

CURRENT AFFAIRS PRACTICE SHEETS (CAPS)

(Q.1-Q.5):

Every year Good Governance Day is celebrated on December 25 to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The Good Governance Day was established in [1].

Vajpayee was elected to the Indian Parliament more than ten times. This includes to both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha He served as the external affairs minister in the Prime Minister Moraji Desai cabinet. During his tenure, Pokhran-II nuclear test was conducted India fought Kargil war during his tenure. In 2015, he was conferred with India's highest civilian award, Bharat Ratna During the tenure of Vajpayee, the major successful schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and National Highways Development Project. Also, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan that aims to improve quality of education in primary and secondary schools were launched during his tenure.

The world longest tunnel at [2] located on the Leh-Manali highway was named as Atal Tunnel. The third longest cable stayed bridge in India

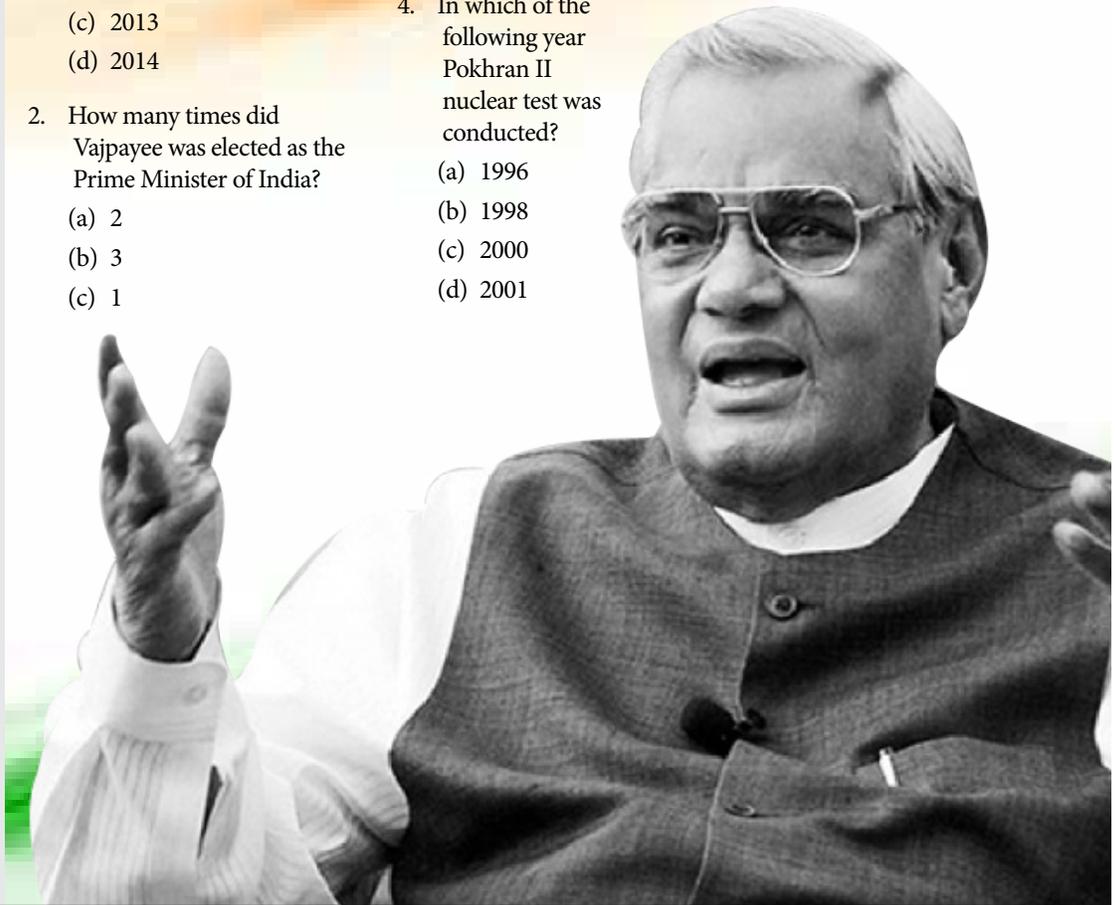
located over the Mandovi river has been named as Atal Setu. Also, the Government of Chhattisgarh changed the name of Navya Raipur to Atal Nagar.

- Which of the following will replace [1]?
 - 2011
 - 2012
 - 2013
 - 2014

- How many times did Vajpayee was elected as the Prime Minister of India?
 - 2
 - 3
 - 1

- Which of the following will replace [2] in the above passage?
 - Spiti Valley
 - Khardung La
 - Rohtang
 - Taglang La
- In which of the following year Pokhran II nuclear test was conducted?
 - 1996
 - 1998
 - 2000
 - 2001

- Who referred Atal Bihari Vajpayee as the Bhisma Pitamah of Indian politics?
 - Lal Krishna Advani
 - Narendra Modi
 - Manmohan Singh
 - PV Narsimha Rao



ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

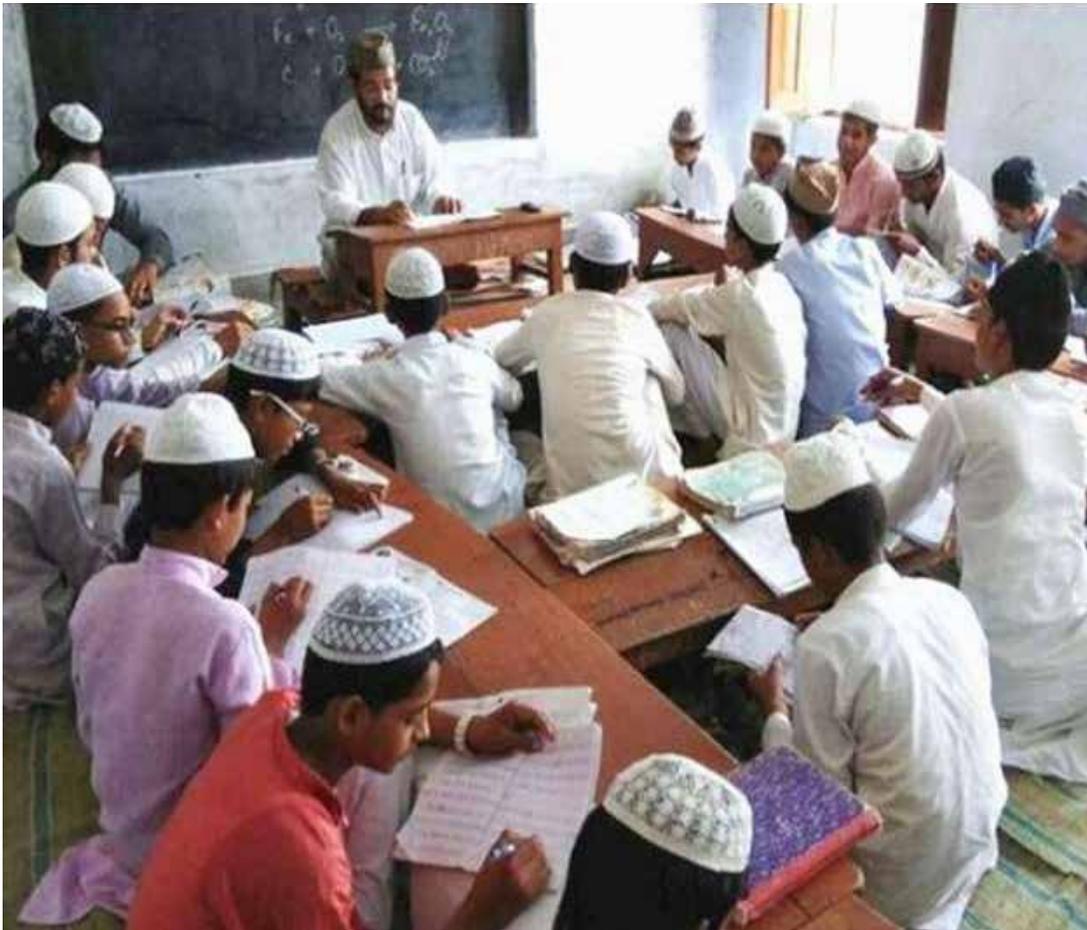
- (d) 2014
- (b) 3
- (c) Rohtang
- (b) 1998
- (c) Manmohan Singh

Explanations:

Vajpayee was referred to as the Bhisma Pitamah of Indian politics by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during a speech in the Rajya Sabha, a reference to the character in the Hindu epic Mahabharata who was held in

respect by two warring sides. The Pokhran-II tests were a series of five nuclear bomb test explosions conducted by India at the Indian Army's Pokhran Test Range in May 1998. It was the second instance of nuclear testing conducted by India;

the first test, code-named Smiling Buddha, was conducted in May 1974. Vajpayee was selected three times as the Prime Minister of India.

**(Q.6-Q.10):**

The Assam Government recently tabled a bill that will abolish all the state-run Madrasahs and will convert them into schools from April 1, 2021. The bill is called [1].

There are 610 state run Madrasahs in Assam. According to the survey conducted by a Guwahati University Professor found that the parents and guardians of most of the students of Madrasahs are not aware that the children are not taught regular subjects in Madrasahs. Rather they are

imparted lessons of theology. Therefore, it is essential to convert the Madrasahs into regular schools that provide primary and secondary education.

In 2015, the [2] faced wide criticism for derecognising Madrasahs. The [2] too brought up the same reason that Madrasahs give student education only on religion without imparting formal education such as maths, English and science.

6. Which of the following will replace [1]?

- (a) Derecognising of Madrasahs Bill, 2020
- (b) Assam Repealing Bill, 2020
- (c) The Abolition of Madrasahs Bill, 2020
- (d) None of the above.

7. The [1] in the above passage will abolish which of the following?
- I. The Assam Madrasah Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1995.
 - II. Assam Madrasah Education

(Provincialisation of Services of Employees and Reorganisation of Madrasah Educational Institutions) Act, 2018.

- (a) Only I
- (b) Only II
- (c) Both I and II
- (d) Neither I nor II

8. Who started the first famous Madrasah of Calcutta?
- (a) Warren Hasting
 - (b) Lord Canning
 - (c) John Macpherson
 - (d) Charles Cornwallis
9. Which of the following will replace [2] in the above passage?
- (a) Maharashtra
 - (b) Madhya Pradesh
 - (c) Gujarat
 - (d) Uttar Pradesh
10. Which of the following is true regarding Madrasahs in India?
- (a) Madrasahs is a type of educational institution that teaches the religion of Islam.
 - (b) Madrasahs were the hubs of nationalism during the 1857 revolt.
 - (c) The Madrasahs mainly teach the holy book of Muslims, The Quran.
 - (d) All of the above

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

6. (b) Assam Repealing Bill, 2020
7. (c) Both I and II
8. (a) Warren Hasting
9. (a) Maharashtra
10. (d) All of the above

Explanations:

The bill will abolish two existing acts namely, The Assam Madrasah Education (Provincialisation) Act, 1995 and Assam Madrasah Education (Provincialisation of Services of Employees and Reorganisation of Madrasah Educational Institutions)

Act, 2018. There will be no change in allowances, change of status or service conditions of the teaching and non-teaching staff. Calcutta Madrasah was set up in October 1780 by Warren Hastings, the British Governor general of

East India Company near Sealdah in Calcutta. A number of titles were used for it, such as Islamic College of Calcutta, Calcutta Madrasah, Calcutta Mohammedan College and Madrasah-e-Aliah.

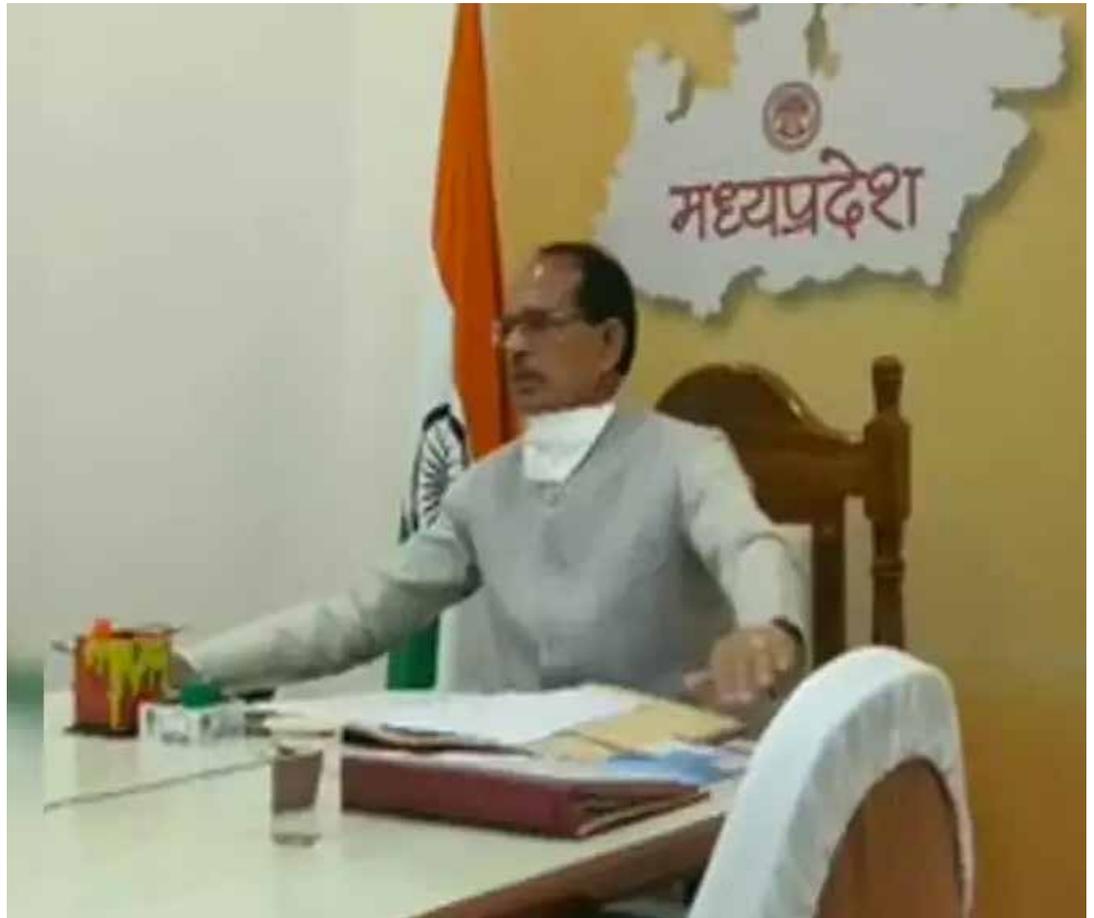
(Q.11-Q.15):

The Madhya Pradesh cabinet recently approved the Religious Freedom Bill, 2020. Under the bill, forcing religious conversions will attract fine of Rs 25,000 and one to five years of imprisonment.

- The bill is to replace the Religious Freedom Act, 1968. Once enforced the Religious Freedom Bill will be the most stringent in the country.
- The bill is also known as [1].
- The conversion of person from one religion to another on the basis of threats, marriage, force and conspiracy has been made punishable.
- An organization, mother or father can register a compliant.
- If the victim is a woman, minor or belongs to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe community, then the accused will be punishable with imprisonment ranging from two to ten years and fine of Rs 50,000.

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recently downgraded India to its lowest ranking in its 2020 report. India was categorized as Tier 2 country in the listing.

11. Which of the following will



replace [1] in the above passage?

- (a) Love-Jihad Law
- (b) Anti-Love Jihad Law
- (c) Religious Conversion Law
- (d) None of the above.

12. which of the following is the first state to being [1] law?

- (a) Madhya Pradesh
- (b) Uttarakhand
- (c) Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Maharashtra

13. Which of the following countries share space with India in tier 2 category of USCIRF?

- (a) Pakistan
- (b) China
- (c) Saudi Arabia
- (d) All of the above

14. Which of the following Articles of Indian Constitution guarantees the freedom of religion?

- (a) Article 14 and 15
- (b) Articles 19 to 21

- (c) Articles 26 to 28
- (d) Article 32

15. In which of the following year was the International Religious Freedom Act passed by the United States?

- (a) 1995
- (b) 1996
- (c) 1998
- (d) 2000

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

11. (b) Anti-Love Jihad Law
 12. (d) Uttar Pradesh
 13. (d) All of the above
 14. (c) Articles 26 to 28
 15. (c) 1998

Explanations:

Uttar Pradesh became the first state to bring an anti-love jihad law after Governor Anandiben Patel

promulgated the UP Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance 2020. The new law to curb forcible or "dishonest" religious conversions becomes applicable from today in Uttar Pradesh to check 'love jihad'. The USCIRF is a federal government commission created by the International Religious

Freedom Act. The main responsibility of USCIRF is to review facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom internationally. Lately, the USCIRF has been criticized world-wide for being biased towards focusing on persecution of Christians, Muslim and Hindu phobic
 The International Religious

Freedom Act of 1998, was passed to promote religious freedom as a foreign policy of the United States, to promote greater religious freedom in countries. Article 25-28 guarantees Freedom of Religion. The articles provide freedom to the citizens to practice and promote their religion peacefully

**(Q.16-Q.20):**

The Union Cabinet recently approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bhutan for peaceful use of outer space. The MoU was signed between the countries on November 19, 2020.

- The agreement allows the countries to pursue cooperation in areas such as space science, navigation, planetary exploration, use of space system, spacecrafts and ground systems.
- The MoU will help in creating Joint Working

Group. The group is to be created from ISRO members and Ministry of Information and Communications, Bhutan.

- The agreement will provide opportunities to explore cooperation in the field of satellite communication, space science, satellite navigation and exploration of outer space.

Both India and Bhutan are signatories of Outer Space Treaty. Therefore, they abide by the treaty to every space agreement being signed. The use of outer space between the countries and by the countries is decided based on Outer

Space Treaty. As of June 2020, 110 countries are parties to Outer Space Treaty.

16. The Outer Space Treaty was passed by the United Nations in which of the following years?

- 1998
- 1960
- 1963
- 1993

17. Which of the organisation oversees the Outer Space treaty?

- United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

- United Nations Committee on the Prevention of Outer Space
- United Nations Security Council
- United Nations Committee on the Peacekeeping

18. Which of the following treaty is not one of among the treaties dealing with the specific concept agreed into the Outer Space Treaty?

- The Rescue Agreement of 1968
- The Space Liability Convention of 1972
- The Registration Convention of 1976
- All of the above are a part.

19. Recently, India successfully tested anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test. Which of the following country does not have this system?

- China
- US
- Russia
- UK

20. In which year did India ratified the Outer Space Treaty?

- 1967
- 1976
- 1982
- 1987

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

16. (c) 1963

17. (a) United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

18. (d) All of the above are a part.

19. (d) UK

20. (c) 1982

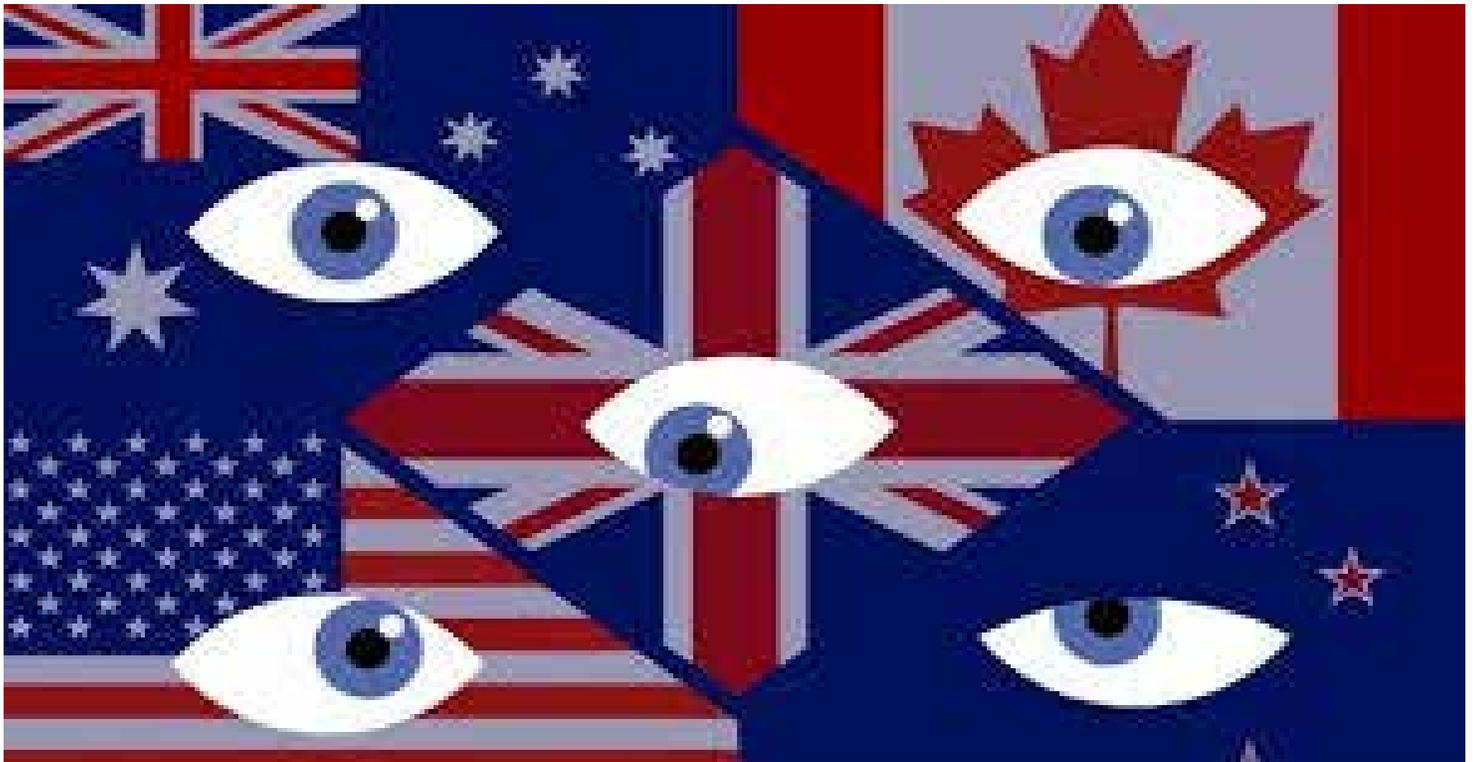
Explanations:

The United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) oversees these treaties and other questions of space jurisdiction.

There are four more multilateral treaties that deal with specific concepts agreed to in the Outer Space Treaty:

- The Rescue Agreement of 1968
 - The Space Liability Convention of 1972
 - The Registration Convention of 1976
 - The Moon Treaty of 1979
- India's recent successful anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test adds a new chapter in its defence preparedness. Before India,

only three countries, namely the US, Russia and China, had demonstrated this capability. India signed the Outer Space Treaty on March 3, 1967 and it was ratified deposited on January 18, 1982.



(Q.21-Q.25):

The Five Eyes network comprises of five nations namely Australia, Canada, Britain, US and New Zealand [1] is now to join the Five Eyes network to become the sixth eye.

The Five Eyes network collaborated to respond against the increasing threats by China and North Korea. The Five Eyes countries are parties to multilateral UK-USA Agreement. It was a treaty of joint cooperation in signals intelligence. It is an intelligence alliance. The origins of Five Eyes alliance can be tracked to the [2] that was issued in August 1941. It laid out the goals for the post-war world

In June 2020, the Five Eyes countries signed an Economic Agreement to isolate China. This will increase the supply chain among these countries. China not only manufactures, distributes but has its own market. For instance, the US is dependent on China in sixteen categories, across five sectors. Not only the Five Eyes network, India is also dependent on China, especially in Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API) imports. India obtains 68% of its API from China.

21. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?
- (a) India
(b) Japan

- (c) France
(d) Spain
22. Which of the following is one of the Surveillance Programmes operated by the Five Eyes?
- (a) PRISM
(b) STATEROOM
(c) MUSCULAR
(d) All of the above
23. Which of the following will replace [2] in the above passage?
- (a) Atlantic Charter
(b) Fourteen Point Charter
(c) Cold War Charter
(d) None of the above
24. The Five Eyes alliance developed which

surveillance system during the course of Cold War initially to monitor communications of the former Soviet Union, People's Republic of China and the Eastern Bloc?

(a) ECHELON
(b) PRISM
(c) MUSCULAR
(d) Tempora

25. In which of the following year did New Zealand joined the Five Eyes?
- (a) 1941
(b) 1948
(c) 1956
(d) 1960

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

21. (b) Japan
22. (d) All of the above
23. (a) Atlantic Charter
24. (a) ECHELON
25. (c) 1956

Explanations:

PRISM, Tempora, XKeyscore,

STATEROOM and MUSCULAR were the secret surveillance missions operated by the Five Eyes Alliance.

The origin of the Five Eyes dates back to post-World War II period. After World War II, the allies issued the Atlantic charter in

August 1941 for a post-war world. The charter is considered as the base for formation of the Five Eyes. The Five Eyes alliance developed the ECHELON surveillance system during the course of Cold War initially to monitor communications of the former

Soviet Union, People's Republic of China and the Eastern Bloc. Now, this system is used for monitoring the private communications worldwide.

New Zealand and Australia joined the Five Eyes in 1956.



(Q.26-Q.30):

The Union Cabinet recently approved revised guidelines for Direct to Home (DTH) broadcasting services. The guidelines allow [1] Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in DTH. Also, it has increased the license period to twenty years. Earlier, it was ten years.

It is Direct To Home Service. It is a digital satellite service that provides television viewing services through satellite transmissions. On the other hand, in a Cable connection, the cable TV operators receive the signals from satellite

and transmit to nearby areas through cables. In DTH, the customers are directly connected to the satellites.

India is the largest DTH market in the world. Currently [2] satellites are in use to provide DTH services to India. They are NSS-6 operated by Dish TV, MEASAT-3 operated by Sun Direct, SES-7 operated by Airtel, AsiaSat 5, ST-2 operated by Dish TV, GSAT-10 operated by Tata Sky and GSAT-15 operated by Sun Direct.

26. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?
 (a) 24%

(b) 49%
 (c) 51%
 (d) 100%

27. Under the new guidelines, the licence fee has been reduced from 10% to
 (a) 9%
 (b) 8%
 (c) 7%
 (d) 6%

28. Which of the following DTH Service providers has the largest market share?
 (a) Tata Sky
 (b) Dish TV
 (c) Sun Direct

(d) Airtel

29. Which of the following will replace [2] in the above passage?

(a) 8
 (b) 10
 (c) 12
 (d) 6

30. Which country is the biggest source of FDI in India?

(a) USA
 (b) China
 (c) Singapore
 (d) UK

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

26. (d) 100%
 27. (b) 8%
 28. (a) Tata Sky
 29. (a) 8
 30. (c) Singapore

Explanations:

Singapore with \$8.30 billion foreign inflows continued to be the top source of FDI for India in April-September 2020-21. The country has received \$2.1 billion inflows from Cayman Islands. In terms of market share, Tata

Sky led the DTH sector with the highest 31.61 per cent share followed by Dish TV at a close 31.23 per cent. Airtel took the third spot with 23.39 per cent market share, while Sun Direct had a total of 13.78 per cent share

respectively. The license fee has been revised to 8% from 10% of the Adjusted Gross Revenue.

(Q.31-Q.35):

NASA and the Canadian Space Agency recently signed a historic agreement under which Canada is to be a part of the Lunar Gateway Space Station. Canada will contribute a new robotic arm called "Canadarm3". Also, a Canadian is to be a part of the [1] mission. [1] is the first crewed mission to the moon by NASA since 1972. The mission is to be launched in 2023.

The Lunar Gateway Space Station is about one-sixth of the size of the International Space Station. It is to be built in the lunar orbit. The space station is expected to play a major role in the Artemis Programme of NASA after its launch. The Gateway is to be developed and utilized by international and commercial partners from CSA (Canadian Space Agency), JAXA (Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency), European Space Agency.

31. The agreement mentioned in the first paragraph of the passage is named
- Gateway Treaty
 - Artemis Treaty
 - Canadarm Treaty
 - Lunar Gateway Treaty
32. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?
- Artemis II
 - Apollo II
 - Maverik
 - None of the above
33. What is the name of the

mission, in which India is planning to send manned mission to lower orbit of Earth?

- Chandrayaan 3
- Gagyanyaan 2
- Chandrayaan 4
- Gayanyaan

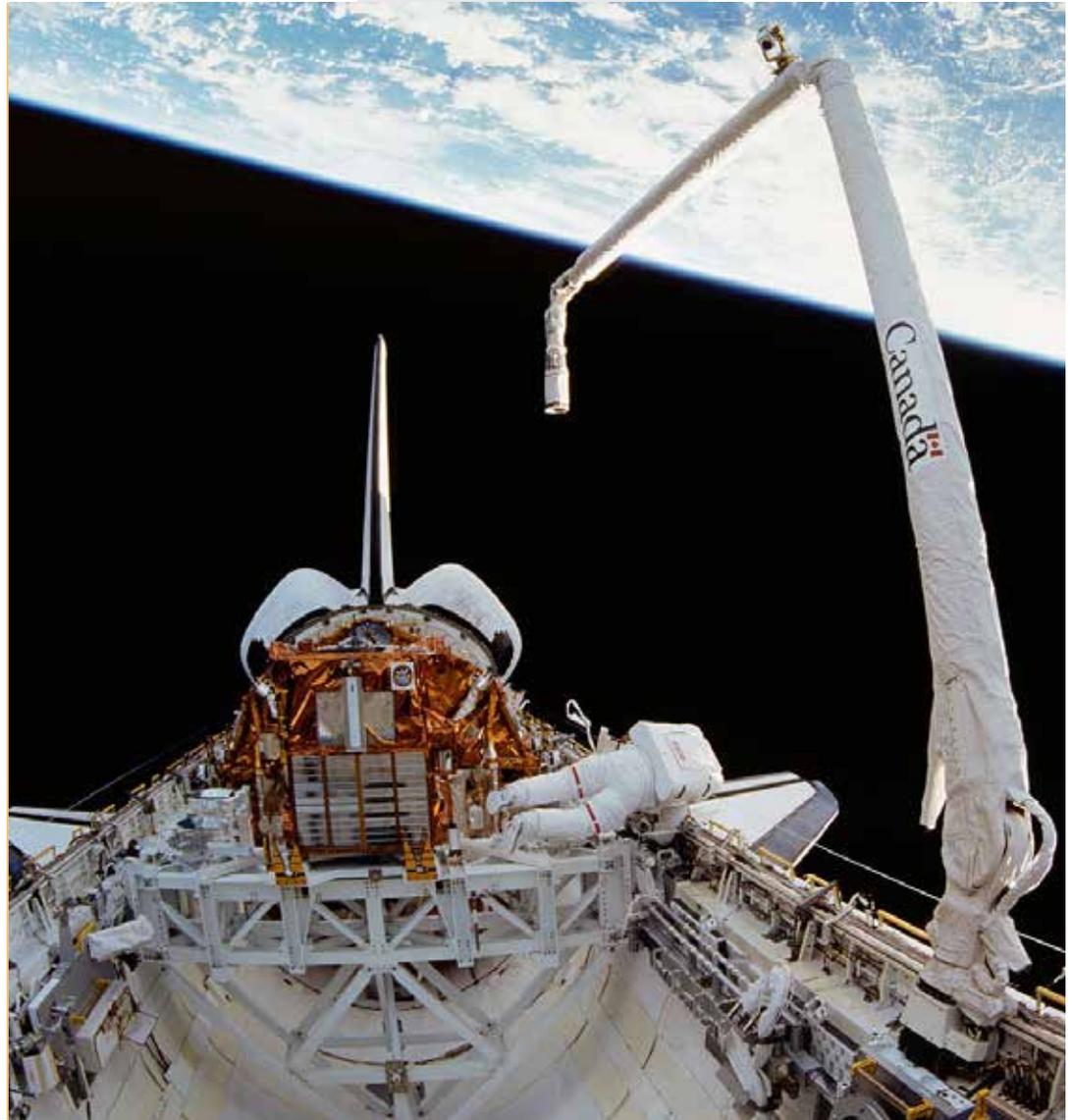
34. Which is the name of the

commercial wing of the ISRO?

- NewSpace India Ltd
- Antrix
- Gaganwing
- None of the above

35. What is the name of the mission which first landed humans on moon?

- Apollo 11
- Apollo 13
- Apollo 1
- Apollo 10



ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

31. (a) Gateway Treaty
 32. (a) Artemis II
 33. (d) Gayanyaan
 34. (b) Antrix
 35. (a) Apollo 11

Explanations:

Gaganyaan is India's manned

space mission which the ISRO aims to launch by December 2021. The project aims at sending the astronauts to a lower orbit of the earth and the spacecraft will have a capsule with adequate supply of oxygen and other essential material and facilities for the astronauts.

Antrix handles ISRO's commercial deals for satellites and launch vehicles with foreign customers whereas NSIL will deal with capacity building of local industry for space manufacturing. Apollo 11 was the spaceflight that first landed humans on the Moon.

Commander Neil Armstrong and lunar module pilot Buzz Aldrin formed the American crew that landed the Apollo Lunar Module Eagle on July 20, 1969

(Q.36-Q.40):

The French President [1] recently announced a referendum to add the fight against climate change into the French Constitution. Also, the need to preserve the environment is to be added. Referendum is a general vote by the electorate on a political question that has been referred to them for a direct decision. The referendum is passed only if it is approved by a majority of the voters across a country. If the referendum includes majority of the voters in majority of the states then it is called double majority.

The concept of Referendum existed in France since the French Revolution. According to 1958 French Constitution, the referendum can be organised in several situations such as constitutional revision, passage of law and entry of a state into the European Union.



36. Which of the following article of Indian Constitution provides for the protection of Environment?

- (a) Article 39A
- (b) Article 51A
- (c) Article 51-A(g)
- (d) Article 51-A(f)

37. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) is also known as:

- (a) Kyoto protocol

- (b) Vienna convention
- (c) Earth summit
- (d) None of these

38. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?

- (a) Francois Hollande
- (b) Emmanuel Macron
- (c) Angela Merkel
- (d) Nikolas Sarkozy

39. The United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) is held in:

- (a) 1992
- (b) 1995
- (c) 1989
- (d) 1990

40. The basic objectives of The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) is:

- (a) To stabilize the melting ice of Antarctic Ocean
- (b) To stabilize greenhouse

gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

- (c) Reduce the carbon emission upto the level of 1992
- (d) Stabilize the ozone layer depletion.

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

36. (c) Article 51-A(g)

37. (c) Earth summit

38. (b) Emmanuel Macron

39. (a) 1992

40. (b) To stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate

system.

Explanations:

Article 51-A (g), says that "It shall be duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life and to have compassion for living creatures." The Directive principles

under the Indian constitution directed towards ideals of building welfare state.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is an international environmental treaty addressing climate change, negotiated and signed by 154 states at the United Nations Conference on Environment and

Development, informally known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. The ultimate objective of the Convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations "at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system."



(Q.41-Q.45):

NITI Aayog has recently released a white paper titled Vision 2035: Public Health Surveillance in India. It is part of its work to strengthen health systems in India. The paper calls for integration of the three tiers of healthcare system in India viz. primary, secondary and tertiary into [1]. It also calls for enhanced lab capacity and expanded referral network. It proposes the use of a new data sharing mechanism involving the use of analytics, health informatics and data science.

According to the white paper of NITI Aayog, the following are the challenges in Public Health Surveillance of India:

- The major implementation challenge is the system design issue. The data on the citizen utilization of service for treatment of diseases is different from that of the notification mechanisms for disease outbreaks.

- Similar data is collected by several organizations. There are no common platform or mechanism for the unified use of the data collected
- The involvement of private sector in the surveillance is limited
- Inadequate linkage of morbidity with mortality data
- Limited usage of social, digital and print media in surveillance
- Limited focus on non-communicable diseases in the surveillance.

41. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?

- Vande Bharat
- Ayushman Bharat
- National Health Mission
- MagaHealth Project

42. Who is the vice chairman of the NITI Aayog?

- Amitabh Kant
- Rajeev Kumar
- Ravind Subramanyam
- Amit Shah

43. Which of the following statement is correct about the NITI Aayog?

- NITI Aayog was Formed 25 January 2016
- NITI Aayog comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- The full form of NITI Aayog is National institute for Transforming India
- The NITI Aayog is a policy think tank of the Government of India

44. Which of the following statement is/are correct about the NITI Aayog?

- The aim of NITI Aayog is to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and to enhance cooperative

federalism in the country.

II. The Prime Minister of India is the ex officio Chairperson of the NITI Aayog

III. There are 8 full time members in the NITI Aayog

- Only II & III
- Only II
- Only I
- Only I & II

45. Which of the following is not the function of the NITI Aayog?

- To evolve a shared vision of national development priorities sectors and strategies
- To foster cooperative federalism
- To give final approval to the Five Year Plans of India
- To create a knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurial support system

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

- (b) Ayushman Bharat
- (b) Rajeev Kumar
- (d) The NITI Aayog is a policy think tank of the Government of India
- (d) Only I & II
- (c) To give final approval to the Five Year Plans of India.

Explanations:

Full-time organizational framework composed of a Vice-Chairperson, 5 full-time members, 2 part-time members (from leading universities, research organizations and other relevant institutions in an ex-officio

capacity). There are 4 ex-officio members of the Union Council of Ministers, a Chief Executive Officer (with the rank of Secretary to the Government of India) who looks after administration, and a secretariat. The NITI Aayog is a policy think tank of the Government of

India. It replaced the Planning Commission. A five year used to be approved by the National Development Council (NDC). Twelfth five plans was the last five plan of India So as of now NITI Aayog don't have any role in five year plans.

(Q.46-Q.50):

The Government of India is to launch Brand India Mission to promote quality of products that are manufactured in the country. This mission is being piloted by the [1]. The mission is based on similar policies in other countries such as Switzerland, United States, Germany and France.

Under the Brand India Initiative, both Indian and international consumers are to be educated about products that are made in India. The mission will help India to demonstrate its leadership position and its commitment to quality.

The main aim of the mission is to increase the local production. The brand India initiative will offer tag to manufactured goods produced in India. In order to receive the tag, the manufactured goods should comply with the prescribed health and safety standards of the country. Also, such manufactured goods should carry minimum of 20% local content.

46. Which of the following will replace [1] in the above passage?
- (a) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
 (b) Ministry of Finance
 (c) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
 (d) Ministry of Corporate

Affairs

47. Recently, Prime Minister of India announced the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan with an economic stimulus package. What percent of India's GDP accounted in that package?
- (a) 10%
 (b) 20%
 (c) 5%
 (d) 8%
48. Who is the ministry in charge for the ministry mentioned as [1] in the

passage?

- (a) Nirmala Sitharaman
 (b) Piyush Goyal
 (c) P.P. Chaudhary
 (d) Prakash Javadekar
49. The Prime Minister announced that an Atmanirbhar Bharat or a self-reliant India should stand on the following five pillars. Which of the following is not one among them?
- (a) Economy
 (b) Infrastructure

- (c) 21st-century technology-driven arrangements and system
 (d) Imports

50. The mission 'Brand India' is expected to be an important building block of NITI Aayog's Strategy of
- (a) Self-Reliant India
 (b) Nav Bharat
 (c) New India
 (d) Kalyan Bharat



ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

46. (a) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

47. (a) 10%

48. (b) Piyush Goyal

49. (d) Imports

50.

Explanations:

Minister responsible for the

ministry of Commerce and Industry is Piyush Goyal.

The Prime Minister announced the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (or Self-reliant India Mission)' with an economic stimulus package — worth Rs 20 lakh crores aimed towards achieving the mission.

The announced economic package

is 10% of India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019-20.

The Prime Minister announced that an Atmanirbhar Bharat or a self-reliant India should stand on the following five pillars:

- (a) Economy
 (b) Infrastructure
 (c) 21st-century technology-driven

arrangements and system
 (d) Demand

(e) Vibrant Demography
 The mission 'Brand India' is expected to be an important building block of "New India". The strategy of New India was put together by Niti Aayog.

(Q.51-Q.55):

An expert panel of India's environment ministry has deferred environment clearance for the Lower Orr Dam, which is part of the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project, and sought fresh data to decide whether a new public hearing is expected for the project or not.

Identified as a national project, it is part of the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project and envisages construction of a 45 metre high and 2,218-metre long dam across Orr river near village Didauni in Madhya Pradesh to provide irrigation facility to 90,000 hectares of area

The project's estimated cost is about Rs 30.65 billion and requires 3,730 hectares of land, of which 968.24 hectares is forest land. It is expected to submerge about 2,723.70 hectare area including seven fully affected villages and five villages partially. It was considered for clearance in the meeting of the expert appraisal committee (EAC) for river valley and hydroelectric projects on October 29, 2020.

51. Ken and Betwa rivers are the tributaries of which river?
- (a) Narmada River
(b) Ganga River
(c) Godavari River

- (d) Gomti River
52. The project involves the deforestation of reserver.
- (a) Dudhwa Tiger Reserve
(b) Kanha Tiger Reserve
(c) Amangarh Tiger Reserve
(d) Panna Tiger Reserve
53. What is the name of the dam to be built for Ken-Betwa river interlinking project?
- (a) Temghar Dam
(b) Tehri Dam
(c) Sardar Sarovar Dam
(d) Daudhan Dam

54. In which year The Ken-Betwa project, received wildlife clearance?
- (a) 2015
(b) 2016
(c) 2017
(d) 2018
55. Who gave clearance to The Ken-Betwa river interlinking project?
- (a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(b) Ministry of Tribal Affairs
(c) Environment Appraisal Committee
(d) All of above



ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

51. (a) **Narmada River**
The important tributaries of the Yamuna River are Tons, Chambal, Hindon, Betwa and Ken. Other small tributaries of the Yamuna River include the Giri, Sind, Uttangan, Sengar and the Rind.
52. (d) **Panna Tiger Reserve**
Ken-Betwa project will result into submergence of 10% of critical tiger habitat of MP's Panna Tiger Reserve that will adversely affect the tiger conservation efforts.
53. (d) **Daudhan Dam**
Daudhan Village It is proposed site of Daudhan dam for Ken Betwa river interlinking program. The height of dam is 73.8 m, and it will be an earthen dam.
54. (b) **2016**
The Ken-Betwa project, India's first river interlinking project, which received wildlife clearance in 2016 is under the scanner for its impact on the environment.
55. (d) **All of above**
The Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Ken-Betwa link project (KBLP) has been completed. The techno-economic clearance and various statutory clearances of the KBLP Phase-I have been accorded. Forest clearance and clearance from Central Empowered Committee (CEC). The Environmental clearance and Forest land diversion clearances for Lower Orr dam (part of phase-II) have been recommended by Environment Appraisal Committee (EAC) and Forest Appraisal Committee (FAC) of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) respectively. Stage-I forest clearance has been accorded by MoEF & CC for Lower Orr dam project. Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) clearance for Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) plan of Project Affected Families (PAFs) of Lower Orr dam has also been accorded. Environmental clearance and Stage-I&II forest clearances for Bina complex projects have been accorded by MoEF & CC. Comprehensive DPR of KBLP has been prepared and sent to Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and Central Water Commission (CWC) in October, 2018.

(Q.56-Q.60):

THE FRAGMENTATION AND LOSS OF NATURAL HABITATS are major drivers of ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss globally. Megaherbivores such as [1], with large home range and food requirements, have been among the species most affected by habitat alteration and loss of habitat connectivity. The fragmented nature of the Indian landscape, with people all around, has increased human-elephant conflict in most parts of the country. On an average about 400-450 people lose their lives annually due to such conflict in India, and around 100 elephants are killed in retaliation for the damage they cause to human life and property.

Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and the Asian Nature Conservation Foundation (ANCF), in collaboration with state forest departments, Project Elephant and several researchers, had identified 88 elephant corridors and published a report titled Right of Passage: Elephant Corridors of India in 2005. This publication systematically assessed the status of the 88 identified corridors, and prioritised them for conservation interventions

and securing. The report was endorsed by Project Elephant, Ministry of Environment and Forests*, and all state forest departments. In the last decade, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), state forest departments and conservation organisations have been working at the policy and ground level to protect and secure these corridors. The elephant task force formed in 2010 also recognised these corridors and strongly recommended that they be legally protected and secured through various approaches.

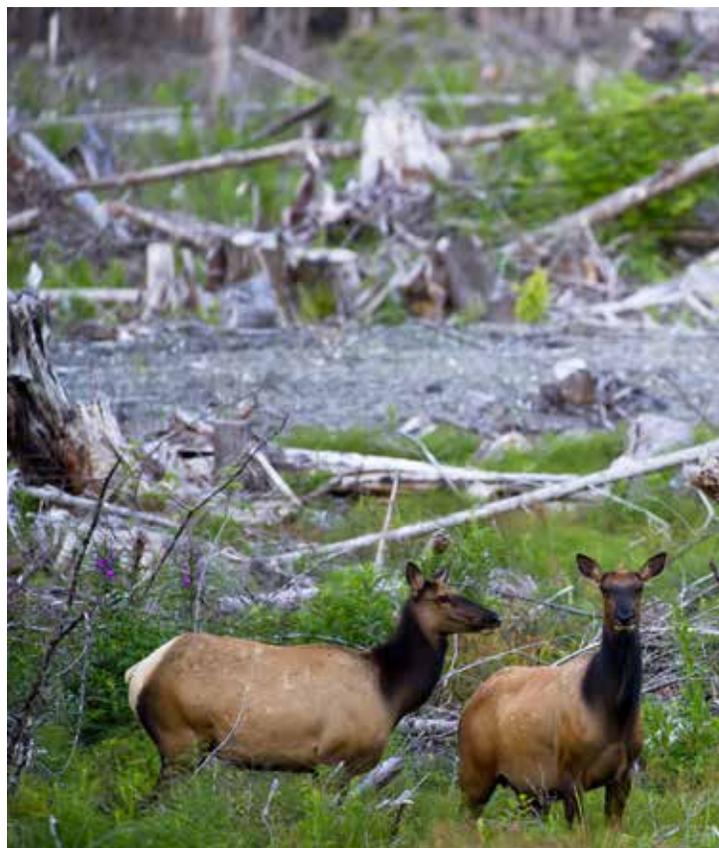
56. How many [1] corridors are there in India?

- (a) 78
- (b) 96
- (c) 45
- (d) 88

57. Which country have the largest number of free-roaming elephant herds?

- (a) Zambia
- (b) Africa
- (c) India
- (d) Tanzania

58., a nationwide campaign to protest elephant, was launched on the occasion of world Elephant Day in 2017.



