

FOREIGN RELATION

Europe's carbon burden

In Context : The European Union announced the gradual implementation of the carbon border adjustment mechanism (CBAM) that is viewed as a resurgence of frictions in an inherently unequal trading system. CBAM is part of EU's attempts to mitigate the effects of climate change that include an emission trading system used to price emissions

➤ **EU's "Fit for 55 Agenda" for effect implementation of CBAM**

- As the EU ramps up its efforts to withdraw free allowances in the system, there is a worry that businesses will relocate to jurisdictions with no such comparable regulations.
- Carbon leakage has compelled the EU to supplement its "Fit for 55 Agenda" with a levy on imports from countries that do not price carbon

➤ **Impact of CBAM on trade and commerce between EU and other countries**

- The EU is an important trading partner. Even though its regional trade is significant, the composition of trade in specific commodities and services is not EU dominated.
- For example, Turkey, Russia, South Korea, India and China are the top five sources of **steel** imports for the EU. Similarly, Russia and Mozambique account for 50 per cent of its aluminum imports.
- Both these products along with cement, fertiliser, electricity and hydrogen will be covered under the initial phase of the CBAM.
- The worry is this will significantly impact trade with countries such as **India** that depend on the EU for its exports 26.4 per cent of India's exports of products are potentially covered by CBAM.

➤ **India and EU trade relation and preparedness of Indian corporate houses**

- EU is India's third largest trading partner, accounting for **10.8% (around €88 billion)** of our total trade in goods.
- Many within the Indian corporate sector have been preparing for the compliance of CBAM norms.
 - For example, Tata Steel operates in the EU market and has experience with transitioning to green steel. As per its annual report 2022-23, CBAM will encourage the company to transition faster and the experience will help with the transition in India
- Along with it, carbon-related costs (not CBAM) are to be borne by the society, either through higher steel prices or through public spending or subsidies.

➤ **The possible outcomes due to rise in taxation under CBAM**

- It is possible that the EU may end up losing on account of higher input costs as they may be passed on to consumers.
- Steel and aluminum are crucial not just for its major exports such as vehicles but also for green transition (aluminum).
- CBAM will apply to aluminum even as the EU lists it as a critical mineral and struggles to lift its production.
- It is hard to reconcile these with the application of a tariff on imports except for the reason that CBAM is designed to keep countries such as China —suppliers of minerals out of the EU. A similar approach was adopted in the past to protect smelters.

➤ **How should India respond to this tax?**

- There is the WTO to contest the measure as discriminatory. However, CBAM raises more serious concerns on the structure of the manufacturing sector that will be dominated by companies and countries that are able to withstand the winds of change.
- The EU and the US have responded to the challenge by designing incentive schemes to attract investments and to remain competitive.
- India too may have to innovate. With limited fiscal space, an internal carbon market along with an effective taxing mechanism may not only nudge firms in that direction, but also can support consumers and smaller businesses
- Such pricing mechanisms can also work as a tool to negotiate equivalence with the CBAM, as common but differentiated responsibility would mean that India can price carbon differently as per its level of development.

➤ **Conclusion:**

- CBAM is significant imitative of EU to check on carbon emission during manufacturing services and trade & commerce which will help in countering climate change
- However, there is need that India must respond with a policy that ensures pricing of carbon in line with its development priorities.

