

UPSC Prelims 2026 GS Paper-I: Detailed Answer Key & Solutions to All 100 Questions

Exam Updates · Study Notes · General Studies · GS I

The **UPSC Prelims 2026 answer key for General Studies Paper-I** is here. The **UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Examination 2026 (CSE 2026 Prelims)** was conducted by the Union Public Service Commission on **Sunday, 24 May 2026** from 09:30 to 11:30 IST across all centres in India. This page is the definitive **UPSC Prelims 2026 GS Paper-I answer key with detailed solutions** — covering all 100 questions of Series D (English) with the consensus correct option, full question text, all four options, and a 3–6 sentence explanation for every question.

Use this **UPSC Prelims answer key 2026** to calculate your expected score, validate your option choices, and review the reasoning behind each correct answer. Each solution explains WHY each statement is true or false, cites the source (NCERT, government reports, official websites), flags any contested options where coaching keys diverge, and highlights the trap UPSC set in the question. Whether you are checking your **UPSC CSE 2026 Prelims** performance, planning a Mains strategy, or building a question bank for the next attempt, this **UPSC 2026 Prelims GS Paper-1 answer key** is structured for fast lookup and deep review.

Note. Initial AnantamIAS analysis based on standard UPSC references, NCERTs, government data and cross-referenced coaching keys. UPSC's official answer key is released only after the final result of the CSE 2026 cycle (April-May 2027). For questions where multiple coaching keys disagree, we note the contested option. We will revise this page within 48 hours as more coaching keys appear.

Quick Answer Key — All 100 Questions

Compact 10×10 grid for instant lookup. Click any letter to scroll to that question's detailed explanation below.

Q range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1-10	D	A	C	B	B	C	A	D	D	B
11-20	D	A	C	B	B	A	D	A	C	C
21-30	A	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B	C
31-40	D	B	D	D	C	C	A	D	C	B
41-50	*	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	A	A
51-60	C	A	C	C	D	A	C	B	B	A
61-70	C	C	B	A	A	C	B	C	B	B
71-80	C	B	B	C	B	C	A	B	D	B
81-90	B	A	C	D	B	D	*	D	*	D
91-100	A	B	A	C	A	B	C	D	B	C

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New UPSC Prelims 2026 GS Paper-I_ Detailed Answer Key & Solutions to All 100 Questions — PDFDownload

Question-by-Question Detailed Solutions

Below: every UPSC 2026 GS Paper-I question with full text, all four options, the consensus correct answer, and a detailed explanation. Use the answer-key grid above to jump to a specific question.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 1

Consider the following assertion: In the Pleistocene period either the Yamuna once flowed into the Indus, or the Sutlej flowed into the Yamuna and one major tributary of either had shifted from the Ganga to the Indus or vice versa. Which of the following is/are the basis of the above assertion?

1. The Nadi-Sukta of the Rigveda
2. The explorations of the Sutlej and the Yamuna by Robert Bruce Foote
3. The presence of the same species of dolphins in both the Indus and the Ganga river systems

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 1 and 2
- d. 3

Answer: (d) 3

Explanation. The Pleistocene river-shifting hypothesis in the Indo-Gangetic plains rests primarily on biogeographic evidence — notably the presence of the **same species of freshwater dolphin (Platanista gangetica)** in both the Indus and Ganga systems, which suggests a former hydrological connection. The Nadi-Sukta of the Rigveda lists rivers but is a much later cultural document and does not establish Pleistocene drainage shifts. Robert Bruce Foote is famous for discovering the first Palaeolithic tool at Pallavaram (1863), not for Sutlej-Yamuna exploration. Hence only statement 3 is the basis. A classic trap: candidates over-trust the Nadi-Sukta because of its river content. (early consensus; verify with official UPSC key when released)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 2

What does an empty seat represent in early Buddhist iconography?

- a. The meditation of the Buddha
- b. The Buddha's First Sermon
- c. The Buddha's Mahaparinibbana
- d. The Buddha's Mahabhinishkramana

Answer: (a) The meditation of the Buddha

Explanation. In early aniconic Buddhist art (Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati, c. 2nd century BCE–1st century CE), the Buddha was never depicted in human form. Specific symbols stood for episodes: the **empty seat / vajrasana** represented his meditation and enlightenment, the **Dharmachakra** the First Sermon at Sarnath, the **stupa** the Mahaparinibbana, and a **horse without a rider** the Mahabhinishkramana

(Great Renunciation). NCERT Class XI *An Introduction to Indian Art* Chapter 4 lists these symbols. The trap is confusing the empty seat with Mahaparinibbana; the seat denotes meditation under the Bodhi tree.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 3

Which of the following pairs of ancient and modern names of rivers is/are correctly matched?

1. Vitasta : Chenab
2. Asikni : Jhelum
3. Parushni : Ravi
4. Yavyavati : Beas

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 3 and 4
- c. 3 only
- d. 4 only

Answer: (c) 3 only

Explanation. The Rigvedic Nadi-Sukta names of Punjab's rivers map as: **Vitasta = Jhelum, Asikni = Chenab, Parushni = Ravi, Vipasa = Beas, Shutudri = Sutlej.** Yavyavati is generally identified with the Zhob (or sometimes the Ravi), not the Beas. Therefore only pair 3 (Parushni : Ravi) is correctly matched. Pairs 1 and 2 swap Jhelum and Chenab — a very common trap because both rivers begin with similar consonants in Sanskrit. This is staple Ancient History material from R.S. Sharma's *India's Ancient Past* and NCERT Class VI.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 4

Which of the following statements on the Amaravati Stupa and its relief sculpture is/are correct?

1. It was located in the lower Krishna valley.

2. In India, it was next only to the Sanchi Stupa in size.
3. The Amaravati school of sculpture made a lasting impact on the later South Indian sculpture, and its products were carried to Sri Lanka and South-east Asia.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation. The Amaravati Mahachaitya stood in the **lower Krishna valley** in present-day Andhra Pradesh and flourished under the Satavahanas and later Ikshvakus. Its limestone reliefs profoundly influenced South Indian and Sri Lankan (Anuradhapura) sculpture, and the style spread to South-East Asia (Dvaravati, Sumatra). However, Amaravati was the **largest stupa in India**, larger than Sanchi (not second to it) — so statement 2 is wrong. Hence 1 and 3 only. This is from NCERT XI Fine Arts, Chapter 4. The trap is the size comparison: Sanchi is more famous but Amaravati was bigger.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 5

Which of the following pairs of the king and his dynasty in early historical Tamilakam is/are not correctly matched?

1. Senguttuvan : Chera
2. Udiyanjeral : Chola
3. Nedunjelidan : Pandya

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 2 only
- c. 1 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 2 only

Explanation. In Sangam-age Tamilakam, **Senguttuvan** (the hero of Silappadikaram, who installed the Pattini cult) belonged to the **Cheras**; **Udiyanjeral** was also a famous **Chera** king (not Chola) celebrated for feeding both armies at Kurukshetra in Purananuru; **Nedunjeliyan** (victor of Talaiyalanganam) was a **Pandya**. Therefore only pair 2 is incorrectly matched. The Chola line of this era includes Karikala (Battle of Venni). The trap is the similar-sounding 'Udiyanjeral' — the 'jeral/cheral' suffix itself signals Chera lineage.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 6

Which of the following factors contributed to the formation of the Forward Bloc by Subhas Chandra Bose in 1939?

1. Bose failed to win the confidence of Mahatma Gandhi.
2. The Congress Left was disunited and failed to support Bose.
3. The Communists did not support Bose in his endeavours.
4. The supporters of M. N. Roy and socialist leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan preferred Congress unity to supporting Bose.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 1, 2 and 4
- c. 1, 3 and 4
- d. 2 and 4 only

Answer: (c) 1, 3 and 4

Explanation. Bipan Chandra's *India's Struggle for Independence* (Ch. 22) explains the 1939 Tripuri crisis: after Bose's re-election as Congress President, Gandhi withdrew confidence; the **Communists, M.N. Roy's followers, and socialists like JP and Narendra Dev preferred Congress unity** over backing Bose against Gandhi, leaving Bose isolated and forcing him to resign and float the Forward Bloc. Statement 2 is wrong because the Congress Left as a whole was actually disunited

but the specific reason listed is the non-support of Communists and Roy/JP — not ‘Left disunity’ per se. Hence 1, 3 and 4. (early consensus; verify with official UPSC key when released)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 7

Consider the following statements regarding the British policy in Awadh immediately after its annexation in 1856:

1. The taluqdars were dispossessed of their estates but allowed to retain their arms and forts.
2. A Summary Revenue Settlement was made in 1856 assuming that the taluqdars were outsiders.
3. The British believed in taking revenue directly from the peasants by removing the taluqdars.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 2 and 3 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. 2 only

Answer: (a) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. After Dalhousie’s annexation of Awadh (Feb 1856) on grounds of misgovernance, the British launched a **Summary Settlement of 1856** assuming taluqdars were ‘interlopers’ with no roots — and proceeded to settle revenue directly with village zamindars/peasants, dispossessing taluqdars of more than half their villages. Crucially, the taluqdars were **also disarmed and their forts demolished**, which is why statement 1 is wrong (arms and forts were NOT retained — this fuelled the 1857 revolt in Awadh). Hence 2 and 3 only. Source: Bipan Chandra, *India’s Struggle for Independence*, chapter on 1857.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 8

Consider the following assertion: The genesis of political alliances based on community lay in the very nature of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, 1919. Which of the following statements support/supports the above assertion?

1. Reforms retained and extended the principle of separate electorates.
2. Separate electorates were supposed to counter Indian nationalism, which was growing stronger.
3. Deprived classes rallied around the favours inherent in separate electorates.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms / Government of India Act 1919 **retained and extended separate electorates** (originally given to Muslims in 1909) to Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Europeans and Indian Christians. The British rationale was explicitly to **counter the rising tide of Indian nationalism** by institutionalising communal divisions; and **depressed/deprived classes** later rallied to separate representation (culminating in the Poona Pact debate). All three statements support the assertion that communal political alliances were embedded in the very design of the 1919 reforms. Bipan Chandra discusses this in the chapter on the rise of communalism.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 9

Pandit Mallikarjun Mansur, the famous classical singer from Karnataka, represented the:

- a. Agra Gharana
- b. Gwalior Gharana
- c. Patiala Gharana
- d. Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Answer: (d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Explanation. Pandit **Mallikarjun Mansur** (1910–1992, Padma Vibhushan 1992) was the foremost twentieth-century exponent of the **Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana**, founded by Ustad Alladiya Khan. Although born in Karnataka, his musical lineage was Jaipur-Atrauli through his guru Manji Khan and later Bhurji Khan (Alladiya Khan’s sons). The trap is geographic — candidates assume a Karnataka singer must belong to a Carnatic tradition or to Gwalior (the oldest Hindustani gharana). The Agra and Patiala gharanas have other famous exponents (Faiyaz Khan; Bade Ghulam Ali Khan).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 10

In which one among the following texts does the term *kshetra-patni* (‘mistress of the field’) originate?

- a. Rigveda
- b. Atharvaveda
- c. Ashtadhyayi
- d. Arthashastra

Answer: (b) Atharvaveda

Explanation. The term **kshetra-patni** (‘mistress/lady of the field’), invoked in agrarian/fertility rituals, occurs in the **Atharvaveda**, which is the Vedic text most concerned with agriculture, healing, magic and household ritual. The Rigveda is overwhelmingly hymnic/cosmological; Panini’s *Ashtadhyayi* is a grammar; Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* is a political-economic treatise. R.S. Sharma’s *Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India* cites this Atharvavedic reference while discussing women’s relation to land. (early consensus; verify with official UPSC key when released). Read more: *Kshetra-patni in the Atharvaveda: The ‘Mistress of the Field’ and Vedic Agricultural Ritual*.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 11

Which one of the following Carnatic music ragas is similar to Raga Bilawal in Hindustani music?

- a. Nat Bhairavi
- b. Kamavardhini
- c. Hanumatodi
- d. Dheera Shankarabharanam

Answer: (d) Dheera Shankarabharanam

Explanation. Among the 72 Melakarta ragas of Carnatic music, **Dheera Shankarabharanam (29th Melakarta)** uses all the natural (shuddha) swaras — S R2 G3 M1 P D2 N3 — exactly corresponding to the Western major scale and to the Hindustani **Raga Bilawal**, which is the *shuddha-swara* thaat. Hanumatodi corresponds to Bhairavi, Kamavardhini to Puriya Dhanashri, and Nat Bhairavi to Asavari/Kafi. NCERT XI Fine Arts and standard music-appreciation references both make this Bilawal ↔ Shankarabharanam parallel canonical.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 12

The artificially fixed rupee-sterling exchange rate prescribed by the Hilton-Young Commission (1926) was adopted by the British Government for which one of the following reasons?

