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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED

Daily Quiz — April 5, 2026

5 April 2026



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DAILY QUIZ — SOLVED ANSWER KEY

Daily Quiz — April 5, 2026

5 April 2026 · 23 Questions · Answers & Explanations Included

Question 1

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India commissioned INS Aridhaman in April 2026. Which of the following correctly describes its key specifications?

- A Displacement: 5,000 tonnes; Launch tubes: 4; Reactor: 55 MW
- B Displacement: 7,000 tonnes; Launch tubes: 8; Reactor: 83 MW ✓
- C Displacement: 6,000 tonnes; Launch tubes: 6; Reactor: 70 MW
- D Displacement: 8,000 tonnes; Launch tubes: 10; Reactor: 100 MW

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

EXPLANATION

FACT: INS Aridhaman displaces ~7,000 tonnes, is powered by an 83 MW pressurised water reactor developed by BARC, and carries 8 vertical launch tubes — double the 4 tubes on INS Arihant. It was built by Larsen & Toubro at the Ship Building Centre (SBC), Visakhapatnam.

ANALYSIS: The doubling of launch tubes is the most strategically significant upgrade — it substantially increases India's sea-based nuclear deterrent payload and enhances credible second-strike capability.

CONCEPT NOTE

INS Aridhaman (S4) is the third submarine in the Arihant class under the classified Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project. The ATV project began in the 1970s under PM Indira Gandhi and is managed by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in coordination with DRDO and the Navy.

The 83 MW reactor is a miniaturised pressurised water reactor — an extremely complex engineering achievement that only a handful of nations have mastered. India's nuclear submarines operate under the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), which reports to the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) chaired by the PM. INS Arihant (commissioned 2016) and INS Arighat (2024) are the first two SSBNs.

Aridhaman completing the trio gives India Continuous At-Sea Deterrence (CASD) for the first time — ensuring at least one submarine is always on patrol.

Q1  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Internal security, nuclear deterrence, Aatmanirbhar Bharat in strategic programmes; GS2 — India's defence policy.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

SSBN, No First Use, credible minimum deterrent, nuclear triad, second-strike capability, ATV project.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing INS Arihant (first SSBN, 4 tubes) with INS Aridhaman (third, 8 tubes) — Prelims often tests specific vessel specs.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested nuclear doctrine; link Aridhaman to NFU policy and why SSBNs make NFU credible — survivable second strike.

 **INTERVIEW**

Does India's No First Use policy remain credible if adversaries doubt India's willingness to retaliate after absorbing a nuclear strike — and does CASD resolve this credibility gap?

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Question 2

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National Maritime Day is observed in India on April 5 every year. What historical event does this date commemorate?

- A The commissioning of INS Vikrant, India's first aircraft carrier, in 1961
- B The launch of India's first oceanographic research vessel, Sagar Kanya, in 1983
- C **The voyage of SS Loyalty from Mumbai to the UK on April 5, 1919 ✓**
- D India's signing of UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) in 1982

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: National Maritime Day commemorates the voyage of SS Loyalty — owned by the Scindia Steam Navigation Company — which set sail from Mumbai to the United Kingdom on April 5, 1919. This was India's first ocean-going vessel under an Indian company, breaking the British monopoly on ocean trade.

ANALYSIS: The date represents India's assertion of maritime commercial independence, predating political independence by nearly three decades.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

National Maritime Day has been observed since 1964. The 2026 edition is the 63rd, with the theme "Maritime India – Empowering Progress".

India has a 7,516 km coastline, a 2.02 million sq. km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and handles ~95% of its international trade by volume through sea routes. The Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways organises celebrations.

India has ~2.4 lakh registered seafarers — the 5th largest global supplier. The Sagarmala Programme (2015) is the flagship port-led development initiative targeting port modernisation, connectivity, and coastal industrialisation.

India's SAGAR doctrine (Security and Growth for All in the Region) reflects its maritime strategic vision in the Indian Ocean Region.

Q2  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Blue Economy, Sagarmala, port infrastructure; GS2 — Indian Ocean maritime strategy, UNCLOS.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Blue Economy, Sagarmala, SAGAR doctrine, EEZ, coastal shipping, logistics cost.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing UNCLOS EEZ (200 nautical miles) with Territorial Sea (12 nm) — different rights apply: sovereignty in territorial sea, sovereign resource rights in EEZ.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2021 tested Sagarmala objectives; link it to logistics cost reduction (India at 13-14% of GDP vs 8% in developed nations).

 **INTERVIEW**

Can India's coastal shipping corridor realistically shift freight from road to sea, given the infrastructure and regulatory barriers to coastal shipping growth?

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Question 3

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The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026, which came into effect on April 1, 2026, mandate how many streams of waste segregation at source?

- A Two (wet and dry)
- B Three (wet, dry, and hazardous)
- C **Four (wet, dry, sanitary, and special care) ✓**
- D Five (wet, dry, sanitary, hazardous, and special care)

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The SWM Rules 2026 mandate four-stream segregation: (1) wet/biodegradable, (2) dry/recyclable, (3) sanitary (diapers, napkins, used masks), and (4) special care (hazardous, e-waste, medical waste). This replaces the earlier three-stream system under SWM Rules 2016.

ANALYSIS: The addition of a dedicated sanitary stream addresses a critical gap — sanitary waste was often mixed with dry waste, contaminating recyclables and creating health risks for waste workers.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

The SWM Rules 2026 were notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, replacing the SWM Rules 2016. Key additions: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) — making producers/importers accountable for collection and disposal; a centralised digital tracking portal; Bulk Waste Generator (BWG) accountability for entities generating >100 kg/day or with >20,000 sq.m. area; Environmental Compensation (polluter pays); and landfill restrictions to residual non-recyclable waste only.

India generates ~62 million tonnes of solid waste annually with only ~20% processed — the rules aim to shift this fundamentally. The SWM Rules 1990 were the first iteration, revised in 2000, 2016, and now 2026.

Q3  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Waste management, circular economy, EPR; GS2 — Centre-State relations in urban governance (12th Schedule, 74th Amendment).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

EPR, circular economy, polluter pays, SWM Rules 2026, bulk waste generator, Swachh Bharat Mission.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing EPR under SWM Rules (solid waste) with Plastic Waste Management Rules (plastic-specific EPR) — SWM 2026 consolidates both under a comprehensive framework.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2020 tested SWM Rules 2016; know the upgrade to 4-stream segregation and EPR as the 2026 key changes.

 **INTERVIEW**

Can EPR genuinely work in India where informal waste pickers handle most recyclable collection — does formalization risk displacing their livelihoods?