ENVIRONMENT

Internet from a Sachet

- **In Context:** Digital connectivity is a sine qua non for everything digital in today's world.
 - **India's digital connectivity landscape:** The connectivity landscape has been transformed in the last seven years in India due to multiple factors like
 - The boom in mobile telephony (a billion-plus mobile connections),
 - 4G coverage,
 - A significant reduction in tariffs (from Rs 300 per GB to a mere Rs 7 per GB).
 - Increased smartphone penetration.
 - Enabling policies like Net Neutrality and the country's focus on building Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) — particularly digital ID and UPI — have further contributed to the increase in digital transactions across domains.
 - **About the Digital India programme**
 - ✓ **Vision:** Government launched the Digital India programme with the vision of transforming India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-based economy, by ensuring
 - digital access,
 - digital inclusion,
 - digital empowerment and
 - bridging the digital divide.
 - ✓ **The programme is centred on three key vision areas:**
 - Digital infrastructure as a core utility to every citizen,
 - Governance and services on demand, and
 - Digital empowerment of citizens.
 - ✓ **Goal:** The overall goal is to ensure that
 - Digital technologies improve the life of every citizen,
 - Expand India's digital economy, and
 - Create investment and employment opportunities and
 - Create digital technological capabilities in India.
 - ✓ **Outcomes of the programme:**
 - Digital India has considerably reduced the distance between Government and citizens.
 - It has also helped in delivery of substantial services directly to the beneficiary in a transparent and corruption free manner.
 - In the process, India has emerged as one of the pre-eminent nations of the world to use technology to transform the lives of its citizens.
 - **Issue of Data Demand & Gaps**
 - This growth has been accompanied by a huge surge in data demand. Video is now the major data-guzzling medium.
 - India's per capita data consumption is a whopping 19.5 GB per month.
 - The total data volume transported by mobile networks of India is more than the mobile networks of the US and China combined.
 - This means that today, even a child requires five to six gigabytes of data for online classes and other educational requirements.
 - Thus, the gap between demand and affordable supply remains wide, especially for poor households and rural India.
 - **Possible way to bridge the Data supply gaps - PM-WANI**
- About Wi-Fi Access Network Interface (WANI):**
- The creation of inter-operable public wi-fi hotspots was one such idea proposed by the Telecom Regulator of India (TRAI) in 2017.
 - Similar in concept to the PCOs of the past, it proposed to create millions of interoperable wi-fi hotspots, Public Data Offices (PDOs), for the last mile distribution of broadband to the common people in sachet-sized packages of Rs 5 to 10.
 - This system can provide community content without using the bandwidth.
 - The idea was successfully piloted as the Wi-Fi Access Network Interface, or WANI.
- Significance of PM-WANI:**
- This framework offers a compelling business opportunity for aggregators as it allows unbundling of internet distribution at the last mile, eliminating the need for additional licensing fees.

- It provides a robust foundation for delivering affordable internet access to a significant portion of society.
- PM-WANI can also nurture the growth of local nano entrepreneurs throughout the country.
- These last-mile providers (PDOs) can be found in small shops, local establishments, and even households.
- They establish wi-fi hotspots and offer internet access to other users, enabling them to augment their monthly earnings while promoting internet usage through affordable sachet plans.

Sachet internet:

- In the last year alone, more than 1.5 lakh wi-fi hotspots have been installed by PDOAs and more than a million people are getting unlimited Internet daily by paying just Rs 5 to 10.
- Students are buying this sachet internet instead of a packet of chips or soft drinks from their pocket money.

Challenges

- **Availability of connectivity:** One of the arguments against PM-WANI is that data is now so cheap and everyone has 4G connectivity — there is no business case for wi-fi hotspots. This, as we have seen, is an oversimplification.
- **Need of legal mandate:** Except for Aadhaar (prompted by litigation), none of the pre existing platforms [like Aarogya Setu, CoWIN or even Government E-Marketplace (GEM)] has a legal definition of their functions, roles and responsibilities from an Act of Parliament.
- **Data collection & breach:** One of the common aspects of all such platforms is them being data guzzlers where personal information is gathered from Indians that goes beyond the technical requirements. This only results in multiple individual and social harms, including data breaches.

➤ **Way ahead**

- PM-WANI presents a golden opportunity to accelerate high-speed unlimited internet penetration, bridging the digital divide and empowering communities.
- PM-WANI needs to be promoted by all stakeholders — governments, civil society, and startups.
- This Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) is uniquely Indian in its approach to interoperability, openness, and scalability. It will hopefully accelerate like UPI or other DPIs.

Environment

The Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023

In Context: The Forest Conservation (Amendment) Bill 2023 is expected to be tabled for clearance during the monsoon parliament session that began on July 20, 2023.

➤ **The Forest (Conservation) Act 1980:**

- It was enacted to ensure that India's forest land is not willingly usurped for non-forestry purposes.
- The Act empowers the Centre to require that any forest land diverted for non-forestry purposes be duly compensated.
- it broadens its purview to include territory that is not formally designated as "forest" in State or Central government records.

