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Mentorship India

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India

Important News Articles

GS I

1. Garba dance of Gujarat makes it to UNESCO list - The Hindu/ Garba gets Unesco tag of 'intangible cultural heritage' - Indian Express

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

News:

	Prelims Takeaway
	• Garba Dance

- The **Garba dance**, a prominent feature of the Navratri festival, has been included in **UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage o**f Humanity.

Garba Dance

- **Garba is a ritualistic and devotional danc**e performed during Navratri, dedicated to the worship of feminine energy or 'Shakti.'
- **Dancers, musicians, social groups, craftspeople,** and religious figures participate in the festivities.
- The dance revolves around a **perforated earthenware pot lit** with an oil lamp or an image of the goddess Amba.
- Participants wear colourful dresses, **move in a counterclockwise circle, and incorporate simple steps** like hopping and clapping hands.

Cultural Significance

- Garba's inclusion highlights its role in **fostering social and gender inclusivity.**
- The dance is **deeply rooted in Hindu festivals and rituals**, connecting people from diverse backgrounds.

Other Indian Cultural Phenomena

- The UNESCO list also includes India's cultural phenomena **such as Ramlila, Vedic Chants, Kumbh Mela, and Durga Puja.**

GS II

2. 114 seats, migrant quota cleared for J&K Assembly - The Hindu

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

News:

	Prelims Takeaway
	• J&K

- **Lok Sabha approves the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill,** 2023, and the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023.

Key Points

- The former **aims to reserve seats in the upcoming 114-seat** J&K Assembly for Kashmiri migrants, those displaced from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), and Scheduled Tribes.

Bills Overview:

- **The Reorganisation Bill increases J&K Assembly seats from 107 to 114,** with nine reserved for Scheduled Tribes.
- It **empowers the Lieutenant-Governor to nominate members,** including representation for Kashmiri migrants and those from PoK.
- The R**eservation Bill amends the J&K Reservation Act, 2004**
  - o Replacing "weak and underprivileged classes" with "other backward classes" as declared by the Union Territory.

Making changes

A look at the J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill and the J&K Reservation (Amendment) Bill

■ The Reorganisation Bill increases the total number of seats in the J&K Assembly to 114 from 107

■ Nine seats are reserved for the Scheduled Tribes for the first time

■ It also empowers the Lieutenant-Governor to nominate three members to the Assembly – two members from the Kashmiri migrant

community, with one nominee being a woman, and one member from among the people from PoK who took refuge in India following the wars with Pakistan in 1947, 1965 and 1971

■ The Reservation Bill seeks to replace the term "weak and underprivileged classes (social castes)" in the J&K Reservation Act, 2004 to "other backward classes"

Point of view: Home Minister Amit Shah speaks in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. PTI

3. India reminds Myanmar to return to 'federal democracy' - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Map based question

- India emphasises the **return to federal democracy in Myanmar** as conflict intensifies between armed resistance groups and the Myanmar military
- Discussions cover various issues, including the border situation, **security, trade, commerce, connectivity, and the status of bilateral development** projects in Myanmar.

Indian Support for Transition

- India reaffirms its support for **Myanmar's transition towards a federal democracy,** as stated in a press note from the Ministry of External Affairs.
- **Myanmar's military faces challenges from armed insurge**nts, leading to its withdrawal from several townships.
- **Thousands of Myanmarese nationals,** including former military personnel, **seek refuge in India,** prompting deep concern from the Ministry of External Affairs.
- **Security situation, border management, and concerns** related to transnational crimes are key topics during the discussion.
- India expresses **continued support for people-centric socio-economic developmental** projects
  - Emphasizing connectivity Rakhine State Development Programme, and Border Area Development Programme for the benefit of Myanmar's people.

4. Panel working on guidelines on seizure of personal digital devices, Centre tells SC - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Digital India Act, 2023

- The Centre requests **additional time to formulate guidelines** for the search and seizure of electronic devices, such as phones and laptops, by investigative agencies.

Key Points

Setting Up a Committee

- Additional Solicitor General informs the bench that a **committee is being established to develop the guidelines.**

- **The government assures the court that the guidelines will be released soon** and welcomes suggestions from the petitioners.

Judicial Inquiry into Delay

- The bench questions the delay, emphasizing that the **matter has been pending for over two years since the government** received notice in March 2021.
- Justice Kaul urges the **law officer to expedite the process** and expresses the need for a resolution.

Digital India Act, 2023

- This proactive move by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** aligns with India's ambitious 'Digital India' initiative.

