

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



Date: 25 Jan. 2024

Important News Articles

1. Court tells ASI to make Gyanvapi report public - The Hindu
2. Top U.S. officials to come to India to discuss bilateral ties and Quad dates - The Hindu
3. WHY TURKEY HAS FINALLY BACKED SWEDEN'S NATO MEMBERSHIP BID - Indian Express
4. Centre releases three-drug regimen for treating leprosy - The Hindu
5. Providing clean water to all - The Hindu
6. Banking system liquidity deficit at record high of ₹3.4 lakh crore - Indian Express
7. Flash PMI signals rebound in economic momentum in Jan. - The Hindu

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. India's problem — different drugs, identical brand names - The Hindu
2. COVERING THE DISTANCE - Indian Express
3. As Army launches Op Sarvashakti, recalling 2003's Sarpvinash in Pir Panjal - Indian Express

Quick Look

1. World's First Melanistic Tiger Safari
2. Arambai Tenggol
3. Bharat Ratna
4. Batadrava Than
5. Lake Retba
6. Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

Important News Articles

GS I

1. Court tells ASI to make Gyanvapi report public - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway

- Gyanvapi
- ASI

- A **Varanasi district court** agreed to make the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)'s scientific survey **report on the Gyanvapi Mosque complex** available to both the Hindu and the Muslim sides.
- The concerned parties will have to submit an affidavit in this regard.

Key Highlights

- The development comes over a month **after the Archaeological Survey of India submitted its report** before the Varanasi District Court in a sealed cover
- However, the ASI had sought the postponement of the release of its Gyanvapi Survey report to the public domain.
- **The panel had urged a Varanasi district judge to delay the disclosure**
 - Fearing that the report's content to the public would be inappropriate and fuel rumours and misinformation.
- **The ASI carried out a scientific survey of the Gyanvapi premises**, located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple
 - To determine whether the 17th-century mosque was constructed over a pre-existing structure of a Hindu temple.
- The **survey had begun after the Allahabad High Court upheld the Varanasi district court order**
- It ruled that the step was "necessary in the interest of justice" and would benefit both the Hindu and Muslim sides in the dispute.
- **After the Allahabad High Court order**, the Gyanvapi committee moved the Supreme Court against the order.

GS II

2. Top U.S. officials to come to India to discuss bilateral ties and Quad dates - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway

- Quad
- Russian oil

- **Top U.S. diplomats will travel to Delhi** this week to discuss bilateral issues, energy cooperation

Key Highlights

- They are expected to discuss possible dates for the **Quad Summit with the U.S.-Australia-Japan-India leaders** as well as shore up ties amidst speculation of a 'pause' in the past few months.
- New Delhi had earlier proposed to hold the summit this weekend, on January 27,
- The Indian Prime Minister had invited the U.S. President as chief guest for Republic Day on the 26th.
- However, after the **U.S. declined the invitation last month**
- **French President agreed to step in**, and is due to arrive in India on Thursday.
- The U.S. decision to turn down the Republic Day invite, and the U.S.'s allegations in the Pannun matter had led to speculation over trouble in the India-U.S. relationship.

- Recently, the U.S. treasury announced it was imposing its first sanctions of the year on a UAE company for transporting Russian oil above the “price cap”
 - That prohibits services like insurance, shipping and freight to such transactions.
 - While India does not accept non-UN unilateral sanctions, it has thus far kept its purchases below the price cap, officials said.

3. WHY TURKEY HAS FINALLY BACKED SWEDEN'S NATO MEMBERSHIP BID - Indian Express

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

Prelims Takeaway

- NATO
- Map based question

News:

- Sweden’s attempt to join NATO cleared a major hurdle after Turkey’s parliament supported its membership.

Key Highlights

- For a new country to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), **all the existing members have to approve it.**
- **Turkey and Hungary had been opposing Sweden’s entry** for almost the past two years.

Sweden's Motivation to Join NATO

- Sweden's historical neutrality and avoidance of war for two centuries
- Shift in stance after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine
- Public opinion favoring NATO membership
- Joint application with Finland in 2022, with Finland's bid already approved

Turkey's Opposition to Sweden's NATO Bid

- Accusations against Sweden of leniency towards groups like the PKK
- Controversial Quran-burning protests affecting relations
- Linkage of Turkey's support to Sweden with the potential sale of F-16 fighter jets by the U.S.

