

ECONOMY**1. RBI governor cautions against ever-greening of loans:**

➤ **CONTEXT:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das raised red flags over banks adopting innovative methods for ever-greening of loans – covering up the real status of stressed loans of corporates – to project an artificial clean image in cahoots with corporates. However, bankers differ, saying that sometimes it is practical to extend liquidity support to companies that are genuinely facing issues.

➤ **What is the Issue?**

- During the supervision of banks, the RBI noticed certain instances wherein banks were using innovative ways to conceal the real status of stressed loans.
- Such (ever-greening) methods include -bringing two lenders together to evergreen each other's loans by sale and buyback of loans or debt instruments; good borrowers being persuaded to enter into structured deals with a stressed borrower to conceal the stress; use of internal or office accounts to adjust borrower's repayment obligations; renewal of loans or disbursement of new/additional loans to the stressed borrower or related entities closer to the repayment date of the earlier loans. The RBI has come across cases where one method of evergreening, after being pointed out by the regulator, was replaced by another method.
- The existence of any such wilful and significant evergreening suggests that the board, CEO and the audit committees are not adequately vigilant.

➤ **What does ever-greening of loans mean?**

- The process of ever-greening of loans, a form of zombie lending, is typically a temporary fix for a bank. If an account turns into a non-performing asset (NPA), banks are required to make higher provisions which will impact their profitability. A loan turns into a nonperforming asset, or NPA, if the interest or instalment remains unpaid even after the due date — and remains unpaid for a period of more than 90 days.
- So, to avoid classifying a loan as an NPA, banks adopt the ever-greening of loans. In the past, many banks had indulged in dressing up bad loans and given additional funds to companies who didn't have the capacity to repay.
- Banks delay the recognition of losses due to loan defaults and engage in ever-greening, which is essentially the rolling over of debts of unviable borrowers that would have otherwise defaulted. This is purely mis-governance, so that bad loans are made to look good many a time by additional lending to troubled borrowers.
- Some banks have even extended such loans to wilful defaulters to keep them out of the defaulters' books. When the then RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan ordered an asset quality review in 2014, a host of concealed bad loans or NPAs surfaced. Poor project appraisal management by banks, especially public sector banks, and some shady promoters who were known for fund diversion, joined hands to evergreen loans.

➤ **When do banks evergreen loans?**

- There is sufficient evidence, anecdotal and otherwise, that restructuring is often used by banks for 'ever-greening' problem accounts to keep the reported NPA levels low. Corporates were allowed to opt for the liberal restructuring route between 2000 and 2014, when a host of companies used fresh loans from banks to evergreen their loan books. However, with the enactment of the bankruptcy code, ever-greening has declined but recovery has remained abysmally low.
- RBI Governor's latest warning indicates that ever-greening is still going on, implying that all is not hunky-dory in the banking system. It normally happens due to the unholy relationship between bankers and borrowers.
- An accommodative monetary policy creates an enabling environment for weak banks to evergreen loans to zombies and keeps them alive.
- The RBI has been following an accommodative policy since March 2020 when the pandemic struck the country. Most of the ever-greening has happened in public sector banks which subsequently led to a jump in NPAs.
- The CBI had detected several cases of fund diversion by promoters of companies from loans advanced again and again by banks in the last couple of years.

➤ **What do bankers say?**

- Bankers said that it is difficult for banks to indulge in the ever-greening of loans as the RBI monitors each and every loan on a regular basis. "This could be an interpretation issue also. What the RBI thinks as postponement of NPA (by ever-greening), could be a real case of a bank trying to save a borrower from becoming NPA by extending temporary liquidity," said