Objective

- **To formulate evolvable rules that are consistent** with the changing trends in technologies
- It can be **updated according to the needs of the country's digital infrastructure.**
- To offer a**n easily accessible adjudicatory mechanism** for online civil and criminal offences.
- To deliver **timely remedies to citizens**, resolve cyber disputes, and enforce the rule of law on the internet.

5. Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched Geographic Information System application "Gram Manchitra" to encourage the Spatial Planning by the Gram Panchayat - PIB

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Gram Manchitra

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj launches GIS application "**Gram Manchitra**" to promote spatial planning by Gram Panchayats.

Key Points

Gram Manchitra Application

- **Gram Manchitra is a Geographic Information System** (GIS) application providing a unified GeoSpatial platform.
- Facilitates visualization of developmental works, **supporting Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).**

mActionSoft Mobile Solution

- mActionSoft, a **mobile-based solution**, introduced to capture photos with Geo-Tags (GPS Coordinates) for works with assets as output.
- **Geo-tagging done at three stages**: before, during, and after work completion.
- Enhances the repository of information on various works related to natural resource **management, water harvesting, sanitation, agriculture, etc**.

Geo-Tagging of Assets

- **Assets created under finance commission fund**s are geotagged with photographs by Panchayats.
- GIS data of geotagged assets visualised on the **Gram Manchitra application, improving developmental** work visualization.

Planning Tools in Gram Manchitra

- Gram Manchitra offers planning tools utilising **GIS technology for realistic and achievable development plans.**
- Tools include identifying potential **project sites, asset tracking, estimating project costs, and assessing project impact.**
- Emphasises the tools' **role in aiding Gram Panchayat officials** in the preparation of development plans.

6. Panchayat Development Index will help in comparing Panchayats in their progress of development goals across nine themes as well as in composite PDI score - PIB

Relevance: Polity

News:

- Recently, the Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj informed Lok Sabha about the **Panchayat Development Index.**

Panchayat Development Index (PDI)

- PDI is a **multi-domain and multi-sectoral index** that is intended to be used to assess the **overall holistic development, performance and progress of panchayats.**
- It is a tool for **evaluating and measuring the progress** made by grassroots institutions in **achieving localised SDGs.**

Thematic Scores

- **Thematic scores,** obtained through PDI, allow for the assessment of Panchayats' progress **across nine themes of localized SDGs.**
  - o poverty free and enhanced livelihood in village
  - o healthy village
  - o child friendly village
  - o women friendly village
  - o water sufficient village
  - o clean and green village
  - o village with self-sufficient infrastructure
  - o socially just and socially secured villages
  - o village with good governance

Ranks

- The Index ranks panchayats on the basis of scores and **categorises them into four grades.**
  - o Scores under 40 percent fall in grade D
  - o 40-60 percent in grade C
  - o 60-75 percent in grade B
  - o 75 to 90 percent in category A
  - o Those scoring above 90 percent are categorised as A+

Knowledge Sharing Initiatives

- The Ministry has **implemented various knowledge-sharing initiatives** to enhance awareness of PDI among stakeholders.
- **State-level workshops,** audio-visual films, learning modules and other methods are employed to disseminate information on the **significance and institutionalisation of PDI.**

National Panchayats Award (NPA)

- Under the revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA), the ministry **incentivizes best-performing Panchayats** through the **National Panchayats Award (NPA).**
- This award **assesses their performance in attaining SDGs,** promoting positive competition among Panchayats.

GS III

7. Google unveils 'Gemini,' AI tech trained to behave like humans - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Artificial intelligence
• Project Gemini

- Google recently launched **Project Gemini,** an AI model designed to **exhibit human-like behaviour.**
- The **rollout will unfold in phases** which includes **versions named "Nano" and "Pro"** immediately incorporated into Google's AI-powered chatbot Bard and the Pixel 8 Pro smartphone.
- The **more advanced "Ultra" model** is slated to power an upgraded version of Bard called "Bard Advanced."

Features and Applications

- Gemini enhances Bard's capabilities, making it **more intuitive and proficient at planning tasks.**
- On the Pixel 8 Pro, Gemini can **summarise recordings and provide automatic replies on messaging services** like WhatsApp.
- The Ultra model, scheduled for early next year, is expected to **introduce unprecedented AI multitasking.**
  o by simultaneously recognizing and understanding presentations involving text, photos and video.

