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Important News Articles

GS II

1. Jaishankar, Guterres discuss reform of global financial institutions, sustainability- The Hindu

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

News:

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	Prelims Takeaway
	• UNSC

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- Recently, **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres held bilateral talks** on the eve of the Minister's address to the 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- They discussed **the sustainability agenda and the reform of international financial institutions and the UN.**

Reform in United Nation
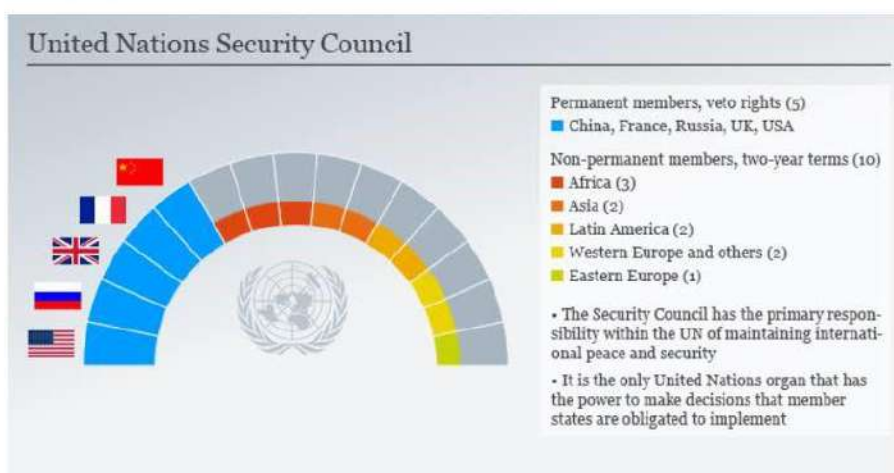
UN Security Council (UNSC) Issue

- The **UN Security Council is less effective** because it is less representative, the most pertinent absence being that of Africa, a continent of 54 countries.
- It is a matter of concern that **globally important countries such as India, Germany, Brazil, and South Africa are not represented o**n the UNSC permanent members list.
- **Veto power has been always criticized** by many experts
- The geopolitical **rivalry among the permanent members** has prevented the UNSC from coming up with effective mechanisms to deal with global issues.

India and UNSC

- There is **widespread support**, including by **four of the five permanent members o**f the Security Council – US, UK, France and Russia – for a permanent seat for India at the Council.
- It's a **regular contributor to the UN's peacekeeping missions.**
- It's one of the **main financial backers of the UN.**
- It's the **world's largest democracy.**
- It maintains one of **the largest armies in the world.**
- It is **responsible for nuclear power** despite being non-signatory to NPT.
- India has been **elected eight times to the UN Security Council,** most recently from 2021 to 2022 after receiving 184 of 192 votes.

Way forward

- The power **imbalance between the P5 and other countries in the UNSC** needs to be addressed urgently to make the council more democratic
- The changing **needs of global governance for peace and securi**ty require significant reforms in the UNSC

United Nations Security Council

Permanent members, veto rights (5)
China, France, Russia, UK, USA

Non-permanent members, two-year terms (10)
Africa (3)
Asia (2)
Latin America (2)
Western Europe and others (2)
Eastern Europe (1)

• The Security Council has the primary responsibility within the UN of maintaining international peace and security

• It is the only United Nations organ that has the power to make decisions that member states are obligated to implement

2. We can scrap Justice Gita Mittal Committee or you can trust it, CJI tells petitioners- The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Map based questions

- Faced with myriad complaints and grievances from petitioners in the Manipur ethnic violence case, **the Supreme Court said it could not run the State administration**
- It said **petitioners had to trust the Justice Gita Mittal Committee to do its job.**

