Daily Current Affairs



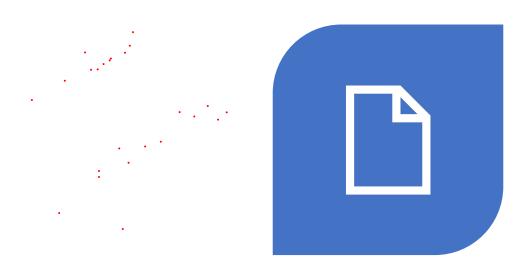








Download class24





PDF

10 MCQ QUIZ

 "Your future is not waiting for you to be ready; it's waiting for you to begin."



LS passes Bill for cess on pan masala units MENE & PAGE 4





Cotton clouds hang heavy here Heavy rain, duty-free imports, and price drop batter Gujarat farmers SHOUSE TERO & PAGE 7



ALL TO FLAY FOR India and South Africa meet in series decider SPORT & PAGE 14

ENSUREE .



Cover of Roy's book does not violate law: SC

NEW BRIDER The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a petition accuring author Arundhati Roy of glamorating tobacco use by using a photograph of her with a beadi on her book Morker

MGNREGS being revamped before Bengal relaunch

NEW DECAME The Centre is in the "pro researting and reference the procedures" to resume the Mohatma transfer teational **Rural Employment Guarantee** Scheme in West Bengal, it told

India-Russia friendship like the pole star: PM Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is on a

two-day India visit, and Modi hold bilateral talks

Modi signals, despite Western opposition, energy ties to continue as a 'strong pillar' of partnership

special envoy, Kirill Dmi

Hoth sides sign 16 MoUs on semi-skilled workers, fertilizers, media, and academic collaboration

ppreciating Russian President Via-dian President Via-ling the India-Russia relationship to "new heights" over the past quarter of a century, Prime Minister Sarendra Modi laid out an expansive can-vas of energy and trade collaborations between the wo countries, strenching

2030. Addressing the media ofter bilateral talks at Hyderalial House on Priday, Mr. Modi described the India-

Modi described the India-lisants friendship as a "pode star" and salled for a peaceful solution to Rus-sia's war with Ukraine.
"Over the past eight de-carles, the world has wit-nessed stony ups and downs. Humanny has forced tumerous challeng, all of his, the India-Russia all of his, the India-Russia friendship has remained

steady like a dhruva tura (pole star)," the Prime Mi-nitus said.

Stustained thes'
Poreign Secretary Vikram
Miser expansived on the
Prims Minister's use of the
Hinds term 'discuss tars'
during a later briefing, saytained and long-term significance of this relation. Highlighting the "sustaina-bility and certainty" of In-dia-Russia ties, Mr. Misri added, "This velationship is a constant. There have been several crises along the way but they have not

the way but they have not altered the fundamentals of this relationship.

Mr. Putin's wist has attracted global attraction as it comes months after U.S. President Donald Trump imposed munitive tariffs on India for purchasing Russian energy. Mr. Trump detection of the Property of the Pr tiating table on Ulcrains.

Hashtrapati Bhavan on Friday, KV, Hookfelf

In his remarks, the Prime Minister referred to Prime Minister referred to 'energy security' as a 'errong and vital pillar of the India-Russia partner-ship'. Since the beginning 'india has consistently ad-vocated fire peace, with re-gards to the situation in the ratio,' he added.
Aboad of the press state.
Patti as Hyderahad House,

Lalatendu Mishra

special snvoy, Kirill Dmi-strov, told the Russian and Indian media that "British and European press is go-ing byserical trying to dis-rupt the U.S.-Russia nego-tiation". In an oblique enforceme to an article re-county published in an in-dian programmer than was dian newspaper that was jointly authored by the French, British, and Ger-man envoys to fields, Mr.

