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Ayushi Ma'am

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How to use this eBook: every question is followed directly by its answer and an easy explanation. Try the question yourself first, then check the answer and read the explanation, because it also carries the connected facts from which SSC can frame the next question. Tap **GO TO INDEX** on any page to come back here.

01 CHAPTER
General Static GK

60 Questions • SSC PYQs

01. Where is the National Institute for Rehabilitation Training and Research (NIRTAR) located?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 28 Jul 2025]

(a) New Delhi
(b) Bhubaneswar, Odisha
(c) Cuttack, Odisha
(d) Mumbai, Maharashtra

Answer (c) Cuttack, Odisha

Explanation

NIRTAR is at **Olatpur in Cuttack district, Odisha**. Its full present name is **Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation Training and Research (SVNIRTAR)**. It works for people with locomotor (movement-related) disabilities and trains professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists and prosthetics experts.

It comes under the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)**, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Bhubaneswar is a tempting choice here, because students assume every national institute in Odisha must be in the capital.

The other national institutes of this department are also asked: **NIEPVD** (visual disabilities) in Dehradun, **AYJNISHD** (speech and hearing) in Mumbai, **NIEPID** (intellectual disabilities) in Secunderabad, **NIEPMD** (multiple disabilities) in Chennai and **PDUNIPPD** (physical disabilities) in New Delhi.

02. Which of the following countries is NOT a member of the QUAD?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 28 Aug 2025]

(a) Australia
(b) India
(c) Japan
(d) China

Answer (d) China

Explanation

The **QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue)** has only four members: **India, the USA, Japan and Australia**. China is not a member. In fact, the QUAD is widely seen as a group of democracies working for a "free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific", and China has openly criticised it.

The idea was pushed by Japan's Prime Minister **Shinzo Abe** in 2007. The grouping became inactive soon after and was revived in **2017**. The navies of all four countries take part together in the **Malabar** naval exercise.

An easy way to remember the four members: **JAI-US** → **J**apan, **A**ustralia, **I**ndia, **US**A.

03. Where is the BIMSTEC Secretariat located?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 29 Jul 2025]

(a) New Delhi, India
(b) Dhaka, Bangladesh
(c) Bangkok, Thailand
(d) Colombo, Sri Lanka

Answer (b) Dhaka, Bangladesh

Explanation

BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) has its permanent Secretariat in **Dhaka, Bangladesh**. It was set up there in 2014.

Many students tick **Bangkok** here, and there is a reason for it. BIMSTEC was born in Bangkok: it was formed on **6 June 1997** through the **Bangkok Declaration**. But the place where an organisation was born and the place where its office works are two different things.

Keep it separate from **SAARC** (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation), whose Secretariat is in **Kathmandu**, and **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), whose Secretariat is in **Jakarta**.

Trick for the headquarters: **B**IMSTEC is a **B**ay of **B**engal group, so its office is in **B**angladesh, that is, **Dhaka**. Born in Bangkok, office in Bangladesh.

04. Which four countries constitute the QUAD?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) USA, Japan, India, Australia
(b) USA, UK, France, Australia
(c) China, Russia, India, Japan
(d) Canada, USA, Mexico, Brazil

Answer (a) USA, Japan, India, Australia

Explanation

The QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) is made up of **India, the USA, Japan and Australia**. These four countries first worked together during relief work after the **2004 Indian Ocean tsunami**, and the dialogue was formally started in **2007**.

After a gap of about ten years, it was revived in **2017** on the sidelines of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Summit in Manila.

Option (c) is not the answer: China and Russia are not part of the QUAD at all. Option (b) sounds like a Western alliance, but the UK and France are not members either.

An easy way to remember the members: **JAI-US** → **J**apan, **A**ustralia, **I**ndia, **US**A.

05. What is the full form of BIMSTEC?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
(b) Bangladesh India Maritime Security and Trade Economic Council
(c) Bhutan India Myanmar South Asia Trade Economic Cooperation
(d) Bay of Bengal International Maritime and Security Treaty

Answer (a) Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation

Explanation

BIMSTEC stands for **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation**. Read the name slowly and it explains itself: it is an **initiative** (not a treaty or a council) of the countries around the **Bay of Bengal**, for cooperation in **many sectors**.

The letters of the old name came from the member countries. It began in 1997 as **BIST-EC** (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand). When Myanmar joined later that year, it became **BIMST-EC**. After Nepal and Bhutan joined in 2004, it was renamed **BIMSTEC** with the present full form.

In 2022 its many areas of work were regrouped into **seven sectors**, each led by one member country; India leads the **security** sector.

06. Which two BRICS countries are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) Russia and Brazil
(b) India and China
(c) China and Russia
(d) India and South Africa

Answer (c) China and Russia

Explanation

The UN Security Council has **five permanent members (P5)**: the **USA, the UK, France, Russia and China**. Out of these, only **China and Russia** are in BRICS. The P5 countries have the **veto power**.

India, Brazil and South Africa are BRICS members who want a permanent seat but do not have one. India has been elected as a **non-permanent member eight times**, most recently for 2021–22. The Council also has **ten non-permanent members**, each elected for a two-year term.

07. Which country is the world's largest democracy?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 02 Aug 2025]

(a) USA
(b) India
(c) Japan
(d) Australia

Answer (b) India

Explanation

India is called the world's largest democracy because it has the **largest number of voters** in the world. In the 2024 Lok Sabha election, nearly **97 crore** people were registered to vote.

Do not confuse "largest" with "oldest". The **USA** is often called the oldest modern democracy, because its Constitution (1787) is the oldest written national constitution still in use.

08. Which BRICS country is the largest in terms of land area?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 02 Aug 2025]

(a) Brazil
(b) China
(c) India
(d) Russia

Answer (d) Russia

Explanation

Russia is the largest BRICS country by area. In fact, it is the largest country in the whole world, with about **1.7 crore square kilometres** of land spread across Europe and Asia.

Among the five original BRICS members, the order by area is: **Russia > China > Brazil > India > South Africa**. India is the seventh-largest country in the world by area. If the question asks about **population** instead, the answer changes to India.

09. Which five countries formed the BRICS grouping?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 24 Jul 2025]

(a) Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
(b) Britain, Russia, India, China, South Korea
(c) Brazil, Romania, Indonesia, China, Singapore
(d) Belgium, Russia, Italy, Canada, Spain

Answer (a) Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

Explanation

BRICS is named after its five original members: **B**razil, **R**ussia, **I**ndia, **C**hina and **S**outh Africa. The term "BRIC" was coined in **2001** by **Jim O'Neill**, an economist at Goldman Sachs, for the four fast-growing economies. South Africa joined in **2010**, and BRIC became BRICS.

The group has grown since then. **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the UAE** joined in 2024, and **Indonesia** became a full member in January 2025. But the question asks about the five that *formed* BRICS, so the answer is option (a). India holds the BRICS chair in 2026.

10. Which countries are members of BIMSTEC?

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand
(b) Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand
(c) Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand
(d) Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

Answer (c) Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand

Explanation

BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) has **seven members**: five from South Asia (**Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka**) and two from South-East Asia (**Myanmar, Thailand**).

The quickest way to solve such questions is elimination. **Pakistan, the Maldives and Afghanistan are not members**, so options (a), (b) and (d) go out at once. Option (d) is actually the list of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) members, so do not fall for it.

Trick: the letters of the name give five members: **B**angladesh, **I**ndia, **M**yanmar, **S**ri Lanka, **T**hailand. Add the two Himalayan countries, **Nepal** and **Bhutan**, who joined in 2004, and you have all seven.

11. Name the organisation that made possible the Golden Quadrilateral project connecting India's major cities.

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-3]

(a) National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)
(b) Indian Railways
(c) Ministry of Urban Development
(d) Border Roads Organisation (BRO)

Answer (a) National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)

Explanation

The **Golden Quadrilateral** was built by the **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**. It is a highway network of about **5,846 km** joining the four metro cities **Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata**, which form the four corners of a quadrilateral on the map.

It was the first phase of the **National Highways Development Project (NHDP)**, started under Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**. NHAI was set up under the NHAI Act of 1988 and works under the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

Along with it, the **North–South corridor** (Srinagar to Kanyakumari) and the **East–West corridor** (Silchar to Porbandar) are also asked. The BRO (Border Roads Organisation) builds roads mainly in border areas and works under the Ministry of Defence.

12. Match the following indices with their respective publishing organisations:

List I (Index)	List II (Organisation)
A. Global Innovation Index	1. UNDP
B. Global Hunger Index	2. WIPO
C. Global Peace Index	3. Concern Worldwide, Welthungerhilfe
D. Human Development Index (HDI)	4. IEP

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-3]

(a) A-3, B-2, C-1, D-4
(b) A-4, B-2, C-3, D-1
(c) A-2, B-1, C-3, D-4
(d) A-2, B-3, C-4, D-1

Answer (d) A-2, B-3, C-4, D-1

Explanation

- **Global Innovation Index → WIPO** (World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva).
- **Global Hunger Index → Concern Worldwide** (an Irish organisation) and **Welthungerhilfe** (a German organisation).
- **Global Peace Index → IEP** (Institute for Economics and Peace, Sydney). IEP also publishes the Global Terrorism Index.
- **Human Development Index → UNDP** (United Nations Development Programme), in its Human Development Report published since 1990. The HDI was developed by **Mahbub ul Haq**, with ideas from **Amartya Sen**. It measures health (life expectancy), education and standard of living (income per person).

So the correct match is **A-2, B-3, C-4, D-1**. A smart shortcut: once you know HDI is by UNDP (D-1), only options (b) and (d) remain, and WIPO for innovation settles it.

13. Which city hosted the BRICS Foreign Ministers' meeting on 4 June 2018?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Pretoria, South Africa
(b) Brasilia, Brazil
(c) Beijing, China
(d) New Delhi, India

Answer (a) Pretoria, South Africa

Explanation

The BRICS Foreign Ministers met in **Pretoria, South Africa**, on 4 June 2018. South Africa held the BRICS chair that year and later hosted the **10th BRICS Summit in Johannesburg** in July 2018.

The logic is simple: BRICS ministerial meetings of a year are usually hosted by the country that holds the chair that year. A related fact: South Africa has **three capitals**, namely **Pretoria** (executive), **Cape Town** (legislative) and **Bloemfontein** (judicial).

14. When was the National Institute of Sports renamed Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports (NSNIS)?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) 15 August 1975
(b) 26 January 1972
(c) 23 January 1973
(d) 7 May 1961

Answer (c) 23 January 1973

Explanation

The National Institute of Sports was renamed **Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports** on **23 January 1973**. The date was chosen because 23 January is the **birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose**, now celebrated as **Parakram Diwas**.

Option (d), **7 May 1961**, is not the answer: that is the date on which the institute was originally **set up**, at the Old Motibagh Palace in **Patiala, Punjab**. NSNIS Patiala is one of Asia's largest sports training institutes and now works under the **Sports Authority of India (SAI)**.

15. In which year was the Amateur Athletics Federation of India (AAFI) established?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 1946
(b) 1948
(c) 1950

(d) 1951

Answer **(a) 1946**

Explanation

The **Amateur Athletics Federation of India (AAFI)** was established in **1946**. Today it is known as the **Athletics Federation of India (AFI)**, the national body that runs athletics in India. Its headquarters is in **New Delhi**, and it is affiliated to **World Athletics** (earlier called IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations)).

Notice how SSC asks this fact again in another shift with different options (1936, 1946, 1956, 1966). A fixed-date fact like this is worth remembering exactly, because only the options change.

16. When was the Amateur Athletics Federation of India (AAFI) established?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 1936
(b) 1946
(c) 1956
(d) 1966

Answer **(b) 1946**

Explanation

The AAFI (Amateur Athletics Federation of India) was established in **1946**, a year before Independence. It is now called the **Athletics Federation of India (AFI)** and is the governing body for athletics in the country.

Its international parent body is **World Athletics**, which was called the **IAAF** (International Association of Athletics Federations) until 2019. World Athletics has its headquarters in **Monaco**.

17. Fill in the blank: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) was officially formed in _____.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 1920
(b) 1922
(c) 1930
(d) 1927

Answer **(d) 1927**

Explanation

The **Indian Olympic Association** was formed in **1927**. **Sir Dorabji Tata** was its first president. The IOA selects and sends Indian teams to the Olympics, Asian Games and Commonwealth Games, and its headquarters is in **New Delhi**.

The option 1920 is not the answer: **1920 (Antwerp Olympics)** is the year India first sent an official team to the Olympics, before the IOA existed. In 2022, athlete **P.T. Usha** became the first woman president of the IOA.

18. What is the full form of ISRO?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Indian Scientific Research Organisation
(b) Indian Space Research Organisation
(c) Indian Satellite Rocket Organisation
(d) International Space Research Organisation

Answer **(b) Indian Space Research Organisation**

Explanation

ISRO stands for **Indian Space Research Organisation**. It was founded on **15 August 1969** and has its headquarters in **Bengaluru**. It works under the **Department of Space**, which reports directly to the Prime Minister.

ISRO grew out of **INCOSPAR** (Indian National Committee for Space Research), set up in 1962 under the guidance of **Dr. Vikram Sarabhai**, who is called the father of the Indian space programme.

19. With reference to the history of IABF, consider the following statements:

1. The first office was in the Majestic Hotel, Bombay.
2. Bombay formed the core (main body).
3. The inaugural meeting was held at the CCI Ground Pavilion.

Choose the correct option.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 23 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only 1 and 2
(b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3
(d) 1, 2 and 3 are correct

Answer **(d) 1, 2 and 3 are correct**

Explanation

All three statements are correct. The **Indian Amateur Boxing Federation (IABF)** was founded on **25 February 1949**, mainly through the efforts of the Bombay Presidency Amateur Boxing Federation,

which had been formed in 1925 as India's first boxing body.

- The IABF's first office was set up at **62, Majestic Hotel, Bombay**.
- **Bombay formed the core** of the body, and most of its early office-bearers came from there.
- The inaugural meeting was held at the **Governor's Pavilion of the Cricket Club of India (CCI)**.

Today boxing in India is run by the **Boxing Federation of India (BFI)**, which replaced the IABF after the latter was suspended internationally in 2014.

20. In which year was NADA formed?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 26 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 2000
(b) 2005
(c) 2009
(d) 2012

Answer (b) 2005

Explanation

The **National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)** was formed in **2005** (registered on 24 November 2005) to keep sport in India free of doping. It works under the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**.

The **National Anti-Doping Act, 2022** gave NADA a legal (statutory) backing. Its global parent is **WADA** (World Anti-Doping Agency), set up in 1999 with headquarters in **Montreal, Canada**. Samples in India are tested at the **National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL)**, New Delhi.

21. As of 31 July 2025, which of the following countries is NOT a member of ASEAN?

[SSC CHSL, 15 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Indonesia
(b) Malaysia
(c) Pakistan
(d) Philippines

Answer (c) Pakistan

Explanation

Pakistan is not a member of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). ASEAN is a group of **South-East Asian** countries, and Pakistan lies in South Asia.

On 31 July 2025, ASEAN had ten members: **Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand** (the five founders), **Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia**. That is why the question fixes a date: **Timor-Leste** joined later, in October 2025, as the eleventh member. India is not a member but is a **Comprehensive Strategic Partner** of ASEAN.

Trick for the ten members (as on July 2025): **MTV PLC BIMS** → Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore.

22. As of 31 July 2025, which of the following is an official language of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)?

[SSC CHSL, 22 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Persian
(b) Chinese
(c) French
(d) Spanish

Answer (b) Chinese

Explanation

The SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) has only **two official languages: Chinese and Russian**. This makes sense, because China and Russia are the two biggest powers that set up the organisation.

Persian is a tempting choice, because **Iran** became an SCO member in 2023. But membership does not make a language official. The SCO has two permanent bodies: the **Secretariat in Beijing** and the **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent**.

23. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was established in _____.

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) 1983
(b) 2001
(c) 2010
(d) 2017

Answer (b) 2001

Explanation

The SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) was established on **15 June 2001** in **Shanghai**. It grew out of the **Shanghai Five** (1996), a group of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. When **Uzbekistan** joined in 2001, the group became the SCO.

Option 2017 is not the answer: that is the year **India and Pakistan** became full members, at the Astana summit. **Iran** joined in 2023 and **Belarus** in 2024, taking the membership to ten.

24. With reference to the Council of Ministers (COM) of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), which of the following statements is/are correct?

I. It is the highest decision-making body of the organisation.
II. It includes the finance ministers of all member countries.

Choose the correct option.

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Only I
(b) Only II
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

Answer (a) Only I

Explanation

Only statement I is correct. The **Council of Ministers (COM)** is the **highest decision-making body** of IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association) and meets every year.

Statement II is wrong because the COM is made up of the **foreign ministers** of the member countries, not the finance ministers. This is how most regional groupings work: foreign ministers handle the organisation's decisions. Below the COM is the **Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)**, and IORA's Secretariat is at **Ebene, Mauritius**.

25. The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) is associated with which of the following international organisations?

[SSC CHSL, 22 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) BRICS
(b) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
(c) Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
(d) SAARC

Answer (b) Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

Explanation

RATS (Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure) is a permanent body of the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**. It is headquartered in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan**, and helps member countries fight the "three evils" the SCO talks about: **terrorism, separatism and extremism**.

The SCO has just two permanent bodies: the **Secretariat in Beijing** and **RATS in Tashkent**. Remember the pair together; SSC can ask either one.

Trick: **T**errorism → **T**ashkent.

26. As of 31 July 2025, which of the following countries is a member of SAARC?

[SSC CHSL, 27 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Afghanistan
(b) Iraq
(c) UAE
(d) Egypt

Answer (a) Afghanistan

Explanation

Afghanistan is a member of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). It joined in **2007** as the **eighth member**, which makes it the only country to join after SAARC was founded in 1985.

The eight members are **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka**. Iraq, the UAE and Egypt are West Asian or African countries and have nothing to do with SAARC.

Trick for the eight members: **MBBS PAIN** → Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Nepal.

27. As of 31 July 2025, which of the following country/countries is/are members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)?

I. Australia
II. Bangladesh

Choose the correct option.

[SSC CHSL, 27 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Only I
(b) Only II
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

Answer (c) Both I and II

Explanation

Both **Australia** and **Bangladesh** are members of IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association). The rule is easy: IORA is for countries whose coastline touches

the **Indian Ocean**, and both of these have such a coast (Bangladesh on the Bay of Bengal, which is part of the Indian Ocean).

IORA has **23 members**, including India, Australia, South Africa, Iran, Indonesia, Bangladesh and France (because of its island of Réunion). Its Secretariat is in **Ebene, Mauritius**.

28. **Which of the following countries is NOT a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation?**

[SSC CHSL, 30 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Iraq
(b) Tajikistan
(c) Russia
(d) China

Answer **(a) Iraq**

Explanation

Iraq is not a founding member; in fact, it is not an SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) member at all. The SCO was founded in 2001 by six countries: **China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan**.

A simple way to remember the founders: **China + Russia + the four Central Asian "-stan" countries** (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan). Turkmenistan is the one Central Asian "-stan" that never joined.

29. **The Indian Ocean Rim Association was established in _____.**

[SSC CHSL, 15 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 1983
(b) 1997
(c) 2003
(d) 2008

Answer **(b) 1997**

Explanation

IORA was established on **7 March 1997** in **Mauritius**. In the beginning it was called the **Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)**; it got its present short name, IORA, in 2013.

Notice that **1997** is a busy year in this chapter: BIMSTEC (Bangkok, June 1997) and IORA (Mauritius, March 1997) were both born that year. The two are often confused, so link each with its place.

30. **At which place was the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) established?**

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ho Chi Minh City
(b) Bangkok
(c) Naypyidaw
(d) Kuala Lumpur

Answer **(b) Bangkok**

Explanation

ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was established in **Bangkok, Thailand**, on **8 August 1967**, when its five founders signed the **ASEAN Declaration**, also called the **Bangkok Declaration**. That is why 8 August is celebrated as **ASEAN Day**.

Be careful: ASEAN was **founded** in Bangkok, but its Secretariat is in **Jakarta, Indonesia**. And the name "Bangkok Declaration" is shared with BIMSTEC (1997), so read the year in the question carefully.

31. **In the context of space research in India, what does "N" in INCOSPAR stand for?**

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) National
(b) Nano
(c) Neutrino
(d) Nodal

Answer **(a) National**

Explanation

INCOSPAR stands for **Indian National Committee for Space Research**, so "N" means **National**. It was set up in **1962** under the Department of Atomic Energy, with **Dr. Vikram Sarabhai** as its chairman.

INCOSPAR set up the **Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS)** near Thiruvananthapuram, from where India's first rocket was launched on **21 November 1963**. In 1969, INCOSPAR was replaced by **ISRO** (Indian Space Research Organisation).

32. **Who among the following was the first Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)?**

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Dr. Vikram A. Sarabhai
(b) Prof. M. G. K. Menon
(c) Prof. Satish Dhawan

(d) Homi J. Bhabha

Answer **(a) Dr. Vikram A. Sarabhai**

Explanation

Dr. Vikram Sarabhai was the first Chairman of ISRO (1969–1971). He is called the **father of the Indian space programme**, and ISRO's big rocket centre in Thiruvananthapuram is named after him: the **Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre**. Even the Chandrayaan-2 and 3 landers were named "Vikram" in his honour.

After his death, **Prof. M.G.K. Menon** headed ISRO for a short time, followed by **Prof. Satish Dhawan** (1972–1984). **Homi J. Bhabha** is not the answer: he is the father of India's **nuclear** programme and never headed ISRO. The present ISRO chairman is **V. Narayanan** (since January 2025).

33. **The headquarters of WADA is in _____.**

[SSC CHSL, 19 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Paris
(b) Geneva
(c) Montreal
(d) Vienna

Answer **(c) Montreal**

Explanation

The **World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)** has its headquarters in **Montreal, Canada**. It was set up in **1999** at Lausanne, Switzerland, at the initiative of the International Olympic Committee, and shifted to Montreal in 2002.

WADA publishes the **World Anti-Doping Code** and the list of banned substances. In India, its rules are applied by **NADA** (National Anti-Doping Agency). Do not confuse it with the IOC, whose headquarters is in **Lausanne**.

Trick: WADA came from the Olympic movement, and **Montreal** is an Olympic city (it hosted the 1976 Olympics).

34. **Which of the following countries is a founding member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation?**

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Iran
(b) India
(c) Pakistan
(d) Kazakhstan

Answer **(d) Kazakhstan**

Explanation

Kazakhstan is a founding member of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation). It was part of the Shanghai Five (1996) and of the SCO from its birth in 2001, along with China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The other three options are members, but not founders: **India and Pakistan** joined in **2017**, and **Iran** in **2023**. So the word "founding" is the key to this question.

35. **Which of the following countries is NOT a member of SAARC?**

[SSC CHSL, 28 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) India
(b) Pakistan
(c) Myanmar
(d) Bhutan

Answer **(c) Myanmar**

Explanation

Myanmar is not a member of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). It is a member of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), and it has only **observer** status in SAARC.

Students often pick it because Myanmar shares a border with India and sits close to South Asia. Just remember the eight SAARC members: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Myanmar is in BIMSTEC, while Pakistan is in SAARC, and neither is in both.

Trick for the eight members: **MBBS PAIN** → Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Nepal. There is no M for Myanmar after the first M (Maldives).

36. **Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis founded _____.**

[SSC MTS, 10 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Reserve Bank of India
(b) State Bank of India
(c) National Sample Survey Office
(d) Indian Statistical Institute

Answer **(d) Indian Statistical Institute**

Explanation

P.C. Mahalanobis founded the **Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)** in Kolkata on **17 December 1931**. In

1959 Parliament declared it an **Institute of National Importance**. He is called the **father of Indian statistics**, and his birthday, **29 June**, is observed as **National Statistics Day**.

The NSSO (National Sample Survey Office) option is close but wrong. The National Sample Survey was started in **1950** on Mahalanobis's suggestion, but it was set up by the government, not founded by him as an institution. He also designed the model behind the **Second Five-Year Plan** (the Mahalanobis model).

37. The headquarters of the Asian Development Bank is located in _____.

[SSC MTS, 10 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) USA
(b) India
(c) China
(d) Philippines

Answer (d) Philippines

Explanation

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has its headquarters in **Manila (Mandaluyong), Philippines**. It was set up in **1966** to help Asia and the Pacific grow, and India is one of its founding members.

China is a tempting choice, because another Asian bank, the **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**, has its headquarters in **Beijing**.

Trick: the old bank and the new bank. **ADB (1966) – Manila**; **AIIB (2016) – Beijing**.

38. After the inclusion of which country was BRIC changed to BRICS?

[SSC MTS, 11 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Spain
(b) Somalia
(c) South Africa
(d) Serbia

Answer (c) South Africa

Explanation

BRIC became BRICS after **South Africa** joined in **December 2010**. It took part in its first summit at **Sanya, China**, in 2011. The added "S" stands for South Africa.

All four options begin with "S", so the question checks real knowledge, not the letter. South Africa was the first African country in the group; later **Egypt and Ethiopia** joined in 2024.

39. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank began its operations in _____.

[SSC MTS, 12 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) 1991
(b) 1997
(c) 2003
(d) 2016

Answer (d) 2016

Explanation

The **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** began operations in **January 2016**. Its agreement was signed in 2015, and its headquarters is in **Beijing, China**.

The AIIB lends money for infrastructure such as roads, power and water in Asia and beyond. **China is its largest shareholder and India the second largest**, and India is also one of the biggest borrowers from the bank.

40. The SAARC Secretariat was established in _____.

[SSC MTS, 13 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Dhaka
(b) Kathmandu
(c) New Delhi
(d) Thimphu

Answer (b) Kathmandu

Explanation

The SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Secretariat was set up in **Kathmandu, Nepal**, on **16 January 1987**.

Dhaka is wrong here. SAARC was **founded** at the Dhaka Summit on **8 December 1985**, but its office is in Kathmandu. Interestingly, Dhaka now hosts the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Secretariat, so the two cities often get swapped in students' minds: **SAARC → Kathmandu, BIMSTEC → Dhaka**.

41. Which of the following is NOT a member of the BIMSTEC group?

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 08 Jan 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Bangladesh

(b) Myanmar
(c) Bhutan
(d) Maldives

Answer **(d) Maldives**

Explanation

The **Maldives** is not a member of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation). BIMSTEC is a group of countries **around the Bay of Bengal**, while the Maldives lies in the Arabian Sea part of the Indian Ocean.

The Maldives is, however, a member of **SAARC** (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). So the pattern to remember is: **Maldives and Pakistan are in SAARC but not in BIMSTEC; Myanmar and Thailand are in BIMSTEC but not in SAARC.**

42. Which feature of BRICS distinguishes it from traditional Western economic groups such as the G7?

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 09 Jan 2026, Shift-1]

(a) It focuses only on military alliances
(b) It includes only low-income countries
(c) It operates under NATO funding
(d) It includes emerging economies from different continents to promote multipolarity

Answer **(d) It includes emerging economies from different continents to promote multipolarity**

Explanation

BRICS brings together **emerging economies from different continents**: South America (Brazil), Europe–Asia (Russia), Asia (India, China) and Africa (South Africa). Its aim is a **multipolar world**, meaning a world where power is not held by one country or one bloc alone.

The G7, on the other hand, is a group of rich Western-style economies: the **USA, the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada**. The other options are simply wrong: BRICS is not a military alliance, it is not only for low-income countries, and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) has nothing to do with it.

43. In terms of organisational functioning, what distinguishes SAARC from BIMSTEC?

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 12 Jan 2026, Shift-1]

(a) BIMSTEC is led by China
(b) SAARC excludes landlocked countries
(c) BIMSTEC functions better in the absence of India-Pakistan rivalry
(d) SAARC includes Russia and Iran

Answer **(c) BIMSTEC functions better in the absence of India-Pakistan rivalry**

Explanation

The real difference is that **Pakistan is not a member of BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), so the **India–Pakistan rivalry** that has blocked SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) does not affect it. No SAARC summit has been held since the **Kathmandu summit of 2014**; the 2016 summit in Islamabad was cancelled after the **Uri attack**. BIMSTEC, meanwhile, adopted its Charter in 2022 and has kept meeting.

The other options are factually wrong: China is not a member of BIMSTEC, SAARC does include landlocked countries (Nepal, Bhutan, Afghanistan), and Russia and Iran are not SAARC members.

44. Why has BIMSTEC gained importance in India's foreign policy?

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 12 Jan 2026, Shift-2]

(a) India's declining interest in ASEAN
(b) Focus on regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal
(c) Inviting Pakistan into BRICS
(d) Decline of SAARC

Answer **(b) Focus on regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal**

Explanation

BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) matters to India because it is built around **regional cooperation in the Bay of Bengal**. It links India's two big foreign-policy ideas: **Neighbourhood First** (South Asia) and **Act East** (South-East Asia), since its members include both South Asian countries and Myanmar and Thailand. It also helps develop India's **North-Eastern region**, which connects to these neighbours.

The stalling of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) has certainly added to BIMSTEC's value, but the question asks for the main reason it is important in itself, and that is its Bay of Bengal focus. India's interest in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) has not declined at all, and Pakistan is not being invited into BRICS.

45. Which of the following does the BIMSTEC Charter emphasise as a fundamental objective?

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 12 Jan 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Expansion of Western alliances in South Asia
(b) Promoting Chinese Belt and Road objectives
(c) Formation of a unified currency bloc
(d) Regional integration through trade, technology and transport

Answer (d) Regional integration through trade, technology and transport

Explanation

The BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Charter stresses **regional integration through trade, technology and transport (connectivity)**. This fits its full name, which talks of **multi-sectoral technical and economic cooperation**.

The Charter was adopted at the **5th BIMSTEC Summit in 2022**, hosted by Sri Lanka, and came into force in **May 2024**. It gave BIMSTEC a proper legal identity as a regional organisation. The other options have no connection with BIMSTEC: it has no common currency, and it is neither a Western alliance nor a part of China's Belt and Road plan.

46. The "2014 Fortaleza Declaration" is best known in BRICS history for the creation of which of the following?

[SSC CGL Mains 2025]

(a) BRICS Space Agency
(b) A common BRICS currency called "R5"
(c) Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)
(d) A permanent BRICS secretariat in Brazil

Answer (c) Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)

Explanation

The **Fortaleza Declaration** came out of the **6th BRICS Summit**, held at **Fortaleza, Brazil**, in July 2014. Two financial institutions were created there: the **New Development Bank (NDB)** and the **Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)**, a 100-billion-dollar safety fund for members.

The other options are wrong: BRICS has **no common currency** (the "R5" idea was only discussed), **no space agency**, and **no permanent secretariat**. The NDB, also born at Fortaleza, has its headquarters in **Shanghai**; its first president was India's **K.V. Kamath**.

47. What does the BRICS New Development Bank mainly finance?

[Delhi Police Constable, 29 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Defence projects
(b) Space research programmes
(c) Cultural festivals
(d) Sustainable infrastructure projects

Answer (d) Sustainable infrastructure projects

Explanation

The **New Development Bank (NDB)** mainly funds **infrastructure and sustainable development projects**, such as clean energy, transport, water supply and urban development, in BRICS and other developing countries.

It was set up at the Fortaleza Summit (2014), began lending in 2016, and has its headquarters in **Shanghai, China**. Countries outside BRICS have also joined it, such as **Bangladesh and the UAE** (2021) and **Egypt** (2023). Its president is **Dilma Rousseff**, the former President of Brazil.

48. What was the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) under BRICS created for?

[Delhi Police Constable, 29 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Military financing
(b) Financing cultural programmes
(c) Supporting space missions
(d) Providing liquidity support during a balance-of-payments crisis

Answer (d) Providing liquidity support during a balance-of-payments crisis

Explanation

The **CRA** (Contingent Reserve Arrangement) was created to give **short-term liquidity (ready money) support** to a BRICS member facing a **balance-of-payments crisis**, that is, when a country is running short of foreign currency to pay for imports or repay loans.

It is a pool of **100 billion US dollars**: China committed 41 billion, Brazil, India and Russia 18 billion each, and South Africa 5 billion. Think of it as a BRICS version of the IMF's emergency help. It was created along with the NDB (New Development Bank) at the **Fortaleza Summit (2014)**.

49. Which international body sets guidelines for air-quality standards at the global level?

[Delhi Police Constable, 29 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) World Health Organization
(b) United Nations Environment Programme
(c) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
(d) Food and Agriculture Organization

Answer (a) World Health Organization

Explanation

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** sets the global **Air Quality Guidelines**, because air pollution is mainly treated as a health issue.

UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) is not the answer: it works on the environment in general but does not set these health-based limits. The **IPCC** (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) assesses climate-change science. In India, the national air-quality standards are set by the **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)**.

50. Which of the following countries is NOT a member of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation initiative, whose objective is to strengthen economic, cultural and tourism relations in Asia?

[Delhi Police Constable, 29 Dec 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Laos
(b) India
(c) Thailand
(d) Pakistan

Answer (d) Pakistan

Explanation

Pakistan is not a member. The **Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC)** has six members: **India** (the Ganga side) and the five Mekong countries **Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam**.

It was launched on **10 November 2000** at **Vientiane, Laos**, and focuses on tourism, culture, education and transport links. The name itself is the clue: the two great rivers of the region, the Mekong and the Ganga. Pakistan has neither river.

51. Before the World Trade Organization (WTO), what was the organisation that set global trade rules called?

[Delhi Police Constable, 30 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) UNCTAD
(b) World Bank
(c) IMF
(d) GATT

Answer (d) GATT

Explanation

Before the WTO (World Trade Organization), world trade rules were set under the **GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade)**, signed in **1947** at Geneva. GATT was an agreement rather than a full organisation, and its last round of talks, the **Uruguay Round (1986–1994)**, ended with the Marrakesh Agreement that created the WTO.

The WTO came into being on **1 January 1995** and has its headquarters in **Geneva**. India was a founding member of both GATT and the WTO. The World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) were born at the Bretton Woods conference (1944) and deal with loans and money matters, not trade rules.

52. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC), which governs football in Asia and Oceania, is headquartered in which city?

[Delhi Police Constable, 30 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Doha
(b) Tokyo
(c) Jakarta
(d) Kuala Lumpur

Answer (d) Kuala Lumpur

Explanation

The **Asian Football Confederation (AFC)** has its headquarters in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**. It was founded in **1954** in Manila and is one of the six continental confederations under **FIFA**, whose headquarters is in **Zurich**.

The mention of "Oceania" in the question is because **Australia** moved from the Oceania confederation to the AFC in 2006. India's football body, the **All India Football Federation (AIFF)**, is a member of the AFC and is based in New Delhi.

53. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) was established in _____.

[Delhi Police Constable, 18 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Paris
(b) London
(c) Brussels
(d) Stockholm

Answer (d) Stockholm

Explanation

The **IAAF** (International Association of Athletics Federations) was set up in **Stockholm, Sweden**, on **17 July 1912**, right after the Stockholm Olympics of that year.

In 2019 it was renamed **World Athletics**, and its headquarters is now in **Monaco**. So keep the two facts apart: **born in Stockholm, based in Monaco**.

54. Where was the first BRIC summit in 2009 held?

[Delhi Police Constable, 20 Dec 2025, Shift-3]

(a) St. Petersburg, USA
(b) Beijing, China
(c) Yekaterinburg, Russia
(d) New Delhi, India

Answer (c) Yekaterinburg, Russia

Explanation

The first BRIC summit was held at **Yekaterinburg, Russia**, on **16 June 2009**. At that time there were only four members, because South Africa had not yet joined.

The second summit was held in **Brasilia** (2010), and the third at **Sanya, China** (2011), which was the first with South Africa. Option (a) is a giveaway: St. Petersburg is in Russia, not the USA.

55. In 2006, in which city was the first meeting of BRIC foreign ministers held?

[Delhi Police Constable, 22 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Moscow
(b) New Delhi
(c) New York
(d) Beijing

Answer (c) New York

Explanation

The first meeting of BRIC foreign ministers was held in **New York** in **September 2006**, on the sidelines of the **UN General Assembly**. It was arranged at Russia's initiative.

That is why the answer is a city outside all four BRIC countries: the ministers were already in New York for the UN session. This meeting started the process that led to the first BRIC summit in Yekaterinburg in 2009.

56. In which year was the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) established?

[Delhi Police Constable, 22 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 1980
(b) 1990
(c) 1995
(d) 1985

Answer (d) 1985

Explanation

SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) was established on **8 December 1985** at the **Dhaka Summit**, when its Charter was adopted. That is why 8 December is observed as **SAARC Charter Day**.

It had **seven founding members**: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Afghanistan joined in 2007. The idea of such a group was first put forward by Bangladesh's President **Ziaur Rahman**.

57. What is the full form of WIPO?

[Delhi Police Constable, 22 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) World International Patent Office
(b) World Intellectual Property Organization
(c) Worldwide Information Protection Organization
(d) World Innovation Protection Office

Answer (b) World Intellectual Property Organization

Explanation

WIPO stands for **World Intellectual Property Organization**. It is a **specialised agency of the United Nations** with its headquarters in **Geneva, Switzerland**. The WIPO Convention was signed in 1967 and came into force in 1970.

WIPO protects creations of the mind such as patents, trademarks, designs and copyright. It pub-

lishes the **Global Innovation Index**, and **26 April** is celebrated as **World Intellectual Property Day**.

Trick: many world bodies whose names begin with "W" sit in **Geneva**: WHO, WTO, WIPO and WMO.

58. Who was the first Indian woman to preside over the United Nations General Assembly?

[Delhi Police Constable, 23 Dec 2025, Shift-3]

(a) V. K. Krishna Menon
(b) Hansa Mehta
(c) Radhakrishnan
(d) Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

Answer (d) Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

Explanation

Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit presided over the **8th session of the UN General Assembly in 1953**. She was not only the first Indian but the **first woman in the world** to hold this post. She was the sister of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Hansa Mehta is not the answer: she was India's delegate on the UN Commission on Human Rights and is remembered for getting the words "**all human beings**" (instead of "all men") into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. V.K. Krishna Menon and Dr. Radhakrishnan are men, so they drop out at once.

59. Which organisation is known for publishing the Global Peace Index, which ranks countries including India on the basis of their level of peace?

[Delhi Police Constable, 23 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) UNDP
(b) IMF
(c) RSF
(d) IEP

Answer (d) IEP

Explanation

The **Global Peace Index** is published by the **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)**, a think tank based in **Sydney, Australia**. It has been released every year since **2007**, and **Iceland** has topped it as the most peaceful country year after year. IEP also publishes the **Global Terrorism Index**.

Know what the other options publish: **UNDP** (United Nations Development Programme) gives the Human Development Index, the **IMF** (International Monetary Fund) gives the World Economic Outlook, and **RSF (Reporters Without Borders)** gives the World Press Freedom Index.

60. Which of the following best describes the mission of Transparency International?

[Delhi Police Constable, 24 Dec 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Reduce global economic inequality and promote fairness
(b) Prevent corruption; promote transparency, accountability and integrity
(c) Regulate international trade and promote global trade
(d) Promote sustainable development; reduce global poverty

Answer (b) Prevent corruption; promote transparency, accountability and integrity

Explanation

Transparency International works to **prevent corruption and promote transparency, accountability and integrity** in governments, businesses and society. It is a non-governmental organisation founded in **1993**, with its headquarters in **Berlin, Germany**.

It is best known for the **Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)**, which scores countries from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). Option (c) describes the WTO (World Trade Organization) and option (d) describes the work of bodies like UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and the World Bank.



02 CHAPTER
Books & Authors

103 Questions • SSC PYQs

01. Who is the author of 'Tomb of Sand' (Ret Samadhi), the first Hindi book to win the International Booker Prize?

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Geetanjali Shree
(b) Arundhati Roy
(c) Kiran Desai
(d) Jhumpa Lahiri

Answer (a) Geetanjali Shree

Explanation

Tomb of Sand is the English translation of **Geetanjali Shree's** Hindi novel **Ret Samadhi**, translated by the American translator **Daisy Rockwell**. In **2022** it won the **International Booker Prize**, the first book written in any Indian language to do so. The prize money is shared equally by the author and the translator.

Keep the two prizes apart: the **Booker Prize** is for a novel written in English, while the **International Booker** is for a book translated into English. In 2025 **Banu Mushtaq's** Kannada short-story collection *Heart Lamp* became the second Indian-language winner. Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai won the Booker (1997 and 2006), and Jhumpa Lahiri won the Pulitzer (2000).

02. Which Indian-American author wrote 'The Namesake', which was later adapted into a film?

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Kiran Desai
(b) Jhumpa Lahiri
(c) Arundhati Roy
(d) Chetan Bhagat

Answer (b) Jhumpa Lahiri

Explanation

The Namesake (2003) is a novel by **Jhumpa Lahiri**. It tells the story of Gogol Ganguli, the son of Bengali immigrants in the USA, who struggles with his unusual name and with his mixed identity. In 2006 it was made into a film by **Mira Nair**, with Irrfan Khan and Tabu.

Lahiri's first book, *Interpreter of Maladies*, won the **Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000**. Her other works include *Unaccustomed Earth*, *The Lowland* and *Whereabouts* (first written in Italian).

03. Match the following (literary work – type):

List I (Work)	List II (Type)
A. Naukar Ki Kameez	1. Poetry collection
B. Lagbhag Jai Hind	2. Novel
C. Ped Par Kamra	3. Short-story collection
D. Woh Aadmi Chala Gaya...	4. Poetry collection (later)

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) A-2, B-1, C-3, D-4
(b) A-1, B-2, C-4, D-3
(c) A-3, B-4, C-1, D-2
(d) A-4, B-3, C-2, D-1

Answer (a) A-2, B-1, C-3, D-4

Explanation

All four works are by the Hindi writer **Vinod Kumar Shukla**, who received the **59th Jnanpith Award**.

- *Naukar Ki Kameez* is his famous **novel** (later made into a film by Mani Kaul) → A-2.
- *Lagbhag Jai Hind* (1971) is his **first poetry collection** → B-1.
- *Ped Par Kamra* is a **collection of short stories** → C-3.
- *Woh Aadmi Chala Gaya Naya Garam Coat Pahinkar Vichar Ki Tarah* is a later **poetry collection** → D-4.

His novel *Deewar Mein Ek Khidki Rehti Thi* won the **Sahitya Akademi Award** in 1999.

04. Which was Vinod Kumar Shukla's first published poetry collection?

[SSC Stenographer, 07 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Lagbhag Jai Hind
(b) Kavita Se Lambi Kavita
(c) Aakash Dharti Ko Khatakhatata Hai
(d) Woh Aadmi Chala Gaya...

Answer (a) Lagbhag Jai Hind

Explanation

Lagbhag Jai Hind (1971) was Vinod Kumar Shukla's **first poetry collection**. The other three are also his poetry books, but they came later, which is why the word "first" decides the answer.

Shukla, from Raipur (Chhattisgarh), is known for writing about ordinary lives in simple yet magical language. He received the **59th Jnanpith Award**, becoming the first writer from Chhattisgarh to get it. His best-known novels are *Naukar Ki Kameez* and *Deewar Mein Ek Khidki Rehti Thi* (Sahitya Akademi Award).

05. Who is the author of 'The God of Small Things'?

[SSC Stenographer, 08 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
(b) Neil Gaiman
(c) Arundhati Roy
(d) Mo Yan

Answer (c) Arundhati Roy

Explanation

The God of Small Things is the debut novel of **Arundhati Roy**. It won the **Booker Prize in 1997**, making her the first Indian woman to win it. The story is set in **Ayemenem, Kerala**, and follows the twins Estha and Rahel.

The other names are foreign authors, which makes elimination easy: **Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie** is Nigerian (*Half of a Yellow Sun*), **Neil Gaiman** is British (*Coraline*), and **Mo Yan** is Chinese (Nobel Prize 2012).

06. Which of the following authors did NOT receive the Nobel Prize in Literature?

[SSC Stenographer, 08 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Orhan Pamuk
(b) Haruki Murakami
(c) Alice Munro
(d) Kazuo Ishiguro

Answer (b) Haruki Murakami

Explanation

Haruki Murakami, the Japanese author of *Norwegian Wood* and *Kafka on the Shore*, has never won the Nobel Prize, although his name comes up as a favourite almost every year.

