



*Drishti IAS Presents...*

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## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Detailed  
Explanation

**Answers**

Drishti IAS, 641, Mukherjee Nagar,  
Opp. Signature View Apartment,  
New Delhi

Drishti IAS, 21  
Pusa Road, Karol Bagh  
New Delhi - 05

Drishti IAS, Tashkent Marg,  
Civil Lines, Prayagraj,  
Uttar Pradesh

Drishti IAS, Tonk Road,  
Vasundhara Colony,  
Jaipur, Rajasthan

e-mail: [englishsupport@groupdrishti.com](mailto:englishsupport@groupdrishti.com), Website: [www.drishtiiias.com](http://www.drishtiiias.com)

Contact: Inquiry (English): 8010440440, Inquiry (Hindi): 8750187501

1. Ans: D

Exp:

- The **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982** is an international agreement that establishes the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.
- It is also known as **Law of the Sea**. It divides marine areas into five main zones namely **Internal Waters, Territorial Sea, Contiguous Zone, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** and the **High Seas**.
- It is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces. It provides a different legal status to different maritime zones.
- Hence, option D is correct.

2. Ans: D

Exp:



- There are eight Arctic nations - **The US, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Russia**.
  - ◆ These are part of the **Arctic Council**, an intergovernmental forum that was formed to promote cooperation in the region.
  - ◆ Hence, option D is correct.

3. Ans: B

Exp:

- It is an **Islamic fundamentalist political and military organisation operating in Afghanistan**.

- ◆ They have **dominated Afghan polity** for quite some time and feature regularly in international affairs. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- The **Taliban**, or students in the Pashto language, emerged in the **early 1990s** in **northern Pakistan** following the **withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The Taliban have been fighting against the U.S.-backed government in Kabul for around 20 years.
  - ◆ They seek to reimpose their strict version of Islam in Afghanistan. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.

4. Ans: B

Exp:



- States Bordering Bangladesh are:

- ◆ West Bengal
- ◆ Assam
- ◆ Meghalaya
- ◆ Tripura
- ◆ Mizoram

- Hence, option B is correct.

5. Ans: A

Exp:

- Yuan Wang 5 is **China's satellite tracking vessel** which has arrived at **Sri Lanka's southern Hambantota Port**.
- Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- It is a third-generation vessel of the Yuan Wang series that entered service in 2007.
  - ◆ This series of ships include "space tracking ships involved in supporting the manned space programme".
  - ◆ It has the ability to track satellites and intercontinental missiles.

◆ Hence, statement 2 is not correct.

● Hence, option A is correct.

6. Ans: B

Exp:

● The G-7 was known as the G-8 for several years after the original seven were joined by Russia in 1997. The inclusion of USSR in G-7 was meant as a signal of cooperation between East and West after the **Soviet Union's collapse in 1991**.

◆ The group returned to being called G-7 after Russia was expelled as a member in 2014 following the annexation of the Crimea region of Ukraine. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct**.

● **The G7 does not have a formal charter or a secretariat.** The presidency, which rotates among member countries each year, is in charge of setting the agenda. **Sherpas, ministers and envoys hammer out policy initiatives before the summit.** Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.

● The G-7 has its roots in an informal meeting of the finance ministers of France, West Germany, the U.S, Great Britain, and Japan (the Group of Five) in the wake of the **1973 oil crisis**.

◆ The French President invited the leaders of West Germany, U.S, Great Britain, Japan and Italy, to **Rambouillet (France) in 1975** for further discussions on **global oil crisis**. Hence, **statement 3 is not correct**.

● The bloc meets annually to discuss issues of common interest like **global economic governance, international security and energy policy**. Hence, **statement 4 is not correct**.

7. Ans: D

Exp:

● **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, adopted and proclaimed by the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 1948**.

◆ It establishes the equality and dignity of every human being and stipulates that every Government has a core duty to enable all people to enjoy all their inalienable rights and freedoms.

◆ Hence, statement 1 is correct.

● The UDHR is **not a treaty**, so it does not directly create legal obligations for countries.

◆ Hence, statement 2 is correct.

● Hence, option D is correct.

8. Ans: D

Exp:

● The **first-ever joint military exercise** held between **India and Uzbekistan** was named **Dustlik**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.

● India has also assisted in setting up an India Room at the Armed Forces Academy of Uzbekistan in Tashkent. **Uzbekistan shares its border with Aral Sea**. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.



● The Uzbek government has extended the **e-Visa facility to Indian tourists**. Hence, **statement 3 is correct**.

9. Ans: C

Exp:



● Vietnam is bordered by **China to the north**, the **South China Sea to the east and south**, the **Gulf of Thailand**

(Gulf of Siam) to the southwest, and Cambodia and Laos to the west.

- Hence, option C is correct.

10. Ans: A

Exp:

- Taiwan is an island about 160 km off the coast of southeastern China, i.e., in Pacific Ocean opposite the Chinese cities of Fuzhou, Quanzhou, and Xiamen. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- It's not a part of China, it's an independent nation, though China claims it as a part of its territory. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
- India also follows One China Policy and it doesn't have formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan. But it has an office in Taipei for diplomatic functions. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.
  - ◆ India-Taipei Association (ITA) is headed by a senior diplomat.
  - ◆ whereas, Taiwan has the Taipei Economic and Cultural Center (TECC) in New Delhi.

11. Ans: D

Exp:

- Recently, India and Mauritius signed the CEPA, which is a kind of free trade pact that aims to provide an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade between the two countries. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
  - ◆ It is a limited agreement that will cover only select sectors.
- It will cover sectors such as Trade in Goods, Rules of Origin, Trade in Services, Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures, Dispute Settlement, etc.
- The two sides also discussed the Chagos Archipelago dispute, which was an issue of sovereignty and sustainable development before the United Nations (UN).
- In 2019, India voted at the UN General Assembly in support of the Mauritian position on the issue. India was one of the 116 countries that voted demanding that the UK end its "colonial administration" from the group of islands. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- Mauritius was the third top source (15.98%) of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India in 2021-22. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

12. Ans: B

Exp:

- The Joint Rivers Commission of India and Bangladesh and was constituted in the year 1972 as a bilateral mechanism to address issues of mutual interest on common / border / transboundary rivers. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- It was established to ensure the most effective joint efforts in maximizing the benefits of common river systems. India and Bangladesh share 54 rivers. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The JRC is headed by Water Resources Ministers of both countries. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

13. Ans: D

Exp:

- Italy's worst drought in decades has reduced Lake Garda, the country's largest lake, to near its lowest level ever recorded. Hence, option D is correct.
  - ◆ It has exposed swaths of previously underwater rocks and warmed the water to temperatures that approach the average in the Caribbean Sea.
- Northern Italy saw significantly lower rainfall for months, and snowfall in 2022 was also down 70%, drying up important rivers like the Po, which flows across Italy's agricultural and industrial heartland.
- The parched condition of the Po, Italy's longest river, caused billions of euros in losses to farmers who normally rely on it to irrigate fields and rice paddies.
  - ◆ To compensate for the loss, authorities allowed more water from Lake Garda to flow out to local rivers.
  - ◆ But in late July 2022, they reduced the amount to protect the lake and the financially important tourism tied to it.
  - ◆ With huge amounts of water being diverted to rivers, the lake recorded its lowest level.

14. Ans: C

Exp:

- China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a 3,000-km long route of infrastructure projects connecting China's northwest Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Gwadar Port in the western province of Balochistan in Pakistan. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- It is a bilateral project between Pakistan and China, intended to promote connectivity across Pakistan with a network of highways, railways, and pipelines accompanied by energy, industrial, and other infrastructure development projects.



- It will pave the way for China to access the Middle East and Africa from Gwadar Port, **enabling China to access the Indian Ocean** and in return China will support development projects in Pakistan to overcome the latter's energy crises and stabilising its faltering economy. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- CPEC is a part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
  - ◆ The BRI, launched in 2013, aims to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and Europe with a network of land and sea routes.

15. Ans: A

Exp:

- **Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** is a kind of free trade pact that covers negotiation on the trade in services and investment, and other areas of economic partnership.
- It may even consider negotiation in areas such as trade facilitation and customs cooperation, competition, and IPR.
- **India has signed CEPA with UAE, and Japan. Hence, option A is correct.**

16. Ans: B

Exp:

- **ILO:**
  - ◆ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is a United Nations agency working for social and economic justice through setting international labour standards.
  - ◆ It was founded in October 1919 (by the Treaty of Versailles) under the League of Nations, **it is the first and oldest specialised agency of the UN. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
    - It received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969.
- **Global Employment Trends for Youth: ILO**
  - ◆ Recently, the **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** has released a report titled **"Global Employment Trends for Youth 2022: Investing in transforming futures for young people"**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
  - ◆ **Other Reports of ILO:**
    - World of Work Report
    - World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2022
    - World Social Protection Report
    - Social Dialogue Report
    - Global Wage Report

#### ● Conventions of ILO:

- ◆ **India has ratified six out of the eight-core/fundamental ILO conventions.** These conventions are:
  - ◆ Forced Labour Convention (No. 29)
  - ◆ Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No.105)
  - ◆ Equal Remuneration Convention (No.100)
  - ◆ Discrimination (Employment Occupation) Convention (No.111)
  - ◆ Minimum Age Convention (No.138)
  - ◆ Worst forms of Child Labour Convention (No.182)
- **India has not ratified the two core/fundamental conventions,**
  - ◆ Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
  - ◆ Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).
- Additionally, the "Indian Government has not ratified ILO Convention No. 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers." Hence statement 3 is not correct.

17. Ans: C

Exp:

- The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** is a specialized agency of the **United Nations** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Its goal is to achieve **food security** for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough **high-quality food** to lead active healthy lives.
- **Flagship Publications:**
  - ◆ The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA).
  - ◆ **The State of the World's Forests (SOFO). Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
  - ◆ The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).
  - ◆ The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA).
  - ◆ The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOC).

18. Ans: C

Exp:

- **New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)** was the last remaining arms reduction pact between the former Cold War rivals and caps to 1,550 the number of nuclear warheads that can be deployed by **Russia and the United States of America, Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**



- Initially, the duration of the **treaty was for ten years till 2021, but it was extended by five more years till 2026. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- It's a legally binding, verifiable agreement** that limits each side's strategic nuclear warheads deployed on 700 strategic delivery systems (ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers) and limits deployed and nondeployed launchers to 800. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

19. Ans: C

Exp:

- The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is a nuclear agreement **between permanent 5 countries of United Nations security council the U.S., Russia, France, China, and the United Kingdom** — as well as Germany and the European Union. **Hence, statement 1 is correct, and statement 2 is not correct.**
- It aims to guarantee the **civilian nature of Iran's nuclear programme** in exchange for a gradual lifting of sanctions, Iran also agreed to implement a protocol **that it would allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to access its nuclear sites to ensure Iran would not be able to develop nuclear weapons in secret. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

20. Ans: D

Exp:

- The **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)** was established with the signing of the SAARC Charter in Dhaka on 8 December 1985.
  - The idea of regional cooperation in South Asia was first raised in November 1980. After consultations, the foreign secretaries of the seven founding countries—Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka—met for the first time in Colombo in April 1981.
- Afghanistan became the newest member of SAARC at the 13th annual summit in 2005.
- The Headquarters and Secretariat of the Association are at Kathmandu, Nepal.
- SAARC comprises of **eight member States**:
  - Afghanistan
  - Bangladesh
  - Bhutan
  - India
  - Maldives
  - Nepal
  - Pakistan
  - Sri Lanka

- There are currently nine Observers to SAARC, namely: (i) Australia; (ii) China; (iii) the European Union; (iv) Iran; (v) Japan; (vi) the Republic of Korea; (vii) Mauritius; (viii) Myanmar; and (ix) the United States of America.
- Hence, option D is correct.**

21. Ans: A

Exp:

- The **Ashgabat Agreement** was first signed by Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Oman, and Qatar on 25 April 2011.
- The aim of agreement is **to establish an international multimodal transport and transit corridor between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- India joined the Ashgabat Agreement in 2018. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- Qatar subsequently withdrew from the agreement in 2013, Kazakhstan and Pakistan joined the grouping in 2016.
- The Ashgabat Agreement came into force in April 2016.
- Its objective is to enhance connectivity within the Eurasian region and synchronize it with other regional transport corridors, including the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

22. Ans: B

Exp:

- The United Nations Human Rights Council (**UNHRC**) is **an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system** responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.
- The Council was **created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006.** It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** serves as the **Secretariat** of the Human Rights Council.
- OHCHR is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland.**
- It is **made up of 47 United Nations Member States** which are elected by the UN General Assembly (UNGA). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

23. Ans: C

Exp:

- It is an international intergovernmental organization of countries that were mostly former territories of the British Empire and dependencies. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

- It was established by the London Declaration in 1949. Queen Elizabeth II is the head of the Commonwealth. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Many countries from Africa, Asia, Americas, Europe and the Pacific have joined the commonwealth.
  - ◆ The two African countries, Gabon and Togo, were admitted to the Commonwealth of Nations, as its 55th and 56th members, respectively, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2022.
  - ◆ The current membership includes 56 Countries. The membership is based on free and equal voluntary co-operation.
- It is Headquartered in London.

24. Ans: B

Exp:

- Together, the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** and **International Development Association (IDA)** form the **World Bank**, which provides financing, policy advice, and technical assistance to governments of developing countries. The **World Bank Group** consists of **five development institutions**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA) insures lenders and investors against political risks such as war. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

25. Ans: A

Exp.

