

OCTOBER 2026

UPSC Current Affairs Topic-Wise Notes & MCQs

Topic 1: Special Intensive Revision (SIR) & Voter Disenfranchisement

Syllabus: GS Paper 2 (Polity – Representation of People Act, Electoral Reforms, Fundamental Rights)

Context & Background: The Election Commission of India (ECI) initiated a nationwide **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)** drive to purge inactive or ineligible voters from electoral rolls. Widespread protests erupted demanding accountability over mass disenfranchisement.

Core Mechanisms & Shift in Burden:

Reversal of Burden: Unlike standard roll revisions where the administrative machinery verifies electors, SIR requires electors to proactively **prove their eligibility**.

Mass Omissions: Across 30 States and UTs, nearly **13.4 crore electors** (~14% of the electorate) were deleted from draft rolls. Deletions escalated across phases, rising from 8.3% in Bihar to 12.9% in the second phase and 17% in the third phase.

Opaque Exclusion Grounds: An undefined ground of "**logical discrepancies**" (first used in West Bengal) was introduced alongside a centralized roll database in New Delhi that facilitated bulk deletion requests.

Legal and Procedural Controversies:

Form 6 Alteration: Form 6 was altered to require applicants to state whether they or their parents/grandparents appeared on previous SIR rolls, despite no statutory amendment to the **Registration of Electors Rules, 1960**.

Violation of Due Process: Standard procedural due process set by the Supreme Court in the landmark **Lal Babu Hussein case**

(1995)—which prohibited removal without individual prior notice and a fair hearing—was bypassed.

Impact on Vulnerable Groups: Paperless electors, migrants, poor citizens, and women relocated after marriage faced extreme hardship producing old roll linkages.

Constitutional Rights: Universal adult franchise under **Article 326** forms a bedrock of electoral democracy, making arbitrary administrative exclusion a severe constitutional issue.

Topic 2: Higher Education Governance & VBSA Bill, 2025

Syllabus: GS Paper 2 (Governance – Statutory & Regulatory Bodies, Education Sector Reforms)

Context & Scale: India operates the world's **second-largest higher education system**, enrolling ~4.65 crore students. The proposed **Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, 2025** seeks to create a single overarching regulator replacing existing bodies like the **UGC, AICTE, and NCTE**.

Key Issues in Regulatory Culture:

"Governmentality" & Bureaucracy: External supervision creates a "paper blizzard" of digital compliance documents, diverting faculty focus from teaching to inspection preparation.

Inconsistent Regulations: Example: UGC Regulation (2018) specifies a 40-hour workweek while simultaneously requiring teachers on campus for only 5 hours daily.

Metric Capture: Institutions prioritize rankings and accreditation scores (NAAC/NBA) over genuine intellectual engagement and pedagogical quality.

Lessons from Autonomous Institutions:

India's premier performers—IISc, IITs, IIMs, NITs, and IISERs—excel precisely because they operate **outside uniform regulatory formulas**, determining their own curricula, admissions, and resource allocation.

Way Forward: Shift toward "**graded autonomy**" under a "light but tight" model and replace document verification with outcome-based learning assessments.

Topic 3: 2016 Model Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) & FDI Dynamics

Syllabus: GS Paper 3 (Economy – Capital Markets, Foreign Direct Investment, Mobilization of Resources)

Context: India's active BIT network shrank drastically from **73 treaties in 2015** to just **eight in force by 2021** following the introduction of the rigid **2016 Model BIT**.

Major Friction Point (Article 15):

5-Year Local Litigation Rule: Foreign investors must litigate in domestic Indian courts for at least five years before accessing international arbitration. Global standards typically require only a **3 to 6-month consultation period**.

Recent treaties with the **UAE (2024)** and **Israel (2025)** reduced this wait to 3 years.

Gross vs. Net FDI Discrepancy:

While gross FDI inflow hit a record **\$94.5 billion** (2025-26), net FDI was a mere **\$7.65 billion** (0.18% of GDP).

Capital Outflows: Foreign investors repatriated/disinvested **\$53.6 billion**, while outward FDI by Indian firms totaled **\$33.3 billion**.

Reinvested Earnings: Reinvested profits totaled **\$25.6**

billion—accounting for the vast majority of net figures rather than fresh capital commitments.

