

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Katchatheevu's Issue

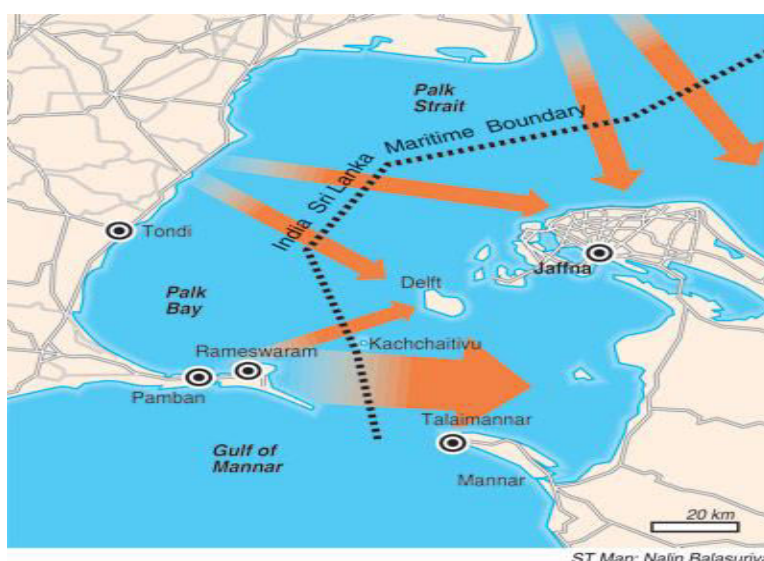
In context: Tamil Nadu CM Stalin urged the Union government to initiate diplomatic efforts to revisit the agreement transferring the Katchatheevu islet to Sri Lanka.

Major issues with Sri Lanka

- **Issue of Katchatheevu:**
- ✓ The unpopular truth in the entire conflict is accusations about Tamil fishermen entering Sri Lankan waters & the ownership of Katchatheevu Island, where Tamil fishermen had traditional fishing rights for centuries, remains an unresolved issue.
- ✓ In 1974, the island was ceded to Sri Lanka after an agreement was signed by Indira Gandhi between the two countries without consulting the Tamil Nadu government.
- ✓ The agreement allowed Indian fishermen "access to Katchatheevu for rest, for drying of nests and for the annual St Anthony's festival" but it did not ensure the traditional fishing rights.



- **Proliferation of trawlers in Indian coast:**
- ✓ Trawlers are mechanised boats with highly exploitative fishing nets unlike most of the poor fishermen on the Sri Lankan coast who use traditional fishing methods.
- ✓ The use of mechanised bottom trawlers has become a bone of contention between the fishermen of the two countries.
- ✓ The actions of the Tamil Nadu fishermen adversely affect their counterparts in the Northern Province who are also struggling to come to terms with life after the civil war.
- ✓ The recent economic crisis in the island nation has only worsened their plight.
- **Demarcation of the IMBL:**
- ✓ The fishermen of Tamil Nadu experience an issue with the lack of fishing areas consequent to the demarcation of the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).
- ✓ Just as sections of fishermen from the Palk Bay bordering districts of Tamil Nadu continue to transgress the IMBL, cases of many of them getting arrested and their boats being impounded by the Sri Lankan authorities continue.



Problems faced by Indian fishermen

- ✓ Indian fishermen face highly restricted access to traditional fishing grounds, increased harassment by the Sri Lankan Navy, and arrests by the Sri Lankan Navy on trespassing charges.

- ✓ Restoring the right to fish in the traditional fishing grounds of Palk Bay has always been among the top priorities of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Suggestions

- ✓ Regular patrolling, establishment of communication channels, and installation of warning systems could significantly reduce the incidents of harassment and apprehension.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu's CM has also proposed regular meetings and consultations of the Joint Working Group reconstituted in 2016, which he said would help in building trust, facilitate effective communication and ensure smooth fishing operations.