- According to a private sector lender, “If temporary funding can help a borrower from becoming NPA, it is good for banks also, he said, adding, “By calling somebody an NPA, you are just giving a dog a bad name and hanging it. Once an account is classified as an NPA, the situation will become worse.”
- **Could the zombies crowd out good borrowers?**
 - There was evidence of indirect ever-greening in India – weak firms increase leverage by borrowing through related parties from weak banks, but decrease real investment – which often goes undetected. Such resource misallocation supports the crowding-out effects ascribed to zombies, according to an RBI paper on Zombies and the Process of Creative Destruction. It results in credit being diverted to weak entities – which is ultimately diverted for other purposes or it becomes a bad loan – depriving the genuine credit needs of good borrowers.
- **Are loan write-offs another means of ever-greening?**
 - Loans written off by the banks are removed from the NPA books. However, these loans continue as NPAs in another form. The mega write-off exercise has enabled banks to reduce their non-performing assets, or defaulted loans, by Rs 10,09,510 crore (\$123.86 billion) in the last five years, according to data furnished by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its reply to the Right to Information (RTI).
 - Aided by this huge write-off, the banking sector reported a decline in gross NPAs to Rs 7.29 lakh crore, or 5.9 per cent of the total advances, as of March 2022 and Rs 5.5 lakh crore in March 2023. Gross NPAs were 11.2 per cent in 2017-18.
- **How can ever-greening be stopped?**
 - Wherever significant ever-greening in a bank is detected by the RBI, penalties should be levied through cancellations of unvested stock options and claw-back of monetary bonuses on officers concerned and on all whole-time directors, and the Chairman of the audit committee be asked to step down from the board, said the Committee to Review Governance of Boards of Banks in India headed by PJ Nayak.
 - The primary defence against ever-greening must however come from the CEO, the audit committee and the board. The audit committee, in particular, needs to be particularly vigilant. If significant ever-greening is detected by RBI supervisors, it must mean that ever-greening is wilful, with support from sections of the senior management of the bank. It then becomes necessary to levy penalties and action against the erring officers.
- 2. **Alternative to UPI, NEFT, RTGS: What is RBI’s planned ‘lightweight’ payments system for emergencies?**
 - **CONTEXT:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has conceptualised a lightweight payment and settlements system, which it is calling a “bunker” equivalent of digital payments, which can be operated from anywhere by a bare minimum staff in exigencies such as natural calamities or war.
 - The infrastructure for this system will be independent of the technologies that underlie the existing systems of payments such as UPI, NEFT, and RTGS. The central bank has not offered a timeline for the launch of this payments system yet.
 - **Why is such a lightweight payments system needed?**
 - In its Annual Report for 2022-23 published on Tuesday (May 30), RBI says that the lightweight and portable payment system is expected to operate on minimalistic hardware and software, and would be made active only on a “need basis”.
 - Such a lightweight and portable payment system could ensure near zero downtime of the payment and settlement system in the country and keep the liquidity pipeline of the economy alive and intact by facilitating uninterrupted functioning of essential payment services like bulk payments, interbank payments and provision of cash to participant institutions.
 - The system is expected to process transactions that are critical to ensure the stability of the economy, including government and market related transactions.
 - Having such a resilient system is also likely to act as a bunker equivalent in payment systems and thereby enhance public confidence in digital payments and financial market infrastructure even during extreme conditions.
 - **How will the lightweight system be different from UPI?**
 - The RBI has said that there are multiple payment systems available in the country for use by individuals as well as institutions, each of which has its distinct character and application.
 - According to the RBI, existing conventional payments systems such as RTGS, NEFT, and UPI are designed to handle large volumes of transactions while ensuring sustained availability. As a result, they are dependent on complex wired networks backed by advanced IT infrastructure.
 - However, catastrophic events like natural calamities and war have the potential to render these payment systems temporarily unavailable by disrupting the underlying information and communication infrastructure, Therefore, it is prudent to be prepared to face such extreme and volatile situations.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

❖ **Why is the U.S. shifting its approach to China from decoupling to de-risking?**

➤ **CONTEXT:** The Trump-era focus of the U.S. to decouple from China is being phased out by a new concept. The U.S. has expressed that it is shifting its policy on China from decoupling to de-risking. The EU has already declared that its approach to China will be based on de-risking. The recently concluded G-7 summit at Hiroshima, through its Leader's Communique, has also expressed the grouping's consensus on de-risking.