The others are winners: **Orhan Pamuk** of Turkey (2006), **Alice Munro** of Canada (2013), known as the master of the short story, and **Kazuo Ishiguro** (2017), the Japan-born British author of *The Remains of the Day*. The only Indian to win the literature Nobel is **Rabindranath Tagore** (1913).

07. Which of the following best captures the essence of Kavitha Iyer's 'Landscapes of Loss: The Story of an Indian Drought'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) A study of the human and ecological effects of drought
(b) A fictional story about a family
(c) A history of monsoon patterns
(d) An analysis of colonial-era policy

Answer (a) A study of the human and ecological effects of drought

Explanation

Landscapes of Loss is a work of **non-fiction journalism** by **Kavitha Iyer**. Through real people in drought-hit regions such as Marathwada in Maharashtra, it shows how drought destroys farms, livelihoods, health and the environment.

The subtitle "The Story of an Indian Drought" already points to the answer. It is not a novel, not a weather history and not a study of colonial policy, so options (b), (c) and (d) fall away.

08. Consider the following statements about 'The Adventures of Kakababu, Volume 1' by Sunil Gangopadhyay:

1. A pioneering Bengali adventure novel featuring the detective Kakababu.

2. A political satire on post-independence Indian governance.
3. An autobiography of the author's freedom-fighter experiences.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Only statement 1 is correct
(b) Only statement 2 is correct
(c) Statements 2 and 3 are correct
(d) 1, 2 and 3 are correct

Answer (a) Only statement 1 is correct

Explanation

Only statement 1 is correct. **Kakababu** is a famous adventure character created by the Bengali writer **Sunil Gangopadhyay**. He is a retired archaeologist who solves mysteries, usually with his nephew **Santu**, and the series is popular with young readers.

The book is neither political satire nor an autobiography. Gangopadhyay is also known for *Sei Samay* (Those Days), which won the **Sahitya Akademi Award**, and for the novel *Aranyer Din Ratri*, filmed by Satyajit Ray.

09. Which of the following best describes the subject of the book 'Hot Stage'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) A collection of modern Indian plays
(b) A historical account of independence
(c) A novel about ancient myths
(d) A travelogue about the Himalayas

Answer (a) A collection of modern Indian plays

Explanation

Hot Stage is a **collection of modern Indian plays**. The word "stage" in the title is the clue: it belongs to the world of theatre, where plays are performed.

For such "what is this book about" questions, read the title closely. A title linked with the stage points to drama, just as a subtitle like "The Story of an Indian Drought" points to non-fiction. None of the other options fits a theatre title.

10. Which statement correctly represents the relationship between Sandeep Jauhar's 'Heart: A History' and the Edgar Award?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 13 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Nominated for its blend of history and mystery
(b) Won the Edgar Award as medical fiction
(c) Received the Edgar for fictional surgery
(d) A non-fiction work, not eligible for the Edgar Award

Answer (d) A non-fiction work, not eligible for the Edgar Award

Explanation

Heart: A History (2018) by the Indian-American cardiologist **Sandeep Jauhar** is a **non-fiction** book about the human heart, mixing medical history with his own experiences as a doctor.

The **Edgar Award**, named after **Edgar Allan Poe**, is given by the Mystery Writers of America to **mystery and crime writing**. A book on medical history has nothing to do with it, so the other three options, which talk of fiction or mystery, are wrong. Jauhar's other books include *Intern* and *Doctored*.

11. Consider the following Assertion (A) and Reason (R) and choose the correct option:

Assertion (A): 'Last Man in Tower' explores moral conflicts during rapid urban development.

Reason (R): The novel focuses on the historical development of Mumbai's architecture.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 13 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Both A and R are true, and R explains A
(b) Both A and R are true, but R does not explain A
(c) A is true, but R is false
(d) A is false, but R is true

Answer (c) A is true, but R is false

Explanation

A is true, but R is false. *Last Man in Tower* (2011) by **Aravind Adiga** is set in a Mumbai housing society. A builder offers the residents a lot of money to leave so that the old building can be pulled down, and one retired teacher, **Masterji**, refuses. The novel shows greed, pressure and moral choices during the city's rapid growth.

The novel is about **people and their choices**, not about the history of Mumbai's architecture, so R is false. Adiga won the **Booker Prize in 2008** for his debut, *The White Tiger*.

12. Consider the following statements about Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's 'The Vine of Desire':

1. Explores cultural conflicts within an Indian immigrant family.
2. A historical account of India's freedom struggle.
3. A science-fiction story about identity.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only statement 1 is correct
(b) Only statement 2 is correct
(c) Both statements 2 and 3 are correct
(d) 1, 2 and 3 are all correct

Answer (a) Only statement 1 is correct

Explanation

Only statement 1 is correct. *The Vine of Desire* (2002) by **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni** follows the cousins **Anju and Sudha** as they rebuild their lives in America, dealing with culture clash, marriage and freedom. It is a sequel to her novel *Sister of My Heart*.

Almost all of Divakaruni's work deals with the **lives of Indian women and immigrants**; it is neither history nor science fiction. Her other well-known books are *Arranged Marriage*, *The Mistress of Spices* and *The Palace of Illusions* (the Mahabharata told by Draupadi).

13. Which of the following best represents the essence of the book 'Because Words Matter'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) The role of language in social justice
(b) Ancient Sanskrit grammar
(c) A novel on colonial India
(d) A critique of post-colonial English

Answer (a) The role of language in social justice

Explanation

Because Words Matter is about **the power of language in shaping society and justice**. Its idea is that the words we use, in public life, the media and law, can either include people or push them out, and so language is a tool of social justice.

The title itself carries the answer: it says words **matter**, that is, they have real effects on people. Sanskrit grammar, colonial fiction and literary criticism are distractors that only share the theme of "words".

14. Consider the following Assertion (A) and Reason (R) and choose the correct option:

Assertion (A): 'The Moor's Last Sigh' blends historical events with magic realism.

Reason (R): The novel won the Booker Prize for its innovative storytelling.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Both A and R are true, and R explains A
(b) Both A and R are true, but R does not explain A
(c) A is true, but R is false
(d) A is false, but R is true

Answer (c) A is true, but R is false

Explanation

A is true, but R is false. *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995) by **Salman Rushdie** tells the story of a Kochi spice-trading family across generations and mixes Indian history with **magic realism**, Rushdie's trademark style.

The novel was **shortlisted** for the Booker Prize in 1995 but **did not win**; it won the Whitbread Novel Award. Rushdie's Booker winner is *Midnight's Children* (1981), which later also won the "Booker of Bookers" and the "Best of the Booker".

15. Who wrote the novel 'Sahela Re'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Vasanti Majumdar
(b) Mrinal Pande
(c) Priyanka Sarkar
(d) Shubhangi Tiwari

Answer (b) Mrinal Pande

Explanation

Sahela Re is a Hindi novel by **Mrinal Pande**. It is set in the world of **Hindustani classical music** and the lives of women singers (tawaifs) of earlier times.

Mrinal Pande is a well-known journalist and writer; she has edited *Hindustan* and chaired **Prasar Bharati**. She is the daughter of the Hindi writer **Shivani**.

16. Which of the following best describes the subject of the book 'Why Bharat Matters'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) India's economic and cultural significance
(b) A biography of Mahatma Gandhi
(c) Ancient mythological tales
(d) A fictional rural story

Answer (a) India's economic and cultural significance

Explanation

Why Bharat Matters (2024) is written by India's External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar**. It explains why India is important in today's world: its economy, culture, democracy and place in global politics. He often draws lessons from the **Ramayana** to explain foreign policy.

His earlier book is *The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World* (2020). Do not confuse the use of epic examples with option (c): the book is about modern foreign policy, not a collection of myths.

17. Which of the following best describes Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's 'Arranged Marriage'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Stories exploring immigrant life
(b) A historical novel on independence
(c) A fictional saga
(d) A scientific study of customs

Answer (a) Stories exploring immigrant life

Explanation

Arranged Marriage (1995) is a **collection of short stories** by **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni**. The stories show Indian women, in India and in America, dealing with marriage, tradition, freedom and the immigrant experience. It won the **American Book Award**.

The key word is "stories": it is not one long novel (so not "a saga") and not a study of customs. Her later works include *The Mistress of Spices* and *The Palace of Illusions*.

18. Who wrote 'Indica: A Deep Natural History of the Indian Subcontinent'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Sanjeev Sanyal
(b) Pranay Lal
(c) Rohan Murty
(d) Tony Joseph

Answer (b) Pranay Lal

Explanation

Indica (2016) is by **Pranay Lal**. It tells the story of the Indian subcontinent over billions of years: how the land was formed, how the Himalayas rose, and which plants, animals and dinosaurs lived here.

The other names also write on Indian history: **Tony Joseph** wrote *Early Indians* (about the ancestry of Indians), and **Sanjeev Sanyal** wrote *Land of the Seven Rivers* and *The Ocean of Churn*. Do not mix up Pranay Lal's *Indica* with Megasthenes' ancient account *Indica*.

19. Consider the statements about Pavan K. Varma's 'Being Indian':

1. Won the Vodafone Crossword Book Award.
2. Received the Sahitya Akademi Award.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Only 1
(b) Only 2
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (a) Only 1

Explanation

Being Indian: The Truth About Why the 21st Century Will Be India's (2004) is a **non-fiction** book by the diplomat-writer **Pavan K. Varma**. It studies the Indian mind, its habits and values, and was widely praised. The answer accepted for this question is **statement 1 only**.

Statement 2 is clearly wrong: the book did not get the Sahitya Akademi Award. Varma's other books include *The Great Indian Middle Class*, *Becoming Indian* and *Adi Shankaracharya: Hinduism's Greatest Thinker*.

20. What is the theme of Avni Doshi's 'Burnt Sugar'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) A romantic story
(b) A political thriller
(c) A complex mother–daughter bond
(d) A historical tale

Answer (c) A complex mother–daughter bond

Explanation

Burnt Sugar by **Avni Doshi** explores a **difficult mother–daughter relationship**. The daughter, Antara, has to care for her mother Tara, who is losing her memory, even though Tara neglected her as a child. The novel looks at love, anger, memory and guilt.

It was first published in India as *Girl in White Cotton* (2019) and was **shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 2020**. The story is set in **Pune**.

21. Who is the author of the book 'School to Startup: Navigating the Path of Entrepreneurship'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Rohit Sinha
(b) Romila Thapar
(c) Bipin Chandra
(d) Shashi Tharoor

Answer (a) Rohit Sinha

Explanation

School to Startup (2024) is written by **Rohit Sinha**, a young entrepreneur from Jharkhand who began his business journey as a teenager and was called "The World's Most Techy Kid" after building a voice-assistant app at 15. The book is a practical guide for students who want to start their own ventures.

Elimination is easy here: **Romila Thapar** and **Bipin Chandra** are historians, and **Shashi Tharoor** writes on politics and history, so none of them fits a book on student start-ups.

22. Who wrote 'An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Shashi Tharoor
(b) Vikram Seth
(c) Pavan Varma
(d) Romila Thapar

Answer (a) Shashi Tharoor

Explanation

An Era of Darkness (2016) is by **Shashi Tharoor**. It grew out of his famous **Oxford Union speech (2015)** arguing that Britain owes reparations to India, and it describes how colonial rule drained India's wealth and damaged its economy. The UK edition is titled *Inglorious Empire*.

The book won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (2019)**. Do not confuse it with V.S. Naipaul's travelogue *An Area of Darkness*; the titles differ by just one word.

23. Who is the author of 'The White Tiger', the 2008 Man Booker Prize winner?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Aravind Adiga
(b) Rohinton Mistry
(c) Arundhati Roy
(d) Vikram Seth

Answer (a) Aravind Adiga

Explanation

The White Tiger is the debut novel of **Aravind Adiga** and won the **Man Booker Prize in 2008**. It is told through letters written by **Balram Halwai**, a poor village boy who becomes a driver in Delhi and finally a businessman in Bengaluru, showing the dark side of class and corruption in modern India.

Arundhati Roy won the Booker in 1997, while Rohinton Mistry and Vikram Seth have been shortlisted or praised but never won it.

24. Who is the author of the book 'The Argumentative Indian'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 18 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Amartya Sen
(b) Shashi Tharoor
(c) Ramachandra Guha
(d) Arvind Subramanian

Answer (a) Amartya Sen

Explanation

The Argumentative Indian (2005) is a collection of essays by the Nobel-winning economist **Amartya Sen**. He shows that India has a long tradition of **debate, questioning and public reasoning**, from ancient texts to Akbar's court, and links it to Indian democracy and tolerance.

Sen won the **Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998** and the **Bharat Ratna in 1999**. His other famous books are *Development as Freedom*, *The Idea of Justice* and *Home in the World* (memoir).

25. 'An Area of Darkness' is the travelogue of which author?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 18 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Raja Rao
(b) V. S. Naipaul
(c) R. K. Narayan
(d) Vikram Seth

Answer (b) V. S. Naipaul

Explanation

An Area of Darkness (1964) is a travel book by **V.S. Naipaul**, describing his first journey to India, the land of his ancestors. It is famous for its sharp and critical view of Indian society. It forms an **India trilogy** with *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977) and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990).

Naipaul, born in Trinidad to a family of Indian origin, won the **Booker Prize (1971)** for *In a Free State* and the **Nobel Prize in Literature (2001)**.

26. 'The Namesake' is the famous novel of which author?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 18 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Jhumpa Lahiri
(b) Arundhati Roy
(c) Chitra Banerjee
(d) Kiran Desai

Answer (a) Jhumpa Lahiri

Explanation

The Namesake (2003) is by **Jhumpa Lahiri**. Its hero is named **Gogol** after the Russian writer Nikolai Gogol, and the novel is about how this odd name becomes a symbol of his confusion between his Bengali roots and American life.

Notice how often SSC asks this one book; it appears three times in this chapter alone. Lahiri, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Kiran Desai all write about the Indian diaspora, so the options are deliberately close.

27. 'Half the Night Is Gone' was written by which award-winning author?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 19 Sep 2025]

(a) Amitav Ghosh
(b) Amit Chaudhuri
(c) Anuradha Roy
(d) Amitabha Bagchi

Answer (d) Amitabha Bagchi

Explanation

Half the Night Is Gone (2018) is the third novel of **Amitabha Bagchi**. It is the story of a Hindi novelist, Vishwanath, who, grieving the death of his son, writes a novel about a rich Delhi merchant's family. It won the **DSC Prize for South Asian Literature (2019)**.

Bagchi is a professor of computer science at **IIT Delhi**. His other novels are *Above Average*, *The Householder* and *This Place*, and both *Above Average* and *The Householder* also appear in this chapter.

28. Who is the author of 'Sleeping on Jupiter'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 19 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Kiran Desai
(b) Anuradha Roy
(c) Jhumpa Lahiri
(d) T. N. Ninan

Answer (b) Anuradha Roy

Explanation

Sleeping on Jupiter (2015) is a novel by **Anuradha Roy**. It follows a young woman, Nomi, who returns to a temple town on India's eastern coast to face memories of abuse from her childhood. The novel was **longlisted for the Booker Prize** and won the **DSC Prize for South Asian Literature (2016)**.

Her other novels include *An Atlas of Impossible Longing* and *The Earthspinner*. T.N. Ninan is the odd one out: he is a journalist known for *The Turn of the Tortoise*, a book on India's economy.

29. Who is the author of the famous book 'The God of Small Things'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 20 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Kiran Desai
(b) Arundhati Roy
(c) Jhumpa Lahiri
(d) Chetan Bhagat

Answer (b) Arundhati Roy

Explanation

The author is **Arundhati Roy**. Published in **1997**, the novel won the Booker Prize the same year. Its non-linear storytelling moves back and forth between 1969 and 1993, and it deals with caste, the "Love Laws" of society and family tragedy in Kerala.

After a gap of twenty years, Roy published her second novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017). In between she wrote many non-fiction essays, such as *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* and *Capitalism: A Ghost Story*.

30. What is the primary literary significance of Natasha Sharma's book 'Bonkers!'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 20 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) A memoir of rural life
(b) A historical epic
(c) An experimental style
(d) Science fiction

Answer (c) An experimental style

Explanation

Bonkers! by the children's author **Natasha Sharma** is valued for its **experimental, playful style**. It tells a lively story with humour and an unusual narrative form, and also touches on real social themes for young readers. (The source paper prints the title as "Boxers!", but the book is *Bonkers!*.)

It is not a memoir, an epic or science fiction, so options (a), (b) and (d) go out. Natasha Sharma is known for children's books such as *Squiggle Takes a Walk*, a fun book on punctuation.

31. What best captures 'The Winner's Mindset' written by Shane Watson?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) A technical manual
(b) A sociological study
(c) Psychological resilience and strategic adaptability
(d) A biography

Answer (c) Psychological resilience and strategic adaptability

Explanation

The Winner's Mindset by the former Australian all-rounder **Shane Watson** is about **mental strength**: how to stay calm under pressure, bounce back from failure and adapt your plans to succeed, in cricket and in life.

It is not a cricket coaching manual or a life story, though Watson uses examples from his own career.

32. What is the main focus of the book 'India on Our Minds'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Analysis of economic development and social challenges
(b) A fictional novel
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (a) Analysis of economic development and social challenges

Explanation

India on Our Minds is a **non-fiction collection of essays** that analyses **India's economic growth and social challenges**, such as poverty, inequality and development.

It is not a novel, so "a fictional novel" and "both" are ruled out. (In the original paper this was framed as two statements, which is why the options still say "Both 1 and 2" and "Neither 1 nor 2".)

33. Consider the following statements about 'One Hundred Years of Solitude':

1. Uses magic realism through the Buendía family.
2. A linear historical account.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Only statement 1 is correct
(b) Only statement 2 is correct
(c) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (a) Only statement 1 is correct

Explanation

Only statement 1 is correct. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) by the Colombian writer **Gabriel García Márquez** tells the story of seven generations of the **Buendía family** in the imaginary town of **Macondo**, and it is the most famous example of **magic realism**, where magical events are told as if they were normal.

Statement 2 is wrong: the novel is anything but a straight, linear history; time loops and names repeat across generations. Márquez won the **Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982**.

34. Consider the following statements about 'The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian':

1. Received the Pulitzer Prize.
2. Won the National Book Award.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 22 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only 1 is correct
(b) Only 2 is correct
(c) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (b) Only 2 is correct

Explanation

Only statement 2 is correct. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007) by **Sherman Alexie** won the **National Book Award for Young People's Literature** in the USA. It is the story of Junior, a Native American (Spokane) boy who leaves his reservation school to study at an all-white school.

Here "Indian" means **Native American**, not a person from India. The book did not win the Pulitzer Prize, so statement 1 is wrong.

35. What is the main focus of 'India for Indians' written by Chittaranjan Das?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 22 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Advocacy of self-governance
(b) A history of empires
(c) Economic reform
(d) A biography of Gandhi

Answer (a) Advocacy of self-governance

Explanation

India for Indians (1917) is a collection of speeches by **Chittaranjan Das**, popularly called **Deshbandhu**. Its central message is **self-governance (Swaraj)**: Indians must run their own country.

C.R. Das was a leading lawyer and nationalist from Bengal. In 1923 he founded the **Swaraj Party** with **Motilal Nehru** to enter the legislatures and oppose British rule from inside. **Subhas Chandra Bose** regarded him as his political guru.

36. What is the theme of Amit Chaudhuri's 'Friend of My Youth'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 22 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Stories exploring family and identity
(b) A historical account
(c) A travelogue
(d) A biography

Answer (a) Stories exploring family and identity

Explanation

Friend of My Youth (2017) by **Amit Chaudhuri** explores **memory, friendship and identity**. The narrator, also named Amit, returns to Bombay, the city of his childhood, and thinks about an old school friend, Ramu, and about how the city and he himself have changed.

Chaudhuri is also a trained Hindustani classical singer. His novel *A New World* won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (2002)**, and his debut *A Strange and Sublime Address* is set in Kolkata.

37. 'Heart Lamp' was originally written in which language?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 23 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Tamil
(b) Kannada
(c) Hindi
(d) Malayalam

Answer (b) Kannada

Explanation

Heart Lamp was originally written in **Kannada** by **Banu Mushtaq** and translated into English by **Deepa Bhasthi**. In **2025** it won the **International Booker Prize**, the first Kannada work and the first **short-story collection** ever to win it.

The stories, written over three decades, show the everyday lives of Muslim women in southern India. Banu Mushtaq is also a lawyer and activist from Karnataka. India's first International Booker came in 2022 with Geetanjali Shree's Hindi novel *Tomb of Sand*.

38. Consider the following statements about 'Negotiating Mughal Law' by Nandini Chatterjee:

1. Explores legal pluralism through a landholding family.
2. A literary biography of emperors.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 23 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only statement 1 is correct
(b) Only statement 2 is correct
(c) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (a) Only statement 1 is correct

Explanation

Only statement 1 is correct. *Negotiating Mughal Law: A Family of Landlords across Three Indian Empires* (2020) by the historian **Nandini Chatterjee** follows one landholding family's documents over several centuries to show **legal pluralism**: how ordinary people used different laws and courts under Mughal and later rulers.

The subtitle "A Family of Landlords" makes statement 2 wrong; it is not a literary biography of emperors but a study of law in everyday life.

39. Consider the following statements about Vikram Seth's 'The Golden Gate':

1. Written in verse; shortlisted for the Whitbread.

2. Won the Booker Prize.
3. Honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Award.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 23 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Only statement 1 is correct
(b) Only statement 2 is correct
(c) Statements 1 and 3 are correct
(d) 1, 2 and 3 are all correct

Answer (c) Statements 1 and 3 are correct

Explanation

Statements 1 and 3 are correct. *The Golden Gate* (1986) by **Vikram Seth** is a **novel written entirely in verse**, in rhyming 14-line stanzas modelled on Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. It is about a group of young professionals in San Francisco. It received the **Sahitya Akademi Award (1988)**.

Statement 2 is wrong: *The Golden Gate* never won the Booker. Seth's most famous work is the long novel *A Suitable Boy* (1993); he also wrote the travel book *From Heaven Lake* and the memoir *Two Lives*.

40. Who is the author of 'The Elephant Paradigm'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 23 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Nandan Nilekani
(b) Raghuram Rajan
(c) Gurcharan Das
(d) Shashi Tharoor

Answer (c) Gurcharan Das

Explanation

The Elephant Paradigm: India Wrestles with Change (2002) is a collection of essays by **Gurcharan Das**, the former CEO of Procter & Gamble India. It looks at how India is slowly but steadily changing after the economic reforms of 1991; the slow but powerful elephant is the image for India.

Das is best known for *India Unbound* (2000), on India's economic journey, and *The Difficulty of Being Good*, on the Mahabharata and ethics. Nandan Nilekani wrote *Imagining India*, and Raghuram Rajan wrote *Fault Lines*.

41. What is the central theme of Girish Kuber's 'The Tatas'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 23 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) The growth of a family
(b) Industrial policies
(c) Their role in building industry and society
(d) A fictional tale

Answer (c) Their role in building industry and society

Explanation

The Tatas: How a Family Built a Business and a Nation by the Marathi journalist **Girish Kuber** shows the **Tata group's role in building Indian industry and society**: steel, power, airlines and hotels on one side, and institutions like the Indian Institute of Science and TIFR (Tata Institute of Fundamental Research) on the other.

Option (a) is only half the story; the book is about how the family's business shaped the nation. Remember the founders: **Jamsetji Tata** started the group, **Tata Steel** (TISCO) was set up in Jamshedpur in 1907, and **J.R.D. Tata** founded India's first airline, Tata Airlines.

42. Who is the author of 'The Great Indian Novel'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 24 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Devdutt Pattanaik
(b) Shashi Tharoor
(c) Sanjeev Sanyal
(d) Gurcharan Das

Answer (b) Shashi Tharoor

Explanation

The Great Indian Novel (1989) is **Shashi Tharoor's** first novel. It retells the **Mahabharata** as the story of India's freedom struggle and the first decades after Independence: for example, Bhishma stands for Gandhi, and Dhritarashtra for Nehru.

The title is a pun: in Hindi "Mahabharata" can be read as "Great India". Tharoor's other books include *An Era of Darkness*, *Why I Am a Hindu* and *Show Business*, all of which appear in this chapter.

43. Which option correctly identifies the author and theme of 'A Fine Balance'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 24 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Salman Rushdie
(b) Rohinton Mistry, social injustice during the Emergency
(c) Jhumpa Lahiri
(d) Arundhati Roy

Answer (b) Rohinton Mistry, social injustice during the Emergency

Explanation

A Fine Balance (1995) is by **Rohinton Mistry**, an Indian-born Canadian writer from a Parsi family of Mumbai. Set during the **Emergency (1975–77)**, it follows four people (two tailors, a widow and a student) and shows the cruelty and injustice faced by ordinary people.

It was **shortlisted for the Booker Prize (1996)**. Mistry's other works include *Such a Long Journey* and *Family Matters*, both also Booker-shortlisted. Option (b) is the only one that gives both an author and a theme, which itself is a clue.

44. Which American author won the Pulitzer Prize for 'Beloved' and the Nobel Prize in 1993?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 24 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Toni Morrison
(b) Alice Walker
(c) Maya Angelou
(d) Zora Neale Hurston

Answer (a) Toni Morrison

Explanation

Toni Morrison won the **Pulitzer Prize (1988)** for *Beloved* and the **Nobel Prize in Literature (1993)**, becoming the first African-American woman to win the Nobel. *Beloved* is the story of Sethe, a woman who escaped slavery, and the ghost of the daughter she lost.

The others are also famous African-American women writers: **Alice Walker** won the Pulitzer for *The Color Purple*, **Maya Angelou** wrote *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, and **Zora Neale Hurston** wrote *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. None of them won the Nobel.

45. Who is the author of 'Why I Am a Hindu'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 25 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Pavan K. Varma
(b) Shashi Tharoor
(c) Aravind Adiga
(d) Gurcharan Das

Answer (b) Shashi Tharoor

Explanation

Why I Am a Hindu (2018) is by **Shashi Tharoor**. In it he explains Hinduism as a broad, open and tolerant faith, based on its texts and thinkers, and argues against narrow, political uses of religion.

Pavan Varma can mislead you, because he too writes on Hindu thought (*Adi Shankaracharya*, *The Book of Krishna*). Tharoor followed this book with *The Hindu Way* (2019).

46. What is the central theme of 'Fraternity: Constitutional Norm and Human Need'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 25 Sep 2025]

(a) Economic inequality
(b) Legal history
(c) Fraternity as a binding force
(d) Federalism

Answer (c) Fraternity as a binding force

Explanation

The book argues that **fraternity**, the feeling of brotherhood among citizens, is the **binding force** that holds a democracy together, and that it is both a constitutional value and a basic human need.

Fraternity is one of the four ideals in the **Preamble** of the Indian Constitution, along with justice, liberty and equality. **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar** stressed that liberty and equality cannot last without fraternity. The Preamble links fraternity with "the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation".

47. Who is the author of 'The Ocean of Churn'?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 25 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Sanjeev Sanyal
(b) Tony Joseph
(c) Devdutt Pattanaik
(d) Rohan Mukherjee

Answer (a) Sanjeev Sanyal

Explanation

The Ocean of Churn: How the Indian Ocean Shaped Human History (2016) is by the economist and historian **Sanjeev Sanyal**. It tells the history of the lands around the Indian Ocean through trade, migration, empires and ideas.

The title borrows the idea of **Samudra Manthan** (the churning of the ocean). Sanyal's other books include *Land of the Seven Rivers* and *Revolutionaries*. Devdutt Pattanaik writes on mythology.

48. 'Why Nations Fail' is co-authored by Daron Acemoglu and _____.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 25 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Fareed Zakaria

(b) Abhijit Banerjee
(c) James Robinson
(d) Raghuram Rajan

Answer (c) James Robinson

Explanation

Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty (2012) was written by **Daron Acemoglu** and **James A. Robinson**. Its idea is that nations become rich or stay poor mainly because of their **institutions**: "inclusive" institutions spread opportunity, while "extractive" ones serve only a few.

Acemoglu, Robinson and **Simon Johnson** won the **Nobel Prize in Economics in 2024** for this research. Abhijit Banerjee won the 2019 Economics Nobel with Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer for work on poverty.

49. Who is the author of the book 'The Illicit Happiness of Other People'?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Janice Pariat
(b) Madhuri Vijay
(c) Neel Mukherjee
(d) Manu Joseph

Answer (d) Manu Joseph

Explanation

The Illicit Happiness of Other People (2012) is a novel by the journalist **Manu Joseph**. Set in Chennai, it follows a father trying to understand why his brilliant 17-year-old son, a cartoonist, took his own life.

His *Miss Laila, Armed and Dangerous* also appears in this chapter.

50. Who is the author of the book 'In an Antique Land'?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Amitav Ghosh
(b) Manu Joseph
(c) Neel Mukherjee
(d) Siddharth Dhanvant Shanghvi

Answer (a) Amitav Ghosh

Explanation

In an Antique Land (1992) is by **Amitav Ghosh**. It mixes history, travel and memoir: Ghosh describes his stay in an Egyptian village as a student and traces the story of a 12th-century Indian slave who worked for a Jewish merchant trading between Egypt and India.

Ghosh is the first English-language writer to receive the **Jnanpith Award (2018)**. His other works include *The Shadow Lines*, *The Glass Palace*, *The Hungry Tide* and the *Ibis trilogy*.

51. Who is the author of the book 'Love Is Always Right and Other Musings'?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ravinder Singh
(b) Vinita Dawra Nangia
(c) Ravi Subramanian
(d) Novoneel Chakraborty

Answer (b) Vinita Dawra Nangia

Explanation

Love Is Always Right and Other Musings is by the journalist and writer **Vinita Dawra Nangia**. It is a collection of short reflections on love, relationships and everyday life, drawn from her popular newspaper columns.

The other three are popular fiction writers: **Ravinder Singh** (*I Too Had a Love Story*), **Ravi Subramanian** (banking thrillers) and **Novoneel Chakraborty** (romantic thrillers). The word "musings", meaning thoughtful notes, points away from them.

52. Who is the author of the book 'The Namesake'?

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Arundhati Roy
(b) Satyajit Ray
(c) Jhumpa Lahiri
(d) Arun Joshi

Answer (c) Jhumpa Lahiri

Explanation

The author is **Jhumpa Lahiri**. *The Namesake* (2003) was her first novel, coming after her Pulitzer-winning story collection *Interpreter of Maladies*.

Lahiri was born in London to Bengali parents and grew up in the USA, and her own background shapes this story of an immigrant family. Satyajit Ray has a Bengali link: he was a filmmaker and also wrote the **Feluda** detective stories.

53. Who is the author of the travel book 'From Heaven Lake: Travels Through Sinkiang and Tibet', which won the Thomas Cook Travel Book Award?

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Sarah Joseph
(b) Rohit Lal
(c) Kanchana Banerji
(d) Vikram Seth

Answer (d) Vikram Seth

Explanation

From Heaven Lake (1983) is by **Vikram Seth**. It describes his journey, while he was a student in China, through **Xinjiang (Sinkiang) and Tibet** to Nepal and finally home to Delhi. It won the **Thomas Cook Travel Book Award**.

Seth is a writer of many forms: a travel book (*From Heaven Lake*), a verse novel (*The Golden Gate*), a very long novel (*A Suitable Boy*) and a family memoir (*Two Lives*).

54. Who is the author of the book 'Above Average'?

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Amit Varma
(b) Amitabha Bagchi
(c) Anita Nair
(d) Amish Tripathi

Answer (b) Amitabha Bagchi

Explanation

Above Average (2007) is the debut novel of **Amitabha Bagchi**. It is the story of Arjun Sen, a student at **IIT Delhi**, and his life of hostels, friendships and pressure to succeed, drawn from Bagchi's own experience as an IIT student.

Bagchi later wrote *The Householder*, *This Place* and the DSC Prize-winning *Half the Night Is Gone*. All three "A"-names in the options (Amit Varma, Anita Nair, Amish Tripathi) are there to confuse; Amit Varma is a writer and podcaster, not the author of this book.

55. The book 'Pinjar', depicting the trauma of Partition, was written by which Indian author?

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Krishna Sobti
(b) Amrita Pritam
(c) Ismat Chughtai
(d) Mahadevi Varma

Answer (b) Amrita Pritam

Explanation

Pinjar (The Skeleton, 1950) is a **Punjabi** novel by **Amrita Pritam**. It tells the story of **Puro**, a Hindu girl abducted before Partition, and shows the suffering of women during those violent times.

Amrita Pritam is also famous for the Partition poem *Ajj Aakhaan Waris Shah Nu*. She was the first woman to win the **Sahitya Akademi Award** (for *Sunehade*, 1956) and later received the **Jnanpith Award (1981)** for *Kagaz Te Canvas*.

56. Who is the author of the book 'The Gopi Diaries: Finding Love'?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Sudha Murty
(b) Rekha Varma
(c) Anuradha Roy
(d) Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

Answer (a) Sudha Murty

Explanation

The Gopi Diaries is a children's book series by **Sudha Murty**, told from the point of view of **Gopi, a dog** who lives with a family in Bengaluru. *Finding Love* is the second book in the series, after *Coming Home*.

Sudha Murty is the chairperson of the Infosys Foundation and a nominated **Rajya Sabha member (2024)**. She received the **Padma Bhushan (2023)**. Her other popular books include *Wise and Otherwise*, *Grandma's Bag of Stories* and *Three Thousand Stitches*.

57. Who is the author of the book 'The Householder'?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Ruskin Bond
(b) Satyajit Ray
(c) Arun Joshi
(d) Amitabha Bagchi

Answer (d) Amitabha Bagchi

Explanation

The Householder (2012) is the second novel of **Amitabha Bagchi**. It is the story of a personal assistant

to a senior government officer in Delhi, and looks at ambition, corruption and family life in the capital.

A useful note: there is an older novel with the same title, *The Householder* (1960) by **Ruth Prawer Jhabvala**, filmed by Merchant–Ivory in 1963. She is not among the options, so the answer here is Bagchi, whose *Above Average* and *Half the Night Is Gone* also appear in this chapter.

58. Who is the author of 'Gandhi in Champaran', which describes Mahatma Gandhi's first Satyagraha struggle on Indian soil in 1917?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Toru Dutt
(b) Rajendra Prasad
(c) D. G. Tendulkar
(d) Kamala Das

Answer (c) D. G. Tendulkar

Explanation

Gandhi in Champaran (1957) was written by **D.G. Tendulkar**, the biographer best known for his eight-volume *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*.

Rajendra Prasad is not the answer: he took part in the Champaran movement and wrote a different book on it, *Satyagraha in Champaran*. The **Champaran Satyagraha (1917)** in Bihar was Gandhi's first Satyagraha in India, against the forced cultivation of **indigo** under the **tinkathia** system.

59. 'Mohini: The Enchantress' is a mythological tale whose author is _____.

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Shobha Rao
(b) Anita Nair
(c) Anuja Chandramouli
(d) Deepti Naval

Answer (c) Anuja Chandramouli

Explanation

Mohini: The Enchantress is by **Anuja Chandramouli**, a writer known for retelling Indian myths from fresh angles. It tells the story of **Mohini**, the female form taken by Lord Vishnu, who appears during the Samudra Manthan to distribute the nectar (amrit).

Chandramouli's other books include *Arjuna: Saga of a Pandava Warrior-Prince* and *Kamadeva: The God of Desire*. Deepti Naval, the actress, writes poetry and memoir, not mythology.

60. Who won the Pulitzer Prize for the 1999 debut work 'Interpreter of Maladies'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Kiran Desai
(b) Jhumpa Lahiri
(c) Shobha Rao
(d) Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

Answer (b) Jhumpa Lahiri

Explanation

Interpreter of Maladies (1999) is a collection of nine short stories by **Jhumpa Lahiri**, and it won the **Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000**. It was a rare case of a debut book, and a story collection at that, winning the Pulitzer.

The title story is about Mr. Kapasi, a tour guide in Odisha who also works as an interpreter for a doctor. Remember the pair: **book published in 1999, Pulitzer in 2000**.

61. Who is the author of 'Marx's Revenge: The Resurgence of Capitalism and the Death of Statist Socialism'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Amartya Sen
(b) Meghnad Desai
(c) Pavan K. Varma
(d) Ramachandra Guha

Answer (b) Meghnad Desai

Explanation

Marx's Revenge (2002) is by the economist **Lord Meghnad Desai**, an Indian-born member of the British House of Lords who taught at the London School of Economics. He argues that the global spread of capitalism actually fits Marx's own predictions, while state-run socialism failed.

Desai also wrote *Nehru's Hero: Dilip Kumar in the Life of India*, which appears later in this chapter. He received the **Padma Bhushan (2008)**.

62. Who is the author of the book 'The God of Small Things'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Ruskin Bond
(b) Arundhati Roy

(c) R. K. Narayan
(d) Mulk Raj Anand

Answer (b) Arundhati Roy

Explanation

The author is **Arundhati Roy**. The book is set in **Ayemenem**, a village in Kerala's Kottayam district, where Roy herself spent her childhood.

The other three are classic Indian English writers from an earlier time: **Ruskin Bond** (*The Room on the Roof*), **R.K. Narayan** (*Malgudi Days*, *The Guide*) and **Mulk Raj Anand** (*Untouchable*, *Coolie*). None of them wrote this novel.

63. Who is the author of the book 'Miss Laila, Armed and Dangerous'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Sachin Kundalkar
(b) Ruchir Joshi
(c) Manu Joseph
(d) Ajay K Pandey

Answer (c) Manu Joseph

Explanation

Miss Laila, Armed and Dangerous (2017) is a novel by **Manu Joseph**. Inspired by a real police encounter case, it follows a young woman, Laila, killed in a fake encounter, and looks at the media, politics and terror fears that surround such events.

Manu Joseph's other novels are *Serious Men* and *The Illicit Happiness of Other People*, both of which also appear in this chapter. SSC clearly likes asking about him.

64. Who is the author of the novel 'The Blue Umbrella'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ruskin Bond
(b) Arundhati Roy
(c) R. K. Narayan
(d) Khushwant Singh

Answer (a) Ruskin Bond

Explanation

The Blue Umbrella (1980) is a short novel by **Ruskin Bond**. It is about **Binya**, a little girl in a Himalayan village who trades her leopard-claw pendant for a beautiful blue umbrella, and Ram Bharosa, the shopkeeper who wants it.

Bond, who lives in **Landour, Mussoorie**, won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (1992)** for *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* and has received the **Padma Bhushan (2014)**. His first novel was *The Room on the Roof*.

65. Who is the author of the book 'Two Lives'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Vikram Seth
(b) Chetan Bhagat
(c) Sudha Murty
(d) Samit Basu

Answer (a) Vikram Seth

Explanation

Two Lives (2005) is a memoir by **Vikram Seth** about his great-uncle **Shanti Behari Seth**, an Indian dentist who lost an arm in the Second World War, and his German-Jewish wife **Henny**, who fled Nazi Germany. Seth lived with them in London as a student.

It is the fourth Vikram Seth book in this chapter, along with *A Suitable Boy*, *The Golden Gate* and *From Heaven Lake*. Seth received the **Padma Shri (2007)**.

66. Which of the following books was NOT written by Amitav Ghosh?

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) The Glass Palace
(b) The Imam and the Indian
(c) The Hungry Tide
(d) The Ground Beneath Her Feet

Answer (d) The Ground Beneath Her Feet

Explanation

The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1999) was written by **Salman Rushdie**, not Amitav Ghosh. It retells the myth of Orpheus through the story of two rock musicians.

The other three are Ghosh's: *The Glass Palace* (2000) on Burma and the Indian diaspora, *The Hungry Tide* (2004) set in the **Sundarbans**, and *The Imam and the Indian* (2002), a collection of essays. Ghosh, the first English-language writer to win the **Jnanpith (2018)**, also wrote the *Ibis trilogy* on the opium trade.

67. Who is the author of 'Guerrillas', published in 1975?

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Novoneel Chakraborty
(b) V. S. Naipaul
(c) Bapsi Sidhwa
(d) Mohsin Hamid

Answer (b) V. S. Naipaul

Explanation

Guerrillas (1975) is a novel by **V.S. Naipaul**, set on a Caribbean island in political turmoil after the end of colonial rule. It shows violence, false revolutionaries and the confusion of newly free societies.

Naipaul's other famous works include *A House for Mr Biswas* (1961), *In a Free State* (Booker 1971) and *A Bend in the River*. **Bapsi Sidhwa** (Pakistan) wrote *Ice-Candy Man*, and **Mohsin Hamid** (Pakistan) wrote *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

68. Which of the following novels is authored by Anita Desai?

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Book of Humour
(b) I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale
(c) Where Shall We Go This Summer?
(d) The Struggle for India's Soul

Answer (c) Where Shall We Go This Summer?

Explanation

Where Shall We Go This Summer? (1975) is a novel by **Anita Desai**. It tells of Sita, a pregnant woman who escapes her dull city life to an island, unsure whether she wants to bring a child into the world.

Desai has been shortlisted for the Booker three times (*Clear Light of Day*, *In Custody*, *Fasting, Feasting*) and won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (1978)** for *Fire on the Mountain*. She is the mother of **Kiran Desai**, who won the Booker in 2006. *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* is by Khushwant Singh, and *The Struggle for India's Soul* is by Shashi Tharoor.

69. Who is the author of the book 'The Shadow Lines'?

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Hari Kunzru
(b) Amitav Ghosh
(c) Pankaj Mishra
(d) Vikram Chandra

Answer (b) Amitav Ghosh

Explanation

The Shadow Lines (1988) is by **Amitav Ghosh**. It moves between Kolkata, Dhaka and London and questions the meaning of national borders, the "shadow lines" of the title, especially through the 1964 riots. It won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (1989)**.

Ghosh also wrote *In an Antique Land*, *The Hungry Tide* and *The Glass Palace*. **Vikram Chandra** wrote *Sacred Games*, and **Pankaj Mishra** wrote *The Romantics* and *Age of Anger*.

70. Which Hindi novel by Munshi Premchand depicts the life of Indian peasants?

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Godan
(b) Kurukshetra
(c) Gunjan
(d) Urvashi

Answer (a) Godan

Explanation

Godan (1936) is **Premchand's** last complete novel and is often called his masterpiece. It tells the story of **Hori**, a poor farmer whose one dream is to own a cow (the gift of a cow, "go-daan"), and shows the debt, poverty and exploitation faced by Indian peasants.

The other options are works of other Hindi writers: *Kurukshetra* and *Urvashi* are by **Ramdhari Singh Dinkar** (*Urvashi* won him the Jnanpith in 1972), and *Gunjan* is a poetry collection by **Sumitranandan Pant**. Premchand's other novels include *Gaban*, *Nirmala* and *Rangbhoomi*.

71. Who is the author of 'Show Business', which parodies and satirises formula-driven Bollywood cinema?

[SSC CHSL, 21 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Arundhati Roy
(b) Salman Rushdie
(c) Shashi Tharoor
(d) Khushwant Singh

Answer (c) Shashi Tharoor

Explanation

Show Business (1992) is a satirical novel by **Shashi Tharoor**. Through the rise and fall of a film star, Ashok Banjara, it makes fun of the clichés of Bollywood and also comments on Indian politics.

Tharoor's novels, *The Great Indian Novel* and *Show Business*, are both satires; his later books are mostly non-fiction, like *An Era of Darkness* and *Why I Am a Hindu*.

72. Who wrote 'The Jungle Book' in 1894?

[SSC CHSL, 21 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Rudyard Kipling
(b) William Shakespeare
(c) Stephen Alter
(d) Edgar Allan Poe

Answer (a) Rudyard Kipling

Explanation

The Jungle Book (1894) was written by **Rudyard Kipling**. Its most famous stories are about **Mowgli**, a boy raised by wolves in the jungles of central India, with friends like Baloo the bear and Bagheera the panther, and the tiger Shere Khan as his enemy. The forests of the **Seoni** region (Madhya Pradesh) inspired it.

Kipling was born in **Bombay (1865)** and in 1907 became the first English-language writer, and the youngest so far, to win the **Nobel Prize in Literature**. He also wrote *Kim* and the poem *If—*.

