

International Relations

CRISP, CONCISE & COMPLETE

For UPSC CSE
PRELIMS 2025
JAN 2024 - APR 2025

CURRENT AFFAIRS MATERIAL



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS – CURRENT AFFAIRS

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Day 23

Topic 221

221. India's 'Neighbourhood First' Policy

- Aims at management of India's relations with countries in its immediate neighbourhood, that is, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Objective-

- To enhance physical, digital and people to people connectivity across the region, as well as augmenting trade and commerce.
- The policy officially came to being in 2008.

Change in 'Neighbourhood First' Policy post Uri attack, 2016

- After Uri attack in 2016 one of the important foreign policy goals for India is to isolate Pakistan in the South Asia.
- India is promoting regional groupings like BIMSTEC and SASEC and neglecting SAARC.

Important factual info related to neighbour first-

1. Connectivity projects

- BBIN Initiative, Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, IMT Trilateral Highway

2. Energy security

- Eq Shwe oil & gas project implemented by ONGC Videsh limited in Myanmar.



Q661. Consider the following statements regarding India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy:

- The policy focuses on improving connectivity and trade relations with neighbouring countries.
- It was officially introduced in 2008.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- India has been actively promoting SAARC over BIMSTEC as a part of this policy.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1:** Correct. The policy emphasizes enhancing connectivity and trade with immediate neighbours.
- Statement 2:** Correct. The 'Neighbourhood First' policy was officially introduced in 2008.
- Statement 3:** Incorrect. Post-Uri attack in 2016, India shifted focus towards BIMSTEC and SASEC while sidelining SAARC.

Q662. Which of the following statements about India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy are correct?

- It aims to isolate Pakistan after the Uri attack in 2016.
- It promotes regional groupings like BIMSTEC and SASEC.
- Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is an example of connectivity under this policy.
- Shwe oil and gas project in Myanmar is related to India's energy security initiatives under this policy.

- 1, 3, and 4 only
- 1, 2, and 3 only
- 2, 3, and 4 only
- All 4

Ans: d

Sol:

- Statement 1:** Correct. India aimed to diplomatically isolate Pakistan post-Uri attack in 2016.
- Statement 2:** Correct. The policy emphasizes BIMSTEC and SASEC for regional collaboration.
- Statement 3:** Correct. The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is a key connectivity initiative.
- Statement 4:** Correct. The Shwe oil and gas project in Myanmar ensures India's energy security.



Q663. Consider the following statements about the connectivity and energy initiatives under India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy:

1. The BBIN initiative is a project to improve road connectivity among Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal.
2. The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project connects India with Afghanistan.
3. ONGC Videsh is implementing the Shwe oil and gas project in Bangladesh.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. The BBIN initiative aims to enhance road connectivity among Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, and Nepal.
- **Statement 2:** Incorrect. The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project connects India with Myanmar, not Afghanistan.
- **Statement 3:** Incorrect. The Shwe oil and gas project is being implemented in Myanmar, not Bangladesh.

Topic 222

222. BBIN and SASEC

BBIN

- The **BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal)** initiative is a **sub-regional grouping**.

Key Features

- 1. Regional Connectivity**
 - **road, rail, air, and waterways** connectivity.
- 2. Energy Cooperation**
- 3. Trade and Economic Integration**

BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement (MVA)

- Signed in 2015.
- Aims to promote passenger, personal, and cargo vehicular traffic across borders.
- Bhutan opted out of the MVA due to environmental concerns but supports other BBIN initiatives.

South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC)

- A **project-based partnership** that is designed to **promote regional prosperity.**

Members

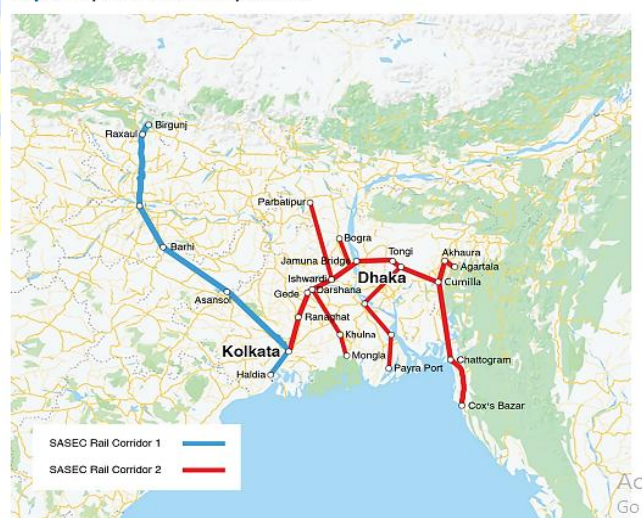
- Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Secretariat

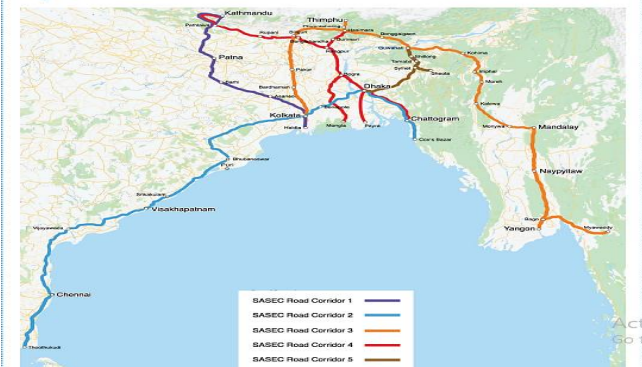
- Asian Development Bank (also lead financier of SASEC)



Map 2: Proposed SASEC Railway Corridors



Map 1: SASEC Road Corridors



Q664. Consider the following statements about the BBIN initiative:

1. BBIN focuses on enhancing road, rail, air, and waterways connectivity among member nations.
2. Bhutan has opted out of the BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement due to environmental concerns.
3. The BBIN initiative includes Myanmar and Sri Lanka as its members.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. Regional connectivity is a key focus of the BBIN initiative.
- **Statement 2:** Correct. Bhutan opted out of the Motor Vehicle Agreement citing environmental concerns.
- **Statement 3:** Incorrect. BBIN includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal. Myanmar and Sri Lanka are not members.

Q665. Which of the following statements about SASEC are correct?

1. SASEC is a sub-regional economic cooperation project aimed at regional prosperity.
 2. Bhutan, Maldives, and Sri Lanka are members of SASEC.
 3. The Asian Development Bank acts as the lead financier and secretariat for SASEC.
 4. SASEC primarily focuses on cultural and political integration.
- (a) 1, 2, and 3 only
 - (b) 2, 3, and 4 only
 - (c) 1, 3, and 4 only
 - (d) All 4

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. SASEC aims to enhance regional economic prosperity.
- **Statement 2:** Correct. Bhutan, Maldives, and Sri Lanka are part of SASEC.

- **Statement 3:** Correct. The Asian Development Bank serves as the lead financier and secretariat for SASEC.
- **Statement 4:** Incorrect. SASEC focuses on economic integration, not cultural or political integration.

Q666. Consider the following statements about BBIN and SASEC:

1. The BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement facilitates passenger and cargo traffic across borders.
2. Bhutan does not participate in any BBIN initiatives.
3. SASEC includes Myanmar as one of its members.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. The BBIN MVA promotes cross-border passenger and cargo movement.
- **Statement 2:** Incorrect. Bhutan supports other BBIN initiatives despite opting out of the MVA.
- **Statement 3:** Correct. Myanmar is indeed a member of SASEC.

Topic 223

223. BIMSTEC

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation.

Members

- littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal

Out of the 7 members,

- Five are from South Asia –
 1. Bangladesh
 2. Bhutan
 3. India
 4. Nepal
 5. Sri Lanka
- Two are from Southeast Asia –
 1. Myanmar
 2. Thailand
- BIMSTEC headquarters are in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



- It was founded as in June 1997, with the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration.

Current news?

- The BIMSTEC Charter, came into force on May 20, 2024.
 - BIMSTEC acquires legal personality after charter came into force



Membership to BIMSTEC is important for-

- India's 'Neighbourhood First' Policy
- Act East Policy

Q667. Consider the following statements about BIMSTEC:

- BIMSTEC includes members from both South Asia and Southeast Asia.
- BIMSTEC was established through the Bangkok Declaration in 1997.
- The BIMSTEC headquarters are located in Thailand.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1:** Correct. BIMSTEC includes members from South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) and Southeast Asia (Myanmar and Thailand).
- Statement 2:** Correct. BIMSTEC was established in June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration.
- Statement 3:** Incorrect. BIMSTEC headquarters are located in Dhaka, Bangladesh, not Thailand.

Q668. Consider the following statements about BIMSTEC:

- BIMSTEC consists of seven member countries.
- Myanmar is the only Southeast Asian country in BIMSTEC.
- BIMSTEC acquired legal personality after its charter came into force in May 2024.
- The BIMSTEC Charter was adopted in the Bangkok Declaration.

Which of the above statements are incorrect?

- 1 and 4 only
- 2 and 4 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 3 and 4 only

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1:** Correct. BIMSTEC has seven member countries.
- Statement 2:** Incorrect. Both Myanmar and Thailand are Southeast Asian members of BIMSTEC.
- Statement 3:** Correct. BIMSTEC acquired legal personality after the charter came into force on May 20, 2024.
- Statement 4:** Incorrect. The Bangkok Declaration marked the establishment of BIMSTEC in 1997, but the BIMSTEC Charter was not adopted in the Bangkok Declaration.

Q669. Consider the following statements regarding BIMSTEC membership and structure:

- BIMSTEC includes three countries from Southeast Asia.
- BIMSTEC headquarters are located in the Bay of Bengal region.
- BIMSTEC's member countries are all littoral states of the Bay of Bengal.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1:** Incorrect. BIMSTEC includes two countries from Southeast Asia (Myanmar and Thailand).



- **Statement 2:** Correct. The headquarters are in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which is in the Bay of Bengal region.
- **Statement 3:** Incorrect. Not all BIMSTEC members are littoral states of the Bay of Bengal. Bhutan and Nepal are landlocked countries.

Topic 224

224. SAARC

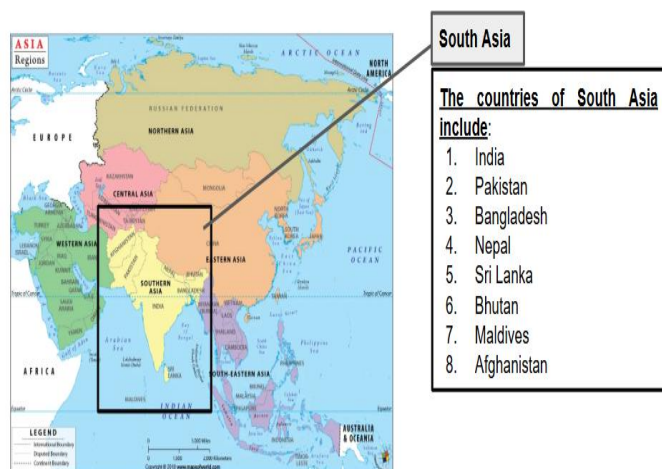
- **SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985**(SAARC Charter Day)
- **Seven founding countries (Afghanistan joined later in 2005).**
- **Headquarters** and **Secretariat-**
Kathmandu, Nepal

SAARC summits have not been held for last 10 years.

- Last SAARC summit, the 18th SAARC summit, was held in Kathmandu in November 2014.
- The 2016 SAARC Summit was to be held in Islamabad.
- But after the terrorist attack on an Indian Army camp in Uri in Jammu and Kashmir on September 18 that year, India pulled out of the summit.
- Tensions escalated after Pulwama and revocation of special status of J&K in 2019.

India's approach in South Asian region

- **policy of isolating Pakistan** in South Asia.
- India promotes **sub regional groupings** like SASEC and BBIN.



Q670. Consider the following statements about SAARC:

1. SAARC was established with seven founding countries, and Afghanistan joined later in 2005.
2. The SAARC headquarters are located in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
3. The 2016 SAARC Summit was cancelled following the Uri terrorist attack.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. SAARC initially had seven founding members, and Afghanistan joined in 2005.
- **Statement 2:** Incorrect. The SAARC headquarters and secretariat are located in Kathmandu, Nepal, not Dhaka.
- **Statement 3:** Correct. The 2016 SAARC Summit in Islamabad was cancelled after India pulled out following the Uri terrorist attack.

Q671. Consider the following statements regarding SAARC summits:

1. The last SAARC Summit was held in Dhaka in 2014.
2. No SAARC summits have been held in the last decade.
3. The Pulwama attack and revocation of J&K's special status further strained SAARC relations.

Which of the above statements are incorrect?

- (a) 1 and 2 only



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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Incorrect. The last SAARC Summit (18th) was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, in November 2014.
- **Statement 2:** Incorrect. While SAARC summits have not occurred since 2014, this does not cover a full decade as of now (2024).
- **Statement 3:** Correct. Tensions escalated post-Pulwama and revocation of J&K's special status, affecting SAARC's functionality.

Q672. Consider the following statements regarding India's approach to SAARC:

1. India has adopted a policy of isolating Pakistan in South Asia.
2. India promotes sub-regional groupings like BBIN and SASEC over SAARC.
3. SAARC summits continue to be held annually despite regional tensions.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. India has adopted a policy of isolating Pakistan in South Asia.
- **Statement 2:** Correct. India promotes sub-regional initiatives like BBIN and SASEC to bypass SAARC's limitations.
- **Statement 3:** Incorrect. SAARC summits have not been held since 2014 due to regional tensions, especially between India and Pakistan.

Topic 225

225. IMT trilateral highway and Kaladan Multimodal Project

IMT trilateral highway

- It connects **Moreh in Manipur, India**, to **Mae Sot in Thailand**, via **Tamu and Mandalay in Myanmar**
- 1360 km.



- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. The IMT Trilateral Highway connects Moreh in Manipur to Mae Sot in Thailand via Mandalay, Myanmar.
- **Statement 2:** Correct. The project includes a road stretch from Paletwa (Myanmar) to Mizoram (India).
- **Statement 3:** Incorrect. The Kaladan Multimodal Project connects Mizoram to the Kolkata port, not the Mumbai port.

Q674. What is the length of the IMT Trilateral Highway?

- (a) 1020 km
- (b) 1360 km
- (c) 1500 km
- (d) 1850 km

Ans: b

Sol: The IMT Trilateral Highway stretches 1360 km, connecting Moreh in Manipur, India, to Mae Sot in Thailand via Tamu and Mandalay in Myanmar.

Q675. Consider the following statements about the Kaladan Multimodal Project:

1. It has three different stretches: shipping, inland water transport, and road.
2. The shipping stretch connects Kolkata port to Sittwe port across the Arabian Sea.
3. The inland water stretch uses the River Kaladan to connect Sittwe port to Paletwa in Myanmar.
4. The road stretch connects Paletwa to NH-502A at Zorinpui in Mizoram, India.

Which of the above statements are incorrect?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. The project consists of shipping, inland water transport, and road stretches.
- **Statement 2:** Incorrect. The shipping stretch connects Kolkata port to Sittwe port across the Bay of Bengal, not the Arabian Sea.
- **Statement 3:** Correct. The inland water stretch uses the River Kaladan to connect Sittwe port to Paletwa.
- **Statement 4:** Correct. The road stretch connects Paletwa to NH-502A at Zorinpui in Mizoram, India.

Topic 226

226. Special Status of J&K

- **J&K -March 1846, British**, under the **Treaty of Amritsar** after the **first Anglo-Sikh War**, sold **Kashmir-to Gulab Singh**
- **Maharaja Hari Singh**-descended from Gulab Singh.

Special status of J&K

Article 370

- 'temporary provision'
- Jammu & Kashmir, permitting it to **draft its own Constitution**
- **Constituent Assembly of J&K** -decide **which articles** of the **Indian Constitution should apply to the state.**

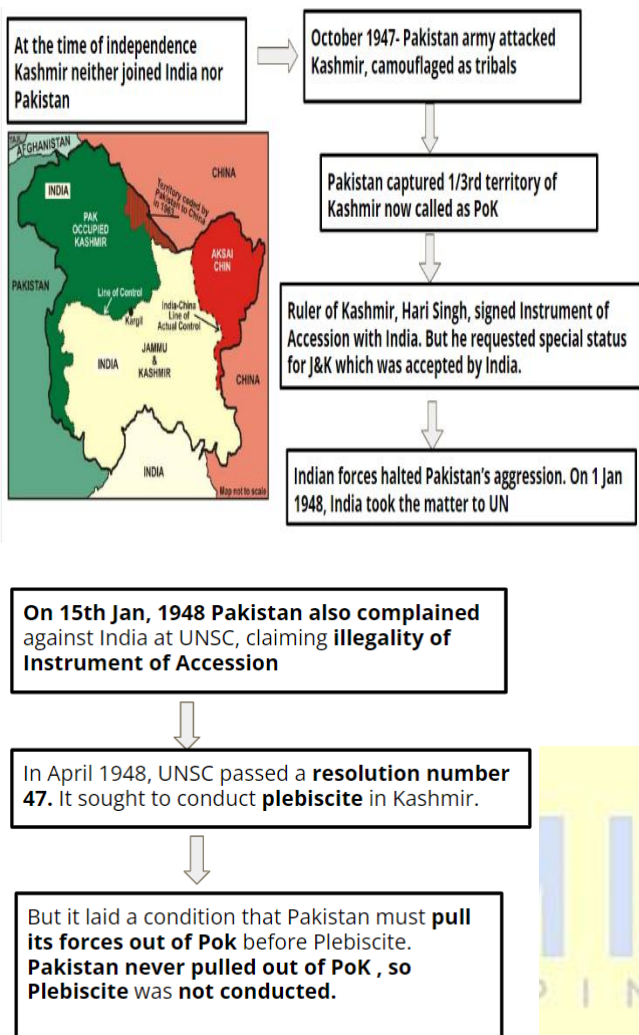
Article 35A

- Stems from Article 370 and was introduced through a **Presidential Order in 1954**
- **prohibited outsiders** from permanently settling, buying land, holding local government jobs

5th Aug 2019 – Parliament - de operationalised special status of J&K

- Create **UT J&K/ and UT Ladakh**





Q676. Consider the following statements regarding Article 370 and 35A of the Constitution of India:

- Article 370 was a temporary provision allowing Jammu & Kashmir to have its own Constitution and limiting the Indian Parliament's legislative authority in the state.
- Article 35A granted the Jammu & Kashmir legislature the authority to identify permanent residents and delineate their specific rights and privileges within the state. 479

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol: Article 370: This was a temporary provision in the Indian Constitution that granted special autonomy to Jammu & Kashmir. It allowed the state to have its own Constitution and limited the authority of the Indian Parliament to legislate on matters concerning Jammu & Kashmir, except for defense, foreign affairs, communications, and ancillary matters.

- Article 35A:** This article was introduced through a Presidential Order in 1954. It empowered the Jammu & Kashmir legislature to define "permanent residents" of the state and to provide them with special rights and privileges, such as rights related to property ownership, employment in the state government, and access to social welfare benefits. These provisions were not available to non-permanent residents of the state.

Additional Context:

Both Article 370 and Article 35A were effectively abrogated on **August 5, 2019**, when the Indian government revoked the special status of Jammu & Kashmir, reorganizing the state into two Union Territories: Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Q677. Consider the following Statements:

Statement-I: The Indian Independence Act of 1947, which established India as an independent dominion, authorized the temporary use of the Government of India Act, 1935, as the interim constitution until the country formulated its own constitution.

Statement-II: The Government of India Act, 1935 allowed princely States to join India by signing an instrument of accession. In the case of Jammu and Kashmir, the instrument included certain conditions that were later incorporated into Article 370.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I
- Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, but Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I
- Statement -I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect
- Statement-I is incorrect, but Statement-II is correct

Ans: a



Sol:

• **Statement-I: Correct**

The **Indian Independence Act of 1947** provided for the creation of two independent dominions, India and Pakistan. It allowed both dominions to use the **Government of India Act, 1935**, as a temporary governing framework until they could draft their own constitutions through their respective constituent assemblies. This ensured administrative continuity after independence.

• **Statement-II: Correct**

The **Instrument of Accession** was a legal mechanism under the Indian Independence Act of 1947 that allowed princely states to join either India or Pakistan. Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India came with certain conditions, such as autonomy in matters other than defense, foreign affairs, and communications. These terms formed the foundation for **Article 370**, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian Constitution.

Q678. Regarding Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, consider the following statements:

1. Article 370 was added to the Indian constitution, as a 'temporary provision'.
2. It was introduced into the draft constitution by N Gopalaswami Ayyangar.
3. Article 35A stems from Article 370 and was introduced through a Presidential Order in 1954.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

• **Statement 1: Correct**

Article 370 was indeed added to the Indian Constitution as a "temporary provision" in Part XXI, which deals with "Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions." It granted special autonomy to the state of Jammu & Kashmir, allowing it to have its own Constitution and limiting the Indian Parliament's legislative powers in the state.

• **Statement 2: Correct**

N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar, a member of the Constituent Assembly and a close associate of Jawaharlal Nehru, introduced Article 370 into the draft Constitution. He was instrumental in crafting this provision due to his experience as the Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir (during the princely state's pre-independence era).

• **Statement 3: Correct**

Article 35A stems from Article 370 and was introduced through a Presidential Order in 1954. It empowered the Jammu & Kashmir legislature to define "permanent residents" of the state and provide them with special rights and privileges, such as access to state government jobs and property ownership.

Topic 227

227. 2nd Indo-Pak war

• **3 full fledged wars between India and Pakistan**

1st war 1947/48

- Declaration of UN mediated ceasefire

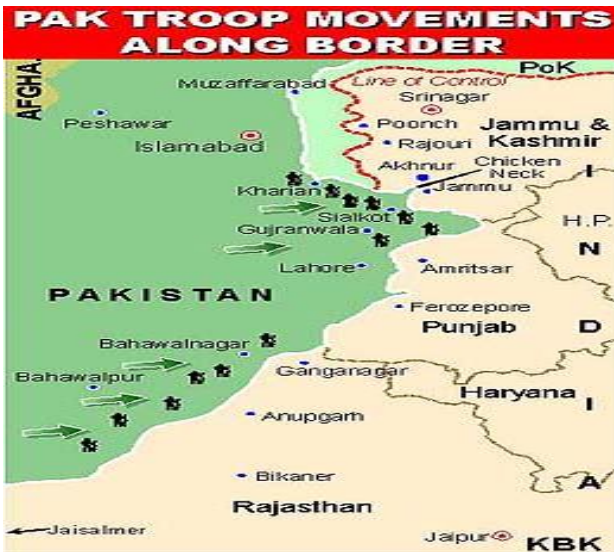
2nd war 1965

- **Sino India War in 1962** and **death of India's first PM** JL Nehru in 1964 **emboldened Pakistan.**
- The Pakistan Army started unprovoked war in Jammu and Kashmir since **August 1965**, when **Pakistani infiltrators** were pushed inside the (erstwhile) state under what was known as **Operation Gibraltar.**
- **Indian Army** launched an attack across the **International Border in Punjab.**
- The **Battle of Asal Uttar in Punjab region** was most fierce battle.
- Pakistan **lost 165 tanks** during the 1965 war, more than half of which were knocked out during the **"debacle" of Asal Uttar.**
- The battle also witnessed the **personal bravery** of an **Indian soldier, Abdul Hamid**, who was honoured posthumously with the **Param Vir Chakra**, **India's highest military award**, for knocking out **seven enemy tanks** with a **recoilless gun.**
- Post this war **India established RAW** for **external espionage** and intelligence to avoid such incidents in future.

3rd war 1971



- Led to creation of **Bangladesh** (to be taken under India-Bangladesh theme)



Q679. The Indo-Pak war of 1965 was initiated by Pakistan under which military operation?

- (a) Operation Trident
(b) Operation Gibraltar
(c) Operation Vijay
(d) Operation Meghdoot

Ans: b

Sol: Pakistan initiated the 1965 war under *Operation Gibraltar*, which involved infiltrating forces into Jammu and Kashmir to incite rebellion against Indian rule.

Q680. Consider the following statements about the 2nd Indo-Pak war of 1965:

1. Pakistan's Operation Gibraltar involved infiltrators entering Jammu and Kashmir to incite unrest.
2. The Battle of Asal Uttar in Punjab saw the loss of over 165 Indian tanks.
3. Abdul Hamid was awarded the Param Vir Chakra posthumously for his bravery in this war.
4. Post this war, India established RAW to strengthen external intelligence.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:

1. **Correct.** Operation Gibraltar involved Pakistani infiltrators entering Jammu and Kashmir.
2. **Incorrect.** Pakistan, not India, lost 165 tanks during the Battle of Asal Uttar.
3. **Correct.** Abdul Hamid was posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra for destroying seven enemy tanks.
4. **Correct.** India established RAW post-1965 war to bolster intelligence capabilities.

Q681. Consider the following statements regarding the outcomes of the Indo-Pak war of 1965:

1. The war concluded with the Tashkent Agreement mediated by the Soviet Union.
2. The creation of RAW was a direct response to intelligence failures during the war.
3. The war resulted in territorial changes favouring India.
4. The conflict emboldened Pakistan's future military strategies.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

1. **Correct.** The Tashkent Agreement was signed in 1966 to conclude the war.
2. **Correct.** RAW was established post-war to prevent future intelligence lapses.
3. **Incorrect.** The war ended without significant territorial changes for either side.
4. **Correct.** The war emboldened Pakistan, influencing its future strategies, including the 1971 war.

Topic 228

228. Intelligence Agencies of India

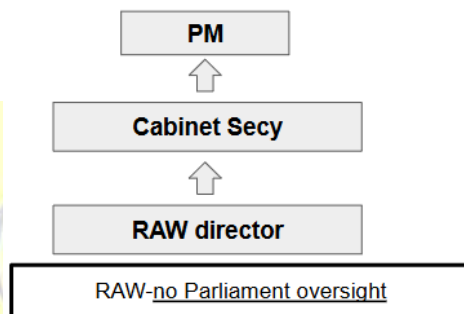
Intelligence Bureau (IB)

- Internal intelligence agency
- **Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- **IB Chief Tapan Kumar Deka.**
- **IPS of Himachal Pradesh cadre (from Assam)**
- **First person from NE to head IB.**

Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)



- **External** intelligence agency.
- **Director of RAW reports** to the **Cabinet Secretary**, who reports to the **Prime Minister (no Parliament oversight)**.
- **Until 1968, IB** handled **both** domestic and foreign intelligence after which **Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)** was formed specifically for foreign intelligence.
- **RAW created in 1968** -to counter primarily **China & Pakistan (after 1965 war)**.



Q682. Which intelligence agency in India is responsible for external intelligence operations?

- Intelligence Bureau (IB)
- National Investigation Agency (NIA)
- Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)
- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

Ans: c

Sol: The *Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)* is India's external intelligence agency, formed in 1968 to handle foreign intelligence operations and counter threats from countries like China and Pakistan.

Q683. Consider the following statements about the Intelligence Bureau (IB):

- The IB operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The IB was responsible for both domestic and foreign intelligence until 1968.

- The current IB Chief, Tapan Kumar Deka, is the first person from the Northeast to head the agency.
- The IB reports directly to the Prime Minister without oversight from Parliament.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- Only three
- All four

Ans: c

Sol:

- Correct.** The IB operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Correct.** Until 1968, the IB handled both domestic and foreign intelligence before RAW was formed.
- Correct.** Tapan Kumar Deka is the first person from the Northeast to head the IB.
- Incorrect.** Unlike RAW, the IB does not directly report to the Prime Minister but functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Q684. Consider the following statements about RAW:

- RAW was formed after the Indo-Pak war of 1965.
- The Director of RAW reports to the Cabinet Secretary.
- RAW has no parliamentary oversight in its operations.
- RAW's primary focus is countering threats from China and Pakistan.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 4 only
- 1, 2, and 4 only
- All 4

Ans: d

Sol:

- Correct.** RAW was formed in 1968, largely due to intelligence failures during the 1965 war.
- Correct.** The Director of RAW reports to the Cabinet Secretary, not directly to Parliament.
- Correct.** RAW operates without parliamentary oversight.
- Correct.** RAW's primary focus is countering threats from China and Pakistan.



Topic 229

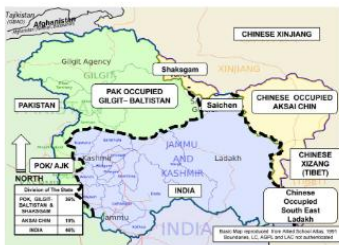
229. Operation Meghdoot

Shimla Agreement, 1972

- After **1971 Bangladesh** liberation war
- 93,000 PoW-released by India
- Ceasefire Line converted into LoC
- Proper demarcation of LoC began-left unmarked beyond NJ9842
- In the agreed map it was written that **after grid number NJ9842 the LoC moves into glaciers.**

Operation Meghdoot

- 1984-Siachen captured by India (against Planned Operation Ababeel of Pak)

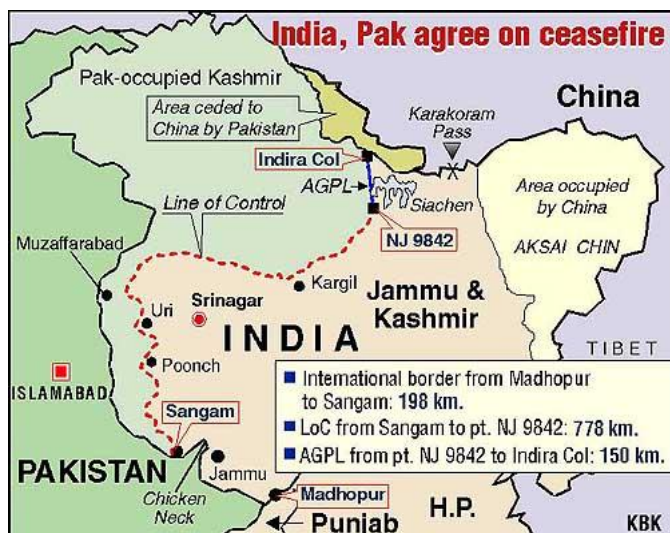


Before Shimla Agreement

Ceasefire line-
temporary
stoppage of war

After Shimla Agreement

LoC-"temporary
till solved" but
war is over



Q685. What was the primary objective of India's Operation Meghdoot in 1984?

- (a) Liberation of Bangladesh
(b) Capture of the Siachen Glacier
(c) Establishment of the Line of Control (LoC)
(d) Demarcation of the ceasefire line beyond NJ9842

Ans: b

Sol: Operation Meghdoot was launched by India in 1984 to secure the Siachen Glacier and prevent Pakistan's planned Operation Ababeel.

Q686. Consider the following statements about the Shimla Agreement (1972):

1. It was signed after the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.
2. The ceasefire line was converted into the Line of Control (LoC).
3. The LoC was fully demarcated, including areas beyond NJ9842.
4. India agreed to release 93,000 Pakistani prisoners of war.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:

1. **Correct.** The Shimla Agreement followed the 1971 war.
2. **Correct.** The ceasefire line was converted into the LoC.
3. **Incorrect.** The LoC was left unmarked beyond NJ9842, where it was written that it "moves into glaciers."



4. **Correct.** India released 93,000 Pakistani prisoners of war after the agreement.

Q687. Consider the following statements about Operation Meghdoot:

1. It was launched to prevent Pakistan's Operation Ababeel.
2. The operation resulted in India capturing the Siachen Glacier.
3. The operation was conducted in response to the Shimla Agreement.
4. Siachen Glacier lies beyond NJ9842, where the LoC was not demarcated.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

1. **Correct.** Operation Meghdoot preempted Pakistan's Operation Ababeel.
2. **Correct.** India successfully captured the Siachen Glacier during this operation.
3. **Incorrect.** The operation was not a direct response to the Shimla Agreement but related to the undemarcated LoC beyond NJ9842.
4. **Correct.** The Siachen Glacier lies beyond NJ9842, where the LoC remains undefined.

Topic 230

230. Indus Water Treaty

- Deals with Indus River, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej.
- The basin is shared by India and Pakistan.

Provisions of Indus Water Treaty 1960-

1. Ravi, Sutlej and Beas were allocated to India for exclusive use.
2. Western rivers - Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab were allocated to Pakistan.
 - But India was allowed to use 20% of the Indus, Jhelum, Chenab water for some specific purpose like irrigation, power generation and transport.
3. Indus commission- a permanent body was established to resolve any dispute in future.
 - Note-

- The Indus Water Treaty 1960 between India and Pakistan was brokered by the World Bank.

- whenever India comes up with some project on Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab to use 20% water Pak objects.

- Three major disputes

1. Kishanganga project (Run of River project)
 - Kishanganga (Neelum) river is a tributary of Jhelum.
2. Ratle project dispute on Chenab river
3. Shahpur Kandi Dam Project on Ravi river

Q688. Consider the following statements regarding the Indus Waters Treaty:

1. It was signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan and was brokered by the United Nations.
2. It prescribes how water from the six rivers of the Indus River System would be shared between India and Pakistan.
3. It allocated the three western rivers Indus, Chenab and Jhelum to India and the three Eastern rivers Ravi, Beas and Sutlej were allocated to Pakistan for unrestricted usage.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 Incorrect.** The Indus Waters Treaty was signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan, but it was brokered by the **World Bank**, not the United Nations.
- **Statement 2 Correct.** The treaty lays down the sharing of water from the six rivers of the Indus River System between the two countries.
- **Statement 3 Incorrect.** The treaty allocated the **three eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej)** to India for unrestricted usage and the **three western rivers (Indus, Chenab, Jhelum)** to Pakistan.

Hence, only **Statement 2** is correct.

Q689. Consider the following statements regarding the major disputes under the Indus Waters Treaty:



1. The Kishanganga project dispute involves a tributary of the Jhelum River.
2. The Rattle project dispute is related to the Ravi River.
3. The Shahpur Kandi Dam Project is located on the Ravi River.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: **Correct.** The Kishanganga project involves the Kishanganga (Neelum) River, a tributary of the Jhelum River.
- Statement 2: **Incorrect.** The Ratle project dispute is related to the Chenab River, not the Ravi River.
- Statement 3: **Correct.** The Shahpur Kandi Dam Project is located on the Ravi River.

Hence, **2 statements are correct.**

Q690. Consider the following statements regarding the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty:

1. The treaty allocated the eastern rivers Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej to Pakistan for unrestricted use.
2. India is allowed to use 20% of the water from the western rivers for purposes such as irrigation, power generation, and transport.
3. The treaty established a permanent Indus Commission to resolve future disputes.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: **Incorrect.** The eastern rivers Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej were allocated to **India** for unrestricted use.
- Statement 2: **Correct.** India can use 20% of the water from the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab) for specific purposes.

- Statement 3: **Correct.** The treaty established a permanent Indus Commission to resolve disputes.

Hence, **2 statements are correct.**

Day 24

Topic 231

231. SAARC Currency Swap agreement

What is currency Swap?

- Currency swap is effectively a loan given in one currency but paid back in other currency.

Why Currency Swap agreements are made?

1. To help a country to deal with **Balance of Payments (BOP) crisis**
2. **To protect** a country against **currency risk**

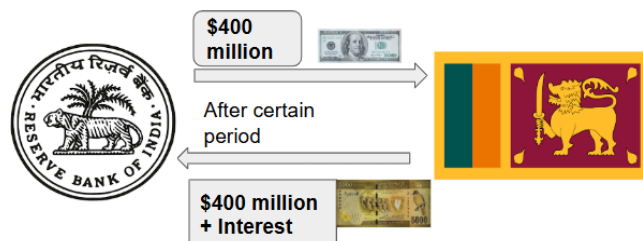
SAARC currency swap framework

- According to it SAARC members can provide credit in foreign currencies like Dollar, Euros to each other and take back repayment in local currencies.
- The facility is available to all SAARC member countries, subject to their signing the bilateral swap agreements.
- According to one such bilateral agreement India's RBI provided \$400 million to Sri Lanka in 2020.
- RBI has created a overall corpus of USD 2 billion to support other SAARC countries under swap arrangement.

Current news?

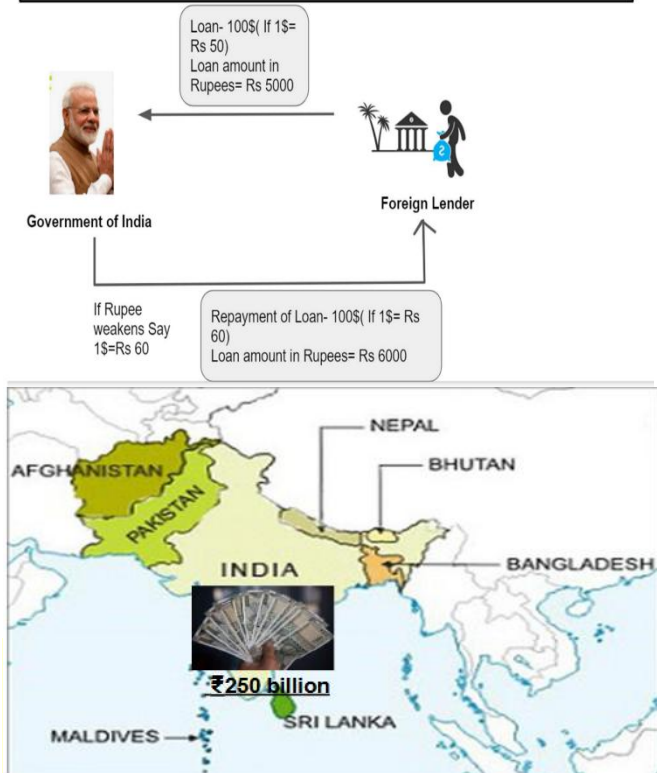
- RBI) has decided to put in place a **new Framework** on **Currency Swap Arrangement.**
- Under the Framework for 2024-27, a **separate INR Swap Window** has been introduced of **₹250 billion.**
- The RBI will **continue to offer swap arrangement** in **US\$** and **Euro.**

This step will help in internationalisation of rupee.



Currency Risk

Currency risk, commonly referred to as exchange-rate risk, arises from the change in price of one currency in relation to another.



Q691. Which of the following statements about currency swap agreements is/are correct?

1. Currency swap is a loan provided in one currency and repaid in another currency.
2. Currency swap agreements help countries deal with Balance of Payments (BOP) crises.
3. SAARC currency swap agreements are only available in Indian Rupees.
4. India's RBI provided \$400 million to Sri Lanka under a currency swap agreement in 2020.

- (a) Only 1 and 2 are correct
- (b) Only 1, 2, and 4 are correct
- (c) Only 1, 3, and 4 are correct
- (d) All statements are correct

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. Currency swap agreements involve borrowing in one currency and repaying in another.
- Statement 2: Correct. These agreements aim to address BOP crises and mitigate currency risks.

- Statement 3: Incorrect. SAARC agreements allow swaps in foreign currencies such as the Dollar and Euro, not just INR.
- Statement 4: Correct. India's RBI extended \$400 million to Sri Lanka in 2020 under the agreement.

Q692. Which of the following statements about the SAARC Currency Swap Framework are correct?

1. It allows member countries to borrow in local currencies and repay in Dollars or Euros.
 2. Bilateral swap agreements are a prerequisite for availing this facility.
 3. RBI has introduced a ₹250 billion INR Swap Window under the framework for 2024-27.
 4. This framework helps in the internationalization of the Indian Rupee.
- (a) Only 1 and 2 are correct
 - (b) Only 2 and 4 are correct
 - (c) Only 2, 3, and 4 are correct
 - (d) All statements are correct

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1: Incorrect. The SAARC framework involves borrowing in foreign currencies and repaying in local currencies, not vice versa.
- Statement 2: Correct. Signing bilateral swap agreements is necessary to utilize this facility.
- Statement 3: Correct. The 2024-27 framework includes a ₹250 billion INR Swap Window.
- Statement 4: Correct. The framework supports internationalizing the Indian Rupee by promoting its use in regional transactions.

Q693. What is the overall corpus set aside by India's RBI for SAARC currency swap agreements?

- (a) USD 250 million
- (b) USD 2 billion
- (c) ₹250 billion
- (d) USD 400 million

Ans: b

Sol: The RBI has created an overall corpus of USD 2 billion under the SAARC currency swap arrangement to support member countries. This facilitates financial stability and regional cooperation in dealing with currency risks and BOP issues.



Topic 232

232. 75 years of Communist Party of China rule

- **17th to 19th centuries- Qing Dynasty ruled China**

Colonialism in China

- China was **not colonised in the way India was**.
- During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several **Western powers and Japan** established "**spheres of influence**" in China.
- 2 main parties (**Communist Party and Kuomintang**) emerged in China **with the aim** of **ending imperialism and monarchy** in China.
- But after removing monarchy and ending imperialism, **Kuomintang(KMT) and Communist Party engaged into civil war**.

End of Civil war in 1949

- **1st October, 1949 Communist rule in China** was set up under one party- Communist Party of China.
- While **Chiang Ki Shek** along with his supporters was **forced outside mainland China** on an island- **Formosa island**.

Two Chinas- PRC and RoC

- **RoC (Taiwan)** claims to be original China.
- **PRC (the mainland China)**- maintains a foreign policy- "One China Principle".

One China Principle(foreign policy of PRC)

- It means there is just **one China ie Mainland China or PRC**.
- All **major countries** including India and US follow "**One China principle**".(only 12 small countries formally recognise Taiwan)



Brief History- To understand conflict between China and Taiwan

- A civil war was going on in China from 1927 to 1949.
- Civil war was fought mainly between two parties- Kuomintang (KMT) party vs Communist Party of China.

Kuomintang (KMT) party

- Leader- Chiang- Ki- Shek
- Ideology- Democracy
- Calls China as Republic of China(RoC)

Communist Party of China

- Leader- Mao Zedong
- Ideology- Communism
- Calls China as People's Republic of China

Vs



Q694. Which of the following statements about the colonial history of China is/are correct?

1. China was colonized in a manner similar to India.
 2. Several Western powers and Japan established "spheres of influence" in China during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
 3. The Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China both aimed to end imperialism and monarchy in China.
 4. The civil war between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party of China ended in 1949.
- (a) Only 1, 2, and 3 are correct
 - (b) Only 2, 3, and 4 are correct
 - (c) Only 1, 3, and 4 are correct
 - (d) All statements are correct

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** China was not colonized in the same way as India; instead, "spheres of influence" were established by foreign powers.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Western powers and Japan established these "spheres of influence" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Both Kuomintang and the Communist Party sought to end imperialism and monarchy in China.
- **Statement 4: Correct.** The civil war ended in 1949, leading to Communist Party rule in mainland China.

Q695. Which of the following statements about the "One China Principle" are correct?

1. It is the foreign policy of the Republic of China (Taiwan).
 2. It asserts that there is only one China, represented by mainland China or the People's Republic of China (PRC).
 3. Most major countries, including India and the US, recognize this principle.
 4. Only 12 small countries formally recognize Taiwan as an independent state.
- (a) Only 1 and 2 are correct
 - (b) Only 2, 3, and 4 are correct
 - (c) Only 3 and 4 are correct
 - (d) All statements are correct

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Incorrect. The "One China Principle" is the foreign policy of the People's Republic of China (PRC), not Taiwan.
- Statement 2: Correct. The policy asserts that there is only one China, represented by the PRC.
- Statement 3: Correct. Major countries like India and the US follow this principle.
- Statement 4: Correct. Only 12 small countries formally recognize Taiwan as independent.

Q696. What happened after the civil war between the Kuomintang (KMT) and the Communist Party of China in 1949?

- (a) Communist rule was established in mainland China under the Kuomintang.
- (b) Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters were forced to Formosa Island (now Taiwan).
- (c) The Republic of China (RoC) was recognized as the sole representative of China by all major countries.
- (d) The civil war resulted in two separate entities: the PRC (mainland China) and the RoC (Taiwan).

Ans: d

Sol:

- In 1949, the Communist Party of China established rule in mainland China, forming the PRC.
- Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters fled to Formosa Island (Taiwan), establishing the RoC.
- This led to the existence of two Chinas: the PRC (mainland) and the RoC (Taiwan).
- However, only 12 small countries formally recognize Taiwan, while most nations adhere to the "One China Principle."

Topic 233

233. China's dispute with Philippines in South China sea

- China claims **90%** of the **South China sea** through arbitrary **9 dash line**.
 - It has set up many **short and long range missiles** on islands of South China sea.
 - **Disputed Islands**
1. **Spratly Islands**
 - Between **China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Philippines and Vietnam.**



2. Paracel Islands

- Between **China and Vietnam**.

3. Scarborough shoal

- Between China and Philippines
- Philippines registered a complaint against China in PCA (**Permanent Court of Arbitration**) for violation of **UNCLOS** (United Nations Conventions on Laws of Sea) in 2013.

PCA ruling

- **China's claim** on South China sea is **arbitrary and illegal**.

China's response

- China **refused to accept** the ruling of Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA).

Similarly **China has created many territorial disputes** with other countries eg Aksai Chin with India, **Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary region with Bhutan.**

- Such **expansionist approach** of China is known as its **Salami strategy**.



Q697. Which of the following statements about the Lingshui 36-1 gas field is not correct?

1. The Lingshui 36-1 gas field is the world's first large, ultra- shallow gas field in ultra-deep waters.
2. The discovery is likely to increase geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea by providing energy resources to all claimant nations.
3. The gas field is estimated to contain over 100 billion cubic meters of natural gas.
4. The South China Sea is a region of major territorial disputes involving countries like the Philippines, Japan, South Korea, Brunei, and Taiwan.

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. The Lingshui 36-1 gas field is recognized as the world's first large, ultra-shallow gas field in ultra-deep waters.
- Statement 2: Correct. The discovery of Lingshui 36-1 gas field in the South China Sea could increase geopolitical tensions in the region
- Statement 3: Correct. The gas field is estimated to contain over 100 billion cubic meters of natural gas.
- Statement 4: Incorrect. The South China Sea disputes involve countries like the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, Taiwan, and China—not Japan or South Korea, which are not claimants in the South China Sea.

Q698. Consider the following statements regarding the South China Sea:

1. The "nine-dash line" encircles Beijing's claimed waters and islands of the South China Sea.
2. Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Pratas, Natuna Islands, and Scarborough Shoal are located in the South China Sea.



3. Luzon strait connects the Philippine Sea to the South China Sea.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. The "nine-dash line" is an arbitrary demarcation used by China to claim sovereignty over much of the South China Sea, including its waters and islands.
- Statement 2: Correct. The Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Pratas, Natuna Islands, and Scarborough Shoal are all located in the South China Sea and are subject to disputes involving multiple countries.
- Statement 3: Correct. The Luzon Strait connects the South China Sea to the Philippine Sea, serving as a key maritime passage in the region.

Q699. Sabina Shoal", recently seen in the news, is located in which sea?

- (a) Red Sea
- (b) Black Sea
- (c) South China Sea
- (d) Arabian Sea

Ans: c

Sol: Sabina Shoal is a disputed maritime feature located in the South China Sea. It has been at the center of territorial disputes involving China and the Philippines. The South China Sea is a region marked by significant geopolitical tensions due to competing claims by various nations over islands, reefs, and shoals, including Sabina Shoal.

Topic 234

234. UNCLOS (United Nation Conventions of Laws on Seas)

- The United Nation Conventions of Laws on Seas (**UNCLOS**) has demarcated different zones of the ocean as far as sovereignty of countries and economic utilisation of resources are concerned.

Different zones are-

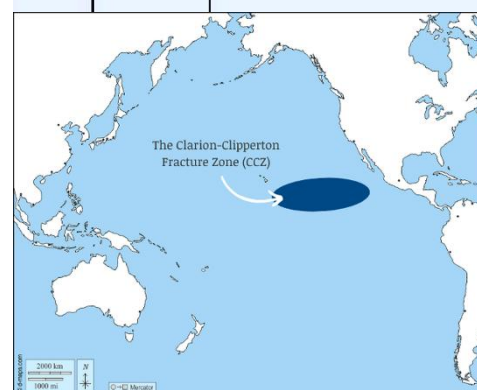
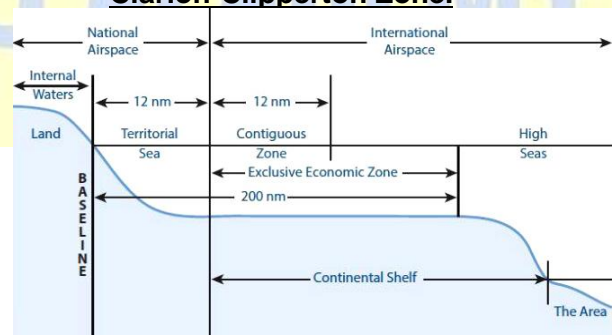
1. **Territorial water** (upto 12 NM from baseline),
2. **Contiguous Zone** (12 NM to 24 NM)
3. **Economic Exploration Zone** (upto 200 NM or upto continental shelf whichever is greater)
 - EEZ is the region till where a country can extract resources of the sea like gas reserve, oil reserves or fishes.
 - The agreement became **effective on 16th November 1982.**

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

- international organization established under the UNCLOS.
- All States Parties to UNCLOS are members of ISA.
- **ISA has 168 members**, including 167 member States and the European Union.
- It gives permission to countries to explore minerals in international Seabed (region beyond EEZ).
- Headquarter-Kingston, Jamaica

Current news?

- India will apply for licences from International Seabed Authority (ISA) to explore for deep-sea minerals in the Clarion-Clipperton Zone.



Some important countries were not either signed or ratified UNCLOS

1. The US



2. Turkey
3. Israel

Q700. Regarding the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, consider the following statements:

1. It is an international treaty under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
 2. It aims to address the growing concerns over the long-term protection of marine biodiversity in the high seas.
 3. It aims at achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 which deals with Life Below Water.
- How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 Correct: The Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement is an international treaty under the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It is legally binding and aims to address marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdictions.
- Statement 2 Correct: The agreement focuses on addressing concerns over the long-term protection and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in the high seas, which constitute a significant portion of the global ocean.
- Statement 3 Incorrect: The agreement supports Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14), which deals with "Life Below Water," not SDG 6. SDG 6 pertains to clean water and sanitation.

Q701. Regarding the "United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982", which one of the following statements is not correct?

- (a) It divides marine areas into three main zones namely- the Territorial Sea, the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the High Seas.
- (b) UNCLOS introduced the regime of 'transit passage' through straits used for international navigation.

- (c) It is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces.
- (d) India is a state party to the UNCLOS.

Ans: a

Sol: It divides marine areas into five main zones namely- Internal Waters, Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the High Seas.

Q702. Regarding the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers (1978), consider the following statements:

1. It sets qualification standards for masters, officers, and watch personnel on seagoing merchant ships.
 2. The STCW Convention is the second after the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to establish basic requirements for training, certification, and watchkeeping for seafarers on an international level.
 3. It applies to ships of non-party States when visiting ports of States which are Parties to the Convention.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol: Statement 1: It sets qualification standards for masters, officers, and watch personnel on seagoing merchant ships.

- Correct. The STCW Convention establishes international standards for the training and certification of masters, officers, and watchkeeping personnel to ensure the safety of life and property at sea and to protect the marine environment.

Statement 2: The STCW Convention is the second after the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to establish basic requirements for training, certification, and watchkeeping for seafarers on an international level.



- Incorrect. While the STCW Convention sets international requirements for seafarers, it is not directly connected to UNCLOS, which governs maritime boundaries and rights. There is no evidence that STCW is second to UNCLOS in this specific sense.

Statement 3: It applies to ships of non-party States when visiting ports of States which are Parties to the Convention.

- Correct. The provisions of the STCW Convention are enforced by Party States, and they apply to ships from non-party States when they visit the ports of countries that are Parties to the Convention.

Thus, the correct statements are 1 and 3 only.

Topic 235

235. Tibet issue

Tibet

- Often called **"the roof of the world"** due to high plateaus.

Culture

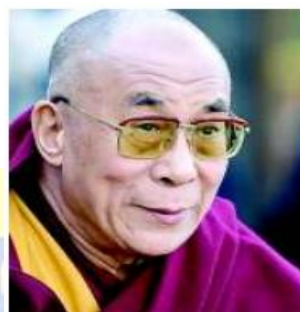
- Tibetan language and Tibetan Buddhism-Vajrayana Buddhism (different from Chinese Buddhism).

Political history

- The Dalai Lama became the spiritual and political leader of Tibet in **1578 AD**.
- Dalai Lama is not a person (It is a position).
- Tibet people call Dalai Lama is a **Avalokitesvara (a deity)**.
- One Dalai Lama is **succeeded by another** after death.
- **In 1949 Communist Party of China(CPC)** established its rule in China and named China as **PRC(People's Republic of China)**.
- Till **1950 Tibet** was **independent** and **autonomous**.
- In 1950 **China attacked Tibet** and started its consolidation with China.
- Due to atrocities and political pressure **Dalai Lama fled to India** and established a **seat in Dharamsala** in **1959**.
- India gave refuge to **Dalai Lama** as **religious leader**.
- But China saw it as **interference in internal matters** of China and **retraction of Panchsheel agreement**.
- This is one reason behind **India- China 1962 war**.

Current news?

- **US Congress** passed **Resolve Tibet Act-demanding return of autonomy to Tibet**



The **current Dalai Lama** is **14th** in succession.