➤ **What is 'de-risking'?**

- After the establishment of diplomatic ties between the U.S. and China in 1979, both the countries embarked on a path of increasing economic interdependence. China gained immensely from this relationship, as it helped the country drastically widen and deepen its diplomatic and economic engagement with the rest of the world.
- As China's economic and military power grew, its ambition to challenge the primacy of the U.S. in the international system became increasingly apparent. China's rise not only came at the expense of America's global clout, but also the latter's domestic industry, which got "hollowed out" in its four-decade old economic embrace with China.
- By the time Donald Trump took over the reins of power in the U.S., dealing with the techno-economic challenge from China became a matter of urgency. The Trump administration made it a point to attack the gargantuan bilateral trade imbalance in favour of China. It also wished to keep the U.S.'s high technology sector out of China's reach. In a series of moves, Trump raised tariffs on Chinese imports which invited retaliatory tariffs from China.
- The U.S.-China 'trade war' started, and bilateral relations were set on course for a "decoupling" from the American standpoint. This approach was marked by a rare sense of bipartisanship in an otherwise polarised domestic political climate in the U.S.
- Therefore, the Biden administration which took over from the Trump administration continued with the latter's China policy. However, over time, the Biden administration added its own features into the China policy inherited from Trump.
- Most recently the label of "decoupling" has been changed to "de-risking". According to the U.S. National Security Advisor Jack Sullivan, **"de-risking fundamentally means having resilient, effective supply chains and ensuring we cannot be subjected to the coercion of any other country"**. While decoupling stands for an eventual reversal of the four-decade old project to enmesh the two economies, de-risking aims to limit such an effect only in areas where it undercuts the national security and industrial competence of the U.S.
- This shift has been articulated by the Biden administration in two recent landmark speeches — by the Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen on the "U.S.-China Economic Relationship" at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies on April 20, followed by that of Jake Sullivan on "Renewing American Economic Leadership" at the Brookings Institution on April 27.
- Recent legislations in the U.S. such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, CHIPS and Science Act as well as the Inflation Reduction Act have been subsumed under this new approach. The U.S.'s geo-economic initiatives like the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment as well as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity are also supposed to reflect the spirit of de-risking.

➤ **Why de-risking?**

- In order to understand the rationale behind the U.S.'s shift from decoupling to de-risking, it is important to comprehend the timing of the move. The policy change has been announced in the wake of several events of high geopolitical significance. The world has just emerged out of the tentacles of the pandemic after three disruptive years and the global economy is hoping for a resulting rebound.
- The U.S.-China rivalry had peaked in the past few months — from the ratcheting of tensions across the Taiwan Strait to the acrimonious spy balloon episode between the two countries. China also witnessed Xi Jinping beginning his second decade of rule over China in an unprecedented third term as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, Chairman of the Central Military Commission and President of the People's Republic of China, ever since the dawn of the reform era.
- In parallel, a year has passed since Russia began its special military operation in Ukraine, with the conflict going on without any end in sight. Mr. Xi, after starting his third consecutive leadership term, made his first foreign visit to Russia where he proposed a peace plan. He has also, in his third leadership tenure, extended his "peacemaking diplomacy" to West Asia, striking gold in normalising the frayed Saudi-Iran ties.
- All of these developments have necessitated the U.S. to recalibrate its posture towards China. In such a situation, casting the U.S.-China relations as a new Cold War and a zero-sum game appears to be risky

for the U.S. Bringing more nuance into its earlier decoupling approach could bring down China’s guard and give the U.S. more room to re-consolidate its strength.

- Perhaps, the Russia-Ukraine conflict could have played a pivotal role in enabling the U.S.’s policy shift towards China. The Biden administration, unlike its predecessor, has made it a point to reassure its European allies. At a time when China has been backing Russia in its shadow battle in Ukraine against the West, the idea of decoupling hardly appeals to the European Union (EU). The EU has in fact been looking to woo China in order to convince it to stop supporting Russia from skirting Western sanctions.
- In this context, a watered down version in the form of de-risking could better achieve the objective of getting Europe on board the U.S.’s efforts to counter China. It is therefore no surprise that the U.S.’s recent articulation of its de-risking approach repeatedly draws references to the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen’s milestone speech on “EU-China relations” to the Mercator Institute for China Studies and the European Policy Centre on March 30. In her speech, Ms. von der Leyen stressed that the EU’s strategy to China will be based on de-risking. This was a precursor to her visit to China in April, along with the French President Emmanuel Macron, with the Russia-Ukraine war as the main agenda. In fact, China policies of the U.S. and the EU have been witnessing a significant convergence of late — recent developments may have only triggered the Trans-Atlantic consensus on de-risking vis-à-vis China.

➤ **What could be the geopolitical ramifications of de-risking?**

- The U.S. efforts to keep its allies closer in its geopolitical rivalry against China by adopting the path of de-risking has already won a significant victory in Japan at the G-7 summit.
- The leaders at the summit declared that they will coordinate their “approach to economic resilience and economic security that is based on diversifying and deepening partnerships and de-risking, not decoupling”.
- China has expressed its scepticism to the West’s de-risking approach, portraying it as a façade to the decoupling agenda. Moreover, China has expressed its disapproval in painting China as the actor responsible for heightening geopolitical risks. According to China, the real source of risks is the U.S., which it alleges to have created instability across the world by pursuing political and military interventions and perpetuating a Cold War mindset.
- The continuing emphasis in de-risking to diversify supply chains away from China demonstrates that the Trump-era spirit of decoupling is being carried forward, albeit with some changes. This could also make the West’s moves to counter China’s rise much more sustainable by facilitating a united front among allies.
- However, its effectiveness could be questionable, as it has dialled down U.S.’s rhetoric against China which could be read by the latter as a sign of its adversary’s weakness. Though countries like India will stand to benefit from de-risking by leveraging its benefits like attracting supply chains and confronting China’s aggressive moves, it could also come at a cost. With the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the consolidation of the European alliance being the major triggers behind this shift, de-risking could lead to U.S. focus on the Indo-Pacific being diluted, at least for the short term.