Sweden's Contribution to NATO

- **Geopolitical significance:** NATO gaining almost all Baltic Sea coastline, except Russia-controlled areas
- **Strategic advantages:** Proximity to Russia, streamlined supply lines, and enhanced defense capabilities
- **Overview of Sweden's modern and experienced military** with advanced aircraft and submarine capabilities

4. Centre releases three-drug regimen for treating leprosy - The Hindu

Relevance: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Prelims Takeaway

- Leprosy Disease
- National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP)

News:

- The Indian government recently gave its approval for a **new treatment regimen for leprosy**, with the goal of **halting transmission at the sub-national level by 2027.**

Key Developments

- The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has received approval from the competent authority to **implement a three-drug regimen for Pauci-Bacillary (PB) cases.**
 - The three-drug regimen for PB cases will replace the existing two-drug regimen for six months.
- The shift is based on the latest **globally accepted scientific research studies and evidence-based practices.**

- The revised classification and treatment regimen for PB and multi-bacillary (MB) cases will be **effective from April 1, 2025**.
 - The World Health Organization (WHO) will supply the revised drug regimen from April 1, 2025.
- All states and union territories have been instructed to requisition anti-leprosy drugs 12 months in advance.

Expert Perspectives

- Concerns have been raised about **potential side effects**, with clofazimine causing a distinctive red coloration of the skin.
- Healthcare experts argue that the **two-drug regimen has adequate efficacy**, and the addition of a third drug **may not be strictly necessary**.

Leprosy Disease

- Leprosy, caused by **Mycobacterium leprae**, is a **chronic infectious disease**.
- The disease predominantly **affects the skin and peripheral nerves**. Left untreated, the disease may cause progressive and permanent disabilities.
- It is more common in **tropical and subtropical areas**.
- It is a **neglected tropical disease (NTD)** which still occurs in more than 120 countries, with more than 200 000 new cases reported each year.
- It is known to **occur at all ages** ranging from early childhood to old age.
- **Transmission:** Through droplets from the nose and mouth during close contact with untreated cases.
- **Symptoms**
 - Disfiguring skin sores, lumps, or bumps that don't go away after several weeks or months.
 - Nerve damage can lead to loss of feeling in the arms and legs; and muscle weakness
- The WHO-recommended treatment regimen, known as **multi-drug therapy (MDT)**, includes three drugs viz. **dapsone, rifampicin, and clofazimine**.

5. Providing clean water to all - The Hindu

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.

Prelims Takeaway

- Jal Jeevan Mission

News:

- Tap water in almost all regions, **provided by the Jal Jeevan Mission**.
- **Launched by the Prime Minister in 2019**, the Jal Jeevan Mission has already provided tap water to 73% of rural households.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- **Launched in 2019, it envisages supply of 55 litres of water per person per day** to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024.
- **JJM looks to create a jan andolan for water**, thereby making it everyone's priority.
- It comes under Jal Shakti Ministry.

Objective:

- **The mission ensures functionality of existing water supply** systems and water connections, water quality monitoring and testing as well as sustainable agriculture.
- It also ensures conjunctive use of conserved water; drinking water source augmentation, drinking water supply system, grey water treatment and its reuse.
- JJM focuses on integrated demand and supply-side management of water at the local level.
- **Creation of local infrastructure** for source sustainability measures as mandatory elements, like:
 - rainwater harvesting
 - groundwater recharge

- Management of household wastewater for reuse, is undertaken in convergence with other government programmes/schemes.
- **The Mission is based on a community approach** to water and includes
 - extensive Information, education and communication as a key component of the mission.
- Paani Samitis plan, implement, manage, operate and maintain village water supply systems.
- **The committees prepare a one-time village action plan**, merging all available village resources. The plan is approved in a Gram Sabha before implementation.

