



**UPSC
Mentorship**
A Unit of Mentorship India

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

16 July 2024



SOURCES



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GS I

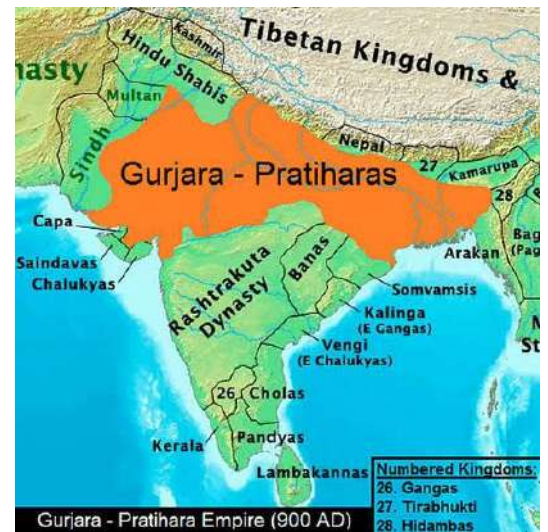
1. ASI Survey of Bhojshala Complex

Source: The Hindu

Context: The Indore Bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court has ordered the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct a scientific survey of the Bhojshala Temple-Kamal Maula Mosque complex in Dhar district to clarify its original nature.

Bhojshala Temple-Kamal Maula Mosque Complex

- The Bhojshala Temple-Kamal Maula Mosque complex was originally a temple of goddess Sarasvati built by Parawara King Bhoja in 11th Century AD.
- The mosque is built using structural members of the temple. The monument also retains some slabs inscribed with Sanskrit and Prakrit literary works.
- Noted as a great patron of art and literature, King Bhoja is said to have established a school, now known as Bhojashala.
- Under an agreement with the ASI, Hindus perform puja in the temple every Tuesday, and Muslims offer Namaz every Friday.



Dispute:

- The controversy revolves around the original status of the site as a temple.
- The petitioner cites an ASI report claiming that the original Bhojshala and Vagdevi temples were demolished to build a mosque. A survey was requested to determine the actual history of the site.

Who was Raja Bhoj of the Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty?

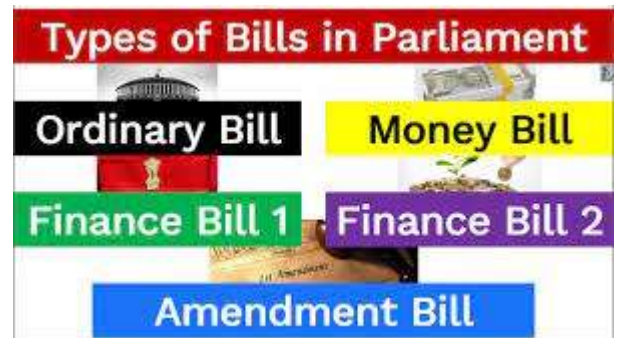
- Bhoja was the Pratihara dynasty's greatest emperor and the actual founder of the empire.
- The Gurjara-Pratiharas came to prominence in the second quarter of the 8th century, when they offered successful resistance to the Arabs.
- The Pratiharas who ruled over Kannauj for a long time are also called Gurjara-Pratiharas. The meaning of the word Pratihara is "doorman."
- They were in a tripartite struggle with the Palas and Rashtrakutas over dominance in the Kannauj, Malwa, and upper Ganga valley regions.
- He defeated the Pala king Devapala and the Rashtrakuta king Amoghavarsha, establishing the Gurjara-Pratiharas as the dominant power in northern India during his reign.

Bhoja I /Mihir Bhoja (836 – 885 AD):

- The best-known Gurjara-Pratihara king was Bhoja, grandson of Nagabhata II.
- A glorious chapter of the history of the Pratiharas begins with the accession of Mihirabhoja.



- Mihirabhoja ascended to the throne in 836 AD. He ruled the Pratiharas for more than 46 years and is regarded as their most popular king.
- He reorganised and consolidated the empire inherited from his ancestors and ushered in an era of prosperity for the Pratiharas.
- Kannauj which was likewise known as Mahodaya was regarded as the capital of his empire.
- The Skandhavara military camp at Mahodaya is mentioned in the Barrah Copper Plate inscription.
- The Pratihara rulers reportedly had India's strongest cavalry, according to Arab travellers.
- He was a great follower of Vaishnavism and assumed the title of "Adivaraha".
- Al-Masudi, an Arab traveller, gave him the title "King Baura."
- The Arabs of Sindh, the Chandalas, and the Kalachuris all acknowledged his supremacy.