73. Who authored 'Speedpost', a collection of personal letters written to her children?

[SSC CHSL, 22 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Kiran Desai
(b) Shobhaa De
(c) Jhumpa Lahiri
(d) Arundhati Roy

Answer (b) Shobhaa De

Explanation

Speedpost (1999) is by **Shobhaa De**, a columnist and writer often called the "Jackie Collins of India". In this book she writes warm, practical **letters to her six children** on life, relationships, career and growing up.

She is better known for her novels about Mumbai high society, such as *Socialite Evenings* and *Starry Nights*, and her memoir *Selective Memory*.

74. 'Faster than Lightning: My Story' is the autobiography of which of the following Olympians?

[SSC CHSL, 22 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Carl Lewis
(b) Usain Bolt
(c) Justin Gatlin
(d) Yohan Blake

Answer (b) Usain Bolt

Explanation

Faster than Lightning (2013) is the autobiography of the Jamaican sprinter **Usain Bolt**, nicknamed "Lightning Bolt". He still holds the world records in the **100 m (9.58 s)** and **200 m (19.19 s)**, both set in Berlin in 2009, and won eight Olympic gold medals.

The title plays on his nickname. Yohan Blake is also Jamaican, Justin Gatlin is American, and Carl Lewis is the American legend of the 1980s and 90s.

75. Who wrote the autobiography 'Childhood Days: A Memoir'?

[SSC CHSL, 22 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Satyajit Ray
(b) Amartya Sen
(c) Soumitra Chatterjee
(d) Rabindranath Tagore

Answer (a) Satyajit Ray

Explanation

Childhood Days: A Memoir is the English translation of **Satyajit Ray's** Bengali memoir *Jakhan Chhoto Chhilam* (When I Was Small). In it Ray recalls his childhood in Kolkata, his family and his early influences.

Ray, the maker of *Pather Panchali* (1955), received an **Honorary Oscar (1992)** and the **Bharat Ratna (1992)**. He also wrote the **Feluda** detective stories and the **Professor Shonku** science-fiction stories.

76. 'Nehru's Hero: Dilip Kumar in the Life of India' is a book written by _____.

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Sunil Khilnani
(b) Vikram Sampath
(c) Rajmohan Gandhi
(d) Meghnad Desai

Answer (d) Meghnad Desai

Explanation

Nehru's Hero: Dilip Kumar in the Life of India (2004) is by the economist **Lord Meghnad Desai**. It shows how Dilip Kumar's films, from *Devdas* to *Naya Daur*, reflected the hopes and doubts of India in the Nehru years.

Desai also wrote *Marx's Revenge*, asked earlier in this chapter. **Dilip Kumar** (real name Muhammad Yusuf Khan) received the **Dadasaheb Phalke Award (1994)** and Pakistan's Nishan-e-Imtiaz.

77. Who is the author of the book 'The Room on the Roof'?

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Shashi Tharoor
(b) R. K. Narayan
(c) V. S. Naipaul
(d) Ruskin Bond

Answer (d) Ruskin Bond

Explanation

The Room on the Roof (1956) is **Ruskin Bond's** first novel, written when he was just about **17**. It is the story of **Rusty**, an Anglo-Indian boy in Dehradun who runs away from his strict guardian and finds friendship and freedom among Indian friends.

The novel won the **John Llewellyn Rhys Prize (1957)**, given to young writers. Its sequel is *Vagrants in the Valley*.

78. Who is the author of the book 'The White Tiger'?

[SSC CHSL, 25 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Aravind Adiga
(b) Vikram Seth
(c) Amitav Ghosh
(d) Rohinton Mistry

Answer (a) Aravind Adiga

Explanation

The White Tiger is by **Aravind Adiga**. When it won the Booker Prize in 2008, Adiga was only 33, and he was the fourth India-born writer to win the prize after Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai.

A "white tiger" is a rare animal that appears once in a generation; in the novel, Balram is called that by his teacher because he is unusually clever. Adiga's other books are *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower*.

79. Who is the author of the book 'War Talk'?

[SSC CHSL, 25 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Arundhati Roy
(b) Anita Desai
(c) Shobhaa De
(d) Githa Hariharan

Answer (a) Arundhati Roy

Explanation

War Talk (2003) is a collection of political essays by **Arundhati Roy**. Written around the time of the Iraq war and the 2002 Gujarat riots, the essays criticise war, nuclear weapons, communal violence and the abuse of power.

After *The God of Small Things*, Roy wrote mostly non-fiction for twenty years: *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*, *War Talk*, *Walking with the Comrades* and *Capitalism: A Ghost Story*.

80. Who is the author of the book 'Ladies Coupé'?

[SSC CHSL, 25 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Leila Seth
(b) Anita Nair
(c) Twinkle Khanna
(d) Nirupa Roy

Answer (b) Anita Nair

Explanation

Ladies Coupé (2001) is a novel by **Anita Nair**. On an overnight train journey in a ladies' compartment, Akhila, a 45-year-old single woman, meets five other women, and each tells her own life story. Together they help her answer one question: can a woman live happily on her own?

Nair, from Kerala, also wrote *Mistress* and *Eating Wasps*. **Leila Seth** was the first woman Chief Justice of a High Court and the mother of Vikram Seth.

81. Which of the following authors wrote 'Midnight's Children'?

[SSC CHSL, 25 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Raj Kamal Jha
(b) Salman Rushdie
(c) Kiran Nagarkar

(d) Upamanyu Chatterjee

Answer (b) Salman Rushdie

Explanation

Midnight's Children (1981) is by **Salman Rushdie**. Its narrator, **Saleem Sinai**, is born at the exact stroke of midnight on **15 August 1947**, and his life runs parallel to the history of independent India, told in Rushdie's style of magic realism.

It won the **Booker Prize (1981)**, the "Booker of Bookers" (1993) and the "Best of the Booker" (2008). Upamanyu Chatterjee wrote *English, August*, and Kiran Nagarkar wrote *Cuckold*.

82. Who wrote the book 'A Suitable Boy', published in 1993?

[SSC CHSL, 26 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Amit Varma
(b) Vikram Seth
(c) Aruni Kashyap
(d) Ajay K Pandey

Answer (b) Vikram Seth

Explanation

A Suitable Boy (1993) is by **Vikram Seth**. With nearly **1,350 pages**, it is one of the longest novels ever published in English in one volume. Set in the early 1950s in a newly independent India, it follows **Mrs Rupa Mehra** as she looks for a suitable husband for her daughter **Lata**.

Seth's other works include *The Golden Gate*, *From Heaven Lake* and *Two Lives*.

83. Who wrote the novel 'Last Man in Tower'?

[SSC CHSL, 26 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Kiran Desai
(b) Aravind Adiga
(c) Arundhati Roy
(d) Shashi Tharoor

Answer (b) Aravind Adiga

Explanation

Last Man in Tower (2011) is by **Aravind Adiga**. In a crumbling Mumbai housing society, a builder offers everyone money to move out, and one retired teacher, **Masterji**, refuses, turning his neighbours against him.

Adiga's three main books show different faces of modern India: *The White Tiger* (class and corruption), *Between the Assassinations* (stories set in a small coastal town) and *Last Man in Tower* (greed in a growing city).

84. Who is the author of the book 'Kitne Pakistan', which won the Sahitya Akademi Award?

[SSC CHSL, 26 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Kamleshwar
(b) Krishna Sobti
(c) Amrita Pritam
(d) Bhisham Sahni

Answer (a) Kamleshwar

Explanation

Kitne Pakistan (2000) is a Hindi novel by **Kamleshwar**, which won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (2003)**. Its idea is a court of history where the past is put on trial: every division based on religion, caste or hatred creates a new "Pakistan", a new partition in society.

Kamleshwar was a leader of the **Nayi Kahani** movement in Hindi. Bhisham Sahni wrote the Partition novel *Tamas*.

85. Who is the author of the book 'Development as Freedom'?

[SSC CHSL, 27 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Durjoy Datta
(b) Bhisham Sahni
(c) Amartya Sen
(d) Vivek Shanbhag

Answer (c) Amartya Sen

Explanation

Development as Freedom (1999) is by **Amartya Sen**. Its main idea is that development should not be measured only by income; real development means expanding people's **freedoms and capabilities**, such as health, education and the ability to take part in society.

This "capability approach" shaped the **Human Development Index (HDI)** of the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). Sen won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1998, a year before this book came out.

86. Which of the following is a book written by Arundhati Roy?

[SSC CHSL, 27 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Flood of Fire
(b) The Circle of Reason
(c) Capitalism: A Ghost Story
(d) The Liberation of Sita

Answer (c) Capitalism: A Ghost Story

Explanation

Capitalism: A Ghost Story (2014) is a collection of essays by **Arundhati Roy**, criticising the growing power of big corporations and the gap between India's rich and poor.

The other options are wrong: *Flood of Fire* and *The Circle of Reason* are by **Amitav Ghosh** (the first is the last book of his Ibis trilogy, the second his debut novel), and *The Liberation of Sita* is the English translation of a Telugu work by **Volga**.

87. Who is the author of the book 'Shalimar the Clown'?

[SSC CHSL, 27 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Anita Desai
(b) Shiva Naipaul
(c) Salman Rushdie
(d) Rohinton Mistry

Answer (c) Salman Rushdie

Explanation

Shalimar the Clown (2005) is a novel by **Salman Rushdie**. Set largely in **Kashmir**, it follows Shalimar, a village tightrope performer, whose personal betrayal turns him towards revenge and terrorism, and links it to global politics.

Rushdie's other major works are *Midnight's Children* (Booker 1981), *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses* and *The Moor's Last Sigh*. Shiva Naipaul was the younger brother of V.S. Naipaul.

88. Which of the following books is written by Jhumpa Lahiri?

[SSC CHSL, 27 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Whereabouts
(b) The Nowhere Man
(c) The Keeper of the Dead
(d) The Nine-Chambered Heart

Answer (a) Whereabouts

Explanation

Whereabouts (2021) is by **Jhumpa Lahiri**. She first wrote it in **Italian** as *Dove mi trovo* (2018) and then translated it into English herself. It is a short novel about a lonely woman's everyday life in an Italian city.

Lahiri moved to Rome and began writing in Italian in mid-career, which is unusual for a Pulitzer winner. *The Nowhere Man* is by **Kamala Markandaya**, and *The Nine-Chambered Heart* is by **Janice Pariat**.

89. Which of the following is a Jnanpith Award-winning woman writer?

[SSC CHSL, 28 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Mahadevi Varma
(b) Sarojini Naidu
(c) Kamala Suraiyya
(d) Subhadra Kumari Chauhan

Answer (a) Mahadevi Varma

Explanation

Mahadevi Varma received the **Jnanpith Award in 1982** for her poetry collection *Yama*. She was one of the four pillars of **Chhayavad** in Hindi poetry, along with Jaishankar Prasad, Suryakant Tripathi 'Nirala' and Sumitranandan Pant, and is often called the "modern Meera".

The first woman to win the Jnanpith was **Ashapoorna Devi** (Bengali, 1976). Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Suraiyya (Kamala Das) and Subhadra Kumari Chauhan (*Jhansi ki Rani*) are celebrated poets but did not receive the Jnanpith.

90. Which of the following novels is the first in the trilogy written by R. K. Narayan?

[SSC CHSL, 30 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) The Scheme
(b) The Namesake
(c) Swami and Friends
(d) The Hungry Tide

Answer (c) Swami and Friends

Explanation

Swami and Friends (1935) is **R.K. Narayan's** first novel and the first book of his **Malgudi trilogy**, followed by *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) and *The English Teacher* (1945). It is about Swaminathan, a schoolboy in the imaginary town of **Malgudi**.

The English novelist **Graham Greene** helped get this first book published. Narayan won the **Sahitya Akademi Award (1960)** for *The Guide*. *The Namesake* is Lahiri's and *The Hungry Tide* is Ghosh's.

91. Consider the following Assertion (A) and Reason (R) and choose the correct option:

Assertion (A): 'India: A Million Mutinies Now' presents a vivid account of diverse social and political upheaval across India at the end of the 20th century.

Reason (R): The book won the Booker Prize for its literary excellence and sharp analysis of post-colonial Indian society.

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 25 Jul 2025]

(a) Both A and R are true, and R correctly explains A
(b) Both A and R are true, but R does not correctly explain A
(c) A is true, but R is false
(d) A is false, but R is true

Answer (c) A is true, but R is false

Explanation

A is true, but R is false. *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1990) by **V.S. Naipaul** gives a vivid picture of India's many social and political upheavals, told through the voices of ordinary people from different regions and communities.

But the book did not win the Booker Prize; it is a non-fiction travel narrative, and the Booker is for fiction. Naipaul's Booker came in 1971 for *In a Free State*, and his Nobel in 2001. This book is the third part of his India trilogy, after *An Area of Darkness* and *India: A Wounded Civilization*.

92. Consider the following statements about 'Half a Life' written by V. S. Naipaul:

1. Shortlisted for the Booker Prize for its exploration of post-colonial identity.
2. Won the Nobel Prize in Literature for narrative innovation.
3. Received the Sahitya Akademi Award for its depiction of Indian rural life.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 28 Jul 2025]

(a) Only statement 2 is correct
(b) Only statement 1 is correct
(c) Statements 1 and 3 are correct
(d) Statements 1, 2 and 3 are correct

Answer (b) Only statement 1 is correct

Explanation

Statement 1 is the one accepted as correct: *Half a Life* (2001) was in the running for the **Booker Prize** (it appeared on the 2001 list) and explores **post-colonial identity** through Willie Chandran, a young man of mixed background who drifts from India to London and Africa without finding a place he belongs to.

Statement 2 is wrong because the **Nobel Prize (2001)** is given for a writer's whole body of work, never for one book. Statement 3 is wrong because Naipaul, a British writer of Trinidad origin, was not given the Sahitya Akademi Award, which is for writers in Indian languages and Indian English.

93. Consider the following Assertion (A) and Reason (R) about 'In a Forest, a Deer' by Ambai:

Assertion (A): The collection explores subtle feminist themes through deeply personal and culturally rooted short stories.

Reason (R): Ambai's writing critically examines gender, identity and social structures within contemporary Indian society.

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 29 Jul 2025]

(a) Both A and R are true, and R correctly explains A
(b) Both A and R are true, but R does not correctly explain A
(c) A is true, but R is false
(d) A is false, but R is true

Answer (a) Both A and R are true, and R correctly explains A

Explanation

Both are true, and R explains A. *In a Forest, a Deer* is a collection of Tamil short stories by **Ambai** (pen name of **C.S. Lakshmi**), translated into English by Lakshmi Holmström. The stories explore women's lives with quiet, **personal feminist themes**. A is true because of what R says: Ambai's writing examines **gender, identity and social structures** in Indian society.

The translation won the **Vodafone Crossword Book Award (2006)**. Ambai received the **Sahitya Akademi Award (2021)** for her Tamil story collection *Sivappu Kazhuththudan Oru Pachchai Paravai*.

94. Which of the following correctly describes the recognition and literary significance of 'The Mystic Masseur' written by V. S. Naipaul?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 31 Jul 2025]

(a) Awarded the Nobel Prize solely for its portrayal of Caribbean culture
(b) Received the Sahitya Akademi Award for Indian English literature
(c) Awarded the Booker Prize for its innovative narrative style
(d) Won the Somerset Maugham Award for its satirical portrayal of Trinidad

Answer (d) Won the Somerset Maugham Award for its satirical portrayal of Trinidad

Explanation

The Mystic Masseur (1957) was **V.S. Naipaul's** first published novel. It is a comic, **satirical** story of Ganesh Ramsumair, a failed teacher in **Trinidad** who becomes a famous mystic healer and finally a politician. Option (d) is the intended answer, as it is the only one that matches the book's satirical portrait of Trinidad.

A note for accuracy: the prize this novel actually won was the **John Llewellyn Rhys Prize (1958)**; Naipaul received the **Somerset Maugham Award** for *Miguel Street*, published soon after. The other options are clearly wrong: the Nobel is never given for one book, and this novel won neither the Booker nor the Sahitya Akademi Award.

95. Who is the author of the internationally acclaimed book 'The God of Small Things'?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 28 Jul 2025]

(a) Salman Rushdie
(b) Chetan Bhagat
(c) Arundhati Roy
(d) Jhumpa Lahiri

Answer (c) Arundhati Roy

Explanation

The author is **Arundhati Roy**. Her debut novel was a worldwide success: it won the **Booker Prize in 1997** and has been translated into dozens of languages.

Salman Rushdie is the other Booker winner in the options, but for *Midnight's Children* (1981).

96. Which of these Nobel Prize-winning authors did NOT win the Pulitzer Prize?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 29 Aug 2025]

(a) Ernest Hemingway
(b) Gabriel García Márquez
(c) William Faulkner
(d) John Steinbeck

Answer (b) Gabriel García Márquez

Explanation

Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia, Nobel 1982) never won the Pulitzer Prize, and he could not have: the Pulitzer for fiction is given only to **American** authors, ideally for writing about American life.

The other three are Americans who won both: **Ernest Hemingway** (Pulitzer 1953 for *The Old Man and the Sea*, Nobel 1954), **William Faulkner** (Pulitzer twice, Nobel 1949) and **John Steinbeck** (Pulitzer 1940 for *The Grapes of Wrath*, Nobel 1962). That nationality rule is the quick trick for this question.

97. The novel 'Train to Pakistan', set during the Partition of India, was written by:

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 29 Jul 2025]

(a) Vikram Seth
(b) Amrita Pritam
(c) Khushwant Singh
(d) Anita Desai

Answer (c) Khushwant Singh

Explanation

Train to Pakistan (1956) is by **Khushwant Singh**. It is set in **Mano Majra**, an imaginary village on the India–Pakistan border, where Sikhs and Muslims have lived peacefully for generations until a train full of dead bodies arrives during Partition and hatred spreads.

Khushwant Singh was also a famous journalist (editor of *The Illustrated Weekly of India*) and wrote *A History of the Sikhs* and *Delhi: A Novel*. He received the **Padma Vibhushan (2007)**. Amrita Pritam can mislead you, because her *Pinjar* is also a Partition novel.

98. Which of the following books was written by Rabindranath Tagore?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 30 Jul 2025]

(a) The Discovery of India
(b) Gitanjali
(c) Train to Pakistan

(d) A Suitable Boy

Answer **(b) Gitanjali**

Explanation

Gitanjali (Song Offerings) is a collection of poems by **Rabindranath Tagore**. Its English version (1912) won him the **Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913**, making him the first non-European and the first Indian to win a Nobel.

Tagore also wrote the national anthems of **India** (*Jana Gana Mana*) and **Bangladesh** (*Amar Shonar Bangla*) and founded **Visva-Bharati** at Santiniketan. *The Discovery of India* is by Jawaharlal Nehru, written in Ahmednagar Fort prison.

99. In which year did Arundhati Roy win the Booker Prize for her debut novel 'The God of Small Things'?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) 1990
(b) 1997
(c) 2003
(d) 2012

Answer **(b) 1997**

Explanation

Arundhati Roy won the Booker Prize in **1997**, the same year the novel was published. It was a rare case of a **debut novel** winning the Booker.

A simple way to fix the year: 1997 was also the **50th year of India's Independence**. Kiran Desai, the next Indian woman to win, received the prize in 2006 for *The Inheritance of Loss*.

100. Which book by Salman Rushdie won the 1981 Booker Prize?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) Shame
(b) The Satanic Verses
(c) Midnight's Children
(d) The Golden House

Answer **(c) Midnight's Children**

Explanation

Midnight's Children won the **Booker Prize in 1981**. It was later named the "**Booker of Bookers**" (1993), the best novel among the first 25 winners, and the "**Best of the Booker**" (2008), the best of the first 40 years.

The other three are also by Rushdie: *Shame* (1983), about Pakistan, was shortlisted; *The Satanic Verses* (1988) was banned in India and led to a fatwa against him; and *The Golden House* (2017) is set in New York.

101. Which of these books was NOT written by Khushwant Singh?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) Train to Pakistan
(b) The Company of Women
(c) A Suitable Boy
(d) The History of the Sikhs

Answer **(c) A Suitable Boy**

Explanation

A Suitable Boy was written by **Vikram Seth**, not Khushwant Singh.

The other three are Khushwant Singh's: the Partition novel *Train to Pakistan* (1956), the novel *The Company of Women* (1999), and the two-volume *A History of the Sikhs*. His other well-known books include *Delhi: A Novel*, *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* and his autobiography *Truth, Love and a Little Malice*.

102. Which author won the Booker Prize for the novel 'The God of Small Things'?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) Ruskin Bond
(b) Arundhati Roy
(c) R. K. Narayan
(d) Anita Desai

Answer **(b) Arundhati Roy**

Explanation

Arundhati Roy won the Booker Prize for *The God of Small Things* in 1997. This book appears six times in this chapter, which shows how much SSC loves it. Fix three facts firmly: **Arundhati Roy – 1997 – set in Ayemenem, Kerala**.

Anita Desai is not the answer: she was shortlisted for the Booker three times but never won. Her daughter **Kiran Desai** did win, in 2006.

103. Which book won Jhumpa Lahiri the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) The Namesake
(b) Unaccustomed Earth
(c) Interpreter of Maladies
(d) The Lowland

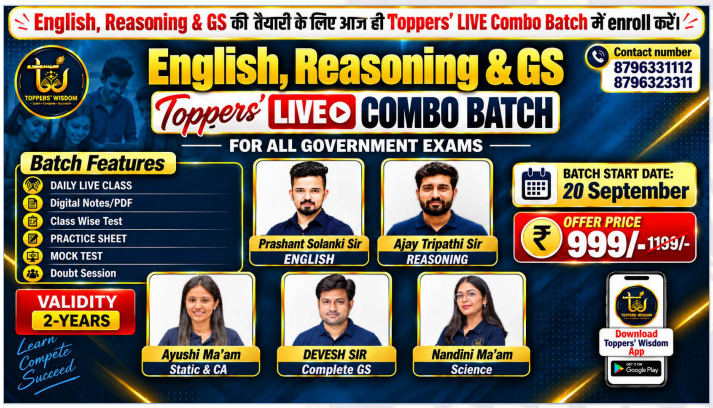
Answer (c) Interpreter of Maladies

Explanation

Interpreter of Maladies (1999), her first book of short stories, won Jhumpa Lahiri the **Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 2000**.

Put her books in order: *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999, Pulitzer) → *The Namesake* (2003, filmed by Mira Nair) → *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008, stories) → *The Lowland* (2013, shortlisted for the Booker) → *Where-abouts* (2021, first written in Italian).







03 CHAPTER
Religious Places

54 Questions • SSC PYQs

01. Below are given an Assertion and a Reason. Choose the correct option:

Assertion (A): Designating 'Good Friday' as a positive term is universally accepted among Christian scholars and traditions.

Reason (R): The day is called 'Good' to reflect the positive religious meaning of Jesus's sacrificial death.

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Both A and R are false.
(b) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
(c) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
(d) A is false, but R is true.

Answer (d) A is false, but R is true.

Explanation

A is false, but R is true. **Good Friday** marks the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and Christians call it "good" because they believe his sacrificial death brought salvation, so R is true.

But A says this meaning is **universally** accepted by all scholars and traditions, which is not the case. Some scholars think "Good" comes from the old sense of "holy", others link it to "God's Friday", and in many languages the day has a different name (for example, "Holy Friday" or "Great Friday"). Words like "universally" and "always" in an assertion should always make you careful. Easter Sunday, which follows, celebrates the resurrection.

02. Which of the following statements about the Urs of Ajmer Sharif is correct?

[SSC Stenographer, 08 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) It follows the lunar calendar and marks the death of the saint.
(b) It is celebrated every year based on the solar calendar.
(c) It marks the birth anniversary of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.
(d) It is held only once every five years, during Ramzan.

Answer (a) It follows the lunar calendar and marks the death of the saint.

Explanation

The **Urs** of Ajmer Sharif marks the **death anniversary** of the Sufi saint **Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti**, and its date follows the **Islamic lunar calendar**. It is held every year during the first six days of the month of **Rajab**, so its date on the English calendar shifts each year.

"Urs" means "wedding" in Arabic: Sufis see a saint's death as his union with God, so it is celebrated, not mourned. Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti brought the **Chishti order** to India; he is also called **Gharib Nawaz**, and his dargah is in Ajmer, Rajasthan.

03. Which of the following temple styles is correctly matched with its roof shape?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Phamsana – slabs rising upward with a straight slope
(b) Latina – rectangular, wagon-shaped
(c) Valabhi – tall and sharply curved inward
(d) Latina – low and broad with a stepped roof

Answer (a) Phamsana – slabs rising upward with a straight slope

Explanation

The correct pair is **Phamsana – slabs rising upward with a straight slope**. In the Nagara style, the shikhara (tower) comes in three main types:

- **Latina / Rekha-prasada:** the most common, a tall tower that is square at the base and **curves inward** as it rises.

- **Phamsana:** broader and shorter, with a roof of several **slabs rising in a straight slope**, like a pyramid.
- **Valabhi:** a **rectangular** building with a vaulted, **wagon-shaped** roof.

So options (b), (c) and (d) mix up the descriptions: (b) describes Valabhi, (c) describes Latina, and (d) is closer to Phamsana.

04. How many pairs of finely carved decorative wheels are there in the chariot structure of the Konark Sun Temple?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) 11 pairs
(b) 13 pairs
(c) 10 pairs
(d) 12 pairs

Answer (d) 12 pairs

Explanation

The Konark Sun Temple is designed as the **chariot of the Sun God**, with **12 pairs of wheels (24 wheels)** pulled by **seven horses**. The 12 pairs are often linked with the 12 months of the year, and the seven horses with the seven days of the week. The wheels also work as **sundials** that can tell the time.

The temple was built in the 13th century by **King Narasimhadeva I** of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty**. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site (1984), and a Konark wheel is shown on the back of the **₹10 note**.

05. Identify the distinctive architectural feature associated with the style of the Capuchin Church:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) A multi-storeyed spire tower
(b) A flat arched entrance set on a platform
(c) Intricately traced rose windows
(d) Ornate spires and domes

Answer (b) A flat arched entrance set on a platform

Explanation

Churches of the **Capuchin** friars (a Catholic order that follows a strict vow of poverty) are known for their **simple, plain design**: a flat front wall with a modest **arched entrance**, usually raised on a platform, and very little decoration.

That rules out the other options, which all describe grand, decorative features: tall spires and domes belong to Gothic or Baroque churches, and traced **rose windows** are typical of Gothic cathedrals like Notre-Dame in Paris. The idea to carry: Capuchin style = **simplicity**.

06. Which distinctive feature stands out in the architectural design of the Notre Dame des Anges Church in Puducherry?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) A spire adorned with an amalaka
(b) A translucent façade supported by classical columns
(c) A tower structure with balconies
(d) Corbelled arches decorated with lattice patterns

Answer (b) A translucent façade supported by classical columns

Explanation

The **Notre Dame des Anges** (Our Lady of the Angels) church in **Puducherry**, built in the 1850s, is in the **Greco-Roman (classical) style**. Its smooth, glowing façade, finished with lime plaster mixed with egg white, stands on **classical columns**.

The other options borrow features from Indian architecture: an **amalaka** is the ribbed stone disc on top of a Nagara temple, and corbelled arches with lattice (jali) work belong to Indo-Islamic buildings. Puducherry was the main French settlement in India until 1954.

07. Which is the largest and most famous monastery of Sikkim, known for its colourful murals and vibrant mask-dance festivals?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 26 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Lingdum Monastery
(b) Phodong Monastery
(c) Rumtek Monastery
(d) Ralang Monastery

Answer (c) Rumtek Monastery

Explanation

Rumtek Monastery, near Gangtok, is the largest monastery in Sikkim. It is the main seat in exile of the **Karma Kagyu** school of Tibetan Buddhism, and its famous **Cham (mask dance)** is performed during festivals.

Phodong, Ralang and Lingdum are also Sikkim monasteries, which makes the options tricky. Two more

Sikkim names to remember: **Pemayangtse** (one of the oldest) and **Tashiding**. For other states: **Tawang** (Arunachal Pradesh) is India's largest monastery, and **Hemis** is the largest in Ladakh.

08. Which temple is popularly called the 'Taj Mahal of the South'?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Brihadeeswarar Temple, Thanjavur
(b) Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai
(c) Ramanathaswamy Temple, Rameswaram
(d) Virupaksha Temple, Hampi

Answer (b) Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai

Explanation

The **Meenakshi Amman Temple** in **Madurai** is often compared to the Taj Mahal because it holds the same place in South India's heritage that the Taj holds in the North. Its **14 gopurams** (gateway towers) are covered with thousands of colourful sculptures; the tallest, the southern gopuram, is about 52 m high.

The temple is dedicated to **Meenakshi** (a form of Parvati) and **Sundareswarar** (Shiva). Do not mix this title with the **Bibi Ka Maqbara** at Aurangabad, which is called the "Taj of the Deccan".

09. The UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Mahabodhi Temple, is located in which Indian state?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Bihar
(b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) West Bengal
(d) Jharkhand

Answer (a) Bihar

Explanation

The **Mahabodhi Temple** is at **Bodh Gaya** in **Bihar**, the place where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. It became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in **2002**.

The first temple here was built by Emperor **Ashoka** in the 3rd century BCE; the present brick temple dates from the Gupta period. Remember the four main Buddhist sites: **Lumbini** (birth, Nepal), **Bodh Gaya** (enlightenment, Bihar), **Sarnath** (first sermon, UP) and **Kushinagar** (death/mahaparinirvana, UP).

Uttar Pradesh can mislead you, because two of these four are there.

10. Which of these cities does NOT traditionally host the Kumbh Mela?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Prayagraj
(b) Ujjain
(c) Haridwar
(d) Varanasi

Answer (d) Varanasi

Explanation

Varanasi does not host the Kumbh Mela, even though it is one of India's holiest cities. The Kumbh is held in rotation at **four** places, each on a sacred river:

- **Prayagraj** – confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and mythical Saraswati (Sangam)
- **Haridwar** – Ganga
- **Ujjain** – Shipra (called **Simhastha**)
- **Nashik** – Godavari

Legend says drops of **amrit** fell at these four places during the Samudra Manthan. The Kumbh Mela was added to UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage in **2017**, and Prayagraj hosted the **Maha Kumbh in 2025**.

Trick for the four Kumbh cities: **PHUN** → Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain, Nashik.

11. The ancient Virupaksha Temple at Hampi is associated with the worship of which Hindu deity?

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Lord Shiva
(b) Goddess Durga
(c) Lord Surya
(d) Lord Kartikeya

Answer (a) Lord Shiva

Explanation

The **Virupaksha Temple** at Hampi is dedicated to **Lord Shiva** in his form as **Virupaksha**, the consort of the local goddess **Pampa** (a form of Parvati). It stands on the banks of the **Tungabhadra** river and is still an active place of worship.

The temple existed before the **Vijayanagara Empire**, which later enlarged it; its tall eastern gopuram was built in the 15th–16th centuries. Hampi, once the capital of Vijayanagara, is a UNESCO World Heritage

Site (1986). Another famous Hampi temple is the **Vitthala Temple**, known for its stone chariot and musical pillars.

12. During whose reign was the Meenakshi Amman Temple built?

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Raja Raja Chola
(b) Kulasekara
(c) Krishna Deva Raya
(d) Mahendravarman

Answer (b) Kulasekara

Explanation

The original Meenakshi temple is traditionally said to have been built by the **Pandya king Kulasekara**, as Madurai was the capital of the Pandyas. The temple was damaged in the 14th century and was **rebuilt and greatly expanded** by the **Nayak rulers** of Madurai in the 16th–17th centuries, especially **Vishwanatha Nayak** and **Thirumalai Nayak**; most of what we see today is their work.

The other kings are linked to different temples: **Raja Raja Chola I** built the Brihadeeswarar Temple at Thanjavur, **Mahendravarman I** (Pallava) started rock-cut temples, and **Krishna Deva Raya** was the great Vijayanagara emperor.

13. Which Indo-French heritage site is recognised by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 30 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Basilica of Bom Jesus
(b) Chandannagar Strand
(c) Karaikal Port Walls
(d) Mahe Heritage Square

Answer (a) Basilica of Bom Jesus

Explanation

Among the options, the only UNESCO World Heritage Site is the **Basilica of Bom Jesus** in Old Goa, part of the "**Churches and Convents of Goa**" listed in **1986**, so it is the answer expected here. It holds the remains of **St. Francis Xavier**.

A note for accuracy: Bom Jesus is a **Portuguese (Indo-Portuguese)** monument, not French; Goa was a Portuguese colony until 1961. The real French-linked places in the options, **Chandannagar** (West Bengal), **Karaikal** and **Mahe** (both part of Puducherry), are not World Heritage Sites. So use elimination: pick the one site that is actually on the UNESCO list.

14. Which temple complex is world-famous for its erotic sculptures and is recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 01 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Meenakshi Temple
(b) Sun Temple, Konark
(c) Khajuraho Temples
(d) Brihadeeswarar Temple

Answer (c) Khajuraho Temples

Explanation

The **Khajuraho Group of Monuments** in **Madhya Pradesh** is world-famous for its sculptures, including erotic figures, and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in **1986**. The temples were built mainly by the **Chandela** rulers between about 950 and 1050 CE.

Of the original 85 temples, about 25 survive, both Hindu and Jain. The largest is the **Kandariya Mahadeva Temple**, a fine example of the **Nagara style**. Konark also has such sculptures, but Khajuraho is the one most famous for them.

15. The Brihadeeswarar Temple of Tamil Nadu is famous for which of the following architectural styles?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 29 Jul 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Nagara style
(b) Indo-Saracenic architecture
(c) Vesara style
(d) Dravidian style

Answer (d) Dravidian style

Explanation

The **Brihadeeswarar Temple** at Thanjavur is one of the finest examples of the **Dravidian style**. It was built by the Chola king **Raja Raja Chola I** and completed in **1010 CE**. Its **vimana** (tower over the sanctum) rises about 66 m and is topped by a huge stone capstone.

In Dravidian temples, the tower over the shrine is called the **vimana**, and the large gateway towers are **gopurams**. Nagara is the North Indian style, Vesara is the Deccan mix of the two, and Indo-Saracenic is a British-era style (for example, Chennai Central

station). The temple is part of the UNESCO site "Great Living Chola Temples".

16. By which other name is the Ekattarso Mahadeva Temple also known?

[SSC MTS, 04 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Chausath Yogini Temple
(b) Virupaksha Temple
(c) Somnath Temple
(d) Dilwara Temple

Answer (a) Chausath Yogini Temple

Explanation

The **Ekattarso Mahadeva Temple** at **Mitaoli**, near Morena in **Madhya Pradesh**, is also called the **Chausath Yogini Temple**. It is a **circular** temple with **64 small chambers** (one for each yogini) around a central shrine of Shiva, built in the 11th century by the Kachchhapaghata kings.

It is often said that its circular design inspired the **old Parliament House** in New Delhi, though there is no clear historical proof of this. Other Chausath Yogini temples are at **Hirapur** (Odisha) and **Bhedaghat**, Jabalpur (MP).

17. The Dilwara Temple complex is famous for its architecture. How many separate temples are there in this complex in total?

[SSC MTS, 06 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) 3
(b) 5
(c) 7
(d) 9

Answer (b) 5

Explanation

The **Dilwara Temples** at **Mount Abu** (Rajasthan) are a group of **five** Jain temples, built between the 11th and 13th centuries. They are famous for their extremely fine **white marble carving**.

The two most famous are the **Vimal Vasahi** (dedicated to Rishabhanatha, built by **Vimal Shah**, minister of the Chalukya king, in 1031) and the **Luna Vasahi** (dedicated to Neminatha, built by the brothers **Vastupala and Tejapala**). The other three are Pittalhar, Parshvanatha (Khartar Vasahi) and Mahavira Swami temples.

18. The famous 'Thousand Pillar Temple' is located in which of the following Indian states?

[SSC MTS, 09 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Tamil Nadu
(b) Kerala
(c) Gujarat
(d) Telangana

Answer (d) Telangana

Explanation

The **Thousand Pillar Temple** (Rudreswara Swamy Temple) is at **Hanamkonda**, near Warangal, in **Telangana**. It was built in 1163 CE by the **Kakatiya** king **Rudra Deva** and is dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu and Surya. It has beautifully carved pillars, and a large Nandi made from a single black basalt stone.

Do not confuse it with the **Ramappa Temple** (also Kakatiya, in Telangana), which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2021. A "thousand-pillared hall" is also found in Meenakshi Temple, Madurai, which is why Tamil Nadu can mislead you.

19. The historic 'Lad Khan Temple' is located in which state of India?

[SSC MTS, 11 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Karnataka
(b) Kerala
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Gujarat

Answer (a) Karnataka

Explanation

The **Lad Khan Temple** is at **Aihole** in the Bagalkot district of **Karnataka**. It is one of the **oldest** temples at Aihole, built by the early **Chalukyas of Badami**, and its flat, sloping roof copies older wooden halls.

Its odd name comes from a man called Lad Khan who lived in it for a short time centuries later. Aihole is called the "**cradle of Indian temple architecture**" because builders tried out many temple forms there. The nearby **Pattadakal** group is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

20. To which deity is the famous Hawa Mahal of Jaipur dedicated?

[SSC MTS, 12 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Lord Krishna
(b) Lord Vishnu
(c) Lord Buddha

(d) Lord Shiva

Answer **(a) Lord Krishna**

Explanation

The **Hawa Mahal** (Palace of Winds) in Jaipur was built in **1799** by **Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh**, who was a devotee of **Lord Krishna**. Its five-storey front is shaped like Krishna's **crown (mukut)**, which is why it is linked with him.

It was designed by **Lal Chand Ustad** and has **953 small windows (jharokhas)**, so that royal women could watch street life without being seen, while cool air flowed through. It is made of red and pink sandstone, matching Jaipur's title "**Pink City**".

21. The Draupadi Ratha of Mahabalipuram represents which type of temple architecture?

[SSC MTS, 17 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Rock-cut
(b) Nagara style
(c) Dravidian style
(d) Vesara style

Answer **(a) Rock-cut**

Explanation

The **Draupadi Ratha** is a **rock-cut** (monolithic) temple: it was carved out of a single large rock, not built from separate stones. It is one of the **Pancha Rathas** (five chariots) at **Mahabalipuram**, Tamil Nadu, made by the **Pallava** king **Narasimhavarman I (Mamalla)** in the 7th century.

The Draupadi Ratha is the smallest and simplest of the five, shaped like a village hut with a curved roof, and dedicated to the goddess Durga. The Pancha Rathas are part of the UNESCO site "Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram" (1984).

22. The famous Konark Sun Temple is located in which state of India?

[SSC MTS, 17 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Odisha
(b) Andhra Pradesh
(c) Tamil Nadu
(d) West Bengal

Answer **(a) Odisha**

Explanation

The **Konark Sun Temple** is in the **Puri district of Odisha**, on the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Sailors once called it the "**Black Pagoda**" because of its dark tower, while the Jagannath Temple at Puri was the "White Pagoda".

Along with Puri (Jagannath) and Bhubaneswar (Lingaraja), Konark forms Odisha's "**Golden Triangle**" of temple towns. The temple is in the **Kalinga** style, a regional form of Nagara architecture.

23. Which of the following temples is located at Mount Abu in Rajasthan?

[SSC MTS, 19 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Somnath Temple
(b) Konark Sun Temple
(c) Dilwara Jain Temple
(d) Brihadeeswarar Temple

Answer **(c) Dilwara Jain Temple**

Explanation

The **Dilwara Jain Temples** are at **Mount Abu**, Rajasthan's only hill station, in the **Aravalli** range. They are famous for marble carving so fine that it looks like lace.

Mount Abu also has **Guru Shikhar**, the highest peak of the Aravallis (about 1,722 m), and the **Nakki Lake**. The other temples belong elsewhere: Somnath is in Gujarat, Konark in Odisha and Brihadeeswarar in Tamil Nadu.

24. The architecture of the Konark Sun Temple is based on which design?

[SSC CPO, 10 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) A giant stone chariot
(b) A blooming lotus
(c) A circular Buddhist stupa
(d) A reclining statue of the Sun god

Answer **(a) A giant stone chariot**

Explanation

The Konark Sun Temple is designed as a **giant stone chariot** of **Surya**, the Sun God, with 24 carved wheels and seven horses pulling it towards the east, so that the morning sun lights up its entrance.

This is why it is often called a "chariot temple". Remember the builder and dynasty: **Narasimhadeva I**, **Eastern Ganga** dynasty, 13th century. A lotus design is linked with the **Lotus Temple** (Bahá'í House of Worship) in Delhi.

25. The Bhimakali Temple at Sarahan is famous for representing which architectural tradition?

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Nagara style
(b) Kath-Kuni style
(c) Vesara style
(d) Indo-Islamic style

Answer (b) Kath-Kuni style

Explanation

The **Bhimakali Temple** at **Sarahan** in Himachal Pradesh is a fine example of **Kath-Kuni** architecture, a traditional Himalayan building method that uses **alternate layers of wood (kath) and stone** without cement. This makes buildings strong against earthquakes and snow.

The temple is dedicated to the goddess **Bhimakali**, the family deity of the former rulers of Bushahr state. Another famous Kath-Kuni building is the **Naggar Castle** in the Kullu valley.

26. The 'Jageshwar Temple' complex in Uttarakhand is located in which district?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Almora
(b) Nainital
(c) Pithoragarh
(d) Haridwar

Answer (a) Almora

Explanation

Jageshwar Dham is a group of more than a hundred stone temples dedicated to **Lord Shiva** in the **Almora district** of Uttarakhand, in the Jataganga valley among deodar forests. Most were built between roughly the 9th and 13th centuries under the **Katyuri** kings, in the Nagara style, and the site is protected by the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India).

Locally it is believed to be the **Nagesh Jyotirlinga**, but in the standard list of twelve Jyotirlingas used in exams, **Nageshwar** is near **Dwarka, Gujarat**. Almora also has the **Katarmal Sun Temple**, so remember: Almora gives Shiva (Jageshwar) and Surya (Katarmal) together.

27. Jain temples are especially famous for which architectural feature?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Elaborate stone inlay work
(b) Huge column-free domes
(c) Intricately carved marble designs
(d) Renaissance-style columns

Answer (c) Intricately carved marble designs

Explanation

Jain temples are best known for their **intricately carved marble**. The finest examples are the **Dilwara Temples** at Mount Abu and the **Ranakpur Temple** (Rajasthan), whose famous hall has **1,444 carved marble pillars**, no two alike.

Stone **inlay work** (pietra dura) is a feature of Mughal buildings like the Taj Mahal, and huge column-free domes belong to Indo-Islamic monuments such as the Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur. Other famous Jain sites include **Palitana** (Shatrunjaya hills, Gujarat) and **Shravanabelagola** (Karnataka), with its giant statue of Bahubali (Gommateshwara).

28. The Sidi Saiyyed Mosque in Gujarat is famous for which distinctive architectural feature?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Stained-glass panels
(b) Spiral minarets
(c) Latticed windows (jalis)
(d) Carved wooden doors

Answer (c) Latticed windows (jalis)

Explanation

The **Sidi Saiyyed Mosque** in **Ahmedabad** (built in 1573) is world-famous for its stone **jalis** (latticed windows). The most famous one shows an intertwined **"Tree of Life"**, carved so finely from a single stone that it looks like lace.

This jali design inspired the **logo of IIM Ahmedabad**. Ahmedabad became India's first **UNESCO World Heritage City** in 2017.

29. At which place did the great Rashtrakuta king 'Krishna I' get the magnificent Shaiva temple built?

[SSC CHSL, 02 Jul 2024, Shift-3]

(a) Badami
(b) Kanchi
(c) Kannauj
(d) Ellora

Answer (d) Ellora

Explanation

Krishna I of the **Rashtrakuta** dynasty built the **Kailasa (Kailashnath) Temple** at **Ellora** (Maharashtra) in the 8th century. It is the world's largest **monolithic rock-cut** structure: the whole temple was carved **from top to bottom** out of a single rock, and it is Cave 16 at Ellora.

The Ellora caves include Buddhist, Hindu and Jain caves side by side and are a UNESCO World Heritage Site (1983). Badami is linked with the Chalukyas and Kanchi with the Pallavas.

