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GEO IAS

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Important News Articles

GS I

1. A Sicilian volcano is blowing smoke rings in the sky. What are volcanic vortex rings? - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

News:

- **Mount Etna**, the largest volcano in **Europe**, and among the world's most active and iconic volcanoes, has been sending up almost perfect rings of smoke into the air.
- The rings are a rare phenomenon that scientists refer to as **volcanic vortex rings**, which are produced roughly in the same way as the smoke rings that some cigarette smokers are able to blow out.

Mount Etna:

- Mount Etna, is an active volcano on the east coast of Sicily, the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea.
- Etna's peak is the highest in Italy south of the Alps, and it is **Europe's largest and one of the most active volcanoes**.
- Etna has been a **World Heritage Site** since 2013, and according to UNESCO, the volcano's eruptive history can be traced back 500,000 years. At least 2,700 years of this activity has been documented.

Volcanic Vortex Rings:

- Vortex rings are generated when **gas, predominantly water vapour**, is released rapidly through a vent in the crater.
- The vent that has opened up in Etna's crater is almost perfectly circular
- However volcanic vortex rings have been observed at volcanoes such as Redoubt in Alaska, Tungurahua in Ecuador, Pacaya in Guatemala, Eyjafjallajökull and Hekla in Iceland, Stromboli in Italy, Aso and Sakurajima in Japan.

Prelims Takeaway

- Mt Etna
- Volcanic vortex rings

GS II

2. India shifts its Myanmar staff to Yangon over conflict - The Hindu

Relevance: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora

News: Indian consulate in Sittwe relocates staff in view of situation in Myanmar's Rakhine state, says MEA

Key Highlights:

- In view of the ongoing conflict between the military junta of Myanmar and the **Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs)** India has 'temporarily moved' the staff from its consulate in the port city of Sittwe in the Rakhine province, stated by MEA.
- **Karen National Union**, an ethnic minority armed group claim to have seized the last remaining military base in the southeastern town of **Myawaddy**.

India Myanmar Relations:

Myanmar is an important neighbour of India which has

- Geopolitical Importance as it is **the Gateway to Southeast Asia**:
 - Myanmar serves as a land bridge connecting South Asia to Southeast Asia.
- The proximity of Myanmar to India's northeastern states establishes a strategic link and is important for regional connectivity.
- India and Myanmar share maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal which gives opportunities for maritime cooperation in fishing and navigation

Prelims Takeaway

- Imbax
- Kaladan

- India's active engagement with Myanmar is important to counter China's growing influence in the region.
- India ranks as **Myanmar's fifth-largest trading partner**, registering bilateral trade at USD 1.03 billion in 2021-22
- **Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project**: which aims to connect the North eastern states to the seaport of Kolkata via Sittwe port in Myanmar by sea.



- India-Myanmar Bilateral Army Exercise (**IMBAX**) is building and promoting closer relations between the two armies.
- India has extended **USD 2 billion in soft loans**. India has provided Myanmar with developmental assistance in the areas it wants rather than be prescriptive.
- India and Myanmar share cultural ties in terms of Buddhist heritage and shared history of British colonialism.
- People of Indian Origin constitute about **4 %** of the total population in Myanmar.

3. India welcomes steps by Taliban to restore assets to minorities- - The Hindu

Relevance: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

News: India has welcomed the Taliban's initiative to restore property to the minority Sikhs and Hindus of Afghanistan.

Key Highlights:

- In a bid to cleanse Afghanistan's major cities the 'Justice Ministry' of the Taliban administration in Kabul recently, has initiated a **large scale crackdown**
- Narender Singh Khalsa, a Sikh leader from Afghanistan, has returned to Kabul after the Taliban assured him and other members of the minority religious communities that their property rights would be safeguarded.
- With steps like **restoring property** of the Sikhs, Hindus and also of other Afghans who lost property in the decades beginning with the Soviet occupation and the warlord culture
- Taliban want to be seen as **rational actors and convey a message to the world at large which has so far blacklisted them**

India - Afghanistan Relations:

- India Afghanistan share rich historical ties with Afghanistan, **since the Harrappan Civilisation**.
- The Mountain passes of Hindu-Kush region have been the gateway to Indian subcontinent throughout Centuries.

