



**UPSC
Mentorship**
A Unit of Mentorship India

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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SOURCES



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GS I

1. Do marriages need to be registered?

Source: IE, Page 14

Prelims: Various Provisions related to Valid Marriages

Mains: Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

News: The Supreme Court, in a recent case, ruled that a Hindu couple who had filed divorce case need not get a divorce because they were never married in the first place. These observations spotlight various issues on the registration and solemnization of a marriage.

Difference between Solemnized and Registered Marriage

- Solemnizing a marriage refers to the performance of an official marriage ceremony, with appropriate rituals. Solemnized marriage is largely governed by a gamut of personal laws, with each religion having its own set of 'requirements' for a valid marriage. Examples are:
 - **Hindu Marriage Act, 1955:** Rituals such as kanyadaan and saptapadi (saat phere) solemnize a Hindu marriage, Section 7 of the HMA codifies these requirements, and names saptapadi as an essential ritual.
 - **Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872:** A ceremony in church based on local customs is regarded as a valid marriage. For some Tamil Christians, tying of a thaali- a chain with a cross on the pendant in church is an essential ritual.
 - **Muslim Marriages Registration Act, 1981:** Marriage is a contractual obligation. A valid marriage requires the consent of both parties, in writing, and in the presence of witnesses.
- 'Court marriage' or 'registered marriage' refer to a non-religious or civil marriage under the Special Marriage Act 1954, which is a secular law. A marriage performed under this law is essentially a solemnization in court (registrar's office) without any rituals. A marriage without any rituals is only valid under the Special Marriage Act 1954.

Usefulness of Marriage Registration

- Applying for a spousal visa
- Joint Medical insurance
- In a bigamy case
- In an inheritance case

What if a marriage is not registered?

- Not registering a marriage cannot be the sole ground to declare it invalid since registering a marriage itself does not make it valid.
- Section 114 of the Indian Evidence Act states that "the Court may presume the existence of any fact which it thinks likely to have happened, regarding the common course of natural events, human conduct and public and private business, in relation to the facts of the particular case."
- A marriage as per rituals (through photos, witnesses etc) and proof of long cohabitation as spouses through acceptance by family, friends or even children can be a proof of a valid marriage.
- In summary, a certificate can support the evidence but cannot be an evidence in itself.



GS II

2. Debt owed by South Asian nations to China hits record levels

Source: The Hindu, Page 9

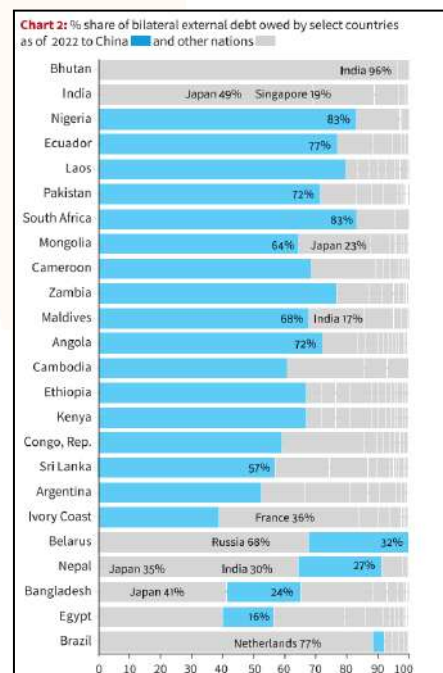
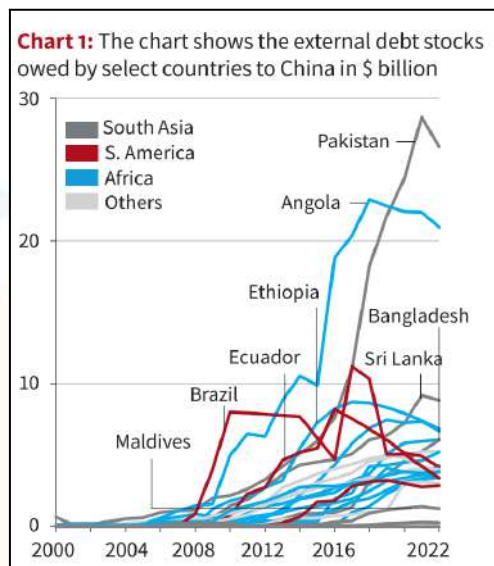
Prelims: International Debt Report 2023, Data and Statistics.