GS III

6. Banking system liquidity deficit at record high of ₹3.4 lakh crore - Indian Express

Relevance: Economy

Context:

- The liquidity in the **Indian banking system has reached a historic deficit** of Rs 3.4 lakh crore.
- This deficit is attributed to **reduced government spending, higher tax outflows and slower bank deposit growth.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Open Market Operations
- Variable Rate Repo Auction

Factors Contributing to Liquidity Deficit

- The primary reason for this liquidity deficit is **reduced government expenditure.**
- The **Goods and services tax (GST) outflow** further impacted the liquidity.
- **Higher outflows from foreign portfolio investors (FPIs)** have also led to the widening of banking system liquidity.
- Bank deposits grew by 13% on a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, while credit grew by 20%.
- A large amount of **retail deposits migrating to mutual funds** has also resulted in a **slower growth in deposits.**

RBI's Response and Current Liquidity Measures

- Banking system liquidity, as reflected by the amount of money injected by the RBI into the banking system, has been in deficit mode since last month.
- On a net basis, the RBI has injected liquidity averaging Rs 1.8 trillion from December 16, 2023, to January 14, 2024.
- The RBI has been **conducting VRR auctions to infuse liquidity** into the banking system, with the latest being a 15-day VRR worth Rs 2.5 lakh crore on January 24.

Experts Response

- Analysts anticipate, RBI may announce permanent liquidity measures such as **open market operations (OMO) purchases** to ease liquidity deficit conditions.
 - Instead of variable repo rate auctions (VRR) to infuse temporary liquidity.
- Bankers analyse that RBI's may be reluctant to ease liquidity due to **consumer-price inflation (CPI)** persistently exceeding the 4% target.

Potential Implications

- Sustained tightness in the banking system liquidity could **pose challenges for borrowers.**
 - It may worsen if government spending does not accelerate in a meaningful way.

- The monetary policy stance should **change to 'neutral'** from 'withdrawal of accommodation' to **maintain consistency of stance and action.**

7. Flash PMI signals rebound in economic momentum in Jan. - The Hindu

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

News:

- Private sector industrial and services activity regained momentum this month as per a new HSBC Flash India PMI

Prelims Takeaway

- Purchasing managers' Index (PMI)
- Core Sectors

Purchasing Managers Index (PMI)

- **It is a survey-based measure** that asks the respondents about changes in their perception of key business variables as compared with the previous month.
- It is an index of the **prevailing direction of economic trends in the manufacturing and service sectors.**

Objective

- **It is to provide information about current and future business conditions** to company decision makers, analysts, and investors.
- It is calculated separately for the manufacturing and services sectors and then a composite index is also constructed.
- The PMI is a number from 0 to 100.
- **A print above 50 means expansion**, while a score below that denotes contraction.
- A reading at **50 indicates no change.**
- If the PMI of the previous month is higher than the PMI of the current month, it represents that the economy is contracting.
- **It is usually released at the start of every month.**
- It is, therefore, considered a good leading indicator of economic activity.

Flashing green

Private sector industrial and services activity rebounded this month as per a new HSBC Flash India Purchasing Managers' Index



■ **The HSBC Flash India Composite PMI Output Index was at 61 compared with 58.5 in December**

■ **Flash PMI is based on responses from about 75-85% of 800 services, industry firms that are surveyed each month**

■ **Operating capacities remained under pressure, encouraging firms to hire additional workers**

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

8. India's problem — different drugs, identical brand names - The Hindu

Relevance: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Context:

- Recently, an oncologist highlighted a concerning issue that **two different drugs**, one treating cancer (Linamac 5) and the other diabetes (Linamac), had **identical brand names**.
- This situation raises serious concerns about **potential mix-ups at pharmacies** and their **impact on patient safety**.

