

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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Important News Articles

GS II

1. Govt. panel to study simultaneous polls to LS, State Assemblies - The Hindu/ One nation, one election: Govt sets ball rolling, with panel under Kovind - Indian Express

Relevance: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

News:

- Recently, the government has constituted a **committee to look into the 'One Nation, One Election' issue** and submit a report for a debate in Parliament.
- **Former President Ram Nath Kovind** would **head the committee** on One Nation, One Election.

Prelims Takeaway

- One nation one election
- Election commission

Background

- The Election Commission first **mooted** the idea around since at least **1983**.
- **Until 1967, simultaneous elections** were **the norm** in India.
- The **first General Elections** to the House of People (Lok Sabha) and all State Legislative Assemblies were held **simultaneously in 1951-52**.
- The **practice continued** in three subsequent General Elections held in the years **1957, 1962 and 1967**.
- However, due to the **premature dissolution of some Legislative Assemblies in 1968 and 1969, the cycle got disrupted**.
- In **1970, the Lok Sabha** was itself **dissolved prematurely** and fresh elections were held in 1971.
- As a result of **premature dissolutions and extension of terms of both the Lok Sabha and various State Legislative Assemblies**, the cycle of simultaneous elections has been disturbed.

Arguments in the favour of 'One Nation, One Election'

- To reduce the **problem in the decision-making process**.
- It helps in **reducing election expenses** for both political parties and the government
- The idea of **simultaneous elections for Parliament, State assemblies and local bodies** will:
 - Reduce expenditure
 - Ensure efficient utilisation of government resources and security forces
 - Help in effective policy planning.

Arguments against 'One Nation, One Election'

- Critics say that simultaneous elections are almost impossible **to implement**, as it would be **midterm polls in the States**, due to political instability in the States.
- **Term of Legislative Assemblies cannot be reduced**, to have simultaneous elections to Legislative Assemblies and Parliament
- There is a possibility of **midterm polls for Parliament** also, due to the ruling **party losing majority**, as it happened earlier.

2. Children from void marriages entitled to parents' share in property, says SC - The Hindu/ Child from void marriage can claim ancestral property: SC - Indian Express

Relevance: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

News:

- Recently, the Supreme Court held that a **child born of a void or voidable marriage can inherit the parent's share in a joint Hindu family property governed by the Mitakshara law**.

Prelims Takeaway

- Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005
- Voidable marriage

- A child would **not be entitled** to rights in or to the property of **any other person in the family.**

Voidable marriage

- A voidable marriage is one that is made **invalid by the husband or wife through a decree.**
- A void marriage is invalid **at the very inception.**

Legal provision for child through voidable marriage:

- **Section 16 of the Hindu Marriage Act** has statutorily conferred **legitimacy to children** born out of void or voidable marriages.
- **Section 16(3)** stipulates that children from void and voidable marriages would have a **right to their parents' property.**
- Children from void or voidable marriages come **within the ambit of "legitimate kinship"** and cannot be regarded as illegitimate by the Hindu Succession Act when it comes to inheritance.
- A child born in such a relationship is innocent and is **entitled to all the rights which are given to other children born in valid marriage** as per **Revanasidappa versus Mallikarjun case.**

Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005

- Hindu Succession Act, 1956 was amended in September 2005 and **women were recognised as coparceners for property** partitions arising from 2005.
- Section 6 of the Act was amended to make a **daughter of a coparcener also a coparcener by birth "in her own right** in the same manner as the son".
- It also **gave the daughter the same rights and liabilities** "in the coparcenary property as she would have had **if she had been a son**".
- The law applies to **ancestral property and to intestate succession** in personal property, where succession happens as per law and not through a will.

3. HC declares as null and void election of Prajwal Revanna - The Hindu

Relevance: Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.

News:

- Recently, the High Court of Karnataka on Friday declared as **null and void the election of Prajwal Revanna of Janata Dal (Secular)** for indulging in a series of **corrupt practices during the poll process.**
- He contested from Hassan Lok Sabha constituency in the **general elections held in April-May 2019.**
- The court also **rejected the plea of A. Manju**, who had then unsuccessfully contested the elections from the Bharatiya Janata Party, **to declare him as a returned candidate in place of Mr. Prajwal.**
- Mr. Manju as the returned candidate as **he too had indulged in corrupt practices.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Salient features of the Representation of People's Act
- Corrupt Practices' under the RPA, 1951

'Corrupt Practices' under the RPA, 1951

Section 123 of the Act:

- It defines '**corrupt practices**' and include:
 - Bribery
 - undue influence
 - false information
 - promotion or attempted promotion of "feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of the citizens of India on grounds of religion, race, caste, community, or language".