Archaeological Survey of India (ASI):

- ASI, under the Ministry of Culture, is the premier organisation for the archaeological research and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- It administers more than 3650 ancient monuments, archaeological sites, and remains of national importance.
- Its activities include carrying out surveys of antiquarian remains, exploration and excavation of archaeological sites, conservation and maintenance of protected monuments, etc.
- It was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham- the first Director-General of ASI. Alexander Cunningham is also known as the "Father of Indian Archaeology".

GS II

2.SC to Take Up Plea on Money Bills Legal Affairs

Source: Deccan Chronicle

Context: The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to consider a submission for setting up a constitution bench to hear pleas challenging the validity of passage of laws like the Aadhaar Act as money bills allegedly to bypass the Rajya Sabha.

Money Bills:

Constitutional Provisions:

- Articles 109 and 198 deal with Special procedures in respect of Money Bills.
- Articles 110 and 199 deal with the definition of Money Bill.

Money Bill Definition:

- A bill is deemed to be a money bill if it contains 'only' provisions dealing with following matters:



- Imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax.
- Regulation of the borrowing of money by the Union government.
- Appropriation of Money, payments and withdrawals from the Consolidated Fund of India or the contingency fund of India.
- Receipt, custody, audit of money on account of the Consolidated Fund of India or the public account of India.
- Any matter incidental to any of the matters specified above.

What is not a Money Bill?

A bill is not to be deemed to be a money bill by reason only that it provides for

- Imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or
- Demand for payment of fees for licences or fees for services rendered; or
- Imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax by any local authority or body for local purposes.

Role of Different Institutions With Respect to Money Bills:

Lok Sabha Speaker:

- The Speaker of the Lok Sabha has to certify that a bill being introduced in the house is a Money Bill.
- However, the Supreme Court in 2018 while delivering the judgement upholding the Aadhaar Act stated that the Speaker's decision will be subject to judicial scrutiny.
- His decision in this regard cannot be questioned in any court of law or in either the House of Parliament or even the president.
- When a money bill is transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for recommendation and presented to the president for assent, the Speaker endorses it as a money bill.

Rajya Sabha:

- Money bills cannot be amended or rejected by the Rajya Sabha.
- Rajya Sabha should return the bill with or without recommendations, which may be accepted or rejected by the Lok Sabha.
- It can be detained by the Rajya Sabha for a maximum period of 14 days only.

President: It can be rejected or approved but cannot be returned for reconsideration by him.

Joint Sitting: No provision of joint sitting of both the Houses.

3. Indian Council of Agricultural Research

Source: The Hindu

Context: Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) celebrated its 96th foundation day on 16th July 2024.

Key Points:

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) was established on 16 July 1929 as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.



- It is an autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- It is headquartered at New Delhi. With 102 ICAR institutes and 71 agricultural universities spread across the country this is one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world.
- It is the apex body for coordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country.
- The ICAR has played a pioneering role in ushering Green Revolution and subsequent developments in agriculture in India through its research and technology development that has enabled the country to increase the production of foodgrains by 5.6 times, horticultural crops by 10.5 times, fish by 16.8 times, milk by 10.4 times and eggs by 52.9 times since 1950-51 to 2017-18.

Note:

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) will start a Farmers Innovation Fund.
- The 'Kisan Diwas' or National Farmers Day is observed across the country on 23rd December to celebrate the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India.
- Dr. Norman E. Borlaug was the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his work in global agriculture. He is also known as the Father of the Green Revolution.
- The World Food Prize is also known as the "Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture". Dr. Rattan Lal has been declared the winner of the World Food Prize 2020.
- Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, the father of India's green revolution, was the first recipient of this award in 1987.
- World Food Day is observed annually on 16th October to address the problem of global hunger (SDG 2-Zero hunger).