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Question 4

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 Which of the following is **INCORRECTLY** matched regarding INS Aridhaman?

- A Programme: Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project
- B Builder: Larsen & Toubro at Ship Building Centre, Visakhapatnam
- C Reactor developer: Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC)
- D Operational command: DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) ✓

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

FACT: INS Aridhaman is NOT under DRDO's operational command. Nuclear submarines operate under the Strategic Forces Command (SFC), which reports to the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) chaired by the Prime Minister. DRDO contributed to the ATV programme through research and development (missile systems, materials), but operational command rests with SFC under the Navy. Options A, B, and C are all correctly matched.

ANALYSIS: This tests institutional knowledge — DRDO develops; SFC operates.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

The Strategic Forces Command (SFC) was established in 2003 as a tri-service command to manage India's nuclear forces — both delivery vehicles and warheads. It reports to the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) which has two bodies: Political Council (chaired by PM, authorises nuclear use) and Executive Council (chaired by NSA, technical oversight).

The ATV project was classified under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) — not Defence Ministry — because of its nuclear propulsion component. DRDO contributed the K-series missile family (K-15 Sagarika, K-4) carried by SSBNs. BrahMos Aerospace developed the supersonic cruise missile that Aridhaman may eventually be modified to carry. The Ship Building Centre (SBC), Visakhapatnam, is India's most classified naval facility.

Q4  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Nuclear command and control, India's nuclear doctrine; GS2 — Civil-military relations, NSA role.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Nuclear Command Authority, Strategic Forces Command, No First Use, second-strike capability, ATV project, SSBN triad.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Thinking DRDO commands nuclear forces — DRDO only designs/develops; SFC operates.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2021 tested India's nuclear doctrine; know NCA structure: PM chairs Political Council, NSA chairs Executive Council.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India's nuclear command authority be integrated into a joint military command structure, or does the current civilian-dominated NCA provide better oversight?

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Question 5

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The Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 were held in which state, and which state emerged as the overall champion?

- A Host: Jharkhand; Champion: Maharashtra
- B Host: Chhattisgarh; Champion: Karnataka ✓
- C Host: Odisha; Champion: Chhattisgarh
- D Host: Madhya Pradesh; Champion: Jharkhand

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The inaugural Khelo India Tribal Games 2026 were hosted by Chhattisgarh and concluded on April 3, 2026. Karnataka emerged as the overall champion, winning 23 gold, 8 silver, and 7 bronze medals. The games were organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in collaboration with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. **ANALYSIS:** Chhattisgarh was a natural host — ~30.6% of its population belongs to Scheduled Tribes, making it one of India's most tribal-dense states.

📖 CONCEPT NOTE

The Khelo India Tribal Games is a dedicated edition within the Khelo India umbrella specifically for tribal athletes, featuring both indigenous/traditional tribal sports and mainstream disciplines. The Khelo India programme was launched in 2018 (rebranded from Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan) to identify sporting talent from rural, tribal, and non-metro India. Other Khelo India editions include Youth Games (U-17), University Games, Winter Games (J&K), and Para Games. Winners are tracked through the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) for elite athlete support. India's Scheduled Tribe population is ~10.4 crore (8.6% of total, Census 2011). The PM-JANMAN scheme (launched November 2023) covers Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) across 18 states.

Q5
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS1 — Tribal society, sports and culture; GS2 — Tribal welfare policies, Fifth/Sixth Schedule governance.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Khelo India, tribal sports, TOPS, PM-JANMAN, PVTG, Scheduled Tribes, Fifth Schedule, PESA.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Placing the Tribal Games in Jharkhand (which has higher tribal population in absolute numbers) — the 2026 inaugural edition was in Chhattisgarh.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested PESA Act 1996; link tribal sports promotion to broader tribal empowerment agenda including PESA and PM-JANMAN.

 **INTERVIEW**

Can state-sponsored sporting events genuinely preserve indigenous tribal sports, or do they inevitably dilute and standardise them for mainstream audiences?

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Question 6

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With reference to India's Blue Economy and National Maritime Day 2026, which of the following statements is correct?

- A India has the world's longest coastline at over 20,000 km
- B The Sagarmala Programme was launched in 2020 under PM Modi's second term
- C India's EEZ extends up to 200 nautical miles and covers approximately 2.02 million sq. km ✓
- D India is the second-largest global supplier of seafarers after the Philippines

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) extends 200 nautical miles from the baseline, covering ~2.02 million sq. km of ocean — giving India sovereign rights over all marine resources within this area. India's coastline is 7,516 km (not 20,000 km); Sagarmala was launched in 2015 (not 2020); and India is the 5th largest seafarer supplier (not 2nd).

ANALYSIS: The EEZ is distinct from territorial waters (12 nm, full sovereignty) — in the EEZ, India has resource rights but not full sovereignty.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

The Indian Ocean is strategically critical — it carries ~50% of global container traffic and ~70% of global petroleum trade. India's SAGAR doctrine (Security and Growth for All in the Region, articulated by PM Modi in Mauritius, 2015) reflects its maritime strategic vision.

The National Deep Sea Mission (Rs 4,077 crore, 2021) explores the deep ocean for mineral resources, biodiversity, and climate data. India's Matsya 6000 submersible aims to take scientists to 6,000 m depth.

The Indian Maritime University (IMU), established in 2008 and headquartered in Chennai, is the apex university for maritime education. T.S. Chanakya (Navi Mumbai) is the premier merchant navy training institute.

Q6  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Blue Economy, National Deep Sea Mission, maritime infrastructure; GS2 — UNCLOS, maritime security, SAGAR doctrine.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

EEZ, UNCLOS, Blue Economy, Sagarmala, SAGAR, deep-sea mining, coastal shipping.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing EEZ (200 nm, resource rights) with Continental Shelf (up to 350 nm in some cases, seabed resource rights) — both exist under UNCLOS but confer different rights.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2020 tested UNCLOS provisions; know: Territorial Sea (12 nm), Contiguous Zone (24 nm), EEZ (200 nm), Continental Shelf (up to 350 nm).

 **INTERVIEW**

India's deep-sea mining ambitions in the Central Indian Ocean could benefit the EV transition — but at what ecological cost to the deep ocean ecosystem?

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Question 7

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The National Panchayat Awards 2025 were given under which award scheme for the highest district-level recognition?

- A Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA)
- B Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP)
- C **Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP) ✓**
- D Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission Award

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: The Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar (NDSPSVP) is the highest district-level panchayat recognition, evaluating holistic integration of infrastructure, digital governance, and livelihood. Sepahijala District Panchayat from Tripura won first rank under this scheme and received Rs 5 crore.

