

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



**Date: 23 Jan. 2024**

### **Important News Articles**

1. With no iron or steel, Ayodhya temple is a study in sandstone - The Hindu
2. PM announces solar rooftop scheme for 1 crore households - The Hindu/ PM announces scheme to install rooftop solar systems in 1 cr homes - Indian Express
3. Centre not to re-work RoDTEP scheme as it is WTO compliant: officials - The Hindu/ No relook at duty remission scheme needed due to US, EU action: Official - Indian Express
4. Spiking tensions: On peace in Korean Peninsula
5. Govt. expands financial services scope at IFSC - The Hindu
6. MNRE launches scheme to incentivise production of green hydrogen - Down To Earth

### **Editorials, Gists and Explainers**

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2. Intersectionality of gender and caste in women's participation in the labour force - The Hindu
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2. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THCBD)
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## Important News Articles

### GS I

#### 1. With no iron or steel, Ayodhya temple is a study in sandstone - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Percota
- Bansi Paharpur

**News:**

- A new landmark of India — both structural and spiritual — has risen on Ayodhya's horizon on January 22 in the form of a new-age architectural marvel of elegant sandstones
  - diligently carved by craftspeople with dedication and devotion to Lord Ram.

**Key Highlights**

- The majestic Ram Temple in Ayodhya is a sprawling structure, **built by overcoming engineering challenges and with due sensitivity to nature.**
- The new Ram Lalla idol was consecrated at the temple, an event led by the Prime Minister who said it marked **the advent of a new era.**
- **No iron or steel has been used** in the construction of the grand structure.
- **Stones** have been sourced from **Rajasthan's Bansi Paharpur area.**

**Nagara style**

- The temple complex, **built in the traditional Nagara style**, will be 380 feet long from the east to the west, 250 feet wide and 161 feet high.
- During the excavation work, **it was found that the ground was unsuitable for laying the foundation stone**
  - A challenge that engineers overcame by creating an "artificial foundation" over which the superstructure sits.
- Images of Lord Hanuman, other deities, peacocks and flower patterns have been carved onto the stones, lending the structure a divine look.

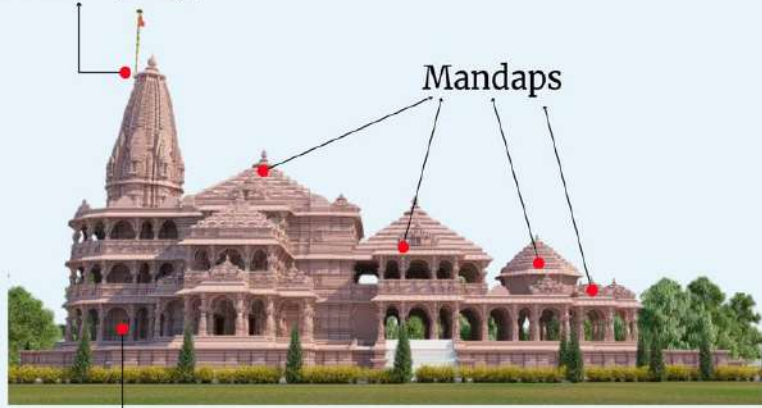
**Unique feature**

- Around the grand temple is a rectangular periphery called **percota**, a feature found in temples in south India, but not generally in north India
  - The percota will be 14 feet wide and the periphery span 732 metres.
- The temple will be **nestled within the percota periphery.**
- Ornate statues of elephants, lions, Lord Hanuman and Garuda were installed at the main entrance leading to the temple earlier this month.
- The top court backed the construction of the Ram temple at the disputed site.
- It ruled that an alternative five-acre plot must be found for building a mosque.
- Later, the Uttar Pradesh government allotted the land for the mosque in Dhannipur area of Ayodhya district.



# Ram temple at Ayodhya

Shikhara (Flag)



Mandaps

Garbh Griha  
(Temple sanctum)

- Ram Darbar comprises **statues of Ram, Sita, Lakshman, & Hanuman**

- Temple can accommodate **1500** people at a time
- Expected daily footfall: **1-2 lakh**
- Expected footfall on special days: **upto 5 lakh**



Pradhakshin patha

16 ft.