Regulatory Concerns: Proposed redefinitions to classify portfolio investments held over 3 years as FDI violate **OECD Benchmark Definitions**, risking statistical credibility.

Topic 4: Cartographic Standardisation of Names in Ladakh

Syllabus: GS Paper 1 (Geography) / GS Paper 2 (International Relations & Border Security)

Context & Agency: The **Survey of India (Sol)** published an updated official map standardizing names for **28 geographical features** across Ladakh to record territorial claims and counter Chinese cartographic aggression along the 3,488 km **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**.

Breakdown of Standardised Features:

11 Peaks: Named after Buddhist masters (Marpa Lotsava Ri, Milarepa Kangri, Atisha Giri), historical leaders (Kanishka Peak, Zorawar Peak), and Hindu deities (Shiva Ri, Maheshvara Ri, Martand Giri).

5 Mountains & Land Areas: Including Karun Pir, Drak Karpo, Gogra, Brangsa, Dehra Compass, Kumarayana Point.

Glaciers & Passes: Glaciers (Parpik, Skamri); Passes (Chapchingal, Shachmirk).

Rivers & Lakes: Shkorga Valley, Yangpa River, Guru Rinpoche lake, Hot Spring.

Strategic Context & Back2Basics:

Counters China's practice of renaming places (e.g. Zangnan in Arunachal Pradesh).

LAC Sectoral Lines: Western Sector (Ladakh) sees India following the **Johnson Line (1865)** and China asserting the **Macartney-MacDonald Line (1899)**; Eastern Sector follows the **McMahon Line** of the **Simla Convention (1914)**.

Recommends submitting names to the **UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names** and strengthening presence via the **Vibrant Villages Programme**.

Topic 5: Free-Space Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) Link Demonstration

Syllabus: GS Paper 3 (Science & Technology – Indigenization & IT/Cyber Security)

Milestone: QNu Labs, in collaboration with **BISAG-N** (under MeitY) and **IIT Gandhinagar**, successfully demonstrated India's first free-space QKD link over **5.56 km**.

Key Performance Parameters:

★ **Quantum Bit Error Rate (QBER):** Kept **below 5%**.

★ **Secure Key Generation Rate:** Achieved **230–260 bits per second (bps)**.

Tracking Mechanism: Employed a **Pointing, Acquisition and Tracking (PAT)** system.

Architectural Integration:

Hardware: QNu Labs' **Armos** hardware QKD device.

Software: Integrated with BISAG-N's **Vedic Kavach** post-quantum cryptography (PQC) and quantum random number generation platform.

Key Technical Distinction (UPSC Concept):

QKD vs. PQC: QKD uses fundamental quantum mechanics principles over physical channels (optical/free-space) to distribute keys; PQC relies on complex mathematical algorithms designed to run on classical software to withstand quantum computing attacks.

Topic 6: PM E-DRIVE Scheme

Syllabus: GS Paper 3 (Science & Technology / Environment / Infrastructure)

Overview: Launched in September 2024 by the **Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)**, the **PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE)** scheme has been extended up to **March 31, 2028**, with a total outlay of **₹11,900 crore**.

Key Financial Allocations & Sub-components:

e-2W Demand Incentive: Subsidy of **₹2,500/kWh**, capped at **₹5,000 per vehicle** for e-2Ws priced up to **₹1.5 lakh ex-factory** (Total allocation: ₹2,767 crore).

e-Buses: **₹4,391 crore** for 14,028 e-buses (13,800 allocated across 7 major cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Surat).

Public Charging Stations (EV PCS): **₹2,000 crore** earmarked for nationwide charging infrastructure.

Testing Agencies: **₹780 crore** allocated to upgrade vehicle testing agencies for Phased Manufacturing Programme (PMP) compliance.

e-3W Segment Distinction: Support for **L5 e-3Ws** hit target and closed on **December 26, 2025**, whereas incentive support for **e-rickshaws and e-carts** continues through March 2028.

Delivery Mechanism: Upfront price discount provided to buyers via **e-vouchers**, reimbursed later to OEMs by MHI.

Topic 7: PM-SETU Initiative for ITIs

Syllabus: GS Paper 3 (Economy – Skill Development, Industrial Growth, Infrastructure)

Overview & Financial Structure: Launched on October 4, 2025, **Pradhan Mantri Skilling and Employability Transformation through Upgraded ITIs (PM-SETU)** completes one year with a **₹60,000 crore** outlay shared between Centre (₹30,000 cr), States (₹20,000 cr), and Industry (₹10,000 cr).