The DDUPSVP is a separate thematic award (gram panchayat level) covering 9 SDG-aligned themes. **ANALYSIS:** Both awards are under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj — the distinction between district-level (NDSPSVP) and gram-level (DDUPSVP) is frequently tested.

CONCEPT NOTE

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj administers the National Panchayat Awards to incentivise good governance. DDUPSVP covers 9 SDG-linked themes: poverty-free livelihoods, healthy panchayat, child-friendly, water-sufficient, clean and green, self-sufficient infrastructure, socially secured, good governance, and women-friendly panchayat.

Gram panchayats choose one theme and compete nationally. Prize: Rs 25 lakh to Rs 1 crore.

NDSPSVP is the apex award for district panchayats — evaluates overall performance across all SDG themes. Prize: Rs 5 crore for first rank.

National Panchayati Raj Day is April 24 — the day the 73rd Amendment came into force in 1993. India has ~2.55 lakh gram panchayats.

As of 2024, >46% of elected panchayat members are women.

Q7
 **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — 73rd Amendment, PRIs, decentralisation; GS1 — SDGs localisation at panchayat level.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

DDUPSVP, NDSPSVP, 73rd Amendment, gram sabha, 11th Schedule, panchayati raj, SDG localisation.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing DDUPSVP (gram panchayat, thematic) with NDSPSVP (district panchayat, holistic) — both under Ministry of Panchayati Raj but different levels and criteria.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2019 tested 73rd Amendment; know: Article 243G (panchayat powers), 11th Schedule (29 subjects), April 24 = National Panchayati Raj Day.

 **INTERVIEW**

Do financial awards to panchayats genuinely improve governance, or do they create perverse incentives to show off metrics rather than address residents' actual needs?

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Question 8

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Consider the following statements about India's SSBN programme:

- 1 INS Arihant was India's first nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, commissioned in 2016.
2. All Indian SSBNs are built at the Ship Building Centre (SBC) in Visakhapatnam.
- 3 The K-15 Sagarika missile, carried by Indian SSBNs, has a range of approximately 3,500 km.
- 4 The Strategic Forces Command (SFC) reports to the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) chaired by the Prime Minister.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1, 2 and 4 only ✓

B 1 and 4 only

C 2, 3 and 4 only

D 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

EXPLANATION

FACT: Statements 1, 2, and 4 are correct. Statement 3 is INCORRECT — the K-15 Sagarika has a range of ~750 km, not 3,500 km.

The longer-range K-4 missile (range ~3,500 km) is the submarine-launched missile India is deploying on its SSBNs.

ANALYSIS: This is a classic UPSC technique — test whether students confuse K-15 (750 km) with K-4 (3,500 km). Both are part of the K-series SLBMs.

CONCEPT NOTE

The K-series of submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) developed by DRDO: K-15 Sagarika (750 km range, operational), K-4 (3,500 km range, under deployment), K-5 and K-6 (intercontinental range, under development). The SFC was established in January 2003 as a tri-service command.

Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) has two components: Political Council (PM chairs, authorises nuclear use) and Executive Council (NSA chairs, technical oversight). India's nuclear stockpile estimate (as of 2025) is approximately 170 warheads.

India is not a member of the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) but has signed the CTBT in principle and maintains a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing since Pokhran-II (1998). India is a member of the NSG (Nuclear Suppliers Group) through a waiver — not full membership.

Q8  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Nuclear deterrence, India's missile programme; GS2 — India's nuclear diplomacy, NSG, NPT.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

SSBN, K-series SLBMs, NFU, NCA, SFC, nuclear triad, Pokhran-II, NSG waiver.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Mixing K-15 (750 km) and K-4 (3,500 km) ranges — common error in MCQs.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2023 tested India's nuclear doctrine; know NCA structure, NFU policy, and that India is NOT an NPT signatory.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India revise its No First Use policy given Pakistan's tactical nuclear weapons doctrine and China's growing conventional + nuclear capability?

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Question 9

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With reference to the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2026, which of the following is correct?

- A Singapore Changi Airport ranked first for the first time in 2026
- B Tokyo Haneda Airport ranked first, with Singapore Changi second
- C Singapore Changi Airport retained the top position, followed by Incheon and Tokyo Haneda ✓
- D An Indian airport featured in the global top 10 for the first time in 2026

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

EXPLANATION

FACT: Singapore Changi Airport topped the Skytrax World Airport Awards 2026, followed by Incheon International Airport (South Korea) at #2 and Tokyo Haneda Airport (Japan) at #3. All top 5 airports are from Asia.

Changi has won this award multiple times (not for the first time). No Indian airport featured in the top 20.

ANALYSIS: Asia's dominance in airport quality rankings reflects massive infrastructure investment in Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and the Gulf — areas where India still lags on passenger experience metrics.

CONCEPT NOTE

Skytrax is a UK-based aviation consultancy that conducts annual passenger surveys across 550+ airports globally. Its ratings (1-5 stars) and the annual World Airport Awards are called the "Oscars of aviation." Singapore Changi has won the top award 13 times (2013-2020 consecutively, then again from 2022).

India's major airports — IGI Delhi, Mumbai CSIA, Bengaluru Kempegowda — have been expanding rapidly but rank outside top 20 globally. India's airport sector is governed by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) for state-owned airports and private operators (Adani Airports, GMR, GVK) for PPP airports.

The UDAN scheme (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) has expanded connectivity to tier-2/3 cities — over 500 routes operationalised since 2017.

Q9  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Aviation infrastructure, PPP in airports, logistics competitiveness; GS2 — UDAN scheme, AAI.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Skytrax, Changi airport, AAI, UDAN, PPP airports, aviation sector, logistics.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Assuming Changi won for the first time in 2026 — it has been the perennial winner for over a decade.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested UDAN scheme; know UDAN = Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik, launched 2016, focus on unserved/underserved airports.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India privatise all major airports under a single national champion (like Adani Airports) or maintain competitive bidding among multiple private operators?

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Question 10

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Consider the following statements about the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026:

- 1 The rules were notified under the Environment (Protection) Act,
2. Bulk Waste Generators are defined as entities generating more than 500 kg of waste per day.
- 3 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) makes producers, importers, and brand owners accountable for waste collection and disposal.
- 4 The rules restrict landfilling to non-recyclable, non-energy-recoverable, and inert waste only.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1, 3 and 4 only ✓

B 1 and 3 only

C 2, 3 and 4 only

D 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct. Statement 2 is **INCORRECT** — Bulk Waste Generators are defined as entities generating >100 kg/day (not 500 kg/day), OR consuming >40,000 litres/day of water, OR having >20,000 sq. m. built-up area — any one of the three criteria qualifies.

