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## A. GS 1 Related

### Category: GEOGRAPHY

#### 1. Shifting monsoon patterns

*Syllabus: Climatology-Monsoon*

*Mains: Impact of varying monsoon patterns*

**Context:** As per India Meteorological Department (IMD), the [southwest monsoon](#) began withdrawing from parts of southwest Rajasthan and Kutch recently.

#### **Monsoon distribution in 2022:**

- Monsoon rainfall in India has been surplus by around 7% in 2022 though with extreme inequity.
- Rains in Central India were surplus by 20% and in southern India by 25%, with several instances of flooding in Kerala, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.
- Large parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha have seen large deficits.
- The east and northeast of India have reported a 17% shortfall and the northwest 2%.
- This has impacted sowing of the kharif crop.
- Paddy planting has been impacted with sown area 5.51% lower than last year. The Centre is expecting a minimum of six-million tonne shortfall in rice production which is likely to elevate inflation.

#### **What led to excessive rains in southern and central India?**

- Heavy rains in central India and the southern peninsula are due to [La Nina](#).
- While, [El Ninos](#) are linked to reduced rains over India, La Ninas indicate surplus rainfall.
- India is witnessing an extended spell of the La Nina, called a 'triple dip' La Nina which is a phenomenon lasting across three winter seasons in the northern hemisphere.
- This is only the third time since 1950 that a triple dip La Nina has been observed. This, in part, is why for the third year in a row, India is seeing surplus rain in September, a month that usually marks the retreat of the monsoon.

#### **Changes in monsoon patterns:**

- As per IMD , between 1989 and 2020, five states namely, UP, Bihar, West Bengal, Meghalaya and Nagaland have shown significant decreasing trends in Southwest Monsoon rainfall.
- A significant increasing trend in the frequency of heavy rainfall days has been observed over

Saurashtra and Kutch, southeastern Rajasthan, northern Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and adjoining areas of southwest Odisha, and parts of many other states.

- Monsoon is surplus in India since 2019 except a slight dip in 2021.
- The rainfall over the country as a whole, in 2021, was 1% less than normal though rainfall in September was a remarkable 35% above what is usual.
- Monsoon in 2022 is already in surplus by about 6%.
- Three years of above-normal rain in four years is unprecedented in more than a century of IMD's record keeping.

### **Implications of changing monsoon patterns:**

- Shifting monsoon patterns with deficits in certain regions and increased rainfall in a short period of time resulting in surface runoffs has created acute water shortage in the country.
- Cycles of droughts and floods have become more common in many parts of India.
- Poor monsoon rains result in less crop output and necessitates import which increases food shortage and inflation.
- Variation in monsoon has also resulted in the incidence of vector borne diseases such as malaria, dengue.

***Nut Graf:** Climate change has resulted in erratic monsoon patterns in India. With a warming climate, more moisture will be held in the atmosphere, leading to heavier rainfall, consequently, inter-annual variability of the monsoon will increase in future. Reliable and sustainable prediction of monsoon forecasts is crucial in order to prepare the country for this change.*

## **B. GS 2 Related**

### **Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE**

#### **1. A call for better work practices**

***Syllabus:** Human Resources*

***Mains:** Issues with 21st century work-life balance*

**Context:** A recent survey by Deloitte shows various concerns of young workforce who are looking for a better work-life balance.

#### **Introduction:**

- The phrase “Quiet quitting” has generated high interest and engagement in social media recently. Young workers are promoting this concept which rejects the idea of going the extra mile at work. It is promoting people to take time out of work and do something outside of the office.

- This centres around self-preservation and doing what they are paid to do.
- This trend, in a way, shows the impact of hybrid or work from home-based office work culture that has permeated all organisations in the last two years.
- During this time, a growing number of Gen Z and millennial workers have grown tired of not being recognised or compensated for putting in extra hours. Now, they want to end the burnout, and are looking to focus on a work-life balance.

### Survey by Deloitte:

- As per the survey involving thousands of participants across 46 countries, Gen Z and millennial workers are feeling “burned out”, and many are taking on second jobs, while pushing for more purposeful and flexible work.
- Survey demonstrates that over half of Gen Z and millennial workers worry about not being able to pay their bills and live paycheck to paycheck.
- More over a fifth of respondents lacked confidence in their ability to retire comfortably. Many of them are altering their work schedules in response to their financial uncertainty, with more choosing to add a second part- or full-time paying job to their current one.