Prelims Takeaway

- Delaram Zaranj Highway
- Selma/hajigak

- In the current scenario India seeks a cordial relationship with Afghanistan as an important regional **partner in South Asia**, and is committed to supporting Afghanistan's efforts towards peace, stability, and development.
- **It has financed and built significant projects such as:**
 - **Delaram Zaranj Highway**, Parliament Building, India Afghanistan Friendship Dam/Selma Dam
 - **Air Freight Corridor for Afghan Exports**, Transmission lines to Kabul, 800MW power plant and 6 MT steel plant by SAIL.
- However, with the revival of Taliban regime India's major concern is Revival of terrorism (Haqqani network) as well as Threat to financial and strategic investments in Afghanistan.
- However, the people of Afghanistan have immense respect for Indians, which is why Taliban has not shied away from garnering support from Indian Government
- **India has been Training Afghan diplomats** of the new regime in New Delhi, India has also committed over 3 billion US\$ for development efforts in Afghanistan.



4. Is transparency lacking in candidate disclosure? - The Hindu

Relevance: Salient Features of the Representation of People's Act.

News:

- **The Supreme Court** recently held that candidates need not disclose every piece of information and possession in their election **affidavit** unless it is substantial in nature.

Legal Provisions:

- **RPA 1951:** Section 33 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act) read with rule 4A of election rules, requires every contesting candidate to file their nomination paper for elections along with an Affidavit.
- **Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) Vs Union of India (2002):**

Prelims Takeaway

- RPA, 1951
- ECI

- The Supreme Court held that voters have the right to know about the criminal records, income and Assets of candidates along with their educational qualification.
- This judgement resulted in Section 33A being added to the RP Act that requires details of criminal records to be part of the election affidavit.
- **Section 125A** of the RP Act provides that failure to furnish required information, giving false information or concealing any information in the nomination paper or affidavit shall be punishable with imprisonment up to six months or fine or both.
- **In Public Interest Foundation Vs Union of India (2018)** it was directed that both candidates as well as political parties to declare about criminal records of candidates
 - at least three times before the election, in local newspapers and electronic media.

Recommendations by Election Commission and Law Commission in its 244th report:

- The conviction for filing a false affidavit should be a minimum of 2 years imprisonment and be a ground for disqualification.
- The Trials of such cases on a must be conducted on daily basis
- Persons charged by a competent court with offences punishable by imprisonment of at least 5 years should be debarred from contesting in the elections provided the case is filed at least 6 months before the election in question.

5. Hindus must seek permission to convert to Buddhism, says Gujarat govt - The Hindu

Relevance: Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

Prelims Takeaway

- FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

News:

- The Gujarat government has released a circular clarifying the recognition of Buddhism as an independent religion.
- It said that conversions from Hinduism to Buddhism, Jainism, or Sikhism must receive prior approval from the relevant district magistrate in accordance with the Gujarat Freedom of Religion Act, 2003.

LAW RELATED TO CONVERSION IN INDIA

- **Article 25 (FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT):** people have the freedom to practice, profess, and propagate any religion.
- Religious groups also have the right to govern their own religious affairs, as long as they abide by public morality, health, and order.
- There are currently **no national restrictions** or regulations on religious conversions in India.
- several states have enacted “Freedom of Religion” laws over the years to prohibit forced, fraudulent, or coerced conversions.
- In general, anti-conversion laws in India require individuals who wish to convert to another religion to obtain government permission beforehand.
- Some states have stricter laws than others, and some laws specifically target certain religious groups or activities.

S. Pushpabai vs. C.T. Selvaraj:

- The Supreme Court affirmed that provided the conversion is genuine and voluntary, individuals have the right to convert to another religion
- It emphasized that any form of coercion or misrepresentation in connection with religious conversions violates the freedom of religion.