Section 123 (2):

- It deals with '**undue influence**' with the consent of the candidate or his election agent, with the free exercise of any electoral right."
- This could also include **threats of injury, social ostracism and expulsion from any caste or community.**

Section 123 (4):

- It **extends the ambit of "corrupt practices"** to the intentional publication of false statements which can prejudice the outcome of the candidate's election.
- Under the provisions of the Act, an elected representative can be **disqualified if convicted of certain offences** on grounds of;

- Corrupt practices
- For failing to declare election expenses
- For interests in government contracts or works.

4. NCERT given deemed-to-be university tag, says Pradhan - The Hindu

Relevance: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

News

- Recently, the Union Minister for Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship announced that **the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** has been granted the **status of deemed university**.
- The Union Minister made an announcement during an event to mark the **63rd foundation day of NCERT** in the national capital.

Prelims Takeaway

- The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) laboratory

Key Highlights

- The Council, on becoming a **research university**, will **offer opportunities for global collaborations** and contributions to the global educational landscape.
- A **play-based learning-teaching material** tailored for children between the age group of **3-8 years** developed by NCERT.
- Keeping in mind the '**Industrial revolution 4.0**', the union minister suggested developing **small booklets on varied subjects**
 - To provide the facts on the subjects such as India's Covid-19 management, Chandrayaan 3, etc.
- He also inaugurated a **new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) laboratory of the central institute of educational technology (CIET)** on the occasion.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

- The NCERT is an **autonomous organization set up in 1961** by the Government of India
- **The Executive Committee (EC) is the highest decision-making body** of NCERT and is **chaired by the Education Minister**.

Objectives

- To **assist and advise the Central and State Governments** on policies and programmes for **qualitative improvement in school education**.
- To undertake, **promote and coordinate research** in areas related to:
 - School education
 - Prepare and publish model textbooks
 - Supplementary material
 - Newsletters, journals
 - Develop educational kits, multimedia digital materials

5. Putin, Erdogan meeting amid efforts to repair Black Sea grain deal - Indian Express

Relevance: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

News:

- The **Russian President will hold talks with Turkey** in the Black Sea resort of Sochi as Ankara and the United Nations seek to **revive a Ukraine grain export deal** that helped ease a global food crisis.
- **Russia quit the deal in July** - a year after it was brokered by the United Nations and Turkey.

Prelims Takeaway

- Black sea
- Black Sea Grain Initiative

Black Sea Grain Deal

- **Ukraine is among the world's biggest exporter** of foodgrains, such as wheat and corn, and a **major contributor to the UN's food aid programmes**.

- When **Russia invaded the country** and blockaded its ports, it sent **food prices soaring and raised fears of food security** in the poorer nations of the world.
- Against this backdrop, **the UN and Turkey got Russia to agree to the Black Sea Grain Initiative.**
- In July 2022, **Russia and Ukraine signed a deal to reopen grain exports from Ukrainian Black Sea ports.**
- Under the initiative, **cargo ships would be allowed to travel from and to three Ukrainian ports** of Odesa, Chornomorsk and Pivdennyi (Yuzhny), after inspection that they weren't carrying arms.
- A **control centre** was established in **Istanbul**, staffed by U.N., Turkish, Russian and Ukrainian officials, to run and coordinate the process.
- The deal has been extended twice, and **expired on July 17.**

Why has Russia not agreed to renew it?

- Russia claims that the **promises made to it under the deal have not been met.**
- Russia own **food and fertiliser exports faced obstacles**
- Not enough Ukrainian grain was going to countries in need rather **exported mainly to high-and middle-income countries.**
- While there is no direct restriction on Russia's agricultural products, barriers on **payment platforms, insurance, shipping and other logistics are hampering its exports.**
- One of Moscow's main demands is for the **Russian Agricultural Bank to be reconnected to the SWIFT international payments system.**
 - The EU cut it off in June 2022.

