



# TOPPERS CHOICE



5 subject-specific questions daily to comprehensively prepare for UPSC PRELIMS 2024.

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**May 2023 to July 2023**

Date – 3rd May 2023

1. Consider the following statements with reference to IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility:

1. The RSF is a loan fund to help countries tackle longer-term challenges such as climate change and pandemics.
2. It aims to provide affordable, longer-term finance and to support government policy reforms.
3. Sri Lanka is the first country to receive funds under RSF.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

1. only
2. and 3 only
3. 1 and 2 only
4. only

Answer: C

Explanation

- The RSF is a loan fund to help countries tackle longer-term challenges such as climate change and pandemics.
- It aims to provide affordable, longer-term finance and to support government policy reforms.
- In 2022, three Asian countries applied for loans from the International Monetary Fund.
- **They were Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. IMF released the funds to Bangladesh first.**

- The rest two couldn't get final approval from the financial organization even though they are doing worse than Bangladesh.

Extended Fund Facility

- Extended Fund Facility (EFF) provides financial assistance to countries facing serious medium-term balance of payments problems because of structural weaknesses that require time to address.
- To help countries implement medium-term structural reforms, the EFF offers longer program engagement and a longer repayment period.



Kristalina Georgieva

IMF Executive Board Approves US\$3 Billion Under the New Extended Fund Facility (EFF) Arrangement for Sri Lanka

March 20, 2023

- The IMF Board approved a 48-month extended arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) of SDR 2.286 billion (about US\$3 billion) to support Sri Lanka's economic policies and reforms.
- The objectives of the EFF-supported program are to restore macroeconomic stability and debt sustainability, safeguarding financial stability, and stepping up structural reforms to unlock Sri Lanka's growth potential. All program measures are mindful of the need to protect the most vulnerable and improving governance.
- Close collaboration between Sri Lanka and all its creditors will be critical to expedite a debt treatment that will restore debt sustainability consistent with program parameters.

**Washington, DC:** The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved today a 48-month extended arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with an amount of SDR 2.286 billion (395 percent of quota or about US\$3 billion).

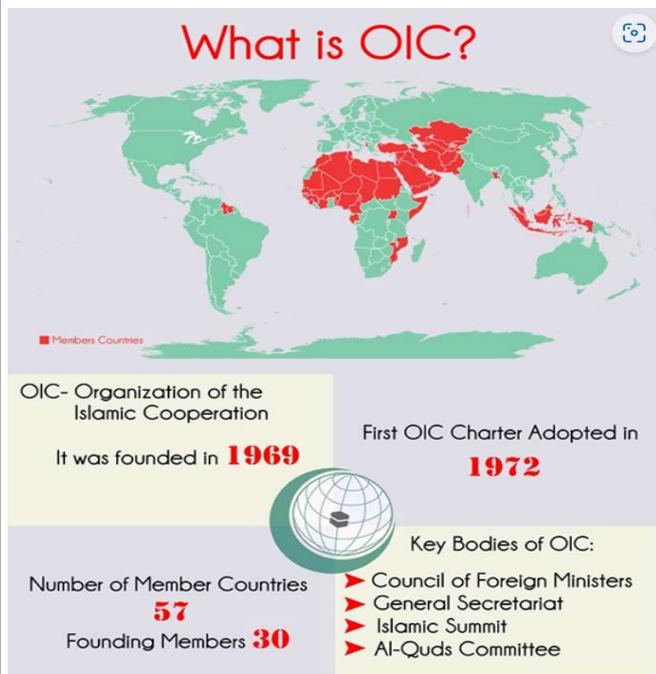
2. Which of the following statement is incorrect with reference to Organization of Islamic Cooperation?

- A. It is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nation
- B. The organisation works to "safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony".
- C. The OIC has permanent delegations to the United Nations and the European Union.
- D. None of the above

**Answer: D**

**Explanation**

- It is an international organization founded in 1969, consisting of 57 member states.
- It is the second largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations.
- The organisation states that it is “the collective voice of the Muslim world” and works to “safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony “.
- The OIC has permanent delegations to the United Nations and the European Union
- Permanent Secretariat is in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia



**What is OIC?**

OIC- Organization of the Islamic Cooperation

It was founded in **1969**

First OIC Charter Adopted in **1972**

Number of Member Countries **57**

Founding Members **30**

Key Bodies of OIC:

- ▶ Council of Foreign Ministers
- ▶ General Secretariat
- ▶ Islamic Summit
- ▶ Al-Quds Committee

**3. With Reference to INTERPOL Consider the Followings**

1. The 89th General Assembly of Interpol, the world’s largest police body with 195 members, was held in New Delhi in 2021.
2. It was in this session that Vanuatu had officially joined the world’s police body, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).

**Which of the above is/ are Correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 & 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: D**

**Explanation**

- The 90th General Assembly of Interpol, the world’s largest police body with 195 members, was held in New Delhi from 18 to 21 October 2022.
- **The General Assembly is taking place in India after 25 years.**
- The move was **proposed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Interpol secretary general Jurgen Stock** during the latter’s official visit to New Delhi in August 2019
- **The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is holding the Interpol session after decades.**

**INTERPOL: International Criminal Police Organisation**

- Today INTERPOL has 195 member countries, making us the world's largest police organisation.
- The organisation moved to its present headquarters in Lyon in 1989.

- At the **89th General Assembly** of Interpol the **Federated States of Micronesia** became the organisation's **195th** member country.
- Vanuatu has officially joined the world's police body, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).
- The application was approved during 87th Interpol's General Assembly, which took place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 18th to 21st of November 2018.

#### INTERPOL

- The idea was born at the first International Criminal Police Congress held in Monaco in April 1914.
- At the invitation of Prince Albert I of Monaco, lawyers and police officials from 24 countries discussed cooperation on solving crimes, identification techniques and extradition.
- **The meeting was highly successful, but plans had to be put on hold due to the outbreak of the First World War.**
- **The idea of an international police body was revived by Dr Johannes Schober, President of the Vienna Police.**
  - He convened the second the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) in Vienna, Austria in 1923.
  - It was attended by representatives from 19 other countries.

- The International Criminal Police Commission was established in September 1923 with headquarters in Vienna.
- **The aim of the ICPC was to provide mutual assistance between police in different countries.**

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#### 4. Which among the Following are members of Minerals Security Partnership

1. Australia
2. Chile
3. Sweden
4. Netherlands
5. Finland

Select the Correct Answer using code mentioned below

- A. 1,2,3
- B. 1,3,5
- C. All of the above are members of MSP
- D. 2 & 4 Only

Answer: B

Explanation

- In order to ***break the dominance and reduce dependence*** on China in mining and processing rare earth mineral.
- United States recently announced the formation of a global alliance called the **Mineral Security Partnership (MSP)**.
- Apart from the US, the other countries to have joined this partnership are:

- Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, the UK, and the European Commission.
- **The Partnership was announced at the world's largest mining event, held in Toronto in June 2022.**

### Goal of this alliance

The goal of the alliance is to ensure that critical minerals are produced, processed, and recycled in a manner that supports the ability of countries to **realise the full economic development benefit** of their geological endowments.

### 5. What sanctions are imposed on countries under CAATSA?

1. Prohibition on loans to the sanctioned person.
2. Prohibition of Export-Import bank assistance for exports to sanctioned persons.
3. Prohibition on procurement by United States Government to procure goods or services from the sanctioned person.
4. Denial of visas to persons closely associated with the sanctioned person.