India - Sri Lanka Relations

➤ **About:**

- ✓ India and Sri Lanka have a legacy of intellectual, cultural, religious and linguistic interaction and the relationship between the two countries are more than 2500 years old.
- ✓ Trade and investment have grown and there is cooperation in the fields of development, education, culture and defence.
- ✓ In recent years, significant progress in the implementation of developmental assistance projects for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and disadvantaged sections of the population in Sri Lanka has helped further cement the bonds of friendship.
- ✓ The nearly three-decade long armed conflict between Sri Lankan forces and the LTTE came to an end in May 2009.
- ✓ During the conflict, India supported the right of the Government of Sri Lanka to act against terrorist forces.

➤ **Commercial Partnership:**

- ✓ Both countries enjoy a vibrant and growing economic and commercial partnership, which has witnessed considerable expansion over the years.
- ✓ In 2020, India was Sri Lanka's 2nd largest trading partner with the bilateral merchandise trade amounting to about USD 3.6 billion.
- ✓ India is also one of the largest contributors to Foreign Direct Investment in Sri Lanka.

➤ **Projects under Lines of Credit:**

- ✓ 11 Lines of credit (LOC) have been extended to Sri Lanka by the Export-Import Bank of India in the last 15 years.
- ✓ Important sectors in which Projects have been executed/ are under execution, under these LOCs include Railway, transport, connectivity, defence, solar.
- ✓ A US\$ 100 million LoC for undertaking solar projects in Sri Lanka has been signed between the Government of Sri Lanka and EXIM Bank in June 2021.

➤ **People-to-people ties:**

- ✓ Buddhism is one of the strongest pillars connecting the two nations and civilizations from the time when the Great Indian Emperor Ashoka sent his children Arahata Mahinda and Their Sangamitta to spread the teachings of Lord Buddha at the request of King Devanampiyatissa of Sri Lanka.

➤ **Human Resource Development:**

- ✓ India now offers about 710 scholarship slots annually to Sri Lankan students.
- ✓ In addition, under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program, India offers 402 fully-funded slots every year to officials in various Ministries of Government of Sri Lanka and also to other eligible citizens for short term training programs in a wide variety of technical and professional disciplines to enhance skill sets.
- ✓ Indian institutes under the 'Study in India' Program provide technical expertise across a diverse range of courses and include programs in niche disciplines such as Ayurveda, Yoga, and Buddhist Studies.

➤ **Defence:**

- ✓ India and Sri Lanka conduct a joint Military exercise named 'Mitra Shakti' and a Naval exercise named SLINEX.

➤ **Support during the recent Srilankan crisis:**

- ✓ Sri Lanka recently faced an acute economic and energy crisis triggered due to a shortage of foreign exchange.
- ✓ India has provided a \$2.4-bn package of financial assistance in February and March.
- ✓ India also appointed experts to assist Sri Lanka's economic recovery, and for various joint projects.
- ✓ India extended a \$400-million currency swap and a \$500-million credit line for fuel purchases to Sri Lanka earlier this year.
- ✓ Since January 2022, India has also signed several key bilateral agreements with Sri Lanka, including the joint development of the Trincomalee Oil Tank Farms, and three major power projects in the north and east, involving the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and the Adani Group, apart from the recent pacts on maritime security.

SOCIAL ISSUES**Marital Rape**

In context: The Supreme Court would list a batch of petitions pertaining to the matters related to marital rape.

What is Marital Rape?

- ✓ 'Marital rape' refers to the act of forcible sexual intercourse by a man with his wife without her consent. While rape is a serious crime in India, marital rape is not illegal.

Issues before the Court

- ✓ An appeal against a split verdict of the Delhi High Court on a challenge to the constitutional validity of the 'marital rape immunity' in the Indian Penal Code.
- ✓ An appeal against a judgment by the Karnataka High Court that allowed the prosecution of a man for raping his wife.
- ✓ PILs challenging the 'marital rape exception' allowed under IPC Section 375 which defines rape.

Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code

- ✓ It defines rape as "sexual intercourse with a woman against her will, without her consent, by coercion, misrepresentation or fraud or at a time when she has been intoxicated or duped, or is of unsound mental health and in any case if she is under 18 years of age.
- ✓ Consent: Consent is defined as clear, voluntary communication that the woman gives for a certain sexual act.
- ✓ Exceptions to Section 375: Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife who is above the age of 18, is not sexual assault.
- ✓ Punishment: Except in certain aggravated situations, the punishment will be imprisonment of not less than seven years but it may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.
- In aggravated situations, punishment will be rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 10 years but which may extend to imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.

Arguments favoring Marital Rape

- ✓ A marriage should not be viewed as a license for a husband to forcibly rape his wife with impunity.
- ✓ The doctrine of Coverture: The marital exception to the IPC's definition of rape was drafted based on Victorian patriarchal norms that did not recognize men and women as equals.
- It did not allow married women to own property, and merged the identities of husband and wife under the "Doctrine of Coverture."
- ✓ Article 14 of the Constitution: Indian women deserve to be treated equally under Article 14 and an individual's human rights do not deserve to be ignored by anyone, including by their spouse.
- Further, a married woman has the same right to control her own body as does an unmarried woman.
- Bodily Integrity is intrinsic to Article 21: A woman is entitled to refuse sexual relations with her husband as the right to bodily integrity and privacy is an intrinsic part of Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Supreme Court has included sanctity of women, and freedom to make choices related to sexual activity under the ambit of Article 21
- In the State of Karnataka v. Krishnappa, the Supreme Court held that sexual violence apart from being a dehumanizing act is an unlawful intrusion of the right to privacy and sanctity of a female.
- In the Suchita Srivastava v. Chandigarh Administration, the Supreme Court equated the right to make choices related to sexual activity with rights to personal liberty, privacy, dignity, and bodily integrity under Article 21 of the Constitution.
- Rape not ground for Divorce: As marital rape is not a ground for a divorce in any personal laws and even the Special Marriage Act, 1954, It cannot be used as a ground for divorce and cruelty against the husband. Thus, the women remain helpless and keep suffering in silence.
- Rape is rape, irrespective of the identity of the perpetrator, and the age of the survivor.
- A woman who is raped by a stranger lives with a memory of a horrible attack; a woman who is raped by her husband lives with her rapist throughout her life.
- Criminalizing marital rape: It will ensure that women remains safer from abusive spouses and they can receive the help needed to recover from marital rape and can save themselves from domestic violence and sexual abuse
- Much of the developed world has criminalized it. The even United Kingdom, whose common law was followed by India, made marital rape a criminal offence in 1991.
- The JS Verma committee set up in the Nirbhaya gang-rape case and the UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 2013 had recommended that the Indian government should criminalize marital rape

Arguments against marital rape

- Destabilize marriage as an institution: It may create absolutely anarchy in families and destabilize the institution of marriage and thereby destroy the family platform which upholds family values and helps in sustaining the country.
- Indian society believes that marriage is a sacrament
- Misuse of law: It may become an easy tool for harassing the husbands by misusing the law similar to the growing misuse of section 498A (harassment caused to a married woman by her husband and in-laws) of the IPC.
- Awareness is more important: Merely criminalizing marital rape may not stop it as “moral and social awareness” plays a vital role in stopping such an act.
- Diversity in Cultures of the states: India has its unique problems due to various factors like literacy, lack of financial empowerment of the majority of females, the mindset of the society, vast diversity, poverty, etc. and these should be considered carefully before criminalizing marital rape.
- Also, criminal law is in the Concurrent List and implemented by the states and there is a vast diversity in the cultures of these states
- Law Commission has not recommended: Indian Law Commission and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs after thoroughly examining the matter did not recommend the criminalization of marital rape.
- No violation of Article 21: Non-criminalisation of marital rape is “not a violation” of Article 21 of the Constitution as a wife is not compelled to live with a sexually abusive husband under personal law.
- Implementation issues: Criminalizing marital rape will create serious implementational issues like
- If all sexual acts by a man with his wife will qualify to be marital rape, then the judgment as to whether it is a marital rape or not will singularly rest with the wife who cannot always be trusted.
- What evidences the courts will rely upon in such circumstances, as there can be no lasting evidence in case of sexual acts between a man and his wife.