GS III

6. European agency to support Aditya-L1 - The Hindu

Relevance: Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

News

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** is all set to launch the **Aditya-L1 solar mission** from the launch pad at **Sriharikota** in Andhra Pradesh.
- The **European Space Agency (ESA)** is supporting Aditya-L1, providing **deep space communication services** to the mission.
- Earlier, it had provided **crucial support to ISRO to monitor the Chandrayaan-3's health.**

Support for Aditya L1 Mission

- ESA is **providing support** from all three of its **35-metre deep space antennas** over **Australia, Spain and Argentina.**
- Also from the **Kourou station in French Guiana** and coordinated support from the **Goonhilly Earth Station in the UK.**
- ESA stations will **support the mission from beginning to end**
 - From the critical 'Launch and Early Orbit Phase', throughout the journey to L1, and then to send commands to and receive science data from Aditya-L1.
- ESA's global network of **deep space tracking stations** and use of **internationally recognised technical standards** allows to **track, command and receive data** from their spacecraft **almost anywhere in the solar system.**

Aditya-L1 Mission

- To be launched by **ISRO** to the **L1 orbit** which is about **1.5 million km from the Earth.**
- The orbit allows Aditya-L1 to **look at the Sun continuously** without any occultation/eclipses.

Objective

- To study the **Sun's corona, Sun's photosphere, chromosphere, solar emissions, solar winds and flares and Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs).**
- To carry out **round-the-clock imaging of the Sun.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Aditya-L1 Mission
- Lagrange Points
- ISRO

Launch Vehicle and Payloads

- **Launch Vehicle:** Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)
 - Previous Launches
 - Chandrayaan-1 in 2008
 - Mars Orbiter spacecraft in 2013
- **7 payloads (instruments)** on board viz.
 - Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC)
 - Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT)
 - Solar Low Energy X-ray Spectrometer (SoLEXS)
 - Aditya Solar wind Particle Experiment (ASPEX)
 - High Energy L1 Orbiting X-ray Spectrometer (HEL1OS)
 - Plasma Analyser Package for Aditya (PAPA)
 - Advanced Tri-axial High Resolution Digital Magnetometers

What is L1?

- It refers to **Lagrangian/Lagrange Point 1**, one of the five points in the **orbital plane of the Earth-Sun system**.
- These are **positions in space** where the combined **gravitational pull of two large masses roughly balance each other**.
- These can be used by spacecraft to **reduce fuel consumption** needed to remain in position.

7. Indian Navy's stealth frigate Mahendragiri launched - The Hindu

Relevance: Defence

News

- Recently, the **seventh and last stealth frigate** of **Project 17A, Mahendragiri**, was launched into water by the wife of Vice-President of India at **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai**.
- Under **Project 17A**, a total of **seven ships were constructed**, four at MDL and three at Garden Reach Ship Builders Limited (GRSE), Kolkata.

Prelims Takeaway

- Mahendragiri Hills
- Mahendragiri Frigate
- Project 17A

Mahendragiri Frigate

- It is the **seventh and last stealth frigate** of **Project 17A Frigates**.
- It is named after a **mountain peak in Eastern Ghats located in Odisha**.
- The ship is being built by the **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai**.

Mahendragiri Hills

- Mahendragiri is a mountain in the **Rayagada subdivision** of the **district of Gajapati, Odisha**.
- It is situated amongst the **Eastern Ghats** at an elevation of 1,501 metres.
- The hill and its surrounding areas are recognized as a **biodiversity hot spot** due to **numerous medicinal plants and other species** that are found here.
- It is inhabited by the **Soura people, a particularly vulnerable tribal group** as well as the **Kandha tribe**.

Project 17 Alpha Frigates

- P-17A was launched by the **Indian Navy in 2019** to construct a series of **stealth guided-missile frigates**.
- These are currently being **constructed by two companies** viz.
 - Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL)
 - Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)
- **Six P17A Project ships** have been **launched so far** between 2019 and 2023.
 - These were 'Nilgiri', 'Himgiri', 'Udaygiri', 'Dunagiri', 'Taragiri' and 'Vindhyagiri'.

Key Features

- These guided-missile frigates have been constructed with a **specific stealth design**.
- Project 17A frigates are the **follow-on Class of Project 17 'Shivalik Class' frigates**, with **improved stealth features, advanced weapons, sensors and platform-management systems**.

- It has **radar-absorbent coatings** and is **low-observable** which can make its **approach undetectable** for the enemies.
- It also reduces the **infrared signals of the ship**.
- As much as **75% of the orders for equipment and systems** of Project 17A ships are from **indigenous firms, including MSMEs**.
- The **economic development, employment generation, growth of MSMEs and ancillary industry** in the country are **positive spin-offs of the shipbuilding project**.