Pacts to raise opportunities for Indian workers in Russia

frulian and Russian governments on Frulay agned two agreements that will enhance mobility of Indian semi-skilled and skilled workers to Russia. as official sources indicated that New Delhi

Imitive said, "We know the British empire does not sold any more but at the beautiful and beautiful an

forth being made for a peaceful and lasting reso-bution in this matter. India-tation in this matter. India-tation and the said. Associated in the said. Referring to the Rudan-kulan power plant as the lada", Mr. Putth an-nounced that Russia is also willing to collaborate with India for small modular

will increasingly utilise india's "strength" in the category of "semi-skilled workers" in the coming years while adding

dynamism to existing relations between the

partner countries.

PARA REPORT OR

security, noting "the cur-rent and potential cooper-ation between Indian and Rimina companies in fields such as oil and oil products, oil refining and petrochemical technolo-gies, oilfield services and ture." Both sides have also agreed to resolve the chal-lenges faced by their "in-vestors in the energy

He described india and He described India and Russia as countries that both follow as 'indepen-dent foreign policy' that calls for a 'more just, de-order and respect for order and respect for sovereignty.'

The two sides signed sin-teen MoUs covering areas such as the mobility of se-such as the mobility of se-ters, media, and academic collaboration.

Dawn in the hills



Planging temperature: Househoats moored on the hanks of the Dal Lake on Friday reoming as odd gips Srinagar. The city suntinues to include upon temperatures at might. Paradgam recorded the boyest composition of 3.3 degrees Callaba in Ratheric wave minute.

IndiGo cancels over 1,000 flights, gets exemption from new night duty rules

Jagriti Chandra

more on Saturday, crip-pling air travel across India and sending striares sky recketting that prompted the government to exempt the country's largest air-line from meeting new

line from meeting new rules until Petruary 10. The airline suspensed Delhi airport for the entire day to reboot its systems and stop cascating delays. If the petrology of the entire day to reboot its systems and stop cascating delays. If the entire day of the entire day. "Cancellations were made today to sign our air-craft and case to be where



Provinged Ryans: Stranded travellers at Right Canello International Airport on the outstants of Hyderabad on Friday, second cores.

they need to be in order to they need to be in order to start affects tomorrow morning, Measures of the last few days have regressa-bly proven to be not enough. We have decided today for a reboot of all our systems and schedules," IndiGo's chief essecutive of ficer (CRO) Prieter Ethers and in a recorded video

message, He added that

the 1,000".
The sime and scale of indico's operations meant normalcy is expected only between Decomber 10 and 15, according to the CEO. The attime operates a total of 2,200 flights every day

and accounts for six out of every 10 passengers who tavel by air.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation granted in-different states of the night dary restrictions, in-cluding the cap on two landings, until February 10. The airline had admit ted to the government that it underestimated the increased crew require

scenard crew requirements, despite the court order issued in April 2020-on new duty houis.

"This exemption has been granted solely to facil-tate operational stabilisa-tion and in no way amounts to distinct of suff-y requirements," a press statement issued by the Mi haltry of Chil Aviation said.

Govt. to streamline its public communications framework

The Centre has begun a sweeping revamp of its in-formation network, formation network, through measures ranging from reorganising human resources to atrengthening technological

The atm is to ensure real-time media response mechanisms and data-dri-

mechanisms and data-dir-ven campaign planning for a more streamlined public communications frame-work, as per officials. In the near future, the make of Indian Informa-tion Service (10) officials is likely to see a significant rise, given the increasing number of departments

Unified outreach plan

W More trials of Kulius Information function officials to color to carry number of departments and formities Bestructuring of HS carbre
 A Mount on results sammun destators on transfers and proteins.

■ Creation of posts in more than 40 Systamore to strengthen

and functions that need to be covered under a unified communications system.

Officials say that the proposal for an 115 cadre restructure is also in an advanced stage of consideration.

In another move, the great consideration is a stage of consideration.

decisions related to trans-ers and operings.

Officials say there are now plans to create posts at more than 40 Embassies to further attengthen the government's communica-tions mechanism overseas.

