

400 Smart City Mission projects to miss June 30 deadline

Why in News?

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs has submitted its report on the evaluation of the Smart Cities Mission presented in the Lok Sabha.
- The report said that 400 projects, out of the 7,970, worth Rs 22,814 crore would take beyond December 2024 to complete.
- Last year, the Ministry had extended the mission's deadline from June 2023 to June 2024.

Smart Cities Mission (SCM)

- About
 - It was launched on 25 June, 2015, with the objective to promote cities that provide core infrastructure, clean and sustainable environment.
 - 100 cities have been selected to be developed as Smart Cities (through a two-stage competition) in various rounds from 2016 to 2018, with each getting five years from their selection to complete the projects.
 - It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme under the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
 - The Central Government will give financial support to the extent of Rs. 48,000 crores over 5 years i.e., on an average 100 crore per city per year.
 - An equal amount on a matching basis is to be provided by the State/ULB.
 - Principles
 - The six fundamental principles on which the concept of Smart Cities is based are:



- Objective of SCM
 - It will ensure a decent quality of life to their citizens through the application of 'smart solutions'.
 - It aims to drive economic growth and improve quality of life through comprehensive work on social, economic, physical and institutional pillars of the city.
 - The focus is on sustainable and inclusive development by creation of replicable models which act as lighthouses to other aspiring cities.
- Financing of Smart Cities Mission
 - The Smart Cities Mission in India is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
 - It requires state governments and urban local bodies (ULBs) to contribute an equal amount for implementing projects under the Smart City Proposal (SCP).
- Progress report
 - As on December 1, 2023, out of 7,970 projects worth Rs 1, 70,400 crore in the 100 cities, 6,419 projects worth Rs 1, 25,105 crore have been completed.
 - 1,551 projects worth Rs 45,295 crore are underway.
 - Among the cities lagging behind were North-Eastern, Himalayan cities and those in small Union Territories.
- Budget allocation
 - The outlay in the Smart Cities' proposal fell from Rs 7,634 crore to Rs 7,535 crore in the revised budget of 2023-24, with a major slash in the 2024-25 outlay to Rs 2,236 crore.

News Summary: 400 Smart City Mission projects to miss June 30 deadline

- As per the Parliamentary committee, as many as 400 projects being undertaken by about ten cities under the Centre's flagship SCM are unlikely to meet the extended deadline of June 2024.
- The ministry of housing and urban Affairs (MoHUA) extended for the second time the Smart Cities Mission by a year till June 2024 to complete the pending work.

Key highlights

- State governments will have to take over
 - In case of non-completion of these projects within the extended time frame, the state governments concerned will have to complete the projects at their own cost.
- Role of ministry not limited to transfer of their share regarding
 - The ministry's role should not be confined to transfer of their share regarding mission/scheme/project.
 - However, they have to remain watchful for the execution and successful completion of the projects.
- No further extension
 - The report said that the ministry did not want to extend the mission further.
- Reasons for the delay
 - Among the reasons cited by the ministry for the delays were difficulties in resettlement of local population and legal issues such as land procurement.
 - Frequent transfers of smart cities' CEOs and delay in projects that require convergence with other government ministries or agencies were also flagged.
- Recommendations
 - The committee recommended that the next phase of the mission be brought for Tier-2 cities in the radius of 50-100 km of capital cities and tourist hubs.
 - The committee also recommended that the right to privacy be protected, given that the mission had led to installation of over 76,000 CCTV cameras, Integrated Command and Control Centres in all 100 cities, red-light violation detection and smart health systems.

ECONOMY**Decoding White Paper on the Indian Economy****Why in News?**

- The Union Finance Minister presented a "White Paper" on the Indian economy (prepared by the Ministry of Finance) in the Lok Sabha.
- The government had announced in the Union Interim Budget that it would come out with a 'White Paper' to compare the economic performance of 10 years of the Congress-led UPA govt with that of 10 years of the BJP-led NDA govt.

What is a White Paper?