6. What is the 'Adjudicating Authority' that has confirmed ED's attachment of Rahul-Sonia-promoted company's assets? - Indian Express

Relevance: Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies. assessment.

News:

- **The Adjudicating Authority** under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (**PMLA**) confirmed the attachment of assets worth Rs 751.9 crore belonging to newspaper community

An adjudicating authority

- It is appointed by the Indian government, reviews property seizures by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) within 180 days.
- The **ED can seize property** suspected to be linked to money laundering crimes.
- The ED seizes the property for 6 months (180 days) to prevent its disappearance before a trial.
- An adjudicating authority decides if the seizure is valid. If not, the property goes back to the owner.
- If the authority approves the seizure, the owner can appeal the decision through multiple courts.
- The property remains frozen until the legal process is complete.
- In the worst-case scenario, if convicted, the owner loses the property permanently to the government.
- This process can take years, leaving the seized property unusable and potentially damaged.

The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA)

- It is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to prevent money laundering and provide for the confiscation of property derived from money laundering.
- Section 45 provides for bail on money laundering charges.
- This provision in the law, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
- However, there is a crucial exception to the bail standard.
- "Provided that a person, who is under the age of sixteen years or is a woman or is sick or infirm, may be released on bail, if the Special Court so directs," the law says.
- This exception is similar to exemptions under the Indian Penal Code for women and minors.

Prelims Takeaway

- UAPA
- PMLA

GS III

7. Risky premise: Policymakers must simplify trade rules to boost exports - The Hindu

Relevance: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

News:

- Recently, **Asian Development Bank revised its forecast**.
- India's Policymakers must simplify trade rules to boost exports and increase GDP growth.

Key highlights

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) raised its forecast for India's GDP growth in the current fiscal year ending on March 31, 2025, to **7%, from 6.7%**.
- The growth is premised upon investments by public and private sectors and expectations of a gradual improvement in consumer demand, as the rural economy is pushing growth.
- ADB also projected that India's economy would expand by 7.2% in fiscal 2025-26.

Asian Development Bank (ADB):

- ADB was founded in **1966**, headquartered in **Manilla** to provide inclusivity, resilience, sustainability and eradication of poverty from Asia and pacific region.

Prelims Takeaway

- ADB
- GDP

- **ADB has 67 members from Asia-Pacific region** and the organisation functions similar to World Bank.
- It has created **Strategy 2030**, by which ADB targets to eradicate extreme poverty and expand its vision to achieve a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific.
- **India is a founding member** of the Asian Development Bank.

8. Industrial production rises to a four-month high of 5.7% in February - Economic Times

Relevance: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

News:

- **The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) in India rose 5.7 per cent** as per the data provided by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)

The IIP

- It is published monthly by a government agency, tracks changes in industrial activity like mining, manufacturing, and electricity.
- It compares **production levels to a baseline year (2011-2012)**
- There's a delay of six weeks before the data is released.
- The IIP also breaks down production into categories like basic goods and machinery.
- Eight key industries make up a significant portion of the IIP.

Consumer Price Index (CPI),

- A consumer price index (CPI) is a price index, the price of a weighted average market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households.
- Changes in measured CPI track changes in prices over time.
- The CPI is **calculated by using a representative basket of goods and services.**
- The basket is updated periodically to reflect changes in consumer spending habits.
- Changes in the CPI can be used to track inflation over time and to compare inflation rates between different countries.
- The **National Statistical Office (NSO)**, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation releases CPI.
- The CPI is not a perfect measure of inflation or the cost of living, but it is a useful tool for tracking these economic indicators.

Prelims Takeaway

- CPI
- WPI

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

9. Why Andaman and Nicobar Islands are key to Indo-Pacific security- Indian Express

Relevance: Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

context:

- The aftermath of the 1857 War of Independence saw the British establish a penal colony in the Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) islands, where many Indian revolutionaries and freedom fighters were incarcerated for life.
- Recent reports regarding the government's heightened security focus on these strategic islands are to be welcomed, especially because in the past, these islands nearly slipped from India's grasp.