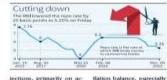
ponsibility of overseeing decisions related to transf-

points on four occasions, he took over as RB Gover-nor on December B, 2024. The reduction will lead to lower interest rates for borrowers and savers. After this rate cut, the standing deposit facility The Monetary Policy Com-

standing deposit facility rate under the liquidity ad-justment facility (LAF) will stand adjusted to 5%. The decision comes against the backdrop of da-ta showing that India's real

The marginal standing facility (MSP) rate and the bank rate will be adjusted to 5.5%. The MPC also decided to continue with the neutral stance indicating rates may go up or reduce

Gross Domestic Product (GIP) growth accelerated to 8.2% in the second quar-ter and average headline inflation reduced to 1.7%, breaching the lower tole-rance threshold Q%) of the rates may go up or reduce further.
On the rationale for the decisions of the MPC, Mr. Malhotra, in the Gover-nor's statement, sold: "The MPC noted that headline inflation has eased signifi-cantly and is likely to be softer than the safter pronunce threshold (2%) of the inflation target (4%) set by the RDI. With this, the MPC un-size Governor Sangay Mal-botra has cumulatively cut the reper rate by 128 basis.



jections, primarily on ac-count of the exceptionally benium food prices."

"The underlying inta-tion of the impact of in-crease in price of precious metals is about 50 basis points (hps). Grewth, withe remaining restlent, is expected to soften some-stian. Thus, the growth su-

Cheaper loans likely as repo rate cut by 25 bps

the benign inflation out-look on both headline and

'Hare goldlocks period' to his opening remark, The Governor said since the October policy, the Indian

economy had witnessed rapid disinflation, with in-lation coming down to an unprecedentedly low level.
"For the first time since the adoption of flexible in-fation targeting 67F3, aver-age headline inflation for a quarter at 1.7% in Q2.2025-segment threshold (29%) of the inflation transit (45%). If the inflation transit (45%). the inflation target (4%). It mid. 'On the other hand, with real GDF growth accelerating to 8.2% in 62, buoyed by arrong spending during the feative season which was further facilitat-

India-Russia friendship like the pole star: PM

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is on a two-day India visit, and Modi hold bilateral talks Modi signals, despite Western opposition, energy ties to continue as a 'strong pillar' of partnership

Both sides sign 16 MoUs on semi-skilled workers, fertilizers, media, and academic collaboration

Kallol Bhattacherjee NEW DELHI

ppreciating Russian President Vladimir Putin for tak-India-Russia the relationship to "new heights" over the past quarter of a century, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid out an expansive canvas of energy and trade collaborations between the two countries, stretching to 2030.

Addressing the media after bilateral talks at Hyderabad House on Friday, Mr. Modi described the India-Russia friendship as a "pole star" and called for a peaceful solution to Russia's war with Ukraine.

"Over the past eight decades, the world has witnessed many ups and downs. Humanity has faced numerous challenges and crises. Yet, through all of this, the India-Russia friendship has remained steady like a *dhruva tara* (pole star)," the Prime Minister said.

'Sustained ties'

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri expanded on the Prime Minister's use of the Hindi term 'dhruva tara' during a later briefing, saying it referred to the "sustained and long-term significance of this relation." Highlighting the "sustainability and certainty" of India-Russia ties, Mr. Misri added, "This relationship is a constant. There have been several crises along the way but they have not altered the fundamentals of this relationship."

Mr. Putin's visit has attracted global attention as it comes months after U.S. President Donald Trump imposed punitive tariffs on India for purchasing Russian energy. Mr. Trump described his move as a tactic to push Russia to the negotiating table on Ukraine.



Vladimir Putin and Narendra Modi shake hands at a reception in the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Friday, R.V. MOORTHY

In his remarks, the Prime Minister referred to "energy security" as a "strong and vital pillar of the India-Russia partnership". Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, "India has consistently advocated for peace, with regards to the situation in Ukraine," he added.

Ahead of the press statements by Mr. Modi and Mr. Putin at Hyderabad House, the Russian President's special envoy, Kirill Dmitriev, told the Russian and Indian media that "British and European press is going hysterical trying to disrupt the U.S.-Russia negotiation". In an oblique reference to an article recently published in an Indian newspaper that was jointly authored by the French, British, and German envoys to India, Mr.

