

## CURRENT AFFAIRS – 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024

1.a

<p>The Markets in Crypto-Assets (MiCA) law, will regulate cryptocurrencies for the first time in its entirety.</p> <p>It is anticipated to set new standards for the regulation of cryptocurrencies globally.</p> <p>MiCA will impose compliance on the issuers of crypto assets, who are defined as the “legal person who offers to the public any type of crypto-assets”.</p>	<p>It will apply to crypto-asset service providers (CASPs) providing one or more of these services the operation of a trading platform like Coinbase, custody, and administration of crypto assets on behalf of third parties (customers), the exchange of crypto assets for funds/other crypto-assets, the execution of orders for crypto assets, the placing of crypto assets, providing transfer services for crypto assets to third parties, providing advice on crypto-assets and crypto-portfolio management.</p> <p>The regulation prescribes different sets of requirements for CASPs depending on the type of crypto assets.</p> <p>The base regime will require every CASP to get incorporated as a legal entity in the EU.</p> <p>They can get authorised in any one member country and will be allowed to conduct their services across the 27 countries.</p> <p>They will then be supervised by regulators like the European Banking Authority and the European Securities and Markets Authority, who will ensure that the companies have the required risk management and corporate governance practices in place.</p> <p>CASPs will have to demonstrate their stability and soundness, ability to keep the funds' users safe, implementation of controls to ensure they are not engaging in proprietary trading; avoidance of conflicts of interest, and their ability to defend against market abuse and manipulation.</p>
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2.c

<p>National Civil Services Day is celebrated in India on the 21st of April.</p> <p>This day acts as a reminder for civil servants, working in various departments, of the cause to serve the citizens of the country above all else.</p> <p>The government of India celebrates Civil Services Day, every year as an occasion for civil servants to rededicate themselves to the cause of</p>	<p>The theme for this year's Civil Services Day is 'Viksit Bharat: Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile'.</p> <p>As part of Civil Services Day, Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration are presented to Districts/Implementing Units for the</p>
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<p>serving citizens and renew their commitments to public service and excellence in work.</p> <p>The reason behind choosing this very date was to commemorate the day when the first Home Minister of Independent India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, addressed the probationers of Administrative Services Officers in 1947 at Metcalf House, Delhi. There he referred to civil servants as the 'steel frame of India'.</p> <p>This meant that civil servants, employed at various levels of the government, act as supporting pillars of the country's administrative system.</p>	<p>implementation of Priority programmes and innovation categories.</p>
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3.b

<p>The State Wide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology (SWAGAT) is an initiative of the Government of Gujarat that was started in 2003.</p> <p>The fourth Thursday of every month is designated as SWAGAT day, wherein the highest office in administration attends to the grievances of the common man.</p> <p>There is a three-tier grievance redressal system under SWAGAT – at State, District, and Taluka levels.</p> <p>It is now extended to the village level also.</p>	<p>It is an innovative concept that enables direct communication between the citizens and the Chief Minister, as also between the citizens and other functionaries of the Government.</p>
<p>The impacts of the SWAGAT initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Public accountability has been strengthened</li> <li>● Citizen satisfaction increased as grievances were attended to at the highest level</li> <li>● The monitoring system focuses attention on unresolved cases</li> <li>● Transparency is brought about as all stakeholders are present during the interaction with Chief Minister</li> <li>● Inputs from all – citizens, officers, and elected representatives- leads to fair decisions</li> </ul>	

- Activates local-level administration by requiring local-level grievances to be resolved to the extent possible before they escalate to the state level.