- (a) Kunjar Mahotsav
- (b) Dwip Yatra
- (c) Vaaran Mahotsav
- (d) Gaj Yatra

59. Why protect elephant corridors?

- (a) To ensure that their populations
- (b) Forests that have turned into farms
- (c) Weak regulation of ecotourism

(d) All of above

60. Name the association who took initiative to secure 96 out of the 101 existing corridors used by elephants across 12 States in India

- (a) NGOs Elephant Family
- (b) International Fund for Animal Welfare
- (c) IUCN Netherlands and World Land Trust
- (d) Asian Elephant Alliance

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

56. (d) 88

A total of 88 [1] corridors were identified as being currently in use in the coun- try. Of these, 12 are in north-western India, 20 in central India, 14 in northern West Bengal, 22 in north-eastern India and 20 in southern India Of the total, 77.3% of the corridors are being regularly used by [1].

57. (b) Africa

In Africa, Botswana houses the largest number of free-roaming elephant herds.

58. (d) Gaj Yatra

'Gaj Yatra', a nationwide campaign to protect elephants, was launched on the occasion of World Elephant Day in 2017. The campaign is planned to cover 12 elephant range states. The campaign aims to create awareness about elephant corridors to encourage free movement in their habitat.

59. (d) All of above

The movement of elephants is essential to ensure that their

populations are genetically viable. It also helps to regenerate forests on which other species, including tigers, depend Nearly 40% of elephant reserves are vulnerable, as they are not within protected parks and sanctuaries. Also, the migration corridors have no specific legal protection. Forests that have turned into farms and unchecked tourism are blocking animals' paths. Animals are thus forced to seek alternative routes resulting

in increased elephant-human conflict. Weak regulation of ecotourism is severely impacting important habitats. It particularly affects animals that have large home ranges, like elephants.

60. (d) Asian Elephant Alliance
Asian Elephant Alliance, an umbrella initiative by five NGOs, had, last year, come together to secure 96 out of the 101 existing corridors used by elephants across 12 States in India.



(Q.61-Q.65):

Disability inclusion is an essential condition to upholding human rights, sustainable development, and peace and security. It is also central to the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind. The commitment to realizing the rights of persons with disabilities is not only a matter of justice; it is an investment in a common future.

The global crisis of COVID-19 is deepening pre-existing inequalities, exposing the extent of exclusion and highlighting that work on disability inclusion is imperative. People with disabilities—one billion people—are one of the most

excluded groups in our society and are among the hardest hit in this crisis in terms of fatalities.

When launching the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy in June 2019, the Secretary-General stated that the United Nations should lead by example and raise the Organization's standards and performance on disability inclusion—across all pillars of work, from headquarters to the field.

The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy provides the foundation for sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion through all pillars of the work of the United Nations. Through the Strategy, the United Nations

system reaffirms that the full and complete realization of the human rights of all persons with disabilities is an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

61. What is the theme of the 2020 International Day of Persons with Disabilities?

- (a) Building Better Tomorrow
- (b) Encouraging future
- (c) Building Back Better
- (d) Building Better world

62. Which of the following people do not have a disability?

- (a) Hillary Clinton
- (b) Abraham Lincoln
- (c) Ty Pennington (Extreme Makeover Home Edition)
- (d) Howie Mandel

63. When the Government of India passed the Disability Act?

- (a) December 12, 1995
- (b) January 12, 1996
- (c) November 12, 1997
- (d) February 12, 1998

64. Under which Article the Rights of Persons with Disabilities gave quality and free primary and secondary education?

- (a) Article 15
- (b) Article 24
- (c) Article 5
- (d) Article 30

65. Who was the first cabinet minister of India to be Tried Under New Disability Law?

- (a) Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh
- (b) YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government in Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Nitin Kumar government in Bihar
- (d) Ashok Gehlot government In Rajasthan

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

61. (c) **Building Back Better**
 UNESCO will mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with a week-long programme from 25 November to 3 December 2020 under the theme: "Building back better: towards an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 world by, for and with persons with disabilities".

62. (a) **Hillary Clinton**

63. (a) **December 12, 1995**

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995. The Act, which catalogues the rights of people with disabilities in India, was passed by the Parliament of India on December 12, 1995, and notified on February 7, 1996.

64. (b) **Article 24**

Article 24 of the UN

Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities (link is external) stipulate that countries must take steps to ensure that persons with disabilities access an inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live.

65. (a) **Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh**
 Uttar Pradesh cabinet minister was the first one to be booked

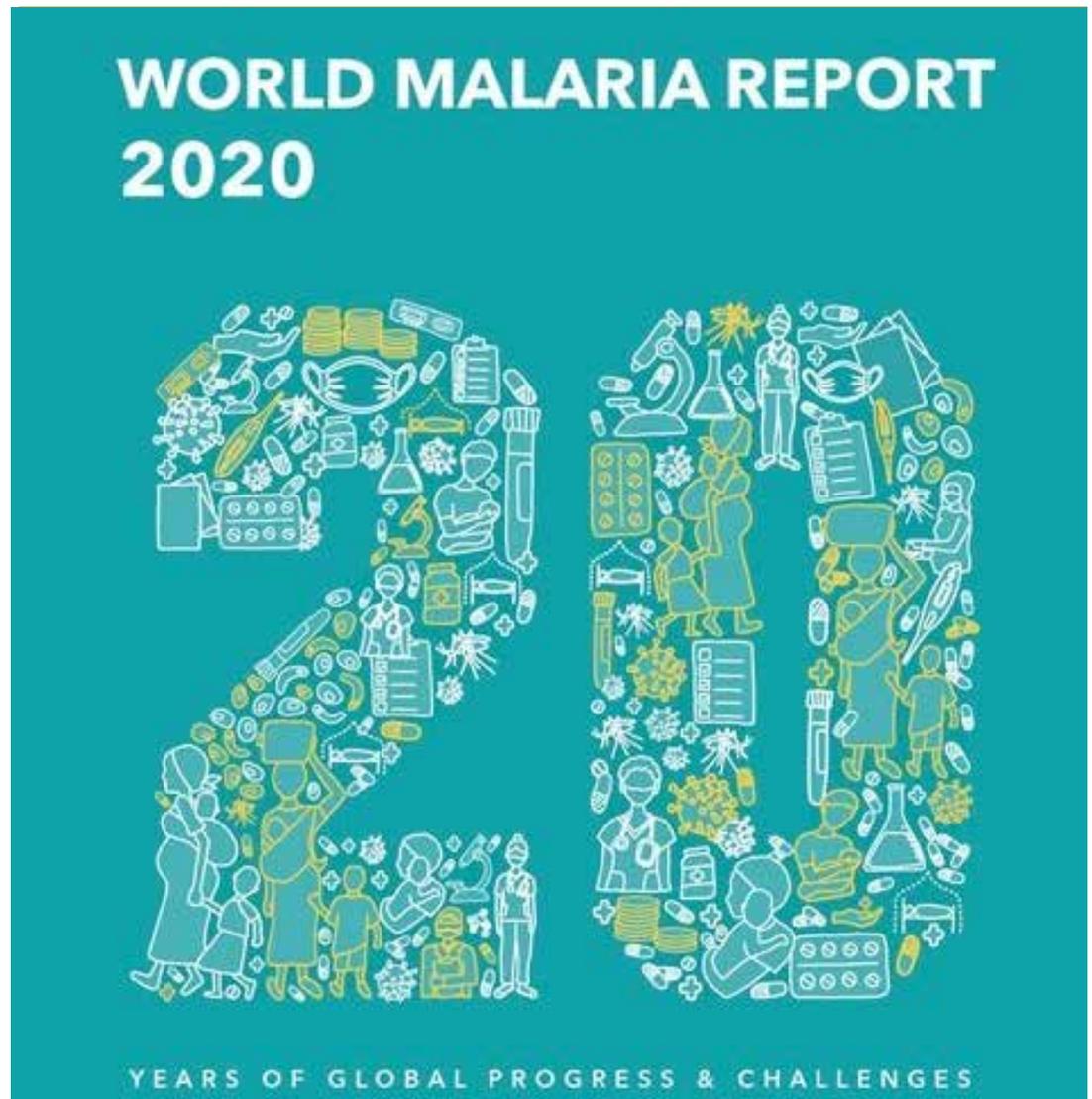
under this new legislation when disability activist Satendra Singh (doctor) filed case against him on publicly humiliating a disabled employee. The addition of thalassemia as a new disability under this new law allowed a Chhattisgarh girl with this disorder to get medical admission after Supreme Court's intervention.

(Q.66-Q.70):

The 2020 edition of the World malaria report takes a historical look at key milestones that helped shape the global response to the disease over the last 2 decades – a period of unprecedented success in malaria control. The report features a detailed analysis on progress towards the 2020 milestones of WHO's global malaria strategy and a special section on malaria and the COVID-19 pandemic.

As in past years, the report provides an up-to-date assessment of the burden of malaria at global, regional and country levels. It tracks investments in malaria programmes and research as well as progress across all intervention areas. This latest report draws on data from 87 countries and territories with ongoing malaria transmission.

66. What blood type is immune to malaria?
- (a) A+
(b) O
(c) B-
(d) B+
67. What is the best treatment for malaria?
- (a) Artemisinin
(b) Tissue plasminogen activator
(c) Fosfomycin
(d) Cephalixin
68. What is the theme of World



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| 66. What blood type is immune to malaria? | Malaria Day 2020? | in 1902 for the discovery of the malaria parasite life cycle? | Elimination was launched in India? |
| (a) A+
(b) O
(c) B-
(d) B+ | (a) Ready to Beat Malaria
(b) No Mosquitoes No Malaria
(c) Defeat malaria
(d) Zero malaria starts with me. | (a) Robert Koch
(b) Paul Ehrlich
(c) Alexander Fleming
(d) Ronald Ross | (a) 2015
(b) 2016
(c) 2017
(d) 2018 |
| 67. What is the best treatment for malaria? | 69. Who won the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine | 70. In which year The National Strategic Plan for Malaria | |
| (a) Artemisinin
(b) Tissue plasminogen activator
(c) Fosfomycin
(d) Cephalixin | | | |

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

66. (b) O
People with type O blood have a degree of protection against the most dangerous form of malaria, which is caused by the mosquito-transmitted parasite, *Plasmodium falciparum*, as opposed to less-dangerous species of *Plasmodium*.
67. (a) Artemisinin
ACTs are, in many cases, the first line treatment for malaria. There are several different types of ACTs. Examples include artemether-lumefantrine (Coartem) and artesunate-amodiaquine. Each ACT is a combination of two or more drugs that work against the malaria parasite in different ways.
68. (d) Zero malaria starts with me.
The theme of World Malaria Day 2020 — Zero Malaria Starts with Me — is a movement dedicated to driving action and making change, and this starts with YOU!
69. (d) Ronald Ross
Sir Ronald Ross won the Nobel Prize in 1902.
70. (c) 2017
In July 2017, the National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (2017-22) was launched laying down strategies for the next five years.



(Q.71-Q.75):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday will lay the foundation stone of the new Parliament building, nearly a hundred years after the foundation for the existing Parliament was laid by Duke of Connaught on February 12, 1921.

According to a release by

the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the new building is an intrinsic part of the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' and will be a landmark opportunity to build peoples' Parliament for the first time after independence, one which will match the needs and aspirations of 'New India' in the 75th anniversary of independence

in 2022.

71. Who constructed Indian Parliament?

- (a) Edwin Lutyens
- (b) Herbert Baker
- (c) Both
- (d) None of them

72. In which year government Of India announced

the Central Vista Redevelopment project?

- (a) 2000
- (b) 2003
- (c) 2005
- (d) 2019

73. What is the seating capacity of New Parliament building?

- (a) 1575
- (b) 1224
- (c) 1000
- (d) 999

74. What is the interior theme of the Lok Sabha chamber, the Rajya Sabha and the Central lounge in New Parliament building?

- (a) Peacock, Banyan, Lotus
- (b) Banyan, Lotus, Peacock
- (c) Peacock, Lotus, Banyan
- (d) Banyan, Peacock, Lotus

75. To whom did the government gave the contract of making New Parliament Building?

- (a) The Hindustan Construction company
- (b) The Tata Group company
- (c) GMR Group
- (d) Afcons Infrastructure Limited

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

71. (c) **Both**

It was designed by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, who were responsible for planning and construction of New Delhi by British government. The construction of building took six years and the opening ceremony was performed on 18 January 1927 by the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, Lord Irwin.

72. (d) **2019**

Government in 2019 launched

Central Vista Redevelopment Project which started undertaking construction of new parliament after bidding in 2020. The project includes replacing north and south blocks with a single secretariat building with all ministries and move prime minister's residence and office near it and revamp the 3 km long Rajpath between Rashtrapati Bhavan and India Gate.

73. (b) **1224**

The new building would be a

four-storey structure with a seating capacity of 1,224 and cost Rs 970 crore. It would replace the existing colonial structure which would be completing hundred years in 2021.

74. (c) **Peacock, Lotus, Banyan**

In the Lok Sabha chamber, the National bird (peacock) is the theme. In the Rajya Sabha- The national flower (lotus) and in the central lounge the national tree (banyan)

75. (b) **The Tata Group company**

Tata Projects is set to win the contract to build India's new Parliament building as a part of the government's Central Vista redevelopment plans, beating Larsen & Toubro. The Tata group company offered to execute the project for Rs 861.9 crore, only Rs 3.1 crore less than L&T's bid of Rs 865 crore.

(Q.76-Q.80):

In a decision that could influence the global use of medicinal marijuana, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) on Wednesday voted to remove cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, decades after they were first placed on the list.

At its ongoing 63rd session, the 53-member CND has chosen to affirm a World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendation from 2019 to remove cannabis from its 'most dangerous' category, with 27 Member States voting in favour, 25 against, and one abstention.

Currently in India, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, illegalises any mixture with or without any neutral material, of any of the two forms of cannabis – charas and ganja — or any drink prepared from it.

76. WHO recommendation from 2019 to remove cannabis from its 'most dangerous' category, name the country who voted against it?
- (a) India



- (b) Russia
(c) Ukraine
(d) Sewden
77. Who was the President when the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, bill was introduced in India?
- (a) Neelam Sanjiva Reddy
(b) Ramaswamy Venkataraman
(c) Giani Zail Singh
(d) Shankar Dayal Sharma
78. Which are the criteria that drugs meet in order to be placed in Schedule I?

- (a) Abuse of the drug or other substance may lead to moderate or low physical dependence or high psychological dependence.
- (b) Abuse of the drug or other substances may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence
- (c) There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision
- (d) All of above.

79. What are the short-term effects of cannabis?
- (a) Respiratory problems
(b) Dependence
(c) Altered perception of time and events
(d) Brain development
80. Name the country where consumption of cannabis is legal?
- (a) New Jersey
(b) Bhutan
(c) Fiji
(d) Oman

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

76. (b) **Russia**

India was part of the voting majority, along with the US and most European nations. China, Pakistan and Russia were among those who voted against, and Ukraine abstained.

77. (c) **Giani Zail Singh**

The bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 23 August 1985. It was passed by both the Houses of Parliament, received assent from then President Giani Zail Singh on 16 September 1985, and came into force on 14 November 1985. The NDPS Act has since been amended thrice — in

1988, 2001 and 2014.

78. (c) **There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision**

Schedule I

- The drug or other substance has no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.
- There is a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug or other substance under medical supervision.

Schedule II

- The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse.
- The drug or other substance has a currently accepted

medical use in treatment in the United States or a currently accepted medical use with severe restrictions.

- Abuse of the drug or other substances may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence.

Schedule III

- The drug or other substance has a potential for abuse less than the drugs or other substances in schedules I and II.
- The drug or other substance has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.
- Abuse of the drug or other

substance may lead to moderate or low physical dependence or high psychological dependence.

79. (c) **Altered perception of time and events**

Option A, B and D are long term effects of cannabis, where as option C is a short term effect of cannabis. Thus, option C is the correct answer.

80. (a) **New Jersey**

Arizona, Montana, New Jersey, and South Dakota's legalizations become effective in 2021.



(Q.81-Q.85):

The world's highest mountain Mount Everest is 0.86m higher than had been previously officially calculated, Nepal and China have jointly announced. For years, we have studied the height of Mount Everest to be 8,848 metres. However, that is now set to change as the Foreign Ministers of both China and Nepal jointly certified that Everest is 8,848.86 metres tall, making it taller by 86 centimetres. The change in the height due to joint certification has brought an end to a long-standing debate on

the elevation of the mountain between China and Nepal, of which, the former had been claiming that the Everest was 8,844 metres or 29,017 feet, while the latter said that the mountain was 8,848 metres or 29,028 feet tall. However, the new height makes Everest 29,031 feet tall, 3 feet taller than Nepal's claims.

81. The Survey of India had determined the previous height of Mount Everest back in
 (a) 1956
 (b) 1954
 (c) 1952

(d) 1958

82. US' National Geographic Society in 1999 measured the elevation of the mountain to be about:
 (a) 29,017 feet
 (b) 29,035 feet
 (c) 29,031 feet
 (d) 29,033 feet

83. Who is the current foreign minister of the People's Republic of China
 (a) Yang Jiechi
 (b) Wang Yi
 (c) Li Zhaoxing
 (d) Wu Xueqian

84. Mount Everest is the highest peak of the world. It lies in the Himalayan Range in;
 (a) Nepal
 (b) Tibet
 (c) India
 (d) China

85. What do you mean by world 'Himalaya'?
 (a) Land of peaks
 (b) Land of rising sun
 (c) Adobe of snow
 (d) Land of mountains

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

81. (b) 1954

The previous height of the mountain had been recognised since 1954, according to a report in IE

82. (b) 29,035 feet

Explanation: US' National

Geographic Society in 1999 measured the elevation of the mountain to be about 29,035 feet

83. (b) Wang Yi

The current foreign minister of the People's Republic of China

is Wang Yi

84. (a) Nepal

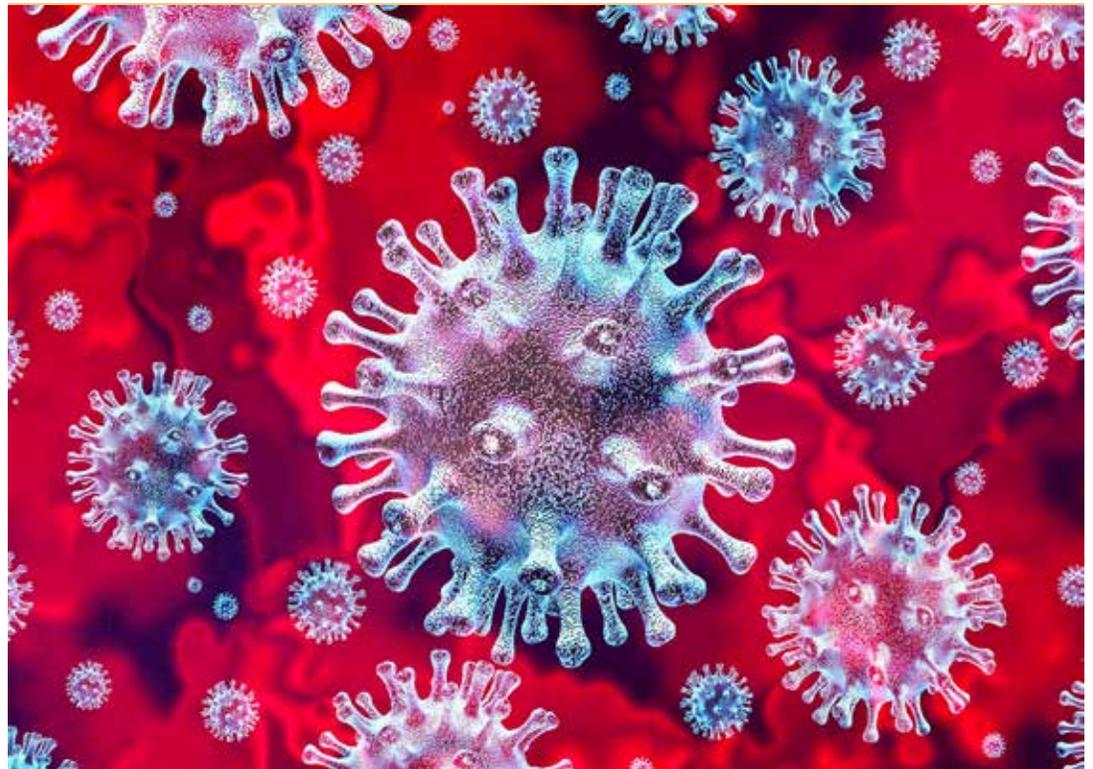
Mount Everest is the highest peak of the world at 8848m. It lies in the Himalayan Range in Nepal.

85. (c) Adobe of snow

The highest mountain range of India, Himalaya literally translates to "abode of snow" from Sanskrit.

(Q.86-Q.90):

The World Health Organisation Director recently announced that a new strain of Corona Virus has been detected in eight European countries. The new strain is spreading rapidly among the younger groups unlike the previous strain. More than 40 countries in Europe, Asia, South America and the Middle East have closed their borders to travellers from the United Kingdom. As per the reports, the new strain in the virus has accounted for at least 60% of the new COVID-19 cases in London, UK. This variant alarmed the scientists when it began to turn up more frequently in Coronavirus samples collected from parts of South England in December 2020. The variant has undergone 23 mutations. In preliminary studies, scientists and researchers have found that people who are infected with the new strain of the coronavirus carry a heightened viral load. In simple words, a higher concentration of the virus is found in the upper respiratory tract, which in other viral diseases is associated with more severe symptoms. As per scientists, a similar variant has been detected in South Africa in 90% of the samples whose genetic sequences have been analysed since November 2020. As of 13 December 2020, 1,108



cases with this variant have been identified, predominantly in the South and East of England.

86. The new strain of the Sars-CoV-2 virus is known as
- VOI- 202012/01
 - VUI - 202012/10
 - VUI - 202012/01
 - VIU-202012/10

87. Which of the following statement is/are correct about Favipiravir?
- Favipiravir is an antiviral COVID-19 drug.
 - Glenmark Pharmaceuticals

under the brand name FabiFlu has launched an antiviral drug Favipiravir.

- It is India's first COVID-19 drug launched, priced at Rs 103 per tablet.
 - All the above are correct
88. According to Scientists, Coronavirus has mutated into ____ different types:
- 11
 - 12
 - 8
 - 10
89. Thailand announced that

it has proceeded to test its novel coronavirus vaccine on which animal/bird?

- Monkeys
- Lizards
- Hens
- Kite

90. Name a clinical trial in which blood is transfused from recovered COVID-19 patients to a coronavirus patient who is in critical condition?
- Plasma Therapy
 - Solidarity
 - Remdesivir
 - Hydroxychloroquine

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

86. (c) **VUI - 202012/01**
 The new strain of the Sars-CoV-2 virus is known as VUI - 202012/01 (the first Variant Under Investigation in December 2020) or the lineage (b)1.1.7.
87. (d) **All the above are correct**
 Favipiravir is an antiviral COVID-19 drug. Glenmark

- Pharmaceuticals under the brand name FabiFlu has launched an antiviral drug Favipiravir. It is India's first COVID-19 drug launched, priced at Rs 103 per table
88. (d) **10**
 According to Scientists, Coronavirus has mutated into 10 different types.

89. (a) **Monkeys**
 After seeing positive results on mice now Thailand announced that it has proceeded to test its novel coronavirus vaccine on monkeys. The vaccine uses messenger RNA (mRNA) technology to weaken the strain of the virus and produce antigens to fight with the virus

- from the root
90. (a) **Plasma Therapy**
 Plasma Therapy or Convalescent Plasma Therapy is a clinical trial in which blood is transfused from recovered COVID-19 patients to a coronavirus patient who is in critical condition

(Q.91-Q.95):

AstraZeneca is a British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical company with its headquarters in Cambridge, England. AstraZeneca has a portfolio of products for major disease areas including cancer, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, infection, respiratory and inflammation.