ANALYSIS: The 100 kg threshold is deliberately low to capture a wide range of commercial and institutional waste generators including hotels, malls, hospitals, and offices.

CONCEPT NOTE

The SWM Rules 2026 replace SWM Rules 2016, which were themselves a revision of the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules 2000. The digital tracking portal mandated by the 2026 rules will be linked to the existing e-Waste and Plastic Waste EPR portals for a unified waste governance digital ecosystem.

Environmental Compensation (polluter pays) is modelled on similar provisions under the Plastic Waste Management Rules. The four waste streams (wet, dry, sanitary, special care) align with the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) Phase 2 guidelines. India's National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) also benefits from SWM rules since open burning of mixed waste is a major source of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ in cities.

Q10  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Waste management, EPR, circular economy, air pollution; GS2 — Urban governance, 12th Schedule, 74th Amendment.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

SWM Rules 2026, EPR, bulk waste generator, polluter pays, 4-stream segregation, circular economy, Swachh Bharat.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Placing the BWG threshold at 500 kg/day — the correct threshold is 100 kg/day or the water/area alternatives.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC tested Plastic Waste Management Rules in 2021 — SWM 2026 extends similar EPR logic to all solid waste; know the thresholds and four streams.

 **INTERVIEW**

India's informal waste sector (rag-pickers, kabadiwallas) handles most recyclable collection — do EPR rules formalise and empower them, or bypass and marginalise them?

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Question 11

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Which of the following statements about the Sagarmala Programme is **INCORRECTLY** matched?

- A Sagarmala pillar: Port Modernisation — Focus: Capacity expansion and digitisation of major ports
- B Sagarmala pillar: Port Connectivity — Focus: Rail, road, inland waterway links to hinterland
- C Sagarmala pillar: Port-Led Industrialisation — Focus: Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs)
- D Sagarmala pillar: Coastal Tourism — Focus: Development of beach resorts and cruise terminals ✓

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

FACT: The fourth pillar of Sagarmala is Coastal Community Development — focusing on skill development for fisherfolk, coastal communities, and seafarers — NOT "Coastal Tourism." Tourism is not a pillar of Sagarmala.

Options A, B, and C are correctly matched.

ANALYSIS: This tests the exact four pillars of Sagarmala. Coastal tourism is not among them — a distinction UPSC has tested for other government schemes as well.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

The four pillars of Sagarmala are: (1) Port Modernisation and new port development; (2) Port Connectivity Enhancement (rail, road, inland waterways, coastal shipping); (3) Port-Led Industrialisation (Coastal Economic Zones, SEZs); and (4) Coastal Community Development (skill development for fisherfolk, seafarers, and coastal communities). Sagarmala was launched in 2015 by PM Modi under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

It has identified over 500 projects worth ~Rs 6.5 lakh crore. Key achievement: Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT), Mundra Port, and Visakhapatnam Port have significantly increased container handling.

India's logistics cost is ~13-14% of GDP — Sagarmala targets reducing this to 8% (the global benchmark) through modal shift to coastal shipping and inland waterways.

Q11  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Port infrastructure, logistics, Blue Economy, Sagarmala; GS2 — Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Sagarmala four pillars, logistics cost, coastal shipping, inland waterways, CEZ, JNPT.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Adding "coastal tourism" as a Sagarmala pillar — only 4 pillars exist; tourism is not one.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2021 tested Sagarmala; memorise the exact 4 pillars in sequence: Modernisation → Connectivity → Industrialisation → Community Development.

 **INTERVIEW**

Sagarmala's success depends on state cooperation for coastal shipping and land acquisition for CEZs — what structural reforms are needed to overcome state-Centre coordination failures?

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Question 12

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Consider the following statements about the Panchayati Raj system in India:

- 1 The 73rd Constitutional Amendment inserted Part IX into the Constitution, providing for Panchayats.
- 2 Article 243G empowers panchayats with authority over 29 subjects listed in the 11th Schedule.
- 3 The Constitution mandates that at least 50% of seats in all panchayats be reserved for women.
- 4 National Panchayati Raj Day is observed on April 24 every year.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1, 2 and 4 only ✓

B 2 and 4 only

C 1, 3 and 4 only

D 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

EXPLANATION

FACT: Statements 1, 2, and 4 are correct. Statement 3 is **INCORRECT** — the Constitution (Article 243D) mandates a **MINIMUM** of 1/3 (33%) of seats reserved for women in panchayats, not 50%.

Many states (like Rajasthan, Bihar, Maharashtra) have increased this to 50% through their own state legislation, but 50% is **NOT** the constitutional mandate. **ANALYSIS:** The 33% vs 50% distinction is a frequent UPSC trap — always distinguish between the constitutional floor and state-level enhancements.

CONCEPT NOTE

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment (1992) inserted Part IX (Articles 243 to 243O) into the Constitution. Key articles: 243A (gram sabha), 243B (3-tier structure), 243C (composition), 243D (reservation — 1/3 for women, proportional for SC/ST), 243E (duration), 243F (disqualifications), 243G (powers — 11th Schedule 29 subjects), 243H (taxes/finances), 243I (State Finance Commission).

National Panchayati Raj Day (April 24) marks when the 73rd Amendment came into force in 1993. India has ~2.55 lakh gram panchayats.

As of 2024, >46% of elected panchayat members are women — exceeding the 33% constitutional minimum. States that mandate 50% reservation include Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttarakhand, and Maharashtra.

Q12  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Constitutional provisions for panchayats, federalism, local self-government; GS1 — Women in panchayats, grassroots democracy.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

73rd Amendment, Part IX, Article 243D, 11th Schedule, gram sabha, State Finance Commission, women in panchayats.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Stating 50% women reservation is constitutionally mandated — the Constitution says 1/3 minimum; 50% is a state-level enhancement.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2019 tested 73rd Amendment; memorise Part IX article numbers — 243A to 243O — and 11th Schedule (29 subjects).

 **INTERVIEW**

Is women's reservation in panchayats genuinely empowering women or creating proxy representatives controlled by male family members ('Sarpanch Pati' phenomenon)?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 13

of 23

[Source →](#)

The Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE), recently designated as the National Repository for Deep-Sea Fauna, is located in which city and under which ministry?