4.a

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LockBit was first reported in September 2019 and dubbed the “abcd” virus, due to the file extension used when encrypting victims’ files.</li> <li>• The LockBit ransomware is designed to infiltrate victims’ systems and encrypt important files.</li> <li>• The virus is categorized as a “cryptovirus” due to its requests for payment in cryptocurrency to decrypt files on the victim’s device.</li> <li>• The ransomware is therefore typically deployed against victims who feel hindered enough by the disruption to pay heavy sums in exchange for access to the files and can afford to do so.</li> <li>• The gang behind the LockBit ransomware reportedly maintains a dark web portal to recruit members and release data of victims who refuse to meet their demands, as part of their business model.</li> <li>• In the past, LockBit ransomware has been used to target enterprises and organizations in the U.S., China, India, Ukraine, and Indonesia.</li> <li>• Attacks have also been recorded throughout Europe, including France, Germany, and the U.K.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It works as a self-spreading malware, not requiring additional instructions once it has successfully infiltrated a single device with access to an organisational intranet.</li> <li>• It is also known to hide executable encryption files by disguising them in the PNG format, thereby avoiding detection by system defences.</li> <li>• Attackers use phishing tactics and other social engineering methods to impersonate trusted personnel or authorities to lure victims into sharing credentials.</li> <li>• Once it has gained access, the ransomware prepares the system to release its encryption payload across as many devices as possible.</li> <li>• It then disables security programs and other infrastructures that could permit system data recovery.</li> <li>• The goal is to ensure that data recovery without assistance from the LockBit gang is impossible.</li> <li>• Once this is ensured, the ransomware places an encryption lock on all system files, which can only be unlocked via a custom key created by the LockBit gang.</li> <li>• The process leaves behind a ransom note, with instructions to restore the system, and has reportedly also included threatening blackmail messages.</li> <li>• Victims are then left with no choice but to contact the LockBit gang and pay up for the data.</li> </ul> |
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5.a

<p>‘Zero Shadow Day’ is a phenomenon that occurs when the Sun is directly overhead.</p> <p>The shadows of vertical objects such as poles, trees, and buildings disappear completely for a brief period of time during this.</p> <p>It lasts for a small part of a second, but the effect can be seen for a minute to a minute-and-a-half.</p>	<p>It is an astronomical event that occurs twice a year on specific dates in some parts of the world. There are two zero shadow days every year in May and July/August, observed in places that lie between the tropic of Cancer and the tropic of Capricorn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One fall during the Uttarayan (when the Sun moves northwards).</li> <li>● The other is during Dakshinayan (when the Sun moves southwards).</li> </ul>
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6.a

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Tughlaqabad Fort in Delhi which is in complete ruins now, was built by Ghiyasuddin Tughla</li> <li>● Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq is the first Sultan of the Tughlaq Dynasty in 1321.</li> <li>● Curse of the Tomb: The legend has it that Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq wanted a powerful fortress that could stand up to a Mongol assault. Hence, soon after he ascended the throne, he began to work on the township and made it mandatory for all the workers of Delhi to work on the fort.</li> <li>● Around the same time, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, a mystic Sufi Saint was building a Baoli (step well) at his khanqah (dwelling place). The workers worked all day at the fort and at night, they would work on the Baoli. This angered the Sultan.</li> <li>● He banned the supply of oil to Nizamuddin so that the lamps could not be lit at the construction site of the Baoli.</li> <li>● It infuriated Nizamuddin Auliya and he used his mystical powers to turn the water of the well into oil.</li> <li>● He also cursed Tughlaqabad saying, “Ya rahe ujjar ya base Gujjar,” (either it will be left desolate or occupied by the nomadic herdsmen).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Raigad Fort overlooks an artificial lake known as the ‘Ganga Sagar Lake’.</li> <li>● It is a hill fort situated in the Raigad district of Maharashtra.</li> <li>● The fort was known to early Europeans as the ‘Gibraltar of the East’.</li> <li>● The fort, which was earlier called Rairi, was the seat of the Maratha clan Shirke in the 12th century.</li> <li>● The fort changed hands a number of times from the dynasty of Bahaminis to the Nizam Shahis and then the Adil Shahis.</li> <li>● In 1656 Chhatrapati Shivaji captured it from the Mores of Javli who were under the suzerainty of the Adilshahi Sultanate.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fortified city was built in four years on the rocky terrain, as a defence mechanism.</li> <li>• It is in two parts, the citadel and palaces along the southern walls forming one unit and the city to the north the other.</li> <li>• Across the main entrance from the south is Ghiyathu'd-Din's tomb is located.</li> <li>• It is faced with red sandstone relieved by marble, and with batter on the exterior.</li> <li>• It is enclosed within high walls forming an irregular pentagon.</li> <li>• Ghiyathu'd-Din's successor, Muhammad Tughluq (1325-51), added the small fortress of 'Adilabad' on the hill south of Tughluqabad, with which it shares the main characteristics of construction.</li> </ul>	
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7.c