The company was founded in 1999 through the merger of the Swedish Astra AB and the British Zeneca Group (itself formed by the demerger of the pharmaceutical operations of Imperial Chemical Industries in 1993). Since the merger it has been among the world's largest pharmaceutical companies. In March 2020, the company announced that it would be donating PPE, including 9 million face masks, to help support various international health organisations mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic. On 23 November 2020, Oxford University/AstraZeneca announced the coronavirus vaccine's successful trial, preventing 70% of people developing symptoms. [86]

The researchers think that the figure may be as high as 90% by tweaking the dose.

In January 2021 India approved the COVID-19 vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University, paving the way for a huge immunisation campaign in the world's second most populous country. It was announced that the AstraZeneca/Oxford shot would be made locally by the Serum Institute of India (SII) with a brand name COVISHIELD.

91. Who is the current CEO of AstraZeneca?
- Pascal Soriot
 - Simon Dawson
 - David Brennan
 - Leif Johansson
92. AstraZeneca founded in the year 1999 on the day
- 8 June 1999
 - 6 April 1999
 - 8 May 1999
 - 6 May 1999
93. The UK Department of Health and Social Care has accepted the recommendation of the



- (MHRA) to authorise the use of Oxford/ AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. What is the full form of MHRA? -
- Medical and Healthcare Healthcare products Regulatory Authority
 - Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
 - Medical and Healthcare production Regulation Authority
 - Medicines and Healthcare production Regulatory Agency
94. Astra Zeneca Vaccine was recently rolled out. Choose the correct statement from the following
- The first country to roll

- out the vaccine is India
- India is conducting a direct run of this vaccine without any dry run
 - Brian Pinker, a British national is the first to receive the vaccine
 - This vaccine is helpful against AIDS and Syphilis
95. Name the vaccine that is jointly developed by the German company BioNTech and US pharma giant Pfizer for COVID-19?
- BNT162
 - PICOVACC
 - Both A and B
 - Neither A nor B

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

91. (a) **Pascal Soriot**

AstraZeneca is a British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical company with its headquarters in Cambridge, England. AstraZeneca has a portfolio of products for major disease areas including cancer, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, infection, respiratory and inflammation. Leif Johansson is a Chairman and Pascal Soriot is the CEO of AstraZeneca.

92. (b) **6 April 1999**

AstraZeneca is a British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical company

with its headquarters in Cambridge, England. AstraZeneca has a portfolio of products for major disease areas including cancer, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, infection, respiratory and inflammation. The company was founded in 1999 through the merger of the Swedish Astra AB and the British Zeneca Group.

93. (b) **Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency**

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care in the United Kingdom which is

responsible for ensuring that medicines and medical devices work and are acceptably safe. The MHRA was formed in 2003 with the merger of the Medicines Control Agency (MCA) and the Medical Devices Agency (MDA).

94. (c) **Brian Pinker, a British national is the first to receive the vaccine**

Britain became the first nation in the world on January 4, 2020, to roll out the low-cost and easily transportable Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. An 82-year-old man, dialysis patient Brian Pinker, became the first in the world on January 4th to receive the

Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. He received his first vaccine dose at Oxford's Churchill Hospital.

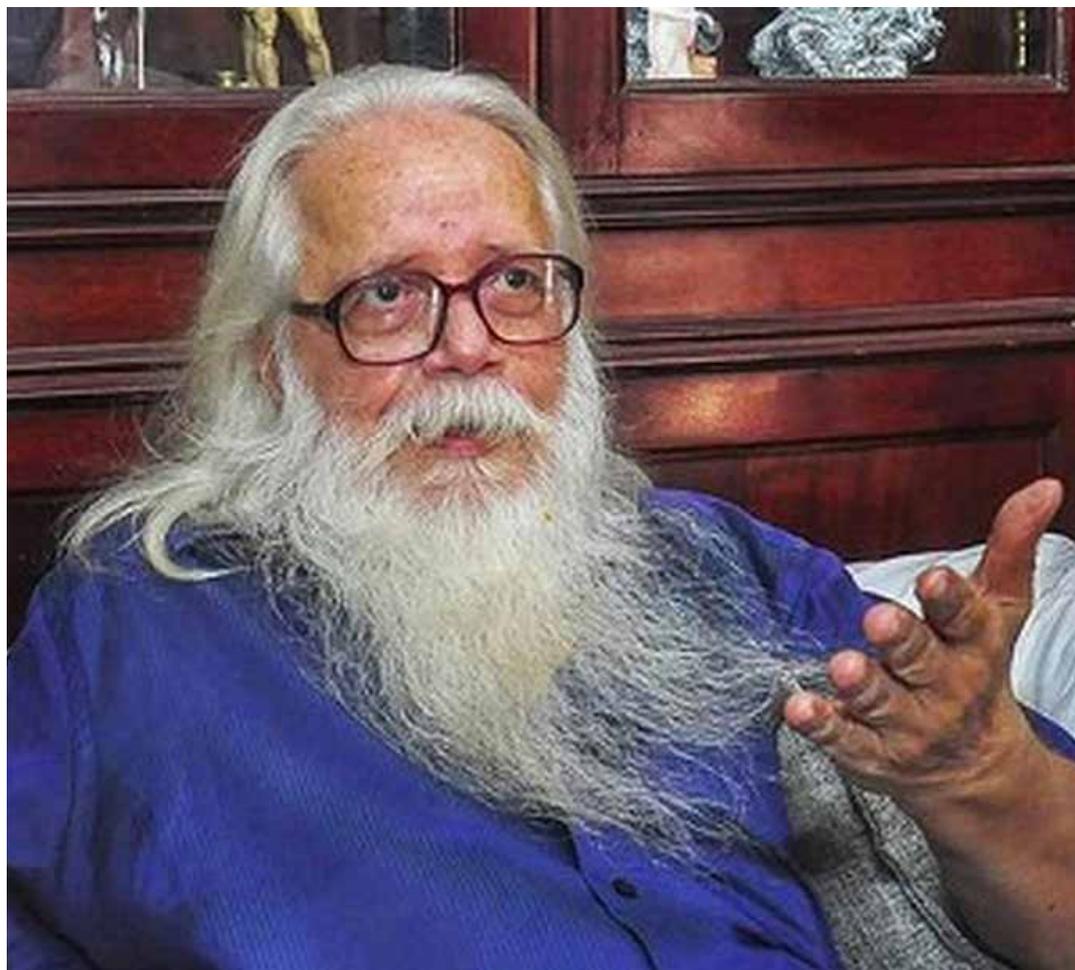
95. (a) **BNT162**

BNT162 is jointly developed by the German company BioNTech and US pharma giant Pfizer. It is a group of four potential vaccines based on the messenger RNA or mRNA, concept. On the other hand, PICOVACC is an inactivated vaccine developed by the private biopharma company Sinovac. These vaccines are in clinical trial phases.

(Q.96-Q.100):

A three-member Committee chaired by former Supreme Court judge (d)K. Jain is scheduled to begin work on unravelling the rogue officials responsible for the infamous ISRO “frame-up” case of 1994, which destroyed the life and reputation of Nambi Narayanan, one of the country’s prominent space scientists. At the time of his arrest on November 30, 1994, Mr. Narayanan was working on cryogenic engine technology at the premier Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The police officers in the conspiracy against Nambi Narayanan, who was accused of selling secrets pertaining to ISRO’s cryogenic engine technology and PSLV flight data/drawings to women who were allegedly acting as spies for Russia, Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence and other countries. But the Supreme Court dismissed the case in 2018 as a criminal frame-up based on “some kind fancy or notion”. It said Mr. Narayanan’s career was “smothered.”

96. The Justice Jain committee is having its first sitting two years after the Supreme Court constituted it in which year to find “ways and means to take appropriate steps against the erring officials.”
- (a) September 2018
(b) October 2018



- (c) September 2019
(d) October 2019

97. Police investigators had accused Nambi Narayanan of passing on documents and drawings of ISRO relating to which engine technology
- (a) Vinking/Vinay
(b) Viking/Vikas
(c) Viking/Vikram

(d) Viking/Vijay

98. What is the India’s Rank in the world to develop the cryogenic engine?

- (a) 7th
(b) 6th
(c) 8th
(d) 10th

99. What is meant by PSLV?

- (a) Polar Space Launch Vehicle
(b) Polar Satellite Launch

Vehicle

- (c) Polar small Launch Vehicle
(d) Polar Satellite Launching Vehicle

100. ISRO was established in which year?

- (a) 15 August 1949
(b) 15 August 1969
(c) 15 August 1972
(d) 15 August 1968

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

96. (a) **September 2018**
The Justice Jain committee is having its first sitting two years after the Supreme Court constituted it in September 2018 to find “ways and means to take appropriate steps against the erring officials”
97. (b) **Viking/Vikas**
The police investigators had

accused him of passing on documents and drawings of ISRO relating to Viking/Vikas engine technology, cryogenic engine technology and PSLV flight data/drawings to Pakistan

98. (b) 6th
India is only the 6th country to

develop the cryogenic engine after the USA, French, Japan, China and Russia

99. (b) **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle**

The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is an expendable medium-lift launch vehicle designed and operated by the Indian

Space Research Organisation (ISRO). PSLV can also launch small size satellites into Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO).

100. (b) **15 August 1969**
15 August 1969

(Q.101-Q.105):

Fifteenth Finance Commission Chairman N. K. Singh has called for a fresh look at the Constitution's Seventh Schedule, which forms the basis for allocating subjects to the Centre and States, and hinted at the need to fill an 'institutional vacuum' created by the abolition of the Planning Commission. N. K. Singh also stressed that a co-ordination mechanism between the Finance Commission and the GST Council had now become an 'inescapable necessity' as both were constitutional bodies dealing with revenue and grappling with 'unsettled questions'. "The symmetry in the working of the GST Council and the Finance Commission deserves serious consideration," chairman said at FICCI's annual general meeting on Friday. "The Finance Commissions look at projections of expenditure and revenue, but issues of GST rates exemptions, changes, and implementation of the indirect taxes are entirely within the domain of the GST Council. This leads to unsettled questions on the

ways to monitor, scrutinise and optimise revenue outcomes," A month after the Commission submitted its report to the government, following extended consultations with States, Mr. Chairman said States were keen to have a different kind of 'a policy-based consultative forum' with the Centre beyond the Niti Aayog and the National Development Council. "With the abolition of the Planning Commission, many economists and policy makers have argued about an institutional vacuum. We need to give serious consideration for a consultative forum for credible policy dialogue between the Centre and the States," Urging a review of both the Seventh Schedule and Article 282 of the Constitution so as to give more flexibility to States in implementing centrally sponsored schemes, Mr. Singh said these issues needed urgent consideration to reinforce trust in fiscal federalism.

101. With respect to the 15th Finance Commission, consider the following statements:
1. The term of the 15th Finance Commission was

extended for two years recently.

2. Its recommendations will be applicable for six years and not the conventional five-year period.

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

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

102. The Union government allowed who much percentage additional borrowing for States in July based on universalisation of 'One Nation, One Ration Card', ease of doing business, power distribution and urban local body revenue.

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

103. Which of the following is/are not recommended in the 15th Finance Commission Report?

1. Grants to States are divided into - Panchayats and Municipal Bodies
2. Performance-based

grants and Sector-specific grants

3. Setting up of District Disaster Management Funds

4. Setting up of State Disaster Management Fund

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

104. As per the recommendations, the State's share in the divisible pool of taxes for FY 2020-21 should be reduced from 42% to

- (a) 41%
- (b) 35%
- (c) 39%
- (d) 40%

105. The headquarters of GST council is located at _

- (a) New Delhi
- (b) Mumbai
- (c) Hyderabad
- (d) Bangalore

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

101. (b) 2 only

The Union Cabinet, in November 2019 approved the extension of the term of the 15th Finance Commission, which had to submit two reports. The term was extended till October 30, 2020 (11 months). The first report, for the financial year 2020-21, was submitted on January 30, 2020, before the Union Budget, and the second report for the period 2021-26 was presented on November 9, 2020. This effectively means that the 15th Finance Commission's recommendations will be

applicable for six years and not the conventional five-year period

102. (c) 2%

The Union government recently allowed additional 2% borrowing for States in July based on universalisation of 'One Nation, One Ration Card', ease of doing business, power distribution and urban local body revenues. Performance and outcome-based flexibility for States undertaking market borrowing adds flexibility. A fiscal range than a fiscal point based on expenditure outcomes may be the need of

the hour.

103. (c) 1 and 3 only

"Grants to States are divided into - Panchayats and Municipal Bodies" was a recommendation made by the 14th Finance Commission. Statement 1 is incorrect The 15th Finance Commission has recommended a total of Rs 90,000 crore for grants to the local bodies in 2020-21. This amounts to an increase over the Rs 87,352 crore allocated for 2019-20 for the same. Statement 2 is correct. To promote local-level mitigation activities,

the Commission has recommended the setting up of National and State Disaster Management Funds. Hence, Statement 3 is incorrect but 4 is correct.

104. (a) 41%

The report reduced the State's share in the divisible pool of taxes from 42% to 41% for the current year, after the dissolution of Jammu and Kashmir as a State.

105. (a) New Delhi

The headquarters of GST council is located at New Delhi

(Q.106-Q.110):

Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill (2020). The Karnataka state assembly passed the Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Bill (2020). It has banned the slaughter of all cows, bulls, bullocks and calves as well as it also outlaws the slaughter of buffaloes below the age of 13. Smuggling and transporting animals for slaughter is also an offence. The bill prescribes punishments of between three to seven years – which is more than the punishment prescribed in Indian law for causing the death of a human being by negligence. It also gives the police powers to conduct searches based on suspicion. Though the bill has yet to be passed by the state's Legislative Council, the government has said it will pass an ordinance to implement its provisions. Earlier, the 2010 Bill was shelved in 2013 by the Congress government after it did not receive the Governor's assent. The Congress government had reverted to the less stringent Karnataka Prevention of Cow Slaughter and Preservation of Animals Act, 1964, which allows cow slaughter with certain restrictions.

But the 1964 law banned the killing of "any cow or calf of she-buffalo", it allowed the



slaughter of bullock, buffalo-male or female if it was certified by a competent authority to be above the age of 12 years or incapacitated for breeding or deemed sick.

106. It has also banned outlaws the slaughter of buffaloes below the age of
 (a) 14
 (b) 13
 (c) 15
 (d) 16

107. The new law passed in the state assembly also

designates the slaughter of cattle as a:

(a) Cognizable Offence
 (b) Non-Cognizable Offence
 (c) Compoundable Offence
 (d) Non-Compoundable Offence

108. The new bill increases the jail term from 3 to 7 years and fines ranging from Rs 50,000 to _____ or both.

(a) Rs 6 lakh.
 (b) Rs 7 lakh.

(c) Rs 3 lakh.
 (d) Rs 5 lakh.

109. Who Is the Current Governor of Karnataka.

(a) Rameshwar Thakur
 (b) Konijeti Rosaiah
 (c) Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala
 (d) Hans Raj Bhardwaj

110. The state of Karnataka was formed in the year

(a) 1973
 (b) 1972
 (c) 1956
 (d) 1948

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

106. (b) 13

It has banned the slaughter of all cows, bulls, bullocks and calves as well as it also outlaws the slaughter of buffaloes below the age of 13.

107. (a) Cognizable Offence

The bill envisages a ban on all forms of cattle slaughter and stringent punishment for offenders. The law passed in the state assembly also designates the slaughter of

cattle as a cognizable offence — where arrests can be carried out without court warrants

108. (d) Rs 5 lakh

It also prescribes new punishments for transport of cattle, sale of meat and purchase or disposal of cattle for slaughter — a prison term of three to five years and a fine of Rs 50,000 to Rs 5 lakh.

109. (c) Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala
 Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala (born

12 January 1939) is presently serving as the Governor of Karnataka since September 2014. Vajubhai served as the Speaker of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly from 2012 to 2014. He is still a member of Bhartiya Janata Party.

110. (c) 1956

Karnataka is a state in the south western region of Indi(a) It is the largest state in

South India and sixth largest in Indi(a) It was formed on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act. Originally known as the State of Mysore, it was renamed Karnataka in 1973. The state corresponds to the Carnatic region. Its capital and largest city is Bangalore.

(Q.111-Q.115):

China recently launched the Change-5 Lunar Mission. The mission is the first probe in four decades to bring back rock samples from the moon from its previously unexplored portions. Change-5 is the first probe to land on the far side of the moon.

As the rotation and revolution time period of the moon is same, only one side of the moon is constantly visible to the earth. The other side of the moon till date remains unexplored and is called the far side of the moon. The mission is named after the Chinese moon goddess. It was launched from the Long March-5 carrier rocket, the largest carrier rocket of China. The mission will land in the Mons Rumker region of the moon. The mission will operate for one lunar day on the surface which is two weeks on the earth. If the mission is successful, China will become the third country to collect lunar samples after USA and Soviet Union.

The Change-5 consists of a lander, lunar orbiter and an ascent probe. It has a coring drill, robotic arm and a sample chamber to place the collected samples. It is also equipped with penetrating radar, camera and a spectrometer. The spacecraft is expected to return to the earth by December 15,



2020.

111. Chang'e-5, comprising an orbiter, a lander, an ascender and a returner, with a total take-off mass of

- (a) 7.3 tonnes.
- (b) 6.2 tonnes.
- (c) 7.9 tonnes.
- (d) 8.2 tonnes.

112. The landing site of Chang'e-5 will be to the west of that of Chang'e-3, which went to the moon in.

- (a) 2015

(b) 2007

(c) 2010

(d) 2013

113. What is the full form of CNSA:

- (a) China National Satellite Authority
- (b) China National Space and Aeronautics
- (c) China National Space Administration
- (d) China National Satellitia Administration

114. China has successfully

launched Chang'e 5, its first unmanned space mission to the moon on

- (a) 23rd November
- (b) 24th November
- (c) 25th November
- (d) 26th November

115. The Moon's average orbital distance from Earth is

- (a) 345,502 km
- (b) 354,402 km
- (c) 384,402 km
- (d) 385,402 km

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

111. (d) 8.2 tonnes

Chang'e 5 is an 8,200 kilograms spacecraft and is one of its kind. It has four modules including a lander, an ascent vehicle, a service module, and an attached Earth-return capsule. Chang'e 5 lander is solar-powered and is not able to operate once night falls at its location.

112. (d) 2013

Earlier China launched the Chang'e 1 orbiter in 2007 and Chang'e 2 orbiters in 2010. Also, Chang'e 3 lander-rover duo touched down on the moon's near side in December 2013.

113. (c) China National Space Administration

China National Space Administration (CNSA). CNSA is an agency created

in 1993. is the national space agency of China responsible for the national space program and for planning and development of space activities?

114. (b) 24th November

On November 24, China's Chang'e-5 lunar mission will become the first probe in over four decades to bring back samples of lunar rock from a

previously unexplored portion of the Moon.

115. (c) 384,402 km

The Moon's average orbital distance from Earth is 384,402 km (238,856 mi) or 1.28 light-seconds. Its surface gravity is 0.1654 g, about one-sixth of Earth's. Its gravitational influence produces Earth's tides and slightly lengthens Earth's day.

(Q.116-Q.120):

India has become the fourth country in the world to have its independent regional navigation satellite system recognised by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a part of the World-Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS). The other three countries that have its navigation systems recognised by the IMO are the US, Russia and China. (a) The IRNSS was designed to provide accurate position information services to assist in the navigation of ships in Indian Ocean waters. The Director General of Shipping (DGS) had approached the IMO for granting recognition to the IRNSS as a component of the WWRNS, similar to the US-owned Global Positioning System (GPS) or Russia's Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) – a process that took two years. The IMO has encouraged various countries to design their own satellite navigation systems. The IMO has now accepted IRNSS as an alternative navigation module.

116. What do you mean by IRNSS:

- (a) Indian Region Navigation Space System
- (b) Indian Region



Navigation Space System

- (c) Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System
- (d) Indian Region Navigation Satellite System

117. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched India's first lunar probe Chandrayaan-1 in.....

- (a) March 2008
- (b) October 2008
- (c) August 2009
- (d) October 2009

118. With respect to the IMO's recognition of the IRNSS mean? Which of the following statement is true?

I. With the recognition, the IRNSS is similarly placed as GPS, most commonly used by marine shipping vessels

across the world

II. Unlike GPS, IRNSS is a regional and not a global navigation system.

III. This is also a significant achievement towards the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.

- (a) I and III
- (b) II and III
- (c) I and II
- (d) I, II and III

119. Who is the current Secretary-General of International Maritime Organisation (IMO)?

- (a) Mr. Lawrence Barchue
- (b) Mr. Frederick Kenney
- (c) Mr. Kitack Lim
- (d) Ms. Heike Deggim

120. Which of the following statement is true with

respect of Important Navigation Systems

I. Galileo is Europe's Global Navigation Satellite System

II. Glonass is china Satellite Navigation System considered as a counterpart to GPS of the US(a)

III. IRNSS is regional navigation satellite system developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) with the help of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

- (a) I and II
- (b) II and III
- (c) I only
- (d) None of the above

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

116. (c) **Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System**

It is India's independent regional navigation system designed to provide accurate position information service to assist in the navigation of ships in the Indian Ocean Region. NavIC is certified by 3GPP (3rd Generation Partnership Project), responsible for coordinating mobile telephony standards globally.

117. (b) **October 2008**

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched India's first lunar probe

Chandrayaan-1 in October 2008 and operated until August 2009. It included a lunar orbiter and an impactor.

118. (d) **I, II and III**

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) is the United Nations' agency which is responsible for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships with the recognition, the IRNSS is similarly placed as GPS, most commonly used by marine shipping vessels across the world. (d) Unlike GPS, IRNSS

is a regional and not a global navigation system. This is also a significant achievement towards the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative

119. (c) **Mr. Kitack Lim**

Kitack Lim was elected Secretary-General of the Organization by the 114th session of the IMO Council in June 2015 for a four-year period beginning 1 January 2016. The election was endorsed by the IMO's Assembly at its 29th session in November 2015.

120. (c) **I only**

IRNSS is an independent regional navigation satellite system developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO). Glonass is Russian Satellite Navigation System considered as a counterpart to GPS of the USA. BeiDou Navigation Satellite System of China: A hybrid constellation consisting of around 30 satellites in three kinds of orbits. Galileo is Europe's Global Navigation Satellite System

(Q.121-Q.125):

The Karnataka High Court on Monday ruled that Bharatiya Janata Party leader and Member of Legislative Council AH Vishwanath was not eligible to become a minister because of his disqualification as an MLA under the anti-defection law in 2019, Live Law reported Vishwanath was among the MLAs from the Janata Dal (Secular) and Congress. They had switched over to the BJP in 2019, which led to the collapse of the HD Kumaraswamy-led government in the state. The court's order was based on a batch of petitions challenging the induction of Vishwanath and two other defectors – R Shankar and MTB Nagaraj – into the state's Council of Ministers.



121. How many MLA were rebel and resigned from the JD(S)-Congress coalition government in Karnataka in July last year to join the BJP-led Yediyurappa government.

- (a) 17
(b) 16
(c) 18
(d) 19

122. Consider the following statements in context of the grounds of defection under ADL:

I. If a member of the house belonging to a political

party voluntarily gives up his/her membership of that political party.