Liberated by INA

- In February 1942, just a month after the fall of Singapore, the islands were occupied by the Japanese as a prospective springboard for the invasion of India.
- Towards the end of 1943, they became the first part of India to be “liberated” from British rule, when Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose visited Port Blair and hoisted the INA tricolour.
- However, this was mere symbolism because the British reoccupied the A&N after the Japanese surrender in 1945.
- After independence, island came o indian part

After Kargil War

- In 2001, the post-Kargil War security review saw the establishment of India's first joint/unified operational command — the Andaman Nicobar Command (ANC) in Port Blair.
- Only 31 of the archipelago's 836 islands and islets are inhabited.
- This means there is a possibility of surreptitious occupation — a la “Kargil heights” — by a covetous neighbour.

A theatre command

- To obviate the possibility of intrusions by state and non-state entities, ANC will need to maintain three-dimensional maritime domain awareness through networked assets, including radars, aircraft, satellites and unmanned vehicles.
- In context of the severe disruption and re-routing of shipping, occasioned by the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea
 - The Malacca Strait — more than 90,000 merchant ships carrying about 30 per cent of the world's traded goods pass through it every year
 - Presents a challenge as well as a latent opportunity for India.

Importance of the chain of islands

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are of great strategic importance since they straddle one of the busiest sea lanes in the world
- It give India the reach to monitor the flow of traffic from the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean) to the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) via the Strait of Malacca that's key to trade and oil shipments in the Indo-Pacific.
- Although the surface area of these islands is only 8,300 sq km, they add 300,000 sq km to India's exclusive economic zone with the promise of undersea hydrocarbon and mineral deposits.

Conclusion

- One hopes that the reported security infrastructure upgradation is part of a cohesive strategy, which aims to convert the A&N islands into a formidable maritime bastion that will not only extend India's defensive perimeter but also bestow the ability to project power or extend a hand of friendship to maritime neighbours.

10. India-China border dispute: Beyond the hype, the reality of the LAC- Indian Express

Relevance: Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

context:

- Ladakh certainly has been and will continue to remain a serious flashpoint.
- There are no borders here except a 1,597 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC), a notional demarcation separating India and China since 1962. Even the LAC is not well defined.

Key highlights

- Both countries have differing perceptions.
- The patrolling is done till 65 earmarked Patrol Points (PPs) stretching from Karakoram to Chumur.
- The recent dispute points occurred at PP9, 10, 11, 12, 12A and 13 in Depsang, PP14 in Galwan, PP15 and PP16 in Hot Springs/ Chang Chenmo, and PP17 and 17A in Gogra.

Chushul-Pangong Sector

- In the Chushul-Pangong sector, the situation in the Sirijap range on the north bank of Pangong, where Finger series 1 to 8 jut out, is stable.
- In May 2020, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered the Finger 3-4 area to prevent Indian troops from patrolling.
- After the disengagement agreement in February 2021, the status quo prior to May 2020 is being restored.

Kailash Range

- In the Kailash range, the PLA's provocative move in early September 2020 to capture Nyanlung Yokma/Gongma or the Kailash Heights, at an altitude of 15,000 feet located between Pangong Tso and Spangur Gap
 - was foiled by the Indian Army in a major pre-emptive strategic manoeuvring.

Chang Chenmo Valley

- PLA's intrusions in Galwan Valley, Changlung Nalla, Hot Springs and Kongrung Nalla of Chang Chenmo Valley, where it had created area denial for Indian troops, are also relatively peaceful now.
- The situation in the Gogra-Hot Springs area remained volatile until September 8, 2022, when both sides agreed to disengage.

Depsang and Demchok

- Currently, only Depsang and Demchok remain points of friction, predating the 2020 stand-off.
- The Shyam Saran Report of August 2013 made a chilling revelation of India having lost 640 sq km area due to "area denial" by the PLA.
- Experts suggest that the Chinese are in control of 600-800 sq km of the southern half of Depsang Plains.
 - complete disengagement has been elusive.