- **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations** intended to deal with the humanitarian crisis triggered by severe emergency circumstances.
- **India and Myanmar** both countries agreed to upgrade capability for **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations**.
- India and Malaysia have signed **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)**. CECA is a kind of Free Trade Agreement (FTA). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Malaysia expressed the need for inducting **women** personnel in **peacekeeping missions**. Both sides agreed to engage each other on this issue.
- The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations** is a regional organization which was established to promote **political and social stability** of the region.
  - ◆ Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Cambodia are the member nations of the **ASEAN**. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

26. Ans: B

Exp:



- **Hence, option B is correct.**

27. Ans: D

Exp:

- **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** is a special program of the United Nations (UN) devoted to **aiding national efforts to improve the health, nutrition, education, and general welfare of children**.
- **UNICEF was created in 1946 as International Children's Emergency Fund (ICEF)** by UN relief Rehabilitation Administration to help children affected by World War II.
  - ◆ **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- UNICEF is guided by the **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**.
  - ◆ It strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.
  - ◆ **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.
- **Hence, option D is correct.**

28. Ans: B

Exp:

**United Nations Guidelines for Displaced Children**

- These guidelines are a joint initiative of the **International Organisation for Migration (IOM)**, **UN Children's Fund**

(UNICEF), Georgetown University, and the United Nations University. And not by the United Nations Development Programme. Hence, Statement 1 is not correct.

- It contains a set of **nine principles** that address the unique vulnerabilities of children who have been uprooted.
  - ◆ The principles are **based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child** and are informed by existing operational guidelines and frameworks. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**

29. Ans: C

Exp:

- The **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)** project was originally decided between **India, Iran, and Russia** in 2000 in St Petersburg, and subsequently included **10 other central Asian and west Asian countries**, and **not an extension of China's Belt and Road Initiative**, and involves moving freight from India, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Russia. and it does not connect China & Africa, Hence, **statements 1 and 2 are not correct.**
- It includes **Iran's Chabahar port**, Hence, **statement 3 is correct.**

30. Ans: A

Exp:

- The phrase "Kangaroo Court" is used against a **judicial system where the judgement against the accused is usually predetermined.** Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
- It is a **self-appointed or mock court set up without much premeditation for the purpose of delivering judgement** arrived at in advance, usually in which the fate of a disloyal person is decided. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**
- This expression may have originated in Australia but it **was first recorded in the US during the California Gold Rush of 1849.** Hence, **statement 3 is not correct.**
- The Kangaroo Courts were common during the Stalin era in the Soviet Union, famous as the "Moscow Trials" of the Soviet Great Purge.

31. Ans: C

Exp:

- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) comprises of eight member States: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, **India, Maldives**, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

- The **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** currently comprises eight Member States: China, **India**, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- The **Colombo Security Conclave (CSC)**, was formed in 2011 as a trilateral maritime security grouping of **India**, Sri Lanka and the **Maldives**. It welcomed Mauritius as a fourth member.
- The **South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC)** Program, set up in 2001, brings together Bangladesh, Bhutan, **India, the Maldives**, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in a project-based partnership to promote regional prosperity by improving cross-border connectivity, boosting trade among member countries, and strengthening regional economic cooperation.
- Hence, **option C is correct.**

32. Ans: D

Exp:

- Varanasi has been selected as the **SCO region's first "Tourism and Cultural Capital for 2022-23."**
  - ◆ Varanasi' "**Cultural and Tourism Capital**" has been decided under a **new rotating initiative** to promote people-to-people contacts and tourism among the member states.
  - ◆ Each year a **city of the cultural heritage of a member country that will take over the rotating Presidency** of the organisation will get the title to highlight its prominence.
  - ◆ The new initiative will come into force **after the Samarkand summit following which India will take over the Presidency and host the next Heads of the State summit.** Hence option 1 is correct.
- Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan, are the member states Turkmenistan is not the member of SCO. Hence **statement 2 is not correct.**
- **SCO objectives are,**
  - ◆ **Strengthening mutual trust and neighbourliness among the member states.**
  - ◆ **Promoting effective cooperation in -politics, trade & economy, research & technology and culture.**
  - ◆ **Enhancing ties in education, energy, transport, tourism, environmental protection, etc.**
  - ◆ **Maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region.**

- ◆ Establishment of a democratic, fair and rational new international political & economic order. Hence statement 3 is correct.

33. Ans: C

Exp:

- I2U2 stands for **India, Israel, the UAE, and the US**, and was also referred to as the 'West Asian Quad'.
- I2U2 was initially formed in October, 2021 following the Abraham Accords, to deal with issues concerning maritime security, infrastructure and transport.
- The Abraham Accord is the first Arab-Israeli peace deal in 26 years mediated by the USA.
- Objectives:
  - ◆ Its stated aim is to discuss "common areas of mutual interest, to strengthen the economic partnership in trade and investment in our respective regions and beyond".
  - ◆ Six areas of cooperation have been identified by the countries mutually, and the aim is to encourage joint investments in water, energy, transportation, space, health, and food security.
- Hence, option C is correct.

34. Ans: B

Exp:

- Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) **US-led initiative that aims to strengthen economic partnership** among participating countries to enhance resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the Indo-Pacific region. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- The IPEF was launched with a dozen initial partners who together represent 40% of the world GDP.
- India is also part of this USA-led Initiative. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

35. Ans: D

Exp:

G20:

- It is an **informal group of 19 countries** and the **European Union (EU)**, founded in 1999, with representatives of the **International Monetary Fund** and the **World Bank**. Hence statement 1 is correct.
  - ◆ Its members are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United

Kingdom, the United States and the EU. Hence statement 2 is correct.

- ◆ The G-20 has **no fixed headquarters**, and the secretariat moves by rotation between the countries hosting or assuming Presidency of the grouping each year.
- India will steer the international body as its President from 1st December 2022 to 30th November 2023, which will lead to the G20 summit to be hosted here.
- **Jammu and Kashmir will be hosting the 2023 meetings of G-20. Hence statement 3 is correct.**
  - ◆ The Ministry of External Affairs had said that India will hold the G20 presidency from December 1, 2022 and will convene the G20 leaders' summit in 2023 for the first time.

36. Ans: D

Exp:

African Union:

- The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent.
- The African Union is celebrating its 20th Anniversary on 9th of July 2022.
- In 1963, the **Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was founded** by the independent states of Africa. The organisation aimed to **promote cooperation between African states**.
- The 1980 Lagos Plan of Action was adopted by the Organisation of African Unity. The plan suggested that Africa should minimise reliance upon the West by promoting intra-African trade.
- In 2002, the **Organisation of African Unity was succeeded by the African Union**, which had as one of its goals to **accelerate the "economic integration of the continent"**. Hence statement 1 is correct.
- The **AU is made up of 55 Member States which represent all the countries on the African continent**. AU Member States are divided into five geographic regions, which were defined by the OAU in 1976. Hence statement 2 is correct.
  - ◆ Central Africa
  - ◆ Eastern Africa
  - ◆ Northern Africa
  - ◆ Southern Africa
  - ◆ Western Africa



37. Ans: C

Exp:

- Recently, The United Nation Security Council (UNSC) got five new non-permanent members (Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and the United Arab Emirates).
- The five permanent members of UNSC are the United States, the Russian Federation, France, China and the United Kingdom. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The council's presidency is a capacity that rotates every month among its 15 members. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

38. Ans: B

Exp:

- SAGAR** is a foreign policy initiative of the **Government of India**, which aims to promote **maritime security and cooperation** in the **Indian Ocean region**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- It emphasizes the importance of **inclusive and sustainable development**, and seeks to build partnerships with countries in the region to address common challenges such as **piracy, terrorism, and natural disasters**.
- The initiative also aims to enhance India's role as a **maritime security** provider in the region, and to promote the use of the **Indian Ocean** as a conduit for **trade and economic growth**.
- SAGAR** is encouraging **group action** to **combat** maritime concerns like **piracy, terrorism, and newly emerging non-state entities**. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

39. Answer: D

Exp:

- The G-20 is a group of 20 major economies that represent around 85% of the global GDP and two-thirds of the world's population. The members of the G-20 are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union. Sweden is not a member of the G-20. **Hence, option D is correct.**

40. Ans: B

Exp:

**United Nation Security Council (UNSC):**

- On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022, **India assumed the monthly rotating presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC)** for the second time in its two-year tenure as an elected member of the Council in 2021-22.

- India had earlier assumed UNSC presidency in August 2021.
- The **Security Council was established by the UN Charter in 1945**. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
- The UNSC, with a mandate to maintain international peace and security, is the centrepiece of global multilateralism.
- The **Secretary-General** is appointed by the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the **Security Council**.
- The UNSC and UNGA jointly elect judges to the **International Court of Justice**. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

**Composition:**

- The UNSC is composed of **15 members: 5 permanent and 10 non-permanent**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Five permanent members: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
- Ten non-permanent members: Elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.

41. Ans: A

Exp:

**Montreux Convention:**

- The **international agreement** was signed by **Australia, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Japan, Romania, Yugoslavia, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union and Turkey** and has been in effect since **November 1936**.
- The Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits gives Turkey control over the water route between the Black Sea.
  - Russia has a major navy base at Sevastopol, on the Crimean Peninsula.
  - However, for ships to move to and from the Mediterranean – and beyond – they have to pass through two straits controlled by Turkey under the Montreux Convention.
- It sets limits on the **passage of civilian vessels and military warships through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus straits**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The key elements in the Montreux Convention are:
  - In the event of a war, the pact gives Turkey the right to regulate the transit of naval warships and to block the straits to warships belonging to the countries involved in the conflict.

- ◆ Any country with coastline on the Black Sea – Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Russia or Ukraine – must notify Turkey eight days in advance of its intention to send vessels of war through the straits.

○ Other countries, the ones that don't border the Black Sea, must give Turkey **15 days' advance notice**.

- Turkey has used the **convention's powers before**. During **World War II**, Turkey prevented the **Axis powers** from sending their warships to attack the **Soviet Union** – and **blocked the Soviet navy from participating in combat in the Mediterranean**. Hence statement 2 is not correct.

42. Ans: C

Exp:

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC):

● About:

- ◆ The OIC claims to be the “**collective voice of the Muslim world**”.
- ◆ It was established at a 1969 summit in Rabat (Morocco) after what it describes as the ‘criminal arson’ of **Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem**.

● Members:

- ◆ It has 57 member Countries. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
- India is not a Member of OIC. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.

● Objectives:

- ◆ The OIC endeavours to **establish solidarity** among member states.
- ◆ To support **restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity** of any member state under occupation.
- ◆ To protect, defend and **combat defamation of Islam**.
- ◆ To prevent **growing dissension in Muslim societies** and work to ensure that member states take a united stand at the **U. N. General Assembly, Human Rights Council** and other international fora.

- Headquarters: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Hence, **statement 3 is correct**.

- ◆ The organisation plans to permanently move its headquarters to **East Jerusalem once the disputed city is 'liberated'**.
- ◆ Moreover, it aspires to hold Israel accountable for **'War Crimes'** and violations of international law.

43. Ans: D

Exp:

- The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a voluntary initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region. The 25 member states of the IONS are classified under four sub-regions, namely the South Asian sub-region, the West Asian sub-region, the South-East Asian and Australian sub-region, and the East African sub-region.

● The 25 member nations of the IONS are:

- ◆ South Asian sub-region: **India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka**
- ◆ West Asian sub-region: Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Iran.
- ◆ South-East Asian and Australian sub-region: Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand.
- ◆ East African sub-region: Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritius, **Seychelles, Hence, option D is correct.**

- Additionally, there are eight states with observer status in the IONS: China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Madagascar, Netherlands, and Russia.

44. Ans: D

Exp:



● International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC):

- ◆ It is a **multi-modal transportation established on 12th September 2000 in St. Petersburg**, by Iran, Russia and India for the purpose of promoting transportation cooperation among the Member States. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct**.

○ The INSTC **was expanded** to include eleven new members, namely: the Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Armenia, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of

Tajikistan, Republic of Turkey, Republic of Ukraine, Republic of Belarus, Oman, Syria, Bulgaria (Observer).

- It envisions a **7,200-km-long multi-mode network of ship, rail and road route** for transporting freight, aimed at reducing the carriage cost between India and Russia by about 30% and bringing down the transit time from 40 days by more than half.

◆ This corridor **connects India Ocean and the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea** via the Islamic Republic of Iran and then is connected to St. Petersburg and North Europe via the Russian Federation. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

45. Ans: A

Exp:

- **India and the UK** have decided to launch the **Young Professionals Scheme (YPS)**.
- It is conceived as part of an **India-U.K. Migration and Mobility MoU (signed in 2021)**. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - ◆ The scheme will have an **initial running period of 3 years** and is expected to be launched by March 2023.
- Under this scheme **up to 3,000 of their degree-holding citizens (age 18-30)** will be permitted to live and work in **each other's countries for a period of 2 years**. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

46. Ans: D

Exp:

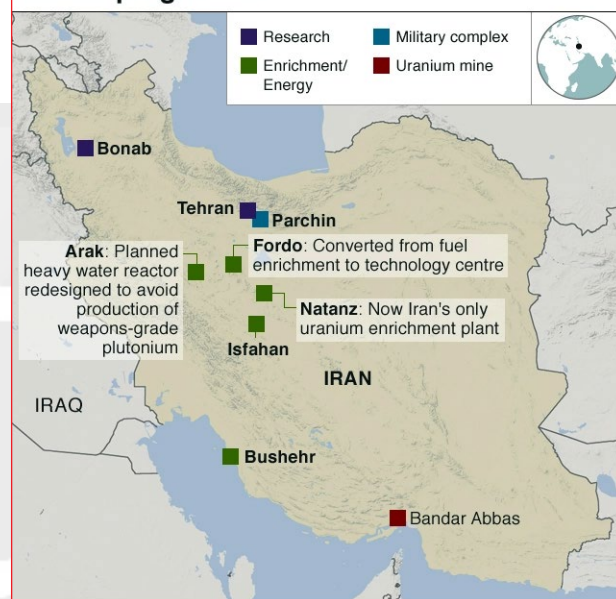
- It is a treaty brokered by the **World Bank** and signed by then **Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru** and **Pakistan's President Ayub Khan** which administers how the waters of the Indus and its tributaries that flow in both the countries will be utilised. **Hence, statement 1 is NOT correct.**
- According to the treaty, **waters of the eastern rivers — Sutlej, Beas and Ravi** had been allocated to India, while the **western rivers — the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab** to Pakistan.
  - ◆ However, since Indus flows from India, the country is allowed to use 20 percent of its water for irrigation, power generation and transport purposes.
  - ◆ **Hence, statement 2 is NOT correct.**

47. Ans: C

Exp:

- **Natanz** in Iran's central Isfahan province in Tehran, Natanz hosts the country's main uranium enrichment facility.
  - ◆ It is known as the first Pilot Fuel Enrichment Plant of Iran.
- **Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP)** is Iran's second pilot enrichment plant.
- **Hence, option C is correct.**

### Changes agreed under Iran deal to limit nuclear programme



48. Ans: B

Exp:

Iran nuclear deal:

- The deal, formally known as **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**.
- The JCPOA was the result of **prolonged negotiations from 2013 and 2015 between Iran and P5+1** (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States + Germany). **Hence statement 1 is not correct.**
- Under the deal, **Iran agreed to significantly cut its stores of centrifuges, enriched uranium and heavy-water**, all key components for nuclear weapons. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Iran also agreed to implement a protocol that would allow **inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to access its nuclear sites** to ensure Iran would not be able to develop nuclear weapons in secret.