A Chennai; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

B Kochi; Ministry of Earth Sciences ✓

C Goa; Ministry of Science and Technology

D Visakhapatnam; Ministry of Defence

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: CMLRE (Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology) is located in Kochi, Kerala, and operates under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) — not MoEFCC. While MoEFCC notified the designation, the repository itself is a MoES institution. **ANALYSIS:** The institutional parent distinction is a classic Prelims trap — MoEFCC regulates environment/forests; MoES manages oceanography, meteorology, and seismology. CMLRE falls under MoES because it deals with marine living resources research, not environmental regulation.

📖 CONCEPT NOTE

CMLRE was established in Kochi in 1993 under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (then part of the Department of Ocean Development). It conducts research on marine fisheries, biodiversity, deep-sea fauna, and ocean ecosystem health. The National Deep Sea Mission (NDSM, 2021, Rs 4,077 crore) has 5 verticals: deep-sea mining, ocean climate advisory, technological innovations, deep ocean survey/exploration, and advanced marine biology. India's deep-sea submersible Matsya 6000 — developed by NIOT (National Institute of Ocean Technology), Chennai — will take scientists to 6,000 m depth.

Key MoES institutions: NCMRWF (weather models), ESSO (Earth System Science Organisation), INCOIS (Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services), NIO (National Institute of Oceanography, Goa), NIOT (Chennai).

Q13  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Deep-sea exploration, National Deep Sea Mission, marine biodiversity; GS2 — Institutional architecture (Ministry of Earth Sciences).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

CMLRE, deep-sea fauna, NDSM, Matsya 6000, MoES, NIOT, deep-sea mining, polymetallic nodules.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Placing CMLRE under MoEFCC — it is under Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested deep-sea mission; know MoES institutions: CMLRE (Kochi), NIOT (Chennai), INCOIS (Hyderabad), NIO (Goa).

 **INTERVIEW**

India's deep-sea mining ambitions in the Central Indian Ocean compete with the goal of protecting deep-ocean biodiversity — how should this trade-off be governed?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 14

of 23

[Source →](#)
ASSERTION (A)

The Assertion-Reason question below is about India's nuclear doctrine. Assertion (A): India's No First Use (NFU) nuclear policy requires maintaining a survivable second-strike capability.

REASON (R)

SSBNs (nuclear submarines) are the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad because they are virtually undetectable when submerged. Select the correct answer:

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 & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: Both A and R are true and R correctly explains A. India's NFU policy means India will only retaliate after absorbing a nuclear strike — so retaliation must be guaranteed even after an adversary's first strike. SSBNs guarantee this because they are practically undetectable in deep ocean — a first strike cannot destroy them. This is precisely why India has invested in the ATV project and SSBNs. R directly explains why SSBNs are essential to make NFU credible.

ANALYSIS: This is a textbook example of a correct A-R pair where the reason is the causal mechanism behind the assertion.






CONCEPT NOTE

India's nuclear doctrine was announced in January 2003 (Cabinet Committee on Security). Key pillars: No First Use (NFU), credible minimum deterrent, massive retaliation against nuclear attack on Indian territory or Indian forces anywhere, non-use against non-nuclear states, and support for global nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear triad — land (Agni I-V, Pralay), air (Rafale with ASMP-equivalent capability, Mirage 2000), sea (INS Arihant, Arighat, Aridhaman) — makes NFU credible because no adversary can destroy all three simultaneously. The NCA (Political Council chaired by PM) is the sole authority to authorise nuclear use.

India has not conducted any nuclear tests since Pokhran-II (May 1998). India's estimated arsenal: ~170 warheads (SIPRI, 2025).

Q14  **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS3 — Nuclear deterrence theory, triad; GS2 — India's nuclear doctrine, NCA.
 MAINS KEYWORDS	NFU, credible minimum deterrent, nuclear triad, second-strike, SSBN, NCA, Pokhran-II, massive retaliation.
 COMMON MISTAKE	Thinking NFU means India will never use nuclear weapons — it means India will not use them FIRST; retaliation is guaranteed and massive.
 EXAM TIP	UPSC 2022 tested nuclear doctrine components; know: NFU + massive retaliation + civilian control (NCA) + no-use against non-nuclear states.
 INTERVIEW	Should India abandon NFU given China's increasing nuclear arsenal and Pakistan's sub-strategic nuclear weapons — or does NFU remain the strategic sweet spot?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 15

of 23

[Source →](#)

With reference to the National Deep Sea Mission (NDSM), which of the following is **NOT** one of its five verticals?

- A Deep-sea mining of polymetallic nodules
- B Development of Matsya 6000 manned deep-sea submersible
- C Ocean climate change advisory services
- D Deep-sea fishing rights enforcement in India's EEZ ✓

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Deep-sea fishing rights enforcement is NOT a vertical of the National Deep Sea Mission. The 5 NDSM verticals are: (1) deep-sea mining, (2) ocean climate change advisory services, (3) technological innovations for exploration, (4) deep ocean survey and exploration, and (5) advanced marine station for ocean biology.

The Matsya 6000 submersible falls under vertical 4 (deep ocean exploration). Deep-sea fishing enforcement is managed by the Coast Guard and Fisheries Ministry separately.

ANALYSIS: NDSM is a science and technology mission — it does not cover fisheries regulation.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

The National Deep Sea Mission (NDSM) was launched in 2021 with a budget of Rs 4,077 crore over 5 years. Matsya 6000 (manned submersible, 6,000 m depth capacity) is being developed by NIOT (National Institute of Ocean Technology), Chennai.

India has been allocated a mining zone in the Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB) by the International Seabed Authority (ISA) — covering ~75,000 sq. km — for polymetallic nodule exploration. These nodules contain manganese, nickel, copper, and cobalt — critical minerals for EV batteries.

India is among only six nations with such CIOB allocations: USA, Russia, China, France, Germany, South Korea, Japan, and India. INCOIS (Hyderabad) provides the climate advisory services under NDSM. CMLRE (Kochi) handles marine biodiversity and deep-sea fauna research.

Q15  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Deep-sea exploration, critical minerals, Blue Economy, climate science; GS2 — International Seabed Authority, UNCLOS regime.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

NDSM, Matsya 6000, polymetallic nodules, NIOT, CMLRE, ISA, critical minerals, deep-sea mining.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Adding "deep-sea fishing enforcement" as an NDSM vertical — fishing regulation is entirely separate (Fisheries Ministry + Coast Guard).

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested NDSM; know 5 verticals and that ISA (not India's government) governs deep-sea mining in international waters under UNCLOS Part XI.