- **Panchsheel agreement 1954**
- set of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.
 1. Peaceful co-existence
 2. Mutual respect
 3. Mutual non-interference
 4. Mutual non-aggression
 5. Equality and mutual benefit
- **Jawaharlal Nehru**, the Prime Minister of India, and **Zhou En-Lai, the Premier of China**, signed the Panchsheel Agreement on April 29, 1954

Q703. How many of the following is not a part of India's Foreign Policy:

1. Gujral Doctrine
 2. Panchsheel
 3. Policy of non-alignment
 4. Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- (a) Only two
 - (b) Only three
 - (c) All four
 - (d) None



Ans: d

Sol: All the listed concepts are integral components of India's Foreign Policy:

1. Gujral Doctrine

- A set of five principles introduced by former Prime Minister I.K. Gujral to improve India's relations with its neighbors, focusing on unilateral concessions to build trust and goodwill.

2. Panchsheel

- The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence signed between India and China in 1954, emphasizing mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference, equality, and peaceful coexistence.

3. Policy of non-alignment

- A cornerstone of India's Foreign Policy during the Cold War, ensuring that India did not align with any of the major power blocs (US-led or Soviet-led).

4. Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes

- A fundamental principle of India's Foreign Policy, consistent with the ideals of the United Nations Charter, aiming for diplomacy and dialogue in resolving international disputes.

Since all four are part of India's Foreign Policy, the correct answer is None.

Q704. With reference to the Tibetan Plateau in Asia, consider the following statements:

1. Tibet is the highest region on Earth, with an average elevation of 6,900 meters.
2. The highest elevation in Tibet is Mount K2.
3. In 2023, Tibetan leaders signed a treaty dictated by China known as the "Seventeen Point Agreement".

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: d

Sol: Tibet is the highest region on Earth, with an average elevation of 6,900 meters.

- Incorrect. Tibet is the highest region on Earth but its average elevation is approximately 4,500 meters, not 6,900 meters.

The highest elevation in Tibet is Mount K2.

- Incorrect. The highest elevation in Tibet is Mount Everest, which lies on the border of Tibet and Nepal. Mount K2 is located in the Karakoram range, primarily in Pakistan-administered Kashmir.

In 2023, Tibetan leaders signed a treaty dictated by China known as the "Seventeen Point Agreement".

- Incorrect. The "Seventeen Point Agreement" was signed in 1951, not in 2023, and it formalized China's control over Tibet.

Q705. Which of the below given pairs are not correctly matched?

Pass

- Connects

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------|
| Khardung La | :: Leh and Srinagar |
| Chang-La | :: Ladakh and Tibet |
| Zoji La | :: Leh and Siachen |
| Umling La | :: Leh to Pangong Lake |

Choose the correct code:

- (a) One pair only
- (b) Two pairs only
- (c) Three pairs only
- (d) All of the pairs

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Khardung La :: Leh and Srinagar**

Incorrect. Khardung La connects Leh to Nubra Valley, not Srinagar. It is one of the highest motorable roads in the world, located in Ladakh.

- **Chang-La :: Ladakh and Tibet**

Correct. Chang-La connects Ladakh to Tibet. It is one of the highest motorable passes in the world, located in the Ladakh region of India.

- **Zoji La :: Leh and Siachen**

Incorrect. Zoji La connects Srinagar to Leh via Drass. It does not connect Leh to Siachen Glacier.

- **Umling La :: Leh to Pangong Lake**

Incorrect. Umling La connects Leh to Chumar and is one of the highest motorable passes in the world. It does not directly connect to Pangong Lake.

Topic 236

236. BRI of China

What is Malacca dilemma of China?

- In **2003** Chinese President **Hu Jintao** identified that **China's 80% of their energy needs** (oil imports) coming from



the **Middle East passes through Malacca Straits** (between Malaysia and Indonesia).

- Countries around strait of Malacca are **pro US**.
- So the US and India **may choke China's access** through Malacca strait.
- This will lead to **energy crisis** in China.

Belt and Road Initiative (to deal with Malaccan dilemma)

- BRI project of **China is massive infrastructure project started in 2013**. Under it China is building **road, railways, pipeline, ports**. As per China it is **an attempt to revive old Silk trade routes**.

Objective

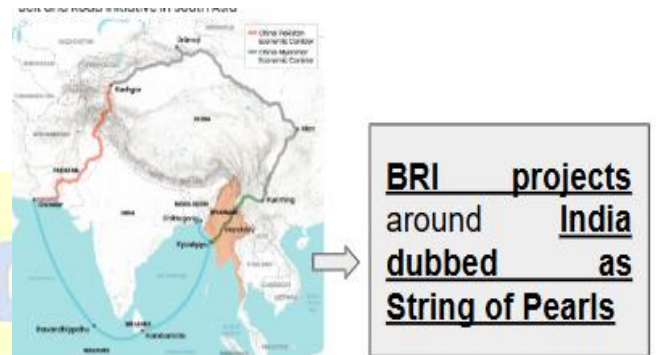
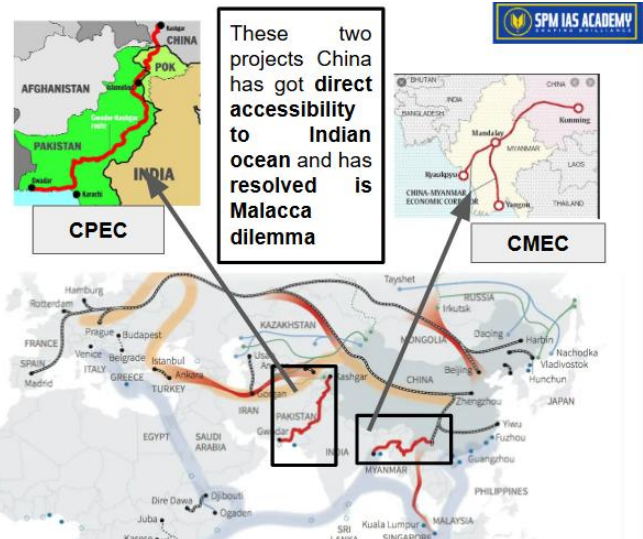
- To **connect Asia, Africa and Europe**.
- This is expected to **boost trade** amongst the countries of Asia, Africa and Europe.

India has not joined BRI. Why?

1. **Sovereignty challenge-CPEC** is moving through **PoK**.
2. **Debt Trap-Hambantota port** of Sri Lanka **taken by China** China for 99 years in **debt swap arrangement**.
3. **Security Threat**- Notion of **"string of pearls"** around India. (Some experts believe India is countering **"string of pearls"** of China with **"Necklace of diamond strategy"**).

Current news-Brazil-2nd country of BRICS to opt out of BRI of China after India.

India has established its **first tri-service command, the A&N Command** at Port Blair in the Andamans. This is called as **Iron curtain of India**.



'Necklace of diamond'



Q706. Consider the following statements regarding the China- Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):

1. It is a major project of the Belt and Road Initiative.
2. It aims to connect the north-western Chinese province of Xinjiang with the Pakistani port of Gwadar.
3. It will shorten the route for China's energy imports from the Middle East by avoiding the Suez Canal.



How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol: It is a major project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI):

- True. CPEC is one of the flagship projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), aiming to enhance connectivity and economic cooperation between China and Pakistan.

It aims to connect the north-western Chinese province of Xinjiang with the Pakistani port of Gwadar:

- True. The primary objective of CPEC is to establish a transportation and energy corridor linking Kashgar in Xinjiang with the strategically located Gwadar Port in Pakistan.

It will shorten the route for China's energy imports from the Middle East by avoiding the Suez Canal:

- False. It will shorten the route for China's energy imports from the Middle East by avoiding the existing route from the Straits of Malacca between Malaysia and Indonesia.

Q707. Which of the following countries form part of the "Zomia" region?

- 1. India
- 2. Myanmar
- 3. Laos
- 4. China

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Ans: d

Sol: The term "Zomia" refers to a highland region in Southeast Asia that spans across several countries, primarily encompassing the upland areas outside the reach of centralized states. It includes parts of:

1. India: Specifically, the northeastern states like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram fall within the Zomia region.
2. Myanmar: Much of Myanmar's highland areas are part of Zomia.
3. Laos: The highland regions of Laos are included in Zomia.
4. China: The southwestern provinces, particularly Yunnan and parts of Guizhou and Guangxi, are part of Zomia.

Thus, all four countries are part of the Zomia region.

Q708. Which country was the first among BRICS to opt out of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)?

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

Ans: b

Sol: India was the first among BRICS countries to opt out of the BRI, citing concerns over sovereignty (CPEC passing through PoK), debt traps, and security threats. Brazil followed as the second BRICS nation to opt out.

Topic 237

237. Galwan valley conflict 2020

Galwan conflict 2020

- Chinese soldiers confronted Indian soldiers in many areas in Ladakh.
- Most violent incidents happened in Galwan Valley, where 20 Indian soldiers were martyred.

Pangong Tso lake

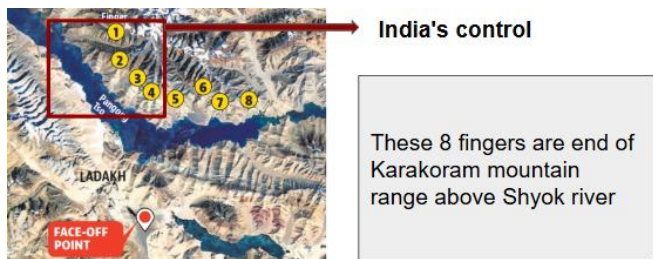
- Saline Lake
- Shyok river moves through Pangong Tso lake and is Right hand tributary of Indus.
- The barren mountains on the lake's northern bank, called by Indian Army "fingers".
- India claims that the LAC is coterminous with Finger 8, but it physically controls area only up to Finger 4.

Confrontation areas-India & China in 2020

- Ladakh- Galwan, Hot Spring, Pangong Tso Lake
- 8 Fingers of Karakoram-North of Pangong Tso Lake



- Pangong Tso Lake (Saline)- Shyok River moves through it
- Naku La sector-Sikkim



Q709. Arrange the following from south to north

1. Pangong Tso lake
2. Hot Springs
3. Galwan Valley
4. Daulat Beg Oldie

Choose the correct code:

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

Ans: a

Sol: When arranged from south to north, the locations are as follows:

1. Pangong Tso lake: Located in the southernmost region near the Indo-China border in Ladakh.
2. Hot Springs: Lies to the north of Pangong Tso but south of Galwan Valley.
3. Galwan Valley: Positioned further north, near the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

4. Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO): The northernmost location, near the Karakoram Pass in Ladakh. Thus, the correct order is 1-2-3-4.

Q710. Consider the following statements about the Galwan Valley conflict in 2020:

1. The conflict occurred in Ladakh and resulted in the martyrdom of 20 Indian soldiers.
2. The Line of Actual Control (LAC) near Pangong Tso is coterminous with Finger 4, as claimed by India.
3. Naku La sector, another area of confrontation in 2020, is located in Ladakh.
4. The barren mountains on the northern bank of Pangong Tso Lake are referred to as "fingers" by the Indian Army.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The Galwan Valley conflict in Ladakh resulted in the martyrdom of 20 Indian soldiers.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: India claims the LAC is coterminous with Finger 8, not Finger 4.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Naku La sector is in Sikkim, not Ladakh.
- Statement 4 is correct: The northern bank of Pangong Tso Lake has barren mountains referred to as "fingers" by the Indian Army.

Q711. Which of the following statements about Pangong Tso Lake are incorrect?

1. It is a freshwater lake located in Ladakh.
 2. The Shyok River, a tributary of the Indus, flows through it.
 3. India controls the area up to Finger 8 on the lake's northern bank.
 4. The lake is a significant point of confrontation between India and China.
- (a) 1 and 3 only
(b) 1 and 4 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, and 4 only

Ans: a



Sol:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: Pangong Tso is a saline, not freshwater, lake.
- Statement 2 is correct: The Shyok River flows through Pangong Tso Lake.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: India claims the LAC is coterminous with Finger 8 but controls the area only up to Finger 4.
- Statement 4 is correct: The lake is a significant point of confrontation between India and China

Topic 238

238. Meeting over LAC

- LAC-demarcates-separates India and China.

It is divided into three sectors:

1. the eastern sector which spans Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim,
2. the middle sector in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh,
3. the western sector in Ladakh.

Notion of LAC

- LAC is a large empty area and the armies of India and China maintain a gap of nearly 50 to 100 km.

How concept of LAC emerged?

- The concept of the LAC emerged after the 1962 conflict between India and China. The war ended with a unilateral Chinese ceasefire and withdrawal to positions that they defined as the LAC. However, India did not officially recognize this line.

Border agreements between India and China

1. Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control, 1993

- The first formal recognition of the concept of the LAC by both India and China.

2. 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement

- Both sides agreed not to follow or tail each other's patrols.
- Both sides committed to not using force or threatening to use force during border patrol encounters.

Current news?

- India and China have agreed to resume patrolling at key friction points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.



Q712. In which year did India and China formally recognize the concept of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) for the first time?

- (a) 1962
- (b) 1993
- (c) 2013
- (d) 2020

Ans: b

Sol: The first formal recognition of the LAC concept by both India and China was in 1993 through the "Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control" agreement.

Q713. Consider the following statements about the Line of Actual Control (LAC):

1. The LAC separates India and China and is divided into three sectors: eastern, middle, and western.
2. The LAC was established during the 1962 India-China conflict and is officially recognized by both countries.
3. The 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement prohibits either side from following or tailing the other's patrols.
4. The LAC is a heavily fortified border with both armies stationed less than 10 km apart.



Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The LAC separates India and China and is divided into three sectors: eastern (Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim), middle (Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh), and western (Ladakh).
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The LAC emerged after the 1962 conflict but was not officially recognized by India at the time.
- Statement 3 is correct: The 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement prohibits following or tailing each other's patrols.
- Statement 4 is incorrect: The LAC is a large empty area with a gap of 50-100 km between the armies.

Q714. Which of the following statements about the LAC agreements between India and China are correct?

1. The 1993 agreement aimed at maintaining peace and tranquility along the LAC.
 2. The 2013 agreement prohibited the use of force during border patrol encounters.
 3. Both agreements resulted in India officially recognizing the Chinese-defined LAC.
 4. The agreements resolved all border disputes between the two countries.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1, 2, and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, and 4

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The 1993 agreement focused on maintaining peace and tranquility along the LAC.
- Statement 2 is correct: The 2013 agreement included a commitment to avoid the use or threat of force during border patrol encounters.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: India has not officially recognized the Chinese-defined LAC.

- Statement 4 is incorrect: Neither agreement resolved the border disputes between India and China.

Topic 239

239. Diaoyu/ Senkaku island dispute

- East China Sea
- The East China Sea borders China, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea.
- China asserts that the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands, located in the East China Sea and under Japanese control, belong to China.
- Diaoyu/ Senkaku island dispute-
- Japan has administered the island chains since 1875.
- China began to reassert claims over the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the 1970s, citing historic rights to the area.
- However, Japan does not recognise Chinese claims.
- Japan calls it Senkaku.
- China calls it Diaoyu.



Q715. Consider the following pairs:

Disputed Place :: Countries

1. Essequibo :: Guyana-Venezuela
2. Senkaku (Diaoyu) islands :: Japan-Russia
3. Kuril Islands :: Japan-China

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

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



Ans: a

Sol:

- Essequibo:: Guyana-Venezuela
 - Correct. The Essequibo region is a disputed area between Guyana and Venezuela. Venezuela claims the region, but it is administered by Guyana.
 - Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands :: Japan-Russia
 - Incorrect. The Senkaku Islands (referred to as Diaoyu Islands by China) are disputed between Japan and China, not Russia.
 - Kuril Islands :: Japan-China
 - Incorrect. The Kuril Islands are disputed between Japan and Russia, not China.
- Thus, only Pair 1 is correctly matched.

Q716. Consider the following statements about the Senkaku/Diaoyu Island dispute in the East China Sea:

- Japan has administered the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands since 1875.
- China reasserted claims to the islands in the 1970s based on historic rights.
- Japan officially recognizes China's claim over the islands but maintains administrative control.
- The islands are referred to as Diaoyu by China and Senkaku by Japan.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- 1, 2, and 4 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2, 3, and 4 only
- 1, 2, 3, and 4

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Japan has administered the islands since 1875.
- Statement 2 is correct: China reasserted its claims in the 1970s, citing historic rights.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Japan does not recognize China's claims to the islands.
- Statement 4 is correct: The islands are called Diaoyu by China and Senkaku by Japan.

Q717. Which of the following statements about the East China Sea and its disputes are incorrect?

- The East China Sea is bordered by China, Taiwan, Japan, and North Korea.

- The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are under Chinese control, but Japan disputes this claim.
- The island dispute intensified in the 1970s when China cited historic rights over the region.

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: The East China Sea is bordered by China, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea, not North Korea.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands are under Japanese control, not Chinese control.
- Statement 3 is correct: The dispute intensified in the 1970s when China reasserted its claims.

Topic 240

240. Vibrant Village Programme

- It was announced in the **2022-23 budget**.
- Aims** to **enhance the infrastructure in border villages** along **India's border with China**.
- Activities** include **Housing, Tourism promotion**, Road Infrastructure, Renewable Energy, livelihood generation etc.
- Promotes** community knowledge in the **border management**.
- Other similar initiatives:** Border Area Development Programme (BADP); Border Infrastructure and Management Scheme etc.
- VVP was approved in 2023 to ensure comprehensive development of selected villages along the northern border in the States of **Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Ladakh**.

Key Features of VVP

- Type: Centrally Sponsored Scheme
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs





CABINET DECISIONS
15 FEBRUARY 2023

VIBRANT VILLAGES PROGRAMME

- Cabinet approves Centrally Sponsored Scheme- "**Vibrant Villages Programme**" for the FY 2022-23 to 2025-26
- Financial allocation of scheme is **Rs. 4800 Cr**
- Will lead to infrastructure development and livelihood opportunities in **4 states and 1 UT along the northern land border**



1/2

Q718. The Vibrant Village Programme was announced in which Union Budget?

- 2021-22
- 2022-23
- 2023-24
- 2020-21

Ans: b

Sol: The Vibrant Village Programme was announced in the 2022-23 budget to enhance infrastructure in border villages along India's border with China.

Q719. Consider the following statements about the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP):

- The programme aims to enhance infrastructure in border villages along India's border with China.
- Activities under the programme include renewable energy projects and livelihood generation.
- The programme replaces the Border Area Development Programme (BADP).
- It also promotes community knowledge in border management.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1, 2, and 4 only
- 1, 3, and 4 only
- 1, 2, 3, and 4

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The programme focuses on infrastructure in border villages along India's border with China.
- Statement 2 is correct: Activities include renewable energy projects, livelihood generation, housing, and more.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: The Vibrant Village Programme does not replace BADP but works alongside similar initiatives like BADP and the Border Infrastructure and Management Scheme.
- Statement 4 is correct: It promotes community knowledge in border management.

Q720. Which of the following statements about the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP) is/are incorrect?

- The Home Ministry recently sanctioned 113 roads under the programme in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
 - The programme focuses solely on road infrastructure development.
 - It is aimed at strengthening India's border villages along the border with Nepal.
- 1 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - 1 and 3 only
 - 2 only

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The Home Ministry recently sanctioned 113 roads under the Vibrant Village Programme in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The programme focuses on multiple aspects, including housing, tourism promotion, renewable energy, and community development, not just road infrastructure.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: The programme is aimed at strengthening border villages along India's border with China, not Nepal.

Day 25

Topic 241

241. Bangladesh Liberation war, 1971

- Bengali speaking people of East Pakistan wanted freedom from West Pakistan



- They wanted to set up **Bangladesh**.
- **1971- Bangladesh liberation war** started where Bengali people started violent struggle against West Pakistan occupation of East.
- **Operation Searchlight** by Pakistan Army on **25th March 1971**.
- **Huge influx of illegal immigrants** from East Pakistan entered into India.
- This is why **NRC update cutoff date** in Assam is **24th March 1971 (midnight)**.

Bangladesh Liberation war,1971

- Huge refugee influx in India forced India to sent its army in East Pakistan on 3rd December 1971.
- Pakistan was unable to defend East Pakistan once India entered into war.
- On 16 December 1971, Pakistani army surrendered.
- India won the war and Bangladesh was declared a free country.

Shimla Agreement, 1972

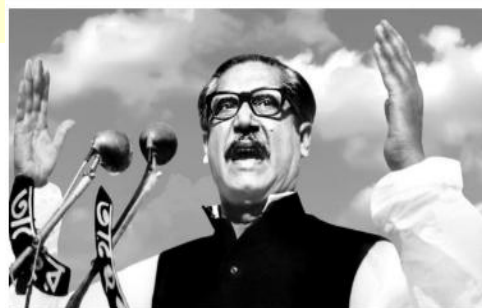
- Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in July 1972

Important Provisions-

1. Any outstanding issues between India and Pakistan to be resolved through bilateral negotiations
2. Diplomatic recognition to Bangladesh by Pakistan
3. 93,000 Prisoners of War of Pakistan was released by India unconditionally
4. Ceasefire line was transformed into Line of Control (LoC).



General Niazi of Pakistan surrendered to Indian Army general JS Aurora



Awami League(major political party of East Pakistan) led by **Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** led East Pakistan for independence




Sheikh Hasina

- Head of Awami League
- Daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
- Awami League- Pro India

Khaleda Zia

- Head of BNP
- widow of former president of Bangladesh Ziaur Rahman
- BNP- Anti India/Pro China stance

Q721. Consider the following pairs:

Port - Country

1. Chattogram - Bangladesh
2. Mongla - Maldives
3. Kyaukpyu - Myanmar

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol: The correct answer is 1 and 3 only.

- **Chattogram** is indeed the main seaport of **Bangladesh**.
- **Mongla** is located in **Bangladesh**, not the Maldives. The primary port in the Maldives is Malé.
- **Kyaukpyu** is a significant port in **Myanmar**.

Q722. Regarding India-Bangladesh relations, consider the following statements:

1. India shares the second longest land boundary with Bangladesh.
2. India has provided duty-free quota free access to Bangladesh on all tariff lines except tobacco and alcohol under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) since 2011.
3. In July 2023, Bangladesh and India initiated a rupee-based trade transaction to diminish reliance

on the US dollar and enhance regional currency and trade.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol: Statement 1:

- India shares the longest land boundary with Bangladesh, not the second longest. The land boundary between India and Bangladesh spans approximately 4,096 kilometers, making it India's longest land border with any country.
- This statement is incorrect.

Statement 2:

- India has indeed provided duty-free and quota-free access to Bangladesh on all tariff lines except for tobacco and alcohol under the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) since 2011. This was part of India's commitment to fostering stronger trade relations with Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the region.
- This statement is correct.

Statement 3:

- In July 2023, Bangladesh and India initiated rupee-based trade transactions to reduce reliance on the US dollar and strengthen regional trade and currency. This is a factual development aimed at enhancing bilateral economic cooperation.
- This statement is correct.

Q723. Joint Exercises like "Ekuverin", "Dosti", "Ekatha" and "Operation Shield" are carried by India with which of the following country?

- (a) United Kingdom
- (b) Bangladesh
- (c) Myanmar
- (d) Maldives

Ans: d

Sol: The joint exercises mentioned are conducted by India and the Maldives:

1. **Ekuverin:** A joint military exercise between India and the Maldives, focusing on enhancing



interoperability and conducting counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations.

2. **Dosti:** A trilateral coast guard exercise involving India, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka, aimed at strengthening maritime security in the Indian Ocean region.
3. **Ekatha:** A joint naval exercise between India and the Maldives to improve maritime collaboration and operational synergy.
4. **Operation Shield:** A joint operation carried out to enhance cooperation in maritime security between the two nations.

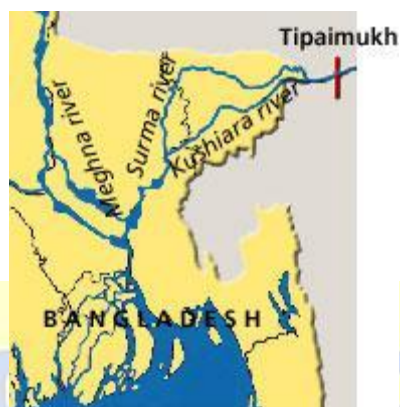
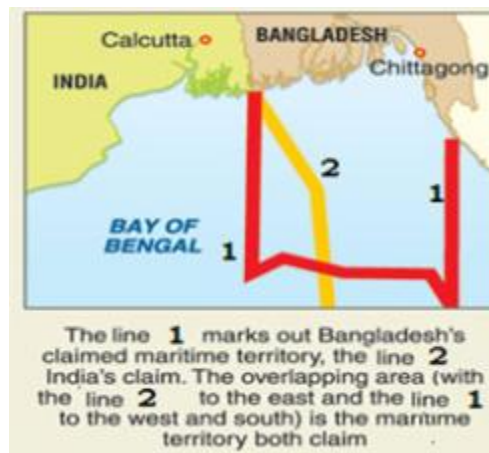
Topic 242

242. Issues between India-Bangladesh after 1971

- India played a key role in **birth of Bangladesh** as a country.
- **1972-India and Bangladesh signed a treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.**

Some differences started-

1. **1975- The Farakka barrage** was constructed by India over Hooghly river to flush excessive siltation of Kolkata port. Bangladesh opposed its construction. Bangladesh took up the matter to UNGA. UNGA asked both parties to settle the issue on bilateral grounds.
2. **1979- Assam movement** started in Assam against Bangladeshi illegal migrants.
 - This created more differences between India and Bangladesh.
3. **Water sharing disputes-**
 - Of the **57 transboundary rivers**, Bangladesh **shares 54 of them with India.**
 - Important disputed rivers are **Teesta river** and **Tipaimukh dam on Barak.**
4. **Maritime dispute-**
 - Since India and Bangladesh **shares Continental shelf** in Bay of Bengal, there was conflict regarding ownership of the continental shelf.
 - **2009-Bangladesh** got established a **UN tribunal** for resolving the dispute.
 - **2014- UN tribunal** has **awarded Bangladesh nearly four-fifths** of an area sprawling over 25,000 sq km (9,700 sq miles) in the Bay of Bengal.
 - The verdict, **binding** on both countries.



Barak River

- Originates **Manipur hills.**
- Eventually merging into the **Meghna River.**

In India

- Flows through **Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Assam.**

In Bangladesh

- It enters through **Sylhet and splits into two** distributaries, **Surma and Kushiara.**
- **second largest river** in the **Northeast India** after the **Brahmaputra.**
- **Tipaimukh dam-** A proposed dam **near mouth of Barak river.**

Q724. Consider the following pairs:

Project :: Countries

1. Akhura-Agartala Cross Border Rail Link :: India-Bhutan
2. Gorakhpur-Bhutwal Transmission Line :: India-Nepal
3. Punatsangchhu-I :: India-Bangladesh

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

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



(d) None

Ans: b

Sol: Akhaura-Agartala Cross Border Rail Link — India-Bhutan:

- **Incorrectly Matched:** This project is between India and Bangladesh, not India and Bhutan. It aims to enhance connectivity and trade between Tripura (India) and Bangladesh.

Gorakhpur-Bhutwal Transmission Line — India-Nepal:

- **Correctly Matched:** This is a joint electricity transmission project between India and Nepal, facilitating power trade and strengthening the electricity grid between the two countries.

Punatsangchhu-I — India-Bangladesh:

- **Incorrectly Matched:** Punatsangchhu-I is a hydropower project in Bhutan, being developed with India's support. It is between India and Bhutan, not India and Bangladesh.

Q725. How many of the following countries share land borders with Myanmar?

1. Bangladesh
2. Cambodia
3. Laos
4. Thailand
5. Vietnam

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Ans: a

Sol: Countries Sharing Land Borders with Myanmar:

1. **Bangladesh:** Shares a land border with Myanmar in the west.
2. **Cambodia:** Does not share a border with Myanmar.
3. **Laos:** Shares a land border with Myanmar in the northeast.
4. **Thailand:** Shares a land border with Myanmar in the southeast.
5. **Vietnam:** Does not share a border with Myanmar.

Q726. Consider the following statements:

1. Raxaul-Parwanipur, Kushaha-Kataiya, and New Nautanwa- Mainahiya are the three recently inaugurated cross-border transmission lines between India and Bangladesh.

2. India has the longest border with Bangladesh followed by Nepal.

3. India is Nepal's largest trade partner and the largest source of foreign investments.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol: Statement 1:

- The Raxaul-Parwanipur, Kushaha-Kataiya, and New Nautanwa-Mainahiya cross-border transmission lines are not between India and Bangladesh. They are between India and Nepal, enhancing electricity trade and cooperation between the two countries.

- This statement is incorrect.

Statement 2:

- India shares its longest border with Bangladesh (approximately 4,096 km). The second-longest border is with China, not Nepal. India shares a 1,751 km border with Nepal, which is shorter than the India-China border (3,488 km).

- This statement is incorrect.

Statement 3:

- India is indeed Nepal's largest trade partner and the largest source of foreign investments. India plays a significant role in Nepal's economy, providing essential goods, services, and investments.

- This statement is correct

Topic 243

243. Teesta River dispute

- Teesta River originates from the **Kangse glacier** near Charamu Lake in Sikkim. It flows through **Sikkim and northern part of West Bengal** to merge with the **Jamuna in Bangladesh** and flows into Bay of Bengal.
- **Brahmaputra is known as Jamuna** once it enters into Bangladesh.
- The **main tributary** of river Teesta is the **Rangeet River**.



- The river is important for rice crops in **Rangpur region of Bangladesh** (known as Bangladesh's 'rice bowl') and **Jalpaiguri region of West Bengal**.

2011: an Interim deal that was supposed to last for **15 years** – gave India **42.5%** and Bangladesh **37.5%** of Teesta water.

- The deal was obstructed by WB CM **Mamata Banerjee**.

Article 253

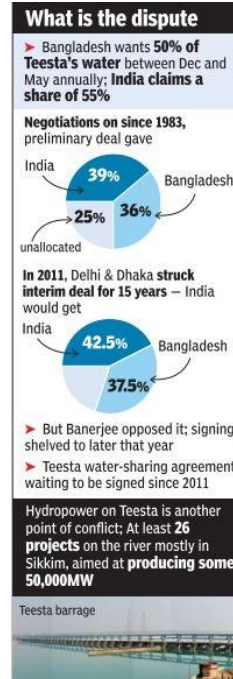
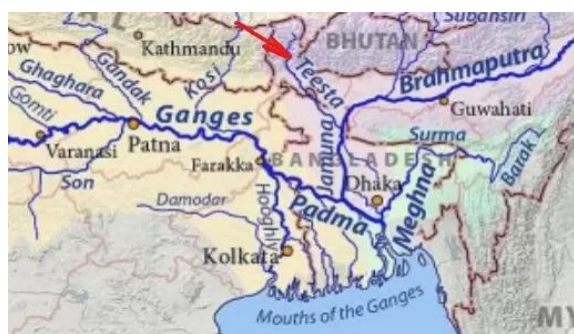
- According to **Article 253**, the **Union Legislature** has the power to **legislate on State subjects** to comply with its **international agreements**.
- But due to **coalition government**, PM Manmohan Singh could not enforce the deal.



Rangpur region of Bangladesh known as Rice Bowl



Jalpaiguri region of West Bengal



Q727. Which of the following is NOT true regarding the Teesta River:

- Teesta River is a tributary of the Ganga (known as Jamuna in Bangladesh), flowing through India and Bangladesh.
- It originates in the Himalayas near Chunthang, Sikkim, and flows to the south through West Bengal before entering Bangladesh.
- Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has opened a 360-feet- long bailey suspension bridge over the Teesta River in Munshithang, Sikkim.

Choose the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: a

Sol: Statement 1:



- The Teesta River is not a tributary of the Ganga. It flows through **Sikkim and West Bengal in India** before entering Bangladesh, where it merges with the **Jamuna (Brahmaputra River)**, not the Ganga.
- This statement is NOT true.

Statement 2:

- The Teesta River originates from the Himalayas near Chungthang, Sikkim, and flows south through West Bengal before entering Bangladesh. This is factually correct.
- This statement is true.

Statement 3:

- The **Border Roads Organisation (BRO)** did indeed open a 360-foot-long Bailey suspension bridge over the Teesta River in Munshithang, Sikkim, for better connectivity in the region.
- This statement is true

Q728. Arrange the following land border points of India and Bangladesh from west to east:

1. Petrapole
2. Dawki
3. Akhaura
4. Hili

Select the correct order:

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

Ans: a

Sol: Petrapole is in West Bengal, Hili is farther east in West Bengal, Akhaura is in Tripura, and Dawki is in Meghalaya.

Q729. Which of the following ports in Bangladesh have been made accessible for Indian transit trade?

1. Chattogram
2. Mongla
3. Payra
4. Cox's Bazar

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: a

Sol: The Chattogram and Mongla ports in Bangladesh are accessible to India under transit trade agreements. Payra and Cox's Bazar are not included in these agreements.

Topic 244

244. Agartala-Akhaura rail link

- A rail link connecting Northeast India with Bangladesh.
- inaugurated in 2023
- will cut down the travel time between Agartala and Kolkata, from 31 hours to 10 hours.
- The Indian portion of the project is already complete, while about 98% of the work on the Bangladesh side is finished.
- However, the current turmoil in Bangladesh may pose challenges to finalizing the remaining work.
- It will be the first rail link between India's Northeastern States and Bangladesh.
- The rail link is also part of India's Act East Policy.



The 12.24-km Agartala-Akhaura railway line, 5.46 kilometres lie on the Indian side in Tripura, and 6.78 km in the Akhaura, Bangladesh

Q730. Which of the following are major cross-border infrastructure projects between India and Bangladesh?

1. Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link
2. Padma Bridge
3. Maitri Setu

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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



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

Ans: b

Sol: The Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link connects India and Bangladesh, and the Maitri Setu connects Tripura with Bangladesh. The Padma Bridge, however, is an internal project in Bangladesh.

Q731. Which of the following Indian states share a land boundary with Bangladesh?

1. West Bengal
2. Assam
3. Meghalaya
4. Mizoram
5. Tripura
6. Manipur

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2, 3, and 5 only
(b) 1, 3, 4, and 5 only
(c) 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6

Ans: c

Sol: Manipur does not share a boundary with Bangladesh, while the others do.

Q732. Consider the following countries:

1. Bangladesh
2. Sri Lanka
3. Myanmar
4. Maldives

How many of the above are not the participants of MAHASAGAR Initiative of the Indian Navy?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: a

Sol:

1. Bangladesh: Actively participates in the Indian Navy's maritime cooperation initiatives, including exercises like Milan and bilateral naval cooperation.
 - o Participant of MAHASAGAR.

2. Sri Lanka: A key maritime partner of India, actively involved in Indian Navy initiatives, including the MAHASAGAR initiative.
 - Participant of MAHASAGAR.
3. Myanmar: Shares maritime interests with India but is not explicitly listed as a participant of the MAHASAGAR initiative.
 - Not a participant of MAHASAGAR.
4. Maldives: A critical partner in India's maritime cooperation programs, including MAHASAGAR, to enhance regional security.
 - Participant of MAHASAGAR.

Topic 245

245. Political Crisis in Bangladesh

- In August 2024, the then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh has resigned and fled to India amid significant political turmoil and protests.
- Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel laureate, has taken oath as the head of the interim government in Bangladesh.

Muhammad Yunus

- A social entrepreneur, **economist.**
- He is **founder of Grameen Bank.**
- Grameen Bank provides **small loans(microfinance)** to impoverished entrepreneurs **without requiring collateral.**
- This innovative approach has **empowered millions** of people, **particularly women** through self-employment.

Nobel Peace Prize

- In 2006, Yunus and Grameen Bank were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to create economic and social development from below.

Other Nobel laureates who lead their countries

- Won the **Nobel Peace Prize in 1991** for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights. Served as the **de facto head of Myanmar's** government from **2016 to 2021**.

Nelson Mandela (South Africa)

- Served as President from 1994 to 1999.
- A key figure in the anti-apartheid movement and spent 27 years in prison.
- He won the **Nobel Peace Prize in 1993**





Bangladesh President Mohammed Shahabuddin administers oath to Muhammad Yunus in Dhaka. Reuters

Prelims Facts

- Important Books written by Muhammad Yunus
- 1. "Banker to the Poor"
- 2. "Creating a World Without Poverty."

Recent

- Bangladesh has sent a **note verbale** to India seeking the **extradition of Sheikh Hasina**.

Note verbale?

- a diplomatic communication
- Written in third person (writers express his position neutral)
- Formal in nature

India has **extradition treaty** with **Bangladesh**.

Q733. Which of the following statements are not correct in respect of Sheikh Hasina Wazed, who resigned as Prime Minister of Bangladesh on August 4th 2024?

1. She was the Prime Minister of Bangladesh for two decades
 2. The students protest against Job Quota turned into anti-government agitation
 3. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh gave a ruling of 30 per cent reservation in jobs for descendants of those who participated in 1971 Bangladesh Liberation Movement.
 4. She is the President of 'Bangladesh National Party' supported by Jamaat-e-Islami
- (a) 1 and 3
(b) 2 and 3
(c) 1 and 2
(d) 1 and 4

Ans: d

Sol:

1. She was the Prime Minister of Bangladesh for two decades: This statement is not correct. Sheikh Hasina served as Prime Minister from 1996 to 2001 and then from 2009 until her resignation in August 2024, totaling approximately 15 years, not two decades.

2. The students' protest against Job Quota turned into anti-government agitation: This statement is correct. The protests began over a job quota system but escalated into broader anti-government demonstrations demanding Hasina's resignation after a violent crackdown by security forces.
3. The Supreme Court of Bangladesh gave a ruling of 30 percent reservation in jobs for descendants of those who participated in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation Movement: This statement is correct. The government had reinstated a quota system that reserved up to 30% of government jobs for families of veterans from the liberation war, which was a point of contention during the protests.
4. She is the President of 'Bangladesh National Party' supported by Jamaat-e-Islami: This statement is not correct. Sheikh Hasina is the leader of the Awami League, not the Bangladesh National Party (BNP), which is a rival political party. Jamaat-e-Islami has historically been an opposition party and has been banned at times, and it does not support Hasina's party.

Q734. Which of the following are partner countries in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)?

1. Japan
 2. Bangladesh
 3. Indonesia
 4. USA
- (a) 1, 2 and 3
(b) 1, 2 and 4
(c) 1, 3 and 4
(d) 2, 3 and 4

Ans: c

Sol:

- Japan: Yes, Japan is a founding member of the IPEF.
- Bangladesh: No, Bangladesh is not a member of the IPEF.
- Indonesia: Yes, Indonesia is a founding member of the IPEF.
- USA: Yes, the USA initiated and leads the IPEF.

Q735. Which of the following statements about 'Exercise Mitra Shakti-2023' are correct?



1. This was a joint military exercise between India and Bangladesh.
2. It commenced in Aundh (Pune).
3. Joint response during counter-terrorism operations was a goal of this operation.
4. Indian Air Force was a part of this exercise.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: d

Sol: Option d is the correct answer.

- Statement 1 is incorrect. Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023 is a joint military exercise between India and Sri Lanka (not India and Bangladesh).
- Statement 2 is correct. The ninth edition of Joint Military exercise "Exercise MITRA SHAKTI-2023" commenced in Aundh (Pune).
- Statement 3 is correct. The Scope of the exercise includes synergizing joint responses during counter-terrorist operations. Both sides practiced tactical actions such as raid, search and destroy missions, heliborne operations, etc. In addition, Army Martial Arts Routine (AMAR), combat reflex shooting and Yoga will also form part of the exercise curriculum.
- Statement 4 is correct. 15 personnel from Indian Air Force and five personnel from Sri Lankan Air Force participated in the exercise.

Topic 246

246. Military Junta rule in Myanmar

Political history of Myanmar

1. Independence and Democracy in the beginning in 1948
2. Rule of military Junta(1962 to 1990)
 - Military junta refers to a government led by a group of military officers who have seized power, often through a coup.
3. 8888 Revolution(Started on 8th August 1988)
 - Revolution was led by Aung San Suu Ki.
 - National League for Democracy(NLD) party was created by Aung San Suu Ki.
4. 1990 elections
 - First democratic elections after more than 30 years.

- Military Junta refused to accept the result of election and imprisoned Aung San Suu Ki.
 - Aung San Suu Ki got Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her peaceful protest for democracy.
- Military Junta rule(1990- 2015)**
- Military Junta criticised worldwide for human rights violations.
- Democratic government in 2015**
- Led by Suu Kyi, with party NLD(Suu Kyi herself could not become president as her husband is of foreign origin)
- Military coup in Myanmar,2021**
- Return of Military junta rule and end of Democracy

Concerns for India-Security challenges-may give shelter to insurgent groups like NSCN(K) and ULFA /Hinder implementation of **Act East Policy** /**Rohingya issues**

Pure Prelims info-

- In 1989, **Burma** was renamed **Myanmar**, while its capital **Rangoon** is renamed **Yangon**.



Myanmar borders -

- China
- Laos
- Thailand
- Bangladesh
- India
- Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal

Q736. Which of the following pairs of country and river is correctly matched?

River - Country

1. Mahaweli Ganga – Thailand (Great Sandy River)
2. Chao Phraya - Myanmar
3. Irrawaddy - Vietnam



4. Mekong - Sri Lanka

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 4 only
- (d) None

Ans: d

Sol:

- Mahaweli Ganga - Sri Lanka
- Chao Phraya - Thailand
- Irrawaddy - Myanmar
- Mekong - six countries - China - Myanmar - Laos - Thailand - Cambodia - Vietnam.

Q737. Match the following ethnic groups correctly matched with their location country.

Ethnic Group - Country

1. Maasai - Tanzania, Kenya
2. Sami - Sweden, Norway
3. Inca - Peru, Bolivia
4. Chin - Myanmar, India

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

Ans: d

Sol: Here is the reasoning:

1. **Maasai - Tanzania, Kenya:** Correct. The Maasai people are a well-known ethnic group native to Kenya and Tanzania.
2. **Sami - Sweden, Norway:** Correct. The Sami are an indigenous people inhabiting parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia.
3. **Inca - Peru, Bolivia:** Correct. The Inca civilization was centered in present-day Peru, and its influence extended into parts of Bolivia, among other areas in South America.
4. **Chin - Myanmar, India:** Correct. The Chin people are an ethnic group primarily residing in western Myanmar (Chin State) and also in neighboring northeastern India.

Q738. With reference to India's projects on connectivity, consider the following statements:

1. East-West Corridor under Golden Quadrilateral Project Dibrugarh and Surat. connects
2. Trilateral Highway connects Moreh in Manipur and Chiang Mai in Thailand via Myanmar.

3. Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor connects Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh with Kunming in China.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: d

Sol:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: The East-West Corridor is a part of the National Highways Development Project (NHDP) in India, which aims to connect Silchar in Assam to Porbandar in Gujarat. It does not connect Dibrugarh in Assam and Surat in Gujarat. East-West Corridor is a 3,300 kilometres (2,100 mi) corridor via NH 27 (Porbandar–Rajkot–Samakhiali–Radhanpur–Kota–Jhansi–Kanpur–Lucknow–Ayodhya–Gorakhpur–Muzaffarpur–Darbhanga–Supaul–Purnia–Dalkhola–Kishanganj, Islampur–Sonapur–Ghoshpukur–Jalpaiguri – Alipurduar–Bongaigaon – Nalbari – Bijnor–Guwahati–Nagaon–Dabaka–Silchar).
 - Statement 2 is incorrect: The Trilateral Highway is a connectivity project that aims to connect Moreh in Manipur, India, with Mae Sot in Thailand via Myanmar. It is an important infrastructure project to enhance trade, connectivity, and people-to-people ties among the three countries.
 - Statement 3 is incorrect: The Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor (BCIM) is a proposed economic corridor that aims to connect Kunming in China with Kolkata in India, passing through Myanmar and Bangladesh. Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh is not directly connected to this corridor.
- Thus, none of the statements are correct.

Topic 247

247. Rohingya issue

Who are Rohingyas?

- Muslim Refugees of Myanmar (Rakhine province)-persecuted by the majority (Majority Buddhist)
- UN said- Rohingyas are the most persecuted community in the world



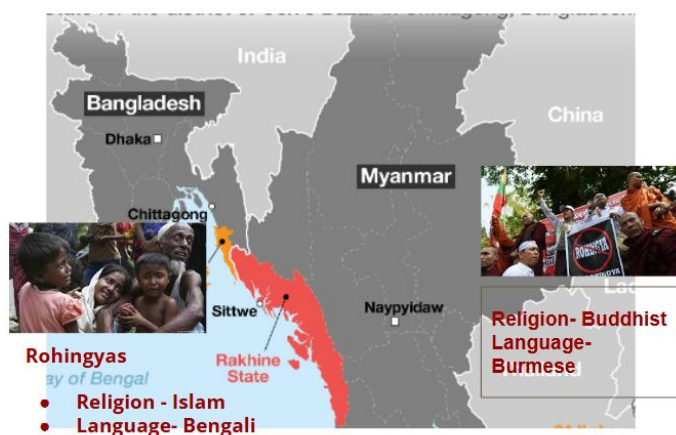
- Many migrated- **Cox Bazar Refugee camp** in **Bangladesh**
- Some entered into India,some go in **South Asia(known as Boat people)**.

Why Rohingya issue is important for India-Myanmar and Bangladesh relations?

- **Rohingya are to Bangladesh what illegal migrants from Bangladesh are to India.**
- **If India supports Rohingyas stay in Bangladesh, logically it needs to keep Bangladeshi illegal immigrants.**

“Operation Insaniyat”

- India launched “Operation Insaniyat” to provide relief assistance for the refugee camps in Bangladesh.



Over 300 Rohingya Muslims arrive in Indonesia's Aceh region

Adrift in the Andaman Sea for 27 days



Q739. Arrange the following border checkpoints between India and Myanmar from north to south:

1. Pangsau Pass
2. Moreh-Tamu
3. Rih Dil

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Ans: c

Sol:-

- Pangsau Pass is located in Arunachal Pradesh, making it the northernmost checkpoint.
- Moreh-Tamu, a significant trade route, is located in Manipur.
- Rih Dil, a cultural and trade hub, is in Mizoram, the southernmost state sharing a border with Myanmar.

Q740. The operation launched by India to provide relief assistance to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is called:

- (a) Operation Maitri
(b) Operation Samudra Setu
(c) Operation Insaniyat
(d) Operation Vijay

Ans: c

Sol: Operation Insaniyat was India's humanitarian initiative to assist Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Q741. Consider the following statements about the Rohingyas:

1. They are a predominantly Muslim community from Myanmar's Rakhine province.



2. The United Nations has identified the Rohingyas as one of the most persecuted communities in the world.
3. Most Rohingya refugees have settled in Thailand as part of their migration.
4. India launched "Operation Dost" to provide relief assistance for Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. Rohingyas are a Muslim community from Myanmar's Rakhine province.
- Statement 2: Correct. The UN has labeled the Rohingyas as one of the most persecuted communities globally.
- Statement 3: Incorrect. Most Rohingya refugees have migrated to Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, not Thailand.
- Statement 4: Incorrect. India launched "Operation Insaniyat" to assist Rohingya camps in Bangladesh.

Topic 248

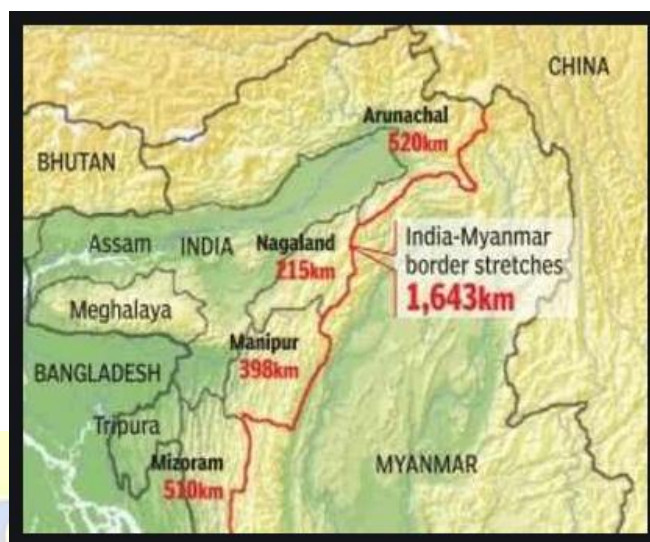
248. Free Movement Regime

- The Free Movement Regime (FMR) is a **policy framework** allowing for **unhindered movement** of people across **designated regions or countries**.
- The Free Movement Regime is **implemented** on **India's border management** policies with **Myanmar**.
- It permits people living within **16 kilometers** of the Indo-Myanmar border to **cross without a visa** for up to **72 hours**, provided they carry a **border pass**.
- This policy aims to accommodate the **cultural and familial ties of tribal communities**, such as the Nagas, Mizo, and Kuki-Chin tribes, that straddle the border.

Current news?

- Due to security challenges in NE states like violence in Manipur and drug trafficking due to proximity to golden triangle, the Union government is planning to end FMR system.

- There have been verbal announcements on ending FMR but formal orders are still not there.
- Tighter guidelines issued to regulate movement of people between the two countries.
- Earlier, those living within 16 km of border were allowed to cross but the limit has now been set at 10 km.



Q742. Regarding the Free Movement Regime (FMR), consider the following statements:

1. It aimed to facilitate local border trade, improve access to education and healthcare for border residents, and strengthen diplomatic ties.
2. India has this mechanism with Bangladesh, Nepal, and Myanmar.
3. While the Free Movement Regime has been recently suspended with Myanmar but will continue with Bangladesh and Nepal.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. The Free Movement Regime (FMR) facilitates local border trade, access to education and healthcare, and diplomatic ties for residents in border areas.
- Statement 2: Incorrect. India has the Free Movement Regime specifically with Myanmar, not with Bangladesh or Nepal.



- Statement 3: Incorrect. The FMR has been suspended with Myanmar due to security concerns, but it does not apply to Bangladesh and Nepal, as these countries do not share this mechanism with India.

Thus, only one statement is correct.

Q743. Regarding the Free Movement Regime (FMR), consider the following statements:

1. Within the Indo-Myanmar Border (IMB), hill tribe members, regardless of their citizenship in India or Myanmar, are permitted to travel within a 50 km radius on both sides.
2. With a one-year valid border pass issued by the relevant authority, individuals can cross the border and stay for up to two weeks per visit.
3. As a component of the Central government's Act East policy, the FMR was put into effect in 2018.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: The FMR allows hill tribe members to travel within a 16 km radius, not 50 km, on both sides of the Indo-Myanmar Border.
- Statement 2 is correct: Individuals can indeed cross the border with a one-year valid border pass and stay for up to two weeks per visit.
- Statement 3 is correct: The FMR was indeed implemented in 2018 as part of the Indian government's Act East Policy.

Therefore, statements 2 and 3 are correct.

Q744. Which of the following rivers play a crucial role in the India-Myanmar connectivity projects?

1. Irrawaddy
2. Chindwin
3. Kaladan

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Ans: b

Sol: The Chindwin and Kaladan rivers are central to connectivity projects such as the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project.

The Irrawaddy River, though crucial within Myanmar, is not directly part of India-Myanmar connectivity efforts.

Topic 249

249. Sittwe Port

- Recently, **India has gained the right to operate its second overseas port, Sittwe** in Myanmar.
- The **first overseas port** where India got rights to operate was **Chabahar, Iran**.
- **India Ports Global (IPGL)**, a company fully owned by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways will operate.

Importance of the port for India

1. Economic importance

- It is a deep water will act as **major port of call** for east coast of India.

2. Strategic

- Countering Chinese aggressiveness (China has developed Myanmar's Kyaukphyu port under BRI which is considered as part of strings of pearls)



Port of call means an **intermediate stop** for a ship on its **scheduled journey** for cargo operation or taking on **supplies or fuel**.





Ports of Bangladesh

Q745. Which of the following initiatives contribute to connectivity between India and Myanmar?

1. Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project
2. India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway
3. Sittwe Port Development

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- The Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project links Kolkata to Sittwe Port in Myanmar and further connects to India's northeastern states.
- The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway is designed to enhance road connectivity.
- Sittwe Port Development is part of India's Look East Policy to increase access to Southeast Asia.

Q746. Match the following Myanmar regions with their significance for India-Myanmar relations:

| Region in Myanmar | Significance |
|-------------------|--|
| A. Sagaing | 1. Bordering Mizoram, crucial for cross-border trade |
| B. Chin State | 2. Bordering Manipur, part of the Kaladan Project |
| C. Rakhine State | 3. Base for connectivity projects like Kaladan and Sittwe Port |

Select the correct answer:

- (a) A-3, B-2, C-1
(b) A-2, B-1, C-3



- (c) A-1, B-3, C-2
(d) A-2, B-3, C-1

Ans: b

Sol:

- Sagaing borders Manipur and is crucial for projects such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway.
- Chin State shares a border with Mizoram and facilitates border trade.
- Rakhine State is the site of the Sittwe Port under the Kaladan project

Q747. Match the following Indian cities with their role in India-Myanmar connectivity projects:

| Indian City | Role in Connectivity |
|-------------|---|
| A. Kolkata | 1. Origin point for Kaladan Project's Sea route to Sittwe |
| B. Imphal | 2. Hub for the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway |
| C. Aizawl | 3. Closest Indian city to the Rih Dil border checkpoint |

Select the correct answer:

- (a) A-1, B-2, C-3
(b) A-3, B-1, C-2
(c) A-2, B-3, C-1
(d) A-3, B-2, C-1

Ans: a

Sol:

- Kolkata is the starting point of the Kaladan Project sea route to Sittwe.
- Imphal is a key hub for the India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway.
- Aizawl is close to the Rih Dil border checkpoint.