- While the **West agreed to lift sanctions related to Iran's nuclear proliferation**, other sanctions addressing alleged abuses of human rights and Iran's ballistic missile programme remained in place.
- The **US committed to lifting sanctions on oil exports, but continued to restrict financial transactions**, which have deterred international trade with Iran.
- Nonetheless, Iran's economy, after suffering years of recessions, currency depreciation, and inflation, **stabilised significantly after the deal took effect**, and its exports skyrocketed.
- Israel, America's closest ally in the Middle East, strongly rejected the deal**, and other countries like Iran's great regional rival **Saudi Arabia, complained that they were not involved in the negotiations** even though Iran's nuclear programme posed security risks for every country in the region.
- After Trump abandoned the deal and reinstated banking and oil sanctions, **Iran ramped up its nuclear programme in earnest**, returning to approximately 97% of its pre-2015 nuclear capabilities.

49. Ans: B

Exp:

- The **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** is a specialised agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - World Food Day is celebrated every year around the world on 16th October. The day is celebrated to mark the anniversary of the founding of the FAO in 1945.
- It is one of the UN food aid organisations based in Rome (Italy). Its sister bodies are the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- Flagship Publications:**
  - The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA).
  - The State of the World's Forests (SOFO).
  - The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).
  - The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA). Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
  - The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO).

50. Ans: C

Exp:

- The **Geneva Conventions (1949) and their Additional Protocols** are international treaties that contain the **most important rules limiting the barbarity of war.**
- They protect people who do not take part in the **fighting (civilians, medics, aid workers) and those who can no longer fight** (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war)
  - The **first Geneva Convention** protects wounded and sick soldiers on land during war.
  - The **second Geneva Convention** protects wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel at sea during war.
  - The **third Geneva Convention** applies to prisoners of war.
  - The **fourth Geneva Convention** affords protection to civilians, including in occupied territory.
- Hence, option C is correct.**

51. Ans: B

Exp:

- India** is a signatory to the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016** increases the quantum of reservation for people suffering from disabilities from 3% to 4% in government jobs and from 3% to 5% in higher education institutes.
- Unique Disability Identification (UDID)** streamlines the tracking of recipients' **physical and financial progress** at all levels of implementation hierarchy i.e., **village, block, district, state, and national**. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

52. Ans: C

Exp:

**United Nations Human Rights Council:**

- The Human Rights Council is **an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system** responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of **human rights** around the world.
- The Council was **created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006**. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- The **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** serves as the **Secretariat** of the Human Rights Council. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**



- OHCHR is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- It is **made up of 47 United Nations Member States** which are **elected by the UN General Assembly (UNGA)**. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.
  - ◆ The UNGA takes into account the candidate States' contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights, as well as their voluntary pledges and commitments in this regard.
- The Council's Membership is based on equitable geographical distribution. Seats are distributed as follows:
  - ◆ African States: 13 seats
  - ◆ Asia-Pacific States: 13 seats
  - ◆ Latin American and Caribbean States: 8 seats
  - ◆ Western European and other States: 7 seats
  - ◆ Eastern European States: 6 seats
- Members of the Council **serve for a period of three years and are not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms**.

53. Ans: D

Exp:

- The aim of agreement is to establish an international multimodal transport and transit corridor between **Central Asia and the Persian Gulf**. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct**.
- The Agreement was first signed by **Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Oman and Qatar on 25 April 2011**.
- The **Ashgabat Agreement** came into force in **April 2016**.
- India joined the **Ashgabat Agreement** in **2018**. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.

54. Ans: B

Exp:

- The National Security Advisor (NSA) of India, for the first time, hosted a special meeting with his counterparts from Central Asian countries.



- Central Asian Countries include: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- Hence, **option B is correct**.

55. Ans: B

Exp:

- **BBIN Connectivity Project** was conceived after the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)** failed to agree on a regional motor vehicles agreement at a **summit in Nepal in 2014**, mainly because of opposition from Pakistan.
- The **BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement for the Regulation of Passenger, Personal and Cargo Vehicular Traffic** between the 4 countries was signed during a transport ministers' meeting in **Thimpu on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015**.
- Operationalising the MVA by concluding the **Passenger and the Cargo Protocol** will help realise the full potential of trade and **people to people connectivity** between the BBIN countries by **fostering greater sub-regional cooperation**. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.
- **Foreign Funding:** The Asian Development Bank has supported the project as part of its **South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation programme**, and has been requested to prioritise about 30 road projects worth billions of dollars. Hence **statement 1 is not correct**.
  - ◆ The **World Bank**, which has estimated that the implementation of the MVA will potentially see an **increase in traffic-regional trade within South Asia by nearly 60%**, has also announced its interest in supporting infrastructure.

56. Ans: D

Exp:

- UN Peacekeeping began in 1948 when the UN Security Council authorised the deployment of UN military observers to the Middle East. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct**.
- UN Peacekeeping helps countries navigate the difficult path from conflict to peace. It is made only to establish peace and not to fight or take up arms against NATO forces. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.
- It deploys troops and police from around the world, integrating them with civilian peacekeepers to address a range of mandates set by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and the General Assembly.

57. Ans: C

Exp:

- Throughout history, armed conflicts always **wrought havoc on the lives of people**. In addition to its

humanitarian toll, conflicts also led to the **large-scale destruction of cultural heritage**, weakening the foundations of communities, lasting peace and prospects of reconciliation.

- **Origin:** Considering that the preservation of cultural heritage is of great importance for all peoples of the world and thus needs universal protection, the **Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict was adopted in 1954** under the auspices of UNESCO.

◆ This convention is referred to as the **1954 Hague Convention**.

◆ It is the **first and the most comprehensive multilateral treaty** dedicated exclusively to the protection of cultural heritage in times of peace as well as during an armed conflict.

- Hence, option C is correct.

58. Ans: C

Exp:

- **Troika** refers to the top grouping within the **G20** that consists of the **current, previous and the upcoming presidencies**. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- The **G20** was founded in **1999** after the Asian financial crisis as a forum for the **Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors** to discuss **global economic and financial issues**.
- India will serve as the **G20's** presidency in **2023**. Theme is **"One Earth. One Family. One Future"**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

59. Ans: B

Exp:

- Recently, the 17th Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the International Labour Organization (ILO) was held in Singapore. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
  - ◆ The APRM brings together representatives of governments, employers' and workers' organizations from Asia, the Pacific and the Arab states.
- The International Labour Organization was established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles as an affiliated agency of the League of Nations. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
  - ◆ ILO is the only tripartite U.N. agency with government, employer, and worker representatives.
  - ◆ It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

60. Ans: A

Exp:

- The **Tunis Agenda** for the Information Society was a consensus statement of the World Summit on the

Information Society, adopted on **18<sup>th</sup> November 2005**, in **Tunis, Tunisia**.

- It called for the creation of the **Internet Governance Forum** and a novel, lightweight, **multi stakeholder governance structure for the Internet**.
- India Internet Governance Forum (IIGF) has been constituted in conformance to IGF-Paragraph 72 of the **Tunis Agenda of the UN-based Internet Governance forum (IGF)**.
- Therefore, option A is correct.

61. Ans: C

Exp:

- **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** members **commit to treating other members equally** so they can all benefit from each other's lowest tariffs, highest import quotas and fewest trade barriers for goods and services.
  - ◆ This principle of non-discrimination is known as **Most Favoured Nation (MFN) treatment**.
  - ◆ This is **one of the measures which ensures trade without discrimination**. Another one is 'National Treatment'.
- Article 1 of the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 1994**, requires every WTO member country to accord MFN status to all other member countries. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- A nation with MFN status will not be discriminated against and **will not be treated worse than any other nation with MFN status**.
  - ◆ Grant someone a special favour (such as a lower customs duty rate for one of their products) and you have to do the same for all other WTO members. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

62. Ans: B

Exp:

- **Kazakhstan**, officially the Republic of Kazakhstan, is a country of Central Asia.



- It is bounded on the **northwest and north by Russia**, on the **east by China**, and on the south by **Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, the Aral Sea, and Turkmenistan**. The **Caspian Sea bounds Kazakhstan to the southwest**.

◆ It doesn't share its boundary with Tajikistan.

- Therefore, **option B is correct**.

63. Ans: B

Exp:

- The **Australia Group (AG)** is an informal forum of countries which, through the harmonisation of export controls, seeks to ensure that **exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
- The formation of the Australia Group (AG) in 1985 was **prompted by Iraq's use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988)**.
- Coordination of National export control measures assists Australia Group members to fulfil their obligations under the **Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological & Toxin Weapons Convention**. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.
- It has **43 members (including the European union)**. The members work on a consensus basis. The **annual meeting is held in Paris, France**.
- India joined (as 43<sup>rd</sup> Participant) the Australia Group (AG) on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018**.
  - ◆ The Australia Group decided to admit India as the Group's through a consensus decision. Hence, **statement 3 is not correct**.

64. Ans: A

Exp:

- It calls for **urgent and integrated action** to reflect **biodiversity considerations** in all sectors of the **global economy**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
- The adoption of the declaration will create momentum for a new **global biodiversity pact**.
- The **Kunming Declaration** was adopted by over 100 countries at the ongoing **15th Conference of the Parties** to the **United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity**. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.

65. Ans: A

Exp:

- A Global Minimum Tax (GMT) applies a standard minimum tax rate to a defined corporate income base worldwide. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
  - ◆ The OECD developed a proposal **featuring a corporate minimum tax of 15% on foreign profits**

**of large multinationals**, which would give countries new annual tax revenues of USD 150 billion.

- The framework of GMT aims **to discourage nations from tax competition through lower tax rates** that result in corporate profit **shifting and tax base erosion**. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.
- It aims to ensure that **big businesses with global operations do not benefit by domiciling themselves in tax havens** in order to save on taxes.
  - ◆ The minimum tax and other provisions **aim to put an end to decades of tax competition between governments** to attract foreign investment. Hence, **statement 3 is not correct**.

66. Ans: B

Exp:

- Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM)** is a process for the **management of the coast using an integrated approach**, regarding all aspects of the **coastal zone**, including geographical and political boundaries, in an attempt to achieve sustainability.
- The concept was born in 1992 during the **Earth Summit of Rio de Janeiro**. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct**.
- The specifics regarding ICZM is set out in the **proceedings of the summit within Agenda 21**. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.

67. Ans: D

Exp:

- The **Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)** is a permanent, intergovernmental organization, created at the **Baghdad Conference in 1960**, by **Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela**.
- It aims to **manage the supply of oil in an effort to set the price of oil** in the world market, in order to avoid fluctuations that might affect the economies of both producing and purchasing countries.
  - ◆ It is **headquartered in Vienna, Austria**.
- As of 2019, OPEC has a total of **14 Member Countries** viz. **Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Congo, Angola, Ecuador and Venezuela**.
  - ◆ **Jordan is not a member of OPEC**.
- Therefore, **option D is correct**.

68. Ans: B

Exp:

- There have been many instances in the past where **rockets striking some parts on Earth**.



- ◆ **Russian rocket in 2018 and China's Long March 5B** rockets in 2020 and 2022 striking parts of Indonesia, Peru, India and Ivory Coast, among others.

- Parts of a **SpaceX Falcon 9** that fell down in Indonesia in 2016 included two **"refrigerator-sized fuel tanks"**.
- There is **no international binding agreement to ensure rocket stages always perform controlled re-entries** nor on the technologies with which to do so. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The **Liability Convention 1972** requires countries to pay for damages, not prevent them. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

69. Ans: D

Exp:

- The **council has 15 members**: the five permanent members and ten non-permanent members elected for two-year terms.
  - ◆ The five permanent members are the **United States, the Russian Federation, France, China and the United Kingdom.**
- The **council's presidency is a capacity that rotates every month** among its 15 members. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
  - ◆ **India, for the eighth time, has entered the UNSC as a non-permanent member** last year (2021) and will stay on the council for two years i.e **2021-22.** **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

70. Ans: C

Exp:

- **About:**
  - ◆ The Paris Club is a group of mostly western creditor countries that grew from a 1956 meeting in which Argentina agreed to meet its public creditors in Paris.
  - ◆ It describes itself as forum where official creditors meet to solve payment difficulties faced by debtor countries.
  - ◆ Their **objective is to find sustainable debt-relief solutions for countries that are unable to repay their bilateral loans.** **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **Members:**
  - ◆ The members are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

- ◆ All 22 are members of the group called Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

#### ◆ Recent Developments:

- The Paris group countries dominated bilateral lending in the last century, but their importance has **receded over the last two decades or so with the emergence of China as the world's biggest bilateral lender.** **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- In Sri Lanka's case, for instance, India, China, and Japan are the largest bilateral creditors.
- Sri Lanka's debt to China is 52% of its bilateral debt, 19.5% to Japan, and 12% to India.