30. The Brihadeeswarar Temple, which showcases Dravidian temple architecture, is located in _____.

[SSC CHSL, 05 Jul 2024, Shift-1]

(a) Dharmapuri
(b) Thiruvananthapuram
(c) Madurai
(d) Thanjavur

Answer (d) Thanjavur

Explanation

The Brihadeeswarar Temple is in **Thanjavur**, Tamil Nadu, the capital of the Chola kings. Built by **Raja Raja Chola I** (completed 1010 CE), it is also called the **"Big Temple"** or **Peruvudaiyar Kovil**.

Together with the **Brihadeeswarar Temple at Gangaikonda Cholapuram** and the **Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram**, it forms the UNESCO site "**Great Living Chola Temples**". Madurai can mislead you, as it is famous for the Meenakshi Temple.

31. Under the rule of which dynasty was the Sun Temple at Konark built?

[SSC CHSL, 11 Jul 2024, Shift-3]

(a) Pandya dynasty
(b) Pallava dynasty
(c) Rashtrakuta dynasty
(d) Eastern Ganga dynasty

Answer (d) Eastern Ganga dynasty

Explanation

The Konark Sun Temple was built in about **1250 CE** by **King Narasimhadeva I** of the **Eastern Ganga dynasty**, which ruled Odisha (Kalinga). The same dynasty also built the famous **Jagannath Temple at Puri**, under King **Anantavarman Chodaganga Deva**.

The other dynasties ruled the South or the Deccan: the Pandyas (Madurai), the Pallavas (Kanchi, Mahabalipuram) and the Rashtrakutas (Ellora). So for any Odisha temple of that age, think "**Eastern Ganga**".

32. The Lad Khan Temple at Aihole in Karnataka is an example of which style of temple architecture?

[SSC Selection Post (HSC), 25 Jun 2024, Shift-4]

(a) Dravidian
(b) Nagara
(c) Vesara
(d) Pagoda

Answer (c) Vesara

Explanation

The Lad Khan Temple is regarded as an early example of the **Vesara** style, the **Deccan blend of Nagara (North) and Dravidian (South)** features developed by the **Chalukyas** at Aihole, Badami and Pattadakal. Its lattice windows show northern influence, while its plan comes from southern traditions.

Vesara reached its height under the later **Chalukyas and Hoysalas**; famous Hoysala examples are the temples at **Belur** and **Halebidu**, which became a UNESCO site (Sacred Ensembles of the Hoysalas) in 2023. "Pagoda" is a term for East Asian or Nepalese tiered temples, not a standard Indian style.

33. The Trimbakeshwar Temple at Nashik in Maharashtra was built by whom?

[SSC Selection Post (Graduate), 20 Jun 2024, Shift-3]

(a) Maharaja Ganga Singh
(b) Maharana Pratap
(c) Balaji Baji Rao
(d) Shivaji

Answer (c) Balaji Baji Rao

Explanation

The present **Trimbakeshwar Temple**, one of the **twelve Jyotirlingas** of Shiva, was built by the third Peshwa, **Balaji Baji Rao** (also called **Nanasaheb Peshwa**), in the 18th century, in black stone.

It stands near the source of the **Godavari** river, at Brahmagiri hill. A special feature: its lingam has **three small faces**, representing Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Nashik is also one of the four Kumbh Mela towns.

34. **Choose the correct pairing of a temple with the state where it is located.**

[SSC CPO, 04 Oct 2023 (Evening)]

(a) Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga – Uttarakhand
(b) Somnath Jyotirlinga Temple – Maharashtra
(c) Kamakhya Temple – Assam
(d) Jagannath Temple – West Bengal

Answer **(c) Kamakhya Temple – Assam**

Explanation

Kamakhya Temple – Assam is correct. It stands on the **Nilachal Hill** in **Guwahati** and is one of the most important **Shakti Peethas**; the **Ambubachi Mela** is held here every June.

The other pairs are wrong: **Mahakaleshwar** is in **Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh**; **Somnath** is in **Gujarat** (the first of the twelve Jyotirlingas); and the **Jagannath Temple** is in **Puri, Odisha**.

35. **The famous 'Pashupatinath Temple' is located in which of the following countries?**

[SSC MTS, 08 Sep 2023, Shift-1]

(a) Nepal
(b) Bhutan
(c) Maldives
(d) Sri Lanka

Answer **(a) Nepal**

Explanation

The **Pashupatinath Temple** is in **Kathmandu, Nepal**, on the banks of the **Bagmati** river. It is dedicated to Lord Shiva as **Pashupati**, "the lord of all living beings", and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site as part of the Kathmandu Valley.

The temple is built in the Nepalese **pagoda style**, with a two-tiered golden roof. India also has a famous Pashupatinath Temple at **Mandsaur**, Madhya Pradesh, with an eight-faced lingam.

36. **The Sirpur Shrine is located in which of the following states?**

[SSC MTS, 11 Sep 2023, Shift-3]

(a) Odisha
(b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Chhattisgarh
(d) Bihar

Answer **(c) Chhattisgarh**

Explanation

Sirpur is in the Mahasamund district of **Chhattisgarh**, on the banks of the **Mahanadi** river. It is famous for the **Lakshman Temple** (7th century), one of the finest **brick temples** in India, built by Queen Vasata in memory of her husband.

Sirpur was also a major Buddhist centre with many viharas, and the Chinese traveller **Xuanzang** is believed to have visited it. It holds the Sirpur National Dance and Music Festival every year.

37. **In South India, the tall gateways built in the courtyards of temples were called _____.**

[SSC CHSL, 02 Aug 2023, Shift-1]

(a) Mandapa
(b) Ardha-mandapa
(c) Vimana
(d) Gopuram

Answer **(d) Gopuram**

Explanation

In South Indian (Dravidian) temples, the tall, decorated **gateway towers** in the outer walls are called **gopurams**. Over time they became taller than the main shrine itself, as at Madurai and Srirangam; the **Ranganathaswamy Temple at Srirangam** has one of the tallest gopurams in Asia.

Know the other parts: the **vimana** is the tower over the sanctum, the **mandapa** is the pillared hall for devotees, and the **ardha-mandapa** is the small entrance porch. In the North (Nagara style), the tower over the sanctum is called the **shikhara**.

38. **_____ was considered the most important part of some early Hindu temples.**

[SSC MTS, 15 Jun 2023 (Afternoon)]

(a) Shikhara
(b) Garbhagriha
(c) Ghats
(d) Mandapa

Answer **(b) Garbhagriha**

Explanation

The **garbhagriha** ("womb-house") is the small, dark inner chamber where the main image of the deity is placed. In early Hindu temples it was the **most important part**, and the whole temple was planned around it.

In fact, the earliest temples, such as those of the Gupta period, were often just a simple square garbhagriha with a porch. The **shikhara**, **mandapa** and other parts were added later as temple architecture developed.

39. The Virupaksha Temple is located in _____.

[SSC MTS, 16 Jun 2023 (Evening)]

(a) Surat
(b) Sanchi
(c) Hampi
(d) Jaipur

Answer (c) Hampi

Explanation

The Virupaksha Temple is at **Hampi** in the Vijayanagara (Ballari region) of **Karnataka**, on the banks of the Tungabhadra. Dedicated to Shiva, it is one of the oldest working temples in India.

A second famous **Virupaksha Temple** stands at **Pattadakal**, built by Queen **Lokamahadevi** of the Chalukyas in the 8th century to celebrate her husband's victory over the Pallavas. Sanchi is famous for Ashoka's **Great Stupa**.

40. Which of the following is NOT a component of the Lion Capital at Sarnath, India?

[SSC CHSL, 20 Mar 2023, Shift-3]

(a) A carved cow representing the south direction
(b) Figures of four lions
(c) Dharma Chakra
(d) An inverted bell-shaped lotus at the base

Answer (a) A carved cow representing the south direction

Explanation

There is **no cow** on the Lion Capital. It has **four lions** sitting back to back on top; below them is an abacus carved with **four animals** (an **elephant, a bull, a horse and a lion**) separated by **four Dharma Chakras**; and at the base is an **inverted bell-shaped lotus**.

Made by Emperor **Ashoka** in about 250 BCE, it was adopted as the **National Emblem of India on 26 January 1950**, with the motto **"Satyameva Jayate"** from the **Mundaka Upanishad** written below. The Dharma Chakra from it appears in the centre of the national flag. A **bull** does appear on it, which is why students wrongly accept a "cow".

41. In the Kandariya Mahadeva Temple, the _____ was the place of ritual worship, where only the king, his family members and the priests gathered.

[SSC CPO, 10 Nov 2022 (Evening)]

(a) Garbhagriha
(b) Mahamandapa
(c) Antarala
(d) Amalaka

Answer (a) Garbhagriha

Explanation

The **garbhagriha** (sanctum) was the place of ritual worship, where only the **king, his immediate family and the priests** could gather. This line comes directly from the NCERT description of the **Kandariya Mahadeva Temple** at Khajuraho, built in 999 CE by the Chandela king **Dhangadeva** and dedicated to Shiva.

Know the other parts: the **mahamandapa** is the large hall, the **antarala** is the passage between the hall and the sanctum, and the **amalaka** is the ribbed stone disc at the top of a Nagara shikhara.

42. The Shri Brahmapureeswarar Temple is located in which state of India?

[SSC MTS, 06 Jul 2022 (Afternoon)]

(a) Andhra Pradesh
(b) Tamil Nadu
(c) Rajasthan
(d) Manipur

Answer (b) Tamil Nadu

Explanation

The **Brahmapureeswarar Temple** is at **Thirupattur** near **Tiruchirappalli**, in **Tamil Nadu**. It is a Shiva temple linked with the legend of **Lord Brahma**, who is believed to have prayed here to regain his power of creation; it is one of the rare temples with a separate shrine for Brahma.

The names ending in "-eeswarar" (Brihadeeswarar, Brahmapureeswarar, Ramanathaswamy) are a strong clue for Tamil Nadu, where Shiva temples are commonly named this way.

43. The Kardang Monastery, a Buddhist pilgrimage site, is located in which state of India?

[SSC MTS, 08 Jul 2022 (Morning)]

(a) Jharkhand
(b) Goa
(c) Himachal Pradesh

(d) Kerala

Answer **(c) Himachal Pradesh**

Explanation

The **Kardang Monastery** is in the **Lahaul** valley (Lahaul and Spiti district) of **Himachal Pradesh**, near Keylong, on the bank of the Bhaga river. It belongs to the Drukpa lineage of Tibetan Buddhism and is known for its library and murals.

Other famous Himachal monasteries are **Key Monastery** and **Tabo Monastery** (over 1,000 years old) in Spiti, and **Dhankar Monastery**. Dharamshala (McLeodganj) is the seat of the **Dalai Lama** in exile.

44. In the temple architecture of Odisha and nearby regions, what is the stone disc seen at the top of a temple called?

[SSC MTS, 11 Jul 2022 (Morning)]

(a) Kalasha
(b) Antarala
(c) Amalaka
(d) Jagati

Answer **(c) Amalaka**

Explanation

The ribbed, round **stone disc** at the top of a Nagara (and Odisha-style) temple tower is called the **amalaka**. Its shape is said to come from the **amla (Indian gooseberry)** fruit. Above it sits the **kalasha**, a pot-shaped finial.

The other terms: **antarala** is the vestibule between the hall and the sanctum, and **jagati** is the raised platform on which a temple stands. In Odisha temples, the tower over the sanctum is called the **rekha deul**, and the hall in front is the **jagamohana**.

45. A 7-metre-tall statue known as 'Sadashiva', representing three aspects of Lord Shiva, is located in the _____ caves.

[SSC MTS, 14 Oct 2021 (Morning)]

(a) Khandagiri
(b) Udayagiri
(c) Bhimbetka
(d) Elephanta

Answer **(d) Elephanta**

Explanation

The famous three-headed **Sadashiva (Trimurti)** sculpture is in the **Elephanta Caves** on Elephanta Island (Gharapuri), near Mumbai. Its three faces show Shiva as the **creator, preserver and destroyer**.

The caves date from about the 5th–6th centuries and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in **1987**. The island got its name from a large stone elephant found there by the Portuguese. Khandagiri and Udayagiri (Odisha) are Jain caves, and Bhimbetka (MP) is famous for prehistoric rock paintings.

46. Who founded the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)?

[SSC MTS, 14 Oct 2021 (Morning)]

(a) Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
(b) Sri Chaitanya
(c) Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
(d) Sri Ramakrishna

Answer **(a) Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada**

Explanation

ISKCON (the "Hare Krishna movement") was founded by **A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada** in **New York in 1966**. Its world headquarters is at **Mayapur**, West Bengal.

ISKCON follows the **Gaudiya Vaishnava** tradition started by **Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** in the 16th century, which is why Chaitanya can mislead you. **Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati** was Prabhupada's own guru, and **Sri Ramakrishna** was the guru of Swami Vivekananda.

47. The Phodong Monastery is located in _____.

[SSC CHSL, 12 Apr 2021 (Evening)]

(a) Ladakh
(b) Bihar
(c) Madhya Pradesh
(d) Sikkim

Answer **(d) Sikkim**

Explanation

The **Phodong Monastery** is in **North Sikkim**, about 28 km from Gangtok. It belongs to the **Karma Kagyu** school of Tibetan Buddhism and is one of the six most important monasteries of Sikkim, known for its old murals and its **Cham** (mask dance) festival.

Other Sikkim monasteries in this chapter are **Rumtek** (largest), **Ralang** and **Lingdum**. Ladakh can mislead you, because it also has many monasteries, such as **Hemis**, **Thiksey** and **Diskit**.

48. Bishnupur, famous for its terracotta temples, is located in which state?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Oct 2020 (Afternoon)]

(a) Rajasthan
(b) Gujarat
(c) West Bengal
(d) Assam

Answer (c) West Bengal

Explanation

Bishnupur, in the Bankura district of **West Bengal**, is famous for its **terracotta (baked clay) temples**, built in the 17th–18th centuries by the **Malla kings**. The best known are the **Rasmancha**, the **Shyam Rai Temple** and the **Jor Bangla Temple**.

Because Bengal has little stone, builders used clay bricks and covered the walls with carved terracotta panels showing scenes from the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Krishna's life. Bishnupur is also known for **Baluchari sarees** and for its own school of Hindustani music, the **Bishnupur gharana**.

49. Which of the following cities is famous for the Swaminarayan Akshardham Temple?

[SSC CHSL, 15 Oct 2020 (Afternoon)]

(a) New Delhi
(b) Madurai
(c) Vadodara
(d) Mysore

Answer (a) New Delhi

Explanation

The **Swaminarayan Akshardham** temple in **New Delhi**, on the banks of the Yamuna, was opened in **2005**. It is built of pink sandstone and white marble without any steel.

It was built by the **BAPS** (Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha) organisation and is dedicated to **Bhagwan Swaminarayan**. There is also an Akshardham at **Gandhinagar** (Gujarat, 1992), but among the options only New Delhi fits. BAPS also built the large temple in **Abu Dhabi** (opened in 2024).

50. The Kartarpur Sahib Corridor connects the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Gurdaspur, India, to the Kartarpur Gurdwara in Pakistan, which is on the bank of the _____ river.

[SSC CHSL, 19 Oct 2020 (Morning)]

(a) Ravi
(b) Jhelum
(c) Sutlej
(d) Chenab

Answer (a) Ravi

Explanation

Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur stands on the banks of the **Ravi** river in Pakistan's Narowal district, only about 4 km from the Indian border. **Guru Nanak Dev** spent the last 18 years of his life here and passed away here in 1539.

The **Kartarpur Corridor** was opened on **9 November 2019**, just before Guru Nanak's **550th birth anniversary**, allowing Indian pilgrims to visit visa-free. On the Indian side it starts from **Dera Baba Nanak** in Gurdaspur, Punjab.

51. The birthplace of Guru Nanak, also called Nankana Sahib, was earlier known as what?

[SSC CHSL, 16 Oct 2020 (Morning)]

(a) Roda
(b) Umarkot
(c) Rai Bhoi Di Talwandi
(d) Luni

Answer (c) Rai Bhoi Di Talwandi

Explanation

Guru Nanak Dev was born in **1469** at **Rai Bhoi Di Talwandi**, which was later renamed **Nankana Sahib** in his honour. It is in the Punjab province of present-day **Pakistan**, near Lahore, and **Gurdwara Janam Asthan** marks the exact spot.

Guru Nanak's birth anniversary is celebrated as **Gurpurab (Prakash Parv)** on Kartik Purnima. **Umarkot** is the birthplace of the Mughal emperor **Akbar** (in Sindh).

52. The Birja Temple, Rajarani Temple and Samaleswari Temple are located in which state?

[SSC CGL, 04 Mar 2020 (Morning)]

(a) Odisha
(b) Tamil Nadu
(c) Assam

(d) Kerala

Answer **(a) Odisha**

Explanation

All three are in **Odisha**: the **Birja (Biraja) Temple** at **Jajpur** is an important Shakti Peetha; the **Rajarani Temple** at **Bhubaneswar**, built of reddish-gold sandstone, is famous for its carvings and has no deity inside; and the **Samaleswari Temple** at **Sambalpur** is dedicated to the goddess Samaleswari, the presiding deity of western Odisha.

Bhubaneswar is called the "**Temple City of India**". Its most famous temple is the 11th-century **Lingaraja Temple**, dedicated to Harihara.

53. **The Dharmaraja (Yudhishthira) Ratha, Bhima Ratha, Arjuna Ratha and Nakula-Sahadeva Ratha are four of the Pancha Rathas at Mahabalipuram. What is the name of the fifth Ratha?**

[SSC CGL, 05 Mar 2020 (Afternoon)]

(a) Draupadi Ratha
(b) Bhishma Ratha
(c) Krishna Ratha
(d) Karna Ratha

Answer **(a) Draupadi Ratha**

Explanation

The fifth is the **Draupadi Ratha**. The **Pancha Rathas** are named after the five Pandavas and Draupadi, though they have nothing to do with the Mahabharata story itself; they are temples carved from rock by the **Pallava** king **Narasimhavarman I** in the 7th century.

Each ratha has a different shape, as if the builders were trying out designs: the **Dharmaraja Ratha** is the tallest, the **Draupadi Ratha** is the smallest (hut-shaped), and next to them stand carved figures of an **elephant, a lion and a Nandi**. Mahabalipuram also has the **Shore Temple** and the giant relief **Arjuna's Penance**.

54. **The paintings and sculptures of the Ajanta Caves are related to what?**

[SSC CGL, 09 Mar 2020 (Afternoon)]

(a) Stories of the Hitopadesha
(b) Stories of the Panchatantra
(c) Stories of the Pentamerone
(d) Jataka tales

Answer **(d) Jataka tales**

Explanation

The paintings and sculptures of the **Ajanta Caves** (Maharashtra) mainly show the **Jataka tales**, stories of the Buddha's earlier lives, along with scenes from his life. The 30 caves are all **Buddhist**, made between about the 2nd century BCE and the 5th century CE.

Ajanta's murals, painted with the **fresco** (tempera) technique, include the famous **Padmapani Bodhisattva**. The caves were rediscovered in **1819** by a British officer, John Smith, and became a UNESCO site in 1983. The **Panchatantra** and **Hitopadesha** are animal fable collections, and the **Pentamerone** is an Italian folk-tale book.





04 CHAPTER
Government Schemes

92 Questions • SSC PYQs

01. **Consider the following statements regarding the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme:**

1. Beneficiaries can obtain subsidised food grains from any Fair Price Shop in India.
2. This facility is enabled through Aadhaar-based biometric authentication.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Both 1 and 2, and 2 explains 1
(b) Both 1 and 2, but 2 does not explain 1
(c) Only 1
(d) Only 2

Answer **(a) Both 1 and 2, and 2 explains 1**

Explanation

Both statements are true, and 2 explains 1. Under **One Nation One Ration Card**, a beneficiary of the National Food Security Act can take subsidised grain from **any Fair Price Shop in the country**, not only the one in their home town. This is possible because the shops use **Aadhaar-based biometric authentication** on ePoS machines, so the person can be identified anywhere.

The scheme mainly helps **migrant workers**. It was launched in 2019 and became operational in all states and UTs by 2022. It is run by the **Department of Food and Public Distribution**; the **"Mera Ration"** app supports it.

02. **What is the eligible age range for farmers to enrol under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PM-KMY)?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 18–32 years
(b) 25–50 years
(c) 21–45 years
(d) 18–40 years

Answer **(d) 18–40 years**

Explanation

PM Kisan Maandhan Yojana is a pension scheme for **small and marginal farmers** (land up to **2 hectares**). A farmer can join between **18 and 40 years** of age. It was launched on **12 September 2019** at **Ranchi** and is run by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

The farmer pays **₹55 to ₹200 a month** depending on the age of joining, the Centre adds an equal amount, and after **60** the farmer gets **₹3,000 a month**. **LIC** manages the fund. The same entry age of 18–40 is used in **Atal Pension Yojana**, **PM-SYM** and **NPS-Traders**. Do not confuse it with **PM-KISAN**, which gives ₹6,000 a year as income support.

03. **Consider the following statements regarding the UDAN scheme:**

1. Its aim is to improve regional air connectivity in India.
2. It provides viability gap funding to airlines on unserved and underserved routes.

Choose the correct option:

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Both 1 and 2, and 2 explains 1
(b) Both 1 and 2, but 2 does not explain 1
(c) Only 1
(d) Only 2

Answer **(a) Both 1 and 2, and 2 explains 1**

Explanation

Both statements are true, and 2 explains 1. **UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik)** aims to improve **regional air connectivity** and make flying affordable for common people. To make airlines fly on routes that are not profitable, the government gives them **Viability Gap Funding (VGF)**; this support is how the scheme achieves its aim.

UDAN was launched in **2016** under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and the first flight ran on **27 April 2017** between **Shimla and Delhi**. Under it, about half the seats on a flight have capped fares. Related schemes include **Krishi UDAN** (farm produce) and **UDAN** seaplane routes.

04. Which of the following enables the delivery of financial services through postmen?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) PRAGATI
(b) PMJAY
(c) NSAP
(d) IPPB

Answer (d) IPPB

Explanation

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) uses the huge network of post offices and around **2 lakh postmen and Gramin Dak Sevaks** to provide banking at people's doorsteps, especially in villages. It was launched on **1 September 2018** under the **Department of Posts**.

As a payments bank, IPPB can accept deposits up to **₹2 lakh** per customer but **cannot give loans** or issue credit cards. The other options are different: **PRAGATI** (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) is the PM's platform to review projects, **PMJAY** is health insurance, and **NSAP** (National Social Assistance Programme) gives social pensions.

05. Which department is responsible for launching the 'Dak Karmayogi' e-learning platform for postal employees?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 13 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY)
(b) Ministry of Education (MoE)
(c) Department of Posts (DoP)
(d) Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)

Answer (c) Department of Posts (DoP)

Explanation

Dak Karmayogi is an e-learning portal launched by the **Department of Posts** (Ministry of Communications) in **2023** to train its lakhs of employees, including Gramin Dak Sevaks, through online courses.

It follows the spirit of **Mission Karmayogi**, the national programme for building the skills of civil servants, which runs the **iGOT Karmayogi** platform. DoPT can mislead you, since it handles Mission Karmayogi in general, but this particular portal is the Department of Posts' own.

06. The main objective of India's new eco-tourism policy for protected areas is –

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) To completely restrict human presence
(b) To focus only on revenue generation, excluding communities
(c) To harmonise ecological conservation with livelihood opportunities
(d) To develop protected areas as commercial resorts

Answer (c) To harmonise ecological conservation with livelihood opportunities

Explanation

The eco-tourism guidelines for protected areas (national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and tiger reserves) aim to **balance conservation with livelihoods**. Tourism should not harm wildlife, and at the same time **local communities** should earn from it, as guides, homestay owners and eco-development committee members.

The other options go to extremes, either shutting people out completely or turning forests into resorts. The key idea is "**low-impact tourism with local benefit**", guided by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

07. Which government initiative is mainly focused on promoting organic farming in India?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)
(b) Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana (PM-KMY)
(c) Soil Health Card Scheme (SHC)
(d) Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana

Answer (a) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

Explanation

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), launched in **2015**, promotes **organic farming** through a **cluster approach**: groups of farmers (clusters of about 20 hectares) are helped to adopt organic methods, get certified under the **PGS-India**

system and sell their produce. It is part of the **Soil Health Management** component of the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.

For the North-East there is a separate scheme, **MOVCDNER** (Mission Organic Value Chain Development). **Sikkim** became India's first fully organic state in 2016. The Soil Health Card tells farmers about nutrients in their soil but does not specifically promote organic farming.

08. **'Har Khet Ko Pani' is the tagline of which government initiative?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana
(b) Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
(c) Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana
(d) Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana

Answer **(b) Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana**

Explanation

"Har Khet Ko Pani" (water to every field) is the motto of the **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**, launched in **2015** to expand irrigation. Its second motto is **"More Crop Per Drop"**, which promotes micro-irrigation such as drip and sprinkler systems.

PMKSY has several parts: the **Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP)**, Har Khet Ko Pani, Per Drop More Crop, and a **watershed development** component. The key word "paani" (water) itself points to an irrigation scheme.

09. **Read the following statements and choose the correct answer:**

Assertion (A): The SVAMITVA scheme issues property ownership cards using drone-based mapping technology.

Reason (R): This scheme is implemented in both rural and urban areas of India.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
(b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
(c) A is true, but R is false.
(d) A is false, but R is true.

Answer **(c) A is true, but R is false.**

Explanation

A is true, but R is false. **SVAMITVA** (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) maps village residential land using **drones** and gives owners **property cards** (record of rights), so A is correct.

But the scheme covers only **rural** inhabited areas (abadi land in villages), not cities, so R is wrong. It was launched on **National Panchayati Raj Day, 24 April 2020**, by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**. Property cards let villagers use their homes as collateral to take bank loans.

10. **Which government initiative promotes crop diversification using a cluster-based approach?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) RKVY (Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana)
(b) PM-AASHA (Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan)
(c) SMAM (Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization)
(d) AIF (Agriculture Infrastructure Fund)

Answer **(a) RKVY (Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana)**

Explanation

The **Crop Diversification Programme (CDP)**, which helps farmers move away from water-hungry crops like paddy towards pulses, oilseeds and other crops in clusters, runs as a **sub-scheme of the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)**. It focuses especially on the original Green Revolution states such as **Punjab, Haryana and western UP**, where groundwater is falling.

RKVY was launched in **2007** to give states flexible funds for agriculture. The other options do different jobs: **PM-AASHA** ensures MSP (Minimum Support Price) prices to farmers, **SMAM** (Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization) supports farm machines, and **AIF** (Agriculture Infrastructure Fund) funds storage and post-harvest infrastructure.

11. **Which NAFCC-supported project focuses on enhancing micro-climate resilience through community water harvesting in semi-arid regions?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Climate-Resilient Watershed Programme
(b) Pani Sanchay Yojana
(c) Neeranchal Mission

(d) Gram Jal Suraksha Yojana

Answer (a) Climate-Resilient Watershed Programme

Explanation

The answer is the **Climate-Resilient Watershed Programme**. Watershed projects collect rainwater through community structures like check dams, farm ponds and trenches, which improves soil moisture and the local micro-climate in dry, **semi-arid** areas. This is exactly the kind of adaptation work funded under **NAFCC**.

NAFCC (National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change) was set up in **2015** by the Centre to help states adapt to climate change, with **NABARD** (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) as the national implementing entity. Note that **Neeranchal** is a separate World Bank-assisted national watershed programme, not an NAFCC project.

12. The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) aims to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in India. Which of the following is a key programme under AIM?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 18 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)
(b) Startup India Seed Fund Scheme
(c) Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL)
(d) Standup India Scheme

Answer (c) Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL)

Explanation

Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) are a flagship programme of the **Atal Innovation Mission**. These labs, set up in schools, give students from **Class 6 to 12** tools like 3D printers, robotics kits and electronics to build and test their own ideas.

AIM was set up in **2016** by **NITI Aayog** (National Institution for Transforming India). Its other programmes include **Atal Incubation Centres (AIC)** and Atal Community Innovation Centres. The other options belong elsewhere: PMKVY (skills ministry), the Seed Fund Scheme (DPIIT's Startup India) and Stand-Up India (bank loans for SC/ST and women).

13. Which of the following programmes aims to enhance digital education and learning outcomes in Indian schools?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 20 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Pradhan Mantri Bal Shiksha Abhiyan
(b) Digital India Abhiyan
(c) PM e-Vidya
(d) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Mission

Answer (c) PM e-Vidya

Explanation

PM e-Vidya, launched in **May 2020** during the COVID-19 lockdown, brings together all digital and online education efforts for school students. It includes **DIKSHA** ("One Nation, One Digital Platform" for e-content), **one TV channel per class** from Class 1 to 12 ("One Class, One Channel"), radio and podcasts, and special content for children with disabilities.

Digital India is the much broader programme for digital infrastructure and services, so it is too general to be the answer. "Pradhan Mantri Bal Shiksha Abhiyan" is not a real scheme.

14. What fixed monthly pension is guaranteed to enrolled small and marginal farmers under PM-KMY after they attain the age of 60?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 20 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) ₹1,000
(b) ₹2,000
(c) ₹3,000
(d) ₹5,000

Answer (c) ₹3,000

Explanation

Under PM Kisan Maandhan Yojana, an enrolled farmer gets an assured pension of **₹3,000 per month** after turning **60**. If the farmer dies, the spouse receives half of it (**₹1,500 a month**) as family pension.

The ₹3,000 figure is common to three schemes: **PM-KMY** (farmers), **PM-SYM** (unorganised workers) and **NPS-Traders** (small traders). Atal Pension Yojana is different, offering a chosen pension of **₹1,000 to ₹5,000**, which explains the options ₹1,000 and ₹5,000.

15. Which Government of India programme mainly seeks to develop and upgrade road connectivity in rural areas?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Gramin Sampark Samvardhan Yojana
(b) PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan
(c) Bharatmala Pariyojana

(d) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

Answer (d) Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)

Explanation

The **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)** was launched on **25 December 2000** to give **all-weather road connectivity** to unconnected villages: those with a population of **500+ in plain areas** and **250+ in hill, desert and tribal areas**. It is run by the **Ministry of Rural Development**.

The other options deal with bigger networks: **Bharatmala** builds national highways and economic corridors, and **PM Gati Shakti** is a digital master plan to coordinate all infrastructure projects. "Gramin Sampark Samvardhan Yojana" is not an actual central scheme.

16. Against how many diseases does the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) provide free vaccines across India (at national and sub-national levels)?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 12
(b) 7
(c) 8
(d) 14

Answer (a) 12

Explanation

The **Universal Immunization Programme** provides free vaccines against **12 diseases**: against **9 nationally** (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, rubella, severe childhood tuberculosis, hepatitis B, and meningitis/pneumonia caused by Hib) and against **3 sub-nationally** in selected areas (rotavirus diarrhoea, pneumococcal pneumonia and Japanese encephalitis).

UIP began in **1985**. To speed it up, **Mission Indradhanush** was launched in **2014**; its seven colours originally stood for seven diseases, which is why "7" is wrong here. The vaccination data is tracked on the **U-WIN** portal.

17. Which of the following programmes is designed to provide financial assistance to elderly citizens who lack regular income support?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 21 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Atal Pension Yojana (APY)
(b) Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)
(c) National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)
(d) Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY)

Answer (b) Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)

Explanation

The **Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)** gives a monthly pension to elderly people (60 years and above) from **BPL families** who have no regular income: **₹200 a month** for ages 60–79 and **₹500** for 80 and above, with states adding their own share.

Do not pick **NSAP** (National Social Assistance Programme): it is the **umbrella programme (1995)** under which IGNOAPS runs, along with widow and disability pensions and the National Family Benefit Scheme, so the specific answer is IGNOAPS. **APY** (Atal Pension Yojana) is a contributory scheme for working people, and **PMVVY** (Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana) was an LIC pension plan in which seniors invested their own money.

18. The main objective of India's Green Credit Programme, launched under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, is –

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 19 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To issue green bonds to support clean industries
(b) To impose fines on polluting industries
(c) To reward voluntary environmental actions by individuals or institutions
(d) To promote green finance for construction projects

Answer (c) To reward voluntary environmental actions by individuals or institutions

Explanation

The **Green Credit Programme**, notified in **October 2023**, **rewards voluntary environmental actions**. Individuals, companies and institutions earn tradable **green credits** for activities such as **tree plantation**, water conservation, sustainable farming and waste management.

It is linked with PM Modi's **Mission LiFE** (Lifestyle for Environment), and the **Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE)** administers it. Do not confuse it with the **carbon credit** market, which is about reducing greenhouse gas

emissions, or with green bonds, which are a way of borrowing money.

19. Under which central ministry of the Government of India does the National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM) function?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 22 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Ministry of Rural Development
(b) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
(c) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
(d) Ministry of Food Processing Industries

Answer (c) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

Explanation

The **National Beekeeping and Honey Mission (NBHM)** works under the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** and is carried out through the **National Bee Board**. It was launched in **2020** as part of the **Atmanirbhar Bharat** package.

Its goal is the "**Sweet Revolution**": scientific beekeeping for extra income, better pollination of crops and quality honey. The **Madhukranti** portal registers beekeepers and tracks honey. Remember the revolutions: Sweet (honey), White (milk), Blue (fish) and Yellow (oilseeds).

20. The UMANG mobile app provides access to which of the following?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Oct 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Only banking services
(b) Multiple government services
(c) Only educational content
(d) Social networking features

Answer (b) Multiple government services

Explanation

UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance), launched in **November 2017**, is a single app that gives access to **many government services** of central and state departments, such as EPFO (PF), pensions, gas booking, passport, and DigiLocker documents.

It was developed by the **Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY)** and the **National e-Governance Division** as part of **Digital India**. The idea is "one app, many services", so options that say "only" something are wrong.

21. Under WEP, the 'EmpowHER Biz – Sapno Ki Udaan' programme to support women entrepreneurs was launched in collaboration with which organisation?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) New Shop
(b) SEWA Bharat
(c) Tata Group
(d) Amazon India

Answer (a) New Shop

Explanation

"EmpowHER Biz – Sapno Ki Udaan" was launched by NITI Aayog's **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)** in partnership with **New Shop**, a retail chain, to help women run their own retail stores, with training, mentoring and support.

WEP was started by **NITI Aayog** (National Institution for Transforming India) in **2018** as a single platform for women entrepreneurs, offering access to finance, markets, skills and mentors. In 2022 it moved to a public–private partnership model. Amazon and Tata can mislead you because they too run women-focused programmes.

22. Which conservation initiative is recognised as the world's first inter-continental translocation of a large wild carnivore, in which animals were moved from one continent to another?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Project Tiger
(b) Project Cheetah
(c) Project Crocodile
(d) Project Panther

Answer (b) Project Cheetah

Explanation

Project Cheetah is the world's first **inter-continental translocation** of a large wild carnivore. On **17 September 2022**, eight cheetahs from **Namibia** were released into **Kuno National Park** in Madhya Pradesh, and twelve more came from **South Africa** in February 2023.

The cheetah had been declared **extinct in India in 1952**. **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary** (MP) has been developed as the second home for cheetahs. Project Tiger began in 1973 (Jim Corbett) and Project Crocodile in 1975.

23. In which year was the National Youth Policy launched in India?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 2000
(b) 2012
(c) 2014
(d) 2016

Answer (c) 2014

Explanation

The current **National Youth Policy** was launched in **2014** (NYP-2014) by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. It defines "youth" as people aged **15 to 29 years** and sets five goals, including a productive workforce, a healthy generation and social values.

India's earlier youth policies came in **1988** and **2003**. India has one of the youngest populations in the world, which is why youth policy matters. **National Youth Day** is observed on **12 January**, the birthday of Swami Vivekananda.

24. In which year was the National Pension System (NPS) introduced in India?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) 1999
(b) 2004
(c) 2010
(d) 2015

Answer (b) 2004

Explanation

The **National Pension System (NPS)** was introduced on **1 January 2004** for new central government employees (except the armed forces), replacing the old defined-benefit pension. In **2009** it was opened to **all citizens** on a voluntary basis.

NPS is a contributory scheme regulated by the **PFRDA** (Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority). From **1 April 2025**, central employees also got the option of the **Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)**, which guarantees a fixed pension.

25. Which of the following is NOT an objective of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) To attract large investment
(b) To promote domestic manufacturing
(c) To increase government regulation of private-sector operations
(d) To boost export capacity

Answer (c) To increase government regulation of private-sector operations

Explanation

The PLI (Production Linked Incentive) scheme does **not** aim to increase government control over private companies. Its idea is the opposite: it gives companies **cash incentives linked to their extra production (sales)** in India, to attract investment, boost **domestic manufacturing** and increase **exports**.

PLI began in **2020** with mobile phones and electronics and was later extended to **14 sectors**, including pharmaceuticals, automobiles, solar modules, textiles, food processing and drones. It supports the goals of **Make in India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

26. The Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (2024) mainly targets the development of which group?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Urban poor
(b) Farmers of irrigated areas
(c) Tribal communities in aspirational areas
(d) Coastal fishing communities

Answer (c) Tribal communities in aspirational areas

Explanation

The **Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PM-JUGA)**, launched in **September 2024** at **Hazaribagh, Jharkhand**, targets the all-round development of **tribal-majority villages** and tribal families in aspirational districts. It aims to cover about **63,000 villages** by bringing together the schemes of 17 ministries.

It was renamed **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan**, after **Birsa Munda**, who is called "Dharti Aaba". Do not confuse it with **PM JANMAN** (2023), which focuses specifically on **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**.

27. The 'Service Exports from India Scheme', launched under the Foreign Trade Policy 2015–20, mainly aims to promote which sector?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Agricultural exports
(b) Service exports
(c) Manufacturing exports

(d) Handicraft exports

Answer **(b) Service exports**

Explanation

As its name says, the **Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS)** promoted the export of **services** such as IT, tourism, education and healthcare, by giving exporters duty credit scrips as a reward. It replaced the older Served From India Scheme.

Under the same **Foreign Trade Policy 2015–20**, goods exports were supported by the **MEIS** (Merchandise Exports from India Scheme). MEIS was later replaced by **RoDTEP** (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products) from 2021. India's new **Foreign Trade Policy 2023** has no fixed end date.

28. The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme was launched in 1998 on the recommendation of which committee?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) M. S. Swaminathan Committee
(b) R. V. Gupta Committee
(c) Narasimham Committee
(d) Rangarajan Committee

Answer **(b) R. V. Gupta Committee**

Explanation

The **Kisan Credit Card** scheme was launched in **August 1998** on the recommendation of the **R.V. Gupta Committee**, and was designed by **NABARD** (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development). It gives farmers easy, timely short-term credit for crops and other needs.

In 2019 KCC was extended to **animal husbandry and fisheries** farmers. Under the interest subvention scheme, farmers can get loans at an effective rate of **4%** if they repay on time. The other committees are known for other things: Swaminathan (farmers and MSP (Minimum Support Price)), Narasimham (banking reforms) and Rangarajan (poverty estimates and financial inclusion).

29. Under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), which of the following loan categories is NOT an officially recognised classification?

[SSC CHSL, 15 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Tarun
(b) Kishor
(c) Shishu
(d) Yuva

Answer **(d) Yuva**

Explanation

"Yuva" is not a MUDRA category. The official categories are based on the stage of growth of a business:

- **Shishu** – loans up to **₹50,000**
- **Kishor** – ₹50,000 to **₹5 lakh**
- **Tarun** – ₹5 lakh to **₹10 lakh**
- **Tarun Plus** – ₹10 lakh to **₹20 lakh** (added in the 2024 Budget, for those who repaid Tarun loans)

PMMY (Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana) was launched on **8 April 2015** to give collateral-free loans to small, non-farm businesses. MUDRA stands for **Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency**.

30. What is the main objective of the 'Subhadra Yojana' launched by the Government of Odisha?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To ensure adequate housing facilities for women
(b) To provide women aged 21–60 financial assistance of ₹50,000 over five years
(c) To grant scholarships for girls' education
(d) To help women start businesses through loans

Answer **(b) To provide women aged 21–60 financial assistance of ₹50,000 over five years**

Explanation

Under Odisha's **Subhadra Yojana**, eligible women aged **21 to 60** receive **₹50,000 over five years**, that is, **₹10,000 every year** in two instalments, credited directly to their bank accounts. It was launched by **PM Narendra Modi** in **Bhubaneswar on 17 September 2024**.

The scheme is named after **Devi Subhadra**, the sister of Lord Jagannath. Similar state cash schemes for women include **Ladli Behna** (Madhya Pradesh), **Majhi Ladki Bahin** (Maharashtra) and **Maiya Samman** (Jharkhand).

31. How many sub-schemes are there under the PM-YASASVI scheme?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 3
(b) 5
(c) 9

(d) 8

Answer **(b) 5**

Explanation

PM-YASASVI (PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India) is an umbrella scheme of the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** for **OBC, EBC and DNT** students. It has **five sub-schemes**: pre-matric scholarship, post-matric scholarship, top class school education, top class college education, and construction of hostels for OBC boys and girls.

Students are selected for the top class school component through the **YASASVI Entrance Test**, conducted by the **National Testing Agency (NTA)**.

32. The Swavalambini programme is associated with which of the following institutions?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ministry of Home Affairs
(b) Election Commission of India
(c) Ministry of Education
(d) NITI Aayog

Answer **(d) NITI Aayog**

Explanation

Swavalambini is a women's entrepreneurship programme launched in **2025** by the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** together with **NITI Aayog** (National Institution for Transforming India). It started in higher education institutions of the **North-Eastern states**, training female students in entrepreneurship and helping them start ventures.

It is run with the help of the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD). NITI Aayog also runs the **Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**, mentioned earlier in this chapter.

33. The implementation of the 'Mission Amrit Sarovar' programme is being led by which central ministry?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ministry of Jal Shakti
(b) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
(c) Ministry of Rural Development
(d) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Answer **(c) Ministry of Rural Development**

Explanation

Mission Amrit Sarovar is led by the **Ministry of Rural Development**, which is its nodal ministry. Launched on **24 April 2022** (National Panchayati Raj Day), it aimed to build or revive **75 water bodies (Amrit Sarovars) in every district** to mark **Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav**, 75 years of Independence.

Several ministries work together on it, including Jal Shakti, Panchayati Raj and Environment, which is why Jal Shakti can mislead you. Most of the work is done through **MGNREGA** (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) and other rural schemes.

34. What are the main objectives of the 'Mission Mausam' initiative?

I. To strengthen India's capacity for accurate weather forecasting.
II. To build advanced, high-resolution models for better prediction of monsoon patterns.

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Only statement I
(b) Only statement II
(c) Both statement I and statement II
(d) Neither statement I nor statement II

Answer **(c) Both statement I and statement II**

Explanation

Both statements are correct. **Mission Mausam**, approved in **September 2024** with an outlay of about **₹2,000 crore**, aims to make India "**weather-ready and climate-smart**". It will strengthen **weather forecasting** through more radars, satellites and supercomputers, and build **high-resolution models** to predict the monsoon and extreme weather more accurately.

It is run by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**, mainly through the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, IITM Pune and NCMRWF. It also plans to study "weather management", such as cloud seeding.

35. Which country launched the 'SAGAR' initiative to provide humanitarian assistance and relief to countries of the Indian Ocean region?

[SSC CHSL, 19 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) China
(b) United States of America
(c) India

(d) United Kingdom

Answer **(c) India**

Explanation

India launched **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)** in **2015**, announced by PM Modi in **Mauritius**. It is India's vision for the Indian Ocean region: cooperation in security, trade, disaster relief and humanitarian help. Under it, the Indian Navy has carried relief to neighbours, for example through **Mission SAGAR** during COVID-19.

In **2025**, again in Mauritius, India expanded the idea into **MAHASAGAR** (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions), extending it to the Global South.

36. **In which year did NITI Aayog first release the School Education Quality Index to assess school education outcomes in states and UTs?**

[SSC CHSL, 20 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 2019
(b) 2017
(c) 2018
(d) 2022

Answer **(a) 2019**

Explanation

NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) released the first **School Education Quality Index (SEQI)** in **September 2019**, based on 2016–17 data. It ranked states on **learning outcomes, access, equity and infrastructure**, and **Kerala** topped the large states.

Do not confuse it with the **Performance Grading Index (PGI)**, which is released by the **Ministry of Education** for grading school education in states. NITI Aayog's other state indices include the **SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) India Index** (since 2018), the **India Innovation Index** and the **Export Preparedness Index**.

