

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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1. Nagaland govt.'s efforts to regulate coal mining hit Article 371A wall - The Hindu
2. Nepal-India official dialogue silent on landmark Pancheshwar project - The Hindu
3. Row over Karnataka Bill: what changes it proposed to how temples are taxed - Indian Express
4. CAG, ICAI to launch online courses to strengthen local bodies' accounting - Indian Express
5. First Pey Jal Survekshan Awards to be conferred by President on 5th March - PIB
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7. Special parachutes, cramped capsule — how Gaganyaan will take 3 astronauts to space & bring them back- The Print
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## Important News Articles

### GS II

#### 1. Nagaland govt.'s efforts to regulate coal mining hit Article 371A wall - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Article 371A
- Nagaland's

**News:**

- **Article 371A of the Constitution of India** has been the **major hurdle** in the Nagaland government's efforts **to regulate small-scale illegal coal mining activities in the State.**

**Key Highlights**

- Specific to Nagaland, Article 371A has **special provisions guaranteeing the protection of land** and its resources apart from the Naga customary law and procedure.
- Contractors and businesspersons conducting mining activities should bear the responsibility for land reclamation
  - by filling up the rat-hole mines and planting trees rather than leaving it barren
- Nagaland's **coal mining policy, first notified in 2006**
  - allows rat-hole mining as the coal deposits are too scattered for large-scale and coordinated operations.
- Leases called small pocket deposit licences are awarded to individuals.
- rat-hole mining can be undertaken only with the consent of the departments concerned, including that of Forest and Environment.
- State government awarded several rat-hole mining leases with proper forest and environment clearances and definite mining plans.
- This has not stopped people from operating such mines illegally.

#### 2. Nepal-India official dialogue silent on landmark Pancheshwar project - The Hindu

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

**News:**

- India and Nepal signed the agreement on long-term power sharing but have not managed to make any forward movement on **the stalled negotiations over the landmark Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project (PMP).**

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Mahakali River
- Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project

**Key Highlights**

- After the Joint Commission Meeting, the two Ministers witnessed the exchange of an agreement between the two governments on long-term electricity trade.
- The agreement aims to increase export of Nepali power to India to the level of 10,000 MW over a period of 10 years.
- However, the **Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project is aimed at generating around 6,480 MW energy (to be divided equally between two sides)**
  - along with water for irrigation of 130,000 hectares of land in Nepal and 240,000 hectares of Indian territory, respectively.
- While electricity is divided equally, India gets the lion's share of irrigation and flood control benefits.
- On the other hand, **Kathmandu feels water is 'white gold' and India should pay Nepal for it.**

**Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project (PMP)**

- It is a bi-national project between India and Nepal, aimed primarily at energy production and enhancing irrigation in both countries.



- It involves the construction of a 315-meter high dam **across the River Mahakali (Sarada in India)**.
- It forms an 80 km long reservoir with a surface area of 116 km square and a total gross storage volume of about 11.35 billion cubic meters.
- This project underscores the progress of the Mahakali Treaty signed in February 1996 between India and Nepal
  - and includes provisions for the **integrated development of the Mahakali River basin**.

### 3. Row over Karnataka Bill: what changes it proposed to how temples are taxed - Indian Express

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

**News:**

- The Karnataka government's attempt to tweak the law that **governs taxation of Hindu temples was stymied in the Legislative Council**

**Key Highlights**

- **The Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments (Amendment) Bill, 2024** was introduced in the Legislative Assembly
- However, it was rejected two days later in the **Legislative Council**.
- The first and the most contentious was that it intended to divert "10% of the gross income of institutions whose gross annual income exceeds Rs 1 crore
  - to a common pool for the maintenance of temples, instead of the existing "10% of the net income of institutions whose gross annual income exceeds Rs 10 lakh
- Net income is calculated based on the profits of the temple after accounting for its expenses, whereas gross income simply refers to the total amount of money the temple makes.