Pacts to raise opportunities for Indian workers in Russia

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Indian and Russian governments on Friday signed two agreements that will enhance mobility of Indian semi-skilled and skilled workers to Russia, as official sources indicated that New Delhi will increasingly utilise India's "strength" in the category of "semi-skilled workers" in the coming years while adding dynamism to existing relations between the partner countries.

FULL REPORT ON

» PAGE 3

Dmitriev said, "We know the British empire does not exist any more but attempts to disrupt [the Russia-U.S.] peace negotiation through the use of the media is still continuing."

Mr. Modi, who has called for peace on multiple occasions since the beginning of the Ukraine conflict in February 2022, reiterated the Indian position. "We welcome all ef-

forts being made for a peaceful and lasting resolution in this matter. India has always been, and will always be ready to contribute," he said.

Referring to the Kudankulam power plant as the "largest nuclear reactor of India", Mr. Putin announced that Russia is also willing to collaborate with India for small modular nuclear reactors.

The India-Russia joint statement also made an extensive reference to energy security, noting "the current and potential cooperation between Indian and Russian companies in fields such as oil and oil products, oil refining and petrochemical technologies, oilfield services and upstream technologies and related infrastructure." Both sides have also agreed to resolve the challenges faced by their "investors in the energy sector".

He described India and Russia as countries that both follow an "independent foreign policy" that calls for a "more just, democratic multipolar world order and respect for sovereignty".

The two sides signed sixteen MoUs covering areas such as the mobility of semi-skilled workers, fertilizers, media, and academic collaboration.

1. India-Russia Relationship Elevated

- PM Modi appreciated President Vladimir Putin for taking bilateral ties to "new heights" in the last 25 years.
- Modi described India–Russia friendship as "Dhruva Tara" (Pole Star) meaning:
 - Steady, reliable, long-term certainty in partnership.
 - A stable anchor despite global crises.

2. Sustained & Strategic Bilateral Ties

- Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri clarified:
 - "Dhruva Tara" signifies long-term strategic significance of ties.
 - Despite global turbulence (Ukraine war, sanctions), fundamentals remain intact.
- Key themes:
 - Stability
 - Reliability
 - Strategic autonomy

3. Strong Energy Partnership

- Modi called energy security a "strong and vital pillar" of India–Russia partnership.
- Russia remains a top crude oil supplier to India.
- Joint statement highlighted:
 - Cooperation on oil, gas, oil refinery tech,
 - Petrochemicals, upstream tech,
 - Infrastructure projects.

4. Global Geopolitics & Ukraine War

- India reiterated:
 - Call for peaceful resolution,
 - Dialogue & diplomacy,
 - Consistent stand since Feb 2022.
- Russia accused Western nations (UK, France, Germany) of trying to:
 - · Disrupt Russia-US negotiations,
 - Influence the narrative over Ukraine.

5. Labor Mobility Agreements (Major Highlight)

India and Russia signed two agreements:

- To increase mobility of Indian semi-skilled and skilled workers to Russia.
- India aims to utilise its strength in labour supply.
- Expected outcomes:
 - Employment generation,
 - Stronger economic ties,
 - Better people-to-people cooperation.

6. 16 MoUs Signed

Covering areas such as:

- Skilled workforce mobility
- Media collaboration
- Fertilizers
- Academic & research partnerships
- Nuclear cooperation

Why Russia wants Indian workers?

Russia facing labour deficit because:

- War mobilization since 2022
- Sanctions affecting workforce availability
- Ageing population
- Decline in immigration from Central Asia

Reports show Indians were fraudulently recruited by agents to fight in Ukraine → now Russia wants legal pathways.

30-Day Free e-Tourist Visa for Russians

Modi announced:

Aim: improve people-to-people ties & tourism.

30-day gratis (free) e-tourist visas for Russians. **Group tourist visas** also
permitted.