### Go-slow movement: A Case Study

- The new trend resonates with the old-time slowdowns and work-to-wage strikes. Mostly raised by labour unions a century ago, the ideas came from workers engaged in improving working conditions and increasing daily wage in factories and industrial units.
- The concept of "going slow" dates back to the late nineteenth century, when Glasgow, Scotland's organised dock workers demanded a 10% wage increase. The workers went on strike after the owners turned down their request.
- Dock owners hired farm labourers to work for them in order to thwart the nascent movement. The dock workers admitted defeat and started working again for the previous wage.
- The dockers carefully examined their replacements and discovered that they were ineffective.
- The dockers deliberately worked poorly, similar to agricultural labourers which prompted the owners to ask the union to tell workers to complete the task as before, and that they would be granted the 10% pay increase.

### Working in the 21st century:

- Companies re-organised for the information age. For example, a company engaged in a single activity branched out into other verticals.
- This shift made it focus on new geographies for more customers.
- Several aspects of work have changed in the 21st Century.
  - A significant number of processes are now automated.
  - Robots have replaced humans in several industrial units.

- More emphasis is given to Skill workers.
- Expansion of customer base made it necessary for employees to connect with diverse colleagues to discuss and execute critical functions of the organisation.
- These changes have resulted in additional hours at work and less personal time.
- Collaboration technologies in the workplace, adoption of matrix-based structures, and the proliferation of initiatives to create a “one firm” culture have created the ‘collaboration workload’.

### **Crunch culture:**

- Ongoing trend is an antithesis of the infamous ‘crunch culture’(In the gaming industry, crunch is the word used for overtime)
- Closer to home, Shantanu Deshpande, founder and CEO of the Bombay Shaving Company, drew flak for asking Gen Z workers to “put in 18-hour days for at least 4-5 years and not to think about work-life balance” in a LinkedIn post.
- In 2020, Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy suggested Indians work 64 hours a week for two to three years to compensate for the economic slowdown caused by COVID-19 related lockdowns.
- This idea of crunch culture received serious opposition on social media for promoting a toxic work culture by a large proportion of young workers who are facing collaboration overload, compensation stagnation, and a poor work-life balance.

### **A movement sans unions: Way Forward**

- However, the younger labour of the twenty-first century lacks an organised union to advance their demands and find a long-term solution, unlike the dock workers and railroad employees of the previous century.
- At best, their digital activism without the support of a union can serve as an outlet for their resentment and anger regarding important concerns in today's workplaces that are tech-enabled.
- Employers may solve this problem by giving millennials and Generation Z an enriching professional life.
- Young employees may feel more a part of the organisation if there is a culture of good work-life balance, suitable pay, and opportunity to develop and grow in their existing positions.
- If done right, companies can reap a rich reward from their coordinated action as it can improve employee retention rate.

***Nut Graf:** Century old issues with the labourers chime with present times on worker rights, fair wage and employee benefits. Increase in digitisation was seen as a boon during the early part of the pandemic, extensive reliance on technology has now become a bane for several workers resulting in various online movements demanding work life balance.*

## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: DISASTER MANAGEMENT

#### 1. Bhopal Gas Tragedy

*Syllabus: Community Level Disaster Management*

*Mains: Proactive and reactive responses to Disaster*

**Context:** Recently, the Supreme Court asked the union government to clarify its position on a 2010 plea to enhance compensation for Bhopal gas tragedy victims.

#### **Introduction:**

- A 5-Judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court recently asked the Solicitor General to seek instructions from Centre regarding its position on the 2010 curative petition filed by it, seeking additional compensation for Bhopal gas tragedy victims from US based Union Carbide Corporation.
- The [Supreme Court](#) indicated that as the curative petition was filed by the Centre, the fate of the present proceedings would be determined by the decision of the Union Government to press or not to press the prayers in the curative petition.

#### **Background:**

- The Union government filed the curative petition in December 2010 asking for an increase in compensation of Rs. 7413 crores and a review of the Supreme Court's ruling from February 14, 1989, which set the compensation at US\$ 470 million (Rs. 750 crore), as well as its subsequent orders which determined the method of payment and settlement.
- While submitting the [curative petition](#) in 2010, the Union government had clearly declared itself as “the parens patriae (protector) of the victims.
- The prior settlement, according to the Central Government, did not account for the subsequent environmental damage and was based on inaccurate estimates of the number of fatalities, injuries, and losses.
- Based on an earlier estimate of 3,000 fatalities and 70,000 injury cases, the payment was determined.
- The curative petition has put the death numbers at 5,295 and 527,894 injuries.
- Further, Parliament had cast the government in the role of the protector of the victims by enacting the Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster (Processing of Claims) Act, 1985.