Topic 250

250. St. Martin's Island

- St. Martin's Island is a **small coral island** located in the northeastern part of the Bay of Bengal, near the **southernmost tip of Bangladesh**.
- It has been **disputed** between **Bangladesh and Myanmar**.

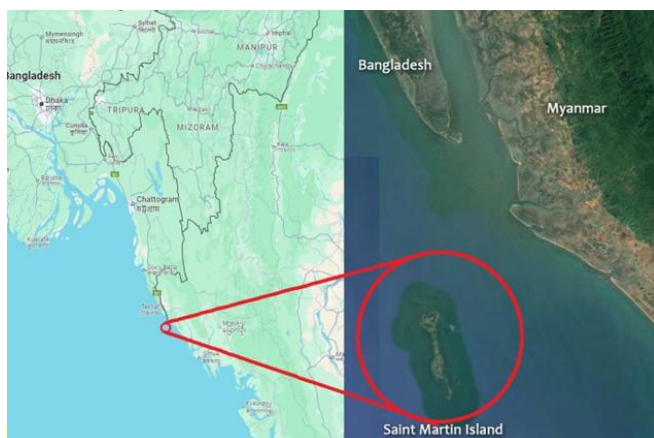
Why in news?

- Allegedly, former Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, said that **she could have**

remained in power if she had given Bangladesh's "St. Martin's Island to America,"

Inference

- The alleged statement, if true, highlights how **powerful nations threaten territorial integrity and national sovereignty** of other nations for their **own vested interest**.



Q748. Match the following border areas with their significance in Myanmar-Bangladesh relations:

| Border Area | Significance |
|---------------------------|---|
| A. Teknaf | 1. Major crossing point for refugees and trade |
| B. Maungdaw | 2. Center of tension due to the Rohingya refugee crisis |
| C. Chittagong Hill Tracts | 3. Region of cross-border ethnic linkages |

Select the correct answer:

- (a) A-1, B-2, C-3
(b) A-2, B-1, C-3
(c) A-3, B-1, C-2
(d) A-1, B-3, C-2

Ans: a

Sol:

- Teknaf, in Bangladesh, is a key crossing point for Rohingya refugees and trade with Myanmar.
- Maungdaw, in Myanmar, is a focal point in the Rohingya crisis.
- The Chittagong Hill Tracts share cultural and ethnic connections with parts of Myanmar.

Q749. Match the following trade routes or ports with their relevance to Myanmar-Bangladesh trade relations:

| Trade Route/Port | Relevance |
|--------------------------|--|
| A. Sittwe Port | 1. Potential trade link for Bangladesh and Myanmar |
| B. Teknaf-Maungdaw Route | 2. Facilitates border trade and people-to-people exchanges |
| C. Chattogram Port | 3. Major port in Bangladesh for regional trade |

Select the correct answer:

- (a) A-2, B-3, C-1
(b) A-3, B-1, C-2
(c) A-1, B-2, C-3
(d) A-1, B-3, C-2

Ans: c

Sol:

- Sittwe Port in Myanmar could serve as a link for regional trade, including with Bangladesh.
- The Teknaf-Maungdaw Route is significant for border trade and people-to-people connections.
- Chattogram Port is a key Bangladeshi port for regional trade and connectivity

Q750. Which of the following statements about St. Martin's Island is/are correct?

1. St. Martin's Island is located in the Bay of Bengal near the southernmost tip of Bangladesh.
 2. It is known for its coral ecosystem and has been a source of territorial dispute between Bangladesh and India.
 3. The island's location makes it geopolitically significant in the northeastern part of the Bay of Bengal.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, and 3

Ans: c

Sol:-



- Statement 1 is correct. St. Martin's Island is indeed located in the Bay of Bengal near the southern tip of Bangladesh.
- Statement 2 is incorrect. The territorial dispute over St. Martin's Island is between Bangladesh and Myanmar, not India.
- Statement 3 is correct. The island's location in the Bay of Bengal makes it geopolitically significant.

Day 26

Topic 251

251. Chabahar Port project

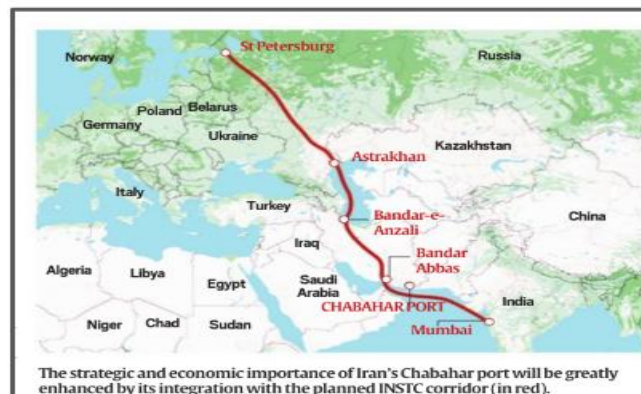
- It is a **project** between **India and Iran** (finalised in 2016).
- **Shahid Beheshti Terminal** at **Chabahar Port** is being **developed**.

Benefits of developing Chabahar project for India-

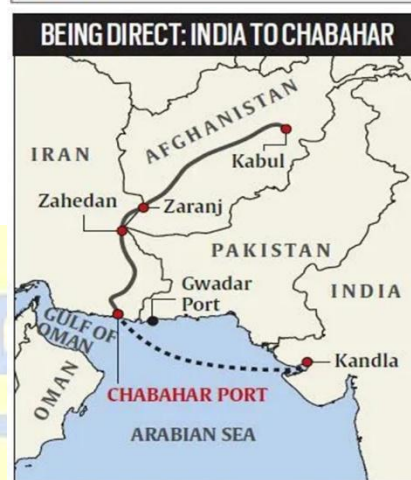
1. Trade and Energy security
2. Security and strategic
 - Counter Pakistan's Gwadar Port- part of BRI of China(known as String of Pearls).
 - 0. Connectivity
 - The Chabahar project and the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) will complement each other by optimising Indian connectivity with Russia and Eurasia.
 - Improve connectivity with Afghanistan and Central Asia.

International North South Transport Corridor

- Mumbai to Bandar Abbas in Iran by sea;
- Bandar Abbas to Bandar-e-Anzali, an Iranian port on the Caspian Sea, by road;
- Bandar-e-Anzali to Astrakhan, a Caspian port in the Russian Federation by ship across the Caspian Sea;
- Onward to other parts of the Russian Federation and Europe by rail.



INSTC will boost **trade connectivity** with Russia by **cutting down time and distance by 40%**.



Astrakhan, Russia

- Home of **Chechens ethnic** group
- Some of them **engage in insurgency** against Russia demanding **Chechenia-an independent country**



Central Asia (5 countries-all landlocked)

1. Kazakhstan,



2. Tajikistan,
3. Kyrgyzstan
4. Turkmenistan
5. Uzbekistan (double landlocked)

Q751. Consider the following statements regarding India-Iran relations:

1. ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) discovered the Farzad-B gas field in the Gulf of Oman.
2. India's investment is restricted to the Shahid Kalantari port under the Chabahar project.
3. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) 2015 was agreed between Iran and a group of world powers known as the P5+1 including India.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: d

Sol: ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) discovered the Farzad-B gas field in the Gulf of Oman:

- Incorrect. The Farzad-B gas field was discovered by OVL, but it is located in the Persian Gulf, not the Gulf of Oman.

India's investment is restricted to the Shahid Kalantari port under the Chabahar project:

- Incorrect. India's investment in the Chabahar project includes developing the Shahid Beheshti terminal, not Shahid Kalantari port. Additionally, India's role includes constructing infrastructure and improving connectivity through the Chabahar-Zahedan railway line.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) 2015 was agreed between Iran and a group of world powers known as the P5+1 including India:

- Incorrect. The JCPOA was an agreement between Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Russia, the UK, the US, and Germany). India was not part of this agreement.

Q752. Which of the following sequences correctly describes the route of the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)?

- (a) Mumbai → Bandar Abbas → Bandar-e-Anzali → Astrakhan → Europe
- (b) Mumbai → Bandar-e-Anzali → Bandar Abbas → Astrakhan → Europe

- (c) Mumbai → Bandar Abbas → Astrakhan → Bandar-e-Anzali → Europe
- (d) Mumbai → Astrakhan → Bandar Abbas → Bandar-e-Anzali → Europe

Ans: a

Sol: The INSTC connects India to Europe and Russia via the following route:

- Mumbai (India) → Bandar Abbas (Iran) by sea.
- Bandar Abbas → Bandar-e-Anzali (Iranian Caspian port) by road.
- Bandar-e-Anzali → Astrakhan (Russian Caspian port) by ship across the Caspian Sea.
- Astrakhan → Europe/Russia by rail.

Q753. Consider the following statements about the strategic importance of the Chabahar Port Project:

1. It is complementary to the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) for enhancing India's connectivity with Russia and Eurasia.
2. It enhances India's energy and trade security by providing access to Iranian energy resources.
3. It serves as a direct competitor to Pakistan's Gwadar Port, located in the Arabian Sea.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Chabahar project complements the INSTC by optimizing connectivity with Russia and Eurasia.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It provides strategic access to Iran's energy resources, enhancing India's trade and energy security.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Chabahar serves as a counter to Pakistan's Gwadar Port in the Arabian Sea.

Topic 252

252. Gulf Cooperation council

- It is a **political and economic alliance** of six countries in the **Arabian Peninsula**:
1. Bahrain
 2. Kuwait
 3. Oman
 4. Qatar



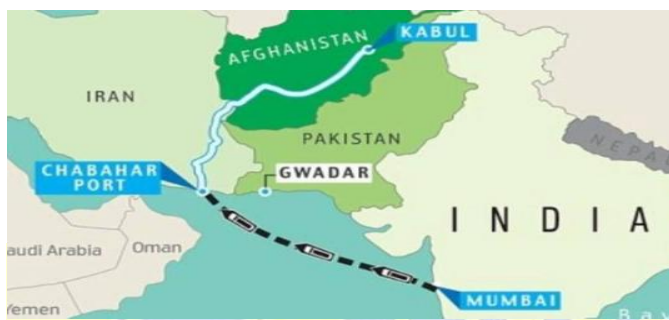
- 5. Saudi Arabia
- 6. UAE
 - Established in **1981**.

Significance of GCC-

1. **Energy Security**
2. **Trade and Investment**
3. **Diaspora and Remittances** (Indian workers in the Gulf sent over \$80 billion in remittances back to India)

Additional info-

- India has secured access to key strategic Port of Duqm in Oman in Arabian sea for military use and logistical support.



Q754. Using the map, identify which countries of the Arabian Peninsula share a border with Yemen.

- (a) Oman and Saudi Arabia
(b) Oman and Qatar
(c) Saudi Arabia and UAE
(d) UAE and Oman

Ans: a

Sol:

- Yemen, located at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula, shares land borders with Saudi Arabia to the north and Oman to the east.
- The UAE and Qatar do not share borders with Yemen.

Q755. The Arabian Peninsula is critical for global trade and geopolitics due to its proximity to key maritime chokepoints. Consider the following pairs of chokepoints and their connecting water bodies:

1. Strait of Hormuz: Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman
2. Bab-el-Mandeb: Gulf of Aden and Red Sea
3. Suez Canal: Arabian Sea and Mediterranean Sea

How many of the pairs given above are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Pair 1 is correct:** The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman.
- **Pair 2 is correct:** Bab-el-Mandeb connects the Gulf of Aden to the Red Sea, forming part of the maritime route to the Suez Canal.
- **Pair 3 is incorrect:** The Suez Canal connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, not the Arabian Sea.

Q756. Which of the following countries is/are members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)?

1. Bahrain
2. Iraq
3. Oman
4. UAE

Select the correct answer using the options below:

- (a) Only two
(b) Only three



- (c) All four
(d) Only one

Ans: b

Sol:-

- Bahrain, Oman, and UAE are members of the GCC.
- Iraq is not a member of the GCC, even though it is geographically in the Gulf region.
- The six GCC member countries are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE.

Topic 253

253. India's International Boundary

India's international boundary length in descending order

1. Bangladesh
2. China
3. Pakistan
4. Nepal
5. Myanmar
6. Bhutan
7. Afghanistan

Trick to remember

- BC PAN kha k MBA krne Gaya



| Land Border Country | Length (km) and (mi) | Force |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Bangladesh | 4,097 kilometres (2,546 mi) | Border Security Force |
| China | 3488 kilometres (2,167 mi) | Indo-Tibetan Border Police and Special Frontier Force |
| Pakistan | 3,323 kilometres (2,065 mi) | Border Security Force |
| Nepal | 1,751 kilometres (1,092 mi) | Sashastra Seema Bal |
| Myanmar | 1,643 kilometres (1,021 mi) | Assam Rifles and Indian Army |
| Bhutan | 699 kilometres (434 mi) | Sashastra Seema Bal |
| Afghanistan | 106 kilometres (66 mi) | Border Security Force |

Q757. Match the following Indian border locations with their significance or features:

| Border Location | Significance |
|------------------|---|
| A. Lipulekh Pass | 1. Trade route to Tibet |
| B. Wagah Border | 2. India-Pakistan ceremonial checkpoint |
| C. Nathula Pass | 3. Connects Sikkim with China |
| D. Moreh | 4. Gateway for trade with Myanmar |

Select the correct matching combination:

- (a) A-3, B-2, C-4, D-1
(b) A-1, B-2, C-3, D-4
(c) A-1, B-4, C-2, D-3
(d) A-4, B-3, C-1, D-2

Ans: b

Q758. Consider the following statements regarding India's international boundary states:

1. Arunachal Pradesh shares a border with Bhutan, China, and Myanmar.
2. Sikkim shares a border with Bhutan and China but not Nepal.
3. Punjab shares a border with both Pakistan and China.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?



- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Arunachal Pradesh shares borders with Bhutan (west), China (north), and Myanmar (east).
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Sikkim shares borders with Bhutan, China, and Nepal.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Punjab shares a border with Pakistan but not China.

Q759. Arrange the following neighbouring countries of India in descending order of their shared boundary length with India:

1. Myanmar
2. Nepal
3. China
4. Pakistan

Select the correct answer using the options below:

- (a) $3 > 4 > 2 > 1$
- (b) $2 > 1 > 3 > 4$
- (c) $3 > 1 > 2 > 4$
- (d) $3 > 4 > 1 > 2$

Ans: a

Sol:

- China (3,488 km) shares the second-largest boundary with India.
- Pakistan (3,323 km) comes next in length.
- Nepal (1,751 km) ranks third among these options.
- Myanmar (1,643 km) has the shortest border length among the options given.

Topic 254

254. India-Nepal border issue

Genesis of the issue

- **Treaty of Sugauli-** after Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-16.
- **Article 5** of the treaty **took away the jurisdiction** of **Nepal's** rulers over the land to the **east of the Kali River**.
- **Territorial dispute** is because there are **two streams of Kali river** in the **Himalayan region**.

- The **Sharda River** is the downstream of **Kālī River** (or Mahakali River).

Escalation of the dispute in 2020

- Till 2020, Nepal used Indian maps showing **Kalapani, Limpiyadhura** and **Lipu Lekh** in India.
- In 2020, Nepal amended its constitution to show Kalapani in Nepal for the first time **leading to escalation of dispute**.

Other aspects of India-Nepal relations

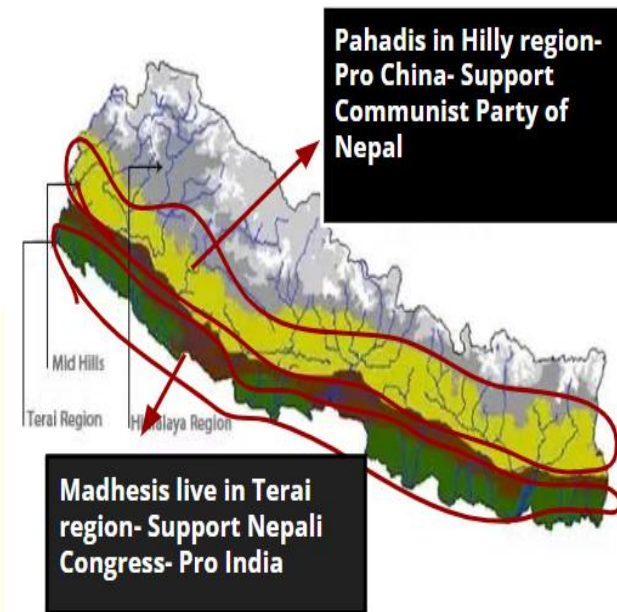
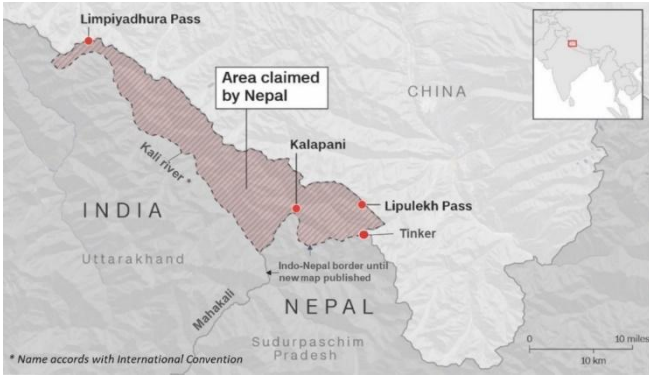
- India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950
- Cultural ties-Roti- Beti ka sambandh

Internal ethnic differences of Nepal having impact on India-Nepal relations-

- Nepal has **2 main ethnic groups- Madhesi and Pahadis**
- **India has soft corner for Madhesi**(due to cultural synonymity). This leads to **differences** with **Pahadi group**.
- Nepal framed and made its **constitution** effective in **September 2015**.
- The constitution was **slightly favoring Pahadis vis-a vis Madhesi interest**.
- **India raised** the issue with **Nepal government** but **Nepal government** saw it as **interference by India** in their **internal matters**. Since then **India-Nepal relations became slightly strained**.

Main dispute is because of the two streams that joins to make Mahakali river. Both of them are known as Kali





Q760. Regarding India-Nepal Relations, consider the following statements:

1. Nepal borders five Indian states, spanning over 1850 km, including Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand.
2. Under a revised Treaty of Transit, Nepal now has access to India's inland waterways and ports like Haldia, Kolkata, Paradip etc, for third-country trade.

Which of the given statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol: Statement 1 is incorrect

- Nepal borders five Indian states: Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, and West Bengal (not Assam).



3. Madhesis and Pahadis are the two main ethnic groups in Nepal, with India having cultural ties with the Pahadis.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 1950 treaty serves as a foundation for close cultural and economic ties between India and Nepal.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Nepal's 2015 constitution was seen as favoring the Pahadis over the Madhesis, leading to strained relations with India, which raised concerns.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** India has a cultural affinity with the Madhesis, not the Pahadis, due to shared ethnic and linguistic similarities.

Topic 255

255. India-Maldives relations

- India had good ties with Maldives.
- 1988-India sent in troops to fight the combatants (Operation Cactus) to deter a coup attempt.

Maldives Elections 2023

- **Mohamed Muizzu** (generally considered **pro-China**) got elected as President.

'India Out' Campaign

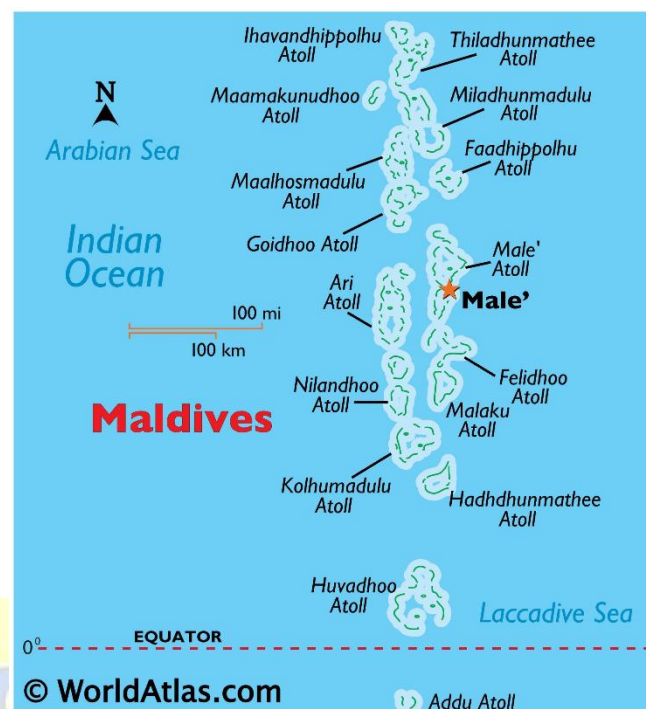
- When MDP (pro India) was in power in Maldives India has gifted a Dornier aircraft and a helicopter to Maldives.
- Muizzu government when came to power in November 2023, it ordered evacuation of Indian Air Force along with Dornier aircraft from Maldives by **10th May 2024**.
- This is considered as beginning of 'India Out' campaign in Maldives.

Change in Muizzu stance

- A Maldivian ministers' offensive **remarks against India's PM** on his visit to Lakshadweep had led to **boycott Maldives trend** in India.
- This led to **forex reserve crisis** for Maldives and thus **President Muizzu changed approach.**

Recent

- **India** signed a **\$750 million currency swap agreement** with the **Maldives**.
- This swap, under the **SAARC Currency Swap Framework**, will be available **until 2027**.



Bridge Politics between India and China in Maldives

- **Sinamale Friendship bridge** by **China- 2 Km long bridge**, links the **Maldivian capital of Male** with **neighboring island Hulhule**.

India

A number of bridges and highways to connect Male to Villingili, Thilafushi and Gulhifahu islands that span 6.7 km.

Q763. Regarding India-Maldives relations, consider the following statements:

1. The Greater Male Connectivity Project, funded by India, involves building a 6.74 km bridge and causeway connecting Male with Villingli, Gulhifalhu, and Thilafushi islands.
2. Under Operation Cactus 1988 India supplied drinking water to Maldives to deal with the drinking water crisis.

Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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



Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:**

The Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP), funded by India, involves building a 6.74 km bridge and causeway connecting Male with the islands of Villingli, Gulhifalhu, and Thilafushi. This is a flagship infrastructure project supported under India's Neighborhood First policy.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:**

Operation Cactus (1988) was a military operation where India intervened to foil an attempted coup in the Maldives.

- The incident involving India supplying drinking water to the Maldives occurred in 2014, under a separate operation, not during Operation Cactus.

Q764. Consider the following statements about India-Maldives relations in 2023-2024:

1. Mohamed Muizzu, elected as President in 2023, is generally considered pro-China.
2. Under the 'India Out' campaign, President Muizzu ordered the evacuation of the Indian Air Force and the Dornier aircraft from the Maldives by May 2024.
3. A boycott Maldives trend in India was triggered by Maldivian ministers' offensive remarks during a visit to Lakshadweep.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: c

Sol:-

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Mohamed Muizzu, elected in 2023, is considered pro-China.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The 'India Out' campaign included Muizzu's government ordering the removal of Indian Air Force assets, including the Dornier aircraft, by May 2024.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** A boycott trend emerged in India following offensive remarks by Maldivian ministers during a visit to Lakshadweep, exacerbating tensions.

Q765. Match the following bridges and agreements with their respective countries involved in Maldives' development:

| Project/Agreement | Country |
|--|--------------------|
| A. Sinamale Friendship Bridge | 1. India |
| B. Greater Male Connectivity Project | 2. China |
| C. \$750 Million Currency Swap Agreement | 3. SAARC Framework |

Select the correct match using the options below:

- (a) A-2, B-1, C-3
(b) A-1, B-2, C-3
(c) A-2, B-3, C-1
(d) A-3, B-1, C-2

Ans: a

Sol:

- **A. Sinamale Friendship Bridge (China):** Constructed by China, it connects Male with Hulhule Island.
- **B. Greater Male Connectivity Project (India):** India is funding this 6.7 km bridge and causeway project connecting Male to nearby islands.
- **C. \$750 Million Currency Swap Agreement (SAARC Framework):** This agreement is under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework, signed by India and the Maldives.

Topic 256

256. 13th Amendment

The Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord (Rajiv - Jayawardene accord,1987)

- India-to send its Peacekeeping force in Sri Lanka to ensure surrender of LTTE.
- Sri Lanka-13th Amendment to the constitution in 1987-to give political and economic rights to Tamils.

Provisions of 13th Amendment

- Separate **Provincial Council for Tamils** in Northern Province
- Accepted **Tamils as official language** apart from Sinhalese.
- But many such provisions of **13th Amendment remained just in letters** but never saw practical implementation.

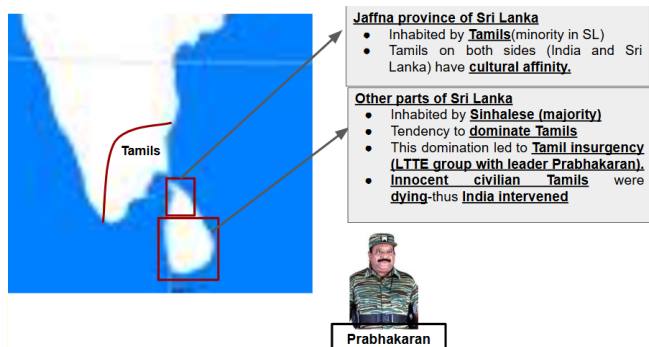
Why?



- LTTE didn't surrendered.LTTE came into conflict with Indian army.More than 1200 Indian soldiers were killed.Many LTTE cadres were also killed.IPKF of India was a failure.
- The Sinhala nationalists oppose the 13th Amendment as they see it as imposed by India.

Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi

- LTTE became anti India.
- In a suicide bomb attack the then former PM Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in 1991 in Perumbudur Tamil nadu.



Note-

- Despite constitutional promises, the provisions of 13th Amendment has not been implemented.



Q766. Consider the following statements:

1. Palk Bay is a semi-enclosed shallow water body between the southeast coast of India and Sri Lanka.
2. Delft, Nainativu, and Analativu are islands in the Palk Strait off the Jaffna peninsula, with Delft being the smallest and closest to Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:**

Palk Bay is indeed a semi-enclosed shallow water body located between the southeast coast of India (specifically Tamil Nadu) and Sri Lanka. This bay is separated from the Palk Strait by a chain of islands, including Rameswaram and Dhanushkodi in India and several islands in Sri Lanka.

- **Statement 2 is incorrect:**

Delft, Nainativu, and Analativu are indeed islands located in the Palk Strait, off the Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka. However, Delft Island is the largest and not the smallest. It is located to the north of Rameswaram and is not the closest to Tamil Nadu. Nainativu is closer to Tamil Nadu than Delft.

Q767. Which of the following statements is correct regarding the 13th Amendment in Sri Lanka?

1. It was introduced in 1987 as part of the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord.
 2. It aimed to grant political and economic rights to Tamils.
 3. It was fully implemented and resolved Tamil grievances.
 4. It recognized Tamil as an official language alongside Sinhalese.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1, 2, and 4 only
(c) 3 and 4 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The 13th Amendment was introduced in 1987 under the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Its objective was to grant political and economic rights to Tamils.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Many provisions of the 13th Amendment were never practically implemented.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Tamil was recognized as an official language alongside Sinhalese.

Q768. Which of the following are reasons for the failure of the 13th Amendment in achieving its objectives?



1. The LTTE refused to surrender and came into conflict with the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF).
2. Sinhala nationalists opposed the 13th Amendment, viewing it as imposed by India.
3. Rajiv Gandhi's assassination led to a complete halt in implementing the accord.
4. The 13th Amendment was implemented only partially and remained largely unpracticed.

Select the correct codes:

- (a) 1, 2, and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 2, and 4 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The LTTE's refusal to surrender and their conflict with IPKF hindered the accord's success.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Sinhala nationalists strongly opposed the amendment, calling it India's imposition.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Rajiv Gandhi's assassination by LTTE created further tensions and halted cooperation.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The 13th Amendment largely remained unimplemented, contributing to its failure.

Topic 257

257. Katchatheevu and Wadge Bank issue

Katchatheevu Island

- Located about **33 km from coast of India**. On **maritime boundary of India and Sri Lanka**. In the **northeast of Rameshwaram island** of **Tamil Nadu**. South west of **Sri Lanka's Delft island**. The island has 120 year old **St Anthony's church**.

1970's India and Sri Lanka signed 2 Maritime boundary agreements-

1. **Maritime agreement of 1974**
 - **Katchatheevu Island** was ceded to **Sri Lanka** by India.
 - **Indian fishermen** were given **access to the island** for-rest. drying of nets, annual St Anthony's festival (but no fishing rights).
2. **Maritime agreement of 1976**
 - Sovereign rights over a maritime patch called **'Wadge Bank'** were given to India.

- The Wadge Bank, located south of Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin), is a **resource-rich deep sea fishing ground (submarine)**.

Implications of ceding Katchatheevu island

- **Sri Lankan water is more rich** in **fishes**. **Indian fisherman** often engage into **fishing around Katchatheevu Island**.
- This results in their **arrest and thus strain in diplomatic ties** between India and Sri Lanka.

Reasons why Sri Lanka water is more rich in fishes?

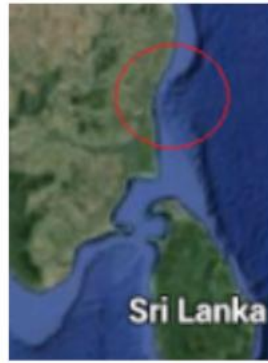
1. **A civil war prevailed in Sri Lanka(1987-2009)-fishing industry couldn't commercialise**
2. **Unsustainable fishing on the Indian side-Dynamite fishing, Trawlers fishing**
3. **Relatively broader Continental shelf on Sri Lankan side**



Dispute regarding Katchatheevu island-

- A survey of 1921 suggested Katchatheevu island is within Sri Lanka maritime boundary.
- The survey was rejected by British India.





Q769. With reference to the Katchatheevu islet, consider the following statements:

1. The Portuguese exercised jurisdiction over the Katchatheevu islet for some time.
2. It was part of the zamin (estate) of the erstwhile Raja of Ramnad (Ramanathapuram).
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Katchatheevu islet, located in the Palk Strait, was under Portuguese jurisdiction during their colonial rule, as they controlled parts of coastal Tamil Nadu and nearby areas.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Historically, Katchatheevu was part of the zamin (estate) of the Raja of Ramnad (Ramanathapuram) before its jurisdiction became a matter of contention between India and Sri Lanka.

Q770. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding Katchatheevu Island?

1. It is located northeast of Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu and southwest of Sri Lanka's Delft Island.
2. The St. Anthony's Church on the island is more than 120 years old.

3. Katchatheevu Island was ceded to Sri Lanka under the Maritime Agreement of 1976.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) All of the above

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Katchatheevu Island is geographically situated northeast of Rameshwaram and southwest of Sri Lanka's Delft Island.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The St. Anthony's Church on the island is over 120 years old.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Katchatheevu Island was ceded to Sri Lanka under the Maritime Agreement of 1974, not 1976.

Q771. Which of the following are reasons why Sri Lankan waters are more resource-rich in fishes compared to Indian waters?

1. Sri Lanka's broader continental shelf provides favorable conditions for fish breeding.
2. The Sri Lankan civil war (1987–2009) limited commercial exploitation of fisheries.
3. Indian fishermen often use unsustainable practices like dynamite and trawler fishing.
4. Wadge Bank is exclusively controlled by Sri Lanka, adding to its fishing resources.

Select the correct codes:

- (a) 1, 2, and 3 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2, 3, and 4 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Sri Lanka's broader continental shelf supports better fish breeding.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The civil war limited the commercial exploitation of fisheries in Sri Lankan waters.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Unsustainable practices like dynamite and trawler fishing in Indian waters have depleted resources.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Wadge Bank is under India's sovereign rights as per the Maritime Agreement of 1976.



Topic 258

258. Taliban

1979

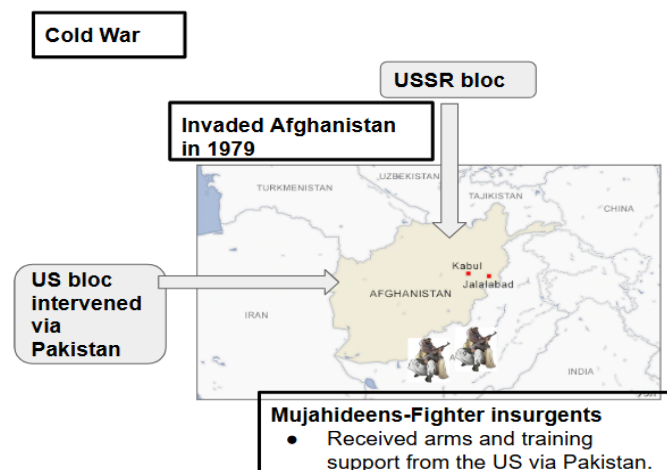
1. **Iranian Revolution**-overthrow of the US-backed Shah of Iran, **deteriorating US-Iran relations**
2. **Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan**-In December 1979, the **Soviet Union** **invaded Afghanistan**.

The above two events are interlinked-

- With Iran becoming anti US, USSR planned to invade Afghanistan to **isolate Pakistan (The US ally during cold war)**.
- **India and USSR** had signed **friendship agreement in 1971**.

End of Cold War 1991

- USSR pulled out of Afghanistan.
- The US also pulled out of Afghanistan.
- After Cold war Pakistan, conditioned Mujahideens as radical Islamic group, called Taliban.
- India was projected as anti-Islam country by Pakistan.
- Radical Islamist Mujahideens, now called Taliban, were directed against India.
- Taliban ruled entire Afghanistan, coordinated with Al Qaeda (founded by Osama bin Laden) and promoted terrorist activities against India between 1991 to 2001. They destroyed Bamiyan Buddha.
- India continued to draw attention of world communities towards terrorism-India proposed Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT).



Q772. Evaluate the following statements related to the geopolitical developments after 1979 and their impact on regional and global politics:

1. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 marked a turning point in US-Iran relations and contributed to a shift in regional alliances.
2. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 aimed to strengthen Soviet influence and indirectly isolate Pakistan.
3. After the Cold War, Pakistan utilized radicalized Mujahideens to create the Taliban, which later collaborated with Al Qaeda to promote terrorism.
4. India signed a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) during the Cold War to combat terrorism globally.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:-

- **Statement 1:** The Iranian Revolution of 1979 marked a turning point in US-Iran relations and contributed to a shift in regional alliances.
 - Correct. The Iranian Revolution led to the overthrow of the Shah, a key US ally, and established the Islamic Republic under Ayatollah Khomeini. This strained US-Iran relations and significantly impacted regional alliances, particularly in the Middle East.
- **Statement 2:** The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 aimed to strengthen Soviet influence and indirectly isolate Pakistan.



- Correct. The invasion was aimed at propping up the communist regime in Afghanistan, strengthening Soviet influence in the region. While Pakistan wasn't a direct target, its proximity and alignment with the US made it an adversary in the broader Cold War strategy.
- **Statement 3:** After the Cold War, Pakistan utilized radicalized Mujahideens to create the Taliban, which later collaborated with Al Qaeda to promote terrorism.
 - Correct. Pakistan supported the Taliban, which emerged from Mujahideen factions post-Cold War. The Taliban later provided a haven for Al Qaeda, contributing to global terrorism.
- **Statement 4:** India signed a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) during the Cold War to combat terrorism globally.
 - Incorrect. India proposed the CCIT at the United Nations in 1996, post-Cold War, and it remains under negotiation. This statement is factually inaccurate as the timing and context do not align.

Q773. Evaluate the following statements related to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and its consequences:

1. The United States and its allies supported Afghan Mujahideens to resist the Soviet invasion during the Cold War.
2. The invasion led to a prolonged conflict, ultimately forcing the Soviet Union to withdraw in 1989.
3. The invasion strengthened Soviet control over Afghanistan and established lasting peace in the region.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

1. **Correct:** The United States and its allies, including Pakistan, supported Afghan Mujahideens by providing military and financial aid to resist the Soviet invasion.

2. **Correct:** The conflict lasted nearly a decade and ended with the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, contributing to the weakening of the USSR.

3. **Incorrect:** The invasion did not strengthen Soviet control or establish peace; instead, it destabilized the region, contributing to long-term conflict and the rise of extremist groups.

This question examines the motivations, dynamics, and outcomes of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, linking it to Cold War geopolitics.

Q774. Evaluate the following statements about key locations in Afghanistan and their significance:

1. Kabul is the capital and largest city of Afghanistan, serving as the country's political, cultural, and economic center.
2. Kandahar is historically significant as the birthplace of the Taliban and a key region in Afghanistan's southern Pashtun belt.
3. Herat, located in western Afghanistan, has historical ties with Persian culture and is a hub for trade with Iran.
4. Bamiyan, known for the Buddhas of Bamiyan, is a region historically associated with ancient Hindu and Sikh kingdoms.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

1. **Correct:** Kabul is indeed Afghanistan's capital and a critical center of administration, culture, and economy.
2. **Correct:** Kandahar is a historically significant city in southern Afghanistan, closely associated with the Taliban and Pashtun cultural influence.
3. **Correct:** Herat, in western Afghanistan, has a strong historical and cultural connection to Persia and serves as a vital trade route with Iran.
4. **Incorrect:** Bamiyan is famous for the Buddhas of Bamiyan, which are linked to ancient Buddhist culture, not Hindu or Sikh kingdoms.

Topic 259

259. Bamiyan Buddhas statue

Bamiyan



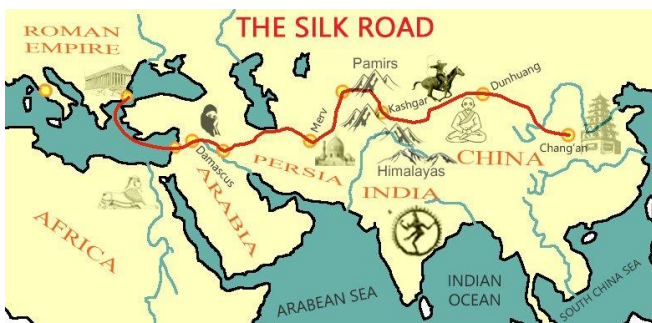
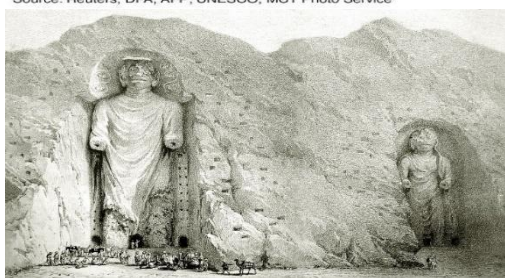
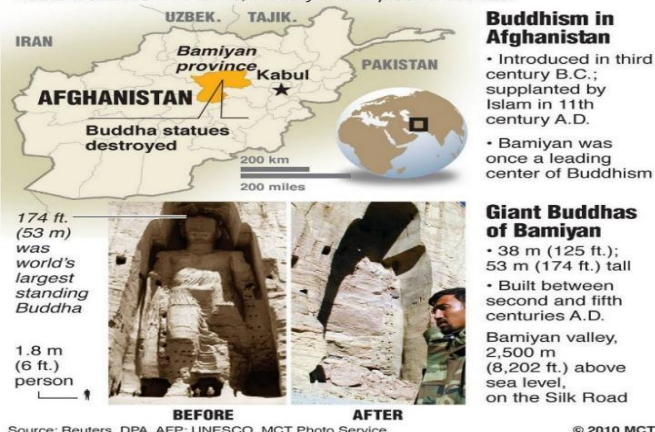
- **Central highlands** of Afghanistan
- Part of **Hindu Kush mountains**
- On **ancient Silk road**

Bamiyan Buddhas

- **Two tall Buddha** statues
- **5th century AD**
- Cut from **sandstone cliffs**
- **55 and 38 metres** respectively
- **Style-Hybrid**-Roman, Sassanian and Hellenistic-Greco-Buddhist artistic styles (**Expression-Gandhara school**)
- Called **Salsal** and **Shamama** by the locals.
- Salsal means "**light shines through the universe**", while **Shamama** is "**Queen Mother**"
- **2002-Destroyed by Taliban**
- **2003, UNESCO included** the remains of the **Bamiyan Buddhas** in its list of **world heritage sites**

Ancient wonders remembered

It's been 10 years since the Taliban destroyed two giant, ancient Bamiyan Buddha statues with tanks, artillery and explosive devices.



Q775. Where are the Buddhas of Bamiyan located?

- (a) Hazarajat region of Afghanistan
- (b) Bagram district of Afghanistan
- (c) Kathmandu of Nepal
- (d) Hussain Sagar of India

Ans: a

Sol: The Buddhas of Bamiyan were located in the Hazarajat region of Afghanistan, specifically in the Bamiyan Valley. These monumental statues of Gautama Buddha, carved into the side of a cliff, were part of the cultural heritage of the region, associated with ancient Buddhist civilization. Unfortunately, they were destroyed by the Taliban in 2001, but their significance as a UNESCO World Heritage Site remains intact.

Q776. Evaluate the following statements about the ancient Silk Route:

1. The Silk Route was a network of trade routes connecting Asia, Europe, and Africa, facilitating the exchange of goods, culture, and ideas.
2. The route primarily served to transport silk from China to the Mediterranean region, giving it its name.
3. Cities such as Samarkand and Kashgar were key trading hubs along the Silk Route.
4. The Silk Route exclusively functioned during the medieval period and ceased to exist after the rise of maritime trade routes in the 15th century.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

1. **Correct:** The Silk Route was indeed a vast network of trade routes connecting continents and fostering the exchange of goods, culture, and technologies.
2. **Correct:** The name "Silk Route" derives from the trade of silk, which was a highly sought-after commodity from China.
3. **Correct:** Cities like Samarkand and Kashgar were significant trading hubs, playing a crucial role in facilitating commerce and cultural exchange.



4. **Incorrect:** While the prominence of the Silk Route declined with the rise of maritime trade routes in the 15th century, parts of the network continued to function for trade and cultural exchange.

Q777. The Buddhas of Bamiyan were created in which artistic style?

- Greco-Buddhist style
- Gandhara style
- Mughal style
- Mauryan style

Ans: a

Sol: The Buddhas of Bamiyan were carved in the Greco-Buddhist style, which is a blend of Greek and Buddhist artistic traditions. This style developed as a result of interactions between Hellenistic culture and Buddhism in the ancient region of Gandhara, influenced by the conquests of Alexander the Great. The statues showcased this unique synthesis in their design and execution.

Topic 260

260. Return of Taliban 2.0 in 2021

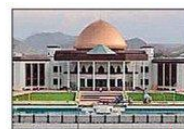
- After **pullout of the US** on **15th August 2021**, entire Afghanistan has been **captured by Taliban** again.

Threat for India

- Cross border terrorism**
- Advantage to China and Pakistan**
 - Taliban is known for its **proxy ties with Pakistan** especially **Pakistani army and ISI**.
- Connectivity with Central Asia**
 - India's goal of increasing connectivity with **energy rich Central Asia and Russia** through **INSTC** is in threat.
- Energy security**
 - Peace and stability in Afghanistan is essential for successful completion of **TAPI pipeline**.
- India's investment** in Afghanistan like Friendship dam, Hajigak mines are under threat.



The Indian-built **\$290 mn Afghanistan-India Friendship Dam**, known earlier as the Salma Dam, in Afghanistan's Herat province has reduced Kabul's dependence on its neighbours for electricity and is **irrigating around 75,000 hectares**



Afghan parliament building was constructed by India at a cost of **\$90 m**

The Delaram-Zaranj Highway was constructed at a cost of \$135 million, financed fully by development grants from India

Q778. Evaluate the following statements regarding the implications of the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan for India:

- The Taliban's return to power poses a threat of increased cross-border terrorism for India due to its proxy ties with Pakistan, particularly the Pakistani army and ISI.
- India's strategic goal of enhancing connectivity with Central Asia through the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) is threatened.
- Peace and stability in Afghanistan are crucial for the successful implementation of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline.
- India's investments in Afghanistan, including the Friendship Dam and Hajigak iron ore mines, remain secure under Taliban rule.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- Only 1, 2, and 3
- Only 2 and 4
- Only 1 and 4
- Only 1, 3, and 4

Ans: a

Sol:

- Correct:** The Taliban's ties with Pakistan, especially the Pakistani army and ISI, heighten the risk of cross-border terrorism targeting India.
- Correct:** The Taliban's control of Afghanistan creates instability, jeopardizing India's efforts to enhance connectivity with Central Asia through the INSTC.
- Correct:** Stability in Afghanistan is indeed essential for the completion of the TAPI pipeline, which is significant for India's energy security.



4. **Incorrect:** India's investments in Afghanistan, including the Friendship Dam and Hajigak mines, face significant risks under Taliban rule, contrary to the statement.

Q779. What is the primary purpose of the Salma Dam in Afghanistan, built with Indian assistance?

- Hydropower generation and irrigation
- Flood control
- Tourism and recreation
- Mining and mineral extraction

Ans: a

Sol: The Salma Dam, also known as the Afghanistan-India Friendship Dam, is located on the Hari River in Herat province. Its primary objectives are to provide irrigation for agricultural purposes and generate hydroelectric power, significantly benefiting Afghanistan's economy and infrastructure.

Q780. What is the significance of the Zaranj-Delaram Highway, constructed with Indian assistance in Afghanistan?

- It connects Kabul to Kandahar, facilitating trade within Afghanistan.
- It provides Afghanistan access to the Iranian port of Chabahar, enhancing regional connectivity.
- It serves as a strategic bypass to avoid Taliban-controlled regions.
- It is a key route for tourism between Afghanistan and India.

Ans: b

Sol: The Zaranj-Delaram Highway, constructed by India, connects the Afghan city of Delaram to Zaranj, near the border with Iran. This highway links Afghanistan to the Iranian port of Chabahar, providing a crucial alternative trade route that bypasses Pakistan and enhances regional connectivity, especially for landlocked Afghanistan.

Day 27

Topic 261

261. Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism

- India proposed the **CCIT(Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism)** at

the **United Nations General Assembly** in 1996 and has been a leading advocate for its adoption.

CCIT included the following major objectives:

- To have a **universal definition** of terrorism that all 193-members of the UNGA will adopt.
- To **ban all terror groups** and shut down terror camps.
- To **prosecute all terrorists** under **special laws**.
- To make **cross-border terrorism an extraditable offense worldwide**.

Current Status

- The **CCIT remains under negotiation**, largely stalled due to the political differences among member states **regarding the definition of terrorism** and the inclusion of **acts of liberation movements**.

HITTING HURDLES



Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is a draft proposed by India in 1996, that has yet to be adopted by the UN General assembly

Terror striking every day now -Turkey, Somalia, Afghanistan, Kenya & Bangladesh. Mere condemnation & commiseration @un won't do. Need CCIT
 — Syed Akbaruddin, India's ambassador to UN, on Twitter

What does it call for?

- ❗ **Universal definition of terrorism:** No good terrorist or bad terrorist
- ❗ Ban on all groups regardless of country of operation, cut off access to fund and safe havens
- ❗ Prosecution of all groups, including cross-border groups
- ❗ Amending domestic laws to make cross-border terror an extraditable offence

Why has CCIT been blocked?

- ❗ **US+allies:** Concerns over definitions of terrorism, including acts by US soldiers in international interventions without UN mandate
- ❗ **Latin American countries:** Concerns over international humanitarian laws and HR being ignored
- ❗ **OIC:** Concerns that convention will be used to target Pakistan, and restrict rights of self-determination groups in Palestine, Kashmir etc

Q781. Which one of the following statements is not correct?

- Indian joined MTCR in 2018
- India submitted a formal application for membership of NSG in 2016
- India proposed the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in 1996
- The 27th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), 2024 was held in Apia, Samoa.

Ans: a



Sol: India joined the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016, not 2018.

Q782. Which of the following objectives are included in the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) proposed by India?

1. Establishing a universal definition of terrorism accepted by all UN member states.
2. Banning all terror groups and shutting down terror camps.
3. Making cross-border terrorism a non-extraditable offense.
4. Prosecuting terrorists under special laws.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2, and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3, and 4 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** CCIT seeks a universal definition of terrorism for all UN member states.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It aims to ban terror groups and shut down terror camps.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The convention proposes making cross-border terrorism an extraditable offense, not a non-extraditable one.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** It includes prosecuting terrorists under special laws.

Q783. Which of the following are reasons for the delay in the adoption of the CCIT by the United Nations?

1. Disagreements among member states over the definition of terrorism.
2. Opposition to including acts of liberation movements within the scope of terrorism.
3. Lack of consensus on extradition mechanisms for cross-border terrorism.
4. Political differences between developed and developing nations.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2, 3, and 4 only
- (c) 1, 2, and 4 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** A major hurdle is disagreement on the universal definition of terrorism.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Some member states oppose including acts of liberation movements within the scope of terrorism.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The delay is not specifically due to extradition mechanisms but political disagreements.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Political differences among nations contribute to the lack of progress.

Topic 262

262. TAPI Pipeline

- **Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Pipeline.**

- It is a **natural gas** pipeline.

Route

- **Start** from The **Galkynysh gas field** of **Turkmenistan**.
- The pipeline **reaches India via Afghanistan and Pakistan**.
- In India the pipeline **terminates at Fazilka** in **Punjab**, near the Pakistan-India border.

Length

- Approximately **1,814 kilometers**.

Capacity

- The pipeline is expected to **carry 33 billion cubic meters** of **natural gas annually**.

Current Status of the pipeline

- The project was **conceived in the 1990s but no completed so far**.

Why delay in implementation?

1. Funding challenges

- The estimated investment required for the TAPI Pipeline is **\$10 billion**.

2. Geopolitical issues

- Differences between **India and Pakistan** has led to delay in the project.

3. Security concerns

- Rise of **Taliban in Afghanistan**.
- Several **terrorist groups** threatening the project in **Pakistan**.





Note-

- Turkmenistan, which holds the world's fourth-largest natural gas reserves.
- Russia has world's largest natural gas reserve.

Trans-Afghanistan pipeline

Route of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) natural gas pipeline



Q784. Consider the following statements about 'TAPI Gas Pipeline':

1. It is an 1,800 km gas pipeline from Galkynynsh Gas Field in Turkmenistan.
2. This project is partially funded by the World Bank.

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

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

Ans: b

Sol: TAPI is an 1800 km pipeline from Galkynynsh Gas Field in Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, Pakistan and then to India. It is being funded by the Asian Development Bank.

Q785. Which of the following are reasons for the delay in the implementation of the TAPI Pipeline project?

1. Funding challenges due to an estimated \$10 billion investment requirement.
2. Security concerns arising from the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan.
3. Geopolitical issues between Turkmenistan and Pakistan.
4. Threats from terrorist groups in Pakistan.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1, 2, and 4 only
(c) 2, 3, and 4 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Funding challenges have been a significant barrier due to the high investment requirement of \$10 billion.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Security concerns in Afghanistan, especially after the rise of the Taliban, have contributed to delays.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The geopolitical issues causing delays are primarily between India and Pakistan, not Turkmenistan and Pakistan.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Terrorist threats in Pakistan have raised safety concerns for the pipeline.

Q786. Which of the following correctly describes the route of the TAPI Pipeline?

- (a) Galkynysh gas field (Turkmenistan) → Pakistan → Afghanistan → Fazilka (India)
- (b) Galkynysh gas field (Turkmenistan) → Afghanistan → Pakistan → Fazilka (India)
- (c) Galkynysh gas field (Turkmenistan) → Afghanistan → Fazilka (India) → Pakistan
- (d) Galkynysh gas field (Turkmenistan) → Pakistan → Fazilka (India) → Afghanistan

Ans: b

Sol:

- The TAPI Pipeline begins at the Galkynysh gas field in Turkmenistan.
- It passes through Afghanistan and Pakistan before terminating at Fazilka in Punjab, India, near the Pakistan-India border.

Topic 263



263. India-Bhutan

- **India Bhutan Friendship Treaty 1949.**
- **Monarchy of Bhutan** shares close relations with India.
- **1961-Project DANTAK** was **initiated by India** (by Border Road Organization) to construct the **motorable roads in Bhutan.**

Doklam Issue, 2017

- **Chumbi valley** is a **tri-junction** between **Bhutan, India and China.**
- **Doklam plateau** is on **Southern side of Chumbi valley .**
- Doklam is **located in Bhutan,** but it's a **disputed area** between **Bhutan and China.**

Significance of Doklam, 2017

- It is close to the **chicken's neck** (the Siliguri corridor)
- **In 2017 China was building a road** in **Chumbi valley** connecting to **Doklam.**
- **Bhutan's Royal Army objected** PLA of China.
- Indian army came in support of **Bhutan's Royal Army**
- Possibility of war intensified between India and China-**later the tension was diffused.**

Security cooperation

- **Operation All Clear (2003-2004)**-A military operation conducted by Royal Bhutan Army forces against **Assam separatist insurgent groups in the southern regions of Bhutan.** It was the **first operation ever** conducted by the **Royal Bhutan Army.**
- **IMTRAT** (Indian Military Training Team) – India provides training to **Royal Bhutanese Army (RBA) officials under it.**



Q787. With reference to the Mahisasan railway station, consider the following statements:

1. The Mahisasan-Shahbajpur railway route has been non-operational since 1966.
2. The station is located along the Kushiya River and is vital for India's bilateral trade and transit connectivity with Bangladesh.
3. It will serve as the first international cross-border railway connectivity for the Northeastern region of India.