- India–Russia Cooperation on Arctic Region
- Both sides committed to regular bilateral consultations on Arctic issues.
- India has had interest in the Arctic since:
 - Svalbard Treaty, 1920
- India permitted to:
 - Conduct non-military scientific activities
 - Undertake research in the Arctic
- India operates Himadri station in Svalbard (operational since 2008).

7. Nuclear Energy Cooperation

- Reference to Kudankulam Nuclear Plant:
 - Russia to cooperate with India on small modular reactors.
 - Kudankulam is the largest nuclear reactor site in India.

8. Strategic Autonomy & Multipolarity

- India and Russia both support:
 - Independent foreign policy
 - A just, democratic multipolar world order
 - Sovereignty & territorial integrity

Previous relation and work

1. India-Russia Treaty of Peace & Friendship (1971)

- Foundation of strategic ties.
- · Signed during Cold War.

2. Russia = Largest Arms Supplier to India

Historically provides 60–70% of India's military hardware.

3. Energy Shift Since 2022

- After Ukraine war, India increased discounted Russian crude imports.
- Russia became India's largest oil supplier (overtaking Iraq & Saudi Arabia).

4. Kudankulam Nuclear Plant

- Located in Tamil Nadu
- Built with Russian collaboration under IAEA safeguards

5. India-Russia Trade

- Crossed USD 65 billion in 2023 driven mainly by crude imports.
- Trade imbalance remains high in Russia's favour.

6. Worker Mobility MoUs

- Part of India's strategy to:
 - · Increase overseas employment,
 - · Boost remittances,
 - Create alternate labour markets beyond Gulf countries.

Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
UPSC CSE Prelims	2023	"India is heavily dependent on imports for oil and gas. Which of the following is/are possible consequences of rising crude oil prices globally?"	A (Multiple economic impacts)	Official UPSC Key (2023): https://upsc.gov.in
UPSC CSE Prelims	2020	"With reference to the 'Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)', consider the following statements" (Russia strongly supports India's entry)	С	UPSC Key 2020: https://upsc.gov.in
UPSC CSE Prelims	2022	"'Strategic Partnership' in Indian foreign policy refers to?"	India–Russia mentioned in explanation	UPSC Key 2022
SSC CGL Tier-1	2023	"Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant is built with assistance from which country?"	Russia	SSC Official Website: https://ssc.nic.in
IB ACIO	2023	"Which country is India's largest supplier of crude oil after 2022 changes?"	Russia	Memory-based + verified via platforms (actual Q reported by candidates).
State PSCs (UPPSC/RPSC)	2023– 24	"India follows strategic autonomy in foreign policy. Which group reflects this policy?"	NAM + BRICS + SCO	Respective PSC answer keys

Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Official Verification Link	
UPSC Prelims	2023	Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant receives assistance from which country?	Russia	https://ssc.nic.in (SSC also asked same question)	
UPSC Prelims	2022	"India is an observer in the Arctic Council." True or False?	True	UPSC Key: https://upsc.gov.in	
SSC CGL	2023	Svalbard Treaty is related to which region?	Arctic Region	SSC Key 2023: https://ssc.nic.in	
IB ACIO	2023	India's largest supplier of crude oil in 2023?	Russia	memory-based (widely reported)	
RPSC RAS Prelims	2023	Kudankulam Nuclear Plant is located in which state?	Tamil Nadu	RPSC Answer Key 2023 (official PDF)	

- Consider the following statements regarding the recent India-Russia cooperation developments:
- India and Russia signed agreements to facilitate mobility of Indian semi-skilled workers to Russia.
- The Kudankulam nuclear plant, built with Russian assistance, is currently the largest nuclear power project in India.
- India has joined Western sanctions against Russia following the Ukraine conflict.
- Which of the statements is/are correct?
- Options:
- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3

Netflix clinches \$72-billion deal for Warner Bros

LUCAS SHAW & MICHELLE F DAVIS December 5

NETFLIX AGREED TO buy Warner Bros Discovery in a historic combination, joining the world's dominant paid streaming service with one of Hollywood's oldest and most revered studios.

