

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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Important News Articles

GS II

1. UN Security Council demands immediate ceasefire in Gaza, US abstains - Indian express

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

Prelims Takeaway

- UNSC
- UN

News:

- The **United Nations Security Council demanded an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Palestinian militants Hamas** and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages after the United States abstained from the vote.

Key Highlights

- The remaining 14 council members voted for the resolution, which was proposed by the 10 elected members of the body.
- Washington had been averse to the word ceasefire earlier in the nearly six-month-old war in the Gaza Strip and had used its veto power to shield U.S. ally Israel as it retaliated against Hamas
- The Security Council resolution also “emphasizes the urgent need to expand the flow of humanitarian assistance to and reinforce the protection of civilians in the entire Gaza Strip
 - and reiterates its demand for the lifting of all barriers to the provision of humanitarian assistance at scale.”
- Russia and China have also vetoed two U.S. drafted resolutions on the conflict – in October and on Friday.

UNSC:

- The Security Council was **established by the UN Charter in 1945**.
- It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
- The other 5 organs of the United Nations are—the **General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat**.
- Its primary responsibility is to work to maintain international peace and security.
- The council is headquartered at New York.
- The council has 15 members: **the five permanent members and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms**.
- The five permanent members are the **United States, the Russian Federation, France, China and the United Kingdom**.
- India, for the eighth time, has entered the UNSC as a non-permanent member last year (2021) and will stay on the council for two years i.e 2021-22.

2. An expert explains: What will it take to resume India-Pakistan trade? - The Hindu

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

News:

- Pakistan stopped trade after the constitutional changes in Jammu and Kashmir** in 2019.
- Like other aspects of the India-Pak relationship, trade too has been impacted by Islamabad’s hard line on Kashmir and its support for terrorism.

Prelims Takeaway

- Most Favored Nation status
- Map based questions

- The dire state of the Pakistani economy, however, has raised hopes for a change in Pakistan's approach.

Pakistan limited trade with India despite benefits:

- Although granted favorable trading terms since 1996, Pakistan restricted most Indian imports.
- India still enjoyed a trade advantage, with cotton and chemicals being key Pakistani imports.

Trade halt and reasons:

- Pakistan stopped official trade with India in 2019 after India revoked special status for Kashmir.
- This followed India raising tariffs on Pakistani goods and withdrawing its Most Favored Nation status.

Why might Pakistan resume trade?

- A new Pakistani government and economic woes create pressure for a policy change.
- Importing from further distances strains Pakistan's finances.
- Direct trade with India would be more efficient.
- Pakistan's relations with other neighbors are currently tense.

Challenges to restarting trade:

- Political figures in Pakistan may oppose trade normalization.
- Pakistan's military traditionally disfavors improved relations.
- Pakistan wants Kashmir's status reversed, which India won't do.
- India demands Pakistan address terrorism concerns before trade resumes.

Current situation:

- India holds a stronger position and won't make concessions.
- Pakistan needs to decide if economic benefits outweigh political difficulties.

3. China to develop Sri Lanka's deep sea port and airport -The Hindu

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

Prelims Takeaway

- Hambantota
- Map Based question

News:

- Sri Lanka's Prime Minister said that **China has pledged to develop the island nation's strategic deep sea port** and the capital's airport after talks with his counterpart in Beijing.

Key Highlights

- Sri Lanka said China — the island's biggest bilateral creditor — would "assist" Sri Lanka's restructuring of external debt, a key condition to maintaining a \$2.9 billion IMF bailout.
- Beijing's position on debt restructuring has not been made public
 - but Sri Lankan officials have said China was reluctant to take a haircut on its loans but could extend the tenure and adjust interest rates.
- Sri Lanka in 2022 ran out of foreign exchange to finance essential imports and declared a sovereign default on its \$46 billion foreign debt.
- Beijing had offered "assistance to develop" Colombo International Airport and Hambantota port,

Japanese project halted

- A Japanese-funded expansion of Colombo airport had been on hold since Sri Lanka's sovereign debt default.

India's concern

- The southern sea port of Hambantota was handed to a Chinese state-owned company in 2017 on a 99-year lease for \$1.12 billion.
- India and the U.S. are both concerned that a Chinese foothold at Hambantota, on the island's southern coast, could boost its naval advantage in the Indian Ocean.