Manipur issue

- The **central valley of Manipur (10% of the geographical area) is home to the Meitei and Meitei Pangals** who constitute roughly 64% of the state's population.
- The **remaining 90% of the state's geographical area comprises hills** surrounding the valley, which are home to the recognized tribes, making up about 35% of the state's population.
- **The Meitei community** (living in the valley) **wants to be included in the state's Scheduled Tribes list.**
- They argue that **being left out of the ST list has caused the community to be victimized** without any constitutional safeguards.
- A single judge of the **Manipur High Court passed an order asking the government to consider the demand of the Meitei community for ST status.**
- The order has **been opposed by tribal groups in the state.**
- Both the demand and the order, passed by a single judge of the High Court, have been strongly opposed by groups representing the state's tribal communities such as **Kukis and Naga (living in Hills)**

Status of Meiteis

- Opposition to the inclusion of the Meiteis in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category by hill tribe in Manipur is **due to their dominant population and political representation of Meitei and fear of job loss.**
- Additionally, **the Meitei language is already included in the Constitution**
- sections of the Meitei community are already classified as Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes with access to opportunities associated with that status.

Effort by judiciary

- Recently, The **Justice Mittal Committee was constituted by the apex court to intervene and monitor relief and rehabilitation,** restoration of homesteads, religious places of worship, etc, in Manipur.

3. NGOs told to declare assets acquired with foreign funds - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)
• nongovernmental organization (NGO)

- The Ministry of Home Affairs on Monday issued a gazetted notification, **amending the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) rules**
- Decision came after mandating **NGOs with FCRA license to submit details of movable and immovable assets created out of foreign contributions.**

Key changes in FCRA rule

- Under the new rules, **political parties, legislature members, election candidates, judges, government servants, journalists and media houses among** others – all barred from receiving foreign contribution
- They will **no longer be prosecuted if they receive foreign contribution from relatives** abroad and fail to intimate the government within 90 days.

Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

- The "**Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act" (FCRA) regulates foreign donation**s and ensures that such contributions do not adversely affect internal security.
- Firs**t enacted in 1976, it was amended in 2010 in which a slew of new measures was adopted to regulate foreign donations.**
- The FCRA act is implemented b**y the Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- Under the **new rules notified by MHA in 2015, NGOs are required to give an undertaking that**
  - o the acceptance of foreign funds is not likely to prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India
  - o impact friendly relations with any foreign state and does not disrupt communal harmony.
- The FCRA **is applicable to all associations, groups and NGOs which intend to receive foreign donations.**

Registration

- It is mandatory **for all such NGOs to register themselves under the FCRA.**
- Registration can be canceled for a range of reasons including:
  - o if in the opinion of the Central Government
  - o If It is necessary for the public interest to cancel the certificate
- Once the registration of an NGO is canceled, **it is not eligible for re-registration for three years.**

4. Centre rebuffs Moody's Aadhaar report; says a billion Indians trust it, no breach of database- The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Virtual ID(VID)
• Aadhaar

- Recently, **The Electronics and IT Ministry took on a report from Moody's Investors Service that raised questions** about the efficacy of Aadhaar
- It asserted that **there have been no breaches reported from the unique ID system's** database till date to dismiss concerns about security and privacy in a centralised system.

Key points

- The ministry said that t**he seeding of Aadhaar and payment in the MGNREGS has been done without requiring the worker to authenticate using their biometrics.**
- The Moody's report also ignores that **biometric submission is also possible through contactless means like face authentication and iris authentication,**
- the **option of mobile OTP (One-Time Passcode) is** also available in many use cases.
- Parliament has laid down **robust privacy protections in the law governing the Aadhaar** system
- **State-of-the-art security solutions are in place**, along with a federated database and encryption of data both at rest and in motion,
- These **systems are certified as per international security** and privacy standards

Aadhaar

- It is a **12-digit unique identification number issued by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI**) to every individual resident of India.
- It **serves as proof of identity**, which is linked to the individual's biometric and demographic information.
- The **Aadhaar programme was launched in 2009 by the UIDAI w**ith the goal of providing a unique and verifiable identity for every resident of India.
- **Mask Aadhaar option allows you to mask your Aadhaar number** in your downloaded e-Aadhaar.