32 steps

THE HINDU

## GS II

### 2. PM announces solar rooftop scheme for 1 crore households - The Hindu/ PM announces scheme to install rooftop solar systems in 1 cr homes - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

**News:**

- The Prime Minister publicly announced a scheme **to electrify one crore households with solar electricity.**

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Solar energy
- Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana

#### Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana

- The scheme has the **target of installing rooftop solar on one crore houses.**
- Currently, **there is no centrally compiled estimate of the number of households** in India with rooftop solar installations.
- As of July 31, 2023, **only 2.2 GW (1 GW is 1,000 MW) worth of rooftop installations** were reportedly installed in Indian homes, according to information presented to the Lok Sabha.
- The government, since 2010, has been claiming to install 100 GW by 2022 — 60 GW from utility project (mega concentrated solar parks) and 40 GW from rooftop solar.
- So far, **about 56 GW has been installed in the utilities** (July 2023) and 12 GW in rooftops.
- Rooftop solar installations include **panels in offices and homes.**
- Of the nearly 12 GW of rooftop solar installations as of July 2023, **about 87% are “non-residential”**, according to a report by JMK Research.
- India has consistently added around 2 GW annually (rooftop) but most of these are in offices and buildings.
- Currently, the **incentive structures are such that it benefits commercial entities more than individual houses** (to install solar panels)

### 3. Centre not to re-work RoDTEP scheme as it is WTO compliant: officials - The Hindu/ No relook at duty remission scheme needed due to US, EU action: Official - Indian Express

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

**News:**

- The **Centre has no plans of re-working** the popular Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (**RoDTEP**) scheme for exporters

#### Prelims Takeaway

- RoDTEP
- WTO

#### Key Highlights

- The government order despite the **US government imposing anti-subsidy duties against it**
- the problem **was not with the WTO** compatibility of the scheme but with the inability of exporters to provide adequate documents to US investigating teams,
- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (**DGFT**) and the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (**DGTR**) are **now working on familiarising exporters**

#### ‘Remission scheme’

- “RoDTEP is a remission scheme and **is fully WTO compliant.**
- The RoDTEP scheme, announced in January 2021, replaced the WTO-incompatible MEIS scheme**

- which had faced several challenges from partner countries at the WTO as it was not transparently determined.
- RoDTEP was designed carefully to ensure that **it was totally transparent and the refund rates** were based on embedded duties and taxes
  - such as VAT on fuel used in transportation, mandi tax and duty on electricity used during manufacturing of the exported items.
- However, earlier this fiscal, both the US and the EU imposed countervailing (anti-subsidy) duties on Indian products, against RoDTEP payments availed.

#### 4. Spiking tensions: On peace in Korean Peninsula

**Relevance:** Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

**News:**

- **North Korea's decision to declare South Korea as an enemy state** of the North

##### Prelims Takeaway

- Seoul
- Pyongyang

##### Key Highlights

- The idea of peaceful reunification was abandoned, signaling that Pyongyang is adopting a more aggressive stand.
- It is evident from these actions that the Kim regime is seeking to alter the status quo.
- The government sees the **growing military convergence between South Korea, Japan, and the U.S. as a security threat.**
- The three countries **recently linked up their missile radar data with one another.**
- **The U.S. and South Korea also routinely conduct joint military exercises**, which triggers sharp reactions from the North.
- In the past, despite its rhetoric, **North Korea was open to diplomatic engagement with the South and the U.S.**

##### Agreement with USA government

- In 1994, it reached the **Agreed Framework with the Clinton administration.**
- As part of this, it agreed to freeze the operation and construction of its nuclear reactors.
- It was **after the collapse of the Agreed Framework** during the George Bush Jr. administration that **Pyongyang went nuclear.**
- In an apparent rejection of the path of reconciliation with the U.S., **Pyongyang has ruled out talks on denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula** and has taken measures to strengthen ties with China and Russia.
- **A direct conflict between the two Koreas**, one a nuclear power and the other backed by the world's most powerful country, would be disastrous for the entire region.
- Dialling down tensions and rebuilding confidence in **inter-Korean relations should be an immediate priority for all stakeholders — Seoul, Pyongyang, and Washington.**

### GS III

#### 5. Govt. expands financial services scope at IFSC - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

**News:**

- The government has **expanded the scope of activities** that can be undertaken at **the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)**
- services such as bookkeeping, and accounting have now been included in it.