71. Ans: C

Exp:

- India, under **'Operation Dost'** has sent its sixth plane carrying **National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel, essentials, and medical equipment for the earthquake-hit Turkey.**
- A field **hospital under Operation Dost** has been set up by the Indian Army in Hatay province of Turkey. India has also sent a transport aircraft with medical supplies to Syria.
- The **earthquake of magnitude 7.7 on the Richter scale hit Turkey and Syria** on 6 Feb 2023 followed by a series of aftershocks causing huge devastation, major loss of lives and damage to infrastructure in the two countries.
- Operation Dost symbolises that **India is a friend of Turkey** and the two must deepen their relations.
- Earlier, the **NDRF was sent to two similar international operations—the 2011 Japan triple disaster (earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown) and the 2015 Nepal earthquake.**
- **Hence, option C is correct.**

72. Ans: D

Exp:

#### UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC):

- Established by the UN Charter in 1945, it is the **principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations** on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as implementation of internationally agreed development goals.
- It has **54 members, elected by the UN General Assembly** for overlapping three-year terms. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It is the UN's central platform for reflection, debate and innovative thinking on sustainable development.



- ◆ Each year, ECOSOC structures its work around an annual theme of global importance to sustainable development. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

- It coordinates the work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, ten functional commissions and five regional commissions, receives reports from nine UN funds and programmes and issues policy recommendations to the UN system and to member states.

- Few Important Bodies under the Purview of ECOSOC:

- ◆ International Labour Organization (ILO)
- ◆ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- ◆ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- ◆ World Health Organization (WHO)
- ◆ Bretton Woods Twins (World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund)

○ Hence, statement 3 is correct.

- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- Apart from these there are various Functional and Regional Commissions, Standing Committees, Ad Hoc and Expert Bodies as well.

73. Ans: B

Exp:

New START Treaty:

- It was a treaty between the US and Russia that placed new verifiable limits on intercontinental-range nuclear weapons.
- The treaty entered into force on 5th February 2011, and its central limits on strategic offensive arms had to be met by the two countries by February 2018.
- The treaty aimed to reduce the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles.
- It also required the exchange of data and information about the number, location, and movement of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, making it a verifiable agreement.
- Hence, option B is correct.

74. Ans: D

Exp:

- USA and UAE remain India's top 2 export markets while Canada remains in top 30. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- As per the latest available data of OECD-NEA (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Nuclear Energy Agency)/IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency), World Nuclear

Association – Australia has 30% of reserves, Kazakhstan (14%), Canada (8%), Russia (8%) and USA (1%). Hence, statement 2 is not correct.

75. Ans: A

Exp:

- Nuclear Non-proliferation treaty (NPT):

- ◆ The NPT is an international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of disarmament.
- ◆ The treaty was signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970. Presently, it has 191 member states.
- ◆ India is not a member and has faced international sanctions in the past for its nuclear weapons program. Hence, statement 3 is correct.
- ◆ It requires countries to give up any present or future plans to build nuclear weapons in return for access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- ◆ It represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.
- ◆ Nuclear-weapon states parties under the NPT are defined as those that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive devices before 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1967.

- Also, India is not a member of Nuclear Suppliers group as it is not a member of NPT. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.

- Mineral security partnership (Critical Mineral Alliance):

- ◆ Minerals Security Partnership is an ambitious new US-led partnership to secure supply chains of critical minerals, aimed at reducing dependency on China. India has been excluded from it. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
- ◆ Demand for critical minerals, which are essential for clean energy and other technologies is projected to expand significantly in the coming decades.

76. Ans: A

Exp:

- When a country borrows from the IMF, its government agrees to adjust its economic policies to overcome the problems that led it to seek financial aid.
- ◆ Conditionality helps countries solve balance-of-payments problems without resorting to measures that are harmful to national or international prosperity. Hence, statement 1 is correct.



- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** approved a preliminary agreement with Sri Lanka on a four-year, **USD 2.9 billion bailout package** which is aimed at restoring economic stability and debt sustainability for the crisis-ridden south Asian nation. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It can **boost the receiving country's credit ratings**, and the confidence of international creditors and investors who may then chip in to provide bridge financing to close the gaps between the tranches. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

77. Ans: B

Exp:

- It is a group of 19 countries and the **European Union (EU)**, founded in 1999, with representatives of the **International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.**
- Its members are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the EU.
- Nigeria was meant to be the "20<sup>th</sup>" member and was dropped at the last minute due to political troubles at the time.
- The membership comprises a mix of the world's largest advanced and emerging economies, representing about two-thirds of the world's population.
- The G20 holds a strategic role in securing **future global economic growth and prosperity.**
- Together, the G20 members represent more **than 80% of world GDP, 75% of international trade and 60% of the world population.**
- **Hence, option (b) is correct.**

78. Ans: D

Exp:

- The Strategic Partnership between **India and South Africa**, called the **RED FORT DECLARATION**, was signed in **1997. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The Strategic Partnership between the two countries was again reaffirmed in the Tshwane Declaration (October 2006).
- Both these declarations have been instrumental mechanisms that have contributed in the past to both South Africa and India for achieving their respective national objectives.
- **Square Kilometer Array Observatory (SKAO)** is a new intergovernmental organization dedicated to radio astronomy and is **headquartered in the UK.**

- **SKAO** member nations are Australia, China, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, **South Africa** and the United Kingdom. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

79. Ans: B

Expl:

- The Security Council was established by the UN Charter in 1945. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
  - ◆ The other 5 organs of the United Nations are—the General Assembly (UNGA), the Trusteeship Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.
- Each member of the Security Council has one vote. Decisions of the Security Council on matters are made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the concurring votes of the permanent members. **A "No" vote from one of the five permanent members blocks the passage of the resolution. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Any member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council may participate, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council whenever the latter considers that the interests of that member are specially affected. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**

80. Ans: D

Exp:

- The Strategic Partnership between **India and South Africa**, called the **RED FORT DECLARATION**, was signed in **1997. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The Strategic Partnership between the two countries was again reaffirmed in the Tshwane Declaration (October 2006).
- Both these declarations have been instrumental mechanisms that have contributed in the past to both South Africa and India for achieving their respective national objectives.
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- **SKAO** member nations are Australia, China, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, **South Africa** and the United Kingdom. **Hence statement 2 is not correct.**

81. Ans: B

Exp:

- **The Human Rights Council** is an inter-governmental body within the **United Nations system** responsible for



strengthening the promotion and protection of **human rights around the world.**

- The Council was created by the **United Nations General Assembly in 2006.** It replaced the former **United Nations Commission on Human Rights.**
  - ◆ Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- **The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** serves as the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council.
  - ◆ OHCHR is **headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.**
  - ◆ Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- It is made up of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- Members of the Council serve for a **period of three years** and are **not eligible for immediate re-election after serving two consecutive terms.**
  - ◆ Hence, statement 3 is not correct.

82. Ans: B

Exp:

- The **BIMSTEC** is a regional organization comprising **Seven Member States:**
  - ◆ Five from **South Asia**, including **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka.**
  - ◆ Two from **Southeast Asia**, including **Myanmar and Thailand.** Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- This sub-regional organization came into being on **6<sup>th</sup> June 1997** through the **Bangkok Declaration.** Its Secretariat is in **Dhaka.** Hence, statement 2 is correct.

83. Ans: A

Exp:

- The official languages of the SCO are **Chinese and Russian.** Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- SCO is a Eurasian political, economic and military organization aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.
- **Varanasi** has been chosen as the SCO region's first **"Tourism and Cultural Capital for 2022–23"** ahead of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit**, which will take place in September 2022. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
- The new initiative will come into force after the **Samarkand summit** following which India will take over the Presidency and host the next Heads of the State summit.

84. Ans: B

Exp:

- The NPT is an **international treaty** whose objective is to **prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology**, to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of disarmament.
- The treaty was **signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970.** Presently, it has 191 member states.
  - ◆ **India is not a member.** India is **one of the only five countries that either did not sign the NPT or signed but withdrew later**, thus becoming part of a list that includes Pakistan, Israel, North Korea, and South Sudan.
  - ◆ Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- Nuclear-weapon states parties under the NPT are defined as those **that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive devices before 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1967.**
  - ◆ Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- Hence, option B is correct.

85. Ans: A

Exp:

- **Exercise Samudra Shakti (Maritime):** In pursuance of India's Act East Policy, Exercise 'Samudra Shakti' was conceived in 2018 as a bilateral **Indian Navy-Indonesian Navy exercise.** Hence, pair one is not correctly matched.
- **Exercise Tiger Triumph (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise)** is **between US and Indian military**, it aims to develop interoperability for conducting HADR operations. Hence, pair two is not correctly matched.
- **Exercise Vajra Prahar (Special Forces' Exercise)** is the joint exercise conducted by the **Special Forces** of India and the United States. Hence, Pair four is not correctly matched.
- **Garuda Shakti** is a Military Exercise **between India & Indonesia**, Hence, pair three is correctly matched. Therefore, option A is correct.

86. Ans: B

Exp:

- **Troika** refers to the top grouping within the **G20** that consists of the **current, previous and the upcoming presidencies (Indonesia, India and Brazil).** Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- During the Presidency, **India, Indonesia and Brazil** would form the **troika.** This would be the first time when the



troika would consist of three developing countries and emerging economies, providing them a greater voice.

- The agenda and work are coordinated by **representatives of the G20 countries, known as 'Sherpas'**, who work together with the finance ministers and governors of the central banks. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

87. Ans. C

Exp:

- Quad is the **grouping of four democracies** –India, Australia, the US, and Japan.
  - ◆ All four nations **find a common ground of being democratic nations** and also support the common interest of unhindered maritime trade and security.
  - ◆ The Quad is billed as four democracies with a **shared objective to ensure and support a "free, open and prosperous" Indo-Pacific region.**
  - ◆ Finally in **2017, India, Australia, the US and Japan, came together and formed this "quadrilateral" coalition.**
  - ◆ The **Quad nations carry out the military exercise in the name of Malabar.**
- Ekuverin: Joint military exercise between India & Maldives.
- Indra: It's an **Indo-Russia joint military Exercise.**
- Hand in Hand: Joint military exercise between India & China.
- **Hence, option C is correct.**

88. Ans: D

Exp:

- **Exercise Yudh Abhyas** is the largest running joint military training and defence cooperation endeavor between **India and the US.**
- **The exercise was started in 2004** under the **US Army Pacific Partnership Program.** The exercise is hosted **alternately between both countries.**
- The exercise aims at **enhancing understanding, cooperation and interoperability between two Armies.**
  - ◆ This helps them in undertaking joint operations at battalion level in mountainous terrain with cold climatic **conditions under the ambit of the United Nations.**
- **Hence, option D is correct.**

89. Ans: B

Exp:

- India is the **10<sup>th</sup> largest** trading partner of **Mexico**, and the trade balance has remained in favor of India for eight years. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**

- **Mexico** was the first **Latin American country** to recognize India after Independence and establish diplomatic relations with India in 1950.
- During the colonial era, **Mexico** was a colony of **Spain** whereas **India** was a colony of **Great Britain.** **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- An agreement on cultural cooperation has been in existence since 1975 and cooperation activities are carried out through four-yearly '**Programmes of Cultural Cooperation**'.
- **The Gurudev Tagore Indian Cultural Center** has been functioning in **Mexico** since October 2010, teaching Yoga, classical dances, music, etc

90. Ans: B

Exp:

- Established in 1989, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) cites minimum eligibility that countries must share borders with the Pacific Ocean to be a member. India is not a member and was invited to be an observer for the first time in November 2011. It is a 21-member body. **Hence, 1 is not correct.**
- It is a **permanent intergovernmental international organisation.** It was **created in 2001.** The **SCO Charter was signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2003.** It's a **Eurasian political, economic and military organisation** aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region, It is a **nine-member economic and security bloc** and has emerged as one of the **largest transregional international organisations.** Prior to the creation of SCO in 2001, **Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five, and India and Pakistan became members in 2017. Iran is the ninth and the newest member of SCO, Hence, 2 is correct.**
- Established in 2005, the East Asia Summit (EAS) is an 18-member States body for strategic dialogue and cooperation on the key political, security, and economic challenges facing the Indo-Pacific region. It comprises the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states along with 8 members Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States. **Hence, 3 is correct.**
- The EEF was established in 2015 to encourage **foreign investments in Russia's Far East, it displays the economic potential, suitable business conditions and investment opportunities** in the region, In 2019, India offered a **USD 1 billion line of credit to develop infrastructure in the region.** Through the EEF, **India aims to establish a strong inter-state interaction with Russia.**



- The Regional **Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)** was signed into existence by 15 countries led by China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the 10-state ASEAN grouping, creating one of the world's largest trading blocs, it came into force in January 2022. Hence, statement 4 is not correct.

91. Ans: C

Expl:

#### Group of Four (G-4) Countries

- The G4 is a grouping of **Brazil, Germany, India and Japan** which are aspiring to become permanent members of the UNSC. Hence, option © is correct.
- The G4 countries are supporting each other's bids for permanent membership of the UNSC.
- The G4 nations traditionally meet on the sidelines of the annual high-level UN General Assembly session.