Virtual ID(VID)

- **It is a temporary, revocable 16-digit random numbe**r mapped with the Aadhaar number.
- It can be **used in lieu of an Aadhaar number whenever authentication or e-KYC services are performed.**
- Authentication may be performed using VID in a manner similar to using an Aadhaar number. It is not possible to derive Aadhaar number from VID.

GS III

5. ISRO tests engine for Gaganyaan mission - The Hindu

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

News:

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully completed the CE20 E13 engine** hot test for the Gaganyaan qualification and 22-tonne thrust qualification.
- Recently, The engine was tested at **ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC), Mahendragiri**

Key Points

- **The CE20 engine** is a vital component, **serving as the powerhouse of the Cryogenic Upper Stage** (CUS) responsible for propelling the upper stage (C25) of the LVM3 vehicle.
- It has demonstrated its capability by successfully operating at a thrust level of 19 tonnes in six successive LVM3 missions, including:
  - the Chandrayaan-2
  - Chandrayaan-3
  - two commercial OneWeb missions.
- To **enhance the payload capacity of the LVM3 vehicle**, ISRO is upgrading the CE20 engine.
- The **CE20 engine hardware referred to as E13** was selected for both Gaganyaan qualification and 22-tonne thrust level operations," the space agency said.

Gaganyaan

- It is a mission by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to send a **three-member crew to space for a period of five to seven days.**
- The **first trial (uncrewed flight) for Gaganyaan is being planned by the end of 2023 or early 2024.**
- This will be followed by **sending Vyom Mitra, a humanoid and then with the crew onboard.**
- The Gaganyaan spacecraft will be **placed in a low earth orbit (LEO) of 300-400 kilometers.**
- It is the first indigenous mission **that will send Indian astronauts to space.**
- **If it succeeds, India will be the fourth country to have sent a human to space,** the other three being the US, Russia and China.
- ISRO is developing the **spacecraft and Russia is helping in the training of the astronauts.**
- It will be launched by ISRO's **Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle GSLV Mk III** (3 stages heavy-lift vehicle).

6. Philippines removes China's barrier in disputed shoal - The Hindu

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

News:

- **Philippine officials vowed to remove a floating barrier placed by China's coast guard** to prevent Filipino fishing boats from entering a disputed lagoon in the South China Sea.
- They said the **300 meter-long barrier at the entrance to the lagoon at** Scarborough Shoal is "illegal and illegitimate.

South China sea

- An arm of the **western Pacific Ocean that borders the Southeast Asian mainland.**
- Bordered by **Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.**
- It is connected by **the Taiwan Strait with the East China Sea and by the Luzon Strait with the Philippine Sea**

- It Comprises three archipelagos, namely, **the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Pratas Islands and Macclesfield's Bank and Scarborough Shoal**.
- **China's Nine Dash Line**: Defines area claimed by China in the South China Sea - by far the largest portion of the Sea.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982
- Also known as **Law of the Sea**, it is an **international agreement** that establishes the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.
- It divides marine areas into **five main zones namely Internal Waters, Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the High Seas.**
- It not **only zones coastal states' offshore areas b**ut also provides specific guidance for states' rights and responsibilities in the five concentric zones.
- While **UNCLOS has been signed and ratified by nearly all the coastal countrie**s in the South China Sea, its interpretation is still hotly disputed.

7. Docking of first ship at Vizhinjam port to be delayed by 10 days

Relevance: Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Vizhinjam International Seaport

- The docking of the first ship **at the Vizhinjam International Seaport in Thiruvananthapuram has been deferred from October 4 to 15**, said Ports Minister.

