of their receipts and expenditures.
- In that sense, they aren't a source of finance per se.
- Section 17(5) of the RBI Act, 1934 authorizes the central bank to lend to the Centre and state governments subject to their being repayable “**not later than three months** from the date of the making of the advance”.
- The **interest rate on WMA is the RBI's repo rate**, which is basically the rate at which it lends short-term money to banks.
- That rate is currently 4.4%.
- The governments are, however, **allowed to draw amounts in excess of their WMA limits**.
- The interest on such overdraft is 2 percentage points above the repo rate, which now works out to 6.4%.
- Further, **no state can run an overdraft with the RBI for more than a certain period**.

2. c

- Indian Finance Minister has recently participated in the 101st Meeting of

the **Development Committee Plenary** through video conference.

- The items on the agenda included update on World Bank Group Response to the COVID-19 Emergency, and the **Covid-19 Debt Initiative: International Call for Action in Support of IDA Countries**.

### International Development Association (IDA)

- It is the part of the **World Bank** that helps the world's poorest countries.
- Established in 1960, IDA aims to reduce poverty by providing loans (called “**credits**”) and grants for programs that boost economic growth, reduce inequalities, and improve people's living conditions.
- IDA **complements** the **World Bank's** original lending arm—the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**.
- IBRD was established to function as a self-sustaining business, and provides loans and advice to middle-income and credit-worthy countries.
- IBRD and IDA share the same staff and headquarters and evaluate projects with the same rigorous standards.

### Borrowing Countries

- 76 countries are currently eligible to receive IDA resources. These are called “**Borrowing Countries**”.
- Eligibility for IDA support depends first and foremost on a country's relative poverty, defined as **gross national income (GNI)** per capita below an established threshold.
- India is not a borrowing country under the IDA.

3. b

- The Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has recently launched a farmer friendly mobile application “**Kisan Rath**” developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- It aims to facilitate farmers & traders in searching transport vehicles for Primary and



Secondary transportation for movement of Agriculture & Horticulture produce.

- Primary transportation would include movement from Farm to Mandis, FPO Collection Centre and Warehouses etc.
- Secondary Transportation would include movement from Mandis to Intra-state & Inter-state mandis, Processing units, Railway station, Warehouses and Wholesalers etc.

4. d

#### Long Term Repo Operations (LTRO)

- LTRO is a tool under which **the central bank (RBI)** provides **one-year to three-year money** to banks at the prevailing **repo rate**, accepting government securities with matching or higher tenure as the collateral.
- While the RBI's current windows of **liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) and marginal standing facility (MSF) offer banks money for their immediate needs ranging from 1-28 days, the LTRO supplies them with liquidity for their 1-to 3-year needs.**
- LTRO operations are intended to prevent short-term interest rates in the market from drifting a long way away from the policy rate, which is the repo rate.

5. c

- A team of scientists has recently discovered an **Earth-size Exo-Planet** 300 light-years away while taking a second look at old observations from NASA's Kepler space telescope that the agency retired in 2018.
- The planet, called Kepler-1649c, orbits its star's habitable zone— the area around a star where a rocky planet could support liquid water.
- Kepler-1649c is only 1.06 times larger than Earth.
- The light received by this planet from its host star is around 75 per cent of the amount of light Earth receives from our Sun.

**20-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India***

1. It aims to raise awareness about the various intangible cultural heritage elements from different states of India at national and international level and ensure their protection.
2. This initiative is a part of the Vision 2024 of the Ministry of Culture.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to *World Heritage Day-2020***

1. It is celebrated every year to preserve the human heritage and recognize the efforts of the organizations working for it.
2. The theme for the World Heritage Day is decided by the UNESCO every year.
3. Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility is the theme of World Heritage Day 2020.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**3) 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbhakam' which means the "World is One" is taken from which of the following?**

- a. Maha Upanishad
- b. Mundaka Upanishad
- c. Taittiriya Upanishad

d. Mandukya Upanishad

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Reverse Repo Rate***

1. Reverse repo rate is the rate of interest the RBI charges from its clients on their short-term borrowings.
2. It is reverse of the repo rate and this was started in November 1996 as part of liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) by the RBI.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to the *International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)***

1. It is a global non-governmental organization established based on the Venice Charter 1964.
2. It is an advisory body of the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are incorrect?

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

**Answers**

1. c

- Union Ministry of Culture has recently launched the **National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) of India** in New Delhi.

- India houses a repository of unique Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) traditions, 13 of which have also been recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
- The National ICH List is an attempt to recognize the diversity of Indian culture embedded in its intangible heritage.
- It aims to raise awareness about the various intangible cultural heritage elements from different states of India at national and international level and ensure their protection.
- This initiative is also a part of the **Vision 2024 of the Ministry of Culture**.

2. c

**World Heritage Day**

- It is observed every year on April 18 to preserve the human heritage and recognize the efforts of the organizations working for it.
- **Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility** is the theme of 2020.
- The theme is decided by the **International Council on Monuments and Sites** every year.

3. a

4. b

- The Indian economy's slowdown during 2018 and 2019 is becoming much worse in 2020 with the spread of COVID-19.
- Like most other central banks in the world, the Reserve Bank of India, too, has tried to cut interest rates to boost the economy.
- However, unlike in the past, when the RBI used its repo rate as the main instrument to tweak the interest rates, today, it is the reverse repo rate that is effectively setting the benchmark.

**Reverse Repo Rate**

- It is the rate of interest the **RBI pays to its clients** who offer short-term loans to it.
- It is **reverse of the repo rate** and this was started in November 1996 as **part of liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF)** by the RBI.

### Repo Rate

- The rate of interest the RBI charges from its clients on their short-term borrowing is the repo rate in India.
- Basically, this is an abbreviated form of the 'rate of repurchase' and in western economies it is known as the 'rate of discount'.