- A white paper typically provides information about a specific issue to make people aware of the nature and scope of the problem and the possible ways to resolve it.
- Apart from governments, a white paper is often used by businesses and other agencies to showcase their products and promote them.
- One of the earliest instances of a government presenting a white paper is of 1922, when then British PM Winston Churchill introduced one to detail his government's policy on Palestine.
- In India,
 - There are no specific guidelines on the issue or tabling of white papers.
 - The Opposition is well within its right to demand a white paper from the government on issues which it needs clarity on. For example, they demanded one on black money recently, demonetisation, etc.
 - In the last 10 years, the incumbent government tabled only two white papers – the other one on the Railways in 2014, detailing freight and fare rationalisation, capacity augmentation, etc.

Is the One Presented by the FM a White Paper, and Why is it Being Presented Now?

- In the sense of the above definition, what was presented in the Indian Parliament is not exactly a white paper because, it is a comparison between the record of two governments on a variety of economic parameters.
- The document explains why the white paper is being presented at the end of 10 years instead of at the start.
 - According to the incumbent government, it refrained from bringing out a white paper on the poor state of affairs then.
 - The need of the hour then was to give hope to the people, to attract investments, both domestic and global and to build support for the much-needed reforms.

Highlights of the White Paper on the Indian Economy and its Objectives

- The 58-page white paper has three main parts.
 - Part 1 discusses the macroeconomic situation during the 10 years of UPA rule.
 - Part 2 provides the current status of the various corruption scams of the UPA government.
 - Part 3 shows how the NDA turned the economy around.
- Objectives of the white paper:
 - It seeks to inform every one of the nature and extent of governance, economic and fiscal crises that the NDA government had when it assumed office in 2014.
 - It informs about the policies and measures that the (NDA) government took to restore the health of the economy since 2014.
 - It wants to spark a broader, more informed debate about the importance of national interest and fiscal responsibility in governance over political expediency.

Some of the Most Important Claims in the White Paper

UPA AND NDA YEARS: WHAT SOME CRUCIAL NUMBERS SAY

Financial Year	UPA YEARS			NDA YEARS			
	Nominal GDP growth rate (%)	Real GDP growth rate (%)	Fiscal Deficit*	Nominal GDP growth rate (%)	Real GDP growth rate (%)	Fiscal Deficit*	
2004-05	14.10	7.92	3.95	2014-15	10.99	7.41	4.10
2005-06	13.99	7.92	4.03	2015-16	10.46	8	3.87
2006-07	17.14	8.06	3.35	2016-17	11.76	8.26	3.48
2007-08	15.14	7.66	2.59	2017-18	11.03	6.8	3.46
2008-09	12.56	3.09	6.11	2018-19	10.59	6.45	3.44
2009-10	15.46	7.86	6.57	2019-20	6.37	3.87	4.64
2010-11	19.92	8.5	4.89	2020-21	-1.36	-5.83	9.17
2011-12	14.43	5.24	5.91	2021-22	18.36	9.05	6.75
2012-13	13.82	5.46	4.93	2022-23	16.06	7.24	6.38
2013-14	12.97	6.39	4.48	2023-24	8.87	7.32	5.85
AVERAGE OF UPA YEARS				AVERAGE OF NDA YEARS			
2004-2014	14.95	6.80	4.7	2014-2024	10.31	5.9	5.1

Source: MoSPI and CMIE. *as a % of Nominal GDP

- UPA’s decade was marked by policy misadventures and scams such as non-transparent auction of public resources (coal and telecom spectrum).
- In a quest to maintain high economic growth by any means after the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, UPA severely undermined the macroeconomic foundations.
- For instance, it underscores high inflation, high fiscal deficit (or the money borrowed to meet expenses), and high proportion of bad loans in the banking system that dragged down economic activity.
- Capital expenditure as a percent of total expenditure (excluding interest payments) halved from 31% in FY04 to 16% in FY14 (this ratio stands at 28% in the current year).
- The resulting neglect of infrastructure creation and challenges of the logistical constraints caused industrial and economic growth to stumble.
- Health expenditure of Indian households showed very little improvement, defence preparedness was hampered by policy paralysis.
- A substantive part of the documents goes on to claim how things have improved under the NDA. For example,
 - It uses data from the International Monetary Fund to show how average headline Inflation has been lower in the NDA decade.
 - Or how many of the schemes (such as Jan Dhan, Swachh Bharat Mission, etc) achieved higher results during the NDA decade.
- Thus, the NDA government rescued the economy from a state of crisis, despair and paralysis and India is now among the ‘top five’ economies (not among the ‘fragile five’), making the third highest contribution to global growth every year.