37. **Matsya 6000 is related to which of the following initiatives?**

[SSC CHSL, 24 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Chandrayaan Mission
(b) Deep Ocean Mission
(c) Shukrayaan Mission
(d) Gaganyaan Mission

Answer **(b) Deep Ocean Mission**

Explanation

Matsya 6000 is India's first **manned submersible**, being built under **Samudrayaan**, part of the **Deep Ocean Mission**. It is designed to carry **three people** to a depth of **6,000 metres** in the ocean to study deep-sea resources, minerals and biodiversity.

It is developed by the **National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT)**, Chennai, under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**. With it, India joins a small group of countries (USA, Russia, France, Japan, China) that have such technology. The word "Matsya" (fish) is the clue that it is about the ocean, not space.

38. **In which year did India release its first 'Export Preparedness Index' (EPI) to assess the export readiness of states and UTs?**

[SSC CHSL, 25 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 2022
(b) 2014
(c) 2015
(d) 2020

Answer **(d) 2020**

Explanation

NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India) released the first **Export Preparedness Index (EPI)** in **August 2020**, together with the Institute for Competitiveness. It ranks states and UTs on how ready they are to export, using four pillars: **policy, business ecosystem, export ecosystem and export performance**.

Gujarat topped the first edition, and Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu also ranked high. The index supports the idea of "**competitive federalism**", in which states compete to improve their performance.

39. **Which central ministry launched the 'Deen Dayal SPARSH Yojana'?**

[SSC CHSL, 26 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Ministry of Defence
(b) Ministry of Communications
(c) Ministry of Rural Development
(d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Answer **(b) Ministry of Communications**

Explanation

Deen Dayal SPARSH (Scholarship for Promotion of Aptitude and Research in Stamps as a Hobby) is a **philately scholarship** run by the **Department of**

Posts, which is under the **Ministry of Communications**. School students from Class 6 to 9 who are good in academics and have a hobby of collecting stamps can win a yearly scholarship.

Students are selected through a philately quiz and project, and each postal circle gives a fixed number of scholarships. The 2024 round was announced in August 2024. Since stamps are issued by India Post, the ministry follows easily.

40. The 'Sakhi Niwas Scheme', which was in the news in April 2025, is implemented as a component of which government initiative?

[SSC CHSL, 30 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Mission Shakti
(b) Mission Poshan
(c) Mission Vatsalya
(d) Mission Swavalamban

Answer (a) Mission Shakti

Explanation

Sakhi Niwas (earlier the Working Women Hostel scheme) provides safe, affordable hostels for **working women**, with day-care facilities for their children. It is part of the **Samarthya** sub-scheme of **Mission Shakti**, run by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**.

Mission Shakti has two parts: **Sambal** (safety and security: One Stop Centres, Women Helpline 181, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao) and **Samarthya** (empowerment: Sakhi Niwas, Shakti Sadan, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, creches). **Mission Vatsalya** is for child protection, and **Poshan** is for nutrition.

41. What is the primary objective of the Swachh Bharat Mission?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 24 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Affordable housing
(b) Sanitation and personal hygiene
(c) Promotion of renewable energy
(d) Rural employment

Answer (b) Sanitation and personal hygiene

Explanation

The **Swachh Bharat Mission**, launched on **2 October 2014** (Gandhi Jayanti), aims at **sanitation and cleanliness**: building toilets, ending **open defecation** and managing solid waste. Its logo is **Mahatma Gandhi's spectacles**.

It has two parts: **SBM-Gramin** (Ministry of Jal Shakti) and **SBM-Urban** (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs). India declared its villages **Open Defecation Free (ODF)** on 2 October 2019, and the second phase now focuses on **ODF Plus** (waste management). The **Swachh Survekshan** ranks cities on cleanliness; Indore has topped it many times.

42. Who are the main beneficiaries of the Stand-Up India scheme?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 24 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Small farmers
(b) Women and SC/ST entrepreneurs
(c) Private banks
(d) College students

Answer (b) Women and SC/ST entrepreneurs

Explanation

Stand-Up India, launched on **5 April 2016**, helps **women and SC/ST entrepreneurs** start a new (greenfield) business. Every bank branch is expected to give a loan of **₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore** to at least **one SC/ST borrower and one woman borrower**.

The loans are for setting up enterprises in **manufacturing, services, trading or agri-allied activities**. The scheme is run by the **Department of Financial Services**, and **SIDBI** (Small Industries Development Bank of India) manages its online portal. Do not confuse it with **Startup India**, which supports innovative start-ups.

43. Under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), which category of beneficiaries is provided the benefit?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 25 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) All households
(b) Women of BPL households
(c) Elderly people
(d) Agricultural labourers

Answer (b) Women of BPL households

Explanation

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, launched on **1 May 2016** at **Ballia, Uttar Pradesh**, gives **free LPG connections to women of BPL (poor) households**. The connection is given in the name of the adult woman of the family, which also empowers women.

The aim is to replace polluting fuels like wood and cow-dung cakes, whose smoke harms women's

health. **Ujjwala 2.0** (2021) added the first refill and a stove free and made it easy for **migrant families** to enrol. The scheme is run by the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas**.

44. What does the Stand-Up India scheme mainly provide?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 25 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Loans without any collateral
(b) Funding for renewable energy projects
(c) Finance for real-estate projects
(d) Loan support for export-oriented units

Answer (a) Loans without any collateral

Explanation

The answer expected is **loans without collateral**. Stand-Up India gives bank loans of **₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore** to women and SC/ST entrepreneurs for new businesses, and these loans can be covered under the **Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme for Stand-Up India Loans (CGFSIL)**, so the borrower does not have to pledge property as security.

The loan covers up to **85%** of the project cost (including term loan and working capital) and is repayable over up to **7 years**. The scheme is for setting up enterprises, not for real estate or only export units.

45. Under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, which of the following benefits do eligible beneficiaries receive?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 25 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Free education
(b) Health insurance support
(c) Subsidised housing facilities
(d) Support for agricultural inputs

Answer (b) Health insurance support

Explanation

Under **Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)**, eligible families get **health cover of ₹5 lakh per family per year** for hospital treatment, cashless, at empanelled public and private hospitals. Launched on **23 September 2018** at **Ranchi**, it is often called the world's largest government-funded health assurance scheme.

Since 2024, all senior citizens aged **70 and above** are covered regardless of income, through the **Ayushman Vay Vandana Card**. Ayushman Bharat's other pillar is **Ayushman Arogya Mandirs** (earlier Health and Wellness Centres). The scheme is run by the **National Health Authority (NHA)**.

46. As per the PM-KISAN scheme, what is the annual income-support amount given to eligible farmers?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 25 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) ₹3,000
(b) ₹6,000
(c) ₹10,000
(d) ₹15,000

Answer (b) ₹6,000

Explanation

Under **PM-KISAN (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi)**, eligible farmer families get **₹6,000 a year**, paid in **three equal instalments of ₹2,000** directly into their bank accounts through **DBT**. It is a **100% centrally funded** scheme.

It was announced in the interim budget of 2019 and launched on **24 February 2019** at **Gorakhpur**, Uttar Pradesh. Keep it separate from **PM-KMY**, which is a pension of ₹3,000 a month after 60; that is where the option ₹3,000 comes from.

47. Under the PMJDY scheme, what type of bank account can individuals open?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 26 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Savings account
(b) Current account
(c) Fixed deposit account
(d) Recurring deposit account

Answer (a) Savings account

Explanation

Under **Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)**, people can open a **basic savings bank account** with **zero balance**. It was launched on **28 August 2014** to bring every household into the banking system, a goal called **financial inclusion**.

Account holders get a **RuPay debit card** with accident insurance cover of **₹2 lakh** (for accounts opened after August 2018) and an overdraft facility of up to **₹10,000**. PMJDY set a Guinness World Record for opening the most bank accounts in one week, and it forms the base of the **JAM trinity** (Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile).

48. What is the main objective of rainwater harvesting under the Jal Shakti Abhiyan?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 26 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To promote urbanisation
(b) To store surplus rainwater for future use
(c) To increase groundwater depletion
(d) To reduce agricultural activities

Answer (b) To store surplus rainwater for future use

Explanation

Rainwater harvesting means **collecting and storing surplus rainwater** so that it can be used later and can recharge groundwater. The **Jal Shakti Abhiyan** was launched in **2019** in water-stressed districts, and since 2021 it runs every year as **"Catch the Rain – Where it falls, When it falls"**.

The campaign focuses on water conservation, renovating old ponds, recharge structures and tree planting. It is coordinated by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**, which was formed in 2019 by merging the water resources and drinking water ministries.

49. The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme mainly focuses on tackling which problem?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 26 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Gender-based discrimination
(b) Women's literacy and welfare
(c) Employment of women
(d) Child marriage

Answer (a) Gender-based discrimination

Explanation

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) mainly tackles **gender-based discrimination** against girls, shown most clearly in the falling **Child Sex Ratio** caused by sex-selective abortion. It was launched on **22 January 2015** at **Panipat, Haryana**.

It is run jointly by three ministries: **Women and Child Development** (nodal), **Health and Family Welfare**, and **Education**. Girls' education is part of it, but the root problem it targets is discrimination. A related savings scheme for girls is **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana**.

50. What is the main objective of the Jal Jeevan Mission?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 26 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Groundwater recharge
(b) River conservation
(c) To provide piped drinking water to households
(d) Modernisation of the irrigation system

Answer (c) To provide piped drinking water to households

Explanation

The **Jal Jeevan Mission**, announced on **15 August 2019**, aims to give every rural household a **Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC)**, that is, **"Har Ghar Jal"**, with safe drinking water of adequate quantity and quality.

It is run by the **Ministry of Jal Shakti**, with the Centre and states sharing costs. Goa became the first "Har Ghar Jal" certified state. Its urban counterpart is **AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) 2.0**, which aims to provide tap water in all cities.

51. Which scheme was launched with the goal of providing affordable housing to all citizens by 2022?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 28 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
(b) Jan Dhan Yojana
(c) Skill India
(d) Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

Answer (a) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Explanation

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) was launched in **2015** with the goal of **"Housing for All" by 2022**, the 75th year of Independence. It has two parts: **PMAY-Urban** (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs) and **PMAY-Gramin** (Ministry of Rural Development, started in 2016).

A key feature is that houses are usually registered in the name of the **woman of the family** or jointly. The scheme has since been extended, with **PMAY-Urban 2.0** approved in 2024 for one crore more urban houses.

52. Which government initiative helps citizens open bank accounts even if they have no prior financial history?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 28 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
(b) Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
(c) Skill India

(d) Make in India

Answer **(a) Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana**

Explanation

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), launched on **28 August 2014**, lets people open a **zero-balance basic savings account** even if they have never had a bank account. Even people without full documents can open a "small account" with relaxed rules.

Jan Dhan accounts are the channel for **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT)** of subsidies and scheme money. The slogan of the scheme is **"Mera Khata – Bhagya Vidhata"**.

53. The AMRUT scheme of the Government of India mainly aims to improve which of the following areas?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 28 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Wetland conservation
(b) Urban infrastructure
(c) Achieving 100 GW of nuclear power
(d) Renewable energy

Answer **(b) Urban infrastructure**

Explanation

AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation), launched on **25 June 2015**, improves basic **urban infrastructure** in about 500 cities: **water supply, sewerage**, drainage, urban transport and green spaces. It is run by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

AMRUT 2.0 (2021) aims to make cities "water secure" with tap water for every household. On the same day in 2015, the government also launched the **Smart Cities Mission** and **PMAY-Urban**.

54. Which Government of India initiative aims to promote the use of hydrogen as a clean energy source?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 29 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) National Renewable Energy Mission
(b) National Green Hydrogen Mission
(c) National Clean Power Programme
(d) National Bio-Energy Development Scheme

Answer **(b) National Green Hydrogen Mission**

Explanation

The **National Green Hydrogen Mission**, approved in **January 2023**, aims to make India a global hub for producing and exporting **green hydrogen**, that is, hydrogen made by splitting water using **renewable electricity**. Its target is to produce **5 million tonnes** of green hydrogen a year by 2030.

It is run by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**, and its main programme is called **SIGHT** (Strategic Interventions for Green Hydrogen Transition). Hydrogen made from natural gas is called "grey", and when the carbon is captured, it is "blue".

55. Which national initiative aims to establish India as a leader in digital innovation and technology?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 29 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Startup India
(b) Digital India
(c) Make in India
(d) Skill India

Answer **(b) Digital India**

Explanation

Digital India, launched on **1 July 2015**, aims to transform India into a **digitally empowered society and knowledge economy**. It has three focus areas: digital infrastructure for every citizen, governance and services on demand, and digital empowerment of citizens.

Its achievements include **Aadhaar**-based services, **UPI** (Unified Payments Interface), **DigiLocker**, **UMANG** and **BharatNet** (broadband to villages). It is run by the **Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY)**.

56. Which major Government of India scheme was launched to provide free LPG connections to below-poverty-line families?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 29 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Ujjwala Yojana
(b) Stand-Up India
(c) Ayushman Bharat
(d) PM Kisan Samman Nidhi

Answer **(a) Ujjwala Yojana**

Explanation

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana was launched on **1 May 2016** at Ballia (UP) to give **free LPG connections** to women of BPL families. Its slogan is

"Swachh Indhan, Behtar Jeevan" (clean fuel, better life).

It replaced smoky chulhas fuelled by wood and dung cakes, which harm women's health. It was preceded by the **"Give It Up"** campaign, in which better-off people voluntarily gave up their LPG subsidy.

57. Fill in the blank: A key objective of the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) is to provide every Indian citizen a unique _____.

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 30 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Health ID
(b) Wellness Code
(c) Treatment Token
(d) Medical Pass

Answer (a) Health ID

Explanation

The **National Digital Health Mission**, launched on **15 August 2020**, gives every citizen a unique **Health ID**, now called the **ABHA (Ayushman Bharat Health Account)** number, a 14-digit ID that links a person's health records digitally.

In 2021 the mission was renamed the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)**. It is run by the **National Health Authority**. With consent, doctors and hospitals can view a patient's past records, so test reports and prescriptions do not have to be carried around on paper.

58. Which section of the population benefits from the micro-credit support under the PM SVANidhi scheme?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 31 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Street vendors
(b) Large farmers
(c) Urban artisans
(d) Fishermen

Answer (a) Street vendors

Explanation

PM SVANidhi (PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi), launched on **1 June 2020**, gives **collateral-free working-capital loans to street vendors** to restart their business after the COVID-19 lockdown. Loans are given in steps: **₹10,000**, then **₹20,000** and **₹50,000** on timely repayment.

Vendors also get an **interest subsidy of 7%** and cashback on digital payments. It is run by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**. In 2025 the scheme was extended, with higher loan limits and a UPI-linked credit card.

59. Making the development of Indian cities resilient to climate-related challenges is the main goal under which mission?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 31 Jul 2025, Shift-1]

(a) National Solar Mission
(b) National Mission on Sustainable Habitat
(c) Swachh Bharat Abhiyan
(d) AMRUT Mission

Answer (b) National Mission on Sustainable Habitat

Explanation

The **National Mission on Sustainable Habitat (NMSH)** aims to make cities **climate-resilient and sustainable** through energy-efficient buildings, better urban planning, waste management and public transport. It is one of the **eight missions** of the **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**, launched in **2008**.

The eight NAPCC missions are: Solar, Enhanced Energy Efficiency, Sustainable Habitat, Water, Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, Green India, Sustainable Agriculture, and Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change. The National Solar Mission is about solar power, not city planning.

60. What is the primary objective of the Government of India's 'INSPIRE' programme?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 01 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To promote science education and encourage young talent in science
(b) To strengthen national cyber-security systems
(c) To develop advanced space technologies
(d) To work on nuclear reactor development

Answer (a) To promote science education and encourage young talent in science

Explanation

INSPIRE (Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research), launched in **2008** by the **Department of Science and Technology**, aims to attract bright young students to **science** and keep them in research careers. It offers scholarships for science graduates and fellowships for PhD students and young researchers.

Its school-level component is **INSPIRE–MANAK**, which invites school students (Classes 6–10) to send original ideas and innovations; selected students get support to build models.

61. Which programme focuses on reducing malnutrition and improving nutrition for children, pregnant women and lactating mothers?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 01 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
(b) PM Matru Vandana Yojana
(c) Mid-Day Meal Scheme
(d) Poshan Abhiyaan

Answer (d) Poshan Abhiyaan

Explanation

POSHAN Abhiyaan (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment) was launched on **8 March 2018** at **Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan**, to reduce **stunting, undernutrition, anaemia and low birth weight** among children, pregnant women and lactating mothers.

It now runs as **Mission Poshan 2.0** under the Ministry of Women and Child Development. **September** is celebrated as **Poshan Maah** (Nutrition Month). PM Matru Vandana Yojana gives cash to pregnant women, and the Mid-Day Meal (now PM POSHAN) feeds school children; both are narrower than POSHAN Abhiyaan.

62. Which national programme is designed to prevent and control non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes and hypertension?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 01 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Mission Indradhanush
(b) National Programme for Prevention and Control of NCDs
(c) Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana
(d) National Digital Health Mission

Answer (b) National Programme for Prevention and Control of NCDs

Explanation

The **National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD)**, earlier called **NPCDCS** (started in **2010**), works to prevent, screen and treat **cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and stroke**, through NCD clinics in district hospitals and screening at health centres.

Non-communicable diseases do not spread from person to person and are linked to lifestyle. Mission Indradhanush is about vaccination against infectious diseases, and PM-JAY is about hospital insurance.

63. The PM Vishwakarma scheme is mainly designed to provide financial assistance and skill development to which group?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 01 Aug 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Farmers
(b) Artisans and craftspeople
(c) Street vendors
(d) Women entrepreneurs

Answer (b) Artisans and craftspeople

Explanation

PM Vishwakarma, launched on **17 September 2023** (Vishwakarma Jayanti), supports **artisans and craftspeople** working with their hands and tools in **18 traditional trades**, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, goldsmiths, cobblers, tailors, barbers and boat makers.

Beneficiaries get a **PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card**, skill training with a stipend of **₹500 a day**, a toolkit grant of **₹15,000**, and collateral-free loans of up to **₹3 lakh** (₹1 lakh + ₹2 lakh) at **5%** interest. It is run by the **Ministry of MSME** (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises).

64. What was the main objective of the Antyodaya programme launched in 1977?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 02 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To promote industrial development
(b) To uplift the poorest sections of society
(c) To provide employment to rural youth
(d) To reduce the fiscal deficit

Answer (b) To uplift the poorest sections of society

Explanation

The **Antyodaya** programme was started in **1977** in **Rajasthan** by Chief Minister **Bhairon Singh Shekhawat**. "Antyodaya" means **"rise of the last person"**: it aimed to **uplift the poorest families** in each village first.

The idea comes from the thinking of **Mahatma Gandhi** and **Deendayal Upadhyaya**. It lives on in

schemes such as **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (2000)**, which gives the poorest families **35 kg of foodgrain per month**, and the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana–NRLM** (National Rural Livelihoods Mission) for rural livelihoods.

65. What is the primary objective of the 'Genome India Project'?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Matric), 01 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To improve crop productivity
(b) To map the genetic diversity of India's population
(c) To study rare and endangered animals
(d) To support the development of new vaccines

Answer (b) To map the genetic diversity of India's population

Explanation

The **Genome India Project**, approved in **2020** by the **Department of Biotechnology**, aims to **map the genetic diversity of India's population**. In its first phase it sequenced the genomes of **10,000 healthy Indians** from different communities, and the data was released in **January 2025**.

This reference database will help in understanding genetic diseases common in Indian groups and in developing **personalised medicine**. The project involved about 20 institutions, led by the **Centre for Brain Research at IISc, Bengaluru**.

66. Who officially launched the Ladli Behna Yojana?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 24 Jul 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan
(b) Governor Mangubhai Patel
(c) Prime Minister Narendra Modi
(d) Education Minister Yashodhara Raje Scindia

Answer (a) Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Explanation

The **Mukhyamantri Ladli Behna Yojana** of **Madhya Pradesh** was launched by the then Chief Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** in **2023**. It gives a fixed monthly amount directly into the bank accounts of eligible women; it began at ₹1,000 a month and was later raised to ₹1,250.

Chouhan also started the **Ladli Laxmi Yojana** (2007) for girl children. Ladli Behna became a model for similar women's cash schemes in other states.

67. Who is eligible to avail the benefit of the Ladli Behna Yojana?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 24 Jul 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Women employed in government jobs
(b) Women below 18 years of age
(c) Women belonging to urban families
(d) Women aged 21 years or above

Answer (d) Women aged 21 years or above

Explanation

Under Madhya Pradesh's Ladli Behna Yojana, the benefit goes to **women aged 21 to 60 years** who are residents of MP, including married, widowed, divorced and abandoned women, whose **family income is below ₹2.5 lakh a year**.

Women whose family members pay income tax or hold government jobs are **not eligible**, which rules out option (a). Girls below 18 are covered by a different scheme, **Ladli Laxmi**. The scheme covers both rural and urban women, so option (c) is too narrow.

68. What is the main objective of the 'DISHA' platform set up by the Government of India?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 26 Jul 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Monitoring and coordination of centrally sponsored schemes at the district level
(b) Allocating funds for building rural roads
(c) Providing online training to panchayat representatives
(d) Conducting data surveys of rural households

Answer (a) Monitoring and coordination of centrally sponsored schemes at the district level

Explanation

DISHA stands for **District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee**. Set up in **2016**, these committees **monitor and coordinate central schemes at the district level**, so that schemes of different ministries work together and reach people properly.

Each committee is chaired by the senior-most **Lok Sabha MP** of the district, and the District Collector is its member secretary. A **DISHA dashboard** shows the progress of major schemes for every district.

69. Which ministry is responsible for the implementation of the DISHA scheme?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 26 Jul 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Ministry of Education
(b) Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY)
(c) Ministry of Rural Development
(d) Ministry of Skill Development

Answer (c) Ministry of Rural Development

Explanation

DISHA committees are set up and coordinated by the **Ministry of Rural Development**, because most of the schemes they monitor, such as MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), PMAY-G and PMGSY (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana), are rural development schemes.

MeitY is not the answer: it helped build the DISHA **dashboard** (through the National Informatics Centre), but the scheme itself belongs to the Ministry of Rural Development.

70. What is the eligibility requirement for artisans under the PM Vishwakarma scheme?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 02 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Must work in a government department
(b) Must be engaged in a traditional craft skill
(c) Must earn at least ₹5 lakh per year
(d) Must reside in urban areas

Answer (b) Must be engaged in a traditional craft skill

Explanation

To join PM Vishwakarma, a person must be an artisan or craftsperson **working with hands and tools** in one of the **18 listed traditional trades**, usually a family-based occupation, and must be at least **18 years old**.

Only **one member per family** can benefit, and people in government jobs (and their families) are excluded. The scheme covers both rural and urban artisans, and there is no minimum income condition; in fact it is meant for those with small incomes.

71. Which of the following is a major government scheme that provides free LPG connections to women of BPL families?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 29 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Ujjwala Yojana
(b) Amrit Bharat
(c) Ayushman Bharat
(d) Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

Answer (a) Ujjwala Yojana

Explanation

It is the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** (2016), run by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. The first target of **5 crore** connections was later raised to **8 crore**, and the number of beneficiaries has since crossed 10 crore.

The other names are different schemes: **Amrit Bharat** is linked with railway station redevelopment and trains, **Ayushman Bharat** with health cover, and **Swachh Bharat** with sanitation.

72. Which of the following schemes specifically targets the development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) through focused interventions?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (HSC), 29 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission
(b) Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)
(c) National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)
(d) Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana

Answer (b) Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM JANMAN)

Explanation

PM JANMAN was launched on **15 November 2023** (Janjatiya Gauras Divas, Birsa Munda's birth anniversary) at **Khunti, Jharkhand**, specifically for the **75 PVTGs** spread across 18 states and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It brings housing, roads, drinking water, electricity, health and education to PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group) habitations.

PVTGs are the most vulnerable tribal groups, identified by features such as declining or stagnant population, very low literacy and pre-agricultural technology; **Odisha** has the most PVTGs. The other options are broader schemes not focused on PVTGs.

73. Under the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM), what share of the cost is given as a grant to Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) for farmer drone demonstration projects?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII (Graduate), 29 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) 50%
(b) 75%

(c) 100%
(d) 40%

Answer **(b) 75%**

Explanation

Under SMAM (Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization) guidelines for agricultural drones, **FPOs** get a grant of up to **75% of the cost** of a drone for demonstrations on farmers' fields. Government bodies such as **ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) institutes, Krishi Vigyan Kendras and state agricultural universities** get up to **100%**, which is why 100% can mislead you.

Related scheme: under **Namo Drone Didi** (2023), drones are given to women's self-help groups with up to **80% central assistance**, so they can earn by renting drone services for spraying fertilisers and pesticides.

74. In which year was the Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) programme, aimed at giving rural youth technical and entrepreneurial skills, launched?

[SSC MTS, 09 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) 1969
(b) 1975
(c) 1979
(d) 1985

Answer **(c) 1979**

Explanation

TRYSEM (Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment) was launched on **15 August 1979** to train rural youth aged **18 to 35** from poor families in technical and business skills so that they could become self-employed. It was a part of the **Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)**, which began in 1978–80.

In **1999**, TRYSEM, IRDP and other small schemes were merged into the **Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)**, which in turn became **NRLM (Aajeevika)** in 2011, now called DAY-NRLM.

75. India's 1961 Census recorded 1,652 mother tongues. According to the Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages (SPPEL), how many endangered languages have been identified in India?

[SSC MTS, 11 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) 117
(b) 123
(c) 149
(d) 154

Answer **(a) 117**

Explanation

Under **SPPEL** (Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages), the **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysuru**, has identified **117 endangered languages** for documentation, mostly languages spoken by fewer than 10,000 people. The scheme was launched in **2013** by the Ministry of Education.

The 1961 Census, mentioned in the question, recorded 1,652 mother tongues, the highest ever recorded. Remember the key numbers: **22** languages in the Eighth Schedule, **6 classical languages** earlier and **11** after five more (Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese and Bengali) were added in 2024.

76. In the context of language conservation in India, the abbreviation SPPEL refers to which of the following government initiatives?

[SSC MTS, 12 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages
(b) Special programme for promotion of ethnic languages
(c) Scheme for promoting public education in languages
(d) State programme for conservation of endangered literature

Answer **(a) Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages**

Explanation

SPPEL stands for **Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages**. Launched in **2013**, it documents and archives languages spoken by small communities, recording their grammar, dictionaries and oral traditions before they disappear.

It is carried out by the **Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysuru**. A related international effort is UNESCO's **International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032)**.

77. In which year was the Atal Pension Yojana, aimed at providing pension security to unorganised-sector workers, launched?

[SSC MTS, 18 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) 2012
(b) 2015
(c) 2017
(d) 2019

Answer (b) 2015

Explanation

Atal Pension Yojana (APY) was launched on **9 May 2015** at **Kolkata**, along with two insurance schemes: **PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana** (life cover of ₹2 lakh) and **PM Suraksha Bima Yojana** (accident cover of ₹2 lakh). It replaced the earlier **Swavalamban** scheme.

A subscriber aged **18–40** chooses a guaranteed pension of **₹1,000 to ₹5,000 a month** after 60. It is regulated by **PFRDA** (Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority). Since October 2022, income-tax payers cannot join APY.

78. In which year was the Semicon India programme launched?

[SSC MTS, 19 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) 1999
(b) 2001
(c) 2011
(d) 2021

Answer (d) 2021

Explanation

The **Semicon India programme** was approved in **December 2021** with an outlay of **₹76,000 crore** to build a **semiconductor and display manufacturing** ecosystem in India. Under it, the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** was set up under MeitY.

Major projects include the **Micron** plant at **Sanand** (Gujarat) and the **Tata–PSMC** fab at **Dholera** (Gujarat). India hosts the yearly **SEMICON India** conference, and the first "Made in India" chips were showcased in 2025.

79. The GOBARdhan scheme mainly aims to convert which of the following materials into useful products like biogas and organic manure?

[SSC CPO, 09 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Urban solid waste and sewage
(b) Crop residue and cattle dung
(c) Electronic waste and plastic
(d) Chemical waste from factories

Answer (b) Crop residue and cattle dung

Explanation

GOBARdhan (Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan), launched in **2018**, turns **cattle dung and crop residue** (and other organic farm waste) into **biogas, compressed biogas (CBG) and organic manure**. This keeps villages clean, gives farmers extra income and reduces burning of crop waste.

It is part of the **Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)** under the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The name itself contains "gobar" (cow dung), which is the clue. A unified registration portal for GOBARdhan plants was launched in 2023.

80. In which year was the Fit India Movement launched to encourage physical fitness and a sports-oriented lifestyle in India?

[SSC CPO, 09 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 2016
(b) 2018
(c) 2019
(d) 2021

Answer (c) 2019

Explanation

The **Fit India Movement** was launched by PM Modi on **29 August 2019**, **National Sports Day**, which marks the birth anniversary of hockey legend **Major Dhyan Chand**. It encourages people to make fitness part of daily life.

Related campaigns include the **Fit India Freedom Run**, **Fit India School** certificates and **"Fit India Sundays on Cycle"**. It is separate from **Khelo India** (2018), which develops sports talent and infrastructure.

81. Which of the following initiatives is correctly matched with its objective?

[SSC CPO, 09 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) UDAN – inland waterways
(b) PM-PRANAM – reduction in the use of chemical fertilisers
(c) NBS – expansion of digital banking

(d) NSWS – social welfare schemes

Answer (b) PM-PRANAM – reduction in the use of chemical fertilisers

Explanation

PM-PRANAM – reduction in chemical fertilisers is correct. **PM-PRANAM** (PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth), approved in **2023**, rewards states that cut their use of chemical fertilisers: half of the subsidy saved is given back to the state as a grant.

The other pairs are wrong: **UDAN** is about regional air connectivity, **NBS** is the **Nutrient Based Subsidy** on fertilisers (not banking), and **NSWS** is the **National Single Window System** for investors' business approvals.

82. What is the main objective behind launching e-NAM (electronic National Agriculture Market)?

[SSC CPO, 10 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) To facilitate agricultural exports
(b) To provide insurance coverage to farmers
(c) To create a unified national digital trading platform
(d) To enable direct government procurement of crops

Answer (c) To create a unified national digital trading platform

Explanation

e-NAM, launched on **14 April 2016**, is an online platform that links agricultural **mandis (APMCs)** across India into a **unified national market**, so that farmers can sell to buyers beyond their local mandi and get better prices through transparent online bidding.

It is implemented by the **Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC)** under the Ministry of Agriculture. Over 1,400 mandis are now linked. Its motto is "One Nation, One Market" for farm produce.

83. Which of the following schemes provides insurance protection to farmers in case of crop failure?

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
(b) Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)
(c) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
(d) Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)

Answer (c) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)

Explanation

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), launched in **2016**, gives crop insurance against losses from natural disasters, pests and diseases. Farmers pay a very low premium: **2%** for Kharif crops, **1.5%** for Rabi crops and **5%** for commercial and horticultural crops; the rest is paid by the government.

It replaced the older National Agricultural Insurance Scheme and Modified NAIS. Since 2020 enrolment is **voluntary** for all farmers. Technology such as satellite data and the **YES-TECH** system is used to estimate crop yields.

84. Under the PM Gati Shakti initiative, which agency has been designated as the nodal authority for planning?

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)
(b) Ministry of Finance (MoF)
(c) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)
(d) Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)

Answer (a) Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)

Explanation

The **Logistics Division of DPIIT** (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) is the nodal body for **PM Gati Shakti**. Launched on **13 October 2021**, PM Gati Shakti is a **National Master Plan** on a GIS digital platform that brings together the infrastructure plans of 16+ ministries (roads, railways, ports, airports, gas pipelines, etc.) so projects are planned together.

The platform was built by **BISAG-N** (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics). The related **National Logistics Policy** came in 2022.

85. Under the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), children up to which age group are screened and treated?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Up to 6 years
(b) Up to 12 years

(c) Up to 18 years
(d) Up to 22 years

Answer **(c) Up to 18 years**

Explanation

Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK), launched in **February 2013**, screens children from **birth to 18 years** for the **"4 Ds"**: **Defects at birth, Diseases, Deficiencies, and Developmental delays including disabilities**, and then provides free treatment.

Mobile health teams visit Anganwadi centres and government schools for screening, and **District Early Intervention Centres (DEIC)** handle treatment. RBSK is part of the **National Health Mission**.

86. Under the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), what main service is provided to mothers and newborns?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Free food supply
(b) Paid transport to health centres
(c) Free delivery and C-section (operation) services
(d) Subsidised infant formula

Answer **(c) Free delivery and C-section (operation) services**

Explanation

Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), launched in **June 2011**, entitles every pregnant woman delivering in a **public health facility** to **completely free and cashless delivery**, including **caesarean section**, along with free medicines, tests, blood, diet during stay, and **free transport** from home to hospital and back. Sick newborns up to one year also get free treatment.

It goes with **Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY, 2005)**, which gives cash help to encourage institutional deliveries. "Paid transport" is wrong, because transport under JSSK is free.

87. Which is the largest pan-India scheme launched to strengthen healthcare infrastructure across the country, focusing on primary, secondary and tertiary care?

[SSC CGL, 14 Jul 2023, Shift-1]

(a) LaQshya
(b) AB-PMJAY
(c) PM-ABHIM
(d) PM-MI

Answer **(c) PM-ABHIM**

Explanation

PM-ABHIM (PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission), launched on **25 October 2021** at **Varanasi**, is the largest pan-India scheme to strengthen **health infrastructure** at all three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Its outlay is about **₹64,180 crore** for 2021–26.

It builds critical care blocks, public health labs and disease surveillance capacity, learning from the COVID-19 experience. The other options: **AB-PMJAY** is health insurance (not infrastructure), and **LaQshya** improves the quality of labour rooms and maternity operation theatres.

88. What is the priority area of the AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) mission launched by the Government of India in 2015?

[SSC CGL, 17 Jul 2023, Shift-3]

(a) Water supply followed by sewerage
(b) Electricity and power generation
(c) Primary education for all
(d) Healthcare of urban residents

Answer **(a) Water supply followed by sewerage**

Explanation

The first priority of **AMRUT** (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) is **water supply**, followed by **sewerage and septage management**. Its other areas are storm-water drainage, non-motorised urban transport (footpaths, cycle tracks) and **green spaces and parks**.

AMRUT covered around 500 cities with a population of over one lakh. **AMRUT 2.0** (2021–26) extends tap water to all statutory towns and aims to make cities "water secure".

89. What is the name of the major programme launched in 2005 to address infrastructure gaps in urban India?

[SSC CGL, 19 Jul 2023, Shift-3]

(a) National Urban Livelihood Mission
(b) Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns
(c) Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation

(d) Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission

Answer (d) Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission

Explanation

The **Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)** was launched in **December 2005** as a massive programme to improve infrastructure and basic services in Indian cities, linked with urban reforms.

JNNURM ended in 2014 and was followed in **2015** by **AMRUT** (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation) and the **Smart Cities Mission**. The older **IDSMT** (Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns) scheme (1979–80) was merged into JNNURM. Keep the years apart: **JNNURM 2005, AMRUT 2015**.

90. When was the National Urban Health Mission approved by the Government of India?

[SSC CGL, 20 Jul 2023, Shift-1]

(a) 2014
(b) 2015
(c) 2012
(d) 2013

Answer (d) 2013

Explanation

The **National Urban Health Mission (NUHM)** was approved by the Union Cabinet on **1 May 2013** to meet the health needs of the urban poor, especially slum dwellers, through urban primary health centres and community health workers.

NUHM and the **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM, 2005)** are the two sub-missions of the umbrella **National Health Mission (NHM)**. In cities, the local woman health worker is called **ASHA** (Accredited Social Health Activist), as in villages, along with Mahila Arogya Samitis.

91. In which year was the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana launched?

[SSC CGL, 24 Jul 2023, Shift-1]

(a) 2019
(b) 2015
(c) 2014
(d) 2020

Answer (b) 2015

Explanation

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) was launched on **15 July 2015**, which is observed as **World Youth Skills Day**, along with the **Skill India Mission**. It gives free, short-term skill training and certification to young people to improve their job chances.

PMKVY is run by the **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship** through the **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)**. It has gone through versions 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0, the last focusing on new-age skills like AI and drones.

92. The 'Swachh Bharat Mission' is associated with which public figure?

[SSC CGL, 27 Jul 2023, Shift-2]

(a) Mahatma Gandhi
(b) Jawaharlal Nehru
(c) Vallabhbhai Patel
(d) Lal Bahadur Shastri

Answer (a) Mahatma Gandhi

Explanation

The Swachh Bharat Mission is linked with **Mahatma Gandhi**, who believed that **cleanliness is next to godliness**. It was launched on his birth anniversary, **2 October 2014**, with the aim of a clean India by his **150th birth anniversary (2 October 2019)**.

The mission's logo shows **Gandhi's round spectacles** with the words "Swachh" and "Bharat" in the two lenses, and the tagline **"Ek Kadam Swachhata Ki Or"**. 2 October is also the birth anniversary of **Lal Bahadur Shastri**, which is why some students pick him.



05
CHAPTER

Fairs & Festivals

102 Questions • SSC PYQs

01. **Which festival is known as the "Water Festival" in parts of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam?**

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Losar
(b) Poi Sangken
(c) Eid
(d) Mopin

Answer **(b) Poi Sangken**

Explanation

Poi Sangken is the Buddhist New Year "water festival" of the **Khampti and Singpho** communities of Arunachal Pradesh (Namsai) and Assam. It is celebrated in **April**; people bathe images of the Buddha and sprinkle water on one another as a sign of washing away the old year's sins.

It is similar to **Songkran** of Thailand and Thingyan of Myanmar. **Losar** is the Tibetan New Year, and **Mopin** is the harvest festival of the Galo tribe.

02. **Ganesh Chaturthi, widely celebrated in Maharashtra, is associated with which event?**

[SSC Stenographer, 2025]

(a) Descent of the Ganga
(b) Marriage of Shiva and Parvati
(c) Birth of Lord Ganesha
(d) Krishna's return to Mathura

Answer **(c) Birth of Lord Ganesha**

Explanation

Ganesh Chaturthi celebrates the **birth of Lord Ganesha**. It falls on the fourth day (Chaturthi) of the bright half of **Bhadrapada** (August–September) and lasts up to ten days, ending with **Anant Chaturdashi**, when idols are immersed in water (visarjan).

Bal Gangadhar Tilak turned it into a large **public (sarvajanik) festival in 1893** in Pune to bring people together against British rule. Mumbai's **Lalbaugcha Raja** is one of the most famous pandals.

03. **Which of the following is true about Gudi Padwa?**

1. It marks the beginning of the Hindu New Year according to the lunisolar calendar.
2. "Gudi" refers to a sacred scripture read on this day.
3. Traditionally, the celebration begins by eating sweets.

[SSC Stenographer, 2025]

(a) 1, 2 and 3 are correct
(b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3
(d) Only 1

Answer **(d) Only 1**

Explanation

Only statement 1 is correct. **Gudi Padwa** marks the **Marathi (Hindu lunisolar) New Year** on the first day of **Chaitra**.

Statement 2 is wrong: the **Gudi** is not a scripture but a **decorated pole** topped with an upturned pot and a bright cloth, hoisted outside homes as a sign of victory. Statement 3 is wrong too: the day traditionally begins by eating a bitter-sweet mix of **neem leaves and jaggery**, a reminder that life has both. The same New Year is called **Ugadi** in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

04. **What does the Bihu festival of Assam mark?**

[SSC Stenographer, 2025]

(a) Winter solstice
(b) New harvest
(c) Victory of good over evil
(d) End of monsoon

Answer **(b) New harvest**

Explanation

Bihu is linked with the farming cycle and the **harvest** of Assam. There are three Bihus: **Rongali (Bohag) Bihu** in April, marking the Assamese New Year and the start of sowing; **Kongali (Kati) Bihu** in October, when granaries are nearly empty and lamps are lit in the fields; and **Bhogali (Magh) Bihu** in January, the harvest feast.

Bihu dance, with drums (dhol), pepa (buffalo-horn pipe) and gogona, is the state's most famous folk dance.

05. Which festival is celebrated by the tribal communities of Nagaland and showcases traditional dance and music?

[SSC Stenographer, 2025]

(a) Ugadi
(b) Hornbill Festival
(c) Teej
(d) Onam

Answer (b) Hornbill Festival

Explanation

The **Hornbill Festival** is held every year from **1 to 10 December** at **Kisama Heritage Village** near Kohima, bringing together all the major Naga tribes with their dances, songs, crafts, food and games. It began in **2000** and is called the "**Festival of Festivals**".

It is named after the **hornbill**, a bird that appears in Naga folklore and on traditional headgear. 1 December is also **Nagaland Statehood Day** (1963).

06. Veerampattinam, in Puducherry, is a coastal village associated with which chariot festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Sri Sengazhuneer Amman Temple
(b) Meenakshi Temple
(c) Shore Temple
(d) Brihadeeswarar Temple

Answer (a) Sri Sengazhuneer Amman Temple

Explanation

The fishing village of **Veerampattinam** in Puducherry is known for the **chariot festival of the Sri Sengazhuneer Amman Temple**, held in the Tamil month of **Aadi** (July–August). The Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry traditionally pulls the chariot along with the villagers, a custom said to go back to the French era.

The other temples are in Tamil Nadu: Meenakshi (Madurai), Shore Temple (Mahabalipuram) and Brihadeeswarar (Thanjavur).

07. Read the statements about Bastar's Goncha festival:

1. "Tupki" is a bamboo toy gun that uses Goncha fruit as a pellet.
2. The chariot procession was started by Chalukya rulers.
3. The Rath Yatra begins on Ashadha Shukla Dashami and ends on Dwitiya.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Only 1 and 2
(b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3
(d) 1, 2 and 3 are correct

Answer (a) Only 1 and 2

Explanation

Statements 1 and 2 are correct. At the **Goncha festival** of Jagdalpur (Bastar, Chhattisgarh), people fire a **Tupki**, a toy gun made of bamboo, using the small **Goncha (peng) fruit** as a pellet, as a salute to Lord Jagannath's chariot. The chariot procession was started by the Bastar rulers of the **Chalukya (Kakatiya) dynasty**; King **Purushottam Dev** brought the tradition from Puri around 1408.

Statement 3 has the dates reversed: the Rath Yatra begins on **Ashadha Shukla Dwitiya** and ends on **Dashami**. "Goncha" comes from Puri's **Gundicha** Yatra.

08. The Pongtu festival of the Tutsa tribe of Arunachal Pradesh is mainly celebrated to seek the blessings of which deity?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Donyi-Polo
(b) Rangkhothak
(c) Rangfra
(d) Nyugi-Nyap

Answer (c) Rangfra

Explanation

The **Tutsa** tribe of **Changlang and Tirap districts** celebrates **Pongtu** in April to seek the blessings of **Rangfra (Rangfrah)**, their supreme deity, for a good

harvest, health and prosperity, after the jhum fields are prepared.

Rangfra is also worshipped by the Tangsa and other tribes of the Patkai hills. **Donyi-Polo** (Sun and Moon) is the faith of the Adi, Apatani, Galo and other tribes of central Arunachal.

09. Which statement about Madurai's Chithirai Festival is correct?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) It is celebrated in the Tamil month of Margazhi
(b) Lord Kallazhagar arrives on a golden horse
(c) It is held especially in December
(d) It ends with bull-fighting games

Answer (b) Lord Kallazhagar arrives on a golden horse

Explanation

The highlight of Madurai's **Chithirai Festival** is the arrival of **Lord Kallazhagar** (a form of Vishnu) on a **golden horse**, entering the **Vaigai river** on his way to the wedding of his sister **Meenakshi** with **Sundareswarar** (Shiva). Lakhs of people gather to see it.

The festival is held in the Tamil month of **Chithirai** (April–May), not Margazhi (December–January). It is unusual because it joins Shaiva and Vaishnava traditions. Bull-taming (Jallikattu) belongs to Pongal.