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

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** The Mahisasan-Shahbajpur railway route, located along the Kushiya River, has been non-operational since 1966. This historical fact highlights its untapped potential for connectivity and economic development. **This statement is correct.**
- **Statement 2:** The Mahisasan railway station is strategically significant as it facilitates bilateral trade and transit connectivity with Bangladesh, thereby playing a crucial role in enhancing economic ties and regional cooperation. **This statement is correct.**
- **Statement 3:** The revival of this route will provide the Northeastern region of India with its



first international cross-border railway connectivity, significantly boosting regional integration and accessibility. **This statement is correct.**

Q788. Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct regarding the India-Bhutan Integrated Check Post (ICP) and cooperation?

1. The first Integrated Check Post (ICP) along the India-Bhutan border was inaugurated at Darranga in Assam.
 2. Bhutan has partnered with India in developing hydropower projects with a total capacity of 2,136 MW.
 3. Assam currently receives an aggregate capacity of 500 MW of power from Bhutan.
- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The first ICP along the India-Bhutan border was inaugurated at Darranga, Assam, in November.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Bhutan and India have partnered in developing hydropower projects totaling 2,136 MW, including Chukha, Kurichhu, Tala, and Mangdechhu.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While Assam has been allocated 500 MW from Bhutan's projects, it currently receives around 205 MW.

Q789. Which of the following hydro-electric projects are part of the India-Bhutan collaboration?

1. Tala HEP
2. Chukha HEP
3. Punatsangchhu I HEP
4. Mangdechhu HEP

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2, 3, and 4 only
(c) 1, 2, and 4 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: d

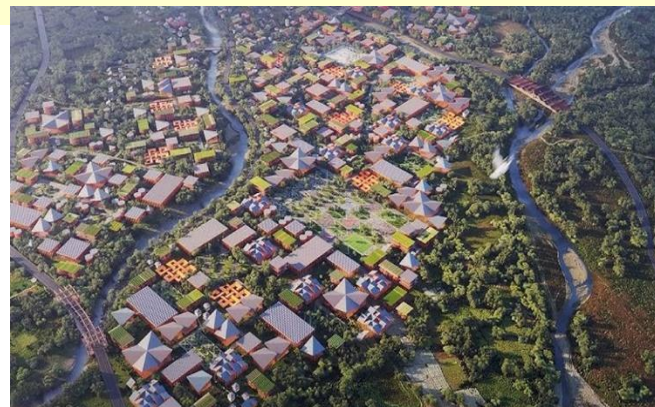
Sol:

- All the mentioned projects—Tala HEP (1,020 MW), Chukha HEP (336 MW), Punatsangchhu I HEP, and Mangdechhu HEP (720 MW)—are part of the India-Bhutan hydropower collaboration.
- These projects highlight the longstanding cooperation between India and Bhutan in renewable energy.

Topic 264

264. Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC)

- **"Zero Carbon" city** being developed.
- Aim to **integrate economic growth** with **mindfulness, holistic living** and sustainability.
- It is located in the **south-central part of Bhutan** and covers over **2500 square kilometers** (bigger than Singapore).
- It is expected to be a **low-rise city**.
- The city will have its **own international airport**.
- It is a first-of-its-kind **Special Administrative Region (SAR)** in Bhutan.
- It will have its **own government** and have the independence to have its own lawmaking, as well as an independent judiciary.
- It will have **two protected areas** - a national park and a wildlife sanctuary.



Gelephu Mindfulness City

- It will be biggest **"co-operative project"** in Bhutan.
- India is expected to **support Bhutan in this project**.

Q790. Which of the following statement(s) about Gelephu Mindfulness City is/are correct?

1. It is being developed as a "Zero Carbon" city.



2. The city will cover an area larger than Singapore.
3. It will have its own international airport.
4. It will be a high-rise city to optimize space utilization.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2, and 3 only
- (c) 2, 3, and 4 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Gelephu is being developed as a "Zero Carbon" city to promote sustainability.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The city will cover over 2,500 square kilometers, which is larger than Singapore.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Gelephu will have its own international airport.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** It is planned as a low-rise city, not a high-rise one.

Q791. Which of the following features characterize Gelephu Mindfulness City?

1. It will function as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) in Bhutan.
2. It will have its own independent judiciary and lawmaking authority.
3. It will include two protected areas: a national park and a wildlife sanctuary.
4. It will integrate economic growth with sustainability and holistic living.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1, 2, and 3 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 3, and 4 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Gelephu will be Bhutan's first Special Administrative Region (SAR).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It will have its own independent judiciary and lawmaking authority.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The city will include two protected areas: a national park and a wildlife sanctuary.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The city aims to integrate economic growth with mindfulness, holistic living, and sustainability.

Q792. What makes Gelephu Mindfulness City unique?

- (a) It will be the first "Zero Carbon" city in Bhutan.
- (b) It will have governance autonomy as a Special Administrative Region (SAR).
- (c) It will feature both a national park and a wildlife sanctuary.
- (d) All of the above

Ans: d

Sol:

- Gelephu Mindfulness City is unique due to its status as Bhutan's first "Zero Carbon" city (A).
- It will have governance autonomy as a Special Administrative Region (B).
- The city will also include two protected areas: a national park and a wildlife sanctuary (C).
- All of these aspects collectively make it a pioneering development in Bhutan (D).

Topic 265

265. Assam-Bhutan friendship

Current news?

- Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's visit Bhutan to attend **117th Bhutan's National Day celebrations.**

Bhutan's National Day

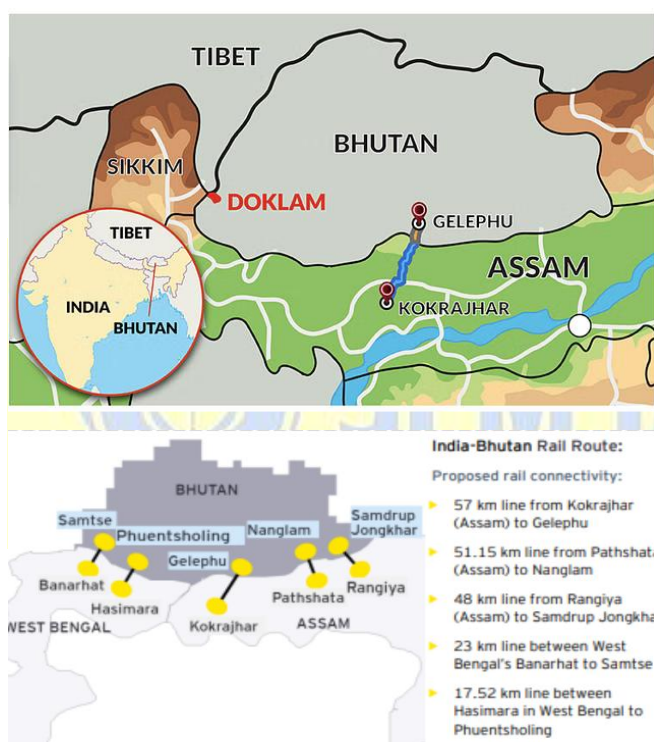
- Celebrated on **December 17**
- On this day in **1907**-the coronation of the **first Druk Gyalpo (Dragon King)** of **Bhutan, Ugyen Wangchuck, in 1907.**
- This event **symbolizes** the **unification of Bhutan** under the **Wangchuck dynasty.**

Different areas of cooperation explored-

1. **Water resource management**



- Assam's plans for **Borola Multi-Village Drinking Water Supply Project** in the **Bodoland Territorial Region**(on Udalguri rocky soil) using clean water from the **Nonai river**, which is just **2 km within Bhutan**.
- 2. Proposal for a **Sister-City Agreement** between **Gelephu Mindfulness City** and **Jagiroad Electronics City**.
- 3. **Gelephu-Kokrajhar road link**
- 4. **Kokrajhar and Gelephu rail link** (first proposed cross-border railway link between India and Bhutan to be completed by 2026)
- 5. **Upgradation** of **Gelephu-Hathisar Land Custom Station**.



Q793. Consider the following statements about Bhutan's National Day and its significance:

1. Bhutan's National Day is celebrated on December 17 each year.
2. The day marks the coronation of Bhutan's first Druk Gyalpo, Ugyen Wangchuck, in 1907.
3. This event symbolizes the unification of Bhutan under the Wangchuck dynasty.
4. It is celebrated as a national holiday in Bhutan and neighboring Indian states like Assam.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

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

Ans: a

Sol:-

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Bhutan's National Day is celebrated on December 17.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It marks the coronation of the first Druk Gyalpo, Ugyen Wangchuck, in 1907.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The coronation symbolizes the unification of Bhutan under the Wangchuck dynasty.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Bhutan's National Day is not celebrated as a holiday in Indian states like Assam.

Q794. Which of the following statements regarding Assam-Bhutan collaboration are incorrect?

1. Assam plans to implement the Borola Multi-Village Drinking Water Supply Project using water from the Nonai River, which originates in Assam.
2. A Sister-City Agreement has been signed between Gelephu Mindfulness City and Jagiroad Electronics City.
3. The Gelephu-Kokrajhar rail link is expected to be the first cross-border railway link between India and Bhutan.
4. The Gelephu-Hathisar Land Custom Station is proposed to be upgraded for better trade connectivity.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Nonai River, used for the Borola Water Supply Project, is within Bhutan, not Assam.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Sister-City Agreement between Gelephu Mindfulness City and Jagiroad Electronics City is a proposal, not yet signed.



- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Gelephu-Kokrajhar rail link is indeed the first proposed cross-border railway link between India and Bhutan, to be completed by 2026.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The Gelephu-Hathisar Land Custom Station is proposed to be upgraded.

Q795. The Sairang-Hbichhuah railway line in Mizoram is significant because:

- It connects Mizoram to Bangladesh's Chittagong Port.
- It provides Northeast India access to the Sittwe Port in Myanmar.
- It links Mizoram with India's easternmost railway station in Arunachal Pradesh.
- It connects Mizoram to the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

Ans: b

Sol: The Sairang-Hbichhuah railway line, which is South of Mizoram and connects the Kaladan Multimodal Project, has also been given approval. Sairang-Hbichhuah railway project that will give NE a gateway to the Sittwe Port in Myanmar.

Topic 266

266. India-Singapore agreement on Semiconductors

India and Singapore (after the PM's visit in Sept 2024)

- a. elevated their bilateral relations to a "comprehensive strategic partnership."
- b. MoU signed on cooperation in semiconductors.

Semiconductors

- heart and soul of modern electronics industry.
- Leaders-US, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore etc
- RoC(Taiwan) survives-Silicon shield(TSMC of Taiwan is one of the largest Semiconductor Chip producer-US doesn't want it to be controlled by China)

Semiconductor Mission

- Started by **government of India in 2021**
- **Financial outlay of Rs. 76,000 crore**
- **Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY)**

Upcoming three Semiconductor Manufacturing units in India

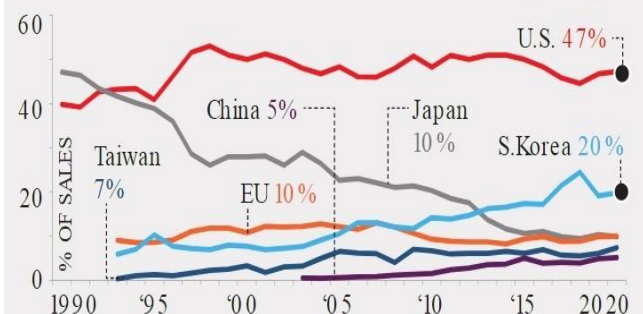
- 2 in Gujrat
- Semiconductor fab unit in Dholera, Gujarat by Tata group
- Semiconductor unit in Sanand, Gujarat-CG Power, in conjunction with Japan's Renesas and Stars Microelectronics of Thailand
- b. 1 in Assam
- Semiconductor unit in Morigaon, Assam-
by Tata group
- investment of Rs 27,000 crore/ target 48 million semiconductor chips per day

ASEAN Member Countries



Leading chip makers

U.S. firms form 47% of the global semiconductor sales in 2020. Japan's dominance has waned while South Korea's share has increased



SOURCE: SEMICONDUCTOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION





Q796. Consider the following statements about the India-Singapore agreement on semiconductors and its broader context:

1. The India-Singapore MoU on semiconductors was signed during the elevation of bilateral relations to a "comprehensive strategic partnership."
2. Taiwan is considered a leader in semiconductor manufacturing, with TSMC being one of the largest producers globally.
3. The "Semiconductor Mission" in India was launched in 2021 with a financial outlay of Rs. 76,000 crore.
4. The United States supports Taiwan's semiconductor dominance to counter China's influence in the region.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The MoU on semiconductors was signed as part of India and Singapore elevating their bilateral relations to a "comprehensive strategic partnership."
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Taiwan's TSMC is a global leader in semiconductor manufacturing.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India launched the "Semiconductor Mission" in 2021 with a financial outlay of Rs. 76,000 crore.

- **Statement 4 is correct:** The US supports Taiwan's semiconductor industry (the "Silicon Shield") to prevent Chinese dominance.

Q797. Which of the following statements regarding semiconductor manufacturing in India are incorrect?

1. Gujarat is the only state in India where semiconductor manufacturing units are being established under the Semiconductor Mission.
2. Tata Group is involved in establishing semiconductor units in both Gujarat and Assam.
3. The semiconductor unit in Morigaon, Assam, targets the production of 48 million semiconductor chips per day.
4. The Semiconductor Mission is under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Semiconductor manufacturing units are being set up in both Gujarat (Dholera and Sanand) and Assam (Morigaon).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Tata Group is involved in setting up units in Gujarat and Assam.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Morigaon unit in Assam has a target production of 48 million semiconductor chips per day.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The Semiconductor Mission is under the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), not the Ministry of Science and Technology.

Q798. Consider the following statements about the global and Indian semiconductor industry:

1. Singapore is one of the global leaders in semiconductor manufacturing.
2. The semiconductor fab unit in Dholera, Gujarat, is being established in collaboration with South Korea.



3. The US views Taiwan's semiconductor industry as a critical component of its strategic interests.
4. Semiconductor manufacturing is vital to the modern electronics industry.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Singapore is recognized as one of the global leaders in semiconductor manufacturing.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The semiconductor fab unit in Dholera, Gujarat, is being established by the Tata Group, not in collaboration with South Korea.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The US views Taiwan's semiconductor industry as critical due to its geopolitical significance and dominance in the industry.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Semiconductors are integral to the modern electronics industry.

Topic 267

267. 10 point plan for India-ASEAN relation ASEAN

- international organisation that has 10 member countries
- formed in 1967
- Secretariat: Jakarta, Indonesia

India-ASEAN relations

- After disintegration of USSR India look for or other trading partners-1992 under Prime Ministership of PV Narasimha Rao-Look East Policy-to promote trade with Southeast Asian countries.
- In 2014 Look East Policy was upgraded in to Act East Policy to add strategic dimensions in India ASEAN relations.
- Act East Policy also focuses on East Asian countries.

Recent

- 21st ASEAN-India Summit held in Vientiane, Laos.

- Summit's **theme** of **"Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience."**
- PM Modi unveiled a **10-point plan** to promote **India-ASEAN summit**.

10-Point Plan for India-ASEAN relation

- Celebrating **2025** as **ASEAN-India Year of Tourism**
- Conduct **Youth Summits** and **Start-up Festivals**
- Organizing the **ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave**
- **Doubling scholarships** at **Nalanda University** for **ASEAN Students**
- Reviewing the **ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement**
- Allocating **USD 5 million** to enhance **Disaster Resilience**
- Initiating a Health Ministers' track to **build health resilience**
- Establishing an **ASEAN-India Cyber Policy Dialogue**
- Hosting a workshop on **Green Hydrogen**
- Launching the **'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign**



East Asia Summit

Leaders' summit in Naypyidaw, Myanmar on November 12-13



East Asia Summit is ASEAN + 8 members(
Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand,
the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United
States)

Q799. Consider the following statements about the India-ASEAN relations:

1. The Look East Policy was launched in 1992 under Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao to strengthen trade ties with Southeast Asian countries.
2. The Act East Policy was introduced in 2014 and includes strategic dimensions with East Asian countries.
3. The 21st ASEAN-India Summit was held in Jakarta, Indonesia.
4. ASEAN's Secretariat is located in Vientiane, Laos.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Look East Policy was launched in 1992 to strengthen India's trade and cultural ties with Southeast Asian countries.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Act East Policy was introduced in 2014, expanding the Look East Policy to include strategic dimensions and relations with East Asian countries.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The 21st ASEAN-India Summit was held in Vientiane, Laos, not Jakarta.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** ASEAN's Secretariat is located in Jakarta, Indonesia, not Vientiane.

Q800. Which of the following statements regarding the 10-point plan for India-ASEAN relations are incorrect?

1. Celebrating 2025 as ASEAN-India Year of Tourism is part of the 10-point plan.
 2. Doubling scholarships for ASEAN students at Nalanda University is not included in the plan.
 3. A workshop on Green Hydrogen and a Cyber Policy Dialogue are key components of the plan.
 4. The theme of the 21st ASEAN-India Summit was "Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience."
- Select the correct answer using the code below:

(a) 2 only

- (b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) None of the above

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Celebrating 2025 as ASEAN-India Year of Tourism is part of the plan.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Doubling scholarships at Nalanda University for ASEAN students is explicitly mentioned in the 10-point plan.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Both the workshop on Green Hydrogen and the Cyber Policy Dialogue are included.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The theme of the 21st ASEAN-India Summit was indeed "Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience."

Q801. Consider the following components of the 10-point plan for India-ASEAN relations:

1. Organizing ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave
2. Allocating USD 10 million to enhance Disaster Resilience



3. Launching the 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign
4. Initiating a Health Ministers' track to build health resilience

How many of the above are correctly matched to the 10-point plan?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) Only four

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Women Scientists Conclave is included in the plan.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The allocation is USD 5 million, not USD 10 million.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign is part of the plan.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The Health Ministers' track is a key component of the plan.

Thus, three statements are correct.

Topic 268

268. India-UAE agreements

Political structure of UAE

- It consists of a **federation of seven emirates** (kingdom).
- Each with its **own ruler(emir)**.

Federal Supreme Council

- **Highest constitutional authority** (includes the 7 emirs and some elected members).
- It is **highest decision making body**.

President

- The **President of the UAE** is traditionally the **ruler of Abu Dhabi**.

Current news?

- India and (UAE) **signed agreements-**

1. **Energy cooperation**
- Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) with **Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL)** to **augment strategic petroleum of India**.
2. **Comprehensive strategic partnership** between **India and UAE**.
3. **Cross-border Transactions in local currency** ie Rupee and UAE Dirham

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



UAE federation includes-

- Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Fujairah, Umm Al Quwain, and Ras Al Khaimah.

Q802. Consider the following statements regarding the political structure of the UAE:

1. The UAE is a federation of seven emirates, each governed by its own ruler (emir).
2. The Federal Supreme Council is the highest constitutional authority in the UAE.
3. The President of the UAE is traditionally the ruler of Dubai.
4. The UAE's Federal Supreme Council consists solely of the seven emirs.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The UAE is indeed a federation of seven emirates, each ruled by an emir.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Federal Supreme Council is the highest constitutional authority in the UAE.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The President of the UAE is traditionally the ruler of Abu Dhabi, not Dubai.



- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The Federal Supreme Council includes the seven emirs and some elected members, not solely the emirs.

Q803. Which of the following statements regarding recent agreements between India and the UAE are *incorrect*?

1. The agreement on cross-border transactions involves trading in Indian Rupee and UAE Dirham.
2. The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) signed a deal with Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL) to augment India's strategic petroleum reserves.
3. The comprehensive strategic partnership between India and the UAE includes collaboration on military defense systems.
4. UAE's federation includes Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras Al Khaimah, among others.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) None of the above

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Cross-border transactions in local currencies, the Indian Rupee and UAE Dirham, were part of the agreement.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** ADNOC signed an agreement with ISPRL for augmenting India's strategic petroleum reserves.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The comprehensive strategic partnership does not specifically mention collaboration on military defense systems.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The UAE federation includes Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, and Ras Al Khaimah, among others.

Q804. Consider the following components of the India-UAE agreements:

1. Augmenting India's strategic petroleum reserves through cooperation with ADNOC.
2. Facilitating cross-border trade and transactions in Indian Rupee and UAE Dirham.

3. Jointly exploring renewable energy projects in the Gulf region.
4. Strengthening cultural ties through collaborative arts and media initiatives.

How many of the above components are part of the agreements?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The agreement includes augmenting India's strategic petroleum reserves with ADNOC.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Cross-border trade and transactions in local currencies are part of the agreements.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The agreements do not specifically mention renewable energy projects.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** There is no mention of cultural collaboration in the agreements.

Topic 269

269. Strategic Petroleum Reserve

- By Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited
- HQ-Noida
- Functional Strategic Petroleum Reserve of 5.33 MMT at
 - . Mangalore (Karnataka)
 - a. Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh)
 - b. Padur (Karnataka).

2 more being created

- Chandikhol (Odisha) and Udupi (Karnataka) with capacity of 6.5 MMT.

Current news?

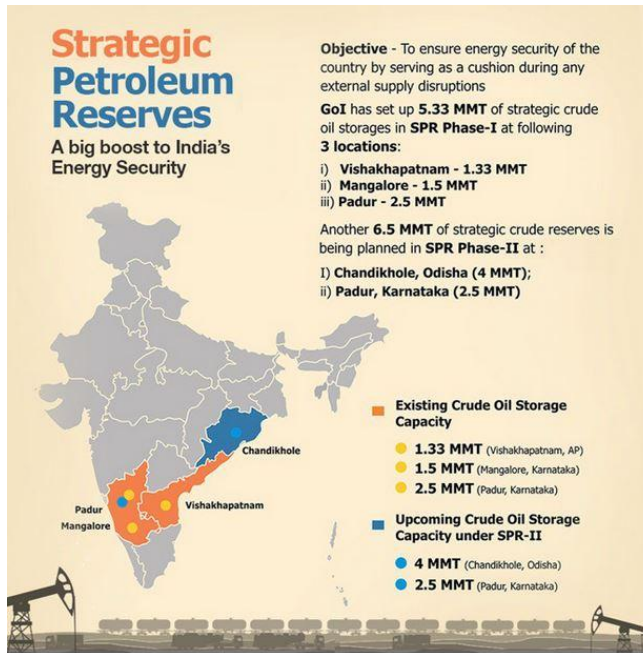
- Government-owned engineering consultancy firm Engineers India (EIL) is studying the prospects and feasibility of developing salt cavern-based strategic oil reserves in Rajasthan

Salt vs Rock cavern

- rock caverns-developed through excavation
- salt caverns are developed by the process of solution mining, which involves pumping



water into geological formations with large salt deposits to dissolve the salt.



Q805. Consider the following statements regarding India's Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):

- The SPR facilities at Mangalore and Padur are located in Karnataka.
- The capacity of the functional SPR facilities in India is 5.33 MMT.
- Chandikhol in Odisha and Udupi in Karnataka are locations for upcoming SPR facilities.
- Engineers India Limited (EIL) is currently studying the feasibility of rock cavern-based SPR facilities in Rajasthan.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- 1, 2 and 3 only
- 2, 3 and 4 only
- 1, 3 and 4 only
- 1, 2 and 4 only

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct:** Both Mangalore and Padur SPR facilities are in Karnataka.
- Statement 2 is correct:** The functional SPR facilities have a total capacity of 5.33 MMT.
- Statement 3 is correct:** Chandikhol and Udupi are planned locations for upcoming SPR facilities with a combined capacity of 6.5 MMT.

- Statement 4 is incorrect:** Engineers India Limited is studying the feasibility of salt cavern-based SPR facilities in Rajasthan, not rock cavern-based facilities.

Q806. Which of the following statement(s) regarding the development of salt cavern-based Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR) in India is/are incorrect?

- Salt caverns are developed by the process of solution mining, which involves dissolving salt deposits with water.
 - Salt caverns are more suitable for SPR than rock caverns as they require no excavation.
 - Engineers India Limited (EIL) is studying the prospects of salt cavern-based SPR facilities in Karnataka.
 - Salt cavern-based SPR facilities are being explored in geological formations in Rajasthan.
- Select the correct answer using the code below:

- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 4 only
- 2, 3, and 4 only
- 1, 2, and 3 only

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct:** Salt caverns are indeed developed through solution mining.
- Statement 2 is incorrect:** While salt caverns require no excavation, their suitability depends on geological conditions and not solely on the absence of excavation.
- Statement 3 is incorrect:** The study of salt cavern-based SPR facilities is being conducted in Rajasthan, not Karnataka.
- Statement 4 is correct:** Salt cavern-based SPR facilities are being explored in Rajasthan.

Q807. Consider the following features of Strategic Petroleum Reserves (SPR):

- Rock caverns are developed through the process of solution mining.
- Salt caverns involve pumping water into geological formations with salt deposits to dissolve the salt.
- India's functional SPR facilities are entirely based on salt caverns.



4. Chandikhol and Udupi SPR facilities are expected to add a combined capacity of 6.5 MMT.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Rock caverns are developed through excavation, not solution mining.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Salt caverns are indeed developed by dissolving salt deposits with water.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** India's functional SPR facilities are based on rock caverns, not salt caverns.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** Chandikhol and Udupi facilities are expected to add 6.5 MMT capacity.

Thus, two statements are correct.

Topic 270

270. Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Malaysia

- Malaysian Prime Minister and PM of India announced **elevation** of "**Enhanced Strategic Partnership**" established in **2015** into "**Comprehensive Strategic Partnership**" between the two sides.
- **India and Malaysia** had established **Strategic Partnership agreement** in **2010** which was elevated to "Enhanced Strategic Partnership" in 2015.

Important areas of cooperation announced

1. **Local Currency Settlement**
- **Indian Rupee and Malaysian Ringgit**

Note

- All local currency settlement agreement can be seen as step by India to promote **internationalisation of Rupee**.
- 2. **Digital Cooperation**
- The signing of an MoU on Digital Technologies to establish the **Malaysia-India Digital Council**.
- 3. **Start-Up Alliance:**

- Both sides will explore possibility of synergy in **Start-up India** and **Cradle Fund of Malaysia**.
- 4. Malaysia appreciating India's initiatives like the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.



Strategic Partnership vs Alliance System

- An arrangement between two or more states to work together on **mutual security issues**.
- It involves **common defence strategies**.
- Eg **NATO group**

Strategic Partnership

- These are **less formal** than alliances.
- Includes **cooperation in areas** around **trade, economy, technology, connectivity** apart from **security**.

Q808. Consider the following statements regarding the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Malaysia:

1. The partnership was upgraded from an "Enhanced Strategic Partnership" established in 2015.
2. Malaysia joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as a founding member.
3. A Local Currency Settlement agreement between Indian Rupee and Malaysian Ringgit has been signed as part of the partnership.
4. Both sides have established the Malaysia-India Digital Council through an MoU on Digital Technologies.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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



Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The partnership was elevated from an "Enhanced Strategic Partnership" established in 2015.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Malaysia has appreciated India's initiatives like the ISA but is not mentioned as a founding member.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** A Local Currency Settlement agreement between Indian Rupee and Malaysian Ringgit is part of the partnership.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The Malaysia-India Digital Council was established through an MoU on Digital Technologies.

Q809. Which of the following statements regarding Strategic Partnerships and Alliance Systems is/are correct?

1. Strategic Partnerships focus on cooperation in trade, economy, and technology rather than common defense strategies.
2. Alliance Systems are formal arrangements for mutual security issues and typically involve common defense strategies.
3. The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Malaysia is an example of an Alliance System.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Strategic Partnerships are less formal and focus on broader areas such as trade, economy, and technology rather than mutual defense.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Alliance Systems are formal arrangements for mutual security and involve defense strategies, as seen in NATO.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Malaysia is not an Alliance System;

it focuses on economic and technological cooperation.

Q810. Consider the following statements regarding the recent developments in India-Malaysia relations:

1. The Local Currency Settlement agreement aims to promote the internationalization of the Indian Rupee.
2. The Cradle Fund of Malaysia and Start-up India are exploring synergies for start-up ecosystems.
3. The Strategic Partnership between India and Malaysia was first established in 2010.
4. Digital cooperation under the partnership includes the signing of an MoU on cybersecurity between the two nations.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Local Currency Settlement agreement supports the internationalization of the Indian Rupee.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Synergies between the Cradle Fund of Malaysia and Start-up India are being explored.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Strategic Partnership was first established in 2010 and later elevated in 2015 and 2024.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Digital cooperation includes the signing of an MoU on Digital Technologies, not cybersecurity.

Day 28

Topic 271

271. International Solar Alliance

- launched by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France in 2015
- On sidelines of the Conference of the Parties (COP-21) of UNFCCC-Paris



Objective

- To develop cooperation 121 solar resource rich countries
- Secretariat of the ISA-Gurugram, Haryana
- Now membership has extended to all members of UN.
- Each Member has one vote in the Assembly.
- There is no membership-fee to join the ISA.
- There are no targets or legal obligations

Important initiatives

1. World Solar Bank (WSB) initiative to fund solar energy projects
2. STAR-C (Solar Technology Application Resource-Center): To share knowledge and build expertise in solar technologies.
3. One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG) Initiative



One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG) Initiative

- The idea for the **OSOWOG initiative** was put forth by the **Prime Minister of India**, at the **First Assembly** of the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** in **October 2018**.
- The initiative aims at connecting energy supply across borders.

Q811. Regarding the International Solar Alliance (ISA), consider the following statements:

1. India and the US jointly launched the ISA at the UNFCCC COP 21 in Paris.
 2. The 'Towards 1000' strategy is adopted by the ISA to mobilise USD 1,000 billion of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030.
 3. Nepal becomes the 104th full member of the International Solar Alliance in November 2024.
- Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol: Statement 1:

- The ISA was jointly launched by India and France, not the United States, during the UNFCCC COP 21 in Paris in 2015.
- Conclusion: This statement is incorrect.

Statement 2:

- The 'Towards 1000' strategy is a key initiative of the ISA, aimed at mobilizing USD 1,000 billion of investments in solar energy solutions by 2030 to enhance global energy access and support the transition to clean energy.
- Conclusion: This statement is correct.

Statement 3: Armenia became the 104th full member of the ISA in November 2024, reflecting the growing membership of the alliance.

- Conclusion: This statement is incorrect.
- Nepal was the 101st member.

Q812. Consider the following statements about the objectives and initiatives of the ISA:

1. The ISA aims to establish legally binding solar energy targets for its member countries.
2. The World Solar Bank (WSB) initiative aims to fund solar energy projects globally.
3. The STAR-C (Solar Technology Application Resource-Center) initiative focuses on knowledge sharing and expertise building in solar technologies.
4. The One Sun, One World, One Grid (OSOWOG) initiative was first proposed at the ISA's inaugural meeting in 2015.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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



(d) 2, 3, and 4 only

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** The ISA does not impose legally binding targets or obligations on its members.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The World Solar Bank initiative is designed to provide funding for solar energy projects globally.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** STAR-C focuses on sharing knowledge and building expertise in solar technologies.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** The OSOWOG initiative was proposed by India's Prime Minister at the First Assembly of the ISA in 2018, not in 2015.

Q813. Consider the following statements about the governance and membership of the International Solar Alliance (ISA):

1. Each member country of the ISA has one vote in its Assembly.
2. The ISA has legally binding rules for all member countries.
3. Membership of the ISA is now open to all United Nations member countries.
4. Decisions in the ISA Assembly are made based on weighted voting according to member contributions.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: b

Sol:-

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Each member country has one vote in the ISA Assembly.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** The ISA does not have legally binding rules for its members.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Membership is now open to all United Nations member countries.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** Decisions are not made based on weighted voting; each member has equal voting rights.

Topic 272

272. G7 meeting of 2024

- The G7 (originally G8) was set up in **1975** as an **informal forum** bringing together the leaders of the world's **leading industrial nations to deliberate on** international issues and **find solutions.**

How G8 was reduced to G7?

- Russia's membership of the G8 was suspended due to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 from Ukraine.
- Though Russia has not been permanently dismissed.

Current news?

- G7 meet of **2024** held in **Italy's Apulia region**
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** is also attending the summit as **India** has been invited as an **Outreach Country**.





Q814. Consider the following statements about the G7:

1. The G7 was originally established in 1975 as an informal forum for industrial nations.
2. Russia's membership in the G8 was permanently revoked following the annexation of Crimea in 2014.
3. The G7 countries collectively account for over 50% of the global GDP.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The G7 was formed in 1975 as an informal platform for industrial nations to discuss global issues.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** Russia's membership was suspended in 2014, but it has not been permanently dismissed.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The G7 countries collectively account for a significant share of the global GDP, over 50%.

Q815. Consider the following statements about the G7 meeting of 2024:

1. The G7 meeting of 2024 was held in Italy's Apulia region.

2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the summit as India is a permanent member of the G7.
3. India's participation in the 2024 G7 summit is as an invited Outreach Country.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The 2024 G7 meeting was held in Italy's Apulia region.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** India is not a permanent member of the G7.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** India participated as an Outreach Country at the invitation of the G7.

Q816. Consider the following statements about the G7's structure and significance:

1. Decisions made at the G7 meetings are legally binding on member countries.
2. The G7 meetings are focused on addressing global issues such as climate change, trade, and international security.
3. The G7 operates without a permanent secretariat or headquarters.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** G7 decisions are not legally binding; they are based on consensus and are advisory in nature.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The G7 focuses on pressing global issues like climate change, trade, and security.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The G7 operates without a permanent secretariat or headquarters, emphasizing its informal nature.

Topic 273

273. Antarctic Parliament

- The Antarctic Treaty was signed on December 1, 1959(came in force in 1961).



- A total of **56 countries** — including **India, in 1983** — have joined it since then.

India has been **taking scientific research** in **Antarctica** and has established **3 research stations-**

1. **Dakshin Gangotri (first, now abandoned since 1990)**
2. **Maitri (operational)**
 - In 1989, India set up its second Antarctica research station, named Maitri.
3. **Bharati (operational)**
 - In 2012, India inaugurated Bharati, its third Antarctica research station.
 - **Upcoming research station- Maitri II** (set to begin by 2029)

Antarctic Act

- In **2022**, India enacted the **Antarctic Act**, reaffirming its **commitment** to the **Antarctic Treaty**.

Major Provisions of the Antarctic Act

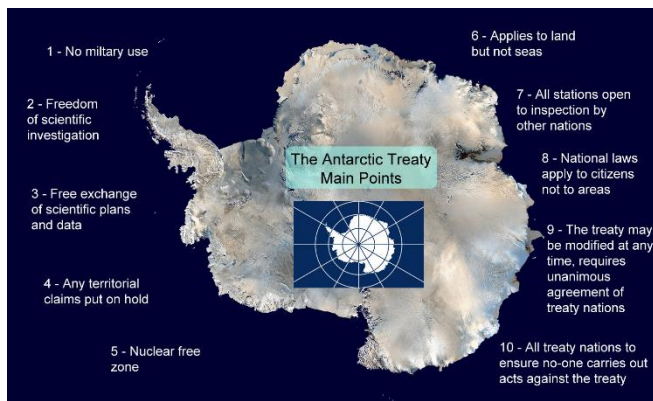
1. **Requirement of Permit for expedition** from India
2. **Commercial Fishing**-as per **quota permitted** in Antarctic Treaty
3. **Environmental Protection**-prohibits drilling, dredging, excavation etc
4. **Penal Provisions** for violation

Current news?

- India hosted the **46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting** (Antarctic Parliament) in **Kochi**.
- **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, Goa**, through the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**, has organised the meeting with agenda of sustainable use of Antarctica and its resources.

Svalbard Treaty of 1920

- Regulates any scientific research in the Arctic region-India joined during its inception in 1920.



Antarctic Treaty provisions-

1. No militarization
2. Free sharing of data
3. Freedom to make scientific expedition



Wikimedia Commons

Q817. Consider the following statements about the Antarctic Treaty:

1. The Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959 and came into force in 1961.
2. India became a signatory to the Antarctic Treaty in 1983.
3. The Antarctic Treaty prohibits military activity and ensures freedom for scientific expeditions.
4. The Antarctic Treaty allows unrestricted commercial fishing activities.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) All four
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Antarctic Treaty was signed in 1959 and came into force in 1961.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** India joined the Antarctic Treaty in 1983.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The treaty prohibits militarization and ensures freedom for scientific expeditions.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** Commercial fishing is allowed only as per quotas permitted under the Antarctic Treaty, not unrestricted.



Q818. Consider the following statements about India's Antarctic research and its Antarctic Act:

1. India has three operational research stations in Antarctica: Dakshin Gangotri, Maitri, and Bharati.
2. The Antarctic Act of 2022 prohibits activities like drilling and excavation in Antarctica.
3. Maitri II, India's upcoming research station, is expected to begin operations by 2029.
4. The Antarctic Act imposes penal provisions for violations of its regulations.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** Dakshin Gangotri is no longer operational; it was abandoned in 1990. Maitri and Bharati are the operational stations.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The Antarctic Act prohibits activities like drilling, dredging, and excavation to protect the environment.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Maitri II is set to begin operations by 2029.
- **Statement 4: Correct.** The Antarctic Act imposes penal provisions for violations of its regulations.

Q819. Consider the following statements about the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting and governance:

1. India hosted the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Kochi, focusing on the sustainable use of Antarctica and its resources.
2. The National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, organized the meeting through the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
3. The Antarctic Treaty mandates free sharing of scientific data among member countries.
4. The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings are legally binding on all signatory nations.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- (a) Only Two
- (b) Only three
- (c) All four
- (d) Only one

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India hosted the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Kochi, with sustainability as a key agenda.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The meeting was organized by NCPOR, Goa, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The Antarctic Treaty promotes free sharing of scientific data among member countries.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings provide guidelines and recommendations but are not legally binding on member nations.

Topic 274

274. Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- initiative of the **G7 countries**
- **inter-governmental body** established in the 1989
- headquarter-**Paris, France.**
- It has **38 members (including India).**
- **2 regional organisations** (the **Gulf Cooperation Council** and the **European Commission**) are **also members.**
- **FATF suspended membership of Russia in 2023**

The main functions of FATF are-

1. Curbing Terror Finance
2. Prevent Money Laundering
3. Recently started **dealing with issues of virtual currencies.**

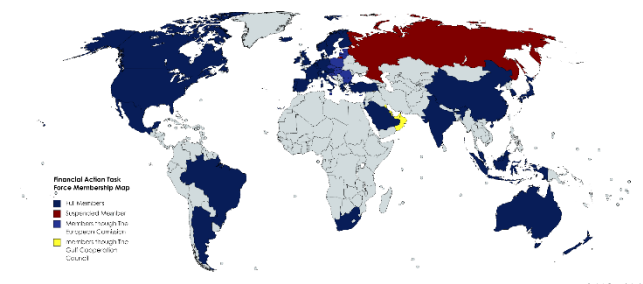
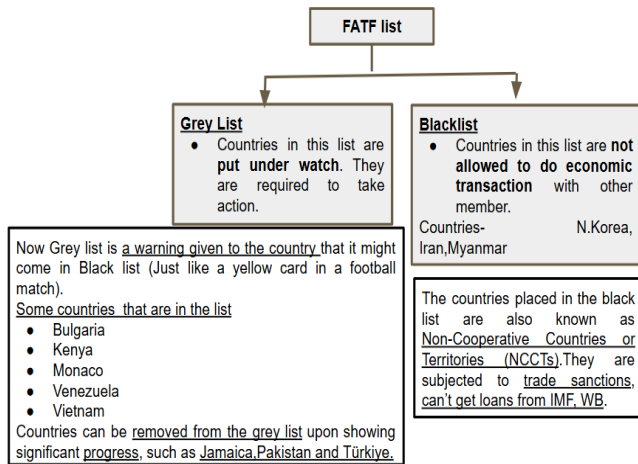
Current news?

- FATF **placed India** in the "**regular follow-up**" **category**
- Countries placed in the **regular follow-up category** are **generally compliant** with FATF's recommendations, showing an "effective" system in place.

FATF has raised some concerns too-

1. Pendency of cases of money laundering
2. Terror groups are getting active in J&K





Q820. Which of the following best describes the chronological evolution of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)'s objectives?

- Money laundering, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation financing, terrorist financing
- Terrorist financing, money laundering, WMD proliferation financing
- Money laundering, terrorist financing, WMD proliferation financing
- WMD proliferation financing, money laundering, terrorist financing

Ans: c

Sol: The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was established in 1989 by the G7 to address the growing problem of money laundering, which was its initial focus.

1. Money Laundering (1989):

- FATF was primarily created to combat money laundering, particularly in relation to the proceeds of drug trafficking and other organized crimes.

2. Terrorist Financing (2001):

- After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, FATF expanded its mandate to include terrorist financing, emphasizing the need for

countries to implement measures to prevent and detect the misuse of financial systems by terrorist organizations.

3. WMD Proliferation Financing (2012):

- FATF further broadened its scope to include the prevention of financing related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), in response to global concerns about nuclear security and sanctions evasion.

Thus, the chronological evolution of FATF's objectives is best described as:

Money laundering → Terrorist financing → WMD proliferation financing.

Q821. Consider the following statements about the Financial Action Task Force (FATF):

- It was established in the year 1989 in Tokyo.
- Initially its mandate was to examine and develop measures to combat money laundering.
- The objectives of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

1. Statement 1: Incorrect.

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was established in 1989, but not in Tokyo. It was established at the G7 Summit in Paris, not Tokyo.

2. Statement 2: Correct.

- FATF's original mandate was to examine and develop measures to combat money laundering, which was the primary focus at its inception.

3. Statement 3: Correct.

- FATF's objectives include setting standards and promoting the effective implementation of measures to combat money laundering, terrorist financing, and other threats to the integrity of the international financial system.



Thus, statements 2 and 3 are correct.

Q822. Consider the following statements regarding FATF's evaluation of India:

1. Countries placed in the "regular follow-up" category are generally compliant with FATF recommendations.
2. FATF raised concerns about pendency in cases of money laundering in India.
3. FATF's evaluation found India's system for combating money laundering and terror financing ineffective.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The "regular follow-up" category indicates that a country is generally compliant with FATF recommendations and has an effective system in place.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** FATF raised concerns about the pendency of money laundering cases in India.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** While FATF raised concerns, it did not deem India's system ineffective; India was placed in the "regular follow-up" category, indicating effectiveness.

Topic 275

275. West Asia Politics

The US stance

- Anti Iran since 1979 Iranian revolution.
- pro Saudi and Israel.

China's growing footprint in West Asia

1. \$400 billion Iran China deal in 2020
2. Saudi-Iran deal brokered by China

The US response

- **Brokered Abraham Accords**-agreement reached between Israel, Bahrain and the UAE (an Arab ally of Saudi Arabia)

India and the US joint response

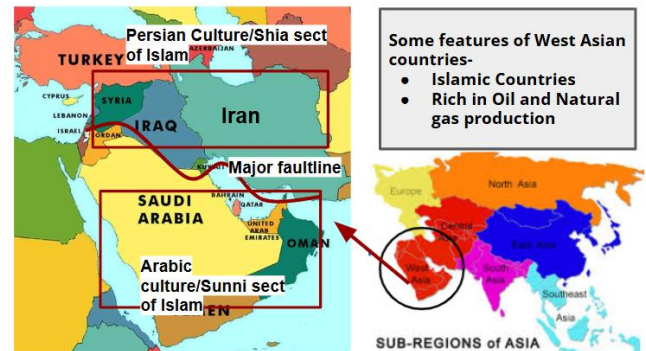
1. I2U2 summit to limit **China's** footprint in West Asia
2. India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridor

Gaza war, 2023

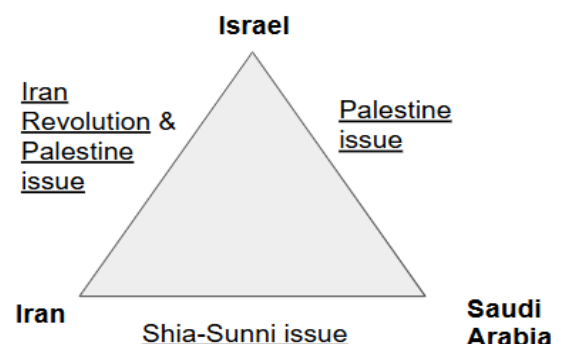
- Hamas attacked Israel in October 2023.

- Since then relentless retaliation by Israel in the Gaza, causing humanitarian crisis.
- This has again increased hostility between Arab and Israel and led to **loss of developments due to Abraham accords**.
- For India also it has become difficult to manage its ties between Israel-Saudi Arabia-Iran.

West Asia is important for energy security, remittances and diaspora security for India.



Major power centres in West Asia



Q823. Consider the following statements regarding the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):



1. It was signed at the G20 Summit in the 2020 Riyadh summit.

2. It aims to create a comprehensive transportation network, comprising rail, road, and sea routes, connecting India, the Middle East, and Europe.

3. India, the US and the European Union are among the signatories of IMEC.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three statements
(d) None of the statements

Ans: b

Sol: Statement 1: Incorrect.

- The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) was not signed at the 2020 Riyadh G20 Summit. It was signed during the 2023 G20 Summit in New Delhi, as part of efforts to enhance connectivity between India, the Middle East, and Europe.

Statement 2: Correct.

- IMEC aims to create a comprehensive transportation network, including rail, road, and sea routes, to facilitate economic and trade linkages between India, the Middle East, and Europe.

Statement 3: Correct.

- India, the United States, and the European Union are key signatories of IMEC, alongside countries in the Middle East, like Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Q824. Consider the following statements about countries bordering Turkey from the south in West Asia:

1. Syria shares the longest border with Turkey in West Asia.
2. Iraq is the only country other than Syria that shares a southern border with Turkey.
3. Lebanon shares a land border with Turkey from the south.

4. The Turkey-Syria border has been a focal point for addressing cross-border security concerns.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:-

- **Statement 1: Correct.**

Syria shares the longest border with Turkey in West Asia, spanning approximately 911 kilometers, making it Turkey's most significant southern border in the region.

- **Statement 2: Incorrect.**

While Iraq does share a southern border with Turkey, it is not the only country other than Syria to do so. Lebanon does not share a land border with Turkey, making the statement partially correct but misleading.

- **Statement 3: Incorrect.**

Lebanon does not share a land border with Turkey. Its closest neighbor to the north is Syria, which separates Lebanon from Turkey.

- **Statement 4: Correct.**

The Turkey-Syria border has been a significant geopolitical area, especially concerning cross-border security issues like terrorism, refugee movements, and military operations.

Thus, statements 1 and 4 are correct.

Q825. Consider the following statements:

1. Hamas originated as a derivative of the Palestinian arm of the Muslim Brotherhood.
2. The United States and the European Union have designated Hamas a terrorist organization.

3. Hamas took over the Gaza Strip after defeating its rival political party, Fatah, in elections in 2006.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three statements
(d) None of the statements

Ans: c

Sol:

- Hamas originated as a derivative of the Palestinian arm of the Muslim Brotherhood - This statement is correct. Hamas was founded in 1987 as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood in Palestine.
- The United States and the European Union have designated Hamas a terrorist organization - This statement is correct. Both



the U.S. and the EU consider Hamas a terrorist organization.

- Hamas took over the Gaza Strip after defeating its rival political party, Fatah, in elections in 2006 - This statement is correct.

Topic 276

276. India-Middle East-Europe mega economic corridors

- Launched on the sidelines of G20 summit in India.
- Part of PGII (Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment)
- PGII is G7 initiative to counter BRI of China
- Jointly announced by India, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), European Union (EU), France, Germany, Italy, and the United States.

IMEC-known as Green and Digital bridge

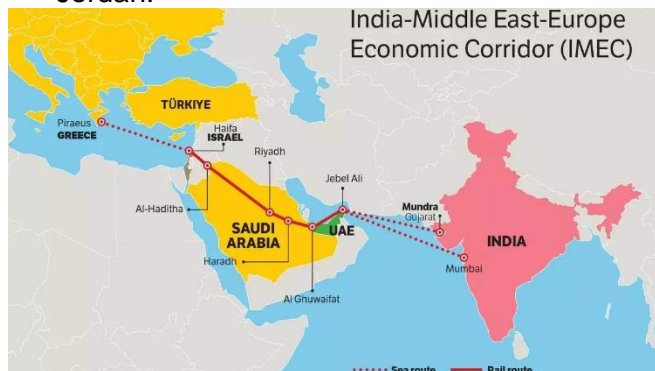
- Rail link, electricity cable, hydrogen pipeline and high speed data cable

Ports Which are Part of IMEC

1. **India:** Ports in Mundra (Gujarat), Kandla (Gujarat), and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Navi Mumbai).
2. **Europe:** Piraeus in Greece, Messina in Southern Italy, and Marseille in France.
3. **Middle East:** Ports include Fujairah, Jebel Ali, and Abu Dhabi in the UAE, as well as Dammam and Ras Al Khair ports in Saudi Arabia.
4. **Israel:** Haifa port.

Railway Line

- The railway line will link Fujairah port in the UAE to Haifa port in Israel, passing through Saudi Arabia (Ghuwaifat and Haradh) and Jordan.



The corridor will consist of two separate corridors-

1. **The Eastern Corridor**, connecting **India to West Asia/Middle East**
 - India United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel.
2. **Northern Corridor**, connecting **West Asia/Middle East to Europe.**

Q826. Consider the following features of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):

1. It is part of the G7's Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII).
2. It connects ports in India, the Middle East, and Europe through rail links, electricity cables, hydrogen pipelines, and high-speed data cables.
3. The railway line will link Haifa port in Israel directly to Marseille port in France.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:-

- **Statement 1 is correct:** IMEC is part of the G7's PGII, which counters China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** IMEC involves multiple modes of connectivity, including rail, electricity, hydrogen pipelines, and high-speed data cables.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The railway line links Fujairah port in the UAE to Haifa port in Israel, passing through Saudi Arabia and Jordan, not directly to Europe.

Q827. Consider the following statements about ports included in the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):

1. Indian ports in the corridor include Mundra, Kandla, and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT).
2. Haifa port in Israel and Marseille port in France are part of IMEC.
3. Ras Al Khair in Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi in the UAE are the only Middle Eastern ports included.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two



- (c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Indian ports included are Mundra, Kandla, and JNPT.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Haifa port in Israel and Marseille port in France are indeed part of the corridor.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** In addition to Ras Al Khair and Abu Dhabi, other Middle Eastern ports like Fujairah, Jebel Ali, and Dammam are also included.

Q828. Which of the following best describes the structure of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)?

- (a) A single integrated corridor connecting India to Europe via the Middle East.
(b) Two separate corridors: Eastern Corridor connecting India to the Middle East, and Northern Corridor connecting the Middle East to Europe.
(c) A maritime-only corridor connecting ports in India, the Middle East, and Europe.
(d) A regional economic integration initiative focused solely on the Middle East.

Ans: b

Sol: IMEC consists of two distinct corridors:

- The Eastern Corridor links India with the Middle East (UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Israel).
- The Northern Corridor connects the Middle East to Europe, integrating ports, railways, and other infrastructure.

Topic 277

277. India-Israel-US-UAE(I2U2)

Abraham Accords

- a series of agreements signed in **2020** between **Israel and several Arab states**

Primary countries involved in the Abraham Accords-

- **Israel--United Arab Emirates (UAE) + Bahrain + Sudan + Morocco**
- Mediated by the **United States**

I2U2-result of Abraham accord

- **India-Israel-UAE-USA**

- It is also sometimes called **West Asian Quad** or '**Middle-Eastern Quad**'.

Note-

- India announced its **recognition of Israel on September 17, 1950.**
- But **Embassies were opened in 1992** when **full diplomatic relations** were established.

Arab countries with diplomatic ties to Israel



In **1988**, India became one of the first countries to recognize the **Palestinian State**. In 1996, India opened its **Representative Office in Gaza**, which was later shifted to **Ramallah in 2003**.

Q829. With reference to the regional grouping I2U2, consider the following statements:

1. It is an initiative of four countries: India, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States.
 2. It aims to promote cooperation in the fields of trade, energy, security and space.
 3. It was initially formed in 2021 following the Abraham Accords between Israel and the UAE.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:**
The I2U2 group comprises India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the United States, not the United Kingdom.
- **Statement 2 is correct:**



The grouping aims to foster cooperation in various fields such as trade, energy, security, food, water, health, and space.

• **Statement 3 is correct:**

The group was initially conceptualized in 2021, following the Abraham Accords between Israel and the UAE, which normalized relations between the two countries and paved the way for broader regional cooperation.

Q830. With reference to India-Israel relations, consider the following statements:

1. India officially recognized Israel in 1950 but established full diplomatic ties in 1992.
2. India was among the first countries to recognize the Palestinian State in 1988.
3. India maintains its diplomatic representation for Palestine in Ramallah.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** India recognized Israel on September 17, 1950, but full diplomatic ties were established in 1992.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India recognized the Palestinian State in 1988.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India shifted its diplomatic representation for Palestine from Gaza to Ramallah in 2003.

Q831. Which of the following statements is correct about the Abraham Accords and I2U2?

- (a) The Abraham Accords were mediated by India and led directly to the formation of I2U2.
- (b) The Abraham Accords involved Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain, and were mediated by the United States.
- (c) I2U2 is a separate grouping unrelated to the Abraham Accords and focuses solely on economic issues.
- (d) The Abraham Accords focused only on normalizing relations between Israel and Palestine.

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Option (a) is incorrect:** The accords were mediated by the United States, not India.
- **Option (b) is correct:** The Abraham Accords normalized relations between Israel, the UAE, Bahrain, and later Sudan and Morocco.
- **Option (c) is incorrect:** I2U2 is a result of the Abraham Accords and addresses economic, security, and strategic issues.
- **Option (d) is incorrect:** The accords involved several Arab states, not just Palestine.