**Do Only Temples Have to Pay Taxes in India?**

- According to the **Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Act**, any business/entity has to register themselves under **Goods and Services Tax**
  - If their aggregate turnover in a financial year exceeds Rs 40 lakhs (in all normal category states, except Telangana)
  - and Rs 20 lakhs (in special category states, except J&K and Assam).
- There is no separate tax for an entity/body belonging to a particular religion.
- All services provided by charitable and religious trusts are not exempt from GST. A few of them are
  - Services of transportation of passengers for a pilgrimage
  - Events, functions, celebrations
  - Shows against admission fee or tickets
  - Some activities which are exempt include:
    - Conduct of religious ceremony
    - Renting of precincts of a religious place meant for general public
- However, it must be noted that 'renting' should not apply to '**renting of rooms where charges are Rs 1000 or more per day**
- renting of shops for business and other commercial activities' and even 'renting of halls, space for Rs 10,000 or more per day.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Goods and Services Tax
- The Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions

## 4. CAG, ICAI to launch online courses to strengthen local bodies' accounting - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Constitution of India —historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

**News:**

- Recently, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (**CAG**), in collaboration with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (**ICAI**), launched a **series of online courses**.
- **Purpose:** To enhance the capabilities of accountants to bolster the accounting systems of panchayats and municipal bodies.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)
- Local Government
- SDGs

**Key Highlights**

- The online courses aim to **equip accountants** with the **requisite knowledge and skills** to **maintain standardized accounts** for various categories of **local governments**.
- By creating a pool of certified professionals, the initiative seeks to **enhance the capacity of local bodies in financial management**.
- This pool of professionals will play a crucial role in **ensuring the integrity and efficiency of financial management practices** at the grassroots level.

**Significance of Grassroots Democracy**

- The President of India emphasised the pivotal role of grassroots democracy in fostering a **vibrant and inclusive society**.
- With a vast network, India's grassroots governance system serves as the **foundation for implementing various schemes and projects** aimed at achieving SDGs.

**Direct Devolution of Funds**

- The Union Finance Commissions provide **direct devolution of funds to local bodies**.
- However, these bodies face several **unique challenges** in terms of their dependence on higher tiers of government for functions, funds, and functionaries.
- This necessitates innovative audit approaches tailored to the **specific needs of local governance**.

**Evolution of Audit Methodologies**

- In the era of interconnected governance, **audit methodologies must evolve** to keep pace with the complexities of modern governance.
- The partnership between CAG and ICAI reflects a **proactive approach** to enhancing financial governance and accountability at the grassroots level.

## 5. First Pey Jal Survekshan Awards to be conferred by President on 5th March - PIB

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

**News:**

- Recently, the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs** announced the inaugural **Pey Jal Survekshan Awards**.

**Pey Jal Survekshan Awards**

- A total of **130 awards** will be conferred across various categories to cities and states for their **excellence in the water sector**.
  - This includes Pey Jal Gold, Silver, and Bronze City Awards signifying top performers in their respective population categories.
  - The awards extend to commendations for Best Water Body, Sustainability Champion, Reuse Champion, Water Quality, City Saturation, and AMRUT 2.0 Rotating Trophy of the Year.

**Evaluation Criteria**

- The evaluation, conducted under **AMRUT 2.0** in 485 cities, encompasses several parameters

### Prelims Takeaway

- Pey Jal Survekshan Awards
- AMRUT Mitra Initiative

- such as access, coverage, water quality, sustainability, availability of SCADA/flowmeters, and reuse of treated water.
- Cities will be graded on a **star rating scale**, ranging from **5 stars** to **No star**, based on their performance across critical criteria.

#### Methodology of Pey Jal Survekshan

- It ensured clean water through **independent NABL lab testing** at the source and citizen-end.
- Utilizing **GIS-enabled web portal, geo-tagging, and infrastructure mapping**, the survey collected accurate and transparent data.