<p>A quasar is an extremely luminous active galactic nucleus (AGN), in which a supermassive black hole with mass ranging from millions to billions of times the mass of the Sun is surrounded by a gaseous accretion disk.</p> <p>Quasars are the brightest and most powerful objects in the universe.</p> <p>The power radiated by quasars is enormous.</p>	<p>Quasars are formed by the energy emitted by materials spiralling around a black hole right before being sucked into it.</p> <p>As gas in the disk falls towards the black hole, energy is released in the form of electromagnetic radiation.</p> <p>The most powerful quasars have luminosities thousands of times greater than a galaxy such as the Milky Way.</p> <p>Most active galaxies have a supermassive black hole at the centre which sucks in surrounding objects.</p>
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8.a

<p>The wheat blast is a fungal disease.</p> <p>It is caused by the Magnaporthe oryzae pathotype Triticum (MoT).</p> <p>It was identified in Brazil in 1985.</p> <p>It affects wheat production in tropical and subtropical regions.</p> <p>The fungus infects wild and cultivated grasses, most notably rice and wheat.</p>	<p>It spreads through infected seeds, and crop residues as well as by spores that can travel long distances in the air.</p> <p>It spread to major-wheat producing areas in the country and then to other South American countries like Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina.</p>
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Asia's first outbreak of this pathogenic wheat blast was reported in Bangladesh in 2016.

9.c

- The countries that banned Russian oil imports instead imported oil commodities worth €42 billion from India, China, United Arab Emirates, Singapore, and Turkey after the war started in 2022. These five countries were thus identified as 'laundromats'.
- The five countries are responsible for 70 percent of Russia's crude oil exports.

10.b

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An epeiric sea on the European continental shelf, it connects to the Atlantic Ocean through the English Channel in the south and the Norwegian Sea in the north.</li> <li>• An inland sea (also known as an epeiric sea or an epicontinental sea) is a continental body of water that is very large in area and is either completely surrounded by dry land or connected to an ocean by a river, strait, or "arm of the sea".</li> <li>• It is more than 970 kilometres long.</li> <li>• It hosts key north European shipping lanes and is a major fishery.</li> <li>• The coast is a popular destination for recreation and tourism in bordering countries, and a rich source of energy resources, including wind and wave power.</li> <li>• The North Sea has featured prominently in geopolitical and military affairs, particularly in Northern Europe, from the Middle Ages to the modern era.</li> </ul>	<p>The North Sea lies between Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France.</p>
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11.b

Statement Analysis:

- World Heritage Committee is a committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

- It is responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, defines the use of the World Heritage Fund, and allocates financial assistance upon requests from state parties. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It has the final say on whether a property is inscribed on the World Heritage List. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- It examines reports on the state of conservation of inscribed properties and asks States Parties to take action when properties are not being properly managed.
- It also decides on the inscription or deletion of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger.
- The Committee consists of 21 members from the state parties to the Convention elected by their General Assembly and they hold office for a term of six years. However, most state parties choose voluntarily to be members of the committee for only four years to allow other state parties to be on the committee. **Hence statement 3 is incorrect.**

**Note:**

The **United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is a specialized agency of the United Nations. Its mission is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science, and culture. It provides a platform for international cooperation and establishes a holistic cultural governance system based on human rights and shared values.

12.d

Statement Analysis:

- The Eight Degree Channel separates the islands of Minicoy and Maldives. **Hence option d is correct.**
- The Nine Degree Channel separates the island of Minicoy from the main Lakshadweep archipelago.
- The Ten Degree Channel separates the Andaman Islands and the Nicobar Islands from each other in the Bay of Bengal.

**Note:**

**Maldives** is a low-lying island country in the north-central Indian Ocean. Its capital is Male and its official language is an Indo-European language called Dhivehi. Its state religion is Islam and its economy mainly revolves around tourism.