10. In the Nyokum festival, what does the word "Kum" signify?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Land
(b) Purity
(c) Collectivity / gathering
(d) Sacrifice

Answer (c) Collectivity / gathering

Explanation

Nyokum is the main festival of the **Nyishi** tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, celebrated on **26 February**. In the Nyishi language, **"Nyo" means land** and **"Kum" means collectivity or gathering**, so Nyokum means people coming together to worship the land and its deities.

It is held for a good harvest and for the well-being of all. Remember the main Arunachal festivals by tribe: Nyokum (Nyishi), **Solung** (Adi), **Losar** (Monpa), **Dree** (Apatani) and **Mopin** (Galo).

11. During the Jawa festival, what does the offering of a green melon by girls symbolize?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Wealth and long life
(b) Rain and crop yield
(c) Sons and fertility
(d) Marriage and devotion

Answer (c) Sons and fertility

Explanation

Jawa is a festival of **unmarried tribal girls** in Jharkhand, celebrated around the time of **Karam**. The girls grow sprouts (jawa) of barley and other grains in baskets, and offer a **green melon (cucumber)**, which symbolises **children and fertility**, praying for a good future married life with healthy children.

The sprouting seeds themselves stand for growth and fertility, which is why the festival is seen as a fertility ritual. Jawa songs and dances are performed with the Karam celebrations.

12. Which statement about Punjab's Hola Mohalla festival is correct?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) It is mainly celebrated by women in Patiala
(b) Martial arts and langar are showcased at Anandpur Sahib
(c) It is a harvest festival before Diwali
(d) It is celebrated on the same day as Holi

Answer (b) Martial arts and langar are showcased at Anandpur Sahib

Explanation

Hola Mohalla is celebrated at **Anandpur Sahib** (Punjab) with displays of **Sikh martial arts** such as gatka, horse riding and mock battles by the **Nihang Sikhs**, along with huge **langars** (community kitchens).

It was started by **Guru Gobind Singh** in **1701** to train Sikhs in martial skills. It is held on the **day after Holi**, not the same day, which makes option (d) wrong.

13. What best describes the cultural significance of "Mim" in the Mim Kut festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) A rare millet stored for famine
(b) A sacred herb used in tribal healing

(c) The final crop symbolising love and remembrance
(d) A mythical offering meant only for spirits

Answer (c) The final crop symbolising love and remembrance

Explanation

Mim Kut is a festival of **Mizoram**, celebrated in **August–September** after the **maize (mim)** harvest. It is dedicated to the **souls of the departed**: families offer the first and final harvest of maize, bread and vegetables in loving **remembrance** of relatives who have died.

Mizoram's three main "Kut" festivals are **Chapchar Kut** (spring, after clearing jhum), **Mim Kut** (maize harvest, for the dead) and **Pawl Kut** (after the rice harvest).

14. Tripura's Kharchi Puja is associated with the worship of how many deities?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) 12
(b) 14
(c) 15
(d) 16

Answer (b) 14

Explanation

Kharchi Puja is the worship of the **fourteen deities (Chaturdasha Devata)** of Tripura. It is held for seven days in **July** at the Chaturdasha Devata temple in **Old Agartala (Khayerpur)**, and people of all communities take part.

"Kharchi" comes from "khya" (earth): the festival is linked with purifying Mother Earth after her menstruation period, which is observed through a related ritual, **Ama Pechi**. It began as a royal festival of the Tripuri kings and is now organised by the state government.

15. Which of the following best represents the cultural essence of the Dol Mela of Baran, Rajasthan?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) It opens with Dev-viman stunts
(b) Procession of Lord Shriji/Raghunathji on Jal Jhulni Gyaras
(c) It is celebrated only in Madhya Pradesh
(d) It is led by monks in caves

Answer (b) Procession of Lord Shriji/ Raghunathji on Jal Jhulni Gyaras

Explanation

The **Dol Mela** of **Baran** (Rajasthan) is held on **Jal Jhulni Ekadashi (Dol Gyaras)**, in Bhadrapada. Its main event is a grand **procession of Lord Shriji (Raghunathji)**, with decorated **palanquins (dols)** of deities carried to the Dol talab (pond), where they are ceremonially bathed and swung.

The fair lasts several days and is one of the major fairs of the **Hadoti** region. Baran is also home to the **Sahariya** tribe, whose Sitabari fair is another well-known event.

16. What is the name of the festival jointly celebrated by unmarried tribal girls during Karam in Jharkhand?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Jawa
(b) Sohrai
(c) Karma
(d) Madai

Answer (a) Jawa

Explanation

Jawa is the festival of **unmarried girls**, celebrated alongside **Karam** in Jharkhand. The girls sow barley and other seeds in baskets about a week before Karam, care for the sprouts (jawa), and dance and sing around them, praying for fertility and a good future.

The other options are bigger community festivals: **Karma** honours the Karam tree, **Sohrai** (after Diwali) honours cattle and is famous for wall paintings, and **Madai** is a fair of Chhattisgarh.

17. Which of the following best describes the cultural significance of Kanuma in Andhra Pradesh?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Marks the beginning of the monsoon
(b) Honours cattle used in agriculture
(c) Victory of good over evil
(d) Worship of rivers

Answer (b) Honours cattle used in agriculture

Explanation

Kanuma is the **third day** of the Sankranti festival in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, and it **honours cattle** that help farmers in the fields. Cows and bullocks are bathed, decorated and worshipped, and bird and cockfight games are held in some areas.

The four days of Telugu Sankranti are **Bhogi, Makar Sankranti, Kanuma and Mukkanuma**. In Tamil Nadu the cattle day of Pongal is called **Mattu Pongal**, and in Maharashtra and MP bullocks are honoured at **Pola**.

18. Which of the following best describes the main ritual of the Phagli festival in Pattan Valley?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) A "Baraza" decorated with marigolds symbolising Shikara-Appa
(b) It includes symbolic ploughing again
(c) A totem is placed on rooftops
(d) A Kyari sweet prepared by elderly women

Answer (a) A "Baraza" decorated with marigolds symbolising Shikara-Appa

Explanation

Phagli is a late-winter festival of the **Pattan Valley** in **Lahaul** (Himachal Pradesh), celebrated around February as a new-year festival. Its main ritual is the **"Baraza"**, a decorated bunch or structure covered with **marigold flowers**, which represents the local goddess **Shikara Apa**, the protector of the valley and its crops.

Families visit each other, offer prayers for a good year, and prepare special foods. Phagli is also celebrated in parts of Kullu, where it is known for its masked dances.

19. Fill in the blank: Tusu festival is mainly celebrated in Jharkhand's tribal belt, especially around _____ and Raidih.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Dumka
(b) Bundu
(c) Daltonganj
(d) Chaibasa

Answer (b) Bundu

Explanation

Tusu Parab is a harvest festival celebrated at **Makar Sankranti** (mid-January) in the **Panch Pargana** region of Jharkhand, around **Bundu**, Tamar and Raidih, and also in parts of West Bengal and Odisha. Unmarried girls make colourful paper-and-bamboo structures called **chaudal**, sing Tusu songs and immerse them in rivers at the end.

Tusu is worshipped as a young girl goddess linked with the new harvest. It is mainly a festival of the Kurmi and other communities of the region.

20. Which statement uniquely identifies the symbolic element that links Teej with both nature and mythology?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Teej is a public holiday
(b) It refers to the Moon goddess
(c) Its name comes from a small red insect
(d) The swing represents the lunar cycle

Answer (c) Its name comes from a small red insect

Explanation

The name **Teej** is linked with a small **red velvet insect** (the red velvet mite, called "teej" or "birbahuti") that appears on the ground at the start of the **monsoon**. This links the festival with nature (the rains), while its mythology celebrates the **union of Shiva and Parvati**.

Women fast, wear green, apply mehndi and enjoy swings for marital happiness. The main Teej festivals are **Hariyali Teej** (Shravan), **Kajari Teej** and **Hartalika Teej** (Bhadrapada). Jaipur's Teej procession is famous.

21. Bhagoria festival begins seven days before which Hindu festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Diwali
(b) Holika Dahan
(c) Navratri
(d) Makar Sankranti

Answer (b) Holika Dahan

Explanation

Bhagoria is a festival of the **Bhil and Bhilala** tribes of western Madhya Pradesh (**Jhabua, Alirajpur, Dhar, Khargone**), held as weekly-market fairs during the **seven days before Holika Dahan**, at the end of the harvest season.

It is known for colourful dress, the **mandal (drum)**, dances and joyful gatherings of young people. The popular belief that it is mainly a "marriage market" is often described as exaggerated; for the community it is a festival of harvest and joy.

22. Which of the following best describes the essence of Uttarakhand's Bissu Mela?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) A three-day martial-arts event
(b) A week-long Jaunsari tribal fair in Chakrata
(c) A pilgrimage associated with the Pandavas
(d) A fasting-based fair

Answer (b) A week-long Jaunsari tribal fair in Chakrata

Explanation

Bissu Mela is a spring fair of the **Jaunsari** tribe of the **Jaunsar-Bawar** region, around **Chakrata** (Dehradun district) in Uttarakhand. Held in **April** around Baisakhi, it celebrates the harvest and the arrival of spring with folk dances, songs and archery-like games, over several days.

The Jaunsari people are known for their distinct culture and once followed polyandry; they trace their traditions to the Pandavas, which explains option (c) as a distractor. Bissu is also celebrated in nearby parts of Himachal Pradesh.

23. Fill in the blank: In Naga folklore, the hornbill symbolises courage and _____.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Vision
(b) Memory
(c) Grandeur
(d) Peace

Answer (c) Grandeur

Explanation

In Naga folklore the **hornbill** stands for **courage and grandeur**. Its feathers are worn on traditional **headgear** as a sign of bravery and honour, and its image appears in Naga art and dances.

That is why Nagaland's biggest festival, held from 1 to 10 December at Kisama near Kohima, is named the **Hornbill Festival**. The **Great Hornbill** is also the state bird of **Arunachal Pradesh and Kerala**.

24. Fill in the blank: Ladakhi New Year (Losar) is welcomed with a symbolic flour model of a _____.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Ibex
(b) Yak
(c) Snow leopard
(d) Buddha

Answer (a) Ibex

Explanation

During **Losar**, the Ladakhi New Year (celebrated around December–January according to the Tibetan lunar calendar), families make small **dough (flour) figures of the ibex** and place them in the kitchen and at shrines. The ibex is a symbol of good luck and plenty, and the custom is believed to have pre-Buddhist roots.

Losar also includes lighting fires, visiting monasteries and the **Metho** procession with torches to drive away evil spirits. Ladakh's Losar falls earlier than Tibetan Losar.

25. During Nuakhai in Odisha, Nabanna (new rice) is first offered to which deity?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Maa Samaleswari
(b) Maa Mangala
(c) Maa Bhuvaneshwari
(d) Maa Budhi Thakurani

Answer (a) Maa Samaleswari

Explanation

Nuakhai ("nua" = new, "khai" = eating) is the harvest festival of **western Odisha**, celebrated a day after Ganesh Chaturthi. The first grains of the new rice crop (**nabanna**) are offered to **Maa Samaleswari**, the presiding deity of **Sambalpur**, at an auspicious time, and only then do families eat it.

It is followed by **Nuakhai Juhar**, when younger members touch the feet of elders and people greet one another. The festival is also celebrated in nearby parts of Chhattisgarh.

26. Which traditional drink is shared during the Solung festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Soma
(b) Apong
(c) Thukpa

(d) Chhang

Answer **(b) Apong**

Explanation

Apong, a traditional **rice beer**, is shared during **Solung**, the main agricultural festival of the **Adi** tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, celebrated in early **September** after sowing, for a good harvest and the welfare of animals.

Apong is part of almost every Adi and Mising ritual. **Chhang** is the barley beer of Ladakh and Sikkim, and **Thukpa** is a noodle soup, not a drink. The Adi women perform the **Ponung** dance during Solung.

27. The Kambala festival of coastal Karnataka is associated with what?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Temple fairs
(b) Classical music
(c) Buffalo race
(d) Tribal ritual

Answer **(c) Buffalo race**

Explanation

Kambala is a traditional **buffalo race** held in slushy paddy fields in the **Tulu Nadu** region (Dakshina Kannada and Udupi) of coastal Karnataka, from **November to March**. Pairs of buffaloes are driven by a farmer running behind them, and it began as a thanksgiving to gods for a good harvest.

After the Supreme Court's 2014 ban on animal sports, Karnataka passed a law in **2017** to allow Kambala with safeguards.

28. Kharchi festival is mainly associated with what?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Worship of Tripura's rulers
(b) Worship of indigenous tribal deities
(c) Commemoration of Tripura attaining statehood
(d) Worship of river goddess Yamuna

Answer **(b) Worship of indigenous tribal deities**

Explanation

Kharchi Puja is the worship of the **fourteen deities (Chaturdasha Devata)** of the indigenous Tripuri people. During the festival the deities are taken to the river **Saidra (Haora)** for a holy bath and brought back to the temple at Khayerpur, Old Agartala.

It started as a royal festival of the Manikya kings, which is why option (a) is not the answer: the kings organised it, but the worship is of the deities, not the rulers. Tripura became a full state in **1972**.

29. At Hemis, the sacred masked dances represent various _____ of the Drukpa lineage.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Ancient lamas
(b) Ancient kings
(c) Guardian deities
(d) Ancestral spirits

Answer **(c) Guardian deities**

Explanation

At the **Hemis Festival (Hemis Tsechu)** in Ladakh, monks perform the sacred **Cham** masked dances, which represent the **guardian (protector) deities** of the Drukpa lineage and the victory of good over evil. The festival marks the birth anniversary of **Guru Padmasambhava** and is held in the Tibetan month of Tse-chu (June–July).

Hemis Monastery, founded in the 17th century, is the largest and richest monastery in Ladakh. Every 12 years a giant **thangka** of Padmasambhava is displayed there.

30. Which Kodava harvest festival includes the chant "Poli, Poli, Deva"?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Kambala
(b) Kailpodh
(c) Puthari
(d) Onam

Answer **(c) Puthari**

Explanation

Puthari ("new rice") is the harvest festival of the **Kodava** people of **Kodagu (Coorg)**, Karnataka, held in November–December. As the first sheaves of paddy are cut, people chant **"Poli, Poli, Deva"** ("increase, increase, O God"), invoking **Lord Igguthappa**, the Kodava deity of rain and harvest.

Don't confuse it with **Kailpodh**, the Kodava festival of arms in September, when weapons are worshipped, or with **Kaveri Sankramana**, which marks the river Kaveri's origin at Talakaveri.

31. Which option reflects the symbolic roots of the Jawa festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Return of spirits
(b) Honouring forest spirits
(c) Fertility ritual with sprouted seeds
(d) Appeasing the rain god

Answer (c) Fertility ritual with sprouted seeds

Explanation

Jawa has its roots in a **fertility ritual**: unmarried girls sow barley, maize and other seeds in a basket and nurse the **sprouts (jawa)** for about a week. The healthy growth of the sprouts symbolises fertility, growth and a happy future life.

The sprouts are later offered during **Karam** worship. Similar seed-sprouting rituals are seen in **Navratri's "jaware/khetri"** and in the Gangaur festival of Rajasthan.

32. The earliest recorded origin of the Bonalu festival is linked to an outbreak of which disease?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Smallpox
(b) Cholera
(c) Plague
(d) Malaria

Answer (c) Plague

Explanation

Bonalu is the folk festival of **Telangana**, celebrated in **Ashada** (June–July) in honour of **Goddess Mahakali** and her forms (Yellamma, Pochamma, etc.). Its popular origin story traces it to a **plague epidemic in 1869** in Hyderabad and Secunderabad, after which people offered prayers to the goddess for protection.

Women carry **bonam** (cooked rice with milk and jaggery) in decorated pots on their heads to the temple. It was declared a **state festival** of Telangana in 2014. Famous venues include the Golconda fort and the Ujjaini Mahankali temple, Secunderabad.

33. Which option reflects a distinctive cultural feature of the Salhesh festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Harvest ceremony
(b) Dramatic retelling of legends by the Bhagat
(c) Boat chant
(d) Sword dance

Answer (b) Dramatic retelling of legends by the Bhagat

Explanation

The **Salhesh** festival of the **Mithila** region (Bihar) honours **Raja Salhesh**, a folk hero and protector deity of the **Dusadh** community. Its distinctive feature is the **dramatic retelling of his legends by the "Bhagat"** (priest-singer), who goes into a trance and narrates the hero's deeds through song and performance.

Salhesh is also a popular subject of **Madhubani paintings**. The festival is held in mid-April, and the stories present Salhesh as a brave guardian who protected people from wrongdoers.

34. Fill in the blank: In Dhar, the ceremonial procession of Bhagwan Dharnath is called _____.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 25 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Jhanki
(b) Chhabina
(c) Rath
(d) Sawari

Answer (b) Chhabina

Explanation

In **Dhar** (Madhya Pradesh), the ceremonial procession of **Baba Dharnath** (a form of Shiva worshipped as the city's protector) is locally called the **"Chhabina"**. The deity's image is carried in a palanquin from the **Dhareshwar Mahadev Temple** around the city, traditionally by members of the Majhi community, with a police guard of honour and flower showers along the route.

"Sawari" can mislead you, because the famous procession of Lord Mahakal in nearby **Ujjain** is called the **Mahakal Sawari**. Dhar was the capital of the **Paramara** king **Raja Bhoj**.

35. Which tribal community celebrates the Wangala festival?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Bodo
(b) Khasi
(c) Mizo
(d) Garo

Answer (d) Garo

Explanation

Wangala is the harvest festival of the **Garo** tribe of **Meghalaya**, held in **November** to thank **Misi Saljong** (Pattigipa Ra'rongipa), the Sun god of fertility, for a good harvest. Because of the many drums (dama) played together, it is called the "**Festival of 100 Drums**", held near Tura.

Meghalaya's other tribes have their own festivals: the **Khasi** celebrate **Shad Suk Mynsiem** and **Nongkrem**, and the **Jaintia (Pnar)** celebrate **Behdienkhlam**.

36. During which festival does the Wancho tribe perform a war dance?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 25 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Hornbill
(b) Chalo Loku
(c) Oriah
(d) Ojiyele

Answer (c) Oriah

Explanation

The **Wancho** tribe of **Longding** district, Arunachal Pradesh, performs its famous **war dance** during **Oriah**, their main festival, celebrated on **16 February**. It invokes the blessings of the deity **Rang** for a good harvest and is marked by animal sacrifices, feasts and dances around a ceremonial pole.

The Wancho are culturally Naga and are known for their wood carving and facial tattoos. **Chalo Loku** is the festival of the neighbouring **Nocte** tribe, and the Hornbill Festival belongs to Nagaland.

37. The "Phool Dei" festival is unique to which region?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Deccan Plateau
(b) Malwa Plateau
(c) Kumaon Hills
(d) Western Ghats

Answer (c) Kumaon Hills

Explanation

Phool Dei is a spring festival of the **Kumaon and Garhwal hills** of Uttarakhand, celebrated on the first day of **Chaitra** (mid-March). Young girls go from house to house, placing fresh flowers and rice on the doorsteps and singing "**Phool Dei, Chhamma Dei**", wishing the family prosperity; in return they receive sweets and gifts.

The flowers used are mostly the yellow **Phyonli**, rhododendron (**buransh**) and other spring blooms. It is a festival that welcomes spring and the new year in the hills.

38. The Garia carnival is organised under the guidance of which person?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Ochai
(b) Lama
(c) Ojha
(d) Doloi

Answer (a) Ochai

Explanation

Garia Puja is a festival of the **Tripuri and Reang** tribes of Tripura, held in **April** after the Bengali New Year, worshipping **Baba Garia** for good crops, health and the welfare of children. The rituals are performed under the guidance of the **Ochai**, the traditional tribal **priest**.

The Garia dance, performed with drums and flutes during the festival, is one of Tripura's best-known folk dances. The Ochai also leads the Kharchi and Ker pujas.

39. In which state is the Phool Dei festival mainly celebrated?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Himachal Pradesh
(b) Jammu and Kashmir
(c) Uttarakhand
(d) Assam

Answer (c) Uttarakhand

Explanation

Phool Dei is mainly celebrated in **Uttarakhand**. On the first day of Chaitra, children decorate doorsteps with flowers and rice and sing blessings, and households prepare a special pudding called **"sayei"** from rice, jaggery and curd.

Uttarakhand has several such seasonal festivals: **Harela** (July, greenery), **Ghee Sankranti / Olgia** (August), **Ghughutia** (Makar Sankranti in Kumaon) and Phool Dei (spring).

40. In Madhya Pradesh, the Pola festival is dedicated to what?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Cow worship
(b) Prayer for rain
(c) Bullock worship
(d) Sale of crops

Answer (c) Bullock worship

Explanation

Pola is a festival dedicated to **bullocks (oxen)**, celebrated by farmers in **Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh** on the new-moon day (**Pithori Amavasya**) of **Shravan/Bhadrapada** (August–September). Bullocks are given rest, bathed, painted, decorated and fed special food in thanks for their work in the fields.

In Chhattisgarh, children play with clay bullocks on this day. The cattle-honouring days of other states are **Mattu Pongal** (Tamil Nadu) and **Kanuma** (Andhra Pradesh).

41. Consider the following statements about Karma:

1. It honours the Karam tree.
2. The drum associated with it is the "Madal".

Which statement(s) is/are correct?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Only 1 is correct
(b) Only 2 is correct
(c) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (c) Both 1 and 2 are correct

Explanation

Both statements are correct. **Karma (Karam)**, celebrated in **Bhadrapada** by tribes of **Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal** (Oraon, Munda, Ho and others), **honours the Karam tree**, a symbol of fertility, prosperity and good fortune. A branch of the tree is planted in the village courtyard (akhra) and worshipped.

The Karma dance is performed through the night to the beat of the **Madal (Mandar)** drum and other instruments. It is one of Jharkhand's most important festivals, along with **Sarhul** (spring) and **Sohrai**.

42. Fill in the blank: In Madhya Pradesh, unmarried girls place lamps inside a _____ during Gangaur.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Kalash
(b) Ghudliya
(c) Matki
(d) Deepdan

Answer (b) Ghudliya

Explanation

During **Gangaur**, unmarried girls carry a **ghudliya (ghudlya)**, an earthen pot with many small holes, with a lamp burning inside it, from house to house while singing songs; people give them sweets, money or oil in return. The light shining through the holes makes it look like a pot of stars.

Gangaur, celebrated in **Chaitra** in **Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat**, honours **Gauri (Parvati)** and Shiva (Gan). Married women pray for their husbands' long life and unmarried girls for a good husband. Jaipur's Gangaur procession is the most famous.

43. Wangala festival is associated with which tribe?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Garo
(b) Bhotia
(c) Warli
(d) Nyishi

Answer (a) Garo

Explanation

Wangala belongs to the **Garo** tribe of Meghalaya. It is a post-harvest thanksgiving to the Sun god **Saljong**, held in October–November. The **100 Drums Wangala Festival** at Asanang near **Tura** (West Garo Hills) is its grand public celebration.

The other tribes belong elsewhere: **Bhotia** (Uttarakhand and Sikkim), **Warli** (Maharashtra, famous for Warli painting) and **Nyishi** (Arunachal Pradesh, Nyokum festival).

44. Which statement about Pongal is correct?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Thai Pongal honours cattle
(b) Mattu Pongal involves decorating cattle
(c) Pongal fair hosts kite flying

(d) Jallikattu is held on Bhogi day

Answer (b) Mattu Pongal involves decorating cattle

Explanation

On **Mattu Pongal**, the third day, **cattle are bathed, their horns painted and decorated** with bells and garlands, and worshipped. The four days of Pongal in Tamil Nadu (mid-January) are:

- **Bhogi** – old things are burnt to welcome the new
- **Thai Pongal** – the main day, honouring the **Sun God**; rice is boiled with milk and jaggery until it overflows
- **Mattu Pongal** – honouring cattle; **Jallikattu** (bull-taming) is held around this day
- **Kaanum Pongal** – visiting relatives and outings

So options (a) and (d) put the events on the wrong day. Kite flying is linked with **Uttarayan** in Gujarat.

45. In which state is the Manimahesh Mela held?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Kerala
(b) Himachal Pradesh
(c) Tamil Nadu
(d) Assam

Answer (b) Himachal Pradesh

Explanation

The **Manimahesh Yatra and Mela** is held in the **Chamba** district of **Himachal Pradesh**, in August–September (from Janmashtami to Radhashtami). Pilgrims trek from **Bharmour** to the sacred **Manimahesh Lake** at the foot of **Mount Kailash (Manimahesh Kailash)** to take a holy dip.

The region is home to the **Gaddi** shepherd community, who consider Manimahesh the abode of Lord Shiva. Chamba's other famous fair is the **Minjar Mela**.

46. The Guruvayur festival is native to which state?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Kerala
(b) Gujarat
(c) Assam
(d) Tripura

Answer (a) Kerala

Explanation

The **Guruvayur Utsavam** is held at the famous **Sri Krishna Temple** at **Guruvayur** in **Thrissur district, Kerala**, in February–March, lasting ten days. It begins with the **Aanayottam**, an elephant race in which the winning elephant gets to carry the deity's idol during the festival.

The temple, often called the "**Dwarka of the South**", keeps one of the largest groups of captive elephants at Punnathur Kotta. Thrissur is also home to the famous **Thrissur Pooram**.

47. In which state is the Gaan-Ngai festival celebrated?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Kerala
(b) Manipur
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Andhra Pradesh

Answer (b) Manipur

Explanation

Gaan-Ngai is the main festival of the **Zeliangrong** Naga people (Zeme, Liangmai and Rongmei) of **Manipur**, as well as parts of Assam and Nagaland. It is celebrated in **December–January**, after the harvest, for five days.

It marks the end of the harvest and the start of a new year, and includes the lighting of a new fire, offerings to the Supreme God, feasts, and dances by young people. Other Manipur festivals include **Lai Haraoba**, **Cheiraoba** (Manipuri New Year) and **Lui-Ngai-Ni**.

48. In which state is the Raja festival celebrated?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 2025]

(a) Nagaland
(b) Gujarat
(c) Karnataka
(d) Odisha

Answer (d) Odisha

Explanation

Raja Parba is a three-day festival of **Odisha**, celebrated in mid-June at the start of the monsoon. It celebrates **womanhood and Mother Earth (Bhudevi)**: it is believed that the Earth goes through her menstrual cycle during these days, so no ploughing or digging is done.

The three days are **Pahili Raja, Mithuna Sankranti (Raja Sankranti) and Basi Raja**, followed by Vasumati Snana. Girls wear new clothes, play on swings and eat **poda pitha**. A similar idea is seen in Assam's **Ambubachi Mela** at Kamakhya.

49. Which of the following cities is NOT one of the traditional venues of the Kumbh Mela?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Haridwar
(b) Nashik
(c) Ujjain
(d) Varanasi

Answer (d) Varanasi

Explanation

Varanasi is not a Kumbh venue. The four places are **Prayagraj** (Sangam), **Haridwar** (Ganga), **Ujjain** (Shipra) and **Nashik** (Godavari), where drops of amrit are believed to have fallen during the Samudra Manthan.

The timing depends on the positions of **Jupiter (Brihaspati)**, the Sun and the Moon. A Kumbh comes to each place roughly every 12 years, an **Ardh Kumbh** every 6 years at Prayagraj and Haridwar, and a **Maha Kumbh** after 144 years, like the one at Prayagraj in 2025.

Trick for the four Kumbh cities: **PHUN** → Prayagraj, Haridwar, Ujjain, Nashik.

50. In which state is the Shad Suk Mynsiem festival celebrated?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Ladakh
(b) Meghalaya
(c) Assam
(d) Gujarat

Answer (b) Meghalaya

Explanation

Shad Suk Mynsiem ("dance of the joyful heart") is a spring festival of the **Khasi** people of **Meghalaya**, held in **April** in Shillong. Young unmarried women in rich traditional dress and jewellery dance in the inner circle, while men dance around them holding swords and whisks, to thank God for the harvest and pray for the next one.

Other Khasi festivals include **Nongkrem** (Smit, autumn). Meghalaya's Garo celebrate **Wangala**, and the Jaintia celebrate **Behdienkhlam**.

51. In which state is the Nagaur Mela held?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Rajasthan
(b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Punjab
(d) Bihar

Answer (a) Rajasthan

Explanation

The **Nagaur Cattle Fair** (Ramdev Pashu Mela) is held every year in **Nagaur, Rajasthan**, in January–February (Magh). It is one of the **largest cattle fairs in India**, where thousands of bullocks, camels and horses, especially the famous **Nagauri bullocks** and Marwari horses, are traded.

It also features camel races, cock fights, tug of war and folk music. Rajasthan's other big animal fair is the **Pushkar Mela** (Kartik, camel fair) in Ajmer district.

52. In West Bengal, Durga Puja begins with which event?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Mahalaya
(b) Navami
(c) Dashami
(d) Poila Baisakh

Answer (a) Mahalaya

Explanation

Mahalaya, the new-moon day that ends **Pitru Paksha**, marks the beginning of the Durga Puja season. It is believed that Goddess Durga starts her journey to earth on this day. In Bengal, people wake before dawn to listen to the radio programme **"Mahishasuramardini"**, recited by **Birendra Krishna Bhadra**.

The main days are **Shashthi, Saptami, Ashtami, Navami** and **Vijaya Dashami**, when idols are immersed. **Durga Puja in Kolkata** was added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in **2021**. Poila Baisakh is the Bengali New Year.

53. The Vettucaud festival celebrated in Kerala is associated with which religious community?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Hindu
(b) Jain
(c) Christian
(d) Muslim

Answer (c) Christian

Explanation

The **Vettucaud festival** is held at the **Madre de Deus Church** at **Vettucaud**, a coastal area of **Thiruvananthapuram**, so it belongs to the **Christian** community. Its main event is the feast of **Christ the King** in November, which draws pilgrims of all faiths.

The church is linked with the arrival of **St. Francis Xavier** on the Travancore coast in the 16th century. Kerala's Christian festivals also include the feast at **Malayattoor** and Easter celebrations; its Muslim festivals include **Beemapally Uroos**.

54. In which state is the Chhapar Mela held?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Punjab
(b) Jharkhand
(c) Tamil Nadu
(d) Goa

Answer (a) Punjab

Explanation

The **Chhapar Mela** is held every year in September at **Chhapar village** in **Ludhiana district, Punjab**, in honour of **Gugga Pir (Gugga Zahar Pir)**, a folk deity worshipped for protection from snakebites. Devotees offer prayers and clay at the shrine.

It is one of Punjab's largest rural fairs, known for folk music, bhangra, giddha and political conferences. Punjab's other well-known fairs include **Jor Mela** (Fatehgarh Sahib) and **Maghi Mela** (Sri Muktsar Sahib).

55. In which Indian state is the Kandali festival celebrated?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Goa
(b) Maharashtra
(c) West Bengal
(d) Uttarakhand

Answer (d) Uttarakhand

Explanation

The **Kandali festival** is celebrated by the **Rung (Shauka)** community in the **Chaundas valley of Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand**. It is held only **once every 12 years**, when the **Kandali plant (Strobilanthes)** blooms, and commemorates the community's victory over invaders in the past.

Women and men in traditional dress march to the Kandali bushes and symbolically destroy them with swords and sticks, as a reminder to stay alert against enemies. It is linked with the region near the Kailash–Mansarovar route.

56. In which Indian state is the Dhamoni Urs Mela held?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) West Bengal
(b) Maharashtra
(c) Odisha
(d) Madhya Pradesh

Answer (d) Madhya Pradesh

Explanation

The **Dhamoni Urs** is held at **Dhamoni** in the **Sagar district** of **Madhya Pradesh**, at the shrine (mazaar) of a revered **Sufi saint**, every year. People of all faiths visit, making it a symbol of communal harmony.

Other big Urs in India include those of Ajmer Sharif (Rajasthan) and Haji Ali (Mumbai).

57. In which city is the Tulip Festival celebrated?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Srinagar
(b) Patna
(c) Kolkata
(d) Mumbai

Answer (a) Srinagar

Explanation

The **Tulip Festival** is held every spring (March–April) in **Srinagar** at the **Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden**, on the foothills of the **Zabarwan range** overlooking **Dal Lake**. It is **Asia's largest**

tulip garden, with lakhs of tulips of dozens of varieties.

The festival is organised by the J&K tourism and floriculture departments to promote tourism.

58. Which religious community in India celebrates Navroz?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Sikh
(b) Parsi
(c) Muslim
(d) Buddhist

Answer (b) Parsi

Explanation

Navroz (Nowruz, "new day") is the New Year of the **Parsi** (Zoroastrian) community. In India it is celebrated in **August** as per the **Shahenshahi** calendar, which is why it is also called **Jamshedi Navroz** in honour of the Persian king Jamshed; elsewhere in the world Nowruz falls on the spring equinox (around 21 March).

Parsis visit the **fire temple (Agiary)**, wear new clothes and prepare dishes like **sali boti** and **falooda**. Nowruz is on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

59. In Mathura, the Ras Lila performance is part of which festival?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Holi
(b) Diwali
(c) Raksha Bandhan
(d) Chhath Puja

Answer (a) Holi

Explanation

In the **Braj** region (Mathura, Vrindavan, Barsana, Nandgaon), **Holi** is celebrated for many days with **Ras Lila** performances that enact the playful love of **Radha and Krishna**. Braj Holi includes the famous **Lathmar Holi** of Barsana and Nandgaon, the **Phoolon wali Holi** of Vrindavan and the Huranga at Dauji.

Ras Lila is also staged on Janmashtami, but among the options given, Holi is the festival linked with it. Kathak dance and the Raslila tradition of Manipur also draw from these stories.

60. In which Indian state/Union Territory is the Veerampattinam festival celebrated?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Kerala
(b) Puducherry
(c) Telangana
(d) Lakshadweep

Answer (b) Puducherry

Explanation

Veerampattinam is a fishing village in **Puducherry**, famous for the annual **chariot festival** of the **Sri Sengazhuneer Amman Temple** in the Tamil month of Aadi (July–August), in which the Lieutenant Governor helps pull the chariot.

Puducherry is a Union Territory made of four separate parts: **Puducherry** and **Karaikal** (Tamil Nadu coast), **Mahe** (Kerala coast) and **Yanam** (Andhra coast). It celebrates **De Jure Transfer Day** on 16 August and **Liberation Day** on 1 November.

61. Jivati Puja, performed by married women to worship Goddess Parvati, is popular in which state?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Assam
(b) Jharkhand
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Himachal Pradesh

Answer (c) Maharashtra

Explanation

Jivati Puja is performed in **Maharashtra** on the Fridays of the month of **Shravan** (July–August). Married women worship **Jivati Devi**, a form of Parvati, praying for the long life and good health of their children; a picture of the goddess is pasted on the wall and worshipped.

Shravan in Maharashtra is full of such women's rituals, including **Mangala Gaur** (for newly married women) and **Nag Panchami**. Similar vows for children's well-being are seen in other states, such as Jitiya (Bihar).

62. Which Kerala festival entered the Guinness World Records for the largest single gathering of women for a religious activity?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) Chikkara Kali
(b) Pooram
(c) Vishu

(d) Attukal Pongala

Answer (d) Attukal Pongala

Explanation

Attukal Pongala at the **Attukal Bhagavathy Temple** in **Thiruvananthapuram** entered the Guinness World Records (in **1997**, and again in **2009** with about 25 lakh women) as the **largest gathering of women for a religious activity**. The temple is often called the "**Sabarimala of Women**".

On Pongala day in February–March, lakhs of women cook **pongala** (rice with jaggery and coconut) in earthen pots on the streets of the city as an offering to the goddess. **Thrissur Pooram** is known for elephants, and **Vishu** is the Malayali New Year.

63. Which statement about the Dungri Festival of Himachal Pradesh is correct?

[SSC CHSL, 2025]

(a) It is celebrated in honour of Hidimba Devi, wife of Bhima
(b) It is dedicated to the goddess of wealth
(c) It marks the beginning of the Tibetan year
(d) It is celebrated in honour of Lord Shiva

Answer (a) It is celebrated in honour of Hidimba Devi, wife of Bhima

Explanation

The **Dhungri (Dungri) Festival** is held in **May** at the **Hidimba Devi Temple** in the Dhungri forest of **Manali**, Kullu district, in honour of **Hidimba Devi**, who in the Mahabharata is the wife of **Bhima** and mother of **Ghatotkacha**. It coincides with her birthday.

The pagoda-style wooden temple was built in **1553** by Raja **Bahadur Singh**. Hidimba is also the family deity of the Kullu royal family, and during **Kullu Dussehra** her palanquin must arrive before the celebrations can begin.

64. Which Indian festival marks Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya after 14 years of exile?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Holi
(b) Navratri
(c) Diwali
(d) Dussehra

Answer (c) Diwali

Explanation

Diwali celebrates Lord Rama's **return to Ayodhya** with Sita and Lakshmana after 14 years of exile and his victory over Ravana; the people of Ayodhya lit rows of lamps (**deepavali**) to welcome him. It falls on the new-moon night of **Kartik** (October–November).

Dussehra is not the answer: it celebrates Rama's **victory over Ravana**, about 20 days before Diwali. Diwali also marks Lakshmi Puja and, for Jains, the nirvana of **Mahavira**.

65. Holi is popularly known as the festival of what?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Lights
(b) Colours
(c) Harvest
(d) Peace

Answer (b) Colours

Explanation

Holi is the **festival of colours**, celebrated on the full-moon day of **Phalgun** (March). The night before, **Holika Dahan** is held, recalling the story of **Prahlad**, who was saved while his aunt Holika burnt, a victory of devotion over evil.

It also welcomes spring and the ripening of the rabi crop. Regional forms include **Lathmar Holi** (Barsana), **Dol Jatra / Basanta Utsav** (West Bengal), **Yaosang** (Manipur), **Hola Mohalla** (Punjab) and **Baithaki Holi** (Kumaon). Diwali is the festival of lights.

66. Navreh is mainly celebrated by which of the following communities?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Dogras of Jammu
(b) Kashmiri Pandits
(c) Ladakhi Buddhists
(d) Gujjars of Kashmir

Answer (b) Kashmiri Pandits

Explanation

Navreh is the **New Year of Kashmiri Pandits**, celebrated on the first day of the bright half of **Chaitra** (March–April), the same day as Gudi Padwa and Ugadi elsewhere. The word comes from the Sanskrit "nava varsha" (new year).

On the night before, a **thali** is prepared with rice, a new almanac (jantri), walnuts, flowers, a mirror, a pen and money, and it is the first thing family members see on waking up. **Zyeth Atham** (Kheer Bhawani) is another important Kashmiri Pandit festival.

67. Navratri is associated with the worship of whom?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Lord Shiva
(b) Lord Vishnu
(c) Goddess Durga
(d) Lord Krishna

Answer (c) Goddess Durga

Explanation

Navratri ("nine nights") is devoted to **Goddess Durga** and her **nine forms (Navadurga)**: Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skandamata, Katyayani, Kalaratri, Mahagauri and Siddhidatri. It celebrates her victory over the demon **Mahishasura**.

The main **Sharad Navratri** (September–October) ends with **Vijaya Dashami (Dussehra)**; there is also a **Chaitra Navratri** in spring. Gujarat celebrates it with **Garba**, which entered UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in **2023**.

68. Lohri, a popular North Indian festival, is mainly associated with what?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Rice harvest
(b) Winter solstice
(c) Sugarcane harvest
(d) Mango season

Answer (b) Winter solstice

Explanation

Lohri, celebrated on **13 January** mainly in Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, marks the **passing of the winter solstice**: from now on the days get longer and the cold begins to ease. People light a bonfire and offer **rewri, gajak, peanuts and popcorn** to it, singing folk songs.

It is also linked with the **rabi harvest season**, and sugarcane products like gur are central to it, which is why option (c) is close. Lohri songs remember **Dulla Bhatti**, a Robin Hood-like folk hero of Mughal times. The next day is **Maghi** (Makar Sankranti).

69. Pongal is mainly celebrated in which Indian state?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Andhra Pradesh
(b) Tamil Nadu
(c) Karnataka
(d) Kerala

Answer (b) Tamil Nadu

Explanation

Pongal is the main harvest festival of **Tamil Nadu**, celebrated for four days in mid-January at the start of the Tamil month of **Thai**. The word "pongal" means "to boil over": newly harvested rice is cooked with milk and jaggery until it overflows, a sign of abundance.

It is the Tamil version of the harvest festival that falls at the same time across India: **Makar Sankranti**, **Lohri** (Punjab), **Bhogali Bihu** (Assam), **Uttarayan** (Gujarat) and **Sankranti** (Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka).

70. Which festival celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 2025]

(a) Janmashtami
(b) Ganesh Chaturthi
(c) Ram Navami
(d) Navratri

Answer (a) Janmashtami

Explanation

Janmashtami celebrates the birth of **Lord Krishna**, the eighth avatar of Vishnu, on the eighth day (**Ashtami**) of the dark half of **Bhadrapada** (August–September), at midnight, the hour of his birth in a prison cell in Mathura.

In Maharashtra it is celebrated with **Dahi Handi**, where human pyramids of "Govindas" break a pot of curd hung high above the street. Ram Navami celebrates the birth of **Rama** (Chaitra), and Ganesh Chaturthi the birth of **Ganesha**.

71. Which of the following fairs is NOT associated with Uttarakhand?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Thal Mela
(b) Pushkar Mela
(c) Jauljibi Mela
(d) Syalde Bikhauti Mela

Answer (b) Pushkar Mela

Explanation

The **Pushkar Mela** is held in **Rajasthan** (Ajmer district), not Uttarakhand. It is a famous camel and cattle fair in the month of **Kartik**, along with a holy dip in the Pushkar lake and worship at the rare **Brahma Temple**.

The other three are Uttarakhand fairs: **Thal Mela** (Pithoragarh, on Baisakhi), **Jauljibi Mela** (Pithoragarh, at the meeting of the Kali and Gori rivers, near the Nepal border, in November) and **Syalde Bikhauti Mela** (Dwarahat, Almora).

72. Which of the following festivals is celebrated in the Union Territory of Ladakh?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Karaga
(b) Shigmo
(c) Kambala
(d) Yuru Kabgyat

Answer (d) Yuru Kabgyat

Explanation

Yuru Kabgyat is a two-day masked-dance festival held at the **Lamayuru Monastery** in Ladakh, usually in June–July. Monks perform **Cham** dances, and effigies are burnt to remove evil and bring peace.

The other festivals belong elsewhere: **Karaga** (Bengaluru, Karnataka), **Shigmo** (Goa's spring festival like Holi) and **Kambala** (coastal Karnataka buffalo race). Ladakh's other festivals include **Hemis Tsechu**, **Losar**, **Dosmoche** and **Sindhu Darshan**.

73. How often is the Kumbh Mela held at Prayagraj?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Every 2 years
(b) Every 5 years
(c) Every 10 years
(d) Every 12 years

Answer (d) Every 12 years

Explanation

A full **Kumbh Mela** is held at Prayagraj (and at each of the four places) about **once every 12 years**, based on the position of **Jupiter**, which takes about 12 years to go around the zodiac. An **Ardh (half) Kumbh** is held every **6 years** at Prayagraj and Haridwar.

After twelve Kumbhs, that is, every **144 years**, comes the **Maha Kumbh**; Prayagraj hosted one from January to February **2025**, with record crowds. Every year there is also a smaller **Magh Mela** at the Prayagraj Sangam.

74. Which festival–religion pair is correctly matched?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Mahavir Jayanti – Buddhism
(b) Guru Nanak Jayanti – Christianity
(c) Buddha Jayanti – Jainism
(d) Barah Wafat – Islam

Answer (d) Barah Wafat – Islam

Explanation

Barah Wafat – Islam is correct. Barah Wafat (also called **Milad-un-Nabi** or Eid-e-Milad) is observed on the 12th day of the Islamic month of **Rabi-ul-Awwal**, marking the birth (and, by tradition, the death) of **Prophet Muhammad**.

The other pairs are mixed up: **Mahavir Jayanti** is a **Jain** festival, **Buddha Jayanti (Buddha Purnima)** is **Buddhist**, and **Guru Nanak Jayanti (Gurpurab)** is **Sikh**. Fix the correct pairs, since SSC simply swaps them around.