Select the correct code:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 4 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1,2,3 and 4

**Answer: D**

**Explanation**

- Enacted in 2017, it is a US federal law that imposed sanctions on Iran, North Korea and Russia.
- Includes sanctions against countries that engage in significant transactions with Russia's defence and intelligence sectors.
- The Act empowers the US President to impose at least five of the **12 listed sanctions** on persons engaged in a "significant transaction" with Russian defence and intelligence sectors

### What Sanctions Will Be Imposed?

- Prohibition on loans to the sanctioned person.
- Prohibition of Export-Import bank assistance for exports to sanctioned persons.
- Prohibition on procurement by United States Government to procure goods or services from the sanctioned person.

Denial of visas to persons closely associated with the sanctioned person.

**Date - 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**1. Consider the following statements with reference to Common Security & Defence Policy (CSDP):**

1. The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is a framework for cooperation among the ASEAN member states.
2. It Aims to Conduct Peace-keeping and International Security Operations in Developing Countries.

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

- A. 1 only
- B. Both
- C. 2 only
- D. Neither 1 Nor 2

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

- The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is a framework for **cooperation among the EU member states**.
- It Aims to Conduct *Peace-keeping and International Security* Operations in Developing Countries.
- It Uses Civil and Military Assets Provided by the states.
- CSDP missions and operations *contribute to global security* abroad and within the EU.

- They aim to help *prevent or resolve conflicts* and crises and enhance the capacities of allies.

**History of the CSDP**

- Europe first considered setting up a *consolidated security* and defence architecture after World War II.
- The first landmark achievement in this direction was the signing of the *Brussels Treaty in 1948*.
- It paved the way for the formation of the NATO.
- The **European Political Cooperation (EPC)** was presented in the 1970 *Davignon Report*.
- It outlined facilitating consultation among members of the *European Community (EC)* as one of the objectives of the EPC.

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2. Which of the following statement is Correct with reference to Vandenberg Resolution?

- A. Resolution Passed by US Senator Arthur Vandenberg to undertake Expedition in Antarctica
- B. Resolution Endorsing Finland's Entry into NATO.
- C. Vandenberg Resolution was the steppingstone to NATO.
- D. None of the above

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

- Vandenberg Resolution was passed in June 1948 and was proposed by and named after US Senator Arthur Vandenberg.
- Negotiations over the nature and degree of commitment by the United States to defend its North Atlantic allies were complicated by the conflicting desire of the allies for an iron-clad assurance of immediate US intervention in case of a Soviet attack and the insistence for the US Senate that its constitutional prerogatives to be preserved, especially the power to commit the US to war.

**What are the origins of NATO?**

- In 1948, Stalin's government sponsored a coup in (erstwhile) Czechoslovakia.
- It led to the installation of a communist regime in a country.
- It was sharing borders with both Soviet-controlled East Germany and the pro-West West Germany.

- In 1948-49, the Soviets blockaded West Berlin to force the US, UK, and France to give up their post-war jurisdictions in the country.
- It led to a major crisis and an 11-month airlift of supplies by Western countries to keep their part of the city going.
- All these events led the US to conclude that an American-European alliance against the USSR was necessary.
- The Europeans too were convinced of the need for a collective security solution.
- In March 1948, the UK, France, Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg signed the Brussels Treaty of collective defence.
- It which meant that if any of the signatories faced an attack, they would be defended by all the others.
- A few months later, the US Congress passed the Vandenberg Resolution.
- The Vandenberg Resolution was the stepping stone to NATO.
- The US believed the treaty would be more effective if it included, apart from the signatories of the Brussels Treaty, countries of the North Atlantic – Canada, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Ireland, and Portugal.
- From the American perspective, these countries were the links between the two shores of the Atlantic Ocean, and could help facilitate military action if it was needed.

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**3. With Reference to International Criminal Court Consider the Following Statements**

1. Both the ICC & ICJ have the power to prosecute Individuals.

2. 123 countries are party to the Rome Statute, including Britain, Japan, Afghanistan, Germany & Ukraine.
3. The court carries out its investigations through the Office of Secretary of ICC and has 18 judges.

Which of the above is/ are Incorrect?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 1 & 3
- D. All 3 are Incorrect

Answer: D

What is ICC?

- The ICC was established under a 1998 treaty called the “Rome Statute”.
- Its headquarter is situated in **The Hague, Netherlands**.
- The International Criminal Court (ICC) investigates and, where warranted, **tries individuals** charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community: **genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression**.
- **ICC’s jurisdiction and prosecutions:**
  - Unlike the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)**, which deals with **countries and inter-state disputes**, the **ICC prosecutes individuals**.
  - Additionally, the offences **should be committed either in a country that ratified the agreement** or by a national of a ratifying country.
  - The ICC can also practice its jurisdiction over **cases referred by the UN Security Council** to it.

- ICC is the world’s **first permanent international criminal court**.
- Presently, 123 countries are party to the Rome Statute, including Britain, Japan, Afghanistan, and Germany.
- **Russia, India, the USA and China have abstained from membership.**



How Does ICC Function?

- The court carries out its investigations through the **Office of the Prosecutor and has 18 judges**.
- Both the judges and prosecutors hold non-renewable nine-year terms.
- The current prosecutor of ICC is **Mr. Karim Khan**.
- There are pre-trial, trial, and appellate benches in the ICC.
- The prosecutor **conducts a preliminary examination** in a matter, before seeking permission from **pre-trial judges** to open a full investigation.

**4. With Context to Childcare Incentive Fund Consider the following statements**

1. UN launched a new program in 2022 to scale up quality, affordable childcare in developing countries.

2. The Fund is supported by the governments of Australia, Canada, and the United States

Select the Correct Answer using code mentioned below

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 Only
- C. Both 1 & 2
- D. Neither 1 Nor 2

**Answer: B**

### Childcare Incentive Fund

- The World Bank and government and foundation partners in April 2022 launched a new program to scale up **quality, affordable childcare in developing countries.**
- It is a critical investment to *build the next generation* of human capital and place women at the center of an inclusive global economic recovery.
- The *Global Childcare Incentive Fund* will catalyze at least \$180 million in new funding.
- In the next 5 years to support childcare in low and middle-income countries.
- This will provide wide returns for families, businesses, and economies.

### Explanation

- The Fund is supported by the governments of Australia, Canada, and the United States
- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; Echidna Giving; the Ford Foundation; the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation; and the LEGO Foundation.

- Combined, these pledges will catalyze at least \$180 million in new funding to ensure quality, affordable childcare in available in low- and middle-income countries worldwide.

### G7 Promoting Gender Equality

- G7 will “introduce a mechanism to *continuously monitor* G7 commitments and progress towards achieving gender equality”.
- The group will also *support efforts to expand access* to quality childcare infrastructure globally, **including \$79m support** for a **Childcare Incentive Fund** aimed at improving:
  - Women’s economic empowerment
  - Child outcomes
  - Family welfare, and
  - Overall economic growth

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### 5. Which of the following visas and their purpose is correctly matched?

1. H-1B is for a Person in Specialty Occupation
2. L1 visas allows companies to transfer highly skilled workers to US for a period of up to seven years.
3. H-2B Visas is for students on work-study summer programmes.
4. J-1 visas allow food and agricultural workers to seek employment in the US.

Select the correct code:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 3 and 4 only
- C. 1 and 3 only

D. 2 and 4 only

**Answer: A**

**Explanation**

- In order to fill a vacuum of highly-skilled low-cost employees in IT and other related domains
- The US administration issues a certain number of visas each year which allows companies from outside the US to send employees to work on client sites.
- H-1B: Person is Specialty Occupation- To work in a specialty occupation requires a higher education degree of its equivalent.
- L1 visas allows companies to transfer highly skilled workers to US for a period of up to seven years.
- H-2B visas allow food and agricultural workers to seek employment in the US.

J-1 Visas: It is for students on work-study summer programmes



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**Date – 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**1. Consider the following statements about New Development Bank:**

1. It was established in 2018 by the BRICS countries.
2. The bank aimed at mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other EMDCs.
3. It has announced the launch of its Indian Regional Office (IRO) in Gujarat.