What can be Inferred from the above Claims?

- Analysing the performance of any economy over two decades, even when they are aligned back-to-back, is a daunting task.
 - This is so because a variety of factors affect not just the economy but also how we measure it.

- For instance, a very big reason why domestic inflation was very high during the last couple of UPA years is the cost of crude oil.
- The crude oil ranged between \$111 and \$105 a barrel between FY12 and FY14, and then fell to \$84 in FY15 and to \$46 in FY16.
- The NDA government has several genuine achievements to its credit (such as the GST and IBC) but the white paper ignores all that is amiss with the economy.
 - For instance, it does not even contain the word “unemployment” and makes no mention that there has been no formal measure of poverty since 2011.

PRELIM FACTS

1. Mera Gaon Mera Dharohar Programme

- Recently, the Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and Development of North Eastern Region informed the Lok Sabha about the Mera Gaon Mera Dharohar programme.

About Mera Gaon Mera Dharohar programme:

- It is a pan-India initiative of the Ministry of Culture under National Mission on Cultural Mapping and was launched on 27th July 2023.
- It seeks to compile comprehensive information detailing the life, history, and ethos of Indian villages and to make the same available to virtual and real-time visitors.
- Under the MGD, information is collected under seven broad categories as given below-
 - Arts and Crafts Village
 - Ecologically Oriented Village
 - Scholastic Village linked with Textual and Scriptural Traditions of India
 - Epic Village linked with Ramayana, Mahabharata and/or Puranic legends and oral epics
 - Historical Village linked with Local and National History
 - Architectural Heritage Village
 - Any other characteristic that may need highlighting such as fishing village, horticulture village, shepherding village etc.
- Objective:
 - The main objective of the project is to culturally map India's 6.5 lakh villages, spanning 29 States and 7 Union Territories, on a comprehensive virtual platform.
 - Through MGD, people will get an opportunity to immerse themselves in the diverse and vibrant cultural heritage of India.
 - The core idea behind this project is to encourage appreciation for India's culture and traditions, paving way for economic growth, social harmony, and artistic development in rural communities.
 - Financial outlay of Rs.353.46 Crore is approved under the scheme of Financial Assistance for Promotion of Art and Culture consisting 08 scheme components namely;
 - Financial Assistance to Cultural organizations with National Presence
 - Cultural Function & Production Grant (CFPG):
 - Financial Assistance for the Preservation & Development of Cultural Heritage of the Himalayas:
 - Financial Assistance for the Preservation & Development of Buddhist/Tibetan Organization
 - Financial Assistance for Building Grants including Studio Theatres
 - Financial Assistance For Allied Cultural Activities
 - Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage

2. Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)

- Using data from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), astronomers have recently discovered and characterized a habitable zone planet named TOI-715b.

About Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS):

- It is a NASA mission that's searching for planets orbiting the brightest stars in Earth's sky.
- The satellite is a follow-up to NASA's highly successful Kepler space telescope, which found thousands of exoplanets during a decade of work after its launch in 2009.
- Launch: It was launched on April 18, 2018, aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket out of Cape Canaveral.
- Orbit: TESS circles Earth in a unique high Earth orbit of 12 to 15 days, which is inclined in such a way that the telescope's sky view is largely free from obstructions by our bright planet and the Moon.
- Over the course of its two-year primary mission, TESS' four sensitive cameras systematically scanned over 200,000 of the nearest and brightest stars, imaging 75% of the sky. It found 2,100 planetary candidates and 66 confirmed exoplanets.
- The prime mission ended on July 4, 2020, and TESS is now on an extended mission.
- TESS is finding planets ranging from small, rocky worlds to giant planets, showcasing the diversity of planets in the galaxy.

How does TESS find exoplanets?

- It uses the transit method to detect planets.
- It looks for periodic dips in stars' brightness as planets cross in front of them along our sightline.
- The larger the planet, the greater the drop in brightness during the transit.
- How long it takes a planet to pass in front of the star and come back tells us the shape of its orbit.
- This method reveals the diameter of the planet and the size of its orbit.
- Orbits within a certain range lie in the "habitable zone", where liquid water can exist on the surface of an Earth-like world.