- a. Aiding the flow of remittances from India and maintaining India's creditworthiness
- b. Providing support to Indian importers
- c. Encouraging export of cotton produce from India
- d. Preventing depreciation of the Rupee in terms of gold

Answer: (a) Aiding the flow of remittances from India and maintaining India's creditworthiness

Explanation. The **Hilton-Young Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance (1926)** recommended a gold-bullion standard pegging the rupee at 1s 6d sterling — an artificially high rate which the British adopted primarily to **facilitate the smooth remittance of 'Home Charges'** (pensions, debt service, civil and

military payments) to Britain and to safeguard India's creditworthiness in London. The over-valued rupee actually hurt Indian exporters (especially cotton) and helped Lancashire imports, so options (b) and (c) are wrong. Bipan Chandra's *India's Struggle for Independence* and *India Since Independence* both note this drain-of-wealth dimension.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 13

Consider the following statements: I. Pali texts contain the first definite references to coins, e.g., kahapana, nikkha, kamsa, and kakanika. II. The literary evidence from Pali texts is corroborated by archaeological evidence of punch-marked coins from many sites, most of them made of silver. The above statements have been associated with which of the following?

1. Emergence of urban life
2. Transition to money economy

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation. The references in Pali canonical literature to coins like **kahapana, nikkha, kamsa and kakanika**, corroborated by the archaeological recovery of large hoards of **silver punch-marked coins** (e.g., Golakhpur, Paila, Taxila), are cited by historians like R.S. Sharma and Romila Thapar as twin evidence of two parallel processes in c. 6th century BCE northern India: the **Second Urbanisation** (rise of mahajanapada cities) and the **transition from a barter/cattle-wealth economy to a money economy**. Both 1 and 2 are therefore correct. NCERT XII *Themes in Indian History* Theme 2 ('Kings, Farmers and Towns') uses this evidence.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 14

Which of the following temples has/have a Nagara-style shikhara?

1. Malegitti Shivalaya, Badami
2. Huchimalligudi Temple, Aihole
3. Dashavatara Temple, Deogarh
4. Virupaksha Temple, Pattadakal

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 2 and 3
- c. 3 only
- d. 3 and 4

Answer: (b) 2 and 3

Explanation. Nagara shikhara = the curvilinear (rekha-prasada) north-Indian tower. Among the four temples, BOTH the **Huchimalligudi Temple at Aihole** and the **Dashavatara Temple at Deogarh** bear Nagara-style shikharas. The Huchimalligudi (late 6th–early 7th century, Early Chalukyan) is in fact the only Aihole temple with a north-Indian rekhanagara shikhara, and it is notable for introducing the shukanasa (vestibule projection) — a distinctive Nagara feature. The Dashavatara Temple at Deogarh (early 6th century, Gupta) is the earliest surviving Nagara shikhara. The Malegitti Shivalaya at Badami and the Virupaksha Temple at Pattadakal are both Dravida (pyramidal vimana) in style. Hence statements 2 and 3 are correct — answer (b). Source: Wikipedia/ASI on Aihole temples; NCERT XI Fine Arts Ch. 6.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 15

Among the four main forms of existence of life recognized in Jainism, which one of the following is not included?

- a. Deva (gods)
- b. Yaksha (demi-gods)
- c. Manushya (humans)
- d. Tiryancha (animals and plants)

Answer: (b) Yaksha (demi-gods)

Explanation. Jain cosmology recognises four *gatis* (forms of existence) in which the soul transmigrates: **Deva (gods), Manushya (humans), Tiryancha (animals and plants), and Naraki (hell-beings).** **Yaksha (demi-gods)** is not a separate *gati*; yakshas are sub-classes of devas. The trap is plausibility — yakshas figure prominently in Jain (and Buddhist) iconography as attendant deities of Tirthankaras, so unprepared candidates assume they form a separate category. Reference: A.L. Basham, *The Wonder That Was India*, chapter on Jainism.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 16

The Hallisalasya painting in the Bagh Caves represents:

- a. A joyous folk dance
- b. Buddha in a meditative pose
- c. The depiction of Shiva and Parvati on Kailasha
- d. Samudramanthan (Churning of the Ocean)

Answer: (a) A joyous folk dance

Explanation. The **Bagh Caves** in Madhya Pradesh (5th–6th century CE) are Buddhist rock-cut viharas famous for mural paintings stylistically akin to Ajanta. The celebrated mural in Cave 4 (Rang Mahal) depicting a circle of dancers and musicians is identified as a **Hallisa-lasya** — a **joyous folk/group dance** traditionally associated in Sanskrit dramaturgy with the gopis. NCERT XI Fine Arts (Chapter on Indian Paintings) notes it as a rare secular dance scene in Indian mural art. The trap is reading ‘Hallisa’ as a Krishna-Radha icon (Rasa-mandala); here it’s the dance form itself. Read more: Bagh Caves and the Hallisalasya Painting: A Folk Dance in Buddhist Fresco.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 17

Consider the following statements relating to the use of the place-value system in India:

1. The earliest epigraphic use of the place-value system in India is found in the Mankani plates from Gujarat (AD 595 – 596).
2. In the ninth century, place-values become general in inscriptions all over India.
3. The place-values have been found in Sanskrit inscriptions in South-east Asia as early as the seventh century.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (d) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation. All three statements are historically established. The **Mankani copper plates of Taralavamin (Gujarat, AD 595–596)** contain the earliest unambiguous epigraphic use of the decimal place-value system in India. By the **9th century**, place-value notation had become general across Indian inscriptions. Independently, **Sanskrit inscriptions in South-East Asia** (notably the Sambor inscription of Cambodia, 683 CE, and the Old Malay inscriptions of Sumatra) show place-value numerals in the **7th century** — even slightly earlier than its generalisation in India. Source: Bibhutibhushan Datta and A.N. Singh, *History of Hindu Mathematics*. Read more: Place-Value System in India: From the Mankani Plates to the Decimal World.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I • QUESTION 18

Consider the following statements about the archaeological findings in Harappan towns: I. There is wide occurrence of spindle-whorls in the houses but absence of spinning wheels. II. Weights and measurement scales, complete with graduations, have been discovered. III. There are houses built in large part with baked bricks, around relatively spacious courtyards, with their own wells, bathing platforms, and large rooms. Which of the following inferences can be drawn from the above statements?

1. Statement I suggests that spinning was a laborious activity done at home.

2. Statement II suggests the extent of the scientific knowledge that the Harappans possessed.
3. Statement III suggests the emergence of a common property system.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. Spindle-whorls without spinning wheels point to **hand-spindle spinning done laboriously in households** (inference 1 valid). The graduated weights and measurement scales from Lothal, Mohenjo-daro and Harappa show systematic standardisation reflecting **scientific/technical knowledge** (inference 2 valid). However, the existence of well-built houses with **private wells and bathing platforms** indicates **private property and differentiated household wealth**, NOT a common-property system — so inference 3 is wrong. Hence 1 and 2 only. Source: Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India*, chapter on the Harappans. Read more: Harappan Archaeological Findings: Spindle-Whorls, Weights and Baked-Brick Houses.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 19

Which one of the following statements about the Eka Movement and Bardoli Satyagraha is correct?

- a. The Eka Movement was throughout supported and organized by the Congress while Bardoli Satyagraha was initially independent of Congress influence and was only in the last stages supported by the Congress.
- b. The Eka Movement was provided leadership by the taluqdars of Awadh, whereas the Bardoli Satyagraha was a movement of the landless labourers.
- c. The Bardoli Satyagraha was a campaign against the enhancement of land revenue, while the Eka Movement was a protest against excessive extraction of rents.

d. The Eka Movement was located in the Varanasi and Mirzapur districts of the present-day U.P., while the Bardoli Satyagraha took place in Saurashtra.

Answer: (c) The Bardoli Satyagraha was a campaign against the enhancement of land revenue, while the Eka Movement was a protest against excessive extraction of rents.

Explanation. The Eka (Unity) Movement of 1921–22 in Hardoi, Bahraich, Sitapur and Barabanki districts of Awadh (not Varanasi/Mirzapur) was a peasant agitation, led initially by Madari Pasi, against excessive rent extraction (rents 50% above recorded rates), forced labour and share-rents. The Bardoli Satyagraha (1928) in Surat district under Vallabhbhai Patel was a no-tax campaign against a 22% (later 30%) enhancement of land revenue. Option (c) captures this contrast accurately. Source: Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence*.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 20

Consider the following statements about the Rigvedic period: I. Irrigation from wells allowed agriculture to expand away from flood plains and strips on river margins into the present Punjab and Haryana plains having underground water levels reasonably close to the surface. II. Draught-animal power was employed to draw up water out of the wells. Which of the following information support/supports the above statements?

1. There is evidence in the Rigveda of the use of ashma chakra (stone pulley wheel) and ahava (strapped wooden pails) to draw up water.
2. Mention has been made in the Rigveda of the use of implements like parashu/kulisha (axe) and datra/sreni (sickle).
3. There is a history of the use of ox, even before the Rigveda, for ploughing the land and pulling the carts.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1, 2 and 3
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 3 only

Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Explanation. Statement I (well-irrigation enabling agrarian expansion into Punjab-Haryana doab) and Statement II (use of draught animals to lift water) are best supported by the Rigvedic references to the **ashma-chakra (stone pulley)** and **ahava (leather/wooden water-bucket)** for drawing water from wells, AND by the well-attested pre-Rigvedic use of **oxen for ploughing and pulling carts**, which would have supplied the draught-animal power for water-lifting. Statement 2 in the list refers only to axes and sickles — harvesting implements that do not bear on irrigation. Hence 1 and 3 only. (early consensus; verify with official UPSC key when released)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 21

Tungurahua Volcano, which was declared a Global Geopark by UNESCO in 2025, is situated in which one among the following countries?

- a. Ecuador
- b. Peru
- c. Bolivia
- d. Colombia

Answer: (a) Ecuador

Explanation. **Tungurahua** ('Throat of Fire' in Quechua) is an active stratovolcano in the Cordillera Oriental of the Andes, located in **Ecuador**, about 140 km south of Quito. The Tungurahua Volcano and its surrounding landscape were inscribed as a **UNESCO Global Geopark in 2025**, joining Ecuador's earlier Imbabura Geopark. The trap is confusing Andean volcanoes — Cotopaxi and Chimborazo are also Ecuadorian; Misti is in Peru; Sajama in Bolivia; Nevado del Ruiz in Colombia. Tungurahua's last major eruptive cycle ran 1999–2016.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 22

With reference to Madhav National Park, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It was declared a Tiger Reserve in India in 2025.
2. Sakhya Sagar, which is designated as a Ramsar Site, is situated within this National Park.
3. Its area is shared between Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 2

Explanation. Madhav National Park lies in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh (entirely within MP — not shared with Rajasthan), so statement 3 is wrong. It was notified as India's **58th Tiger Reserve in 2025**, making statement 1 correct. The park encloses two lakes — **Sakhya Sagar and Madhav Sagar** — of which **Sakhya Sagar was designated a Ramsar Site in 2022**, making statement 2 correct. Hence 1 and 2 only. The trap is the shared-state confusion with Ranthambore/Kuno; Madhav is wholly in Madhya Pradesh.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 23

With reference to the climate of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The climate can be defined as a humid, tropical coastal climate.
2. It receives rainfall from both South-west monsoon and North-east monsoon.
3. Maximum precipitation is between December and May.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 2

Explanation. The Andaman & Nicobar Islands have a **humid tropical maritime/coastal climate** with little annual temperature range (24–30 °C). Their position in the Bay of Bengal exposes them to **both the South-West monsoon (May–September) and the retreating North-East monsoon (October–December)**, giving 3000+ mm of rain. **Maximum precipitation occurs between May and December**, not December–May — so statement 3 is wrong. Hence 1 and 2 only. Source: NCERT Class XI *India: Physical Environment*, chapter on climate. Trap: candidates flip the wet/dry months.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 24

Which of the following geographical features or phenomena is/are associated with the Peninsular Block of India?