Infrastructure upgrades

- Earlier, the Chinese bullied and coerced India because of the latter's lax attitude and grabbed a chunk of Ladakh territory between the 1960s and 1990s.
- government has fast-tracked the connectivity projects, including the 260 km long Shyok-DBO road that was completed on a war footing.
- DBO can be reached from Dorbuk in eight hours now, which gives Indian troops a major advantage in the difficult terrain.

Conclusion

- Technically, there has been no intrusion on Indian side of the LAC.
- The discrepancies have occurred only in the grey-zone patrolling areas due to differences in LAC perception.
- Both sides should grasp fresh opportunities to revive the stalled process of clarifying the LAC after the new government is formed in New Delhi.



Quick Look

1. Doctrine of Harmonious Construction

- It is an essential rule for interpreting statutes. It states that when there's a conflict between two or more statutes or between different parts or provisions of a statute, we should interpret them in a way that harmonises them.
- It means that when there are inconsistencies, we should try to reconcile the conflicting parts so that one part doesn't negate the purpose of another.
- It is rooted in the fundamental legal principle that every statute is created with a specific purpose and intent. Therefore, it should be understood as a whole.
- But when two provisions are contradictory, it may not be possible to effectuate both of them, and as a result, one will be rendered futile as against the settled basic principle of 'ut res magis valeat quam pereat' (that a thing is better understood so that it may have an effect than that it should be made void).

2. Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS)

- Location: It is located in Wayanad, Kerala, in the southern trenches of the Western Ghats. It is a part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- It is bordered by the protected areas of Nagarhole and Bandipur in Karnataka on the northeastern side and Mudumalai in Tamil Nadu on the southeastern side.
- Tribes living in these forests include some scheduled adivasis, such as Paniyas, Kattunaikkans, Kurumas, Ooralis, Adiyans, and Kurichiyas.

3. Sungrazing Comets

- Sungrazing comets are a special class of comets that come very close to the sun at their nearest approach, a point called perihelion.
- To be considered a sungrazer, a comet needs to get within about 850,000 miles from the sun at perihelion. Many come even closer, even to within a few thousand miles.
- Being so close to the sun is very hard on comets for many reasons.
- They are subjected to a lot of solar radiation, which boils off their water or other volatiles.
- The physical push of the radiation and the solar wind also helps form the tails.
- As they get closer to the sun, the comets experience extremely strong tidal forces or gravitational stress.
- In this hostile environment, many sungrazers do not survive their trip around the sun.

4. Fractal

- It is a never-ending pattern which is infinitely complex and self-similar across different scales. They are created by repeating a simple process over and over in an ongoing feedback loop.
- In essence, a fractal is a pattern that repeats forever, and every part of the fractal, regardless of how zoomed in or zoomed out you are, it looks very similar to the whole image.
- Fractals are distinct from the simple figures of classical, or Euclidean, geometry—the square, the circle, the sphere and so forth.

5. Methanol

- It appears as a colorless fairly volatile liquid with a faintly sweet pungent odor like that of ethyl alcohol. It is also known as wood alcohol. It can completely mix with water.
- **Production:** Preparing methanol is based on the direct combination of carbon monoxide gas and hydrogen in the presence of a catalyst. Increasingly, syngas, a mixture of hydrogen and carbon monoxide derived from biomass, is used for methanol production.
- **Benefits:**
 - Lower production costs – Methanol is cheap to produce relative to other alternative fuels.
 - Improved safety – Methanol has a lower risk of flammability compared to gasoline.
 - Increased energy security – Methanol can be manufactured from a variety of domestic carbon-based feedstocks, such as biomass, natural gas and coal.



Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following pairs:

Mountain	Country
1. Mt Etna	Greece
2. Stromboli	Italy
3. Pacaya	Guatemala

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding Kaladan Multimodal project

1. It connects Myanmar port Sittwe to Zorinpui in Tripura
2. NHAI is the Project Development consultant appointed by MEA
3. The project is to provide an alternate access route to the North-Eastern region of India

How many statements given above are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q3. Consider the following Indian projects in Afghanistan:

Site in news	Country
1. Myawaddy	Myanmar
2. Selma	Pakistan
3. Pul-e Khumri	Afghanistan

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q4. Consider the following statements about Elections-

1. Candidates must file Affidavit along with Nomination Papers in Accordance to RPA, 1950
2. The Model Code of Conduct has Statutory backing by RPA, 1951
3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.