#### Expected Impact

- Pey Jal Survekshan results are anticipated to **drive ULB decision-making, enhance service delivery, and foster citizen engagement**.
- The initiative aims to **instill a sense of ownership** and **promote knowledge dissemination** about water conservation and optimal use.

#### AMRUT Mitra Initiative

- The event will also mark the launch of the AMRUT Mitra initiative, aiming to **actively involve women Self-Help Groups (SHGs)** in the **urban water sector**.
- **AMRUT Mitras**, designated from women SHGs, will be engaged in **executing AMRUT 2.0 projects**, focusing on various activities.
  - such as billing, collection, leak detection, plumbing works, and water quality sampling.
- The initiative aims to **promote inclusivity and diversity in the water sector** while ensuring **access to safe drinking water** for households and **addressing gender inequality**.

### GS III

## 6. PM Modi inaugurates country's first indigenous hydrogen fuel cell ferry - The Hindu

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

#### News:

- Recently, the Prime Minister inaugurated India's **first indigenously built hydrogen fuel cell ferry boat** virtually.

#### Key Highlights

- The pilot vessel, a 24-meter catamaran, has the capacity to accommodate 50 passengers in its fully air-conditioned passenger space.
- Designed to enhance urban mobility, the ferry boat is equipped with advanced hydrogen fuel cell technology.
- The vessel is part of the **Harit Nauka initiative**, symbolizing the commitment to environmentally friendly transportation solutions.
- The vessel, constructed at the Cochin Shipyard, marks a significant milestone in India's journey towards **embracing clean energy solutions** and the **nation's net-zero commitments**.

#### Home-Grown Technology

- The hydrogen fuel vessel features **fully indigenous technology** developed by **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)**.
- This technology holds promise for **replication in other regions** of the country, offering **sustainable urban mobility solutions** nationwide.

#### Green Hydrogen Hub Port

- The **V.O. Chidambaranar Port**, where the vessel was flagged off, is designated as the **first Green Hydrogen Hub Port** in the country.
- The port's development projects encompass a desalination plant, hydrogen production, and bunkering facility.
  - This reflects Tamil Nadu's commitment to exploring alternative energy sources.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Harit Nauka Initiative
- Green Hydrogen

## 7. Special parachutes, cramped capsule — how Gaganyaan will take 3 astronauts to space & bring them back- The Print

**Relevance:** Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Chandrayaan
- Gaganyaan

### News:

- India's maiden human spaceflight mission **Gaganyaan, will take three astronauts to space inside a cramped but heavy capsule**
- It will orbit the Earth for at least three days before heading back and crashing into the Indian Ocean.

### Key Highlights

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is developing the Rs 9,000 crore mission with a projected launch sometime next year.
- Recently, **the Prime Minister announced the names of four astronaut candidates** shortlisted for the mission.

### Gaganyaan Structure

- The entire spacecraft flying into the Earth's orbit is called the orbital module.
- It consists of two parts — **the service and crew modules.**
- The crew module, a pyramid-shaped cramped structure, will house the astronauts.
- The service module enables the spacecraft to enter the orbit and later leave the orbit and descend to the surface.
- **ISRO's LVM3 rocket will take the Gaganyaan craft into space.**
- The orbital module will separate from the LVM3 before reaching the Earth's orbit.
- Then, five engines, parts of the propulsion system in the service module, will fire to put the orbital module into orbit.
- During the return journey, the service module engines will fire again to break the modules away from the orbit and make it head towards the Earth.

### Crew Module

- The crew module is fully autonomous, primarily consisting of the Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS)
  - Responsible for producing oxygen, maintaining pressure, adjusting temperature, etc.
- ISRO tried procuring this system from other countries but later developed the technology itself.
- The crew module also contains the Crew Escape System (CES)
  - Which can be activated during launch and remain active within the atmosphere only for use in case of emergencies.
- The crew module can carry a maximum of three people.