Under the deal announced Friday, Warner Bros share-holders will receive \$27.75 a share in cash and stock in Netflix. The total equity value of the deal is \$72 billion, while the enterprise value of the deal is about \$82.7 billion.

Prior to the closing of the sale, Warner Bros will complete the planned spinoff of cable channels including CNN, TBS and TNT.

The acquisition marks an dramatic strategic shift for Netflix, which has never made a deal of this scope. The streaming pioneer grew to become Hollywood's most valuable company, without the benefit of a library or studio, by licensing programmes from others and then expanding into original content.

With the purchase, Netflix becomes owner of the HBO network, along with its

TOP DEAL



■ Under the deal announced Friday, Warner Bros shareholders will receive \$27.75 a share in cash and stock in Netflix

The the enterprise value of the deal is about \$82.7 billion

Founded as a DVD rental firm, Netflix finished 2024 with

\$39 bn in revenue

library of hit shows like *The Sopranos* and *The White Lotus*. Warner Bros assets also include its sprawling studios in Burbank, California, along with a vast film and TV archive that includes *Harry Potter* and *Friends*.

Continued on Page 7

- Largest Tech & Media Acquisitions in history
- Microsoft–Activision Blizzard: \$69 billion
- Disney–21st Century Fox: \$71 billion
- AT&T-Time Warner: \$85 billion
- This Netflix—Warner Bros deal at \$72 billion becomes one of the biggest ever.
- 2. Warner Bros Quick Facts
- Founded: **1923**
- Notable franchises:
 - Harry Potter, DC Universe, Friends, Lord of the Rings
- Owns HBO (premium cable + streaming platform Max)
- 3. Netflix Quick Facts
- Founded: 1997 as a DVD rental company
- Entered streaming: 2007
- First original show: House of Cards (2013)

Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
UPSC Prelims	2023	"In the context of global business, SPAC is sometimes mentioned. What is it?"	A company formed to raise capital via IPO to acquire another company	Official UPSC Key: https://upsc.gov.in
SSC CGL Tier 1	2023	"Which media company owns HBO?"	Warner Bros Discovery	SSC Website: https://ssc.nic.in
SSC CGL Tier 2	2023	"Netflix started as a rental company for which medium?"	DVDs	SSC Key
IB ACIO	2023	"Which streaming service produced 'The Crown'?"	Netflix	Memory-based
RPSC/UPPSC	2023	"Which company acquired 21st Century Fox?"	Disney	PSC Official Keys

- Consider the following statements regarding the Netflix–Warner Bros acquisition:
- The total equity value of the deal is approximately \$72 billion.
- Under the agreement, Warner Bros shareholders will receive \$27.75 per share in cash and Netflix stock.
- After the merger, Netflix will own CNN, TBS, and TNT channels.
- Which of the statements are correct?
- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3





Big Cats and their Conservation Status

TIGER



- IUCN Status: Endangered
- CITES Listing Appendix 1
- WPA Listing Schedule 1

LION



- IUCN Status : Vulnerable
- CITES Listing: Appendix 1 (Only Indian population, Rest in Appendix 2)
- WPA Listing: Schedule 1

JAGUAR



- IUCN Status: Near Threatened
- CITES Listing: Appendix 1
- WPA Listing: Not Applicable

CHEETAH



- IUCN Status: Vulnerable
- CITES Listing: Appendix 1
- WPA Listing: Schedule 1

PUMA



- IUCN Status: Least concern
- CITES Listing: Appendix 1
- WPA Listing: Not Applicable

SNOW LEOPARD



- IUCN Status: Vulnerable
- CITES Listing: Appendix 1
- WPA Listing: Schedule 1

LEOPARD



- IUCN Status: Vulnerable
- CITES Listing: Appendix 1
- WPA Listing: Schedule 1

Note: All CITES listed species are also part of WPA schedule IV



1. Russia joins India-led International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

- Russia became the 19th member country to join the International Big Cat Alliance.
- The decision aligns with President Putin's state visit to India.
- Move strengthens India–Russia cooperation in:
 - Wildlife conservation
 - · Environmental protection
 - Global biodiversity governance