Vizhinjam International Seaport
- It is **located at Vizhinjam,** a coastal town in Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala.
- It is designed primarily to **cater to container transhipment besides multi-purpose and break bulk cargo.**
- It is **developed in a landlord model with a Public Private Partnership c**omponent on a design, build, finance, operate and transfer ("DBFOT") basis.
- The Port is merely a 10 NM diversion from the international east-west shipping route and is also **close to the national/regional road and rail network.**

Significance
- It is the **only transhipment hub in the Indian subcontinent,** closest to the international shipping routes, and is centrally located on the Indian coastline.
- Around **95 per cent of India's foreign trade is conducted through the sea route**.
- In value terms, this **works out to 70 per cent of the foreign trade.**
- Nearly 30 percent of the f**reight movement takes place through the international shipping route South of the Indian peninsula**, which passes 10 nautical miles off Vizhinjam.
- Currently, **India does not have a deep-water container transhipment terminal and depends on Colombo**, Singapore and Salalah ports.
- This results in a **significant loss of foreign currency and revenue**, estimated to be about Rs 2,500 crore a year.

8. IISER Bhopal Scientists identify a circular RNA that helps in replication of HIV-1 virus- Indian Express

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• circRNA
• HIV

- Recently, r**esearchers from the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal (IISER Bhopal)** identified a specific circular RNA (circRNA) called **'ciTRAN.**
- It plays a crucial role in the multiplication of the AIDS-causing HIV-1 virus within the human body.

circular RNA

- **Ribonucleic acid is a molecule in living cells t**hat carries genetic information and helps in the production of proteins.
- **RNAs are in general straight-chain, free-end structures** but these circular RNA ('circRNA') forms a closed-loop.
- **The circRNA plays a pivotal role in regulating gene expression** and is essential for various biological processes.
- I**ts role in HIV-1 replication has remained** unclear for a long time.
- Characterizing **circular RNA can be tricky b**ecause it usually is less abundant, making it further challenging to detect in the native form.
- During **viral infections, there's so much information from the virus** that it can make it hard to find the less common ones like circular RNA.

Key Point

- The researchers developed **a novel approach called 'circDR-Seq'**, to successfully capture circRNAs from T-cells (white blood cells) infected with the HIV-1 virus and identified a specific circRNA named ciTRAN,
- It **plays an important role in the multiplication of the virus.**
- HIV-1 **viral protein R (VpR) is a multifunctional protein** that plays specific roles at multiple stages of the HIV-1 viral life cycle and affects anti-HIV functions of the immune cells.
- Further found that **HIV-1 infection induces ciTRAN expression in a Vpr-dependent** manner and that ciTRAN interacts with serine/arginine-rich splicing factor 1 (SRSF1), a protein known to repress HIV-1 transcription,"
- The results **suggest that HIV-1 hijacks ciTRAN which is generally altered during immunological signaling, inflammation, and viral infection.**
- It further **prevents (SRSF1) from doing its job, thereby promoting efficient viral transcription.**
- In addition, **researchers demonstrated that an SRSF1-inspired mimic can inhibit viral transcription regardless of ciTRAN induction.**
- The **hijacking of a host circRNA** thus represents a previously unknown facet of primate lentiviruses in overcoming transmission bottlenecks.

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. Children, a key yet missed demographic in AI regulation

Relevance: Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

Context

- **India is to host the first-ever global summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI)** this October.
- Additionally, **as the Chair of the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI), India will also be hosting the GPAI global summit** in December.
- **The nature of digital services means that many cutting-edge AI deployments are not designed specifically for children** but are nevertheless accessed by them.

The governance challenge

- Regulation will have to align incentives to reduce issues of addiction, mental health, and overall safety.
- Other malicious threats emerging from AI include misinformation, radicalisation, cyberbullying, sexual grooming, and doxxing.
- The next generation of digital nagriks must also grapple with the indirect effects of their families' online activities.
- While moving into adolescence we must equip young people with tools to manage the unintended consequences.
- For instance, AI-powered deep fake capabilities can be misused to target young people wherein bad actors create morphed sexually explicit depictions and distribute them online.
- Beyond this, India is a melting pot of intersectional identities across gender, caste, tribal identity, religion, and linguistic heritage.
- Internationally, AI is known to transpose real world biases and inequities into the digital world.
- Such issues of bias and discrimination can impact children and adolescents who belong to marginalised communities.