3. Messinian Event

- The Geological Institute of Israel recently uncovered a never-before-known about underwater canyon near Cyprus that dates back to the Messinian Event.

About Messinian Event:

- Also known as the Messinian Salinity Crisis (MSC), the Messinian event was a geological event during which the Mediterranean Sea went into a cycle of partial or nearly complete desiccation (drying up).
- It was one of the most severe ecological crises in the Earth's history.
- The MSC began approximately 6 million years ago (MYA) and lasted until around 5.3 MYA.
- How has it unfolded?
 - It began when the connection between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea was cut off.
 - This occurred due to a combination of lowered sea levels in the global oceans and collision between the European and African plates that caused the land to lift.
 - Normally, there is much more evaporation than precipitation over the Mediterranean Sea. This means that much more water is leaving than entering the sea.
 - Without a significant source of water from the Atlantic Ocean, this led to the evaporation of much of the Mediterranean Sea.
 - A large underground canyon formed, and rivers made deep incisions into the bottom of the basin. This canyon was much larger than the Grand Canyon and had a depth of up to 2,000 meters (6562 feet).
 - As the water in the Mediterranean evaporated, the salt that was in the water was left behind and began to build up in layers on the floor of the Mediterranean.
 - Two major salts that were deposited on the floor were Halite and Gypsum. Some of the salt deposit areas were 800 meters (2,500 feet) deep.
 - However, the salt in the Mediterranean did not deposit on the floor as quickly as the water was evaporating. This means that whatever water was left in the Mediterranean became very salty.
 - This high amount of salt in the water (also known as salinity) caused the Mediterranean to become deadly to all marine life.
 - The Mediterranean continued to dry up until there was almost no water left.
 - It ended with the Zanclean flood, when the Atlantic reclaimed the basin.
- What is a Deep-sea Canyon?
 - Deep-sea canyons are steep-sided valleys cut into the seafloor of the continental slope, sometimes extending well onto the continental shelf.
 - These submarine canyons vary in size, shape, and morphological complexity; some were scoured by the flow of rivers during past low sea level periods, but most formed via other erosional processes, such as mud slides, debris flows, and turbidity currents.

4. Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs)

- An Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) team along with their international collaborators recently developed a new model of the internal thermal evolution of coronal mass ejections (CMEs), as they travel from the sun toward the earth.

About Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs):

- CMEs are large expulsions of plasma and magnetic field from the sun's atmosphere—the corona, that propagate outward into interplanetary space.
- During a CME, the sun releases a colossal amount of material, including electrons, protons, and heavier ions, as well as magnetic fields.
- How are they formed?
 - They form similarly to solar flares—a result of the twisting and realignment of the sun's magnetic field, known as magnetic reconnection.
 - When magnetic field lines "tangle" they produce strong localized magnetic fields which can break through the surface of the sun at active regions, subsequently generating CMEs.
 - CMEs usually take place around sunspot groups and are often accompanied by a solar flare, though the two don't always occur in tandem.

- CMEs travel outward from the sun at speeds ranging from slower than 250 kilometers per second (km/s) to as fast as 3000 km/s.
- The fastest Earth-directed CMEs can reach our planet in as little as 15-18 hours.
- They expand in size as they propagate away from the Sun, and larger CMEs can reach a size comprising nearly a quarter of the space between Earth and the Sun by the time they reach our planet.
- CMEs, like solar flares, are most common during the solar maximum, a period in the sun's 11-year cycle of activity when the star is at its most active.
- Impact on Earth:
 - Geomagnetic Storms: The interaction between the CME's magnetic fields and Earth's magnetosphere can lead to geomagnetic storms. These can disrupt satellite communications, navigation systems, and even power grids.
 - Auroras: CMEs can cause spectacular displays of the Northern and Southern Lights, also known as auroras, by energizing particles in Earth's atmosphere.
 - Radiation Hazards: Astronauts in space or passengers on high-altitude flights can be exposed to elevated levels of radiation during a CME event.