II. If he/she defect from his/her party to any party after elections.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

123. Who is the current Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court:

- (a) Justice Satish Chandra Sharma

(b) Justice Abhay Shreeniwasa Oka

- (c) Justice Aravind Kumar
(d) Mr. Justice Alok Aradhe

124. Consider the following statements in context of the exemptions given under ADL:

I. Disqualification on ground of defection does not apply in case of merger of political parties in some conditions.

II. A party may merge with another or the two may form a new party, if 2/3rd of the members of the legislature party decide to

merge with another party. Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

125. What is the subject of the 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003?

- (a) Right to Information
(b) Limiting the size of Council of Ministers
(c) Right to Education
(d) Elimination of Corruption at all Levels

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

121. (a) 17

17 MLA were rebel and resigned from the JD(S)-Congress coalition government in Karnataka in July last year to join the BJP-led Yediyurappa government.

122. (c) Both 1 and 2

If a member of the house belonging to a political

voluntarily gives up his/her membership of that political party. if he/she defect from his/her party to any party after elections.

123. (b) Justice Abhay Shreeniwasa Oka

He was appointed Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court on 30 April 2019 and sworn in

as Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court on 10 May 2019

124. (c) Both 1 and 2

Disqualification on ground of defection does not apply in case of merger of political parties in some conditions. A party may merge with another or the two may form a new party, if 2/3rd of the members

of the legislature party decide to merge with another party.

125. (b) Limiting the size of Council of Ministers

The 91st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003 is the subject of limiting the size of council of minister.

(Q.126-Q.130):

The Total Solar Eclipse on Monday - December 14, 2020, will be the last solar eclipse of this year. Apart from Chile and Argentina, people living in southern parts of South America, Southwest Africa and Antarctica will be able to witness partial solar eclipses. A solar eclipse is a natural event (also called an occultation) that takes place on Earth when the Moon moves in its orbit between Earth and the Sun. A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon comes in between the Earth and the Sun, thereby totally or partly

concealing the vision of the Sun. A total solar eclipse takes place when the size of the Moon is greater than that of the Sun and it blocks all the Sun's rays to reach the Earth, turning the day into darkness.

126. What was the duration of Total Solar Eclipse that occurred on 2nd July, 2019?

- (a) 2 minutes
- (b) 2 minutes and 11 seconds
- (c) 4 minutes
- (d) 4 minutes and 33 seconds

127. Certain phenomena can

only be seen during a total solar eclipse:

- (a) Shadow bands
- (b) Diamond Ring
- (c) The Sun's Corona
- (d) All the above

128. Which of the following is the region of complete shadow resulting from the obstruction of light by an opaque object?

- (a) Penumbra
- (b) Umbra
- (c) Antumbra
- (d) None of the above

129. In which type of solar

eclipse the Sun's centre is covered by the moon, leaving its edges uncovered?

- (a) Partial Solar Eclipse
- (b) Total Solar Eclipse
- (c) Annular Solar Eclipse
- (d) None of the above

130. What is the maximum width of the path of totality during Solar Eclipse?

- (a) 200 Km
- (b) 250 Km
- (c) 269 Km
- (d) 278 Km



ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

126. (d) 4 minutes and 33 seconds

The Total Solar Eclipse on 2 July, 2019 will last four minutes and 33 seconds.

127. (d) All the above

Certain phenomena that can only be seen during Total Solar Eclipse are shadow bands, diamond ring, Sun's corona,

Baily's beads and the Sun's chromosphere.

128. (b) Umbra

Umbra is the darkest part of the shadow that cast by the Moon onto the Earth during a Solar Eclipse. Whereas Penumbra is the outer of the conical shadow that cast by

Moon onto the Earth during Solar Eclipse.

129. (c) Annular Solar Eclipse

Annular solar eclipse occurs when the Sun's centre is covered by the moon leaving its edges left uncovered, producing a ring of the Sun around its edges. Basically,

annular eclipses occur when the moon appears smaller than the sun.

130. (c) 269 Km

269 Km is the maximum width of the path of totality.

(Q.131-Q.135):

Years ago, on December 3, 1971, a war took place and it shock everyone as it lasted for about 13 days. The heart-wrenching war came to an end on December 16, after that Pakistan surrendered to the Indian Armed forces and Bangladesh got liberate(d) General AA Khan Niazi, chief of the Pakistan Army, surrendered to the Indian Army and Bangladesh's Mukti Bahani, along with 93,000 troops. After which this day is observed as Vijay Diwas. The meaning of the word Vijay is Victory and thus it is also known as Victory Day. On this day, India pays tribute to soldiers, who sacrificed their lives. It is known that before 1971, Bangladesh was a part of Pakistan and was known as East Pakistan and on December 16, 1971, the country Bangladesh got liberate(d) The historians say that the people of East Pakistan were in extreme grief due to the atrocities of the Pakistan Army. It is also said that they were exploited, raped, and murdered by the military of Pakistan. After which, on December 3, 1971, the Indian Army came up to help the people of East Pakistan and the war took place under the leadership of Field Marshal Manekshaw. On December 16, 1971, the Pakistan Army consisting of 93,000 soldiers surrendered before the Indian Army. It is also reported that more than 1400 soldiers of India were martyred during this



war.

After this Bangladesh emerged on the world map with India's victory in this war. Hence, Bangladesh celebrates its independence day on December 16 every year. It was the Indian Army's one of the biggest victories ever made against Pakistan.

131. Which day is considered as the victory day?
- 5 May
 - 9 July
 - 16 December
 - 3 December

132. Who is the current Chief of the Army Staff?
- Bikram Singh
 - Dalbir Singh Suhag
 - Bipin Rawat
 - Manoj Mukund Naravane

133. The government has organized vijay diwas 2020 programme at -
- Delhi
 - West-Bengal
 - Ladhak
 - Srinagar

134. Who is the current Defense minister of state.
- Dr. Jitendra Singh
 - Kiren Rijiju
 - Prahalad Singh Patel
 - Shri Rajnath Singh

135. The Vijay Diwas 2020 marked as -
- 49th
 - 50th
 - 48th
 - 52th

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

131. (c) 16 December

Vijay Diwas or Victory Day is celebrated in India every year on December 16 to commemorate the victory of the Indian armed forces over Pakistan in the 1971 Indo-Pak War, also known as the

Bangladesh Liberation War.

132. (d) **Manoj Mukund Naravane**
The current COAS is General Manoj Mukund Naravane, who took office on 31 December 2019.

133. (a) **Delhi**
The government has organized

vijay diwas 2020 programme at Delhi.

134. (d) **Shri Rajnath Singh**

135. (a) **49th**

India celebrates December 16 as Vijay Diwas to commemorate its victory over Pakistan during the 1971 war.

This year marks the beginning of the 50th anniversary year celebrations of India's victory over Pakistan that led to the creation of Bangladesh from erstwhile East Pakistan. So this current year is going to be its 50th anniversary.

(Q.136-Q.140):

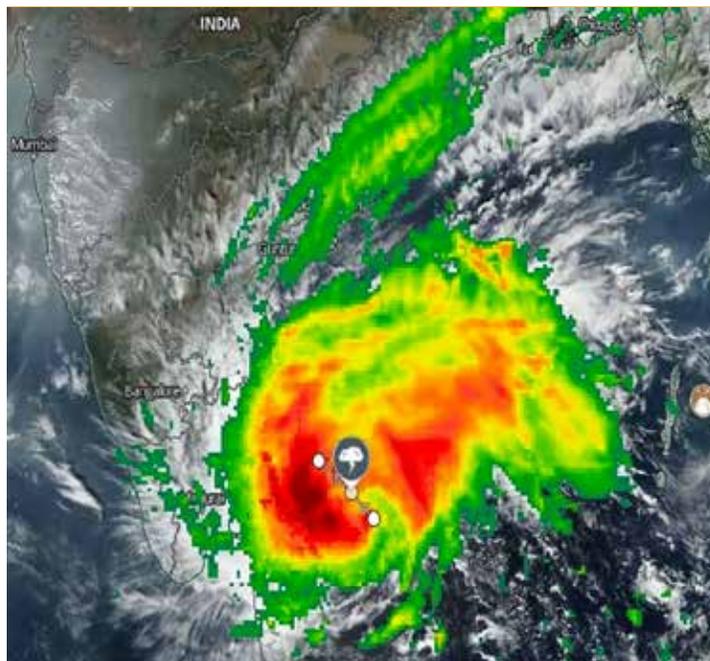
The landfall process of Cyclone Nivar (pronounced Nivaar, meaning atmosphere) began late Wednesday night, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD), it weakened into a severe cyclonic storm as it crossed the coast near Puducherry.

Authorities in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry have taken a slew of measures to handle the situation arising out of the cyclonic storm, which has led to heavy rainfall in several regions. Over one lakh people were taken to safety from coastal areas and power supply disconnected in vulnerable areas as a precautionary measure.

Earlier, the IMD had said Nivar will cross the coast near Puducherry with a wind speed of 120-130 kmph, gusting up to 145 kmph. "Very severe cyclonic Storm NIVAR: Center lies over Lan(d) Crossed coast near Puducherry during 23:30 of 25th Nov-02:30 IST of 26th Nov," the weather department had earlier tweete(d)

Nivar is the second cyclone to have developed in the Bay of Bengal this year after Cyclone Amphan wreaked havoc in West Bengal in May. Amphan had intensified to become a 'super cyclonic storm'.

The cyclonic storm Nivar



has crossed the coast near Puducherry, triggering heavy winds and rainfall activity in the neighbouring areas. It brought very heavy rainfall in Puducherry (237 mm), Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore town (237 mm), and state capital Chennai late last night.

The Met Department has predicted that fairly widespread to widespread rainfall/thunderstorm activity is very likely over coastal and north interior Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema, and southeast Telangana throughout Thursday.

136. "Cyclone 'Nivar', recently seen in news, is likely to

hit which of the following states by midweek?

- (a) Maharashtra
- (b) Kerala
- (c) West Bengal
- (d) Tamil Nadu

137. Consider the following statements about the North Indian Ocean Region

- i). The Cyclones Gati, Nisarga, Amphan and Nivar all have occurred in the North Indian Ocean Region.
- ii). India, Bangladesh, China, UAE and Yemen come under the North Indian Ocean Region.

Select the correct statement.

- (a) 1 only

- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both
- (d) None

138. Which of the following statement is/are correct about Tropical Cyclone?

- (a) These Cyclones developed in the regions lying between the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn.
- (b) Tropical Cyclones usually develop in summer season in the vicinity of Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone over arm ocean surface.
- (c) The source of energy of the tropical cyclones is the latent heat of condensation.
- (d) All the above are correct.

139. What type of cyclone was Nivar?

- (a) Typhoon
- (b) Tornado
- (c) Tropical cyclone
- (d) Hurricane

140. State the full form of NDRF?

- (a) National Disaster Response Force
- (b) National Development Regional Force
- (c) National Disaster Reaction Force
- (d) National Disaster Rescue Force

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

136. (d) Tamil Nadu

It is likely to hit Tamil Nadu coast by midweek. Within a week, the second cyclone is taking shape in the North Indian Ocean region. The Bay of Bengal will see its second Severe Cyclone of the year, after Super Cyclone Amphan formed in May. It is likely to hit Tamil Nadu coast by midweek .

137. (d) None

138. (d) All the above are correct.

Cyclones developed in the regions lying between the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn. They usually develop in summer season in the vicinity of Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone over the warm ocean surface. The source of energy of the tropical cyclones is the latent heat of

condensation.

139. (b) Tornado

Very Severe Cyclonic Storm Nivar was a tropical cyclone which brought severe impacts to portions of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh in late November of 2020.

140. (a) National Disaster Response Force

The National Disaster Response Force is an Indian

specialized force constituted "for the purpose of special response to a threatening disaster situation or disaster" under the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The "Apex Body for Disaster Management" in India is the National Disaster Management Authority.

(Q.141-Q.145):

The Maharashtra Shakti Criminal Law (Maharashtra Amendment) Act, 2020, and the Special Court and Machinery for Implementation of Maharashtra Shakti Criminal Law, 2020, propose stringent measures to prevent crimes against women. One of the main provisions of the Bill was the death penalty for convicted rapists. Rights activists say that the pieces of legislation are regressive. A group consisting of lawyers' and women's organizations has written to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray appealing for a review of the proposed law. The letter, with 92 signatories, says: "While the Act is said to be made for justice to women, it feeds into the patriarchal construction of consent and conduct of women. It goes against the statement and object of this Bill. In a lot of cases of rape, the accused take the plea of consent and, with such an explanation, it will become impossible for the prosecution to establish rape. Such an explanation negates and nullifies the very offense of rape."

These groups believe that with such a law in place, women would not file complaints as in most cases of rape the perpetrators are known



persons. Not many women would want to be seen as responsible for sending a relative to the gallows. They say timely intervention and long-term programs to fight violence against women would be far more effective. Death penalty for rape can also endanger the lives of victims, say lawyers. Opposition parties, meanwhile, say the Bill was tabled in a hurry and needs further review.

During the campaign for the Assembly election in 2019, the Shiv Sena promised to enact such a law if it came to power. The Bill was modeled on Andhra Pradesh's tough Disha Act. According to lawyers familiar with the draft Bill, it proposes an increase in the quantum of punishment for perpetrators of rape, acid attacks and sexual assaults on children and fast-track the judicial process in such a way that investigation and filing of charge sheet are completed

within 15 days of the crime and trial is completed in 30 days. It proposes to set up special police teams, 36 special courts with a special prosecutor and an online registry of offenders which would be linked to the national registry of sex offenders.

141. Choose the correct key features among the following -

- i. The bill seeks to add third explanation in Section 375 of Indian Penal Code. It deals with rape. It talks about "Presumption of Consent".
 - ii. The acid attack victims shall be provided with a compensation of ten lakhs of rupees for plastic surgery and facial reconstruction.
- (a) Only A
(b) Only B
(c) Both
(d) None

142. How many members did the government had decided to set up a review committee to help put together a new draft which would be taken up in the March 2021 Budget session of the Assembly?

- (a) 35 members
(b) 21 members
(c) 20 members
(d) 15 members

143. What is the current duration for completion of trail process for a bill ?

- (a) 25 days
(b) 30 days
(c) 60 days
(d) 45 days

144. The Maharashtra government tabled the bill in state legislature on -

- (a) 18 December
(b) 14 December
(c) 1 October
(d) 15 January

145. As per the bill, threatening and intimidating women on social media will be an offense with a maximum punishment of -

- (a) 2 years and 5 lakhs fine
(b) 5 years and 10 lakhs fine
(c) 2 years and 1 lakhs fine
(d) 1 years and 2 lakhs fine

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

141. (c) Both

One of the main provisions of the Bill was the death penalty for convicted rapists. Rights activists say that the pieces of legislation are regressive. A group consisting of lawyers' and women's organizations has written to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray appealing for a review of the proposed law. The letter, with 92 signatories, says: "While the Act is said to be made for

justice to women, it feeds into the patriarchal construction of consent and conduct of women. It goes against the statement and object of this Bill. In a lot of cases of rape, the accused take the plea of consent and, with such an explanation, it will become impossible for the prosecution to establish rape. Such an explanation negates and nullifies the very offense of rape."

142. (b) 21 members

The government had decided to set up a review committee of 21 members to help put together a new draft which would be taken up in the March 2021 Budget session of the Assembly.

143. (c) 60 days

The bill suggests making the trial process much faster than the already existing 60 days time frame. According to the draft, a probe should be

completed within 15 days and trial within 30 days.

144. (b) 14 December

145. (c) 2 years and 1 lakhs fine

As per this bill, threatening and intimidating women on social media will be an offence with a maximum punishment of two years and a Rs 1 lakh fine.



(Q.146-Q.150):

India's multi-billion-dollar deal to purchase the Russian-made S-400 air defence system may trigger US sanctions on New Delhi, a US Congressional report has warned. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) – an independent and bipartisan research wing of US Congress – in its latest report to Congress, said India is “eager for more technology-sharing and co-production initiatives, while the United States urges more reforms in India's defence offsets policy and higher Foreign Direct Investment caps in its defence sector.” Prepared for the members of the Congress for them to take informed decisions, the report went on to warn that “India's multi-billion dollar deal to purchase the Russian-made S-400 air defence system may trigger US sanctions on India under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.” The CRS' reports are

neither an official report of the US Congress nor reflect the view of Congressmen. They are prepared by independent experts for the lawmakers to take informed decisions.

In October 2018, India had signed a deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, despite a warning from the Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may invite US sanctions. In 2019, India made the first tranche of payment of around USD 800 million to Russia for the missile systems. The S-400 is known as Russia's most advanced long-range surface-to-air missile defence system. Last month, Russia had said that implementation of its ongoing defence deals with India including the supply of a batch of S-400 missile systems is advancing well notwithstanding the threat of US sanctions. At a press conference in New Delhi last month, Russian ambassador to India Nikolay

Kudashev appeared to criticise the US sanctions on Turkey for procuring the S-400 missile systems under a USD 2.5 billion deal, saying Moscow does not recognise such unilateral actions.

It is long-range air defence missile system is one of most advanced long-range defence systems in the world. It is referred to as SA-21 Growler by NATO. It is an upgraded version of the S-300 defence system and is manufactured by Almaz-Antey. It has been in service in Russia since 2007.

It is capable of firing three types of missiles, creating layered defence, and simultaneously engaging 36 targets. It has capability to destroy incoming all airborne targets at ranges of up to 400 km. With it, India can destroy Pakistani or Chinese aircrafts even when they are in their airspace.

146. What is “S-400 air defence missile system”, sometimes seen in the news?

- (a) The Russian radar system
- (b) India's indigenous anti-missile programme
- (c) An American anti-missile system
- (d) None of the above

147. The system is also known as the ‘.....’ interceptor-based missile system.

- (a) Triumph
- (b) Track
- (c) Terrestrial
- (d) None

148. What is the finalised financial component of the deal. (S-400) ?

- (a) Nearly 4 Billion
- (b) Nearly 5 Billion
- (c) Nearly 6 Billion
- (d) Nearly 7 Billion

149. Which country was first to seal a government-to-government deal with Russia to procure this lethal missile system in 2014.

- (a) Germany
- (b) China
- (c) Japan
- (d) India

150. It has capability to destroy incoming all airborne targets at ranges of up to -

- (a) 300 miles
- (b) 200 miles
- (c) 100 miles
- (d) 250 miles

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

146. (a) **The Russian radar system**

The S-400 is an integrated air defence system featuring radars, command and control equipment and four types of surface-to-air missiles. The four types of missiles used by the S-400 have ranges varying from 40km to 400km and can shoot down aircraft, drones, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles.

147. (a) **Triumph**

The S-400 Triumph (NATO reporting name: SA-21 Growler) is an air defence missile system developed by Almaz Central Design Bureau of Russia

148. (b) **Nearly 5 Billion**

India announced its intention to acquire Russian-made S-400 surface-to-air missile systems in 2015. The delivery contract

worth USD 5.43 billion was signed during the visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin to India last year.

149. (b) **China**

China was the first foreign buyer to seal a government-to-government deal with Russia in 2014 to procure the lethal missile system. India and Russia signed a USD 5 billion S-400 air defence system deal

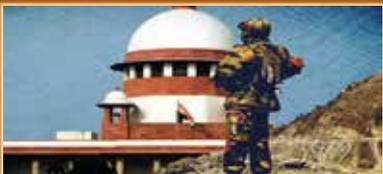
in October last after wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

150. (d) **250 miles**

In April 2015, a successful test firing of the missile was conducted at an airborne target at a range of 400 km (250 mi)

TOPIC GALAXY

JAN 2021



Adultery Law Must Stay for Military Govt



Alexei Navalny & Novichok



American President to be Impeached Twice



Central Vista Verdict



China Defends New Village in Arunachal Pradesh



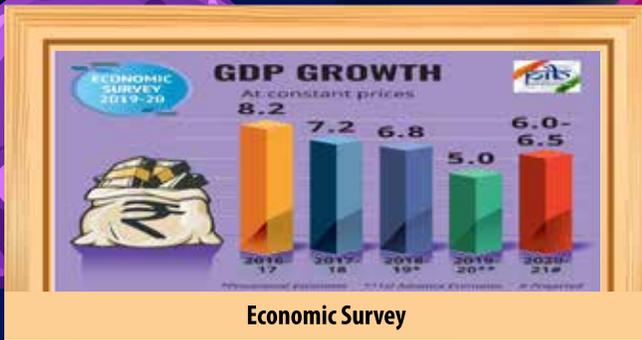
Collegium System and its Recommendations for Judicial Appointments



DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019



Don't Overlook the Women Farmers



Economic Survey



FATF



G-7



Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)



IBC 2016 and Recent Developments



India Nepal Bilateral Relations and Recent Developments



India Srilanka Bilateral Relationship



Joe Biden has Expressed its Intention to Review the Landmark U.S. Deal with the Taliban



Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)



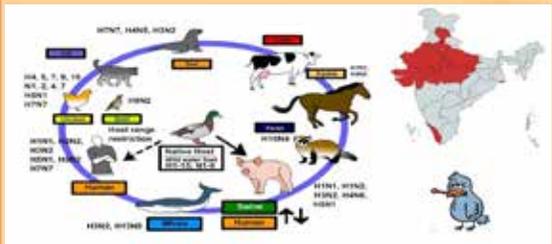
Judicial Overreach and Separation of Powers



Kalapani Boundary Dispute with India



Open Skies treaty (OST)



Outbreak of Avian Influenza



PM-Kisan ,Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi



Power of Governor to Grant Pardon



Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act



Ramsar Convention on Wetlands



SC to Study Anti-Conversion Laws



START Treaty



Supreme Court Dismisses Aadhaar Review Petitions



UN rights Inspectors to Visit Xinjiang



UN Security Council Reforms



US Policy in Tibet



Vaccine Nationalism

ONE LINERS

1. Union Minister of Education, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has



virtually laid the foundation stone of "TiHAN-IIT Hyderabad", India's first Testbed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial) at IIT Hyderabad.

2. Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan launched India's first indigenously developed vaccine against pneumonia. The Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) named 'Pneumosil' has been developed by Punebased Serum Institute of India.
3. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has flagged off the country's first-ever fully-automated driverless train service on the Magenta Line of the Delhi Metro.
4. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has flagged off the 100th 'Kisan Rail' on 28th December 2020. The 100th run of the Kisan Rail was flagged off from Sangola in Maharashtra to Shalimar in West Bengal virtually.
5. India's first hot air balloon wildlife safari in a tiger reserve was launched in the world-famous Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve by Madhya Pradesh forest minister Vijay Shah.

6. The country's first pollinator park with over 40 species of butterflies, honeybees, birds and insects has been developed over four acres at Haldwani, Uttarakhand.

7. Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan has been nominated as the board member of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI). The seat is currently held by Myint Htwe of Myanmar.

8. Umesh Sinha has been named as the deputy



- election commissioner in the Election Commission of India. Sinha, a 1986-batch IAS officer (retired) is at present serving as secretary-general in the commission.

9. The Dr Narendra Dabholkar Memorial Award for this year has been conferred upon Dravidar Kazhagam president K. Veeramani. The award was instituted in the memory of the Maharashtra-based rationalist Dabholkar.

10. Senior scientist Hemant Kumar Pandey has been honoured with DRDO's "Scientist of the Year Award" for his contribution in developing several herbal medicines, including the

popular drug Lukoskin meant for the treatment of leucoderma.

11. Indian wrestler, Anshu Malik has become the first



wrestler of the country to finish on the podium position at the Individual Wrestling World Cup in Belgrade, Serbia.

12. The Badminton World Federation (BWF) has imposed a 5-year ban on Russian shuttler Nikita Khakimov for charges of "betting, wagering and irregular match results. Khakimov was part of the Russian men's team that won the bronze medal at the 2020 European Team Championships.