### Launch Vehicle

- The Launch Vehicle Mark-3 rocket's human-rated variant (HLVM3) will launch the Gaganyaan mission.
- The spacecraft will fly on top of the HLVM3 until it reaches orbit.
- The HLVM3 is a three-stage launch vehicle and can carry 10,000 kg to low earth orbit and 400 kg to geostationary orbit.
- A solid propellant powers the HLVM3 first stage.
- The second stage has two Vikas engines
- The third stage powers the spacecraft through its cryogenic engines and launches it towards the destination orbit before breaking away.
- The rocket **launched the Chandrayaan-2 and -3 missions.**
- The rocket underwent many reevaluations and modifications with multiple safety redundancies, strengthening of structures and components, new and additional navigation systems, etc.
- The module also performed orientation manoeuvres to help decide the correct angle for entering the atmosphere.



## 8. How 'NaMo Drone Didis' are pushing past their limitations & transforming India's rural landscapes- The Print

**Relevance:** Major crops-cropping patterns in various parts of the country, – different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers.

### Prelims Takeaway

- IFCCO
- Drone Didis

### News:

- The 'NaMo Drone Didi Initiative' was announced by the PM on 15 August last year to train **15,000 women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the use of agricultural drones.**

### NaMo Drone Didi

- It is a name given to women drone pilots who have been trained under the government's '**NaMo Drone Didi Initiative**'.

### Objective

- It is aimed at training and equipping 15,000 women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with agricultural drones.
- The idea is to offer farmers assistance in agricultural operations, such as crop monitoring, spraying fertilizers, and sowing seeds
  - Thus helping rural women achieve self-sufficiency while simultaneously making the sector less labour-intensive.
- Once they finish the course, these women get the Remote Pilot Certificate (RPC)
- the certification required to fly drones, from the DGCA and can take up assignments as 'Drone Didis'.
- The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) has been part of the NaMo Drone Didi Scheme since its inception.
  - It is a farmer-owned fertilizer collective and India's largest fertilizer company.
- IFFCO produces two major fertilizers — nano urea and nano DAP.

## Editorials, Gists and Explainers

## 9. The economic case for investing in India's children - The Hindu

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

### Context:

- Despite India's emphasis on demographic dividends, education, and employment, **early childhood education (ECE)** has long been overlooked and underinvested.
- Often limited to the household domain, ECE is now gaining recognition as a **critical component of national development**, especially with the government's focus on **women-led development**.



### Importance of Early Childhood Education

- ECE lays the foundation for human development, making it essential for the overall progress of a nation.
- While India has made strides in primary education, there is a growing realisation that addressing learning deficits must begin earlier, targeting children under six years old.

### Government Initiatives and Budget Allocations

- The Indian government has introduced initiatives like NIPUN Bharat and Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi to enhance foundational literacy, numeracy, and overall ECCE quality.
- The interim Budget 2024's commitment to upgrading Saksham Anganwadis and providing healthcare services for Anganwadi workers is a positive step.
- Budget allocations for teaching-learning materials have tripled, indicating increased investment in ECE.
- However, compared to other sectors, ECE funding remains relatively modest, highlighting the need for further investment.

### Impact of the Anganwadi System

- Research shows that children attending Anganwadis demonstrate cognitive and motor skills improvement, reducing gender and income-related disparities.
  - According to a study in 2020, children exposed to the Anganwadi system from ages zero to three go on to complete 0.1-0.3 more grades of school.
- Nobel Laureate Heckman's Perry Preschool study found that children who received high quality ECCE had improved socio-emotional development and grew into less violent adults.

### Economic Implications and Research Needs

- Comprehensive research is needed to understand the macroeconomic implications of ECE investment, including its impact on GDP, public health expenditure, and social unrest.
- Longitudinal studies are essential to gauge the returns on investment in ECE, such as the Anganwadi system, on various outcomes.

### Way Forward

- Investing in ECE is crucial for India's transition from a developing to a developed nation, mirroring the experiences of successful economies like the Asian Tigers.
- By prioritizing ECE, India can ensure the well-being of women and children and foster national progress.