Way Ahead

- In striking down the marital rape exception, the court will not be creating a new crime, or trespassing into the domain of Parliament. It will be held that an artificial immunity from criminal law, created by an 1860 law, can no longer survive constitutional scrutiny.
- Criminalising marital rape, therefore, is not about the State invading the privacy, but about ensuring that the principles of consent, dignity, and autonomy, apply as much in private as outside.

PRELIM FACTS

1. Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana

In Context: The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has been working towards creating an inclusive and equitable society for all its citizens and Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY) is one such scheme for **empowering the elderly for a dignified life.**

Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)

➤ **About:**

- Earlier it was named as **National Action Plan for Senior Citizen (NAPSrc)** and had been revamped, **renamed in 2021.**
- It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

➤ **Objectives:**

- To recognize the invaluable contribution made by the elderly to society and seeks to ensure their well-being and social inclusion.
- Through recognising their contribution, the government aims to empower and uplift them, ensuring their active participation and inclusion in all aspects of life.

➤ **Components:**

- **Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPSrc):** It provides financial assistance for running and maintenance of Senior Citizen Homes to improve the quality of life by providing basic amenities.
- **Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana (RVY):** To provide financial assistance of Rs. 15000 to senior citizens who belong to below poverty line (BPL) category suffering from any of the age-related disabilities with assisted living devices.

➤ **Achievements:**

- **Under IPSrC:**
 - A total of 552 Senior Citizen Homes, 14 Continuous care homes, 19 mobile Medicare units and 5 physiotherapy clinics are being maintained by different NGOs across the country.
 - Nearly 1.5 lakh beneficiaries are staying in the Senior Citizen homes.
- **Under RVY:**

- Total 269 camps as implementing agencies have been held till date and the Number of beneficiaries of this camp is over 4 lakhs.
- A total amount of Rs. 140.34 crore has been released during the last 3 financial years.

Significance

- It stands as a testament to the government's commitment to the **well-being and empowerment of senior citizens in India**.
- By addressing their financial, healthcare, and social needs, the scheme aims to **empower the elderly, ensuring their active participation and inclusion in society**.
- The government strives to create an environment where senior citizens can live a life of dignity, respect, and fulfillment, acknowledging their invaluable contributions to the nation.

2. Kanwar Yatra

In context: The Kanwar Yatra that attracts million of devotees of shiva in state of Uttarakhand had concluded recently.

- The Kanwar Yatra is a pilgrimage organised in the Hindu calendar month of Shravana (Saavan), usually from July to August.
- During this yatra, millions of devotees of Lord Shiva known as 'Kanwariya' make a journey to Haridwar, Gangotri, and Gaumukh in the state of Uttarakhand.
- The water is used by the pilgrims to worship Shiva lingas at shrines of importance, including the 12 Jyotirlingas, or at certain specific temples or even in the devotee's own village or town.