➤ **Need for the latest amendments:**

- This forest-clearance approval is one of the most difficult permits to obtain in India, requiring a wait of as long as 365 days and lakhs of rupees in bribes.
- India's land records are in terrible shape, parcels marked as forests in one official record can be given a different classification in another.
- To make matters worse, the court order was worded such that it led states to avoid reclassifying forests.
- According to the Centre, these amendments are necessary to remove ambiguities and bring clarity about the applicability of the Act on various lands.

➤ **Some of the proposed amendments:**

- ✓ Cultivating plantations on non-forest land that could (over time) increase tree cover.
- ✓ Removing the (1980 Act's) restrictions on creating infrastructure that would aid national security and create livelihood opportunities for those living on the periphery of forests. For example,
- ✓ In geographically sensitive areas within 100 km of the International Borders or the Line of Control, no forest clearance is required to construct highways, hydel power projects, etc.
- ✓ No forest clearance is required to establish zoos, safari parks and ecotourism activities.
- ✓ No central protection for vast tracts of so-called 'deemed forests' (forests not officially recorded as forests) and permitting activities such as tourism.

➤ **Concerns raised by the environmentalists:** Amending the name of the Act: To Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam (translated as Forest Conservation and Augmentation) from the existing Forest (Conservation) Act.

- **The reclassification of forest areas adds confusion:**
 - The Bill states that the FCA will only apply to areas recorded as forests in government records, as on or after 25 October 1980.
 - This has raised fears that the amendment will invalidate the SC's 1996 judgment in T.N. Godavarman vs Union of India, which expanded the purview of the FCA by interpreting the meaning of forest as its dictionary definition.
 - If these areas are declassified, 1,97,159 sq km of forests (27.62% of total 7,13,789 sq km) that lie outside Recorded Forest Areas will lose all protection.
 - **Framed without taking real scenario into consideration:**
 - Only 21% of India's land area has forests and only 12.37% of this is intact natural forest.
 - While the India State of Forest Report 2021 has shown a marginal increase (2261 sq. km) in forest cover, it hides a pattern of deforestation in some parts of the country.
 - For instance, the most biodiversity-rich north-eastern hill States show a net decline of 3199 sq. km of forest cover from 2009-2019.
 - Also, this marginal increase in forest cover can be ascribed to commercial plantations, which can't replace the ecological functions performed by intact natural forests.
 - **Exemptions will remove the necessity of forest clearances:**
 - In border areas, which are home to the most ecologically important ecosystems in the country.
 - This will be in conflict with the rights of forest-dwelling tribes, as they will no longer be consulted before seeking forest clearances.
 - The Bill was referred to a joint committee (JPC) instead of the standing committee: The 31-member joint committee (18 are from the ruling party) has 21 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha.
 - The JPC has not suggested any changes in the original version of the Bill.
 - **Government's intention:**
 - This is a rare opportunity for India to correct a 27-year-old policy logjam that is holding up growth and employment opportunities, without helping the country substantially conserve its forests.
 - The changes are necessary considering the dynamic changes in the ecological, strategic and economic aspirations of the country.
- The amendments will –**
- Support the country's objective to increase forest and tree cover up to a third of its land area.
 - Help the country achieve Net Zero emissions by 2070 and maintain or enhance forest carbon stocks through ecologically balanced sustainable development.
 - Help create a carbon sink amounting to 2.5-3 billion tonnes of CO₂-equivalent by 2030 under the Nationally Determined Contribution targets.
 - The scope of this act can be further expanded with emerging ecological challenges of forest conservation, restoration, compensatory mechanism, mitigation measures, etc.

Way ahead: The Bill should not be tabled in Parliament without additional consultations with domain experts. As the devastating impacts of climate change and environmental degradation become clearer (recent floods across north India), this is the time for the government to reaffirm its commitment to protecting the country's immense biodiversity.

Conclusion: While ensuring the military security of the country is a priority, the Bill should not come at the cost of losing ecological security. These natural ecosystems play a crucial role in buffering against increasingly unpredictable weather patterns caused by climate change.

PRELIM FACTS

1. International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem 2023

In context: International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem is celebrated every year on July 26.

