

THE PALA CIVIL TIMES



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New Inclusion



**PYQ
COMPASS**
UPSC PREVIOUS YEARS QUESTIONS

Practice questions

A dedicated section featuring UPSC-style Prelims and Mains practice questions based on the major issues, concepts, and debates discussed in today's newspaper.

EDITORIALS DECODED FOR UPSC



Partial digitisation

Cumbersome processes from analogue era remain despite more online services



Beneath camouflage: Questions for HDFC



No marks

CBSE online evaluation fiasco, deeply unfortunate

Snapshot

When it comes to shaping the dynamics of India's constitutional framework, the Supreme Court consistently establishes itself as the rightful custodian of the Constitution. In its latest judgment validating the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, the Court emphatically reaffirmed the powers and constitutional role of the nation's apex election management body, the Election Commission of India. At the State level, Assam marked a significant legislative development with the passage of its comprehensive Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill. In another important judgment, the apex court also upheld the imposition of GST on online gaming platforms. Today's edition of the Pala Civil Times therefore brings you a mixtape of dynamic developments from India and the wider world alike, focusing on provisions, policies, and events that are likely to create long-term institutional and societal impact. Read the edition thoroughly and analyse the developments to understand the evolving world better.

SC upholds SIR, says it is EC's constitutional duty

The Supreme Court of India upheld the constitutional validity of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls conducted by the Election Commission of India (ECI). The Court held that accurate and updated electoral rolls are essential for ensuring free and fair elections. It observed that electoral integrity depends not only on polling procedures but also on maintaining a reliable voter database forming the foundation of democratic governance.

Citizenship Verification and EC's Constitutional Powers

Petitioners argued that the SIR exercise functioned as a backdoor citizenship screening mechanism targeting alleged "non-citizens" in the electoral rolls. The Court rejected this argument, stating that citizenship is a necessary precondition for voter enrolment. It clarified that the ECI possesses constitutional authority under Article 324 to examine citizenship-related questions to the limited extent necessary for inclusion or exclusion from electoral rolls during revision exercises.

Court's Response to "Arbitrary Exclusion"

Concerns were raised that genuine voters could be arbitrarily deleted from electoral rolls during the revision process. The Court responded by directing that individuals removed from the Bihar electoral roll on citizenship grounds be referred to competent authorities under the Citizenship Act for adjudication within four weeks. It further held that voters wrongly excluded due to duplication, migration, absence, or procedural errors could challenge such decisions before courts and seek restoration if found eligible.

Justification for Conducting the SIR Exercise

Petitioners questioned the empirical basis of the SIR exercise and argued that it lacked sufficient justification. The Court disagreed, observing that rapid urbanisation, migration, duplication of entries, non-reporting of deaths, and large-scale changes in population patterns justified periodic intensive revision of electoral rolls. It described the electoral roll as a dynamic document requiring regular updating to preserve electoral purity, administrative accuracy, and democratic legitimacy.

Constitutional Significance of the Judgment

The judgment reaffirmed that the ECI's powers under Article 324 constitute a continuous constitutional authority to supervise all aspects of the electoral process. The Court clarified that the SIR exercise does not override the Representation of the People Act or the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, but rather complements them in fulfilling the constitutional mandate of free and fair elections. The ruling is expected to influence similar electoral revision exercises in other States and Union Territories.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



PYQ
COMPASS

Q.) Discuss the role of the Election Commission of India in light of the evolution of the Model Code of Conduct. (GS II - Indian constitution - 2022)

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls upheld by the Supreme Court of India in 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court held that preparation and revision of accurate electoral rolls form an essential component of free and fair elections.
2. The Court ruled that the Election Commission of India has no authority to examine citizenship-related questions during electoral roll revision.
3. The Court observed that the powers of the Election Commission under Article 324 complement the provisions of the Representation of the People Act and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.
4. The Court directed that individuals removed from electoral rolls on citizenship grounds must be given an opportunity for adjudication under the Citizenship Act.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

RELEVANCE

GS II : Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary

Assam Assembly passes UCC Bill

The Assam Assembly passed the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill, 2026, aimed at regulating matters relating to marriage, divorce, succession, and live-in relationships. The legislation seeks to establish a common legal framework in selected civil matters while promoting uniformity in personal laws. The Bill was passed two days after it was tabled in the House, where concerns were raised regarding consultations, applicability, and constitutional implications.