<p>Historical Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practice of assigning identical trade names to drugs with different active ingredients has been a longstanding problem in India. • Notably, the brand name 'Medzole' is used by four different companies for drugs addressing distinct medical conditions, illustrating the widespread confusion. <p>Similar Trade Names: A Wider Problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond identical names, the issue extends to similar trade names that are phonetically and visually alike. • This practice poses risks of confusion, with examples like 'Medpol,' 'Medrol,' and 'Metrozole,' sounding similar to 'Medzole' and each other. <p>Brand Name Dilemmas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies sometimes reuse their successful brand names for different formulations, potentially leading to confusion. • For example, the company that uses the brand name 'I-Pill' for emergency contraception, uses the brand name 'i-Pill Daily' as a daily contraceptive pill. • This underscores the risks of misunderstanding and several unintended consequences. <p>Challenges in India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The drug packaging in India bears the name and prescription advice in the English language, spoken by less than 10% of the population. • Also, in India, it is common for many pharmacies to dispense drugs without prescriptions. • Additionally, several of them fail to adhere to the legal mandate of operating exclusively with trained pharmacists registered with the Pharmacy Council of India. • The combination of language barriers and lax regulation increases the likelihood of prescription errors, compounded by confusing drug names. 	<p>Judicial and Parliamentary Attention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Supreme Court and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare have addressed this issue. • They have urged the Ministry of Health to prevent the use of confusingly similar names for drugs. • However, these recommendations were initially overlooked until Justice Pratibha M. Singh's intervention in 2019. <p>Regulatory Response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019, the Ministry of Health introduced the Drugs and Cosmetics (Thirteenth Amendment) Rules, 2019, aiming to address the problem. • However, this framework relies on self-certification by pharmaceutical companies, which is deemed ineffective. • Additionally, India lacks a comprehensive database of pharmaceutical brand names. <p>Data Deficiency and Reform Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India lacks data on prescription errors, hindering the acknowledgment of the problem by the Ministry of Health. • The lack of political determination within the Drug Regulation Section hinders the execution of reforms. • This is in contrast to mechanisms in the US and Europe, where thorough scrutiny of drug names is undertaken to minimize confusion and reduce prescription errors.
---	--

9. COVERING THE DISTANCE - Indian Express

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

Context:

- The enduring relationship between India and France, characterized by **shared values, strategic cooperation** and **mutual support**, is poised to reach new heights.
- The **French President's visit** to India as the **chief guest for Republic Day** underscores the robust bonds between the two nations.

Historical Cooperation

- India and France have consistently demonstrated the ability to overcome differences, with a relationship deeply rooted in time-tested trust and collaboration.
- This alliance, free of historical baggage and bilateral disputes, has attracted global attention due to its geopolitical significance.
- France's unwavering support for India on critical issues highlights the strength of their partnership.
 - These include nuclear capabilities, Jammu and Kashmir, permanent UN Security Council membership, standing with India to counter Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and bolstering India's capabilities against China.

Strategic Cooperation and Shared Interests

- The strategic cooperation extends to various domains, including defence production, nuclear and space sectors, and intelligence sharing.
- France has been instrumental in enhancing India's hard power, offering advanced defence technologies and supporting India's interests within the European Union.
- The Indo-Pacific region, with France's vast territory and involvement in organizations like the Indian Ocean Commission, serves as a strategic asset for India.

Shared Values and Challenges

- Both nations value their strategic autonomy, fostering a unique relationship that goes beyond traditional alliances.
- France's ability to view India independently from the Anglo-Saxon world aligns with India's pursuit of strategic autonomy without being perceived as anti-Western.
- This shared commitment to multiculturalism and pluralism resonates at both domestic and international levels.

Cultural Exchange and Support

- India and France have established a culture of supporting each other, evident in their collaboration on several initiatives.
 - Such as the International Solar Alliance and France's adoption of the UPI payments system (first European country).
- Bilateral maritime cooperation in the Indo-Pacific predates the Quad, showcasing their commitment to regional stability.
- The French President's visit is expected to yield new areas of cooperation, particularly in military and technical domains.
 - Such as engines, aircraft, submarines, space, digitalization, cyber security, and climate change.

Global Leadership

- As the world grapples with tensions and uncertainties, the French President's role as a bridge between the West and the East, and between the North and the South, becomes crucial.
- The Indian Prime Minister and the French President have a unique opportunity to leverage their friendship for global stability and cooperation.

Conclusion

- The **India-France partnership**, built on early investments and reciprocal trust, stands as a **model for international collaboration**.
- The upcoming summit is poised to **strengthen ties further, fostering cooperation in diverse sectors** and reinforcing the shared commitment to a **stable and multipolar world**.