75. Dev Deepawali celebrated in Bihar commemorates the nirvana of _____.

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Jesus Christ
(b) Guru Nanak
(c) Buddha
(d) Mahavir

Answer (d) Mahavir

Explanation

For **Jains**, Deepawali marks the **nirvana (moksha) of Lord Mahavira**, the 24th Tirthankara, at

Pawapuri in **Bihar** in 527 BCE (traditional date). Lamps are lit to symbolise the light of his knowledge; this is why the festival in Bihar is linked with him.

Pawapuri has the famous **Jal Mandir**, a white marble temple in the middle of a lotus pond, built where Mahavira was cremated. Note that **Dev Deepawali** is also the name of the Kartik Purnima festival on the ghats of **Varanasi**, which is different.

76. In which region of Gujarat is the Rann Utsav held?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Kutch
(b) Rajkot
(c) Vadodara
(d) Surat

Answer (a) Kutch

Explanation

The **Rann Utsav** is held every winter (November to February) in the **Great Rann of Kutch**, at **Dhordo** village, where a **tent city** is set up on the white salt desert. The full-moon nights, when the salt flat glows white, are its biggest attraction.

It showcases Kutchi crafts (embroidery, Rogan art, Ajrakh printing), music and dance. Dhordo was named among the **Best Tourism Villages** by the UN World Tourism Organization in **2023**.

77. In which Indian state is the Syalde Bikhauti Mela celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Andhra Pradesh
(b) Uttarakhand
(c) Gujarat
(d) Goa

Answer (b) Uttarakhand

Explanation

The **Syalde Bikhauti Mela** is held every year in April at **Dwarahat** in the **Almora district** of **Uttarakhand**, around **Vishuvat Sankranti** (Baisakhi). Villagers come in groups (aals) beating drums and perform the **Jhoda and Chanchari** folk dances near the Vibhandeshwar temple.

A custom of the fair is to strike a stone ("oda"), linked with an old story of rivalry between village groups.

78. In Kerala, Chandanakudam Mahotsavam is a festival celebrated at a _____.

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Temple
(b) Church
(c) Mosque
(d) Buddhist monastery

Answer (c) Mosque

Explanation

Chandanakudam ("pot of sandalwood") is a festival held at **mosques and dargahs** in Kerala, especially at the **Beemapally** dargah in Thiruvananthapuram and in Malappuram. Devotees carry pots smeared with sandalwood paste and offer coins in them, in procession with music, elephants and fireworks.

It is part of the **Uroos** (Urs) celebrations honouring Sufi saints, and people of all faiths join in, which makes it a symbol of Kerala's religious harmony.

79. In which city of Uttarakhand is the Kumbh Mela held?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Haridwar
(b) Rishikesh
(c) Nainital
(d) Dehradun

Answer (a) Haridwar

Explanation

The Kumbh Mela in Uttarakhand is held at **Haridwar**, on the banks of the **Ganga**, where the river leaves the hills and enters the plains. The main bathing ghat is **Har Ki Pauri**, believed to bear Lord Vishnu's footprint; the famous Ganga Aarti takes place there every evening.

Haridwar holds both the **Kumbh** (about every 12 years) and the **Ardh Kumbh** (in between). It is one of the seven holy cities (**Sapta Puri**) of Hinduism, known as **Mayapuri** in old texts.

80. In which Indian state is the Mahamastakabhisheka festival celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Karnataka
(b) Rajasthan
(c) Uttarakhand
(d) Gujarat

Answer (a) Karnataka

Explanation

The **Mahamastakabhisheka** ("grand head-anointing") is held at **Shravanabelagola** in **Karnataka** once every **12 years**. The 57-foot (about 17.4 m) monolithic statue of **Bahubali (Gommateshwara)** is anointed with milk, saffron, sandalwood paste and flowers poured from above. The last one was held in **2018**.

The statue was built around **983 CE** by **Chavundaraya**, a minister of the Western Ganga dynasty, and is one of the largest free-standing statues in the world. Shravanabelagola is also linked with **Chandragupta Maurya**, who is said to have spent his last days there as a Jain monk.

81. Ganga Dussehra is celebrated in the month of _____.

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) January
(b) October
(c) November
(d) June

Answer (d) June

Explanation

Ganga Dussehra falls on the tenth day (Dashami) of the bright half of **Jyeshtha**, which comes in **May–June**. It celebrates the **descent of the Ganga** from heaven to earth, brought down by **King Bhagiratha**'s penance and held in Lord Shiva's matted hair.

Devotees bathe in the Ganga at Haridwar, Varanasi, Prayagraj and Rishikesh. Do not confuse it with **Dussehra (Vijayadashami)** in October, which celebrates Rama's victory over Ravana.

82. In which Indian state is the Pushkar Mela held?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Rajasthan
(b) Kerala
(c) Punjab
(d) Bihar

Answer (a) Rajasthan

Explanation

The **Pushkar Mela** is held in **Pushkar**, Ajmer district, **Rajasthan**, in the month of **Kartik** (October–November), ending on **Kartik Purnima**. It is one of the world's largest **camel fairs**, with camel races, decorated camels, folk music and competitions.

Pilgrims take a holy dip in the **Pushkar Lake** and visit the **Brahma Temple**, one of the very few temples dedicated to Lord Brahma. Bihar's famous animal fair is the **Sonepur Mela**, also held on Kartik Purnima.

83. In which state of India is the Bushu festival traditionally celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Bihar
(b) Punjab
(c) Nagaland
(d) Karnataka

Answer (c) Nagaland

Explanation

Bushu (Busu) is the main harvest festival of the **Dimasa (Dimasa Kachari)** people, who live in the Dima Hasao district of Assam and around **Dimapur in Nagaland**. Among the given options, **Nagaland** is the answer. It is celebrated in January after the harvest with feasts, music and the **Baiddima** dance.

Dimapur, Nagaland's biggest city, gets its name from the Dimasa kingdom, whose old capital ruins with mushroom-shaped pillars still stand there.

84. Gujarat's International Kite Festival coincides with which festival?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Holi
(b) Diwali
(c) Krishna Janmashtami
(d) Makar Sankranti

Answer (d) Makar Sankranti

Explanation

The **International Kite Festival** of Gujarat is held on **Uttarayan**, the Gujarati name for **Makar Sankranti** (14 January), when the Sun begins its northward journey. Ahmedabad hosts kite-flyers from many countries, and the whole state flies kites from rooftops; people eat **undhiyu** and chikki.

The night kites with lamps are called **tukkal**. The festival has been organised by Gujarat Tourism since **1989**.

85. In which city of Gujarat is the Saptak Music Festival held?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Surat
(b) Rajkot
(c) Vadodara
(d) Ahmedabad

Answer (d) Ahmedabad

Explanation

The **Saptak Annual Festival of Music** is held every January in **Ahmedabad**. It was started in **1980** by tabla maestro **Pandit Nandan Mehta** and his wife **Manju Mehta** (sitar), and runs for about 13 nights of Indian classical music.

Almost every great Hindustani and Carnatic musician has performed at Saptak. Other famous music festivals include the **Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav** (Pune), **Tansen Samaroh** (Gwalior) and the **Dover Lane** conference (Kolkata).

86. Where is the International Mango Festival mainly held in India?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Shimla
(b) Dispur
(c) Mysuru
(d) Delhi

Answer (d) Delhi

Explanation

The **International Mango Festival** is organised every summer (July) in **Delhi** by **Delhi Tourism** (DTTDC), showcasing hundreds of mango varieties from across India, with mango-eating and other competitions.

Mango is India's **national fruit**, and India is the world's largest producer. Famous varieties include **Alphonso** (Ratnagiri), **Dasheri** (Malihabad), **Langra** (Varanasi), **Kesar** (Gujarat) and **Banganapalli** (Andhra Pradesh).

87. In which Indian state/Union Territory is the Feast of the Three Kings celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Ladakh
(b) Nagaland
(c) Assam
(d) Goa

Answer (d) Goa

Explanation

The **Feast of the Three Kings** (Epiphany) is celebrated on **6 January** in **Goa**, especially at the hilltop **Our Lady of Remedios chapel** in **Cansaulim** and at Chandor and Reis Magos. Three young boys dressed as the kings who visited baby Jesus ride on horseback to the chapel.

Goa's other Christian festivals include the **Feast of St. Francis Xavier** (3 December) and **Christmas**; its famous public celebration is the **Goa Carnival** before Lent.

88. Which festival is known as the "100-Drum Festival" and is celebrated by the Garo tribes?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Hornbill
(b) Hekar
(c) Lai Haraoba
(d) Wangala

Answer (d) Wangala

Explanation

Wangala, the post-harvest festival of the **Garo** tribe of Meghalaya, is called the "**100 Drums Festival**" because of the many **dama** (long drums) beaten together while dancers move in rows. It thanks the Sun god **Saljong** for a good harvest.

Lai Haraoba is a festival of the Meitei people of Manipur, and the **Hornbill Festival** is Nagaland's.

89. On which occasion is Chhattisgarh's Pathori song traditionally sung?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) At the birth of a child
(b) While worshipping Goddess Lakshmi
(c) At a harvest festival
(d) While bidding farewell to a newly married bride

Answer (d) While bidding farewell to a newly married bride

Explanation

In Chhattisgarh, **Pathoni (Pathori) songs** are sung at the **farewell (bidai) of a newly married bride**, when she leaves her parents' home for her hus-

band's house, often at the **gauna** ceremony. The songs are full of the sadness of parting.

Chhattisgarh has songs for every occasion: **Sohar** at a child's birth, **Bihav** songs at weddings, **Sua** songs and **Raut Nacha dohas** at Diwali, and **Cherchera** songs at the harvest.

90. In which Indian state is Baithaki Holi traditionally celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Maharashtra
(b) Uttarakhand
(c) Telangana
(d) Uttar Pradesh

Answer (b) Uttarakhand

Explanation

Baithaki Holi is the musical Holi of the **Kumaon** region of **Uttarakhand**, especially Almora. People sit together (baithak) and sing Holi songs based on **classical ragas**, starting weeks before Holi, from the first Sunday of Paush.

Kumaoni Holi has three forms: **Baithaki Holi** (seated, classical), **Khadi Holi** (standing, folk songs with dance) and **Mahila Holi** (sung by women).

91. In which month is the Feast of St. Francis Xavier celebrated in Goa?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) August
(b) December
(c) May
(d) October

Answer (b) December

Explanation

The **Feast of St. Francis Xavier** is celebrated on **3 December** at the **Basilica of Bom Jesus** in Old Goa, where his remains are kept. It is preceded by a nine-day **novena**.

About every ten years, his body is shown to the public in the **Exposition**; the most recent was from November 2024 to January 2025. St. Francis Xavier, a co-founder of the Jesuit order, came to Goa in **1542**.

92. In which Indian state is the Agalmaka festival celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Kerala
(b) Gujarat
(c) Andhra Pradesh
(d) Meghalaya

Answer (d) Meghalaya

Explanation

Agalmaka is an agricultural festival of the **Garo** people of **Meghalaya**, held after clearing and burning the jhum fields, before sowing, to seek the blessings of the deities for a good crop.

The Garo agricultural year has a series of such festivals, ending with **Wangala** after the harvest. Meghalaya's three main tribes are the **Khasi, Garo and Jaintia (Pnar)**.

93. Phagun Madai is celebrated on the eve of which major festival?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Makar Sankranti
(b) Holi
(c) Diwali
(d) Lohri

Answer (b) Holi

Explanation

Phagun Madai is a ten-day fair held in **Dantewada** (Bastar, Chhattisgarh) in the month of **Phalgun**, leading up to **Holi**, in honour of **Maa Danteshwari**, the presiding deity of Bastar. Village deities are brought in procession and many tribal rituals and hunt-dances are performed.

A "madai" is a gathering of village gods and people, a common tradition in Bastar. The Danteshwari temple is one of the **Shakti Peethas**.

94. In which Indian state is the Lui-Ngai-Ni festival celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Goa
(b) Manipur
(c) Assam
(d) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer (b) Manipur

Explanation

Lui-Ngai-Ni is the **seed-sowing festival** of the **Naga tribes of Manipur**, celebrated on **15 February** every year. It marks the start of the new agricultural season, with prayers for a good harvest, traditional dances and games.

It was first celebrated jointly in 1988 to bring the different Naga tribes together. Manipur's other festivals include **Gaan-Ngai**, **Lai Haraoba**, **Yaosang** and **Cheiraoba**.

95. In which Indian state/Union Territory is the Dosmoche festival celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Tamil Nadu
(b) Goa
(c) Ladakh
(d) Gujarat

Answer (c) Ladakh

Explanation

Dosmoche is a two-day festival held at **Leh Palace** and monasteries in **Ladakh** in February, at the end of the Tibetan New Year season. It is also called the "**Festival of the Scapegoat**": monks perform masked dances, and effigies holding the evil spirits of the past year are taken out of town and burnt.

It was started by the kings of Ladakh. Ladakh's other festivals in this chapter are **Losar**, **Hemis Tsechu** and **Yuru Kabgyat**.

96. In which Indian state is the Indra Jatra festival celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Goa
(b) Gujarat
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Sikkim

Answer (d) Sikkim

Explanation

Indra Jatra is celebrated in **Sikkim** (and in a bigger way in Kathmandu, Nepal) in September, in honour of **Lord Indra**, the god of rain, for a good harvest. In Sikkim it is observed mainly by the Nepali-origin Newar community in places like Gangtok.

Features include masked dances, processions and the raising of a tall wooden pole (**Yosin**). Sikkim's other festivals include **Losar**, **Saga Dawa**, **Pang Lhabsol** and **Losoong**.

97. In which Indian state is the Chikhal Kalo festival celebrated?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Haryana
(b) Odisha
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Goa

Answer (d) Goa

Explanation

Chikhal Kalo ("mud play") is a monsoon festival of **Goa**, held at **Marcel** (Ponda) in July at the Devki Krishna temple. Young men play games in the slushy temple ground, recreating the childhood play of **Lord Krishna** with his friends.

It falls on the Ashadhi Ekadashi time of year. Goa's other festivals include **Shigmo** (spring), **Sao Joao** (24 June, jumping into wells and ponds) and the **Carnival**.

98. In which Indian state is the Surajkund Crafts Mela held?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Maharashtra
(b) Haryana
(c) Mizoram
(d) Tripura

Answer (b) Haryana

Explanation

The **Surajkund International Crafts Mela** is held every February at **Surajkund** in **Faridabad, Haryana**, near Delhi. Started in **1987**, it showcases handicrafts, handlooms and folk performances from all over India and many foreign countries; each year a state and a country are chosen as "theme" partners.

Surajkund itself is an ancient amphitheatre-like reservoir built in the 10th century by the Tomar king **Surajpal**, which gives the place its name.

99. Kojagiri Purnima is mainly celebrated in Maharashtra. Which deity is honoured on this occasion?

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Lord Shiva
(b) Lord Ganesha

(c) Goddess Durga
(d) Goddess Lakshmi

Answer **(d) Goddess Lakshmi**

Explanation

Kojagiri Purnima (Sharad Purnima), the full-moon night of **Ashwin** (October), honours **Goddess Lakshmi**. It is believed that she goes around asking "**Ko jagarti?**" ("Who is awake?") and blesses those who stay awake through the night.

People stay up, keep milk boiled with saffron and dry fruits in the moonlight and drink it. In Bengal and Odisha it is celebrated as **Kojagari Lakshmi Puja**. The night also marks the harvest season and is called Sharad Purnima in North India.

100. **The "Doha" songs of Chhattisgarh are sung during _____.**

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) Weddings
(b) Diwali
(c) Funerals
(d) Birth of a child

Answer **(b) Diwali**

Explanation

In Chhattisgarh, **dohas** are sung during **Raut Nacha**, the dance of the **Raut (Yadav)** cattle-herding community, performed at **Diwali** and around **Govardhan Puja**, in honour of Lord Krishna. Dancers in colourful costumes with sticks recite dohas between beats of the drum.

The biggest Raut Nacha festival is held at **Bilaspur**. Diwali in Chhattisgarh is also celebrated with **Sua** songs and dances by women.

101. **Manipur's Kwak Jatra is celebrated in the month of _____.**

[SSC MTS, 2026]

(a) January
(b) March
(c) October
(d) December

Answer **(c) October**

Explanation

Kwak Jatra ("crow procession") is celebrated in **Manipur** on **Vijaya Dashami**, which falls in **October**, at the end of Durga Puja. The Maharaja (or royal family representative) leads a procession to the Kwak Jatra ground near the Palace in Imphal, where rituals are performed and the call of crows is taken as an omen for the coming year.

It is a festival of the **Meitei** Hindus. Manipur's other festivals in this chapter include **Lui-Ngai-Ni** and **Gaan-Ngai**.

102. **In which Indian state is the Purnagiri Mela celebrated?**

[SSC MTS, 2026]

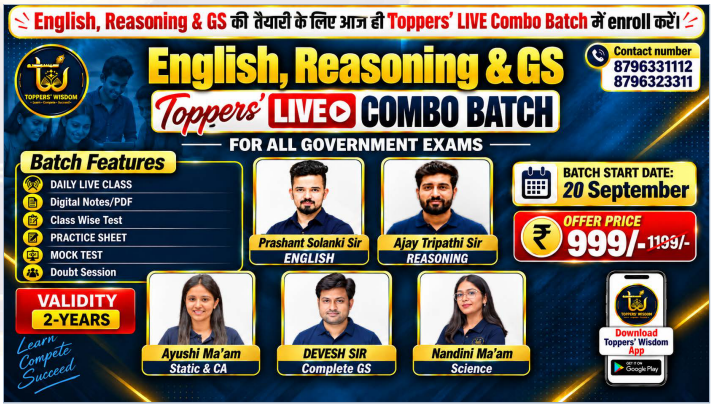
(a) Assam
(b) Gujarat
(c) West Bengal
(d) Uttarakhand

Answer **(d) Uttarakhand**

Explanation

The **Purnagiri Mela** is held at the **Purnagiri Temple** near **Tanakpur** in the **Champawat district** of **Uttarakhand**, on a hill above the **Sharda (Kali)** river near the Nepal border. The fair begins around **Chaitra Navratri** (March–April) and lasts about three months.

Purnagiri is one of the **Shakti Peethas**, where the navel of Sati is believed to have fallen. Pilgrims often also visit **Siddha Baba** across the river in Nepal.



06 CHAPTER
Instruments, Music & Gharanas

103 Questions • SSC PYQs

01. **The folk-music tradition "Zikir" is popular in which state?**

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Assam
(b) Gujarat
(c) Odisha
(d) Rajasthan

Answer **(a) Assam**

Explanation

Zikir (Zikr) is a devotional song tradition of **Assam**, composed by the Sufi saint **Azan Fakir (Shah Miran)** in the 17th century. Written in simple Assamese, Zikirs spread the message of Islam alongside harmony and humanity, and they borrow tunes and ideas from Assamese Vaishnava music.

Azan Fakir's tomb is at **Saraguri Chapori** near Sivasagar. Zari (Jari) songs, about the tragedy of Karbala, are a related form.

02. **Which of the following is a major form of Hindustani classical vocal music?**

[SSC Stenographer, 06 Aug 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Kathak
(b) Dhrupad
(c) Bharatanatyam
(d) Kuchipudi

Answer **(b) Dhrupad**

Explanation

Dhrupad is the oldest surviving form of **Hindustani classical vocal music**, sung in a slow, serious style, usually to the **pakhawaj**. It begins with a long **alap** without rhythm and then moves into the composition. It flourished in the court of **Raja Man Singh Tomar** of Gwalior and with **Tansen** in Akbar's court.

The other three options are **classical dances**, not music: Kathak (North India), Bharatanatyam (Tamil Nadu) and Kuchipudi (Andhra Pradesh). The famous Dhrupad family today is the **Dagar** family.

03. **Consider the following statements about the Trinity of Carnatic music and choose the correct option:**

1. Tyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastri lived in the 17th century.
2. The Trinity raised the Kriti form to its highest artistic expression.

[SSC Stenographer, 07 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(b) Only 1
(c) Only 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer **(c) Only 2**

Explanation

Only statement 2 is correct. The **Trinity of Carnatic music**, **Tyagaraja (1767–1847)**, **Muthuswami Dikshitar (1775–1835)** and **Syama Sastri (1762–1827)**, lived in the **18th–19th centuries**, not the 17th, and all three were born in **Thiruvarur**, Tamil Nadu. So statement 1 is wrong.

They took the **kriti** to its highest artistic form, which makes statement 2 right. Tyagaraja wrote mostly in Telugu (the **Pancharatna Kritis**), Dikshitar mostly in Sanskrit (Navagraha Kritis), and Syama Sastri was known for his swarajatis. **Purandara Dasa** is called the father of Carnatic music.

04. **Consider the following statements regarding the structure of Carnatic compositions:**

1. Varnam is usually presented at the end of a Carnatic concert to summarise the main ragas.
2. Alapana includes an improvised expansion of a raga without tala.

Which statement(s) is/are correct?

[SSC Stenographer, 08 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(b) Only 1
(c) Only 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (c) Only 2

Explanation

Only statement 2 is correct. The **Varnam** is usually sung at the **beginning** of a Carnatic concert, as a warm-up that shows the main phrases of a raga, so statement 1 is wrong.

The **Alapana** is an **improvised, free-flowing expansion of a raga without tala** (rhythm) and without words, sung before a kriti; it is the Carnatic equivalent of the Hindustani **alap**. Concerts usually end with lighter pieces like the **tillana** and a **mangalam**.

05. Consider the following statements about Carnatic compositions:

1. Kriti is a highly structured musical composition in the Carnatic tradition.
2. Tillana often concludes a Carnatic concert and emphasises rhythmic syllables.

Which statement(s) is/are correct?

[SSC Stenographer, 08 Aug 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(b) Only 1
(c) Only 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (a) Both 1 and 2 are correct

Explanation

Both statements are correct. The **kriti** is the most important and highly structured composition of Carnatic music, with three parts: **pallavi**, **anupallavi** and **charanam**. It gives room for improvisation such as niraval and kalpana swaras.

The **tillana** is a lively, rhythmic piece built on syllables like "ta, dhim, na, dir", usually sung near the **end** of a concert and also used to end a **Bharatanatyam** recital. It is similar to the Hindustani **tarana**, said to have been developed by Amir Khusro.

06. Evaluate the following statements about Carnatic instruments:

1. Mridangam is a melodic percussion instrument used to outline a raga.
2. Nadaswaram is a double-reed instrument traditionally played in temples and weddings.

Which statement(s) is/are correct?

[SSC Stenographer, 07 Aug 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only 1
(b) Only 2
(c) Both 1 and 2 are correct
(d) Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer (b) Only 2

Explanation

Only statement 2 is correct. The **mridangam** is a double-headed **percussion** (avanaddha) instrument that keeps the rhythm (tala) in Carnatic music; it does not outline a raga, which is the job of melodic instruments like the veena or violin. So statement 1 is wrong.

The **nadaswaram** is a long **double-reed wind instrument**, traditionally played in **temples and at weddings** in South India, usually with the **thavil** drum. It is often called one of the loudest non-brass acoustic instruments. Famous players include **T.N. Rajarathinam Pillai** and **Sheikh Chinna Moulana**.

07. Which instrument is commonly used in Carnatic classical music?

[SSC Stenographer, 08 Aug 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Dhol
(b) Mridangam
(c) Santoor
(d) Shehnai

Answer (b) Mridangam

Explanation

The **mridangam** is the main percussion instrument of **Carnatic music**. Other common Carnatic instruments are the **veena**, **violin**, **ghatam** (clay pot), **kanjira** (small frame drum), **morsing** (jaw harp) and the **nadaswaram**.

The other options belong to the North: the **santoor** (Kashmir, made famous by Pt. Shivkumar Sharma) and the **shehnai** (Ustad Bismillah Khan) are Hindustani instruments, and the **dhol** is a folk drum. Famous mridangam players include **Palghat Mani Iyer** and **Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman**.

08. Which of the following statements best defines a Ghan Vadya?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Tuned melodic instruments
(b) Percussion instruments that require precise tuning

(c) Solid, non-tunable instruments
(d) Wind instruments made of bamboo

Answer (c) Solid, non-tunable instruments

Explanation

Ghan Vadya are **solid instruments** (idiophones) that produce sound when the body of the instrument itself is struck, shaken or rubbed, and they **do not need tuning**. Examples are **manjira, kartal, ghungroo, jaltarang, ghatam and gongs**. They are thought to be among the earliest instruments made by humans.

The **Natya Shastra** of Bharata classifies instruments into four groups: **Tat** (string), **Sushir** (wind), **Avanaddha** (membrane drums) and **Ghan** (solid).

09. Which of the following best represents Kerala's instrumental heritage?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Ravanhatha originated in Kerala
(b) It uses only trumpet-like wind instruments
(c) The instruments are recent/Western
(d) Drums such as Timila and Maddalam are mentioned in the Silappadikaram

Answer (d) Drums such as Timila and Maddalam are mentioned in the Silappadikaram

Explanation

Kerala's instrumental heritage is ancient: drums like the **timila** and **maddalam** are mentioned in the Tamil epic **Silappadikaram** (around the 2nd century CE). These are central to **Panchavadyam**, Kerala's temple orchestra of five instruments: timila, maddalam, ilathalam (cymbals), idakka and kombu (horn).

Kerala is also famous for the **chenda**, used in Chenda Melam and Kathakali. The **Ravanhatha** is a bowed string instrument of **Rajasthan**.

10. Which traditional wind instrument with an ornate curved design is used in the folk music of Himachal Pradesh?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Bhonpal
(b) Narsingha
(c) Hudki
(d) Kangalo

Answer (b) Narsingha

Explanation

The **Narsingha** is a long, **S-shaped copper horn** with a wide funnel-shaped mouth, used in the folk music of **Himachal Pradesh** during processions of deities, fairs and ceremonies. It is also played by the Oraon tribe in Bihar and Jharkhand.

Other Himachali wind instruments include the **karnal** (long straight horn) and **shehnai**. The **hudki** is a small hourglass drum of Uttarakhand.

11. Which instrument of Sikkim is believed to have been first made for the deity Tetelara Lahadongna?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Niyara Hongsing Ke
(b) Simikla Kum (Binayo)
(c) Yama Dhol
(d) Yewa ka Nagada

Answer (b) Simikla Kum (Binayo)

Explanation

The **Simikla Kum**, popularly called the **Binayo**, is a small **bamboo jaw harp** of Sikkim. According to tradition, it was the first instrument made for the deity **Tetelara Lahadongna**, which is why it holds a special place in the region's folklore. It is played by holding it to the mouth and plucking the bamboo tongue, with the mouth acting as a resonator.

Other Sikkim instruments include the **damphu** (Tamang frame drum), **tungna** (plucked lute) and the Lepcha flute **palit**.

12. What is the primary instrument used in Burrakatha?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 19 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Dholak
(b) Tambura
(c) Noot
(d) Khab

Answer (b) Tambura

Explanation

Burrakatha is a storytelling art of **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**. The main storyteller holds a **tambura** (tamboora) on his shoulder, wears anklets, and narrates stories of history, mythology or social issues while moving rhythmically. Two co-artists play the **burra** (a clay drum shaped like a skull, from

which the art gets its name) and add humour and comments.

During the freedom struggle, Burrakatha was used to spread political messages. **Sheik Nazar** is regarded as its most famous exponent.

13. Which Mizo instrument is used only in memorial-stone ceremonies?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 14 Oct 2025]

(a) Dengeng
(b) Dadu
(c) Khujang
(d) Talhkhuang

Answer (d) Talhkhuang

Explanation

The **Talhkhuang** is a large Mizo instrument made of hollowed-out wooden pieces, played by striking. It is taken to the **lungdawh**, the stone platform at the village entrance, only on special occasions such as the **erection of memorial stones**.

Other Mizo instruments include the **khuang** (drum), **darkhuang** (large brass gong, used in the Mizoram Assembly to call members), **bengbung** (a xylophone-like instrument) and the **tuiumdar**.

14. Dengeng, an indigenous Mizo instrument, is similar to which instrument?

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Flute
(b) Cymbals
(c) Mridangam
(d) Xylophone

Answer (d) Xylophone

Explanation

This indigenous Mizo instrument resembles a **xylophone**: it is made of a row of wooden pieces of different sizes, which are struck to produce different notes. The best-known such Mizo instrument is the **bengbung**, played mainly by women while working or resting in the jhum fields.

A xylophone is a solid (ghan) instrument. Mizoram's brass **gongs (dar)** and the drum **khuang** are central to the **Cheraw (bamboo dance)** and other community dances.

15. The traditional Tamil Nadu instrument 'Vamsali' is a _____:

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Flute
(b) Drum
(c) Sarod
(d) Manjira

Answer (a) Flute

Explanation

The **Vamsali** is a **flute** of Tamil Nadu; the name comes from the Sanskrit **"vamsha"** (bamboo) and is linked with **vamshi**, a name for Krishna's flute. The South Indian bamboo flute used in Carnatic music is also called the **venu** or **pullanguzhal**.

Famous Carnatic flautists include **T.R. Mahalingam (Mali)** and **N. Ramani**; in Hindustani music the bansuri is associated with **Pannalal Ghosh** and **Hariprasad Chaurasia**.

16. Which pipe instrument is traditionally associated with the songs and dances of the Dimasa tribe in Assam?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Muri
(b) Veena
(c) Cymbals
(d) Santoor

Answer (a) Muri

Explanation

The **muri** is a traditional **pipe (wind) instrument** of the **Dimasa** people of Assam (Dima Hasao). It is a kind of shehnai-like pipe, played along with the **khram** (drum) during Dimasa dances and festivals like **Bushu**.

The Dimasa also play the **suphin** (flute). The veena and santoor are classical string instruments, and cymbals are solid instruments, so only the muri fits a "pipe instrument".

17. Which of the following is a wind instrument made of wood and metal?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Dholak
(b) Mahuri
(c) Sarangi
(d) Mridangam

Answer (b) Mahuri

Explanation

The **mahuri** is a **wind instrument made of wood and metal**, similar to the shehnai, with a double reed. It is played in **Odisha** (and parts of Bihar and Jharkhand) at temple rituals, weddings and festivals, and is an important instrument in the **Jagannath temple** tradition.

The other options are not wind instruments: the dholak and mridangam are drums (avanaddha), and the sarangi is a bowed string instrument (tat).

18. Which of the following is a violinist from Andhra Pradesh?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) A. Srinivas
(b) Chinni Babu
(c) Sheikh Chinna Moulana
(d) Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu

Answer (d) Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu

Explanation

Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu (1893–1964) was a celebrated **Carnatic violinist** who worked in Andhra Pradesh, at **Vizianagaram**, where he headed the Maharaja's music college. He was among the first to present the violin as a solo concert instrument in Carnatic music and received the **Padma Shri (1957)**.

Sheikh Chinna Moulana was a famous **nadaswaram** player, also from Andhra Pradesh. Other great Carnatic violinists include **Lalgudi Jayaraman**, **M.S. Gopalakrishnan** and **L. Subramaniam**.

19. Into how many groups were instruments classified by Bharata Muni in the Natya Shastra?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) 2
(b) 3
(c) 4
(d) 5

Answer (c) 4

Explanation

Bharata Muni's **Natya Shastra** divides musical instruments into **four groups**:

- **Tat Vadya** – string instruments (chordophones): veena, sitar, sarangi
- **Sushir Vadya** – wind instruments (aerophones): flute, shehnai
- **Avanaddha Vadya** – drums covered with skin (membranophones): tabla, mridangam
- **Ghan Vadya** – solid instruments (idiophones): manjira, ghatam

This system closely matches the modern **Hornbostel–Sachs** classification used worldwide, which also has four main groups.

20. The "Devar Geet", sung as entertainment songs, belong to which Indian state?

[SSC CHSL, 21 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Goa
(b) Maharashtra
(c) Haryana
(d) Chhattisgarh

Answer (d) Chhattisgarh

Explanation

Devar Geet belong to **Chhattisgarh**. They are sung by the **Devar** community, traditionally wandering singers, who entertain village audiences with songs and ballads, accompanied by simple folk instruments.

Chhattisgarh's rich folk song tradition also includes **Pandavani**, **Bharthari**, **Chandaini**, **Sua** and **Dadaria**.

21. The diameter of a bamboo flute is generally about _____ centimetres.

[SSC CHSL, 21 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 1.9
(b) 4.1
(c) 4.8
(d) 3.8

Answer (a) 1.9

Explanation

A typical bamboo flute (**bansuri**) has a diameter of about **1.9 cm** (roughly three-quarters of an inch), though bass flutes can be wider. The flute is made from a single hollow piece of bamboo, closed at one end, with a blowing hole and usually **six or seven finger holes**.

Longer and wider flutes give a deeper sound. **Pannalal Ghosh** introduced the long bass bansuri into Hindustani classical music, and **Hariprasad Chaurasia** made it popular worldwide.

22. **"Mando" is a slow poetic song with a refrain dealing with love, tragedy, social injustice and political resistance. It is associated with which Indian state?**

[SSC CHSL, 25 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Goa
(b) Uttarakhand
(c) Bihar
(d) Tamil Nadu

Answer **(a) Goa**

Explanation

Mando is a song-and-dance form of **Goa**, developed in the 19th and early 20th centuries by the Catholic community. It blends **Indian and Western (Portuguese)** music, is sung in **Konkani**, and is slow and graceful, with themes of love, separation, social injustice and resistance to colonial rule.

It is usually followed by the faster **dulpod**. The **Mando Festival** is held every year in Goa. Goa's other folk forms include **Dekhni**, **Fugdi** and **Dhalo**.

23. **Hariprasad Chaurasia is a renowned classical musician known for playing which instrument?**

[SSC CHSL, 26 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Sitar
(b) Flute
(c) Violin
(d) Tabla

Answer **(b) Flute**

Explanation

Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia (born 1938, Prayagraj) is the world's best-known Hindustani **flute (bansuri)** player. He trained under **Annapurna Devi** and received the **Padma Vibhushan (2000)**.

With santoor player **Shivkumar Sharma**, he formed the duo **"Shiv–Hari"**, which composed music for Hindi films like *Silsila* and *Chandni*. Remember the instrument pairs: **Ravi Shankar** – sitar, **Zakir Hussain** – tabla, **Bismillah Khan** – shehnai, **Amjad Ali Khan** – sarod.

24. **The Bettiah gharana, famous for Dhrupad singing, is associated with which Indian state?**

[SSC CHSL, 28 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Bihar
(b) Telangana
(c) Uttarakhand
(d) Maharashtra

Answer **(a) Bihar**

Explanation

The **Bettiah gharana** of Dhrupad comes from **Bettiah** in West Champaran, **Bihar**. It grew under the patronage of the Bettiah Raj in the 18th–19th centuries and is known for both Dhrupad and Dhamar singing.

Bihar has another famous Dhrupad tradition, the **Darbhanga gharana**, carried forward by the **Mallik** family. The four classical styles (vanis) of Dhrupad are **Gauhar, Dagar, Khandar and Nauhar**.

25. **The raga "Gujari" is traditionally associated with which Indian state?**

[SSC CHSL, 28 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Gujarat
(b) Odisha
(c) Kerala
(d) Goa

Answer **(a) Gujarat**

Explanation

The raga **Gujari** (also called Gurjari) takes its name from **Gujarat** (the old Gurjara region). Several ragas are named after regions: **Sorath** (Saurashtra, Gujarat), **Bilawal** (Veraval, Gujarat), **Multani** (Multan), **Malav** (Malwa) and **Bangal Bhairav** (Bengal).

A related raga is **Gurjari Todi**, a morning raga of the Todi family. Raga Gujari is also used in the **Guru Granth Sahib**, which is arranged by ragas.

26. **Which of the following is a wind instrument?**

[SSC CHSL, 29 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Dhol
(b) Pava
(c) Manjira
(d) Nagada

Answer **(b) Pava**

Explanation

The **pava** (jodiya pava) is a **wind instrument**: a pair of bamboo or wooden flutes played together by herders in **Gujarat (Kutch)** and Rajasthan, one giving a steady drone and the other the melody.

The other options are not wind instruments: the **dhol** and **nagada** are drums (avanaddha), and the **manjira** is a pair of small cymbals (ghan).

27. Which of the following Assamese songs is a lullaby?

[SSC CHSL, 29 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Bihu Geet
(b) Bon Geet
(c) Biya Naam
(d) Nichukoni Geet

Answer (d) Nichukoni Geet

Explanation

Nichukoni Geet are the traditional **lullabies** of Assam, sung by mothers and grandmothers to put children to sleep. The word comes from "nichukona", meaning to lull or soothe a child.

The others: **Bihu Geet** are songs of the Bihu festival, **Bon Geet** are songs sung by cowherds in the forests and fields, and **Biya Naam** are wedding songs sung by women.

28. The Darbhanga style of Dhrupad, a classical form of Indian music, is associated with which Indian state/UT?

[SSC CHSL, 10 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Bihar
(b) Haryana
(c) Gujarat
(d) Jammu and Kashmir

Answer (a) Bihar

Explanation

The **Darbhanga gharana** of Dhrupad belongs to **Bihar**. It developed under the patronage of the Darbhanga Raj and is carried forward by the **Mallik** family (Amta–Darbhanga tradition), known for powerful Dhrupad and Dhamar singing in the Khandar and Gauhar vanis.

Famous exponents include **Pandit Ram Chatur Mallik** (Padma Shri). Bihar's other Dhrupad tradition is the **Bettiah gharana**.

29. The instrument "Dedh Satara" is associated with which Indian state?

[SSC CHSL, 30 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Kerala
(b) Manipur
(c) Rajasthan
(d) West Bengal

Answer (c) Rajasthan

Explanation

The **satara** is a **double flute** of **Rajasthan** (especially the desert districts of Barmer and Jaisalmer), played by the **Langa and Manganiyar** folk musicians and by herders. One pipe plays a drone while the other plays the melody; the instrument is played with circular breathing.

Rajasthan has a huge range of folk instruments: **kamaicha** and **ravanhatha** (bowed strings), **morchang** (jaw harp), **algoza** (double flute), **khartal** and the **Bhopa's ravanhatha**.

30. Ashwini Bhide Deshpande is a noted vocalist associated with which gharana?

[SSC CHSL, 12 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Banaras Gharana
(b) Patiala Gharana
(c) Kirana Gharana
(d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Answer (d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Explanation

Ashwini Bhide Deshpande is a leading Hindustani vocalist of the **Jaipur-Atrauli gharana**. She trained with her mother **Manik Bhide**, a disciple of **Kishori Amonkar**, and later with **Ratnakar Pai**. She received the **Padma Shri (2025)**.

The Jaipur-Atrauli gharana was founded by **Ustad Alladiya Khan** and is known for complex, rare ragas and intricate patterns. Its stars include **Kesarbai Kerkar**, **Mogubai Kurdikar**, **Kishori Amonkar** and **Shruti Sadolikar**.

31. The Patiala gharana is notable for the presentation of which forms of classical music? I. Thumri II. Khayal

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only I
(b) Only II
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

Answer (c) Both I and II

Explanation

The **Patiala gharana** is known for both **khayal** and **thumri**. It was founded in the 19th century by **Ali Bakhsh Jarnail** and **Fateh Ali Khan** under the patronage of the Maharaja of Patiala, and is famous for fast, complex **taans** and emotional thumris.

Its greatest name is **Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan**, whose thumri "*Yaad piya ki aaye*" is famous. Other Patiala singers include **Ajoy Chakrabarty** and **Parveen Sultana**.

32. In Carnatic music, a laghu of five matras is known as the _____ jati.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Tisra
(b) Chaturasra
(c) Khanda
(d) Mishra

Answer (c) Khanda

Explanation

In the Carnatic tala system, the **laghu** can have five lengths, called **jatis**: **Tisra (3)**, **Chaturasra (4)**, **Khanda (5)**, **Mishra (7)** and **Sankeerna (9)**. So a laghu of five beats is **Khanda jati**.

The 7 basic talas (Suladi Sapta Talas) combined with these 5 jatis give the famous **35 talas**. The most common Carnatic tala is **Adi tala** (Chaturasra jati Triputa, 8 beats).

33. Which of the following correctly describes the development of Indian classical music?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Jatis developed from ragas
(b) The 72-mela system was introduced by Bharata in the 13th century
(c) Mela and grama scales were used only in folk music
(d) Ragas developed from jatis; the 72-mela system was formulated by Venkatamakhin

Answer (d) Ragas developed from jatis; the 72-mela system was formulated by Venkatamakhin

Explanation

Option (d) is correct. In ancient music, melodies were organised as **jatis** (described in the Natya Shastra), and **ragas developed from these jatis** over time; Matanga's *Brihaddeshi* (around the 9th century) is the first text to define "raga".

The **72 melakarta** system, which classifies all parent scales of Carnatic music, was formulated by **Venkatamakhin** in his *Chaturdandi Prakashika* (17th century). Bharata lived much earlier (the Natya Shastra is roughly 2nd century BCE–2nd century CE), so option (b) is wrong on both counts.

34. In Teentaal of Hindustani classical music, the khali is marked on the _____ matra.

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 12 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) 1
(b) 5
(c) 9
(d) 13

Answer (c) 9

Explanation

Teentaal has **16 matras** in four divisions (vibhags) of 4 each. The **sam** (first beat, shown with a clap and marked "X") is on matra **1**, the other claps (tali) are on **5 and 13**, and the **khali** (empty beat, shown with a wave of the hand and marked "0") is on matra **9**.

Its theka begins "Dha dhin dhin dha...". Other common talas: **Dadra (6)**, **Rupak (7)**, **Keharwa (8)**, **Jhaptal (10)** and **Ektal (12)**; Rupak is unusual because its sam itself is khali.

35. What is the term for a structured musical composition in Hindustani classical music?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 13 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Kriti
(b) Bandish
(c) Gamak
(d) Rasa

Answer (b) Bandish

Explanation

In Hindustani music, a fixed, structured composition set to a raga and tala is called a **bandish** (literally "binding"). It usually has two parts, the **sthayi** and the **antara**, and the singer improvises around it.

Kriti is not the answer: it is the structured composition of **Carnatic** music. **Gamak** is a kind of ornamentation (oscillation of notes), and **rasa** is the emotional flavour of a performance.

36. **A raga having six notes is classified under the _____ jati.**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 13 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Audav
(b) Sampurna
(c) Shadav
(d) Mishra

Answer **(c) Shadav**

Explanation

Ragas are classified by the number of notes (jati): **Audav** = 5 notes, **Shadav** = 6 notes, and **Sampurna** = all 7 notes. So a six-note raga is **Shadav**.

A raga can have different numbers in its ascent and descent; for example, **Audav–Sampurna** means 5 notes going up and 7 coming down. Raga **Bhupali** is audav (5 notes), while **Yaman** and **Bhairav** are sampurna.

Trick: **Shadav** sounds like "shashth" (sixth), so 6 notes; **Audav** is 5 and **Sampurna** (complete) is all 7.

37. **Which of the following best describes traditional Rajasthani music?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 15 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Centred only on temple rituals
(b) Uses ornamental sounds as its only basis
(c) Connected with nature, life and stories
(d) Known only for classical ragas

Answer **(c) Connected with nature, life and stories**

Explanation

Traditional **Rajasthani folk music** is closely **connected with nature, daily life and stories**: songs of rain and desert, love and separation, heroes and saints. Hereditary musician communities like the **Manganiyars** and **Langas** sing for their patrons at births, weddings and festivals, and **Bhopas** sing long epics like **Pabuji ki Phad**.

The other options are too narrow ("only" temple rituals, "only" classical ragas). Well-known Rajasthani song forms include **Maand**, **Panihari** and **Kesariya Balam**.

38. **Who is credited with developing the modern notation system for Hindustani classical music (Kramik Pustak Malika)?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 16 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Ustad Allauddin Khan
(b) Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar
(c) Pt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande
(d) Sant Tyagaraja

Answer **(c) Pt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande**

Explanation

Pt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande (1860–1936) developed the notation system now most widely used for Hindustani music, and collected hundreds of compositions in his six-volume **Kramik Pustak Malika**. He also organised ragas into **ten thaats** and founded what is now the **Bhatkhande Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya** in Lucknow.

Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar is not the answer: he developed a different notation system and founded the **Gandharva Mahavidyalaya** (Lahore, 1901). Both men brought classical music from royal courts to ordinary students.