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

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 only
- D. 2 and 3 only

**Answer: D**

**Explanation**

- NDB was established in 2015 by BRICS countries.
- The New Development Bank is a multilateral development bank aimed at mobilising resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other EMDCs.
- The New Development Bank (NDB) announced the launch of its Indian Regional Office (IRO) in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).

- The Bank shall *mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS* and other emerging economies and developing countries, complementing the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development
- Unlike the World Bank, *which assigns votes based on capital share*, in the *New Development Bank each participant country will be assigned one vote*, and none of the countries will have veto power.
- The first regional office of the *NDB is in Johannesburg, South Africa.*
- The *second regional office was established in 2019 in São Paulo, Brazil, followed by Moscow, Russia.*
- Egypt & Uruguay are Prospective Members to NDB.
- The bank will start operating with \$50 billion in initial capital with the five BRICS contributing \$10 billion each.
- According to the pact, the capital of the bank will be divided equally among the five participating nations and initially it will focus on infrastructure projects member countries.
- The headquarters of the bank will be located in Shanghai, China.
- Eminent banker Kondapur Vamana Kamath was appointed as first President New Development Bank (NDB) of BRICS nations.

- Bangladesh & UAE became members of NDB in September & October 2021 respectively

## 2. What is the main goal of Bucharest 9?

- To promote regional cooperation
- To strengthen NATO's presence in Central and Eastern Europe
- To address common security challenges
- All of the above

**Answer: D**

### Explanation

- The “Bucharest Nine” is a group of nine NATO countries in Eastern Europe that became part of the US-led military alliance after the end of the Cold War
- The Bucharest Nine or Bucharest Format, often abbreviated as the B9, was founded on November 4, 2015, and takes its name from Bucharest, the capital of Romania.
- The Bucharest Format (B-9) offers a platform for deepening the dialogue and consultation among the participant allied states, in order to articulate their specific contribution to the ongoing processes across the North-Atlantic Alliance, in total compliance with the principles of solidarity and indivisibility of the security of the NATO Member States.
- The countries in the B-9 grouping are Romania and Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

## 3. The Sahel region is bordered by:

- The Sahara Desert to the north, the Sudanian Savanna to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Red Sea to the east.
- The Sahara Desert to the south, the Sudanian Savanna to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, and the Red Sea to the west.
- The Sahara Desert to the east, the Sudanian Savanna to the west, the Atlantic Ocean to the north, and the Red Sea to the south.
- The Sahara Desert to the west, the Sudanian Savanna to the east, the Atlantic Ocean to the south, and the Red Sea to the north.

**Answer: A**

### Explanation



### Countries in Sahel Region

 Mauritania Capital: Nouakchott	 Mali Capital: Bamako	 Niger Capital: Niamey
 Chad Capital: N'Djamena	 Burkina Faso Capital: Ouagadougou	 Nigeria Capital: Abuja
 Cameroon Capital: Yaoundé	 Senegal Capital: Dakar	 The Gambia Capital: Banjul
 Eritrea Capital: Asmara	 Sudan Capital: Khartoum	 South Sudan Capital: Juba
 Guinea Capital: Conakry		



**4. With Context to IAEA Consider the Following statements**

1. The IAEA is an intergovernmental organization that was founded immediately post World War 2
2. Its mission is to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to inhibit its use for military purposes.
3. India is a Founding Member of IAEA
4. IAEA Reports to United Nations

Select the Correct Answer using code mentioned below

- A. 1 & 3
- B. 2 & 4
- C. 2 & 3
- D. Only 2

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an international organisation dedicated to promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and prohibiting its use for military purposes, including the development of nuclear weapons.
- On July 29, 1957, the IAEA became an independent entity.

- The IAEA reports to both the UN General Assembly and Security Council, despite being founded independently of the UN by its own international treaty, the IAEA Statute.
- The IAEA’s programmes promote nuclear energy, science, and technology for peaceful purposes, provide international safeguards against the misuse of nuclear technology and nuclear materials,
- Its mandate includes promoting nuclear safety (including radiation protection) and nuclear security standards and their implementation.
- The IAEA’s three chief areas of work are: Safety and Security, Science and Technology and Safeguards, and verification
- India became a member in 1957.
- The IAEA is entrusted with the task of upholding the principles of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970.

**5. Global gateway Initiative is Associated with**

- A. NATO
- B. G-7
- C. EU
- D. ASEAN

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

- The Global Gateway is an initiative by the European Union (EU) to invest in infrastructure projects and establish economic partnerships around the world.

- It was launched in December 2021 by the European Commission, under the leadership of Ursula von der Leyen.
- The Global Gateway aims to mobilize €300 billion by 2027 in public and private infrastructure investment around the world.
- The EU will use a combination of grants, loans, and guarantees to finance projects in the following areas:
  - Digital connectivity
  - Energy transition
  - Transport
  - Health
  - Education
  - Research and innovation
  - Water and sanitation
  - Climate adaptation and resilience
- The Global Gateway is seen as a response to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- The BRI is a Chinese-led infrastructure investment program that has been criticized for its lack of transparency and environmental impact.
- **The Global Gateway is designed to be more transparent and sustainable than the BRI.**



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Date - 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023

1.

71. Consider the following statements :

1. Mirage 2000 is a twin-engine fighter jet.
2. HAL Tejas is a delta-winged fighter jet.
3. Rafale is a hypersonic fighter jet.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Answer- Option B**

- Mirage 2000 is a French Multirole, Single Engine, Fourth Generation Jet Manufactured by Dassault Aviation
- It has been in operational use by French Air Force Since 1984
- HAL Tejas is an Indian Single engine, Delta Wing light multirole fighter
- LCA Programme began in 1980s to replace the ageing fleet of MIGs 21
- LCA Tejas was officially Named in 2003
- A delta wing is a wing shaped in the form of a triangle. It is named for its similarity in shape to the Greek uppercase letter delta ( $\Delta$ ).

- Dassault Rafale literally meaning "gust of wind", or "burst of fire" in a more military sense) is a French twin-engine, canard delta wing, multirole fighter aircraft designed and built by Dassault Aviation.
- Equipped with a wide range of weapons, the Rafale is intended to perform air supremacy, interdiction, aerial reconnaissance, ground support, in-depth strike, anti-ship strike and nuclear deterrence missions.
- The Rafale is referred to as an "omnirole" aircraft by Dassault.
- Omnirole Aircraft- It has the capability to carry out different complex combat assignments during the same sortie, be it ground attack, beyond visual range (BVR) air-to-air combat or interceptions.
- Its competitors classify their aircraft as 'multi-role' or 'swing-role'.

**LCA- TEJAS**



2.

73. 'The Kh-47M2 Kinzhal', a nuclear-capable hypersonic missile, belongs to which one of the following countries?

- (a) China
- (b) France
- (c) Russia
- (d) USA

**Answer- Option C**

- The Kh-47M2 Kinzhal (NATO reporting name Killjoy) is a Russian hypersonic air-launched ballistic missile.
- It is claimed to have a range of 2,000 km (1,200 mi) and Mach 10 speed.
- It can carry either conventional or nuclear warheads and can be launched by Tu-22M3 bombers or MiG-31K interceptors.
- It has been deployed at airbases in Russia's Southern Military District and Western Military District.
- The Kinzhal entered service in December 2017 and was one of the five new Russian strategic weapons unveiled by Russian President Vladimir Putin in March 2018.

3.

75. Recently, with which one of the following countries did India sign the 'Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement' ?