13. M S Dhoni won the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award of

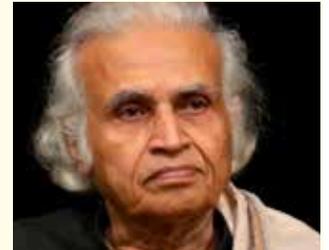


the Decade for his gesture of calling back England batsman Ian Bell after a bizarre run out in the Nottingham Test in 2011. The incident won the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award in 2011.

14. The International Cricket

Council (ICC) announced the ICC Teams of the Decade. Former Indian captain and wicketkeeper batsman Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been named as the captain of the ICC ODI Team of the Decade. Dhoni has also been named the skipper of the ICC T20I Team of the Decade. Similarly, Virat Kohli has been named the captain of the ICC Test Team of the Decade. Ravi Ashwin is the only other Indian in this list.

15. Padma Shri awardee dance historian and critic,



Sunil Kothari has passed away. He was qualified as a Chartered Accountant, before turning to the study of Indian dance forms. He authored more than 20 books on the subject of Indian dance forms.

16. Former professional wrestler Jon Huber, who was popularly known by his ring name 'Luke Harper' in the WWE has passed away, due to a non-COVID-19 related lung illness.

17. Veteran broadcaster, Indira Joseph Venniyoor passed away. She was a renowned broadcaster, All India Radio veteran & first English news announcer of Travancore Radio when its English service began in 1949.

18. The 21-year-old college



student, Arya Rajendran has been elected the new mayor of Thiruvananthapuram Corporation, of Kerala. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader, Arya is the youngest person in India to occupy the post of mayor anywhere in the country.

19. Indian Railways successfully completed the 180 km per hour speed trial of its new design Vistadome tourist coaches.

20. India has been chosen as the co-chair of the IUCN-supported Asia Protected Areas Partnership (APAP) for a period of three years till November 2023. India will replace South Korea, which held the post for 3 years until November 2020.

21. The Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' and Union Minister WCD and Textiles Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani jointly launched Toyathon-2021 and the Toyathon Portal.

22. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated the 306-km New Rewari-New Madar section of the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) to the nation.

23. The Journalist Day is observed by Maharashtra state government on 6th January every year in the memory of late journalist

Balshastrri Jambhekar. The first newspaper in the Marathi language named 'Darpan', was published on January 6, 1832, the date which also marks the birth anniversary of Balshastrri Jambhekar.

24. The U.S. Congress has passed the 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' to increase the number of scholarships for Pakistani women in higher education under merit and needs-based programme. The bill was passed by the United States Senate by a voice vote on January 1.

25. Indian-American Dr Raj Iyer has taken over as the



first Chief Information Officer of the US Army, after the Pentagon created the position in July 2020. Dr Raj Iyer is one of the highest-ranking Indian-American civilians in the US Department of Defence.

26. Japan's Sumitomo Forestry company and Kyoto University aims to launch the world's first woodbased space satellite by 2023 to combat the problem of space junk.

27. The Pakistan Army successfully conducted the test flight of an indigenously developed Guided Multi Launch Rocket System, Fatah-1. The Fatah-1 weapon system is capable of precisely delivering

conventional warheads deep into "enemy territory."

28. Faustin-Archange Touadera

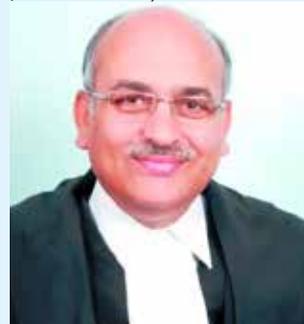


was re-elected as the president of the Central African Republic with more than 53% votes.

29. Indian Army has inked a contract with Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) to procure 12 Fast Patrol Boats for surveillance and patrolling of large water bodies, including those in high altitude areas like Pangong Tso lake in Ladakh.

30. A book titled 'India's 71-Year Test: The Journey to Triumph in Australia' and one which reflects on India's previous 12 tours Down Under, was launched. The book, a Bradman Museum initiative, is authored by senior cricket scribe R. Kaushik, and it chronicles a rivalry that has given a fillip to Test cricket.

31. Justice Pankaj Mithal has



been appointed as the new Chief Justice (CJ) of the Common High Court for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and

Union Territory of Ladakh in Jammu on January 04, 2021.

32. Sanjay Kapoor was elected president of the All India Chess Federation (AICF) while Bharat Singh Chauhan retained the secretary's post.

33. The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC), the national apex body of the gems and jewellery industry, has announced the appointment of Ashish Pethe as chairman and Saiyam Mehra as vice chairman for a period of two years.

34. Lt Gen Shantanu Dayal has been named the new



Deputy Chief of Army Staff (DCOAS). Lt Gen Dayal is the Corps Commander of the Tejpur based 4 Corps.

35. Arup Kumar Goswami was sworn in as the Chief Justice (CJ) of Andhra Pradesh High Court by Governor Biswabushan Harichandan.

36. The senior-most judge of Delhi High Court, Justice Hima Kohli has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of Telangana High Court. She is the first woman to be sworn in as CJ of Telangana HC. She replaces CJ Raghvendra Singh Chauhan, who has been appointed as the CJ of Uttarakhand HC.

37. Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari was sworn in as the new Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court.

38. India and Israel successfully

tested a Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) defence system. The MRSAM missile defence system has been developed jointly by DRDO and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) to deal with airstrikes by enemy countries.

39. Union Education Minister



Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' has inaugurated the two-day Virtual International Akhand Conference 'EDUCON 2020' through video conferencing.

40. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Tesla CEO Elon Musk overtakes Amazon's Jeff Bezos to become the world's richest person. Elon Musk had a net worth of more than \$188.5 billion.

41. Goa's 14-year-old Leon Mendonca has become India's 67th chess Grandmaster by winning the third and final norm at a tournament in Italy.

42. Khelo India Ice Hockey Tournament organised at



Chiktan in Kargil, Ladakh. For the first time, the women team of Chiktan also participated in the Khelo India Games in Kargil district.

43. Australia's Claire Polosak

is set to become the first female match official in a men's Test match when she takes up the fourth umpire's role in the third Test between India and Australia.

44. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas or NRI Day is celebrated every year on January 9 to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. The theme of 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2021 is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat".

45. Former Union Minister and senior Rajasthan Congress



leader Buta Singh passed away. The veteran politician Buta Singh served as Home Minister of India in the Rajiv Gandhi government from 1986 to 1989.

46. Ace mountaineer Colonel Narendra 'Bull' Kumar, who helped India secure the Siachen Glacier, passed away. He was responsible for the success of Operation Meghdoot in 1984. He was the first Indian to climb Mount Nanda Devi.

47. Olympic bronze and World



Cup-winning hockey player Michael Kindo passed away. He played 3 Men's Hockey

World Cup in 1971, 1973 & 1975 where India bagged bronze, silver & gold medals.

48. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece and eminent academician Chitra Ghosh has passed away.

49. The 51st International Film Festival of India (IFFI) will open on 16th January, with the Indian premiere of the movie 'Another Round' by Thomas Vinterberg.

50. The 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica



was flagged off on January 05, 2021, from Mormugao Port, Goa. The chartered ice-class vessel MV Vasiliy Golovnin has been chosen for the prestigious 40th Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica (ISEA) mission journey and will reach Antarctica in 30 days.

51. The Chief Minister of Odisha, Naveen Patnaik virtually inaugurated a first of its kind 'Fire Park' to educate and bring awareness on basic fire safety measures among the people, particularly the students. The 'Fire Park' is located inside the premises of the Odisha Fire and Disaster Academy in Bhubaneswar.

52. Kerala has become the 8th State in the country to successfully undertake "Ease of Doing Business" reform stipulated by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.

53. US President-elect Joe Biden named Indian American



Sumona Guha as senior director for South Asia and Tarun Chhabra as senior director for Technology and National Security.

54. A passenger plane of Indonesia's Sriwijaya Air carrying 62 people on board crashed into waters off Jakarta. The Boeing 737-500 was on an estimated 90-minute flight from Jakarta to Pontianak, capital of West Kalimantan province on Indonesia's Borneo island.

55. The frontrunner in Kyrgyzstan's presidential election, Sadyr Japarov, has won by a landslide. According to the Central Election Commission, Mr Japarov had won 79% of votes cast.

56. Bharat Biotech has announced that it has signed an agreement with Precisa Medicamentos for the supply of its indigenously manufactured Covid-19 vaccine 'Covaxin' to Brazil.

57. Former chief election



commissioner (CEC) S Y Quraishi has come out with his book titled "The Population Myth: Islam, Family Planning and Politics

in India”.

58. Manipur Governor, Dr Najma Heptulla has virtually released a book titled “Making of a General-A Himalayan Echo” authored by (Retd) Lt General Konsam Himalaya Singh at Durbar Hall, Raj Bhavan, Imphal.
59. Jay Shah has been named as the official representative of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meetings. Shah is the Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

60. The World Hindi Day is



celebrated annually on January 10 since 2006 to promote the language at the global stage. The day marks the anniversary of first World Hindi Conference which was inaugurated on January 10, 1975, by the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

61. National Youth Day is celebrated in India every year on 12 January to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. The day was declared by the Government of India in 1984 while the event was first celebrated in 1985.
62. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways observes the National Road Safety Week every year in the second week of January.

However, in 2021, the Government has decided to observe National Road Safety Month instead of National Road Safety Week.

63. In India, the Armed Forces Veterans Day is observed each year on 14 January since 2017 to acknowledge and honour the selfless devotion and sacrifice of our veterans in the service of the nation. The day was initially called Armistice Day. 2021 marks the 5th Armed Forces Veterans Day.
64. The Army Day in India is celebrated on 15 January every year, to salute the valiant soldiers who sacrificed their lives to protect the country and its citizens. This year marks the 73rd Indian Army Day.

65. Veteran journalist and



orator (public speaker) Sri Turlapati Kutumba Rao has passed away. He is known for his service to journalism in the Telugu language.

66. Pulitzer Prize-winning author & journalist Neil Sheehan passed away. He covered the Vietnam War for United Press International and the Times from 1962 to 1966. He won a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award in 1989 for “A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam.”
67. Indian American writer Ved Mehta passed away.

The Indian-American novelist overcame blindness & was widely known as the 20th-century writer most responsible for introducing American readers to India.

68. Noted social activist and



Padma Shri winner, D Prakash Rao has passed away. He was conferred with the prestigious Padma Shri award in 2019 for his contribution towards boosting the value of education among slum kids in Cuttack.

69. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has launched a month-long mass awareness campaign titled ‘SAKSHAM’ to spread awareness about green and clean energy. The campaign has been organised by the Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), to motivate consumers to switch to cleaner fuels and bring in behavioural change to use fossil fuel intelligently. SAKSHAM stands for Sanrakshan Kshamata Mahotsav.
70. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has flagged off eight trains connecting the Statue of Unity in Kevadiya, Gujarat with different regions of the country through video conferencing. PM Modi informed that it was the first time in history that so many trains from different locations were flagged off

for a common destination.

71. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched Rs 1,000-crore ‘Startup India Seed Fund’ on 16 January 2021, while addressing the ‘Prarambh: Startup India International Summit’ 2021. This initiative will help in setting up new startups and promote their growth.

72. The first-ever National



Road Safety Month was inaugurated by Union Minister for Defence Shri Rajnath Singh and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways & MSME Nitin Gadkari on 18 January 2021. It will be held till 17 February 2021.

73. The Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar has inaugurated the first-ever bird festival of the state, ‘Kalrav’, at Nagi-Nakti bird sanctuary, located in Jamui district.
74. The Maharashtra government has renamed Gorewada International Zoo in Nagpur as ‘Balasaheb Thackeray Gorewada International Zoological Park’. The zoological park will come up on nearly 2,000 hectares forest land.
75. Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur has launched Himachal Pradesh’s first online youth radio station

"Radio Hills-Youngistan Ka Dil". The Chief Minister appreciated the efforts of young entrepreneurs. The developer of the online radio Karan, and Radio Jockeys Palak, Rahul and Nidhi were also present on the occasion.

76. The Gujarat state government has renamed



dragon fruit as 'Kamalam'. The move has kept the internet in splits and many criticized it using the hashtag #SanskariFruitSabzi. As per Gujarat Chief Minister, the dragon fruit has been renamed Kamalam because of the shape of the fruit.

77. Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah has inaugurated the new 4-lane Thaltej-ShilajRancharda railway overbridge in Ahmedabad city of Gujarat through video conferencing. The new overbridge has been built at a cost of Rs 55 crore.

78. Uganda's incumbent



President Yoweri Museveni has been declared as the winner of the country's presidential election for 2021. Museveni secured 58.64 per cent of the total votes cast, to win the sixth

term as the President.

79. Joe Biden became the 46th



president of the United States. He swore the oath of office moments after Kamala Harris, who became America's first woman vice president, turning the page on Donald Trump's tumultuous four years.

80. At 78, Biden is the oldest president in US history and only the second Roman Catholic president.

81. The 5th edition of the Defence Ministers' Dialogue (DMD) between India and Singapore was successfully held on 20 January 2021 through a video conference, in an effort to deepen military cooperation.

82. Ramchandra Guha's latest



book 'The Commonwealth of Cricket' would be launching virtually in the Tata Literature Live (The Mumbai Lit fest) this month.

83. The board of directors of RBL Bank has approved the re-appointment of Vishwavir Ahuja as the Managing Director and CEO of the bank for three years.

84. Ministry for Sports and

Youth Affairs, Kiren Rijju has been given the additional charge of the Ayush Ministry.

85. Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force are conducting a bilateral Air exercise, Ex Desert Knight-21 in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.

86. The Indian Army is to conduct a large scale joint military exercise Kavach in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal. The exercise is to be held under the aegis of Andaman and Nicobar Command. The Joint Military Exercise Kavach will involve Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard.

87. Union Minister for



Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar announced veteran actor, director and singer Biswajit Chatterjee as the recipient of the 'Indian Personality of the Year' award.

88. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has won the Ice Hockey Association of India (IHAI) 10th National Ice Hockey Championship trophy after a win over Ladakh in the finals in Gulmarg.

89. Shyam Srinivasan, managing director and chief executive officer (CEO) of Federal Bank, is the Business Standard Banker of the Year for

2019-20.

90. In Ladakh, the inaugural



edition of the Khelo India Zanskar Winter Sport & Youth Festival 2021 kicked off on 18th January 2021.

91. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's, 125th birth anniversary on 23 January 2021 is observed as Parakram Diwas. The day is celebrated to honour and remember Netaji's indomitable spirit and selfless service to the nation.

92. Legendary Indian classical musician and Padma Vibhushan awardee Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan passed away.

93. Former Union minister and noted industrialist Kamal Morarka has passed away. He served as the Minister of State in Prime Minister's Office under Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar from 1990 to 1991.

94. Padma Award winning



renowned oncologist Dr V Shanta has passed away. She was the chairperson of Adyar Cancer Institute in Chennai, which she joined in 1954. The institute is known for providing state-of-the-art healthcare to all patients.

95. Former Arunachal Governor Mata Prasad has passed away at the age of

95. He served as minister in the Congress government in Uttar Pradesh in 1988-89 and appointed as Governor of Arunachal Pradesh in 1993.

96. Veteran Malayalam actor,



Unnikrishnan Namboothiri has passed away while contracting COVID-19. He made his acting debut in

1996 with Desadanam.

97. The iconic Indian Bhajan singer Narendra Chanchal, who specialized in religious songs and hymns, has passed away. He sang a Bollywood song Beshak Mandir Masjid for the 1973 film Bobby and won Filmfare Best Male Playback Award.

98. One of the oldest trains of Indian Railways, the Howrah-Kalka Mail has been renamed as the 'Netaji Express'. Indian Railways have renamed the train

just a few days before the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on January 23.

99. Flight lieutenant Bhawana



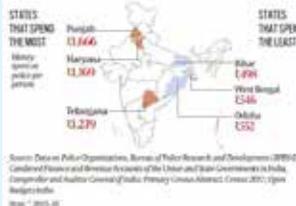
Kanth will become the 1st woman fighter pilot to take part in the Republic Day parade. She will be a part of the Indian Air Force's tableau in the 2021

Republic Day Parade that will showcase mock-ups of the light combat helicopter, light combat aircraft, and the Sukhoi-30 fighter plane.

100. Meghalaya Chief Minister, Conrad K. Sangma has inaugurated India's longest road arch bridge "Wahrew Bridge" at Sohbar in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya on 22 January 2021. The project was sanctioned in 2013 and, the work started in 2014. The construction of the bridge was completed in December 2018.

Legal Current Affairs

1. The 2nd edition of India Justice Report, which



tracks the progress made by the states in enabling the justice system of their state to effectively delivering service to all and takes situations and statistics prior to March 2020. The India Justice Report (IJR) is an initiative of Tata Trusts. The report has ranked Maharashtra at the top in terms of justice delivery among 18 large and mid-sized states in the country, followed by followed by Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Punjab and Kerala. The small states' list is topped by Tripura, followed by Sikkim and Goa.

In terms of Prisons in the States, Rajasthan is on the top position in the large

states whereas; Himachal Pradesh is Rank 1 this year in the Small states. Further, Tamil Nadu has been declared as the top Large and Mid-sized State, and Sikkim as the top Small State, as far as the Judiciary is concerned.

2. A book titled 'International Arbitration and the Rule of Law' was launched by the PCA (Permanent Court of Arbitration) in the honour of jurist Mr. Fali S Nariman. The book was released by Supreme Court Judges, Justice Rohinton Nariman and Justice DY Chandrachud, Attorney General for India Mr. KK Venugopal, and the Deputy Secretary General of the PCA Mr. Brooks Daly in the presence of Mr. Fali Nariman. The book includes a collection of essays and is edited by Senior Advocate Gourab Banerji, Advocate Promod Nair, Advocate George Pothan Poothicote and

Advocate Ashwita Ambast.

3. Justice Sunil Kumar



Awasthi of the Madhya Pradesh High Court has tendered his resignation from the office of Judge, Madhya Pradesh High Court, in pursuance of proviso (a) to clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution, with effect from 02nd January, 2021.

4. Justice (Retd.) Gita Mittal who was the former Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court, is appointed as the first women Chairperson of the BCCC (Broadcasting

Content Complain Council), which is a self-regulatory and independent body formed by the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) in 2001, for general entertainment channels.

5. The term of Justice (retd) Bansi Lal Bhat has been



extended, as the officiating Chairperson of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) by the Central government till he attains the age of 67 years, or until further orders, whichever is earlier. Also, by the same notification, the term of Justice AIS

Cheema is also extended till the age of 67. Justice Bhat was appointed as Judicial Member of National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), New Delhi in 2017. He was first appointed as an officiating Chairperson of NCLAT in March 2020 for a period of three months. His tenure was thereafter extended on several occasions.

6. Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia,



of the Uttarakhand HC, is appointed as the next Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court by the Central Government. Chief Justice Dhulia has taken over from Justice Nongmeikapam Kotiswar Singh, who was appointed Acting Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court, following the retirement of the then Chief Justice Ajai Lamba.

7. Justice Hima Kohli, who was a judge of Delhi High Court, is appointed as the Chief Justice of the Telangana HC and was, administered the oath at a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan, Hyderabad by the Governor Dr Tamilisai Sounderarajan. She became the first women Chief Justice of the Telangana HC and also is currently only women Chief Justice in the country out of 25 High Courts. Chief Justice Hima Kohli replaces Chief Justice Raghvendra Singh Chouhan, who has been transferred as the CJ of Uttarakhand High Court.

8. The Supreme Court full

bench consists of Justices



A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna pronounced the 2-1 judgment in the favour of Central Vista Project. The Supreme Court refused to treat the Central Vista project as a unique one requiring greater or heightened judicial review. The Central Vista project of New Delhi includes 86 acres of land in Lutyens's Delhi, including Rashtrapati Bhawan, Parliament House, North and South Block, India Gate, National Archives among others.

9. The Supreme Court bench



of Chief Justice S A Bobde and Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian has asked the Centre and the Election Commission of India (EC) to respond to a plea to debar legislators, disqualified under the Tenth Schedule, from contesting by-elections during the rest of the tenure of the House. The present plea came in the background of political events in various States such as Manipur, Madhya

Pradesh, Karnataka in which MLAs resign, and came back as ministers in the new government after the collapse of the incumbent government.

A memorandum is submitted by a group of BJP Lawmakers from Assam to the central government, asking for the implementation of Article 244A for the creation of an autonomous State within Assam. The appeal to the Centre has been for the creation of an autonomous State for the Karbi Anglong region including three hill districts namely Karbi Anglong, West Karbi Anglong, and Dima Hasao. This has been a demand since 1986. Furthermore, Article 244 deals with the administration of the Scheduled and Tribal Areas.

11. The Karnataka High Court's



Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice Sachin Shankar Magadam has issued notice to the Union government on a PIL petition, which was filed by senior journalists Krishna Prasad and N. Ram, former Minister Arun Shourie and senior advocate Prashant Bhushan, challenging the constitutional validity of a provision i.e. Section 2(c)(i) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, that makes "scandalising or tends to scandalising courts" as a ground for contempt.

12. A single judge bench of Allahabad High Court, of



Justice Vivek Chaudhary, struck down the provisions under Section 5 of the Special Marriage Act that required parties to give a 30-day mandatory public notice of their intention to marry.

13. A single judge bench



of Delhi High Court, of Justice Pratibha M Singh, in an uncommon order, has ordered the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to explore Crowdfunding to help two children, who are suffering from a Rare Disease known as Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. The Court further directed the Union of India to implement and notify the draft policy (Draft Health Policy for Rare Diseases, 2020) and also consider crowd funding option in the meantime for the successful.

ARTICLES YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO MISS

Explained: What is bird flu? How severe is the outbreak in India?

Bird flu outbreaks have been affecting poultry around the globe for decades, and culling of infected birds has been a common measure to contain the spread.

Bird flu has been reported among wild geese in Himachal Pradesh, crows in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and ducks in Kerala. In Haryana, around one lakh poultry birds have died mysteriously in the last few days.

affects poultry birds such as chickens and turkeys. There are many strains of the virus – some of them are mild and may merely cause a low egg production or other mild symptoms among chickens, while others are severe and

virology professor Vincent Racaniello.

From water birds, many of whom migrate and travel long distances, the viruses are thus further spread to poultry and terrestrial birds. Sometimes, the

virus, and 6 out of 18 infected humans died of the disease.

It was contained, but re-emerged a few years later in various other parts of the globe and caused hundreds of human deaths, particularly in Southeast Asia. Movement of infected poultry and migratory birds, and an illegal bird trade are believed to be the causes of the spread. Some mammals such as cats and lions were also infected.

Subsequently, several other strains of the virus such as H5N2 and H9N2 spread from animals to humans, thus becoming a global public health concern.

Does it spread easily to humans?

No, it does not. Generally, people coming in close contact with infected alive or dead birds have contracted the H5N1 bird flu, and it does not usually spread from person to person, as per the WHO. There is also no evidence, the WHO says, that the disease can be spread to people through properly prepared and cooked poultry food. The virus is sensitive to heat, and dies in cooking temperatures.

Then why the scare?

H5N1 is severe and deadly – around 6 out of 10 confirmed cases in humans have led to deaths (though the actual mortality rate may be lower due to under-reporting of asymptomatic cases).



In Himachal Pradesh's Pong Dam Lake, around 1,800 migratory birds have been found dead. In Kerala, the flu has been detected in two districts, prompting authorities to order culling of ducks. A bird flu alert has been sounded in Rajasthan, where more than 250 crows were found dead in half a dozen districts.

What is avian influenza or bird flu?

It is a highly contagious viral disease caused by Influenza Type A viruses which generally

lethal.