Focus on Gender Justice and Social Reform

The Bill places strong emphasis on women's rights and social reform measures. Key provisions include prohibition of child marriage and polygamy, compulsory registration of marriages and divorces, uniform grounds for divorce, and gender-equal inheritance rights among Class-I heirs in cases of intestate succession. The government has presented these measures as efforts to strengthen legal protection for women and ensure greater equality within family and inheritance laws.

Exemption for Scheduled Tribes

One of the most debated provisions of the Bill is the exemption granted to Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities. The exemption is linked to constitutional protections available under the Sixth Schedule, which empowers Autonomous District Councils to frame laws relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, and social customs.

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill passed in Assam in 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Bill includes provisions relating to marriage, divorce, succession, and regulation of live-in relationships.
2. The Bill applies uniformly to all communities in the state without any constitutional exemptions.
3. The legislation mandates registration of marriages, divorces, and live-in relationships.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Regulation of Live-in Relationships

A major feature of the Bill is the regulation of live-in relationships through mandatory registration before designated sub-registrars. The provisions extend even to residents of Assam living outside the state. The government argued that legal registration is necessary to ensure accountability, legal protection, and rights relating to maintenance, inheritance, and responsibilities arising from such relationships. However, concerns were raised regarding privacy, state oversight, and possible administrative intrusion into personal relationships.



Broader Debate

The Bill has triggered wider discussion regarding the balance between legal uniformity, individual liberty, gender justice, and protection of cultural diversity. Supporters view the legislation as an attempt to modernise civil laws and strengthen legal safeguards for women, while concerns continue regarding implementation, proportionality, and the scope of state regulation in personal matters.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Examine the scope of Fundamental Rights in the light of the latest judgement of the Supreme Court on Right to Privacy. (GS II - Indian Constitution - 2017)

Women live longer but spend more of those years with illness

Life Expectancy (LE) refers to the average number of years a person is expected to live, while Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE) is a metric that adjusts life expectancy by discounting the years spent with illness, disability, chronic pain, and poor health. Women consistently outlive men in terms of overall lifespan, yet they do not enjoy a proportionate advantage in healthy years. By 2023, women's life expectancy globally had reached 76 years compared to 71 years for men, but women's HALE stood at only 64 years, compared to 62 years for men. Despite living longer, women spend a larger share of their lives living with disease, untreated conditions, and pain.

Why Women Live Longer Than Men

Men experience significantly higher death rates from cardiovascular diseases, stroke, chronic lung diseases, accidents, interpersonal violence, and suicide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), lower mortality from ischaemic heart disease alone adds nearly 0.63 healthy years to women's lives, while lower mortality from other major conditions further strengthens this advantage. During the COVID-19 pandemic, men died at substantially higher rates than women, which temporarily increased women's survival advantage by adding nearly 0.89 years to women's HALE advantage over men. However, this survival advantage did not substantially improve women's overall HALE, as rising mental health burdens and chronic morbidity neutralized these gains.

The Indian Context: A Deeper Structural Challenge

According to the WHO Global Health Statistics Report 2026, nearly **53.7%** of Indian women of reproductive age are anaemic — almost double the global average. Chronic anaemia reduces productivity, weakens immunity, increases maternal health risks, and contributes to long-term fatigue and poor quality of life. Gender-based violence remains another major hidden determinant of women's health. **One in five partnered Indian women reportedly faces intimate partner violence annually**, almost double the global figure. Such violence contributes to trauma, depression, anxiety, and long-term psychological distress.

Financial barriers : Nearly one-third of Indian households spend over 40% of their discretionary income on healthcare, making sustained treatment unaffordable for many families. As a result, women's chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, and reproductive disorders often remain untreated or neglected, which significantly reduce mobility, productivity, economic participation, and overall human development.

The global women's health paradox demonstrates that longer life does not automatically translate into healthier life.