5. d

- ICOMOS, the **International Council on Monuments and Sites**, is a **global non-governmental organization** associated with UNESCO.
- It was established on the principles put down in the **Venice Charter**, also known as the 1964 International Charter on the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites.
- Its mission is to promote the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of monuments, building complexes and sites.
- It participates in the development of doctrine and the evolution and distribution of ideas, and conducts advocacy.
- ICOMOS is an Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention of UNESCO.

**21-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative (NMITLI) program**

1. It is a flagship initiative of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
2. It seeks to build, capture and retain for India a leadership position by synergizing the best competencies of publicly funded R&D institutions, academia and also private industries.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

**2) Who among the following heads the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) which ensures implementation of Drugs and Cosmetics Act across the country?**

- a. Drugs Controller General of India
- b. Directorate General of Health Services
- c. Minister for Health and Family Welfare
- d. Chairperson of National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to National Policy on Biofuels, 2018**

1. The policy allows conversion of food grains to ethanol when there is 50% over supply of food grains being projected by Ministry of Agriculture.
2. The conversion would be based on the approval of National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC).

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**4) "Daporijo Bridge", a strategic link towards the LAC between India and China, was constructed recently on which of the following rivers?**

- a. R. Lohit
- b. R. Dihing
- c. R. Subansiri
- d. R. Dhansiri

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to New Development Bank (NDB)**

1. It was established by the BRIC countries, before the induction of South Africa in 2010.



2. NDB is a member of G-20 forum along with World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

## Answers

1. c

- The **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**, through its flagship **New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative (NMITLI) program**, has been supporting Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Ahmedabad since 2007 for developing a drug to save lives of critically ill patients suffering from **Gram-negative sepsis**.
- It is now approved for marketing in India. It will be available commercially as **Sepsivac** from Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

### **New Millennium Indian Technology Leadership Initiative (NMITLI)**

- It is the largest public-private-partnership effort within the R&D domain in the country.
- It looks beyond today's technology and thus **seeks to build, capture and retain for India a leadership position by synergising the best competencies of publicly funded R&D institutions, academia and private industry**.
- The Government finances and plays a catalytic role in this initiative.

2. a

- **Drug Controller General of India (DCGI)** heads the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** which ensures implementation of Drugs and Cosmetics Act across the country.
- CDSCO looks after quality control of drugs and cosmetics as well as approval of new drugs in India.

3. b

- **National Policy on Biofuels, 2018** under Para 5.3 *inter-alia* envisages that during an agriculture crop year when there is **projected over supply of food grains as anticipated by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (No specific quantities)**, the policy will allow conversion of these **surplus quantities** of food grains to ethanol, based on the approval of **National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC)**.
- A meeting of NBCC was held recently under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas, wherein it was approved that the surplus rice available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) may be converted to ethanol for utilization in making alcohol-based hand-sanitizers and in blending for Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) programme.

4. c

- The **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** has managed to build a 430-ft bridge in a strategically important area in Arunachal Pradesh in just 27 days, despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 lockdown.
- **Daporijo bridge on Subansiri River**, replacing an older bridge, was inaugurated recently by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister through video conferencing.
- It is a strategic link towards the LAC between **India and China**.

5. d

- Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman attended the 5th Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of New Development Bank through video-conference in New Delhi recently.
- She also strongly encouraged NDB **to take appropriate actions to join G-20 forum** along with other Multilateral Development Bank (MDBs)/International Financial Institutions (IFIs).
- She also urged NDB to follow innovative practices in supporting the BRICS nations for achieving their Sustainable Development Goals.

### **New Development Bank (NDB)**



- The NDB was established by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) in 2014.
- The purpose of the Bank is to mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging market economies and developing countries to complement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development.
- NDB has so far approved 14 projects of India for an amount of \$ 4,183 million.

**22-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC)**

1. It is an autonomous technology think tank under the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
2. The main focus of TIFAC is to provide connectivity training and other value added services such as web hosting, e-mail services, video conferencing.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) The following is associated with which of the following States/UTs?**

1. Brokpa tribes
2. Markha Valley
3. Chamba Buddha statue

**Select the correct answer:**

- a. Sikkim
- b. Ladakh
- c. Arunachal Pradesh
- d. Himachal Pradesh

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to World Earth Day**

1. It is an international event celebrated around the world to pledge support for environmental protection.
2. The year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the annual celebrations of World Earth Day.
3. The theme for Earth Day 2020 is "Climate Action".

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**4) Consider the following statements**

1. The Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) of the rupee is a weighted average of exchange rates adjusted with inflation before the currencies of India's major trading partners.
2. A decrease in NEER denotes depreciation in rupee's value and an increase reflects appreciation.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**5) Consider the following statements with respect to e-Raktosh portal**

1. It is a Centralized Blood Bank Management System to streamline the standard operating procedures, guidelines and workflow of blood banks across the nation.
2. It enforces Drug & Cosmetic Act, National blood policy standards and

**guidelines ensuring proper management of donated blood.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

## Answers

1. a

- *The Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) by virtue of its mandate of thinking for future, is preparing a white paper to strategize revival of post-COVID 19 Indian economy.*
- This document would mainly focus on strengthening Make in India initiatives, commercialization of Indigenous technology, developing a technology-driven transparent Public Distribution System (PDS), efficient rural health care delivery, reduction of import, adoption of emerging technology domains like AI, Machine Learning, Data Analytics and many more.
- It will be soon submitted to the decision-making authorities of the Government.

### **Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC)**

- It was formed as a registered Society in 1988 under the **Department of Science and Technology** as an autonomous body.
- It was mandated to **assess the state-of-art of technology and set directions for future technological development in India** in important socio-economic sectors.

2. b

- To generate awareness about and promote various tourism destinations of India, the Ministry of Tourism has launched the “DekhoApnaDesh” webinar series.
- It provides information on the rich culture and heritage of the country and share the depth and expanse of the destinations in India.

- As part of the ongoing series, the Ministry of Tourism conducted its 5th webinar on the rich heritage of Ladakh titled “**Ladakh: Explore the Unexplored**” on 20th April 2020.