- **About International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem:**
 - It is celebrated every year on July 26.
 - This International Day was adopted by the General Conference of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2015.
 - Purpose: To raise awareness of the importance of mangrove ecosystems as "a unique, special and vulnerable ecosystem" and to promote solutions for their sustainable management, conservation and uses.
- **What are Mangroves:**
 - Mangroves are unique coastal ecosystems found in tropical and subtropical regions around the world.

- They are characterized by dense, salt-tolerant trees and plants that thrive in the intertidal zones, where land and sea meet.
- They are typically found in sheltered coastal areas, estuaries, lagoons, and tidal flats, where they play a crucial role in maintaining the balance of the ecosystem.
- Some common species of mangrove trees include the Red Mangrove (*Rhizophora* spp.), Black Mangrove (*Avicennia* spp.), White Mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa*), and the Buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus*).

➤ **Features:**

Respiratory or knee roots:

- They have specialized adaptations to cope with high salt levels in both the soil and water, such as unique root systems called "prop roots" or "pneumatophores" that help with gas exchange in waterlogged soils.
- They project above the mud and have small openings (lenticels) through which air enters, passing through the soft spongy tissue to the roots beneath the mud.
- They can survive extreme weather conditions and require low oxygen levels to survive.
- They cannot survive freezing temperatures and thus are found mainly in tropical and subtropical latitudes.
- Mangrove forests can store ten times more carbon per hectare than terrestrial forests.
- They can store carbon up to 400 per cent faster than land-based tropical rainforests.
- Mangroves improve water quality by filtering pollutants and trapping sediments from the land, and they reduce coastal erosion.

➤ **Mangroves in India:**

- India contributes to nearly half of the total mangrove cover in South Asia.
- According to the India State of Forest Report, 2021, the mangrove cover in India is 4,992 square km, which is 0.15 per cent of the country's total geographical area.
- West Bengal has the highest percentage of mangrove cover in India, mainly because it has Sundarbans, the largest mangrove forest in the world. It is followed by Gujarat and Andaman, and Nicobar Islands.
- Other states that have mangrove cover are Maharashtra, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Kerala.

2. Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome

In context:The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed that a man had been infected with the deadly Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- **About Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS):** Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is a severe respiratory illness that mainly involves the upper respiratory tract.

Symptoms:fever, coughing, and shortness of breath.

Mortality rate:About 30% of people who have gotten this illness have died.

Causes:MERS is caused by the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV).Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that can cause mild to severe respiratory infections.MERS was first reported in Saudi Arabia in 2012 and then spread to many countries..

➤ **Transmission:**

- The MERS virus comes from MERS-CoV virus mainly spreads from animals to humans.
- The virus has been found in camels, and exposure to camels is a risk factor for MERS.
- The virus can spread between people in close contact.

- **Treatment:**Right now, there is no vaccine for MERS and no specific treatment.Supportive care is given.

3. US Re-entry to UNESCO

In context:U.S. first lady Jill Biden attended a flag-raising ceremony at UNESCO in Paris, marking USA's official re-entry into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

➤ **Background**

- The U.S. exit from UNESCO in 2017 cited an alleged anti-Israel bias within the organization.
- The decision followed a 2011 move by UNESCO to include Palestine as a member state, which led the U.S. and Israel to cease financing the agency. The U.S. withdrawal became official a year later in 2018.
- This is the second time the U.S. has returned to UNESCO after a period of withdrawal. The country previously left the organization in 1984 under the Reagan administration, citing mismanagement, corruption and perceived advancement of Soviet interests. It rejoined in 2003 under George W. Bush's presidency.
- The US requested \$150 million for the 2024 budget to go toward UNESCO dues and arrears, with plans for similar requests in the ensuing years until the full debt of \$619 million is paid off.

- This represents a significant portion of UNESCO's annual operating budget of \$534 million, highlighting the substantial financial role the U.S. played in the agency before its departure.
- Before its withdrawal, the U.S. was the single biggest funder of UNESCO, contributing 22% of the agency's overall funding.

➤ **Reasons for US Re entry**

- The U.S. decision to return to Paris-based UNESCO was based mainly on concerns that China has filled a leadership gap since Washington withdrew during the Trump administration. This development underscores the broader geopolitical dynamics at play, particularly the growing influence of China in international institutions.
- The U.S.'s absence had helped China gain more influence in setting the rules around artificial intelligence and the ensuing technological shifts.
- The decision is a big boost to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, known for its World Heritage program as well as projects to fight climate change and teach girls to read.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

➤ **About:** UNESCO was formed in 1945, is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN).