1. Submergence of parts of the western coast due to tectonic activity
2. Presence of residual mountain ranges such as the Veliconda hills and Mahendragiri hills
3. Deep, V-shaped river valleys formed by fast-flowing rivers

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 2

Explanation. The Peninsular Block, one of India's three macro physiographic divisions, is characterised by: **(1) submergence of parts of the western coast** (the Konkan-Malabar submerged coast, evidenced by drowned river mouths and offshore islands due to faulting); **(2) residual mountain ranges** such as the Aravallis, Nallamala, **Velikonda and Mahendragiri hills**, which are remnants of older folded systems. However, **deep V-shaped valleys with fast-flowing rivers** are characteristic of the youthful Himalayan rivers, not the mature, graded

peninsular rivers (which mostly flow in shallow valleys). Hence 1 and 2 only.
NCERT XI India: *Physical Environment*, Ch. 2. Read more: Himalaya Mountain: Formation, Ranges, Rivers, Passes and UPSC Notes.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 25

Consider the following statements with reference to the Sagarmala Programme of the Government of India: I. The Sagarmala Programme seeks to achieve port-led economic growth through cost-effective and sustainable coastal infrastructure. II. The success of the Sagarmala Programme is reflected in significant growth in coastal and inland waterway shipping, along with improved global port rankings. III. Sagarmala 2.0 aims to position India as a global maritime innovation hub aligned with Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047 visions. Which of the following relationships among the above statements is/are correct?

1. Statement II validates the effectiveness of the strategies envisioned in statement I.
2. Statement III extends the objectives of statement I by embedding them into a future-oriented innovation framework.
3. Statement I contradicts statement III by focusing only on traditional infrastructure instead of modern innovation.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 2

Explanation. The **Sagarmala Programme** (launched 2015 by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways) explicitly aims at **port-led economic growth** through port modernisation, connectivity, port-linked industrialisation and coastal community development — so Statement I is accurately framed, and the documented growth in coastal/inland-waterway traffic plus India’s improved global port performance (Logistics Performance Index, container port rankings) validates this — making Statement II a correct extension of I. **Sagarmala 2.0** indeed embeds

the original mission into an innovation/Atmanirbhar-Viksit-Bharat-2047 framework — extending, not contradicting, Statement I. So relationships 1 and 2 are correct; 3 is wrong. Hence (b).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 26

Consider the following statements about *Rhynchostylis retusa* (Foxtail orchid):

1. It is an epiphytic orchid.
2. The species is endemic to North-east India.
3. It is the State flower of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 3

Explanation. *Rhynchostylis retusa*, the Foxtail orchid (Kopou phul in Assamese), is an epiphytic orchid that grows on tree trunks, so statement 1 is correct. It is NOT endemic to North-east India — it is widely distributed across South and Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and southern China — making statement 2 wrong. Multiple authoritative sources (Wikipedia, Indian Tree Pix, regional government notifications) confirm *Rhynchostylis retusa* is the State flower of BOTH Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, validating statement 3. Hence statements 1 and 3 are correct.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 27

Which one of the following statements with regard to the Moidams, built by the Tai-Ahom kingdom and inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, is/are correct?

1. They acted as army fortresses.

2. They were recreation centres of the Royals and Nobles.
3. They were burial grounds of the Royals and Nobles.
4. They were battle drill centres of the Royals and Nobles.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3
- c. 3 only
- d. 2 and 4

Answer: (c) 3 only

Explanation. Moidams are the mound-burial system of the Tai-Ahom dynasty of Assam, located at Charaideo, and were inscribed as India's 43rd UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2024 (46th session, New Delhi). They served as burial grounds (tumuli) of Ahom royalty and nobility — hollow vaults housing the body of the king along with belongings and sometimes attendants — and reflect ancestor worship and the Tai cosmology. They were never army fortresses, recreation centres, or battle drill grounds, ruling out statements 1, 2 and 4. Only statement 3 is correct, giving option (c).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 28

At the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) held in June, 2025 in France, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations demonstrated its leading voice on marine and ocean issues, especially on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for resilient livelihood and “Blue Transformation”. Which of the following combinations about the “Four Betters” proposed by FAO for “Blue Transformation” is correct?

- a. Better production, better nutrition, better environment and better ocean
- b. Better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life
- c. Better coral reefs, better nutrition, better environment and better life
- d. Better estuaries, better nutrition, better environment and better mangrove vegetation

Answer: (b) Better production, better nutrition, better environment and better life

Explanation. FAO's flagship 'Blue Transformation' roadmap (2022-2030), reiterated at UNOC-3 in Nice, June 2025, advances the Four Betters — Better Production, Better Nutrition, Better Environment and Better Life — which are FAO's overarching Strategic Framework pillars applied to aquatic food systems. The framework promotes sustainable aquaculture expansion, effective fisheries management and upgraded value chains to ensure resilient blue food livelihoods. 'Better ocean', 'better coral reefs', 'better estuaries' and 'better mangroves' are not part of FAO's official four-pronged framing, eliminating (a), (c) and (d).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 29

Which of the following statements with reference to Lake Turkana is/are correct?

1. It is the largest desert lake in the world.
2. The lake is situated in South Sudan along the eastern fringe of the Sahara desert.
3. The lake is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is also referred to as the 'Jade Sea'.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation. Lake Turkana is the world's largest permanent desert lake and the largest alkaline lake, located in northern Kenya (not South Sudan) with its northern tip extending into Ethiopia — so statement 2 is incorrect. It is famously called the 'Jade Sea' due to the blue-green algae that colour its waters, and its national parks

(Sibilo, Central Island, South Island) form a UNESCO World Heritage Site inscribed in 1997 (and on the List in Danger since 2018). Statements 1 and 3 are correct; only the geographical location in statement 2 is the trap.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 30

Which one of the following is the first Plan Vivo certified Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) project in India?

- a. Uttarakhand REDD+ project
- b. ICFRE-ICIMOD Transboundary REDD+ project in North-Eastern Himalayas
- c. Khasi Hills Community REDD+ project
- d. Sikkim Mamley Kamrang Community REDD+ project

Answer: (c) Khasi Hills Community REDD+ project

Explanation. The Khasi Hills Community REDD+ Project in Meghalaya, implemented by the Ka Synjuk Ki Hima Arliang Wah Umiam Mawphlang Welfare Society in partnership with Community Forestry International, became India's first Plan Vivo-certified REDD+ initiative (validated 2013). It covers community-managed sacred groves and forests across ten Khasi himas, generating verified carbon credits while strengthening customary forest governance. The Sikkim Mamley-Kamrang project came later as a second community REDD+ effort, and the ICFRE-ICIMOD transboundary work is a research initiative, not Plan Vivo certified.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 31

Consider the following statements with reference to India's response to climate change:

- I. India's Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) is a crucial tool for achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.
- II. India's 4th Biennial Update Report (BUR-4) submitted in December, 2024 recorded around 8% decrease in Greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 over 2019.

III. Climate-resilient development necessarily depends on quick and short-term achievement of emission reduction targets.

Which of the following relationships among the above statements is/are correct?

1. Statement I is empirically supported by statement II.
2. Statement III contradicts the approach implicit in statement I.
3. Statement I and statement III together establish the premise of long-term sustainability.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (d) 3 only

Explanation. Climate-resilient development is a long-term, adaptive, equity-centred pathway — it does NOT necessarily depend on short-term emission reduction targets, so as stated in Statement III, the proposition is incorrect on its own terms; however, the question asks about logical relations.

Statement I (LT-LEDS as a tool for 2070 net-zero) reflects a long-horizon approach that is directly contradicted by Statement III's insistence on quick short-term cuts. Statement II's 7.93% emissions decline in 2020 (largely COVID-driven) does not empirically validate I.

- Statement II is factually correct due to COVID-19, but not a forward looking factor, but it does not empirically support Statement I.
- Statement III does not contradict Statement I because long-term net-zero planning and short-term emission reduction are complementary. Together, Statement I and Statement III establish the premise that long-term sustainability requires both a long-term pathway and near-term mitigation action. **Hence, only relationship 3 is correct.**

Hence only relation 3 holds. Read more: [India's LT-LEDS and Climate Strategy: Why Net-Zero by 2070 Needs a Long Horizon.](#)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 32

With respect to the Western Hoolock Gibbons, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. A Sanctuary in North-east India is home to this ape species listed as Endangered in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
2. They have specialized brachiation and can easily swing between trees.
3. They possess a strong and heavy build like gorillas, yet are remarkably agile tree climbers.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 2

Explanation. The Western Hoolock Gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*) is found in the Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary of Assam and other NE forests, and is listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, validating statement 1. Gibbons are the supreme brachiators of the primate world — their elongated forelimbs and ball-and-socket wrists let them swing through canopies at high speed, confirming statement 2. They are small, lightweight lesser apes (6–9 kg), nothing like the heavy-built gorillas of statement 3, which is therefore wrong. Answer: 1 and 2 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 33

Which of the following best explain(s) the rationale for protecting mangrove ecosystems in the context of climate resilience?

1. Mangroves reduce tidal energy and store freshwater, making them ideal sites for paddy cultivation in saline estuarine belts.
2. Their salt-sensitive roots filter seawater, making mangroves key to converting coastal land into freshwater aquaculture zones.

3. By withstanding tidal surges and offering biomass resources, mangroves function both as natural bio-shields and livelihood bases for rural communities.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (d) 3 only

Explanation. Mangroves are halophytes adapted to saline tidal mudflats; their pneumatophores and stilt roots dissipate wave and tidal energy and trap sediment, but they neither store fresh water nor make sites suitable for paddy, so statement 1 is wrong. Their roots tolerate, not ‘filter out’, salt to create freshwater aquaculture zones — statement 2 is a misconception. Statement 3 correctly captures the dual climate-resilience rationale: mangroves serve as natural bio-shields against cyclones and tidal surges (as proven during the 1999 Odisha super-cyclone and 2004 tsunami) and provide fuelwood, honey, fisheries and ecotourism livelihoods. Hence only 3 is correct.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 34

In what way(s) does the Vizhinjam International Seaport represent a structural shift in India’s maritime trade and logistics policy?

1. By functioning exclusively as a domestic cargo hub to reduce reliance on coastal shipping and eliminate the need for foreign collaborations.
2. By focusing primarily on passenger cruise tourism and heritage shipping to increase Kerala’s profile as a maritime heritage destination.
3. By leveraging its natural deep draft and strategic location to reduce dependence on foreign trans-shipment ports, enhance revenue retention, and reposition India in regional maritime trade.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (d) 3 only

Explanation. Vizhinjam International Seaport in Thiruvananthapuram, commissioned in 2024 and operated by Adani Ports, is India's first dedicated container trans-shipment port. Its 20-metre natural draft and location just 10 nautical miles from the international east-west shipping lane allow it to handle ULCVs and reclaim Indian trans-shipment cargo currently routed via Colombo, Singapore and Salalah, retaining freight revenue domestically. It is neither a purely domestic hub (rejecting 1) nor a cruise/heritage destination (rejecting 2). Only statement 3 captures its strategic structural shift, so the answer is (d).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 35

Identify the river of the Indian sub-continent on the basis of the following information:

1. It has an antecedent drainage system.
2. It flows through three countries.
3. It originates in the Tibetan Plateau and is an important river for irrigation.
4. It does not form distributaries.

Select the answer from the following:

- a. Brahmaputra
- b. Indus
- c. Sutlej
- d. Teesta

Answer: (c) Sutlej

Explanation. The correct answer is **Sutlej**. It is an antecedent river of the Himalayan drainage system, originating in the Tibetan Plateau near the Rakshastal-Manasarovar region. It flows through **China (Tibet), India, and Pakistan**, making

the “three countries” clue fit. It is also a major irrigation river, especially because of the Bhakra-Nangal system and canals in Punjab. The key eliminator is the last clue: **it does not form distributaries**. Brahmaputra forms multiple channels and distributaries, Indus forms a delta with distributaries near the Arabian Sea, and Teesta does not originate in Tibet proper or flow through three countries. So the answer is **c. Sutlej**.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 36

Which of the following with reference to Indian States is/are not correct?