PRELIMS

1. Shenzhou-16 spacecraft

➤ **In News:** China launched a spacecraft carrying three astronauts, including its first civilian, to its **Tiangong space station** on 30th May. This is the country’s fifth manned mission to a fully functional space station since 2021.

- The spacecraft, Shenzhou-16, was launched atop a **Long March-2F** rocket from the **Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre** in the Gobi Desert in northwest China.
- The crew of Shenzhou-16 includes Jing Haipeng as the leading commander on the mission, as well as Zhu Yangzhu and Gui Haichao, the first Chinese civilian to travel to space. So far, the Asian country has also been sending astronauts chosen from its People’s Liberation Army (PLA).
- The three astronauts will replace the crew of Shenzhou-15 aboard the Tiangong space station, who have been there since November last year.
- The new crew will stay there for the next five months and will carry out “large-scale in-orbit tests and experiments in various fields as planned. They are expected to make high-level scientific achievements in the study of novel quantum phenomena, high-precision space time-frequency systems, the verification of general relativity, and the origin of life.

➤ **About Tiangong space station:**

- Operated by China Manned Space Agency (CMSA), the Tiangong space station was built by China after the USA barred NASA from working with the Asian country, citing a high risk of espionage. The

permanently inhabited space station's first module entered orbit in 2021 and two more modules were added to it in the following years.

- The Tiangong space station, expected to become the sole in-orbit outpost for scientific research after the end of operations for the International Space Station in 2030, is China's ambitious project to achieve its space dreams.

2. **MissionGraHAQ**

➤ **In News:** THE UTTAR Pradesh Police and Amazon India are coming together to tackle the menace of online shopping scams with a consumer education and awareness campaign named #MissionGraHAQ.

- The collaboration will explore several joint initiatives aimed at empowering consumers to shop online with greater confidence.
- UP Police and Amazon India to join forces to educate online consumers about their rights as well as raise awareness about safe shopping practices and protecting online shoppers from bad actors.

3. **Egypt, two largest embalming laboratories ever discovered**

➤ **In News:** Egypt continues to unveil the secrets of its ancient history, and probably never will. At Saqqara, the necropolis 30 km south of Cairo, two of the largest embalming laboratories ever to come to light have in fact been discovered.

- In addition to these two sites, which in itself would make the discovery sensational, two sarcophagi, one belonging to the Old Kingdom (ca. 2400 BC) and one to the New Kingdom (ca. 1400 BC), have also returned to the surface.
- The region of Saqqara, where everything was found, is one of the largest royal necropolises in Egypt and home to the oldest stone building in history, the step pyramid of Djoser.

4. **22nd SCO summit**

➤ **In News:** India will host the 22nd summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), for the first time under its chairmanship, in a virtual format on 4th July. Heads of state of all member-countries, including Russia, China and Pakistan, have been invited

- Earlier supposed to be an in-person event, the event will be held on July 4 and will be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- In addition to member-countries such as China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, India has invited Iran, Belarus and Mongolia as Observer States. As per SCO tradition, Turkmenistan has also been invited as the guest of the Chair. Heads of the two SCO Bodies — the Secretariat and the SCO RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure) will also be present.
- Heads of six international and regional organisations — the UN, ASEAN, CIS, CSTO, EAEU and CICA — have also been invited.
- India has named the upcoming summit '**Towards a SECURE SCO**'.

• "SECURE", an acronym coined by Prime Minister Modi at the 2018 SCO Summit. Stands for **Security; Economy and Trade; Connectivity; Unity; Respect for Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity; and Environment.**

- As the Chair, India has set up "**new pillars**" of cooperation within the bloc, such as **Startups and Innovation; Traditional Medicine; Digital Inclusion; Youth Empowerment; and Shared Buddhist Heritage.** It added that India has worked towards fostering greater people-to-people ties that celebrate the historical and civilisational bonds between the nations, like the various sociocultural events hosted by Varanasi under the framework of the first SCO Cultural and Tourist Capital for 2022-23.