3. b

- April 22 is **World Earth Day**, an international event celebrated around the world to pledge support for environmental protection.
- The year 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of the annual celebrations.
- This year’s theme for Earth Day is “**Climate Action**”.
- In 2009, the United Nations designated April 22 as ‘International Mother Earth Day’.
- The landmark Paris Agreement, which brings almost 200 countries together in setting a common target to reduce global greenhouse emissions, was signed on Earth Day 2016.
- Earth Day aims to build the world’s largest environmental movement to drive transformative change for people and the planet.
- The movement’s mission is to diversify, educate and activate the environmental movement worldwide.

4. b

- The Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) of the rupee is a weighted average of exchange rates before the currencies of India’s major trading partners.
- When the **weight of inflation is adjusted** with the NEER, we get the **Real Effective Exchange Rate (REER)** of the rupee.
- A **decrease in this index denotes depreciation** in rupee’s value; an increase reflects appreciation.
- The Reserve Bank of India tabulates the rupee’s Nominal Effective Exchange Rate (NEER) in relation to the currencies of 36 trading partner countries.

5. c

**e-Raktosh portal**

- It is a Centralized Blood Bank Management System.
- It is a comprehensive IT solution to standardize and streamline the standard operating procedures, guidelines and workflow of blood banks across the nation.
- It was inaugurated in 2016 by then Minister of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- It enforces Drug & Cosmetic Act, National blood policy standards and guidelines ensuring proper collection & donation, effective management and monitoring the quality and quantity of the donated blood.
- e-Rakt Kosh has components for management of the blood donation life cycle which includes:
  1. The biometric Donor Management System
  2. Blood grouping,
  3. TTI screening,
  4. antibody screening,
  5. A centralized Blood Inventory Management System
  6. Bio-Medical Waste Management System for disposal of discarded blood

**23-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Van Dhan Samajik Doori Jagrookta Abhiyaan**

1. It is an initiative of TRIFED that aims to educate tribals through 15,000 Self Help Groups under Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana spread across 28 States/UTs.
2. UNICEF is providing the necessary Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials for this campaign.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

c. Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

**2) Consider the following statements with respect to Sugarcane Pricing in India**

1. Both the Central government and State governments have the power to fix the price of sugarcane under the Concurrent List of the Constitution.
2. The price fixed by the state government is always higher than the minimum price fixed by the central government.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**3) "Anthurium", often seen in the news recently is a/an?**

- a. Air Purifier Plant
- b. Weak Radioactive Element
- c. Strong Radioactive Element
- d. Water Purifying Chemical

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to VidyaDaan 2.0**

1. It is a common national programme launched by the Ministry of Human Resources Development Ministry for individuals & organizations across the country to contribute e-learning resources.
2. The content donated will be used on the SWAYAM portal to help millions of children across the country to continue their learning anytime and anywhere.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only

- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

5) With respect to the recent promulgation of Ordinance to amend the *Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897*, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to protect healthcare service personnel and property including their living/working premises against violence during epidemics.
2. The amendment makes acts of violence cognizable and non-bailable offences.
3. Offences shall be investigated by an officer of the rank of Inspector within a period of 30 days, and trial has to be completed in three year.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

## Answers

1. c

### Van Dhan Samajik Doori Jagrookta Abhiyaan

- Educating tribals through 15,000 Self Help Groups under **Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana** spread across 28 States/UTs.
- TRIFED teamed up with UNICEF and WHO for launching a digital campaign spreading awareness about the importance of social distancing amid the coronavirus crisis in India.
- **UNICEF** is providing the necessary IEC materials (posters, flyers, leaflets, brochures, booklets, messages for health education sessions, radio broadcast or TV spots etc) for the campaign christened as **Van Dhan Samajik Doori Jagrookta Abhiyaan** OR **Van Dhan Social Distancing Awareness Movement**.
- Extensive outreach through Train of Trainer Programs and Webinars focused on basic orientation on covid-19 response, key

preventive behaviour, social media campaigns on social distancing, home quarantine has been initiated.

2. a

- *The Supreme Court has recently held in its judgement that **both the central government and the state governments have the power to fix the price of sugarcane under the Concurrent List of the Constitution** provided the price set by the State is higher than the minimum price fixed by the Centre.*
- The judgment was passed by a five-judge constitution bench through video conferencing for a plea filed by Western Uttar Pradesh Sugar Mills Association which questions the power of the state government to fix a minimum price for sugarcane when the Centre had already set a price for the same.
- The constitutional bench observed in its judgment that the price which is fixed by the central government is the “**minimum price**” and the price which is fixed by the state government is the “**advised price**” which is always higher than the “minimum price” fixed by the central government and therefore, there is no conflict.
- ***It is only in a case where the “advised price” fixed by the state government is lower than the “minimum price” fixed by the central government, the provisions of the central enactments will prevail and the “minimum price” fixed by the central government would prevail.***
- So long as the “advised price” fixed by the state government is higher than the “minimum price” fixed by the central government, the same cannot be said to be void as per the provisions of the Constitution of India.

3. a

- *D Vasini Bai, a women innovator from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, has developed ten varieties of Anthurium, a flower with high market value, by cross-pollination.*
- Anthurium (*Anthurium spp.*) is a vast group of beautiful blooming plants available in a wide range of colors. The plants of the varieties are



having high demands due to its use as indoor decorative plants.

- They are beautiful but also purify the surrounding air and remove harmful airborne chemicals like formaldehyde, ammonia, toluene, xylene, and allergens.
- Its importance of removing toxic substances from the air, **NASA has placed it in the list of air purifier plants.**

4. a

- The Union Human Resource Development Minister has recently e-launched **VidyaDaan 2.0 program** for inviting e-learning content contributions in New Delhi.
- The programme has been launched due to the increasing requirement for e-learning content for students (both school and higher education) especially in the backdrop of situation arising out of Covid-19 and also due to the urgent need to integrate digital education with schooling to augment learning.