10. As Army launches Op Sarvashakti, recalling 2003's Sarpvinash in Pir Panjal - Indian Express

Relevance: Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

Context:

- The Indian Army has recently initiated **Operation Sarvashakti** in the **Rajouri-Poonch sector of Jammu and Kashmir**.
- Focusing on the **Pir Panjal range**, it aims to **target terrorists responsible for recent attacks on security forces**.
- This recalls the historical **Operation Sarpvinash conducted in 2003**, which successfully addressed similar challenges.

The Background

- In recent years, the Rajouri-Poonch sector has witnessed multiple attacks on security forces, with 20 soldiers losing their lives.
- Most of the terrorists operating in this region are believed to be foreigners.
- Operation Sarvashakti, deploying additional troops, seeks to enhance the likelihood of contact with terrorists and restore security in the area.

Operation Sarpvinash

- Operation Sarpvinash, launched in 2003, was the largest counter-insurgency operation in Jammu and Kashmir at that time.
- It focused on the dense forests south of the Pir Panjal range, especially in the Hilkaka area in Poonch.
- Involving around 10,000 troops, the three-month-long operation targeted terrorists who had infiltrated and established camps.
- The operation resulted in the elimination of about 100 terrorists, recovery of weapons, explosives, and supplies, and demolition of numerous hideouts.

Significance of Hilkaka Area

- The Hilkaka area, strategically important due to its proximity to the Pir Panjal range, served as a key route for infiltrators from across the LoC into the Kashmir valley.
- Terrorists, exploiting the region's topography, created secure camps, bunkers, and communication networks, posing a threat to national security.

Strategic Importance of the Region

- The areas south of Mendhar leading to the Pir Panjal range through Hilkaka represent one of the shortest routes for infiltrators.
- The dense forests and steep mountain slopes provided cover for terrorists, enabling them to merge with foliage during Indian troop searches and inflict casualties.

Outcome of Operation Sarpvinash

- Operation Sarpvinash successfully cleared the region of terrorists, ensuring peace until 2017-18.
- However, recent years have seen a resurgence in high-intensity attacks in this strategic area, prompting the launch of Operation Sarvashakti.



Mentorship
India

Quick Look

1. World's First Melanistic Tiger Safari

- The Odisha Government recently unveiled plans to establish the world's first melanistic tiger safari near Baripada, the district headquarters of Mayurbhanj.
- Objective: To provide a unique experience for tourists to witness the rare and majestic melanistic tigers found exclusively in the Similipal Tiger Reserve.
 - The Similipal Tiger Reserve is the sole habitat for melanistic tigers in the wild globally, as reported in the 2018 All India Tiger Estimation.
- The melanistic tiger safari, covering an area of 200 hectares along NH-18, will be located about 15 km from the Similipal Tiger Reserve.
- Melanistic tigers, characterized by a dark coat due to excess melanin, have been captured on cameras installed in Odisha forests.
- The safari serves as a platform to raise awareness about the conservation needs of melanistic tigers and showcase Odisha's commitment to preserving its unique biodiversity.

2. Arambai Tenggol

- Arambai Tenggol is a Meitei activist organisation in the Indian state of Manipur, often described as a radical organisation.
- Initially established in 2020 as a cultural outfit, it has undergone a transformation into a radical organization.
- It is also a revivalist organisation that aims to reestablish the pre-Hindu, native Sanamahi religion among the Meiteis.
- It enjoys the patronage of Manipur's titular king and parliamentarian Leishemba Sanajaoba as well as the Manipur chief minister.
- The group is suspected to have played a significant role in the Meitei-Kuki clashes that started in May 2023.

3. Bharat Ratna

- It is the highest civilian Award of the country which was instituted in the year 1954.
- It is awarded in recognition of exceptional service/performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour.
- Any person without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex is eligible for these awards.
- Though usually conferred on India-born citizens, the Bharat Ratna has been awarded to one naturalised citizen, Mother Teresa and to two non-Indians, Pakistan national Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and former South African President Nelson Mandela.
- The original statutes did not provide for posthumous awards but were amended in 1955 to permit them.
 - Former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri became the first individual to be honoured posthumously.
- The recommendations for Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister himself to the President and no formal recommendations for this are necessary.
- The number of annual awards is restricted to a maximum of three in a particular year.
- On conferment of the award, the recipient receives a Sanad (certificate) signed by the President and a medallion. The award does not carry any monetary grant.