Integration and Language Support

- While **initially available only in English,** Google plans to expand Gemini's language support.
- The AI model will eventually be integrated into Google's dominant search engine, promising **significant advancements in AI development.**

Problem-Solving Skills and Potential Impact

- Google praised Gemini's **problem-solving skills,** particularly in maths and physics, raising hopes for **scientific breakthroughs.**
- However, concerns persist about AI potentially **surpassing human intelligence,** leading to **job losses and other potential risks.**
- Google CEO underscored **collaboration** with governments and experts **to address emerging risks.**

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. The role of special inquiry committees of Parliament - The Hindu

Relevance: Parliament and State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

Context:
- The **Lok Sabha ethics committee** is reported to recommend the expulsion of MP Mahua Moitra for alleged "unethical conduct" and "breach of privileges."

Role of Ethics Committee
- Established in 2000, the ethics committee oversees members' moral conduct and examines cases of 'unethical conduct' referred to it.
- The Committee examines complaints filed against members of the House by other members; outsiders through a member; or referred by the Speaker.
- It conducts prima facie inquiries, presents reports to the Speaker who places it before the House for consideration.
- The term 'unethical' is not defined, hence, the committee decides on the ethical nature of acts.

Privileges Committees
- The privileges committee or special inquiry committee examines the more serious accusations against a member.
- In 1951, a special committee found a member guilty of promoting a business interest by putting questions in return for financial benefits.
- It was again a special committee that inquired into the 'cash for query' scam of 2005 where 10 MPs of Lok Sabha were recommended for expulsion.

Constitutional Implications of Expulsion
- While Article 101 of the Constitution lists grounds for MP seat vacation, however, expulsion is not explicitly mentioned.
- The Supreme Court has provided conflicting judgments in this regard.
  - In Raja Ram Pal vs Hon'ble Speaker (2007), expulsion was upheld
  - In Amarinder Singh vs Special Committee (2010), it was deemed unconstitutional.

Reconciliation of House Privileges and Democratic Representation
- The serious nature of allegations against the MP raises questions about the proportionality of expulsion.
- Further, concerns exist regarding leaving citizens of a constituency without representation until the next election or bye-election.
- The tension between upholding House privileges and ensuring democratic representation highlights the need for fair and time-bound legal proceedings, possibly through fast-track courts, to address such cases.
- If convicted, it would result in their disqualification under the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

2. Who is responsible for farming's impact on the environment? - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

Context:
- The **increasing global demand for agricultural products** has led to significant **social and environmental consequences.**
- This expansion has **created global supply chains linking consumers to distant impacts** such as carbon emissions, biodiversity loss and labour-rights issues.
- India, as a global anchor in agricultural trade, faces challenges in **balancing the demand and supply dynamics,** putting pressure on national resources.

Challenges in Current Accounting Methods
- The current production-based accounting method measures impacts where products are produced.
- However, concerns arise about its limitations in managing environmental leaks, fixing accountability and ensuring equity.
- The expansion of imports contributes to environmental pressure in exporting countries, highlighting the need for alternative approaches.

Consumption-Based Accounting
- Consumption-based accounting, an alternative approach, attributes impact at the point of consumption.
- It urges consumers to accept responsibility for the environmental and social impact during production and trade.
- This approach addresses concerns about the divide between producer and consumer countries and encourages sustainable consumption practices.

The Demand Perspective
- From a demand perspective, consumption-based accounting places responsibility on developed economies.
  - Their consumption practices directly contribute to environmental and social pressures.
- Studies suggest that developing economies like India have contributed only 23% of global cumulative emissions.
- This aligns with principles of equity and justice, acknowledging historical responsibility and decoupling population and emissions.

The Supply Perspective
- From a supply perspective, consumption-based accounting encourages cleaner production in producer countries.
- The producer countries are implicitly encouraged to implement strategies that lower the environmental footprint of their exports.
- It can also address production system leaks and improve living standards in agricultural supply chains.

Benefits of Environmental Action
- The application of consumption-based accounting to estimate embodied emissions and virtual water use has made inroads into policymaking.
- For example, the European Commission recently initiated steps to ensure products consumed in the EU have not contributed to deforestation in their country of origin.
- This measure is expected to significantly reduce carbon emissions from deforestation as well as biodiversity loss.

India's Position and Fair Impact Attribution
- From a consumption-based accounting perspective, India, as a major agricultural producer and consumer, finds itself in a unique position.
- Major developed economies have an environmental footprint in India because of their consumption of Indian agricultural produce.
- Also, India's own deforestation footprint outside its borders has increased over the last two decades and is rapidly growing.
- Consumption-based accounting can facilitate fair impact attribution.
- It allows for coordinated global environmental action while considering the development needs of countries like India.