13.a

Statement Analysis:

The findings of the Henley Passport Index 2024:

- France, Italy, Japan, Singapore, Spain, and Germany hold the top spot as the world's most powerful passports. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The top 10 is largely dominated by European countries.
- The average number of destinations travellers can access visa-free has nearly doubled, from 58 in 2006 to 111 in 2024.
- India's passport ranked 80th on the list, with citizens allowed to travel to 62 countries without a visa.
- Afghanistan and Syria hold the bottom spot on the list. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The United Arab Emirates was the fastest climber over the past decade, jumping to 11th place and offering access to 183 destinations without a visa.

14.c

Statement Analysis:

- The Kadamba inscription has been found in the **Mahadeva temple at Cacoda in southern Goa.**
- Its epigraph is engraved in Kannada and Nagari characters of the 10th century AD. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- The record is composed as a **vocal statement on the death of his son from the mouth of a grieving father.** It records that when Talara Nevayya was administering the mandala, his son Gundayya having taken a vow to fulfil his father's desire of capturing a gopura of the port of Goa, fought and died after fulfilling his father's wish.
- It is in the literary style of the Talangre inscription of Jayasimha I of the same period. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

15.a

Statement Analysis:

- The Pallas's Sea Eagle also known as band-tailed fish eagle, is a large, brownish sea eagle. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- It is found in the east Palearctic in Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, China, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It can be seen near lakes, marshes, and large rivers, from lowlands to 5,000 metres of elevation.
- It feeds primarily on fish, but many other preys are part of its diet.
- It breeds usually near water in a large nest placed in a tall tree.
- It is listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Chilka Lake is a brackish water lake and a shallow lagoon with estuarine character spread across the districts of Puri, Khurda, and Ganjam in the state of Odisha.
- Chilka Lake is located at the mouth of the Daya River, flowing into the Bay of Bengal.
- It is connected to the Bay of Bengal by a wide channel that mostly runs parallel to the Bay separated by a narrow spit.



16.c

Statement Analysis:

- The National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) is the leading industry association for the real estate sector in the country. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Its primary objective is to provide a legitimate platform for the government, the real estate industry, and the general public to address their concerns and find effective solutions to the challenges faced by the real estate sector.
- Its mission is to improve the real estate industry's building, construction, and marketing standards.
- It works under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs of the Government of India. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- It plays a crucial role in policy formulation by representing the viewpoints of its members to various ministries regularly.
- All major national developers and public sector organizations in the fields of housing and real estate development, finance, and marketing are members of NAREDCO.
- Its organizational structure includes National, State, and City Councils. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- The councils ensure that the policy recommendations accurately reflect the real conditions on the ground and cover the entire geography.
- The Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs, Govt. of India, serves as the Chief Patron of NAREDCO.

17.b

Statement Analysis:

- The Thanjavur Doll is a type of traditional Indian toy made in the city of Thanjavur, formerly Tanjore, in Tamil Nadu.
- Thanjavur Doll originated during the 18th Century under King Saraboji's reign. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- The centre of gravity and the total weight of the doll is concentrated at its bottom-most point, generating a dance-like continuous movement with slow oscillations.
- They are handmade with paper mache, wax, plaster of Paris, coloring agents, clay, cardboard, plastics, and cement. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- They have been recognized as a Geographical Indication by the Government of India. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

18.c

Statement Analysis:

- Fuel Cells are an electrochemical device that converts chemical energy into electrical energy. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- A fuel cell consists of two electrodes—a negative electrode (or anode) and a positive electrode (or cathode).
- Both electrodes must be immersed in and separated by an electrolyte, which may be a liquid or a solid but must, in either case, conduct ions between the electrodes to complete the chemistry of the system.
- A fuel, such as hydrogen, is supplied to the anode, where it is oxidized, producing hydrogen ions and electrons.
- An oxidizer, such as oxygen, is supplied to the cathode, where the hydrogen ions from the anode absorb electrons from the latter and react with the oxygen to produce water.
- They can be used in a wide range of applications, providing power for applications across multiple sectors, including transportation, industrial/commercial/residential buildings, and long-term energy storage for the grid in reversible systems.
- They have an efficiency of over 60% when compared to thermal plants. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- They have lower or zero emissions compared to combustion engines as hydrogen fuel cells emit only water, addressing critical climate challenges as there are no carbon dioxide emissions.