39. **In Raga Vibodha, Pt. Somanatha defined raga through the Devamaya form (lokachara). What represents its tonal/swara structure?**

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Talanga
(b) Rupa
(c) Swaralakshana
(d) Jati

Answer **(c) Swaralakshana**

Explanation

In **Raga Vibodha** (1609), **Pt. Somanatha** described each raga in two ways: its **devamaya** (deity-like, pictorial) form, and its tonal structure, the **swaralakshana**, that is, the defining features of its notes (which notes are used, how it ascends and descends, and its important notes).

Somanatha was a 17th-century musicologist from Andhra; his work is also important for linking the music of North and South India and for describing the **rudra veena**.

40. **"Abhang Vani" is a folk-song tradition of which state?**

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Manipur
(b) West Bengal
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Tamil Nadu

Answer **(c) Maharashtra**

Explanation

Abhangs are devotional songs of **Maharashtra**, in praise of **Lord Vitthal (Vithoba) of Pandharpur**, composed by the Marathi saint-poets of the **Varkari** movement: **Sant Tukaram, Namdev, Dnyaneshwar**, Eknath and Janabai. "Abhang" means unbroken, eternal.

They are sung especially during the **Pandharpur Wari**, the yearly pilgrimage on foot to Pandharpur in Ashadha. **Pandit Bhimsen Joshi** made abhangs popular on the classical stage through his "Santavani" concerts.

41. "Mangal" folk songs are traditional to which Indian state?

[SSC CHSL, 13 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Goa
(b) Maharashtra
(c) Uttarakhand
(d) Telangana

Answer (c) Uttarakhand

Explanation

Mangal geet are auspicious songs of **Uttarakhand** (Garhwal and Kumaon), sung by women at **weddings** and other ceremonies such as the naming of a child. In Garhwal, the women who sing them are called **Mangaleris**.

Uttarakhand's other folk song forms include **Jagar** (to invoke deities), **Chhopati**, **Bajuband**, **Khuder** and **Basanti** (spring songs).

42. The folk-music form "Bhopa" is traditional to which Indian state?

[SSC CHSL, 14 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Sikkim
(b) Odisha
(c) Rajasthan
(d) Tamil Nadu

Answer (c) Rajasthan

Explanation

The **Bhopas** are priest-singers of **Rajasthan** who sing the epics of folk deities. The most famous is the **Pabuji ki Phad**, in which the Bhopa sings the story of the hero **Pabuji** in front of a long painted scroll (**phad**), while his wife, the Bhopi, holds a lamp to light up the scenes. The Bhopa plays the **ravanhatha**.

The phads of **Devnarayan** are also sung this way. Phad painting comes mainly from **Shahpura** (Bhilwara district).

43. Narayanrao Rajhans, also known as Bal Gandharva, was a famous exponent of the music tradition of which state?

[SSC CHSL, 17 Nov 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Gujarat
(b) Haryana
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Meghalaya

Answer (c) Maharashtra

Explanation

Narayan Shripad Rajhans, known as **Bal Gandharva** (1888–1967), was the greatest star of **Marathi Sangeet Natak** (musical theatre) of **Maharashtra**. He was famous for playing **female roles** with great grace, and his **Natya Sangeet** songs are still loved.

The title "Bal Gandharva" was given to him by **Lokmanya Tilak**. He received the **Padma Bhushan (1964)**, and a Marathi film, *Balgandharva* (2011), is based on his life.

44. Which of the following best describes achal and chal swaras in Indian classical music?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-2]

(a) The pitch of all swaras is fixed
(b) Sa and Pa are fixed; the others have variants
(c) Komal/Tivra forms exist only in Carnatic music
(d) Ga and Ni are always shuddha

Answer (b) Sa and Pa are fixed; the others have variants

Explanation

Sa and **Pa** are **achal (fixed) swaras**: they never change. The other five, **Re, Ga, Dha, Ni** and **Ma**, are **chal (movable) swaras**: Re, Ga, Dha and Ni have **komal** (flat) forms, and Ma has a **tivra** (sharp) form. Together with the seven shuddha notes, this gives **12 notes** in an octave.

So options (a) and (d) are wrong, and (c) is wrong because komal and tivra notes are central to Hindustani music too (for example, Raga Yaman uses tivra Ma).

45. Which classical music treatise was composed by Sharangadeva in the 13th century?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 17 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) Natya Shastra
(b) Sangeet Sudha
(c) Sangeet Ratnakar
(d) Abhinaya Darpan

Answer (c) Sangeet Ratnakar

Explanation

Sangeet Ratnakar was written by **Sharangadeva** in the 13th century at the court of the **Yadava** king Singhana of Devagiri. It is one of the most important texts of Indian music and is respected by both the Hindustani and Carnatic traditions.

Know the other texts: **Natya Shastra** – Bharata Muni; **Abhinaya Darpan** – Nandikeshvara (on dance gestures); **Sangeet Sudha** – Govinda Dikshita (17th century, Thanjavur); **Brihaddeshi** – Matanga.

46. What does the term "Swaravali" mean in Indian classical music?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 18 Sep 2025, Shift-3]

(a) A specific raga
(b) A melodic exercise composed using the seven notes
(c) Ornamentation
(d) Rhythmic cycle

Answer (b) A melodic exercise composed using the seven notes

Explanation

Swaravali (sarali varisai in Carnatic music) is a basic **practice exercise** made of patterns of the seven notes (Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni), sung up and down at different speeds. Beginners learn these to train their voice and fix the notes in their ear.

In Carnatic training, swaravalis were systematised by **Purandara Dasa**, along with janta varisai and alankaras, usually taught in Raga **Mayamalavagowla**.

47. The composition "Guru Bin Kaise Gun Gaun" is set in which rhythmic cycle (tala)?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 19 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Jhaptal
(b) Keharwa
(c) Teentaal
(d) Rupak

Answer (c) Teentaal

Explanation

The well-known bandish **"Guru bin kaise gun gaun"** is a composition in **Raga Malkauns**, set in **Teentaal** (16 beats). It is often taught to students as a classic example of a madhya-laya bandish in this raga.

Teentaal is the most common tala in Hindustani music, with 16 matras in 4 equal divisions; its khali falls on the 9th beat. **Jhaptal** has 10 beats, **Keharwa** 8 and **Rupak** 7.

48. Which of the following is not a type of raga-based performance?

[SSC CGL Tier-1, 24 Sep 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Thumri
(b) Dhrupad
(c) Prabandh
(d) Sonata

Answer (d) Sonata

Explanation

The **sonata** is a form of **Western classical music**, usually written for a solo instrument like the piano or violin, in several movements. It is not based on Indian ragas.

The other three are Indian raga-based forms: **Dhrupad** (the oldest surviving form), **Thumri** (light-classical, romantic and devotional) and **Prabandh** (the old structured compositions described in texts like Sangeet Ratnakar, from which Dhrupad grew).

49. In Indian classical music, the basic musical notes are called _____.

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 03 Aug 2025]

(a) Raga
(b) Tala
(c) Swar
(d) Alankar

Answer (c) Swar

Explanation

The basic musical notes are called **swar** (swaras). There are seven: **Sa (Shadja), Re (Rishabh), Ga (Gandhar), Ma (Madhyam), Pa (Pancham), Dha**

(Dhaivat) and **Ni (Nishad)**, together called the **saptak**.

The other terms are built from swaras: a **raga** is a melodic framework of swaras, **tala** is the rhythmic cycle, and an **alankar** is a pattern or ornament of swaras used for practice.

50. Carnatic music is mainly prevalent in which part of India?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 28 Jul 2025]

(a) Western India
(b) Northern India
(c) Southern India
(d) Eastern India

Answer (c) Southern India

Explanation

Carnatic music is the classical music of **South India**: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. It is mostly devotional and composition-based, with the **kriti** as its central form.

The **Hindustani** tradition belongs to North India. The two systems began to separate around the 13th–14th centuries; the terms "Carnatic" and "Hindustani" first appear in **Haripala's Sangita Sudhakara** (14th century). The biggest Carnatic festival is the **Chennai December Music Season** (Margazhi).

51. Which of the following is a prominent Sushir Vadya used in Indian classical music?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 29 Jul 2025]

(a) Sitar
(b) Flute
(c) Tabla
(d) Veena

Answer (b) Flute

Explanation

The **flute (bansuri/venu)** is a **Sushir Vadya**, that is, a wind instrument in which sound is produced by blowing air. Other sushir vadyas are the **shehnai, nadaswaram, harmonium** and **conch**.

The others belong to other groups: the **sitar** and **veena** are **Tat** (string) and the **tabla** is **Avanaddha** (membrane drum).

52. The Baul music tradition belongs to which state?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 30 Jul 2025]

(a) Rajasthan
(b) West Bengal
(c) Gujarat
(d) Tamil Nadu

Answer (b) West Bengal

Explanation

Baul music belongs to **West Bengal** (and Bangladesh). The Bauls are wandering mystic minstrels who sing of divine love and the search for the "**moner manush**" (the person of the heart) within, mixing ideas from Vaishnava bhakti and Sufism. They play the one-stringed **ektara** and the small drum **dubki**.

The Baul tradition was added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in **2005**. **Lalon Fakir** is its most famous saint-poet, and **Rabindranath Tagore** was deeply influenced by Baul songs. The **Joydev Kenduli** fair is a big gathering of Bauls.

53. Raga Miyan Malhar is known for its association with which famous musician?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 31 Jul 2025]

(a) Tansen
(b) Swaroop Chand Singh
(c) Ravi Shankar
(d) Amir Khusro

Answer (a) Tansen

Explanation

Raga Miyan ki Malhar is credited to **Tansen**, the great musician of **Akbar's court**; "Miyan" refers to Tansen himself. It is a **monsoon raga**, and legend says Tansen could bring rain by singing it, just as Raga Deepak could light lamps.

Tansen, one of Akbar's **Navaratnas**, was a disciple of **Swami Haridas**; other ragas linked with him are **Miyan ki Todi** and **Darbari Kanada**. His tomb is in **Gwalior**, where the **Tansen Samaroh** is held every December.

54. Which of the following is a classical form of Indian music?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 24 Jul 2025]

(a) Bhangra
(b) Kuchipudi
(c) Hindustani

(d) Garba

Answer (c) Hindustani

Explanation

Hindustani music is one of the two classical music systems of India, the other being **Carnatic**. Hindustani music is practised mainly in North India and includes forms like **Dhrupad, Khayal, Thumri, Tappa** and **Tarana**.

The other options are dances: **Bhangra** (Punjab folk dance), **Garba** (Gujarat folk dance) and **Kuchipudi** (a classical dance of Andhra Pradesh).

55. Which instrument is commonly associated with Indian classical music?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 25 Jul 2025]

(a) Guitar
(b) Sitar
(c) Piano
(d) Violin

Answer (b) Sitar

Explanation

The **sitar** is the instrument most strongly associated with Indian (Hindustani) classical music. It is a long-necked plucked string instrument with movable frets and sympathetic strings, traditionally linked with **Amir Khusro**, though its modern form developed in the 18th century.

Pandit Ravi Shankar made the sitar famous worldwide. The **violin** is not the answer: it is now central to **Carnatic** music, but it came from the West in the 18th century, while the sitar is an Indian instrument.

56. Bihu songs are part of the folk tradition of which Indian state?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 26 Jul 2025]

(a) Assam
(b) Punjab
(c) Gujarat
(d) Odisha

Answer (a) Assam

Explanation

Bihu geet are folk songs of **Assam**, sung during the Bihu festivals, especially **Rongali (Bohag) Bihu** in April. They celebrate spring, youth, love and the farming cycle, and are sung with the **dhol, pepa** (buffalo-horn pipe), **gogona** and **taal**.

Bihu songs and dance were made famous on stage and in films by artists like **Bhupen Hazarika** and **Khagen Mahanta**.

57. Who composed the famous Carnatic music set "Pancharatna Kritis"?

[SSC Selection Post Phase-XIII, 01 Aug 2025]

(a) Tyagaraja
(b) Purandara Dasa
(c) Muthuswami Dikshitar
(d) Syama Sastri

Answer (a) Tyagaraja

Explanation

The **Pancharatna Kritis** ("five gems") were composed by **Tyagaraja** in **Telugu**, in the ragas Nata, Gowla, Arabhi, Varali and Sri. Every year at the **Tyagaraja Aradhana** in **Thiruvaiyaru** (Tamil Nadu), musicians sing them together at his samadhi on the banks of the Kaveri.

Tyagaraja composed thousands of songs in praise of **Lord Rama**. **Muthuswami Dikshitar** is known for the **Navagraha Kritis**, and **Purandara Dasa** is called the father of Carnatic music.

58. Which of the following groups of musical instruments is known as membranophones?

[SSC MTS, 05 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Ghan Vadya
(b) Tat Vadya
(c) Sushir Vadya
(d) Avanaddha Vadya

Answer (d) Avanaddha Vadya

Explanation

Avanaddha Vadya are **membranophones**: instruments in which sound comes from a stretched **skin (membrane)**, like the **tabla, mridangam, pakhawaj, dholak** and **damaru**. "Avanaddha" means "covered".

Match the four groups: **Tat** = chordophones (strings), **Sushir** = aerophones (wind), **Avanaddha** = membranophones (skin drums), **Ghan** = idiophones (solid).

59. **Raga "Sorathi" takes its name from a region located in _____.**

[SSC MTS, 05 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Punjab
(b) Tripura
(c) Gujarat
(d) Jammu and Kashmir

Answer **(c) Gujarat**

Explanation

Raga **Sorath (Sorathi)** is named after **Saurashtra** (Sorath), the peninsular region of **Gujarat**. It is a raga of the Khamaj thaat, usually sung late at night, and appears in the **Guru Granth Sahib** as well.

Two other ragas take their names from Gujarat: **Bilawal** (from **Veraval**) and **Gujari/Gurjari** (from Gurjara).

60. **Daskathia is a form of ballad singing prevalent in _____.**

[SSC MTS, 06 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Punjab
(b) Tamil Nadu
(c) Maharashtra
(d) Odisha

Answer **(d) Odisha**

Explanation

Daskathia is a ballad-singing tradition of **Odisha**. Two performers, the main singer (gayaka) and his assistant (palia), tell stories from mythology while playing a pair of wooden clappers called **kathia**; "das" (servant) + "kathia" means the devotee who sings with the kathi.

A similar Odia form is **Pala**, a larger group performance. Daskathia is popular especially in **Ganjam** and other southern districts.

61. **Which statement about Gitam is correct? I. It is the simplest form of composition. II. Its composition is very simple and its musical flow is easy and melodious.**

[SSC MTS, 06 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Only I
(b) Only II
(c) Both I and II
(d) Neither I nor II

Answer **(c) Both I and II**

Explanation

Both statements are correct. A **gitam** is the **simplest composition** in Carnatic music, taught to beginners right after basic exercises like swaravalis and alankaras. It has a simple, melodious flow with no repetitions or sangatis, and the music moves in a steady pace.

Many gitams were composed by **Purandara Dasa**, such as "Lambodara Lakumikara" in Raga Malahari. After gitams, students move on to **swarajatis** and **varnams**.

62. **Which of the following is a Tat Vadya (string instrument)?**

[SSC MTS, 06 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Mera
(b) Idigya
(c) Dilruba
(d) Flute

Answer **(c) Dilruba**

Explanation

The **dilruba** is a **Tat Vadya**: a bowed string instrument with sympathetic strings and frets, popular in North India and in **Sikh devotional music (Gurbani kirtan)**. A similar instrument is the **esraj**, used in Bengal and at Santiniketan.

The **flute** is a wind (sushir) instrument, so it is out. The dilruba is said to have been developed around the time of **Guru Gobind Singh** as a lighter form of the taus.

63. **In Haripala's "Sangita Sudhakara", written in the _____ century CE, the terms Carnatic and Hindustani are found for the first time.**

[SSC MTS, 09 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) 6th
(b) 18th
(c) 8th
(d) 14th

Answer **(d) 14th**

Explanation

Sangita Sudhakara was written by **Haripala**, a Chalukya king of Gujarat, in the **14th century** (around 1309–1312). It is the first text where the terms **"Carnatic"** and **"Hindustani"** appear, showing that the two styles had begun to separate by then.

The division grew wider after the 13th century, as Persian influence shaped North Indian music in the Delhi Sultanate period, while the South kept closer to older traditions.

64. **U. Srinivas is associated with which musical instrument?**

[SSC MTS, 10 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Sitar
(b) Tambura
(c) Nadaswaram
(d) Mandolin

Answer **(d) Mandolin**

Explanation

U. Srinivas (1969–2014), known as **"Mandolin Srinivas"**, was a child prodigy from Andhra Pradesh who made the Western **mandolin** a respected instrument in **Carnatic music**. He received the **Padma Shri (1998)** and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award.

He also collaborated with world musicians like **John McLaughlin** in the band **Remember Shakti**. His brother **U. Rajesh** is also a mandolin player.

65. **Famous Indian musician Ustad Zakir Hussain is an expert in which instrument?**

[SSC MTS, 10 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Sitar
(b) Flute
(c) Violin
(d) Tabla

Answer **(d) Tabla**

Explanation

Ustad Zakir Hussain (1951–2024) was the world's most celebrated **tabla** player, son and disciple of tabla maestro **Ustad Alla Rakha** of the **Punjab gharana**. He received the **Padma Vibhushan (2023)**.

He won several **Grammy Awards**, including three in 2024 (for Shakti's album *This Moment* and other works), and co-founded the fusion band **Shakti** with John McLaughlin. He passed away in San Francisco in December 2024.

66. **Which of the following is a Sushir Vadya (wind instrument)?**

[SSC MTS, 10 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Hand bell
(b) Pena
(c) Rangma
(d) Dagu

Answer **(c) Rangma**

Explanation

Among the options, **Rangma** is the wind (sushir) instrument, a traditional blown instrument of the North-East. The others can be ruled out: a **hand bell** is a solid instrument (ghan), and the **pena** is a bowed **string** instrument of Manipur (tat), played to accompany Meitei folk songs and the Lai Haraoba festival.

Use elimination by group for such questions: anything struck as a whole (bells, cymbals) is ghan, anything with a skin is avanaddha, anything with strings is tat, and only the blown ones are sushir.

67. **The birth of Purandara Dasa in the year _____ was a very important milestone in the development of Carnatic music.**

[SSC MTS, 11 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) 1218
(b) 1310
(c) 1576
(d) 1484

Answer **(d) 1484**

Explanation

Purandara Dasa was born in **1484** in Karnataka and is called the **"Pitamaha" (father) of Carnatic music**. He organised the basic lessons still used today, the **swaravalis, janta varisai, alankaras** and **gitams**, and fixed **Raga Mayamalavagowla** as the first raga for beginners.

A leading saint of the **Haridasa movement**, he composed thousands of **Devara Namas** in simple Kannada in praise of Lord Vishnu (Vitthala). He was a contemporary of Vijayanagara's Krishna Deva Raya era.

68. **"Padavali Kirtan" is traditionally associated with which Indian state?**

[SSC MTS, 12 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Haryana
(b) Karnataka
(c) Telangana
(d) West Bengal

Answer **(d) West Bengal**

Explanation

Padavali Kirtan is a devotional song tradition of **Bengal**, based on the **padas** (verses) of Vaishnava poets like **Chandidas, Vidyapati** and Govindadas about the love of Radha and Krishna. It grew strongly after **Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** (16th century), and is sung to the **khol (mridanga)** and kartal.

It is also called **Lila Kirtan**, as it narrates episodes of Krishna's life. The **Manoharshahi** and **Garanhati** styles are well-known schools.

69. Which instrument is played by the lead singer in Burrakatha?

[SSC MTS, 13 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Flute
(b) Guitar
(c) Veena
(d) Tambura

Answer (d) Tambura

Explanation

In **Burrakatha** of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the lead storyteller (kathakudu) plays a **tambura**, which he holds on his right shoulder, while keeping rhythm with brass rings on his fingers and anklets on his feet.

His two companions play the **burra** (a skull-shaped clay drum, also called dakki or gummeta), one adding humour and the other political or social comments. Burrakatha became a powerful tool of mass awakening during the freedom struggle and the **Telangana movement**.

70. Which Indian region is known for a monastic music tradition in which chants are accompanied by the beats of a drum called "Yang"?

[SSC MTS, 13 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Kerala
(b) Goa
(c) Ladakh
(d) Gujarat

Answer (c) Ladakh

Explanation

In the Buddhist monasteries of **Ladakh**, monks chant prayers in a deep voice to a style of notation called **yang**, accompanied by drums (nga), cymbals and long horns. This sacred **monastic music** is part of daily rituals and festivals such as Hemis Tsechu.

The **Buddhist chanting of Ladakh** was added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in **2012**. The monastic orchestra also uses the **gyaling** (oboe) and **dungchen** (long horn).

71. Structurally, Dhrupad has ____ sections, and Dhrupad proper is a song divided into ____ parts.

[SSC MTS, 16 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) 2, 4
(b) 5, 4
(c) 6, 8
(d) 8, 8

Answer (a) 2, 4

Explanation

A Dhrupad performance has **two main sections**: the **alap** (slow, rhythm-free exploration of the raga using syllables like "aa, ra, na") and the **Dhrupad proper**, the composition sung with the pakhawaj.

The composition itself has **four parts**: **sthayi, antara, sanchari** and **abhog**. The Dhrupad style was patronised by Raja Man Singh Tomar of Gwalior, and its four vanis are Gauhar, Dagar, Khandar and Nauhar.

72. Classical vocalist Shruti Sadolikar is associated with which gharana?

[SSC MTS, 16 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Bhendi Bazaar Gharana
(b) Agra Gharana
(c) Patiala Gharana
(d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Answer (d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Explanation

Shruti Sadolikar-Katkar is a noted vocalist of the **Jaipur-Atrauli gharana**. She trained with her father **Wamanrao Sadolikar** and with Ustad Gulubhai Jasdanwala, both of the Alladiya Khan tradition. She has served as Vice-Chancellor of the **Bhatkhande Music University**, Lucknow.

This gharana appears several times in this chapter: Alladiya Khan (founder), Kesarbai Kerkar, Kishori Amonkar, Ashwini Bhide Deshpande and Shruti Sadolikar.

73. Which group of musical instruments is known as aerophones?

[SSC MTS, 16 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Tat Vadya
(b) Ghan Vadya
(c) Avanaddha Vadya
(d) Sushir Vadya

Answer (d) Sushir Vadya

Explanation

Sushir Vadya are **aerophones**: instruments that produce sound from a column of vibrating air, by blowing (flute, shehnai, nadaswaram, conch) or by bellows (harmonium). "Sushir" means hollow.

The four Natya Shastra groups and their modern names: **Tat** – chordophones, **Sushir** – aerophones, **Avanaddha** – membranophones, **Ghan** – idiophones.

74. The musical instrument "Bhankora" is associated with which of the following states?

[SSC MTS, 17 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Tamil Nadu
(b) Rajasthan
(c) Kerala
(d) Uttarakhand

Answer (d) Uttarakhand

Explanation

The **bhankora** is a long **copper trumpet** of **Uttarakhand** (Garhwal), blown at religious processions, fairs and ceremonies along with the **dhol and damau**. Like the ransingha, it announces the arrival of deities and important events.

Other Uttarakhand instruments include the **hudka** (hourglass drum), **dhol-damau**, **masakbeen** (bagpipe) and **turhi**.

75. The traditional Nagaland instrument "Asem" belongs to which category?

[SSC MTS, 17 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Flute
(b) Guitar
(c) Harmonium
(d) Drum

Answer (d) Drum

Explanation

The **asem** is a traditional **drum** of Nagaland, often in the form of a large **log drum** carved from a single hollowed tree trunk. Naga villages used log drums to send signals, announce events and accompany festivals and dances.

Nagaland's string instruments include the single-stringed **tati (libuh)**, made popular worldwide by the **Tetseo Sisters**. Its wind instruments include bamboo flutes and buffalo-horn trumpets.

76. Who founded the Jaipur-Atrauli gharana, known for its complex and melodious style?

[SSC MTS, 17 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Ustad Amir Khan
(b) Pandit Bhimsen Joshi
(c) Ustad Vilayat Khan
(d) Ustad Alladiya Khan

Answer (d) Ustad Alladiya Khan

Explanation

The **Jaipur-Atrauli gharana** was founded by **Ustad Alladiya Khan** (1855–1946) in the late 19th century. It is known for **complex, rare ragas** (jod ragas), intricate rhythmic patterns and a perfect balance of melody and rhythm. Alladiya Khan later settled in **Kolhapur** and Mumbai.

The others belong elsewhere: **Ustad Amir Khan** founded the **Indore gharana**, **Pandit Bhimsen Joshi** belonged to the **Kirana gharana**, and **Ustad Vilayat Khan** was a sitar maestro of the **Imdadkhani (Etawah) gharana**.

77. The monastic orchestra that uses the "Gyaling" (oboe) instrument is associated with _____.

[SSC MTS, 18 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Goa
(b) Ladakh
(c) Punjab
(d) Bihar

Answer (b) Ladakh

Explanation

The **gyaling** is a double-reed **oboe** used in the Buddhist **monastic orchestra** of **Ladakh** (and Tibet, Sikkim). It plays the melodies in rituals and masked-dance festivals, along with the long horns

(**dungchen**), drums (**nga**), cymbals (**rolmo**) and conch shells.

Ladakh's Buddhist chanting with this music is on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list (2012). The gyaling is usually played in pairs at the start of ceremonies, as a welcome.

78. Raga Bilawal, named after Veraval, is traditionally associated with which Indian state?

[SSC MTS, 18 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Sikkim
(b) Kerala
(c) Gujarat
(d) West Bengal

Answer (c) Gujarat

Explanation

Raga **Bilawal** is believed to take its name from **Veraval**, a port town in the Saurashtra region of **Gujarat** (near Somnath). It is a morning raga, and **Bilawal thaat** uses all seven **shuddha** (natural) notes, like the Western major scale, which is why it is the base thaat in Bhatkhande's system.

Other ragas named after Gujarat are **Sorath** (Saurashtra) and **Gujari**.

79. In the context of the "Rasiya" folk songs of Uttar Pradesh, what does the word "Dang" mean?

[SSC MTS, 18 Feb 2026, Shift-3]

(a) Small guitar
(b) Soft flutes
(c) Heavy cymbals
(d) Large drums

Answer (d) Large drums

Explanation

Rasiya are folk songs of the **Braj** region (Mathura, Vrindavan) of Uttar Pradesh, about the playful love of Radha and Krishna, sung especially during **Holi**. They are accompanied by large drums called **"dang"** (big nagaras), whose loud beats drive the singing and dancing.

Rasiya is part of the famous Braj Holi, including **Lathmar Holi** of Barsana and Nandgaon.

80. Which of the following is a Ghan Vadya?

[SSC MTS, 19 Feb 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Naal
(b) Jantar
(c) Manjidi
(d) Das-kathi

Answer (c) Manjidi

Explanation

The answer is **Manjidi**, small brass **cymbals** similar to the manjira, which are struck together and need no tuning; this makes them a typical **Ghan Vadya** (solid instrument).

The **naal** is a barrel drum with skin heads (avanaddha), and the **jantar** is a string instrument of Rajasthan played by the Gujar Bhopas while singing the Devnarayan epic (tat). The **kathi** of Odisha's Daskathia singers is a pair of wooden clappers.

81. Renowned classical vocalist Kesarbai Kerkar was associated with which gharana?

[SSC MTS, 19 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Patiala Gharana
(b) Kirana Gharana
(c) Banaras Gharana
(d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Answer (d) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Explanation

Surshri Kesarbai Kerkar (1892–1977), born in Goa, was a leading singer of the **Jaipur-Atrauli gharana** and a disciple of its founder, **Ustad Alladiya Khan**. She received the **Padma Bhushan (1969)**.

Her recording of Raga **Bhairavi, "Jaat kahan ho"**, was included on the **Voyager Golden Record**, sent into space by NASA in 1977. Other Jaipur-Atrauli greats are **Mogubai Kurdikar** and her daughter **Kishori Amonkar**.

82. Which of the following is a Tat Vadya?

[SSC MTS, 20 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Penjani
(b) Nagori
(c) Karna
(d) Ektara

Answer (d) Ektara

Explanation

The **ektara** ("one string") is a **Tat Vadya**: a single-stringed plucked instrument with a gourd or wooden resonator and a bamboo neck. It is used by wander-

ing singers, especially the **Bauls** of Bengal, and in devotional music across India.

The **karna** is a long trumpet (sushir), and the **nagori** is a drum. A two-stringed version of the ektara is called the **dotara**.

83. Which of the following is a Sushir Vadya?

[SSC MTS, 20 Feb 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Dimdi
(b) Santoor
(c) Cymbals
(d) Gogona

Answer (d) Gogona

Explanation

The **gogona** is a small **bamboo instrument** of Assam, held between the teeth and plucked so that air passes through it; it is classified as a **Sushir Vadya**. Along with the **pepa** (buffalo-horn pipe), it accompanies the **dhol** in **Bihu** performances, and is played mostly by women.

The others: the **dimdi** is a small drum (avanaddha), the **santoor** is a string instrument struck with mallets (tat), and **cymbals** are solid instruments (ghan).

84. Which of the following is a key difference in the playing technique of Pakhawaj and Tabla?

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 10 Jan 2026, Shift-1]

(a) Tabla is played standing, while Pakhawaj is played sitting.
(b) Pakhawaj uses flat-palm strokes, whereas Tabla uses the fingers.
(c) Pakhawaj is played with sticks, whereas Tabla is played with the hands.
(d) Pakhawaj uses only open strokes, whereas Tabla uses only closed strokes.

Answer (b) Pakhawaj uses flat-palm strokes, whereas Tabla uses the fingers.

Explanation

The **pakhawaj** is a large double-headed barrel drum played mainly with **open, flat-palm strokes**, producing a deep, resonant sound suited to **Dhrupad**. The **tabla**, a pair of drums, is played mostly with the **fingers and fingertips**, allowing fast, delicate and varied strokes suited to khayal, thumri and Kathak.

Both are played sitting and with the hands, so options (a) and (c) are wrong. A common story credits **Amir Khusro** with creating the tabla by splitting the pakhawaj, though historians doubt this.

85. Which instruments are correctly matched with their use/performance context?

1. Sri-Khol – Kirtan
2. Ektara – Baul singing
3. Dhol – Rama Yuddha dance

[Delhi Police Head Constable (Min.) 2025, 12 Jan 2026, Shift-2]

(a) Only 1 and 2
(b) Only 2 and 3
(c) Only 1 and 3
(d) 1, 2 and 3 are correct

Answer (a) Only 1 and 2

Explanation

Pairs 1 and 2 are the well-established matches. The **Sri-Khol** (khol or mridanga, a clay-bodied drum) is the main drum of **kirtan** in Bengal, Odisha, Assam and Manipur, made popular by **Sri Chaitanya**. The **ektara** is the signature instrument of the **Baul** singers of Bengal.

The third pairing is not a standard one, so the accepted answer is **only 1 and 2**. The khol is also used in the **Manipuri Sankirtana** tradition, which is on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list (2013).

86. Fill in the blank: In the modern period, Pt. V. N. Bhatkhande and Pt. V. D. Paluskar made an important contribution to Hindustani classical music by introducing an organised _____.

[SSC CPO, 09 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Bhakti movement
(b) Stage-performance culture
(c) Notation system
(d) Raga-Ragini painting

Answer (c) Notation system

Explanation

Both **Pt. Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande** and **Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar** developed **notation systems** (swaralipi) so that compositions could be written down and taught systematically, instead of being passed only orally from guru to disciple.

Bhatkhande also classified ragas into **10 thaats** and published the **Kramik Pustak Malika**, while Paluskar founded the **Gandharva Mahavidyalaya** (1901) and composed the tune of **"Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram"** as sung by Gandhi's followers.

87. What is the central theme of Goa's Mando music?

[SSC CPO, 09 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Religious devotion
(b) War and bravery
(c) Love and historical narratives
(d) Nature and philosophy

Answer (c) Love and historical narratives

Explanation

Mando songs of Goa mainly deal with **love**, longing and separation, along with **historical and social events** and resistance to Portuguese rule. Sung in **Konkani** with Western harmony and a slow, graceful rhythm, they were performed at weddings and gatherings of the Goan Catholic community.

The Mando is often followed by the livelier **dulpod**, and the singers are accompanied by the violin, guitar and the **ghumot** (an earthen drum, Goa's heritage instrument).

88. Which of the following pairs of musical forms/ artists and their characteristics is correctly matched?

[SSC CPO, Dec 2025]

(a) Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana – fast swara patterns, technically difficult
(b) Thumri (Banaras style) – a khayal-like form sung after tarana
(c) Tappa – a principal form of slow lyrical love songs (Thumri)
(d) Rasoolan Devi – known for fast, technical khayal taans

Answer (a) Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana – fast swara patterns, technically difficult

Explanation

Rampur-Sahaswan gharana – fast swara patterns, technically difficult is correct. Founded by **Ustad Inayat Hussain Khan**, this gharana is known for intricate, fast **taans** and sargams that demand great technical skill. Its exponents include **Ustad Rashid Khan** and **Ghulam Mustafa Khan**.

The other pairs are wrong: **Banaras thumri** is slow, expressive and light-classical, not a khayal-like form after tarana; **tappa** is a fast, jerky form from Punjab's camel drivers, not slow thumri; and **Rasoolan Bai** was a famous **Banaras thumri** singer, known for expression rather than technical taans.

89. Which of these classical musicians is credited with popularising the sitar on the global music stage?

[SSC CPO, 10 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Pandit Ravi Shankar
(b) Ustad Vilayat Khan
(c) Pandit Nikhil Banerjee
(d) Ustad Allauddin Khan

Answer (a) Pandit Ravi Shankar

Explanation

Pandit Ravi Shankar (1920–2012) took the sitar to the world, especially through his friendship with **George Harrison of the Beatles**, performances at **Monterey (1967)** and **Woodstock (1969)**, and collaborations with violinist **Yehudi Menuhin**. He received the **Bharat Ratna (1999)** and several Grammy Awards.

He trained under **Ustad Allauddin Khan** of the **Maihar gharana**, who also taught Ali Akbar Khan, Annapurna Devi and Nikhil Banerjee. Ustad Vilayat Khan, another great sitarist, belonged to the Imdadkhani gharana.

90. Read the following statements about traditional and semi-classical Indian music. Which statements are correct?

1. Kajri is sung by women in Uttar Pradesh during the rainy season and often involves rhythmic group dance.
2. Qawwali, presented by Sufi saints, occurs only as solo singing and has no chorus.
3. Tappa originated in Punjab, contains high and agile taans, and was inspired by camel-drivers' songs.
4. Amir Khusro helped shape Qawwali in India as a Sufi devotional music style.

[SSC CPO, 10 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Only 1, 2 and 3
(b) Only 1, 3 and 4
(c) Only 2, 3 and 4
(d) Only 1, 2 and 4

Answer (b) Only 1, 3 and 4

Explanation

Statements 1, 3 and 4 are correct. **Kajri** is sung by women of Uttar Pradesh (especially around Mirzapur and Varanasi) in the **rainy season**, often with group dancing. **Tappa** came from the songs of **camel drivers of Punjab**, with quick, agile taans; it was re-

fined by **Shori Miyan**. **Amir Khusro** is credited with shaping **qawwali** as a Sufi devotional form.

Statement 2 is wrong: qawwali is sung by a **group (party)**, with a lead singer, supporting singers and a **chorus with hand-clapping**, not as a solo.

91. Which style of music is commonly associated with Qawwali?

[SSC CPO, 10 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Carnatic music
(b) Hindustani music
(c) Folk music
(d) Western classical music

Answer (b) Hindustani music

Explanation

Qawwali is a Sufi devotional form rooted in **Hindustani music**: it is based on ragas and talas of the North Indian system and is sung at **dargahs** like those of Nizamuddin Auliya (Delhi) and Ajmer Sharif. **Amir Khusro**, a disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya, is regarded as its father.

Famous qawwals include **Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan**, the **Sabri Brothers** and the **Wadali Brothers** (though the last are Sufi singers in a related style). "Qaul" means a saying of the Prophet, which gives qawwali its name.

92. Which devotional song form in simple Kannada, propagated by the Haridasa movement in Karnataka, is a foundation of the Carnatic music tradition?

[SSC CPO, 10 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Devara Nama
(b) Vachana
(c) Janapada Geete
(d) Bhajan

Answer (a) Devara Nama

Explanation

Devara Namas are devotional songs in simple **Kannada**, composed by the saints of the **Haridasa movement**, mainly **Purandara Dasa** and **Kanaka Dasa**, in praise of Lord Vishnu. They spread bhakti among ordinary people and laid the foundation of Carnatic music.

Vachanas are short devotional prose-poems of the **Lingayat (Veerashaiva)** movement of the 12th century, by **Basavanna**, Akka Mahadevi and Allama Prabhu; they are not musical compositions in the same way.

93. Which instrument is commonly used during Pandavani performances in Chhattisgarh?

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Tambura
(b) Tabla
(c) Harmonium
(d) Manjira

Answer (a) Tambura

Explanation

In **Pandavani**, the folk narration of the **Mahabharata** (the story of the Pandavas) from Chhattisgarh, the main performer holds a **tambura** decorated with peacock feathers and bells, and uses it as a prop: it becomes Bhima's mace, Arjuna's bow or a chariot as the story moves. A group of accompanists plays the harmonium, tabla and kartal.

The most famous Pandavani artist is **Teejan Bai** (Padma Vibhushan 2019) of the **Kapalik** style, in which the performer acts out the story. The other style is **Vedamati**, where the narrator sits and recites.

94. Fill in the blank: In Indian classical music notation, a note marked with a dot above the letter represents the _____ octave.

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Madhya Saptak
(b) Mandra Saptak
(c) Taar Saptak
(d) Shuddha Saptak

Answer (c) Taar Saptak

Explanation

In Bhatkhande notation, a **dot above** a note means it belongs to the **Taar Saptak** (upper octave), and a **dot below** means the **Mandra Saptak** (lower octave). Notes with no dot are in the **Madhya Saptak** (middle octave).

Other marks in this notation: a **line below** a note shows it is **komal** (flat), and a **vertical line above Ma** shows **tivra** Ma (sharp).

95. Which instrument is mainly used in Kathakali to prepare the rhythmic foundation for the performance?

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Pakhawaj
(b) Chenda
(c) Veena
(d) Tabla

Answer (b) Chenda

Explanation

The **chenda**, a cylindrical drum played with two curved sticks, provides the powerful rhythm of **Kathakali**, Kerala's classical dance-drama. It is played along with the **maddalam**, **idakka** and **chengila** (gong), while singers sing the story.

A Kathakali performance traditionally begins with the **Kelikottu**, drumming in the evening to announce the show to the village. The chenda is also central to Kerala's **Chenda Melam** and temple festivals like Thrissur Pooram.

96. In North India, especially at weddings and temple festivals, which instrument is commonly associated with ceremonial music?

[SSC CPO, 11 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Flute
(b) Shehnai
(c) Santoor
(d) Sarod

Answer (b) Shehnai

Explanation

The **shehnai**, a double-reed wind instrument, is the instrument of **auspicious occasions** in North India: weddings, temple ceremonies and festivals. It is often called "mangal vadya" (auspicious instrument), and its southern counterpart is the **nadaswaram**.

Ustad Bismillah Khan of Varanasi raised the shehnai to the classical concert stage and played it at the **Red Fort on 15 August 1947**. He received the **Bharat Ratna (2001)**.

97. Which of these ragas is traditionally associated with the morning and creates a peaceful, meditative mood?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Raga Bageshri
(b) Raga Hamsadhwani
(c) Raga Bhairav
(d) Raga Marwa

Answer (c) Raga Bhairav

Explanation

Raga Bhairav is a **dawn raga** (sung around sunrise) with a serious, peaceful and devotional mood, named after a form of Lord Shiva. It uses komal Re and komal Dha, and its parent scale is the **Bhairav thaat**.

The others are for different times: **Bageshri** is a late-night raga, **Marwa** is a sunset raga, and **Hamsadhwani** (a Carnatic raga also sung in Hindustani music) is usually an evening raga. In Hindustani music, each raga has a traditional time of day (**samay**).

98. Which term in Indian classical music refers to a melodic framework containing ascending (Aroh) and descending (Avaroh) notes?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Talam
(b) Alap
(c) Raga
(d) Swara

Answer (c) Raga

Explanation

A **raga** is a melodic framework with a fixed set of notes, a particular **aroh** (ascent) and **avaroh** (descent), important notes (**vadi** and **samvadi**), characteristic phrases (**pakad**) and a mood. It is the basis of all Indian classical melody.

The others: **talam/tala** is the rhythmic cycle, **alap** is the slow, rhythm-free opening of a raga, and **swara** is a single musical note.

99. Who is a famous Indian Santoor player often credited with popularising the instrument worldwide?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Shivkumar Sharma
(b) Zakir Hussain
(c) Bhajan Sopori
(d) Hariprasad Chaurasia

Answer (a) Shivkumar Sharma

Explanation

Pandit Shivkumar Sharma (1938–2022) of Jammu took the **santoor**, once a folk instrument of Kashmir used in Sufiana music, to the classical concert stage

and made it popular worldwide. He received the **Padma Vibhushan (2001)**.

With flautist **Hariprasad Chaurasia** he formed the film music duo **Shiv–Hari**. **Bhajan Sopori** was also a great santoor player from the Sufiana gharana of Kashmir, but Sharma is the name most linked with its worldwide popularity.

100. Lotiya folk music is performed in which state?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Maharashtra
(b) Rajasthan
(c) Uttar Pradesh
(d) Manipur

Answer (b) Rajasthan

Explanation

Lotiya is a folk song-and-dance of **Rajasthan**, performed by women during the **Lotiya festival** in the month of **Chaitra**. Women carry brass pots (**lotas**) and kalash filled with water, decorated with flowers, from wells and ponds to the temple, singing as they go.

Rajasthan's other women's folk forms include **Ghoomar**, **Panihari** songs (about women fetching water) and **Chari** dance.

101. Which Hindustani classical gharana founded by Ustad Alladiya Khan is known for melodic complexity and exponents such as Kesarbai Kerkar and Kishori Amonkar?

[SSC CPO, 12 Dec 2025, Shift-2]

(a) Gwalior Gharana
(b) Agra Gharana
(c) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana
(d) Kirana Gharana

Answer (c) Jaipur-Atrauli Gharana

Explanation

The **Jaipur-Atrauli gharana**, founded by **Ustad Alladiya Khan**, is known for melodic complexity, rare and compound ragas and intricate taans. **Kesarbai Kerkar**, **Mogubai Kurdikar** and **Kishori Amonkar** (Padma Vibhushan 2002) are among its greatest singers.

Fix the founders of major khayal gharanas: **Gwalior** (the oldest khayal gharana, Haddu–Hassu Khan), **Agra** (Faiyaz Khan made it famous), **Kirana** (Abdul Karim Khan) and **Patiala** (Ali Bakhsh and Fateh Ali Khan).

102. Which form of folk music is associated with the Bengal region?

[Delhi Police Constable, 27 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Baul
(b) Dandiya
(c) Bhajan
(d) Lavani

Answer (a) Baul

Explanation

Baul is the folk music of the **Bengal** region (West Bengal and Bangladesh), sung by wandering mystic minstrels with the **ektara** and **dubki**. It is on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

The others belong elsewhere: **Dandiya** is a dance of Gujarat, **Lavani** is a song-and-dance form of Maharashtra, and **bhajan** is a general devotional song form found all over India.

103. As a global ambassador, which classical music tradition did Ravi Shankar represent?

[Delhi Police Constable, 27 Dec 2025, Shift-1]

(a) Hindustani classical music
(b) Both Hindustani and Carnatic music
(c) Sufi music
(d) Folk music

Answer (a) Hindustani classical music

Explanation

Pandit Ravi Shankar represented **Hindustani classical music** around the world. Trained in the **Maihar gharana** under Ustad Allauddin Khan, he introduced Western audiences to the sitar and to ragas, collaborated with musicians like **George Harrison**, **Yehudi Menuhin** and Philip Glass, and composed music for Satyajit Ray's **Apu trilogy**.

He was a nominated member of the **Rajya Sabha** (1986–92) and received the **Bharat Ratna (1999)**. His daughters **Anoushka Shankar** (sitar) and **Norah Jones** (singer) are also well-known musicians.