Core Components:

Component I (Hub-and-Spoke Model): Upgrading 1,000 Government ITIs structured into **200 Hub ITIs** (providing innovation centers, trainer training, and placement units) and **800 Spoke ITIs**.

Component II (NSTI Augmentation): Capacity expansion across **5 National Skill Training Institutes** (Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Ludhiana) with international partners (e.g. France at NSTI Kanpur, Singapore at NSTI Chennai, Germany at NSTI Hyderabad, Australia at NSTI Bhubaneswar).

Governance Innovation:

Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) govern clusters: **Anchor Industry Partner (51% stake)**, Centre (24.5%), State Government (24.5%).

Curriculum Modernisation: Directorate General of Training (DGT) introduced **32 new-age courses** under Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) in fields like AI, Cyber Security, Green Hydrogen, Drones, Semiconductor Technology, and Robotics.

Topic 8: NABKISAN WASH Social Bond

Syllabus: GS Paper 3 (Economy – Sustainable Finance & Capital Markets)

Context: **NABKISAN Finance Limited** (a subsidiary of **NABARD**) listed India's first **Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)** focused Social Bond on the **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** on October 1, 2026.

Key Bond Features:

Issue Size & Demand: Raised **₹180 crore** with an oversubscription rate of **1.8 times**.

Tenure & Yield: **5-year tenure** maturing in **September 2031** with a coupon rate of **8.10%**.

Credit Rating: Rated **CRISIL AAA (Stable)** and **CARE AAA (Stable)**.

Technical Guidance: Supported by **Water.org** as Technical Advisor and Knowledge Partner.

Target & Significance: Directs capital market funding to rural and underserved communities to improve access to safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene solutions.

Topic 9: Rewilding of Captive-Bred Great Indian Bustards (Project GIB)

Syllabus: GS Paper 3 (Environment & Biodiversity – Species Conservation)

Milestone: For the first time, two captive-bred male **Great Indian Bustards (GIBs)** were released into the wild at **Desert National Park (Sam, Jaisalmer)** by the Union Environment Ministry and Wildlife Institute of India (WII).

Project GIB Framework:

Established conservation breeding centers at **Sam** and **Ramdevra** in Jaisalmer holding 98 captive birds.

Employs artificial incubation of wild-collected eggs and telemetry tracking across fenced grassland enclosures (~200 sq km).

Species Profile & Conservation Status:

IUCN Status: Critically Endangered.

Legal Protection: Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

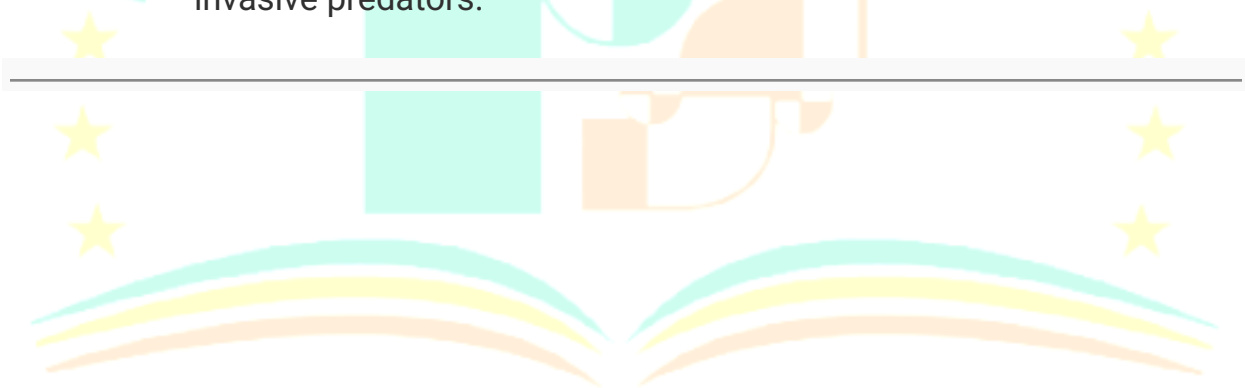
Identity: Local name **Godawan**; State bird of **Rajasthan**; one of the heaviest flying birds.

Wild Population: Dwindled to ~150 remaining individuals.