1. Uttar Pradesh shares its boundary with the highest number of other Indian States.
2. Rajasthan shares the longest international border among all Indian States.
3. Sikkim is the only State that shares its boundary with just one other Indian State.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (c) 2 and 3

Explanation. Uttar Pradesh shares boundaries with 8 Indian States (Uttarakhand, HP, Haryana, Rajasthan, MP, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar) plus Delhi UT — the highest among Indian States; Assam comes second at 7. So statement 1 IS correct. Rajasthan does NOT share the longest international border — West Bengal shares the longest international boundary at 2,217 km with Bangladesh (Rajasthan-Pakistan is only ~1,070 km); statement 2 is incorrect. Sikkim borders only West Bengal among Indian states, but it is NOT the ONLY such state — Meghalaya also borders only one Indian state (Assam); hence statement 3 as worded is incorrect. NOT correct = 2 and 3, giving (c).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 37

Which of the following statements with regard to the arrival of Amur Falcons at Doyang Lake in Nagaland each year from Mongolia is/are correct?

1. It showcases how sustained local conservation efforts can contribute to the arrival and protection of international migratory birds.
2. It reflects the global success of advanced tracking technologies that guide migratory birds back to their stopover sites.
3. It confirms that Amur Falcons have adapted to permanent residency in India due to favourable habitat changes.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (a) 1 only

Explanation. Amur Falcons undertake one of the world's longest migrations, breeding in south-east Siberia, Mongolia and northern China and roosting in lakhs at Doyang Lake, Nagaland every October-November en route to southern Africa. The community of Pangti and surrounding villages transformed from hunters to protectors after 2012, making Nagaland the 'Falcon Capital of the World' — a textbook case of local conservation enabling international migratory bird protection (statement 1 correct). Their arrival is driven by innate migration cues and habitat suitability, not by tracking technologies guiding them (2 wrong), and the falcons remain transit migrants, never permanent residents (3 wrong).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 38

Which among the following is/are the objective(s) of the Rainfed Area Development (RAD) initiative under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)?

1. Encouraging monoculture in rainfed areas

2. Increasing rice cultivation in irrigated regions
3. Enhancing productivity and minimising climatic risks through Integrated Farming Systems (IFS)

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 only

Answer: (d) 3 only

Explanation. The Rainfed Area Development (RAD) component of the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), launched in 2014-15, promotes Integrated Farming Systems combining crops with horticulture, livestock, fisheries, agroforestry and apiculture to enhance productivity, diversify incomes and minimise climatic risk for rainfed farmers. It explicitly discourages monoculture (rejecting 1) and is targeted at rainfed, not irrigated rice, areas (rejecting 2). Only statement 3 captures the stated objective.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 39

Which of the following is/are the most significant implication(s) of obtaining Oeko-Tex certification for Eri Silk in the global textile industry?

1. It allows Indian exporters to compete in high-end markets that prioritise chemical-free products.
2. It confirms that Eri Silk meets international safety, environmental, and quality standards, enabling its entry into premium eco-conscious markets.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation. OEKO-TEX Standard 100 certification confirms that a textile is tested free of harmful substances against a globally harmonised criteria catalogue. For Eri Silk — the eco-friendly ‘peace silk’ of Assam reared without killing the silkworm — the certification (secured by Central Silk Board for Eri in 2023-24) validates compliance with international safety, environmental and quality benchmarks, opening doors to premium eco-conscious EU/US markets where chemical residues are a barrier. Both statements describe complementary trade and standards benefits and are correct.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 40

Ships from which of the following countries have to cross the Strait of Hormuz to reach out to the Indian Ocean?

1. Bahrain
2. Syria
3. Qatar
4. Egypt

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 1 and 3
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 3 and 4

Answer: (b) 1 and 3

Explanation. The Strait of Hormuz connects the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Countries whose maritime traffic must transit Hormuz to reach the Indian Ocean are those bordering the Persian Gulf: Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, the UAE (mostly), Saudi Arabia (eastern coast) and Iran. Syria’s coast

lies on the Eastern Mediterranean and Egypt's main maritime access is via the Suez/Mediterranean and the Red Sea — neither needs Hormuz. Hence Bahrain (1) and Qatar (3) are correct, giving (b).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 41

Match List I with List II and select the answer using the code given below the Lists:

List I (INTERPOL Notice)	List II (Description)
A. Silver Notice	1. To seek information on unidentified bodies
B. Blue Notice	2. To collect additional information about a person's identity, location, or activities in relation to a criminal investigation
C. Black Notice	3. To provide warning about a person's criminal activities, where the person is considered to be a possible threat to public safety
D. Green Notice	4. To identify and trace criminal assets

Select the answer using the code given below:

Option	A	B	C	D
(a)	3	1	2	4
(b)	4	1	3	2
(c)	4	2	3	1
(d)	3	2	1	4

Answer: (*) No correct option

Explanation. INTERPOL Silver Notice is a new (Jan 2025) notice colour to identify and trace criminal assets, making it the correct match for "to identify and trace criminal assets" (A-4). Blue Notice is used to collect additional information about a person's identity, location, or activities in relation to a criminal investigation (B-2). Black Notice is used to seek information on unidentified bodies (C-1). Green Notice is used to provide warnings about a person's criminal activities where the person is considered a possible threat to public safety (D-3). The correct sequence derived from INTERPOL definitions is A-4, B-2, C-1, D-3 — i.e. the code **4, 2, 1, 3**.

No option exactly matches this sequence; the closest, option (c), reads 4, 2, 3, 1 (with C and D swapped). The question is therefore defective as printed and is marked as having **no correct option (*)**; UPSC may award marks to all candidates or drop the question. Source: INTERPOL official notice classification (cbi.gov.in).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 42

Which of the following statements in relation to NIRANTAR (National Institute for Research and Application of Natural Resources to Transform, Adapt and Build Resilience), a platform of institutions under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, is/are correct?

1. Ecosystem Survey and Analysis is a vertical under this platform, the lead institute of which is Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata.
2. Research and Management of Ecosystem Service is a vertical under this platform, the lead institute of which is Central Zoo Authority, New Delhi.
3. Capacity Development Support is a vertical under this platform, the lead institute of which is Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 only
- d. 3 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 3 only

Explanation. NIRANTAR, launched by MoEFCC in 2024, brings together six MoEFCC subordinate institutes under thematic verticals. The Ecosystem Survey and Analysis vertical is led by the Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata (statement 1 correct). The Capacity Development Support vertical is anchored by the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal (statement 3 correct). Research and Management of Ecosystem Services is led by the Wildlife Institute of India (Dehradun) or ICFRE, NOT the Central Zoo Authority, which discharges a regulatory mandate over zoos — statement 2 is wrong. Hence 1 and 3 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 43

The Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany visited India in January, 2026. Which of the following is/are not correct in terms of outcomes of this visit?

1. Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the All India Institute of Ayurveda and the University of Hamburg
2. Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Youth Hockey Development between Hockey India and the German Hockey Federation
3. Establishment of a bilateral dialogue mechanism on the Indo-Pacific
4. Opening of an Honorary Consul of Germany in Lucknow

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 2 and 3
- b. 1 and 4
- c. 3 and 4
- d. 1 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 4

Explanation. During Chancellor Friedrich Merz's January 2026 visit, India and Germany signed MoUs on Youth Hockey Development between Hockey India and the Deutscher Hockey-Bund and on establishing an Indo-Pacific bilateral dialogue mechanism, validating statements 2 and 3 as actual outcomes. There was no MoU between AIIA and the University of Hamburg on Ayurveda (the Ayurveda partnership has been with Charité-Berlin earlier), and no German Honorary Consulate was opened in Lucknow — Germany's Honorary Consul opened in Bengaluru/Hyderabad earlier; the Lucknow consulate claim is incorrect. Hence outcomes 1 and 4 are NOT correct, giving (b). (Early consensus; verify with official UPSC key.)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 44

Which of the following statements about DHRUV64 is/are correct?

1. It is the third chip fabricated under the DIR-V Programme with an overall aim to enable the creation of microprocessors for India.

2. It is India's first homegrown 1.0 GHz, 64-bit dual-core microprocessor.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation. DHRUV64, unveiled by MeitY in 2025, is indeed India's first homegrown 1.0 GHz, 64-bit dual-core RISC-V microprocessor and is the third silicon-validated chip rolled out under the Digital India RISC-V (DIR-V) Programme after VEGA and SHAKTI variants. The DIR-V Programme, launched in 2022, aims to make India a hub for RISC-V design and to enable indigenous microprocessors for strategic, automotive and IoT applications. Both statements are factually correct, so the answer is (c). Read more: Gaganyaan Mission: India's First Human Spaceflight Programme (UPSC Science & Tech).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 45

The Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) recently introduced a national standard to test and assess bomb disposal system. Which of the following statements with regard to this system is/are correct?

- 1. The new standard is known as IS 19445 : 2025.
- 2. It will improve interoperability of equipment across agencies.
- 3. It was developed by TBRL, DRDO in collaboration with the 30th Central Scientific Research Institute, Russia.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1 only

Answer: (c) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. BIS notified IS 19445:2025 as India's first national standard for Bomb Disposal Suits/Systems, developed jointly by DRDO's Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL), Chandigarh. The standard prescribes test protocols for blast and fragmentation resistance and will enable interoperability of bomb-disposal equipment across CAPFs, state police and the armed forces, validating statements 1 and 2. There is no involvement of any '30th Central Scientific Research Institute of Russia'; the standard was developed indigenously, so statement 3 is incorrect. Answer (c).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 46

'X', born in the UK, was conferred the Nobel Prize in 2025. He was a professor in an American university when this prize was announced. Identify 'X':

- a. Michel H. Devoret
- b. Richard Robson
- c. John Clarke
- d. Joel Mokyr

Answer: (c) John Clarke

Explanation. **John Clarke**, born in Cambridge, United Kingdom (1942), is a professor of physics at the **University of California, Berkeley (USA)** — satisfying both clues: UK-born AND professor at an American university when the 2025 Nobel was announced. Clarke shared the 2025 Nobel Prize in Physics with Michel H. Devoret and John M. Martinis for the discovery of macroscopic quantum-mechanical tunnelling and energy quantisation in an electric circuit. Among the other options: Michel H. Devoret was born in Paris (not UK); Richard Robson (2025 Chemistry laureate) is UK-born but is a professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia — so he fails the American-university clue; Joel Mokyr (2025 Economics laureate) was born in the Netherlands. Hence only John Clarke satisfies both conditions — option (c).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 47

Which of the following statements with regard to the Grand Slam Tennis Tournaments is/are correct?

1. The tournaments have a shared governance structure establishing the partnership among the four Grand Slam tournaments.
2. They are open for entry to all internationally ranked tennis players above the age of 14.
3. There is a limitation on the number of 'Wild Cards' a player may receive to compete in a Grand Slam Tournament.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c) 1 only

Explanation. The four Grand Slams (Australian Open, Roland-Garros, Wimbledon, US Open) are coordinated through the Grand Slam Board, providing a shared governance partnership — statement 1 correct. Entry is restricted by ranking and age-eligibility rules: the WTA/ITF age-eligibility rule limits participation, and there is no blanket open entry for all internationally ranked players above 14 — statement 2 wrong. Wild cards are allotted by each tournament (typically 8 in singles main draw) but there is no global cap on how many wild cards a single player may receive across her career — statement 3 wrong. Only 1 is correct. Read more: Artemis Accords Explained: Principles, India's Entry, and the Lunar Governance Race.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 48

Which one of the following pairs of semiconductor plants in India and their locations is not correctly matched?

- a. CG Power and Industrial Solutions Pvt. Ltd. in partnership with Renesas Electronics and STARS Microelectronics : Gujarat
- b. Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test Pvt. Ltd. : Assam
- c. HCL-Foxconn Joint Venture India Chip Ltd. : Madhya Pradesh
- d. SicSem Pvt. Ltd. : Odisha

Answer: (c) HCL-Foxconn Joint Venture India Chip Ltd. : Madhya Pradesh

Explanation. Under the India Semiconductor Mission, the approved fabs and OSATs are: Tata-PSMC at Dholera, Gujarat; Tata Semiconductor Assembly & Test (TSAT) at Jagiroad, Assam; CG Power-Renesas-STARs OSAT at Sanand, Gujarat; Kaynes at Sanand; SicSem (silicon carbide) at Bhubaneswar, Odisha; and the HCL-Foxconn JV approved in 2025 for Jewar, Uttar Pradesh — NOT Madhya Pradesh. Hence option (c) is mismatched. All other pairings are correctly mapped, making (c) the answer.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 49

Which of the following statements with regard to India's indigenous new high resolution weather model, the 'Bharat Forecast System,' is/are correct?