Members: 195 Members and 8 Associate Members. . India is a founding member of the Organisation.

Structure: The Secretariat is headed by the Director-General, implements the decisions of the General Conference and the Executive Board. The Organization has more than 50 field offices around the world and its headquarters are located in Paris.

Objectives:

- Attaining quality education for all and lifelong learning
- Mobilizing science knowledge and policy for sustainable development
- Addressing emerging social and ethical challenges
- Fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace
- Building inclusive knowledge societies through information and communication.

➤ **Role of UNESCO in context of World Heritage Sites:**

- It seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity.
- This is embodied in an international treaty called the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.
- The most significant feature of the 1972 World Heritage Convention is that it links together the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties in a single document.
- The Convention recognizes the way in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.

4. Janjatiya Darpan

In context: The President of India inaugurated the Tribal Arts gallery (Janjatiya Darpan) at Rashtrapati Bhavan.



➤ **About**

- The gallery was established by Rashtrapati Bhavan in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts (IGNCA).
- The aim of this gallery is to provide a glimpse of rich art, culture and the contributions of tribal communities in building this nation.
- Themes: The gallery consists of different themes such as unsung Tribal Freedom Fighters, Traditional Natural Resource management practices like Halma, Dokra Art, Musical Instruments, Gunjala Gondi Script, Paintings such as Warli, Gondi and Mud Art, Scroll, Metal work etc.

➤ **Other projects launched at Rashtapati Bhavan**

- **Navachara:** An Artificial Intelligence enabled gallery developed by Rashtrapati Bhavan in collaboration with Intel India.
- **Sutra-kala Darpan:** It is a textile Collection. This gallery showcases a remarkable collection of antique textiles that document the illustrious legacy of Rashtrapati Bhavan.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Evaluate the role played by the Indian Diaspora in providing a platform for a stronger relationship between India and ASEAN countries.

Introduction: A proverb in ancient India was very popular among Gujrati traders about Java: “those who go to Java or the East never returns, but if he returns, his decedents live at ease for generations.” Today, this proverb seems to be true from the fact that India’s civilization and culture spread in many parts of the world through trade but struck firm roots in Southeast Asia. Through the centuries, India has been a source of inspiration for countries belonging to the present-day ASEAN. In Cambodia, Thailand, and Indonesia or Burma today, many symbolic remnants of India’s influence are clearly visible in their art, culture, and civilization.

The relationship still with the Government of India’s ‘Act East policy’ aims at improving economic and political relations with the Southeast Asian region which has had close contact with India for centuries and is linked culturally and geographically with it. Moreover, India’s dialogue partnership with ASEAN has evolved into a strategic partnership as well and the Indian diaspora provides a platform for stronger ties with the grouping

Role of Indian Diaspora in strengthening relationship between India and ASEAN countries

- Our diaspora provides a platform for a stronger relationship between India and ASEAN countries. The size of the Indian Diaspora is highly numerically varied in the specific countries of Southeast Asia. About 9-8% of the population in Malaysia and Singapore is of Indian origin, in Myanmar 4% and Indonesia-about 0.5%. The socio-economic status of the Indian Diaspora is also different in different countries depending upon their historical context.
- In Indonesia, the Indian Diaspora got established as the Sikh, Sindhi, and Tamil communities migrated for small businesses. However, today the Indian community is well respected in Indonesia as a substantial majority of them are holding senior positions in MNCs.
- Malaysia occupies an important position as it houses the largest number of Indian expatriates in South East Asia. They are involved in manual work, skilled and unskilled, and administrative, professional, and managerial categories as well.
- The Indians in Singapore as most of them are represented in the judiciary, civil services, and armed forces. The reason such a great representation is the state ideology of meritocracy.
- In the Philippines and Indonesia, the Indian Community has played a prominent role in the export of textile products, which has empowered their economy in the recent past.
- In Brunei, apart from running business mini-marts and small restaurants, Indians have filled up the human resources vacuum, thus making an important contribution to its economy.
- The Indian cinema and Ayurveda also have a great impact on South East Asia. The influence of Bollywood, Indian Music is the main driver of the contemporary diasporic influence.