Ecosystem & Threats:

Serves as an umbrella species for **dry grassland ecosystems** and stopover habitat along the **Central Asian Flyway** (covering 30 countries).

Primary threats: Overhead transmission lines causing collision (due to poor frontal vision), habitat diversion for renewables/farming, and invasive predators.



MCQs

Question 1 (Polity)

With reference to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in India, consider the following statements:

Under the SIR framework, the burden of proving voter eligibility rests on the individual elector rather than the Election Commission.

The Supreme Court in the Lal Babu Hussein case (1995) ruled that names of voters can be removed from electoral rolls without prior individual notice if verified by central databases.

Form 6 of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 was formally amended by Parliament to require parentage proof on prior SIR rolls.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Question 2 (Governance)

Consider the following statements regarding the regulatory framework of Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in India:

India operates the second-largest higher education system in the world in terms of student enrollment.

Premier autonomous institutions such as the IITs, IIMs, and IISc are exempt from the regulatory jurisdiction of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishtan (VBSA) Bill, 2025 proposes replacing single-domain regulators with an overarching regulatory body.

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

Question 3 (Economy)

Regarding India's 2016 Model Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT), consider the following statements:

It obliges foreign investors to exhaust domestic judicial remedies in Indian courts for a mandatory minimum period of 5 years before initiating international arbitration.

Under standard global practice recommended by the OECD, foreign investors must litigate for at least 3 years in host country courts before filing treaty claims.

Reinvested earnings of foreign companies operating in India are excluded while calculating Net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) data under present definitions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Question 4 (Geography / IR)

Consider the following pairs of geographical features recently in the news and their associated category/location in Ladakh:

Feature	Category / Associated Name
1. Marpa Lotsava Ri	Mountain Peak

2. Parpik	Mountain Pass
3. Chapchingal	Glacier
4. Shkorga	Valley

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one pair
- (b) Only two pairs
- (c) Only three pairs
- (d) All four pairs

Question 5 (Science & Technology)

With reference to Quantum Communication technology in India, consider the following statements:

India's first free-space Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) link over 5.56 km was demonstrated using a conventional fiber-optic cable network.

Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) relies on quantum physical properties for key distribution, whereas Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC) relies on mathematical algorithms designed for software security.

In the recent trial between BISAG-N and IIT Gandhinagar, the Armos device functioned as the post-quantum cryptography platform while Vedic Kavach provided hardware QKD.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Question 6 (Government Schemes / EV Sector)

Consider the following statements regarding the PM E-DRIVE Scheme:

The scheme provides demand incentives for electric two-wheelers capped at ₹5,000 per vehicle for models priced up to ₹1.5 lakh ex-factory.

Target incentive support for all electric three-wheelers, including e-rickshaws and L5 category e-3Ws, was closed simultaneously in December 2025.

The scheme includes financial allocations for the modernization of vehicle testing agencies under the Phased Manufacturing Programme.

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

Question 7 (Skill Development)

With reference to the PM-SETU scheme for Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), consider the following statements:

The scheme adopts a Hub-and-Spoke model aimed at upgrading both government and private ITIs across India.

Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) governing upgraded ITI clusters assign a 51% majority shareholding to the Anchor Industry Partner.

Capacity expansion of selected National Skill Training Institutes (NSTIs) under PM-SETU involves collaboration with international partners.

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
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Question 8 (Economy / Social Bonds)

Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding India's first WASH Social Bond issued in October 2026?

The bond was issued directly by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

It is listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) with a tenure of 10 years.

The proceeds of the bond are dedicated exclusively to funding Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives in rural and underserved areas.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Question 9 (Environment / Wildlife)

Consider the following statements regarding the Great Indian Bustard (GIB):

It is classified as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List and listed under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

The captive-breeding program under Project GIB is carried out at Desert National Park in Rajasthan.

The species serves as an indicator species for tropical evergreen forest ecosystems.

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

Question 10 (International Border / LAC Framework)

With reference to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China, consider the following statements:

In the Western Sector (Ladakh), India's official territorial claim is aligned with the Johnson Line of 1865.

The Macartney-MacDonald Line of 1899 represents China's historical proposal for the boundary in the Western Sector.

In the Eastern Sector, the LAC broadly aligns with the Durand Line established under the Simla Convention.