- 1. Its objective is to generate forecasts at the Panchayats cluster level.
- 2. It was developed by IIT Delhi.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a) 1 only

Explanation. The Bharat Forecast System (BFS), launched in May 2025 by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, is India's first indigenously developed high-resolution (6 km) global weather model designed to generate forecasts down to the panchayat-

cluster (block) level — statement 1 correct. It was developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, in collaboration with IMD and NCMRWF, NOT by IIT Delhi — statement 2 wrong. Hence only statement 1 is correct, option (a).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 50

Consider the following statements with regard to the film 'Boong':

1. The film has recently won the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award in the Children's and Family Film category.
2. The film is directed by Lakshmipriya Devi.
3. This is the first Indian film to win a BAFTA award in the Children's and Family Film category.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 3 only

Answer: (a) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation. 'Boong', a Manipuri-language coming-of-age film directed by Lakshmipriya Devi and produced by Excel Entertainment (Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani), won the 2026 BAFTA Award for Best Children's and Family Film at the 79th British Academy Film Awards in London — confirmed by The Hollywood Reporter India, DD News, Outlook India and The Better India. The film is reported in multiple authoritative outlets as the FIRST Indian film to win a BAFTA in the Children's and Family Film category, making statement 3 also correct. Hence all three statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct, option (a).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 51

Which of the following statements regarding the features of blockchain technology are correct?

1. Records stored in the database may be made visible to relevant stakeholders without risk of alteration.
2. Copies of the entire database are stored on multiple computers on a network, syncing within seconds.
3. Consortium blockchain is a blend of public and private blockchains allowing selective data access.
4. Mathematical algorithms make it impossible to change or delete any data once recorded and accepted.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 3
- b. 2 and 4 only
- c. 1, 2 and 4
- d. 1 and 4 only

Answer: (c) 1, 2 and 4

Explanation. Blockchain ledgers are append-only and visible to permissioned stakeholders without alteration risk (1 correct). The distributed ledger is replicated across nodes that sync in seconds (2 correct). Cryptographic hashing plus consensus make recorded blocks effectively immutable (4 correct). Statement 3 describes a consortium chain as a ‘blend of public and private blockchains’ — strictly, a consortium chain is a type of permissioned blockchain governed by a group of organisations, not a hybrid public-private chain (that is a ‘hybrid blockchain’). Hence 1, 2 and 4 are correct. (Early consensus; verify with official UPSC key.)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 52

An e-commerce revenue model where the seller has control over pricing but doesn't keep products in stock and instead transfers customer orders and shipment details to a third-party supplier, who then ships the goods directly to the customer, is called:

- a. Dropshipping Model
- b. Affiliate Revenue Model

- c. Transaction Fee Revenue Model
- d. Agency Revenue Model

Answer: (a) Dropshipping Model

Explanation. Dropshipping is the e-commerce model where the seller lists and prices products without holding inventory; orders are forwarded to a third-party supplier who ships directly to the customer. Affiliate revenue earns commissions for referrals, transaction-fee models charge per transaction (e.g., marketplaces), and agency models earn fees for matching buyers and sellers. The defining feature here — control over pricing plus no stock plus third-party fulfilment — is the textbook definition of dropshipping.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 53

Which one of the following correctly represents the three key sub-indices of the Financial Inclusion Index (FI-Index) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?

- a. Credit access, Insurance depth, and Pension coverage
- b. Banking access, GDP contribution, and Financial literacy
- c. Access, Usage, and Quality
- d. Access, Affordability, and Transparency

Answer: (c) Access, Usage, and Quality

Explanation. The RBI's Financial Inclusion Index, first published in 2021, is a composite index built on three sub-indices: Access (weight 35%), Usage (45%) and Quality (20%). It captures banking, investments, insurance, postal and pension across these dimensions, with the Quality sub-index including financial literacy and consumer protection. Other combinations listed (credit/insurance/pension or affordability/transparency) are distractors and do not match the RBI's official FI-Index architecture.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 54

Which one of the following best describes the key objective of India's 'Open Network for Digital Commerce' (ONDC) initiative?

- a. To allow government control over all digital commerce transactions
- b. To replace private e-commerce players
- c. To break the dominance of large e-commerce platforms by enabling interoperability across networks
- d. To mandate UPI-based payments for all online transactions

Answer: (c) To break the dominance of large e-commerce platforms by enabling interoperability across networks

Explanation. ONDC, incubated by DPIIT and run by a Section 8 company, is an open protocol that decouples buyers, sellers and logistics from any single platform, enabling interoperability across e-commerce networks. The aim is to democratise digital commerce and break the dominance of large platforms like Amazon and Flipkart, not to give the government control, replace private players, or mandate UPI. Option (c) captures the policy intent stated in the DPIIT strategy paper. Read more: [Indian Space Policy 2023: Liberalising India's Space Sector for Private Players](#).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 55

Which one of the following statements about Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Central Bank Digital Currency (Digital Rupee) is not correct?

- a. UPI is a real-time payment system but Digital Rupee is akin to sovereign paper currency.
- b. In case of UPI, settlement for end users happens instantly as the money gets immediately debited or credited but in case of Digital Rupee, there is no settlement as the wallet balance gets transferred to another wallet.
- c. UPI transactions are recorded by banks and reflected in bank statements but in case of Digital Rupee, no data is captured in bank statements as transactions are from one wallet to another.
- d. In both the cases (UPI and Digital Rupee), the liability lies with the users and their respective banks.

Answer: (d) In both the cases (UPI and Digital Rupee), the liability lies with the users and their respective banks.

Explanation. In UPI the liability and settlement risk lie with banks (and the user's bank account), while the Digital Rupee (e-Rupee) is a direct liability of the Reserve Bank of India — sovereign money held in a wallet, not a bank deposit. So statement (d) is wrong because the liability does not lie with users/banks in the case of the Digital Rupee. Statements (a), (b) and (c) correctly distinguish UPI's bank-mediated, account-settled transactions from CBDC's wallet-to-wallet token transfers.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 56

Which of the following statements about Real-World Assets (RWA) Tokenization are correct?

1. Tokenization is the process of turning real world assets into digital tokens using blockchain technology.
2. Tokenization of real world assets offers 24×7 access, promoting financial inclusion.
3. Tokenization of real world assets will allow the access to high growth investment opportunities for individuals in India.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1 and 3 only

Answer: (a) 1, 2 and 3

Explanation. RWA tokenisation converts ownership/economic rights in physical or financial assets (real estate, bonds, gold, art) into blockchain-based tokens (1 correct). Because tokens trade on always-on distributed ledgers, they enable 24×7 access and fractional ownership, supporting financial inclusion (2 correct). For

Indian retail investors, tokenisation can open access to high-growth assets such as fractional real estate or pre-IPO equity (3 correct). All three statements reflect the IFSCA and RBI working-group framing of RWA tokenisation.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 57

A bond whose proceeds are used only to finance or refinance a combination of both environmental and social projects is called:

- a. Green Bond
- b. Social Bond
- c. Sustainability Bond
- d. Sovereign Bond

Answer: (c) Sustainability Bond

Explanation. Per ICMA's Green, Social and Sustainability Bond Principles, a Sustainability Bond is one whose proceeds finance or refinance a combination of green (environmental) and social projects. Green Bonds fund only environmental projects, Social Bonds fund only social projects, and Sovereign Bonds refer to the issuer (government) rather than use of proceeds. The defining 'both environmental and social' criterion points squarely to a Sustainability Bond. Read more: Norms in Society: Social Expectations, Principles and Behaviour Regulation (UPSC Ethics — GS IV).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 58

Which of the following statements about M1xchange's role in Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) financing is/are correct?

- 1. M1xchange provides collateral based loans to MSMEs.
- 2. M1xchange facilitates discounting of invoices and Bills of Exchange for MSMEs.
- 3. M1xchange functions as a credit rating agency for MSMEs.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1 only

Answer: (b) 2 only

Explanation. M1xchange is one of RBI's licensed TReDS (Trade Receivables Discounting System) platforms. It enables MSMEs to get their invoices and bills of exchange discounted by financiers through competitive bidding, improving working-capital access (statement 2 correct). It does not extend collateral-based loans itself (1 wrong) and is not a credit rating agency (3 wrong); CRAs are licensed separately by SEBI. Hence only statement 2 is correct. Read more: AI-Powered Financial Inclusion in India: How DPI and Analytics Are Rewriting Credit Access.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 59

Which one of the following best describes the 'Crowding Out Effect' in the context of fiscal policy?

- a. A situation where private investment increases due to increased Government spending
- b. A situation where Government borrowing leads to higher interest rates, which reduces private investment
- c. A situation where an increase in taxes leads to increased private sector investment
- d. A situation where Government spending has no impact on aggregate demand

Answer: (b) A situation where Government borrowing leads to higher interest rates, which reduces private investment

Explanation. The crowding-out effect describes how higher government borrowing to finance a fiscal deficit pushes up interest rates in the loanable funds market, raising the cost of capital and squeezing out private investment and consumption. Option (a) is the opposite phenomenon, called crowding-in, which can occur when

public capital expenditure raises private productivity. Option (c) misdescribes tax effects, and option (d) contradicts basic Keynesian aggregate-demand analysis. Option (b) is the standard NCERT and Mankiw textbook definition and is the most commonly tested framing in UPSC Economy.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 60

Which of the following statements about Rare Earth Elements (REEs) and Critical Minerals is/are correct?

1. Modern technological innovations including Artificial Intelligence, robotics and space exploration extensively utilise Rare Earth Elements (REEs).
2. China has the highest share in mining of REEs followed by India.
3. The Government of India launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) in 2025 to establish a robust framework for self-reliance in the critical mineral sector.
4. Rare Earth Elements are a set of 13 metallic elements.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 3 only
- b. 3 only
- c. 1, 3 and 4
- d. 1, 2 and 4

Answer: (a) 1 and 3 only

Explanation. Rare Earth Elements are a group of 17 metallic elements — the 15 lanthanides plus scandium and yttrium (per USGS, IUPAC and standard chemistry references). Statement 4, which calls REEs '13 metallic elements', is therefore wrong. Statement 1 is correct: REEs are critical to AI chips, robotics, EVs and space tech. Statement 2 is wrong: China dominates global REE mining (~60-70%), but India is not second — the United States (~13% via the Mountain Pass mine) is the world's second-largest REE producer, followed by Myanmar and Australia.

Statement 3 is correct: the Union Cabinet approved the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) in January 2025 to build self-reliance in critical minerals. Hence only 1 and 3 are correct.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 61

Which of the following statements about insurance in aviation sector is/are correct?

1. 'Aviation Hull Insurance' covers the physical aircraft, including the body, engine, and on-board equipment.
2. Under the Montreal Convention, adopted in 1999 by over 130 countries, including India, airlines are strictly liable to pay compensation to the family/nominee of every deceased passenger without requiring the family to prove fault.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation. Aviation Hull Insurance indemnifies the physical aircraft — fuselage, engines and on-board equipment — against damage or loss (1 correct). The Montreal Convention 1999, ratified by India in 2009 and signed by 130+ states, imposes strict (no-fault) liability on carriers for passenger death or injury up to a defined SDR limit, with higher amounts payable only if the airline cannot disprove negligence (2 correct). Both statements reflect the IRDAI and DGCA framework, so the answer is (c).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 62

Which of the following statements about Crowdfunding is/are correct?

1. Crowdfunding is solicitation of funds (small amount) from multiple investors through a web-based platform or social networking site for a specific project.
2. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are able to raise funds at lower cost of capital without undergoing rigorous procedures.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation. Crowdfunding pools small contributions from a large number of investors via web-based platforms or social networks to fund a specific venture or project (1 correct) — SEBI's 2014 consultation paper uses exactly this definition. For SMEs it offers an alternative to bank credit and IPOs, lowering the cost of capital and avoiding rigorous listing and collateral procedures (2 correct). Both statements are valid descriptions of the model.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 63

With reference to different Committees in India, consider the following details:

Sl. No.	Committee	Objective	Organization under which it was formed
1.	R. N. Malhotra Committee	Comprehensive reforms of Insurance sector in India	Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India
2.	L. C. Gupta Committee	Preparing a roadmap for the introduction of derivatives trading in India	Securities and Exchange Board of India
3.	Urjit R. Patel Committee	Preparing a roadmap for reforming bank lending to the Housing sector	Reserve Bank of India
4.	Y. H. Malegam Committee	Reforming the regulatory framework governing the Microfinance Industry	Reserve Bank of India

In how many of the above rows are the given details correctly matched?