8. Seven years on, mission to clean the Ganga remains a work in progress - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

News:

- Since the government unveiled its ambitious **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)**, it has **installed treatment plants** capable of treating just **20% of the sewage**.
- This is expected to **increase to about 33% by 2024** and it is projected that treatment plants will be capable of **treating 60% of sewage by December 2026**.
- These calculations are premised on **sewage being generated** in the five States viz. **Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal**, through which the river courses.

Prelims Takeaway

- Ganga River
- National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)

- **Establishment:** 12th August 2011 under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860** as a registered society.
- It is implemented by the **National Council for Rejuvenation, Protection and Management of River Ganga** also known as the **National Ganga Council**.
- **Mandate:** To plan, execute, monitor and coordinate various activities under the Namami Gange programme.

Objectives

- To **rehabilitate and boost the existing STPs** (Sewage Treatment Plants) and **instant short-term steps to curb pollution** at exit points on the riverfront.
- To maintain the **continuity of the water flow** without changing the natural season variations.
- To **restore and maintain the surface flow and groundwater**.
- To **regenerate and maintain the natural vegetation** of the area.
- To **conserve and regenerate the aquatic biodiversity** as well as the **riparian biodiversity** of the river Ganga basin.
- To allow **participation of the public** in the process of protection, rejuvenation and management of the river.

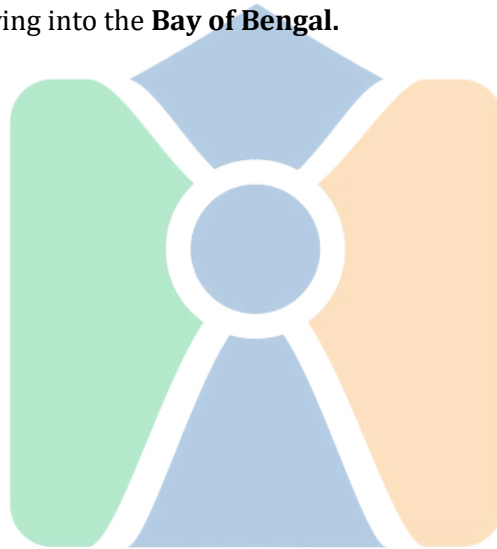
Signs of improvement

- **Rise in the dolphin population**, both adult and juvenile, from 2,000 to about 4,000.
- Presence of dolphins in **new stretches of the river** as well as in **tributaries** of the Ganga.
- Fishermen are also reporting the **increased presence of Indian carp** [a fish species] that **only thrives in clean water**.

River Ganga

- It is the **longest river of India** and is revered by Hindus as the **most sacred river on earth**.
- It originates in the snowfields of the **Gangotri Glacier** in the Himalayas.
 - At its source, the river is called the **Bhagirathi**.
 - It descends down the valley upto **Devprayag** where after joining another hill stream **Alaknanda**, it is called **Ganga**.

- The Ganga basin **outspreads** in **India, Tibet (China), Nepal and Bangladesh** over an area of 10,86,000 Sq.km.
- **Drainage Basin:** Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh and Union Territory of Delhi draining nearly 26% of the total geographical area of the country.
- **Tributaries**
 - **Right Tributaries:** The Yamuna and the Son
 - **Left tributaries:** The Ramganga, the Ghaghra, the Gandak, the Kosi and the Mahananda
 - **Sub Tributaries:** The Chambal and the Betwa
- The Ganga River basin is one of the **most fertile and densely populated areas** of the world.
- The **Ganges River Dolphin** is an **endangered animal** that specifically habitats this river.
- The Ganga **joins the Brahmaputra in Bangladesh** and continues its run under the name **Padma or Ganga**.
- The Ganga widens out into the **Ganges Delta in the Sundarbans** swamp of Bangladesh, before it ends its journey by emptying into the **Bay of Bengal**.



Mentorship
India

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. Missing in G20: Road safety - Indian Express

Relevance: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Context:

- **Death toll in road crashes** in India and several other developing countries **continues to be high**.
- It is high time to **remind all global stakeholders to pay special attention to road safety**.

World Bank on Road Safety

- The World Bank notes that **improving road safety in India** is vital to the **nation's health, well-being and economic growth**.
- The **already-deprived sections of society** are the **most vulnerable to road crashes**.
 - They include road users like pedestrians, cyclists, two-wheelers and unprotected children.
- Close to **70% of the fatalities on the roads** are people belonging to the **economically productive section** of the population.