Mains: Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests

News: Debt owed by various countries, especially in South Asia and Africa, to China has multiplied in recent years.

In Detail:

- **External debt stock** is the debt owed by a country to non-residents repayable in currency, goods, or services. It is the sum of all public, publicly guaranteed, and private non-guaranteed long term debt, and short term debts.
- Post 2010s, this debt owed by South Asian, African, and South American countries to China increased significantly. According to the World Bank's latest International Debt Report 2023, the main reason was due to China's 'Going Global Strategy', which was initiated in 1999 to improve Chinese investment and lending abroad.
- However, in recent years, China has cut back its overall lending due to two factors.
 - China's own economic position is not strong.
 - Defaulting on payments by some countries like Sri Lanka and Pakistan.
- Also, China has given a big chunk of its new loans in recent years to neighbouring countries, while its loans to African and South American economies have fallen.
- Pakistan owes over 72% of its external bilateral debt to China. For Maldives, the figure is 68%; Sri Lanka's is 57%, Nepal's is 27%, and Bangladesh's is 24%.
- China too, during high levels of economic expansion in the 1990s and 2000s, increasingly accumulated foreign debt from countries such as Japan, Germany and France.



3. The India-Nepal border issue

Source: IE, Page 14

Prelims: Places in News

Mains: India and its Neighborhood- Relations.

News: Nepal's Cabinet recently decided to put a map on its Rs 100 currency note showing certain areas administered by India in Uttarakhand as part of its territory.

The Conflict Areas:

- The territorial dispute is about a 372-sq- km area that includes Limpiadhura, Lipulekh, and Kalapani at the India-Nepal- China trijunction in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh district.

History:

- The Treaty of Sugauli at the end of the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-16 took away the jurisdiction of Nepal's rulers over the land to the east of the Kali River.
- British Surveyor General of India in 1819, 1821, 1827, and 1856 showed the Kali River as originating in Limpiadhura. Map issued by the British before they left India in 1947 also showed this position.
- Villages in this area used to pay land revenue to the Nepal government till 1962. However, the situation changed after the war between India and China that year.
- India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru approached King Mahendra of Nepal asking for permission to use Kalapani, located close to the trijunction, as a base for the Indian Army.
- Since then, India has claimed in bilateral talks that King had Mahendra gifted the area to India. However, the issue still remains from the Nepal Government.



Recent Developments:

- In 2014, Indian PM and his Nepali counterpart agreed to set up a boundary working group for speedy settlement of the border issue in Kalapani and Susta, a 145-sq-km area that had fallen on the Indian side after the River Gandak changed course.
- But after 2015, Communist Government in Nepal distanced itself from India and inclined towards China leading to distrust between the two nations.
- In February 2018, Oli, chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal returned as Prime Minister with a massive mandate in the first election held under the new constitution.
- In 2020, he took the lead to build the consensus in Parliament for Nepal's new map that formally included the 372 sq km in Uttarakhand, and pledged to bring it back.
- Despite the in-principle agreement on resolution through appropriate platforms based on evidence, India and Nepal have not fixed a timeframe or called a meeting for the purpose. Hence, the issue still remains.



GS III

4. India is now third largest producer of solar power

Source: The Hindu, Page 4

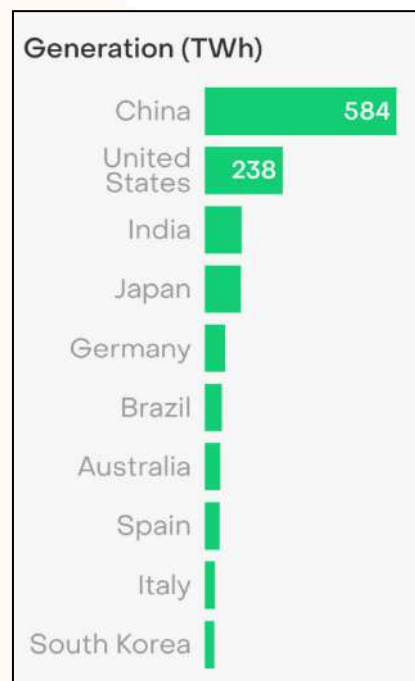
Prelims: Facts and Statistics

Mains: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

News: According to international energy analytics agency Ember, India overtook Japan to become the world's third-highest producer of solar power in 2023.