GS III

4. India achieves 16% decline in new TB cases since 2015' -The Hindu

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

News:

- **India's efforts to ensure early tuberculosis detection and treatment initiation**, along with a host of community engagement efforts has resulted in a decline of 16% in incidence (new TB cases emerging each year) and a 18% reduction in mortality, since 2015.

Prelims Takeaway

- TB
- National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme

Key highlights

- The incidence rate in India had fallen and the mortality rate had declined from 28 per lakh population in 2015 to 23 per lakh population in 2022
 - according to the India TB report 2024 released by the Union Health Ministry, stating that the country has set 2025 as the target for eliminating the disease.
- Additionally, of all the TB cases notified in 2023, nearly 32% of notifications came from the private health care sector which is an increase of 17% from the previous year.
- According to the data released in the report, while the overall notification of TB cases has improved by over 50% in the last nine years on an annual basis
 - **Uttar Pradesh saw the highest jump** in notifications (by 21% compared to the previous year).
- the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) **embarked on a journey towards accelerating TB elimination**, guided by the **National Strategic Plan 2017-25**.
- "The NTEP continued providing free diagnostic services, conducting approximately 1.89 crore sputum smear test," noted the report.

5. Drop in FDI mirrors global trend' -The Hindu

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

News:

- **The decline in India's net foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows**, which had dropped almost 31% to \$25.5 billion over the first 10 months of 2023-24
- It was in line with the slowdown in such investments to developing countries, the Finance Ministry has said, while holding out hope for an uptick in investments in this calendar year.

Key Highlights

- While overall global FDI flows rose 3% to an estimated \$1.4 trillion in 2023, economic uncertainty and higher interest rates did affect global investment
- reflected in FDI flows to developing countries falling by 9%, the Ministry said in its February review of the economy's performance.
- Mirroring the slowdown in FDI flows to developing countries, gross FDI inflows to India also dipped but only slightly in the period April 2023-January 2024 [from \$61.7 bn.
- Citing an UNCTAD report, the Ministry said that despite the drop in FDI inflows, the country witnessed "a stable number of new project announcements
 - keeping it in the top 5 destinations for global greenfield projects.
- The Netherlands, Singapore, Japan, the U.S.A. and Mauritius account for about 70% of the total FDI equity inflows into India, the Ministry added.

Prelims Takeaway

- FDI
- FPI

Slowing flows

Finance Ministry holds out hope for an uptick in investments this year even as FDI inflows witness a decline



■ While overall global FDI flows rose 3% to an estimated \$1.4 trillion in

2023, flows to developing countries fell by 9%

■ Despite drop in FDI inflows, India saw a stable number of new project announcements

■ Modest rise in global flows likely in 2024, thanks to a dip in inflation, borrowing costs

6. Is Australia's carbon credit scheme a 'catastrophe'? -The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

News:

- **Australia's carbon credit scheme** was undermined by damning new research which found a world-leading reforestation project had been an underperforming "catastrophe"
- Vast swathes of land across **Australia's desert Outback** have been earmarked for **native forest regeneration** meant to offset emissions as new trees suck up carbon.

Key Highlights

- But researchers have found that across almost **80% of these plantations forest growth was either stagnant or that woodlands were shrinking.**
- Despite this, Australia had used these projects to bank millions of tonnes in questionable carbon credits, scientists said, which are used to supposedly offset polluting industries.
- Officials claim that since 2013, the native forest spreading across this land has sucked up more than 27 million tonnes of carbon.
- Each tonne of carbon sequestered by these forests is chalked up as a single carbon credit.
- These credits are then bought by mining companies, airlines, and other heavily polluting industries to offset their emissions.
- The regulator said it "only issues carbon credits where a project can demonstrate regenerating native forest".
- Climate policy has long been a fraught affair in Australia, set back by a decade of political brawling dubbed the "climate wars".
- Despite its growing vulnerability to climate-linked natural disasters, Australia remains one of the world's biggest exporters of gas and thermal coal.
- Australia has committed to cutting carbon emissions by 43% by 2030 from 2005 levels, on a path to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Australia's carbon dioxide emissions per person are among the highest in the world at 15.3 tonnes, surpassing U.S. levels, World Bank figures show.