Topic 278

278. Axis of Resistance

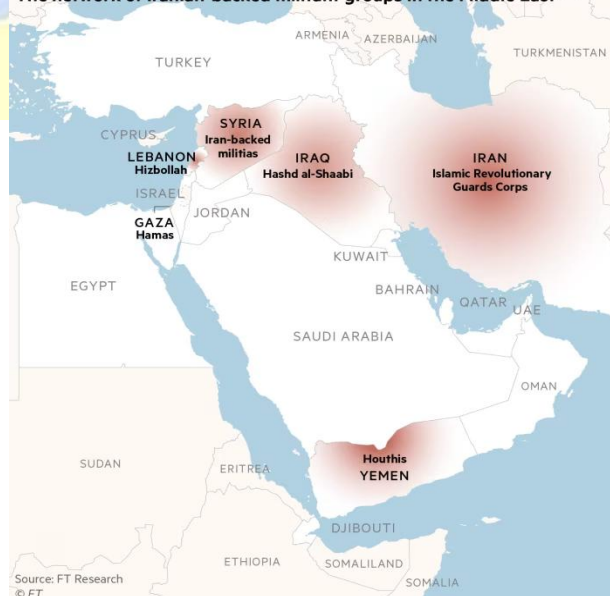
- **Iran** has developed a set of allies in West Asia to counter Israel.

- The alliance is known as 'Axis of resistance'.

Group members of Axis of resistance

1. **Iranian Revolutionary Guards:** Armed Forces of Iran (leader of the alliance)
2. **Hezbollah:** Shiite militant organization based in Lebanon
3. **Hamas:** Palestinian Sunni militant group in Gaza
4. **Houthis:** Zaydi Shia militant group, Yemen
5. **Hashd al Shaabi-** militant organization based in Iraq.

The network of Iranian-backed militant groups in the Middle East



Q832. Consider the following statements regarding the body of water that separates Saudi Arabia from Iran:

1. This body of water is connected to the Arabian Sea through the Strait of Hormuz.



2. The world's largest offshore oil field, the Safaniya Oil Field, is located in this body of water.
3. Major ports on its coastline include Bandar Abbas in Iran and Dammam in Saudi Arabia.
4. It is also known as the Persian Gulf, though it has regional naming disputes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The body of water is the Persian Gulf, which connects to the Arabian Sea via the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Safaniya Oil Field, the world's largest offshore oil field, is located in the Persian Gulf.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Major ports like Bandar Abbas (Iran) and Dammam (Saudi Arabia) lie on its coastline.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The Persian Gulf is the commonly accepted name, though some Arab countries refer to it as the Arabian Gulf, reflecting a regional naming dispute.

Q833. Consider the following statements regarding the country that lies to the south of Jordan:

1. This country shares a coastline with both the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf.
2. Its capital city is home to the Masmak Fortress, a significant historical site.
3. The country has a land border with all the nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).
4. It has the largest proven oil reserves in the Middle East.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The country to the south of Jordan is Saudi Arabia, which has coastlines along the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, is home to the Masmak Fortress, a significant historical site symbolizing the unification of the kingdom.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Saudi Arabia borders all GCC countries: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, Oman, and Yemen.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** While Saudi Arabia has significant oil reserves, Venezuela, not Saudi Arabia, has the largest proven oil reserves in the world.

Q834. Consider the following statements about the Axis of Resistance:

1. The alliance is primarily led by Hezbollah, based in Lebanon.
2. Houthis in Yemen are a part of this alliance.
3. Hashd al Shaabi is an Iraqi militant organization associated with the Axis of Resistance.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The alliance is primarily led by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, not Hezbollah.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Houthis in Yemen are part of this alliance.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Hashd al Shaabi in Iraq is a militant organization linked to the Axis of Resistance.

Topic 279

279. Great Nicobar Island project

- It is a **Rs 72,000 crore** development project.

Components of the Project

- International Container Transhipment Terminal (ICTT),
- Greenfield international airport,
- Power plant
- Township for the personnel who will implement the project
- The project was to be implemented in three phases over the **next 30 years**.

Significance of the project



1. Economic significance

- Act as port of call-Source of revenue
- Employment creation

2. Geostategic significance

- **China's vulnerability** regarding access to Indian Ocean due to strategic location of A&N island is known as **Malacca dilemma**.
- China is building its **military facility at Coco Islands (Myanmar)** in the vicinity of the Andaman and Nicobar islands.



China's efforts to expand its footprint in the Indian Ocean Region to overcome its '**Malacca Dilemma**' (China's fear of a maritime blockade at the Straits of Malacca) and fulfil its 'Maritime Silk Road' ambitions has led to **Belt and Road Initiative by China**.

Q835. Which of the following are part of the Great Nicobar Island Project?

1. International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT)
2. A Greenfield international airport
3. A hydropower plant
4. Township for project personnel

Select the correct answer using the codes below:

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- The project includes an ICTT, a Greenfield international airport, a power plant (but not explicitly a hydropower plant), and a township for project personnel.
- Statement 3 is incorrect as the nature of the power plant is not specified as hydropower.

Q836. Consider the following statements regarding the geostrategic significance of the Great Nicobar Island Project:

1. The project's location helps counter China's presence at Coco Islands in Myanmar.
2. The project aims to mitigate China's "Malacca Dilemma" by securing Indian dominance over the Andaman Sea.
3. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are critical for monitoring the Strait of Malacca.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Coco Islands, where China is reportedly building facilities, are geographically close to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, making this project geostrategically significant.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The project enhances India's ability to monitor and control access to the Indian Ocean, addressing China's Malacca Dilemma.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Strait of Malacca is a vital shipping route, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands play a crucial role in monitoring this region.

Q837. Which of the following is true regarding the timeline and economic significance of the Great Nicobar Island Project?

- (a) The project is to be completed in five years, divided into three phases.
- (b) It includes a major focus on renewable energy to power the facilities.
- (c) The project will act as a port of call, generating revenue and creating employment.
- (d) Its primary aim is to support eco-tourism and environmental conservation.

Ans: c

Sol:

- The project is planned for 30 years, not five years.



- Renewable energy is not mentioned as a focus area for the power plant.
- While revenue generation and employment creation are significant, eco-tourism and conservation are not the primary objectives of the project.

Topic 280

280. Great Nicobar Island project-ecological concerns

1. Ecological challenges

- The Great Nicobar Islands is a biosphere reserve and was included in the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme in 2013.
- The project area within a 10 km radius of Galathea Bay is an ecologically sensitive zone and home to rare fauna such as Leatherback Sea Turtles, saltwater crocodiles, and Nicobar macaques.

2. Threats to marine ecosystem

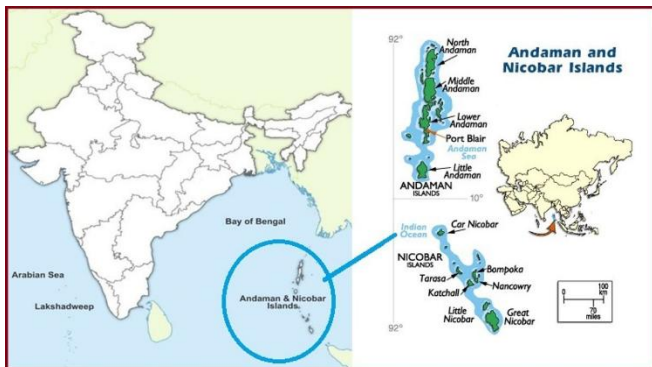
- The **loss of tree cover** will lead to **increased runoff** and sediment deposits in the ocean, **impacting the coral reefs in the area.**

3. Impact on the tribal population

- The GNI are home to the indigenous Shompen tribe who may get displaced due to the project.



Shompen is the only PVTG in the region with Mongoloid features. The **other PVTGs** have **negroid features**.



Great Nicobar

- Great Nicobar is largest of the Nicobar Islands
- 910-sq-km patch

- Mainly tropical rainforest in southeastern
- Indira Point on the island, India's southernmost point.

Great Nicobar has **two national parks**-

- Campbell Bay & Galathea National Parks (Great Nicobar)
- They are a part of the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve.

Tribal population

- Shompen (PVTGs)
- Nicobarese tribal peoples

Q838. Consider the following statements regarding the ecological concerns related to the Great Nicobar Island Project:

1. Galathea Bay is home to rare fauna such as Leatherback Sea Turtles and Nicobar macaques.
2. The Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve includes Campbell Bay and Galathea National Parks.
3. Increased runoff and sediment deposits due to tree loss may threaten coral reefs in the region.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Galathea Bay is an ecologically sensitive zone, home to rare fauna like Leatherback Sea Turtles, saltwater crocodiles, and Nicobar macaques.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Campbell Bay and Galathea National Parks are part of the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Loss of tree cover will lead to increased runoff, affecting coral reefs and the marine ecosystem.

Q839. Consider the following statements about the tribal population in the Great Nicobar Island:

1. The Shompen tribe, classified as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), has Mongoloid features.
2. Nicobarese tribal peoples primarily have Negroid features.
3. The Shompen are the only PVTG in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Shompen tribe, a PVTG, has Mongoloid features.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Nicobarese tribes primarily have Negroid features.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The Shompen are not the only PVTG in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Other tribes like the Great Andamanese, Onge, and Jarwa are also PVTGs.

Q840. Which of the following is true regarding the ecological and strategic importance of Great Nicobar Island?

- (a) The island is entirely covered by tropical rainforests and is not inhabited by humans.
- (b) The project will displace both the Shompen and Nicobarese tribes, affecting their livelihoods.
- (c) Indira Point, India's southernmost point, is located on Great Nicobar Island.
- (d) The Campbell Bay National Park is the only national park on the island.

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Option (a) is incorrect:** While the island has extensive tropical rainforests, it is inhabited by the Shompen and Nicobarese tribes.
- **Option (b) is incorrect:** The project mainly risks displacing the Shompen tribe, not the Nicobarese tribes as a whole.
- **Option (c) is correct:** Indira Point, the southernmost point of India, is located on Great Nicobar Island.
- **Option (d) is incorrect:** The island has two national parks: Campbell Bay and Galathea National Parks.

Day 29

Topic 281

281. Israel-Palestine conflict

- **Israel-coast of Mediterranean sea.**



- Once used to be Jews land-but Jews migrated out about 3000 years ago.
- Later in 7th century Islam was born in Mecca, Arabia.
- The region was then gradually inhabited by Palestinians.

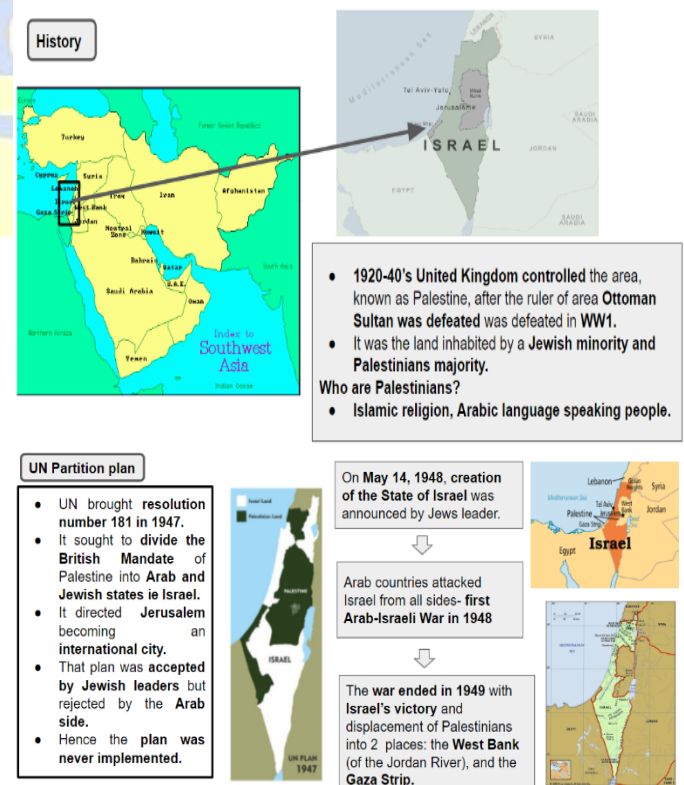
Zionism

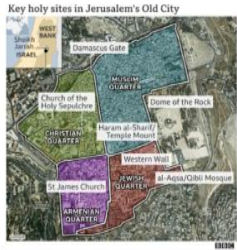
- A movement-of Jews settled across the world -settle in their ancestral land and make it a Jewish state.
- Jewish have an ancient temple there-temple Mount.
- started in 1897 under Theodor Herzl (intensified after Hitler's holocaust against Jews)

After WWII(1939-45)

- UN was created in 1945. UN passed resolution 181 for creation of Israel.
- Soon after started 1st Arab Israeli war (1948).

Overall, after creation of Israel in 1948, **4 wars** between Israel and Palestine has been fought known as Arab-Israeli war.





Al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the rock

- The **Dome of the Rock** is the place where **Muhammad** is said to have ascended into heaven.
 - **Aqsa mosque** is a couple of hundred yards from the **Dome of the Rock**.
- Temple Mount**
- The **Temple Mount** refers to the **elevated plaza above the Western Wall** in Jerusalem that was the site of both of **Judaism's ancient temples**.

Q841. Consider the following countries:

1. Yemen
2. Oman
3. Syria
4. Israel

Which of the above-mentioned countries form a part of the Arabian Peninsula?

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

Ans: a

Sol: Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and parts of Jordan and Iraq form a part of the Arabian Peninsula.

Q842. The Greater Tunb, The Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa Island, sometimes seen in the news, are disputed between which of the following?

- (a) India-Pakistan
(b) Bangladesh-Myanmar
(c) Israel-Lebanon
(d) Iran-UAE

Ans: d

Sol: The Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa Island are three strategically located islands in the Persian Gulf. These islands are the subject of a territorial dispute between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE):

- Iran currently controls these islands, having established its authority over them in 1971.
- The UAE claims sovereignty over the islands, arguing that they were historically under the control of its emirates before Iran's occupation.

This dispute is significant due to the islands' location near key shipping lanes in the Persian Gulf and their potential strategic and economic value.

Q843. Regarding the 'Peace to Prosperity' plan, consider the following statements:

1. It was proposed by the US President to solve the Israeli- Palestinian conflict.
2. The plan provided for a demilitarized Palestinian state living peacefully alongside Israel.
3. The plan includes the construction of a tunnel between the West Bank and Gaza Strip for easy travel and movement of goods.

Select the correct answer using the code given below

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

Ans: d

Sol: The 'Peace to Prosperity' plan, also known as the Trump Peace Plan, was proposed by former U.S. President Donald Trump in January 2020 to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Here's an analysis of the statements:

1. It was proposed by the US President to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
 - True. The plan was a U.S. initiative under Donald Trump's administration to outline a solution for the longstanding conflict.
2. The plan provided for a demilitarized Palestinian state living peacefully alongside Israel.
 - True. The plan proposed the creation of a Palestinian state but required it to be demilitarized, with security control remaining largely under Israeli oversight.
3. The plan includes the construction of a tunnel between the West Bank and Gaza Strip for easy travel and movement of goods.
 - True. A proposed infrastructure component of the plan was the construction of a high-speed transportation link, including a tunnel, to connect the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Thus, all three statements are correct.

Topic 282



282. 4 Arab Israeli Wars-part 1

1. First in 1948

- Right after formation of Israel, Arab countries attacked Israel.
- Halted by UN in 1949
- Israel with help of the US, survived the assault.

2. Second in 1956

- For usage of Suez canal. Egypt had nationalised Suez canal and restricted Israel from using it.

3. Third in 1967

- Known as 6 days war.
- Egypt started military mobilization
- Israel retaliated preemptive strike

Israel overtook-

- Sinai Peninsula and Gaza-from Egypt
- West Bank-from Jordan
- Golan heights from Syria
- Israel evicted UN officials from Jerusalem too

UN resolution-242

- Status quo ante/Israel refused to follow it.

Camp David Accord

- Later on in 1978 Egypt entered into Camp David accord with Israel(mediated by the US).
- Egypt became first Arab country to identify Israel, while Israel returned Sinai peninsula to Egypt.

1860's- Suez canal was built jointly by France and Britain

- Managed by a private British company
- Egypt's President Nasser Nationalised it in 1956



Q844. Consider the following statements related to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency,

1. It was established after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.
2. It is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN member states.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- It was established after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.
 - Correct. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was established in 1949 to provide assistance and relief to Palestinian refugees displaced due to the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict.
- It is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN member states.
 - Correct. UNRWA is funded primarily through voluntary contributions from UN member states and other donors, as it does not receive funding from the UN's regular budget.

Thus, both statements are correct.

Q845. Regarding the West Bank, consider the following statements:

1. It contains a significant section of the western Dead Sea.
 2. It was captured by Israel after the Arab-Israeli War (1948) but Jordan snatched it back during the Six-Day War of 1967 and has occupied it ever since.
 3. It is sandwiched between Israel and Jordan.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?



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

Ans: b

Sol:

It contains a significant section of the western Dead Sea.

- Correct. The West Bank borders the western shore of the Dead Sea, and a significant portion of the western Dead Sea is part of the West Bank territory.

It was captured by Israel after the Arab-Israeli War (1948) but Jordan snatched it back during the Six-Day War of 1967 and has occupied it ever since.

- Incorrect. The sequence of events is as follows:
 - After the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Jordan annexed the West Bank.
 - During the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan, and it has been under Israeli occupation since then, though it is internationally considered disputed territory.
 - Jordan does not currently occupy the West Bank.

It is sandwiched between Israel and Jordan.

- Correct. Geographically, the West Bank is located between Israel (to its west) and Jordan (to its east).

Q846. Consider the following statements:

Statement-1: Israel has established diplomatic relations with some Arab States.

Statement-II: The 'Arab Peace Initiative' mediated by Saudi Arabia was signed by Israel and Arab League.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- (a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I.
(b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I.
(c) Statement-1 is correct but Statement-II is incorrect.
(d) Statement-1 is incorrect but Statement-II is correct.

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Israel has established diplomatic relations with some Arab countries over the years. The first Arab country to officially recognize and establish diplomatic relations with Israel was Egypt. The historic peace treaty between Israel and Egypt was signed in 1979 at Camp David, leading to diplomatic relations and normalization of ties between the two nations.
 - Another Arab country that has established diplomatic relations with Israel is Jordan. In 2020, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain signed agreements with Israel to establish full diplomatic relations, known as the Abraham Accords.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Arab Peace Initiative was not signed by Israel. The Arab Peace Initiative, also known as the "Saudi Initiative," was proposed by Saudi Arabia in 2002 at the Arab League Summit in Beirut. It was endorsed by the Arab League as a potential resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
 - The initiative called for the recognition of Israel by the Arab states and the establishment of normal diplomatic relations in exchange for Israel's complete withdrawal from the territories occupied during the 1967 Six-Day War, the creation of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a "just solution" for Palestinian refugees based on UN General Assembly Resolution 194. While Israel has not officially signed the Arab Peace Initiative, it has been the subject of discussions and negotiations between Israel and the Arab states.

Topic 283

283. 4 Arab Israeli Wars-part 2

Fourth in 1973

- 6th October 1973-Yom Kippur war (new year for Jews)
- PLO attacked (with support of countries like Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq)
- Heavy casualty for Israel
- Later got support from the US and thus survived and defeated all Muslim countries

What happened in October 2023?



- Exactly **50 years after Yom Kippur war** **Hamas**, a fighter group of Palestinians, **attacked Israel**.
- Hamas made many **Israeli civilians captive**.
- Since then **Israel** is regularly **bombing Gaza** region.



As a result of **successive Arab-Israeli war**, **Palestine** has **lost much of its territory** and is now limited to **much smaller** region wrt what it should be as per **UN plan 1947 (UN resolution 181)**

Q847. Consider the following pairs:

Regions often : Reason for mentioned in news being in news

1. North Kivu and Ituri : War between Armenia and Azerbaijan
2. Nagorno-Karabakh : Insurgency in Mozambique
3. Kherson and Zaporizhzhia : Dispute between Israel and Lebanon

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: d

Sol:

- Pair 1 is incorrectly matched:** North Kivu and Ituri are the eastern provinces of Democratic Republic of Congo. The President of Congo, Felix Tshisekedi declared a "State of Siege" due to the increasing violence in the eastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri. The violence killed more than hundred people and displaced more than 1.5 million.
- Pair 2 is incorrectly matched:** Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous and heavily forested region that under international law is

recognised as part of Azerbaijan. Recently, protests against possible concessions by Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh which is disputed with neighboring Azerbaijan, have increased.

- Pair 3 is incorrectly matched:** Russia released vote tallies showing overwhelming support in four provinces of Ukraine to join with Russia. The four regions are Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson.

Q848. Yom Kippur War was fought between which sides/countries:

- (a) Israel and Arab countries led by Egypt and Syria
- (b) Serbs and Croats
- (c) Turkey and Greece
- (d) Iran and Iraq

Ans: a

Sol: The Yom Kippur War, also known as the October War, was fought in 1973 between Israel and a coalition of Arab countries led by Egypt and Syria.

Q849. Consider the following pairs:

Group - Country

1. Houthi - Lebanon
2. Hezbollah - Yemen
3. Hamas - Palestine

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

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

Ans: a

Sol:

Houthi - Lebanon

- Incorrect. The Houthi movement (also known as Ansar Allah) is based in Yemen, not Lebanon. It is a political and armed group primarily involved in the Yemeni civil war.

Hezbollah - Yemen

- Incorrect. Hezbollah (Party of God) is a Shiite political and militant group based in Lebanon, not Yemen. It has significant influence in Lebanon and is supported by Iran.



Hamas - Palestine

- Correct. Hamas is a Palestinian Sunni-Islamic militant and political organization that operates primarily in Palestinian territories, especially the Gaza Strip.

Topic 284

284. Norway, Ireland and Spain recognised Palestine

- Norway, Ireland, and Spain gave recognition to state of Palestine.
- This is for first time a Western European country has committed to such recognition to Palestine.

Which countries recognise Palestine as a state?

- Before the announcement by Norway, Ireland, and Spain, 143 of the UN's 193 members already recognised Palestine as a state. Most of these countries are in Asia, Africa, and South America.
- India accorded diplomatic recognition to Palestine in 1988.

Palestine's status at UN

- "Permanent Observer State" — and not a "Member State" — at the UN.

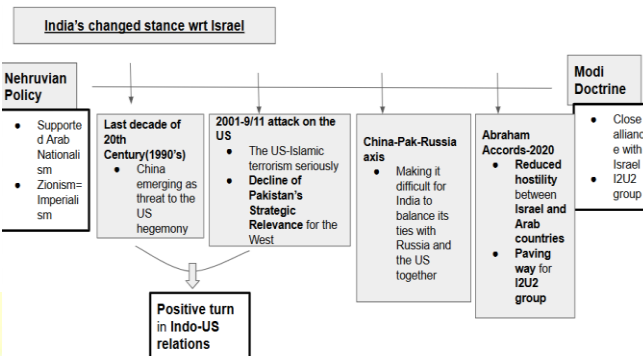
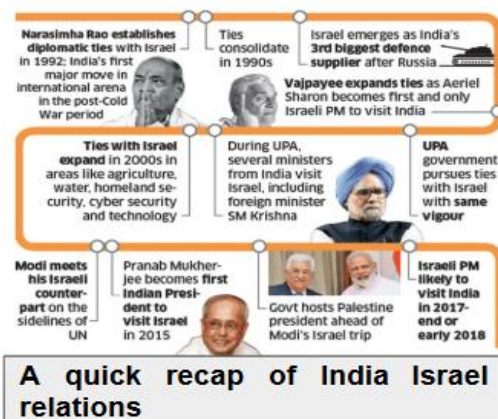
The United Nations criterion for accepting states as Members-

- Admission to the UN as a Member State is granted by a two-thirds majority vote in the UN General Assembly.
- However, the UNGA takes up the candidature resolution only upon the recommendation of the UN Security Council.

Israel membership at UN

- Israel was accorded membership of the UN in 1949 itself (right after its formation).

Note- India formally recognised Israel in 1950. Embassies were opened in 1992 when full diplomatic relations were established.



Q850. Pyrenees Mountains, recently in news, forms a natural border between which two countries?

- Germany & Switzerland
- Norway & Sweden
- Hungary & Romania
- Spain & France

Ans: d

Sol: The French President recently hosted Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Tourmalet Pass in the Pyrenees for private meetings.

About Pyrenees Mountains:

- The Pyrenees are a chain of mountains in southwestern Europe that form a natural border between Spain and France.
- It is a fold mountain chain created by the continental collision of the microcontinent of Iberia with the massive Eurasian plate.
- They are quite old mountains in comparison to the Alps.

Q851. Which of the following statements about the recognition of Palestine as a state is/are correct?
1. Norway, Ireland, and Spain are the first Western European countries to recognize Palestine as a state.



2. Before their recognition, 143 of the UN's 193 members had already recognized Palestine.

3. Most countries that recognize Palestine are located in Asia, Africa, and South America.

4. India accorded diplomatic recognition to Palestine in 1988.

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Norway, Ireland, and Spain were the first Western European countries to recognize Palestine.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Before this, 143 UN members had already recognized Palestine.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Most of these countries are in Asia, Africa, and South America.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** India diplomatically recognized Palestine in 1988.

Q852. Consider the following statements about Palestine's status at the United Nations:

1. Palestine is currently a "Member State" at the UN.

2. Admission as a UN Member State requires a two-thirds majority in the UN General Assembly.

3. A recommendation by the UN Security Council is mandatory for the UNGA to take up a candidature resolution.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Palestine is a "Permanent Observer State," not a "Member State."
- **Statement 2 is correct:** A two-thirds majority in the UN General Assembly is needed for membership.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** A recommendation by the UN Security Council is mandatory for the UNGA to consider a candidature.

Topic 285

285. Rafah crossing

Rafah border crossing

Only crossing point between Egypt and Gaza
Egypt controls the opening of the crossing
Supplies entering Gaza through Rafah require Israeli approval



Image: Getty

BBC



Q853. Regarding the Gaza Strip, consider the following statements:

1. The Gaza Strip is situated in the eastern Mediterranean basin.

2. It shares borders with Israel in the southwest and Egypt to the north and east.

3. Its three operational border crossings are Karem Abu Salem and Erez, under Israeli control, and Rafah, under Egyptian control.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol: The Gaza Strip is situated in the eastern Mediterranean basin.

- Correct. The Gaza Strip is located along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

It shares borders with Israel in the southwest and Egypt to the north and east.

- Incorrect. The Gaza Strip shares borders with Israel to the east and north and Egypt



to the southwest. The directions mentioned in the statement are reversed.

Its three operational border crossings are Karem Abu Salem and Erez, under Israeli control, and Rafah, under Egyptian control.

- Correct. The Gaza Strip has the following operational border crossings:
 - Erez Crossing: Controlled by Israel for people and goods.
 - Kerem Shalom (Karem Abu Salem) Crossing: Controlled by Israel for goods.
 - Rafah Crossing: Controlled by Egypt for people and humanitarian aid.

Q854. Regarding Golan Heights, consider the following statements:

1. It is surrounded by the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee to the west, Mount Hermon to the north, the seasonal Wadi Al- Ruqqad River to the east, and the Yarmük River to the south.

2. Israel seized the Golan Heights from Syria in the closing stages of the 1967 Six-Day War.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** The Golan Heights is indeed surrounded by the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee to the west, Mount Hermon to the north, the seasonal Wadi Al-Ruqqad River to the east, and the Yarmük River to the south. This accurately describes the geographical features surrounding the Golan Heights.
- **Statement 2:** Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria during the 1967 Six-Day War. This event marked a significant shift in the region's territorial dynamics. Israel has controlled the area since then, and in 1981, it unilaterally annexed the Golan Heights, a move not internationally recognized.

Thus, both statements are correct.

Q855. Philadelphi Corridor, recently seen in the news, is located along the border of Gaza and which country?

- (a) Egypt
- (b) Sudan
- (c) Lebanon
- (d) Jordan

Ans: a

Sol: The Philadelphi Corridor is a narrow strip along the Gaza-Egypt border, established as a demilitarized buffer zone by the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.

Topic 286

286. China brokered deal between Hamas and Fatah

Administration of Palestine

- Palestine Government is known as **Palestinian Authority**.
- It is headed by **Fatah (a political party)** in **West Bank**.
- In **Gaza, Hamas** has been in **power since 2006**.

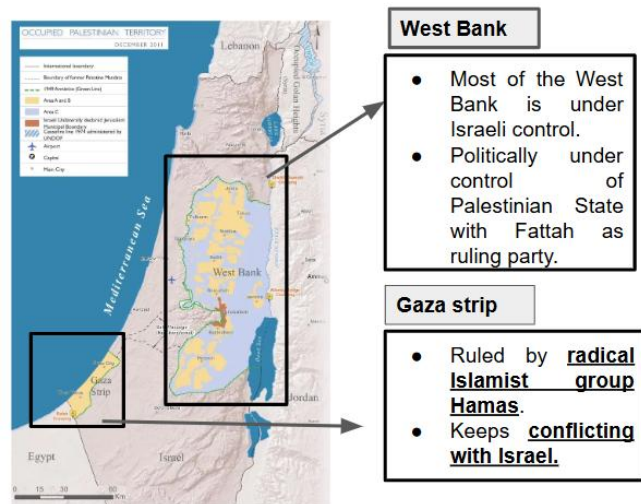
Hamas

- Calls itself a **Political party**.
- But conducts **terror attacks** in **Israel territories**.
- Has **not allowed elections** since **2012 in Gaza**.
- **US and EU** consider it a **terror group**.
- **Iran** is one of Hamas's biggest **benefactors, contributing funds, weapons, and training**.
- **Hamas** is part of Iran's '**Axis of Resistance**'.
- In **October 2023 Hamas attacked Israel**, led to **retaliation by Israel** causing current crisis.

Difference of opinion between Fatah and Hamas

- **Fatah wants a political solution** in line with **2 state solution**, while **Hamas wants to eliminate Israel**.





Current development

- **China** has initiated a **peace dialogue** between **Hamas and Fatah** with a name **Beijing declaration**.
- China claims itself to be a **"just" mediator** in the **region**.

This is sign of China's **growing footprint in West Asia**.

Q856. Consider the following statements regarding the administration of Palestine:

1. The Palestinian Authority is headed by Hamas in Gaza.
2. Hamas has not allowed elections in Gaza since 2012.
3. Fatah supports a two-state solution, while Hamas seeks to eliminate Israel.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The Palestinian Authority is headed by Fatah in the West Bank, not Gaza. Hamas has been in power in Gaza since 2006.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Hamas has not allowed elections in Gaza since 2012.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** There is a fundamental ideological difference between Fatah (political solution via a two-state framework) and Hamas (seeks to eliminate Israel).

Thus, two statements are correct.

Q857. Consider the following statements about Hamas:

1. The United States and the European Union consider Hamas a terrorist organization.
2. Iran is a significant benefactor of Hamas, providing funds, weapons, and training.
3. Hamas is part of the Iranian-backed "Axis of Resistance."
4. Hamas has allowed elections in Gaza since 2006.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Both the US and EU classify Hamas as a terrorist group.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Iran provides significant financial and military support to Hamas.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Hamas is part of Iran's "Axis of Resistance," which includes other groups opposing Israel and Western influence.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** Hamas has not allowed elections in Gaza since 2012.

Thus, statements 1, 2, and 3 are correct.

Q858. Consider the following statements regarding China's involvement in the Hamas-Fatah dialogue:

1. The peace dialogue is named the "Beijing Declaration."
2. China claims to act as a neutral and just mediator in the region.
3. The initiative marks China's growing geopolitical influence in West Asia.
4. This is the first instance of China mediating a conflict in West Asia.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:



- **Statement 1 is correct:** The peace dialogue is referred to as the "Beijing Declaration."
- **Statement 2 is correct:** China positions itself as a neutral and just mediator in global conflicts.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The mediation effort highlights China's increasing involvement in West Asia.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** This is not the first instance of China's involvement in West Asia; China has previously engaged in mediating or influencing other regional issues.

Thus, statements 1, 2, and 3 are correct.

Topic 287

287. The International Energy Agency (IEA)

- Established in 1974 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Created in response to the 1973 global oil crisis following the Yom Kippur War.

Objective:

- To ensure reliable, affordable, and clean energy for its member countries.
- Maintains emergency response systems for oil supply disruptions.
- Acts as a policy advisor to its members and associate members.

Membership:

- Consists of 32 member countries (Latvia is the latest to join).
- Membership is limited to OECD countries.
- India is an associate member, not a full member.
- Located in Paris, France.

Key Reports and Initiatives:

1. **World Energy Outlook (WEO):** A flagship publication providing global energy analysis.
2. **Energy Technology Perspectives:** Focuses on technology's role in achieving energy goals.
3. **Net Zero by 2050 Roadmap:** A guide to transition towards carbon neutrality.

Current news?

- **IEA praised** India's Energy Conservation Building Code (**ECBC**), **2017** in its **World Energy Outlook 2023 report**.

Energy Conservation Building Code

- Released in **2007**, followed by an **update in 2017**
- **By Bureau of Energy Efficiency** (under Ministry of Power)

ECBC role-

- sets minimum energy standards for commercial buildings, with the objective of enabling energy savings of between **25 and 50 per cent**
- It applies to commercial buildings like hospitals, hotels, schools, shopping complexes, etc.

Q859. With reference to the International Energy Agency (IEA), consider the following statements:

1. "Electricity 2024" report is released by the International Energy Agency's (IEA).
2. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), coal power plants produce a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** The International Energy Agency (IEA) publishes the "Electricity 2024" report, which provides analysis and forecasts for electricity demand, supply, and CO₂ emissions through 2026.
- **Statement 2:** Coal-fired power plants are significant contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions. According to the World Bank, coal power plants produce about a fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions, making them the largest single source.

Therefore, both statements are correct.

Q860. Consider the following statements about the International Energy Agency (IEA):

1. It is an autonomous Intergovernmental Organisation established in Paris.
2. A candidate country to the IEA must not be a member country of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).



3. It was established in the wake of the oil crisis of 1973-1974, to help its members respond to major disruptions in oil supply.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three statements
- (d) None of the statements

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The International Energy Agency (IEA) is an autonomous intergovernmental organization headquartered in Paris, France. It works to ensure reliable, affordable, and clean energy for its member countries.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** To become a member of the IEA, a country must be a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Membership in the OECD is a prerequisite for joining the IEA.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The IEA was established in response to the 1973-1974 oil crisis, with the goal of helping its member countries coordinate a collective response to major disruptions in oil supply and promoting energy security.

Q861. The 'Indian Oil Market Outlook to 2030' Report was recently released by which of the following:

- (a) International Energy Agency (IEA)
- (b) Petroleum Conservation Research Association
- (c) Petroleum Federation of India
- (d) Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas

Ans: a

Sol: The 'Indian Oil Market Outlook to 2030' report was recently released by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Topic 288

288. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

- Intergovernmental economic organisation.
- There are 38 OECD member countries.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

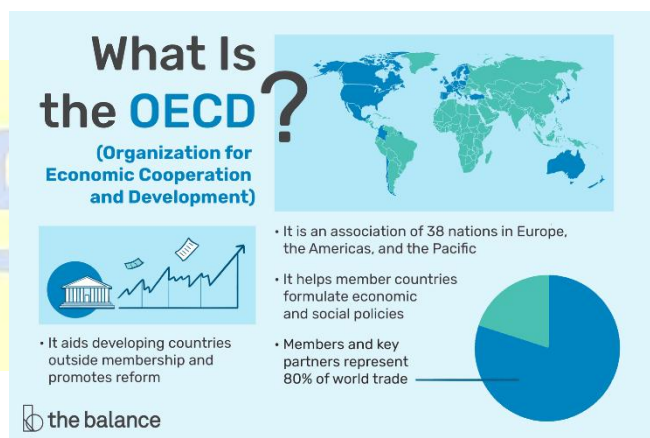
- Most OECD members are high-income economies with a very high Human Development Index (HDI).
- Costa Rica is the most recent member, joining in 2021.

Purpose:

- To promote economic growth, prosperity, and sustainable development.
- Encourages free-market economies and democratic governance.

Reports

- Economic Outlook, Better Life Index, and International Migration Outlook.
- Known for its Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), evaluating global education systems.
- Major economies like China, India, and Brazil are not full members but engage with the OECD on various levels.



Q862. With reference to the Base Erosion and Profit Sharing, consider the following statements:

1. It has been framed by the OECD and approved by the G20 countries.
 2. It aims at ensuring minimum global corporate tax.
 3. India is an active participant in the application of this framework.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 2 only
 - (b) 1, 2 and 3
 - (c) 1 and 3 only
 - (d) 3 only

Ans: b

Sol:



- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) framework has been developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and endorsed by the G20 countries. It addresses tax planning strategies that exploit gaps and mismatches in tax rules to shift profits to low or no-tax jurisdictions.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** One of the key pillars of the BEPS framework is the Global Minimum Corporate Tax. This ensures that multinational corporations pay a minimum level of tax, regardless of where their profits are reported.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** India is an active participant in the BEPS framework and has implemented several measures aligned with the framework, including transfer pricing rules, equalization levy, and the signing of the Multilateral Instrument (MLI).

Q863. Which of the following two organizations are parts of TIWB (Tax Inspectors Without Borders)?

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and ASEAN
- UNDP and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- International Labour Organization (ILO) and ASEAN

Ans: c

Sol: The two organizations that are part of TIWB (Tax Inspectors Without Borders) are:

- OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)
- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
 - TIWB is a joint initiative between the OECD and the UNDP, launched in 2015, to help developing countries build capacity in tax audit and transfer pricing. The program aims to support countries in strengthening their tax systems and combating tax evasion.
 - TIWB provides training, guidance, and hands-on support to tax administrations in developing countries, helping them to improve their tax audit and transfer pricing capabilities.

Q864. Consider the following statements regarding the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):

- Most OECD members are high-income economies with a very high Human Development Index (HDI).
 - Costa Rica became the latest member of the OECD in 2021.
 - OECD is headquartered in Paris, France.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct?
- Only one
 - Only two
 - All three statements
 - None of the statements

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Most members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are high-income economies with a very high Human Development Index (HDI). The OECD focuses on promoting policies that improve economic and social well-being globally.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Costa Rica became the latest member of the OECD in 2021, marking an important step in its integration into the global economy and adherence to international standards.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The OECD is headquartered in Paris, France.

Topic 289

289. Integrated theatre commands

- It means a **unified command of the three Services**, under a **single commander**, for **geographical theatres (areas)**.
- **not be answerable** to any **one individual Services**.
- It will ensure **better coordination** amongst the armed forces.

Current situation

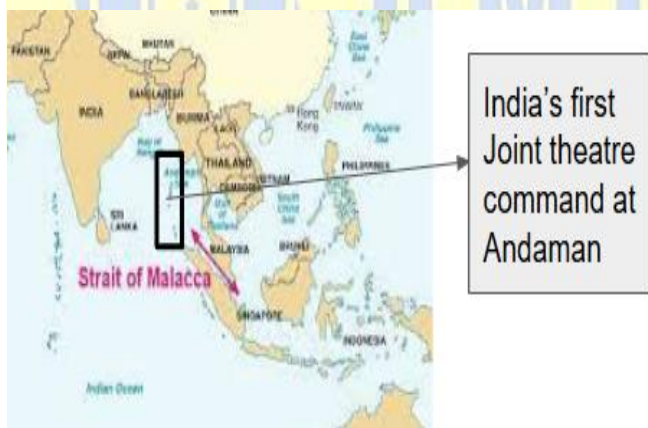
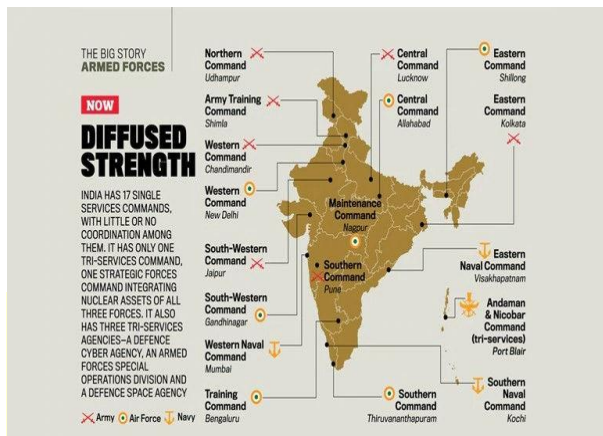
- The **Indian armed forces** currently have **17 commands**.
- There are **7 commands** each of the **Army and the Air Force**.
- The **Navy** has **3 commands**.
- Each command is headed by a **4-star rank military officer**.
- There is **one joint command** in **Andaman and Nicobar Islands at Port Blair**.



- It was created in 2001 to safeguard India's strategic interests in Southeast Asia and the Strait of Malacca (Malacca dilemma for China).

Shekatkar committee

- recommended the creation of 3 integrated theatre commands —
 1. Northern for the China border
 2. Western for the Pakistan border
 3. Southern for the maritime role
- **Southern Command** may be divided in **two** - South East Theatre command and South West Theatre command



Q865. Regarding the Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs), consider the following statements:

1. An integrated theatre command envisages a unified command of the three Services, under a single commander, for geographical theatres (areas) that are of strategic and security concern.
2. The integrated theatre commander will not be answerable to individual services.
3. The Shekatkar Committee, 2015 has recommended the creation of 3 integrated theatre commands.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three statements
(d) None of the statements

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.**

An Integrated Theatre Command (ITC) involves a unified command of the Army, Navy, and Air Force under a single commander for a specific geographical area of strategic importance. The objective is to ensure better coordination, efficiency, and effectiveness in operations.

- **Statement 2: Correct.**

The integrated theatre commander is not answerable to individual services but to the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) or the higher defence organization. This ensures unified decision-making and avoids conflicts among services.

- **Statement 3: Correct.**



The Shekatkar Committee (in 2015) had recommended the creation of 3 integrated theatre commands — northern for the China border, western for the Pakistan border, and southern for the maritime role.

Q866. Which one of the following is not correct in respect of Andaman and Nicobar Command?

- It is the first integrated theatre command in India.
- Its headquarters is at Port Blair.
- It is commanded by a four-star officer.
- It was set up by the British during the Second World War.

Ans: d

Sol: Statement (d): Incorrect. The Andaman and Nicobar Command was not set up by the British during the Second World War. While the British did establish a military presence in the region during the Second World War, the Andaman and Nicobar Command was established by India after independence, in 2001, to safeguard the strategically important islands and enhance India's maritime security in the region.

Q867. Regarding Kuruvadweep Island, consider the following statements:

- It is part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- It is a densely populated river delta with rich flora and fauna, formed by a cluster of Islets in the middle of the River Kabini.
- Its forest is home to various species of orchids, medicinal herbs, and migratory birds.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three statements
- None of the statements

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Incorrect.**

Kuruvadweep is not part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is located in the Wayanad district of Kerala, India, and is situated in the middle of the Kabini River, in the Western Ghats.

- Statement 2: Correct.**

Kuruvadweep is a cluster of islets in the middle of the Kabini River, and it is known for its rich flora and fauna. The area is a river delta, and it is characterized by dense forests and unique biodiversity.

- Statement 3: Correct.**

The forests of Kuruvadweep are indeed home to various species of orchids, medicinal herbs, and migratory birds, making it a significant ecological area.

Topic 290

290. Colombo Security Conclave

- The Colombo Security Conclave is a maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Mauritius.

Envisaged Goal of Colombo Security Conclave-

- Maritime Safety and Security
- Countering maritime piracy
- Combating Trafficking and Transnational Organized Crime
- Cyber Security, Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Technology
- Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

Strategic significance of Colombo Security Conclave for India-

1. Countering China in Indian Ocean

- China through its projects under BRI like CPEC and CMEC aims to expand its footprint in Indian ocean.

2. India's vision regarding Indian ocean

- India aims to make Indian navy a blue water navy in the Indian ocean ie first responder in a contingency.

3. Synergy With SAGAR Vision

- The grouping is also in line with India's vision of "SAGAR: Security and Growth for all in the Region"

SAGAR vision

- In 2015, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi coined SAGAR initiative during his visit to Indian Ocean island countries-Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka for maritime cooperation with island countries of Indian ocean.



COLOMBO SECURITY CONCLAVE (CSC)

Regional security grouping initially formed in 2011 as a trilateral Indian Ocean maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives

MEMBERS

India
Sri Lanka
Maldives
Mauritius

OBSERVERS

Bangladesh
Seychelles



Q868. Regarding the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a regional security grouping comprising India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Mauritius.
 2. It has a permanent secretariat in New Delhi, which was established in 2021 to coordinate activities and implement decisions made at the National Security Advisor (NSA) level meetings.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) is a regional security grouping that includes India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Mauritius. The grouping focuses on

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

cooperation in areas such as maritime security, counterterrorism, and cyber security.

- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** A permanent secretariat, based in Colombo, was established in 2021 to coordinate all activities and implement decisions made at the NSA level

Q869. Regarding the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a trilateral maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives formed in 2011.
 2. Recently, Mauritius, Bangladesh & Seychelles have also joined the grouping as full members.
- Which of the following statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol: Bangladesh and Seychelles attended as observers and have been invited to join the group.

Q870. With reference to Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), consider the following statements:

1. It aims to create a platform for closer cooperation in maritime security and address regional security threats.
2. India, Bangladesh, and Nepal are the founding members of the CSC.
3. Observer states of CSC have no role in decision-making.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statements 1 is correct.** The CSC focuses on creating a platform for cooperation in maritime security and addressing regional security threats, including counter-terrorism, trafficking, and cybersecurity. There are five pillars of cooperation under the CSC namely Maritime



Safety and Security; Countering Terrorism and Radicalisation; Combating Trafficking and Transnational Organised Crime; Cyber Security and Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Technology; and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

- **Statements 2 and 3 are incorrect.** The CSC was originally established as a trilateral maritime security dialogue among India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives in 2011. It was later expanded and renamed in 2020 to include Mauritius as a member. Bangladesh was initially an observer but officially became the fifth full member of the CSC during the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser (DNSA) level meeting on July 10, 2024. Currently, Seychelles holds observer status in the CSC. Observer states participate actively in discussions and can influence the decision-making processes, even though they do not have formal voting rights. Their involvement allows them to contribute significantly to the conclave's activities.

Day 30

Topic 291

291. OPEC+ group

OPEC(Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries)

- intergovernmental organization, headquartered in Vienna, Austria.
- OPEC was founded in Baghdad in 1960 by five countries namely Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.
- Currently, the Organization has a total of 12 Member Countries (Angola withdrew its membership effective 1 January 2024).
- Report-World Oil Outlook

What does OPEC do?

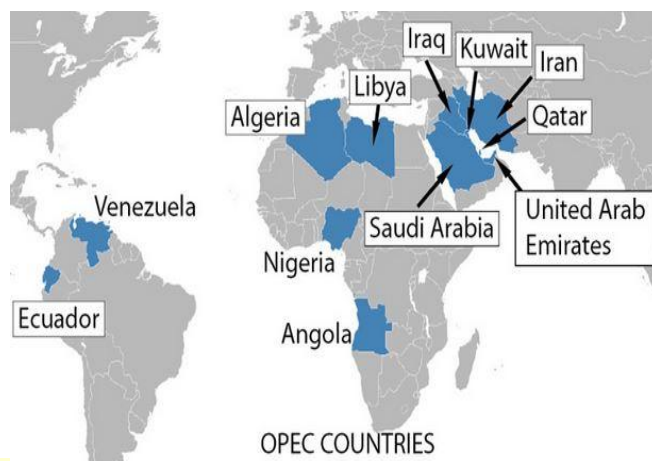
- OPEC is group of major petroleum producing countries.
- Coordinate petroleum policies among member Countries, in order to secure fair and stable prices.

OPEC + group

- group of 22 oil-exporting nations, which includes the 12 members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and 10 other major oil producers.

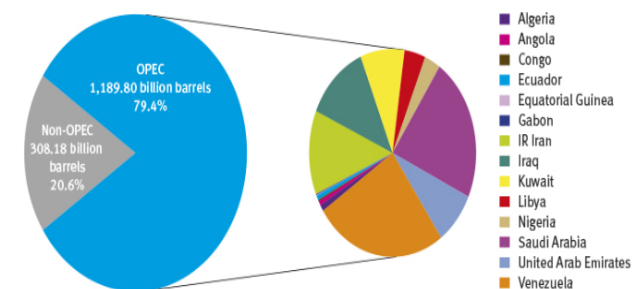
- The "plus" refers to these additional producers
- OPEC plus countries include **Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.**

Note-Venezuela has highest proven oil reserves in the world.



Together OPEC has about 80% of world's oil reserve

OPEC share of world crude oil reserves, 2018



OPEC proven crude oil reserves, at end 2018 (billion barrels, OPEC share)

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------|-------|---------|--------|------|---------|-------|------|-------------------|------|------|
| Venezuela | 302.81 | 25.5% | Kuwait | 101.50 | 8.5% | Algeria | 12.20 | 1.0% | Gabon | 2.00 | 0.2% |
| Saudi Arabia | 267.03 | 22.4% | UAE | 97.80 | 8.2% | Ecuador | 8.27 | 0.7% | Equatorial Guinea | 1.10 | 0.1% |
| IR Iran | 155.60 | 13.1% | Libya | 48.36 | 4.1% | Angola | 8.16 | 0.7% | | | |
| Iraq | 145.02 | 12.2% | Nigeria | 36.97 | 3.1% | Congo | 2.98 | 0.3% | | | |

Source: OPEC Annual Statistical Bulletin 2019.

Q871. Consider the following statements:

1. OPEC was founded in Baghdad in 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
2. The headquarters of OPEC is located in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
3. As of January 2024, OPEC consists of 12 member countries, with Angola withdrawing its membership.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) Only one



- (b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** OPEC was indeed founded in Baghdad in 1960 by Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** OPEC is headquartered in Vienna, Austria, not Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** OPEC currently has 12 member countries as Angola withdrew its membership effective January 1, 2024.

Q872. Consider the following statements:

1. OPEC aims to coordinate petroleum policies among member countries to secure fair and stable prices.
2. The "World Oil Outlook" report is released annually by OPEC.
3. Venezuela, a founding member of OPEC, holds the second-highest proven oil reserves in the world.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** One of OPEC's key objectives is to coordinate petroleum policies among its members to ensure fair and stable prices.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The "World Oil Outlook" report is indeed published by OPEC annually.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** Venezuela has the highest proven oil reserves in the world, not the second-highest.

Q873. Consider the following statements regarding OPEC+:

1. OPEC+ includes the 12 members of OPEC along with 10 additional major oil producers.
2. Russia, Kazakhstan, and Malaysia are among the non-OPEC members in the OPEC+ group.
3. OPEC+ was formed to address challenges related to declining oil prices and overproduction in the global market.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Correct. OPEC+ includes 12 OPEC members and 10 additional major oil producers, making it a group of 22 countries.
- **Statement 2:** Correct. Russia, Kazakhstan, and Malaysia are among the 10 non-OPEC members in the OPEC+ group.
- **Statement 3:** Correct. OPEC+ was formed to address challenges such as declining oil prices and overproduction, which required greater coordination among oil-exporting nations.

Topic 292

292. Shanghai Cooperation Organization

- SCO is a permanent intergovernmental organisation.
 - It was created in 2001.
 - **Objective-** It aims at promoting political, economic and military cooperation amongst members.
 - Secretariat is in Beijing.
- Membership
- Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Iran and Belarus.
 - India and Pakistan became members in 2017.
 - Iran (joined in 2023).
 - Belarus (joined 2024)

Current news?



- 23rd session of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of SCO was held in Islamabad, Pakistan.

- India's External Affairs Minister **Dr S Jaishankar** represented India.

Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) of SCO

- Based in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, focusing on counterterrorism and security cooperation.

Tourist and Cultural Capital of the SCO in 2024-2025

- Qingdao, China

Varanasi was cultural capital in 2022-23

Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional intergovernmental security alliance involving Russia, China and four Central Asian states



Milestones

- 1996**
Foundation of the Shanghai Five,
the SCO predecessor
- 1999**
Foundation of the Bishkek Group to counter border
criminality
- 2001**
Uzbekistan joins SCO
- June 15, 2001**
Shanghai Cooperation Organization Founding
Declaration signed
- 2008**
Iran submits official application for full-right SCO
membership

Basic documents

- **2001**
Shanghai Convention on the Struggle
against Terrorism, Separatism and
Extremism
- **2002**
SCO Charter
- **2002**
Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS)
Founding Agreement

Goals and Objectives

- Strengthening of mutual trust and good-neighbourly policies between member states
- Promotion of effective cooperation in politics, trade, economics, science, technology, and culture, as well as education, energy, transport, tourism and environmental protection
- Jointly ensuring peace, security and stability in the region
- Advancement to a new democratic, fair and rational global political and economic order

SCO Structure

- Council of Heads of State
 - Council of Heads of Government
 - Council of Foreign Ministers
 - Meetings of Heads of Ministries and Departments
 - Council of National Coordinators
 - Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure
- Russian Foreign Ministry
Ambassador-at-Large Vitaly Vorobyov is the
Presidential Envoy for SCO Affairs

Q874. Consider the following statements:

1. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established in 2001 as a permanent intergovernmental organization.
2. Its secretariat is located in Beijing, China.
3. The primary objective of the SCO is to promote military cooperation among member states, with limited focus on political and economic collaboration.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The SCO was established in 2001 as a permanent intergovernmental organization.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The SCO's secretariat is based in Beijing, China.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** The SCO's objectives include promoting political, economic, and military cooperation, not just military cooperation

Q875. Consider the following statements:

1. India and Pakistan became members of the SCO in 2017.
2. Iran joined the SCO as a full member in 2023, and Belarus joined in 2024.
3. The original members of the SCO include Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India and Pakistan became full members of the SCO in 2017.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Iran joined as a full member in 2023, and Belarus joined in 2024.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The original members of the SCO include Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Q876. Consider the following statements regarding the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO):

1. The 23rd session of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the SCO was held in Islamabad, Pakistan.
2. The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) of the SCO is headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and focuses on counterterrorism and security cooperation.
3. Qingdao, China, was designated as the Tourist and Cultural Capital of the SCO for 2024-2025.