Road Safety and G20 Platform

- Road safety is intrinsically linked with the G20's main agenda of economic growth and prosperity.
- However, the issue does not seem to have received headline space on the group's agenda so far.
- In 2016, international road safety organisations requested G20 leaders to support the UN goal of halving the death toll on roads by 2030.
- The proposal, however, did not go much further.
- The ongoing events of the G20 under India's presidency raise fresh hopes of tackling the persisting challenges of road safety.

Steps taken by India for Road Safety

- In 2019, India enacted the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act 2019
- If systematically implemented, it would make the country's roads significantly safer.
- However, several well-framed public programmes do not give the desired results
 - Either their implementation is not systematically monitored and evaluated or the accountability is not fixed.
- The Centre and some state governments do have an excellent record in completing development projects, including by making imaginative use of information technology.
- Even then, the UN goal of halving deaths and serious injuries on roads by 2030 appears difficult.
- Many of the affected countries, including India, despite their sincere efforts, have not been able to curb the number of road crashes appreciably.

India's Role in ensuring Road Safety

- India's response to the Covid-19 pandemic is a good example of its ability to effectively deal with difficult challenges.
- As a country where road safety is an issue of serious concern, India can initiate conversations and steer the G20's resources towards collective scrutiny of ideas and practices that can bring meaningful change.
- Initiatives that can be promoted by India during the G20 summit
 - Initiating a special meeting to formally take note of this grave challenge and deliberate on possible result-oriented solutions.
 - Partnering G20 members with commendable road safety records with countries struggling to tackle this challenge.
 - Instituting a road safety fund (G20 RSF) to help countries reduce road crashes significantly.
 - Evaluating the progress over a six-month cycle and releasing future financial aid according to the effective utilisation of funds.
 - Considering privatisation of road safety systems in accident-prone areas and highways by countries that receive the G20 RSF.
 - G20 should urge the countries concerned to frame a plan that sets targets for reducing the number of road accidents.
 - The project should be equipped with adequate resources and given administrative freedom without compromising on accountability.

Conclusion

- It is expected that the **G20 under India's presidency will frame a road safety action-plan** and agree upon **developing an institutional mechanism** for this purpose.
- Such an approach could **make the roads** of large parts of **low- and middle-income countries safer**.
- This would add a **feather in the cap of the current G20's theme** of "One Earth, One Family, One Future".

2. Special session of Parliament - Indian Express

Relevance: Parliament and State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

Context:

- Recently, the **Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs**, announced that a “**special session**” of **Parliament** would be held from **September 18 to 22**.
- The announcement has led to **speculation about the government’s legislative plans** for the session.

When does Parliament meet?

- India’s Parliament has no fixed calendar of sittings.
- In 1955, a Lok Sabha committee had proposed a timetable for parliamentary sessions.
- It recommended
 - The Budget session of Parliament to begin on February 1 and go on till May 7
 - The Monsoon session to start on July 15 and end on September 15.
 - The Winter session to commence on November 5 (or the fourth day after Diwali, whichever is later) and finish on December 22.
- While the government agreed to this calendar, it was never implemented.

Who decides when Parliament meets?

- The government determines the date and duration of parliamentary sessions.
- The Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs takes this decision.
- The President is informed about the Committee’s decision, who then summons Members of Parliament to meet for the session.

What does the Constitution say?

- The Constitution specifies that six months should not elapse between two parliamentary sessions.
- The framers of the Constitution borrowed it from the Government of India Act of 1935.
- It allowed the British Governor General to call a session of the central legislature at his discretion.
 - However, requiring that the gap between two sessions should not be more than 12 months.
- The Constituent Assembly reduced the gap between sessions to six months.

How often do Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha meet?

- Before independence, the central assembly met for a little more than 60 days a year.
- This number increased to 120 days a year in the first 20 years after Independence.
- Since then, the sitting days of the national legislature have declined.
- Between 2002 and 2021, Lok Sabha averaged 67 working days.
- The situation in state legislatures is much worse.
 - In 2022, 28 state Assemblies met for 21 days on average.
- This year, Parliament has met for 42 days so far.
- The conference of presiding officers has recommended that Parliament should meet for more than 100 days on various occasions..
- The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution set up in 2000 made a similar recommendation.
- Individual MPs have introduced private member Bills that stipulated increased sitting days for Parliament.
- The US Congress and parliaments of Canada, Germany, and the UK are in session throughout the year.
- Their calendar of sitting days is fixed at the beginning of the year.