Key Facts about Solar Flare:

- It is an intense burst of radiation coming from the release of magnetic energy associated with sunspots.
- Flares are our solar system's largest explosive events.
- They are seen as bright areas on the sun, and they can last from minutes to hours.
- In a matter of just a few minutes, they heat the material to many millions of degrees and produce a burst of radiation across the electromagnetic spectrum, including from radio waves to x-rays and gamma rays.
- Although solar flares can be visible in white light, they are often more readily noticed via their bright X-ray and ultraviolet emissions.

Effect of Solar Flare on Earth:

- The intense radiation emitted during a solar flare can affect satellite communications, disrupt radio signals, and even pose a risk to astronauts in space.
- Additionally, the increased solar radiation can lead to geomagnetic storms, which may impact power grids and cause auroras (northern and southern lights) at lower latitudes.

5. Black-necked Crane

- Recently, the union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change informed the Lok Sabha about the important steps taken to protect Black-necked Crane by the government.

About Black-necked Crane:

- The Black-Necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) is classed as a medium-sized member of the crane family.
- Habitat: The high altitude wetlands in the Tibetan plateau are the main breeding ground of the species. These wetlands with small mounds provide an excellent habitat to the birds for breeding.
- Distribution: This species is found in India, China and Bhutan and breeds in high altitude wetlands in the Tibetan plateau at elevations of 2950-4900 m above mean sea level.
- Threats: Habitat loss and degradation related to climate change, changes in agriculture practices, pollution and environmental contamination.
- Conservation status
 - IUCN: Near Threatened
 - The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I
 - CITES: Appendix I
- The important steps taken by government of India to protect bird species include:
 - The important habitats of Black-necked Crane have been notified as Protected Areas, for example, Changthang Sanctuary, Ladakh.
 - The Tso Kar Wetlands Complex, an important foraging and breeding ground for Black-necked Crane, has been designated as a Ramsar Site in December 2020.
 - The National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031) released by the Ministry in October 2017 provides for specific Chapters and priority actions on various aspects of wildlife conservation.
 - The Central Government provides financial assistance to State/Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' for management of wildlife and its habitat in the country.
 - The Government of India has initiated Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) programme that aims to generate public awareness about the environment, and conservation.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Critically analyze the concept of social empowerment, discussing its diverse dimensions and their significance in achieving inclusive development in India.

Answer: Social empowerment is the process of enabling the marginalized and disadvantaged sections of society to participate in the social, economic, and political spheres of life. It aims to enhance their self-reliance, dignity, and well-being, and to reduce the inequalities and discrimination they face.

Some of the dimensions of social empowerment in India are:

- **Women empowerment:** Women empowerment refers to enhancing the status and rights of women in various domains, such as education, health, employment, decision-making, and legal protection. Government initiatives for women empowerment are Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Pradhan Mantri Matritva Vandana Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, Mahila Shakti Kendra, etc.
- **Scheduled Castes (SCs) empowerment:** SCs empowerment is necessary for eliminating caste-based discrimination, violence, and atrocities, and for ensuring their access to education, employment, land, and justice. Government schemes for SCs empowerment are the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, Dr. Ambedkar Post-Matric Scholarship, Venture Capital Fund for SCs, etc.
- **Scheduled Tribes (STs) empowerment:** STs empowerment is important for preserving their cultural identity, natural resources, and traditional knowledge, and for enhancing their livelihood, education, health, and governance. Government programs for STs empowerment are Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana, Eklavya Model Residential Schools, Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India etc.
- **Persons with disabilities (PwDs) empowerment:** PwDs empowerment is significant for removing the barriers and stigma they face, and for providing them with access to education, employment, health, and social protection. Government initiatives for PwDs empowerment are Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, National Trust, Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme, etc.