92. Ans: D

Exp:

- **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)** is an intergovernmental organisation, it was **officially founded in Bonn, Germany, in January 2009**. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
  - ◆ Currently it has 164 members, India is the 77th Founding Member of IRENA.
  - ◆ It has its headquarters in **Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- **Major Functions:**
  - ◆ It supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, and serves as the principal platform for international cooperation, a centre of excellence, and a repository of policy, technology, resource and financial knowledge on renewable energy.
  - ◆ It promotes the widespread adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy, including bioenergy, geothermal, hydropower, ocean, solar and wind energy in the pursuit of sustainable development, energy access, energy security and low-carbon economic growth and prosperity. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

93. Ans: C

Exp:

- **27<sup>th</sup> September** has been celebrated as **World Tourism Day** since **1980**.
- **World Tourism Day in 2022** has the theme **"Rethinking Tourism"**. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

- The purpose of this day is to increase awareness and motivate people to travel. Since it believes that tourism helps people all across the world become even more unified and connected
- This date was chosen to coincide with an important milestone in world tourism: the anniversary of the adoption of the **United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Statutes in 1970**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- **The World Tourism Day** highlights the unique role of the tourism sector in preserving **cultural and natural heritage all around the world**.

94. Ans: B

Exp:

- It is a **multinational maritime partnership**, which exists to **uphold the Rules-Based International Order (RBIO)** by countering illicit non-state actors on the high seas and promoting security, stability, and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which encompass some of the world's most important shipping lanes. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- **CMF is Commanded by a U.S. Navy Vice Admiral**, under U.S. Naval forces central Command headquartered in Bahrain. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
- **CMF has 34 member nations:** Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, UAE, United Kingdom, United States, and Yemen.
- India is not a member of CMF. At the India-US 2+2 dialogue held in April (2022); India announced that it would join the CMF as an Associate Partner. Hence, statement 3 is not correct.

95. Ans: A

Exp:

- The **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** is a regional organisation which was established to promote political and social stability amid rising tensions among the **Asia-Pacific's** post-colonial states.
  - ◆ The motto of ASEAN is **"One Vision, One Identity, One Community"**.
- The **10 member states** of ASEAN include: **Brunei Darussalam**, Cambodia, Indonesia, **Laos**, Malaysia, Myanmar, **Philippines**, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
  - ◆ Mauritius is not a member of ASEAN.
- Therefore, option A is correct.



96. Ans: C

Exp:

- The Commonwealth of Nations is a group of **56 countries composed mostly of former British colonies**.
  - ◆ It was established by the **London Declaration in 1949**.
  - ◆ While members of the Commonwealth are predominantly located in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Pacific, with many of them emerging economies, the three European members of the group are Cyprus, Malta, and the U.K.
  - ◆ The developed nations of the Commonwealth are Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The Commonwealth **consists of both Republics and Realms**.
  - ◆ The British monarch is the **Head of State for the realms, whereas the republics are ruled by elected governments** except in the case of five countries — **Brunei Darussalam, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malaysia, and Tonga** — each a self-governed monarchy.
- The **realms** are Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, the Bahamas, Belize, Canada, Grenada, Jamaica, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- In **2021**, Barbados became the **18<sup>th</sup> country to remove the British monarch from the role of head of state** and substitute them with a national government functionary. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

97. Ans: B

Exp:

- It is a **US-led initiative** that aims to **strengthen economic partnership among participating countries** to enhance resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness, economic growth, fairness, and competitiveness in the **Indo-Pacific region**.
  - ◆ The IPEF was launched in 2021 with **a dozen initial partners** who together represent **40% of the world GDP**. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The IPEF is **not a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** but allows members to **negotiate the parts they want to**. The negotiations will be along **four main “pillars”**.
  - ◆ **Supply-chain resilience**
  - ◆ **Clean energy, decarbonisation & infrastructure**
  - ◆ **Taxation & anti-corruption**
  - ◆ **Fair & resilient trade**. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

- Currently, **India and 13 countries located in the Pacific Ocean** are its members,
- Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, United States, and Vietnam. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

98. Ans: C

Exp:

- Transnistria is described as a “remnant of the Soviet Union”, **Transnistria declared independence like Moldova did soon after the break-up of the Soviet Union**. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- When Moldovan troops attempted to take over the territory in 1990-1992, Transnistria was able to resist them because of Russian soldiers based in Transnistria.
  - ◆ Since then, it has remained free of Moldovan control. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- Moldova is not a member of the European Union & North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

99. Ans: B

Exp:

- **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** is the **only tripartite United Nation (UN) agency**.
  - ◆ It brings together **governments, employers and workers** of 187 member States (India is a member), to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
  - ◆ **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- It was **established in 1919 by the Treaty of Versailles** as an affiliated **agency of the League of Nations** and became the first affiliated specialized agency of the UN in 1946.
  - ◆ Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- Its **headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland**.
  - ◆ Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
- **Hence, option B is correct.**

100. Ans: C

Exp:

Arctic Council:

- The **Arctic Council** is a **high-level intergovernmental body set up in 1996 by the Ottawa declaration** to promote cooperation, coordination and interaction among the Arctic States together with the indigenous communities and other Arctic inhabitants. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**



- ◆ The Council has the eight circumpolar countries as member states and is mandated to protect the Arctic environment and promote the economies and social and cultural well-being of the indigenous people whose organisations are permanent participants in the council.
- The Council has members, ad hoc observer countries and “permanent participants”
  - ◆ **Members of the Arctic Council:** Ottawa Declaration declares Canada, the Kingdom of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States of America as a member of the Arctic Council.
  - ◆ **Permanent participants:** In 1998, the number of Permanent Participants doubled to make up the present six, as, the **Aleut International Association (AIA)**, and then, in 2000, the **Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC)** and the **Gwich'in Council International (GGI)** were appointed Permanent Participants.
  - ◆ **Observer status:** It is open to non-Arctic states, along with inter-governmental, inter-parliamentary, global, regional and non-governmental organisations that the Council determines can contribute to its work. As of May 2019, thirteen non-Arctic states have Observer status. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
    - Germany, 1998
    - Netherlands, 1998
    - Poland, 1998
    - United Kingdom, 1998
    - France, 2000
    - Spain, 2006
    - China, 2013
    - India, 2013
    - Italy, 2013
    - Japan, 2013
    - South Korea, 2013
    - Singapore, 2013
    - Switzerland, 2017

101. Ans: B

Exp:

- Russia is the **world's largest exporter of crude and oil products**, having shipped 7.8 mb/d in December 2021, and the **second largest supplier of crude to the world** with only Saudi Arabia exporting more crude than it. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- India is the **world's third-largest oil consumer** at 5.5

**million barrels a day**, behind the US and China. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

- ◆ The oil demand is growing at **3-4% a year in the country.**
- ◆ By this estimate, in a decade, **India could be consuming about 7 million barrels a day.**
- ◆ **India imports 85% of its oil** from about 40 countries, the bulk coming from the Middle East and the US.
- ◆ From Russia, **India imports 2% of its supplies**, including oil which it converts to petroleum products after refining. So, it's not Russian oil but oil in general and its rising prices that have India worried.
- **Brent crude oil** originates from oil fields in the **North Sea** between the Shetland Islands and Norway, while **West Texas Intermediate (WTI)** is sourced from **US oil fields**, primarily in Texas, Louisiana, and North Dakota. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**

102. Ans: C

Exp:

**Recent MoUs with Japan:**

- Japan will invest Rs 3.2 lakh crores in the next five years in India.
- 7 JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) loans for projects in connectivity, water supply and sewerage, horticulture, healthcare, and biodiversity conservation in various States.
- ◆ An MoU has been signed to introduce **Johkasou technology** in India by Japanese companies for **decentralised wastewater treatment**. It is used in areas where sewage infrastructure has not yet been developed. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**

**Dharma Guardian :**

- It is an **annual training event between Indian and Japanese Military**, it is being conducted in India since 2018. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- The scope of this exercise covers joint training on counter-terrorism operations in the jungle and urban scenario.
- The joint military exercise will enhance the level of defence co-operation as well as bilateral relations between the two nations.

103. Ans: C

Exp:

**Biological diversity in areas Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty (BBNJ Treaty):**



- The “BBNJ Treaty”, also known as the “Treaty of the High Seas”, is an international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, **currently under negotiation** at the **United Nations**. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
- This new instrument is **being developed within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982**, the main international agreement governing human activities at sea. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.
- It will achieve a **more holistic management of high seas activities**, which should better balance the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources.
- BBNJ **encompasses the high seas**, beyond the exclusive economic zones or national waters of countries.
  - ◆ According to the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, these areas account for **“almost half of the Earth’s surface.”**
  - ◆ These areas are **hardly regulated and also least understood or explored** for its biodiversity - only 1% of these areas are under protection.
- Launched at the **One Ocean Summit** in February 2022, the **High Ambition Coalition on Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction** brings together many delegations engaged in the BBNJ negotiations on a common and ambitious outcome at the highest political level.

104. Ans: D

Exp:

- The World Water Day aims to support the achievement of Sustainable Development **Goal 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030**. Hence, **statement 3 is correct**.
  - ◆ Theme: Groundwater: making the invisible visible.
  - ◆ The theme was decided by UN-water at its 30th meeting in Rome. It was proposed by the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC).
- The idea for this international day goes back to 1992, the year in which the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro took place.
  - ◆ That same year, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution by which 22nd March of each year was declared World Day for Water, to be observed starting in 1993.
  - ◆ Later on, other celebrations and events were added. For instance, the International Year of Cooperation in the Water Sphere 2013, and the current **International Decade for Action on Water**

**for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.

- The **Asia-Pacific region is the largest groundwater abstractor in the world**, containing seven out of the ten countries that extract most groundwater (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey). Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.
  - ◆ These countries alone account for roughly 60% of the world’s total groundwater withdrawal.

105. Ans: B

Exp:

- West Bank is a landlocked territory in West Asia. It also contains a significant section of the western Dead Sea.
- It was captured by Jordan after the Arab-Israeli War (1948) but Israel snatched it back during the Six-Day War of 1967 and has occupied it ever since.
- The West Bank is sandwiched between Israel and Jordan.
  - ◆ One of its major cities is Ramallah, the de facto administrative capital of Palestine.
- At present, there are around 130 formal Israeli settlements along with 26 lakh Palestinians in the West Bank.
- Masafer Yatta is in the 60% of the territory where the Palestinian Authority is prohibited from operating.
- The Palestinians want the West Bank to form the main part of their future state.
- Hence, **option B is correct**.

106. Ans: C

Exp:

- **India and US** both reiterated commitment to step efforts to implement the **G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatment** in a predictable, timely, orderly and coordinated manner. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
- **India and US** Both countries shared the re-energized global efforts to increase **climate ambition** as well as respective domestic efforts to meet publicly expressed **climate goals**.
- Both sides affirmed their commitment to **debt sustainability, transparency in bilateral lending**, and coordinating closely on extending **fair and equal debt treatment** to countries facing debt distress.
- The two sides will continue to engage in discussions relating to the **Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA)** for sharing of financial account information. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.



107. Ans: B

Exp:



- India joined a multilateral strategic and command Exercise Vostok - 2022 in Russia along with China among other countries.
- It is aimed at interaction and coordination amongst other participating military contingents and observers.
- It will involve **troops from several ex-Soviet nations, China, India, Laos, Mongolia, Nicaragua and Syria.**
  - ◆ Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- The Indian Army was represented by the **contingent of troops from 7/8 Gorkha Rifles.**
  - ◆ Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- Hence, option B is correct.

108. Ans: A

Exp:

- The Sultanate of Oman is a strategic partner of India in the Gulf and an important interlocutor at the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Arab League and Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) fora.

**Oman's Strategic Significance for India:**

- **Oman is at the gateway of Strait of Hormuz** through which **India imports one-fifth of its oil imports.**
- Defence cooperation has emerged as a key pillar for the robust India-Oman strategic partnership. Defence exchanges are guided by a Framework MOU which was recently renewed in 2021.
- **Oman is the only country in the Gulf region with which all three services of the Indian armed forces conduct regular bilateral exercises** and staff talks, enabling close cooperation and trust at the professional level.
- Oman also actively participates in the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).
- In a strategic move to expand its footprint in the Indian Ocean region, **India has secured access to the key Port**

of Duqm in Oman for military use and logistical support. This is part of India's maritime strategy to counter Chinese influence and activities in the region.

- ◆ The Port of Duqm is situated on the southeastern seaboard of Oman, overlooking the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.
- ◆ It is strategically located, in close proximity to the Chabahar port in Iran. With the Assumption Island being developed in Seychelles and Agalega in Mauritius, Duqm fits into India's proactive maritime security roadmap.

- Hence, option A is correct.

109. Ans: B

Exp:

- The B 9 is a **group of nine NATO countries** in Eastern Europe that **became part of the US-led military alliance** after the end of the **Cold War**. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**
- The B 9 or Bucharest Format, **often abbreviated as the B9, was founded on November 4, 2015.**
- The members of B9 are **Romania and Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and the three Baltic republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.** Hence, **statement 1 is not correct.**



110. Ans: A

Exp:

- In Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) two or more partners give preferential right of entry to certain products. This is done by **reducing duties on an agreed number of tariff lines.** Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
- Tariffs may **even be reduced to zero for some products even in a PTA.** Hence, **statement 2 is not correct.**
- India signed a PTA with Afghanistan.

111. Ans: C

Exp:

**Defence Space Command Agency: Australia**

- Recently, Australia has announced a new Defence Space Command Agency to counter the growing influence of Russia and China in space. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It will help Australia in developing and advocating space-specific priorities within the government, industry, allies and even international partners.
- The agency will provide training to people to become space specialists, help conduct strategic space planning, and be able to be a part of any developments regarding the refinement of space policy. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Australia will be setting scientific and space priorities with the agency in place and will be working towards creating an efficient space architecture.
- All the operations of the agency – including design, construction, maintenance – will be within the purview of the standards and limitations of the Defence Ministry of Australia.