The Hidden Health Crisis Behind Women's Longer Lives

Women suffer disproportionately from chronic pain disorders, reproductive health conditions, mental health struggles, and untreated illnesses that may not immediately cause death but severely reduce quality of life. Back and neck pain alone reduce women's healthy lifespan by 0.44 years globally. Depressive disorders and anxiety further reduce healthy years by 0.21 and 0.16 years respectively. Many of these conditions remain underdiagnosed, underfunded, and socially neglected.

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to Life Expectancy (LE) and Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE), consider the following statements:

1. Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE) measures the average number of years a person is expected to live after excluding years spent with illness, disability, and poor health.
2. Women across the world generally enjoy a proportionately larger advantage in Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE) than in overall Life Expectancy (LE).
3. Lower mortality from cardiovascular diseases, accidents, violence, and suicide contributes significantly to higher female life expectancy.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Explain why suicide among young women is increasing in Indian society. (GS II - Indian Society - 2023)

Q.) In order to enhance the prospects of social development, sound and adequate health care policies are needed particularly in the fields of geriatric and maternal health care. Discuss. (GS II - Social Justice - 2020)

RELEVANCE : GS I : Role of women and women's organization, population and associated issues, poverty and developmental issues

Partial digitisation (The Hindu 28-05-2026)

Digitisation of citizen services has emerged as an important tool for improving governance, transparency, and public convenience. Online delivery of services reduces physical interaction with government offices, thereby limiting delays and corruption. Faceless and paperless systems also make services more accessible and efficient for citizens. Countries such as Estonia have demonstrated the potential of complete digital governance by digitising even sensitive processes like divorce registration. In India too, initiatives such as digital public infrastructure, DigiLocker, Aadhaar, and online citizen-service portals reflect the growing shift towards technology-driven governance.



Challenges in India's Digital Service Delivery

Many online systems suffer from poor reliability, server failures, weak user interface design, and repeated submission of the same personal details despite integration platforms like DigiLocker. Minor spelling mismatches or document inconsistencies often force citizens to restart entire application processes without any correction mechanism. Accessibility remains another major concern, as many portals are not designed in a user-friendly manner, leaving elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and digitally unskilled citizens dependent on middlemen or outside assistance.

India's digital governance framework requires a stronger focus on citizen-centric service delivery rather than mere digitisation of procedures. Improving cybersecurity infrastructure, strengthening institutions like CERT-In, ensuring regular system maintenance, and designing accessible and intuitive portals are essential for building trust in digital governance.

Cybersecurity Concerns & the Role of CERT-In

The rapid expansion of digital governance has increased concerns regarding cybersecurity and data protection. Sensitive citizen data stored in public databases often remains vulnerable to cyber threats, data leaks, and unauthorized access. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) responsible for strengthening India's cybersecurity response framework have frequently faced criticism for failing to adequately address emerging cyber vulnerabilities and infrastructure risks.

Case study : e-SANAD

The Ministry of External Affairs launched the e-SANAD portal in coordination with the National Informatics Centre to provide a centralized, contactless, faceless, and paperless platform for document verification and apostille services for Indians living in India and abroad. However, several States are yet to be fully onboarded, forcing many applicants to depend on middlemen and offline verification processes. As a result, the intended ease of digital service delivery often remains incomplete in practice.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



- Q.) Consider the following statements: (2020)
1. Aadhaar metadata cannot be stored for more than three months.
 2. The state cannot enter into any contract with private corporations for sharing of Aadhaar data.
 3. Aadhaar is mandatory for obtaining insurance products.
 4. Aadhaar is mandatory for getting benefits funded out of the Consolidated fund of India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 4 only
 (b) 2 and 4 only
 (c) 3 only
 (d) 1, 2 and 3 only

Practice questions

- Q.) With reference to digital governance and citizen service delivery in India, consider the following statements:
1. The e-SANAD portal was launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to provide digital payment services for Indians travelling abroad.
 2. CERT-In is India's nodal agency responsible for responding to cybersecurity incidents and strengthening cyber resilience.
 3. Documents apostilled through the e-SANAD system are recognized only in countries that are part of the Hague Convention framework.
- 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

RELEVANCE : GS II : Government policies and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Beneath camouflage: Questions for HDFC(Indian Express - 28-05-2026)

An investigation by The Indian Express alleged that HDFC Bank routed nearly ₹45 crore through its marketing department to provide “differential interest” to the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation on large deposits during FY2024–25. Instead of directly crediting the amount as interest, the money was reportedly disguised as expenditure for a road safety awareness campaign through local vendors. The bank’s internal vigilance inquiry allegedly found that senior management personnel were aware of the arrangement, raising concerns about compliance and transparency in banking operations.