GS III

4. India in Trade Deficit with Top Trading Partners

Source: The Hindu, Page 1

Context: India's merchandise exports grew for the third straight month in June, rising 2.55% to \$35.2 billion, but the import bill climbed by a faster 5% to \$56.2 billion, widening the trade deficit by 9.4% from a year ago, as per quick trade estimates released by the Commerce Ministry on Monday.

About trade deficit:

- A trade deficit occurs when the value of a country's imports exceeds the value of its exports, with imports and exports referring both to physical goods and services.

Current Status of India's Trade Deficit:

- India's total trade deficit in the last fiscal narrowed to USD 238.3 billion as against USD 264.9 billion in FY 2021-22.
- Trade deficit with China, Russia, S Korea, and Hong Kong increased in the last fiscal compared to 2022-23, while the trade gap with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Indonesia, and Iraq narrowed.



- China has emerged as India's largest trading partner with \$118.4 billion of two-way commerce in 2023-24, surpassing the US.
- However, the US was the top trading partner of India during 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- India had a trade surplus of \$36.74 billion with the US in 2023-24, and also with the UK, Belgium, Italy, France, and Bangladesh.
- India has a free trade agreement with four of its top trading partners - Singapore, the UAE, Korea and Indonesia (as part of the Asian bloc).

Reasons Behind India's Trade Deficit:

- **Reliance on Energy Imports:** India imports more than 85% of its crude oil needs which makes the Indian economy vulnerable to the fluctuations in global oil prices, significantly impacting the trade deficit.
- **Dependence on Key Inputs:** Some Indian industries, like pharmaceuticals, semiconductors etc. heavily rely on imported raw materials and intermediates. This increases the import value and contributes to the deficit.
For instance, the pharmaceutical sector heavily imports Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) from China.

Key Impacts of the Trade Deficit on the Indian Economy:

Benefits:

- A trade deficit is not essentially bad if a country is importing raw materials or intermediary products as it would boost manufacturing and exports.
- A short term benefit of the trade deficit is that higher imports ensure availability of a wider variety of goods and services to citizens which offer greater choices and further improve living standards.
- In some cases, a trade deficit can encourage domestic businesses to invest in innovation and improve efficiency to compete with imported goods. This can lead to job creation in export-oriented sectors like packaging, shipping, logistics etc.

Challenges:

- Over-reliance on imports can stifle domestic innovation and production in certain sectors, limiting the availability of domestically produced goods.
- A large trade deficit, particularly in sectors with significant import penetration, can lead to job losses in the industries related to that particular sector.
- A persistent trade deficit can put downward pressure on the rupee's value, potentially weakening the domestic currency. This can make imports even more expensive.
- Lower exports can lead to decreased government revenue from export duties. This can impact the government's ability to fund social programs and infrastructure development.
- To finance a trade deficit, India might need to borrow from foreign sources, increasing external debt and interest payments.
- This further depletes forex reserves, and signals economic instability to investors, leading to reduced foreign investment.



Rationalise Imports:

- Analysing import data can help identify non-essential or luxury goods that could be substituted with domestically produced alternatives.
- Example: The government should discourage the import of certain electronic items through higher tariffs, encouraging consumers to choose domestically produced options.
- Skilling the Workforce: Investing in skill development programs can create a workforce with the expertise needed for modern industries, enhancing domestic production capabilities and reducing reliance on imports.

5.INS Tushil

Source: The Hindu, Page 1

Context: INS Tushil, India's latest naval asset, initiated its sea trials from Russia's Baltiysk naval base on March 5, 2024.

INS Tushil:

- INS Tushil falls under the Talwar-class frigates category of stealth-guided missile frigates.
- The Talwar-class guided missile frigates are the improved versions of the Russian Coast Guard's Krivak III-class frigates.
- Currently, the Indian Navy operates six of these ships while 4 more are under construction including 2 in India's Goa shipyard.

Features:

- These ships feature "stealth technology" in terms of low radar and underwater noise signatures.
- These ships are being equipped with major Indian-supplied equipment such as surface-to-surface missiles, sonar systems, surface surveillance radar, communication suites, and anti-submarine warfare systems, along with Russian surface-to-air missiles and gun mounts.
- The frigates are designed to fight submarines and warships in brown and blue waters and repel air attacks both independently and within formations.
- The displacement is 3620 tons, the length is 124.8 metres. The full speed is 30 knots, and the cruising range is 4850 miles.