Parents role

- The data protection framework's current approach to children is misaligned with India's digital realities.
- It transfers an inordinate burden on parents to protect their children's interests and does not facilitate safe platform operations and/or platform design.
- Confusingly, it inverts the well-known dynamic where a significant percentage of parents rely on the assistance of their children to navigate otherwise inaccessible user interface and user experience (UI/UX) interfaces online.

Shifting the emphasis

- UNICEF's guidance for policymakers on AI and children identifies nine requirements for child-centred AI which draws on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (India is a signatory).
- The guidance aims to create an enabling environment which promotes children's well-being, inclusion, fairness, non-discrimination, safety, transparency, explainability and accountability.
- Another key feature of successful regulation will be the ability to adapt to the varying developmental stages of children from different age groups.
- California's Age Appropriate Design Code Act serves as an interesting template.
- The Californian code pushes for transparency to ensure that digital services configure default privacy settings; assess whether algorithms, data collection, or targeted advertising systems harm children; and use clear, age-appropriate language for user-facing information.
- Indian authorities should encourage research which collects evidence on the benefits and risks of AI for India's children and adolescents.
- This should serve as a baseline to work towards an Indian Age Appropriate Design Code for AI.

Conclusion

- As we move towards a new law to regulate harms on the Internet, and look to establish our thought leadership on global AI regulation, the interests of our young citizens must be front and centre.

2. Woman, moment, nation

Relevance: Role of women and women's organization, population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues, urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

Context:

- Recently, both the houses of Parliament **passed the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-eighth Amendment) Bill 2023** under a new name, Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam.
- It r**eserves one-third of all seats for women in the Lok Sabha**, the state legislatures, and the Delhi legislative assembly.

Government's initiatives toward women-led development

- India has pivoted towards a paradigm of 'women-led development'.
- Governments' efforts to empower women through initiatives such as:
  o Ujjwala Yojana
  o Swachhata Abhiyan
  o Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
  o MUDRA Yojana
  o increasing maternity leave
  o permanent commissioning of women in the Armed Forces are visible to all.
- Around 70 per cent of loans under the PM MUDRA Yojana have been sanctioned to women.
- These are loans up to Rs 1 million to support micro-level units and those self-employed.
- Similarly, 80 percent of beneficiaries under Stand-Up India are women.
- Furthermore, with the success of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, countless women now have access to toilets in their homes, easing concerns over their safety and preserving their dignity.
- Women got joint ownership of houses made under PM Awas Yojana (PMAY).

Achievement of the women

- Over the past years, women have surged ahead with notable accomplishments.
- This progress is evident in the increased representation of female police personnel, accolades secured by our sportswomen on international platforms, and the rising enrolment of women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines.
- Achievement in IT: Since 2014, female participation in technical education, especially in the Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), has doubled.
- Achievement in science: Remarkably, nearly 43 per cent of STEM graduates in India are women.
- Achievement in SpaceAbout a quarter of space scientists in India are women whose dedication and hard work have been instrumental in the nation's flagship space missions, including Chandrayaan, Gaganyaan, and Mission Mars.
- Achievement in aviation: We also have one of the highest numbers of women pilots in civil aviation And female pilots in the Indian Air Force are now flying fighter aircraft.
- Achievement in defense: Women fighters now stand to serve as "Amrit Rakshaks" in the "Amrit Kaal"
- Achievement in Politics: The right to vote and contest elections was granted to women in India since the beginning.
- About 1.4 million, that is 46 percent of elected representatives in rural local bodies in India, are women.
- Indian women and their empowerment are playing a big role in pushing the country's growth.
- As, India's success cannot be achieved if 50 per cent of the population, which comprises women, remains confined to their homes.
- The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam is historic legislation, which will further boost women's empowerment and enable even greater participation of women in our political and governance processes.
- Significance: This transformative journey also signifies a paradigm shift in societal perceptions – where women are no longer merely beneficiaries but are active contributors and shapers of the nation's destiny.
- For e.g. Rashrapati Droupadi Murmu stands as a shining example of an empowered woman, and every female MP embodies empowerment.
- The elected women representatives will undoubtedly enhance the quality of parliamentary debates, influence law and policy making, and contribute positively to governance for the greater good of all Indians.