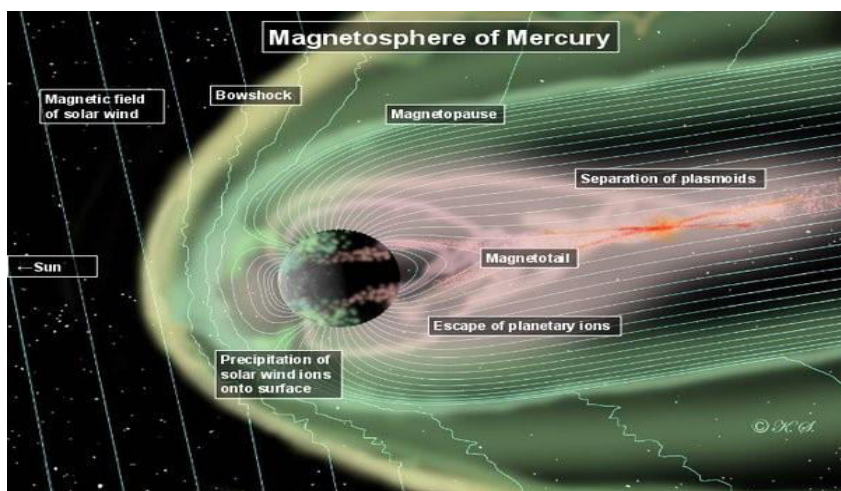


- In the Gangetic plains, the water is taken from pilgrimage sites such as Haridwar, Gaumukh and Gangotri in Uttarakhand, Sultanganj in Bihar, and Prayagraj, Ayodhya or Varanasi from Uttar Pradesh.
- Similarities - Kanwar yatra in North India is celebrated as *Kavadi festival* in Tamil Nadu in which Lord Muruga is worshipped.
- Mythology - The ritual goes back to the 'samudra manthan', narrated in the Bhagavata Purana and in the Vishnu Purana, which explains the origin of 'amrita', or the *nectar of immortality*.
- Another origin story of the Kanwar yatra is linked with *Lord Parashuram*, a devotee of Shiva.

3. X-ray Auroras

In context: During a close Mercury flyby, the BepiColombo spacecraft collected data that showed how electrons raining down on the planet's surface are triggering X-ray auroras.

- Auroras - An aurora is a natural colourful light display that shimmers in the sky.

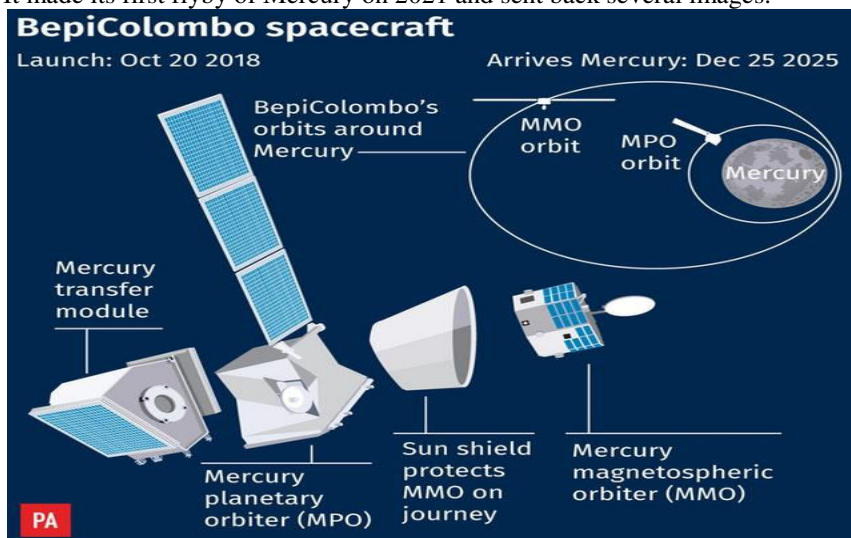


X-ray Auroras in Mercury

- ✓ High energy electrons from the solar wind rain down on Mercury's surface and, because they are *not restricted by a thick atmosphere*, they hit the surface.
- ✓ This process emits an auroral glow in the form of X-rays.
- ✓ For the first time, scientists have witnessed how electrons are accelerated in Mercury's magnetosphere and precipitated onto the planet's surface.
- ✓ MESSENGER Mission- Aurorae at Mercury had previously been observed by the MESSENGER mission, but the exact processes that cause the x-ray aurora had not been well understood.
- ✓ Mercury's magnetosphere is much smaller than Earth's and has a different structure and dynamics, that is evident that generates aurorae is the same throughout the Solar System.