2. What is the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)?

- Global initiative launched by India (PM Modi announced it in 2023).
- Headquartered in New Delhi.
- Aim: Protect the world's seven major big cats:
 - Tiger
 - 2. Lion
 - 3. Leopard
 - 4. Snow Leopard
 - 5. Cheetah
 - 6. Jaguar
 - 7. Puma

India's Significance

- India is home to 5 out of 7 big cats (all except jaguar and puma).
- India is a global leader in big cat conservation (e.g., Project Tiger, Project Lion, Cheetah Reintroduction Programme).

3. IBCA Membership Framework

- Aims to bring together 95 range countries across Asia, Africa, North & South America.
- · Countries join by:
 - Signing a framework agreement
 - Issuing a diplomatic note
- India funds the alliance for the first five years.

4. Objectives of IBCA

- · Strengthen joint conservation efforts for big cat species.
- Improve:
 - Anti-poaching systems
 - · Habitat protection
 - Wildlife forensics
 - · Research & genetic sampling
 - Capacity-building
 - Transboundary cooperation

1. Tiger Population in India (2022 Census)

- India hosts 75% of the world's tigers.
- Total population: 3,167

2. Cheetah Reintroduction in India (2022)

- From Namibia & South Africa → Kuno National Park
- · Part of Project Cheetah initiative.

3. Snow Leopard Range in India

- Himachal Pradesh
- Ladakh
- Uttarakhand
- Sikkim
- Arunachal Pradesh

4. India's Key Species Conservation Projects

- Project Tiger (1973)
- Project Elephant (1992)
- Project Snow Leopard (2009)

5. Headquarters of IBCA → New Delhi

Must remember for Prelims.

Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
UPSC Prelims	2023	"Consider the following animals: Tiger, Lion, Cheetah, Snow Leopard. Which of them are found in India?"	All four	UPSC Official Key 2023: https://upsc.gov.in
UPSC Prelims	2020	"With reference to Indian wildlife, the term 'M-Stripes' is related to?"	Tiger Monitoring System	UPSC Key 2020
SSC CGL	2023	"Project Tiger was launched in which year?"	1973	SSC Official Key: https://ssc.nic.in
RPSC RAS Prelims	2023	"Snow Leopard population in India is found mainly in?"	Himalayan states	RPSC Answer Key 2023
UPPSC Prelims	2023	"Cheetah reintroduction in India is taking place at which national park?"	Kuno National Park	UPPSC Official Key

- Q. Consider the following statements regarding the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA):
- IBCA aims to protect seven major big cat species including jaguar and puma.
- The headquarters of the alliance is located in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Russia recently joined IBCA as its 19th member nation.
- Which of the statements are correct?
- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 2 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

World Soil Day



1. What is World Soil Day?

- · Observed every year on 5th December.
- Established by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), UN.
- Objective: highlight the importance of soil as a life-sustaining natural resource.
- 2025 Theme: "Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities".

2. Importance of Healthy Urban Soils

Urban soils help tackle multiple ecological threats:

a) Reduce Heat Islands

· Soil and vegetation reduce city temperatures compared to concrete surfaces.

b) Improve Air Quality / Pollution Control

Soil acts as natural filters, removing pollutants.

c) Flood and Water Management

Urban soils act as water sponges, reducing runoff, flooding & improving recharge.

d) Climate Mitigation

Soils act as carbon sinks, storing CO₂ and reducing climate impact.

e) Food Security & Biodiversity

Urban agriculture, rooftop farming improve nutrition and biodiversity.

3. Extent of Soil Degradation (Global Concern)

- Urban soils face degradation due to:
 - Contamination (chemicals, waste)
 - Compaction (heavy construction)
 - Sealing by concrete & asphalt
- FAO states: 1/3rd of the world's soils are degraded.
- Soil takes hundreds to thousands of years to form → making it a non-renewable resource.