#### **VidyaDaan**

- It is conceptualized as a common national program for individuals & organizations across the country to donate/contribute e-learning resources for both school and higher education to ensure continuity of quality learning.
- The content will be used on the **DIKSHA app** to help millions of children across the country to continue their learning anytime and anywhere.
- The DIKSHA Platform of MHRD has been operating since September 2017 with 30+ States/UTs leveraging DIKSHA for augmenting teaching and learning processes.

5. c

- The Union Cabinet in its meeting held recently has approved promulgation of an Ordinance to amend the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 to protect healthcare service personnel and property including their living/working premises against violence during epidemics.
- The President has given his assent for promulgation of the Ordinance.

#### **Salient features of the Ordinance**

- Violence as defined in the Ordinance will include harassment and physical injury and damage to property.
- Healthcare service personnel include public and clinical healthcare service providers such as doctors, nurses, paramedical workers and community health workers; any other persons empowered under the Act to take measures to prevent the outbreak of the disease or spread thereof; and any persons declared as such by the State Government, by notification in the Official Gazette.
- The penal provisions can be invoked in instances of damage to property including a clinical establishment, any facility identified for quarantine and isolation of patients, mobile medical units and any other property in which the healthcare service personnel have direct interest in relation to the epidemic.
- The amendment makes acts of violence **cognizable and non-bailable offences.**
- Commission or abetment of such acts of violence shall be punished with imprisonment for a term of three months to five years, and with fine of Rs.50,000/- to Rs.2,00,000/-.
- In case of causing grievous hurt, imprisonment shall be for a term six months to seven years and with fine of Rs.1,00,000/- to Rs.5,00,000/-
- In addition, the offender shall also be liable to pay compensation to the victim and twice the fair market value for damage of property.
- Offences shall be investigated by an officer of the rank of Inspector within a period of 30 days, and trial has to be completed in **one year**, unless extended by the court for reasons to be recorded in writing.

**24-04-2020**

#### **1) Consider the following statements with respect to Nutrient-based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme**

1. Under the scheme, a fixed amount of subsidy is provided on each grade of subsidised phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers, except for urea.

2. The subsidy will be decided biannually by the Department of Fertilizers.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Indian Initiative on Earth BioGenome Sequencing (IIEBS)*

- 1. It aims to decode the genetic information of all known species of plants and animals in India.
- 2. IIEBS project was part of the Earth Bio-Genome Project, an international initiative to catalogue life on the planet.
- 3. The National Institute of Plant Genome Research, New Delhi is the coordinating centre for this initiative.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are incorrect?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None

3) Consider the following pairs

**Observatories - Location**

- 1. LIGO Observatory - France
- 2. Virgo Interferometer - Italy

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Kasowal Bridge* which was opened recently

- 1. It is a permanent bridge on river Sutlej connecting Kasowal enclave in Punjab to the rest of the country.
- 2. The bridge was built by Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) under Project Chetak.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) *Noor*, which means “light” was launched recently. It is the first military satellite of which of the following countries?

- a. Iran
- b. Oman
- c. Indonesia
- d. Saudi Arabia

## Answers

1. a

- The **Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA)** headed by the Prime Minister has recently slashed the subsidy on **non-urea fertilisers**, a move that would reduce the burden on the exchequer to Rs. 22,186.55 crore in this fiscal amid the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The CCEA also approved **the inclusion of a complex fertiliser** namely **Ammonium Phosphate** (NP 14:28:0:0) under the NBS scheme.

## Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme

- In 2010, the government had launched the nutrient-based subsidy (NBS) programme.
- Under the scheme, a fixed amount of subsidy, **decided on an annual basis**, is



provided on each grade of subsidised phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers, **except for urea**, based on the nutrient content present in them.

- Retail prices of non-urea fertilisers such as Diammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potash (MoP) and NPK are decontrolled and are determined by manufacturers, while Centre gives a fixed subsidy each year.
- The government is making available fertilisers, namely urea and 21 grades of P&K fertilisers to farmers at subsidised prices through manufacturers/importers.
- **In case of urea**, the government fixes the maximum retail price (MRP).
- The difference between the production cost and the MRP is reimbursed to manufacturers.

2. d

- **The Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute (JNTBGRI)** has been selected as one of the Biological Knowledge and Resource Centres of the Indian Initiative on Earth BioGenome Sequencing (IIEBS).

#### Indian Initiative on Earth BioGenome Sequencing (IIEBS)

- It seeks to decode the genetic information of all known species of plants and animals in the country.
- The whole genome sequencing of 1,000 species of plants and animals will be taken up in the initial phase of IIEBS to be completed over a period of five years.
- The National Institute of Plant Genome Research, New Delhi is the coordinating centre for the nationwide project involving a total of 24 institutes.

3. b

- **In a first**, a team of astronomers has detected gravitational waves emerging from the merger of two Binary Black Holes (BBH) with significantly unequal masses.
- Named **GW190412**, the merger was collectively detected on April 19, 2019.
- The highly-sensitive signals were detected using **Laser Interferometer**

**Gravitational wave Observatory (LIGO) and Virgo**, located in the **US and Italy**, respectively.

- It was 2015 when gravitational waves were first detected on Earth.

4. b

- For the first time since independence, the Kasowal enclave in Punjab right along the Pakistan border has got a permanent link with the Indian mainland.
- The Kasowal enclave in Punjab got connected permanently to the mainland when the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) opened the 484-metre Kasowal permanent bridge **on River Ravi**.
- The bridge was built by 141 Drain Maintenance Coy of **49 Border Roads Task Force (BRTF)** of **Project Chetak** of the **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)**.

5. a

- Iran's Revolutionary Guard has recently said it put the Islamic Republic's **first military satellite** into orbit, a successful launch after months of failures.
- The launch comes amid tensions between Tehran and Washington over its collapsing nuclear deal and after a US drone strike killed Guard General Qassem Soleimani in January.
- Iran has suffered several failed satellite launches in recent months.