19.d

Statement Analysis:

- Rejupave Technology is developed as a liquid bio-based asphalt modifier cum rejuvenating agent. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It significantly lowers the heating requirement of bituminous mixes besides preserving the bituminous mix temperature during transit.
- It is developed by India's oldest and premier road research organization, CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CSIR-CRRI). **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- CSIR-Central Road Research Institute (CRRI) is a premier national laboratory established in 1952, a constituent of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).
- It addresses construction challenges under low and sub-zero temperature conditions. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- This technology brings down the production and rolling temperature of bituminous mixes by 30 degrees Celsius to 400 degrees Celsius with negligible heat loss in the bituminous mix during transit, despite long haulage time amid snowfall.
- It aims to be environmentally sustainable and reduce the ecological footprint. **Hence statement 4 is correct.**
- It brings down greenhouse gas emissions in the pristine eco-sensitive mountainous environment.

20.b

Statement Analysis:

- INS Chennai is a guided missile destroyer indigenously designed and constructed by the Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL) in Mumbai. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It was commissioned into the Indian Navy on November 21, 2016.
- It is the last ship of the Kolkata-class stealth-guided missile destroyers under the Project 15A. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- Project 15A is a class of stealth guided-missile destroyers constructed for the Indian Navy. It comprises three ships – Kolkata, Kochi, and Chennai.
- It is equipped to fight under nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) warfare conditions. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- It is fitted with a modern surveillance radar, which provides target data to the gunnery weapon systems of the ship.
- It is armed with vertical launch and long-range surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missile systems like supersonic BrahMos, and 'Barak-8' long-range surface-to-air missiles.

21.c

Statement Analysis:

Mahanadi River originates from the Sihawa range of hills in the Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh state. It ranks second to the Godavari River among the peninsular rivers in respect of water potential. It is one of the major east-flowing peninsular rivers in India. The Hirakud Dam, the world's longest earthen dam (26km), is constructed across this river. Chilika Lake gets more than half of its inland flow from this river. Its tributaries include the Seonath, the Hasdeo, the Mand, the Ib, the Ong, the Tel, and the Jonk. **Hence option c is correct.**

22.b

Statement Analysis:

- Indian Army Day is celebrated every year on January 15.
- The Indian Army Day is celebrated to commemorate the victory of the Indian Army over the British Army. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- On January 15, 1949, Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa became the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, and took over authority from the British Commander-in-Chief General Francis Butcher, and became the first Indian to command the Army in its long, rich history.
- From 1949 until 2022, the Army Day parade was organised at the Cariappa Parade Ground in the Delhi Cantonment.
- In 2023, the Southern Command was responsible for the parade in Bengaluru. It was the first time the Army Day parade was held outside the country's capital.
- This year, the parade will be held under the command of the Army's 'Central Command, which is headquartered in Lucknow.

- The theme of Indian Army Day 2024 is “In Service of the Nation”. This year’s theme also resembles the motto of the Indian Army, “Service Before Self.” **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

23.c

Statement Analysis:

- Punganur Cow is native to Punganur village in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It has a high resilience to drought and can adapt to low-quality feed.
- They are considered eco-friendly, requiring less water, feed, and space compared to hybrid breeds. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- It is white, grey, or light brown to dark brown or red. Sometimes, animals with white colour mixed with red, brown, or black patches are also seen.
- Its milk is rich in nutrients such as Omega fatty acids, calcium, potassium, and magnesium. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- It is also prized for its milk, which boasts a higher fat content, making it ideal for producing ghee.
- A Punganur cow can give around 1 to 3 litres a day, and the milk fat content is 8 percent as compared to 3 to 4 percent in other native breeds.
- Its milk has cultural significance as it is used for Ksheeraabhishekam in Tirupati Thirumala Temple. **Hence statement 4 is correct.**