- a. Only one
- b. Only two
- c. Only three
- d. All four

Answer: (b) Only two

Explanation. Only two rows are correctly matched. **Row 1 is wrong:** the R. N. Malhotra Committee on Insurance-sector reforms (1993) was set up by the *Government of India (Ministry of Finance)*, not by IRDAI — IRDAI itself was created in 1999 following the committee’s recommendations, so listing IRDAI as the parent organisation is anachronistic. **Row 2 is correct:** the L. C. Gupta Committee (1996) was constituted by SEBI to prepare the roadmap for derivatives trading in India. **Row 3 is wrong:** the well-known Urjit R. Patel Committee under RBI (2014) revised the *monetary-policy framework* (leading to inflation targeting), not bank lending to the housing sector — no Patel-headed RBI panel on housing-lending reform is on record. **Row 4 is correct:** the Y. H. Malegam Committee (2011) under RBI reformed the microfinance regulatory framework after the Andhra Pradesh crisis. Hence only two rows (2 and 4) are correctly matched — option (b). Source: RBI / SEBI / Ministry of Finance committee archives.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 64

Consider the following statements about the Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) in India:

1. NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits.
2. All the NBFCs operating in India have to be registered with the RBI.
3. NBFCs form part of the payment and settlement system and can issue cheque drawn on itself.
4. Deposit insurance facility of Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) is not available to the depositors of deposit taking NBFCs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 4
- b. 1, 2 and 3
- c. 4 only
- d. 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (a) 1 and 4

Explanation. NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits (1 correct) and DICGC deposit insurance does not cover NBFC depositors — only scheduled commercial, cooperative and RRB depositors are covered (4 correct). Statement 2 is wrong: certain NBFCs are exempt from RBI registration (housing finance companies regulated by NHB/RBI separately, merchant banking NBFCs regulated by SEBI, insurance NBFCs by IRDAI, etc.). Statement 3 is wrong: NBFCs are not part of the payment-and-settlement system and cannot issue cheques drawn on themselves. Hence only 1 and 4.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 65

Consider the following statements about Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI):

1. MPI is calculated using Alkire-Foster methodology.
2. MPI calculated by NITI Aayog has a total of twelve indicators.

3. Maternal Health and Bank Account are common indicators in the MPI of NITI Aayog and MPI of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1, 2 and 3
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 2 only

Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. NITI Aayog's National MPI uses the Alkire-Foster (OPHI) methodology (1 correct). India's MPI adds Maternal Health and Bank Account to UNDP's 10 indicators, taking the total to 12 across the same 3 dimensions of health, education and standard of living (2 correct). Statement 3 is wrong because Maternal Health and Bank Account are India-specific additions, not common with UNDP's global MPI — UNDP's MPI has only 10 indicators and does not include either. Hence 1 and 2 only. Read more: Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI): Alkire-Foster Method, NITI Aayog MPI, and India's Progress.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 66

Which of the following statements with regard to genetic medicine is/are correct?

- 1. Genetic medicines correct/compensate for the faulty genes responsible for disease.
- 2. Engineered viruses and lipid nanoparticles are used as carriers of the genetic medicine.
- 3. Genetic medicines alter the entire DNA sequence.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. Genetic medicines (gene therapy, mRNA, siRNA, CRISPR) work by replacing, repairing or silencing faulty genes responsible for disease (1 correct). They are delivered using vectors such as engineered viruses (AAV, lentivirus) or lipid nanoparticles, as seen in mRNA COVID-19 vaccines (2 correct). Statement 3 is wrong: genetic medicines target specific genes or transcripts and do not rewrite the entire DNA sequence — that would be neither feasible nor safe. Hence 1 and 2 only. Read more: World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO): UN Agency, 26 Treaties, Genetic Resources Treaty 2024, and India's Position.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 67

Which of the following statements with regard to Large Language Models (LLMs) used in machine learning is/are correct?

1. LLMs assign probabilities to the next possible words and then pick the one with the highest probability.
2. LLMs process data through mathematical optimization to minimise prediction errors.
3. LLMs produce unbiased outputs.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. LLMs are next-token predictors: they output a probability distribution over possible next tokens and typically sample from the top-probability candidates (1 correct). Training relies on mathematical optimisation (gradient descent on a loss function) to minimise prediction error across vast corpora (2

correct). Statement 3 is wrong — LLMs inherit and can amplify biases present in their training data, and bias mitigation is an active research problem. Hence 1 and 2 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 68

Which of the following statements with regard to stealth technology is/are correct?

1. Stealth objects have a very small radar cross-section and are coated with Radar Absorbing Material.
2. Stealth objects can be detected using specific frequencies.
3. Stealth objects are coated with metamaterials to increase the scattering of electromagnetic radiation.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. Stealth aircraft minimise radar cross-section using shaping and Radar Absorbing Materials (RAM) like iron-ball paint (1 correct). They can be detected by low-frequency radars (VHF/UHF), bistatic and over-the-horizon systems that exploit resonance and Rayleigh scattering at specific frequencies (2 correct). Statement 3 is wrong: metamaterials in stealth are designed to absorb or guide electromagnetic waves around the object (cloaking), reducing scattering and reflection, not increasing it. Hence 1 and 2 only. Read more: [INS Tamal: Indian Navy's Newest Stealth Frigate — Complete Guide](#).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 69

Which of the following statements with regard to Black Boxes used in modern aircrafts is/are correct?

1. They carry a beacon emitting red light pulses to facilitate underwater detection.
2. They record both the cockpit voice and flight data.
3. Their memory units are made using either stainless steel or titanium.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. Modern Cockpit Voice Recorders and Flight Data Recorders ('black boxes', actually orange) record cockpit audio and hundreds of flight parameters (2 correct), and their crash-survivable memory units are housed in stainless steel or titanium casings with thermal insulation (3 correct). Statement 1 is wrong: the Underwater Locator Beacon emits an ultrasonic acoustic 'ping' at 37.5 kHz, not red light pulses — light would be useless at depth. Hence 2 and 3 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 70

Which of the following statements with regard to Green Hydrogen is/are correct?

1. It is decarbonized hydrogen obtained from natural gas reforming combined with carbon capture and storage (CCS).
2. It is produced using electrolysis of water with electricity generated by renewable energy.
3. National Green Hydrogen Mission of India aims for abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. Green hydrogen is produced by electrolysis of water using renewable electricity (2 correct). Hydrogen from natural-gas reforming with CCS is ‘blue hydrogen’, not green — so statement 1 is wrong. The National Green Hydrogen Mission (2023) targets 5 MMT of green hydrogen production by 2030 and abatement of nearly 50 MMT of annual GHG emissions, per MNRE (3 correct). Hence 2 and 3 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 71

Consider the following statements with regard to involvement of private entities in India’s space programme:

1. The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) is an autonomous agency formed to facilitate participation of private entities.
2. Agnikul Cosmos launched the world’s first flight using 3D-printed rocket engine.
3. Skyroot Aerospace has developed liquid fuel for GSLV.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. IN-SPACe, set up in 2020 under DOS, is an autonomous, single-window agency to authorise and promote private participation in space (1 correct). Agnikul Cosmos’ Agnibaan SOrTeD (May 2024) was the world’s first flight powered by a fully 3D-printed, single-piece semi-cryogenic rocket engine (Agnilet)

— (2 correct). Statement 3 is wrong: Skyroot Aerospace's Vikram series uses solid and cryogenic stages, not liquid fuel for GSLV; GSLV's liquid and cryogenic stages are developed by ISRO. Hence 1 and 2 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 72

Which of the following statements with regard to drone swarms is/are correct?

1. They use Terahertz band of frequency to communicate with the command centre.
2. Individual drones in the swarm can communicate with other drones in the swarm.
3. GPS Spoofing is a commonly used technique to counter drone swarm attack.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. Drone swarms use mesh networks where individual drones share data with peers and adapt collectively, so statement 2 is correct. GPS spoofing — feeding false navigation signals — is a standard counter-swarm electronic-warfare technique alongside jamming and directed energy (3 correct). Statement 1 is wrong: swarms typically use sub-6 GHz RF, Wi-Fi, LTE/5G or proprietary bands, not the Terahertz band, which suffers severe atmospheric attenuation and is still experimental. Hence 2 and 3 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 73

Which of the following statements with regard to GenomeIndia Project is/are correct?

1. It is a part of the Human Genome Project.
2. The project is funded by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India.
3. Its primary aim is to build a catalogue of genetic diversity of the Indian population.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. GenomeIndia is funded by the Department of Biotechnology and executed by a consortium led by IISc Bengaluru (2 correct). Its goal is to sequence ~10,000 whole genomes representative of India's population diversity and build a national reference database of genetic variation (3 correct). Statement 1 is wrong: GenomeIndia is an independent Indian initiative launched in 2020, not part of the international Human Genome Project (which concluded in 2003). Hence 2 and 3 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 74

Which of the following statements with regard to the National Quantum Mission (NQM) is/are correct?

1. It aims at developing intermediate-scale quantum computers with 50 – 1000 physical qubits.
2. Its implementation includes setting up of four Thematic Hubs (T-Hubs) in academic and national R&D institutes across India.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c) Both 1 and 2

Explanation. The National Quantum Mission, approved in April 2023 with an outlay of Rs 6,003 crore, targets development of intermediate-scale quantum computers with 50-1,000 physical qubits over 8 years (1 correct). It establishes four Thematic Hubs (T-Hubs) — in quantum computing, quantum communication, quantum sensing & metrology, and quantum materials & devices — across top academic and national R&D institutes (2 correct). Both statements align with the DST mission document, so (c) Both 1 and 2.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 75

Which of the following statements with regard to India's Deep Ocean Mission is/are correct?

1. It was launched by the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Government of India.
2. Matsya-6000 has been designed to carry 3 people for deep sea exploration.
3. Samudrayaan is a project under this mission.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. Deep Ocean Mission was launched in 2021 by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), not the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways — statement 1 is wrong. Matsya-6000 is the manned submersible being developed by NIOT to carry three persons to 6,000 m depth (2 correct). Samudrayaan is the manned-submersible project under the Deep Ocean Mission (3 correct). Hence 2 and 3 only.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 76

Mr. X, a senior officer, was overseeing a critical vaccination programme during a pandemic. He found that a private service provider responsible for vaccine distribution was compromising on quality to make profits. Despite immense pressure to manage the issue due to vested interests, he raised his voice based on the principles of public administration which he learnt during various training programmes attended across his career. He reported the issue to the appropriate vigilance authority and halted the contract to ensure citizen welfare.

1. Which one among the following principles of public administration was most strongly demonstrated by Mr. X's actions?
 - a. Esprit de corps
 - b. Equity
 - c. Accountability
 - d. Delegation

Answer: (c) Accountability

Explanation. Mr. X's action of reporting wrongdoing to the vigilance authority and halting a compromised contract, despite pressure from vested interests, is a textbook demonstration of accountability — the obligation of a public servant to answer for actions, decisions, and outcomes in the discharge of public duties. Esprit de corps relates to team spirit and unity among staff, equity concerns fair and impartial treatment of citizens, and delegation refers to entrusting tasks downward. None of these capture the act of standing up against malpractice and being answerable for citizen welfare, which is the essence of accountability in public administration as emphasised by 2nd ARC and Nolan principles.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 77

In a multi-ethnic district where both economic competition and historical grievances frequently led to community tensions, a flashpoint has arisen with a Government decision to allocate land for a waste management facility near a tribal hamlet, sparking protests by the tribal community, which claimed that the land was sacred and critical to their cultural identity. At the same time, urban residents and

local industries supported the project, citing severe solid waste challenges and health concerns due to lack of a proper disposal site. The conflict has escalated with road blockades, social media campaigns, and allegations of police excesses.