**25-04-2020**

**1) With respect to 73rd Amendment Act of 1992, consider the following statements**

- 1. The act has given a practical shape to Article 46 of the Indian Constitution.**
- 2. Under the Act, a state having a population not exceeding 20 lakh may not constitute panchayats at the village level.**

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only**
- b. 2 only**



- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *e-GramSwaraj Portal*

1. The portal provides for an integrated property validation solution for rural India which demarcates inhabited land in rural areas.
2. The Demarcation would be done with the collaborated efforts of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Panchayati Raj Department, State Revenue Department and Survey of India.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Swamitva Scheme*

1. The scheme will provide the Gram Panchayats a single interface to prepare and implement their Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).
2. The Unified scheme is an initiative of Ministry of Panchayati Raj and implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) "*Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve*" is located in which of the following states?

- a. Assam
- b. Mizoram

- c. West Bengal
- d. None of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Board for Wild Life (NBWL)*

1. It is a statutory organization constituted under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
2. It is chaired by the Indian Prime Minister and its vice chairman is Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
3. It serves as apex body to review all wildlife-related matters and approve projects in and around national parks and sanctuaries.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

## Answers

1. d

### 73rd Amendment Act of 1992

- This act has added a new Part-IX to the Constitution of India.
- This part is entitled as 'The Panchayats' and consists of provisions from Articles 243 to 243 O.
- In addition, the act has also added a new Eleventh Schedule to the Constitution.
- This schedule contains 29 functional items of the panchayats. It deals with Article 243-G.
- The act has given a practical shape to **Article 40** of the Constitution which says that, "The State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government."
- This article forms a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

- The act gives a constitutional status to the panchayati Raj.
- Under the Act, a state having a population not exceeding 20 lakh may not constitute panchayats **at the intermediate level**.

2. d

- Indian Prime Minister has recently launched the **e-GramSwaraj portal**, a new initiative of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**.
- It will provide the gram panchayats with a single interface to prepare and implement their Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP).

3. d

- The **Swamitva Scheme** provides for an integrated property validation solution for rural India.
- The demarcation of inhabited land in rural areas would be done by the use of the latest surveying methods such as drone technology with the collaborated efforts of the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Panchayati Raj Department, State Revenue Department and Survey of India**.

4. a

- The **National Board for Wildlife's (NBWL)** has recently recommended coal mining in a part of land from the Saleki proposed reserve forest, **Assam**.
- The NBWL's Standing Committee had on April 7, 2020 discussed a proposal for use of 98.59 hectares of land from the Saleki proposed reserve forest land for a coal mining project by North-Easter Coal Field (NECF), a unit of Coal India Limited.
- **Saleki is a part of the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve** that includes the **Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary** covering 111.19 sq km of rainforest and several reserve forests in Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts.

5. d

- NBWL is a **statutory organization** constituted under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- It is **chaired by the Prime Minister** and **vice chaired by the Union**

### **Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).**

- It is **advisory in nature** and advises the Central Government on framing policies and measures for conservation of wildlife in the country.
- No alternation of boundaries in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries can be done without approval of the NBWL.

**27-04-2020**

### **1) Consider the following statements with respect to National Road Transport Network**

1. It was designed with **22 long routes interspersed with 34 interstate/intra-state schedules across the country**.
2. It is an initiative of **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** under the **Project Rashtriya Sadak**.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

### **2) Consider the following statements with respect to Basaveshwara**

1. He led the **Vachana (poetry) Movement** which aims for "**Sakala Jeevatmarige lesu**".
2. He became the **Prime minister of Kalchuri king Bijjala**.
3. He revolted against the caste system in the **Hinduism** and founded a new religion called "**Lingayats**" to create a **casteless society**.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 3 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only





d. 1, 2 and 3

c. Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

3) *Ruhdaar*, often seen in the news recently is a/an?

- Attack Helicopter
- Mechanical Ventilator
- Modified COVID Train
- Indigenous Malware Detector

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)*

- It is an apex organization of marketing cooperatives for agricultural produce in India.
- It was founded with the objective to promote the trade of agricultural produce and forest resources across the nation.
- It is the sole Central Nodal Agency for procurement of Milling Copra, Ball Copra and De-husk Coconut under Price Support Scheme.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Rohtang Pass*

- It is presented on the Zaskar Range of Himalayas located in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- The Ravi river rises west of the Rohtang pass in the Kullu hills of Himachal Pradesh.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only

## Answers

1. a

### National Road Transport Network

- It was designed by **Department of Post** with 22 long routes of over 500 km interspersed with 34 interstate/intra-state schedules touching over 75 cities across the country.
- This initiative will ensure the movement of essential items within the country in the critical situation arising out of lock-down due to COVID-19.

2. d

- Basaveshwara was born in Bagevadi (of undivided Bijapur district in Karnataka) during 1131 AD.
- He belonged to Brahmin community.
- As a religious tradition, he was initiated with the holy thread 'janivara' in Upanayana, (thread ceremony) at the early age of eight years.
- Basavanna revolted against this tradition, cut threw his janivara, left home and went to Kudalasangama from where he was educated in all respects.
- In the later stage, he went to Kalyana, where the **Kalchuri king Bijjala** (1157-1167, AD) was ruling.
- Because of his highly intellectual personality, he was appointed as a karanika (Accountant) in the initial stage, in the court of king Bijjala and later he became the **Prime minister of Bijjala** after proving his administrative ability.
- The main aim of Vachana (poetry) movement, led by Basaveshwara was welfare of all.
- He proclaimed this as- "**Sakala jeevatmarige lesu**" (welfare of all).
- He revolted against the caste system in the Hinduism and founded a new religion called "**Lingayats**" to create a casteless society.

3. b

- A team of engineering students from IIT Bombay, NIT Srinagar and Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST) have come up with a low-cost ventilator using locally available materials.
- The team has named the low cost ventilator as "**Ruhdaar**".