The Project 11356M:

- India inked an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with Russia in October 2016, solidifying plans to acquire four Admiral Grigorovich-class (Project 11356M)
- Under this pact, Russia pledged to deliver two frigates, including INS Tushil and INS Tamala, while India undertook the construction of the remaining vessels domestically, a testament to the burgeoning Indo-Russian defence partnership.
- The construction of the ships is based on the Indian Navy's specific requirements to meet the entire spectrum of naval warfare in all three dimensions of air, surface, and sub-surface.



Editorial, Ideas and Opinions

6. The Union Budget as litmus test of a rethink or stasis

Source: The Hindu, Page 8

Context: It remains to be seen whether the Union Budget will address the bread and butter issues that were prominent in the 2024 general election.

Employment issue as a poll plank:

- One of the major campaign planks in the 2024 general election was unemployment, concern about inflation and questions around social and economic justice. Employment, especially, can be seen as directly or indirectly holding centrality in addressing other questions from an economic vantage point.
- Recent reports on employment, by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy Pvt. Ltd. (CMIE) and the International Labour Organization and the Institute for Human Development, have highlighted concerns with the problem of employment in India.
- While the participation of women in the labour market has increased, it is more as unpaid family labour and odd service activities to supplement household incomes. These challenges are being faced alongside structural retrogression in terms of employment, implying that contrary to the orthodox imagination, there has been an increase in primary sector employment and a contraction in secondary sector employment. This is on account of the significant contraction of the unorganised sector, especially the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

MSME sector contraction:

- The MSME sector has significantly contracted on account of at least three shocks — demonetisation, Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the COVID-19 lockdown. This sector requires special attention in this Budget and the sector needs a nuanced understanding.
- Earlier Budgets have focused on infrastructure (CAPEX), skill-based programmes, credit for start-ups and fiscal prudence to generate employment.
- Most of these interventions have had supply-side policy bias as well as served high-value end activities.
- In the MSME segment as well, the government's emphasis has been on those MSMEs which are export oriented, given that high-value production and the infrastructure sector together with enterprises having foreign direct investments and export-oriented sectors have had high value-added but very low employment elasticity. The focus, therefore, has to change from prioritising growth for growth's sake towards avenues generating employment and inclusive growth.



Where the focus should be:

- Social and economic justice should not be reduced to hollow cliché. This Budget has to focus on MSMEs which cater to the domestic consumption of low-income groups, which are also socially marginalised groups.
- Further, given the poor performance of India on the Human Development Index and Multidimensional Poverty Index (MDPI), education, health, and housing for the deprived sections ought to find higher allocations combined with employment-generation objectives in this Budget.
- The rhetoric in the recent past, of India having become the fifth largest economy and on the path to develop into the third largest economy, has coexisted with the nagging problem of joblessness and poor quality employment growth — witnessed right from the mid-1990s.
- While political machinations show no mood towards a rethink, perhaps wanting to project the optics of continuity, let us hope that such misplaced confidence does not carry into the Budget as well.

7. The toll that extreme heat takes on women

Source: The Hindu, Page 9

Context: Women are disproportionately harmed by extreme heat, largely because of unequal power dynamics, gender norms, and unequal access to resources.

Hidden toll:

- A recent report by the ADB (Rising Above the Heat) highlights the unequal impact of extreme heat on women in Asia and the Pacific. For instance, women living in informal settlements in cities (also at the margins and in slums) face multiple challenges due to rising temperatures. Their homes could turn into heat chambers since the material used in informal, urban neighbourhoods, such as tin, asbestos, and plastic, trap heat.
- Due to lower productivity stemming from heat stress, women work considerably longer hours to complete their share of unpaid work at home. According to Arsht-Rock's 'Scorching Divide' report, the productivity loss due to heat waves translates to 90 more minutes of care work per day in India.
- This adds to the pre-existing gender differences in time-use pattern; in doing unpaid work like cooking, cleaning, and fetching water and fuel, women spend two and a half times more per day than men (National Statistical Office 2019 data). Intriguingly, more than two-third of women's productivity loss from heat strain occurs in the domain of unpaid labour in India. The loss also reflects opportunity costs associated with heat stress — that women could have earned extra income, acquired skills, or rested enough.