Special Session of Parliament

- The Constitution does not use the term “special session”.
- It refers to sessions the government has convened for specific occasions, like commemorating parliamentary or national milestones.
- For the two Houses to be in session, the presiding officers should chair their proceedings.
- The presiding officers can also direct that the proceedings of their respective Houses would be limited.
- The procedural devices like question hour may not be available to MPs during the session.
- However, Article 352 (Proclamation of Emergency) of the Constitution does refer to a “special sitting of the House”.
 - Its purpose was to add safeguards to the power of proclaiming Emergency in the country.

Quick Look

1. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)

- It is an American animal rights organization led by Ingrid Newkirk, its international president.
- The nonprofit corporation claims 6.5 million supporters.
- It focuses on four core issues viz. opposition to factory farming, fur farming, animal testing, and the use of animals in entertainment.
- It also campaigns for a vegan lifestyle and against eating meat, fishing, the killing of animals regarded as pests, the keeping of chained backyard dogs, cock fighting, dog fighting, beekeeping, and bullfighting.

2. Mangri Orang

- Mangri Orang is an unsung hero of India's struggle for freedom from British rule.
- She was gunned down in 1921 for leading a fight against foreign liquor and opium pushed during the colonial period
- She is said to be the first female martyr of India's freedom movement.

3. Dasara Festival

- Mysore Dasara is the "Nadahabha" or the state festival of Karnataka.
- It is celebrated for 10 days and concludes with Vijayadashami.
- In Mysuru, Dasara marks the slaying of demon Mahishasura by Goddess Chamundeshwari and symbolises the triumph of good over evil.
- The world-famous Jambhoosavari (Mysore Dasara procession) is held on the street of Mysore city on Vijayadashami.
- The idol of the Goddess Chamundeshwari is placed on a golden mantapa on the top of a decorated elephant.
- Though the festival is celebrated across India, Dasara in Mysuru is a legacy of the Vijayanagara emperors who ruled between the 14th and 17th centuries.

4. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

- In India, the GST Bill was first introduced in 2014 as The Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill.
- This got an approval in 2016 and was renumbered in the statute by Rajya Sabha as The Constitution (101st Amendment) Act, 2016.
- It is a value-added tax levied on most goods and services sold for domestic consumption. The GST is paid by consumers, but it is remitted to the government by the businesses selling the goods and services.
- GST is applicable on 'supply' of goods or services as against the old concept on the manufacture of goods or on sale of goods or on provision of services.
- GST is based on the principle of destination-based consumption taxation as against the present principle of origin-based taxation.
- It is a dual GST with the Centre and the States simultaneously levying tax on a common base.
- The GST to be levied by the Centre is called Central GST (CGST) and that to be levied by the States is called State GST (SGST).
- Import of goods or services would be treated as inter-state supplies and would be subject to Integrated Goods & Services Tax (IGST) in addition to the applicable customs duties.
- CGST, SGST & IGST are levied at rates to be mutually agreed upon by the Centre and the States.
- The schedule or list of items that would fall under these multiple slabs are worked out by the GST council.

5. Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) project

- It is an international network of laboratories that detect gravitational waves.
 - Gravitational waves were first postulated (1916) in Albert Einstein's General Theory of Relativity, which explains how gravity works.
 - These waves are produced by the movement of massive celestial bodies., such as black holes or neutron stars, and are the ripples in spacetime that propagate outward.
- LIGOs are designed to measure changes in distance that are several orders of magnitude smaller than the length of the proton.
- Such high precision Instruments are needed because of the extremely low strength of gravitational waves that make their detection very difficult.

6. Entazia

- It is a bio fungicide crop protection product formulated with Bacillus subtilis.
- It was developed by FMC India.
- It will provide farmers with a powerful and sustainable tool to protect their crops from fungi while maintaining environmental integrity.
- It leverages the natural capabilities of Bacillus subtilis to control bacterial leaf blight, one of the most serious diseases of rice.
- By fostering a healthy plant microbiome, it bolsters plants' resilience to stress factors and contributes to overall growth and vigour.

7. India's First AI School

- Launched by Santhigiri Vidhyabhavan in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- This establishment is the result of a collaboration between iLearning Engines (ILE) USA and Vedhik eSchool.
- The school's curriculum aligns with the National School Accreditation Standards, which are based on the New National Education Policy (NEP 2020).
- Objective: Deepening students' understanding of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and advanced technologies, enhancing their learning journey.
- It seamlessly integrates AI components such as machine learning, natural language processing, and data analysis into various educational facets like curriculum design, personalised assessments, and student support.