## 10. India's fight against rare diseases - The Hindu

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

**Context:**

- The tragic passing of a 19-year-old child actress due to **dermatomyositis**, a rare disorder, highlights the pressing **need to address rare diseases**.

**Global Scenario**

- According to WHO, rare diseases affect 1 or less per 1,000 population.
- Many patients receive basic symptom-alleviating treatments, but some require costly medications they can't afford, leading to suffering and premature death.

**Rare Diseases in India**

- India accounts for one-third of global rare disease cases, with over 450 identified diseases affecting an estimated 8-10 crore Indians, primarily children (over 75%).
- Despite this significant burden, rare diseases are largely overlooked in India due to resource constraints and lack of awareness, diagnosis, and drug development.

**Challenges and Policy Response**

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare formulated a national policy for rare diseases in 2017 but withdrew it in 2018 due to implementation challenges.
- The revised National Policy for Rare Diseases (NPRD) in 2021 still lacks a standard definition for rare diseases, hindering effective policy implementation.

**Treatment and Funding Challenges**

- Timely diagnosis remains a significant challenge, with an average of seven years for patients to receive a diagnosis, leading to delayed treatment and management.
  - Less than 50% of the 450-odd rare diseases identified in India are treatable.
- Physicians are generally unaware of how to interpret the signs and symptoms.
- Budget allocations for rare diseases remain low, with inadequate funding for therapy and lifelong management.
  - The Budget's allocation, although increasing over the years, remains low at ₹93 crore for 2023-2024
  - The previous years have seen reductions of up to 75% from the Budget Estimate stage to the Revised Estimates and reduction of 90% in actual expenditure.
- Treatment options for rare diseases are limited, with only about 20 rare diseases having approved treatments available at designated Centres of Excellence (CoEs).

**The Way Forward**

- The government should frame a standard definition of rare diseases, increase budgetary allocations, and dedicate funds for drug development and therapy.
- Expanding the number of Centres of Excellence (CoEs), improving fund utilization, and engaging public-private partnerships can enhance rare disease management.
- Addressing exorbitant drug prices through incentives for domestic manufacturers and removing GST on life-saving drugs is essential for affordability and accessibility.

## Quick Look

### 1. Steadfast Defender 2024

- Recently, NATO started its largest military exercise in Europe, the Steadfast Defender 2024.
- It is NATO's most extensive military exercise since the Cold War era.
- Purpose: To put NATO's new regional defence plans to the test.
- It involves 90,000 forces from 31 member countries and NATO partner Sweden and is conducted across various NATO nations.
- The exercise will feature an impressive array of military hardware, including over 50 naval vessels ranging from aircraft carriers to destroyers, and a formidable air contingent of more than 80 units comprising fighter jets, helicopters, and drones.
- The ground forces are equally robust, with at least 1,100 combat vehicles, including 133 tanks and 533 infantry fighting vehicles, demonstrating NATO's ground capabilities.
- These plans, the first of their kind in decades, outline the alliance's response mechanisms to potential threats, notably addressing concerns regarding Russian aggression.

### 2. The Wealth Report 2024

- Recently, the real estate consultant Knight Frank India released 'The Wealth Report 2024'.
- The number of Ultra-high Net Worth Individuals (UHNWIs) in India increased 6% annually to 13,263 last year on rising prosperity.
  - UHNWIs are defined as individuals having a net worth of \$30 million and more.
- The number of affluents is expected to grow further to expand to 19,908 by 2028.

### 3. Africa Club

- Recently, at the 37th African Union Summit member countries took the initiative of forming the Africa Club.
- Africa Club is the Alliance of African Multilateral Financial Institutions (which are African-owned and controlled).
- Aim: To amplify Africa's influence in the global financial system by aligning its functions with the SDGs and the African Union's Agenda 2063.
- It seeks to introduce innovative financial instruments, provide a venue for debt management discussions and foster collaborative efforts to address the specific needs of African countries.
- Members: The African Export-Import Bank, Trade and Development Bank, Africa Finance Corporation, African Reinsurance Corporation, African Trade and Investment Development Insurance, Shelter Afrique Development Bank and ZEP - RE (PTA Reinsurance Co).