Conclusion

- We must remember that empowering women means empowering a nation.
- When women thrive, societies prosper.
- As we stand at this significant juncture, it's not just about celebrating the milestones achieved but also about looking forward to the limitless possibilities that lie ahead.
- India is setting an example on the global stage, showcasing that with commitment, vision, and action, gender barriers can be overcome, making way for a more inclusive, prosperous, and balanced future.

Quick Look

1. Sarcophagus

- It is an above-ground stone container for a coffin or dead body that often is often decorated with art, inscriptions, and carvings.
- The word sarcophagus comes from the Greek "sarx" meaning "flesh," and "phagien" meaning "to eat," so that sarcophagus literally translates as "eater of flesh."
- First used in Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece, the sarcophagus gradually became popular throughout the ancient world.
- It carried over through the later years of European society, often used for high status members of the clergy, government, or aristocracy.

2. Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET)

- It is the most commonly used thermoplastic polymer in the world.
- It belongs to the family of polyesters.
- PET is produced by the polymerization of ethylene glycol and terephthalic acid.
- When heated together under the influence of chemical catalysts, ethylene glycol and terephthalic acid produce PET in the form of a molten, viscous mass that can be spun directly to fibres or solidified for later processing as plastic.
- It is highly flexible, colorless and semi-crystalline resin in its natural state.
- It shows good dimensional stability, resistance to impact, moisture, alcohols and solvents.
- It exhibits excellent electrical insulating properties.
- It is very lightweight, which reduces transportation costs.
- It has good gas (oxygen, carbon dioxide) and moisture barrier properties.
- It is recyclable. It can be commercially recycled by thorough washing and re-melting, or by chemically breaking it down to its component materials to make new PET resin.

3. Brent Crude

- It serves as the most widely used benchmark that defines oil prices around the world.
- The term "Brent" refers to the Brent oil field, which was discovered in the 1970s and became a significant source of oil production.
- About two-thirds of all internationally traded crude oil supplies are priced relative to Brent, making it the most widely used marker of all.
- It is a light, sweet crude oil extracted from different oil fields in the North Sea.
- Its unique properties, low density and low sulphur content, make Brent crude oil simpler to process into products such as gasoline.
- As its supply is water-borne, Brent crude oil is easy to transport to distant locations.
- The Brent Crude oil price is influenced by various factors, including supply and demand dynamics, geopolitical events, production disruptions, and economic factors.

4. Psyche mission

- The journey to the asteroid, also named Psyche, will span nearly six years and cover approximately 3.6 billion kilometers.
- The asteroid orbits the Sun between Mars and Jupiter.
- It is believed to be a remnant core of a planetesimal, composed primarily of iron-nickel metal.
- Studying it from orbit could provide invaluable insights into the composition of Earth's core.

- In addition to its primary mission, the Psyche spacecraft will also host a pioneering technology demonstration known as NASA's Deep Space Optical Communications (DSOC) experiment.
- This laser communications system aims to test high-bandwidth optical communications back to Earth during the first two years of Psyche's journey.
- This experiment could revolutionise how data is transmitted across vast distances in space, potentially enhancing our ability to explore the farthest reaches of the solar system.
- NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory is responsible for mission management, operations and navigation.

5. Mukurthi National Park

- It is located in the western corner of the Nilgiris Plateau in the northwest corner of Tamil Nadu.
- The park was created to protect its keystone species, the Nilgiri tahr.
- Pykara and Kundah rivers flow through the park along with several perennial streams that originate in the park and drain into the Bhavani Puzha.
- It is designated as the UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Vegetation: The Park is characterised by montane grasslands and shrublands interspersed with sholas in a high altitude area of high rainfall.
- Here one can find shrubs like Gaultheria fragrantissima, Helichrysum and Berberis Other plants which can be seen here are Rhododendrons, Cinnamon, Mahonia, Satyrium, Raspberries etc.
- The park is home to some of the endangered wild species like Nilgiri tahr, Indian elephants, Nilgiri Langur, Bengal tiger and bonnet macaque etc.