- (a) Egypt
- (b) Israel
- (c) South Africa
- (d) United Arab Emirates

**Answer - Option D**

- The historic India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) which was signed between the two nations on 18 February 2022, officially entered into force in May 2022.
- Overall, India will benefit from preferential market access provided by the UAE on over 97 % of its tariff lines which account for 99% of Indian exports to the UAE in value terms particularly from labor-intensive sectors such as Gems and Jewellery, Textiles, leather, footwear, sports goods, plastics, furniture, agricultural and wood products, engineering products, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and Automobiles.
- CEPA is expected to increase the total value of bilateral trade in goods to over US\$100 billion and trade in services to over US\$ 15 billion within five years

4.

76. Which one of the following is the oldest Central Paramilitary Force in India?

- (a) The Central Reserve Police Force
- (b) The Border Security Force
- (c) The Assam Rifles
- (d) The Commando Battalion for Resolute Action

**Answer- Option C**

- The present-day Assam Rifles can trace its origins to a paramilitary force known as Cachar Levy which was established by the British in 1835 in the Assam region.
- The Assam Rifles boasts of being the oldest paramilitary force.
- Assam Rifles is the only paramilitary force with a dual control structure.
- While the administrative control of the force is with the MHA, its operational control is with the Indian Army, which is under the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

5.

84. Ganga water is being shared at Farakka with which one of the following countries?

- (a) Nepal
- (b) Bhutan
- (c) Bangladesh
- (d) Myanmar

**Answer- Option C**

- A long-standing dispute exists between India and Bangladesh over the appropriate allocation, and development, of the water resources of the Ganges River, which flows from northern India into Bangladesh.
- The issue had remained a subject of conflict for almost 35 years, with several bilateral agreements and rounds of talks failing to produce results.
- However, a comprehensive bilateral treaty was signed by Indian Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda and Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed on 12 December 1996 in the Indian capital New Delhi.
- **The treaty established a 30-year water-sharing arrangement and recognised Bangladesh's rights as a lower-level riparian.**
- Farakka Barrage is a barrage across the Ganga river located in Murshidabad district in the Indian state of West Bengal, roughly 18 kilometres (11 mi) from the border with Bangladesh near Shibganj.
- Construction of the Farakka barrage started in 1962, was completed in 1970 at a cost of \$208 million
- The purpose of the barrage is to divert 1,800 cubic metres per second (64,000 cu ft/s) of water from the Ganges to the Hooghly River for flushing out sediment deposition from Kolkata harbour without the need of regular mechanical dredging

6.

**95.** Consider the following statements with reference to the latest guidelines issued by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) :

1. Data centres and service providers shall compulsorily report cyber security breaches within 24 hours.
2. Virtual Private Network providers shall retain user data for at least five years and share records with authorities when required.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Answer- Option B**

- CERT-In has Mandated that All Cybersecurity related Incidents must be reported to it by the respective companies within 6 hours of either being made aware of the incident or becoming aware itself.

7.

**99.** As part of the Look/Act East Policy, which one of the following capitals of North-East Indian States is proposed to be connected with Bangladesh via rail route?

- (a) Agartala
- (b) Kohima
- (c) Imphal
- (d) Itanagar

**Answer- A**

- Rail Line between Agartala in Tripura and Akhaura in Bangladesh would pave the way for the first train to run from NER to Bangladesh.
- The rail line between Agartala in Tripura and Akhaura in Bangladesh would pave the way for the first train to run from the northeastern region to Bangladesh.
- The railway link will connect Gangasagar in Bangladesh to Nischintapur in India and from Nischintapur to Agartala railway station.

8.

**118.** Match List-I with List-II and select the correct answer using the code given below the Lists :

<i>List-I</i> (Regional block)	<i>List-II</i> (Headquarters)
A. ASEAN	1. Brussels
B. CIS	2. Vienna
C. EU	3. Minsk
D. OPEC	4. Jakarta

Code :

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

**Answer: A**



- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is a statutory body under the ownership of Ministry of Defence, Government of India.
- BRO develops and maintains road networks in India's border areas and friendly neighboring countries.
- This includes infrastructure operations in 19 states and three union territories (including Andaman and Nicobar Islands) and neighboring countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Myanmar, Tajikistan and Sri Lanka.
- By 2022, BRO had constructed over 55,000 kilometres (34,000 mi) of roads, over 450 permanent bridges with a total length of over 44,000 metres (27 mi) length and 19 airfields in strategic locations.

9.

121. Which of the following statements about the Border Roads Organization (BRO) is/are correct?

1. BRO is concerned with the construction and maintenance of roads in strategically sensitive areas.
2. BRO undertakes snow clearance in high altitude areas.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

**Answer- Option C**

10.

122. Which among the following countries is **not** a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)?

- (a) Hungary  
(b) Poland  
(c) Belarus  
(d) Turkey

**Answer- Option C**

11.

**123.** Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The 15th ASEAN-India Summit was held virtually in March 2022.
2. European Union is India's largest regional trading partner.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

**Answer- Option D**

- India Participated In the 18<sup>th</sup> India-ASEAN Summit at the Invitation of Brunei in 2021.
- 15<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit was held in Manila, Philippines in November 2017. (This Summit was Held Virtually)
- 2022- India ASEAN Friendship- 30 years of Bilateral ties.



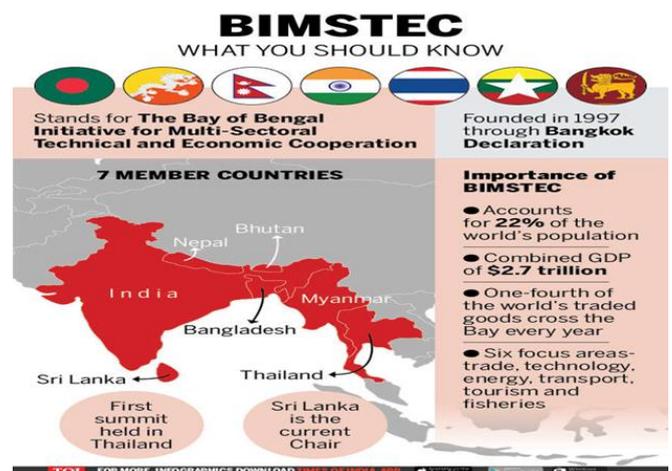
- USA has overtaken China to become India's largest trading Partner in 2021-22, indicating the 2 nations growing economic relations.
- EU is India's Third Largest trading partner accounting for 88 Billion Euro of Trade

12.

**125.** Which of the following sets of nations are members of the BIMSTEC Initiative?

- (a) Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India and Sri Lanka
- (b) Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar
- (c) Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives
- (d) Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Indonesia

**Answer- Option B**



13.

85. The theme of India's G20 Presidency 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'One Earth-One Family-One Future' is drawn from the

- (a) *Maha Purana*
- (b) *Maha Upanishad*
- (c) *Rig Veda*
- (d) *Smriti*

**Answer: B**

14.

86. The 16th edition of Indo-Nepal annual joint training exercise in jungle warfare and counterterrorism operations was held in December 2022 at Nepal Army Battle School, Saljhandi. What is the name of this exercise?

- (a) *Sampriti*
- (b) *Mitra Shakti*
- (c) *Yudh Abhyas*
- (d) *Surya Kiran*

**Answer- Option D**

- The 16th Edition of the Indo-Nepal joint training Exercise "SURYA KIRAN-XVI" between India and Nepal is to be conducted at Nepal Army Battle School, Saljhandi, Nepal.
- "SURYA KIRAN-XVI" was conducted from 16th to 29th December 2022.

- Exercise "SURYA KIRAN" is conducted annually between India and Nepal to enhance interoperability in jungle warfare & counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain and HADR under UN mandate.

15.

118. Which one of the following statements about the Wassenaar Arrangement is **not** correct?

- (a) There are 42 participating nations in the Arrangement.
- (b) It is formed primarily as a nuclear weapon overseer.
- (c) India is the current Chairman of the Arrangement.
- (d) India joined the Arrangement in the year 2017.