Implementation Challenges and Opportunities
- Consumption-based accounting poses challenges related to liability, monitoring, and compliance.
- However, it serves as a valuable tool for diagnosing impact-intensive consumption patterns.
- It can also be applied domestically, shifting the focus from producers to consumers and encouraging individual and collective changes in consumption behaviour.

3. Partners in uncertain times - Indian Express

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

Context:
- The year 2023 has seen **significant strides in the relationship between Italy and India.**
- The Italian Prime Minister's meetings with the Prime Minister of India have **led to a new framework of collaboration.**
- This collaboration focuses on **defence, space, connectivity, mobility** and **energy transition.**

Strategic Alignment in the Indo-Pacific
- Both nations share a vision for a free, safe, and open Indo-Pacific.
- Italy looks at the Indo-Pacific from the perspective of an "enlarged Mediterranean", which forms a geostrategic unit with the Indian Ocean.
- Maritime security is a priority, evident in the visit of the Italian Navy patrol vessel to Mumbai and collaborations on maritime surveillance.

Defence Collaboration
- A renewed cooperation agreement in the defence sector was signed during the visit of the Indian Defense Minister to Italy, marking a significant development.
- Italian companies aim to increase their presence in India, contributing to stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Infrastructure and Connectivity
- Both countries are committed to strengthening digital and physical infrastructure.
- The Blue-Raman project and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) aim to enhance connectivity and trade between Asia and Europe.
  - The Blue Raman Project will bring the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean i.e. Italy and India, closer in exchange of digital data through a submarine cable system.

Bilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation
- Bilateral trade reached a record level last year, with Italian machinery, automotive products, and luxury goods finding a growing market in India.
- The Migration and Mobility Agreement and increased people-to-people contact further strengthened the ties.

Collaboration in Space Sector
- Italy shows increasing interest in India's space initiatives, with collaboration in space exploration, earth observation and helio-physics.
- A joint declaration between the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and ISRO opens new opportunities for cooperation in space-related endeavours.

Multilateral Cooperation
- Italy and India align on multilateral issues, aiming to support a new global agenda.
- Both nations play a stabilizing role in a volatile world, addressing contemporary issues affecting the Global South.
- Both nations also emphasise proactive roles in international forums like G20 and G7.

Quick Look

1. Lakadong Turmeric

- Recently, Meghalaya's Lakadong turmeric has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- It is considered to be one of the world's best varieties of turmeric, with a curcumin content of around 6.8 to 7.5 percent.
- It is darker in colour and is grown organically without the use of fertilisers.
- It is found in the Lakadong area of Jaintia Hills.
- Other GI products from Meghalaya: Garo Dakmanda (traditional dress), Larnai pottery and Garo Chubitchi (alcoholic beverage).

2. Global Positioning System (GPS)

- The US Department of Defence started the GPS programme in 1973 and launched the first satellite in 1978.
- The modern GPS satellite constellation consists of 24 satellites moving around the earth in six orbits.
- Each satellite completes two orbits in a single day.
- The overall programme has three main components
  - Space segment: It consists of 24 satellites. The six orbits they occupy are all 20,200 km above the earth, and each orbit has four satellites at all times.
  - Control segment: It consists of a global network of ground-based control stations and antennae that track the 24 satellites, make sure their performance is as expected at all times, and transmit commands.
  - User segment: It pertains to the use of GPS in various sectors and applications. The major sectors include agriculture, construction, surveying, logistics, telecommunications, power transmission, search and rescue, air travel, meteorology, seismology, and military operations.

3. Pompe Disease

- It is a rare inherited disorder that affects one child per million.
- Mutations in the GAA gene cause Pompe disease.
  - Mutations in the GAA gene prevent acid alpha-glucosidase from breaking down glycogen effectively, which allows this sugar to build up to toxic levels in lysosomes.
  - This buildup damages organs and tissues throughout the body, particularly the muscles, leading to the progressive signs and symptoms of Pompe disease.
- Some common side effects and symptoms include muscle weakness, respiratory issues, heart problems and difficulty swallowing.
- This disease can be
  - Infantile-onset: symptoms begin in the first few months after birth.
  - Late-onset or delayed-onset: symptoms appear later in childhood or in adulthood.
- Treatment: The treatment includes enzyme replacement therapy (ERT).