➤ **About SCO:**

- It is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation. It was created in 2001.
- The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.
- It's a Eurasian political, economic and military organisation aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.
- It is seen as a counterweight to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), It is a nine-member economic and security bloc and has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations.
- Official Languages: **Russian and Chinese.**
- Permanent Bodies: SCO Secretariat in Beijing and Executive Committee of the **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.**
- India and Pakistan became members in 2017. Iran is set to become a permanent member of the SCO in 2023.

5. **Special Protection Group (SPG)**

➤ **In News:** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the proposal for re-employment of **Arun Kumar Sinha**, a Kerala cadre IPS officer of 1987 batch,

on contract basis as **Director of the Special Protection Group (SPG)**, the force that handles the security of the PM, for a period of one year. In 2022, the ACC had cleared an extension in temporary upgradation for Sinha as DG (SPG) till May 31, 2023.

- The SPG is an elite force, specifically raised for the protection of the country's Prime Minister, former PMs and their immediate family. The force is currently 3,000 strong and it was started in 1985 in the wake of the killing of PM Indira Gandhi in 1984.
- Last week, the Ministry of Home Affairs had issued a notification, setting a new set of rules issued under the Special Protection Group Act, 1988 (34 of 1988). According to the notification, the officers of All India Services will be appointed to the SPG on deputation by the Central government on the same terms and conditions as applicable to the officers of the corresponding ranks in the Central government.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Examine the impact of the recent ban on diesel vehicles in India. Also, suggest some alternative solutions to address the issue of emissions from the transport sector.

The Energy Transition Advisory Committee formed by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has recommended a ban on the use of diesel-powered four-wheel vehicles by 2027 in cities with a population of more than 1 million, and instead transition to electric and gas-fuelled vehicles.

This ban on diesel vehicles will impact India both positively and negatively in the following ways:

Positive impacts:

- Reduction in air pollution caused due to emission of high levels of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides from diesel vehicles. For example, after the ban on diesel vehicles that were over ten years old in Delhi in 2015, air pollution levels in the city decreased by 25%.
- Promotion of clean energy vehicles: It can encourage the adoption of electric and hybrid cars, which emit fewer pollutants and greenhouse gases. Also, after the launch of the FAME India scheme in 2015, the sale of electric vehicles in India has increased significantly.
- Improved public health: The reduction in air pollution levels can lead to a significant improvement in public health outcomes, such as a reduction in respiratory illnesses, heart diseases, and premature deaths.
- Reduced dependence on foreign oil: India is heavily dependent on foreign oil imports, which can have a significant impact on the country's energy security and balance of payments.

Negative impacts:

- Economic impact: The automobile industry is a significant contributor to India's GDP, employing millions of people directly and indirectly. The ban can lead to a decline in the demand for diesel cars, resulting in a significant loss of revenue for automobile manufacturers and dealers. For example, when the National Green Tribunal banned diesel vehicles that were over ten years old in Delhi in 2015, it led to a 30% drop in sales for carmakers such as Mahindra and Tata Motors.
- Job loss due to the less demand of diesel vehicles. For example, when the Supreme Court banned the registration of diesel vehicles with an engine capacity of 2000cc and above in Delhi in 2015, it led to a loss of over 12,000 jobs in the automotive sector.
- Increased prices of alternative vehicles: The promotion of alternative vehicles, such as electric and hybrid cars, can lead to an increase in their prices due to the high cost of production and low demand.
- Lack of infrastructure: The lack of infrastructure to support use of electric vehicles in India can pose a significant challenge to the adoption of clean energy vehicles. For example, the number of electric vehicle charging stations in India is currently limited, with only around 1000 charging stations across the country, making it challenging for electric vehicle owners to travel long distances.

The adverse effects of the ban on diesel vehicles in India can be mitigated by:

- Provide support to the automobile industry: The government has announced a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the automobile sector, which provides incentives for manufacturers to shift towards clean energy vehicles.
- Promote the adoption of clean energy vehicles: Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles (FAME) India scheme provides subsidies for the purchase of electric and hybrid vehicles.
- Encourage the development of new technologies: The government has launched the National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project (NATRiP), which is aimed at developing state-of-the-art testing facilities for vehicles in India.
- Provide support to the transportation sector: The Smart Cities Mission is aimed at developing sustainable transportation infrastructure in urban areas. For example - The Rapid Regional Rail Transport system (RRTS) in Delhi-NCR.