**Answer- Option B**

- On 26th annual plenary of the Wassenaar Arrangement in Vienna, Ireland handed over the chairmanship to India and India will officially assume the chairmanship from 1st January 2023.
- The Wassenaar Arrangement is a voluntary export control regime.
- The Arrangement, formally established in July 1996, has 42 members who exchange information on transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies.
- Dual-use refers to the ability of a good or technology to be used for multiple purposes - usually peaceful and military.

- It has 42 member states comprising mostly NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and EU states.
- India became a member of the Arrangement in 2017.

Date - 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023

1. Which of the Following are Members of the Arab League?

1. Iraq
2. Turkey
3. Palestine
4. Djibouti
5. Equatorial Guinea

Which of the Above is/ are correct

- A. 1 Only
- B. 1 & 2
- C. 1, 3 & 4
- D. 2 & 5

Answer : C

Explanation

What is The Arab League?

- It is formally known as the League of Arab States.
- It was established in 1945 with initially just six nations: **Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.**
- Currently, it has 22 member states.



- The League members have pledged to cooperate on economic and military affairs, among other issues.
- The League makes decisions on a majority basis, but there is no mechanism to compel members to comply with resolutions.

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2. With reference to FIPIC, consider the following countries:

1. Cook Islands
2. Fiji
3. Kiribati
4. Marshall Islands
5. Micronesia
6. Nauru
7. Palau

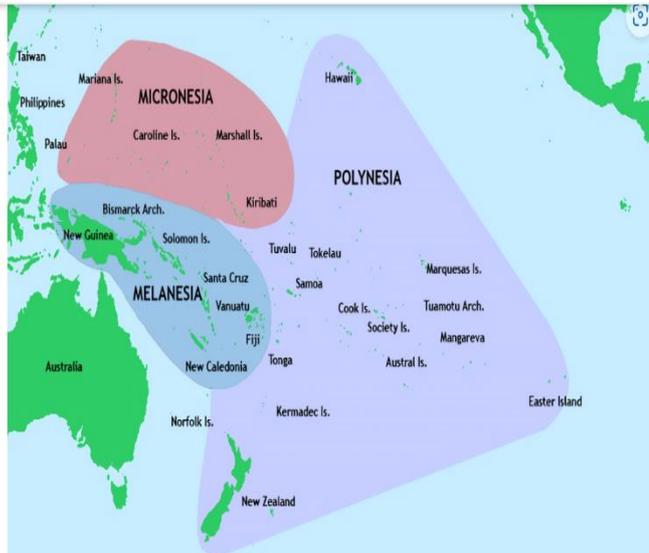
Which of the above countries are part of FIPIC?

- A. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
- B. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6
- C. 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7
- D. 3, 5, 6 and 7

Answer : A

Explanation

- The Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) was launched during PM Modi's visit to Fiji in November 2014.
- FIPIC includes 14 island countries - Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu - that are located in the Pacific Ocean, to the northeast of Australia.



### Idea Behind FIPIC

- Despite their relatively small size and considerable distance from India, many of these islands have large exclusive economic zones (EEZs).
- EEZs is the distance up to which a coastal nation has jurisdiction over the ocean, including both living and non-living resources.
- It generally goes to 200 nautical miles or 230 miles (around 370 km) beyond a nation's territorial sea.
- India's larger focus is on the Indian Ocean where it has sought to play a major role and protect its strategic and commercial interests.
- The FIPIC initiative then marks a serious effort to expand India's engagement in the Pacific region as well.
- After the summit, PM Modi went for his visit to Sydney, Australia, from May 23 and 24. The references to "developments in the Indo-Pacific region" and a "vision for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific" are

believed to be related to China's increasing assertion in the region.

- Based on 2021-22 data, the total annual trade between India and Pacific Island countries is valued at \$570 million, in commodities such as plastics, pharmaceuticals, sugar, mineral fuel and ores.
- **Among them, Papua New Guinea is the biggest trade partner in terms of value.**
- FIPIC-I, in 2014, took place at Suva, Fiji's capital city.
- India announced various development assistance initiatives and other cooperation projects in areas of climate change, trade, economy, telemedicine and tele education, IT, grants for community development projects, etc.
- At FIPIC-II in 2015 in Jaipur, India again announced similar initiatives. India also approached the event from a large diplomatic perspective, calling for a "dedicated seat for Small Island Developing States in an expanded and reformed UN Security Council in both categories".
- The third FIPIC summit was to be held in early 2020 but was postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. During his concluding remarks, the prime minister announced initiatives such as:
- Establishment of a super-specialty cardiology hospital in Fiji. "The Indian government will bear the full cost of this mega greenfield project", the PM said.

- Sea ambulances will be provided to all the 14 Pacific island countries.
- The PM also pledged to provide desalination units for the people of every Pacific Island country.

**3. Statement 1- WHO has binding rules known as the International Health Regulations, which in 2005 set out countries' obligations where public health events have the potential to cross borders.**

**Statement 2- These Regulations were adopted after the 2002-2003 SARS outbreak, these regulations are still considered appropriate for regional epidemics, such as Ebola but inadequate for a global pandemic**

**Which of the Above is Correct?**

- A. Statement 1 is Correct & Statement 2 is Incorrect
- B. Statement 1 is Incorrect & Statement 2 is Correct
- C. Both Statements are Correct & Statement 2 is the Correct Explanation of Statement 1
- D. Both Statements are Correct & Statement 2 is the Incorrect Explanation of Statement 1

**Answer : D**

**Explanation**

- Members of the World Health Organisation (WHO) held the first round of negotiations towards the pandemic treaty on February 24, 2022.
- The meeting was aimed at agreeing on ways of working and timelines for a "convention, agreement or other international instrument" to prevent

further pandemics and to improve the preparedness and response in case of its occurrence.

- In December 2021, the World Health Assembly agreed to start a global process to draft the pandemic treaty.
- The need for an updated set of rules was felt after the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the shortcomings of global health systems.
- The Health Assembly adopted a decision titled "The World Together" at its second special session since it was founded in 1948.
- The pandemic treaty is expected to cover aspects like data sharing and genome sequencing of emerging viruses and equitable distribution of vaccines and drugs and related research throughout the world.
- Solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic have seen an inequitable distribution of vaccines so far, with poorer countries at the mercy of others to receive preventive medication
- Negotiations on new rules for dealing with pandemics are underway at the World Health Organization (WHO), with a target date of May 2024 for a legally binding agreement to be adopted by the U.N. health agency's 194 member countries.
- A new pact is a priority for WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus who called it a "generational commitment that we will not go back to the old cycle of panic and neglect" at the U.N. agency's annual assembly.

- *It seeks to shore up the world's defences against new pathogens following the COVID-19 pandemic that has killed nearly 7 million people.*

**4. Which of the statements are TRUE about the causes of globalisation?**

- A. Technology is an important cause of globalisation.
- B. Globalisation is caused by a particular community of people.
- C. Globalisation originated in the US.
- D. Economic interdependence alone causes globalisation.