How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The 23rd session of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) was held in Islamabad, Pakistan, and India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar represented India.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) is headquartered in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and focuses on counterterrorism and security.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Qingdao, China, was the Tourist and Cultural Capital of the SCO for 2024-2025.

Topic 293

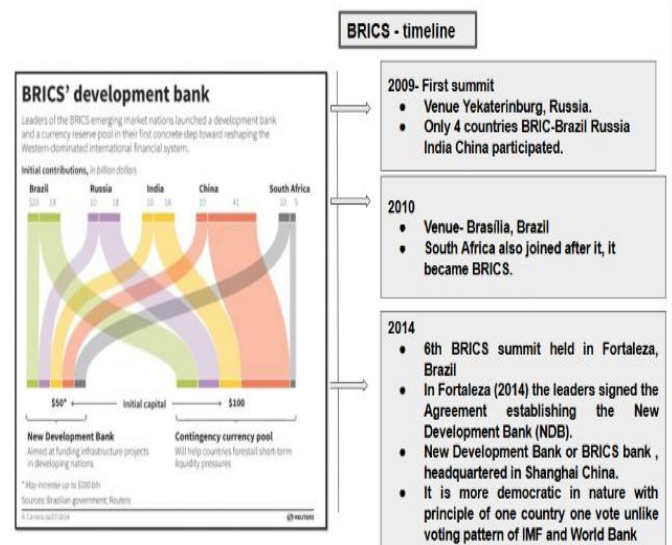
293. BRICS

BRICS Chairmanship

- The chairmanship of BRICS rotates annually among its five founding members.
- The rotation is based on the alphabetical order of the countries' names.
- Due to Brazil's G20 presidency in 2024, Brazil requested to swap its chairmanship year with Russia, resulting in Russia leading BRICS in 2024 and Brazil taking over in 2025.

BRICS Summit 2024:Kazan,Russia

- **BRICS expanding its membership**, adding **five new countries**—Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.
- **Indonesia** is the **latest member to join** in 2025.



Voting Rights

1. Contingency Reserve Arrangement
 - As per contribution-China has highest
2. New Development Bank
 - All founding members (BRICS) have equal shares
 - The BRICS countries will always have at least 55% of the total voting power

Q877. Consider the following statements regarding the "Summit on Peace in Ukraine":

1. It was organized in Brussels, Belgium to establish a just and lasting peace in Ukraine.
2. None of the BRICS members attended the summit.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The "Summit on Peace in Ukraine" was organized in Burgenstock, Switzerland.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** India, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates attended the summit.

Q878. Consider the following statements regarding the BRICS Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA) and New Development Bank (NDB):



1. China has the highest contribution to the BRICS CRA.
2. All founding members of BRICS have equal shares in the New Development Bank.
3. BRICS countries will always hold at least 55% of the total voting power in the New Development Bank.

How many of the above statements is/are incorrect?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** As per the contribution arrangement, China has the highest contribution to the BRICS CRA.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** All founding BRICS members hold equal shares in the New Development Bank.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** BRICS countries will retain at least 55% of the total voting power in the New Development Bank to maintain control.

Q879. Consider the following statements regarding BRICS membership and expansion:

1. Five new countries—Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—joined BRICS recently.
2. Indonesia will become the latest member to join BRICS in 2025.
3. The new members will immediately hold equal voting rights in the New Development Bank.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE were recently added to BRICS.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Indonesia is confirmed to join BRICS in 2025.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The new members will not immediately hold equal voting rights in the New Development Bank, as the founding members retain significant control.

Topic 294

294. Interpol

- **195-member intergovernmental organisation** headquartered in **Lyon, France**.
- It was formed in **1923**.
- **India joined** the organisation in **1949**, and is **one of its oldest members**.

What does Interpol do?

- The Interpol basically **connects police across the world**.
- The agency is **focused** on several key areas of crime – **Terrorism, Sexual abuse of children and child pornography, Organized crime International fugitives**.

Funding –

- Most of Interpol's funding comes from the **member countries themselves**.



- The **President of Interpol** is **elected** by the **General Assembly of Interpol** and holds office for **four years**.
- **CBI** assumes this role of **liaisoning with Interpol** in **India**.

Q880. Consider the following statements about the Interpol Notice:



1. Blue Notice is an "enquiry notice," that enables police forces in member states to exchange crucial crime-related information.

2. Blue notices are issued before or right after criminal charges are filed, while Red notices, which seek the arrest of a fugitive, typically come after criminal convictions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Blue Notice is an "enquiry notice," that enables police forces in member states to exchange crucial crime-related information.

- This statement is correct. A Blue Notice is issued to collect additional information about a person's identity, location, or activities in connection with a crime. It is primarily an inquiry tool for police forces.

- **Statement 2:** Blue notices are issued before or right after criminal charges are filed, while Red notices, which seek the arrest of a fugitive, typically come after criminal convictions.

This statement is correct.

Q881. Consider the following statements regarding INTERPOL:

1. It was established in 1923 and India is one of its founding members.
2. It is headquartered in Paris, France.
3. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is one of the ten members of the Interpol Global Academy Network.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** It was established in 1923 and India is one of its founding members.

- This statement is incorrect. INTERPOL (International Criminal Police Organization) was established in 1923, but India is not one of its founding members. India joined INTERPOL in 1949.

- **Statement 2:** It is headquartered in Paris, France.

- This statement is incorrect. INTERPOL is headquartered in Lyon, France, not Paris.

- **Statement 3:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is one of the ten members of the Interpol Global Academy Network.

- This statement is correct. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) of India is indeed one of the ten members of the INTERPOL Global Academy Network.

Q882. Consider the following statements:

1. Article 27 of the Indian constitution prohibits human trafficking and begar.
2. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) serves as the primary law aimed at preventing trafficking specifically for commercial sexual exploitation.
3. Interpol's Operation Storm Makers II has exposed the growing network of fraudulent activities linked to human trafficking.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1:** Article 27 of the Indian Constitution prohibits human trafficking and begar.

- **This statement is incorrect.** It is Article 23 of the Indian Constitution that prohibits human trafficking, begar (forced labor), and similar forms of exploitation, not Article 27.

- **Statement 2:** Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA) serves as the primary law aimed



at preventing trafficking specifically for commercial sexual exploitation.

- **This statement is correct.** The ITPA is the principal legislation in India that targets trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.
- **Statement 3:** Interpol's Operation Storm Makers II has exposed the growing network of fraudulent activities linked to human trafficking.
 - **This statement is correct.** Operation Storm Makers II by INTERPOL focuses on uncovering fraudulent activities tied to human trafficking and related crimes.

Topic 295

295. Bharat Pol

- **Earlier only CBI could connect** to Interpol from India but now, even **State police can connect** to Interpol via **Bharatpol Portal**.
- it will strengthen **India's efforts** in **combating transnational crimes**.
- It has been developed by **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)**.

Current news?

- Union **Home Minister** Amit Shah on inaugurated the **Bharatpol portal**, which aims to **provide police and security** agencies in India with a **seamless connect to Interpol**.



Q883. Which of the following statements regarding the Bharatpol Portal is/are correct?

1. Bharatpol allows only the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to connect to Interpol.
 2. The portal has been developed to strengthen India's efforts in combating transnational crimes.
 3. State police in India can now connect to Interpol via the Bharatpol Portal.
- (a) 1 and 2 only

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Earlier, only the CBI could connect to Interpol, but now State police can connect via Bharatpol.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The portal aims to enhance India's ability to combat transnational crimes.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** State police forces in India can now directly connect to Interpol using the portal.

Q884. Consider the following statements about the Bharatpol Portal:

1. The Bharatpol Portal has been developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
 2. The portal was inaugurated by India's Union Home Minister, Amit Shah.
 3. Bharatpol facilitates the seamless connection of police and security agencies to Interpol.
- How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
 (b) Only two
 (c) All three
 (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Bharatpol was developed by the CBI.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, inaugurated the portal.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Bharatpol allows seamless connectivity between Indian police/security agencies and Interpol.

Q885. Which of the following is the primary objective of the Bharatpol Portal?

- (a) To centralize criminal investigations at the national level.
- (b) To allow India's State police and security agencies to access Interpol's global network.
- (c) To replace the Central Bureau of Investigation in transnational investigations.
- (d) To establish a national forensic database.



Ans: b

Sol:

- **Option B is correct:** Bharatpol facilitates direct access for State police and security agencies in India to connect with Interpol, enhancing their ability to combat transnational crimes.
- **Options A, C, and D are incorrect** as they do not reflect the primary purpose of Bharatpol.

Topic 296

296. International Maritime Organisation

- responsible for regulating shipping + preventing marine pollution
- Headquartered in London
- 175 Member States
- lists India as among the 10 states with the largest interest in international seaborne trade (elected for 2024–25)
- India is part of 40 member Council—In this India holds position 10 states with largest interest in seaborne trade

Current news?

- Recently, India -selected as the pioneer lead country for IMO- Green Voyage 2050 Project.
- **Aim**—support to developing countries to **reduce GHG emissions from ships**



Q886. Consider the following statements regarding the International Maritime Organization (IMO):

1. The IMO is responsible for regulating shipping and preventing marine pollution.
2. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

3. India is listed among the 10 states with the largest interest in international seaborne trade.
4. The IMO has 175 Member States.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The IMO regulates shipping and prevents marine pollution.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The IMO is headquartered in London, not Geneva.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India is listed among the 10 states with the largest interest in seaborne trade.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The IMO has 175 Member States.

Q887. Consider the following statements about India's involvement in the IMO:

1. India was recently elected to the IMO Council for the term 2024–25.
2. India is part of the 40-member IMO Council under the category of states with the largest interest in international seaborne trade.
3. India has been selected as the lead country for the IMO Green Voyage 2050 Project.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** India was elected to the IMO Council for the 2024–25 term.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India is in the 40-member IMO Council as one of the 10 states with the largest interest in seaborne trade.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India has been selected as the lead country for the IMO Green Voyage 2050 Project, supporting developing countries in reducing GHG emissions.



Q888. Consider the following statements about the IMO Green Voyage 2050 Project:

1. The project focuses on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from ships.
2. India has been selected as the pioneer lead country for this initiative.
3. The project aims to provide support exclusively to developed countries to reduce GHG emissions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The IMO Green Voyage 2050 Project aims to reduce GHG emissions from ships.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India has been selected as the lead country for this initiative.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The project focuses on supporting developing countries, not exclusively developed countries.

Topic 297

297. Garba UNESCO's list of 'intangible cultural heritage'

UNESCO

- one of the **17 specialised agencies** of the UN.
- Headquarters: **Paris, France**
- **India** -founding member its **inception in 1946.**

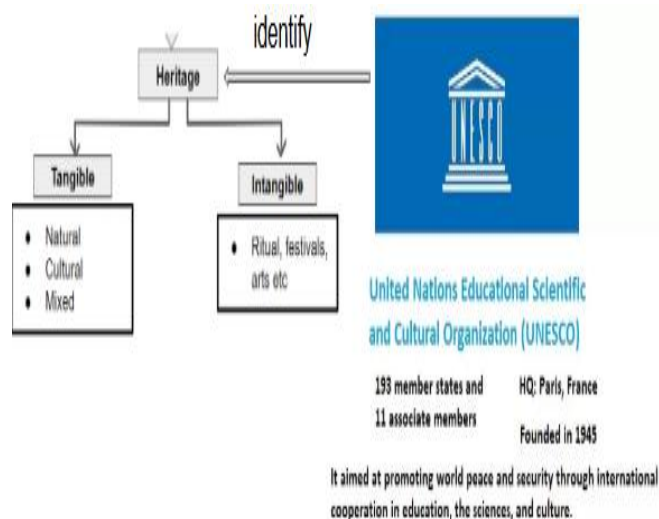
How Intangible Heritages are decided?

- By **Intergovernmental Committee** of the **2003 Convention on intangible heritage** (Comes under **World Heritage Committee**).
- It consists of **24 members** (elected for **4 years cycle**).
- **India** has been elected for **2022-26 cycle.**

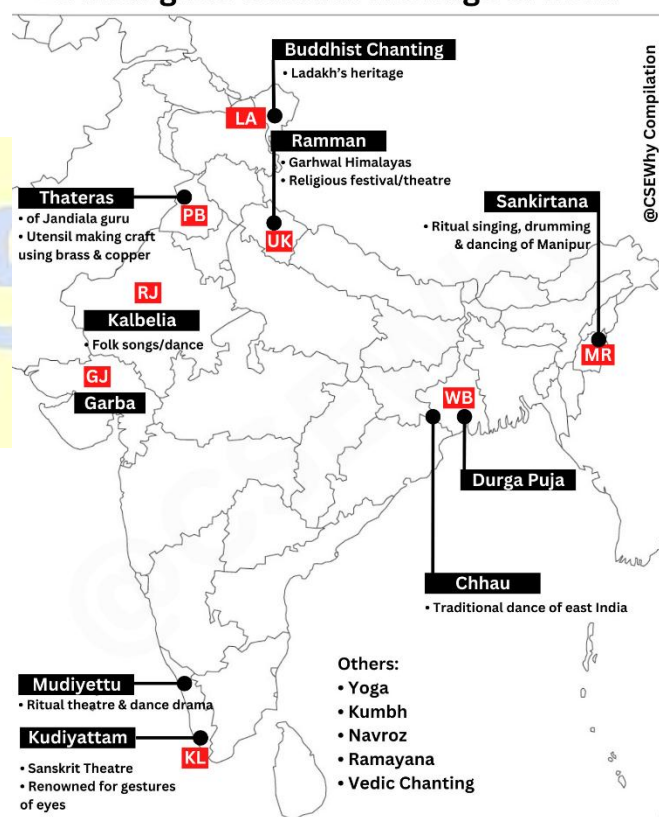
Current news?

- **Gujarati folk dance Garba**-India's **15th inscription** on the intangible heritage list.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



15 Intangible Cultural Heritage of India



Q889. Consider the following statements:

1. According to UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), ICH is manifested into five broad domains.
2. India has 15 ICH elements on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol: According to UNESCO's 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), ICH is manifested into five broad domains.

Statement 1: The 2003 Convention defines ICH and identifies five domains:

- Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of ICH.
- Performing arts.
- Social practices, rituals, and festive events.
- Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe.
- Traditional craftsmanship.

Statement 2: The 15th ICH element from India, inscribed in 2023. Garba is a unifying force that promotes social and gender inclusivity. Correct.

Q890. Consider the following statements regarding UNESCO:

1. UNESCO is one of the 17 specialized agencies of the United Nations.
2. Its headquarters is located in Geneva, Switzerland.
3. India has been a founding member of UNESCO since its inception in 1946.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** UNESCO is one of the 17 specialized agencies of the UN.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** UNESCO's headquarters is located in Paris, France, not Geneva.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** India is a founding member of UNESCO, having joined at its inception in 1946.

Q891. Consider the following statements regarding the Intergovernmental Committee of the 2003 Convention on Intangible Heritage:

1. The Committee operates under the World Heritage Committee.
2. It consists of 24 members elected for a four-year cycle.
3. India has never been a member of this Committee.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Intergovernmental Committee functions under the World Heritage Committee.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It consists of 24 members elected for a four-year cycle.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** India is a member of the Committee for the 2022–26 cycle.

Topic 298

298. APEC and RCEP

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

- regional **economic forum established in 1989**
- **21 members-India is not a member**
- **APEC's 21 member economies** are Australia; Brunei Darussalam; Canada; Chile; People's Republic of China; Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei (Taiwan); Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Peru; The Philippines; The Russian Federation; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; Thailand; United States of America; Viet Nam.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

- trade deal between the **10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.
- **India withdrew from the RCEP** -because of concerns it would open it up to Chinese goods





Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership



Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

Q892. Consider the following statements regarding the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC):

1. APEC is a regional economic forum established in 1989.
2. India is a founding member of APEC.
3. APEC has 21 member economies, including Australia, China, and the United States.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** APEC was established in 1989 as a regional economic forum.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: India is not a member of APEC.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** APEC includes 21 member economies, including Australia, China, and the United States.

Q893. Consider the following statements regarding the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP):

1. RCEP is a trade agreement between the 10-member ASEAN and five other countries, including China and Japan.
2. India withdrew from RCEP due to concerns over its potential impact on domestic markets.
3. RCEP is open exclusively to ASEAN member countries.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:-

- **Statement 1 is correct:** RCEP is a trade agreement involving 10 ASEAN countries and China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India withdrew from RCEP over concerns, particularly about an influx of Chinese goods.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** RCEP includes non-ASEAN countries like China, Japan, and Australia.

Q894. Consider the following statements comparing APEC and RCEP:

1. Both APEC and RCEP include China as a member.
2. India is a member of neither APEC nor RCEP.
3. APEC focuses on economic cooperation, while RCEP is a formal trade agreement.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Both APEC and RCEP include China as a member.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** India is a member of neither APEC nor RCEP.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** APEC emphasizes economic cooperation without binding commitments, while RCEP is a formal trade agreement with defined rules.

Topic 299

299. Global summits on AI

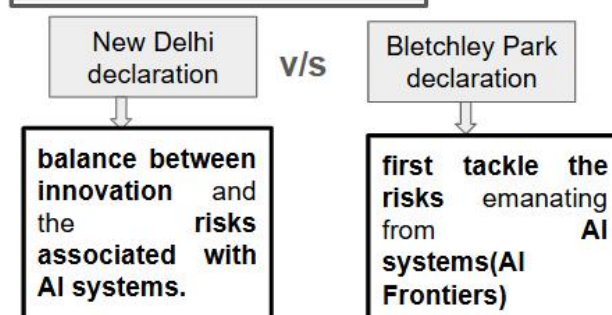
Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)

- an alliance of **29 member countries- 28 countries** and the **European Union**
- Aim- **responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI)**
- A **GPAI summit 2023** -held in New Delhi- adopted **New Delhi declaration**

Other global initiatives in direction of responsible use of AI-

1. EU AI Act
2. Bletchley Park declaration (At AI safety Summit- attended by 29 countries including India)

Bletchley Park, -80-odd km **north of London- birthplace of modern computing. World War II** broke out in 1939-Britain's Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS) was promptly **moved out of London**, under constant **threat from German bombers**.



Q895. Consider the following statements about the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI):

1. GPAI is an alliance of 28 member countries.
2. Its primary aim is the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI).
3. The 2023 GPAI summit was held in New Delhi, where the New Delhi Declaration was adopted.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** GPAI is an alliance of 29 members — 28 countries and the European Union.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** GPAI aims to promote the responsible use of AI.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The 2023 GPAI summit was held in New Delhi, and the New Delhi Declaration was adopted.

Q896. Consider the following statements regarding global initiatives for responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI):

1. The EU AI Act is one of the legislative efforts toward regulating AI in the European Union.



2. The Bletchley Park Declaration was signed at the AI Safety Summit in the UK, attended by 29 countries including India.
3. Bletchley Park, the venue for the AI Safety Summit, is known as the birthplace of modern computing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The EU AI Act aims to regulate AI systems within the European Union.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Bletchley Park Declaration was signed during the AI Safety Summit, with 29 participating countries, including India.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Bletchley Park is renowned as the birthplace of modern computing due to its role in codebreaking during World War II.

Q897. Consider the following statements about Bletchley Park:

1. It is located approximately 80 km north of London.
2. It became significant during World War II as the base for Britain's Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS).
3. The AI Safety Summit 2023, which adopted the New Delhi Declaration, was held at Bletchley Park.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Bletchley Park is about 80 km north of London.

- **Statement 2 is correct:** It gained prominence during World War II as the headquarters for Britain's GC&CS.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The AI Safety Summit was held at Bletchley Park, but the New Delhi Declaration was adopted at the GPAI summit in New Delhi, not at Bletchley Park.

Topic 300

300. Organization of Islamic Cooperation

- founded in **1969**
- Members-**57 countries**
- Goal-**"safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world"**
- Permanent Secretariat is in **Jeddah, Saudi Arabia**
- **Second largest** intergovernmental organization **after the United Nations**
- OIC summit **2024-Gambia**
- **Türkiye** will host the **51st OIC summit in 2025.**

India and OIC

- India is **not a member** of OIC
- 1969- inaugural session-**India was disinvited by Pakistan.**
- **2018 Bangladesh proposed**-India's as an **observer state**(as it has about **10% of world's Muslim population**)-blocked by Pak

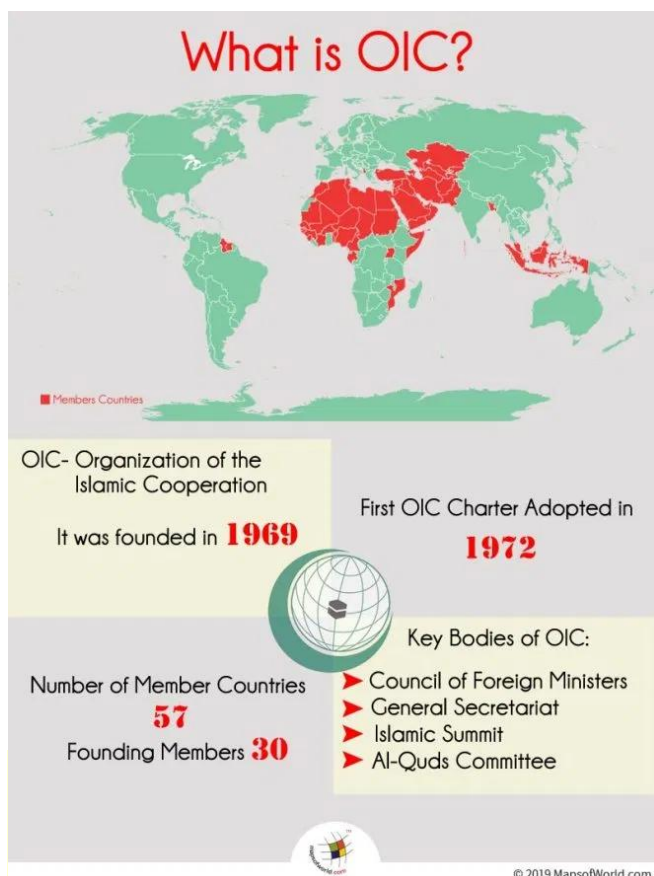
Muslim population

1. Indonesia (231,000,000)
2. Pakistan (212,300,000)
3. India (200,000,000)

Largest Christian population-US

China- Highest Buddhist population





Q898. Consider the following statements about the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

1. OIC is the second-largest intergovernmental organization in the world after the United Nations.
2. Its permanent secretariat is in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
3. India has been a founding member of the OIC since its inception in 1969.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The OIC is the second-largest intergovernmental organization globally, after the United Nations.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The OIC's permanent secretariat is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** India is not a member of the OIC. It was disinvited from the inaugural session in 1969 due to Pakistan's intervention.

Q899. Consider the following statements about India's engagement with the OIC:

1. India was disinvited from the inaugural session of the OIC in 1969 due to Pakistan's objections.
2. Bangladesh proposed India's inclusion as an observer state in 2018, which was supported by Pakistan.
3. India has the second-largest Muslim population in the world.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** India was disinvited from the OIC's inaugural session in 1969 following Pakistan's objections.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Bangladesh proposed India's inclusion as an observer state in 2018, but this was blocked by Pakistan.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** India has the third-largest Muslim population globally, after Indonesia and Pakistan.

Q900. Consider the following statements about the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

1. The OIC has 57 member countries and represents the interests of the Muslim world.
2. The 2024 OIC summit will be held in Türkiye.
3. The 2025 OIC summit will be hosted by Gambia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The OIC has 57 member countries and aims to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world.



- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The 2024 OIC summit will be held in Gambia, not Türkiye.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The 2025 OIC summit will be hosted by Türkiye, not Gambia.

Day 31

Topic 301

301. United Nations-How it was created?

World war I(1914-18)

- League of Nations was created for this purpose-to prevent such wars in future.
- League of Nations failed-more catastrophic war-World War II(1939-45)

During WWII-Atlantic Charter(1941)

- between American President Franklin D Roosevelt and British PM Winston Churchill
- The Charter laid basis for creation of United Nations.

United Nations

After WWII-San Francisco Conference , 1945

- winners of WWII assembled
- On 26th June 1945 UN Charter was signed by 50 countries(later Poland also signed making it 51 countries).
- These 51 countries are called as founding member of the UN.
- India is one of the founding member.
- UN Charter finalised - **how the UN will function.**
- Accordingly UN was established on 24th October 1945 (celebrated as the UN Day).



Sir V. T. Krishnamachari-represented India-
signed the UN Charter on 26 June



United Nations

- Currently made up of **193 Member States.**
- **Palestine and Vatican City** have joined United Nations has an **observer state.**

Article 1 of the UN Charter: Purpose of UN

- maintain international peace and security
- a. To develop friendly relations among nations

Q901. Match List-I with List-II and choose the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

| List-I | List-II |
|-----------------------------|---|
| A. Human Development Report | 1. International Monetary Fund |
| B. World Economic Outlook | 2. United Nations Environment Programme |
| C. World Investment Report | 3. United Nations Development Programme |
| D. Emissions Gap Report | 4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |

Codes:

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

Ans: a

Sol: List-I with List-II:

- A. Human Development Report → 3. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
B. World Economic Outlook → 1. International Monetary Fund (IMF)
C. World Investment Report → 4. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)



D. Emissions Gap Report → 2. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Q902. Who signed the Covenant of the League of Nations on behalf of India, and what was their significant role in global diplomacy?

- Lord Curzon; represented India at the Paris Peace Conference as a British delegate.
- Mahatma Gandhi; advocated for India's inclusion in the League of Nations as a sovereign state.
- Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner; one of the few non-European delegates at the Paris Peace Conference.
- Jawaharlal Nehru; participated in the League of Nations debates as a voice for Indian independence.

Ans: c

Q903. Which of the following statements best explains the Intergovernmental Negotiations Framework?

- The Framework is formed to develop the instrument on plastic pollution.
- It is formed to reform the United Nations Security Council.
- It is formed to review the measure taken to keep the global warming temperature below 1.5 °C.
- It is intergovernmental Framework for peaceful use of outer space

Ans: b

Sol: The Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) Framework is a process established to discuss and advance reforms of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). It focuses on key issues such as membership categories, veto power, regional representation, and working methods to make the UNSC more representative, transparent, and effective.

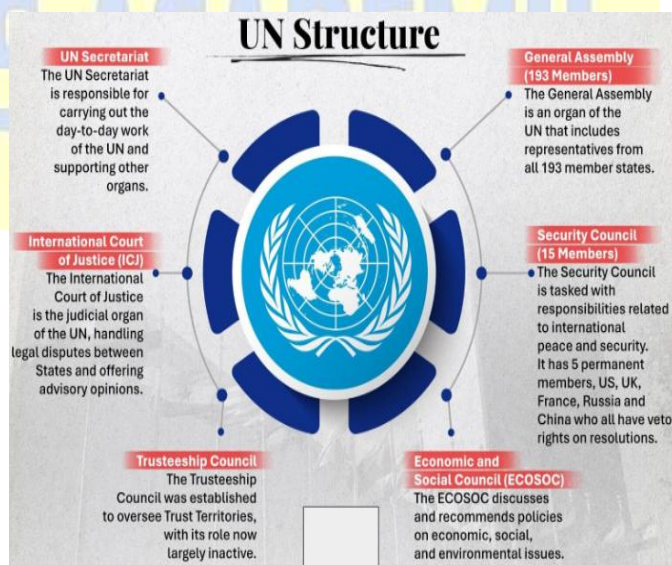
Topic 302

302. United Nations-Structure-Principal Organs

- The UN comprises of **6 institutions** known as Principal Organs of the UN.

1. UN Secretariat

- Responsible for carrying out the **day-to-day work** of the UN.
 - Supports other organs of the UN.
- 2. General Assembly**
- Comprises representatives from **all 193 member states**.
 - Functions as an organ of the UN for collective discussions and decision-making (one country-one vote).
- 3. Security Council**
- Handles **international peace and security** responsibilities.
- 4. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**
- Discusses and recommends **policies on economic, social, and environmental issues**.
- 5. International Court of Justice (ICJ)**
- Acts as the **judicial organ of the UN**.
- 6. Trusteeship Council**
- For transition of **trust territories from colonies to sovereign nations**
 - Suspended** its activities in **1994**, when **Palau**, the **last of the original 11** trust territories, **gained its independence**.



Headquarters

- Five** of these organs are located at the **UN Headquarters in New York**.
- ICJ** is located in **The Hague, Netherlands**

Q904. With reference to the "United Nations Credentials Committee", consider the following statements:

- It is a committee set up by the UN Security Council and works under its supervision.



2. It traditionally meets in March, June and September every year.

3. It assesses the credentials of all UN members before submitting a report to the General Assembly for approval.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol: Option (a) is correct: In most cases, accreditation at the UN is a formality whereby the General Assembly approves specific individuals to represent a Member State. According to this procedure, the Head of State or Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs of a Member State submits documentation to the UN Secretary-General stating that the named individuals are entitled to represent that Member State. The documentation is referred to a Credentials Committee appointed by the General Assembly at the beginning of each regular session (month of September).

Thus, the review of the credentials of UN Member States is an annual process. The Credentials Committee examines the credentials and determines whether they are complete and have been issued by the proper authority, but it does not generally inquire into the legitimacy of the issuing authority. The Committee then submits a report to the General Assembly recommending either rejection or approval of the credentials of the representatives of all Member States. Typically, the General Assembly adopts the Committee's recommendations without discussion.

Q905. With reference to the United Nations General Assembly, consider the following statements:

1. The UN General Assembly can grant observer status to the non-member States.
2. Inter-governmental organisations can seek observer status in the UN General Assembly.

3. Permanent Observers in the UN General Assembly can maintain missions at the UN headquarters.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol: According to the Charter of the United Nations, the General Assembly may:

Elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council and the members of other United Nations councils and organs and, on the recommendation of the Security Council, appoint the Secretary-General.

Make recommendations on maintaining international peace and security, including disarmament.

Discuss any question relating to international peace and security (except where a dispute or situation is currently being discussed by the Security Council)

Make recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and international collaboration in the economic, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and health fields.

Make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation that might impair friendly relations among countries

The Assembly may also take action in cases of a threat to the peace, breach of peace or act of aggression, when the Security Council has failed to act owing to the negative vote of a permanent member.

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The UN General Assembly can grant observer status to the non-member States.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Inter-governmental organisations can seek observer status in the UN General Assembly.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Permanent Observers in the UN General Assembly can maintain missions at the UN headquarters.



Q906. Consider the following statements:

1. The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) has a 'Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air'.
2. The UNCAC is the ever-first legally binding global anti-corruption instrument.
3. A highlight of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime (UNTOC) is the inclusion of a specific chapter aimed at returning assets to their rightful owners from whom they had been taken illicitly.
4. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is mandated by its member States to assist in the implementation of both UNCAC and UNTOC.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol: Statement 1 is not correct: The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) only covers five main areas: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange. This convention does not cover the aspect of Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air'. Statement 2 is correct: The United Nations Convention against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument. The Convention's far-reaching approach and the mandatory character of many of its provisions make it a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem. Statement 3 is not correct: The General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and two of its supplementary Protocols namely: The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea. This convention does not cover the aspect of asset return to rightful owners. Statement 4 is correct: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is a global leader in the

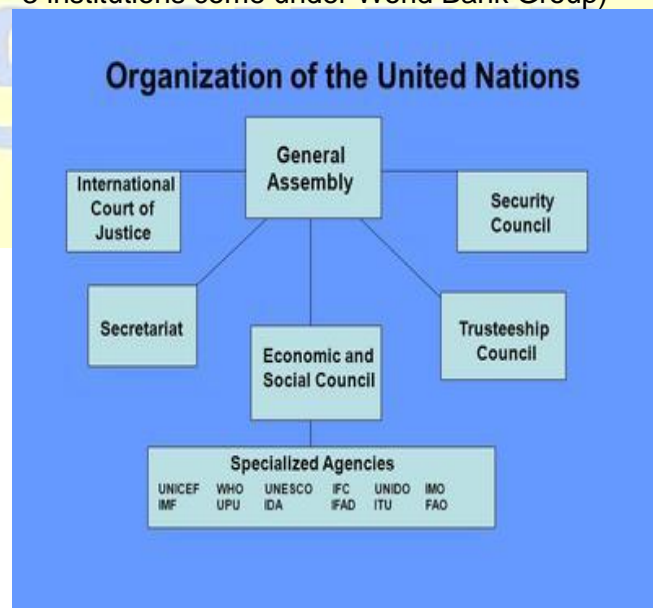
fight against illicit drugs and international crime. Established in 1997 through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention, UNODC operates in all regions of the world through an extensive network of field offices.

Topic 303

303. United Nations-Structure-Specialised agencies

- UN Specialised agencies are **autonomous organizations**
- **Not directly part of the UN** but work for UN as a result of **agreement with the UN**.
- **ECOSOC** coordinates the work of the **UN specialised agencies**.

15 specialised agencies (sometimes referred 17 -3 institutions come under World Bank Group)



1. UPU: Universal Postal Union. Headquarters: Bern, Switzerland
2. **WHO: World Health Organization.** Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
3. WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organization. Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
4. WMO: World Meteorological Organization. Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland



5. **World Bank Group. Headquarters: Washington, DC, USA**
6. **FAO: Headquarters: Rome, Italy**
7. ICAO: International Civil Aviation Organization. Headquarters: Montreal, Canada
8. IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development. Headquarters: Rome, Italy
9. **ILO: International Labour Organization. Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland**
10. **IMF: International Monetary Fund. Headquarters: Washington, DC, USA**
11. IMO: International Maritime Organization. Headquarters: London, United Kingdom
12. ITU: International Telecommunication Union. Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
13. **UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. Headquarters: Paris, France**
14. United Nations Industrial Development Organization. Headquarters: Vienna, Austria
15. UNWTO: World Tourism Organization. Headquarters: Madrid, Spain

Q907. Match the following international organizations with their correct headquarters:

1. ICAO
 2. UNESCO
 3. ITU
 4. UNWTO
- (a) Montreal, Canada – Paris, France – Geneva, Switzerland – Madrid, Spain
 - (b) Geneva, Switzerland – Madrid, Spain – Montreal, Canada – Paris, France
 - (c) Montreal, Canada – Geneva, Switzerland – Paris, France – Madrid, Spain
 - (d) Paris, France – Geneva, Switzerland – Madrid, Spain – Montreal, Canada

Ans: a

Sol:

- ICAO is headquartered in Montreal, Canada.
- UNESCO is headquartered in Paris, France.
- ITU is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- UNWTO is headquartered in Madrid, Spain.

Q908. Consider the following statements about the headquarters of international organizations:

1. The headquarters of the IMO is in Geneva, Switzerland.

2. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.
3. The headquarters of the WMO is in Madrid, Spain.
4. The headquarters of the IMF is in Washington, DC, USA.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Incorrect. The IMO is headquartered in London, United Kingdom.
- Statement 2: Correct. UNIDO is headquartered in Vienna, Austria.
- Statement 3: Incorrect. The WMO is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Statement 4: Correct. The IMF is headquartered in Washington, DC, USA.

Q909. Consider the following statements:

1. The headquarters of all Geneva-based international organizations are related to health or labor.
2. Organizations based in Washington, DC, are primarily financial institutions.
3. Rome hosts the headquarters of multiple organizations focused on agriculture and food security.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Incorrect. Geneva hosts organizations like the WHO (health), ILO (labor), WIPO (intellectual property), and WMO (meteorology), which are not all directly related to health or labor.
- Statement 2: Correct. Washington, DC, is home to the World Bank Group and IMF, both financial institutions.



- Statement 3: Correct. Rome hosts FAO and IFAD, both focusing on agriculture and food security.

Topic 304

304. United Nations Security Council

UNSC-

- aims to maintain international peace and security.

What measures UNSC can adopt?

- apply economic sanctions
- Take military action against an aggressor (but UNSC doesn't have its own offensive forces).
- UNSC resolutions are normally prescriptive (suggestion) for a member country.
- However, when UNSC passes a resolution under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, the resolution becomes binding.

India's strategy for UNSC reforms

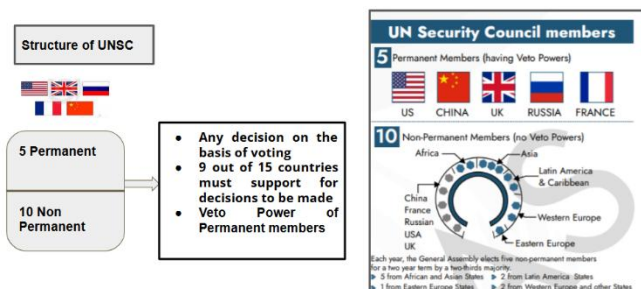
1. G4 groupings

- India has also made a group of four country is known as **G4 for reforms at UNSC**. G4 includes **Brazil India Germany and Japan**.

2. G77 platform (group of 134 developing countries)

- India continues to mobilise the idea of UNSC reform through **G77 platform**.

Coffee club- It is an informal group made up of **40 countries** that are opposed to new members entering the UNSC permanent seat. It includes countries like Italy, Pakistan, Argentina, Republic of Korea etc



Current news?

- As of **January 1, 2025**, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) includes **five new non-permanent members** elected for **two-year terms**:

1. Denmark
2. Greece
3. **Pakistan**



4. Panama
5. Somalia

- Currently **India is not a member**

India was **last a non-permanent member** of the **United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** in 2021–2022. India has served on the UNSC **eight times in total**.

Q910. Consider the following statements about the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF):

1. UNDOF was established following the disengagement of forces agreement between Israel and Syria.
2. Its primary role is to maintain the ceasefire and supervise the demilitarized buffer zone in the Golan Heights.
3. The mandate of UNDOF is reviewed and renewed every three years by the UN General Assembly.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. UNDOF was established after the disengagement of forces agreement between Israel and Syria in 1974.
- Statement 2: Correct. UNDOF's primary role includes maintaining the ceasefire and supervising the demilitarized buffer zone in the Golan Heights.
- Statement 3: Incorrect. The mandate of UNDOF is reviewed and renewed every six months, not every three years.

Q911. Consider the following statements regarding the operational structure of UNDOF:

1. UNDOF is funded through a separate account approved annually by the UN General Assembly.
2. The headquarters of UNDOF is located in Camp Faouar, Syria.
3. India is the top troop-contributing country to this mission.
4. The current mandate of UNDOF has been extended until June 2025.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. UNDOF is funded through a separate account approved annually by the UN General Assembly.
- Statement 2: Correct. The headquarters of UNDOF is in Camp Faouar, Syria.
- Statement 3: Incorrect. While India is a top contributor, it is the third-largest troop-contributing country, not the largest.
- Statement 4: Correct. The mandate of UNDOF has been extended until June 2025.

Q912. Consider the following statements about the United Nations Security Council (UNSC):

1. As of January 1, 2025, Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama, and Somalia are new non-permanent members of the UNSC.
2. India is currently not a member of the UNSC.
3. India has served as a non-permanent member of the UNSC eight times, most recently during 2021–2022.
4. Non-permanent members of the UNSC are elected for a term of five years.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) Only one
- (d) All four

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct. Denmark, Greece, Pakistan, Panama, and Somalia became new non-permanent members of the UNSC on January 1, 2025.
- Statement 2: Correct. India is not currently a member of the UNSC as of 2025.
- Statement 3: Correct. India has served on the UNSC eight times, most recently during the 2021–2022 term.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Topic 305

305. ICC/ICJ/PCA

International Court of Justice

- Principal judicial organ of the United Nations
- 1945
- HQ-Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands
- a state does not need to be a member of the UN to bring a case before the court.
- Takes case of violation of International conventions

Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA)

- located at The Hague in the Netherlands
- **arbitral tribunal**-member states, international organizations or private parties.

International Criminal Court (ICC)

- Rome Statute 1998(enforce-2002)
- Not governed by U.N(but UNSC can refer case to ICC).
- Cases against individuals, organizations or a government
- **Cases of Genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes**
- Headquarter- Hague, Netherlands
- **India not a member**
- Burundi has become the first country to officially quit

ICC/ICJ/PCA- all three are located at the **Peace Palace** in **The Hague (Netherlands)**. Thus, Hague is also known as **Justice Capital of the world.**

More info about ICJ-

- **English and French** are the ICJ's **official languages**.
- The ICJ has **15 judges** who are elected to **nine-year terms** by the **UN General Assembly and Security Council**, which vote simultaneously but separately.

Functions of ICJ?

- **Settles legal disputes** between states on some international conventions (decision of ICJ on such matters is **binding**).
- Gives **advisory opinions** on **legal questions** referred to it (decision in such matter is **non binding**).





Q913. Consider the following statements regarding the International Court of Justice (ICJ):

1. It is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations and was established in 1945.
2. A state does not need to be a member of the UN to bring a case before the ICJ.
3. The ICJ's decisions on legal disputes between states are advisory and non-binding.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The ICJ was established in 1945 as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.
- Statement 2 is correct: A state does not need to be a UN member to bring a case before the ICJ.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: The ICJ's decisions on legal disputes between states are binding, while its advisory opinions are non-binding.

Q914. Consider the following statements about the International Criminal Court (ICC):

1. The ICC prosecutes individuals for crimes like genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
2. The ICC is governed by the United Nations and can only take cases referred to it by the UN Security Council.
3. India is not a member of the ICC, and Burundi is the first country to officially quit the ICC.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two

- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The ICC focuses on prosecuting individuals for crimes such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The ICC is not governed by the United Nations, although the UNSC can refer cases to the ICC.
- Statement 3 is correct: India is not a member of the ICC, and Burundi is the first country to officially withdraw from it.

Q915. Consider the following statements regarding the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA):

1. The PCA is located in the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands, and handles disputes involving member states, international organizations, or private parties.
2. The PCA is one of the principal judicial organs of the United Nations.
3. Unlike the ICJ, the PCA can handle cases involving private entities.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The PCA is located in the Peace Palace and resolves disputes involving states, international organizations, or private parties.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The PCA is not a judicial organ of the United Nations. It operates independently.
- Statement 3 is correct: The PCA can handle disputes involving private entities, unlike the ICJ, which deals only with state disputes.

Topic 306



306. ICC arrest warrant against Putin

The ICC has jurisdiction over crimes committed-

1. on the **territory of member states**, or
2. by **nationals** of member states.
3. It can also **exercise jurisdiction** if a situation is referred to it by the **United Nations Security Council**.

ICC arrest warrant against Vladimir Putin on basis of case registered by Ukraine-

- for the alleged **war crime** of **unlawfully transferring children** from occupied areas of **Ukraine to the Russian Federation**.
- **Russia and Ukraine** both are **not a party** to the Rome Statute.
- But **Ukraine has exercised its options** to accept **ICC's jurisdiction** in this case using **Article 12(3) of the Statute**.
- **Article 12(3)** of the Rome statute allows a **non member state to bring case at ICC**.

Current news?

- Russian President Vladimir Putin received a red carpet welcome during his state visit to Mongolia.
- Mongolia is a member of ICC, yet it didn't arrest Vladimir Putin because of Mongolia's economic dependence on Russia.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and Mongolian President Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh in Ulaanbaatar, Wednesday. Reuters



Russia is building a **pipeline of natural gas** a year from its **Yamal region** to **China** via **Mongolia**.

Q916. Consider the following statements regarding the International Criminal Court (ICC):

1. The ICC has jurisdiction over crimes committed on the territory of member states or by nationals of member states.
2. The ICC can exercise jurisdiction in cases referred to it by the United Nations Security Council.
3. The ICC's jurisdiction extends automatically to non-member states under Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The ICC has jurisdiction over crimes committed on the territory of member states or by their nationals.
- Statement 2 is correct: The ICC can exercise jurisdiction in situations referred to it by the UN Security Council.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute allows non-member states to voluntarily accept ICC jurisdiction on a case-by-case basis, but jurisdiction is not automatic.

Q917. Consider the following statements about the ICC and its recent actions:

1. The ICC issued an arrest warrant against Russian President Vladimir Putin for unlawfully transferring children from occupied areas of Ukraine to Russia.
2. Both Russia and Ukraine are member states of the ICC and have ratified the Rome Statute.
3. Ukraine invoked Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute to allow the ICC jurisdiction in this case.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:



- Statement 1 is correct: The ICC issued an arrest warrant against Vladimir Putin for alleged war crimes involving the unlawful transfer of children from Ukraine to Russia.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: Neither Russia nor Ukraine is a member of the ICC.
- Statement 3 is correct: Ukraine exercised its right under Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute to accept the ICC's jurisdiction in this case.

Q918. Consider the following statements about the ICC and Mongolia:

1. Mongolia is a member of the ICC but did not arrest Vladimir Putin during his visit.
2. Mongolia is legally obligated under the Rome Statute to arrest individuals with ICC warrants.
3. Mongolia refrained from arresting Putin due to its economic dependence on Russia.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Mongolia is a member of the ICC and hosted Vladimir Putin despite the ICC arrest warrant against him.
- Statement 2 is correct: As a member of the ICC, Mongolia is legally obligated to cooperate with the court, including arresting individuals with active ICC warrants.
- Statement 3 is correct: Mongolia's decision not to arrest Putin is attributed to its economic reliance on Russia.

Topic 307

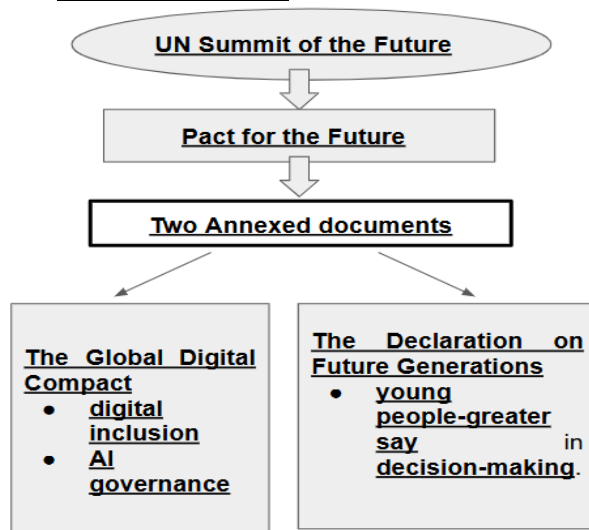
307. UN's Summit of the Future

- The **UN Summit of the Future** was held **22-23 September 2024** at the **United Nations Headquarters in New York**.
 - A **central output** of the Summit was the **Pact for the Future**, which will **outline key areas for action and global cooperation**.
 - Annexed to this Pact will be two important documents:
1. **The Global Digital Compact**
 - addressing issues like **digital inclusion** and **AI governance**,

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

2. The Declaration on Future Generations

- focusing on **long-term planning** and ensuring **young people** have a **greater say** in **decision-making**.



Q919. Consider the following statements about the UN's Summit of the Future (2024):

1. The Summit aims to reaffirm commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Charter.
2. The theme of the Summit is "Multilateral solutions for a better tomorrow."
3. The expected outcome includes the Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The Summit explicitly aims to reaffirm commitments to the SDGs and the UN Charter.
- Statement 2 is correct: The theme of the Summit is indeed "Multilateral solutions for a better tomorrow."
- Statement 3 is correct: The expected outcomes of the Summit include key documents like the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations.



Q920. Which of the following global challenges were emphasized at the UN's Summit of the Future (2024)?

1. Climate change
2. Health crises
3. Artificial intelligence regulation
4. Ongoing conflicts

Select the correct answer:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 1, 2, and 4 only
(c) 2, 3, and 4 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: b

Sol:

- Climate change, health crises, and ongoing conflicts were explicitly mentioned as critical challenges at the Summit.
- Artificial intelligence regulation, though an important topic, was not specifically highlighted in the provided information about this Summit.

Q921. Consider the following statements regarding the outcomes of the UN's Summit of the Future (2024):

1. The Pact for the Future is the only expected outcome of the Summit.
2. The Global Digital Compact focuses on digital inclusion and data privacy as part of the Summit's deliverables.
3. The Summit outcomes aim to lay the groundwork for an improved multilateral system.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: The Pact for the Future is a major outcome, but it is not the only one; other documents, such as the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations, are also part of the expected deliverables.

- Statement 2 is correct: The Global Digital Compact emphasizes digital inclusion and data privacy.
- Statement 3 is correct: The Summit outcomes aim to establish an improved multilateral system to address global challenges effectively.

Topic 308

308. Arab Spring

- series of pro-democracy uprisings that enveloped several largely Muslim countries
- Begun in Tunisia spread to Morocco, Syria, Libya, Egypt and Bahrain.

Arab Spring in Syria and Yemen

- Became **proxy regional conflict** due to entry of **Iran and Saudi Arabia**
- It became a **global war** with entry of the **US on Saudi side** and **Russia on Iran side**.

Yemen a ground for Proxy war



AFTER THE ARAB SPRING





Area controlled by Houthis-supported by Iran

Area under control of government-supported by Saudi

Q922. Which of the following correctly describes the global involvement in the Arab Spring uprisings in Syria and Yemen?

1. The United States aligned with Saudi Arabia's interests in these conflicts.
2. Russia supported Iran's position in these conflicts.
3. Both conflicts remained localized without significant international involvement.

Select the correct answer:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The United States supported Saudi Arabia, a key player in the region, in the conflicts stemming from the Arab Spring.
- Statement 2 is correct: Russia backed Iran's stance, aligning itself against the US and Saudi Arabia.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: The conflicts in Syria and Yemen became global in scope, with the involvement of major powers like the US and Russia.

Q923. Consider the following statements about the Arab Spring and its aftermath:

1. The Arab Spring was initially limited to North African countries like Tunisia and Morocco.
2. The conflicts in Syria and Yemen, influenced by the Arab Spring, evolved into a global war due to the involvement of the US and Russia.

3. Bahrain experienced minimal impact from the Arab Spring compared to other countries mentioned.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: While the Arab Spring began in North Africa (Tunisia), it spread beyond to countries like Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain, not limited to North Africa.
- Statement 2 is correct: The conflicts in Syria and Yemen turned into global wars with US support for Saudi Arabia and Russian backing for Iran.
- Statement 3 is correct: Bahrain experienced significant unrest but not on the scale of prolonged civil wars seen in Syria and Yemen.

Q924. Consider the following geographical and geopolitical statements about the Arabian Peninsula:

1. The Arabian Peninsula is bordered by the Red Sea to the west, the Arabian Sea to the south, and the Persian Gulf to the east.
2. Yemen, located in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, controls the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a critical chokepoint for global oil trade.
3. The largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, both in terms of area and population, is Saudi Arabia.
4. Oman is the only country in the Arabian Peninsula that borders both the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:

1. Statement 1: Correct. The Arabian Peninsula is geographically bordered by the Red Sea



(west), Arabian Sea (south), and Persian Gulf (east).

2. Statement 2: Correct. Yemen's location includes control over the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial maritime chokepoint for oil shipments.
3. Statement 3: Correct. Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula in terms of both area and population.
4. Statement 4: Incorrect. Oman borders the Arabian Sea but not the Persian Gulf. The UAE and Saudi Arabia are the countries bordering the Persian Gulf on the eastern side.

Topic 309

309. Syrian Civil war-Assad falls

- Bashar al-Assad, assumed the presidency in July 2000, succeeding his father.
- His regime continued the authoritarian practices of his father.
- In March 2011, amid the **Arab Spring**, **pro-democracy protests** erupted in Syria.
- The Assad government violent crackdown on demonstrators escalated into a full-scale civil war.
- Assad maintained power with support from allies such as **Russia and Iran**.

Recent

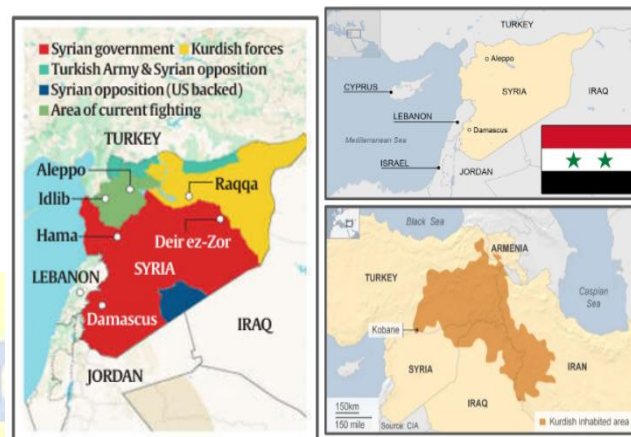
- Syrian President **Bashar al-Assad has been ousted.**
- **Power** taken up by **rebel leader al-Jolani.**

Implications for India

- Turkey played a significant role in the collapse of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria.
- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has openly criticised India on Kashmir issue at international forums
- Assad was largely in favour of India on Kashmir issue.