##### Prelims Takeaway

- GIFT City
- IFSCs



**Key Highlights**

- As per a gazette notification issued by the Ministry of Finance, various services, including
  - Book-keeping
  - Accounting
  - Taxation
  - Financial crime compliance has been included as part of financial services.
- financial services shall be offered by units in an International Financial Service Centre regulated by the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)
- **They offer to non-residents** whose business is not set up either by splitting up of business already in existence in India
  - or reconstructing/reorganising of business already in existence in India
- The notification stipulates that these units should not offer services by way of **transferring or receiving existing contracts or work arrangements from their group entities in India.**

**International Financial Services Centre**

- An IFSC enables bringing back the financial services and transactions that are currently carried out in offshore financial centres by Indian corporate entities
  - And overseas branches/subsidiaries of Financial Institutions (such as banks, insurance companies, etc.) to India.
- **It offers a business and regulatory environment** that is comparable to other leading international financial centres in the world like London and Singapore.
- **IFSCs are intended to provide Indian corporates with easier access to global financial markets**, and to complement and promote further development of financial markets in India.
- The first IFSC in India has been set up at the **Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar.**

## 6. MNRE launches scheme to incentivise production of green hydrogen - Down To Earth

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation.

**News:**

- The **Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)** in India has unveiled guidelines and incentives under the **National Green Hydrogen Mission** to promote green hydrogen procurement.
- Under the mission, Rs 17,490 crore has been set aside for the **Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT)** programme.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- SIGHT Program
- National Green Hydrogen Mission
- Green Hydrogen

**The Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Program**

- **Objective:** To boost domestic electrolyser manufacturing and green hydrogen production.
- The incentives are designed to **facilitate cost reduction and rapid expansion.**
  - Green hydrogen is crucial for removing sulphur content in crude oil to produce petrol and diesel.
- Implemented under **Mode-2B**, the scheme involves **aggregating demand and soliciting bids for green hydrogen** through a competitive selection process.

**Oil and Gas Entities' Role**

- The **execution of the scheme** will be entrusted to agencies nominated by the **Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**, primarily oil and gas companies.
- Oil and gas entities, guided by the **Centre for High Technology (CHT)**, will seek competitive bids for green hydrogen.
  - To qualify for incentives, bidders must meet the criteria outlined in the 'National Green Hydrogen Standard.'
- CHT will provide **secretarial, managerial, and implementation support.**

### Monitoring and Review

- A **scheme monitoring committee**, co-chaired by the secretaries of MoPNG and MNRE, will periodically **review the implementation and performance** of capacities awarded.
- The committee will also **recommend measures to address challenges**.

## Editorials, Gists and Explainers

### 7. Fired up and plugged in - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

**Context:**

- As India aims to become the fastest-growing economy, **decarbonizing its power sector** becomes imperative.
- Despite being vulnerable to climate change impacts, India has taken significant climate actions, yet **coal remains vital for providing base power load support**.
- Coal is especially **indispensable during non-solar hours and the post-monsoon season** catering to over 80% of the peak demand in the evening and night.

#### Four Step Strategy

- To **balance economic development, energy security, and decarbonization**, a four-step strategy is proposed.

#### 1. Efficient Thermal Plant Management

- Improved management of thermal plant outages during peak demand periods is essential.
- Forecasting demand, planning maintenance, and ensuring plant availability during peak days can mitigate the need for new coal assets in the medium term.
- Regulations incentivizing plant availability during peaks and allowing idle plants to participate in the market are crucial.

#### 2. Flexible Operation of Existing Coal Fleet

- Enhancing the flexibility of the existing coal fleet is necessary to integrate more renewable energy into the grid seamlessly.
- Retrofitting existing coal plants to reduce minimum power load and improving ramp rate capabilities can align them with renewable energy variations.
  - The Central Electricity Authority of India has already proposed retrofitting ~92% of the current coal and lignite-based capacity to enable it.
- Regulatory frameworks compensating power plant owners for retrofitting costs and flexible operations should be implemented nationwide.