**Answer : A**

**Explanation**

- Globalisation is a multidimensional concept.
- It has political, economic and cultural manifestations, and these must be adequately distinguished.
- It is wrong to assume that globalisation has purely economic dimensions, just as it would also be mistaken to assume that it is a purely cultural phenomenon.
- The impact of globalisation is vastly uneven – it affects some societies more than others and some parts of some societies more than others.
- *It is important to avoid drawing general conclusions about the impact of globalisation without paying sufficient attention to specific contexts.*

- *While globalisation is not caused by any single factor, technology remains a critical element.*
- *There is no doubt that the invention of the telegraph, the telephone, and the microchip in more recent times has revolutionized communication between actors in different parts of the world.*

**5. Which of the statements are INCORRECT about globalisation?**

- A. Advocates of globalisation argue that it will result in greater economic growth.
- B. Critics of globalisation argue that it will result in greater economic disparity.
- C. Advocates of globalisation argue that it will result in cultural homogenization.
- D. Critics of globalisation argue that it will result in cultural homogenization

**Answer: C**

**Date - 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

**1. Which of the Following countries share land border with Sudan?**

1. Libya
2. Burkina Faso
3. Mali
4. Egypt
5. Mauritania

**Which of the Above is/ are correct**

- A. Only 2
- B. Only 3

C. Only 1

D. All of the Above.

**Answer : A**

**Explanation**



**Do You Know?**

- For more than a century, Sudan—first as a colonial holding, then as an independent country—included its neighbour South Sudan, home to many sub-Saharan African ethnic groups.
- Prior to the secession of the south in 2011, Sudan was the largest African country, with an area that represented more than 8 percent of the African continent and almost 2 percent of the world’s total land area.

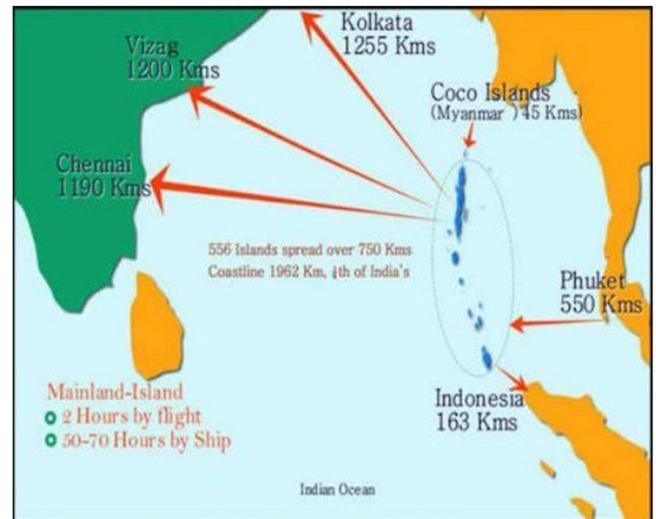
**2. Coco Islands sometimes seen in news is associated with which of the following countries?**

- A. Myanmar
- B. Thailand
- C. Bangladesh

D. Mauritius

**Answer : A**

**Explanation**



Picture 2: Coco Islands Reference Map  
Source: Dr Naing Swe Oo, TISS

**Additional Facts on Cocos Islands**

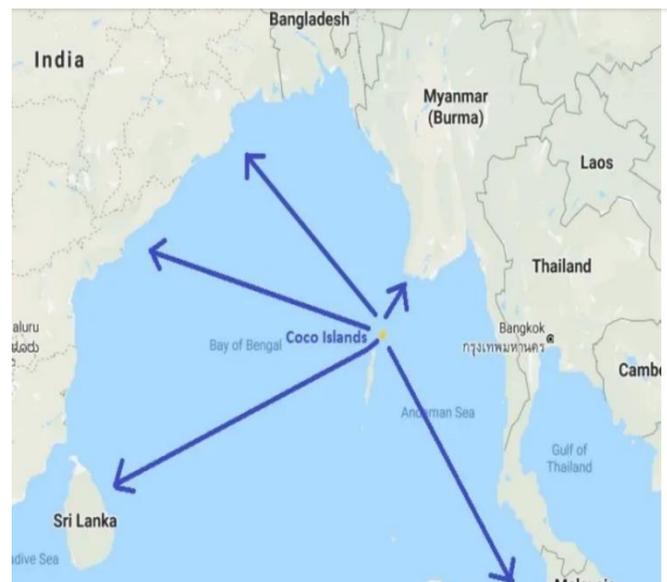
- Coco islands are a small group of islands located in North-Eastern part of Bay of Bengal.
- It is 1255 km South-East of Kolkata, and one of the most important islands in South Asia.
- It is being administered by Myanmar since 1948.
- The Chinese had got these islands on lease from Myanmar military government in 1994.
- It is 250 km south of the Burmese mainland.
- The Coco Islands are 30 miles North to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Group of India
- Geographically, these islands are part of Andaman and Nicobar archipelago. The Coco islands are divided into two major group :-
- Great Coco island

- **Little Coco island**
- The control of Coco islands in the Andaman archipelago was taken over by the English East India company in the 18th century.
- Its control was transferred from EIC to the British government of India in the 19th century.
- Britishers established a penal colony (prison to keep political dissenters) in the Andaman and the Coco islands were a source of food for them (mainly coconut).
- Due to the remoteness of the Coco islands, it was difficult for Britishers to govern them.
- In 1882, the Britishers transferred the control of Coco islands to the British government of Burma.
- After separation of Burma from India in 1937, these islands became part of Burmese territory.
- Japan during World War 2 occupied these islands, along with the Andaman islands.
- After Japanese vacated these islands, the control of Coco islands were retained by independent Burma in 1948 (Burma got its independence from Britishers in 1948).
- After the 1962 military coup in Myanmar, a penal colony was established by its military in these islands.
- Later on, Myanmar Navy developed a naval base there.

- In 1994, China got these islands on lease from the Myanmar military.
- However, both countries deny any such agreement at all.

### Strategic Importance of Cocos Islands

- The islands have an immense strategic advantage in the region, considering their proximity to the strait of Malacca which is a crucial point for the global supply routes of oil from the Gulf.
- Around 40% of global trade passes through Malacca strait. Considering China's military build-up in the South China Sea, it is evident that China wants to control its major trade routes.



### 3. Which of the following are Key differences between “Look East Policy” and “Act East Policy”?

1. The focus of the “Look East Policy ” was to increase economic integration with the Southeast Asian countries and the area was confined to Southeast Asia only.

2. The focus of the “Act East Policy” is economic and security integration and the focus area increased to Southeast Asia as well as East Asia.

**Which of the above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer : C**

**Explanation**

- The focus of the “Look East Policy ” was to increase economic integration with the Southeast Asian countries and the area was confined to Southeast Asia only.
- On the other hand, the focus of the “Act East Policy” is economic and security integration and the focus area increased to Southeast Asia as well as East Asia.

**4. With Regards to Djibouti, which of the below mentioned statements are Incorrect**

- A. Djibouti is a small African country in the region known as the Horn of Africa.
- B. It sits at an incredibly strategic point for shipping – all ships (many carrying oil) that pass through the Suez Canal (connecting Asia and Europe) and the Red Sea get within 10 miles of Djibouti.
- C. China is the Only Country Presently which has a Naval base in Djibouti
- D. Recently a, Russian request to establish its military base in Djibouti was rejected by the Djiboutian authorities

**Answer : C**

**Explanation**

**Strategic Location: Djibouti**



**Facts On Djibouti**

- Djibouti is a small African country in the region known as the Horn of Africa.
- It sits at an incredibly strategic point for shipping – all ships (many carrying oil) that pass through the Suez Canal (connecting Asia and Europe) and the Red Sea get within 10 miles of Djibouti.
- Because of its strategic location for commerce, the country has attracted the eyes of foreign military powers keen on protecting their nation’s interests.
- US, France, Japan and China all have significant permanent military bases in the small African country.