Corporate Governance Concerns

The episode has triggered serious concerns regarding corporate governance and ethical banking practices. Questions have emerged over why a leading private-sector bank allegedly attempted to bypass regulatory norms to attract deposits from a government-owned corporation. The sudden resignation of former chairman Atanu Chakraborty, citing practices inconsistent with his ethical values, intensified scrutiny. The issue highlights the importance of internal accountability, independent audit mechanisms, and ethical leadership in financial institutions that manage large public and private deposits.

Banking and Economic Significance

The controversy is important because public trust forms the foundation of the banking system. Any perception of preferential treatment or concealment of financial transactions can weaken depositor confidence and market credibility. Large banks play a critical role in financial intermediation, credit creation, and economic stability. If regulatory norms are bypassed to secure deposits, it may distort fair competition within the banking sector. The case also demonstrates how governance failures in systemically important banks can potentially affect investor sentiment and the broader financial ecosystem.

Key Legal and Regulatory Provisions

The allegations involve possible violations of provisions under the Banking Regulation Act and regulatory norms framed by the Reserve Bank of India. Banks are generally prohibited from offering negotiated or discriminatory interest rates to select depositors outside prescribed rules. The matter also relates to principles of corporate governance, fiduciary responsibility, accounting transparency, and fair disclosure standards. The role of audit committees, vigilance investigations, and internal compliance systems has come under focus, along with the responsibility of boards to ensure adherence to ethical and regulatory standards.

Implications and Broader Lessons

The case underlines the need for stronger compliance culture and greater transparency in India’s banking sector. It may prompt stricter regulatory scrutiny of how banks manage institutional deposits and classify expenditures. The controversy also raises concerns about the relationship between public-sector entities and private financial institutions. For policymakers, the episode reinforces the importance of robust oversight, ethical corporate conduct, and timely regulatory intervention. More broadly, it serves as a reminder that long-term financial stability depends not only on profitability, but also on integrity, accountability, and public confidence.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) "Ethics encompasses several key dimensions that are crucial in guiding individuals and organizations towards morally responsible behaviour." Explain the key dimensions of ethics that influence human actions. Discuss how these dimensions shape ethical decision-making in the professional context.
 (GS IV - - 2024)

RELEVANCE

GS IV : Codes of Ethics, Work culture, Quality of service delivery

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to recent concerns regarding corporate governance in India’s banking sector, consider the following statements:

1. Banks are generally prohibited from offering discriminatory or negotiated interest rates to select depositors outside regulatory norms prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India.
 2. Under Indian banking regulations, marketing expenditures used to provide indirect financial benefits to depositors are fully exempt from regulatory scrutiny if approved internally by bank management. Which of the statements given above are correct?
- a) 1 only
 b) 2 only
 c) Both 1 and 2
 d) Neither 1 nor 2

No Marks (TH BusinessLine : 28-05-2026)