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Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following statements with reference to One Nation, One Election

1. It will reduce the problem in the decision-making process.
2. It helps in reducing election expenses for both political parties and the government
3. It will ensure efficient utilisation of government resources and security forces
4. It will reduce the term of Legislative Assemblies.

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

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

Q2. Consider the following statements about Hindu Succession Act, 2005

1. The act recognises women as coparceners for property partitions arising from 2005.
2. The law applies to ancestral property and to intestate succession in personal property, where succession happens as per law and not through a will.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Q3. Consider the following statements

1. In India, there is no law restricting the candidates from contesting in one Lok Sabha election from three constituencies.
2. In the 1991 Lok Sabha Election, Shri Devi Lal contested from three Lok Sabha constituencies.
3. As per the existing rules, if a candidate contests in one Lok Sabha election from many constituencies, his/her party should bear the cost of bye-elections to the constituencies vacated by him/her winning in all the constituencies.

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

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

Q4. With reference to The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), consider the following statements:

1. It was set up in 1961 under the ministry of education to undertake, promote and coordinate research in areas related to school education and prepare and publish model textbooks.
2. The Executive Committee (EC) is the highest decision-making body of NCERT and is chaired by the Education Minister.

Which one of the following statements is correct?

- (a) Statement I is correct but statement II is incorrect
- (b) Statement I is incorrect but Statement II is correct
- (c) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II is the correct explanation for Statement I
- (d) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II is not the correct explanation for Statement I

Q5. Consider the following countries

- (a) Bulgaria
- (b) Ukraine
- (c) Turkey
- (d) Serbia

How many of the countries mentioned above shares boundaries with the black sea?

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

Q6. Consider the following statements on India's first Mission to the Sun

Statement I: Aditya-L1 is able to look at the Sun continuously without any eclipses.

Statement II: Aditya-L1 to be launched by ISRO will be placed in the point L1.

Which one of the following statements is correct?

- (a) Statement I is correct but statement II is incorrect
- (b) Statement I is incorrect but Statement II is correct
- (c) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II is the correct explanation for Statement I
- (d) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II is not the correct explanation for Statement I

Q7. The 'Project 17A' seen in the news recently is associated with

- (a) Aircraft Carriers
- (b) Fighter Jets
- (c) Frigates
- (d) Destroyers

Q8. Consider the following statements with reference to the River Ganga

- 1. It originates from the Gangotri Glacier in the Indian state of Uttarakhand.
- 2. The Ganges River Dolphin is an endangered animal that specifically inhabits this river.
- 3. The Ganga basin outspreads in India and Bangladesh only.
- 4. The Yamuna and The Ramganga are some of its left bank tributaries.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

Q9. Consider the following statements with reference to the World Bank on Road safety

- 1. According to the World Bank, improving road safety in India is vital to the nation's health, well-being and economic growth.
- 2. The already-deprived sections of society are the most vulnerable to road crashes.
- 3. Close to 70% of the fatalities on the roads are people belonging to the economically productive section of the population.

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

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

Q10. Consider the following statements

- 1. The Indian constitution clearly mentions the conduct of a special session of Parliament.
- 2. The Indian Constitution specifies that six months should not elapse between two parliamentary sessions.

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

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

Prelims Track Answer**Ans. 1 Option C is correct****Explanation**

- The Election Commission first mooted the idea around since at least 1983.
- Until 1967, simultaneous elections were the norm in India.
- The first General Elections to the House of People (Lok Sabha) and all State Legislative Assemblies were held simultaneously in 1951-52.

Arguments in the favour of 'One Nation, One Election

- To reduce the problem in the decision-making process. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It helps in reducing election expenses for both political parties and the government. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The idea of simultaneous elections for Parliament, State assemblies and local bodies will:
 - Reduce expenditure
 - Ensure efficient utilisation of government resources and security forces. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
 - Help in effective policy planning.