Social empowerment comes with several drawbacks, including:

- **Resistance from dominant groups:** Social empowerment often challenges the existing power structures and norms that favor the dominant groups in the society, such as upper castes, men, majority religions, etc.
- **Lack of resources and opportunities:** Social empowerment requires adequate resources and opportunities for the disadvantaged sections to access and utilize. However, in a developing country like India, there is a scarcity of resources and opportunities, such as education, health, employment, land, etc.
- **Diversity and heterogeneity:** India is a diverse and heterogeneous country, with different social groups having different identities, cultures, languages, religions, etc. This may pose a challenge for social empowerment, as it may be difficult to address the specific needs and aspirations of each group and to ensure their representation and participation in the decision-making processes.
- **Implementation gaps and corruption:** There are often implementation gaps and corruption in the delivery of public services and benefits, which may reduce the reach and quality of the empowerment programs.
 - For example, there may be leakages, delays, or irregularities in the disbursement of scholarships, pensions, subsidies, etc. to the intended beneficiaries.

Conclusion

Social empowerment in India demands a holistic strategy covering education, economic prospects, political participation, gender parity, social inclusion, healthcare, tech access, and environmental sustainability. Inclusive development hinges on policies acknowledging and meeting diverse needs, leaving no group behind. Social empowerment is not just a development tool but an end goal, promoting a fair and equitable society.

MCQs

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. GOBARdhan scheme has been launched with the objective of</p> <p>(a) Reducing Methane emissions</p> <p>(b) Building a heritage corridor</p> <p>(c) Providing microfinance loans to Self-help groups</p> <p>(d) Providing LPG connection to households</p> | <p>3. Seva Sindhu: Karnataka</p> <p>How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?</p> <p>(a) Only one</p> <p>(b) Only two</p> <p>(c) All three</p> <p>(d) None</p> |
| <p>2. Consider the following pairs of online portals and respective States/UTs:</p> <p>1. eUNNAT: Jammu & Kashmir</p> <p>2. Nivesh Mitra: Uttar Pradesh</p> | <p>3. Identify the incorrect statement about the Conservation reserves.</p> <p>(a) It is established under the Wildlife (Protection) Act (WPA), 1972.</p> |

- (b) It acts as a buffer zone and migration corridor between national parks.
(c) It is declared by the State Government, after consulting with the central government.
(d) It is administered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority.
4. The Report 'Finances of Panchayati Raj Institutions' was recently published by which of the following:
(a) Reserve Bank of India
(b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
(c) NITI Aayog
(d) Finance Commission
5. Consider the following:
Statement-I: Typbar TCV is the world's first clinically proven conjugate Typhoid vaccine.
Statement-II: A phase-3 trial in Malwa Plateau, Madhya Pradesh, an endemic region for typhoid fever, showed that Bharat Biotech's Typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV), Typbar, has long-term efficacy.
Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
(a) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is the correct explanation for Statement I
(b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement-II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I
(c) Statement-I is correct but Statement-II is incorrect
(d) Statement-I is incorrect but Statement-II is correct
6. With reference to 'Credit System', consider the following statements:
1. It assigns numerical values, known as credits, to different courses or learning activities based on the time and effort required to complete them.
2. It aims to establish academic equivalence between vocational and general education.
3. The credits earned by a student will be digitally stored in the Academic Bank of Credits and accessible through a linked Digilocker account.
How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
7. Which of the following are ways in which CRISPR technology can be used?
1. To cut, delete, or add DNA sequences at precise locations
2. Treat genetic disorders
3. Develop drought-resistant plants
4. Modify food crops
5. Experiment with de-extinction projects
Select the correct answer using the codes given below:
(a) 1, 2 and 5 only
(b) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
(c) 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
8. Consider the following statements regarding Black-necked Crane:
1. The high altitude wetlands in the Tibetan plateau are the main breeding ground of the species.
2. Its IUCN conservation status is near threatened.
3. This species is found in India, China and Bhutan and breeds in high altitude wetlands in the Tibetan plateau at elevations of 2950-4900 m above mean sea level.
How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
9. Consider the following statements with respect to the Hypervelocity Expansion Tunnel Test Facility:
1. Hypervelocity Expansion Tunnel Test Facility is capable of generating flight speeds ranging from 3 to 10 kmph.
2. The development of the facility was supported by the Fund for Improvement in S&T Infrastructure (FIST) of the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
Which of the statements given above are incorrect?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2
10. With reference to the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC), consider the following statements:
1. It is a voluntary non-government initiative that seeks to increase maritime cooperation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region.
2. It is a platform to deliberate upon the prospects of regional cooperation for Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).
Which of the statements given above are correct?
(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2