4. Batadrava Than

- Also known as the Bordowa Than, it is one of the most sacred sites for Assamese Vaishnavites.
- It is located in Nagaon district of Assam.
- It is a temple complex at the birthplace of revered Vaishnavite reformer-saint Srimanta Sankardeva.
- Features
 - It is enclosed by a brick wall and has two entrances.
 - The Kirtan Ghar, a capacious prayer house, was initially built by Sankardev using temporary materials.
 - Connected to the Kirtan Ghar is the Manikut, a place dedicated to housing sacred texts, scriptures, and manuscripts.
 - The campus encompasses diverse structures such as Natghar (Drama hall), Alohighar (Guest room), Sabhaghar (Assembly hall), Rabhaghar (Music room), Hatipukhuri, Aakashi Ganga, Doul mandir (festive temple), and others.
- A very big festival "Doul Mahotsava" (Holi) is a yearly attraction for the devotees in Bordowa.

5. Lake Retba

- The Lake Retba's waters are virtually devoid of life and are on the verge of disappearing due to pollution and mining.
- Also known as Lac Rose (the Pink Lake), it is located north of the Cap Vert peninsula of Senegal, northeast of Dakar (Senegal).
- The pink coloration is due to the proliferation of halophilic green algae (living in a salty environment), *Dunaliella salina*, which contain red pigments.
 - The algae is associated with halophilic bacteria of the genus *Halobacterium*.
- This microscopic alga's resistance to salt comes from its high concentration of carotenoid pigments, which protect it from light, and its high glycerol content.
- In fact, *Dunaliella salina* contains at least four antioxidant pigments (beta-carotene, astaxanthin, lutein and zeaxanthin), which are rich in vitamins and trace elements.
- When salinity is high, algae with red pigments thrive, and when salinity is low, they give way to other algae rich in green pigments.

6. Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

- Section 420 of the IPC, or IPC 420 as it is commonly known, deals with the act of cheating and dishonestly inducing
 - The person deceived to deliver any property to any person, or to make, alter, or destroy the whole or any part of a valuable security
 - Or anything which is signed or sealed and capable of being converted into a valuable security.
- Section 415 of the IPC defines the offence of cheating.
- In simpler terms, cheating is a dishonest act performed in order to gain some advantage out of it.
- Section 420 IPC is a serious form of cheating that includes inducement (to lead or move someone to happen) in terms of the delivery of property as well as valuable securities.
- This section is also applicable to matters where the destruction of property is caused by cheating or inducement.
- The person found guilty under this section shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term that may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to a fine.
- The offence is cognizable and non-bailable.

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

1. ASI was established during British colonial rule in India.
2. ASI is responsible for the maintenance and preservation of only ancient monuments and archaeological sites.
3. The Director-General of ASI is appointed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.

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 Quad Summit

1. The Quad Summit is a diplomatic forum involving the United States, Japan, Australia, and South Korea.
2. India is the current chair of the Quad, leading discussions and initiatives within the forum.
3. The Quad Summit aims to address economic issues exclusively and does not have a strategic or security-focused agenda.

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 Sweden's attempt to join NATO

1. Sweden's application to join NATO faced opposition primarily from Poland and Germany.
2. Sweden decided to pursue NATO membership following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
3. Turkey's objections to Sweden's NATO bid were related to concerns about Sweden's stance on terrorist groups.
4. Joining NATO would grant Sweden access to strategic bases along almost the entire Baltic Sea coastline.

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 on Leprosy Disease

1. Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by a virus.
2. It is more common in tropical and subtropical areas.
3. It is known to affect the people of old age only.
4. The WHO-recommended treatment regimen for leprosy, known as multi-drug therapy (MDT), includes two drugs.

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

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

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the Jal Jeevan Mission

1. Jal Jeevan Mission aims to provide piped water supply to all rural households in India by 2030.
2. The mission is implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.
3. Jal Jeevan Mission focuses solely on urban areas, aiming to improve water infrastructure in metropolitan cities.
4. The mission emphasizes community involvement and local water management to ensure sustainable water supply.