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
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Question 11 (Polity / Constitutional Provisions)

Under Article 326 of the Constitution of India, which of the following grounds can be validly used by law to disqualify a citizen from being registered as a voter?

Non-residence

Unsoundness of mind

Crime or corrupt and illegal practice

Non-possession of ancestry linkage in prior electoral rolls

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (b) 1 and 4 only
 - (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
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Question 12 (Economy / FDI Analytics)

Consider the following statements regarding Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) data reporting in India:

Net FDI represents gross FDI inflows minus FDI outflows through disinvestment, repurchases, and outward direct investments by Indian firms.

Counting portfolio investments held for more than three years as FDI complies fully with the OECD Benchmark Definition of Foreign Direct Investment.

Reinvested earnings constitute a major portion of India's current net FDI calculation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Question 13 (Science & Technology / Quantum Tech)

Which of the following statements correctly distinguishes Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) from Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC)?

- (a) QKD relies on software algorithms resistant to quantum supercomputers, whereas PQC relies on hardware-based laser beam channels.
 - (b) QKD uses quantum mechanical properties to securely transmit cryptographic keys, whereas PQC uses classical software algorithms designed to resist quantum attacks.
 - (c) QKD operates exclusively over satellite channels, whereas PQC operates strictly over fiber-optic networks.
 - (d) QKD replaces public key infrastructure entirely, whereas PQC is used only for unencrypted voice transmission.
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Question 14 (Government Schemes / Skill Development)

Which of the following new-age trades have been introduced by the Directorate General of Training (DGT) under the Craftsmen Training Scheme for upgraded ITIs under PM-SETU?

- Artificial Intelligence
- Green Hydrogen
- Semiconductor Technology
- Additive Manufacturing
- Drone Technology

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Question 15 (Environment / Biodiversity)

Consider the following statements regarding the Central Asian Flyway (CAF):

It is a major migratory corridor crossing 30 countries linking the Arctic Ocean with the Indian Ocean.

Grassland habitats of the Great Indian Bustard in Rajasthan serve as stopover sites along this flyway.

The flyway covers migratory bird routes exclusively restricted to marine and coastal wetlands.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
 - (b) 1 and 2 only
 - (c) 2 and 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3
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Answer Key & Detailed Explanations

Answer 1: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: Under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), the burden of proof is reversed—electors must proactively prove their eligibility to remain on the draft rolls.

Statement 2 is incorrect: The Supreme Court in the Lal Babu Hussein case (1995) explicitly held that no citizen's name can be struck off the electoral roll without individual written notice and a fair hearing.

Statement 3 is incorrect: Form 6 was modified administratively to ask about parents/grandparents on prior SIR rolls, but the statutory Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 were **never formally amended** by Parliament.

Answer 2: (c)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: India has the world's second-largest higher education system, enrolling ~4.65 crore students.

Statement 2 is incorrect: Premier institutions (IITs, IIMs, IISc) operate outside uniform regulatory formulas of bodies like UGC/AICTE under their own Acts of Parliament, but they are not generically "exempt" from national educational frameworks. Moreover, the critique emphasizes that subjecting them to single-window regulatory apparatuses like VBSA risks threatening their performance.

Statement 3 is correct: The VBSA Bill, 2025 proposes replacing existing separate regulators (UGC, AICTE, NCTE) with a single overarching regulator.

Answer 3: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: Article 15 of India's 2016 Model BIT mandates that foreign investors must litigate in domestic Indian courts for at least 5 years before initiating international treaty arbitration.

Statement 2 is incorrect: Standard international practice (e.g. OECD norms) requires only a 3 to 6-month consultation/cooling-off period, not 3 years of litigation.

Statement 3 is incorrect: Reinvested earnings **are included** in current net FDI calculations (accounting for \$25.6 billion). When excluded (as India did prior to 2000-01), net direct investment shows an outflow of ~\$18 billion.

Answer 4: (b)

Explanation:

Pair 1 is correctly matched: Marpa Lotsava Ri is one of the 11 peaks named in Ladakh.

Pair 2 is incorrectly matched: Parpik is a glacier, not a pass.

Pair 3 is incorrectly matched: Chapchinal is a mountain pass, not a glacier.

Pair 4 is correctly matched: Shkorga is listed as a valley.

Thus, exactly **two pairs** (1 and 4) are correctly matched.