How does the bird flu spread?

Wild aquatic birds such as ducks and geese are the natural reservoir of Influenza A viruses and the central players in the ecology of these viruses.

Many birds carry the flu without developing sickness, and shed it in their droppings. Since birds excrete even while flying, they provide "a nice aerosol of influenza virus, shedding it all over the world", in the words of American

virus jumps over to mammals such as pigs, horses, cats and dogs.

When and how did the bird flu start infecting humans?

Bird flu outbreaks have been affecting poultry around the globe for decades, and culling of infected birds has been a common measure to contain the spread. But it was in 1997 when humans are first known to have contracted bird flu following an outbreak in a live bird market of Hong Kong. It was the H5N1 strain of the

If the virus mutates and becomes easily transmissible from person to person, say by altering its shape to grab human cells much more effectively, it can potentially cause a pandemic.

Also, flu viruses are more prone to mutation because they have a segmented genome. All known strains of flu – including the seasonal flu and the pandemic flu – have jumped from birds to humans in this way.

Bird flu in India

In India, no case of bird flu in humans has been detected so far, according to the Union health ministry. The department of animal husbandry has reported 25 episodes of H5N1 bird flu in poultry in 15 states from 2006 (when the first outbreak occurred in Maharashtra and Gujarat) till 2015. It has also been detected in crows.

Bird flu: What are its symptoms and treatment?

Unlike in birds, where it generally infects the gut, the

avian influenza attacks the respiratory tract of humans and may cause severe respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia or Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS). Its early symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, and sometimes abdominal pain and diarrhoea.

Antiviral drugs, especially oseltamivir, improve the prospects of survival in humans, according to the Union health ministry. The ministry advises people working with poultry to use PPEs and follow hand

hygiene. In the US, the FDA approved a vaccine for the H5N1 virus in 2007.

Among poultry birds, vaccination strategies advised by the World Organisation for Animal Health can be used to prevent the flu, and the Organisation recommends eradicating the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) at its source to decrease the disease in avian species and further human infections.

3 states, 3 anti-conversion laws: what's similar, what's different

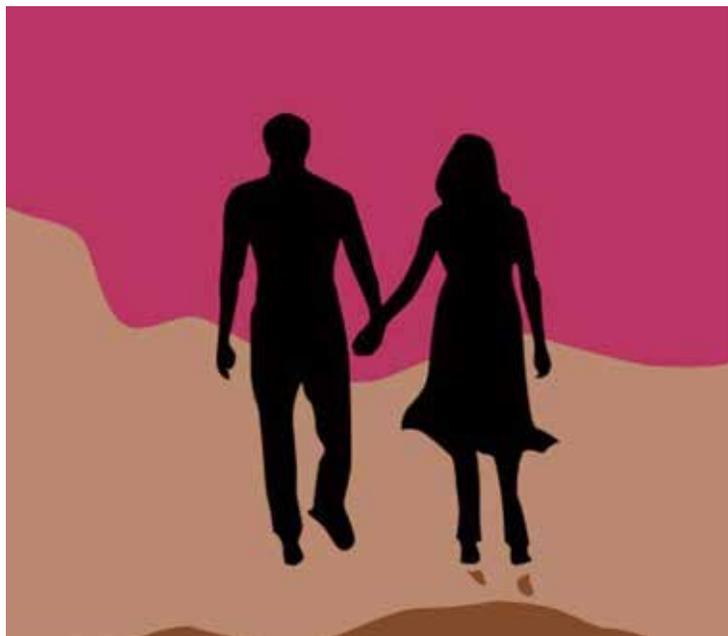
While a common feature of all three laws is the declaration of such marriages as “null and void” and the penalising of conversions done without the prior approval of the state, they differ in the quantum of punishment prescribed and other things.

The Madhya Pradesh government is set to follow two other BJP-ruled states — Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh — in passing an anti-conversion law that outlaws religious conversion solely for the purpose of marriage. The MP Cabinet has approved the Freedom to Religion Bill, 2020 as an Ordinance.

While a common feature of all three laws is the declaration of such marriages as “null and void” and the penalising of conversions done without the prior approval of the state, they differ in the quantum of punishment prescribed, and in attributing the burden of proof that a conversion is lawful. Also, the MP law seeks to protect the rights of women of such marriages.

Prior notice

The MP law requires a 60-day prior “declaration of the intention to convert” to the District Magistrate for conversion to be valid, following which a couple from different



religions can be legally married.

The Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Ordinance, 2020 promulgated in November, too requires a 60-day notice but also requires the Magistrate to conduct a police inquiry to ascertain the real intention behind the conversion.

The Himachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2019 that came into effect last week, requires a 30-day prior “declaration of intention to convert”.

Who can investigate

Section 4 of the MP law states that there cannot be an investigation by a police officer

except on the written complaint of the person converted or the person's parents/siblings. Guardians of the person converted can file a complaint only with the permission of a court. The MP law also says that no police officer below the rank of a sub-inspector can investigate an offence under the law.

The Himachal law says that prosecution cannot be initiated without the prior sanction of an officer not below the rank of a sub-divisional magistrate.

The UP law allows the same people as allowed by the MP law to file a complaint.

Burden of proof

The MP law places on the person converted the burden of proving that the conversion was done without any coercion or illegality. The Himachal law has a similar provision. The UP law goes further, placing this burden of proof on people who “caused” or “facilitated” the conversion and not on the

individual. Even in the police inquiry, if the Magistrate is not satisfied, criminal action under Section 11 of the Ordinance can be initiated against persons who “caused” the conversion. This includes those who committed the offence; omitted to act and prevent the offence; and aided, abetted, counselled or procured people for committing the offence.

Maintenance & inheritance

While declaring as “null and void” any marriage in which either the husband or the wife has converted, even consensual, unless they have given prior notice to the state government, MP’s new law at the same time seeks to protect the right of women and her child from the

and her children, will have a right to maintenance. The law does not, however, provide a recourse for ensuring the marriage can be protected subsequently.

Neither the UP nor the Himachal law has such provisions.

Quantum of punishment

The offence of illegal conversion under the laws of all three states is cognisable and non-bailable, which means an arrest can be made without a warrant and bail is granted only by the discretion of the judge.

Under the MP law, a person can be sentenced to a jail term between one and five years

a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST), the sentence is two to 10 years. It also provides for a jail term of three to 10 years for concealing one’s religion during the marriage.

The UP law provides for a minimum punishment of one year, which can be extended up to five years, and repeat offences can carry double the maximum sentence. Men are awarded a higher punishment if convicted of causing conversion of a woman, a minor or a person belonging to an SC/ST — in which case the sentence is between two and 10 years.

In the Himachal law, a person can be sentenced to a jail term of one to five years for converting or attempting to convert unlawfully. If the person converted is a woman, a minor or a person belonging to an SC/ST, the sentence is two to seven years.

The laws earlier

At least 10 states including MP and Himachal Pradesh already have anti-conversion laws. The key difference in the new laws is that they seek to criminalise conversions solely for the purpose of marriage.

The MP Ordinance repeals the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 1968. While that too criminalised forced conversion, the new law adds provisions relating to conversion during marriage, maintenance rights, and reversal of the burden of proof by placing it on the accused.

Himachal passed its law in 2019, repealing the Himachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2006. While the 2019 law has added provisions related to conversions for the purpose of marriage, the aspect of prior declaration before the district magistrate existed in the 2006 law as well. Incidentally, the High Court had struck down the prior notice provisions as unconstitutional and violative of the fundamental right to privacy.

In 2019, a report by the UP State Law Commission recommended a special law to address incidents of forced conversion. In a draft Bill, submitted along with the report, the Commission recommended penalising fraudulent conversions, including conversions solely for the purpose of marriage. The Ordinance was promulgated subsequently.

JAIL TERMS, AS PRESCRIBED			
	Mass Conversion	Conversion of a minor/SC/ST	Any other conversion
Uttar Pradesh	3-10 years	2-10 years	1-5 years
Madhya Pradesh	5-10 years	-	1-5 years*
Himachal Pradesh	-	2-7 years	1-5 years

* MP bill also prescribes 3-10 years jail for using “misrepresentation” or “impersonation” for religious conversion

“null and void” marriage. Under Section 9, the woman whose marriage has been declared null and void under this legislation,

for converting or attempting to convert unlawfully. If the person converted is a woman, a minor or a person belonging to

Supreme Court central vista judgment: What the petitioners argued

In a split decision, the Supreme Court has cleared the Central Vista project. A look at the grounds on which the project was challenged, how the majority verdict ruled on these, and what the dissenting judge said.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday gave its nod to the Central Vista redevelopment project in a 2:1 verdict. A batch of petitions had challenged the plan for demolition of old structures and new construction, including a brand new Parliament, on approximately 86 acres of land in the national capital.

What was under challenge, and what has the court held?

Broadly, the change in land



use and the manner and

procedure adopted for making

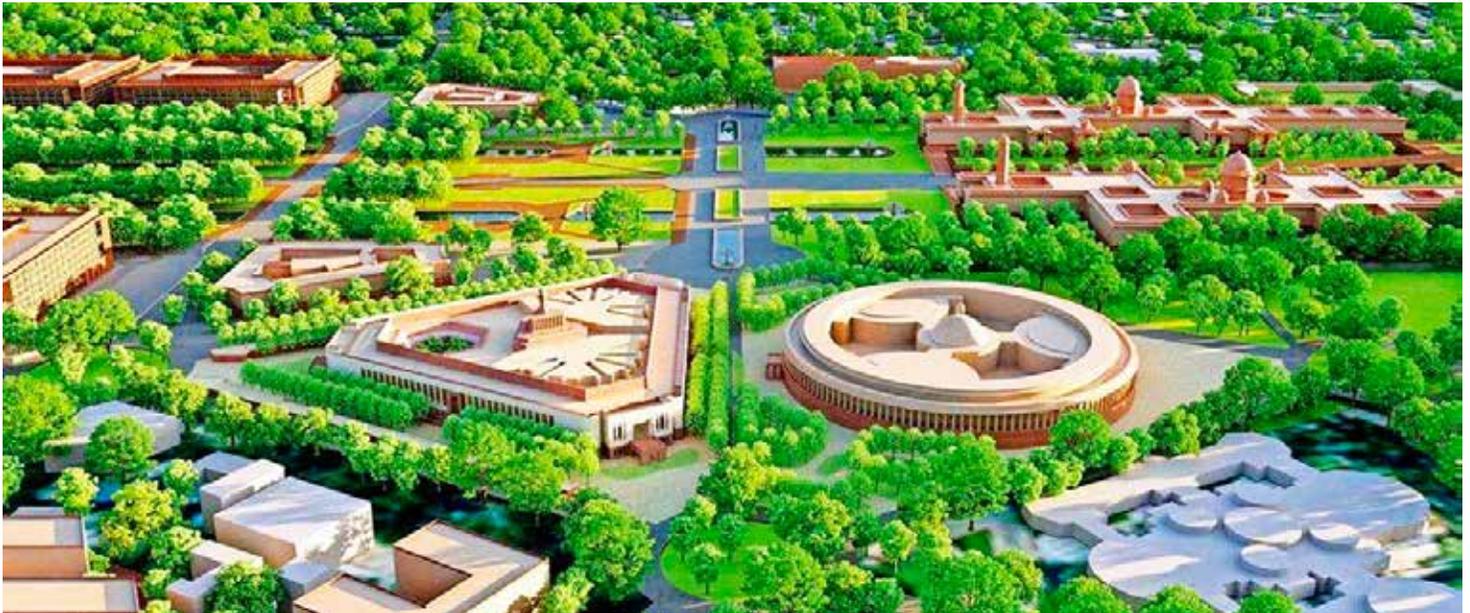
the changes in the Central Vista

precincts were challenged. The petitioners argued that there were irregularities in the process

really a “modification” and also raised concerns on the manner in which the permissions were

activity thereat is proposed in future.

third judge on the Bench, penned a note of dissent. His disagreement from the majority



that involved approval of design, clearance on monetary allocations and the tendering processes, and other regulatory clearances on environment and from local municipal bodies.

In its 2:1 verdict, the court has held that there are no infirmities in the approvals granted. Justices A M Khanwilkar and Dinesh Maheshwari held that the central government’s change of land use for the project in the Master Plan of Delhi 2021 is also a lawful exercise of its powers.

How was the Master Plan modified?

The central government and the Delhi Development Authority are given the power to modify the Master Plan of Delhi that was notified in 2007 to guide the direction of development of the National Capital Territory until 2021. This was modified in March 2020 to include the Central Vista project. Sections of land are assigned for specific purposes such as recreation, government, public and semi-public, which were modified to accommodate the Central Vista project. The petitioners argued that change in land use was not

granted.

What were the processes challenged?

NO OBJECTION BY CVC: The petitioners had challenged the composition of the Central Vista Committee and therefore all the approvals granted by the body. They argued that the CVC was set up to rush the approvals and that the officials who were proponents of the central vista project were also entrusted with the CVC and there was an apparent conflict of interest.

APPROVAL BY DUAC: The petitioners had argued that the consultation with Delhi Urban Commission (DUAC) had to be completed at the plan conception stage itself. They argued that in the absence of a comprehensive consultation, the approvals were granted without proper application of mind. However, the government has stated that considering different stages for different components of the project, DUAC approval regarding the Parliament project has been obtained whereas the approval for rest of the Central Vista precincts shall be taken as and when the development

HERITAGE APPROVAL: The petitioners had argued that the government failed to consult Heritage Conservation Committee, which is an expert body in matters involving heritage structures and ought to have been consulted from the stage of conception of the project, even before the design is agreed upon.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE: The petitioners had argued that the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) had no mandate to grant clearances because the Central Vista project was multi-sectoral and that the body had no expertise to deal with such a project since the sectoral impact was not presented to the EAC. However, the court held that the case on hand does not involve multi-sectoral components to it as it is a “simpliciter construction project.” It also said that the petitioners had failed to substantiate their apprehensions by placing material on record to the contrary.

What does the dissenting opinion say?

Justice Sanjeev Khanna, the

verdict primarily relates to the issue of change in land use in the Master Plan of Delhi.

Justice Khanna was of the view that the change in land use must be struck down on both procedural and substantial grounds. On procedure, the judge noted that it was initiated without a consultation process. “Mere uploading of the gazette notification giving the present and the proposed land use with plot numbers was not sufficient compliance, but rather an exercise violating the express as well as implied stipulations, that is, necessity and requirement to make adequate and intelligible disclosure.”

He held that the central government did not give adequate thought to the concerns of the public and not enough time for those who raised objections to make their case. He said that the permissions given by the CVC appear pre-determined.

Justice Khanna also disagreed with the majority view that the modification was substantial and not a “minor change”.

Donald Trump becomes first U.S. President to be impeached twice

With the Capitol secured by armed National Guard troops inside and out, the House voted 232-197 to impeach Donald Trump

President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House for a historic second time on January 13, charged with “incitement of insurrection” over the deadly mob siege of the Capitol in a swift and stunning collapse of his final days in office.

With the Capitol secured by armed National Guard troops inside and out, the House voted 232-197 to impeach Mr. Trump. The proceedings moved at lightning speed, with lawmakers voting just one week after violent pro-Mr. Trump loyalists stormed the U.S. Capitol, urged on by the President’s calls for them to “fight like hell” against the election results.

Ten Republicans fled Mr. Trump, joining Democrats who said he needed to be held accountable and warned ominously of a “clear and present danger” if Congress should leave him unchecked before Democrat Joe Biden’s inauguration Jan. 20.

The Capitol insurrection stunned and angered lawmakers, who were sent scrambling for safety as the mob descended, and it revealed the fragility of the nation’s history of peaceful transfers of power. The riot also forced a reckoning among some Republicans, who have stood by Mr. Trump throughout his presidency and largely allowed him to spread false attacks against the integrity of the 2020 election.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi invoked Abraham Lincoln and the Bible, imploring lawmakers to uphold their oath to defend the Constitution from all enemies, foreign “and domestic”.

She said of Mr. Trump: “He must go, he is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love.”

Holed up at the White House, watching the proceedings



on TV, Mr. Trump took no responsibility for the bloody riot seen around the world, but issued a statement urging “NO violence, NO lawbreaking and NO vandalism of any kind” to disrupt Mr. Biden’s ascension to the White House.

In the face of the accusations against him and with the FBI warning of more violence, Mr. Trump said, “That is not what I stand for, and it is not what America stands for. I call on ALL Americans to help ease tensions and calm tempers.”

Mr. Trump was first impeached by the House in 2019 over his dealings with Ukraine, but the Senate voted in 2020 to acquit him. He is the first President to be impeached twice. None have been convicted by the Senate, but Republicans said on Wednesday that could change in the rapidly shifting political

environment as officeholders, donors, big business and others peel away from the defeated President.

The soonest Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell would

said he had “not made a final decision on how I will vote.”

Unlike his first time, Mr. Trump faces this impeachment as a weakened leader, having lost his own re-election as well as the Senate Republican majority.

Even Trump ally Kevin McCarthy, the House Republican leader, shifted his position and said Wednesday the President bears responsibility for the horrifying day at the Capitol.

In making a case for the “high crimes and misdemeanors” demanded in the Constitution, the four-page impeachment resolution approved on Wednesday relies on Mr. Trump’s own incendiary rhetoric and the falsehoods he spread about Mr. Biden’s election victory, including at a rally near the White House on the day of the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol.

A Capitol Police officer died from injuries suffered in the riot, and police shot and killed a woman during the siege. Three other people died in what authorities said were medical emergencies. The riot delayed the tally of Electoral College votes that was the last step in finalising Mr. Biden’s victory.

Ten Republican lawmakers, including third-ranking House GOP leader Liz Cheney of Wyoming, voted to impeach Mr. Trump, cleaving the Republican leadership, and the party itself.

Ms. Cheney, whose father is the former Republican Vice-President, said of Mr. Trump’s actions summoning the mob that “there has never been a greater betrayal by a President” of his office.

Mr. Trump was said to be livid with perceived disloyalty from Mr. McConnell and Ms. Cheney.

Security was exceptionally tight at the Capitol, with tall fences around the complex. Metal-detector screenings were

California said, "Every movement has a lunatic fringe." Yet Democratic Rep. Jason

his nominees and approving COVID-19 relief while also conducting the trial.



With the team around Mr. Trump hollowed out and his Twitter account silenced by the social media company, the President was deeply frustrated that he could not hit back, according to White House officials and Republicans close to the West Wing who weren't authorised to speak publicly about private conversations.

From the White House, Mr. Trump leaned on Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina to push Republican senators to resist, while chief of staff Mark Meadows called some of his former colleagues on Capitol Hill.

The President's sturdy popularity with the GOP lawmakers' constituents still had some sway, and most House Republicans voted not to impeach.

required for lawmakers entering the House chamber, where a week earlier lawmakers huddled inside as police, guns drawn, barricade the door from rioters.

"We are debating this historic measure at a crime scene," said Rep. Jim McGovern, D-Mass.

During the debate, some Republicans repeated the falsehoods spread by Mr. Trump about the election and argued that the President has been treated unfairly by Democrats from the day he took office.

Other Republicans argued the impeachment was a rushed sham and complained about a double standard applied to his supporters but not to the liberal left. Some simply appealed for the nation to move on.

Rep. Tom McClintock of

Crow, D-Colo. and others recounted the harrowing day as rioters pounded on the chamber door trying to break in. Some called it a "coup" attempt.

Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., contended that Mr. Trump was "capable of starting a civil war".

Conviction and removal of Mr. Trump would require a two-thirds vote in the Senate, which will be evenly divided. Republican Sen. Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania joined Sen. Lisa Murkowski of Alaska over the weekend in calling for Mr. Trump to "go away as soon as possible".

Fending off concerns that an impeachment trial would bog down his first days in office, Mr. Biden is penceaging Senators to divide their time between taking up his priorities of confirming

The impeachment bill draws from Mr. Trump's own false statements about his election defeat to Mr. Biden. Judges across the country, including some nominated by Mr. Trump, have repeatedly dismissed cases challenging the election results, and former Attorney General William Barr, a Trump ally, has said there was no sign of widespread fraud.

The House had first tried to persuade Vice-President Mike Pence and the Cabinet to invoke their authority under the 25th Amendment to remove Mr. Trump from office. Pence declined to do so, but the House passed the resolution anyway.

The impeachment bill also details Mr. Trump's pressure on state officials in Georgia to "find" him more votes.

While some have questioned impeaching the President so close to the end of his term, there is precedent. In 1876, during the Ulysses Grant administration, War Secretary William Belknap was impeached by the House the day he resigned, and the Senate convened a trial months later. He was acquitted.

Explained: The arguments for and against a bad bank

As the problem of non-performing assets persists in a sector stressed by the pandemic, the RBI Governor has agreed to look at a proposal for creating a bad bank. What are the arguments for and against the concept?

The idea of setting up a bad bank to resolve the growing problem of non-performing assets (NPAs), or loans on which borrowers have defaulted, is back on the table. With commercial banks set to witness a spike in NPAs, or bad loans, in the wake of the contraction in the economy as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor

Shaktikanta Das recently agreed to look at the proposal for the creation of a bad bank.

What's a bad bank and how does it work?

A bad bank conveys the impression that it will function as a bank but has bad assets to start with. Technically, a bad bank is an asset reconstruction company (ARC) or an asset

management company that takes over the bad loans of commercial banks, manages them and finally recovers the money over a period of time. The bad bank is not involved in lending and taking deposits, but helps commercial banks clean up their balance sheets and resolve bad loans. The takeover of bad loans is normally below the book value of the loan and

the bad bank tries to recover as much as possible subsequently.

Former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan had opposed the idea of setting up a bad bank in which banks hold a majority stake. "I just saw this (bad bank idea) as shifting loans from one government pocket (the public sector banks) to another (the bad bank) and did not see how it would improve matters.

Indeed, if the bad bank were in the public sector, the reluctance to act would merely be shifted to the bad bank,” Rajan wrote in his book *I Do What I Do*.

US-based Mellon Bank created the first bad bank in 1988, after which the concept has been implemented in other countries including Sweden, Finland, France and Germany. However, resolution agencies or ARCs set up as banks, which originate or guarantee lending, have ended up turning into reckless lenders in some countries.

Do we need a bad bank?

The idea gained currency during Rajan's tenure as RBI Governor. The RBI had then initiated an asset quality review (AQR) of banks and found that several banks had suppressed or hidden bad loans to show a healthy balance sheet. However, the idea remained on paper amid lack of consensus on the efficacy of such an institution. ARCs have not made any impact in resolving bad loans due to many procedural issues.

Now, with the pandemic hitting the banking sector, the RBI fears a spike in bad loans in the wake of a six-month moratorium it has announced to tackle the economic slowdown.