 **INTERVIEW**

India's NDSM mining ambitions raise questions about environmental governance — who should regulate the ecological impact of deep-sea mining in international waters?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 16

of 23

[Source →](#)

Consider the following statements about the Khelo India programme:

- 1 The Khelo India programme was launched in 2018, rebranded from the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan.
- 2 The Khelo India Tribal Games specifically features only traditional indigenous sports, excluding mainstream sports.
- 3 Athletes identified through Khelo India events may receive support under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).
- 4 The Khelo India University Games are for students of university age, distinct from Youth Games (school-age).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1, 3 and 4 only ✓

B 1 and 3 only

C 2, 3 and 4 only

D 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct. Statement 2 is **INCORRECT** — the Khelo India Tribal Games features **BOTH** indigenous/traditional tribal sports **AND** mainstream disciplines like kabaddi, athletics, and wrestling.

It is not limited to only traditional sports. **ANALYSIS:** Including mainstream sports alongside traditional ones serves the dual purpose of tribal sports promotion **AND** integration into the national sporting mainstream.

📖 CONCEPT NOTE

The Khelo India programme was launched in January 2018, replacing the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan. The programme has multiple editions: Youth Games (U-17, school students), University Games (university students), Winter Games (held in J&K/Himachal), Para Games, and now Tribal Games.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) manages National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs) where Khelo India-identified athletes train. TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) provides elite-level support: international exposure, coaching, equipment, physiotherapy, and cash assistance.

Paris Olympics 2024 saw several TOPS athletes medal — Neeraj Chopra (javelin) and the shooting contingent. Budget for Khelo India in Union Budget 2024-25: Rs 900+ crore.

India's medal tally at Asian Games 2023: 107 medals (28G, 38S, 41B) — record haul.

Q16  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**


GS2 — Sports policy, TOPS, Khelo India; GS1 — Tribal sports, cultural heritage.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Khelo India, TOPS, SAI, NCOE, tribal sports, sports ecosystem, grassroots talent.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Thinking Tribal Games features **ONLY** traditional sports — it combines traditional **AND** mainstream to create a broader platform.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested TOPS beneficiaries; know TOPS = Target Olympic Podium Scheme, annual selection, Rs 50,000/month stipend + training support.

 **INTERVIEW**

India's improving Olympic performance reflects elite sports investment — but does grassroots tribal sports promotion translate to actual Olympic-level talent, or remain a cultural showcase?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 17

of 23

[Source →](#)

The SAFF Men's U20 Championship 2026 final saw Bangladesh defeating India. Where was this tournament held?

- A Dhaka, Bangladesh
- B Colombo, Sri Lanka
- C Male (National Stadium), Maldives ✓
- D Kathmandu, Nepal

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: The SAFF Men's U20 Championship 2026 final was held at the National Stadium in Male, Maldives. Bangladesh won by defeating India 4-3 in a penalty shootout.

The tournament is organised by the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) and features under-20 national teams from South Asian nations. **ANALYSIS:** Maldives hosting an international football event reflects the growing sports infrastructure investment in smaller South Asian nations, and India's engagement with Maldives beyond the traditional political and security ties.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

SAFF (South Asian Football Federation) was founded in 1997 and includes 8 member nations: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The SAFF Championship (senior men's) is the premier regional football competition — India has won it a record 9 times.

The U20 championship is a junior development tournament. Bangladesh's football federation has seen growing investment and this victory marks their rise as a competitive South Asian footballing nation.

India's football ecosystem is governed by AIFF (All India Football Federation). India's FIFA ranking is approximately 120-130 (fluctuates).

The ISL (Indian Super League) has been the primary vehicle for professionalising Indian club football since 2013.

Q17  **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS2 — India-South Asia relations, sports diplomacy; GS1 — Sports and cultural soft power.
 MAINS KEYWORDS	SAFF, South Asian football, AIFF, ISL, India-Maldives relations, sports diplomacy.
 COMMON MISTAKE	Placing the tournament in Bangladesh (the winning country) — it was held in Maldives.
 EXAM TIP	UPSC has tested SAFF in geography and IR context; know SAFF has 8 members and India has won the senior championship 9 times.
 INTERVIEW	Can India use football diplomacy in South Asia more effectively, given football's mass popularity in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Maldives compared to cricket?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 18

of 23

[Source →](#)

Consider the following statements about the Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL):

- 1 BEL is a Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Defence.
- 2 BEL is headquartered in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- 3 BEL manufactures Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) used in Indian elections.
- 4 The Make-I category under DAP 2020 requires a minimum of 50% indigenous content and involves Ministry of Defence funding for development.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1, 3 and 4 only ✓

B 1 and 3 only

C 2, 3 and 4 only

D 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct. Statement 2 is INCORRECT — BEL is headquartered in Bengaluru (Bangalore), Karnataka — NOT Chennai.

Chennai is the location of NIOT and other institutions. BEL has manufacturing units across India including Ghaziabad, Pune, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru.

ANALYSIS: The Bengaluru vs. Chennai distinction is a common geographic trap in UPSC — both cities have major defence/tech institutions.

CONCEPT NOTE

BEL (Bharat Electronics Limited) was established in 1954 and is a Navratna CPSE under the Ministry of Defence, headquartered in Bengaluru. Key products: radars (including AESA for Tejas Mk1A), EVMs and VVPATs, electronic warfare systems, missile systems components, military communication equipment, sonar systems, satellite navigation systems. BEL has 9 manufacturing units across India. DAP 2020 (Defence Acquisition Procedure) categories in order of indigenisation preference: Make-I (MoD funded, 50%+ indigenous content) → Make-II (industry funded) → Buy IDDM (Indigenously Designed, Developed, Manufactured) → Buy Indian (IDDM) → Buy Indian → Buy & Make (India) → Buy Global.

The Mountain Radar contract uses the Make-I route — highest indigenisation priority.

Q18  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Defence manufacturing, PSU in defence, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, DAP 2020; GS2 — Electoral integrity (EVMs).

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

BEL, Navratna, DAP 2020, Make-I, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, AESA radar, EVM, indigenous defence manufacturing.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Placing BEL headquarters in Chennai — BEL is in Bengaluru; NIOT and other institutions are in Chennai.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2023 tested defence PSUs; know BEL = Bengaluru (electronics), HAL = Bengaluru (aircraft), DRDO HQ = New Delhi, OFB (now 7 DPSUs) = various locations.

 **INTERVIEW**

Should India's defence PSUs like BEL and HAL be privatised partially to improve efficiency and competitiveness, or does strategic sensitivity require state ownership?