About BepiColombo Spacecraft

- ✓ Launched on – 2018.
- ✓ Launch Vehicle - Ariane 5.
- ✓ Aim – It will study and understand the composition, geophysics, atmosphere, magnetosphere and history of Mercury, the least explored planet in the inner Solar System.
- ✓ Agency – It is a joint mission between the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).
- ✓ The BepiColombo mission is based on two scientific spacecraft and one transfer module:
 - Mercury Planetary Orbiter (MPO)
 - Mercury Magnetospheric Orbiter (MMO)
 - Mercury Transfer Module (MTM)
- ✓ It will chart the planet's mineralogy and elemental composition, determine whether the interior of the planet is molten or not, and investigate the extent and origin of Mercury's magnetic field.
- ✓ It made its first flyby of Mercury on 2021 and sent back several images.



4. Yellow Sea

In context: North Korea recently fired several cruise missiles into the Yellow Sea.

Location:

- ✓ The Yellow Sea is situated between mainland China to the west and north, the Korean Peninsula to the east, and the Shandong Peninsula and Liaodong Peninsula to the south.
- ✓ It connects with the Bohai Sea to the northwest.
- ✓ Size: Also referred to in China as Huang Hai and in North and South Korea as the West Sea, the Yellow Sea is 870 kilometres long and 556 kilometres wide.
- ✓ Depth: It is one of the largest shallow areas of continental shelf in the world with an average depth of 44 metres and a maximum depth of 152 metres.
- ✓ Inflow: Several major rivers, including the Yellow River and the Yangtze River, discharge into the Yellow Sea, carrying significant amounts of sediment and nutrients.
- ✓ Islands: The Yellow Sea is dotted with numerous islands, the largest of which include Jeju Island (South Korea), Shandong Peninsula islands (China), and Ganghwa Island (South Korea).
- ✓ Climate: The climate is characterized by very cold, dry winters and wet, warm summers.
- ✓ Currents: The warm current of the Yellow Sea is a part of the Tsushima Current, which diverges near the western part of the Japanese island of Kyushu and flows at less than 0.5 mile (0.8 km) per hour northward into the middle of the sea.
- ✓ Along the continental coasts, southward-flowing currents prevail, which strengthen markedly in the winter monsoon period, when the water is cold, turbid, and of low salinity.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Examine the role played by science and technology in the post-Independence period in order to put India on the path of modernity.

Introduction: Nehru believed that science and technology were crucial to the solution of India's problems. The Scientific Policy Resolution, acknowledging the role of science and technology in the economic, social and cultural advancement of the country, was passed by the Lok Sabha in March 1958.

Role played by science and technology in the post-Independence

- Industrialization: Rapid industrialisation based on foundations of modern science and technology helped in the planned socialist model of development of the country. Pandit Nehru initiated a strong and diversified industrial base. This led to the passage of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948 followed by the Industrial Policy Resolutions / Statements of 1956, 1973, 1977, 1980 and 1991.
- Rapid agriculture development: The first five-year plan of 1951 addressed the issues of the agrarian sector, including investments in dams and irrigation. The total planned budget was allocated to irrigation and energy, agriculture and community development, transport and communications, industry social services, land rehabilitation, and other sectors and services.
- The ICAR has played a pioneering role in ushering Green Revolution in 1970s and subsequent developments in agriculture in India through its research and technology development that has enabled the country to increase the production of food grains by 4 times, horticultural crops by 6 times, fish by 9 times (marine 5 times and inland 17 times), milk 6 times and eggs 27 times since 1950-51, thus making a visible impact on the national food and nutritional security. It has played a major role in promoting excellence in higher education in agriculture.
- Space technology: In 1962, the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR), together with a Rocket Launching Facility at Thumba (TERLS), was established. It laid the foundation of future space technology development of the country.
- Technical Education: In 1952, the first of the five institutes of technology, patterned after the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was set up at Kharagpur.
- Atomic Energy: The Atomic Energy Commission, headed by Homi J. Bhabha, was set up in August 1948. In 1954, the government created a separate Department of Atomic Energy with Homi Bhabha as secretary. In August 1956, India's first nuclear reactor in Trombay (Asia's first also), became critical. These institutions have helped the country to become a nuclear state.
- India adopted scientific temper and secularism as a foundation of new India, and of dams as the temples of modern India. Tolerance and spirituality characterize the country's rich culture.
- A change over to decimal coinage and a metric system of weights and measures, in line with international standards, was made in phases between 1955 and 1962.