In Detail:

- India generated 113 billion units (BU) of solar power in 2023 compared to Japan's 110 BU.
- In terms of installed power capacity, which includes both renewable and non-renewable energy, India at 73 gigawatt ranks fifth in the world.
- According to NITI Aayog, solar power made up 18% of India's total installed electricity of 442 GW until March 2024, which is only 6.66% of the power actually produced – reflecting the gap between potential and actuals.
- The United States of America is at second spot while the leading producer of solar power in the world is China. It produced 584 BU of solar power in 2024, more than the next four countries combined – the United States, Japan, Germany and India.
- Globally, renewable sources of energy made up 30% of global electricity produced.
- The report forecasted fossil fuel generation to drop in 2024 and the trend to continue in other years, suggesting that 2023 might be the year when the fossil fuel production may have “peaked” globally.



5. The socio-ecological effects of LPG price hikes

Source: The Hindu, Page 10

Prelims: Various Schemes discussed in Article.

Mains: Inclusive Growth and issues arising from it.

News: Data from the 2014–2015 ACCESS survey, conducted by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water, found LPG's cost to be the foremost barrier to its adoption and continued use in rural poor households.



Indian Government Initiatives to maximise LPG usage

- **Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitrak scheme**
 - Launched in 2009
 - To increase LPG distribution in remote areas
 - Nearly 45 million new LPG connections were thus established between 2010 and 2013.
- **PAHAL Scheme**
 - Initiated in 2015
 - Direct home refill deliveries and the 'Give it Up' program enrolled
 - Around 10 million LPG consumers voluntarily discontinued subsidies and transfer their accounts to below-poverty-line households
- **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)**
 - Launched in 2016
 - To install LPG connections in 80 million below-poverty-line households by 2020.
 - 10.2 Crore Ujjawal connections have been achieved till March 2024.

The Issue

- Of the 54 countries whose LPG prices were available, those in India were reportedly the highest, around ₹300/litre.
- Due to various government schemes, most of the rural households have LPG connections but few refill the cylinder even twice a year. They still depend mainly on forests for fuelwood.
- About 750 million Indians primarily use solid cooking fuels — wood, dung, agricultural residues, coal, and charcoal — every day.

Suggestions

- Devising locally acceptable, suitable, and sustainable alternatives to fuelwood.
- Alternatives like efficient cooking stoves, and multi-stakeholder meetings for resource governance.
- Future governments must focus on making, and keeping, LPG affordable.
- A national policy on introducing smokeless cooking stoves that consume less fuelwood.



Editorials, Opinions and Ideas

6. Giving primacy to human development

Source: The Hindu, Page 9

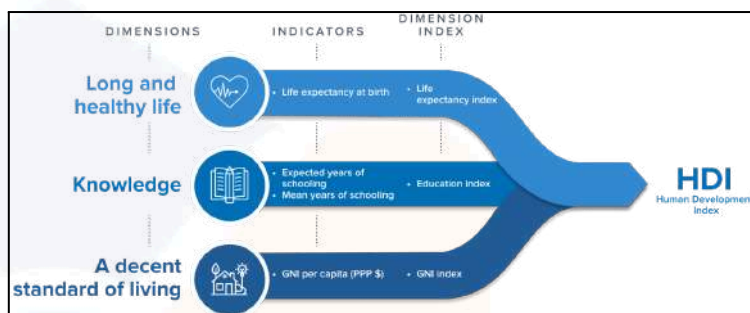
Prelims: Human Development Index (HDI), Gender Inequality Index, World Inequality Lab Report

Mains: Inclusive Growth and issues arising from it.

The Article highlights three reports which underscores the development status in India and asks for a clear strategy for embarking on a long journey.

Human Development Report 2023-24

- India ranked 134 out of 193 countries in the UN Human Development Index (HDI) in 2022, which was an improvement compared to 2021, when it ranked 135 out of 192 countries.
- There is a marginal increase in HDI value to 0.644 in 2022 from 0.633 in 2021.
- However, India still fell behind Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and China.
- When adjusted for inequality, India's loss in HDI is 31.1%, which is higher than that of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.



Gender Inequality Index 2022

- India was ranked 108 out of 193 countries, while in 2021, it ranked 122 out of 191 countries.
- However, India also has one of the largest gender gaps in its labour force participation rate as there exists a 47.8% difference between women (28.3%) and men (76.1%).