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) introduced the On-Screen Marking (OSM) system for Class 12 board examination evaluation in 2026 to improve transparency, speed, and efficiency in answer-sheet assessment. However, the rollout triggered major controversy due to poor scan quality, mismatched answer sheets, technical glitches, cybersecurity concerns, and allegations of inadequate testing. The episode has raised larger concerns regarding digital governance, cybersecurity preparedness, accountability, and the risks of poorly implemented technological reforms in high-stakes public examinations.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE	
<p>On-Screen Marking (OSM) : A digital evaluation system where physical answer sheets are scanned and assessed online by evaluators using computer screens.</p> <p>Coempt EduTeck : Technology vendor associated with implementation of the OSM system.</p> <p>Globarena Technologies : Earlier identity of Coempt EduTeck; previously linked to Telangana examination controversies.</p>	<p>Key Data points</p> <p>Around 98 lakh answer books were reportedly scanned under the OSM system.</p> <p>Nearly 1.96 crore pages were digitally processed.</p> <p>More than 68,000 answer books reportedly required rescanning due to poor image quality.</p> <p>Around 13,500 answer books reportedly underwent manual rechecking.</p> <p>Class 12 pass percentage reportedly declined to 85.20% in 2026.</p>
<p>Advantages of the OSM System</p> <p>Administrative Efficiency : Faster evaluation and result processing, Reduced physical transportation of answer sheets, and Automated mark calculation lowers arithmetic errors.</p> <p>Transparency and Standardisation : Enables digital tracking and audit trails, reduces possibilities of physical tampering, and allows better monitoring of examiner performance.</p> <p>Long-Term Digital Governance Benefits : Supports paperless governance, potential integration with AI-based moderation systems, and easier archival and retrieval of records.</p>	<p>Major Concerns and Challenges</p> <p>Technical and Operational Failures : Poor scan quality, mismatched information, repeated portal crashes, login failures, and payment issues.</p> <p>Cybersecurity Risks : Allegations regarding a hardwired "master password" and possible unauthorized access exposed serious vulnerabilities in the program's cybersecurity preparedness.</p> <p>Evaluation and Human Concerns : Prolonged screen-based evaluation, difficulties in digitally standardising descriptive and interpretive answers, and weakening moderation systems increased the risk of evaluator fatigue.</p>

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) In India, it is legally mandatory for which of the following to report on cyber security incidents? (2017)

1. Service providers
2. Data centers
3. Body corporate

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to the On-Screen Marking (OSM) system introduced in board examination evaluation in India, consider the following statements:

1. One of the major objectives of OSM is to improve efficiency, transparency, and standardisation in the evaluation process.
2. Concerns raised regarding the OSM system included poor scan quality, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, and inadequate evaluator training.
3. Under the OSM system, descriptive subjects can be completely standardised through automation without requiring human interpretive judgement.

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

RELEVANCE

GS III : Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics

Organised online gaming comes under GST regime, states SC

The Supreme Court of India upheld the constitutional validity of the retrospective 28% GST levy on online gaming companies, dealing a major blow to India's real-money gaming industry. The Court held that online gaming activities involving monetary stakes on uncertain outcomes qualify as "betting and gambling" under the GST framework, thereby justifying taxation on such platforms. The ruling revives tax demands estimated at nearly **₹2.5 lakh crore** against gaming firms, fantasy sports platforms, and casinos.

Retrospective GST and Judicial Interpretation

Gaming companies argued that the 28% GST should apply only prospectively from October 1, 2023, after amendments approved by the GST Council came into force. However, the Court treated the 2023 amendments as "clarificatory" rather than introducing a new tax regime. This interpretation allowed retrospective application of GST liabilities on revenues earned before October 2023, validating tax notices issued earlier by GST authorities.

Full Face Value vs Gross Gaming Revenue

A major dispute involved whether GST should apply only to the platform fee or commission earned by gaming firms known as Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR) or on the entire pooled betting amount deposited by users. The Court ruled that real-money gaming involving uncertain outcomes qualifies as betting and gambling for GST purposes, irrespective of skill elements, thereby allowing taxation on the entire transaction value.

Logic Behind Restricting Online Gaming

The government justified stricter regulation and eventual prohibition of online money gaming on grounds of national security, financial crime, and consumer protection. Authorities highlighted concerns regarding money laundering, use of cryptocurrencies and digital wallets for illicit transactions, offshore platforms bypassing Indian laws, and possible misuse of gaming platforms by criminal or terror-linked networks. Concerns regarding addiction and protection of youth also shaped the government's regulatory approach.

Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming (PROG) Act, 2025

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming (PROG) Act, 2025 imposed a strict ban on online money gaming platforms in India, regardless of whether they involve skill or chance. The law prescribes imprisonment up to three years and fines up to ₹1 crore for operators violating the ban. Social media influencers promoting such platforms may face up to two years' imprisonment and ₹50 lakh penalty. The Act also prohibits banks and financial institutions from facilitating transactions linked to such gaming platforms.