### 4. North Atlantic Right Whales

- Recently scientists have discovered that North Atlantic right whales are getting smaller, which is impacting their ability to breed.
- These whales are migratory animals, spending the winter in warmer waters and migrating to the poles for cooler waters in late summer.
- They inhabit the temperate and subpolar waters of the North Atlantic and North Pacific oceans.
- These are generally restricted to the coastal waters of the East Coast of the United States and Canada.
- There are three recognized species of right whales that occur in different parts of the world viz.
  - Southern right whales (*Eubalaena australis*)

- North Atlantic right whales (*Eubalaena glacialis*)
- North Pacific right whales
- These whales often skim feed at or just below the water surface, slowly swimming through clouds of plankton with their mouths half open and then straining the plankton through their long baleen plates.
- IUCN Status: Critically endangered
- CITES: Appendix I

## 5. Singapore faces shrinking population, total fertility rate falls below 1 per cent for first time

- Singapore, facing a dwindling population and a manpower shortage, has seen its resident total fertility rate (TFR) drop to an estimated 0.97 per cent in 2023
  - the first time it has dropped below one per cent in the country's history.
- The TFR, which refers to the average number of babies each woman would have during her reproductive years, fell from 1.04 in 2022 and 1.12 in 2021
- The birth rate remains below the replacement rate of 2.1 – the level at which a population replaces itself.
- The latest figure places Singapore among countries with the lowest birth rates globally, with South Korea topping the list at 0.72 in 2023



**Mentorship**  
India



## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Article 371A of the Indian Constitution:**

1. Article 371A provides special provisions for the state of Nagaland.
2. It grants the state of Nagaland autonomy in matters related to religious and social practices.
3. The Governor of Nagaland has special responsibilities under Article 371A.

**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 Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project (PMP):**

1. Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project is a joint venture between India and Nepal.
2. The project aims to harness the waters of the Kosi and Gandak rivers for irrigation, power generation, and flood control.
3. Pancheshwar Dam, a key component of the project, is located on the border of Uttarakhand and Nepal.

**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**

1. There is no separate tax for an entity/body belonging to a particular religion.
2. All services provided by charitable and religious trusts are not exempt from GST.

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

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

**Q4. With reference to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), consider the following statements**

1. CAG of India is performing the role of both an Auditor General and of a Comptroller.
2. CAG audits the accounts related to all expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, Consolidated Fund of each state and UT's having a legislative assembly only.
3. CAG acts as a guide, friend and philosopher of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament.
4. CAG is a member of the parliament

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

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

**Q5. What is the primary objective of the AMRUT Mitra initiative, seen in the news recently?**

- A. Enhancing digital literacy in the rural areas
- B. Promoting entrepreneurship among rural women
- C. Involve women SHGs in the urban water sector
- D. Implement smart city technologies

**Q6. Consider the following statement regarding a Fuel Cell**

1. It uses Hydrogen gas (H<sub>2</sub>) and Oxygen gas (O<sub>2</sub>) as fuel.
2. It produces methane along with electricity, and heat.

**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

**Q7. Consider the following statements about gaganyaan**

1. The Launch Vehicle Mark-3 rocket's human-rated variant (HLVM3) will launch the Gaganyaan mission.
2. A solid propellant powers the HLVM3 first stage.
3. The second stage has two Vikas engines
4. The third stage powers the spacecraft through its cryogenic engines and launches it towards the destination orbit before breaking away.

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

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

**Q8. Consider the following statements Namo drone didi**

1. It is aimed at training and equipping 15,000 women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with agricultural drones.
2. The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) has been part of the NaMo Drone Didi Scheme since its inception.