How many statements given above are correctly matched?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q5. Consider the following statements

Statement I: Parliament has enacted anti conversion law to prohibit forced, fraudulent, or coerced conversions.

Statement II: The Supreme Court affirmed that provided the conversion is genuine and voluntary, individuals have the right to convert to another religion

Which one of the following statements is correct?

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

Q6. Consider the following statements

1. For prevention of money laundering, there is separate provision in constitution
2. stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
3. If anyone under the age of sixteen years or is a woman or is sick or infirm, may be released on bail, if the Special Court so directs

How many of the statements given above is/are INCORRECT?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q7. Consider the following statements about Asian Development Bank (ADB)

1. It was established in the year 1966, with head office at Manila (Philippines). It has 67 members from the Asia Pacific region.
2. Japan holds the largest share in ADB with 15.677%, followed by U.S.A (15.567%), China (6.473%), and India (5.812%).
3. The aim of the ADB is social development by reducing poverty in the Asia Pacific with inclusive growth, sustainable growth, and regional integration.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q8. Consider the following statements about Consumer Price Index (CPI),

1. Changes in the CPI can be used to track inflation over time and to compare inflation rates between different countries.
2. The National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation releases CPI.
3. The CPI is not a perfect measure of inflation or the cost of living, but it is a useful tool for tracking these economic indicators.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q9. Consider the following pairs Region in news : countries

1. Chushul : India
2. Gelephu : United Kingdom
3. Okinawa : USA

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q10. Consider the following statements

Statement I: Andaman and nicobar is strategically important as it give India the reach to monitor the flow of traffic from the South China Sea to the Andaman Sea via the Strait of Malacca

Statement II: The islands add 200 nautical mile to contiguous zone of India

Which one of the following statements is correct?

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

Prelims Track Answer

Answer 1 Option B is Correct

Explanation-

- Volcanic vortex rings have been observed at volcanoes such as:
 - **Mt Etna in Sicily (Italy) Hence Pair 1 INcorrect**, Redoubt in Alaska, Tungurahua in Ecuador, **Pacaya in Guatemala, Hence Pair 3 is Correct**, Eyjafjallajökull and Hekla in Iceland, **Stromboli in Italy, Hence Pair 2 is Correct**, Aso and Sakurajima in Japan.
 - Mt. Etna is also recognised as World Heritage Site by UNESCO

Answer 2 Option A is Correct

Explanation

- The Kaladan Multimodal Project reaches the southern tip of **Mizoram Zorinpui, Hence Statement 1 is INcorrect**
- **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** is the Project Development Consultant (PDC) appointed by the MEA in 2009 for the implementation of the Port & IWT components, **Hence Statement 2 is INcorrect.**
- The sole route from the rest of India to this region at the moment is a fairly sensitive one through a small section of Indian territory in West Bengal known as the Chicken's Neck Corridor between Bhutan and Bangladesh. With the new Sittwe route, traveling from **Kolkata to Zorinpui, Mizoram** and beyond would be cheaper and shorter in both cost and mileage. **Hence Statement 3 is Correct**

Answer 3 Option B is Correct

Explanation-

- Myawaddy is a town in southeastern Myanmar, in Kayin State, close to the border with Thailand. **Hence, pair 1 is correct.**
- Power Grid Corporation has completed work on the 202 km long 220 kV double circuit **transmission line from Pul-e-Khumri to Kabul in Afghanistan. Hence, pair 3 is correct.**
- Afghan-India Friendship Dam, formerly Salma Dam, is a hydroelectric and irrigation dam project located on the Hari River in Chishti Sharif District of Herat Province in western Afghanistan **Hence, pair 3 is incorrect.**

Answer 4 Option A is Correct

Explanation-

- **According to RPA 1951:** Section 33 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 read with rule 4A of election rules, requires every contesting candidate to file their nomination paper for elections along with an Affidavit, **hence Statement 1 is Incorrect.**
- Model code of Conduct has no Statutory backing, it relies on Moral suasion and Public Cooperation, **Hence Statement 2 is Incorrect**
- Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties, **Hence Statement 3 is Correct.**

Answer 5 Option B is correct.