#### 3. Incentivizing Payment for Storage Services

- Energy storage systems (ESS) are vital for supporting the power grid during non-renewable hours.
- Beyond supplying energy units, compensating entities deploying batteries for their value in grid operation is essential.
- Numerous studies indicate that BESS will increase RE integration into the grid and reduce operational stress on the thermal fleet.
- Existing mechanisms can direct additional revenues toward battery storage systems by offering essential grid support services.
  - These services include inertia, black start, voltage stabilisation, and reactive power supply.

#### 4. Indigenizing Supply Chains for Renewable Energy Technologies

- Boosting domestic value and job creation in clean energy, particularly battery storage and renewable energy (RE) technologies, is crucial.
- Indigenization efforts, supported by initiatives like the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, can contribute to exports, job creation, and economic growth.
- Addressing critical raw material availability and promoting R&D in advanced technologies for battery manufacturing are immediate priorities.



**Conclusion**

- While **global attention** focuses solely on **decarbonization**, India's energy security, driven by rapidly growing power demand, remains a top priority.
- Policymakers must transparently assess the **opportunity costs of conventional power sources**.
- They should prioritise **low-cost and affordable electricity**, and lay the groundwork for more **aggressive decarbonization commitments** in the future.

## 8. Intersectionality of gender and caste in women's participation in the labour force - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Social

**Context:**

- The **decline in female Labour Force Participation (LFP) in India** over the past two decades is a concerning trend, particularly when **compounded with gender bias and caste discrimination**.
- Recently, a study titled '**The Role of Gender and Caste in Accessing Livelihood Opportunities in India**' was published.
- It explores the intricate relationship between **gender, caste, and women's participation in the rural informal sector** utilising data from the SECC 2011.

**Methodology**

- The study analyzes labour force participation at the tehsil level in seven states, considering variables.
  - such as income levels, female-headed households, and the proportion of lower caste households.
- Focuses on how **women's involvement** in revenue-generating non-farm economic activities within the informal sector **changes based on caste positions**.
- Women's LFP in the rural informal economy tends to **rise under two primary conditions** viz.
  - When there is a higher number of lower caste households
  - When there is a high prevalence of female-headed households

**Key Findings**

<p><b>1. Caste and Gender Barriers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Societal expectations, legal constraints, and economic limitations contribute to gender barriers in women's participation in economic activities.</li> <li>• Laws restricting night shifts for women in formal sectors do not hinder their participation in the informal sector, where the need for revenue often drives employment.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Role of Female-Headed Households</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women in female-headed households tend to participate more in the informal sector, particularly when economically disadvantaged.</li> <li>• Economic stability within households decreases the likelihood of women seeking employment, even in female-headed families.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3. Caste Patterns in Employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical expectations related to caste structures contribute to lower-caste women's higher participation in the informal sector.</li> <li>• Education plays a crucial role, with lower-caste women often facing economic disadvantages and limited educational opportunities, confining them to jobs in the informal sector.</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Education and Formal Employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education emerges as a determinant factor in the nature of work accessed by women.</li> <li>• Affirmative action policies enable entry of educated women from lower castes into the formal economy, challenging societal norms.</li> <li>• Conversely, educated women from higher castes have greater prospects in the formal sector.</li> </ul>
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### Socio-Economic Impact of Women's Participation

- Despite obstacles rooted in caste and gender bias, women's participation in the workforce proves **beneficial for both individuals and society.**
  - Liberates women from societal and economic constraints
  - Contributes to delayed marriage and childbirth
  - Enhances children's schooling chances
  - Reduces susceptibility to domestic violence
  - Promotes overall socio-economic development

## 9. WEF meeting in Davos 2024: 5 key takeaways - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

**Context:**

- The recent **World Economic Forum (WEF)** annual meeting attracted leaders from various fields to **discuss global challenges and potential solutions.**
- Despite criticism for its **elite nature**, the Davos summit remains relevant for its insights into the perspectives of the world's influential individuals.

#### 1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- AI emerged as a central theme, with discussions covering its transformative potential for human welfare, the need for regulation, concerns about job losses, risks of impersonation, misinformation, and potential inequalities.
- Overall, the prevailing sentiment favoured the positive aspects of AI, downplaying the notion that it poses a significant threat to human intelligence.