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

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

**Q9. Consider the following statements about NIPUN BHARAT**

1. It aims to ensure that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy.
2. Under it, a five-tier implementation mechanism will be set up at the National- State- District- Block- School level in all States and UTs.
3. It is one of the components of the National Education Policy 2020.

**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 with reference to National Policy of Rare Diseases (NPRD) 2021**

1. Under it, the rare diseases have been identified and categorized into 3 groups.
2. It introduces a crowd funding mechanism and creates a registry of rare diseases.

**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

## Prelims Track Answer

### Answer 1 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- Article 371A indeed provides special provisions for the state of Nagaland. It was inserted in the Constitution to address the special requirements of the Naga people. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- . Article 371A grants the state of Nagaland autonomy in matters related to religious and social practices. It ensures the preservation of the Naga customary law and practices, protecting the unique cultural identity of the Naga people. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The Governor of Nagaland has special responsibilities under Article 371A. The Governor is required to submit an annual report to the President regarding the administration of the state with a special focus on law and order. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

### Answer 2 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project is a joint venture between India and Nepal. It involves the construction of a dam on the Mahakali River, which forms the boundary between India and Nepal. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project aims to harness the waters of the Kosi and Gandak rivers for irrigation, power generation, and flood control. It is expected to provide significant benefits in terms of electricity generation and irrigation for both countries. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The Pancheshwar Dam is planned to be located on the Mahakali River, not the Kosi and Gandak rivers. It is situated in the Champawat district of Uttarakhand, India, and Pithoragarh district of Nepal. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect**

### Answer 3 Option D is correct

#### Explanation

- There is no separate tax for an entity/body belonging to a particular religion. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- All services provided by charitable and religious trusts are not exempt from GST. A few of them are

- Services of transportation of passengers for a pilgrimage
- Events, functions, celebrations
- Shows against admission fee or tickets
- Some activities which are exempt include:
- Conduct of religious ceremony **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

### Answer 4 Option A is correct

#### Explanation

- CAG is one of the bulwarks of the democratic system of government in India. The others being the Supreme Court, the Election Commission and the UPSC.
- CAG of India is only performing the role of an Auditor General and not of a Comptroller but in Britain it has the power of both Comptroller as well as Auditor General. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- In India, the CAG audits the accounts after the expenditure is committed i.e., ex post facto. In the UK no money can be drawn from the public exchequer without the approval of the CAG.
- In India, CAG is not a member of the parliament while in Britain; CAG is a member of house of the Commons. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**
- CAG audits the accounts related to all expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, Consolidated Fund of each state and UT's having a legislative assembly.
- He audits all expenditure from the Contingency Fund of India and the Public Account of India as well as the Contingency Fund and Public Account of each state.
- He audits all trading, manufacturing, profit and loss accounts, balance sheets and other subsidiary accounts kept by any department of the Central Government and the state governments.
- He audits the accounts of any other authority when requested by the President or Governor e.g. Local bodies. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- CAG also acts as a guide, friend and philosopher of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

**Answer 5 Option C is correct****Explanation**

- Recently, the AMRUT Mitra initiative was launched aiming to actively involve women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the urban water sector. **Hence, option C is correct.**
- AMRUT Mitras, designated from women SHGs, will be engaged in executing AMRUT 2.0 projects, focusing on various activities such as billing, collection, leak detection, plumbing works, and water quality sampling.
- The initiative aims to promote inclusivity and diversity in the water sector while ensuring access to safe drinking water for households and addressing gender inequality.

**Answer 6 Option A is correct****Explanation**

- A fuel cell is a device that converts chemical energy (energy stored in molecular bonds) into electrical energy.
- It uses Hydrogen gas (H<sub>2</sub>) and Oxygen gas (O<sub>2</sub>) as fuel. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The products of the reaction in the cell are water (H<sub>2</sub>O), electricity, and heat. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Hydrogen fuel cells are a clean, reliable, quiet, and efficient source of high-quality electric power.
- This is a big improvement over internal combustion engines, coal-burning power plants, and nuclear power plants, all of which produce harmful byproducts.