Prelims Takeaway

- Carbon credit
- Map based question

7. RBI modifies norms for lenders having exposure to AIFs -The Hindu

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

News:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has **modified norms for regulated entities (REs)** concerning their **investments in Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs)**.

Key Highlights

- As per the fresh directive, REs need to only set aside provisions to the extent their investment in an AIF scheme is further invested by the AIFs in a debtor's company, and not the entire investment in the AIF scheme.
- "Provisioning shall be required only to the extent of investment by the RE in the AIF scheme which is further invested by the AIF in the debtor company
 - and not on the entire investment of the RE in the AIF scheme," it added.
- The RBI had in December prevented REs from making investments in AIFs having downstream investments either directly or indirectly in any debtor's company of the REs.
 - This was to stop the evergreening of loans

Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs):

- It is a **special investment category** that differs from conventional investment instruments.
- **AIF is any fund established in India** which is a privately pooled investment vehicle that collects funds from sophisticated investors, both Indian or foreign, for investing.
- It pools funds from investors and invests them under different categories of investments as specified by the SEBI for the benefit of investors.
- These investment vehicles adhere to **the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012**.
- AIFs can be formed as a company, Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), trust, etc.
- It is an investment option for high rollers, including domestic and foreign investors in India.
- Generally, institutions and high net worth individuals invest in AIF as it needs a high investment amount.

Prelims Takeaway

- SEBI
- Alternative Investment Funds

8. Protect Moyar valley, the home of critically endangered Gyps vulture- Indian express

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

News:

- **Moyar valley or Maayar** (invisible river) valley extends from Gudalur through the core area of Mudumalai Tiger Reserve.

- This entire stretch of nearly 85 km is a wildlife haven and **important biome in the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**, sheltering several vital species like tiger and elephant and the critically endangered Gyps vulture.
- It is the only region in peninsular India where you have the biggest nesting colony of Gyps vultures in the wild.

Mudumalai: A vital wildlife corridor in India

- Mudumalai stretches through a critical area within the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.
- This region is home to endangered species like tigers, elephants, and Gyps vultures (the largest nesting colony in peninsular India).
- The Moyar Valley within Mudumalai provides a natural food source for scavengers like vultures.
- This is because prey animals here die from natural causes and lack harmful chemicals.

Key details about Mudumalai Tiger Reserve:

- Located in Tamil Nadu, at the meeting point of three states (Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala).
- Part of the Western Ghats mountain range.
- Shares borders with several protected areas, forming a crucial wildlife corridor.

Prelims Takeaway

- Mudumalai Tiger Reserve
- Moyar Valley

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

9. Preventing a China-Taiwan conflict

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

Context:

- With expanding national interests, India has stronger compulsions to act against far-off hazards. India finds its interests entangled in disputes on the far edges of Asia, including in Taiwan.

Key Highlights	What India can do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China claims Taiwan as its own, and is feverishly preparing to seize the island by force if necessary, while the U.S. has increasingly clearly signaled that it would probably fight to defend Taiwan. • India is highly unlikely to fight in a conflict over Taiwan. • It has vital economic and security interests, and valuable policy levers, to ensure that such a conflict never happens. <p>Maintain the status quo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Delhi has three main reasons to do so. First, it has a stake in the status quo, with Taiwan as a self-governing territory that does not declare independence. • India and Taiwan have expanded trade seven-fold since 2001 and are exploring a possible free trade agreement. • Second, any Chinese aggression against Taiwan would be catastrophically costly for India. • A recent Bloomberg study estimates that the costs of a conflict would amount to over 10% of global GDP. • A conflict over Taiwan is something that India simply cannot afford, especially as it seeks stability and growth for national development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beijing Would doubtless prefer to pursue less costly and disruptive non-military ways as long as they remain viable. • Given the stakes involved, it would only resort to a military campaign once it is satisfied that it has adequately set the conditions for victory. • The military balance across the Taiwan Strait will therefore be the most critical deterrent, but non-belligerent states like India can buttress deterrence by convincing Beijing that it has not adequately set the conditions. • India has six types of policy options at its fingertips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ international law arguments ◦ building narratives opposed to aggression ◦ coordinated diplomatic messaging ◦ economic de-risking ◦ active information operations to support the Taiwanese people ◦ military support to the U.S. forces in the Indian Ocean. • These options can also advance India's grand strategic position, regardless of their impact on the China-Taiwan dispute. • Such policies, therefore, are not a favour to Taiwan or the U.S.; they would be an act of Indian self-interest.