#### 2. War and Uncertainty

- Business leaders addressed the risks posed by a fragile geopolitical situation, conflicts in the Middle East and Europe, threats to global supply chains, and uncertainties around food security.
- However, discussions lacked concrete plans or roadmaps for peace, particularly regarding the Israel-Gaza conflict.
- Economic implications and the need for lasting peace were emphasised.

#### 3. Climate

- The forum highlighted the urgency for businesses to adapt to climate change and for countries to collaborate despite differences.
- The discussion emphasized the benefits of sustainable practices for businesses and the importance of allocating resources effectively in the fight against climate change.
- Developing countries, notably, called for assistance from developed nations in financing climate action.

#### 4. China's Economy

- Amid a slowing economy and efforts to attract more Western investment, China faced challenges, including a semiconductor trade standoff with the United States.
- Despite economic slowdown concerns, China sought to reassure attendees, and experts noted its significance even with modest growth.

#### 5. India

- McKinsey and Company's assessment emphasised India's rapid transformation as one of the fastest-growing large economies globally.
- Industrialist Gautam Adani highlighted India's rising prominence at the WEF, noting the country's potential in technology, talent, and healthcare.
- Additionally, India showcased its commitment to women's health, leading to the launch of the Global Good Alliance for Gender Equity and Equality.
  - It is aimed at driving positive impacts in women's health, education, and enterprise globally.
  - Investment in women's health could boost the global economy by \$1 trillion annually by 2040.

## 10. Free Movement Regime along Myanmar border: rationale and criticism - Indian Express

**Relevance:** India and its neighbourhood- relations.

**Context:**

- Recently, the Union Home Minister announced the decision to **fence the entire 1,643 km India-Myanmar border** to curb free movement.
- The move comes amid discussions on revisiting the **Free Movement Regime (FMR) agreement** implemented in **2018**.

**Free Movement Regime (FMR) and Rationale**

- The FMR, initiated as part of the Act East policy in 2018, aimed to strengthen Indo-Myanmar ties.
  - The border, drawn by the British in 1826, divided people of the same ethnicity without their consent.
- It was a mutually agreed arrangement that allowed tribes living along the border to travel 16 km into each other's territory without a visa.
- It facilitated people-to-people contact, boosted local trade, and addressed historical border demarcation issues.

**Criticisms and Manipur Conflict**

- Despite benefiting local communities, the FMR faced criticism for unintentionally aiding illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and gun running.
- The border runs through forested and undulating terrain, and is almost entirely unfenced, and difficult to monitor.
  - The military coup in Myanmar in February 2021 led to increased persecution, resulting in large numbers of Myanmar tribes seeking shelter in India.
- The ongoing ethnic conflict in Manipur has heightened concerns about the FMR's role in facilitating illegal migration and contributing to the Manipur conflict.
- Insurgent groups, taking advantage of porous borders, engaged in illegal activities, including drug trafficking and weapon sales, often misusing the FMR.
- In September 2022, India suspended the FMR in response to the rising influx of refugees and security concerns.

**Challenges and Implications**

- Removing the FMR entirely or fully fencing the border poses challenges.
- The local population's livelihoods and essential travel for healthcare and education could be affected.
- Securing an unfenced, forested, and undulating border in challenging terrain poses difficulties even with robust patrolling and intelligence.
- Experts suggest a balanced approach, emphasising effective border administration without entirely removing the FMR.



**Mentorship**  
India



## Quick Look

### 1. Kumki

- Kumki (also known as Thappana in Malayalam) is a term used in India for trained captive Asian elephants.
- They are used in operations to trap wild elephants, sometimes to rescue or to provide medical treatment to an injured or trapped wild elephant.
- Kumkis are used for capturing, calming and herding wild elephants or to lead wild elephants away in conflict situations.

### 2. Tetrahydrocannabidiol (THCBD)

- In the battle against antibiotic resistance, scientists have uncovered a potential solution in cannabis-derived compounds known as phytocannabinoids.
- They extracted cannabidiol from cannabis and synthesized THCBD through a chemical process using hydrogen and palladium as a catalyst.
- It highlights the antibiotic properties of tetrahydrocannabidiol (THCBD), a semisynthetic phytocannabinoid, against *Staphylococcus aureus*.
  - It is a bacteria responsible for a significant number of antibiotic-resistant deaths globally.
- However, legal constraints and regulatory challenges associated with cannabis research in India pose obstacles.
- THCBD, despite its potential, faces solubility challenges that need to be addressed for further drug development.