Arguments against 'One Nation, One Election

- Terms of Legislative Assemblies cannot be reduced, to have simultaneous elections to Legislative Assemblies and Parliament. **Hence statement 4 is incorrect.**

Ans. 2 Option D is correct**Explanation**

- Hindu Succession Act, 1956 was amended in September 2005 and women were recognised as coparceners for property partitions arising from 2005. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Section 6 of the Act was amended to make a daughter of a coparcener also a coparcener by birth "in her own right in the same manner as the son".
- It also gave the daughter the same rights and liabilities "in the coparcenary property as she would have had if she had been a son".
- The law applies to ancestral property and to intestate succession in personal property, where succession happens as per law and not through a will. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

Ans. 3 Option A is correct**Explanation**

- In 1996, the Representation of the People Act, 1951 was amended to restrict from 'three' to 'two' the number of seats one candidate could contest in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- In 1991, Shri Devi Lal contested three Lok Sabha seats, Sikar, Rohtak and Ferozepur seats. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Whenever a candidate contests from more than one seat and wins more than one, the candidate has to retain only one, forcing bypolls in the rest.
- It results in an unavoidable financial burden on the public exchequer, government manpower and other resources for holding by-election against the resultant vacancy. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

Ans. 4 Option B is correct**Explanation**

- The NCERT is an autonomous organization set up in 1961 by the Government of India. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- The Executive Committee (EC) is the highest decision-making body of NCERT and is chaired by the Education Minister. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Objectives
 - To assist and advise the Central and State Governments on policies and programmes for qualitative improvement in school education.
 - To undertake, promote and coordinate research in areas related to:
 - School education
 - Prepare and publish model textbooks
 - Supplementary material
 - Newsletters, journals

Ans. 5 Option C is correct**Explanation**

- The Black Sea, also known as the Euxine Sea, is one of the major water bodies and a famous inland sea of the world.
- It is surrounded by the Pontic, Caucasus, and Crimean Mountains in the south, east and north respectively.
- The Turkish straits system - the Dardanelles, Bosphorus and Marmara Sea - forms a transitional zone between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

- The Black Sea is also connected to the Sea of Azov by the Strait of Kerch.
- It is bounded by Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia. **Hence, Option C is correct.**

Ans. 6 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Aditya-L1 Mission to be launched by ISRO will be placed in the L1 orbit which is about 1.5 million km from the Earth. **Hence, Statement II is correct.**
- The orbit allows Aditya-L1 to look at the Sun continuously without any occultation/eclipses. **Hence, Statement I is correct.**
- Objective: To study the Sun's corona, Sun's photosphere, chromosphere, solar emissions, solar winds and flares and Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) and to carry out round-the-clock imaging of the Sun.

Ans. 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Project 17 Alpha Frigates was launched by the Indian Navy in 2019 to construct a series of stealth guided-missile frigates. **Hence, Option C is correct.**
- These are currently being constructed by two companies viz. Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)
- Six P17A Project ships have been launched so far between 2019 and 2023.
- These were 'Nilgiri', 'Himgiri', 'Udaygiri', 'Dunagiri', 'Taragiri' and 'Vindhyagiri'.

Ans. 8 Option B is correct

Explanation

- River Ganga is the longest river of India and is revered by Hindus as the most sacred river on earth.
- It originates in the snowfields of the Gangotri Glacier in the Himalayas. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The Ganga basin outspreads in India, Tibet (China), Nepal and Bangladesh over an area of 10,86,000 Sq.km. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- Drainage Basin: Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh and Union Territory of Delhi draining nearly 26% of the total geographical area of the country.

- Right Tributaries: The Yamuna and the Son
- Left tributaries: The Ramganga, the Ghaghra, the Gandak, the Kosi and the Mahananda. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**
- Sub Tributaries: The Chambal and the Betwa
- The Ganges River Dolphin is an endangered animal that specifically inhabits this river. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The Ganga widens out into the Ganges Delta in the Sundarbans swamp of Bangladesh, before it ends its journey by emptying into the Bay of Bengal.

Ans. 9 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The World Bank notes that improving road safety in India is vital to the nation's health, well-being and economic growth. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The already-deprived sections of society are the most vulnerable to road crashes. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- They include road users like pedestrians, cyclists, two-wheelers and unprotected children.
- Close to 70% of the fatalities on the roads are people belonging to the economically productive section of the population. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 10 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The government determines the date and duration of parliamentary sessions.
- The President is informed about the Committee's decision, who then summons Members of Parliament to meet for the session.
- The Constitution specifies that six months should not elapse between two parliamentary sessions. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The framers of the Constitution borrowed it from the Government of India Act of 1935.
- However, the Constitution does not use the term "special session". **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It refers to sessions the government has convened for specific occasions, like commemorating parliamentary or national milestones.

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