Conclusion

- Depending on the political context, they may invite Chinese retaliation, but no policy is cost-free, and India has recently shown a tough willingness to weather Chinese opprobrium when necessary.
- India's expanding interests and ambitions suggest the need for different policy settings, and the costs of such policies would be dwarfed by the costs of doing nothing.

10. WTO's investment facilitation negotiations are not illegal -The Hindu

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

News:

- One of the significant developments at the 13th Ministerial Conference (MC13) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Abu Dhabi was the non-adoption of the agreement on investment facilitation for development (IFD).

<p>Key Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite opposition from countries such as India, negotiations for an IFD agreement at the WTO were launched in 2017 on a plurilateral basis by 70 countries. • This was done through a process known as the Joint Statement Initiative. • This agreement aims to create legally binding provisions to facilitate investment flows. • In Abu Dhabi, these 120 countries wanted to include the IFD Agreement as a plurilateral agreement (PA) within Annex 4 of the WTO Agreement. • These PAs bind those WTO member countries that accept them and do not create rights or impose obligations on the remaining members. <p>India's concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IFD Agreement, among other things, will require states to augment regulatory transparency, and streamline administrative procedures to bolster foreign investment inflows. • Importantly, this agreement does not contain provisions on market access, investment protection, and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS). • ISDS, which allows foreign investors to bring treaty claims against the state admitting investment, has been a contentious issue in recent years. 	<p>Investment is not trade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On whether investment can be part of the WTO, India's chief contention is that investment per se is not trade. • According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, about 70% of international trade occurs through global value chains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ which are characterised by trade and investment, thus proving the close relationship between the two. • Therefore, it is unsurprising that several modern-day free trade agreements, such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership include detailed investment provisions covering both facilitation and protection. • Interestingly, India's newly minted trade agreement with the European Free Trade Association also contains provisions on investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ though it is restricted to facilitation and promotion measures. • India argued that in 2004, the WTO's General Council decided that the talks on the relationship between trade and investment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ one of the so-called 'Singapore issues' because it was introduced at the 1996 WTO Singapore ministerial conference ◦ would not take place as part of the Doha round of negotiations launched in 2001.
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Conclusion

- An essential function of the WTO is to update existing rules and make new ones to govern the increasingly complex nature of international trade.
- However, the WTO's decision-making process remains deadlocked because of the colossal difficulties in arriving at consensus.
- From this perspective, PAs such as the IFD agreement are essential for reinvigorating the WTO's stalemated legislative function.
- India, which will soon be the third biggest economy, should reconsider its defensive approach towards PAs, as in the proposed IFD Agreement in the WTO.

Quick Look

1. Stomata

- They are tiny openings or pores in plant tissue that allow for gas exchange. They are typically found in plant leaves but can also be found in some stems.
- They allow a plant to take in carbon dioxide, which is needed for photosynthesis. They also help to reduce water loss by closing when conditions are hot or dry.
- Stomata look like tiny mouths which open and close as they assist in transpiration. Plants that reside on land typically have thousands of stomata on the surfaces of their leaves.
- The majority of stomata are located on the underside of plant leaves, reducing their exposure to heat and air currents.

2. Polar Vortex

- The polar vortex is a large area of low pressure and cold air surrounding both of the Earth's poles.
 - It weakens in summer and strengthens in winter.
- The term "vortex" refers to the counter-clockwise flow of air that helps keep the colder air near the poles.
- Many times, during winter in the northern hemisphere, the polar vortex will expand, sending cold air southward with the jet stream.
- This occurs fairly regularly during wintertime and is often associated with large outbreaks of Arctic air in the United States and Canada.
- Portions of Europe and Asia also experience cold surges connected to the polar vortex.