### 3. Havisure Vaccine

- Recently, the Indian Immunologicals Ltd (IIL) launched India's first indigenously developed Hepatitis A vaccine 'Havisure' in Hyderabad.
  - IIL is a wholly owned subsidiary of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB).
- It is a two-dose vaccine with the first dose administered post 12 months of age and the second at least six months after the first dose.
- It is recommended for children as part of the routine immunisation as well as for individuals at risk of exposure or travel to the regions with high hepatitis A prevalence.
- In addition to this people with occupational risk of infection and suffering from chronic liver diseases also require Hepatitis A vaccination.

### 4. Parambikulam Tiger Reserve

- Location: Nelliampathy-Anamalai landscape of the Western Ghats Mountains in Palakkad and Thrissur districts of Kerala.
- The reserve supports diverse habitat types, viz., evergreen, semi-evergreen, moist deciduous, dry deciduous, and shola forests.
- Other unique habitats like montane and marshy grasslands, locally known as 'vayals', are also found.
- Flora
  - The reserve houses teak, rosewood, sandalwood, and neem trees.
  - It is credited with the world's first scientifically managed plantation of teak.
  - It is home to the world's oldest and tallest teak tree named 'Kannimara', which is 450 years old and at a height of 40 metres.

- Fauna
  - The common animals found are Leopard, Elephant, Gaur, Spotted Deer, Sambar, Barking Deer, Common Langur, Nilgiri Langur, Malabar giant squirrel, Sloth Bear, and Wild dog.
  - The only South Indian wild goat, the Nilgiri Tahr is found on the high-altitude rocky hills and grasslands in the tiger reserve.
- The tiger reserve is also home to several rare small animals like Tarantula (large bodied spiders).

## 5. Article 341

- The President may with respect to any State or Union territory
  - where it is a State after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification
  - specify the castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within castes, races or tribes which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Castes
  - in relation to that State or Union territory, as the case may be.
- Article 342: The President may with respect to any State or Union territory,
  - and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof
  - by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities
  - or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes(ST) in relation to that State or Union territory, as the case may be



## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the architecture of the Ayodhya temple**

1. The proposed Ram Temple in Ayodhya is intended to be built in the Nagara style of temple architecture.
2. The Nagara style of temple architecture is characterized by a tall and curvilinear spire, known as Shikhara, and is often associated with North Indian temple construction.
3. The proposed Ram Temple design incorporates elements inspired by the historical and cultural traditions of the region.

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

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana**

1. The Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana aims to provide electricity to all rural households across the country.
2. The scheme primarily focuses on promoting the use of solar power for agricultural and irrigation purposes.
3. The implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana is coordinated by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

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

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP)**

1. RoDTEP is a scheme introduced by the Government of India to reimburse exporters for the embedded taxes and duties that are not refunded under existing export incentive schemes.
2. The RoDTEP scheme covers both goods and services exported from India.
3. The RoDTEP rates are fixed based on the value of the exported products, and

the scheme is designed to be WTO-compliant.

4. RoDTEP replaces all existing export promotion schemes in India.

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

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

**Q4. Consider the following statements regarding North Korea**

1. North Korea is officially known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).
2. The Korean War, which took place in the early 1950s, ended with a peace treaty, leading to the division of the Korean Peninsula into North and South Korea.
3. North Korea is a member of the United Nations Security Council.

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

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q5. Consider the following statements regarding International Financial Services Centres (IFSCs)**

1. IFSCs in India are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
2. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is the sole regulatory authority for banking activities within IFSCs.
3. The first IFSC in India, Gift City, is located in the state of Maharashtra.
4. IFSCs are designed to attract international financial services and promote offshore financial activities in a well-regulated environment.

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

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

**Q6. Consider the following statements with reference to the SIGHT Programme, seen in the news recently**



1. It is a subcomponent of the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
2. It aims to bolster domestic electrolyser manufacturing and green hydrogen production.
3. A scheme monitoring committee established to periodically review the performance can also recommend measures to address challenges.