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

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

Q6. Consider the following statements

1. Standing Deposit Facility is a window for scheduled banks to borrow overnight from the RBI in an emergency situation.
2. Statutory Liquidity Ratio is the minimum percentage of deposits that a

commercial bank has to maintain in the form of gold only.

3. Marginal Standing Facility is a liquidity window through which RBI gives banks an option to park excess liquidity with it.

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

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

Q7. Consider the following statements regarding the Purchasing Managers Index (PMI)

1. PMI is a composite economic indicator that measures the performance of the manufacturing sector only.
2. A PMI reading above 50 indicates expansion in the manufacturing sector, while a reading below 50 indicates contraction.
3. PMI is calculated based on surveys of purchasing managers in various industries, reflecting their views on business conditions and expectations.

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

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

Q8. With reference to Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), consider the following statements

1. Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for approval of drugs and conduct of clinical trials.
2. Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is the head of the department of the CDSCO who sets standards for the manufacturing, sales, import, and distribution of drugs in India.

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 with reference to India - France Relations

1. Both countries launched the International Solar Alliance in 2015 to tackle climate change.
2. France supports India's bid for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.

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

Q10. What is the primary objective of Operation Sarvashakti, seen in the news recently?

- A. To establish diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries for regional stability.
- B. To enhance troop density in the Pir Panjal range and increase the likelihood of engagement with terrorists responsible for recent attacks on security forces.
- C. To initiate a socio-economic development plan for the local communities in LWE affected areas.
- D. To conduct environmental conservation efforts in the Pir Panjal range.

Prelims Track Answer

Answer 1 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was indeed established during the British colonial period. It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham, who became its first Director-General. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The ASI is responsible for the maintenance, preservation, and archaeological research of not only ancient monuments but also archaeological sites and remains of national importance. Its scope extends beyond monuments to include a broader archaeological heritage. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect**
- The Director-General of ASI is appointed by the Government of India, specifically by the Ministry of Culture. The Director-General oversees the functioning of ASI and plays a crucial role in the preservation and promotion of India's rich archaeological heritage. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 2 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The Quad Summit involves the United States, Japan, Australia, and India, not South Korea. South Korea is not a member of the Quad. **Hence, statement 1 is INcorrect**
- As of the last information available (knowledge cutoff in January 2022), India was the chair of the Quad. The chairmanship rotates among the member countries, and India assumed the role in 2021. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- While economic issues are part of the Quad Summit discussions, the forum has a broader agenda that includes strategic and security concerns. The Quad nations discuss regional security, Indo-Pacific stability, and cooperation on various fronts, making it a comprehensive diplomatic and strategic forum. **Hence, statement 3 is INcorrect**

Answer 3 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The primary opposition to Sweden's NATO membership came from Turkey and Hungary, not Poland and Germany. **Hence, statement 1 is INcorrect**
- Sweden's decision to apply for NATO membership was influenced by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, prompting a shift in its

longstanding neutral stance. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

- Turkey raised concerns about Sweden's perceived leniency towards groups it considers terrorists, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), during the discussions about Sweden's NATO membership. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**
- Once Sweden becomes a NATO member, it would provide NATO with strategic access to almost the entire Baltic Sea coastline, enhancing the alliance's geopolitical position. **Hence, statement 4 is correct**

Answer 4 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The Indian government recently gave its approval for a new treatment regimen for leprosy, with the goal of halting transmission at the sub-national level by 2027.
- Leprosy, caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, is a chronic infectious disease. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- The disease predominantly affects the skin and peripheral nerves. Left untreated, the disease may cause progressive and permanent disabilities.
- It is more common in tropical and subtropical areas. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It is a neglected tropical disease (NTD) which still occurs in more than 120 countries, with more than 200 000 new cases reported each year.
- It is known to occur at all ages ranging from early childhood to old age. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- Transmission: Through droplets from the nose and mouth during close contact with untreated cases.
- The WHO-recommended treatment regimen, known as multi-drug therapy (MDT), includes three drugs viz. dapsone, rifampicin, and clofazimine. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**