4. History of World Soil Day

a) Origin

- Proposal by International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002.
- FAO supported the idea → recommended global adoption.

b) Formal Adoption

- FAO Conference (2013) endorsed it.
- UN General Assembly (2013) declared 5 December 2014 as the first World Soil Day.

1. Soil is a Finite Resource

1 cm of soil takes 100–1,000 years to form.

2. FAO Headquarters: Rome, Italy.

3. Global Soil Partnership (GSP)

FAO-led initiative for sustainable soil management.

4. Indian Government Initiatives

- Soil Health Card Scheme (2015)
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)
- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (Organic Farming)
- Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) under Andhra model

5. Types of Soil Degradation

- Physical (erosion, compaction)
- Chemical (salinization, acidification)
- Biological (loss of organic matter, microbes)

Types of Soil in India BAY ARABIAN SEA OF BENGAL Andaman Sea INDIAN OCEAN

		Duronic			
	Alluvial Soil (29.55%)	In the Upper and Middle Ganga plain, two different types of alluvial soils have developed, viz Khadar and Bhangar.			
	Black Soil (19.62%)	It is also known as 'Regur Soil' or the 'Black Cotton Soil'.			
	Red Soil (19.62%)	The soil develops a reddish colour due to a wide diffusion of iron in crystalline and metamorphic rocks. It looks yellow when it occurs in a hydrated form.			
Dust	Desert Soil (14.02%)	They are generally sandy in structure and saline in nature.			
	Laterite Soil (4.77%)	Laterites are not suitable for cultivation. Thus, are widely cut as bricks for use in house construction.			
	Mountain Soil	It is also known as 'Forest Soil'. They are loamy and silty on valley sides and coarse-grained in the upper slopes.			
	Snowfields	This soil is found under the snow and glaciers at the highest peak of the greater Himalayas, Karakoram, Ladakh, and Zaskar.			
	Grey and Brown Soil	Submontane Soil Red and Black Soil			

Exam	Year	Actual Question	Correct Answer	Verification Link
UPSC Prelims	2023	"Which of the following contributes to soil degradation? Overgrazing / Deforestation / Urbanization."	All of the above	UPSC Official Key 2023: https://upsc.gov.in
UPSC Prelims	2022	"The term 'black carbon' is often mentioned in context of soil and climate."	Related to warming and soil fertility loss	UPSC 2022 Answer Key
UPSC Prelims	2020	"With reference to India's Soil Health Card Scheme, consider the following statements"	Statement 1 and 2 correct	UPSC Key 2020
SSC CGL	2023	"FAO is headquartered in which city?"	Rome	SSC Official Key (ssc.nic.in)
RPSC RAS Prelims	2023	"Which soil type is most prone to erosion in India?"	Shifting cultivation/Red soils/Arid soils – depending on options	RPSC Answer Key 2023

Consider the following statements regarding World Soil Day:

- It is observed annually on 5th December and was established by FAO.
- The 2025 theme focuses on improving soil health in urban ecosystems.
- The idea for World Soil Day was first proposed by the FAO Conference in 2013.
- Which of the statements given above are correct?
- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

RELOS Agreement

- Russia's lower house of parliament has ratified the **Reciprocal Exchange of Logistic Support (Relos) Agreement** with India.
 - Relos is similar to logistics agreements India has signed with countries like the US, UK, Japan, Australia, France, Singapore, South Korea, and Vietnam.

•

India—Russia Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Support (Relos) Agreement

- It is a **bilateral military logistics pact** that enables both countries' military aircraft, ships, and personnel to use each other's bases for refueling, maintenance, spare parts, training, joint exercises, humanitarian missions, and disaster relief.
- It streamlines logistics by reducing paperwork, ensuring quicker support, and allowing rolling settlement of costs.
- It also grants mutual access to each other's airspace and ports, which will provide **India with strategic entry to the Arctic region** along the Northern Sea Route, where Russia has an extensive military presence.
- For Russia, Relos offers access to Indian Ocean facilities, helping it maintain global reach despite Western sanctions and allowing power projection in Asia without costly overseas bases.