112. Ans: A

Exp:

- The Antarctic Treaty was signed between 12 countries in Washington on 1st December 1959 for making the Antarctic Continent a demilitarised zone to be preserved for scientific research only.
- The Antarctic treaty remains the only example of a single treaty that governs a whole continent. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It is also the foundation of a rules-based international order for a continent without a permanent population.
- Currently it has 54 parties. India became a member of this treaty in 1983. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

113. Ans: C

Exp:

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):**

- It is a **subsidiary organ of the UN General Assembly** and works as a **sexual and reproductive health agency**. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) establishes its mandate. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It was established as a trust fund in 1967 and began operations in 1969.
  - ◆ In 1987, it was officially renamed the United Nations Population Fund but the original abbreviation, 'UNFPA' for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities was retained.

- UNFPA works directly to tackle Sustainable Development Goals on health (SDG3), education (SDG4) and gender equality (SDG5).
- UNFPA is **not supported by the UN budget**, instead, it is **entirely supported by voluntary contributions** of donor governments, intergovernmental organisations, the private sector, foundations and individuals. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Report released: State of World Population Report.

114. Ans: C

Exp:

- The acronym "BRICS" was initially formulated in 2001 by economist Jim O'Neill, of Goldman Sachs, in a report on growth prospects for the economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China – which together represented a significant share of the world's production and population.
- The grouping was formalised during the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers in 2006.
  - ◆ The first BRIC Summit took place in 2009 in the Russian Federation and focused on issues such as reform of the global financial architecture.
  - ◆ South Africa was invited to join BRIC in December 2010, after which the group adopted the acronym BRICS.
  - ◆ South Africa subsequently attended the Third BRICS Summit in Sanya, China, in March 2011.
- During the **Sixth BRICS Summit in Fortaleza (Brazil) in 2014**, the leaders signed the Agreement establishing the **New Development Bank (NDB)** (headquarters - Shanghai, China).
  - ◆ **The Fortaleza Declaration stressed that the NDB will strengthen cooperation among BRICS and will supplement the efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global development thus contributing to sustainable and balanced growth. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - ◆ They also signed the **BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement** to provide short-term liquidity support to the members. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

115. Ans: D

Exp:

- The **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)** is a regional organisation comprising seven Member States: five deriving from South Asia, including **Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka** and two from Southeast Asia,



including Myanmar and Thailand. Hence, statement 1 is NOT correct.

- This sub-regional organisation came into being on 6 June 1997 through the Bangkok Declaration. The **BIMSTEC Secretariat is in Dhaka**. Hence, statement 2 is NOT correct.

116. Ans: D

Exp:

**Asian Development Bank:**

- ADB is a regional development bank established in 1966. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- It has 68 members. India is a founding member. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.
- 49 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside.
- It aims to promote social and economic development in Asia and the Pacific.
- As of 31st December 2019, ADB's five largest shareholders are Japan and the United States (each with 15.6% of total shares), the People's Republic of China (6.4%), India (6.3%), and Australia (5.8%).
- It is headquartered in Manila, Philippines. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

117. Ans: A

Exp:

- The agreement on the **Addu City Reclamation Project was signed between the Government of Maldives and the Government of India**. The Project would be carried out under a direct line of credit facility from the Exim Bank of India. A total of 194.3 hectares of land is set to be reclaimed from the City as part of this project.
- Addu Atoll, also known as Seenu Atoll, is the southernmost atoll of the Maldives.
- Apart from its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, Addu is the second largest city in the archipelago, home to over 30,000 people.
- Hence, option A is correct.

118. Ans: C

Exp:

**World Organization for Animal Health (OIE):**

- OIE is an intergovernmental organization responsible for improving animal health worldwide.
- In 2018, it had a total of 182 Member Countries. India is one of the member countries. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- OIE develops normative documents relating to rules that Member Countries can use to protect themselves from

the introduction of diseases and pathogens. One of them is the Terrestrial Animal Health Code.

- OIE standards are **recognised by the World Trade Organization** as reference international sanitary rules. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- It is headquartered in Paris, France. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

119. Ans: A

Exp:

- The London Convention, 1972 on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and Other Matter was signed to control all sources of marine pollution and prevent pollution of the sea through regulation of dumping into the sea of waste materials.
- Hence, option A is correct.

120. Ans: C

Exp:

- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is an intergovernmental organization with a membership of 192 Member States and Territories.
  - ◆ India is a member of WMO.
- It originated from the International Meteorological Organization (IMO), which was established after the 1873 Vienna International Meteorological Congress.
- Established by the ratification of the WMO Convention on 23rd March 1950, WMO became the **specialized agency of the United Nations for meteorology** (weather and climate), operational hydrology and related geophysical sciences. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- WMO is **headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

121. Ans: A

Exp:

- Chemical Weapons Convention is a **multilateral treaty banning chemical weapons** and requiring their destruction within the stipulated time.
- Negotiations for the **CWC began in 1980** at the **United Nations Conference on Disarmament**.
- The convention was drafted in **September 1992** and opened for signature in January 1993. It became effective from April 1997.
- It makes it **mandatory to destroy old and abandoned chemical weapons**.
- Members **should also declare the riot-control agents** (sometimes referred to as 'tear gas') in possession of them. Hence, statement 1 is correct.

◆ **Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons** is an international organization established by the CWC in 1997 to implement and enforce the terms of the CWC.

● **Members:**

- ◆ It has **192 state parties** and 165 signatories.
- ◆ India is a signatory of the convention. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**

● **Convention Prohibits:**

- ◆ The **development, production, acquisition, stockpiling**, or retention of chemical weapons.
- ◆ **Transferring** of chemical weapons.
- ◆ **Using** chemical weapons.
- ◆ Assisting other States to indulge in activities that are prohibited by the CWC.
- ◆ **Using riot-control devices** as 'warfare methods'.

122. Ans: C

Exp:

- The **Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT)** provides the trusted messaging platform that enables financial institutions to exchange information about global monetary transactions such as money transfers. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- While SWIFT does not actually move money, it operates as a middleman to verify information of transactions by providing secure financial messaging services to more than 11,000 banks in over 200 countries.
  - ◆ Most of the world trade takes place with financial messaging passing through SWIFT.
- It was established in 1973 and is **based in Belgium**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**



- It is overseen by the central banks from eleven industrial countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States, besides Belgium.

◆ **India's financial system has access to the SWIFT. Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

- Prior to SWIFT, the only reliable means of message confirmation for international funds transfer was Telex.
  - ◆ It was discontinued due to a range of issues such as low speed, security concerns, and a free message format.

● **Therefore, option C is correct.**

123. Ans: C

Exp:

**Evacuation Operations carried out by India:**

● **Operation Ganga (2022):**

- ◆ It is an evacuation mission to bring back all the **Indian nationals who are currently stranded in Ukraine**. **Hence, Pair 1 is correctly matched.**
- ◆ The tensions between Russia and Ukraine are currently heightened, with war erupting in Ukraine after the Russian military launched a series of attacks recently.

● **Evacuation from Brussels (2016):**

- ◆ In March 2016, Belgium was hit by terrorist strikes at Brussels Airport in Zaventem, and one at Maalbeek Metro station in central Brussels.
- ◆ A total of 242 Indians, including 28 crew members, returned to India in a Jet Airways flight.

● **Operation Raahat (2015):**

- ◆ In 2015, a conflict raged between the Yemeni government and Houthi rebels.
- ◆ Thousands of Indians were stranded and Yemen was not accessible by air due to a no-fly zone announced by Saudi Arabia.
- ◆ Under Operation Raahat, **India evacuated nearly 5,600 people from Yemen**.

● **Operation Maitri (2015):**

- ◆ It is the joint relief and rescue operation by the Indian government and the Indian Armed forces in the **aftermath of the 2015 Nepal earthquake**.
- ◆ The joint Army-Air Force **operation brought over 5,000 Indians back from Nepal** by Air Force and civilian planes. **Hence, Pair 3 is correctly matched.**
  - The Indian army successfully evacuated 170 foreign nationals from the US, the UK, Russia and Germany.

● **Operation Safe Homecoming (2011):**

- ◆ India launched 'Operation Homecoming' to bring back **Indian citizens stranded in conflict-torn Libya**.
  - Under the operation, India evacuated 15,400 Indian nationals.
- ◆ The air-sea operation was conducted by the Indian Navy and Air India.

● **Operation Sukoon (2006):**

- ◆ As Israel and Lebanon broke into military conflict in July 2006, India rescued its stranded citizens by launching this operation, which is now famously known as the '**Beirut Sealift**'. Hence, **Pair 2 is not correctly matched**.
- ◆ It was the largest naval rescue mission since the 'Dunkirk' evacuation.
- ◆ The task force evacuated about 2,280 people including some Nepalese and Sri Lankan nationals between 19<sup>th</sup> July and 1<sup>st</sup> August 2006.

124. Ans: D

Exp:

**Genocide Convention:**

- The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) is an **instrument of international law that codified for the first time the crime of genocide**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
  - ◆ It signified the international community's commitment to 'never again' after the atrocities committed during the Second World War.
- The **Genocide Convention was the first human rights treaty adopted by the General Assembly of the UN on 9 December 1948**. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.
  - ◆ Its adoption marked a crucial step towards the development of international human rights and international criminal law as we know it today.
- According to the Genocide Convention, genocide is a crime that can take place both in time of war as well as in time of peace.
  - ◆ The definition of the crime of genocide, as set out in the Convention, has been widely adopted at both national and international levels, including in the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- Importantly, the Convention establishes on State Parties the obligation to take measures to prevent and to punish the crime of genocide, including by enacting relevant legislation and punishing perpetrators, "whether they are constitutionally responsible rulers, public officials or private individuals" (Article IV).

- ◆ That obligation, in addition to the prohibition not to commit genocide, have been considered as norms of international customary law and therefore, binding on all States, whether or not they have ratified the Genocide Convention.

- India is a signatory to this convention. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

125. Ans: C

Exp:

**Convention on Cluster Munitions:**

- It is a **United Nations-adopted legal instrument that prohibits all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
  - ◆ It establishes a framework for cooperation and assistance to ensure adequate assistance to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk reduction education and destruction of stockpiles.
- It was adopted in Dublin, Ireland in 2008, and was opened for signature in Oslo, Norway. It entered into force in 2010 after the requirement of 30 ratifications was complete.
  - ◆ Currently, the convention has 110 State Parties and 13 Signatory States.
- Countries that ratify the convention are obliged to never use cluster munitions, and also to never develop, produce, otherwise acquire, retain, stockpile or transfer to anyone cluster munitions.
- **India has not signed the convention and is not a party to it**. Other countries that are not parties are the US, Russia, China, Pakistan and Israel, among others. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.

126. Ans: A

Exp:

- To ensure national security by providing **ease of investigation** to Indian law enforcement agencies as they currently need to rely on **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) to obtain access to data**. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.
- MLATs are agreements between governments that facilitate the exchange of information relevant to an investigation happening in at least one of those countries.
- India has signed a **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT)** with 45 countries. Hence, **statement 2 is not correct**.

127. Ans: D

Exp:

Ashgabat Agreement:

- The aim of agreement is to establish an international multimodal transport and transit corridor **between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf**.
  - ◆ Its objective is to enhance connectivity within the Eurasian region and synchronise it with other regional transport corridors, including the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).
- The **Agreement was first signed by Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Oman, and Qatar on 25 April 2011**.
- **Qatar subsequently withdrew from the agreement in 2013**, Kazakhstan and Pakistan joined the grouping in 2016.
- The **Ashgabat Agreement came into force in April 2016**.
- **India joined the Ashgabat Agreement in 2018**.
- Hence, option D is correct.

128. Ans: (a)

Exp:

- A **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** is an agreement in which two or more countries agree to provide preferential trade terms, tariff concession, etc. to the partner country. Hence, pair 1 is correctly matched.
- A **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** partnership agreement or cooperation agreement is more comprehensive than an FTA.
  - ◆ CEPA covers negotiation on the trade in services and investment and other areas of economic partnership. Hence, pair 2 is not correctly matched.
- A **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)** generally covers negotiation on **trade tariffs and TRQ (Tariff Rate Quotas) rates only**. It is not as comprehensive as CEPA. Hence, pair 3 is not correctly matched.
- Hence, option (a) is correct

129. Ans: B

Exp:

India - Nepal Ties:

- **Historical:** Nepal is an important neighbour of India and occupies special significance in its foreign policy because of the geographic, historical, cultural and economic linkages/ties that span centuries.
  - ◆ The **India-Nepal Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950 forms the bedrock of the special relations**

that exist between India and Nepal. Hence, **statement 1 is correct**.

- ◆ India and Nepal share similar ties in terms of Hinduism and Buddhism with Buddha's birthplace Lumbini located in present day Nepal.
- **Trade and Economy:** India is Nepal's largest trade partner and the largest source of foreign investments, besides providing transit for almost the entire third country trade of Nepal.
  - ◆ Recently, the Prime Minister of Nepal visited India and held a summit meeting with the Indian Prime Minister. At the summit, India's RuPay card was launched in Nepal.
    - **Nepal is the fourth country**, after Bhutan, Singapore and the UAE, **where RuPay is live**. Hence, **statement 2 is correct**.
- **Cultural:** India has signed **three sister-city agreements** for twinning **Kathmandu-Varanasi, Lumbini-Bodhgaya and Janakpur-Ayodhya**. Hence, **statement 3 is not correct**.
  - ◆ A sister city or twin town relationship is a form of legal or social agreement between two geographically and politically distinct localities.