Answer 5 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The primary objective of the Jal Jeevan Mission is to provide tap water connections to all rural households by 2024, with a broader goal of ensuring safe and adequate

water for rural communities. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**

- The Jal Jeevan Mission is implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India. This ministry is responsible for water resources, river development, and Ganga rejuvenation. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Jal Jeevan Mission is specifically designed for rural areas, aiming to provide piped water supply to all rural households. It does not focus on urban areas. **Hence, statement 3 is Incorrect**
- Community participation and local water management are key components of the Jal Jeevan Mission. The mission emphasizes the community's role in planning, implementation, and management to ensure sustainable water supply. **Hence, statement 4 is correct**

Answer 6 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Repo rate is the rate at which the central bank of a country lends money to commercial banks in the event of any shortfall of funds.
- Standing Deposit Facility is a liquidity window through which RBI gives banks an option to park excess liquidity with it. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- Marginal Standing Facility is a window for scheduled banks to borrow overnight from the RBI in an emergency situation. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- Statutory Liquidity Ratio or SLR is the minimum percentage of deposits that a commercial bank has to maintain in the form of liquid cash, gold or other securities. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**

Answer 7 Option B is correct

Explanation

- PMI is a composite indicator that measures the performance of both the manufacturing and services sectors. It provides insights into overall economic activity. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- A PMI reading above 50 indicates expansion in the economic activity of the surveyed sector, while a reading below 50 suggests contraction. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It serves as a threshold for gauging the health of the sector.

- PMI is calculated based on surveys conducted among purchasing managers in different industries.
- These surveys capture purchasing managers' views on factors such as new orders, production, employment, supplier deliveries, and inventories. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- The index reflects their expectations and assessments of business conditions.

Answer 8 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) is the Central Drug Authority for discharging functions assigned to the Central Government under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act of 1940.
- It works under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and is the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) of India.
- Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for
 - Approval of Drugs
 - Conduct Clinical Trials
 - Laying down the standards for Drugs
 - Control over the quality of imported Drugs in the country
 - Coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) is the head of the department of the CDSCO.
- He is responsible for approval of licences of specified categories of drugs such as blood and blood products, IV fluids, vaccines and sera in India.
- He also sets standards for the manufacturing, sales, import, and distribution of drugs in India. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Answer 9 Option C is correct

Explanation

- France was one of the first countries with which India signed a "strategic partnership" after the end of the Cold War, in January 1998.
- France was also one of the very few countries to support India's decision to test nuclear weapons in 1998.
- France supports India's bid for permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council as well as its entry into the Nuclear

Suppliers Group. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- Both countries, as part of their joint efforts on climate change, launched the International Solar Alliance in 2015. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- France has emerged as a key defence partner for India, becoming the second largest defence supplier in 2017- 2021.
- Joint Exercises: Exercise Shakti (Army), Exercise Varuna (Navy), Exercise Garuda (Air Force).

Answer 10 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The Indian Army has recently initiated Operation Sarvashakti in the Rajouri-Poonch sector of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Focusing on the Pir Panjal range, it aims to target terrorists responsible for recent attacks on security forces. **Hence, option B is correct.**
- This recalls the historical Operation Sarpvinash conducted in 2003, which successfully addressed similar challenges.



Mentorship
India

Mentorship India

Our mission is crystal clear – to provide the finest UPSC mentorship and guidance available in India. We recognize that the path to success in the UPSC examination is both demanding and multifaceted. This is precisely why we have developed a comprehensive approach that goes beyond conventional coaching. Our commitment lies in fostering excellence by equipping aspirants with the necessary tools, knowledge, and unwavering support to not only excel in the examination but also in life itself.

Mentorship India represents more than just an organization; it is a community of ambitious individuals bound together by the shared objective of conquering the UPSC examination. We warmly invite you to embark on this transformative journey alongside us. Whether you are a novice taking your initial steps or a seasoned aspirant aiming for the pinnacle, Mentorship India is your dependable companion in the relentless pursuit of excellence.

+91 9999 057869
www.mentorshipindia.com

A-92, Third Floor, Hari Nagar
Delhi - 110064

 @mentorship.india