**Answer 7 Option D is correct****Explanation**

- The Launch Vehicle Mark-3 rocket's human-rated variant (HLVM3) will launch the Gaganyaan mission. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The spacecraft will fly on top of the HLVM3 until it reaches orbit.
- The HLVM3 is a three-stage launch vehicle and can carry 10,000 kg to low earth orbit and 400 kg to geostationary orbit. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- A solid propellant powers the HLVM3 first stage.

- The second stage has two Vikas engines **Hence, statement 3 is correct**
- The third stage powers the spacecraft through its cryogenic engines and launches it towards the destination orbit before breaking away.
- The rocket launched the Chandrayaan-2 and -3 missions. **Hence, statement 4 is correct**

**Answer 8 Option C is correct****Explanation**

- It is aimed at training and equipping 15,000 women-led Self-Help Groups (SHGs) with agricultural drones. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The idea is to offer farmers assistance in agricultural operations, such as crop monitoring, spraying fertilizers, and sowing seeds
- thus helping rural women achieve self-sufficiency while simultaneously making the sector less labour-intensive.
- Once they finish the course, these women get the Remote Pilot Certificate (RPC)
- the certification required to fly drones, from the DGCA and can take up assignments as 'Drone Didis'.
- The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) has been part of the NaMo Drone Didi Scheme since its inception. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

**Answer 9 Option D is correct****Explanation**

- The Ministry of Education launched NIPUN (National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy) Bharat Scheme.
- Aim: To ensure that every child in the country necessarily attains foundational literacy and numeracy by the end of Grade 3, by 2026-27. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It is one of the components of the NEP 2020. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- Implementing agency: The Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education.
- A five-tier implementation mechanism will be set up at the National- State- District-Block- School level in all States and UTs, under the aegis of the centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

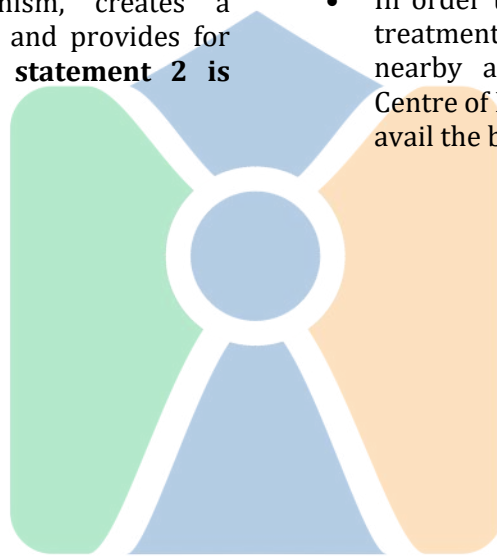


- It will focus on providing access and retaining children in foundational years of schooling; teacher capacity building; development of high quality and diversified Student and Teacher Resources/Learning Materials; and tracking the progress of each child in achieving learning outcomes.
- The rare diseases have been identified and categorized into 3 groups namely
  - Group 1: Disorders amenable to one-time curative treatment.
  - Group-2: Diseases requiring long term/lifelong treatment having relatively lower cost of treatment and benefit has been documented in literature and annual or more frequent surveillance is required.
  - Group 3:- Diseases for which definitive treatment is available but challenges are to make optimal patient selection for benefit, very high cost and lifelong therapy. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

**Answer 10 Option C is correct****Explanation**

- National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021 aims to lower the high cost of treatment for rare diseases with increased focus on indigenous research.
- It offers financial support for one-time treatment of up to Rs. 20 lakh, introduces a crowd funding mechanism, creates a registry of rare diseases and provides for early detection. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- In order to receive financial assistance for treatment of rare disease, the patient of the nearby area may approach the nearest Centre of Excellence to get him assessed and avail the benefits.

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