1. As a responsible Government official, you are tasked with resolving the situation through mediation, ensuring a sustainable outcome that balances environmental needs, tribal rights, and urban public health.
2. Consider the following statements with reference to the above:
3. A successful conflict resolution process must begin with acknowledging the cultural concerns of the protesting tribal community before discussing technical alternatives.
4. The Government should move ahead with the project without delay to address urban health concerns, which outweigh the sentiments of a small group.
5. Creating a multi-stakeholder dialogue platform — including tribal leaders, environmental experts, and municipal representatives — to build mutual understanding and help de-escalate tensions.
6. Conducting an independent Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and sharing findings transparently with both sides to facilitate evidence-based decision-making.
7. Which of the statements given above would contribute to the resolution process?
 - a. 1, 3 and 4 only
 - b. 2, 3 and 4 only
 - c. 1 and 2 only
 - d. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (a) 1, 3 and 4 only

Explanation. Conflict resolution in such ethnically charged disputes begins with empathetic acknowledgement of cultural and identity concerns of the affected community (statement 1), followed by inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue (statement 3) and evidence-based, transparent ESIA (statement 4). Statement 2 — bulldozing ahead by overriding tribal sentiments as a ‘small group’ — violates the principles of natural justice, FRA 2006, PESA, and the doctrine of free, prior and

informed consent, and would escalate rather than resolve the conflict. Hence only 1, 3 and 4 constitute legitimate, sustainable mediation strategies grounded in administrative ethics and Gandhian conflict-resolution principles.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 78

Ms. X is a mid-level civil service official working in the urban development department of a major city. Recently, she was involved in approving a contract for a public infrastructure project — a new community park. During the approval process, she received a piece of confidential information indicating that one of the shortlisted contractors had a history of poor workmanship and allegations of corruption in other cities, though nothing had been legally proven. The Head of the Department, Mr. Y, advised her not to disclose this information to the project committee or the public because it could delay the project and damage the city's reputation. However, Ms. X believed that withholding such information compromised transparency and public trust.

1. What amongst the following should Ms. X do now?
2. Immediately disclose the information to the project committee and the public
3. Recommend removing the contractor from the shortlist to protect the project's integrity
4. Propose a 'limited disclosure' to an oversight committee, while keeping the information confidential from the public for the time being

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 3 only

Explanation. Option 1 (immediate full public disclosure) is premature because the allegations are unproven; it can defame the contractor and invite legal liability. Option 2 (unilaterally removing the contractor) bypasses due process and the

project committee's authority, and is based on hearsay. Option 3 — 'limited disclosure' to an oversight committee — strikes the right balance: it upholds transparency to the institutional check-and-balance mechanism while protecting reputational rights until verified. This respects confidentiality, due process, and Ms. X's duty of integrity without succumbing to Mr. Y's improper instruction. Hence only 3 is the ethically defensible course. Read more: Public Accounts Committee (PAC): India's Oldest Parliamentary Watchdog.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 79

'X' was addressing a seminar on the meaning of the term 'law' as provided under Article 13, Part III of the Constitution of India. 'X' explained that the meaning of the term 'law' in the Constitution of India was very comprehensive. It included ordinances, orders and even rules and regulations. 'Y' pointed out that the term 'law' in Article 13 also included custom or usage having in the territory of India the force of law, to which 'X' was not convinced.

1. Based on the above, select the correct conclusion from the options given below:
 - a. 'X' is correct in the interpretation of law, including the view on non-inclusion of custom.
 - b. The view of 'Y' that 'law' included custom is not correct.
 - c. The views of both 'X' and 'Y' are correct.
 - d. The view of only 'Y' is correct.

Answer: (d) The view of only 'Y' is correct.

Explanation. Under Article 13(3) (a), 'law' is defined inclusively to mean any Ordinance, order, bye-law, rule, regulation, notification, custom or usage having in the territory of India the force of law. Therefore Y is right: custom and usage with force of law are expressly included. X's interpretation, which excludes custom, is incomplete and contrary to the bare text of Article 13(3) (a). Consequently only Y's view is correct, making option (d) the right answer. This is settled doctrine reaffirmed in cases like Sant Ram v. Labh Singh and Madhu Kishwar v. State of Bihar.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 80

Consider the following statements with reference to the Constitution of India:

1. There is no Article in the Constitution of India that specifies that the Constitution of India will be officially called the 'Constitution of India'.
2. There is no Article in the Constitution of India that specifies that the Indian Independence Act, 1947 and the Government of India Act, 1935 stand repealed.
3. There is no Article in the Constitution of India that mentions 26th January, 1950 as the date of the commencement of the Constitution of India.
4. Which one of the following conclusions based on the above statements is correct?
 - a. All three statements are correct.
 - b. There is no correct statement.
 - c. There are two correct statements that include statement 3.
 - d. There is only one correct statement.

Answer: (b) There is no correct statement.

Explanation. All three statements are wrong. **Statement 1 is wrong** — *Article 393* expressly provides “This Constitution may be called the Constitution of India.”

Statement 2 is wrong — *Article 395* explicitly repeals the Indian Independence Act, 1947 and the Government of India Act, 1935 (along with all enactments amending or supplementing the latter).

Statement 3 is also wrong — *Article 394* expressly names **26th January, 1950** as the date on which the remaining provisions of the Constitution come into force (while certain articles, listed in *Article 394* itself, came into force at once on the date of adoption, 26 November 1949). Hence no statement is correct — option (b). Read more: Fundamental Rights and Duties of Indian Constitution — Articles 12–35 (Rights) + *Article 51A* (Duties), Comparison, Significance (UPSC Polity).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 81

Which of the following statements with regard to the persons with disabilities in India is/are correct?

1. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, an Act passed by the Parliament of India in 2018, mandates reservation in education and employment, places a legal duty on Governments to ensure accessibility and non-discrimination.
2. The Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan focuses on achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities across three key domains — built infrastructure, transport systems and information and communication technology.
3. The National Divyangjan Finance and Development Corporation (NDFDC) is a public sector organisation set up by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs as a not-for-profit company to promote entrepreneurship among Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 2 only
- c. 1 and 3
- d. 1 only

Answer: (b) 2 only

Explanation. Statement 1 is incorrect — the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act was passed in 2016, not 2018, although it does mandate 4% reservation in government employment and 5% in higher education and casts duties on Governments for accessibility. Statement 2 is correct — Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan (Accessible India Campaign), launched in 2015, targets accessibility in the three verticals of built environment, transport, and ICT. Statement 3 is incorrect — NDFDC functions under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, not the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Hence only statement 2 is correct.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 82

Consider the following statements about the provisions pertaining to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in India:

1. Provisions regarding the administration of the Tribal Areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are given in the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India.
 2. Some tribes of India are entitled to exemption from paying Income Tax on certain incomes.
 3. The Constitution of India provides for reservation of seats in Panchayats for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
- Which one of the following conclusions based on the above statements is correct?
- a. There are two correct statements, that include statement 2.
 - b. There are two correct statements, that are statements 1 and 3.
 - c. There is only one correct statement.
 - d. All three statements are correct.

Answer: (a) There are two correct statements, that include statement 2.

Explanation. Statement 1 is wrong — administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram is provided in the Sixth Schedule, not the Fifth Schedule (which covers Scheduled Areas in other states). Statement 2 is correct — Section 10(26) of the Income-tax Act exempts members of Scheduled Tribes residing in specified areas of the North-East and Ladakh from tax on incomes arising from those areas or from dividends/interest on securities. Statement 3 is correct — Articles 243D(3) and 243D(4) mandate reservation for SC/ST women in Panchayats. Hence two statements (2 and 3) are correct, and the correct option is the one which says two correct statements that include statement 2.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 83

Consider the following statements in respect of questions asked by the Members in the Parliament of India:

1. Unstarred questions are those to which a Member desires an oral answer in the House.
2. Starred questions are those to which a Member desires a written answer.
3. No supplementary question can be asked on an unstarred question.

4. Which one of the following conclusions based on the above statements is correct?
- All the three statements are correct.
 - There are two correct statements, that include statement 2.
 - There is only one correct statement.
 - There is no correct statement.

Answer: (c) There is only one correct statement.

Explanation. Statement 1 is wrong — unstarred questions are those for which a *written reply* is sought and laid on the Table of the House; no oral answer or supplementary is permitted. The description of an oral-answer question fits a *starred* question. **Statement 2 is wrong** — starred questions are those for which an *oral answer* is desired in the House (and supplementaries can follow). The description of a written-answer question fits an unstarred question. **Statement 3 is correct** — by procedural rule, no supplementary question can be asked on an unstarred question, because unstarred questions are answered only in writing. Hence only one statement (Statement 3) is correct — option (c). Read more: CZA Deer Conservation Controversy: When India Bred the Wrong Musk Deer.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 84

Consider the following statements about the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of the Parliament of India:

- Although members of this Committee are elected from both Houses of Parliament, the Chairperson of this Committee is appointed by the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.
- Twenty members are elected by the Rajya Sabha and ten members by the Lok Sabha.
- No Minister, except for the Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, is eligible to be a member of this Committee.
- Members are elected for a fixed term of two years from the date they enter their office.
- Which one of the following conclusions based on the above statements is correct?

- a. There are four correct statements.
- b. There is only one correct statement, that is statement 2.
- c. There are two correct statements, that include statement 1.
- d. There is no correct statement.

Answer: (d) There is no correct statement.

Explanation. All four statements are wrong. The Committee on the Welfare of SCs and STs has 30 members — 20 elected by Lok Sabha and 10 by Rajya Sabha (statement 2 reverses this). The Chairperson is appointed by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha from among Lok Sabha members of the Committee, not by the Chairman of Rajya Sabha (statement 1 wrong). A Minister cannot be a member of this Committee at all — there is no exception for the Minister of Social Justice (statement 3 wrong). The term of office is one year, not two (statement 4 wrong). Hence there is no correct statement.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 85

Consider the following statements about Mission Sudarshan Chakra of India:

- 1. It aims to enhance India's air defence, ballistic missile defence and aerial offensive capabilities.
- 2. This Mission is being designed to enhance rapid, precise, and powerful defence responses, reinforcing India's strategic autonomy.
- 3. One of the aims of this Mission is to cover all public places of India by an expanded nationwide security shield by 2035.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1 only

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

Explanation. Mission Sudarshan Chakra, announced by the Prime Minister on Independence Day 2025, aims to build a comprehensive, multi-layered national security shield integrating air defence, ballistic missile defence and offensive aerial capabilities (statement 1 correct), with the objective of rapid, precise and powerful responses to safeguard strategic autonomy (statement 2 correct). The target year publicly stated is 2035, but the Mission's stated coverage is critical strategic, civilian and religious sites — not 'all public places of India' as statement 3 claims, which is an exaggerated rendering. Hence only 1 and 2 are correct. (Early consensus; verify with official UPSC key.)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 86

Consider the following statements about river bridges connecting India with neighbouring countries:

1. 'Maitri Setu', built over Feni river, connects Ramgarh in India with Sabroom in Bangladesh.
2. Jhulaghat suspension bridge connects India with Myanmar.
3. Mechi bridge and its approaches connect Panitanki Bypass in India with Kakarvitta in Nepal.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 2 and 3
- c. 1 only
- d. 3 only

Answer: (d) 3 only

Explanation. **Statement 1 is wrong** — the endpoints are *reversed*. Maitri Setu (inaugurated 2021) spans the Feni river and connects **Sabroom in South Tripura, India** with **Ramgarh in Bangladesh**, opening overland access to Chattogram port. The statement reverses the two ends. **Statement 2 is wrong** — the Jhulaghat suspension bridge over the Kali (Mahakali) river connects Pithoragarh district of India with Baitadi district of *Nepal*, not Myanmar. **Statement 3 is correct** — the

Mechi bridge over the Mechi river connects Panitanki Bypass in West Bengal, India with Kakarvitta in Nepal, on NH-327B / the Asian Highway 2 alignment. Hence only Statement 3 is correct — option (d).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 87

Which of the following statements about a Zero First Information Report (Zero FIR) under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023 is/are correct?

1. A Zero FIR can be lodged at a police station, even though the place of commission of a cognizable/non-cognizable offence is outside the territorial jurisdiction of that police station.
2. The Officer-in-Charge of the police station where a Zero FIR has been lodged may, with the permission of the competent authority, initiate a preliminary enquiry.
3. Under Zero FIR, it is obligatory for the informant to furnish information electronically.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 only
- d. 2 only

Answer: (*) No correct option

Explanation. Statement 1 is wrong as printed — Section 173 of the BNSS, 2023 codifies Zero FIR *only for cognizable offences*; the phrase “cognizable/non-cognizable” in the statement is inaccurate, since information about non-cognizable offences is governed separately (Section 174). **Statement 2 is wrong** — the preliminary enquiry under Section 173(3) is permissible only for cognizable offences punishable with 3 to less than 7 years, with prior permission of an officer not below DSP; it is not a generic feature of Zero FIR. **Statement 3 is wrong** — electronic communication of information is *permitted*, not obligatory, and the informant must subsequently sign the information within three days. Since all three statements are

incorrect as printed, **no option correctly answers the question (*)**. UPSC may award marks to all candidates or drop the question. Source: BNSS, 2023, Section 173.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 88

With reference to the organisations under the Government of India, consider the following details:

Sl. No.	Organisation	Function	Controlling Union Ministry
1.	Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB)	To coordinate between various law enforcement agencies	Ministry of Home Affairs
2.	Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO)	To investigate complex corporate frauds	Ministry of Finance
3.	Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)	To preserve values in public life and ensure the health of the national economy	Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension

In how many of the above rows are the given details correctly matched?