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to the regulation and taxation of online gaming in India in 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court upheld only the prospective application of the 28% GST levy on online gaming companies.
2. GST shall be levied only on Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR) of bets and contest entry amounts.
3. According to the Supreme Court, real-money online games involving uncertain outcomes can be treated as betting and gambling for GST purposes.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q.) Consider the following items: (2018)

1. Cereal grains hulled
2. Chicken eggs cooked
3. Fish processed and canned
4. Newspapers containing advertising material

Which of the above items is/are exempted under GST (Goods and Services Tax)?

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

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, growth, development

NASA unveils plan for permanent lunar base

NASA has announced an ambitious long-term programme to establish a permanent human base on the moon as part of renewed lunar exploration efforts. NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman unveiled a proposed USD 20 billion plan aimed at creating sustainable infrastructure on the lunar surface. The initiative seeks to develop technologies and operational capabilities necessary for long-duration human presence beyond Earth. The programme reflects a major shift from short exploratory missions toward permanent extraterrestrial habitation and scientific experimentation.

Moon Base-I Mission and Features

The first phase, called Moon Base-I, is expected to launch no earlier than fall this year using Blue Origin's Blue Moon Mark 1 Endurance lander. The mission will transport scientific instruments and infrastructure components to the lunar surface. These include stereo cameras to study interactions between spacecraft thrusters and lunar soil, as well as laser retroreflective arrays for precision navigation and positioning. The mission is designed to generate data essential for future habitation, landing safety, and sustainable operations in the moon's harsh environment.

Follow-Up Missions and Lunar Mobility

NASA also announced the Moon Base-II mission, which will focus on enhancing mobility and operational capabilities on the moon. The mission will use Astrobotic's Griffin lander to deliver over 1,100 pounds of cargo, including Astrolab's FLIP rover. The rover is intended to test advanced mobility systems and support the development of future Lunar Terrain Vehicles (LTVs). These technologies are critical for transporting astronauts, scientific equipment, and supplies across the lunar surface during extended missions and future settlement activities.

Connection with the Artemis Programme

The announcement follows the successful Artemis II lunar flyaround mission, during which four astronauts travelled beyond low Earth orbit for the first time since the Apollo era. The Artemis programme forms the foundation of NASA's broader lunar exploration strategy and aims to land astronauts on the moon by 2028. By integrating crewed missions with robotic landers, rovers, and infrastructure development, NASA seeks to gradually establish a continuous human presence on the moon and prepare for eventual deep-space exploration missions.

Scientific and Strategic Significance

The lunar base initiative carries major scientific, technological, and geopolitical significance. Scientifically, it will enable experiments related to lunar geology, radiation exposure, resource utilisation, and long-term human survival in space. Technologically, it encourages innovation in robotics, navigation, propulsion, and habitat systems. Strategically, the programme reflects intensifying global competition in space exploration involving countries such as the United States and China.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. "The experiment will employ a trio of spacecraft flying in formation in the shape of an equilateral triangle that has sides one million kilometres long, with lasers shining between the craft." The experiment in question refers to: (2020)

- Voyager-2
- New horizons
- Lisa Pathfinder
- Evolved LISA

Practice questions

Q.) With reference to NASA's recent lunar exploration initiatives, consider the following statements:

- The proposed Moon Base-I mission is intended to support long-term human habitation and scientific operations on the lunar surface.
- The Moon Base-II mission focuses on developing lunar mobility technologies, including rover systems for future Lunar Terrain Vehicles (LTVs).
- The Artemis programme aims only at conducting short-duration lunar flyaround missions without plans for permanent human presence on the moon.
- NASA's lunar base initiative is expected to contribute to scientific research, technological innovation, and future deep-space exploration missions.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1, 2 and 4 only
- 2, 3 and 4 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 4

RELEVANCE

GS III : Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology.