World Inequality Lab Study (in March 2024)

- According to the study, the top 1% earn on average 23 times the average Indian.
- Average incomes for the bottom 50% and the middle 40% stood at 0.3 times national average and 0.7 times national average.
- Also, the bottom 50% gets only 15% of India's national income in 2022-23.
- Also, during 2014-2022, the incomes of the middle 40% of the income distribution seem to have grown slower than the bottom 50%.

Summary

- Given low levels of human development, high levels of inequality, low savings and high debt, it is time to think about an alternate growth strategy which accords primacy to human development and convert it as a route to accelerate growth.
- This needs political will and thinking beyond short-term electoral gains.



7. The Hierarchy of Powers

Source: IE, Page 13

Prelims: Various Historical terms associated with the article.

Mains: Indian Culture - Salient aspects of Art Forms, Literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

The article tries to solve the problem of how to differentiate between leading power, great power and super power. It takes reference from Indian History what metrics were used at that time to differentiate between different powers.

Titles of the King

- Rajan < Samrajan < Maharajan < Chakravartin

Sacrifices Performed

- Source: Satapatha Brahmana
- Rajasuya < Vajapeya < Ashwamedha

Annual Revenue Method

- Source: Shukraniti by Shukracharya
- In terms of Gold (Karsha) coins collected.

Hierarchy	Annual Revenue (Karsha Coins)
Samanta	1 lakh to 3 lakhs
Mandalika	3 lakhs to 1 million
Rajan	1 million to 2 millions
Maharajan	2 million to 5 millions
Swarat	5 million to 10 millions
Samrat	10 million to 100 millions
Virat	100 million to 500 millions
Sarvabhouma	>500 millions

Key Takeaways

- A taxonomy and gradation based on the kingdom's various metrics was indeed present in ancient India.
- Some argue that a kingdom's revenue is a better indicator of power than something like the GDP.
- Reference can be taken from institutions that deliver global public goods (IBRD, IMF, WTO, Security Council), which adjust to altered realities.



InBrief

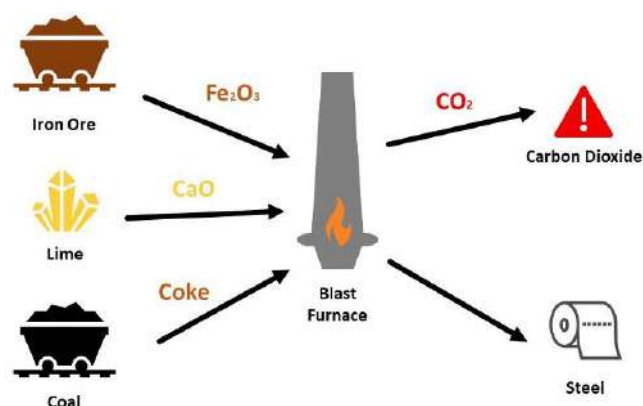
8. Govt. may mandate use of green steel for making luxury cars

Source: The Hindu, Page 12

News: The government is toying with a proposal to make it mandatory for automobile companies, including luxury car manufacturers to procure green steel for premium or ultra high-end models.

About Green Steel

- Green Steel is the manufacturing of steel using renewable or low-carbon energy sources such as hydrogen, coal gasification, or electricity instead of the traditional carbon-intensive manufacturing route of coal-fired plants.
- It eventually lowers greenhouse gas emissions, cuts costs and improves the quality of steel.



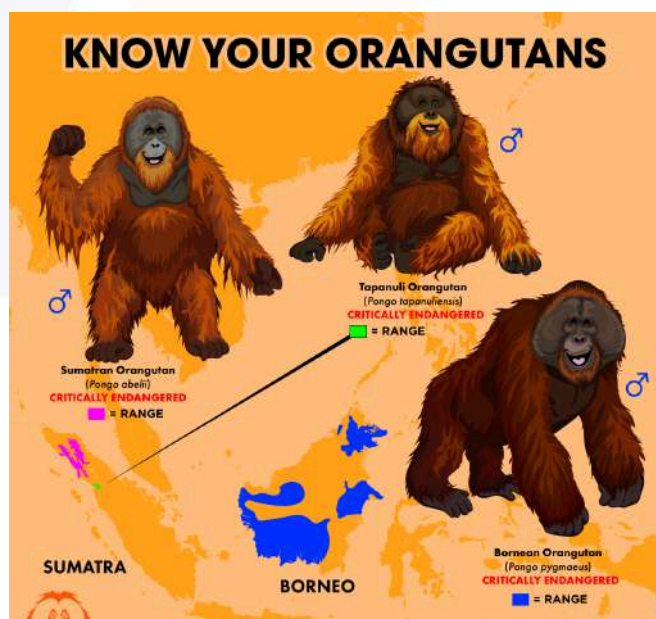
9. Malaysia plans to introduce Orangutan diplomacy

Source: The Hindu, Page 15

News: Malaysia intends to gift orangutans to palm oil purchasing countries as part of an initiative similar to China's panda diplomacy.