Prelims Track Question

Q1. With reference to the Procedure for Renaming of States, consider the following statements
1. The Article 3 of Indian Constitution deals with the alteration of names of existing States.
2. A bill for renaming a state can be introduced in the respective State Assembly only.
3. The views of the state assembly are binding on the Parliament but not on the President.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the transfer of judges in High Courts.
1. The transfer of a judge from one High Court to another requires the consent of both Chief Justices of the respective High Courts.
2. The consent of the judge being transferred is required.
3. The proposal for transferring a HC judge should be initiated by the Chief justice of the concerned High Court.

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 criterias
1. Pre-agricultural level of technology
2. Low level of literacy
3. Economic backwardness
4. A declining or stagnant population

How many of the criterias stated above is/are used for identification of PVTGs in India?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. Only three
D. All four

Q4. Consider the following statements with reference to Aadhaar-enabled Payment System
1. It provides easy and secure access to banking services for the poor and marginalized sections of society.
2. Through this, a person can perform basic banking transactions through a Business Correspondent.
3. It encourages cashless transactions and financial inclusion in India.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q5. Consider the following Pairs of Navigation Systems and Associated Countries.
1. GLONASS: Europe
2. Galileo: Britain
3. NavIC: India
4. BeiDou: Japan

How many of the pairs given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. Only three
D. All four

Q6. Consider the following countries.
1. Bolivia
2. Brazil
3. Ecuador
4. Suriname

How many of the countries stated above is/are members of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. Only three
D. All four

Q7. Consider the following exercises
1. Yudh Abhyas
2. Vajra Prahar
3. Indra Dhanush

How many of the exercises mentioned above is/are practised between India and the US?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q8. With the present state of development, Artificial Intelligence can effectively do which of the following?
1. Bring down electricity consumption in industrial units
2. Create meaningful short stories and songs
3. Disease diagnosis
4. Text-to-Speech Conversion
5. Wireless transmission of electrical energy

Select the correct answer using the code given below:
A. 1, 2, 3 and 5 only
B. 1, 3 and 4 only
C. 2, 4 and 5 only
D. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Q9. Consider the following statements regarding a No Confidence Motion in the Indian Parliament.
1. The Constitution of India defines a No-Confidence Motion.

2. A motion of no-confidence can be introduced in any House of the Parliament.
3. One needs to specify the reasons for initiating the motion.
4. If a "No Confidence Motion" is passed, the current government is immediately dissolved, and new elections are called.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. Only three
D. All four

Q10. Which of the following cell lines is known as the "immortal cell line," widely used in scientific research?
A. X-Cell
B. EnduraCell
C. HeLa
D. VitaLine

Prelims Track Answer

Ans. 1 Option B is correct
Explanation
- Procedure for Renaming of States requires Parliamentary approval under Article 3 and 4 of the Constitution.
  - Article 3 of Indian Constitution deals with the formation of new States and alteration of areas, boundaries or names of existing States.
- A bill for renaming a state may be introduced in the Parliament on the recommendation of the President.
- Before the introduction of the bill, the President shall send the bill to the respective state assembly for expressing their views within a stipulated time.
- The views of the state assembly are not binding, neither on the President nor on the Parliament.
- On the expiry of the period, the bill will be sent to the Parliament for deliberation.
- The bill in order to take the force of a law must be passed by a simple majority.
- The bill is sent for approval to the President.
- After the approval, the bill becomes a law and the name of the state stands modified.