130. Ans: C

Exp:

Weapons of Mass Destruction:

- These are weapons with the **capacity to inflict death and destruction** on such a massive scale and so indiscriminately that its very presence in the hands of a hostile power can be considered a grievous threat.
- Modern weapons of mass destruction are either **nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons**—frequently referred to collectively as **NBC weapons**.
- The term weapons of mass destruction has been in currency **since at least 1937**, when it was used to describe **massed formations of bomber aircraft**.
  - ◆ For example, **Nuclear bombs used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki attack in Japan**.
- Efforts to control the spread of WMD are enshrined in international agreements such as:
  - ◆ Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty of 1968
  - ◆ Biological Weapons Convention of 1972
  - ◆ Chemical Weapons Convention of 1993. Hence **statement 1 is correct**.
- India has not signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, but is **signatory to both Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention**. Hence **statement 2 is correct**.



131. Ans: D

Exp:

**Financial Action Task Force**

- It is an inter-governmental body established in **1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris**.
- Assesses the strength of a country's **anti-money laundering and anti-terror financing** frameworks, however it does not go by individual cases.
- **Objectives:**
  - ◆ To set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for **combating money laundering, terrorist financing** and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.
  - ◆ Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- **Headquarters:**
  - ◆ Its Secretariat is located at the **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- **Member Countries:**
  - ◆ The FATF currently has **39 members including two regional organisations** - the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council. **India is a member of the FATF**. Hence, statement 3 is correct.

132. Ans: D

Exp:

- The G20 was formed in 1999 against the financial crisis of the late 1990s that hit East Asia and Southeast Asia. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- It aims to secure global financial stability by involving middle-income countries. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- Together, the G20 countries include 60% of the world's population, 80% of global GDP, and 75% of global trade. **Hence, statement 3 is not correct.**
- G-20 members are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and the EU. **Hence, statement 4 is not correct.**

133. Ans: B

Exp:

**Central Tibetan Relief Committee (CTRC):**

- It was launched in 2015. The main objective of the committee is to coordinate Individual, Voluntary Agencies and Indian Government's efforts to rehabilitate and settle Tibetan Refugees.

◆ CTRC includes **members from each of the 53 Tibetan settlements in India, Nepal and Bhutan**. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.

- It is dedicated to preserving the cultural and religious heritage of Tibet and building and maintaining sustainable, democratic communities in exile.
- CTRC is dependent on generous international assistance from governments, especially India, Nepal and Bhutan, philanthropic organisations and individuals.
- **All the CTRC activities are carried out with consent and support from the Board of Directors and approval from TPIE (Tibetan Parliament in Exile)**. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- The TPIE has its headquarters in Dharamsala, in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh according to which over 1 lakh Tibetans are settled across India.

134. Ans: A

Exp:

**Global Offshore Wind Alliance:**

- It was established to **ramp up offshore wind** in order to tackle the climate and energy security crises.
- It was set up by the **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)**, Denmark and the **Global Wind Energy Council**. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
  - ◆ GWEC was established in 2005 to **provide a credible and representative forum** for the entire wind energy sector at an international level.
- Several **organizations are supporting the alliance** and promoting offshore wind in their respective regions.
  - ◆ Both IRENA and the International Energy Agency (IEA) **expect that offshore wind capacity will need to exceed 2000 GW in 2050**, from just over 60 GW today, to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degree Celsius and achieve **net zero**.
  - ◆ To reach this target, **GOWA will aim to contribute to accelerating growth** to reach a total of at least 380 GW installed capacity by the end of 2030.
- Recently, nine new countries signed up for Global Offshore Wind Alliance at COP27.
- **Nine new countries:** Belgium, Colombia, Germany, Ireland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, the UK, and the US. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
- Australia announces to sign up with global offshore wind alliance.

135. Ans: A

Exp:

- Recently, the 8th Norway-India Joint Working Group Maritime meeting was held in Mumbai, India.



- The Nordic country is an elongated stretch of land on the western and the northern part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, west of Sweden.
  - ◆ Norway has land borders only to the east, with Sweden, Finland, and Russia.
- Hence, option A is correct.

136. Ans: A

Exp:

- The “No Money for Terror” conference was started in 2018, as an initiative of the French government, to specifically focus on cooperation between countries to choke terror funding. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- In 2019, the conference was held in Australia.
- It was to be held in India in 2020 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Recently, third ‘No Money for Terror’ (NMFT) Ministerial Conference of 2022 on Counter-Terrorism Financing was held in New Delhi, India. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.

137. Ans: C

Exp:

**International Organization of Securities Commission (IOSCO):**

- **Founded:** April 1983
- **Headquarters:** Madrid, Spain
- IOSCO Asia Pacific Hub is located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- **About:**
  - ◆ It is the international organisation that brings together the world’s securities regulators,

covering more than 95% of the world’s securities markets, and is the global standard setter for the securities sector. Hence statement 1 is correct.

- ◆ It works closely with the **G20 (Group of Twenty)** and the **Financial Stability Board (FSB)** in setting up the standards for strengthening the securities markets.
- ◆ The **IOSCO Board** is made up of 32 securities regulators. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), India is one of the members of the **IOSCO Board**. Hence statement 2 is correct.

138. Ans: A

Exp:

- With the establishment of the **World Trade Organization** on 1 January 1995, an agreement on the Application of **Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the “SPS Agreement”)** entered into force.
- **Sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS)** measures are quarantine and biosecurity measures which are applied to protect human, animal or plant life or health from risks arising from the introduction, establishment and spread of **pests and diseases** and from risks arising from **additives, toxins and contaminants in food and feed**. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- These measures are governed by the **World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement)**, and its **Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee)**. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.

139. Ans: D

Exp:

- The **Green Voyage 2050 Project** is a partnership project between the **Government of Norway and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO)** launched in May 2019 aiming to transform the shipping industry towards a lower carbon future. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- The global partnership is supporting developing countries, including Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), in meeting their commitment towards relevant climate change and energy efficiency goals, for international shipping, through supporting the Initial IMO Green House Gas (GHG) Strategy.
- One of the important aims of **Green Voyage2050** is to spur global efforts to demonstrate and test technology solutions. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.

140. Ans: C

Exp:

ADMM-Plus

● About:

- ◆ It is an **annual meeting of Defence Ministers of 10 ASEAN countries** and eight dialogue partner countries.
- ◆ The ADMM-Plus countries include **ten ASEAN Member States** (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia) and **eight Plus countries**, namely **Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and the United States**.

● Aim:

- ◆ It aims to **promote mutual trust and confidence between defence establishments** through greater dialogue and transparency.

● Areas of cooperation:

- ◆ Maritime security, counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peacekeeping operations, and military medicine.
- ◆ Hence, Option C is correct.

141. Ans: B

Exp:

● Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA):

- ◆ The deal is also known as 2015 Iran Nuclear Deal.
- ◆ The JCPOA was the result of prolonged negotiations from 2013 and 2015 between **Iran and P5+1 (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States + Germany)**. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
- ◆ Under the deal, Iran agreed to significantly cut its stores of centrifuges, enriched uranium and heavy-water, all key components for nuclear weapons.
- ◆ Iran also agreed to implement a protocol that would **allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to access its nuclear sites** to ensure Iran would not be able to develop nuclear weapons in secret. Hence, statement 2 is correct.
- ◆ While the West agreed to lift sanctions related to Iran's nuclear proliferation, other sanctions addressing alleged abuses of human rights and Iran's ballistic missile programme remained in place.

- ◆ The US committed to lifting sanctions on oil exports, but continued to restrict financial transactions, which have deterred international trade with Iran.
- ◆ Nonetheless, Iran's economy, after suffering years of recessions, currency depreciation, and inflation, stabilized significantly after the deal took effect, and its exports skyrocketed.
- ◆ After US abandoned the deal in 2018 and reinstated banking and oil sanctions, Iran ramped up its nuclear programme in earnest, returning to approximately 97% of its pre-2015 nuclear capabilities.

142. Ans: B

Exp:

International Solar Alliance (ISA):

● About:

- ◆ It was **Co-founded by the PM of India and the President of France** during 2015, the ISA is an action-oriented, member-driven, collaborative platform for increased deployment of solar energy technologies. Hence, statement 1 is not correct.
  - Its basic motive is to facilitate energy access, ensure energy security, and drive energy transition in its member countries.
- ◆ ISA is the nodal agency for implementing **One Sun One World One Grid (OSOWOG)**, which seeks to transfer solar power generated in one region to feed the electricity demands of others.

● Headquarters:

- ◆ The Headquarters is in India with its Interim Secretariat being set up in **Gurugram**.

● Member Nations:

- ◆ A total of 109 countries have signed the ISA Framework Agreement and 90 have ratified it.
- ◆ **All member states of the United Nations are eligible to join the ISA. Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

143. Ans: A

Exp:

- Recently, the groundbreaking ceremony was performed for the first-of-its-kind World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Centre for Traditional Medicine (GCTM) in **Jamnagar, Gujarat**.
- Additionally, the Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit will be held later this month in Gandhinagar which is aimed at increasing investments and showcase innovations in the field of traditional medicine.

- ◆ It is a unique attempt to foster long-lasting partnerships, boost exports and nurture a sustainable ecosystem.

● Hence, option A is correct.

144. Ans: B

Exp:

- The **US Secretary of State** (the minister primarily in charge of foreign relations) has the power to designate countries that "have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism" as "**State Sponsors of Terrorism**".
- The US can place four categories of sanctions on countries that are on this list:
  - ◆ Restrictions on US foreign assistance
  - ◆ A ban on defence exports and sales
  - ◆ Certain controls over exports of dual use items
  - ◆ Miscellaneous financial and other restrictions
  - ◆ Sanctions can also be placed on countries and persons that engage in certain trade with designated countries.
- **Countries on the List:**
  - ◆ As of now, there are four countries on the list of state sponsors of terrorism.
  - ◆ **Syria** (Designated on 29th December 1979)
  - ◆ **Iran** (Designated on 19th January 1984),
  - ◆ **North Korea** (Designated on 20th November 2017).
  - ◆ **Cuba** was re-designated as a state sponsor of terrorism on 12th January 2021
- Hence, option B is correct.

145. Ans: C

Exp:

- Recently, the fourth '2+2' dialogue between India and the United States took place in Washington DC, US. India's External Affairs and Defence Ministers meet with their American counterparts.
  - ◆ The **US is India's oldest** and most important 2+2 talks partner. Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
  - ◆ The first 2+2 dialogue between the two countries was held during the Trump Administration in 2018.
- The 2+2 Ministerial is the highest-level institutional mechanism between the India and the US.
  - ◆ It is a format of dialogue where the defence/foreign ministers or secretaries meet with their counterparts from another country.
- India has 2+2 dialogues with **four key strategic partners:** the **US, Australia, Japan, and Russia.** Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**

- ◆ Besides Russia, the other three countries are also India's partners in the Quad.

146. Ans: B

Exp:

India - Turkmenistan Relations:

- Turkmenistan is a Central-Asian country that **shares borders with Kazakhstan** in the north, **Uzbekistan** in the north and North-east, **Iran** in the South and **Afghanistan** in the Southeast. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct.**
- India's 'Connect Central Asia' policy 2012 envisages deeper mutual relations with the region and energy linkage is an important component of the policy.
  - ◆ India has joined the Ashgabat agreement, which envisages setting up of an international transport and transit corridor linking central Asia with the Persian Gulf to significantly ramp up trade and investment.
- India considers the **TAPI pipeline (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India)** a 'key pillar' in its economic relations with Turkmenistan. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**
- In 2015, Hindi Chair was established in Azadi Institute of World languages, Ashgabat where Hindi is being taught to university students.
- India provides training for Turkmen nationals under ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) programme.
- Turkmenistan **supports India's permanent position in the UN Security Council.** Hence, **statement 3 is correct.**
- Turkmenistan is a USD 40 billion plus economy, **but the bilateral trade with India is below its potential.** India can increase its economic presence in Turkmenistan, particularly in the Information and communication technologies (ICT) sector. This would help maintain the future balance of trade. Hence, **statement 4 is correct.**



147. Ans: B

Exp:

- The Prime Minister of Nepal visited India and held a summit meeting with the Indian Prime Minister. Highlights of the summit include:
  - ◆ Connectivity:
    - Launched the 35-km cross-border railway line linking Jaynagar in Bihar to Kurtha in Nepal.
    - This is the **first broad-gauge passenger rail link between the two sides** and it will be extended to Bardibas in Nepal under a project supported by an Indian grant of Rs 548 crore.
  - ◆ Solu Corridor:
    - The **Indian side handed over the Solu Corridor, a 90-km, 132 kV power transmission** line built for Rs 200 crore under an Indian line of credit.
    - The line will help bring electricity to several remote districts in northeastern Nepal by connecting them to the country's national grid.
  - ◆ RuPay card:
    - Launched India's RuPay card in Nepal.
    - The domestic variant of the RuPay card will now work at 1,400 point-of-sale machines in Nepal, and the move is expected to facilitate bilateral tourist flows.
    - **Nepal is the fourth country**, after Bhutan, Singapore and the UAE, where RuPay is live.
- Hence, option B is correct.

148. Ans: B

Exp:

- Mission Integrated Bio-refineries is Co-led by **India and the Netherlands**. Also involved are Brazil and Canada as core members, and the European Commission and the United Kingdom as supporting members. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- This is the sixth Mission launched by Mission Innovation, and joins initiatives focused on clean hydrogen, green power systems, net zero shipping, carbon dioxide removal and urban transitions.
- It will advance sustainable biorefining pathways and technologies to support the development and commercialization of bio-based fuels, chemicals and materials, by also considering process energy demands. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- This will support de-risking new and emerging technology, while improving the cost-competitiveness of bio-based alternatives, notably biofuels.

- The Mission unites a dynamic and results-oriented partnership of countries, international organisations, the corporate sector, academic institutions and civil society to accelerate innovation for renewable fuels, chemicals, and materials for a low- carbon future.
  - ◆ It will accelerate Clean Energy solutions through Public -Private Alliances.