Answer 5: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is incorrect: The 5.56 km QKD demonstration was conducted over **free-space optical channels**, not conventional fiber-optic cables.

Statement 2 is correct: QKD uses quantum principles across optical paths for key distribution, whereas PQC relies on software algorithms built to resist quantum computer attacks.

Statement 3 is incorrect: **Armos** (developed by QNu Labs) is the hardware QKD device, whereas **Vedic Kavach** (developed by BISAG-N) is the software post-quantum cryptography platform—the statement swaps their roles.

Answer 6: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: For e-2Ws, PM E-DRIVE offers ₹2,500/kWh incentive capped at ₹5,000 per vehicle for models with ex-factory price up to ₹1.5 lakh.

Statement 2 is incorrect: Support for L5 category e-3Ws closed on December 26, 2025, but support for e-rickshaws and e-carts continues through March 2028.

Statement 3 is correct: ₹780 crore is allocated specifically to upgrade vehicle testing agencies for Phased Manufacturing Programme compliance.

Answer 7: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is incorrect: PM-SETU specifically targets **1,000 Government ITIs**, not private ITIs.

Statement 2 is correct: The Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) governance model allocates a 51% stake to the Anchor Industry Partner, with 24.5% each to Centre and State.

Statement 3 is correct: NSTIs (e.g. Kanpur, Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad) are being augmented through international partnerships with France, Singapore, Australia, and Germany.

Answer 8: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is incorrect: The bond was issued by **NABKISAN Finance Limited** (a subsidiary of NABARD), not directly by NABARD.

Statement 2 is incorrect: It is listed on the **National Stock Exchange (NSE)** in Mumbai with a tenure of **5 years** (maturing September 2031), not BSE with 10 years.

Statement 3 is correct: The entire ₹180 crore proceeds are earmarked for Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) initiatives in rural/underserved communities.

Answer 9: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: GIB is Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List and under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

Statement 2 is correct: Conservation breeding centers under Project GIB operate in Jaisalmer (Sam and Ramdevra) at Desert National Park.

Statement 3 is incorrect: GIB is an indicator and flagship species for **dry grassland and scrub ecosystems**, not tropical evergreen forests.

Answer 10: (a)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: India's official position in the Western Sector (Ladakh) is based on the Johnson Line of 1865.

Statement 2 is correct: China bases its claim in Ladakh on the Macartney-MacDonald Line of 1899.

Statement 3 is incorrect: In the Eastern Sector, the boundary aligns with the **McMahon Line** of the Simla Convention (1914), not the Durand Line (which pertains to the Afghan border).

Answer 11: (a)

Explanation:

Under **Article 326** of the Constitution of India, adult suffrage applies to every citizen unless disqualified by Parliament on grounds of **non-residence, unsoundness of mind, or crime or corrupt and illegal practice**. Non-possession of ancestral linkage on old revision rolls is not a constitutional ground for voter disqualification.

Answer 12: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: Net FDI = Gross FDI Inflows minus capital outflows (disinvestment/repatriation) and outward direct investment by Indian companies.

Statement 2 is incorrect: The OECD Benchmark Definition bars holding period conditions for defining FDI; counting portfolio investments held over 3 years as FDI violates global standards.

Statement 3 is correct: Reinvested profits (25.6 billion) make up more than three times the net FDI figure (7.65 billion).

Answer 13: (b)

Explanation:

QKD utilizes physical quantum phenomena (such as photon polarization over free-space or optical fiber) to distribute encryption keys securely. **PQC** refers to software-based mathematical cryptographic algorithms designed to withstand decryption attempts by quantum computers.

Answer 14: (d)

Explanation:

Under PM-SETU, the Directorate General of Training (DGT) introduced 32 new-age courses including Artificial Intelligence, Cyber Security, Additive Manufacturing, Electric Vehicles, Semiconductor Technology, Robotics, Green Hydrogen, Drones, IoT, 5G, and Solar Energy. All listed options are correct.

Answer 15: (b)

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: The Central Asian Flyway (CAF) crosses 30 countries, connecting bird breeding grounds in the Arctic Ocean to wintering areas in the Indian Ocean.

Statement 2 is correct: Open grassland habitats of Rajasthan serve as critical resting stopovers for migratory birds on the CAF.

Statement 3 is incorrect: The flyway covers diverse terrestrial, inland wetland, coastal, and grassland ecosystems, not exclusively marine wetlands.