Practice Questions and answers

Q.) With reference to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls upheld by the Supreme Court of India in 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court held that preparation and revision of accurate electoral rolls form an essential component of free and fair elections.
2. The Court ruled that the Election Commission of India has no authority to examine citizenship-related questions during electoral roll revision.
3. The Court observed that the powers of the Election Commission under Article 324 complement the provisions of the Representation of the People Act and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.
4. The Court directed that individuals removed from electoral rolls on citizenship grounds must be given an opportunity for adjudication under the Citizenship Act.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: B. 1, 3 and 4 only

Statement 1 is correct. The Supreme Court held that free and fair elections depend not only on polling procedures but also on the integrity, accuracy, and purity of electoral rolls.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Court clarified that the Election Commission of India (ECI) possesses authority under Article 324 to examine citizenship-related issues to the limited extent necessary for inclusion or exclusion from electoral rolls.

Statement 3 is correct. The Court stated that the SIR exercise does not replace or override the Representation of the People Act or the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, but rather operates in furtherance of the constitutional mandate under Article 324.

Statement 4 is also correct. The Court directed that individuals removed from electoral rolls on citizenship grounds must be referred to competent authorities under the Citizenship Act for adjudication, and their names should be restored if they are found to be citizens.

Q.) With reference to the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill passed in Assam in 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Bill includes provisions relating to marriage, divorce, succession, and regulation of live-in relationships.
2. The Bill applies uniformly to all communities in the state without any constitutional exemptions.
3. The legislation mandates registration of marriages, divorces, and live-in relationships.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c) 1 and 3 only

Statement 1 is correct because the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill passed in Assam includes provisions relating to marriage, divorce, succession, inheritance, and regulation of live-in relationships under a common legal framework.

Statement 2 is incorrect because the Bill does not apply uniformly to all communities. Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities have been exempted from its provisions in view of constitutional protections relating to tribal customs and autonomy under the Sixth Schedule framework.

Statement 3 is correct because the legislation mandates registration of marriages, divorces, and live-in relationships as part of its regulatory mechanism.

Practice Questions and answers

Q.) With reference to Life Expectancy (LE) and Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE), consider the following statements:

1. Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE) measures the average number of years a person is expected to live after excluding years spent with illness, disability, and poor health.
2. Women across the world generally enjoy a proportionately larger advantage in Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE) than in overall Life Expectancy (LE).
3. Lower mortality from cardiovascular diseases, accidents, violence, and suicide contributes significantly to higher female life expectancy.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans : (C) 1 and 3

Statement 1 is correct. Healthy Life Expectancy (HALE) is a WHO-linked indicator that measures not merely how long people live, but how many of those years are lived in good health after discounting years affected by illness, disability, chronic pain, or poor health conditions.

Statement 2 is incorrect. Although women generally live longer than men in terms of overall Life Expectancy (LE), this advantage narrows considerably when measured through HALE. Women spend a larger share of their longer lives dealing with chronic illnesses, reproductive health problems, pain disorders, and mental health conditions. Thus, their healthy-life advantage is proportionately smaller than their overall survival advantage.

Statement 3 is correct. Men experience significantly higher mortality from cardiovascular diseases, accidents, interpersonal violence, and suicide, which contributes substantially to women's higher life expectancy across the world.

Q.) With reference to digital governance and citizen service delivery in India, consider the following statements:

1. The e-SANAD portal was launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to provide digital payment services for Indians travelling abroad.
2. CERT-In is India's nodal agency responsible for responding to cybersecurity incidents and strengthening cyber resilience.
3. Documents apostilled through the e-SANAD system are recognized only in countries that are part of the Hague Convention framework.

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: C. 2 and 3 only

Statement 1 is incorrect. The e-SANAD portal was launched by the Ministry of External Affairs in coordination with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to provide online verification, attestation, and apostille services for documents required abroad.

Statement 2 is correct. Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) is India's nodal cybersecurity agency responsible for responding to cyber incidents and strengthening cyber resilience and digital security infrastructure.

Statement 3 is also correct. Apostilled documents issued through the e-SANAD system are recognized only in countries that are members of the Hague Convention framework.