4. d

- *In order to meet the protein needs of people during this crisis, the Central government had decided to provide one kg of milled and cleaned pulses to each NFSA household for three months under the **PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)**.*
- Executed by **NAFED** under guidance of the Department of consumer affairs of the Central government, this operation entails lifting of un-milled pulses from the godowns of Central / State warehousing corporations, getting the pulses milled or cleaned as per quality standards prescribed by FSSAI and then reaching the milled pulses to the States.
- Thereafter, the milled pulses are carried to state government godowns and then to PDS shops for distribution.

**National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED)**

- It is an apex organization of marketing cooperatives for agricultural produce in India.
- It was established on the auspicious day of Gandhi Jayanti on 2nd October 1958 and is registered under the Multi State Co-operative Societies Act.
- NAFED was founded with the objective to promote the trade of **agricultural produce and forest resources** across the nation.
- Agricultural farmers are the main members of Nafed, who have a say in the working of Nafed in the form of members of the General Body.
- NAFED is one of the Central Nodal Agencies for procurement of 16 notified agricultural commodities of Oilseeds, Pulses and Cotton under Price Support Scheme (PSS).
- It continues to be the **sole Central Nodal Agency** for procurement of Milling Copra,

Ball Copra and De-husk Coconut under Price Support Scheme.

5. b

- *Recently Border Roads Organization (BRO) opened the Rohtang Pass, three weeks in advance, for transporting essential supplies and relief materials to Lahaul and Spiti districts of Himachal Pradesh amid the lockdown.*

**Rohtang Pass**

- It is present on the **Pir Panjal Range of Himalayas**.
- It is located in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- It connects the Kullu Valley with Lahaul and Spiti Valleys of Himachal Pradesh.
- The **Ravi river** rises west of the Rohtang pass in the Kullu hills of **Himachal Pradesh**.
- The world's longest tunnel (8.8km) above 10,000 feet -Rohtang Tunnel (Atal Tunnel) is under construction to connect villages in Lahaul-Spiti (Himachal Pradesh) to the rest of the country even during winters.
- The operation to clear snow is carried out every year as the pass remains snow-bound for almost six months, from mid-November to mid-May, isolating Lahaul and Spiti districts from the rest of the country.

**28-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to PRIASoft**

1. It is an exclusive Centralized Accounting Software intended for the sole purpose of managing finance under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) Scheme.
2. It aims to keep track of all the in-flow (Receipts) and out-flow (Expenditure) of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only



- c. Both 1 and 2  
d. Neither 1 nor 2

2) Consider the following statements with respect to the Report: *“Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019* released recently

1. India is the fourth largest military spender after U.S.A, China and Saudi Arabia.
2. The report was released by the International Peace Foundation (IPF).

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*

1. It is a part of the United Nations Secretariat and a completely distinct entity from the Human Rights Council.
2. The High Commissioner for Human Rights heads OHCHR and spearheads the United Nations' human rights efforts.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to the *Kesavananda Bharati v State of Kerala Case, 1973*

1. It upheld the validity of the 24th Amendment Act (1971) and laid down a new doctrine of the 'basic structure' of the Constitution.

2. According to the judgment, the Parliament cannot abridge or take away any of the Fundamental Rights from the Indian Constitution.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

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

5) *“Paracel Islands”* sometimes seen in the news recently is located in which of the following?

- a. Black Sea  
b. Sea of Japan  
c. Caribbean Sea  
d. South China Sea

## Answers

1. b

### PRIASoft

- It aims to keep track of all the in-flow (Receipts) and out-flow (Expenditure) of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- The Application facilitate better financial management of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) by bringing about transparency and accountability in the maintenance of accounts thereby leading to better credibility and ultimately strengthening of PRIs.
- It is a centralized Accounting Software intended for use by all the three levels of Panchayati Raj namely Zilla, Block and Village Panchayat.
- Apart from making the process of accounting simple and easy (necessarily due to lack of trained manpower at this level), it ensures a better financial management, transparency and accountability at the Panchayat level.

2. d

- The annual report *‘Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019’* was released

recently by a Swedish think tank, **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**.

- According to the report, **China and India were, respectively, the second- and third-largest military spenders** in the world.
- In 2019, the top five largest spenders — U.S. (\$732 bn), China, India, Russia (\$65.1 bn) and Saudi Arabia (\$61.9 bn) — accounted for 62% of the global expenditure.
- The report quoted that India's tensions and rivalry with both Pakistan and China are among the major drivers for its increased military spending.
- The \$71.1 billion spent by India on defence in 2019 was 2.4% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- India was at the fourth position **in 2018 with Saudi Arabia at the third**.

3. c

- **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights** Michelle Bachelet called on countries to refrain from violating fundamental rights "under the guise of exceptional or emergency measures".
- The UN rights chief has recently warned that countries flouting the rule of law in the name of fighting the novel coronavirus pandemic risk sparking a "**Human Rights Disaster**".

#### **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**

- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights) is the leading UN entity on human rights.
- The General Assembly entrusted both the High Commissioner and her Office with a unique mandate to promote and protect all human rights for all people.
- The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the principal human rights official of the United Nations.
- **The High Commissioner heads OHCHR** and spearheads the United Nations' human rights efforts.

- UN Human Rights is **part of the United Nations Secretariat** and its headquarters in Geneva.

#### **The Human Rights Council**

- It was established on 15 March 2006 by the UN General Assembly and reporting directly to it.
- It replaced the 60-year-old **United Nations Commission on Human Rights** as the key United Nations intergovernmental body responsible for human rights.
- The Council, consisting of State representatives, is a primarily political body with a comprehensive human rights mandate, and a forum empowered to prevent abuses, inequity and discrimination, protect the most vulnerable, and expose perpetrators.
- The **Human Rights Council is a completely distinct entity from OHCHR**, which is part of the United Nations Secretariat answering to the Secretary-General.
- OHCHR provides technical, substantive and secretariat support to the Council.

4. a

- *Exactly 47 years ago, the Supreme Court passed its landmark judgment in Kesavananda Bharati vs State of Kerala, considered among the most significant constitutional cases in India's judicial history.*
- On April 24, 1973, Chief Justice Sikri and 12 judges of the Supreme Court by a 7-6 verdict ruled that the 'basic structure' of the Constitution is inviolable, and could not be amended by Parliament.
- The basic structure doctrine has since been regarded as a tenet of Indian constitutional law.