 [Read Full Article](#) →

Question 19

of 23

[Source →](#)
ASSERTION (A)

The Assertion-Reason question below is about the Sagarmala Programme. Assertion (A): India's logistics cost at ~13-14% of GDP is significantly higher than the global benchmark of ~8%.

REASON (R)

The Sagarmala Programme promotes modal shift from road freight to coastal shipping and inland waterways to reduce logistics costs. Select the correct answer:

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 & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A. India's logistics cost (13-14% of GDP) is nearly double the global benchmark (8%), making Indian exports less competitive. Road freight is the most expensive mode — shifting cargo to coastal shipping and inland waterways (which carry freight at 1/4 to 1/6 the cost of road transport per tonne-km) is exactly what Sagarmala's connectivity pillar aims to achieve.

R directly explains A. **ANALYSIS:** This is a complete A-R pair — A states the problem, R states the solution that Sagarmala provides.

CONCEPT NOTE


India's logistics sector is the 8th largest in the world but suffers from high costs due to over-reliance on road transport (65%+ of freight). Coastal shipping handles only ~7% of domestic freight in India vs. 40%+ in China and EU. The National Logistics Policy (2022) set a target to reduce logistics cost to 8% of GDP and improve India's ranking in the Logistics Performance Index (LPI — World Bank).

India ranked 38th in LPI 2023 (up from 44th in 2018). The PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (2021) integrates infrastructure planning across 16 ministries digitally.

Sagarmala, NLP, and PM GatiShakti are three complementary logistics reform initiatives — know their distinct focuses.

Inland waterways: National Waterways Authority of India (Nwai) manages 111 declared national waterways; NW-1 (Ganga) is the most developed.

Q19  **CONCEPT KIT**

 CROSS-PAPER	GS3 — Logistics policy, infrastructure, Sagarmala, PM GatiShakti; GS2 — National Logistics Policy.
 MAINS KEYWORDS	Logistics cost, LPI, Sagarmala, coastal shipping, PM GatiShakti, NLP, modal shift, inland waterways.
 COMMON MISTAKE	Confusing PM GatiShakti (multi-modal infrastructure planning) with Sagarmala (port-led development) — they are complementary but distinct.
 EXAM TIP	UPSC 2023 tested NLP and LPI ranking; know India ranked 38th in LPI 2023 and the 8% logistics cost target under NLP 2022.
 INTERVIEW	India's coastal shipping growth is hampered by cabotage laws and port regulations — should India liberalise foreign vessel cabotage rights to compete effectively?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 20

of 23

[Source →](#)

With reference to the Tripura panchayat awards and the constitutional provisions governing panchayats, which of the following is correct about the Sixth Schedule areas in Tripura?

- A** Sixth Schedule areas in Tripura are governed by the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), which has legislative powers separate from the state's regular panchayat system ✓
- B** The Sixth Schedule applies to Tripura's plains districts, while Fifth Schedule covers its hill areas
- C** Tripura's tribal areas are governed under the Fifth Schedule, making PESA Act 1996 applicable there
- D** The Sixth Schedule areas in Tripura are directly administered by the Central Government without any local elected body

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

EXPLANATION

FACT: Tripura's tribal areas are governed under the Sixth Schedule through the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), which has its own legislative powers (land use, forest, customary law, local taxation) — separate from the state's regular three-tier panchayat system. This means PESA (which applies to Fifth Schedule areas) does NOT apply to Tripura.

Option B, C, and D are all incorrect. **ANALYSIS:** The Sixth Schedule (NE states) and Fifth Schedule (other states) are two different frameworks — the distinction is critical.

CONCEPT NOTE

The Sixth Schedule (Article 244(2) and Article 275(1)) applies to tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram — providing for Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) with legislative, executive, and judicial powers. The Fifth Schedule (Article 244(1)) applies to Scheduled Areas in other states (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat) — but NOT northeastern states.

PESA Act 1996 (Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas) extends panchayati raj to Fifth Schedule areas with modifications. PESA does NOT apply to Sixth Schedule areas.

TTAADC covers 2/3 of Tripura's area. Key difference: ADC has legislative powers (passes Acts); panchayats under PESA have devolved powers (cannot legislate).

Q20  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Fifth Schedule, Sixth Schedule, PESA, tribal governance; GS1 — Tribal communities, NE India.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

Sixth Schedule, TTAADC, ADC, Fifth Schedule, PESA, tribal autonomy, NE India governance.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Applying PESA to Tripura — PESA applies to Fifth Schedule areas; Tripura has Sixth Schedule (ADC), not Fifth Schedule.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2021 tested Fifth vs Sixth Schedule; memorise: Sixth Schedule = 4 NE states (Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram) = ADCs; Fifth Schedule = other states = PESA applies.

 **INTERVIEW**

Do Autonomous District Councils under the Sixth Schedule actually deliver better tribal self-governance than PESA panchayats, or do they create a parallel bureaucracy that concentrates power in ADC leadership?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 21

of 23

[Source →](#)

Which of the following correctly describes the Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project under which INS Aridhaman was built?

- A A programme under the Ministry of External Affairs to develop dual-use maritime vessels for diplomatic missions
- B A classified programme under the Department of Atomic Energy, developing nuclear-powered submarines with DRDO and Navy collaboration ✓
- C A DRDO-led programme under the Ministry of Defence to develop nuclear warheads for ballistic missiles
- D A joint programme between India and Russia for co-development of nuclear-powered attack submarines

ANSWER & ANALYSIS

 **EXPLANATION**

FACT: The ATV project is a classified programme under the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) — not the Ministry of Defence — because of its nuclear propulsion component. DRDO contributed to missile systems; the Navy is the end user; and L&T built the hull at SBC Visakhapatnam.

It is entirely indigenous with no foreign collaboration. **ANALYSIS:** The DAE classification (not MoD) is a key institutional distinction — nuclear propulsion required atomic energy expertise, which is why DAE, not the Defence Ministry, oversees the programme.

 **CONCEPT NOTE**

The ATV project began in the 1970s under PM Indira Gandhi, driven by China's growing SSBN capability. Progress was slow due to US sanctions post-1974 Pokhran test and technological challenges.

India borrowed a Charlie-class nuclear submarine from the Soviet Union (INS Chakra, 1988-1991) to train crews. The indigenous ATV programme eventually produced INS Arihant (launched 2009, commissioned 2016).

The programme involved BARC (reactor), DRDO (missiles, electronics), L&T (construction), and Navy (operations). Total programme cost is classified but estimated at \$2-3 billion per submarine.