24.d

Statement Analysis:

Sinomicrurus Gorei is a new species of Coral Snake discovered in Mizoram. It has been named after British Indian doctor Gore. There are a total of nine species of Sinomicrurus coral snakes that have been discovered worldwide, and out of these, only one species called Sinomicrurus maclellandi is found in Northeast India. **Hence option d is correct.**

25.a

Statement Analysis:

- Kalaram Mandir is the site of a landmark agitation led by Babasaheb Ambedkar demanding temple entry rights for Dalits. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- In 1930, B R Ambedkar and the Marathi teacher and social activist Pandurang Sadashiv Sane, known as Sane Guruji, led an agitation to demand access for Dalits to Hindu temples.
- It derives its name from a black statue of the Lord — Kala Ram translates literally to “Black Ram”.
- It was built in 1792 with the efforts of Sardar Rangarao Odhekar.

- It is located on the banks of Godavari in the Panchavati area of Nashik in Maharashtra. **Hence statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Its sanctum sanctorum has statues of Ram, Sita, and Lakshman, and a black idol of Hanuman at the main entrance.
- The main temple has 14 steps, which represent the 14 years of Ram's exile. It has 84 pillars, which represents the cycle of 84 lakh species that one has to complete to be born as a human.

26.b

Statement Analysis:

Festival Name	State
1. Bhogali Bihu	Assam
2. Makar Sankramana	Karnataka
3. Uttarayan	Gujarat
4. Saen-kraat	Kashmir
5. Paush Parbon	Bengal
6. Pongal	Tamil Nadu
7. Lohri	Punjab
8. Lohri	Jammu
9. Khichdi Parwa	Bihar

Hence option b is correct.

27.c

Statement Analysis:

Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) has been designated as India's first Dark Sky Park which is protecting the night sky and preventing light pollution. Dark Sky Place certification focuses on lighting policy, dark sky-friendly retrofits, outreach and education, and monitoring the night sky. This designation positions PTR as a sanctuary where tourists can witness celestial spectacles, shielded from the intrusion of artificial light pollution. The certification was given by the International Dark-Sky Association, a global dark-sky movement to promote astronomy. **Hence option c is correct.**

28.b

Statement Analysis:

- In the PM-eBus Sewa Scheme, 10,000 e-buses will be deployed across cities in India. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It was introduced to give a push to the slow adoption of e-buses in public transport.
- Under this scheme, city bus operations will be done on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- This scheme will support bus operations for 10 years.
- States/Cities shall be responsible for running the bus services and making payments to the bus operators.
- The Central Government will support these bus operations by providing subsidies to the extent specified in the proposed scheme.
- This scheme will cover cities with a population of 300,000 and above and will include all the capital cities of the 'Union Territories, the North Eastern Region, and the Hill States'. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

29.c

Statement Analysis:

- The Bramhagiri Wildlife Sanctuary is situated on the southern side of Kodagu district of Karnataka. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- It is named after the highest peak of the sanctuary called Brahmagiri Hill.
- It is covered with semi-evergreen to wet evergreen forests with high-altitude grassland shoal forests. **Hence statement 2 is correct.**
- River Laxman Tirtha, a very important tributary of river Cauvery originates in it. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**

**Note:** Researchers from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) found a new butterfly species named Conjoined Silverline (*Cigaritis conjuncta*) in Karnataka's Bramhagiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Kodagu.

30.b

Statement Analysis:

- Cabo Verde is a group of islands that lie off the west coast of Africa. Its capital is Praia. **Hence statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It is located near Senegal and is the nearest point on the continent. This volcanic archipelago includes ten islands and five islets, divided into the windward (Barlavento) and leeward (Sotavento) groups.
- Its climate is characterized by stable temperatures with extreme aridity.
- It is certified as a malaria-free country by the World Health Organization (WHO). **Hence statement 2 is correct.**

- Cabo Verde has become the third country to acquire the status in the global health organisation's African region. The country has now joined Mauritius and Algeria, who were certified in 1973 and 2019, respectively.

KUMAR'S IAS