Worryingly pervasive:

- Urban female informal labourers face harsh weather, whether working in marketplaces, streets, construction sites, landfills, or even their employers' homes. Due to their occupational settings, these casual-wage workers — street vendors, paid domestic helpers, construction workers, and



sanitation workers — are vulnerable to climatic extremes, reports the International Labour Organization ('Work in a Changing Climate').

- The situation worsens with energy poverty — living without cooling facilities such as ventilated spaces, fans, air conditioners, or coolers.
- Greenery and other natural forms of cooling are also becoming increasingly unavailable for public consumption in dense urban areas.
- Furthermore, water scarcity and power fluctuations raise the challenge of being hydrated and staying comfortable.
- Conversely, if she works outdoors in the field, MGNREGA, for example, it is under the scorching sun. Additionally, prolonged exposure to heatwaves adversely affects crop yields; for poor rural women, heat may decide whether they live in hunger and poverty or not.

Unequal health strain:

- The incidence of heat-related diseases is also on the rise with increasing temperature. Heat stress puts the body under a great deal of strain, making it harder for it to regulate its temperature, leading to several illnesses, including heat cramps, severe heat stroke, and hyperthermia.
- Women are at greater risk because of their physiological makeup — their body fat percentage and water content levels affect heat tolerance and hydration, while hormonal changes associated with menstrual cycles and pregnancy affect body temperature regulation.
- Strengthening their resilience to heat strain is the need of the hour — climate-friendly urban planning, development of and access to sustainable cooling technologies, fair division of care work, and public provisioning of essential services should be our immediate concerns. And we cannot talk about adaptation and resilience without addressing the social power gradient that determines women's capacity to face the crisis we are experiencing.



In Brief

8. Deputy National Security Adviser Vikram Misri takes over as Foreign Secretary

Source: The Hindu

Context: A 1989-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, Vikram Misri succeeded Vinay Kwatra

- The foreign secretary of India is the top diplomat of India and administrative head of the Ministry of External Affairs.
- This post is held by an Indian foreign service officer of the rank of secretary to the government of India.
- Vikram Misri is an Indian diplomat and currently serving as the Foreign Secretary of India from July 2024, succeeding Vinay Mohan Kwatra.
- As an officer of the rank of secretary to the government of India, the foreign secretary ranks 23rd on the Indian Order of Precedence.
- However, unlike other secretaries to the government of India, the foreign secretary is also the top diplomat of the country and heads the 'Foreign Service Board'.

Powers and responsibilities:-

- The foreign secretary is the administrative head of the Ministry of External Affairs, and is the principal adviser to the minister of external affairs on all matters of policy and administration within the External Affairs Ministry.
- To act as the chief adviser to the Minister of External Affairs on all aspects of policy and administrative affairs.
- To represent the Ministry of External Affairs before the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament of India.
- Recommends postings of officers under the Ministry of External Affairs of the rank of secretary, additional secretary and joint secretary to the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).

9. Manjeera Wildlife Sanctuary

Source: The Hindu

Context: 'Hidden gem': Manjeera wildlife sanctuary in Sangareddy might become Telangana's first Ramsar site.



Manjeera Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is a wildlife sanctuary and a reservoir located in the Medak district of Telangana.
- Originally a crocodile sanctuary, today more than 70 species of birds are spotted here, and is home to the vulnerable species of mugger crocodile.
- The sanctuary follows the course of river Manjeera, a tributary of Godavari, and abuts the Manjeera reservoir.
- It is a man-made reservoir that provides water for irrigation and also drinking water for the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.
- The reservoir has nine small island These islands contain extensive marshy fringes, which act as nesting sites for waterbirds.
- Additionally, thick cover of trees also provides nesting spots for birds. Vegetation: Dry Savannah type of vegetation is found in the sanctuary.
- The reservoir supports both submergent and emergent types of vegetation.
- **Flora:** Being a freshwater ecosystem, the sanctuary is home to many plant species like Typha, Babool, Prosopis, Ipomoea and Acacia Ipomea, Vallisneria, Eichhornia, and Reeds, among others.
- **Fauna:** The sanctuary is a riverine habitat supporting mugger crocodile and freshwater turtles. The sanctuary is home to prawns, molluscs, and fishes like catla, rohu, murrel, eel, karugu, and chidwa. The Indian hare, wild boar, mongoose, and jackal are also present