YEARS OF BLOODSHED AND DIVISION

The sudden collapse of Bashar al-Assad's rule over Syria marks the culmination of a nearly 14-year-old civil war that killed hundreds of thousands, displaced half the population and drew in outside powers. This is how it unfolded:



Q925. Consider the following statements regarding the Syrian Civil War and its leadership transitions:

1. Bashar al-Assad assumed the presidency of Syria in 2000, succeeding his father.
2. Pro-democracy protests in Syria during the Arab Spring of 2011 escalated into a full-scale civil war due to the violent crackdown by Assad's government.
3. Bashar al-Assad maintained power throughout the civil war without any significant international support.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Bashar al-Assad succeeded his father, Hafez al-Assad, as Syria's president in 2000.



- Statement 2 is correct: The violent crackdown by Assad's government on Arab Spring protests in 2011 escalated into a civil war.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Assad maintained power with significant support from allies such as Russia and Iran.

Q926. Which of the following statements about recent developments in Syria and their implications for India are correct?

1. Rebel leader al-Jolani has taken over power in Syria after Bashar al-Assad was ousted.
2. Turkey, under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, played a significant role in the collapse of Assad's regime.
3. Bashar al-Assad's stance on the Kashmir issue was largely in favor of India, while Turkey has openly criticized India on the same issue.

Select the correct answer:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) All of the above

Ans: d

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Rebel leader al-Jolani has assumed power in Syria after Assad's ouster.
- Statement 2 is correct: Turkey, led by President Erdoğan, played a significant role in Assad's downfall.
- Statement 3 is correct: Assad supported India's stance on Kashmir, while Erdoğan has criticized India on the issue.

Q927. Consider the following statements about international involvement in the Syrian Civil War:

1. Russia and Iran were key allies that supported Bashar al-Assad during the Syrian Civil War.
2. Turkey's role in Syria has been limited to humanitarian assistance and mediation efforts.
3. The fall of Assad's regime could have implications for India, particularly due to Turkey's anti-India stance on Kashmir.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two

- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Russia and Iran were significant allies that helped Assad maintain power during the civil war.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: Turkey actively supported opposition forces, contributing to the collapse of Assad's regime.
- Statement 3 is correct: The fall of Assad and Turkey's growing influence could impact India, especially given Turkey's criticism of India on Kashmir.

Topic 310

310. Kurds

- Kurd speaking ethnic group living in border region of Turkey- Syria- Iraq- Iran

What is Kurdistan?

- Proposed separate country for Kurds.
- For the purpose of creating a separate independent country Kurdistan, Kurds have created a militant group called PKK.
- PKK has been fighting Assad forces.

Article 99 of the UN charter

- empowers the secretary-general to bring attention to the UN Security Council about matters that, in their opinion, could threaten international peace and security.
- Recently, the United Nations(UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter on Gaza issue.





↓ Kurd Army- PKK



To create an independent country **Kurdistan**



UN Secretary General

- **António Guterres**, from Portugal, 2017-present.

Q928. Consider the following statements about the Kurds and their aspirations:

1. Kurds are an ethnic group primarily residing in the border regions of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran.
2. Kurdistan refers to an existing autonomous region for the Kurds within the United Nations framework.
3. The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) is a militant group created to advocate for the establishment of an independent Kurdish state.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Kurds predominantly inhabit the border regions of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: Kurdistan is a proposed, not existing, independent state for Kurds.
- Statement 3 is correct: The PKK is a militant group established to push for the creation of an independent Kurdish state.

Q929. Which of the following statements about Article 99 of the UN Charter are correct?

1. Article 99 empowers the UN Secretary-General to alert the Security Council to matters they consider a threat to international peace and security.
2. Article 99 was recently invoked by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres concerning the Gaza issue.
3. The invocation of Article 99 directly mandates the Security Council to take military action.

Select the correct answer:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) All of the above

Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: Article 99 grants the UN Secretary-General the authority to draw the Security Council's attention to threats to international peace.
- Statement 2 is correct: Antonio Guterres recently invoked Article 99 regarding the Gaza issue.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: Article 99 allows the Secretary-General to raise concerns but does not mandate military action by the Security Council.

Q930. Consider the following statements regarding the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) and its involvement in conflicts:

1. The PKK is a militant group created by the Kurds to fight for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan.



2. The PKK has been involved in conflicts with Bashar al-Assad's forces in Syria.
3. The PKK's activities are recognized as legitimate by the United Nations under Article 99 of the UN Charter.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The PKK was formed to advocate for an independent Kurdish state.
- Statement 2 is correct: The PKK has actively engaged in fighting Assad's forces in Syria.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: The UN does not recognize the PKK's activities as legitimate under Article 99 or any other framework.

Day 32

Topic 311

311. UN Peacekeeping Force

- **UN Peacekeeping forces** are deployed to ensure **fulfilment of peace commitments** between conflicting parties.
- UN Peacekeeping forces **can't be used** for **offensive action by UN.**

UN Peacekeeping is guided by three basic principles

- **Consent of the parties**
- a. **Impartiality**
- b. **Non-use of force except in self-defence**
- Every peacekeeping mission is **authorized by the United Nations Security Council.**

Funding of UN Peacekeeping Force

- **Basis of a formula** that includes- **economic wealth** of the State and **Permanent membership to UNSC.**

Manpower contribution to UN Peacekeeping Force

- **Voluntary basis**
- Currently, India is the **fifth largest troop contributor**
- In **2007, India became the first country** to deploy an **all-women contingent** to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.



UN peacekeepers (often referred to as **Blue Berets** or **Blue Helmets** because of their light blue berets or helmets)

Top 5 contributors to UN Peacekeeping missions are-

1. **United States (27.89%).**
2. **China (15.21%).**
3. **Japan (8.56%).**
4. **Germany (6.09%).**
5. **United Kingdom (5.79%).**

Current news?

1. **Major Radhika Sen** has been selected for the **"Military Gender Advocate of the Year 2023"** award by the **UN Headquarters** for her **contribution towards** UN Peacekeeping mission.
2. Indian peacekeeper **Naik Dhananjay Kumar Singh** awarded the **prestigious Dag Hammarskjöld** medal **posthumously** for his service at DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo).
Dag Hammarskjöld was the **second Secretary-General** of the **United Nations.**

Q931. With reference to the United Nations Interim Peacekeeping Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), consider the following statements:

1. It is an international body assigned to prevent violations along the border between Lebanon and Israel.
2. The peacekeeping force includes only military personnel and does not have civilian personnel.
3. It was created by the United Nations Security Council in 1978.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established to monitor the cessation of hostilities, prevent violations along the border between Lebanon and Israel, and support the Lebanese government in restoring its authority in the area.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** UNIFIL includes both military and civilian personnel. The civilian component provides essential support to the mission's mandate, such as administrative, logistical, and coordination functions.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** UNIFIL was created by the United Nations Security Council through Resolutions 425 and 426 in 1978, in response to Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon.

Q932. Consider the following statements regarding United Nations Peacekeeping Force (UNPF):

1. Peacekeepers are recruited directly by selection committee of United Nations General Assembly and are also called as UN Army.
2. They are often referred to as Blue Berets or Blue Helmets

Select the correct statement(s):

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** UN Peacekeepers are not directly recruited by a selection committee of the United Nations General Assembly, nor is there a "UN Army." Peacekeepers are personnel contributed voluntarily by member states of the United Nations. These individuals remain members of their national armed forces or police and are placed under UN command for the duration of their mission.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** UN Peacekeepers are often referred to as "Blue Berets" or "Blue

Helmets" due to the distinctive light blue headgear they wear, which symbolizes their role under the UN flag.

Q933. Consider the following statements regarding 'UN peacekeeping forces':

1. Blue Helmets is the term used for personnel of the UN peacekeeping forces.
2. UN Peacekeepers should be impartial in their dealings with the parties to the conflict, but not neutral.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Personnel of the UN peacekeeping forces are commonly referred to as "Blue Helmets" because of the distinctive blue helmets or berets they wear, which symbolize their affiliation with the United Nations.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** These three principles are inter-related and mutually reinforcing:
 1. Consent of the parties
 2. Impartiality
 3. Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate

Impartiality is crucial to maintaining the consent and cooperation of the main parties, but should not be confused with neutrality or inactivity. United Nations peacekeepers should be impartial in their dealings with the parties to the conflict, but not neutral in the execution of their mandate.

Just as a good referee is impartial, but will penalize infractions, so a peacekeeping operation should not condone actions by the parties that violate the undertakings of the peace process or the international norms and principles that a United Nations peacekeeping operation upholds.

Notwithstanding the need to establish and maintain good relations with the parties, a peacekeeping operation must scrupulously avoid activities that might compromise its image of impartiality. A mission should not shy away from a rigorous application of the principle of impartiality for fear of misinterpretation or retaliation.



Failure to do so may undermine the peacekeeping operation's credibility and legitimacy, and may lead to a withdrawal of consent for its presence by one or more of the parties.

Topic 312

312. QUAD

- stands for quadrilateral security dialogue
- group of four democratic countries—India, Australia, US and Japan.
- March 2021, the first-ever summit of QUAD leaders took place virtually (before that QUAD remained an informal group).

Objectives of QUAD-

- maritime security,
- addressing the risks of climate change,
- boosting technological innovation

Current news?

- sixth Quad Leaders' Summit was held in Wilmington, Delaware (USA).

Quad Wilmington Declaration

1. Quad Cancer Moonshot
 - The initiative will initially target cervical cancer, later other types of Cancer.
2. Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI)
 - To help regional partners in the Indo-Pacific region effectively utilize tools from the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) and other Quad initiatives.
 - India will host the inaugural MAITRI workshop in 2025.
3. Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission- joint exercise of Coast Guards
4. Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network
5. Quad Ports of the Future Partnership

Note-Quad Leaders' Summit 2025 to be held in India.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



EXPLAINED
E Glue is China
 THE QUAD grouping has expanded its landscape, from addressing wars in Europe and West Asia to combating cancer. But Beijing remains the strategic glue — with China's aggression affecting each partner.

China factor behind QUAD

- Though never formally announced, but regulating China's aggression, especially in South China Sea region has been core agenda of QUAD.

Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)

- IPMDA is a joint initiative of QUAD that aims to improve maritime awareness and response capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region.

Q934. Consider the following statements:

1. Pitch Black is a multilateral naval exercise between the Quad partner countries.
2. The exercise aims to hone operational skills and imbibe best practices and procedures, in the maritime domain, through interaction between member countries.

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

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** Pitch Black is not a naval exercise. It is a multilateral air combat exercise hosted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). It involves air forces from multiple countries, including Quad partners (India, Australia, Japan, and the USA) as well as other nations. The exercise focuses on air combat training, interoperability, and sharing best practices among participating nations.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** The objective of exercises like Pitch Black is to hone operational skills and imbibe best practices and procedures through interaction and cooperation among member countries, albeit in the aerial domain rather than the maritime domain.



Q935. Which one of the following international groups/organizations/associations do not consist of Australia or India as its members?

- (a) QUAD
- (b) ASEAN
- (c) AUKUS
- (d) SCO

Ans: b

Sol: QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue): India and Australia are both members, along with the United States and Japan.

1. ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations):

Neither India nor Australia is a member. ASEAN is a regional organization comprising ten Southeast Asian nations: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. However, both India and Australia engage with ASEAN as dialogue partners.

2. AUKUS:

A trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. India is not a member, but Australia is.

3. SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation):

India is a full member of SCO, while Australia is not. SCO primarily includes China, Russia, and Central Asian countries.

Q936. Regarding the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), consider the following statements:

1. It is a strategic forum consisting of the United States, Japan, India, and Australia.
2. Recently the secretariat of the QUAD was inaugurated in New Delhi.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) is a strategic forum

consisting of four countries: the United States, Japan, India, and Australia. It focuses on promoting a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and addresses regional and global challenges, including security, economic, and technological issues.

- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** As of now, the QUAD does not have a formal secretariat or headquarters. The meetings and activities are coordinated among the member countries on a rotational basis or through working groups. There has been no recent inauguration of a QUAD secretariat in New Delhi or elsewhere.

Topic 313

313. Malabar Exercise

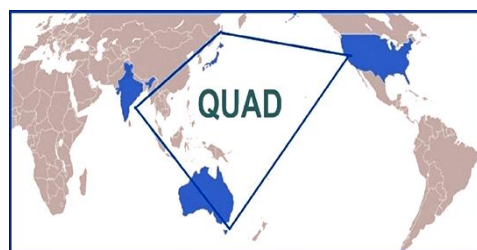
- Initiated in **1992** as a **bilateral naval exercise** between **India and the US**.
- Later on **Japan and Australia also included**.
- **Quad** and **Malabar Exercise** are **closely linked** through their shared objective of enhancing security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

Other Military Exercises:

1. **La Perouse:** India, Australia, United States, France, Japan, and United Kingdom.
2. **SALVEX:** India and USA
3. **Sea Dragon:** India, USA, Japan, Canada and South Korea
4. **Ex Veer Guardian:** Air Exercise between India and Japan

Current news?

- Recently, the **sea Phase of Malabar 2024** concluded at **Visakhapatnam**.





Indo-Pacific region extends from **shores of Africa** to the **shores of the US**.

Q937. Consider the following:

1. JIMEX
2. Malabar exercise
3. Dharma Guardian

How many of the above is/are joint exercises between India and Japan?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **JIMEX (Japan-India Maritime Exercise):** This is a bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). It focuses on enhancing maritime cooperation and interoperability between the two nations.
- **Malabar Exercise:** This is a multilateral naval exercise involving India, Japan, the United States, and Australia. Japan became a permanent member of the exercise in 2015, making it a significant platform for maritime security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Dharma Guardian:** This is a bilateral army exercise between the Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF). It focuses on joint training for counter-terrorism operations and enhancing military cooperation.

Q938. Which of the following countries participates in Military Exercise "Yudh Abhyas" with India?

- (a) Russia
- (b) Japan
- (c) Malaysia
- (d) United States

Ans: d

Q939. Consider the following statements about the Malabar Exercise and other military exercises involving India:

1. The Malabar Exercise began in 1992 as a bilateral naval exercise between India and the United States and later included Japan and Australia.
2. The La Perouse naval exercise involves India, Australia, the United States, France, Japan, and the United Kingdom.
3. The Sea Dragon exercise is conducted among India, the United States, Japan, Canada, and South Korea.
4. The air exercise "Ex Veer Guardian" is conducted between India and Australia.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct: The Malabar Exercise began as a bilateral exercise between India and the US in 1992 and expanded to include Japan and Australia.
- Statement 2 is correct: The La Perouse naval exercise involves six nations: India, Australia, the US, France, Japan, and the UK.
- Statement 3 is correct: The Sea Dragon exercise is conducted among India, the US, Japan, Canada, and South Korea.
- Statement 4 is incorrect: The air exercise "Ex Veer Guardian" is conducted between India and Japan, not Australia.

Topic 314

314. 46th Session of World Heritage Committee **UNESCO**

- **Specialised agency** of the **UN**.



Main role of UNESCO

- Establishment and protection of World Heritages.

How heritage sites are identified?

- Decided by World Heritage committee (comprises of 21 member countries amongst all countries that are signatory of UNESCO World Heritage convention 1972).
- A Country is elected for 4 years terms.

India at World Heritage Committee of UNESCO

- India ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1977.
- Currently India is serving its fourth term on the World Heritage Committee for 2021 to 2025.
- India was the WH Committee member earlier for three terms: 1985-1991, 2001-2007 and 2011-2015.

Current news?

- India will host the 46th World Heritage Committee at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.
- This is the first time India is hosting this event
- UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay attended.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

Q940. Consider the following statements about World Heritage Committee

- The Committee works under the aegis of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- The Committee is responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.
- The Committee representatives are elected by UN General Assembly.

How many of the following statements are incorrect?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three statements
- None of the statements

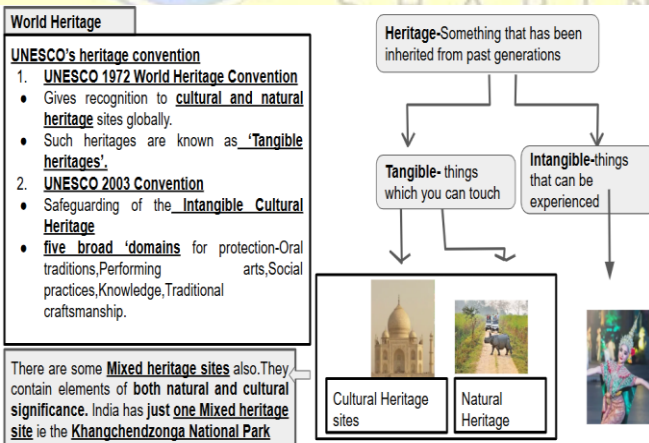
Ans: a

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct** The World Heritage Committee operates under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- Statement 2: Correct** The Committee is responsible for implementing the World Heritage Convention, including maintaining the World Heritage List and monitoring the conservation status of listed sites.
- Statement 3: Incorrect** The representatives of the World Heritage Committee are not elected by the UN General Assembly but by the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention.

Q941. With reference to 'UNESCO World Heritage Sites', consider the following statements

- It is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the UNESCO



2. A nominated site must meet at least one of the ten selection criteria to be enlisted as a world heritage site

3. The nominated sites are evaluated by World Heritage Committee which makes recommendation to the UNESCO for designation
Choose the correct answer using the code given below

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) All of the above.

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** A UNESCO World Heritage Site is a landmark or area recognized for its cultural, historical, scientific, or other significance. It is legally protected under an international convention administered by UNESCO.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** To be included on the World Heritage List, a site must meet at least one of the ten selection criteria, which cover aspects of cultural, natural, or mixed heritage.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** Countries nominate sites to the WHC, which then evaluates them based on recommendations from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The WHC meets once a year to decide which sites to add to the World Heritage List.

Q942. Consider the following statements regarding India and its role in the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO:

1. India ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1977 and is currently serving its fourth term on the World Heritage Committee from 2021 to 2025.
2. India has hosted the World Heritage Committee session twice, including the 46th session in Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
3. UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay attended the 46th World Heritage Committee session hosted by India.
4. India's earlier terms on the World Heritage Committee were from 1985-1991, 2001-2007, and 2011-2015.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1, 2, and 3 only

(b) 1, 3, and 4 only

(c) 2 and 4 only

(d) 1, 2, 3, and 4

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India ratified the World Heritage Convention in 1977 and is currently serving its fourth term (2021-2025).
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** India is hosting the World Heritage Committee session for the first time in Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay attended the event.
- **Statement 4: Correct.** India's prior terms on the World Heritage Committee were from 1985-1991, 2001-2007, and 2011-2015.

Topic 315

315. UNESCO includes Moidams in World Heritage list

- **Ahom Moidams** –Inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List as **India's 43rd Entry**.
- The announcement was made during the **ongoing 46th session** of the **World Heritage Committee** at New Delhi (first ever in India).
- After **Kaziranga** and **Manas National Parks**, it is **Assam's third** World Heritage site and **first** in the **cultural category**.
- India stands at the **6th position globally** for the most number of World Heritage Properties.
- **Italy** with 60 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, **highest in the world**.

Ahom 'Moidams'

- Situated in Assam's **Charaideo district**.
- **Burial grounds** of rulers of **Ahom king and Queen** (compared to pyramids of Egypt).
- In the 13th century, Chau-lung **Siu-ka-pha**, the founder of Ahom kingdom, established his **first capital** at Che-rai-doi or **Charaideo** (at the foothill of Patkai hills).





Architectural features

- Hemispherical
- Sizes vary depending upon the power and status of the person buried.
- Vaulted Chamber
- Octagonal boundary

Q943. Consider the following statements regarding Ahom Moidams:

1. Ahom Moidams were inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List as India's 43rd entry.
2. They are located in Assam's Charaideo district and are burial grounds of Ahom rulers and queens.
3. The architectural design of the Moidams includes a vaulted chamber, octagonal boundaries, and hemispherical shapes.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Ahom Moidams were inscribed as India's 43rd entry in the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The Moidams are located in Charaideo district and serve as burial grounds for Ahom rulers and queens.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Architectural features of the Moidams include hemispherical shapes, a vaulted chamber, and octagonal boundaries.

Q944. Consider the following statements about India's position in the UNESCO World Heritage List:

1. After the inclusion of Ahom Moidams, India now has 43 UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

2. Italy has the highest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites globally, with 60 entries.
3. India ranks 6th globally in the number of World Heritage Properties.
4. The 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee was hosted by India for the second time.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only two
- (b) Only three
- (c) All four
- (d) Only one

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Ahom Moidams became India's 43rd entry in the UNESCO World Heritage List.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Italy leads the world with 60 UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** India ranks 6th globally in terms of the number of World Heritage Properties.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** India hosted the 46th session for the first time.

Q945. Consider the following statements about the historical and cultural aspects of Ahom Moidams:

1. Ahom Moidams have been compared to the pyramids of Egypt in terms of their function as burial grounds.
2. The Ahom kingdom was established by Chau-lung Siu-ka-pha in the 13th century, with its first capital at Charaideo.
3. The sizes of the Moidams vary based on the power and status of the individuals buried.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Moidams have been compared to the pyramids of Egypt as burial grounds.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Chau-lung Siu-ka-pha founded the Ahom kingdom in the 13th century, with the first capital at Charaideo.



- **Statement 3: Correct.** The sizes of the Moidams differ based on the power and status of the individuals buried.

Topic 316

316. NATO at 75

- After WWII that ended in 1945, the world became bipolar-divided in USSR bloc, The US bloc.
- Some newly independent countries like India remained non aligned and started NAM (Non- Alignment Movement).
- The US bloc made a military pact named NATO to counter the USSR bloc.
- The USSR bloc signed Warsaw pact amongst its member countries
- But by 1991 the USSR bloc collapsed, the Warsaw pact ended.
- But the NATO is still continuing.
- NATO is based on the idea of Collective Defence.

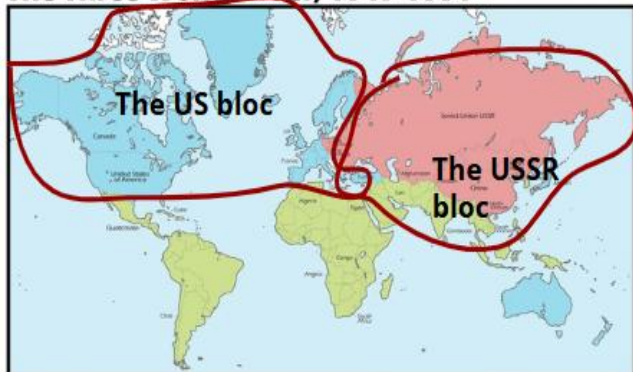
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- It is an intergovernmental military alliance.
- Treaty that was signed on 4 April 1949.
- Headquarters — Brussels, Belgium.
- 32 member countries along North Atlantic Ocean are its members
- Sweden is the latest to join (it joined in 2024)

Nato Plus

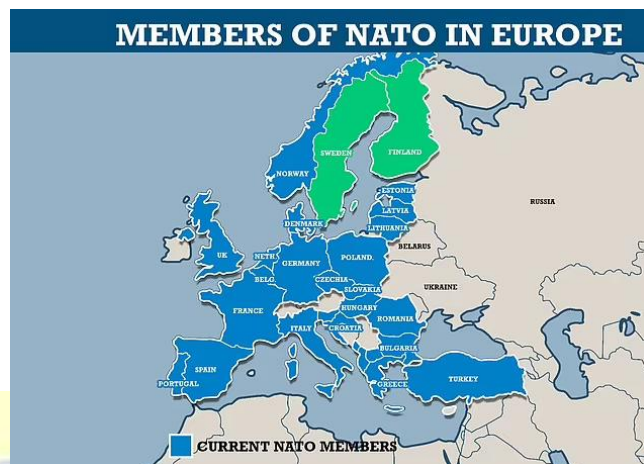
- It is a grouping of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and five countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Israel, and South Korea.
- The US suggested India to be part of Nato Plus, but India declined.

The Three World Order, 1947-1991



Collective Security and Collective Defence

- Collective defence is regional, it is meant only for the members and enemy is known in Advance. NATO is an example of collective defence.
- Collective security is universal, enemy is not predefined. The UN is based on this idea.



Note- One of the most important factor behind Russia-Ukraine war is eastward extension of NATO, especially Ukraine's attempt to join NATO.

Q946. After remaining neutral for almost 200 years, which one of the following countries officially joined NATO in March 2024?

- Sweden
- North Macedonia
- Finland
- Switzerland

Ans: a

Sol: After remaining neutral for nearly 200 years, Sweden officially joined NATO in March 2024. Sweden's decision to join NATO was driven by evolving security concerns in the region, especially in light of Russia's increasing assertiveness and the changing geopolitical dynamics in Europe.

- North Macedonia: Joined NATO earlier, in March 2020.
- Finland: Officially became a NATO member in April 2023.
- Switzerland: Maintains a policy of neutrality and is not a NATO member.



Thus, Sweden's accession in March 2024 marks a historic shift in its longstanding policy of neutrality.

Q947. Consider the following statements about NATO's membership and structure:

1. NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance established in 1949.
2. Its headquarters is located in Brussels, Belgium.
3. Currently, NATO has 32 member countries, with Sweden being the latest to join in 2024.
4. NATO membership is restricted to countries along the North Atlantic Ocean.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** NATO was established in 1949 as an intergovernmental military alliance.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The headquarters of NATO is in Brussels, Belgium.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** NATO has 32 member countries, with Sweden being the latest to join in 2024.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** NATO membership is not limited to countries along the North Atlantic Ocean; for example, Turkey is a member despite being geographically distant from the North Atlantic.

Q948. Consider the following statements about NATO Plus and India's stance:

1. NATO Plus is a grouping that includes NATO and five non-member countries: Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Israel, and South Korea.
2. The US invited India to join NATO Plus, but India declined.
3. NATO Plus is primarily focused on military expansion in the Pacific region.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** NATO Plus includes NATO and five non-member countries: Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Israel, and South Korea.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The US proposed India's inclusion in NATO Plus, but India declined the offer.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** NATO Plus is not explicitly focused on military expansion in the Pacific region but is a broader framework to enhance collaboration with key non-NATO allies.

Topic 317

317. BHISM Cubes

- During his visit to Ukraine Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted four BHISHM cubes to Ukraine.
- The cubes are part of the "Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri (BHISHM)." aimed at ensuring rapid deployment of medical facilities.
- Each cube contains medicines and equipment necessary for medical care in emergency situations.
- The BHISHM cubes were developed under the Indian government's Project Aarogya Maitri.
- Each cube can handle around 200 emergency cases.



PM Modi presents BHISHM cubes to President Zelenskyy. PTI

Q949. Consider the following statements about BHISHM cubes gifted by India to Ukraine:

1. The cubes are designed to provide rapid deployment of medical facilities in emergency situations.
2. Each cube is equipped to handle around 200 emergency cases.
3. The initiative is part of the Indian government's Project Aarogya Maitri.
4. BHISHM stands for "Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri."

Which of the above statements is/are correct?



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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** BHISHM cubes are designed for rapid deployment of medical facilities in emergencies.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Each cube can handle approximately 200 emergency cases.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The BHISHM cubes were developed under the Indian government's Project Aarogya Maitri.
- **Statement 4: Correct.** BHISHM stands for "Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri."

Q950. Consider the following statements regarding Project Aarogya Maitri and BHISHM cubes:

1. Project Aarogya Maitri is an Indian government initiative focused on global medical aid.
2. The BHISHM cubes were first introduced during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Ukraine.
3. The primary purpose of BHISHM cubes is to enhance bilateral ties through healthcare collaboration.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only One
(b) Only Two
(c) All Three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Project Aarogya Maitri is focused on providing medical aid globally, demonstrating India's commitment to international cooperation in healthcare.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** While BHISHM cubes were gifted during the Ukraine visit, they were not introduced for the first time during this visit.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The initiative is part of India's effort to strengthen bilateral ties through healthcare and humanitarian support.

Q951. Consider the following statements about the medical capabilities of BHISHM cubes:

1. Each cube contains medicines and equipment necessary for emergency medical care.
2. BHISHM cubes are capable of handling basic surgical procedures.
3. The cubes are designed for single-use only and cannot be reused.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** BHISHM cubes are equipped with medicines and medical equipment essential for emergency care.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** There is no mention of BHISHM cubes being capable of handling basic surgical procedures.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** There is no indication that the cubes are single-use; they are designed for multiple emergency cases.

Topic 318

318. Swiss Peace Summit

- Swiss Peace Summit was recently conducted by Switzerland at Burgenstock.

Decision taken

- A joint communique was signed by as many as 80 countries.
- Key idea in the communique - "territorial integrity" of Ukraine should be the basis for any peace agreement to end Russia's war.
- Russia did not attend the Swiss summit on peace in Ukraine and calling it a "waste of time".

India's stand

- India did not sign the joint communique.

Argument presented by India for its stand

- One of the two warring parties — declined to attend the summit.
- Any peace agreement has to be signed by both warring parties to be of substance.





India's Four-Point Principle on Russia-Ukraine war-suggested by Dr S Jaishankar

1. There can be **no battlefield solution**.
2. This is a **time for peace**, and **Russia** must be **involved** in the **dialogue**.
3. Emphasis on **diplomacy over military** outcomes.
4. **India** will actively work to find a way to resolve the conflict.

Recent diplomacy by India

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited** both Moscow and Kyiv earlier this year.
- He **suggested Russian President Vladimir Putin** that **'this is not age of war'**.

Q952. Consider the following statements regarding the Swiss Peace Summit:

1. The summit was held in Burgenstock, Switzerland, and was attended by representatives from 80 countries.
2. The key focus of the summit was to ensure the "territorial integrity" of Ukraine in any peace agreement.
3. Russia did not attend the summit, dismissing it as a "waste of time."

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The summit was held in Burgenstock, Switzerland, with participation from representatives of 80 countries.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The key idea in the communique was that Ukraine's territorial

integrity must be the basis for any peace agreement.

- **Statement 3: Correct.** Russia declined to attend the summit, calling it a "waste of time."

Q953. Consider the following statements about India's stand at the Swiss Peace Summit:

1. India did not sign the joint communique at the summit.
2. India's argument was that both warring parties, including Russia, need to participate in any meaningful peace agreement.
3. India emphasized the need for a battlefield solution to end the conflict.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India did not sign the communique at the summit.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** India highlighted that peace agreements must involve both warring parties to have substance.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** India rejected the idea of a battlefield solution, emphasizing diplomacy instead.

Q954. Consider the following statements about India's stance on the Russia-Ukraine war:

1. India's four-point principle on the conflict emphasizes diplomacy and peace over military outcomes.
2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Moscow and Kyiv earlier this year and conveyed that "this is not an age of war."
3. India has actively worked to mediate peace by co-signing the Swiss communique alongside 80 other nations.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:



- **Statement 1: Correct.** India's approach emphasizes diplomacy, peace, and a rejection of battlefield solutions.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Prime Minister Modi visited both Moscow and Kyiv and conveyed his stand to Russian President Putin.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** India did not co-sign the Swiss communique, citing the absence of both warring parties at the summit.

Topic 319

319. 25 years of India's Nuclear Doctrine

- Nuclear Doctrine refers to a set of policies and strategies that a nuclear-armed state adopts to manage, deploy, and use its nuclear weapons.

India's Nuclear Doctrine

- Outlined after India's nuclear tests in 1998 (Operation Shakti-Pokhran II).
- Officially adopted in 2003.

Key Features of India's Nuclear Doctrine-

1. No First Use (NFU) Policy

- India has committed to not using nuclear weapons first in any conflict.

2. Massive Retaliation

- In the event of a nuclear attack on India, India will retaliate with massive nuclear force.

3. Credible Minimum Deterrence:

- India's nuclear arsenal is maintained at a level sufficient to deter adversaries but not excessive.

4. Survivability of Nuclear Forces

- India's nuclear forces are designed to be capable of surviving a first strike by an adversary and still being able to retaliate effectively.

5. Nuclear triad

- India aims to maintain a nuclear triad, which means having the capability to launch nuclear weapons from land-based missiles, aircraft, and submarines.
- This leads to credible deterrence.

6. Commitment to Global Nuclear Disarmament

Note - 11th May is celebrated as National Technology Day



| POKHRAN-I (Operation Smiling Buddha) | POKHRAN-II (Operation Shakti) |
|--|---|
| May 18, 1974 | May 11-13, 1998 |
| Tested: 1 Plutonium Implosion Device Yield: 12-13 kt | Tested: 5 advanced weapon designs - 1. 45 kt Thermonuclear Device 2. 15 kt Fission Device 3. 0.2 kt Sub-Kiloton Device 4. 0.5 kt Sub-Kiloton Device 5. 0.3 kt Sub-Kiloton Device Yield: 0.3 kt to 45 kt |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had on September 7, 1972 authorised work on the nuclear fission device. The government called the test a 'Peaceful Nuclear Explosion' (PNE). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prime Minister A B Vajpayee had given the go-ahead for the tests on March 28, 1998. Vajpayee announced the success of the tests on May 11, 1998. The tests were conducted as part of the nuclear weaponisation programme. |
| Key Scientists: Raja Ramanna, Homi Sethna, B D Nagchaudhuri, P K Iyengar, R Chidambaram, Anil Kakodkar | Key Scientists: R Chidambaram, Anil Kakodkar, K Santhanam, A P J Abdul Kalam |
| The aftermath: Pakistan called the test "a nuclear blackmail" by India. The US was caught by surprise, constituted the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) with the USSR, the UK and others to restrict export of nuke tech. Canada suspended nuclear energy cooperation with India. | The aftermath: The US strongly condemned the tests, imposed economic sanctions on India. China, Japan, Canada and other nations expressed concern. Pakistan retaliated, carried out its first nuke test, Chagai-I (max yield 32 kt) on May 28, 1998, followed by Chagai-II (max yield 15 kt) on May 30, 1998. |

Compiled by KALYAN RAY

India's nuclear programme

1. Pokhran I

- 1974 Operation Smiling Buddha conducted by India- Peaceful Nuclear Explosion

2. Pokhran II

- 1998 operation Shakti- India declared itself a nuclear weapon state

Q955. Consider the following statements regarding India's Nuclear Doctrine:

1. India follows a "No First Use" (NFU) policy for nuclear weapons.
2. India's nuclear arsenal is maintained at a level beyond what is necessary for deterrence.
3. India's doctrine includes the principle of "Massive Retaliation" in response to a nuclear attack.
4. India's nuclear forces are designed to survive a first strike by an adversary and retaliate effectively.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: c



Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India has committed to a "No First Use" policy.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** India follows the principle of Credible Minimum Deterrence, ensuring its arsenal is sufficient but not excessive.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** India has committed to "Massive Retaliation" in response to a nuclear attack.
- **Statement 4: Correct.** India's nuclear forces are designed to survive a first strike and ensure credible retaliation.

Q956. Consider the following statements regarding India's nuclear programme:

1. India conducted its first nuclear test, named Operation Smiling Buddha, in 1974.
2. Operation Shakti (Pokhran II) in 1998 was a peaceful nuclear explosion.
3. India declared itself a nuclear-armed state after Pokhran II in 1998.
4. India's nuclear doctrine was officially adopted immediately after the 1998 nuclear tests.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India conducted its first nuclear test, Operation Smiling Buddha, in 1974 as a "Peaceful Nuclear Explosion."
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** Operation Shakti (Pokhran II) in 1998 was not a peaceful explosion; it declared India as a nuclear weapon state.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** India declared itself a nuclear-armed state after Pokhran II.
- **Statement 4: Incorrect.** India's nuclear doctrine was officially adopted in 2003, not immediately after the 1998 tests.

Q957. Consider the following statements about India's nuclear capabilities and commitments:

1. India is committed to maintaining a nuclear triad as part of its deterrence strategy.
2. India has consistently advocated for global nuclear disarmament.

3. The principle of Credible Minimum Deterrence involves maintaining a large and excessive nuclear arsenal.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

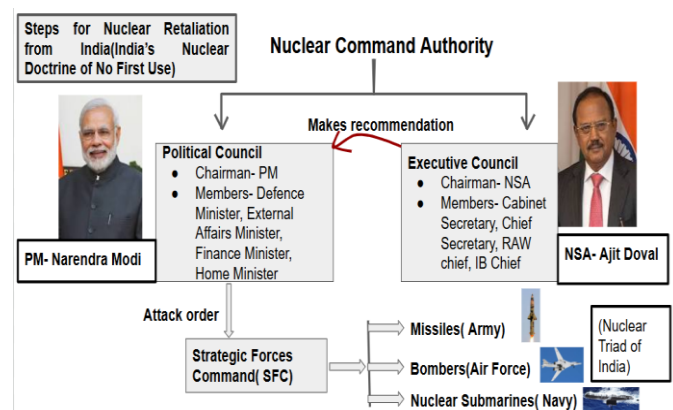
Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India's nuclear doctrine includes the goal of maintaining a nuclear triad (land, air, and sea-based launch capabilities).
- **Statement 2: Correct.** India has consistently advocated for global nuclear disarmament.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** Credible Minimum Deterrence emphasizes maintaining a sufficient but not excessive nuclear arsenal.

Topic 320

320. Strategic Forces Command

- It is the **responsibility of the SFC** to **operationalize the orders of the NCA** (National Command Authority) under the leadership of a **Commander-in-Chief** who is a Senior Officer.
- It has the **sole responsibility of initiating the process** of delivering **nuclear weapons** and warheads **after acquiring clear approval** from the NCA.



Q958. Consider the following statements regarding the Strategic Forces Command (SFC):

1. The SFC was established in 2003 as part of India's Nuclear Command Authority (NCA).



2. It has the sole responsibility of managing and administering India's tactical and strategic nuclear weapons.
3. The Commander-in-Chief of SFC is a 4-star General appointed on a rotational basis from the three services.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The SFC was created in 2003 as part of India's Nuclear Command Authority.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The SFC is responsible for the management and administration of India's tactical and strategic nuclear arsenal.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** The Commander-in-Chief is a 3-star General, not a 4-star, and is appointed on a rotational basis from the three services.

Q959. Consider the following statements about India's Nuclear Command Authority (NCA):

1. The Political Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, is the sole body authorized to approve the use of nuclear weapons.
2. The Executive Council, chaired by the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), provides input to the Political Council for decision-making.
3. The NCA is responsible for command, control, and operational decisions regarding India's nuclear weapons programme.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Political Council, led by the Prime Minister, is the sole body authorized to approve nuclear weapon use.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** The Executive Council is chaired by the National Security Advisor (NSA), not the CDS.

- **Statement 3: Correct.** The NCA oversees command, control, and operational decisions related to India's nuclear programme.

Q960. Consider the following statements regarding the composition and functioning of the Strategic Forces Command (SFC):

1. The SFC is composed of personnel from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force, deputed from their respective services.
2. The SFC is responsible for selecting final nuclear targets independently, without requiring approval from the NCA.
3. The SFC ensures operational readiness and formulates contingency plans for nuclear deployment.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The SFC consists of officers and personnel from the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** The final target selection is done with approval from the NCA through a calibrated process.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The SFC ensures operational readiness and prepares contingency plans to fulfill its objectives.

Day 33

Topic 321

321. Strait of Gibraltar

- separates Europe from Africa
- connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean
- bordered by Spain and the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar in the north, and by the African country of Morocco and the Spanish enclave of Ceuta in the south.
- Declared Important Bird Area by Bird Life International

Why in news?

- Iran has recently threatened to close the Strait of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean Sea unless Israel stops bombing Gaza.





Q961. Regarding the Mediterranean Sea, consider the following statements:

1. It lies between the continents of Eurasia and Africa enclosed almost completely by land.
2. To the west, it is connected to the Atlantic Ocean through the Strait of Gibraltar.
3. The Nile River (Africa) drains into the Mediterranean Sea.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: d

Sol: It lies between the continents of Eurasia and Africa enclosed almost completely by land.

- Correct. The Mediterranean Sea is bordered by Europe (north), Asia (east), and Africa (south). It is almost entirely enclosed by land, with only narrow connections to other water bodies.

To the west, it is connected to the Atlantic Ocean through the Strait of Gibraltar.

- Correct. The Strait of Gibraltar is a narrow passage connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean.

The Nile River (Africa) drains into the Mediterranean Sea.

- Correct. The Nile River flows northward through northeastern Africa and empties into the Mediterranean Sea near its delta in Egypt.

Q962. Consider the following statements about Morocco

1. It is a mountainous country in western North Africa that lies directly across the Strait of Gibraltar.
 2. It is the only African country with coastal exposure to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.
 3. The major Atlantic Ocean port is Casablanca, which is located in Morocco.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three statements
- (d) None of the statements

Ans: c

Sol: It is a mountainous country in western North Africa that lies directly across the Strait of Gibraltar.

- Correct. Morocco is located in western North Africa, and the Rif Mountains lie along its northern coastline. It is directly across the Strait of Gibraltar, which separates it from Spain.

It is the only African country with coastal exposure to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

- Correct. Morocco has coastlines along both the Atlantic Ocean (to the west) and the Mediterranean Sea (to the north).

The major Atlantic Ocean port is Casablanca, which is located in Morocco.

- Correct. Casablanca is Morocco's largest city and its major Atlantic port, known for its economic importance.

Q963. Through which one of the following Straits, does a tunnel connect the United Kingdom and France?

- (a) Davis Strait
- (b) Denmark Strait
- (c) Strait of Dover
- (d) Strait of Gibraltar

Ans: c

Sol: The Channel Tunnel (Chunnel) connects the United Kingdom and France and runs beneath the Strait of Dover, the narrowest part of the English Channel. This engineering marvel enables



transportation of passengers and goods via rail between the two countries.

Topic 322

322. Ben Gurion and Suez Canal Project

Suez Canal

- **1869 to 1956**-under **British and French control**
- **nationalised in July 1956** by **Egypt's** by then leader **Gamal Abdel Nasser** to generate revenue through toll.
- **Britain** and **France** were **charged higher toll/Israeli based** ships were banned by Nasser.
- Israel (with support of British and French) invaded Egypt leading to **second Arab Israeli war(1956)**.
- **Under Soviet, U.S., and U.N. pressure, Britain and France withdrew** in December, and **Israeli forces departed in March 1957**.
- The Suez Crisis ended in a **political victory for Egypt**, which kept **control over the canal**.
- Thus in **1960's Israel and US started** with a plan to bypass Suez canal by building **Ben Gurion Canal Project**.

Ben Gurion Canal Project

- **cut a canal** through the **Israeli-controlled Negev Desert** from the tip of the **Gulf of Aqaba**
- The project remains **only in concept**.



If completed will **take away Egypt's monopoly** over the **shortest route between Europe and Asia**.

Q964. Regarding the Suez Canal, consider the following statements:

1. The canal separates Europe from Asia.

2. The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.

3. It provides the shortest maritime route between Europe and the lands lying around the Indian and western Pacific oceans.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three statements
- None of the statements

Ans: b

Sol: 1. The canal separates Europe from Asia.

- Incorrect. The Suez Canal does not separate Europe from Asia, but it separates the African continent from Asia. It lies entirely within Egypt, connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea.

2. The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway running north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt, to connect the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea.

- Correct. The Suez Canal is an artificial, sea-level waterway that connects the Mediterranean Sea at Port Said in the north to the Red Sea at Suez in the south, running through the Isthmus of Suez in Egypt.

3. It provides the shortest maritime route between Europe and the lands lying around the Indian and western Pacific oceans.

- Correct. The Suez Canal significantly reduces travel distance and time for ships traveling between Europe and the regions around the Indian and western Pacific Oceans, bypassing the need to sail around the southern tip of Africa (Cape of Good Hope).

Q965. Consider the following statements regarding the aftermath of the Suez Crisis (1956):

- Under pressure from the Soviet Union, the United States, and the United Nations, Britain and France withdrew from Egypt in December 1956.
- The Suez Crisis ended with Egypt retaining control over the canal.



3. The crisis led to the immediate construction of the Ben Gurion Canal as an alternative to the Suez Canal.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Britain and France, under international pressure, withdrew in December 1956, and Israeli forces departed by March 1957.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Egypt retained control of the Suez Canal, marking a political victory for the country.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The Ben Gurion Canal was proposed in the 1960s but remained only a concept.

Q966. Consider the following statements about the Ben Gurion Canal Project:

1. It aimed to cut a canal through the Israeli-controlled Negev Desert from the Gulf of Aqaba.
2. The project was proposed in the 1960s as a direct response to the Suez Crisis.
3. It is currently under construction as a major alternative to the Suez Canal.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

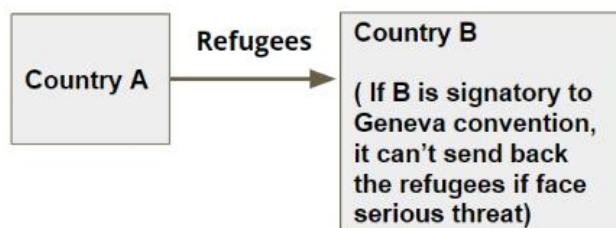
- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Ben Gurion Canal Project envisioned a canal cutting through the Negev Desert from the Gulf of Aqaba.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It was proposed in the 1960s as a conceptual response to the Suez Crisis.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The project remains only a concept and has not been constructed.

Topic 323

323. Geneva Convention on Refugees

Geneva Convention of 1951 and Protocol of 1967

- Known as **Refugee convention**
- **Geneva Convention of 1951**-Only applicable in **Europe**
- **Protocol of 1967**- gave the Convention **universal coverage**.
- **India is not signatory**
- **Geneva Convention** on refugees follows the **principle of non refoulement**.



UK-Rwanda deportation plan

- **Smugglers** send **illegal refugees** to the **UK in lorries (Donkey routes)**.

Why UK doesn't send these refugees back?

- Because the **UK is signatory of Geneva Convention of 1951**.
- **United Kingdom has signed a deal with Rwanda** to send some asylum seekers to Rwanda.
- This led to a **lot of criticism** (evasion of moral responsibility/use of money power against poor country).



Q967. Which of the following African countries have marked 500 days of war between the armed forces and support forces leading to the death of thousands of people?

- (a) Botswana



- (b) Libya
(c) Nigeria
(d) Sudan

Ans: d

Sol: Sudan has been experiencing a devastating conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The war, which began in April 2023, has caused immense humanitarian suffering, leading to the deaths of thousands and the displacement of millions. This conflict has marked over 500 days of hostilities, impacting the country's political stability and human security.

Q968. Consider the following places.

1. Sahara Desert.
2. Andaman Sea
3. Red Sea
4. Persian Gulf

Which of the above places does Tropic of Cancer passes?

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

Ans: c

Sol: Sahara Desert:

- Correct. The Tropic of Cancer passes through the northern part of the Sahara Desert, which lies in Africa.

Andaman Sea:

- Incorrect. The Tropic of Cancer does not pass through the Andaman Sea. It lies south of the Tropic of Cancer.

Red Sea:

- Correct. The Tropic of Cancer crosses the Red Sea near the northern part, where it lies close to Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Persian Gulf:

- Incorrect. The Tropic of Cancer does not pass through the Persian Gulf.

Q969. Consider the following statements regarding United Nations (UN) budget.

1. The UN budget is approved by the UN Security Council.
 2. United Nations (UN) maintains a separate budget for peacekeeping operations.
 3. The amount a member state contributes to the United Nations (UN) regular budget is voluntary.
- How many of the above statements is/are correct?
- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: a

Sol: The UN budget is approved by the UN Security Council.

- Incorrect. The UN budget is approved by the General Assembly, not the Security Council. The General Assembly has the authority to allocate and approve budgets for the organization, including its specialized agencies.

United Nations (UN) maintains a separate budget for peacekeeping operations.

- Correct. The UN peacekeeping budget is separate from its regular budget. This budget specifically funds peacekeeping missions and is assessed separately based on contributions from member states.

The amount a member state contributes to the United Nations (UN) regular budget is voluntary.

- Incorrect. Contributions to the UN regular budget are not voluntary. They are assessed based on a formula that takes into account each member state's capacity to pay, including factors like gross national income (GNI).

Topic 324

324. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

- **Caucasus** is a region between the **Black Sea and the Caspian Sea**-Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and south western Russia.
 - **Armenia and Azerbaijan** are hostile to each other.
1. **Religious conflict-** **Armenia** is a **Christian country** while **Azerbaijan** is an Islamic country.
 2. **Territorial conflict-** Both countries have **territorial conflict** regarding **Nagorno Karabakh region**.

Nagorno-Karabakh region



- internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan.
- 95% population ethnically belongs to Armenia
- region is practically under control of Armenia.
- In 1990s, Azerbaijan's troops were pushed out of the region following a war.

Recently-Fight started in **Lachin corridor**



Madrid Principles

- The Madrid Principles as the **basis for the formulation of a peace treaty** between **Armenia and Azerbaijan**.



Q970. Consider the following statements:

Statement 1: India's petroleum product exports to Europe have shifted entirely to the significantly longer and costlier, albeit safer, route around Africa via the Cape of Good Hope.

Statement II: Since late last year, numerous cargo ships have come under attack from the Iran-backed Houthi rebels of Yemen around the Bab el-Mandeb strait.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- (a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II explains Statement-I

- (b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct, but statement-II does not explain Statement-I
- (c) Statement-I is correct, but Statement-II is incorrect
- (d) Statement-I is incorrect, but Statement-II is correct

Ans: a

Q971. The Port of Odessa was in the news due to an attack on its port infrastructure. It is the largest port of:

- (a) Ukraine
(b) Egypt
(c) Norway
(d) Finland

Ans: a

Sol: The Port of Odessa is the largest port in Ukraine and a critical hub for the country's exports, particularly grain and other agricultural products. It is located on the northwestern shore of the Black Sea. Recently, it has been in the news due to attacks on its infrastructure amidst the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which has disrupted global grain supply chains.

Q972. Consider the following statements regarding Nagorno- Karabakh region conflicts.

1. It is area of contention between Azerbaijan and Armenia.
 2. The Region borders with Caspian Sea.
 3. It is part of former Soviet Union.
 4. The region is majorly populated by Armenians.
- Which of the above statements are true?

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

Ans: c

Sol: It is an area of contention between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

- Correct. The Nagorno-Karabakh region has been a long-standing point of conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, primarily over ethnic and territorial disputes.

The Region borders with the Caspian Sea.

- Incorrect. Nagorno-Karabakh is located inland, and does not border the Caspian



Sea. It lies within Azerbaijan's internationally recognized borders, but is landlocked and does not have a coastline.

It is part of the former Soviet Union.

- Correct. Nagorno-Karabakh was part of the Soviet Union as an autonomous region within Azerbaijan. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the region became a focal point for conflict.

The region is majorly populated by Armenians.

- Correct. Although internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh has a predominantly ethnic Armenian population, which has been a key aspect of the ongoing dispute.

Topic 325

325. India - Africa relations

Historical background

- **India's policy of NAM** created the **third front** during the cold war rivalry of the **US and USSR**.
- Most of the **African countries** joined **NAM** to maintain their **strategic autonomy**.

Green Diplomacy between India and Africa

- Under Cheetah reintroduction programme- **Cheetahs** have been **translocated from Namibia and South Africa.**
- **Many African countries** are part of **India's initiatives** ie **International Big Cat Alliance (conserve-seven big cats: lion, tiger, leopard, cheetah, snow leopard, jaguar, and puma-Note-Jaguar and Puma not found in India)**

India's initiatives for Africa

1. Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program
 - Programme started by India in 1964
 - To give training to professionals of developing countries from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Caribbean.
2. Asian Africa Growth Corridor in association with Japan for infrastructural development of Africa.
3. **India Africa summit**
 - First 2008 (New Delhi),
 - Second 2011 (Addis Ababa),
 - Third 2015 (New Delhi)
4. **Inclusion of African Union in G20**
 - African Union (AU) was included as a permanent member of the G20 under India's chairmanship in 2023.



A cheetah after being released into a quarantine enclosure at Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park on Saturday. 77

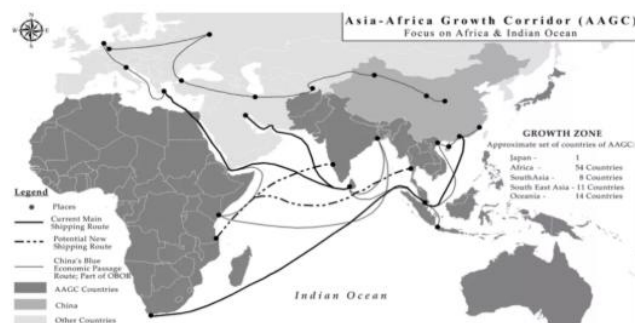
CHEETAH BATCH 2 ARRIVES

FIVE MONTHS AFTER eight cheetahs arrived from Namibia, 12 more of these big cats were released at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday.

AN IAF PLANE carried the seven males and five females from South Africa to Gwalior airport. From there, they were transported in IAF choppers.

AT KUNO, eight cheetahs were put up in separate quarantine enclosures. Four others were kept in two 'bomas' in pairs. They will live in these enclosures for a month to acclimatise.

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Asian Africa Growth Corridor is considered as **India and Japan's collective response to China's Belt and Road Initiative** around in Indian Ocean and African region.

Q973. Regarding India-Africa Relations, consider the following statements:

1. Recently, the 20-member Africa Expert Group (AEG), was constituted by the Government of India in collaboration with African Union.
2. The Indo Africa Forum Summit is a programme fully sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

3. The G20 leaders, under India's G20 chairmanship, have recently endorsed the inclusion of the African Union as a permanent member of the G20. 1.1K

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 Incorrect:** Recently, 20-member Africa Expert Group (AEG), established by Vivekananda International Foundation, presented a Report titled 'India- Africa Partnership: Achievements, Challenges and Roadmap 2030'.