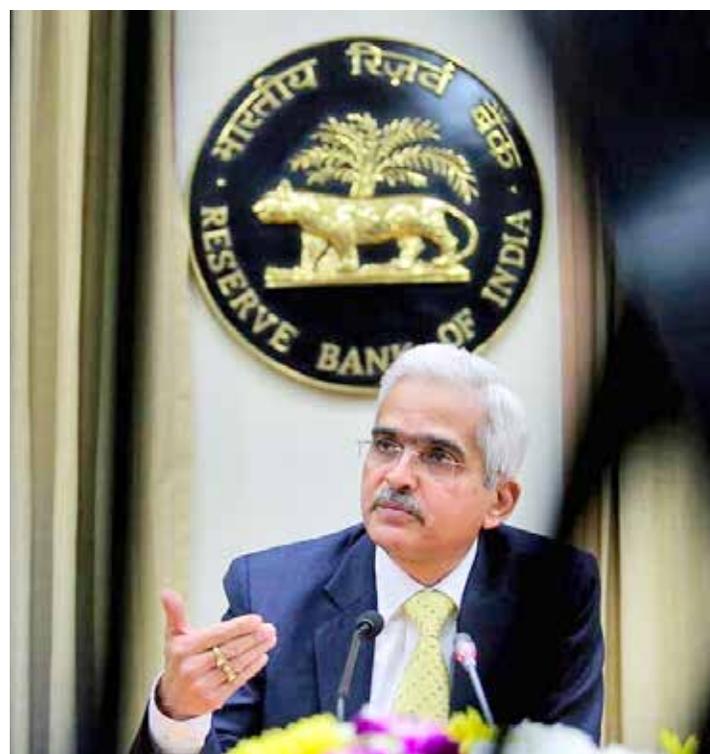
What is the stand of the RBI and government on a bad bank?

While the RBI did not show much enthusiasm about a bad bank all these years, there are signs that it can look at the idea now. Last week, Governor Das indicated that the RBI can consider the idea of a bad bank to tackle bad loans. In recent months, the Finance Ministry too has been receptive to the idea.

Viral Acharya, when he was the RBI Deputy Governor, had said it would be better to limit the objective of these asset management companies to the orderly resolution of stressed

assets, followed by a graceful exit. Acharya suggested two models to solve the problem of stressed assets. The first is a private asset management company (PAMC), which is said to be suitable for stressed sectors where the assets are likely to have an economic value in the short run, with moderate levels of debt forgiveness. The second model is the National Asset Management Company (NAMC), which would be necessary for sectors where the problem is not just one of excess capacity but possibly also of economically unviable assets in

funded by the private lenders and supported the government, can be an effective mechanism to deal with NPAs. The bad bank concept is in some ways similar to an ARC but is funded by the government initially, with banks and other investors co-investing in due course. The presence of the government is seen as a means to speed up the clean-up process. Many other countries had set up institutional mechanisms such as the Troubled Asset Relief Programme (TARP) in the US to deal with a problem of stress in the financial system.



the short to medium terms.

Will a bad bank solve the problem of NPAs?

Despite a series of measures by the RBI for better recognition and provisioning against NPAs, as well as massive doses of capitalisation of public sector banks by the government, the problem of NPAs continues in the banking sector, especially among the weaker banks. As the Covid-related stress pans out in the coming months, proponents of the concept feel that a professionally-run bad bank,

Has the banking system made any proposal?

The banking sector, led by the Indian Banks' Association, had submitted a proposal last May for setting up a bad bank to resolve the NPA problem, proposing equity contribution from the government and banks. The proposal was also discussed at the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) meeting, but it did not find favour with the government which preferred a market-led resolution process. The banking industry's proposal was based

on an idea proposed by a panel on faster resolution of stressed assets in public sector banks headed by former Punjab National Bank Chairman Sunil Mehta. This panel had proposed a company, Sashakt India Asset Management, for resolving large bad loans two years ago. "This is a good idea and hopefully, we would like to take it up again and see that there is a consensus to push this idea. Somehow people have that feeling that banks will park all their bad assets and nothing will happen there. We need to convince all the stakeholders about the purpose behind it and the action plan and the strategy behind the ARC. Once we are able to convince them, hopefully we hope to gain traction," Union Bank MD and CEO Rajkiran Rai said in a recent interview to *The Indian Express*.

The idea of a bad bank was discussed in 2018 too, but it never took shape. During the pandemic, banks and India Inc were also pitching for one-time restructuring of loans and NPA reclassification norms from 90 days to 180 days as relief measures to tackle the impact of the lockdown and the slowdown in the economy. Currently, loans in which the borrower fails to pay principal and/or interest charges within 90 days are classified as NPAs and provisioning is made accordingly.

How serious is the NPA issue in the wake of the pandemic?

Bad loans in the system are expected to balloon in the wake of contraction in the economy and the problems being faced by many sectors. The RBI noted in its recent Financial Stability Report that the gross NPAs of the banking sector are expected to shoot up to 13.5% of advances by September 2021, from 7.5% in September 2020, under the baseline scenario, as "a multi-speed recovery is struggling to gain traction" amidst the pandemic. The report warned

that if the macroeconomic environment worsens into a severe stress scenario, the ratio may escalate to 14.8%. Among bank groups, the NPA ratio of PSU banks, which was 9.7% in September 2020, may increase to 16.2% by September 2021 under the baseline scenario.

The K V Kamath Committee, which helped the RBI with designing a one-time restructuring scheme, also noted that corporate sector debt worth Rs 15.52 lakh crore has come under stress after Covid-19 hit India, while another Rs 22.20 lakh crore was already under

stress before the pandemic. This effectively means Rs 37.72 crore (72% of the banking sector debt to industry) remains under stress. This is almost 37% of the total non-food bank credit.

The panel led by Kamath, a veteran banker, has said

companies in sectors such as retail trade, wholesale trade, roads and textiles are facing stress. Sectors that have been under stress pre-Covid include NBFCs, power, steel, real estate and construction. Setting up a bad bank is seen as crucial against this backdrop.

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

The Centre has informed the Supreme Court about the 2017 rules under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, and said that there was a difference between seizure and confiscation of animals, while responding to a petition.

1. The Centre's response came after last week the court had asked it to amend a rule in the Act pertaining to confiscation of animals before an accused is convicted under the legislation.

What's the issue?

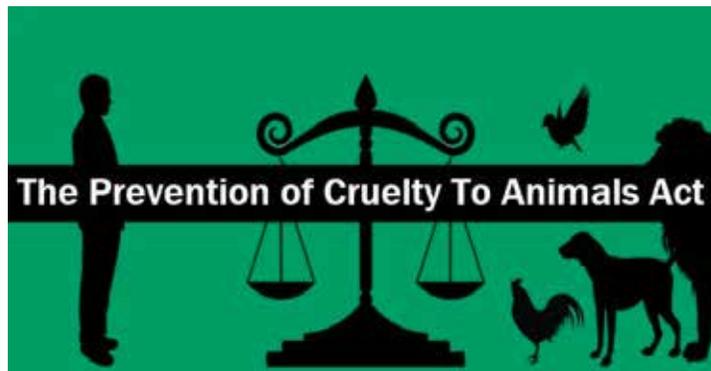
A plea was filed by Buffalo Traders Welfare Association, challenging the validity of the rules that allow authorities to seize vehicles used in cattle transportation and send the animals to shelters. The petition pointed out that the transporters, farmers and cattle traders were being threatened since the rules were notified.

What has the Centre said?

While seizure is temporary in nature and merely takes

possession of property, confiscation amounts to transfer of ownership in the property

to forfeit the cattle of an owner facing trial under the Act.



and is supposed to be carried out only after final adjudication of the rights of the parties in a given case.

Background:

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Care and Maintenance of Case Property Animals) Rules, 2017:

1. Framed under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.
2. The Rules allow a Magistrate

3. The animals are then sent to infirmaries, animal shelters, etc.
4. The authorities can further give such animals for "adoption".

Concerns expressed by traders:

1. The traders have claimed that they were being forcibly deprived of their cattle which is sent to Gaushalas.
2. These frequent lootings are also threatening the rule of law and generally emboldening groups of persons to take the

law into their own hands.

3. Moreover, these incidents are acting as triggers for communal polarisation of society.

Way ahead:

If not halted effectively and immediately, will have disastrous consequences on the social fabric of the country

About the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960:

1. Seeks to "prevent the infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering on animals".
2. The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) was established in 1962 under Section 4 of the Act.
3. This Act provides for punishment for causing unnecessary cruelty and suffering to animals. The Act defines animals and different forms of animals.
4. It provides the guidelines relating to experimentation on animals for scientific purposes.

SC agrees to examine Centre's request to keep adultery a crime in Armed Forces, issues notice

A bench, headed by Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman, requested the chief justice to list the matter before a five-judge bench.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday issued notices on Centre's plea to exempt the Armed Forces from the purview of its 2018 judgement of decriminalising adultery,

reported Live Law. A bench headed by Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman agreed to examine the plea, but requested the Chief Justice of India SA Bobde to list the matter before a five-judge

bench, as the petition sought clarification of a Constitution bench judgement.

The notice was also issued to Joseph Shine and others, on

whose Public Interest Litigation, the Supreme Court had decriminalised adultery in 2018. In its plea, the Centre said that decriminalising adultery may cause "instability" within armed

forces as defence personnel often stay separated from their families for a long period, reported Live Law.

“In view of the judgement, there will always be a concern in the minds of the army personnel who are operating far away from their families under challenging conditions about the family indulging in untoward activity,” the application said.

On being asked by Justice Nariman that why a clarification was required, Attorney General KK Venugopal, representing the Centre, said that the 2018 judgement does not take into account the Armed Forces Act, which does not specify “adultery”, but under which “unbecoming conduct” may lead

to court martial.

On September 27, 2018, the Supreme Court had unanimously struck down the provision of the Indian Penal Code that criminalised adultery. Section 497 of the IPC made it a crime for a man to have sexual intercourse with the wife of another, without the other man's consent. Any man who did so was deemed to be violating the right of the husband. A woman could not be the perpetrator or the victim of the crime of adultery as the section ascribed sexual agency only to men.

The Constitutional Bench of then Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices RF Nariman, AM Khanwilkar, DY Chandrachud and Indu Malhotra held that

Section 497 violated the right to equality and destroyed the dignity of women. The bench



observed that parameters of Fundamental Rights should include the rights of women and that individual dignity is important in a sanctified society. The court felt that the

law was against women who had no opportunity to defend themselves in a situation where

they are falsely linked to a man on mere suspicion, since they could not be made party to the case under Section 497 and had no locus standi.

SC quota ruling is nothing new — reservation in jobs was never a fundamental right

SC ruling that reservations in jobs, promotions are not a fundamental right reiterates a long-held reading of constitutional provisions on quota.

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday ruled that there is no fundamental right to reservations in appointments and promotions under articles 16(4) and 16(4A) of the Constitution.

The apex court ruled that it was the discretion of the governments, either at the state or central level, to grant reservation in promotions. The ruling has since evoked a sharp response from various stakeholders and political parties.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP and the RSS of having always been against reservations to weaker sections of society. He added that the Congress would not let quotas in jobs and education come to an end.

The CPI claimed that Dalits, tribals and backward classes are

“disappointed and agitated” with is not a fundamental right, the



the Supreme Court ruling.

However, the fact that reservation cannot be claimed as a fundamental right is a settled position under the law, and has been pointed out by several judgments in the past.

The Supreme Court's judgment Friday relied on these precedents to rule that since it

government is not obligated to collect quantifiable data showing a community is inadequately represented in public services — as required by Article 16(4A) — if it has already decided not to grant reservations in promotions.

ThePrint explains the precedents and chronicles the dispute that culminated in the Supreme

Court's latest judgment.

What does the Constitution say on reservations?

Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws to everyone. Similarly, Article 16(1) and 16(2) assure citizens equality of opportunity in employment or appointment to any government office.

Article 15(1) generally prohibits any discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of religion, caste, sex or place of birth.

Additionally, Article 29(2) bars discrimination against any citizen with regard to admission to educational institutions maintained by the government or receiving aid out of government funds on grounds of religion, race, caste etc.

How did the case reach the

Supreme Court?

The controversy in the current case pertained to reservations to SCs and STs in promotions for the post of assistant engineer (Civil) in the Uttarakhand government's Public Works Department.

The reservation was initially provided for under the Uttar Pradesh Public Services (Reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes) Act, 1994. Section 3(7) of this Act stated that the government orders providing for reservations in promotions, which were in force in the time of commencement of the Act in 1994 would continue to operate, until modified or revoked.

After the formation of Uttarakhand in 2001, the Act was made applicable to the new state, with a few modifications. Section 3(7) was, however, subsequently held unconstitutional by the

Uttarakhand High Court in 2011.

The state government then constituted a committee for collection of quantifiable data on the backwardness of the reserved communities in Uttarakhand and the inadequacy of their representation in public posts, to satisfy the condition under Article 16 (4A).

In 2012, the then state government decided that all posts in public services will be filled up without any reservations for SCs and STs. All government orders providing for such reservations were also scrapped. This was once again challenged in the high court.

The Uttarakhand High Court then struck down the State's 2012 decision in April last year. A review petition against this order was filed in the high court, which did acknowledge that Article 16 (4A) is an enabling provision.

But it directed the state government to collect quantifiable data regarding inadequacy of representation of SCs and STs in state services, and then take a decision on providing reservations in promotions. This decision was challenged in the Supreme Court.

What SC ruled?

The apex court has now reiterated that Articles 16(4) and 16(4A) do not confer any fundamental rights to claim reservations in promotion. It is for the state government to decide whether reservations are required for appointment and promotions to public posts, it said.

"It is settled law that the State Government cannot be directed to provide reservations for appointment in public posts. Similarly, the State is not bound to make reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in matters of

promotions," it observed.

However, if the state government does want to exercise this discretion and provide reservations, it would have to first collect quantifiable data showing inadequacy of representation of that class in public services.

The court then opined that the high court should not have struck down the state government's 2012 decision to not provide reservation in promotions.

It further ruled that since Article 16(4) and 16 (4A) do not provide a fundamental right, courts cannot issue a direction to the state government to provide reservations. It clarified that since the state government had decided not to provide reservations, it did not have to collect quantifiable data at all.

With these observations, it set aside the high court order.

Find out decision on Rajiv murder case mercy pleas: SC to TN

Find out decision on Rajiv murder case mercy pleas: SC to TN

New Delhi, Feb 11 (IANS) The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Tamil Nadu government to request the Governor to inform it about his decision on the mercy plea of a Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict.

The state government informed the court that the TN Cabinet had passed a resolution that recommended the Governor for premature release of all seven convicts, but it had no information on the Governor's decision.

The convicts had filed mercy petition under Article 161 of the Constitution. The Article 161 gives the Governor the power to pardon a person proved guilty in court.



A Division Bench, comprising Justice L Nageswara Rao and Justice Deepak Gupta, said it

couldn't issue any direction to the Governor and asked the state government to seek about

his decision. The Governor couldn't sit indefinitely on a file, it added.

The court deferred the hearing for two weeks.

On January 21, the Supreme Court asked the TN government to inform it within two weeks if a decision had been taken by the Governor under Article 161 on pardon, commutation or remission of sentence of the 1991 Rajiv Gandhi assassination case convict.

The court pulled up the Centre for lack of substantial

progress in the CBI-led multi-disciplinary monitoring agency (MDMA) probe to unravel the larger conspiracy behind the former Prime Minister's killing.

Additional Solicitor General Pinky Anand, representing the Centre, said things were beyond its control especially in the absence of response from various foreign countries on the letters rogatory.

The top court's response came

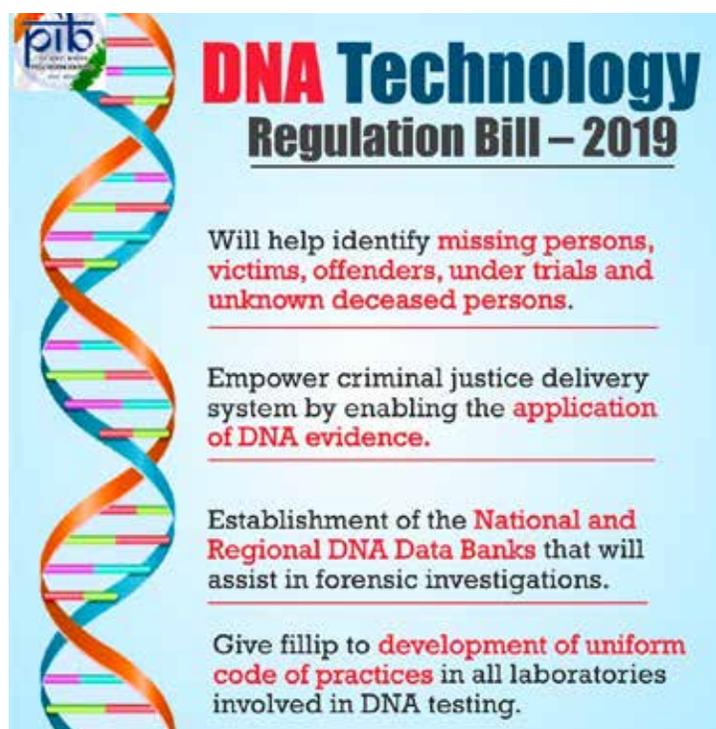
on the plea of A.G, Perarivalan, 46, who sought suspension of his life sentence as the MDMA's probe remained incomplete. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for Perarivalan, said his mercy petition was pending before the Governor.

The Supreme Court had earlier expressed displeasure on progress of the CBI probe, underway for the 22 years. The

court also observed that the latest CBI report was a mirror image of the report filed two years ago. "What is the progress, we want to know", the court told the CBI.

In November 2019, the matter came up for hearing before the apex court, which sought latest status report on the assassination, and gave four weeks to the MDMA to furnish its report.

DNA Bill, 2019



DNA Technology Regulation Bill – 2019

Will help identify **missing persons, victims, offenders, under trials and unknown deceased persons.**

Empower criminal justice delivery system by enabling the **application of DNA evidence.**

Establishment of the **National and Regional DNA Data Banks** that will assist in forensic investigations.

Give fillip to **development of uniform code of practices** in all laboratories involved in DNA testing.

Why in News?

Recently, the scope for violations of privacy in the proposed DNA data bank was discussed by a parliamentary panel on the contentious DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2019.

Key Highlights

The Bill provides for the establishment of a National DNA Data Bank and Regional DNA Data Banks for states.

DNA laboratories are required to share DNA data with the National and Regional DNA

Data Banks.

Every Data Bank will be required to maintain indices for the following categories of data-

- a crime scene index
- a suspects' or undertrials' index
- an offenders' index
- a missing persons' index
- an unknown deceased persons' index

It aims to store the unique genetic information for administrative purposes.

It also provides for the establishment of a DNA Regulatory Board, which will supervise the DNA Data Banks and DNA laboratories.

The Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, will be the ex officio Chairperson of the board and the additional members will be-

experts in the field of biological sciences

Director General of the National Investigation Agency

Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation

Concerns

Threat of data Hacking: After the incident of malware infection at the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant there is a risk of this sensitive data bank being hacked.

Violation of Human Rights: DNA can play an important role in solving the crimes but it also puts human rights at stake. It can lead to misuse and miscarriages of justice.

Not Cost Effective: Creating large databases is not a very budget friendly option with limited resources.

Inadequate Resources: Currently, laboratories are able to assess only one or two samples at a time. This results in

delayed investigations.

Possibility of misuse of DNA samples: Through DNA, not only the identity of a person can be known but also other characteristics like if she/he is suffering from any disease etc. There is a possibility that people having access to DNA samples, blackmail the person who has submitted his/her DNA sample.

Single Use: Bill envisages the use of a DNA sample for a particular specified purpose only. For any other purpose, the DNA sample will have to be processed again.

Way Forward

Modernisation of Technology: It will help process around 40 to 50 samples at a time which will in the quick resolution of various cases and thus will strengthen India's Justice Delivery System.

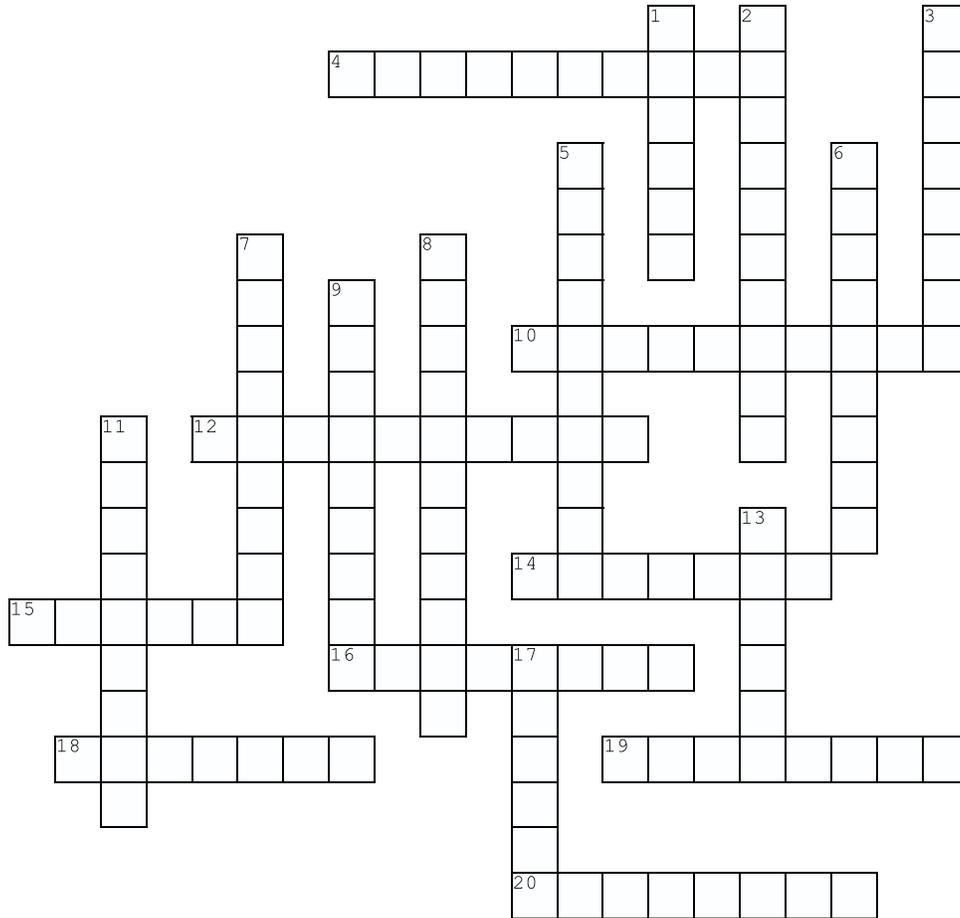
Multiple usage: Use of DNA cannot be restricted to a particular purpose. A series of situations may arise that can demand usage of a DNA sample again and again.

Effective implementation: It is required to ensure the proper storage and usage of DNA bills.

Securing Human Rights: The authorities need to regulate three broad areas of concern – capacity, training and consent before unleashing the DNA Bill in India.

LEGAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

complete the crossword puzzle below



Across

4. make a marriage by having sexual intercourse
10. sexual intercourse between a person and an animal.
12. make a formal judgement on a disputed matter.
14. information received from other people which cannot be substantiated; rumour.
15. the action or practice of deceiving someone by concealing or misrepresenting the truth.
16. a right to cross or otherwise use someone else's land for a specified purpose
18. related by blood
19. agreeable
20. a person or institution appointed by a testator to carry out the terms of their will.

Down

1. piece of paper used for casting votes
2. a writ or order by which a higher court reviews a case tried in a lower court
3. mercy
5. the loss or giving up of something as a penalty for wrongdoing.
6. show that someone is involved in crime
7. a written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation, for use as evidence in court.
8. act of one individual of a species consuming all or part of another individual of the same species as food
9. show or declare that (someone) is not guilty of wrongdoing.
11. relief
13. the action of forgiving or being forgiven for an error or offence
17. ill will

Amenable	19.	Hearsay	14.	Excipate	9.	Consummate	4.	Crossword answerkey-
Executor	20.	Deceit	15.	Bestiality	10.	Forfeiture	5.	February
		Easement	16.	Injunction	11.	Implicate	6.	Ballot
		Malice	17.	Adjudicate	12.	Affidavit	7.	Certiorari
		Cognate	18.	Pardon	13.	Cannibalism	8.	Clemency