3. South East Africa Montane Archipelago (SEAMA)

- It is a newly recognised mountainous ecoregion. It stretches across northern Mozambique to Mount Mulanje in Malawi, southern Africa's second-highest mountain.
- The ecoregion encompasses 30 granitic inselbergs reaching > 1000 m above sea level, hosting the largest (Mt Mabu)
 - And smallest (Mt Lico) mid-elevation rainforests in southern Africa, as well as biologically unique montane grasslands.
- SEAMA has distinctly higher annual rainfall and humidity, especially in the dry season, compared to surrounding regions.
- Since 2000, the SEAMA has lost 18% of its primary humid forest cover (up to 43% in some sites)—one of the highest deforestation rates in Africa.

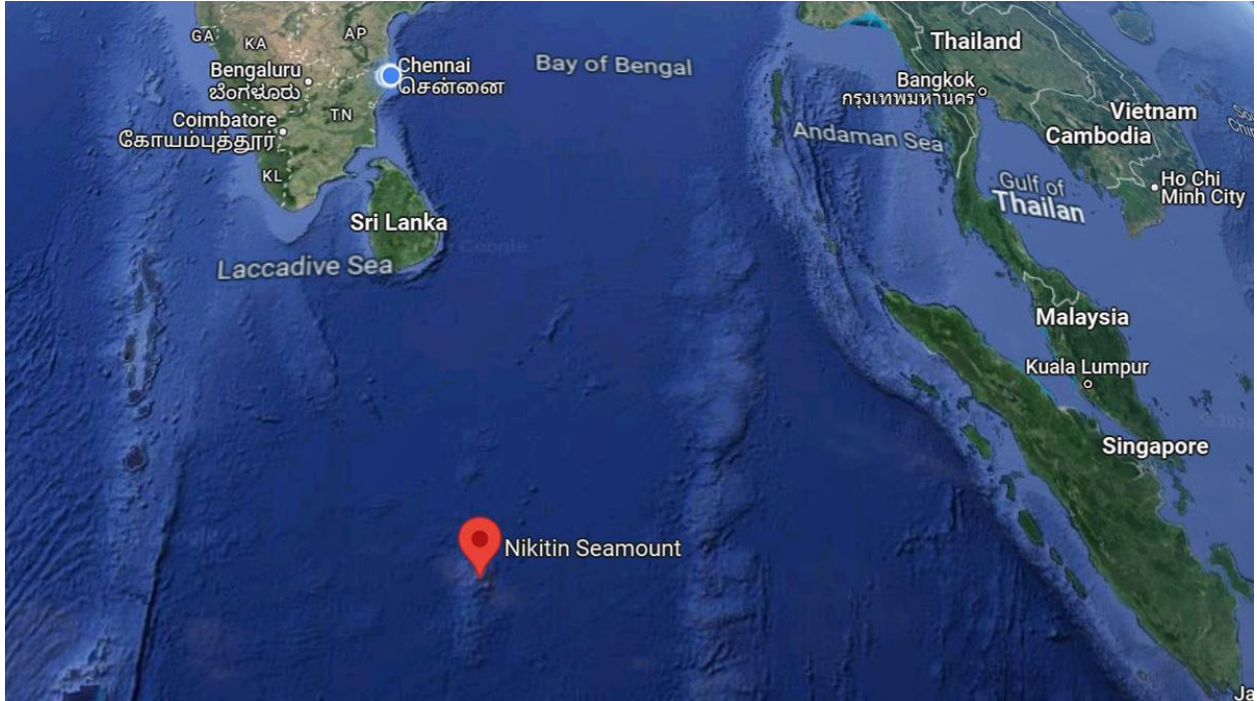
4. Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO):

- It is a project of international collaboration between the European Space Agency (ESA) and the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).
- It was launched in December 1995, SOHO was designed to study the Sun.
- In order to provide continuous observations, it was maneuvered to orbit the first Lagrangian point (L1), a point some 1.5 million km (900,000 miles) from Earth toward the Sun where the gravitational attraction of Earth and the Sun, combine in such a way that a small body remains approximately at rest relative to both.
- It carries 12 scientific instruments to study the solar atmosphere, helioseismology and the solar wind.