- **Statement 2 Correct:** The Indo-Africa Forum Summit is a major platform for India-Africa cooperation fully sponsored by the MEA.
- **Statement 3 Correct:** This statement is correct. The G20 leaders, under India's G20 presidency, did endorse the inclusion of the African Union as a permanent member of the G20. This decision reflects the growing importance of Africa in global affairs and India's commitment to strengthening its ties with the continent.

Q974. Consider the following statements with respect to 'African Union (AU)':

1. The African Union is a continental union consisting of member nations from the continent of Africa and from other continents also.
 2. The African Union was announced in the Sirte Declaration in Sirte, Libya.
 3. The intention of the AU was to replace the Organization of African Unity (OAU).
- How many of the above given statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three statements
(d) None of the statements

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** The African Union exclusively consists of member states from the African continent.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The African Union was indeed announced in the Sirte Declaration in Sirte, Libya.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The intention of the AU was to replace the Organization of African Unity (OAU) with a more effective and integrated union.

Q975. Consider the following statements regarding India-Africa relations and green diplomacy:

1. India's Cheetah reintroduction programme involves the translocation of cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa to India.
2. The International Big Cat Alliance aims to conserve seven big cats, including the jaguar and puma, both of which are found in India.
3. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme was launched

in 1964 to provide training to professionals from developing countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

4. The African Union (AU) was included as a permanent member of the G20 during India's chairmanship in 2023.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:-

- **Statement 1 is correct:** India's Cheetah reintroduction programme involves the translocation of cheetahs from Namibia and South Africa to India as part of a conservation effort.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The International Big Cat Alliance aims to conserve seven big cats (lion, tiger, leopard, cheetah, snow leopard, jaguar, and puma), but the jaguar and puma are not found in India.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme was indeed launched in 1964 and provides training to professionals from developing countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** The African Union (AU) was included as a permanent member of the G20 under India's chairmanship in 2023.

Topic 326

326. India - France Ties

- **Horizon 2047 agreement** between India and France lays down the **future roadmap of India-France** collaboration for the **next 25 years**.

Defence relations with France

- France has emerged as the **second-largest defence supplier** in **2017-2021**.
- Major Military equipments from France- **Rafale** and **Mirage 2000** Fighter Aircraft and **Scorpene** Submarines.
- **Joint exercises-** **Varuna (Naval)**, **Garuda (Air Force)** and **Shakti (Army)**.



Geopolitical

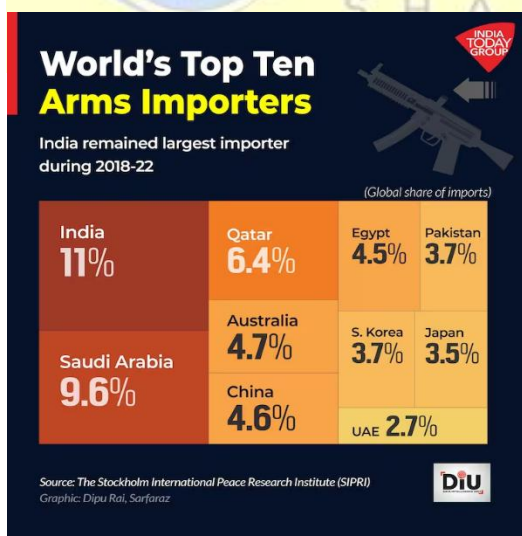
- Collaborating with India to keep Indo-Pacific region free from China's aggression.
- To strengthen India's footprint in Indian ocean Indian Air Force planes have been deployed to Reunion Island of France.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

- India and France are jointly constructing the world's largest nuclear park in Jaitapur, Maharashtra.

Space cooperation

- India and France are collaborating on Joint Earth Observation Mission- TRISHNA



Q976. Consider the following statements about India-France defence relations:

- France is the second-largest defence supplier to India for the period 2017–2021.
- India procures Rafale and Mirage 2000 fighter aircraft and Scorpene submarines from France.
- The joint military exercise "Shakti" is conducted between the Indian Navy and the French Navy.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1 is correct:** France emerged as the second-largest defence supplier to India during 2017–2021.
- Statement 2 is correct:** India procures Rafale and Mirage 2000 fighter aircraft and Scorpene submarines from France.
- Statement 3 is incorrect:** The joint exercise "Shakti" is conducted between the Indian and French armies, not navies.

Q977. Consider the following statements regarding India-France geopolitical and strategic ties:

- India and France collaborate to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region.
- Indian Air Force planes have been deployed to France's Reunion Island to strengthen India's footprint in the Indian Ocean.



3. France supports India's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** India and France collaborate to counter China's aggression and ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Indian Air Force planes have been deployed to France's Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** France has consistently supported India's bid for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

Q978. Consider the following statements about India-France collaboration in civil nuclear and space sectors:

1. India and France are jointly constructing the world's largest nuclear park in Jaitapur, Maharashtra.
2. TRISHNA is a joint India-France Earth Observation Mission aimed at monitoring land surface temperatures.
3. The Jaitapur nuclear park will exclusively use Indian-built nuclear reactors.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Jaitapur nuclear park, a joint venture between India and France, is set to be the world's largest nuclear park.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** TRISHNA (Thermal Infrared Imaging Satellite for High-Resolution Natural Resource Assessment) is a joint Earth Observation Mission by India and France to monitor land surface temperatures.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The Jaitapur nuclear park will use French EPR (European

Pressurized Reactor) technology, not Indian-built reactors.

Topic 327

327. Submarines in India

Conventional diesel-electric submarines

- **6 Kalvari Class** (Developed with France under **Scorpene P75 -project**)
- **4 Shishumar Class** (collaboration with Germany)
- **8 Kilo Class** or **Sindhughosh Class** bought from Russia

Nuclear powered

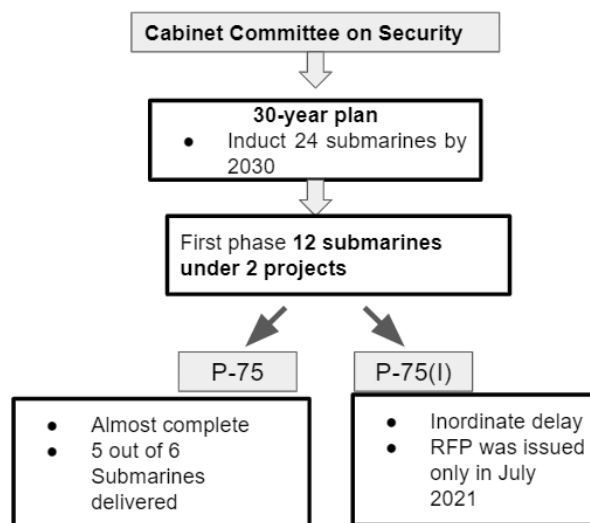
- **Arihant class-Indigenous**-developed by Indian Navy, BARC, DRDO
- **Akula class Nuclear submarine** rented from Russia for 10 years-which has since been **returned to Russia**.

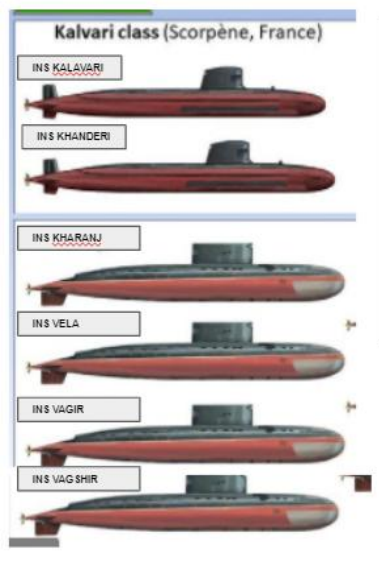
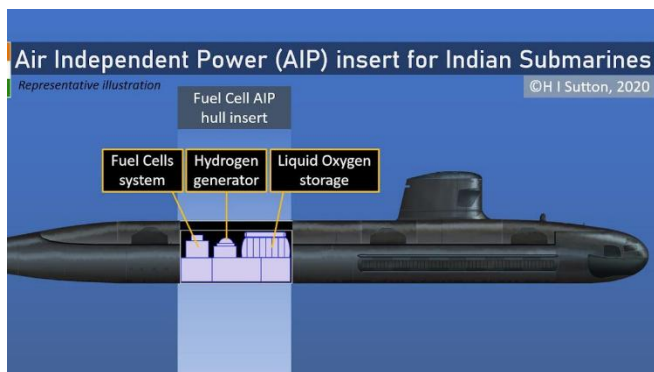
Current news?

- **India is looking for Air-Independent Propulsion technology for Submarines.**

Air-Independent Propulsion technology

- Allows a **conventional submarine** to remain **submerged for much longer** than **ordinary diesel-electric submarines**.





Recent

- The **Indian Navy submarine INS Vagsheer (S26)** was commissioned on **January 15, 2025**. It was the **last of six submarines** in the **Scorpene class**.

Q979. Consider the following statements about Project-75:

- Project-75 aims to develop six Kalvari Class diesel-electric attack submarines domestically with the transfer of technology from the French company Naval Group.
 - INS Kalvari is the first submarine under this project.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct** Project-75 is an initiative by India to develop six Kalvari Class diesel-electric attack submarines domestically. These submarines are being built at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai with technology transfer from the French company Naval Group.
- Statement 2: Correct** INS Kalvari is the first submarine commissioned under Project-75. It was inducted into the Indian Navy in December 2017 and is named after the first-ever submarine operated by the Indian Navy.

Q980. Consider the following statements about submarines in the Indian Navy:

- The Kalvari Class submarines were developed under Project-75 with French collaboration.
- The Shishumar Class submarines were built in collaboration with Russia.
- The Arihant Class submarines are nuclear-powered and developed indigenously by India.
- The Akula Class nuclear submarine rented from Russia has been returned.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- Only three
- All four

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct.** The Kalvari Class submarines were developed under Project-75 with the transfer of technology from the French company Naval Group.
- Statement 2: Incorrect.** The Shishumar Class submarines were built in collaboration with Germany, not Russia.
- Statement 3: Correct.** The Arihant Class submarines are nuclear-powered and developed indigenously by India with the collaboration of the Indian Navy, BARC, and DRDO.
- Statement 4: Correct.** The Akula Class nuclear submarine rented from Russia has since been returned to Russia.

Q981. Consider the following statements regarding Air-Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology and Scorpene Class submarines:

- AIP technology allows conventional submarines to remain submerged for longer



durations than ordinary diesel-electric submarines.

2. INS Vagsheer (S26) is the last of the six Scorpene Class submarines commissioned under Project-75.
3. The Indian Navy has already integrated AIP technology into all six Scorpene Class submarines.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** AIP technology significantly enhances the endurance of conventional submarines by allowing them to remain submerged for extended periods.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** INS Vagsheer (S26), commissioned on January 15, 2025, is the last of the six Scorpene Class submarines under Project-75.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** While India is looking to adopt AIP technology, it has not yet been integrated into the Scorpene Class submarines.

Topic 328

328. Submarine launched ballistic missile

- It is a **ballistic missile** designed for **launch from submarines**.

Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile of India

- **India has developed** a range of **'K' family SLBMs** (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles), long-range missiles that can be launched from submarines, which is **mounted on INS Arihant**.

'K' family SLBMs

- K series missiles are Submarine launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBM).
- K indicates great scientist APJ Abdul Kalam.
- K15 (also called Sagarika with range of 750 km) has already been built and inducted in Arihant or Arighaat Submarine.

Current news?

- India **successfully tested** a **nuclear-capable** Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) with a range of **3,500 km**.

- The SLBM is named K4.
- The test was conducted from INS Arighaat, a nuclear-powered submarine capable of inducing Nuclear warhead SLBM.

Strategic significance of SLBM

1. Strengthens India's nuclear triad
2. Enhances India's second-strike capability



Arihant- Nuclear Powered submarine has -K15 mounted on it



Q982. With reference to the thermite as a weapon, consider the following statements:

1. It was used in both world wars.
2. Dragon drones release thermite which triggers a self-sustaining reaction that is quite difficult to extinguish.
3. The use of thermite in war is prohibited under international law.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct** Thermite, a pyrotechnic composition of metal powder and metal oxide, was indeed used in both World Wars as an incendiary weapon for destroying enemy equipment and fortifications.
- **Statement 2: Correct** Dragon drones are known to release thermite to target specific areas. The thermite triggers a self-sustaining reaction that produces extremely high



temperatures, making it challenging to extinguish.

- **Statement 3: Incorrect** The use of thermite in war is not explicitly prohibited under international law. However, its use is regulated under protocols such as the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), which restricts the use of incendiary weapons against civilians or civilian infrastructure.

Q983. Consider the following statements about India's Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs):

1. The K-series missiles, named after Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, are India's indigenous Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles.
2. K15, also called Sagarika, has a range of 1,500 km and is deployed on INS Arighaat.
3. India's nuclear-capable K4 SLBM has a range of 3,500 km and enhances the country's second-strike capability.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct** The K-series SLBMs are indigenous missiles named after Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect** K15 (Sagarika) has a range of 750 km, not 1,500 km. It is deployed on INS Arihant and Arighaat.
- **Statement 3: Correct** K4 is a nuclear-capable SLBM with a range of 3,500 km, enhancing India's second-strike capability and strengthening the nuclear triad.

Q984. Consider the following statements about India's SLBM program and its strategic significance:

1. INS Arighaat is a nuclear-powered submarine capable of launching K-series SLBMs with nuclear warheads.
2. The development of SLBMs strengthens India's nuclear triad, ensuring the capability for a second-strike.
3. The K4 missile was recently tested from INS Arihant, with a range of 3,000 km.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct** INS Arighaat is a nuclear-powered submarine equipped to launch K-series SLBMs with nuclear warheads.
- **Statement 2: Correct** SLBMs enhance India's nuclear triad and second-strike capability, which are critical for deterrence.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect** The K4 missile was recently tested from INS Arighaat, not INS Arihant, and it has a range of 3,500 km, not 3,000 km.

Topic 329

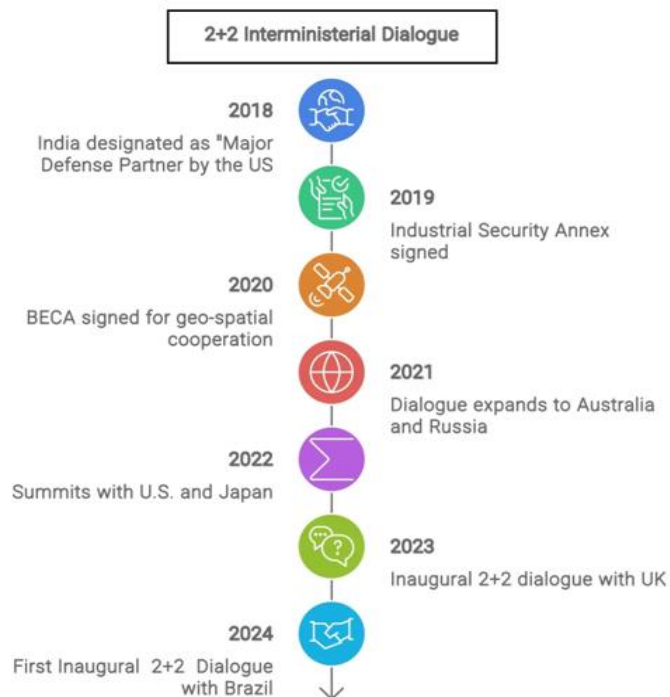
329. 2+2 Dialogue

- The **2+2 dialogue** is a format of meeting of the **foreign and defence ministers** of India and its allies on **strategic and security** issues.
- The platform **enables** stronger, more **integrated strategic relationship** with its strategic partners.

India has 2+2 dialogues with-

1. The US
2. Australia
3. Japan
4. Russia
5. UK
6. Brazil





Q985. The terms "UN Security Council Resolution 1701" and "Blue Line" is related to:

- United States and Iran
- Ukraine and Russia
- Lebanon and Israel
- Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo

Ans: c

Sol: UN Security Council Resolution 1701, adopted on August 11, 2006, is primarily related to Lebanon and Israel. By the resolution, the Council decided to take steps to ensure peace, among them authorizing an increase of force strength of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to monitor the cessation of hostilities, support Lebanese armed forces as Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon and ensure the safe return of displaced persons.

What's the Blue Line? Stretching for 120km along Lebanon's southern frontier and Israel's northern border, the so-called "Blue Line" is "a key to peace in the region" and one of the central elements of resolution 1701 since the war in 2006, with UNIFIL peacekeepers being its temporary custodian, according to UN Peacekeeping.

Q986. Consider the following statements regarding the 2+2 Dialogue mechanism of India:

- The 2+2 Dialogue involves meetings of foreign and defence ministers to address strategic and security issues.
- India has established the 2+2 Dialogue format with countries such as the United States, Australia, Japan, and Russia.
- The primary objective of the 2+2 Dialogue is to enhance economic partnerships with strategic allies.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct** The 2+2 Dialogue is a meeting format for foreign and defence ministers to discuss strategic and security issues.
- Statement 2: Correct** India has 2+2 Dialogues with the United States, Australia, Japan, and Russia, among others.
- Statement 3: Incorrect** The primary objective of the 2+2 Dialogue is to strengthen strategic and security relationships, not primarily to enhance economic partnerships.

Q987. With reference to India's 2+2 Dialogue, consider the following statements:

- The 2+2 Dialogue provides a platform for deeper integration of strategic and defence ties between India and its allies.
- India has a 2+2 Dialogue mechanism with the United Kingdom and Brazil.
- The 2+2 Dialogue is unique to India and has not been adopted by other countries.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- All three
- None

Ans: b

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct** The platform indeed fosters deeper integration of strategic and defence ties with India's allies.



- **Statement 2: Correct** India has initiated the 2+2 Dialogue mechanism with both the United Kingdom and Brazil.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect** The 2+2 Dialogue is not unique to India; it is a format used by other countries as well, such as the United States.

Topic 330

330. 3rd Voice of Global South Summit

“Global South”

- Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania, - **low-income** and often politically or culturally marginalized.

'Global North'

- US, Canada, Russia, and Australia, while 'Global South'. North-South divide line is also known as **Brandt line**-conceived by former German Chancellor Willy Brandt in the 1980s.

Voice of Global South Summit

- **Provide a common platform** for the countries of the **Global South**-to share their **perspectives**.

First summit

- in **January 2023** Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the **Voice of Global South Summit**.

Second summit

- In **November 2023**-The **second Voice of Global South summit** took place in **virtual mode**.

Third summit

- India hosted the 3rd Voice of the Global South Summit in virtual mode in August 2024.

Key Announcements

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed the creation of a "Global Development Compact".
2. A 'Social Impact Fund' of USD 25 million to develop digital public infrastructure (DPI) in the Global South. DPI was announced during India's G20 presidency in 2023.



What is 'Global Development Compact'?

- **“Global Development Compact”** will facilitate **trade, technology sharing** and **concessional financing** in line with the **priorities** of the **developing countries**.
- It aims to **support growth of Global South** in line with **India’s growth journey**.

Q988. Consider the following statements regarding the Voice of Global South Summit:

1. The Brandt Line, conceived in the 1980s, is a theoretical division between the Global North and Global South.
2. The first Voice of Global South Summit was held in a hybrid format in January 2023.
3. The third Voice of Global South Summit emphasized creating a "Global Development Compact" to address trade, technology sharing, and concessional financing for developing nations.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:-

- **Statement 1: Correct** The Brandt Line, conceived by Willy Brandt in the 1980s, represents the theoretical divide between the Global North and Global South.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect** The first Voice of Global South Summit in January 2023 was conducted in a virtual mode, not a hybrid format.
- **Statement 3: Correct** The third summit did emphasize creating a "Global Development



Compact" to support trade, technology sharing, and concessional financing for developing nations.

Q989. With reference to the initiatives announced during the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, consider the following statements:

1. A Social Impact Fund of USD 25 million was announced to support Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in the Global South.
2. The Global Development Compact aims to replicate India's growth model for the benefit of developed countries.
3. DPI was a key initiative announced during India's G20 presidency in 2023.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct** A Social Impact Fund of USD 25 million was announced to develop DPI in the Global South.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect** The Global Development Compact is focused on the priorities of developing countries, not developed nations.
- **Statement 3: Correct** DPI was indeed a key initiative highlighted during India's G20 presidency in 2023.

Q990. Consider the following statements regarding the Global South and the Voice of Global South Summit:

1. The Global South includes regions such as Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania, characterized by low income and political or cultural marginalization.
2. India hosted all three Voice of Global South Summits in virtual mode.
3. The Global North includes countries such as the US, Canada, Russia, and Australia.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct** The Global South includes Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania, often characterized by marginalization.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect** Only the second and third summits were hosted in virtual mode; the format of the first summit was also virtual but is not explicitly stated for all summits.
- **Statement 3: Correct** The Global North includes countries like the US, Canada, Russia, and Australia.

Day 34

Topic 331

331. India-US relations

Brief history of India US relations

- **Cold war**-Pakistan was part of **SEATO group (US bloc)**
- **India** followed **NAM** then **India signed friendship agreement with USSR in 1971**
- Thus US had **anti India stand.**

Post Cold war

- Rise of China compelled the US to to help military rise of India
- India was also in search of new partner after decline of USSR.

India-US defence relations intensified

- 2002-General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) to facilitate sharing of military information.
- 2005- Defence Framework Agreement
- 2012- Upgraded to DTTI- Defence Technology and Trade Initiatives-To promote industrial cooperation and defence trade between 2 countries.

Important defence tags given by the US to India-

- 2016-the US designated India as a Major Defence Partner.
- 2018-India was elevated to Strategic Trade Authorisation tier 1 status-licence-free access to a range of military and dual-use technologies to India (that are otherwise restricted only to NATO allies of the US).
- These tags laid platform for 4 foundational agreements related to defence between India and the US.





Q991. Sierra Madre was constructed in the us for World War II (1939-45) and commissioned in 1944 as a landing ship. in 1999, the Sierra Madre was left on the Second Thomas Shoal, which is a part of the mostly uninhabited Spratly Islands in the South China sea. It has created tensions between:

- US-China
- China-Japan
- US-Japan
- China-Philippines

Ans: d

Sol: The Sierra Madre was intentionally grounded on Second Thomas Shoal (also known as Ayungin Shoal) by the Philippines in 1999 to assert its territorial claim over the area, which is part of the Spratly Islands in the disputed South China Sea. This action has led to ongoing tensions between the Philippines and China, as China also claims sovereignty over the shoal and much of the South China Sea.

Q992. Consider the following Central American Countries.

- Costa Rica
- Nicaragua
- Panama
- Guatemala

Arrange the above countries from West to East.

- 2-1-3-4
- 2-1-4-3
- 4-2-1-3
- 4-1-2-3

Ans: c

Sol: The correct order of countries from West to East: Guatemala - Nicaragua - Costa Rica - Panama.

Q993. Consider the following statements regarding India-US defence relations:

- The General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was signed in 2002 to enable sharing of military information between India and the US.
- India's elevation to Strategic Trade Authorization Tier 1 status in 2018 allowed it license-free access to a range of technologies previously restricted to NATO allies.
- The Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) was introduced in 2005 to promote industrial cooperation and defence trade between India and the US.
- India was designated as a Major Defence Partner by the US in 2018.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- Only one
- Only two
- Only three
- All four

Ans: c

Sol:

- Statement 1: Correct** The GSOMIA was signed in 2002 to facilitate sharing of military information between India and the US.
- Statement 2: Correct** In 2018, India was elevated to Strategic Trade Authorization Tier 1 status, granting it license-free access to a range of military and dual-use technologies typically restricted to NATO allies.
- Statement 3: Incorrect** The Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) was introduced in 2012, not 2005.
- Statement 4: Correct** India was designated as a Major Defence Partner by the US in 2016, establishing a strong foundation for defence collaboration.

Topic 332

332. India-US defence relations-4 foundational agreements

- Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)-2016**
 - Established the basic terms, conditions, and procedures for reciprocal provision of **logistic support, supplies, and services** between the **two militaries**.



2. Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)-2018

- An India-specific version of the Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA).
- To secure military communication between the countries.

3. The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) of 2020

- Facilitate the sharing of military information including geospatial information.

4. Industrial Security Annex (ISA) to the GSOMIA in 2020

- To facilitate the exchange of classified information between the defense industries of the two countries.

Recent Defence agreements

1. iCET (Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies) in 2023

- India and the US to enhance cooperation-defense, AI, quantum computing, and space.

2. Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) in 2024

- Ensures a stable and reliable supply of defense goods and services between India and the US.



Challenges of India-US defence relations

1. 'Bait and Bleed' policy of the US
2. Continuous support to Pakistan
3. CAATSA law of the US

WHAT IS CAATSA?

Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act. Enacted in August 2017, came into effect in January. Targets Iran, North Korea and Russia



Q994. Consider the following statements regarding the foundational agreements between India and the US:

1. LEMOA facilitates the exchange of classified geospatial information between India and the US.
2. COMCASA enables secure military communication between India and the US.
3. BECA ensures the stable supply of defense goods and services.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement) facilitates reciprocal logistical support, supplies, and services between the two militaries, not the exchange of geospatial information.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** COMCASA (Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement) enables secure military communication between India and the US.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** BECA (Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement) facilitates the sharing of geospatial and military information, not the supply of defence goods and services.

Hence, only Statement 2 is correct.

Q995. With reference to recent defence agreements between India and the US, consider the following statements:

1. The Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) focuses on defense, AI, quantum computing, and space cooperation.
 2. The Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) ensures a stable and reliable supply of defense goods and services between the two nations.
 3. Both iCET and SOSA were established in 2024.
- How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:



- **Statement 1 is correct.** iCET aims to enhance cooperation in defense, AI, quantum computing, and space.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** SOSA ensures a stable and reliable supply of defense goods and services between India and the US.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** iCET was established in 2023, while SOSA was established in 2024.

Hence, only Statements 1 and 2 are correct.

Q996. Consider the following statements regarding the Industrial Security Annex (ISA) to the GSOMIA:

1. It facilitates the exchange of classified information between the defense industries of India and the US.
2. ISA was signed as part of the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA).
3. ISA is aimed at enhancing collaboration on advanced technology projects.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** ISA facilitates the exchange of classified information between the defense industries of India and the US.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** ISA was signed under the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), not BECA.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** ISA enhances collaboration on advanced technology projects.

Hence, Statements 1 and 3 are correct.

Topic 333

333. India-US Semiconductor Plant for security

- **India and the US** have entered into an agreement to establish a semiconductor fabrication plant.
- The Fabrication unit is aimed at producing chips for national security, next-generation telecommunications, and green energy applications.
- The fabrication unit will be titled "Shakti".
- The plant will manufacture gallium nitride, and silicon carbide.

- These semiconductors are critical components for national security devices.
- The new fabrication unit will come up in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh and will be next to the new and upcoming Jewar Airport.



Q997. Consider the following statements regarding the India-US Semiconductor Plant:

1. The plant will produce semiconductors for next-generation telecommunications and green energy applications.
2. The fabrication unit will manufacture gallium nitride and silicon carbide.
3. The semiconductors produced at the plant will have critical applications in national security devices.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The semiconductor plant is aimed at producing chips for next-generation telecommunications and green energy applications.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The plant will manufacture gallium nitride and silicon carbide, which are advanced materials used in semiconductors.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** These semiconductors have critical applications in national security devices.

Q998. Consider the following statements about the India-US Semiconductor Plant:

1. The fabrication unit will be titled "Shakti."
2. The plant will be located in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, near the upcoming Jewar Airport.



3. The name “Shakti” was chosen to emphasize India’s focus on self-reliance in semiconductor production.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The fabrication unit will indeed be titled “Shakti.”
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The plant is to be located in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, near the new Jewar Airport.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** While the name “Shakti” signifies strength, the reason for its choice is not explicitly stated to emphasize self-reliance in semiconductor production.

Q999. Consider the following statements about the strategic importance of the India-US Semiconductor Plant:

1. The semiconductors manufactured at the plant will be used exclusively for civilian applications.
2. The plant represents a collaboration between India and the US for strengthening national security.
3. The materials used in the plant, such as gallium nitride and silicon carbide, are crucial for advanced electronics.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** The semiconductors produced at the plant will have applications beyond civilian use, particularly for national security devices.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The plant is part of a strategic collaboration between India and the US for enhancing national security and technological capacity.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- **Statement 3 is correct:** Gallium nitride and silicon carbide are advanced materials crucial for modern electronics, including telecommunications and defense.

Topic 334

334. Indo Pacific Economic Framework

- It is a **US-led initiative** that **aims to strengthen** cooperation in economic partnership amongst member countries in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
- **Indirectly** it is focussed at limiting **economic influence of China** in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
- **IPEF** technically-not a Free Trade Agreement (**FTA**)

IPEF Members

- **14 Economies-** 13+The US
- This grouping is mainly **considered anti China**.
- **The 14-members** of **IPEF** include Australia, Brunei, Fiji, **India**, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam.

Main focus

- **Limiting economic dependence** of East Asian countries **on China** (proxy mention of China).
- **“Decouple East Asia and China”**

IPEF has 4 pillars

1. **Trade (India is not part of it as there is no clarity)**
2. **Supply Chain**
3. **Clean Economy**
4. **Fair Economy (Tax and anti corruption)**

India is part of other 3 pillars.

Q1000. Which of the following is/are members of Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)?

1. All QUAD members.
 2. All ASEAN members.
- Select the correct code.
- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: a



Sol: IPEF is proposed by US.

The IPEF seeks to strengthen economic partnership amongst participating countries with the objective of enhancing resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the Indo-Pacific region. The 13 initial partner countries – US, India, Japan, Australia, Brunei, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Q1001. Consider the following countries:

1. Vietnam
2. Laos
3. China
4. Malaysia
5. Indonesia
6. Philippines

Which of the above countries have been making competing claims over parts of the South China Sea?

- (a) 1, 2, 3 and 6 only
(b) 2, 3, 4 and 6 only
(c) 1, 3, 4 and 6 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

Ans: c

Sol: The South China Sea is a highly contested region with multiple countries making competing claims over its waters and features. Here's an analysis of the countries mentioned:

1. **Vietnam:** Vietnam claims parts of the South China Sea, particularly the Paracel and Spratly Islands.
2. **Laos:** Laos is a landlocked country and does not make claims in the South China Sea.
3. **China:** China asserts expansive claims over the South China Sea, demarcated by the controversial "Nine-Dash Line."
4. **Malaysia:** Malaysia claims portions of the Spratly Islands and the surrounding waters.
5. **Indonesia:** While Indonesia does not claim any islands in the South China Sea, it has disputes with China over waters near the Natuna Islands, which China claims fall within its Nine-Dash Line.
6. **Philippines:** The Philippines claims parts of the Spratly Islands and Scarborough Shoal, both of which are also claimed by China.

Thus, Vietnam, China, Malaysia, and the Philippines (1, 3, 4, and 6) have competing claims over the South China Sea.

Q1002. Consider the following statements regarding the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF):

1. The IPEF is a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) involving 14 member economies.
2. One of the main objectives of the IPEF is to reduce the economic dependence of East Asian countries on China.
3. India is a member of all four pillars of the IPEF.
4. The IPEF focuses on issues like clean economy, supply chain, and fair economy, but India has opted out of the trade pillar.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All four

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** The IPEF is not a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) but rather a cooperative economic framework focused on various economic issues in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** One of the main objectives of the IPEF is to reduce economic dependence of East Asian countries on China, as it is considered an anti-China grouping.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** India is not a member of all four pillars of the IPEF. While India participates in the supply chain, clean economy, and fair economy pillars, it has opted out of the trade pillar due to a lack of clarity.
- **Statement 4: Correct.** The IPEF emphasizes areas like clean economy, supply chain, and fair economy, but India has explicitly chosen to stay out of the trade pillar.

Topic 335

335. Highest Civilian Award of Russia to PM Modi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been honoured with Russia's highest state decoration, the 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle'.
- PM Modi is the first Indian leader to be conferred with this prestigious award.

Notable recipients



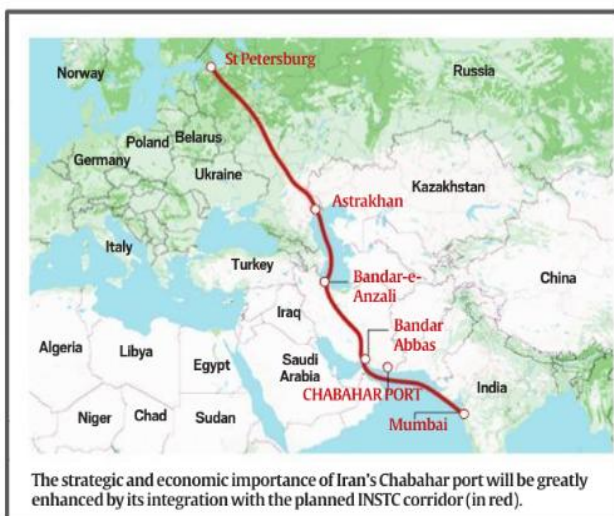
- former **President of Azerbaijan** Heydar Aliyev
- first **President of Kazakhstan** Nursultan Nazarbayev,
- **China President Xi Jinping**

India Russia Relations

- **all-weather friend** during the **Cold war**
- **Post Cold war**-India trying to **balance itself** between **US and Russia**.

Areas of cooperation

- **Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP)** is being built in India with Russian cooperation.
- **India's first satellite "Aryabhata"** was sent in space on a Russian (then USSR) launch **vehicle "Kosmos-3M rocket"**.
- Russia is **largest defence supplier** to India.
- The **INSTC** (International North South Transport Corridor), which was initiated by Russia, India, and Iran.
- Russia is **largest crude oil supplier** to India.



INSTC will boost **trade connectivity** with Russia by **cutting down time and distance by 40%**.



While the award was **announced back in 2019**, Russian President Vladimir Putin conferred the award on PM Modi during a special ceremony at St Andrew Hall in Kremlin.



Q1003. Consider the following statements regarding the 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle' awarded to Prime Minister Modi:

1. The award is Russia's highest state decoration.
2. Prime Minister Modi is the first Indian leader to be conferred with this award.
3. Other notable recipients of the award include the first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and China's President, Xi Jinping.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle' is Russia's highest state decoration.



- **Statement 2: Correct.** PM Modi is the first Indian leader to receive this prestigious award.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Notable recipients include Nursultan Nazarbayev (Kazakhstan) and Xi Jinping (China).

Q1004. Consider the following statements regarding India-Russia relations:

1. The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) is being built in India with Russian cooperation.
2. India's first satellite, Aryabhata, was launched on a Russian (then USSR) Soyuz launch vehicle.
3. Russia is India's largest defence supplier and also its largest crude oil supplier.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant is a joint project between India and Russia.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** India's first satellite, Aryabhata, was launched using a Russian Soyuz launch vehicle.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Russia is India's largest supplier of defence equipment and has also become its largest crude oil supplier in recent times.

Q1005. Consider the following statements about the strategic initiatives involving India and Russia:

1. The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) was initiated by Russia, India, and Iran.
2. India's post-Cold War foreign policy has aimed to balance relations between the US and Russia.
3. India and Russia have collaborated on space missions as well as nuclear power projects.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The INSTC is a strategic initiative spearheaded by Russia, India, and Iran to improve trade connectivity.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Post-Cold War, India has balanced its foreign policy between Russia and the US while maintaining strong ties with both.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** India and Russia have collaborated in space exploration (Aryabhata) and nuclear power projects (KKNPP).

Topic 336

336. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

- Also known as the **Ban Treaty**.
- It is a comprehensive international agreement that **seeks to completely prohibit nuclear weapons**.
- It was **adopted by the United Nations** in **2017** and entered **into force in 2021**.

Key Provisions of the TPNW

1. Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

- The treaty **prohibits the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use, or threat of use of nuclear weapons**.

2. Ban on Assistance

- It also forbids signatory nations from **assisting, encouraging, or inducing** anyone to engage in any activity prohibited by the treaty.

3. Assistance to Victims

- The treaty requires states to provide **assistance to victims** of nuclear weapons use and testing and to remediate environments contaminated by nuclear activities.

4. Nuclear Disarmament

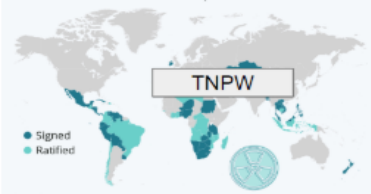
- Countries that possess nuclear weapons and join the treaty are **required to eliminate their nuclear arsenals** in a time-bound, verified manner.

Note- **NPT (Nuclear Non Proliferation treaty)** also aims to **regulate proliferation of Nuclear weapons** in slightly different manner.



The Status Of The UN's Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons

States that have signed/ratified the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*



* As of January 22, 2021
Source: United Nations

Signatory countries

- As of now, **70 countries have ratified** the treaty, and **27 have signed** but not yet ratified.
- However, **none of the nine nuclear-armed states** (United States, Russia, China, France, United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea) **have joined the treaty**.

Q1006. Consider the following statements about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):

1. The TPNW prohibits the development, testing, production, and stockpiling of nuclear weapons.
2. The treaty requires signatory states to provide assistance to victims of nuclear weapon use and testing.
3. The treaty bans assistance to countries that are non-signatories of the treaty.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The TPNW comprehensively prohibits activities like development, testing, production, and stockpiling of nuclear weapons.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The treaty mandates assistance to victims of nuclear weapon use and testing, as well as remediation of contaminated environments.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** The treaty bans assistance in prohibited nuclear activities but does not explicitly ban assistance to non-signatories.

Q1007. Consider the following statements regarding the signatories of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):

1. As of now, 70 countries have ratified the treaty.
2. None of the nine nuclear-armed states have joined the treaty.
3. Countries that sign the treaty must immediately eliminate their nuclear arsenals.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** 70 countries have ratified the treaty, and 27 have signed but not ratified.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** None of the nine nuclear-armed states (United States, Russia, China, France, United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea) have joined the treaty.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** While the treaty requires elimination of nuclear arsenals in a time-bound, verified manner, it is not an immediate requirement.

Q1008. Consider the following statements regarding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):

1. Both the TPNW and the NPT aim to regulate the proliferation of nuclear weapons.
2. Unlike the TPNW, the NPT allows nuclear-armed states to maintain their arsenals under certain conditions.
3. The TPNW has been ratified by more countries than the NPT.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:



- **Statement 1: Correct.** Both treaties aim to regulate nuclear weapons, but they differ in scope and approach.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The NPT permits nuclear-armed states to maintain their arsenals, provided they pursue disarmament, whereas the TPNW calls for total prohibition.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** The NPT has more signatories (191 member states) compared to the TPNW (70 ratified, 27 signed).

Topic 337

337. Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty

- Came into force in **1970**
- **Only 5 countries(P5)-** UK, US, France, China, Russia are **allowed to have nuclear weapon** under this treaty.
- **Rest** countries **can't have nuclear weapons.**

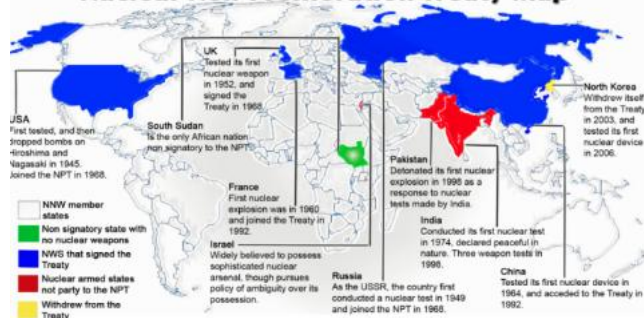
Countries- Who have built Nuclear weapon and not been part of NPT-

1. India
 2. Pakistan
 3. Israel
 4. North Korea
- South Sudan has neither built nor part of NPT.

Difference between TPNW and NPT

1. **Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty**
NPT, which **bans proliferation for non P5 countries**, but only **promises to consider disarmament** (with no concrete plan).
0. **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**
 - It is **extensive in its prohibitions**
 - Thus, it **goes beyond the NPT.**

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Map



Why India is not signatory to NPT?

- India supports **complete disarmament**
- NPT aims at **partial disarmament** and justifies nuclear weapon with P5- this makes **NPT discriminatory.**

Q1009. Consider the following statements regarding the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):

1. The NPT came into force in 1970.
 2. Only the P5 countries (UK, US, France, China, and Russia) are allowed to possess nuclear weapons under this treaty.
 3. All countries except the P5 are prohibited from developing nuclear weapons.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The NPT came into force in 1970.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Only the P5 nations are recognized as nuclear-armed states under the NPT.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The NPT prohibits non-P5 countries from developing nuclear weapons.

Q1010. Consider the following statements about countries outside the NPT:

1. India, Pakistan, and North Korea have developed nuclear weapons but are not part of the NPT.
2. Israel has nuclear weapons and is a signatory to the NPT.



3. South Sudan is neither a part of the NPT nor has developed nuclear weapons.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** India, Pakistan, and North Korea have developed nuclear weapons and are not part of the NPT.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** Israel has nuclear weapons but is not a signatory to the NPT.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** South Sudan is neither a part of the NPT nor has developed nuclear weapons.

Q1011. Consider the following statements regarding the differences between the NPT and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):

1. The NPT allows P5 countries to maintain nuclear weapons, while the TPNW aims for total prohibition of nuclear weapons.
2. The NPT includes a concrete plan for nuclear disarmament, while the TPNW does not.
3. The TPNW has more extensive prohibitions compared to the NPT.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The NPT allows the P5 nations to retain nuclear weapons, while the TPNW calls for total prohibition.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** The NPT only promises to consider nuclear disarmament without a concrete plan, while the TPNW is more definitive.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The TPNW has more extensive prohibitions on nuclear weapons than the NPT.

Topic 338

338. European Union Parliamentary elections

European Union

- The European Union is a **group of 27 countries** that operate as a **political block**.

History

- After World War II UK **PM Winston Churchill** has proposed Union of **European states** like the **United States of America**.

Schengen Agreement (1985)

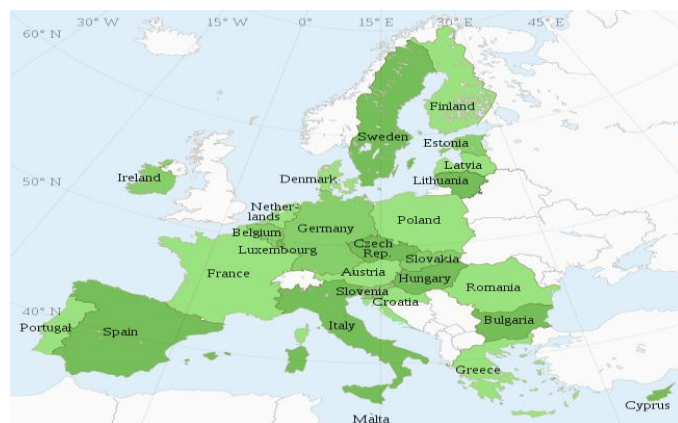
- paved the way for the creation of open borders without passport controls between most member states.

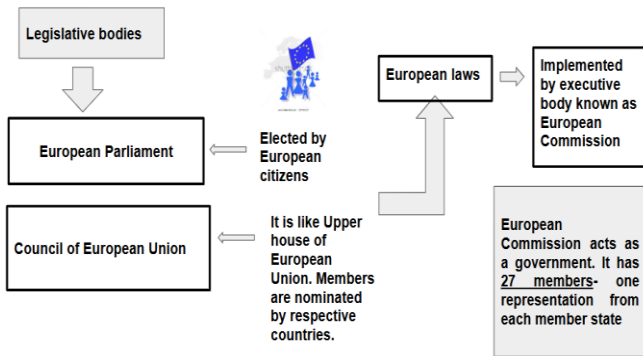
The Maastricht Treaty-1992-Most important

- Give the **concept of European citizenship**
- Laid basis for formation of **European Union in 1993**.
- Laid the foundation of **Economic Union-Eurozone (20 countries having same currency euros)**.

European Parliament

- **720 seats**
- **Seats** allotted to every member of **European Union** depends on the **population of the member** country eg **6 for Malta to 96 for Germany**.
- European Parliament makes **decision on wide range on issues like banking rules, climate, agriculture, fisheries, security and EU budget**.





Q1012. With reference to "High-Ambition Coalition" (HAC), seen in news, consider the following statements

1. This is a coalition of around 65 nations consists of African nations and United States.
2. It wants to end plastic pollution by 2040, phase out "problematic" single-use plastics, and ban certain chemical additives that could carry health risks.
3. The EU which has not joined the HAC said it wants to end plastic pollution by 2040 but unlike the HAC, it advocates that countries should take voluntary steps to end plastic pollution.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: a

Sol: "This is a coalition of around 65 nations consists of African nations and United States."

- The High-Ambition Coalition (HAC) for ending plastic pollution includes a mix of countries, including many from Europe, small island nations, and developing countries, but not specifically all African nations or the United States. The U.S. is not a member of the HAC. This statement is incorrect.

"It wants to end plastic pollution by 2040, phase out 'problematic' single-use plastics, and ban certain chemical additives that could carry health risks."

- This aligns with the HAC's objectives to address plastic pollution comprehensively, including the phase-out of problematic plastics and addressing health risks. This statement is correct.

"The EU which has not joined the HAC said it wants to end plastic pollution by 2040 but unlike

the HAC, it advocates that countries should take voluntary steps to end plastic pollution."

- The European Union is a prominent member of the HAC, so this statement is incorrect.

Q1013. Which of the country has recently adopted the right-to-repair (or R2R) directive to make it easier for consumers to seek repair instead of replacement and repair services will become more accessible, transparent, and attractive?

- (a) United States
- (b) European Union
- (c) Saudi Arabia
- (d) Kenya

Ans: b

Sol: The European Union (EU) has recently adopted the Right-to-Repair (R2R) directive, aimed at encouraging sustainability and reducing electronic waste. The directive ensures that consumers can easily seek repair options instead of replacements. It mandates manufacturers to make spare parts and repair information available for a certain period after the purchase of products, promoting a circular economy.

This move is part of the EU's broader environmental goals under the European Green Deal.

Q1014. Which of the following is/are members of recently launched Biopharmaceutical Alliance?

- (a) India, South Korea, Japan, the US, and the European Union
- (b) BRICS countries
- (c) G-7 Countries
- (d) China, Japan, India, and South Korea

Ans: a

Sol: India, South Korea, Japan, the US, and the European Union launched an alliance to put joint efforts to build a resilient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector. The announcement was made at the inaugural meeting of the Biopharmaceutical Alliance, held in San Diego, California, during the Bio International Convention 2024, the world's largest biopharmaceutical exhibition.

Three important reasons to launch an alliance:



- The participants emphasised the importance of a reliable and sustainable supply chain and agreed to coordinate the respective countries' bio policies, regulations, and research and development support measures.
- They recognised the production of essential raw materials and ingredients is concentrated in a few countries and agreed to work together to build a detailed pharmaceutical supply chain map.
- The alliance was launched in response to the drug supply shortages experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Topic 339

339. UK-Parliamentary election

Parliament of UK

- The UK Parliament is a bicameral legislature, consisting of two houses:

House of Commons

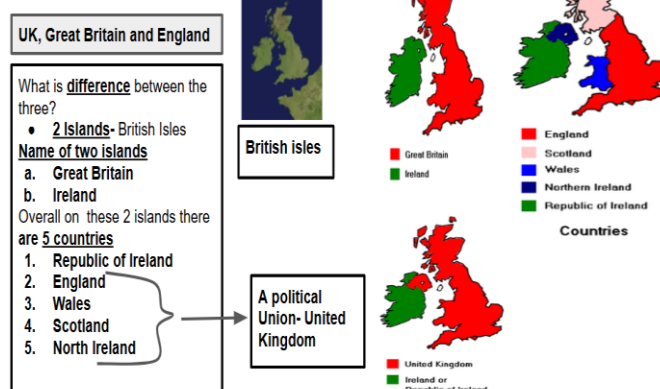
- The lower house, made up of 650 MPs elected by the public through FPTP.
- 533 for England; 59 for Scotland; 40 for Wales; 18 for Northern Ireland
- It is the primary legislative body, responsible for making and passing laws.
- The party (or coalition) with the majority of seats forms the government, and its leader becomes the Prime Minister.

House of Lords

- The upper house, which is unelected and includes life peers, bishops, and hereditary peers.
- It reviews and suggests amendments.
- While it can delay legislation, it cannot ultimately prevent bills passed by the Commons from becoming law.

Political system

- The United Kingdom operates under a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy.
- The head of state(de-jure/ceremonial) is the monarch, currently King Charles III.



Keir Starmer and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak

- Keir Starmer, Labour Party candidate, elected PM of UK.
- Starmer defeated Rishi Sunak, Conservative Party.

Q1015. Consider the following statements about the UK Parliament:

1. The UK Parliament is a unicameral legislature.
 2. The House of Commons has 650 elected Members of Parliament (MPs).
 3. The House of Lords is unelected and includes life peers, bishops, and hereditary peers.
- How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** The UK Parliament is a bicameral legislature, consisting of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The House of Commons has 650 MPs, distributed among



England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

- **Statement 3: Correct.** The House of Lords is unelected and includes life peers, bishops, and hereditary peers.

Q1016. Consider the following statements regarding the House of Commons:

1. MPs in the House of Commons are elected through the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system.
2. The House of Commons has the authority to delay legislation passed by the House of Lords.
3. The party or coalition with a majority in the House of Commons forms the government.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Members of the House of Commons are elected by the FPTP system.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The House of Commons can reject amendments or delay proposals from the House of Lords.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** The party or coalition with the majority in the Commons forms the government, with its leader becoming the Prime Minister.

Q1017. Consider the following statements about the UK political system:

1. The United Kingdom operates under a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy.
2. The monarch is the head of state but holds only ceremonial powers.
3. King Charles III is the head of both the state and the government.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans: b

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The UK operates under a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** The monarch is the ceremonial head of state, with no executive powers.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** King Charles III is the head of state, but the head of government is the Prime Minister.

Topic 340

340. International Yoga Day (Soft power for India)

History

- In **2014**, a draft resolution on '**International Day of Yoga**' introduced by **India's Ambassador to UN**.
- The resolution received support from 177 nations, the **highest number of co-sponsors** for any UNGA resolution.
- Thereafter, the United Nations proclaimed **June 21** as the **International Day of Yoga**.
- **Purpose of International Yoga Day** - International Yoga Day aims to **raise awareness worldwide** of the many benefits of practicing yoga.

Theme of International Yoga Day 2024

- **"Yoga for Self and Society."**

Significance of 21st June?

- PM Modi proposed that June 21 be picked for celebrating International Yoga Day as it marks the **Summer Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere** – the **longest day** of the year and considered **auspicious** in many cultures.
- Yoga term has been **derived from the Sanskrit word yuj** which means **addition or integration**.

Yoga-Integration in 2 context-

1. **Soul (Atma)** with the **Universal Spirit (Parmatma)** leading to **Muksha (salvation)**.
 2. Yoga also means **integration of body and soul**.
- **Yoga philosophy** in Indian tradition was started by **Maharishi Patanjali in 2nd Century BC**.



Logo of International Yoga Day



Folded Hands- reflects the union of individual Consciousness with that of universal Consciousness, a perfect harmony between mind & body, man & nature

Leaves-Brown leaves symbolise the Earth element, the green leaves symbolise the Nature

Blue color symbolises Water element, brightness symbolises the Fire element and the Sun symbolise the source of energy and inspiration.

Overall the logo reflects **harmony amongst different elements of Universe which is the essence of Yoga.**



Breathing is considered to be a thread that connects body and soul.

Q1018. Match List I with List II and select the correct answer using the code given below the Lists:

| List I - (International Yoga Day) | List I - (Theme) |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| A. 6th Edition | 1. Yoga for well-being |
| B. 7th Edition | 2. Yoga for health-Yoga at home |
| C. 8th Edition | 3. Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam |
| D. 9th Edition | 4. Yoga for Humanity |

- (a) A-2, B-4, C-1, D-3
(b) A-2, B-1, C-4, D-3
(c) A-3, B-1, C-4, D-2
(d) A-3, B-4, C-1, D-2

Ans: b

Sol:-

- 2020: Covid pandemic
Yoga at Home
- 2021: Recovering from covid
Yoga for well being

- 2022: Russia Ukraine war
Yoga for Humanity
- 2023: G20 summit
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam

Q1019. Consider the following statements about International Yoga Day:

1. The theme for International Yoga Day 2024 is “Yoga for Self and Society.”
2. June 21 was chosen as it is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
3. The practice of yoga emphasizes the integration of the individual soul (Atma) with the Universal Spirit (Parmatma).

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: c

Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The theme for International Yoga Day 2024 is “Yoga for Self and Society.”
- **Statement 2: Correct.** June 21 marks the Summer Solstice, the longest day in the Northern Hemisphere.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Yoga emphasizes the integration of Atma with Parmatma, leading to spiritual salvation.

Q1020. Consider the following statements about yoga:

1. The term yoga is derived from the Sanskrit word "yuj," which means addition or integration.
2. Maharishi Patanjali introduced the philosophy of yoga in Indian tradition during the 2nd century BC.
3. Yoga focuses exclusively on the physical integration of body and mind.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Ans: b



Sol:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The term yoga comes from "yuj", meaning addition or integration.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** Maharishi Patanjali is credited with introducing the philosophy of yoga in the 2nd century BC.
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** Yoga does not focus exclusively on the physical integration of body and mind; it also emphasizes the spiritual integration of the soul with the Universal Spirit.