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

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q7. With reference to Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA), consider the following statements**

1. It was launched in the COP 27 to the UNFCCC held at Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.
2. It is a coalition to advance the transition from unabated coal power generation to clean energy.
3. India is a member of PPCA.

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

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q8. Consider the following statements**

1. The female Labour Force Participation (LFP) in India has been declining over the past two decades.
2. Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is the percentage of the working-age population that is unemployed, but willing and looking for employment only.

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

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

**Q9. Consider the following statements about annual World Economic Forum summit held in Davos, Switzerland recently**

1. The theme of the annual World Economic Forum summit held in 2024 is "Cooperation in a Fragmented World".
2. It announced the rollout of its own metaverse platform, dubbed the Global Collaboration Village.
3. The report, 'India@100: Realising the potential of a USD 26 trillion economy', was launched by India, on the sidelines of the summit.

**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 with reference to India - Myanmar Relations**

1. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura share an international boundary with Myanmar.
2. The Free Movement Regime (FMR), initiated as part of the Act East policy in 2018, aimed to strengthen Indo-Myanmar ties.
3. The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project links India and Myanmar via the Bay of Bengal.

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

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

## Prelims Track Answer

### Answer 1 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- The proposed Ram Temple in Ayodhya is indeed intended to be built in the Nagara style of temple architecture. The Nagara style is prevalent in North India and is known for its towering spires. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The Nagara style of temple architecture is characterized by a tall and curvilinear spire, known as Shikhara. This style is often associated with North Indian temple construction, and many historic temples in the region follow this architectural tradition. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The proposed Ram Temple design incorporates elements inspired by the historical and cultural traditions of the region. The architects and designers have aimed to create a structure that reflects the rich heritage of Ayodhya. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

### Answer 2 Option A is correct

#### Explanation

- The Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana does aim to provide electricity to all rural households across the country. It focuses on ensuring that each household in rural areas has access to electricity. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The scheme primarily focuses on providing solar power to meet the energy requirements of rural households. While it aims to electrify rural areas, its emphasis is on solar power for domestic consumption, not specifically for agricultural and irrigation purposes. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect**
- The implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana is overseen by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), but it involves the collaboration of various stakeholders, including state governments and distribution companies. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect**

### Answer 3 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- RoDTEP is indeed a scheme introduced by the Government of India to reimburse exporters for the embedded taxes and duties that are not refunded under existing export incentive schemes. It aims to make Indian

exports more competitive in the global market. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**

- The RoDTEP scheme covers both goods and services exported from India. It is not limited to only physical products but includes various exported services as well. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The RoDTEP rates are fixed based on the value of the exported products, and the scheme is designed to be WTO-compliant. This ensures that the scheme adheres to international trade regulations. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**
- RoDTEP does not replace all existing export promotion schemes. It is introduced as a complementary scheme to existing schemes like Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) to address the issue of embedded taxes and duties. **Hence, statement 4 is INcorrect**

### Answer 4 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- North Korea is officially known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). This is the official name of the country. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The Korean War, which took place from 1950 to 1953, ended with an armistice agreement, not a peace treaty. The result was the division of the Korean Peninsula into North Korea (DPRK) and South Korea (ROK). The demilitarized zone (DMZ) separates the two. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- North Korea is not a member of the United Nations Security Council. While South Korea is a member, North Korea has faced sanctions from the UN due to its nuclear weapons program and other activities. **Hence, statement 3 is INcorrect**

### Answer 5 Option A is correct

#### Explanation

- IFSCs in India are not regulated by SEBI. The regulatory authority for IFSCs, including capital markets, is the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), which was established to regulate various financial services within IFSCs. **Hence, statement 1 is INcorrect**
- While RBI regulates banking activities in IFSCs, it is not the sole regulatory authority. IFSCA oversees all financial services,

including banking, insurance, and capital markets, within IFSCs. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect**

- Gift City, India's first operational IFSC, is located in the state of Gujarat, not Maharashtra. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect**
- IFSCs are indeed designed to attract international financial services and promote offshore financial activities. They provide a well-regulated and globally competitive environment to facilitate financial transactions on an international scale. **Hence, statement 4 is correct**