4. BharatNet Project

- The National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN), launched in October 2011, was renamed the Bharat Net Project in 2015.
- It aims to provide affordable broadband connectivity of 2 Mbps to 20 Mbps for all households and on-demand capacity to all institutions.
- The objective is to facilitate the delivery of e-governance, e-health, e-education, e-banking, Internet and other services to rural India.
- To achieve this, the existing fibres of PSUs (BSNL, Railtel and Power Grid) were utilised and incremental fibre was laid to connect to Gram Panchayats wherever necessary.
- The entire project is being funded by the Universal service Obligation Fund (USOF), which was set up to improve telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country.
- The project is being executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) called Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL) incorporated under Indian Companies Act 1956.

Prelims Track Question

Q1. **Which of the following statements regarding UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is/are correct?**
1. Garba dance has been recently included in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.
2. The inclusion of an element in the list signifies its recognition as having outstanding universal value and the need for international cooperation to safeguard it.
3. The Intangible Cultural Heritage list also includes India's cultural phenomena like Ramlila, Vedic Chants, Kumbh Mela, and Durga Puja.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q2. **Which of the following statements regarding Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is/are correct?**
1. The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023, seeks to increase the total number of seats in the J&K Assembly from 107 to 114.
2. The Special Status of J&K under Article 370 of the Constitution was read down by Parliament in August 2019
3. The J&K Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023, aims to replace the term "weak and underprivileged classes" in the J&K Reservation Act, 2004, with "other backward classes" as declared by the Union Territory.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q3. **Which of the following statement:**
1. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj recently launched the Geographic Information System (GIS) application "Gram Manchitra"
2. mActionSoft, a mobile-based solution, has been introduced in Myanmar to capture photos with Geo-Tags.

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

Q4. **Which of the following statements regarding the Digital India Act, 2023, is/are correct?**
1. The Act aims to promote digital literacy and inclusivity by providing free digital education to all citizens.
2. One of the key objectives of the Act, is to establish a regulatory framework for digital services, ensuring data privacy and cybersecurity.
3. The Act mandates the compulsory use of government-developed digital platforms for all financial transactions across the country.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q5. **Which of the following statements regarding Geographic Information System (GIS) is/are correct?**
1. GIS is a technology that enables the capture, storage, analysis, and presentation of spatial and geographical data.
2. The term "Geo-Tags" refers to textual information associated with geographic locations, facilitating data interpretation.
3. Gram Manchitra, a GIS application, was recently launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in India to support spatial planning at the Gram Panchayat level.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q6. Consider the following statements with reference to Panchayat Development Index (PDI)
1. It is a tool for evaluating and measuring the progress made by grassroots institutions in achieving localised SDGs.
2. It ranks panchayats on the basis of scores and categorises them into four grades.

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. What is Project Gemini seen in the news recently?
A. A space mission by NASA
B. A new AI based search engine
C. Latest device to detect black holes
D. Google's new AI model for human-like behaviour

Q8. Consider the following statements
1. A corruption allegation against an MP can be sent to the Ethics Committee only.
2. The Constitution of India explicitly mentions the term 'expulsion'.

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 regarding Consumption-Based Accounting
1. It attributes all social and environmental impacts during production and trade to the place of consumption.
2. It encourages producer countries to implement strategies that lower the environmental footprint of their exports.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?
A. Only 1
B. Only 2
C. Both 1 and 2
D. Neither 1 nor 2

Q10. Consider the following countries
1. Croatia
2. Monaco
3. Austria
4. France

How many of the countries mentioned above border the country Italy?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. Only three
D. All four

Prelims Track Answer

Ans. 1 Option C is correct
Explanation

- Garba dance, a traditional dance form during the Navratri festival in Gujarat, has been recently included in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- When an element is included in UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, it signifies that the element is recognized as having outstanding universal value, and international cooperation is needed to safeguard and promote it. The list aims to raise awareness about the importance of intangible cultural heritage and encourage dialogue that respects cultural diversity. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

- Along with Garba dance, the Intangible Cultural Heritage list includes other cultural phenomena from India such as Ramlila, Vedic Chants, Kumbh Mela, and Durga Puja. These elements are recognized for their cultural significance and the need for their preservation. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

Ans.2 Option C is correct
Explanation

- the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023, indeed seeks to increase the total number of seats in the J&K Assembly from 107 to 114. This is based on the report of the Delimitation Commission. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- The Special Status of J&K under Article 370 of the Constitution was read down by Parliament in August 2019. This constitutional change led to the bifurcation of the state into two Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

- The J&K Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023, aims to replace the term "weak and underprivileged classes" in the J&K Reservation Act, 2004, with "other backward classes" as declared by the Union Territory. This reflects a modification in the language used in the reservation law. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

Ans. 3 Option D is correct
Explanation

- The Geographic Information System (GIS) application "Gram Manchitra" and mActionSoft are initiatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in India, not Myanmar. These applications aim to enhance spatial planning at the Gram Panchayat level within India. Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.