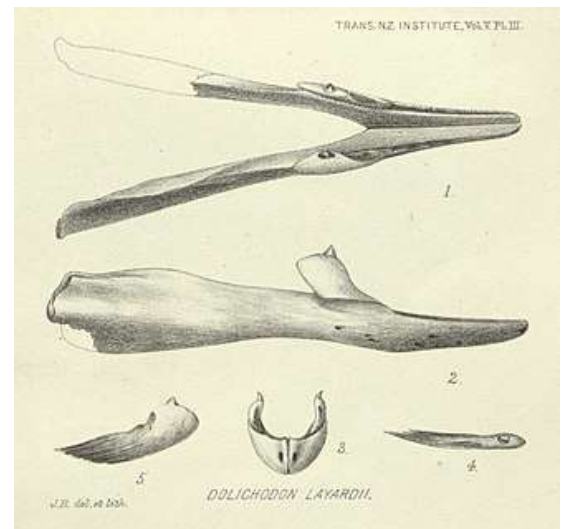
10.Spade-toothed Whale

Source:World News

Context: World's rarest whale may have washed up on New Zealand beach, possibly shedding clues on species.

Spade-toothed Whale

- The spade-toothed whale (*Mesoplodon traversii*) is a very little-known species, the rarest species of beaked whale.
- It was first named from a partial jaw found on Pitt Island, New Zealand, in 1872.
- Until 2012, nothing was known about this species other than cranial and dental anatomy. Some differences exist between it and other mesoplodon, such as the relatively large width of the rostrum.
- Its appearance might be most similar to an oversized ginkgo-toothed beaked whale in overall shape, as their skulls are quite alike except in size.
- The distinguishing characters are the very large teeth, 23 cm (9 in), close in size to those of the strap-toothed whale. The teeth are much wider than those of the strap-toothed, and a peculiar denticle on the tip of the teeth present on both species is much more pronounced in the spade-toothed whale.



- It is believed that only the males obtain the jugged denticle and that it smoothes over time due to aggressive behaviour with other males.
- The common name was chosen because the part of the tooth that protrudes from the gums (unlike the strap-like teeth of strap-toothed whales) has a shape similar to the tip of a flensing spade as used by 19th-century whalers.



Daily Quiz

1. Which of the following statements about the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is/are correct?

- A. ASI is responsible for the conservation and preservation of cultural heritage sites in India.
- B. ASI was established during the British colonial era in the 19th century.
- C. ASI conducts excavations and research solely within the boundaries of India.

Options:

- 1. A and B only
- 2. A and C only
- 3. B and C only
- 4. A, B, and C

2. Consider the following statements:

Statement: The Bhojshala Complex in Madhya Pradesh is significant for its historical and architectural importance.

Reason: It houses the Bhojeshwar Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, known for its colossal lingam carved out of a single rock.

Options:

- A. Both the statement and reason are correct, and the reason is the correct explanation of the statement.
- B. Both the statement and reason are correct, but the reason is NOT the correct explanation of the statement.
- C. The statement is correct, but the reason is incorrect.
- D. The statement is incorrect, but the reason is correct.

3. Which of the following statements about Money Bills in India is/are correct?

- A. A Money Bill can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha.

- B. The Rajya Sabha cannot amend a Money Bill but can suggest amendments which the Lok Sabha may accept if it chooses to.
- C. Money Bills require the President's assent to become law.

Options:

- 1. A only
- 2. A and B only
- 3. B and C only
- 4. A, B, and C

4. Which of the following statements about the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is/are correct?

- A. ICAR is an autonomous body responsible for coordinating agricultural education and research in India.
- B. ICAR operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- C. ICAR was established in 1947 by an act of Parliament.

Options:

- 1. A only
- 2. A and B only
- 3. A and C only
- 4. A, B, and C

5. Which of the following statements about the Indian Naval System is correct?

- A. The Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) is the highest-ranking officer in the Indian Navy.
- B. The Indian Naval System operates under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India.
- C. The Indian Naval System was established in 1950 by an act of Parliament.



- D. The Indian Naval System primarily focuses on maritime trade and commerce.