About Orangutan:

- Orangutans are great ape's native to the rainforests of Indonesia and Malaysia.
- These are arboreal which means they live among the trees of tropical rainforests.
- According to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), there are three species of orangutans: Bornean, Sumatran and Tapanuli.
- The Bornean orangutan is estimated as Endangered as per IUCN status.
- The Sumatran are categorised as Critically Endangered as per IUCN status.
- The Tapanuli orangutan are also Critically Endangered.



10. Sixteenth Finance Commission invites suggestions related to its ToR

Source: PIB

News: The Sixteenth Finance Commission (XVIFC) invites suggestions/views from the general public, interested organisations and individuals on the terms of reference.

About Finance Commission:

- The Finance Commission in India is a quasi-judicial body constituted by the President of India.
- The President of India constitutes the Finance Commission every fifth year or at such earlier times as he/she considers necessary under Article 280.
- The primary function of the Finance Commission revolves around making recommendations on the distribution of financial resources between the Union Government and the State Governments.
- The Finance Commission consists of a Chairman and four other members to be appointed by the President.
- The Chairman and other members of the Commission hold office for such a period as specified by the President in his/her order.
- The Chairman and other members of the Commission are eligible for reappointment.
- The Constitution authorises the Parliament to determine the qualifications of members of the Commission.
- The Finance Commission submits its report to the President of India.

ToR of 16th Finance Commission	Relevant constitutional provision
The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be, or may be, divided between them under Chapter I, Part XII of the Constitution and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds	Article 280(3), subclause (a)
The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under article 275 of the Constitution for the purposes other than those specified in the provisos to clause (1) of that article	Article 280(3), subclause (b) along with Article 275(1)
The measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.	Article 280(3), subclauses (bb) and (c)
The Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (53 of 2005), and make appropriate recommendations thereon.	Entry 97 of Union List of Schedule VII



Daily Quiz

1. Consider the following statements:

Statement I: Not registering a marriage cannot be the sole ground to declare it invalid.

Statement II: Registering a marriage is considered as the sole evidence of a valid marriage.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- A. Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I.
- B. Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I.
- C. Statement-I is correct Statement-II is incorrect.
- D. Statement-I is incorrect Statement-II is correct.

2. Which of the following organisations publish “International Debt Report”?

- A. World Bank
- B. World Economic Forum
- C. International Monetary Fund
- D. World Trade Organisation

3. Recently, the India-Nepal Border dispute is in the news. In this respect, choose the correct options containing states arranged from shortest to lengthiest border with Nepal.

- A. Sikkim, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar
- B. Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal
- C. Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand
- D. Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh

4. Consider the following statements regarding India’s installed power capacity as of 31st March, 2024:

- 1. Nuclear Power Capacity is less than 2% of the total installed capacity.
- 2. Solar Power Capacity is more than 15% of the total installed capacity.
- 3. Hydro Power Capacity is more than 15% of the total installed capacity.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. All are correct
- D. All are incorrect

5. Consider the following statements regarding initiatives related to LPG usage:

- 1. Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitruk scheme aimed at increasing LPG distribution in remote areas.
- 2. PAHAL Scheme was launched to provide the first three LPG cylinders to Rural Women for free.
- 3. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)’s objective was to install LPG connections in below-poverty-line households.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 1 and 3 only



6. Consider the following statements:

1. According to the Human Development Report 2023-24, India ranked 108 out of 193 countries.
2. According to Gender Inequality Index 2022, India was ranked 134 out of 193 countries.
3. According to a study by World Inequality Lab, the top 1% earn on average 23 times the average Indian.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. All are correct
- D. All are incorrect

7. With reference to Ancient India, what did the term “Karsha” signify?

- A. Crown Jewels
- B. Scripts
- C. Coinages
- D. Combat Weapons

8. Consider the following statements:

Statement I: The government came with a proposal to make it mandatory for car manufacturers to procure green steel for premium or ultra high-end models.