Explanations

- Article 25 (FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT): people have the freedom to practice, profess, and propagate any religion.
- Religious groups also have the right to govern their own religious affairs, as long as they abide by public morality, health, and order.
- There are currently no national restrictions or regulations on religious conversions in India. **Hence, statement 1 is INcorrect**
- several states have enacted "Freedom of Religion" laws over the years to prohibit forced, fraudulent, or coerced conversions.
- In general, anti-conversion laws in India require individuals who wish to convert to another religion to obtain government permission beforehand.
- Some states have stricter laws than others, and some laws specifically target certain religious groups or activities.
- S. Pushabai vs. C.T. Selvaraj:
- The Supreme Court affirmed that provided the conversion is genuine and voluntary, individuals have the right to convert to another religion **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

Answer 6 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to prevent money laundering and provide for the confiscation of property derived from money laundering. **Hence statements 1 IS INcorrect**

- Section 45 provides for bail on money laundering charges.
- This provision in the law, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
- However, there is a crucial exception to the bail standard.
- “Provided that a person, who is under the age of sixteen years or is a woman or is sick or infirm, may be released on bail, if the Special Court so directs,” the law says.
- This exception is similar to exemptions under the Indian Penal Code for women and minors. **Hence statement 2 & 3 are correct**

Answer 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- It was established in the year 1966, with head office at Manila (Philippines). It has 67 members from the Asia Pacific region.
- This bank was modeled on the lines of the world bank.
- Japan holds the largest share in ADB with 15.677%, followed by U.S.A (15.567%), China (6.473%), and India (5.812%).
- The aim of the ADB is social development by reducing poverty in the Asia Pacific with inclusive growth, sustainable growth, and regional integration.
- This is carried out through an 80% investment in the public sector. **Hence all statements are correct**

Answer 8 Option C is correct

Explanation

- A consumer price index (CPI) is a price index, the price of a weighted average market basket of consumer goods and services purchased by households.
- Changes in measured CPI track changes in prices over time.
- The CPI is calculated by using a representative basket of goods and services.

- The basket is updated periodically to reflect changes in consumer spending habits.
- Changes in the CPI can be used to track inflation over time and to compare inflation rates between different countries.
- The National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation releases CPI.
- The CPI is not a perfect measure of inflation or the cost of living, but it is a useful tool for tracking these economic indicators. **Hence all statements are correct**

Answer 9 Option A is correct.

Explanations

- The final major clash of World War II, raged for over 80 days in 1945.
- US forces fought to capture Okinawa, a strategically located island close to mainland Japan, from a determined Japanese defense. OKINAWA is in Japan
- Chushul is a village in the Leh district of Ladakh, India. It is located in the Durbuk tehsil, in the area known as "Chushul Valley."
- The King of Bhutan paid a visit to India in November 2023 during which he hinted at his plans for a Mindfulness City at Gelephu in southern Bhutan. Gelephu is in Bhutan.

• **Hence only one pair is correct**

Answer 10 Option A is correct.

Explanations

- It give India the reach to monitor the flow of traffic from the South China Sea (Pacific Ocean) to the Andaman Sea (Indian Ocean) via the Strait of Malacca that's key to trade and oil shipments in the Indo-Pacific. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- Although the surface area of these islands is only 8,300 sq km, they add 300,000 sq km to India's exclusive economic zone with the promise of undersea hydrocarbon and mineral deposits. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect**



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 +91-9477560001 /002/005

 BRANCH: Delhi Kolkata, Raipur, Patna |
HEAD OFFICE: 641, Ramlal Kapoor Marg,
Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi, 110009

 info@geoias.com

 www.geoias.com