These initiatives can help ensure a smoother transition towards a more sustainable and environmentally friendly transportation sector in India.

Alternative measures to tackle the issue of emissions from transport sector:

- Implement emissions standards: The government can mandate stricter emissions standards for vehicles and also conduct regular checks to ensure compliance. For example, the Bharat Stage VI (BS VI) emissions standards were implemented in India in 2020, which are expected to reduce air pollution from vehicles.
- Encourage the use of bicycles: The government can invest in infrastructure for cycling, such as dedicated bicycle lanes, and also provide incentives for people to use bicycles. For example - Smart Cities Mission includes the provisions for the development of cycling infrastructure in urban areas.
- Implement congestion pricing: Congestion pricing involves charging drivers a fee for driving in congested areas during peak hours. For example, London has implemented a congestion charge for drivers entering the city center during peak hours, which has resulted in a reduction in traffic congestion and air pollution.
- Promote telecommuting and remote work: For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many companies have implemented work from home policies, which has resulted in a reduction in traffic congestion and air pollution.
- Promote carpooling and ridesharing: The government can provide incentives for carpooling and ridesharing, such as priority lanes on the road or reduced tolls. For example, in Bengaluru, the government has launched a ride-sharing initiative called Namma Pool, which provides incentives for carpooling.
- Implement urban planning strategies: The government can invest in the development of compact, walkable cities with mixed-use zoning, which reduces the need for private vehicles. For example, the city of Curitiba in Brazil has implemented an urban planning strategy that includes a comprehensive public transportation system, which has reduced the number of private vehicles on the road.
- Promote the use of cleaner fuels: The government can provide incentives for the use of cleaner fuels and also invest in the development of infrastructure for cleaner fuels. For example, the Delhi government has launched a pilot project to run buses on hydrogen-enriched compressed natural gas, which is expected to reduce air pollution from buses.

Thus, it is imperative for the government to adopt a multi-pronged approach and consider all these alternatives while addressing the issue of air pollution.

MCQs

- Consider the following statements regarding Ever-greening of loans
 - Ever-greening methods include -bringing two lenders together to evergreen each other's loans by sale and buyback of loans or debt
 - RBI permitted evergreening of loans to public sector Banks.
 Select the correct statements using the codes below.
 - 1 only**
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- Consider the following statement regarding the campaign #MissionGraHAQ.
 - The campaign is a partnership between Uttar Pradesh Police and Amazon India
 - The objective of the campaign is to educate online consumers about their rights as well as raise awareness about safe shopping practices and protecting online shoppers from bad actors.
 Select the correct statements using the codes below.
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- Authorities in US and Mexico recently appealed to the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare a public health emergency over a fungal meningitis outbreak. Consider the following statements regarding Meningitis:
 - It is an inflammation of the protective membranes covering the brain and spinal cord.
 - Only Viral infections can cause Meningitis.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - 1 only**
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- Senkakau Islands, recently seen in the news, lies in which one of the following seas?
 - South China Sea
 - East China Sea**
 - Baltic Sea
 - Caspian Sea

5. Consider the following statement about Sanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
1. 2022 edition of SCO Summit was hosted by Uzbekistan
 2. India is going to host 22nd SCO summit under the theme of 'Towards a SECURE SCO'.
- Select the correct statements using the codes below.
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Sakhalin-1 Project was in news recently, it is lies in which one of the following countries?
- a) Iran
 - b) Nigeria
 - c) **Russia**
 - d) Oman
7. According to a recent report, as many as 53 per cent of organisations studied in India were victims of spear phishing in 2022. Consider the following statements regarding Spear Phishing:
1. It is a targeted attempt to steal sensitive information such as account credentials or financial information from a specific victim.
 2. This is the most successful form of acquiring confidential information on the internet.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Which one of the following statements are correct with reference to Chandrayaan-3?
1. It would be launched using PSLV.
 2. It is aimed at demonstrating critical technologies to land the spacecraft on the south pole of the moon.
- Select the correct answer using the code given below:
- a) 1 only
 - b) **2 only**
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. The term Acinetobacter baumannii, sometimes seen in news, it is belongs to which of the followings?
- a) **Superbug**
 - b) Superconductor
 - c) Super cyclone
 - d) Supercomputer
10. Consider the following statements with reference to KSS-III Batch-II Submarine:
1. It is a series of diesel-electric attack submarines.
 2. They are equipped with Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology.
 3. The submarine is built by South Korea.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 1 and 3 only
 - d) **1, 2 and 3**