Options:

1. A only
2. A and B only
3. B and C only
4. B only

6. Consider the following statements on Constitutional Amendment Bill:

Statement I: A Constitutional Amendment Bill in India requires approval by a special majority in both houses of Parliament.

Statement II: Once passed by Parliament, a Constitutional Amendment Bill becomes law after receiving the President's assent.

Options:

- A. Both statements I and II are true, and statement II is the correct explanation of statement I.
- B. Both statements I and II are true, but statement II is NOT the correct explanation of statement I.
- C. Statement I is true, but statement II is false.
- D. Statement I is false, but statement II is true.

7. Who is the National Security Adviser (NSA) in India?

- A. The NSA is appointed by the President of India.
- B. The NSA is the highest-ranking military officer in the Indian Armed Forces.

- C. The NSA assists the Prime Minister of India on matters of national security and foreign policy.
- D. The NSA is responsible for the administration of intelligence agencies in India.

8. Where is the Manjeera Wildlife Sanctuary located?

- A. Karnataka
- B. Kerala
- C. Telangana
- D. Madhya Pradesh

9. Which of the following statements about the space toothed whale is correct?

- A. It is the largest species of toothed whale.
- B. It primarily feeds on plankton and small fish.
- C. It lacks teeth and filters food through baleen plates.
- D. It communicates using complex vocalisations known as clicks.

10. Which of the following statements about the budget in India is correct?

- A. The budget is presented annually by the President of India.
- B. The budget contains estimates of government revenue and expenditure for a financial year.
- C. The budget is passed by the Lok Sabha and then ratified by the Supreme Court of India.
- D. The budget primarily focuses on setting interest rates and monetary policy.



Solutions

1. Answer: A, B, and C

Explanation:

- Statement A: ASI is indeed responsible for the conservation, preservation, and maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites of national importance in India. This includes both cultural and historical heritage sites.
- Statement B: ASI was established in 1861 during the British colonial rule in India. Its initial purpose was to manage and document antiquities and archaeological sites across the Indian subcontinent.
- Statement C: ASI conducts excavations, explorations, and research activities not only within the modern boundaries of India but also in regions historically connected to Indian civilization, such as Afghanistan, where it has undertaken archaeological missions.

Therefore, all three statements (A, B, and C) correctly describe aspects of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), making option 4 the correct answer.

2. Answer: A) Both the statement and reason are correct, and the reason is the correct explanation of the statement.

Explanation:

- Statement: The Bhojshala Complex in Madhya Pradesh is indeed significant for its historical and architectural importance. It is primarily known for the Bhojeshwar Temple, which is dedicated to Lord Shiva.

- Reason: The Bhojeshwar Temple is famous for its colossal lingam (phallic representation of Lord Shiva) that is carved out of a single rock. This lingam is one of the largest in India, standing at around 7.5 feet tall.

3. Answer is: . A and B only

Explanation:

- Statement A: This statement is correct. According to Article 110 of the Indian Constitution, a Money Bill can only be introduced in the Lok Sabha.
- Statement B: This statement is correct. The Rajya Sabha cannot amend a Money Bill. It can only suggest amendments, which the Lok Sabha may accept if it chooses to. The Rajya Sabha must return the Money Bill to the Lok Sabha within 14 days with or without recommendations, and the Lok Sabha may or may not accept these recommendations.
- Statement C: This statement is incorrect. Money Bills do not require the President's assent to become law. After being passed by the Lok Sabha, a Money Bill is sent to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations. The President's assent is not required for Money Bills because they deal with matters specified in Article 110, such as taxation, borrowing of money by the government, etc.

Therefore, option 2 (A and B only) is the correct answer regarding Money Bills in India.



4. **Answer:** 4. A, B, and C

Explanation:

- **Statement A:** This statement is correct. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is an autonomous body under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. It is responsible for coordinating agricultural education and research in the country.
- **Statement B:** This statement is correct. ICAR operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. It was established with the objective of coordinating agricultural research and education across India.
- **Statement C:** This statement is correct. ICAR was indeed established in 1929, not 1947, by an act of Parliament, namely the ICAR Act 1929. This act provided a legal framework for agricultural education and research in India.