**Strategic Importance of Djibouti Amidst Sudan Crisis**

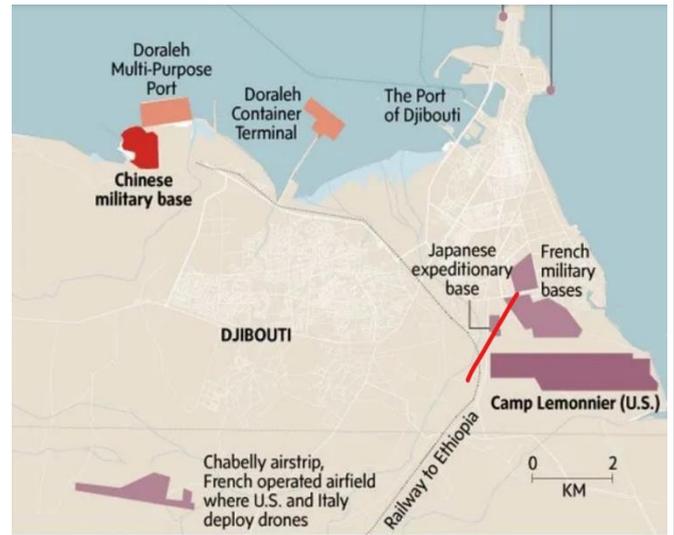
- **A Strategic Military Estate:**
  - Djibouti is known as the ‘most valuable military real estate in the world’.
  - It hosts the military bases of the United States (US), China,

France, Japan and European Union.

- During 2007-12 Piracy was at its peak in the Gulf of Aden.
- It was during this time Djibouti became significant.
- Many major global powers sent their vessels to fight piracy including China and Japan.

### Strategic Location: Djibouti

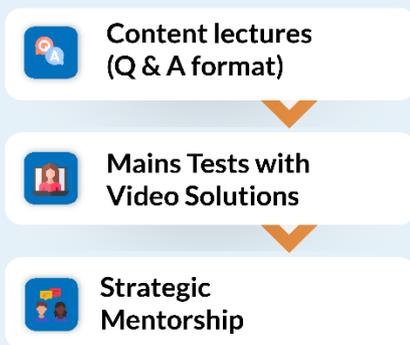
- This tiny East African country is located at the crossroads of Asia, Africa, and the Indian Ocean.
- Djibouti lacks resources and instead survives on the rents paid by major global players for their military bases.
- *Djibouti is a window through which the evolving geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific region could be observed.*



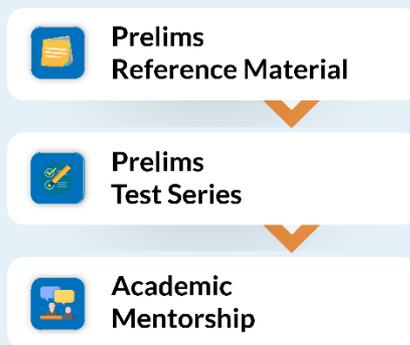
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**5. Statement 1-** The Washington Declaration advocates for nuclear deterrence policy in the region, aiming to balance power dynamics against North Korea.

**Statement 2-** USA been reluctant to allow South Korea to develop their own nuclear arsenal as it would hinder the prolonged efforts of controlling nuclear production in the world.

**Which of the Above is Correct?**

- A. Statement 1 is Correct & Statement 2 is Incorrect
- B. Statement 1 is Incorrect & Statement 2 is Correct
- C. Both Statements are Correct & Statement 2 is the Correct Explanation of Statement 1
- D. Both Statements are Correct & Statement 2 is the Incorrect Explanation of Statement 1

**Answer : C**

**Explanation**

- South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol visited the U.S. to commemorate the 70th anniversary of U.S.-South Korea bilateral relations.
- A highlight of the visit was the signing of the “Washington Declaration” as a nuclear deterrence strategy.
- **The Washington Declaration advocates for nuclear deterrence policy in the region, aiming to balance power dynamics against North Korea.**

**What is Washington Declaration?**

- Washington Declaration outlines a cooperation towards creating nuclear deterrence.
- This declaration was signed between the US and South Korea, during recent visit of South Korean President to the US.

**Key Highlights of The Declaration**

- An American nuclear ballistic submarine would be deployed in the Korean peninsula
- A nuclear consultative group would be formed to formulate principles of joint response tactics;
- South Korea would receive Intel from the U.S. regarding nuclear advancements;

The U.S. will strengthen South Korea’s nuclear deterrence capabilities through joint military training programs and an annual intergovernmental simulation.

**Date - 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**1. Consider the Following Statements With reference to “State Visit”**

1. They are officially described as a “visit of [name of state]” rather than “visit of [name of leader]”
2. These visits to the US only occur on the invitation of the president of the United States.
3. Every visit by a foreign leader a state visit.
4. The last state visit to the US by an Indian was by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh from November 23 to 25, 2009.

Which of the Above is/ are correct

- A. 1,2,3
- B. 3 & 4
- C. 1,2 & 4
- D. All of the Above

Answer : C

Explanation

- Narendra Modi's first state visit to the US during his nine-year long reign as prime minister.
- The last state visit to the US by an Indian was by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh from November 23 to 25, 2009.
- While PM Modi has visited the US multiple times during his tenure, none of the visits were categorized as a state visit, which is the highest ranked visit according to diplomatic protocol.
- State visits are visits to foreign countries led by a head of state/government, acting in their sovereign capacity.
- They are, therefore, officially described as a "visit of [name of state]" rather than "visit of [name of leader]".
- **State visits to the US only occur on the invitation of the president of the United States, acting in their capacity as the head of state.**
- State visits are the highest-ranked category of foreign visits with great ceremonial importance and are considered to be the highest expression of friendly bilateral relations.

- However, these are relatively rare, primarily to maintain their prestige and symbolic status.
- For instance, according to US's diplomatic policy, the president can **host no more than one leader from any nation** once every four years.
- Less important visits are classified (in descending order of magnitude, according to US diplomatic policy) as official visits, **official working visits, working visits, guest-of-government visits, and private visits**
- The major difference between these visits and a state visit is that state visits are made in sovereign capacity with only the head of state (head of government in case of parliamentary democracies due to the ceremonial nature of their heads of state) allowed to make the visits.
- **Other visits can be made by a number of other important leaders including crown princes, vice-presidents, ceremonial heads of state, etc.**

---

2. Miyako Strait was in the news recently. The strait is located between

- A. Japan and South Korea
- B. China and Philippines
- C. Malaysia and Indonesia
- D. Japan and China

Answer : D

Explanation



### Political Significance of Miyako Strait

- The Miyako Strait is of global geopolitical significance, as it is one of the few international waterways for China's People's Liberation Army Navy to access the Pacific Ocean from the East China Sea.
- The PLA Navy used the strait on a large scale for the first time in April 2010, an act which has since become a commonplace practice for them to conduct military exercises in the Pacific.
- Miyako Strait represents a cultural and linguistic split between the Southern and Northern Ryukyuan languages, with the north being more influenced by Japanese culture.
- The Northern Ryukyu Islands have historically been more advanced (socially, technologically, and infrastructurally) than the Southern Ryukyu Islands.

### 3. Which of the following is NOT a correct statement about the Wagner Group?

- The Wagner Group is a private military company that is not officially affiliated with the Russian government.
- The Wagner Group is believed to be funded by Yevgeny Prigozhin, a close associate of Russian President Vladimir Putin.
- The Wagner Group has been sanctioned by the United States and the European Union.
- The Wagner Group is a legitimate business that provides security services to governments and businesses around the world.

**Answer: D**

#### Explanation

- The Wagner Group is a controversial organization that has been accused of human rights abuses and war crimes.
- It is not a legitimate business, and it is not officially affiliated with the Russian government.
- However, it is believed to be funded by Yevgeny Prigozhin, a close associate of Russian President Vladimir Putin.
- The Wagner Group has been sanctioned by the United States and the European Union.

#### Wagner Group

- Is a Russian paramilitary organisation.
- It is described as a private military company (PMC).
- The group came to global prominence during the war in Donbas in Ukraine,

where it aided separatist forces of the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics from 2014 to 2015.

- It participated in the annexation of Crimea.
- **Its contractors have reportedly taken part in various conflicts around the world—including the civil wars in Syria, Libya, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Mali, often fighting on the side of forces aligned with the Russian government.**

---

4. Which of the following is NOT a correct statement about Captagon?

- A. Captagon is a drug that is often used by terrorists and insurgents.
- B. Captagon is a Schedule IV drug in the United States
- C. Originally developed for medical purposes, Captagon contains the active ingredient fenethylamine
- D. Captagon has gained particular attention due to its illicit production and trafficking in some regions, notably in the Sahel Region of Africa.