149. Ans: A

Exp:

- The World Bank was created in 1944, as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IBRD later became the World Bank.
  - ◆ The World Bank Group is a unique global partnership of five institutions working for sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and build shared prosperity in developing countries.
- Members: It has 189 member countries. India is also a member country.
- Major reports:
  - ◆ Ease of Doing Business (Stopped publishing recently).
  - ◆ Human Capital Index.
  - ◆ World Development Report.
- Its Five development institutions:
  - ◆ **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**
    - India became a member of IBRD in December 1945.
  - ◆ **International Development Association (IDA)**
    - India one of the founding members of this concessional financing institution.
  - ◆ **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**
    - India is a founding member of IFC
  - ◆ **Multilateral Guarantee Agency (MIGA)**
    - India became a member of MIGA in January 1994
  - ◆ **International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)**
    - India is **not a member** of this.
- Hence, option A is correct.

150. Ans: B

Exp:

Cape Town Convention and Protocol:

- The Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment was concluded in Cape Town on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2001, as was the Protocol on **Matters Specific to Aircraft Equipment**.



- The Convention and the Protocol were adopted under the **joint auspices** of the **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** and the **International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)**.
- ICAO is a **United Nations (UN) specialized agency**, established in 1944, which laid the foundation for the standards and procedures for peaceful global air navigation. India is a member.
- Its objective is to **resolve the problem of obtaining certain and opposable rights to high-value aviation assets**, namely airframes, aircraft engines and helicopters which, by their nature, **have no fixed location**.
- This problem arises primarily from the fact that **legal systems have different approaches to lease agreements**, which **creates uncertainty for lending institutions regarding the efficacy of their rights**.
- This **hampers the provision of financing** for such aviation assets and increases the borrowing cost.
- **Hence, option B is correct.**

151. Ans: C

Exp:

- The CSC was formed in 2011 as a trilateral maritime security grouping of India, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.
- It welcomed Mauritius as a fourth member at the fifth meeting of national security advisers.
- Bangladesh and Seychelles attended as observers and have been invited to join the group. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The fifth meeting of national security advisers of the CSC identified key areas of cooperation to enhance and strengthen regional security in the following five pillars:
  - ◆ Maritime Safety and Security
  - ◆ Countering Terrorism and Radicalization
  - ◆ Combating Trafficking and Transnational Organized Crime
  - ◆ Cyber Security, Protection of Critical Infrastructure and Technology
  - ◆ Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
- **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

152. Ans: C

Exp:

**Food Safety and Standards Authority of India :**

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is an **autonomous statutory body** established under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 (FSS Act)**. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the administrative Ministry of FSSAI

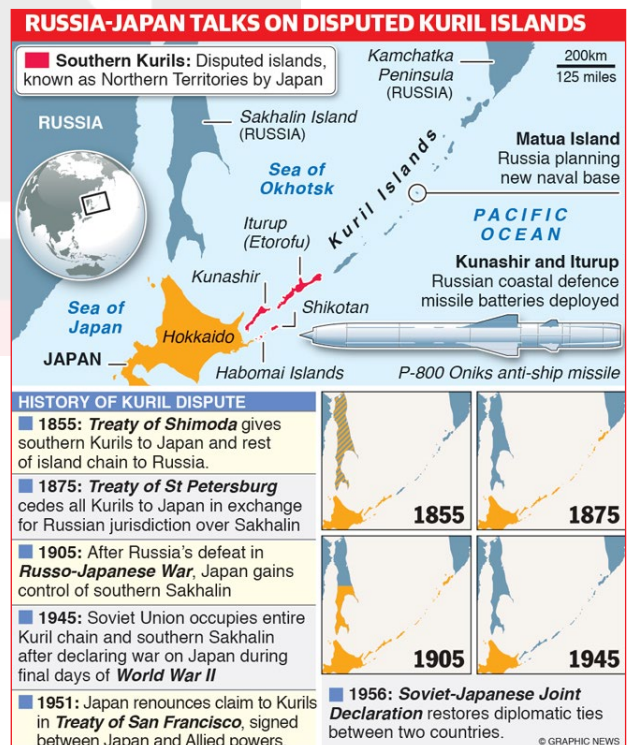
• Its major functions are:

- ◆ Framing of regulations to lay down the standards and guidelines of food safety.
- ◆ Granting FSSAI food safety license and certification for food businesses.
- ◆ Laying down procedure and guidelines for laboratories in food businesses.
- ◆ To provide **suggestions to the government in framing the policies**. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- ◆ To collect data regarding contaminants in foods products, identification of emerging risks and introduction of a rapid alert system.
- ◆ Creating an information network across the country about food safety.
- ◆ Promote general awareness about food safety and food standards.

153. Ans: A

Exp:

- The **Kuril Islands dispute between Japan and Russia** is over the sovereignty of South Kuril Islands.
  - ◆ The South Kuril Islands comprise Etorofu island, Kunashiri island, Shikotan island and the Habomai island.



- These islands are claimed by Japan but occupied by Russia as the successor state of the Soviet Union.
- **Hence, option A is correct.**

154. Ans: B

Exp:

- Recently, a new Global Security Initiative (GSI) was **put forward by the Chinese President**. The GSI looks to counter the **US Indo-Pacific strategy and the Quad (India, US, Australia, Japan grouping)**.
- GSI calls for a **“common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable” security** and building an Asian security model of mutual respect, openness and integration”.
- China held that the Global security initiative is envisaged to uphold the **principle of “indivisible security”**.
  - ◆ **The principle of “indivisible security” means that no country can strengthen its own security at the expense of others.**
- Hence, option B is correct.

155. Ans: B

Exp:

- The **US Secretary of State** (the minister primarily in charge of foreign relations) has the power to designate countries that “have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism” as **“State Sponsors of Terrorism”**.
- The US can place four categories of sanctions on countries that are on this list:
  - ◆ Restrictions on US foreign assistance
  - ◆ A ban on defence exports and sales
  - ◆ Certain controls over exports of dual use items
  - ◆ Miscellaneous financial and other restrictions
  - ◆ Sanctions can also be placed on countries and persons that engage in certain trade with designated countries.
- **Countries on the List:**
  - ◆ As of now, there are four countries on the list of state sponsors of terrorism.
  - ◆ **Syria** (Designated on 29th December 1979)
  - ◆ **Iran** (Designated on 19th January 1984),
  - ◆ **North Korea** (Designated on 20th November 2017).
  - ◆ **Cuba** was re-designated as a state sponsor of terrorism on 12th January 2021
- Hence, option B is correct.

156. Ans: B

Exp:

- BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world’s leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
  - ◆ In 2001, the **British Economist Jim O’Neill coined the term BRIC** to describe the **four emerging**

economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Hence, **statement 1 is not correct.**

- ◆ The grouping was formalised during the first meeting of BRIC Foreign Ministers’ in 2006.
- ◆ **South Africa was invited to join BRIC in December 2010**, after which the group adopted the acronym BRICS.
- The BRICS brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing 41% of the global population, 24% of the global GDP and 16% of the global trade.
- The chairmanship of the forum is rotated annually among the members, in accordance with the acronym B-R-I-C-S. India was the chair for 2021.
- During the **Sixth BRICS Summit in Fortaleza (Brazil) in 2014**, the leaders signed the Agreement **establishing the New Development Bank** (NDB - Shanghai, China). They also signed the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement to provide short-term liquidity support to the members. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**

157. Ans: C

Exp:

**New Development Bank (NDB):**

- It is a multilateral development bank jointly founded by the **BRICS countries** (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) at the **6th BRICS Summit** in Fortaleza, Brazil in 2014. Hence, **statement 1 is correct.**
  - ◆ NDB was formed to support infrastructure and sustainable development efforts in BRICS and other underserved, emerging economies for faster development through innovation and cutting-edge technology.
  - ◆ It is **headquartered in Shanghai, China.**
    - In 2018, the NDB received observer status in the United Nations General Assembly.
  - ◆ The five countries have **an equal vote** share and have pooled in the same amount of capital on inception. No member country has any veto power. Hence, **statement 2 is correct.**

158. Ans: D

Exp:

**East Asia Summit (EAS):**

- **About:**
  - ◆ Established in 2005, it is a **forum of 18 regional leaders for strategic dialogue** and cooperation on the key political, security, and economic challenges facing the Indo-Pacific region.

◆ The concept of an East Asia Grouping was first promoted in 1991 by the then Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.

◆ There are **six priority areas of regional cooperation** within the framework of the EAS.

○ These are – Environment and Energy, Education, Finance, Global Health Issues and Pandemic Diseases, Natural Disaster Management, and ASEAN Connectivity.

● **Membership:**

◆ It comprises the ten member states of the **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** which are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, along with 8 other countries namely Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the USA.

○ It is an ASEAN-centred forum so it **can only be chaired by an ASEAN member. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

○ Brunei Darussalam is the chair for 2021.

● **India and EAS:**

◆ India is **one of the founding members** of the East Asia Summit. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

◆ At the East Asia Summit in Bangkok in November 2019, India had unveiled India's **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI)**, which is aimed at forging partnerships to create a secure and stable maritime domain. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

159. Ans: B

Exp:

● The **Windsor framework is the latest attempt at a remedy to the political complexities** that have impacted trade and sentiments **between the EU and the UK.** It will **replace the Northern Ireland Protocol** - the thorniest of Brexit fallouts.

◆ The Windsor framework seeks to address the trade disruptions by permitting free trade between **Great Britain and Northern Ireland** through the (introduction of) use of green and red lanes for goods flowing into Northern Ireland. Green lane goods will have fewer checks and controls, including no customs checks or rules of origin. Red lane goods under the framework will be subject to full checks and controls to preserve the EU's single market.

● **Hence, option B is correct.**

160. Ans: D

Exp:

**World Wildlife Day:**

● **About:**

◆ World Wildlife Day has been **celebrated every year** on the **3<sup>rd</sup> of March since 2013.** **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

◆ The date chosen coincides with the day of the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** which was signed in 1973. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

◆ The **UNGA (General Assembly) resolution** also **designated the CITES Secretariat** as the facilitator for the global observance of this special day for wildlife on the **UN (United Nations) calendar.**

● **Theme:**

◆ The theme of this year is **'Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation'** which expanded into the conservation of marine life and oceans, and on collaborating with businesses and funding conservation activities. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

161. Ans: D

Exp:

● It has been published by **Global Public Policy Institute** as a part of a global time-series dataset (1900-2019) in close cooperation with **Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg**, Scholars at Risk and the V-Dem Institute.

● The report provides **an overview of academic freedom in 179 countries** by assessing five indicators. It is based on **assessments by more than 2,197 country experts from around the world.**

● The **indicators include,**

◆ Freedom to research and teach  
◆ Freedom of academic exchange and dissemination,  
◆ Institutional autonomy of universities  
◆ Campus integrity  
◆ The freedom of academic and cultural expression.

● The scores **are scaled from 0 (low) to 1 (high).** **Hence, option D is correct.**

162. Ans: A

Exp:

● The G20 was formed in 1999 in the backdrop of the financial crisis of the late 1990s that hit East Asia and Southeast Asia in particular.

● It aims to secure global financial stability by involving middle-income countries.



- Together, the G20 countries include 60 % of the world's population, 80 % of global GDP, and 75 % of global trade.
- The G20 comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, EU, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, UK and USA. **Hence, option A is correct.**

**163. Ans: A**

**Exp:**

- European Space Agency (ESA) wants to give the moon its own time zone. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is shooting for its first flight to the moon with astronauts in more than a half-century in 2024, with a lunar landing as early as 2025.
- For now, **a moon mission runs on the time of the country that is operating the spacecraft.** An internationally accepted lunar time zone would make it easier for everyone, especially since more governments and companies are aiming for the moon. **Hence, Option A is correct.**

**164. Ans: C**

**Expl:**

- An arm of the Arabian Sea; between the southwestern Iran and the Arabian Peninsula.
- Bordering Countries: Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Oman (Musandam exclave) and Iran. **Hence, option C is correct.**



**165. Ans: B**

**Expl:**

- The IBSA is a trilateral, developmental initiative between **India, Brazil and South Africa** to promote **South-South cooperation and exchange**. **Hence, statement 1 is not correct.**
- The grouping was formalised and named the **IBSA Dialogue Forum** when the Foreign Ministers of the three countries met in **Brasilia (Brazil)** on **6<sup>th</sup> June**

**2003** and issued the **Brasilia Declaration**. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

**166. Ans: D**

**Exp:**

- SCO is a permanent intergovernmental international organization created in 2001. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- The SCO is a regional intergovernmental organisation that promotes cooperation between its member states in the areas of security, economy, and culture. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002 and entered into force in 2003.
- India and Pakistan became members in 2017. **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**

**167. Ans: C**

**Exp.**

- Recently, Israel signed a free trade deal with the United Arab Emirates, its first with an Arab country, building on their US-brokered normalization of relations in 2020
- The UAE was the first Gulf country to normalize ties with Israel and only the third Arab nation to do so after Egypt and Jordan.
- Builds on the US-brokered Normalisation of Relations: The deal shows the durability of a series of diplomatic deals in 2020 known as the **Abraham Accords**, which **normalized relations between Israel and four Islamic countries—the U.A.E., Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan.**
- **Hence, option C is correct.**

**168. Ans: D**

**Exp:**

- Tri-Services exercise '**INDRA**' is a **joint training between Indian and Russian Armies** to jointly plan and conduct counter-terror operations under the UN mandate. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- **INS Vikramaditya is Russian in origin.** It is a former USSR carrier vessel and entered into service with the Indian Navy in 2013. Launched in the early 1980s. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The Rooppur project is the first initiative under an Indo-Russian deal to undertake atomic energy projects in Bangladesh. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- India and Russia have two Inter-Governmental Commissions – one on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (**IRIGC-TEC**), and another on Military-Technical Cooperation (**IRIGC-MTC**). **Hence, statement 4 is not correct.**
- **Therefore, (D) is the answer.**