Statement II: Green Steel ensures premium look and will reduce steel imports to India.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- A. Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement-I.
- B. Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I.
- C. Statement-I is correct Statement-II is incorrect.
- D. Statement-I is incorrect Statement-II is correct.

9. Recently, Malaysia plans to introduce Orangutan Diplomacy. In this context, consider the following statements:

1. Orangutans are found in Malaysia only.
2. They mostly live in Tropical Rainforests.
3. There are only two sub species of Orangutans left.

Which of the above given statements is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 2 only
- D. 2 and 3 only



10. Recently, The Sixteenth Finance Commission invited suggestions from the general public on its terms of reference. Which of the following statements regarding the Finance Commission is incorrect?

A. The President determines the qualifications of members of the Finance Commission.

B. The Chairman and other members of the Finance Commission are eligible for reappointment.

C. The Finance Commission in India is a quasi-judicial body constituted by the President of India.

D. The Finance Commission submits its report to the President of India.

Solutions

Answer 1: C

Solution 1:

- Statement 1 is correct: Not registering a marriage cannot be the sole ground to declare it invalid since registering a marriage itself does not make it valid.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: Section 114 of the Indian Evidence Act states that "the Court may presume the existence of any fact which it thinks likely to have happened, regarding the common course of natural events, human conduct and public and private business, in relation to the facts of the particular case." Hence, a marriage certificate can support the evidence but cannot be an evidence in itself.

Hence, Option C is correct.

Answer 2: A

Solution 2:

- The International Debt Report (IDR), formerly International Debt Statistics (IDS), is a longstanding annual publication of the World Bank featuring external debt statistics and analysis for the 121 low- and middle-income

countries that report to the World Bank Debtor Reporting System (DRS).

Hence, Option A is correct.

Answer 3: A

Solution 3:

- Five Indian states - Uttarakhand (263 km), Uttar Pradesh (560km), Bihar (729 km), West Bengal (100km) and Sikkim (99km) - share a land border with Nepal. India and Nepal share an open border that is not fenced unlike its borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Hence, Option A is correct.

Answer 4: B

Solution 4:

- Nuclear Power Capacity is less than 1.85% of the total installed capacity.
- Solar Power Capacity is more than 18.51% of the total installed capacity.
- Hydro Power Capacity is more than 10.62% of the total installed capacity.

Hence, Option B is correct.



Answer 5: D

Solution 5:

- Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitrak scheme aimed at increasing LPG distribution in remote areas.
- PAHAL Scheme was launched to ensure Direct home refill deliveries and to drive the 'Give it Up' program.
- Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)'s objective was to install LPG connections in below-poverty-line households.

Hence, Option D is correct.

Answer 6: A

Solution 6:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: According to the Human Development Report 2023-24, India ranked 134 out of 193 countries.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: According to Gender Inequality Index 2022, India was ranked 108 out of 193 countries.
- Statement 3 is correct: According to a study by World Inequality Lab, the top 1% earn on average 23 times the average Indian.

Hence, Option A is correct.

Answer 7: C

Solution:

- The term Karsapana or Karsha referred to gold, silver and copper coins weighing 80 rattis or 146.5 grains; these coins, the earliest square in shape, followed the ancient Indian system described in Manu Smriti. Use of money was known to Vedic people much before 700 BCE.

Hence, Option C is correct.

Answer 8: C

Solution 8:

- Statement 1 is correct: The government came with a proposal to make it

mandatory for car manufacturers to procure green steel for premium or ultra high-end models.

- Statement 2 is incorrect: Green Steel will eventually lower greenhouse gas emissions, cut costs and improve the quality of steel.

Hence, Option C is correct.

Answer 9: C

Solution 9:

- Statement 1 is incorrect: Orangutans are great ape's native to the rainforests of Indonesia and Malaysia.
- Statement 2 is correct: These are arboreal which means they live among the trees of tropical rainforests.
- Statement 3 is incorrect: According to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), there are three species of orangutans: Bornean, Sumatran and Tapanuli.

Hence, Option C is correct.

Answer 10: A

Solution 10:

- Option A is incorrect: The Constitution authorises the Parliament to determine the qualifications of members of the Commission. All Other Options are correct.

Hence, Option A is correct.





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