India's nuclear submarine reactors use enriched uranium — a capability that required BARC to develop indigenous uranium enrichment, separate from the civilian nuclear fuel cycle.

Q21  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS3 — Defence R&D, nuclear programme, Aatmanirbhar Bharat; GS2 — DAE institutional mandate.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

ATV project, DAE, BARC, DRDO, nuclear propulsion, INS Arihant, SSBN, Aatmanirbhar Bharat in strategic sectors.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Placing ATV under MoD — the ATV programme is under Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), not the Ministry of Defence.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2020 tested DAE institutions; know BARC (reactor), NPCIL (civil nuclear power), DAE (policy), and ATV (submarine) — all under DAE umbrella.

 **INTERVIEW**

India's secrecy around the ATV programme has shielded it from public accountability — is strategic secrecy compatible with democratic oversight of expensive taxpayer-funded programmes?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 22

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[Source →](#)

Match List I (Award) with List II (Category and Prize) related to National Panchayat Awards 2025:

LIST I (AWARD)	LIST II (CATEGORY AND PRIZE)
A. Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar	1. Thematic gram panchayat award; prizes from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 1 crore
B. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar	2. Highest district panchayat award; first prize Rs 5 crore
C. Tripura	3. State that won all three categories in National Panchayat Awards 2025
D. April 24	4. National Panchayati Raj Day; date 73rd Amendment came into force (1993)

A A-2, B-1, C-3, D-4 ✓

B A-1, B-2, C-3, D-4

C A-2, B-3, C-1, D-4

D A-3, B-1, C-2, D-4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
EXPLANATION

FACT: A-2 (NDSPSVP is the highest district panchayat award, Rs 5 crore first prize), B-1 (DDUPSVP is the thematic gram panchayat award, Rs 25 lakh to Rs 1 crore), C-3 (Tripura won across multiple categories including Sepahijala, Kanchanbari, and Baikunthapur), D-4 (April 24 = National Panchayati Raj Day, when 73rd Amendment came into force in 1993). **ANALYSIS:** This match-list tests both the award framework and key panchayat constitutional facts together.

CONCEPT NOTE

National Panchayat Awards are conferred by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj annually around National Panchayati Raj Day (April 24). DDUPSVP covers 9 SDG-linked themes at gram panchayat level. NDSPSVP is the apex district-level award. Tripura's 2025 wins: Sepahijala District Panchayat (NDSPSVP, Rs 5 crore), Kanchanbari GP, Unakoti (DDUPSVP Healthy Panchayat, Rs 1 crore), Baikunthapur GP, West Tripura (DDUPSVP Women-Friendly, Rs 50 lakh). The e-Gram Swaraj portal (2020) digitises panchayat planning and accounts — high-performing panchayats like these typically have high e-Gram Swaraj adoption rates. India's PM Gati Shakti also has a panchayat-level integration module for rural infrastructure planning.

Q22  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — Panchayati raj institutions, decentralisation, 73rd Amendment; GS1 — Tripura, NE India governance.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

DDUPSVP, NDSPSVP, Tripura panchayats, 73rd Amendment, National Panchayati Raj Day, e-Gram Swaraj.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Swapping NDSPSVP (district, Rs 5 crore) with DDUPSVP (gram, Rs 25L-1 crore) — the full name gives the clue: "Sarvottam" (supreme) = highest = district level.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC tests award name–institution matches; "Nanaji Deshmukh" = district panchayat apex award; "Deen Dayal Upadhyay" = gram panchayat thematic award.

 **INTERVIEW**

Financial incentives to well-performing panchayats — do they reward already-privileged panchayats with better infrastructure, or genuinely reach the most deprived?

 [Read Full Article →](#)

Question 23

of 23

[Source →](#)

Consider the following statements about India's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and maritime rights under UNCLOS:

- 1 India's EEZ extends 200 nautical miles from the baseline and covers ~2.02 million sq. km.
- 2 Within the EEZ, India has full sovereignty — including the right to regulate navigation and overflight.
- 3 India's continental shelf may extend beyond 200 nm up to a maximum of 350 nm in some areas under UNCLOS Article
- 76 4. In the EEZ, India has sovereign rights over exploration and exploitation of natural resources including fisheries, oil, and gas.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1, 3 and 4 only ✓

B 1 and 4 only

C 2 and 3 only

D 1, 2, 3 and 4

ANSWER & ANALYSIS
✓ EXPLANATION

FACT: Statements 1, 3, and 4 are correct. Statement 2 is **INCORRECT** — India does **NOT** have full sovereignty in the EEZ. The EEZ grants sovereign **RESOURCE** rights (fisheries, oil, gas, polymetallic nodules), but navigation and overflight remain **FREE** to all nations in the EEZ. Full sovereignty (including navigation control) exists only in Territorial Waters (12 nm).

The EEZ is not equivalent to territorial waters. **ANALYSIS:** This sovereignty vs. resource-rights distinction is the most important UNCLOS concept — and the most commonly confused.

📌 CONCEPT NOTE

UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) zones from the baseline: Territorial Sea (0-12 nm) — full sovereignty; Contiguous Zone (12-24 nm) — enforcement of customs/immigration/sanitation laws; EEZ (0-200 nm) — sovereign resource rights, free navigation for others; Continental Shelf (up to 350 nm in some areas) — seabed resource rights. India has signed UNCLOS (1982) and ratified it in 1995.

India's extended continental shelf submission (under UNCLOS Article 76) has been filed with the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS). Key UNCLOS dispute: South China Sea — China claims "historic rights" beyond its EEZ, rejected by the Permanent Court of Arbitration (2016).

India supports UNCLOS-based order. The Indian Ocean remains the only ocean where UNCLOS's freedom of navigation is broadly respected without territorial claim disputes.

Q23  **CONCEPT KIT**
 **CROSS-PAPER**

GS2 — UNCLOS, maritime law, India's ocean policy; GS3 — Deep-sea resources, EEZ governance.

 **MAINS KEYWORDS**

UNCLOS, EEZ, territorial waters, continental shelf, freedom of navigation, CLCS, South China Sea.

 **COMMON MISTAKE**

Confusing EEZ sovereignty (resource rights only) with territorial sea sovereignty (full sovereignty including navigation control) — the most common error in UNCLOS questions.

 **EXAM TIP**

UPSC 2022 tested UNCLOS zones; memorise the 4-zone hierarchy with exact distances and rights at each zone — this appears frequently.

 **INTERVIEW**

China's rejection of the UNCLOS arbitration award (2016) on the South China Sea — does this signal a broader erosion of rules-based maritime order that India should proactively counter?

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— Nelson Mandela