Ans. 2 Option A is correct
Explanation
- Article 222 of the Constitution makes provision for the transfer of a Judge (including Chief Justice) from one High Court to any other High Court.
- The proposal for transferring a HC judge (including a Chief Justice) should be initiated by the CJI
- The consent of the judge is not required.
- All transfers are to be made in the public interest.
- For transferring a judge other than the Chief Justice, the CJI should take the views of
  - The Chief Justice of the court concerned, as well as the Chief Justice of the court to which the transfer is taking place.
  - One or more SC judges
  - The views, expressed in writing, should be considered by a collegium of the CJI and the four senior most Judges of the Supreme Court.
- The recommendation is sent to the Union Law Minister → the Prime Minister → the President.

- After the President approves the transfer, the notification will be gazetted and the judge remains transferred.

Ans. 3 Option D is correct
Explanation
- PVTGs are more vulnerable among the tribal groups who are in need of greater support and development.
- Out of the 705 Scheduled Tribes in India, 75 have been identified as PVTGs.
- These are spread across 17 states and one Union Territory.
- Criteria for identification of PVTGs
  - Pre-agricultural level of technology
  - Low level of literacy
  - Economic backwardness
  - A declining or stagnant population

Ans. 4 Option D is correct
Explanation
- AePS or Aadhaar-enabled Payment System aims to provide easy and secure access to banking services for the poor and marginalized sections of society, especially in rural and remote areas.
- AePS is a payment service that allows a bank customer to use Aadhaar as his/her identity to access his/her Aadhaar enabled bank account.
- Through this, a person can perform basic banking transactions through a Business Correspondent.
- It eliminates the need for OTPs, bank account details, and other financial information.
- Transactions can be carried out with only the bank name, Aadhaar number, and captured fingerprint during Aadhaar enrollment.
- It was taken up by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) - a joint initiative of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Indian Banks' Association (IBA).

Ans. 5 Option A is correct
Explanation
- GLONASS: Russia
- Galileo: Europe
- NavIC: India
- BeiDou: China
- Quasi-Zenith Satellite System: Japan

Ans. 6 Option D is correct
Explanation
- Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental organisation formed by the eight Amazonian countries by signing the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT).
- Objective: To strengthen and implement the objectives of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty.
- It was founded to promote the preservation of the Amazon basin and regulate Amazonian development through international cooperation.
- It is the only socio-environmental block in Latin America.
- Member countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela.

Ans. 7 Option B is correct
Explanation
- Yudh Abhyas is a joint military exercise between India and the United States.
- 'Vajra Prahar' is an Indo-US Special Forces joint training exercise between India and the US.
- Indra Dhanush is a joint air force exercise between the Indian Air Force and the Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom.

Ans. 8 Option D is correct
Explanation
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think like humans and mimic their actions.
- Artificial Intelligence has various applications in today's society. in multiple industries, such as Healthcare, entertainment, finance, education, etc.
- AI has been used in disease diagnosis, creating songs like 'I am AI' and 'Daddy's Car' and creating short stories and fictions. AI has been used in Text -to -speech conversion, e.g. Cerewave AI.

- Artificial Intelligence has also found use in power industry, e.g. Machine -learning assisted power transfer (based on AI) using magnetic resonance and AI used for energy efficiency. **Hence all the options are correct.**

Ans. 9 Option D is correct
Explanation
- No-Confidence Motion allows opposition parties or any member to express their lack of confidence in the Council of Ministers
- The procedure is laid down under Rule 198 of the rules of procedure and conduct of the Lok Sabha.
- The motion does not require specific grounds to be mentioned.
- Even if mentioned, these grounds do not form part of the motion.
- It can only be moved in the Lok Sabha and not in the Rajya Sabha.
- If a "No Confidence Motion" is passed, it indicates that the current government has lost the support of the majority of the legislature.
- The government may either resign, leading to the formation of a new government without the need for immediate elections, or new elections may be called if no alternative government can be formed.

Ans. 10 Option C is correct
Explanation
- The HeLa cell line is derived from cervical cancer cells taken from Henrietta Lacks in 1951.
- These cells are known as "immortal" because they have achieved the ability to keep on dividing, never reaching the point of senescence.
- The HeLa cell line has been extensively used in scientific research, including the development of vaccines, medical studies, and various other fields.

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