Practice Questions and answers

Q.) With reference to recent concerns regarding corporate governance in India's banking sector, consider the following statements:

1. Banks are generally prohibited from offering discriminatory or negotiated interest rates to select depositors outside regulatory norms prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India.
2. Under Indian banking regulations, marketing expenditures used to provide indirect financial benefits to depositors are fully exempt from regulatory scrutiny if approved internally by bank management.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a) 1 only

Statement 1 is correct because banks are generally not permitted to offer discriminatory or specially negotiated interest rates to select depositors outside the regulatory framework prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India. Such practices may violate principles of fair competition, transparency, and banking regulation.

Statement 2 is incorrect because marketing expenditures or indirect financial arrangements are not automatically exempt from regulatory scrutiny merely due to internal approval by bank management. Banking operations remain subject to audit, compliance standards, regulatory oversight, and legal accountability under banking laws and RBI norms.

Q.) With reference to the On-Screen Marking (OSM) system introduced in board examination evaluation in India, consider the following statements:

1. One of the major objectives of OSM is to improve efficiency, transparency, and standardisation in the evaluation process.
2. Concerns raised regarding the OSM system included poor scan quality, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, and inadequate evaluator training.
3. Under the OSM system, descriptive subjects can be completely standardised through automation without requiring human interpretive judgement.

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: (a). 1, and 2 only

Statement 1 is correct. The reform was introduced to improve speed, transparency, efficiency, standardisation, and ease of evaluation while reducing physical handling and transportation of answer scripts.

Statement 2 is correct. The controversy surrounding the OSM system involved multiple concerns, including poor scan quality, mismatched answer sheets, repeated portal failures, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, and lack of adequate structured training for evaluators.

Statement 3 is incorrect. Descriptive subjects require interpretive human judgement and cannot be fully standardised through automation alone. Experts highlighted that prolonged screen-based checking and weak moderation systems could actually increase inconsistencies in evaluation.

Practice Questions and answers

Q.) With reference to the regulation and taxation of online gaming in India in 2026, consider the following statements:

1. The Supreme Court upheld only the prospective application of the 28% GST levy on online gaming companies.
2. GST shall be levied only on Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR) and not on the full face value of bets and contest entry amounts.
3. According to the Supreme Court, real-money online games involving uncertain outcomes can be treated as betting and gambling for GST purposes.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: D. 3 only

Statement 1 is incorrect. The Supreme Court of India upheld the retrospective application of the 28% GST levy by treating the 2023 GST amendments as clarificatory in nature rather than merely prospective.

Statement 2 is incorrect. The Court rejected the industry's contention that GST should apply only to Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR). Instead, it upheld taxation on the full face value of bets and contest entry amounts deposited by users.

Statement 3 is correct. The Court held that real-money online gaming involving uncertain outcomes can be treated as betting and gambling under the GST framework irrespective of the presence of skill elements.

Therefore, only Statement 3 is correct.

Q.) With reference to NASA's recent lunar exploration initiatives, consider the following statements:

1. The proposed Moon Base-I mission is intended to support long-term human habitation and scientific operations on the lunar surface.
2. The Moon Base-II mission focuses on developing lunar mobility technologies, including rover systems for future Lunar Terrain Vehicles (LTVs).
3. The Artemis programme aims only at conducting short-duration lunar flyaround missions without plans for permanent human presence on the moon.
4. NASA's lunar base initiative is expected to contribute to scientific research, technological innovation, and future deep-space exploration missions.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: B. 1, 2 and 4 only

Statement 1 is correct because NASA's proposed Moon Base-I mission is designed to transport scientific instruments and infrastructure components necessary for future long-duration human presence and sustainable lunar operations.

Statement 2 is also correct. The Moon Base-II mission will focus on enhancing mobility and operational capabilities on the moon using technologies such as Astrolab's FLIP rover, which is intended to support future Lunar Terrain Vehicles (LTVs).

Statement 3 is incorrect because the Artemis programme is not limited to short lunar flyarounds. It forms the broader foundation of NASA's strategy to establish a sustained human presence on the moon and support future deep-space missions.

Statement 4 is correct. The lunar base initiative has scientific, technological, and strategic importance, including research on lunar geology, resource utilisation, radiation exposure, robotics, habitat systems, and preparation for future interplanetary exploration.