**Answer 6 Option C is correct**

**Explanation**

- The Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition (SIGHT) Program aims to boost domestic electrolyser manufacturing and green hydrogen production. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It is a subcomponent of the National Green Hydrogen Mission. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The incentives are designed to facilitate cost reduction and rapid expansion.
- Green hydrogen is crucial for removing sulphur content in crude oil to produce petrol and diesel.
- Implemented under Mode-2B, the scheme involves aggregating demand and soliciting bids for green hydrogen through a competitive selection process.
- The execution of the scheme will be entrusted to agencies nominated by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, primarily oil and gas companies.
- A scheme monitoring committee, co-chaired by the secretaries of MoPNG and MNRE, will periodically review the implementation and performance of capacities awarded.
- The committee will also recommend measures to address challenges. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

**Answer 7 Option A is correct**

**Explanation**

- Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) is a coalition involving governments, businesses, and organizations, focused on transitioning from unabated coal power to clean energy. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- By launching the PPCA at COP23 in 2017, the UK and Canada brought the leaders together. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- At COP28, PPCA welcomed new national and subnational governments, advocating for cleaner energy alternatives.
- India is not part of PPCA as it has not committed to phasing out of coal. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**

**Answer 8 Option A is correct**

**Explanation**

- Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is the percentage of the working-age population (aged 15 years and above) that is either employed or unemployed, but willing and looking for employment. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The female Labour Force Participation (LFP) in India has been declining over the past two decades. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - It is a concerning trend, particularly when compounded with gender bias and caste discrimination.
- Worker Population Ratio (WPR) is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.
- Unemployment Rate (UR) is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.

**Answer 9 Option C is correct**

**Explanation**

- The 53rd edition of the annual World Economic Forum summit was recently held in Davos, Switzerland.
- Theme: Cooperation in a Fragmented World. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- A new Coalition of Trade Ministers on Climate was launched, bringing together over 50 countries to boost international cooperation on climate, trade and sustainable development.
- A new initiative Giving to Amplify Earth Action (GAEA) was launched to leverage philanthropic capital to unlock funding for the climate crisis.
- It also announced the rollout of its own metaverse platform, dubbed the Global Collaboration Village. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- India's focus areas at WEF remained investment opportunities, infrastructural landscape and its inclusive & sustainable growth story.



- The report, 'India@100: Realising the potential of a USD 26 trillion economy', was launched by India, on the sidelines of the summit. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- As per this report, India's economy will reach USD 26 trillion by 2047, the 100th year of the country's independence.

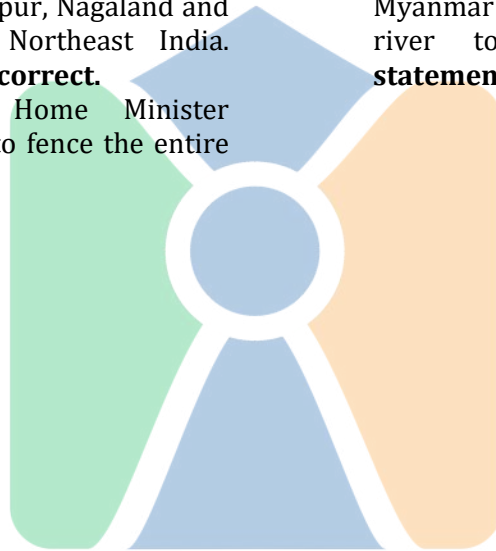
**Answer 10 Option B is correct**

**Explanation**

- India and Myanmar share a long 1,643 km geographical land border and maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal.
- Myanmar shares borders with 4 Indian states viz. Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh in Northeast India. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- Recently, the Union Home Minister announced the decision to fence the entire

1,643 km India-Myanmar border to curb free movement.

- The FMR, initiated as part of the Act East policy in 2018, aimed to strengthen Indo-Myanmar ties. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It was a mutually agreed arrangement that allowed tribes living along the border to travel 16 km into each other's territory without a visa.
- India is building the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport, a road-river-port cargo transport project, to link Kolkata to Sittwe in Myanmar and then from Myanmar's Kaladan river to India's north-east. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**



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