- Though its mission was scheduled to run until only 1998, it has continued collecting data, adding to scientists' understanding of our closest star, and making many new discoveries, including thousands of comets.
- It is the longest-lived Sun-watching satellite to date.

5. Afanasy Nikitin Seamount

- The AN Seamount is a structural feature in the Central Indian Basin, located about 3,000 km away from India's coast.
- It comprises a main plateau, rising 1200 m above the surrounding ocean floor (4800m). It is rich in deposits of cobalt, nickel, manganese, and copper.



Mentorship
India

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Which of the following are organs of United nations:

1. the Trusteeship Council
2. the Economic and Social Council
3. the International Court of Justice

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

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

Q2. Consider the following statements about Most Favoured Nation treatment under WTO

1. It is a non discriminatory measure whereby WTO members grant trade concessions to each other.
2. India has revoked MFN status to pakistan resulted in expensive import for pakistan
3. Iran, North Korea, Syria or Russian ally Belarus do not obey the MFN rule

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 pair:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Port | : country |
| 1. Kyaukphyu Port | : Iran |
| 2. Hambantota Port | : Sri Lanka |
| 3. Shahid Kalantari port | : Myanmar |

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

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

Q4. Consider the following statements about The National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme

1. The programme aims to strategically eliminate TB in India by 2025.
2. Under the programme Ni-kshay aims to meet nutritional requirement of All notified TB patients
3. Patient Provider Support Agencies (PPSA) is a model to engage private-sector doctors treating persons affected by TB to provide end-to-end services

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

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

Q5. With reference to Foreign Direct Investment in India, which one of the following is considered its major characteristic?

- A. It is the investment through capital instruments essentially in a listed company.
- B. It is a largely non-debt creating capital flow.
- C. It is the investment which involves debt-servicing.
- D. It is the investment made by foreign institutional investors in Government securities.

Q6. Consider the following statements about the Carbon Credit Scheme:

1. It allows countries that exceed their emission quota to purchase credits from those that stay below theirs.
2. It is a market-based mechanism that incentivizes a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
3. It is the sole solution required to effectively address climate change.

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 about Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) in India:

1. AIFs are investment vehicles for high-risk, high-reward opportunities not covered by traditional investment options like stocks and bonds.
2. All AIFs are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
3. Category I AIFs receive special government incentives and typically invest in infrastructure and social ventures.

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 about Mudumalai Tiger Reserve:

1. It is located at the tri-junction of Karnataka, Kerala, and Andhra Pradesh.
2. It is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, the first biosphere reserve in India.
3. It shares a common boundary with Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary.

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

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

Q9. Consider the following statements about Taiwan:

1. Taiwan is a member of the United Nations.
2. Taiwan shares a land border with mainland China.
3. Taiwan is a major producer of semiconductor chips.

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

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

Q10. Consider the following statements about the Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD) agreement at the World Trade Organization (WTO):

1. The IFD agreement aims to simplify and streamline procedures for foreign investors in all sectors of a WTO member's economy.
2. Developed countries are the primary beneficiaries of the IFD agreement.
3. The IFD agreement mandates complete removal of restrictions on foreign investment by WTO members.

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 other 5 organs of the United Nations are—the General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. **Hence all options are correct**

Answer 2 Option C is correct

Explanation

- According to the World Trade Organisation rules, countries cannot normally discriminate between their trading partners. If one country is granted a trade concession such as, for example, lower import duties, then all WTO members must be extended the same concessions. This principle is known as the Most Favoured Nation treatment. Despite repeated promises, Pakistan has never granted MFN status to India.
- Revoking it means India can levy whatever import tariffs it wants. India can now make it very expensive for Pakistan to export its goods to India. Pakistan has always retained this right.
- For countries outside the WTO, such as Iran, North Korea, Syria or Russian ally Belarus, WTO members can impose whatever trade measures they wish without flouting global trading rules. **Hence all statements are correct**

Answer 3 Option A is correct

Explanation

- It serves as Iran's only oceanic port, and consists of two separate ports named Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti, each of which has five berths
- The Kyaukphyu Port located in Myanmar, is only one of several China-controlled points in the region which includes a naval base in Cambodia, Hambantota in Sri Lanka and Gwadar in Pakistan besides a naval station at the port of Djibouti. **Hence only pair B is correct**

Answer 4 Option C is correct

Explanation

- It helps to meet the nutritional requirements of TB patients, especially the underserved
- The National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) - Aims to strategically reduce TB burden in India by 2025.

- Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (NPY) (Nutritional Support to TB) - It helps to meet the nutritional requirements of TB patients, especially the underserved
- Patient Provider Support Agencies (PPSA) is a model under which a third-party agency/non-governmental organization is selected by a state NTEP unit to engage private-sector doctors treating persons affected by TB to provide end-to-end services. **Hence all statements are correct**

Answer 5 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is a type of investment made by a foreign entity, such as an individual or a company, in a domestic company or enterprise. It involves the transfer of capital, technology, and other resources, and is considered an important source of non-debt creating capital flow in the recipient country.
- The major characteristic of FDI in India is that it is largely non-debt creating capital flow. This means that FDI does not result in a significant increase in the country's external debt burden, unlike other forms of capital flows such as foreign portfolio investments, which can be volatile and may lead to an increase in the country's external debt.
- Additionally, FDI involves a long-term commitment by the foreign investor, as opposed to short-term investments such as foreign institutional investments in government securities. FDI also typically involves a direct equity stake in the domestic company, rather than investment through capital instruments like stocks and bonds. **Hence statement B is correct**

Answer 6 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The carbon credit scheme allows countries (or entities) that emit less than their allocated quota to sell their unused credits to those exceeding their limits. This creates a financial incentive for polluters to reduce emissions. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The core principle of the carbon credit scheme is to create a market for carbon emissions, making it a market-based mechanism that incentivizes emission reduction. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

- While the carbon credit scheme is a valuable tool, it's not a standalone solution for climate change. It requires a comprehensive approach alongside renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency measures, and adaptation strategies. **Hence, statement 3 is INCORRECT**

Answer 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- AIFs do offer access to a wider range of investment opportunities than traditional options. While some AIFs may be high-risk, high-reward, others may focus on specific sectors or strategies with varying risk profiles. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- All AIFs are regulated by SEBI under the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012. This ensures transparency and investor protection. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Category I AIFs are eligible for government incentives like tax breaks and are typically focused on socially or economically desirable sectors like infrastructure, venture capital, and social ventures. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 8 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Mudumalai Tiger Reserve is located in the Nilgiri District of Tamil Nadu, bordering Karnataka and Kerala, not Andhra Pradesh. **Hence, statement 1 is INCORRECT**
- Mudumalai is indeed part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, which was the first biosphere reserve established in India. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The reserve shares a common boundary with Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala, forming a crucial wildlife corridor. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**
- It is situated on the northeastern and northwestern slopes of the Nilgiri Hills in the Western Ghats.
- The reserve is known for its diverse habitat, sheltering tigers, elephants, and critically endangered Gyps vultures.

- It forms a vital ecological link between protected areas in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala.

Answer 9 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Taiwan is not a member of the United Nations due to political pressure from China. **Hence, statement 1 is INCORRECT.**
- Taiwan is an island nation separated from mainland China by the Taiwan Strait (also known as the Formosa Strait). **Hence, statement 2 is INCORRECT**
- Taiwan is a global leader in the production of semiconductor chips, which are crucial components in various electronic devices. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 10 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The IFD agreement focuses on making it easier for foreign investors to invest, operate, and expand their businesses within a WTO member country. This includes simplifying administrative processes, increasing transparency of investment regulations, and promoting cooperation between governments and investors. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The IFD agreement is designed to benefit both developing and developed countries. By simplifying investment procedures, developing countries can attract more foreign investment, which can boost their economic growth. Developed countries can also benefit from increased access to foreign markets. **Hence, statement 2 is INCORRECT**
- The IFD agreement does not require WTO members to remove all restrictions on foreign investment. Countries can still maintain some safeguards to protect their national interests. **Hence, statement 3 is INCORRECT**
- The IFD agreement is a plurilateral agreement, meaning it is only binding on WTO members who choose to participate.
- The agreement is still under negotiation, although many WTO members have already agreed to some provisions.

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