Answer: D

Explanation

- Captagon is a stimulant drug that is addictive.
- It is also a Schedule IV drug in the United States, which means that it has a low potential for abuse but can still be habit-forming.
- Captagon pills are a type of **amphetamine-based stimulant drug.**

- Originally developed for **medical purposes, Captagon contains the active ingredient fenethylamine.**

What are Captagon Pills?

- It was initially used to treat conditions such as narcolepsy and **attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).**
  - However, it has gained notoriety as a recreational drug due to its stimulant and euphoric effects.
  - Captagon pills are known to **increase energy, alertness, and focus while reducing fatigue and appetite.**
  - **They can induce feelings of euphoria, confidence, and heightened sociability.**
- In recent years, Captagon has gained particular attention due to its illicit production and trafficking in some regions, notably in the Middle East.
  - **It has been reported that the drug is sometimes used by fighters in conflict zones to enhance endurance and suppress fear.**
  - The illegal production and trade of Captagon have contributed to concerns about its widespread use and potential social and health consequences.

---

5. Which of the following is correct with reference to the Helmand River?

1. The Helmand River is the longest river in Afghanistan

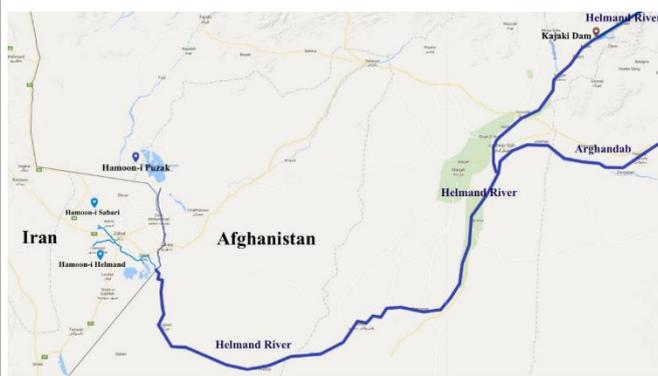
2. The Helmand River flows through the Kandahar and Helmand provinces of Afghanistan.
  3. The Helmand River is a major source of drinking water for the people of Afghanistan.
  4. The Helmand River originates in the Hindu Kush Mountains
- A. Only 1 Statement is Correct  
B. Only 2 Statements are Correct  
C. Only 3 Statements are Correct  
D. All 4 statements are correct

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

**Helmand River**

- The Helmand River, originating in the **Sanglakh Range of the Hindu Kush mountains**, is Afghanistan's longest river.
- It plays a significant role as the primary watershed for the **Endorheic Sistan Basin**.
- It is geographically separated from the watershed of the **Kabul River** by the **Unai Pass**.
- **The river's waters are crucial for supporting agriculture, livelihoods, and ecosystems in the region.**



- The Helmand River is not a major source of drinking water for the people of Afghanistan.

The river is heavily polluted, and it is not safe to drink the water.

**Date - 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**1. Consider the following countries:**

1. Australia
2. Canada
3. India
4. Japan

**How many of the above countries are members of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership?**

- A. Only one  
B. Only two  
C. Only three  
D. All four

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**

- Britain agreed to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific

Partnership (CPTPP), a trade pact based around the Pacific rim, as it seeks to build ties around the world after leaving the European Union.

- CPTPP is a free trade agreement (FTA) that was agreed in 2018 between 11 countries – Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.
- It does not have a single market for goods or services, and so regulatory harmonisation is not required, unlike the European Union.
- Britain will become the 12th member, and the first to join since the partnership since its inception.

### What is CPTPP?

- The Trans-Pacific Partnership was signed by *only 12 member* nations of Pacific rim (*except China and Russia*).
- **Initially the Members were: Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Vietnam.**
- *USA withdrew from TPP from January 2017.*
- The remaining countries negotiated a new trade agreement called *Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership*.
- This incorporates most of the provisions of the TPP and which entered into force on 30 December 2018.



### 2. The Atlantic Declaration aims to:

- Strengthen the "special relationship" between the United States and the United Kingdom
- Address global challenges posed by Russia, China, disruptive technologies, non-state actors, and transnational issues like climate change
- Both (A) and (B)
- None of the above.

Answer : C

### Explanation

- During a White House summit, **US President Joe Biden and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak** unveiled a new strategic pact aimed at bolstering the longstanding "**special relationship**" between their countries.
- The pact is designed to address the threats posed by Russia, China, and economic volatility.
- Key discussions between President Biden and Prime Minister Sunak

covered significant topics including Russia's incursion into Ukraine and the impact of artificial intelligence.

- As part of this pact, the leaders adopted an "Atlantic Declaration" to **strengthen industry collaborations** in the defence and renewable energy sectors.

### What is the Atlantic Declaration?

- "The Atlantic Declaration: A Framework for a Twenty first Century US-UK Economic Partnership"
- It is a new type of innovative partnership to cover all areas of cooperation **including technology, economy and trade.**
- The declaration acknowledges **the various challenges to global stability** arising from authoritarian regimes, disruptive technologies, non-state

actors, and transnational issues such as climate change.

- The objective is to **enhance cooperation between the United States and the United Kingdom** in order to effectively tackle these challenges.

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**3. Consider the following statements with reference to Balfour Declaration:**

1. The Balfour Declaration was significant because it was the first time a major world power had publicly supported the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.
2. It also helped to lay the groundwork for the eventual establishment of the state of Israel.

**Which of the above is/are correct?**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: C**

**Explanation**



- The Balfour Declaration was issued after Britain gained control with the

aim of establishing a home for the Jews in Palestine.

- However during that period the Arabs were in majority in Palestine.
- Jews favored the idea while the Palestinians rejected it.
- Almost 6 million Jews lost their lives in the Holocaust which also ignited further demand of a separate Jewish state.
- The Balfour Declaration was a letter written by Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, to Lord Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community.
- The letter, which was dated November 2, 1917, expressed British support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.
- First it was the first time that a major world power had publicly expressed support for the Zionist movement.
- Second, the declaration helped to pave the way for the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.
- Third, the declaration has been a source of controversy ever since it was issued, as it has been seen by some as a betrayal of the Palestinian people.

**4. Which of the following is not a challenge to US hegemony?**

- A. The rise of China as a global economic power.
- B. The increasing fragmentation of the international system.
- C. The spread of terrorism.

D. The growing power of non-state actors.

**Answer : B**

**Explanation**

- The increasing fragmentation of the international system is not a challenge to US hegemony.
- In fact, it could be seen as an opportunity for the United States to maintain its dominant position by playing different states off against each other.

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**5. Which of the following was the main goal of the Truman Doctrine?**

- A. To help Greece and Turkey resist communist insurgencies
- B. To contain the spread of communism in Europe
- C. To promote democracy and human rights in Europe
- D. To create a unified European market

**Answer : A**

**Explanation**

- The Truman Doctrine was a policy of the United States to provide military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey to help them resist communist insurgencies.

**Additional Information**

- The Truman Doctrine is an American foreign policy that pledges American "support for democracies against authoritarian threats."
- The doctrine originated with the primary goal of containing Soviet

geopolitical expansion during the Cold War.

- It was announced to Congress by President Harry S. Truman on March 12, 1947, and further developed on July 4, 1948, when he pledged to contain the communist uprisings in Greece and Turkey.
- Truman Doctrine implied American support for other nations threatened by Moscow.
- It became the foundation of American foreign policy, and led, in 1949, to the formation of NATO.

Historians often use Truman's March 12th, 1947, speech to Congress to date the start of the Cold War.

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