- a. Only one
- b. Only two
- c. All three
- d. None

Answer: (d) None

Explanation. None of the three rows is completely correct. (1) CEIB is under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance — not the Ministry of Home Affairs — so the controlling ministry is wrong. (2) SFIO is under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs — not the Ministry of Finance — so the controlling ministry is wrong. (3) The stated function — “to preserve values in public life and ensure the health of the national economy” — is the official mandate of the Central Vigilance Commission

(CVC), not the CBI; the CBI's mandate is investigation of corruption, economic offences and special crimes. Hence none of the three rows is correctly matched — option (d). Source: respective official websites; Allocation of Business Rules.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 89

Which of the following international conventions have not been ratified by India?

1. Employment Policy Convention
2. Abolition of Forced Labour Convention
3. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
4. Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War
5. Convention on Reduction of Statelessness

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 2 and 4
- b. 1 and 2
- c. 3 and 4 only
- d. 3, 4 and 5

Answer: (*) No correct option

Explanation. India has ratified the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (ILO C122) and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (ILO C105 — ratified in 2000), as well as the four 1949 Geneva Conventions including the **Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians (ratified 1950)**. India has *not* ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990) or the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (also not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention). The strictly correct unratified set is therefore **3 and 5 only**, but **no option lists exactly 3 and 5**; the question is defective as printed and is marked as having **no correct**

option (*). The closest given option, (d) “3, 4 and 5”, incorrectly includes the Fourth Geneva Convention. UPSC may award marks to all candidates or drop the question.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 90

Consider the following statements with respect to the AI Impact Summit, 2026 held in New Delhi:

1. The Summit’s intellectual framework was based on three foundational Sutras: People, Planning, and Progress.
2. The Preamble of the Summit stresses Democratising AI Resources, which acknowledges the Charter for Democratic Diffusion of AI as a binding framework to support locally relevant innovation and strengthen resilient AI ecosystems while respecting national laws.
3. The New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact was structured around seven Chakras (Pillars), which included Access for Social Empowerment, AI for Science, and Secure and Trusted AI.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 3 only

Answer: (d) 3 only

Explanation. Statement 1 is incorrect — the AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi was built on three Sutras: People, Planet, and Progress (not ‘Planning’). Statement 2 is incorrect — the Charter for Democratic Diffusion of AI was acknowledged as a voluntary, non-binding framework, not a binding one; binding obligations were explicitly avoided to respect sovereign discretion. Statement 3 is correct — the New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact was organised around seven Chakras (Pillars)

including AI for Social Empowerment, AI for Science, and Secure and Trusted AI, alongside others such as sustainability, future of work, and governance. Hence only statement 3 is correct. (Early consensus; verify with official UPSC key.)

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 91

Which of the following connectivity projects is/are a part of cooperation between India and the ASEAN member countries?

1. Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project
2. IMT Trilateral Highway
3. Agartala-Akhaura Rail Line

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 2 and 3
- c. 1 and 3
- d. 2 only

Answer: (a) 1 and 2

Explanation. The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project connects Kolkata to Sittwe port in Myanmar and onward to Mizoram, and the India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway from Moreh to Mae Sot is a flagship ASEAN-India connectivity initiative — both are explicitly counted in India-ASEAN connectivity cooperation, as Myanmar and Thailand are ASEAN members. The Agartala-Akhaura rail line, however, links India with Bangladesh, which is not an ASEAN member state; it falls under BBIN/bilateral cooperation, not ASEAN. Hence only 1 and 2 are part of India-ASEAN connectivity cooperation.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 92

Match List I with List II and select the answer using the code given below the Lists:

List I (Project Supported by India)	List II (Country)
A. Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project	1. Maldives
B. Restoration of Stor Palace	2. Afghanistan
C. District Hospital at Dickoya	3. Bhutan
D. Institute of Security and Law Enforcement Studies	4. Sri Lanka

Select the answer using the code given below:

Option	A	B	C	D
(a)	1	4	2	3
(b)	3	2	4	1
(c)	3	4	2	1
(d)	1	2	4	3

Answer: (b) 3 2 4 1

Explanation. Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project (720 MW) was built with Indian assistance in **Bhutan** → A-3. The Stor Palace in Kabul was restored with Indian aid, located in **Afghanistan** → B-2. The District Hospital at Dickoya was constructed by India in the Central Province of **Sri Lanka** → C-4. The Institute of Security and Law Enforcement Studies in Addu City was built by India in the **Maldives** → D-1. Therefore the correct sequence is A-3, B-2, C-4, D-1, which corresponds to option **(b)**. Source: MEA bilateral briefs and Lines-of-Credit project portfolio.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 93

Which of the following items of defence hardware is/are manufactured in India?

1. Su-30 MKI Fighter Jets
2. T-90 MK-III Tanks
3. Akula Class Submarine

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2

- b. 1 and 3
- c. 1 only
- d. 2 only

Answer: (a) 1 and 2

Explanation. Su-30 MKI is manufactured in India under licence by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited at Nashik with progressive indigenisation of major systems (statement 1 correct). T-90 'Bhishma' tanks, including the upgraded T-90 MK-III variant, are produced under licence at the Heavy Vehicles Factory, Avadi, by Armoured Vehicles Nigam Limited (statement 2 correct). The Akula-class nuclear-powered attack submarine (e.g., INS Chakra) is leased from Russia and built in Russian shipyards; India does not manufacture Akula-class submarines (statement 3 incorrect). Hence only 1 and 2 are correct.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 94

Consider the following statements about platforms for multilateral co-operation:

1. The 'Colombo Process' is a regional consultative process in which member states take binding decisions by consensus.
2. The 'Abu Dhabi Dialogue' is a voluntary non-binding consultative process among Asian countries of labour origin and destination to facilitate regional cooperation on contractual labour mobility.
3. The 'Global Forum for Migration and Development', created upon the proposal of a former UN Secretary General, is a voluntary forum whose decisions are non-binding in nature.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1, 2 and 3
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 2 only

Answer: (c) 2 and 3 only

Explanation. Statement 1 is incorrect — the Colombo Process, a regional consultative process of Asian labour-sending countries (initiated 2003, hosted by IOM), is voluntary and non-binding; it does not take binding decisions. Statement 2 is correct — the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (2008) is a voluntary, non-binding consultative forum between Colombo Process member states and the major Gulf/Asian destination countries on contractual labour mobility. Statement 3 is correct — the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) was set up in 2007 following a proposal by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and operates as a voluntary, informal, state-led process with non-binding outcomes. Hence only 2 and 3 are correct. Read more: [Delimitation in India: Process, Issues & Southern States Debate](#).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 95

Consider the following UN organisations/agencies:

1. World Food Programme
2. United Nations Children's Fund
3. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
4. International Labour Organisation

How many of the above has/have been awarded the Nobel Prize twice?

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4

Answer: (a) 1

Explanation. Of the four organisations listed, only UNHCR has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize twice (1954 and 1981). UNICEF received it once (1965), ILO once (1969), and the World Food Programme once (2020). UNHCR is, in fact, the only UN agency to have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize twice. Therefore exactly one organisation in the list has been awarded the Nobel Prize twice, making (a) the correct answer.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 96

Match List I with List II and select the answer using the code given below the Lists:

List I (UN Peacekeeping Operation)	List II (Period of Operation)
A. UNMIL	1. 2007 – 2010
B. MINURCAT	2. 2002 – 2005
C. MINUSTAH	3. 2003 – 2018
D. UNMISET	4. 2004 – 2017

Select the answer using the code given below:

Option	A	B	C	D
(a)	3	4	1	2
(b)	3	1	4	2
(c)	2	1	4	3
(d)	2	4	1	3

Answer: (b) 3 1 4 2

Explanation. UNMIL (UN Mission in Liberia) operated 2003–2018 → A-3.
MINURCAT (UN Mission in CAR and Chad) operated 2007–2010 → B-1.
MINUSTAH (UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti) operated 2004–2017 → C-4.
UNMISET (UN Mission of Support in East Timor) operated 2002–2005 → D-2.
Therefore the correct sequence is A-3, B-1, C-4, D-2 — option (b). Read more:
Operation Kaveri: India’s Sudan Evacuation Mission — Complete Guide.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 97

Match List I with List II and select the answer using the code given below the Lists:

List I (BIMSTEC Centre/Establishment)	List II (Location)
A. BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory	1. NOIDA
B. BIMSTEC Energy Centre	2. Bengaluru
C. BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate	3. Colombo
D. BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility	4. Thimphu

Select the answer using the code given below:

Option	A	B	C	D
(a)	3	2	1	4
(b)	3	1	2	4
(c)	4	2	1	3
(d)	4	1	2	3

Answer: (c) 4 2 1 3

Explanation. BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory (BCIO) is located in Thimphu/Paro, Bhutan → A-4. BIMSTEC Energy Centre (BEC) is housed at the Central Power Research Institute, Bengaluru, India → B-2. BIMSTEC Centre for Weather and Climate (BCWC) is located at NCMRWF, NOIDA, India → C-1. BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility (TTF) is being set up in Colombo, Sri Lanka → D-3. Therefore the correct sequence is A-4, B-2, C-1, D-3 — option (c).

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 98

Which one of the following pairs is not correctly matched?

Option	Indian Army Corps	Headquarters
(a)	3 Corps	Dimapur
(b)	4 Corps	Tezpur
(c)	14 Corps	Leh
(d)	33 Corps	Srinagar

Answer: (d) 33 Corps : Srinagar

Explanation. The pairing 33 Corps with Srinagar is incorrect. The 33 Corps (Trishakti Corps) of the Indian Army is headquartered at Sukna (near Siliguri, West Bengal), responsible for Sikkim and the Siliguri Corridor; the corps headquartered at Srinagar is the 15 Corps (Chinar Corps). The other pairings are correct: 3 Corps (Spear Corps) at Dimapur covering the Nagaland-Manipur sector; 4 Corps (Gajraj Corps) at Tezpur covering the central Arunachal-Assam sector; and 14 Corps (Fire and Fury Corps) at Leh, responsible for Ladakh including Siachen and eastern Ladakh. Hence (d) is the incorrectly matched pair. Read more: Chicken's Neck of India (Siliguri Corridor): Strategic Importance.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 99

Which of the following statements with respect to the Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) is/are correct?

1. The period of its implementation is 1st April, 2021 to 31st March, 2026.
2. The key objective of the Revamped RGSA is to develop the governance capabilities of the Panchayati Raj Institutions to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals.
3. The share of the Central funding for the Revamped RGSA is 100% for all States and Union Territories.

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1 and 2
- b. 2 only
- c. 1 and 3
- d. 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 2 only

Explanation. **Statement 1 is wrong** — the Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) was approved by the Union Cabinet for implementation from **1 April 2022 to 31 March 2026** (aligned with the Fifteenth Finance Commission cycle), not from 1 April 2021. **Statement 2 is correct** — the central objective is to

develop the governance capabilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals through inclusive local governance. **Statement 3 is wrong** — Central funding is shared *60:40* with most States, *90:10* for North-Eastern and hilly States, and *100%* only for UTs without legislature — not 100% across all States and UTs. Hence only Statement 2 is correct — option (b). Source: Ministry of Panchayati Raj guidelines / PIB.

UPSC 2026 GS PAPER-I · QUESTION 100

Which of the following countries are members of the European Union?

1. Belarus
2. Poland
3. Germany
4. Switzerland

Select the answer using the code given below:

- a. 1, 2 and 4
- b. 1 and 4 only
- c. 2 and 3
- d. 2 and 4 only — END OF PAPER —

Answer: (c) 2 and 3

Explanation. Of the four listed countries, only Poland (acceded 2004) and Germany (founding member, 1957) are members of the European Union. Belarus is not an EU member — it is part of the Eurasian Economic Union with Russia and is currently under EU sanctions. Switzerland has consistently chosen to remain outside the EU; it maintains relations through bilateral treaties and EFTA/Schengen membership but is not an EU member state. Hence the correct combination is 2 and 3 only, i.e., option (c).

Topic-wise Distribution — UPSC 2026 vs 2025

Coming up in our follow-up analysis: full topic-cluster breakdown comparing UPSC 2026 to the 2025 paper, subject-wise weighting, and the difficulty curve. Bookmark this page for updates.

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