#### **Kesavananda Bharati v State of Kerala Case, 1973**

- In the Kesavananda Bharati case<sup>3</sup> (1973), the Supreme Court overruled its judgement in the Golak Nath case (1967).
- It **upheld the validity of the 24th Amendment Act (1971)** and stated that **Parliament is empowered to**



**abridge or take away any of the Fundamental Rights.**

- At the same time, it **laid down a new doctrine of the 'basic structure'** (or 'basic features') of the Constitution.
- It ruled that the constituent power of Parliament under Article 368 does not enable it to alter the 'basic structure' of the Constitution.
- This means that **the Parliament cannot abridge or take away a Fundamental Right that forms a part of the 'basic structure' of the Constitution.**

5. d

- The Chinese government had unilaterally "named" 80 islands, reefs and other geographical features around the Spratly Islands and the **Paracel Islands** with Chinese names.
- Spratly Islands and the **Paracel Islands** are located in the middle of the **South China Sea** waters between the territory of Vietnam and the Philippines.

#### **Paracel Islands**

- This archipelago is a collection of 130 islands and coral reefs and is located in the **South China Sea**, almost equidistant from China and Vietnam.
- Beijing says that references to the Paracel Islands as a part of China sovereign territory can be found in 14th century writings from the Song Dynasty.
- Vietnam on the other hand, says that historical texts from at least the 15th century show that the islands were a part of its territory.

**29-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to naming of Tropical Cyclones**

1. Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre (RSMC), New Delhi is responsible to name tropical cyclones forming over the North Indian Ocean including Bay of Bengal & the Arabian Sea following a standard procedure.

2. The names of the tropical cyclones over the north Indian Ocean, once used, will cease to be used again.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**2) "Covid-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support (CARES) Program" is an initiative of which of the following?**

- a. The World Bank
- b. New Development Bank
- c. Asian Development Bank
- d. African Development Bank

**3) "Global Terrorism Index Report" is published annually by?**

- a. INTERPOL
- b. Economist Intelligence Unit
- c. Institute for Economics and Peace
- d. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to "Patachitra Painting"**

1. It is the traditional painting of Odisha and West Bengal.
2. Women decorate the nuptial chamber and the inner walls of their homes to celebrate festivals particularly the return of Ram from exile.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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



5) “Unified Geologic Map of the Moon”, the first ever digital, unified, global, geological map of the moon was released recently by?

- Lunar Planetary Institute
- United States Geological Survey
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- All of the above

## Answers

1. c

- New list of names of tropical cyclones was adopted by WMO/ESCAP Panel Member Countries in April 2020 for naming of tropical cyclones over North Indian Ocean including Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea.
- The new names will be used after the name ‘Amphan’ from the previous list which is utilized.

### Naming of Tropical Cyclones

- Worldwide there are six regional specialised meteorological centres (RSMCs) and five regional Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres (TCWCs) mandated for issuing advisories and naming of tropical cyclones.
- India Meteorological Department is one of the six RSMCs to provide tropical cyclone and storm surge advisories to 13 member countries under WMO/ESCAP Panel including Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.
- RSMC, New Delhi is also mandated to name the Tropical Cyclones developing over the north Indian Ocean (NIO) including the Bay of Bengal (BoB) and the Arabian Sea (AS).
- The names of tropical cyclones over the north Indian Ocean will not be repeated. Once used, it will cease to be used again.
- Thus, the name should be new. It should not be there in the already existing list of any of the RSMCs worldwide including RSMC, New Delhi.

2. c

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has recently announced \$1.5 billion loan (over Rs. 11,400 crore) to India for its fight against Covid-19 pandemic.
- The funding is part of the **Covid-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support (CARES) Program**.

### CARES Program

- CARES programme will contribute directly to the improvement of access to health facilities and care, as well as social protection for more than 80 crore people, including families below the poverty line, farmers, healthcare workers, women, senior citizens, people with disabilities, low wage earners, and construction workers.
- The **CARES Program is funded through the Covid-19 Pandemic Response Option (CPRO) under the ADB’s Countercyclical Support Facility**.
- CPRO was established as part of ADB’s \$20-billion expanded assistance for developing member countries’ Covid-19 response.
- ADB mentioned that the CARES Program will be provided with a \$2-million technical assistance grant to support the government to strengthen its operational framework and efficient targeting, delivery, and monitoring and evaluation of its pro-poor economic package, as well as its health sector and social protection interventions.

3. c

- A report compiled recently by the **NITI Aayog** has questioned the methodology adopted by an Australian-based **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)** to rank India as the seventh worst terrorism affected country in its **Global Terrorism Index Report, 2019**.
- India has moved to the seventh position from the previous year’s eighth.
- The countries ahead of it are Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Syria, Pakistan and Somalia.
- India is ahead of conflict-ridden countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, South

Sudan, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Palestine and Lebanon.

- The report also questions the opaque funding of the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP).

4. a

- Patachitra is the traditional paintings of **Odisha and West Bengal**.
- The Patachitra paintings are made over a **piece of cloth** known as 'Pata' or a **dried palm leaf**, which is first painted with a mixture of chalk and gum.
- The patachitra of Orissa depicts stories from the famous poem, the Geet Govind, and devotional stanzas by ancient poets, singers and writers.
- The pat was earlier made as a temple offering.
- Stories are drawn in sections on palm leaf as etchings or as paintings on paper and silk.
- Deep red, ochre, black and rich blue colours from minerals, shell and organic lac are used in these paintings.
- Modern developments have encouraged them to paint on wooden boxes, picture frames etc. for contemporary use.