Challenges and suggestions

- The Indian diaspora has not been utilized in its full sense in respect to South East Asia. That is why we need to cultivate a relationship with this diaspora to actualize its potential in acting as a source of soft power.
- Southeast Asia’s Indian Diaspora does not enjoy economic clout because of its small size. We need to enhance our Foreign Direct Investment from this region. Therefore, it is important for the Indian Government to keep the varied circumstances of its Diaspora in these countries before arriving at any major foreign policy decision.
- Taking the cue from the Kaladan Multi-Modal Project, connectivity of which is from Sittwe Port, Myanmar up to Silchar, and the Manipur connectivity with Myanmar through the Moreh-Tamu Kalewa-Kalemyo, further connectivity between northeast India can be expanded. The question of maintenance, coupled with the security issues, should be looked into in a robust manner.
- Certain contemporary sectors, such as communication & connectivity, infrastructure, water, security, etc. can be further explored in the region. The other common challenges in the region like creating skills for the digital age, big data, generating jobs in the age of disruption, meeting the need of rapid urbanization, protecting the bio-diversity, and making the energy sources cleaner.
- All expressions of Indian soft power – spiritualism, cinema, literature, cricket, Ayurveda, handicrafts, and tourism need to be exploited. They need to be supported by actions.

Conclusion: ASEAN is India’s 4th largest trading partner. With the northeast becoming a bridge to the region and India’s efforts to the Act East policy, the region becomes very important. They are making significant contributions to the region and ensure a strong relationship between India and the Southeast Asian countries. India’s culture, heritage, and pluralism are its strengths. We have the potential to be world leaders in not only economic terms but as a free, vibrant and dynamic nation. India must use its culture to leverage and accelerate

its growth. The Indian diaspora has the unique ability to integrate itself with the local community in a good way while serving as a bridge to India's heritage and culture.

MCQ

1. Consider the following statements regarding Mangroves:
 1. They are characterized by dense, salt-tolerant trees and plants that thrive in intertidal zones.
 2. They are found mainly in tropical and subtropical latitudes.
 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. Recently The President of India inaugurated the Tribal Arts gallery (Janjatiya Darpan) at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Considered the following statement:
 1. The gallery consists of Halma, Dokra Art, Musical Instruments, Gunjala Gondi Script, Paintings such as Warli, Gondi and Mud Art.
 2. Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts (IGNCA) is part of it.
 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
3. Considered the following statement regarding UNESCO.
 1. The U.S. exit from UNESCO in 2018
 2. UNESCO was formed in 1945, is a specialized agency of the United Nations
 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. Considered the following statement with reference to the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA).
 1. It is a statutory body
 2. It was established in 2003 by the central government to implement India's Biological Diversity Act.
 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**
5. Considered the following statement with reference to PM-WANI
 1. It is an inter-operable public Wi-Fi hotspots called PM-WANI
2. Its main vision is digital connectivity, software, and services on demand and digital empowerment of citizens.
 Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) **Neither 1 nor 2**
6. T+0 Settlement is recently in news, considered the following statement:
 1. Real time settlement of transaction in the stock exchange.
 2. It is introduced the financial year 2017
 Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) **Only 2**
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
7. PRABANDH Portal, recently seen in news is related to which of the following sector?
 - a) Judiciary
 - b) **Education**
 - c) Health
 - d) Energy
8. Consider the following statements about Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative
 1. It aims to build capacities of Chief Information Security Officers and frontline
 2. IT officials, across all government departments about cyber crime.
 3. It is an initiative of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
 Choose the correct statements:
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
9. Consider the following statements about no-confidence motion
 1. It can be moved in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.
 2. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha will decide whether to admit the motion for discussion and debate.
 3. The passing of no-confidence motion leads to resignation of the ruling government.
 How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) **Only 2**
 - c) Only 3
 - d) None
10. Global Education Monitoring Report 2023, recently seen in news is published by?
 - a) United Nations Development Programme
 - b) **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization**
 - c) United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
 - d) World Bank