Therefore, option 4 (A, B, and C) is the correct answer regarding the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

5. **Answer :**2. A and B only

Explanation:

- **Statement A:** This statement is correct. The Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) is indeed the highest-ranking officer in the Indian Navy. The CNS is responsible for the command, control, and administration of the Navy.
- **Statement B:** This statement is correct. The Indian Naval System operates under

the Ministry of Defence, Government of India. The Ministry of Defence oversees the operations, policies, and budget of the Indian Navy.

- **Statement C:** This statement is incorrect. The Indian Naval System (Indian Navy) was established well before 1950. Its roots can be traced back to the establishment of the Royal Indian Navy in the early 20th century, and it formally became the Indian Navy after India gained independence in 1947.
- **Statement D:** This statement is incorrect. The Indian Naval System (Indian Navy) focuses primarily on defence and security related to maritime interests, including safeguarding national interests at sea, naval warfare, and disaster relief operations, rather than maritime trade and commerce.

Therefore, option 2 (A and B only) is the correct answer regarding the Indian Naval System.

6. **Answer A)** Both statements I and II are true, and statement II is the correct explanation of statement I.

Explanation:

- **Statement I:** This statement is true. A Constitutional Amendment Bill in India requires approval by a special majority in both houses of Parliament. A special majority means a majority of the total membership of each house and a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.
- **Statement II:** This statement is also true. Once a Constitutional Amendment Bill is passed by both houses of Parliament with the required special majority, it must be ratified by at least half of the state



legislatures and then receive the President's assent to become law. Thus, the President's assent is the final step in the process.

Therefore, option A is the correct answer as both statements I and II are true, and statement II provides the correct explanation of statement I regarding Constitutional Amendment Bills in India.

7. Answer C) The NSA assists the Prime Minister of India on matters of national security and foreign policy.

Explanation:

- Option A: This is incorrect. The National Security Adviser (NSA) is appointed by the Prime Minister of India, not the President.
- Option B: This is incorrect. The highest-ranking military officer in the Indian Armed Forces is the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), not the NSA.
- Option C: This is correct. The NSA assists the Prime Minister of India on matters of national security and foreign policy. The NSA acts as the principal adviser to the Prime Minister on these critical issues.
- Option D: This is incorrect. The administration of intelligence agencies in India falls under the jurisdiction of the respective ministries and departments, not the NSA.

Therefore, the correct answer is C) The NSA assists the Prime Minister of India on matters of national security and foreign policy.

8. Answer is C) Telangana

Explanation: Manjeera Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Telangana state. It is situated near

Sangareddy district in the northern part of the state.

9. Answer A) It is the largest species of toothed whale.

Explanation:

- Option A: This statement is correct. The Sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) is the largest species of toothed whale and can grow up to about 60 feet (18 metres) in length.
- Option B: This is incorrect. Sperm whales primarily feed on larger prey such as squid, fish, and sometimes even sharks, rather than plankton and small fish.
- Option C: This is incorrect. Sperm whales have teeth, which are large and conical in shape, located only in their lower jaw. They do not have baleen plates like baleen whales.
- Option D: This is incorrect. Sperm whales communicate using echolocation clicks rather than complex vocalisations.

Therefore, the correct answer is A) It is the largest species of toothed whale, referring to the Sperm whale.

10. Answer B) The budget contains estimates of government revenue and expenditure for a financial year.

Explanation:

- Option A: This statement is incorrect. The budget in India is presented annually by the Union Finance Minister, not the President.
- Option B: This statement is correct. The budget contains estimates of government revenue and expenditure for a financial



year. It outlines the government's fiscal policies and allocations across various sectors.

- Option C: This statement is incorrect. The budget is passed by the Lok Sabha (House of the People) of the Parliament of India, not ratified by the Supreme Court.

- Option D: This statement is incorrect. Setting interest rates and monetary policy falls under the purview of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), not the budget.

Therefore, the correct answer is B) The budget contains estimates of government revenue and expenditure for a financial year.

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

1. Highlighting India's current trade deficit status with most of its major trading partners, discuss its impacts on the Indian economy. Also, suggest measures to bring down India's trade deficit.





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GET IN TOUCH

+919999057869

www.upsmentorship.com

@mentorship.india

C - 103, Second Floor, Sector-2
Noida - 201301

contact@mentorshipindia.com