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5. d

- The first ever digital, unified, global, geological map of the moon was recently released virtually by the **United States Geological Survey (USGS), NASA and the Lunar Planetary Institute**.
- The map is a 'seamless, globally consistent, 1:5,000,000-scale geologic map'.
- Unified Geologic Map of the Moon' will serve as a blueprint for future human missions and a source of research and analysis for the educators and the general public interested in lunar geology.
- Surface features of the moon which included crater rim crests, buried crater rim crests, fissures, grabens, scarps, mare wrinkle ridges, faults, troughs, rilles, and lineaments can be found in the map.
- The final map consists of 43 geologic units across the entire lunar surface, broken down into groups based on characteristics like materials of craters, basins, terra, plains and volcanic units.
- The present and future moon mission's success can be further helped by the digital map of the moon.

**30-04-2020**

**1) Consider the following statements with respect to 11th Petersberg Virtual Climate Dialogue**

1. The U.A.E host the 11th Petersberg Climate Dialogue and co-chaired by Germany and the UK.
2. The dialogue has been hosted by Germany since 2010 to provide a forum for informal high-level political discussions.
3. India participated in the virtual conference.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

- a. 2 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only

d. 1, 2 and 3

**2) Consider the following statements**

1. He was born into aristocracy at Kilimanoor in the erstwhile Travancore state of present-day Kerala, and was closely related to its royal family.
2. In 1904, the British colonial government awarded Varma with the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.
3. His most famous works include *Damayanti Talking to a Swan*, *Shakuntala Looking for Dushyanta*, *Nair Lady Adorning Her Hair*, and *Shantanu and Matsyagandha*.
4. In 2013, a crater on the planet Mercury was named in his honour.

**Identify the character who correctly matches with the above description:**

- a. Ravi Varma
- b. Pazhassi Raja
- c. Maqbool Fida Husain
- d. Vallathol Narayana Menon

**3) Consider the following statements with respect to *US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)***

1. It is an independent, bipartisan U.S. government advisory body which monitors religious freedom abroad and makes policy recommendations.
2. It categorised India as a "Country of Particular Concern" on religious freedom for the first time since 2004.

**Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?**

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

**4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mid-day Meal Scheme***

1. It is a Centrally-Sponsored Scheme, aimed at increasing enrolment, retention and attendance of students in schools.
2. The Scheme comes under the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resources Development.
3. The scheme covers all government and government aided schools and also Madarsa and Maqtabas supported under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

**5) "*Migration and Development Brief*" is a report published by?**

- a. World Bank
- b. World Economic Forum
- c. International Labour Organisation
- d. International Organization for Migration

**Answers**

1. c

- The eleventh and **first ever virtual** Petersberg Climate Dialogue was recently held.
- **Germany chaired the virtual Petersberg Climate Dialogue** held on April, 2020.
- Representing India in the first virtual Petersberg Climate Dialogue, Mr Javadkar stressed on the issue of climate finance and said the world now needs more. He said, we must plan for 1 trillion dollar in grants to developing world immediately.

**Petersberg Climate Dialogue**

- The first virtual climate dialogue, was the eleventh session of Petersberg Climate Dialogue which has been hosted by Germany since 2010 to provide a forum for informal high-level political discussions, focusing both on international climate negotiations and the advancement of climate action.
- The Dialogue was co-chaired by **Germany and United Kingdom**, the incoming Presidency of 26th Conference of Parties (COP 26) to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The Dialogue is of particular importance this year as COP26, originally scheduled for November, has been postponed to an unknown date in 2021 due to the coronavirus outbreak.

2. a

- April 29 is the birth anniversary of the famed Indian painter Raja Ravi Varma (1848-1906), remembered for giving Indians their western, classical representations of Hindu gods and goddesses.
- Through his printing press, Varma's humanised depiction of Hindu pantheon travelled beyond the surfaces of costly canvases, and into the prayer and living rooms of working-class homes.
- A prolific artist, Varma is believed to have made around 7,000 paintings before his death at the age of 58.
- His most famous works include Damayanti Talking to a Swan, Shakuntala Looking for Dushyanta, Nair Lady Adorning Her Hair, and Shantanu and Matsyagandha.

### **Raja Ravi Varma**

- Varma was born into aristocracy at Kilimanoor in the erstwhile Travancore state of present-day Kerala, and was closely related to its royal family.
- In 1904, the British colonial government awarded Varma with the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.
- In 2013, a crater on the planet Mercury was named in his honour.

3. c

- The **US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** has

designated **India** as a **"Country of Particular Concern"** (CPC) in its annual report of 2020.

### **USCIRF**

- It is an independent, bipartisan U.S. government advisory body, separate from the State Department, that monitors religious freedom abroad and makes policy recommendations to the president, secretary of state, and Congress.
- Established by the US Government in 1998 after the inaction of the International Religious Freedom Act, recommendations of USCIRF are **non-binding** to the State Department.
- Traditionally, India does not recognise the view of the USCIRF and has not allowed members to visit the country.

4. d

- *Union Government has recently announced around 11 per cent increase in annual central allocation of cooking cost under Mid-day meal scheme to eight thousand 100 crore rupees in view of situation arising out of COVID-19.*

### **Mid-day Meal Scheme**

- It is a **Centrally-Sponsored Scheme**, aimed at increasing enrolment, retention and attendance of students in schools.
- The Midday Meal Scheme comes under the HRD Ministry's Department of School Education and Literacy.
- The scheme covers all government and government aided schools and also Madarsa and Maqtabs supported under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).
- The cooking cost per child per day has been increased from four rupees 48 paise to four rupees 97 paise for students of Class one to Class five.
- For students of Class six to Class eight, the cooking cost per child per day has been increased from six rupees 71 paise to seven rupees 45 paise.
- According to HRD Ministry, the approval is also being given for providing mid-day meal during summer holidays of schools, on which



an additional expenditure of about 1600 crores will be made.

5. a

- **Migration and Development Briefs** are prepared by the Migration and Remittances Unit, Development Economics (DEC), **World Bank**.
- The brief aims to provide an update on key developments in the area of migration and remittance flows and related policies over the past six months.
- India, the country that received the most remittances in the world, \$79 billion in 2018, according to the World Bank's Migration and Development Brief.