However, the continuing instances of communalism, regionalism, untouchability, gender based discrimination etc. show that India is yet to be a modern state. The lack of scientific temperament still witnesses issues of blind faith, witch hunting etc. The Indian education system still witnesses rote learning.

Conclusion: The Government of India, through the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy-2013, New Education Policy, 2020 among other things, aspires to position India among the world's top five scientific powers and to inculcate scientific temperament among the people of the country.

MCQ

1. With reference to the Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code, consider the following statements:
 1. Consent is defined as clear, voluntary communication that the woman gives for a certain sexual act.
 2. Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife who is above the age of 18, is also a sexual assault.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - a) **Only 1**
 - b) Only 2
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
2. With reference to the India Climate Energy Dashboard (ICED) 3.0, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 1. ICED is released by NITI Aayog.
 2. ICED 3.0 enables users to freely access and analyze real-time data on the energy sector.
 Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to rice exports from India, consider the following statements:
 1. It accounts for 14% of the world's total rice exports.
 2. Rice shipment in 2022 was more than the next 4 exporters combined - Thailand, Vietnam, Pakistan and the US.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) **Only 2**
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. With reference to CU- Chayan portal, consider the following statements:
 1. It is an online portal launched by the central government to streamline the process of selecting government employees through inter departmental exams.
 2. The portal provides a common platform for listing vacancies/advertisements for the vacant positions in the various government departments.
 Which of the above statements is/are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) **Neither 1 nor 2**
5. 'Rule 267 of the Rajya Sabha' which was seen in news pertains to
 - a) Breach of privilege
 - b) **Suspension of normal business**
 - c) Point of order
 - d) Special mention
6. Considered the following statement
 1. It is launched on – 2018.
 2. It will study and understand the composition, geophysics, atmosphere, magnetosphere and history of Mercury.
 3. It is a joint mission between the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).
 How many above statements is /are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) **Only 3**
 - d) None
7. Considered the following statement regarding Kanwar yatra
 1. It is celebrated as *Kavadi festival* in Tamil Nadu in which Lord Muruga is worshipped.
 2. It is associated with Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu
 Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - a) **Only 1**
 - b) Only 2
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
8. Considered the following statement regarding Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana (AVYAY)
 1. Its objective is for empowering the elderly for a dignified life
 2. Earlier it was named as National Action Plan for Senior Citizen (NAPSrc)
 3. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
 4. Comes under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
 Which of the above statement is /are correct?
 - a) 1 and 3only
 - b) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - c) 3 and 4 only
 - d) **All of the above**
9. Considered the following statements regarding Katchatheevu Island.
 1. It is an uninhabited off-shore island in the Palk Strait.
 2. During the British rule, it was administered jointly by India and Sri Lanka.
 Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
10. With reference to 'Heat Index', consider the following statements
 1. It provides information about the impact of humidity on the high temperatures
 2. The Index is divided into five colour coded categories
 3. It has been launched by the India Meteorological Department (IMD)
 How many of the statement(s) given above are correct
 - a) Only 1
 - b) **Only 2**
 - c) Only 3
 - d) None