- mActionSoft and Gram Manchitra are not initiatives in Myanmar; they are specific to India. Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.

Ans. 4 Option A is correct
Explanation

- While the Digital India initiative focuses on promoting digital literacy and inclusivity, there is no information in the statement or commonly known details indicating that the Digital India Act, 2023, specifically provides free digital education to all citizens. Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.

- The Digital India Act, 2023, is expected to establish a regulatory framework for digital services, addressing issues related to data privacy and cybersecurity. Such a framework is crucial to govern the growing digital landscape and protect user data. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

- the Digital India Act, 2023, does not mandates the compulsory use of government-developed digital platforms for all financial transactions across the country. Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.

Ans. 5 Option B is correct
Explanation

- GIS is a technology that allows the capture, storage, analysis, and presentation of spatial and geographical data. It is widely used in various fields, including urban planning, environmental management, and disaster response, to analyze and visualize

geographic information. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- In GIS, the term "Geo-Tags" typically refers to the attachment of geographic coordinates (latitude, longitude) to data, such as photos or other information. It does not specifically refer to textual information but rather enhances data with spatial context. Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.

- Gram Manchitra is a GIS application launched by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in India, not the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. This application supports spatial planning at the Gram Panchayat level, providing a unified Geo Spatial platform for better visualization of developmental works. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

Ans. 6 Option C is correct
Explanation

- Panchayat Development Index (PDI) is a multi-domain and multi-sectoral index that is intended to be used to assess the overall holistic development, performance and progress of panchayats.

- It is a tool for evaluating and measuring the progress made by grassroots institutions in achieving localised SDGs. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- Thematic scores, obtained through PDI, allow for the assessment of Panchayats' progress across nine themes of localized SDGs.

- The Index ranks panchayats on the basis of scores and categorises them into four grades. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

Ans. 7 Option D is correct
Explanation

- Google recently launched Project Gemini, an AI model designed to exhibit human-like behaviour. Hence, option D is correct.

- The rollout will unfold in phases which includes versions named "Nano" and "Pro" immediately incorporated into Google's AI-powered chatbot Bard and the Pixel 8 Pro smartphone.

- Gemini enhances Bard's capabilities, making it more intuitive and proficient at planning tasks.

- On the Pixel 8 Pro, Gemini can summarise recordings and provide automatic replies on messaging services like WhatsApp.

- While initially available only in English, Google plans to expand Gemini's language support.

Ans. 8 Option D is correct
Explanation

- The work of the Ethics Committee and the Privileges Committee often overlap.

- A corruption allegation against an MP can be sent to either body, since it involves an accusation of serious breach of privilege and contempt of the House. Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.

- In the case of the Ethics Committee, only an MP can be examined for misconduct.

- The mandate of the Committee of Privileges is to safeguard the freedom, authority and dignity of Parliament.

- Thus, a person who is not an MP can also be accused of breach of privilege for actions that attack the authority and dignity of the House.

- While Article 101 of the Constitution lists grounds for MP seat vacation, however, expulsion is not explicitly mentioned. Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.

Ans. 9 Option D is correct
Explanation

- Consumption-based accounting attributes all social and environmental impacts during production and trade to the point of consumption. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- It urges consumers to accept responsibility for the embodied impacts of the products they consume.

- It addresses concerns about the divide between producer and consumer countries and encourages sustainable consumption practices.

- It also encourages cleaner production in producer countries, as they are incentivized to lower the environmental footprint of their

exports to meet the demands of environmentally conscious consumers. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

Ans. 10 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Italy shares land borders with France, Switzerland, Austria, Slovenia and the enclaved microstates of Vatican City and San Marino. Hence, option B is correct.

- To the north the Alps separate Italy from France, Switzerland, Austria, and Slovenia.

- Elsewhere Italy is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea, in particular by the Adriatic Sea to the northeast, the Ionian Sea to the southeast, the Tyrrhenian Sea to the southwest, and the Ligurian Sea to the northwest.

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