**Curative Petition:**

- A curative petition is a petition which requests the court to review its own decision even after a review petition is dismissed.
- The first known instance of a curative petition was during the Rupa Ashok Hurra vs Ashok Hurra case in 2002. The question arose whether the aggrieved party was entitled to any relief regarding the final judgement of the Supreme Court.
- It was then decided that in order to prevent the misuse of its process and prevent any incident of a miscarriage of justice, the Supreme Court would reconsider its judgement within the limits of its power. Thus the term 'curative petition' was derived.

**Nut Graf:** *The Supreme Court and the government had agreed that the Bhopal gas tragedy was “unparalleled in human history” and the relief and rehabilitation may have to undergo constant review and change. The lack of clear stand by the union government on the curative petition will lead to “perpetual uncertainty” of compensation for the victims.*

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. Soft power, the new race every country wants to win

**Syllabus:** *Bilateral, regional and global agreements involving and affecting India's interest.*

**Mains:** *Soft power( sports) diplomacy.*

#### Soft Power:

- In the late 1980s American political scientist, Joseph Nye Jr. defined Soft power as “a power of attraction through culture, policies, and political ideas rather than coercion”. It is opposite to the military's hard power.
- Smaller countries across the world are investing more in elite sports nowadays, as it is perceived that success in international sports events has the potential to boost a country's chance of acquiring soft power.
- The medals won in international events not only provide pride to citizens of the country but also

exhibit the nation's soft power in the global arena. Moreover, it also encourages working towards acquiring the status of a great geopolitical actor.

### Survey Findings for soft power:

- French citizens were surveyed in 2020 regarding China's performance in the Olympics. It was found that the rising medal count of China created a positive impact on its national soft power.
- However, there was a caveat that since China is a communist country and has apprehensions regarding Human Rights, branding is difficult and thus soft power can help in this regard. But for democratic countries like India, these factors don't matter much.
- China has also used its superiority in the field of sports to build "people-to-people" relations with other nations. For instance, athletes belonging to Madagascar are trained in badminton, swimming, table tennis, etc. in China. It has also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with countries like Kenya to benefit the local athletes as the Kenyan athletes are the best in Long-distance running.

### India and Sports:

- Even though India received the highest number of Medal(7) in its Olympic history, the population-to-medal ratio is the poorest in the world. India has won only 35 medals at the Olympics since 1900 in contrast to the second largest population of 1.3 billion.
- The reason for India's poor performance in sports is inadequate exposure of Indians to sports at the elementary school level. According to the NITI Aayog's report, India does not have a favourable atmosphere for early-stage athletes.
- According to a reply in Parliament in 2018, India spends only 3 paise per day per capita on sports as against China spending ₹6.1 per day per capita.
- Initiatives taken to improve the performance of India in the field of sports:
  - Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) was launched by the Ministry of Sports in 2014. Its objective was to ameliorate India's performance at the Olympics and Paralympics. The scheme had provisions for extra monetary support and training from the best national/international coaches.
  - NITI Aayog report recommended a 20-point plan to boost India's performance in Olympics.

### Measures Ahead to improve India's soft power:

- Sports should be separated from politics. It is suggested that Former players instead of politicians should be made the head of sports organizations.
- India should forge MoUs with countries that excel in specific sports. For instance, India can take help from the United Kingdom and Australia in swimming. Similarly, India can collaborate with Kenya for training agreements in the field of running. While seeking or even offering assistance,



politics should take a back seat.

- The number of athletes under TOPS should be increased (at least 500) to strengthen the competitive climate, in turn enhancing the country's performance. Moreover, India can focus on a few sports in the initial years just like China.
- Private investment should also be encouraged to build the sporting infrastructure. Moreover, the public-private partnership (PPP) model can also be adopted for creating a robust sports ecosystem and capturing talent at the earliest stages.

**Nut Graf:** *The recent achievements of India in the Olympics and the Common Wealth Games show that the Golden period for India in the field of sports has begun. India can use this opportunity to further enhance its soft power in world affairs.*

### Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE

#### 1. Mid-day meal-related food poisoning cases at six-year peak

**Syllabus:** *Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population.*

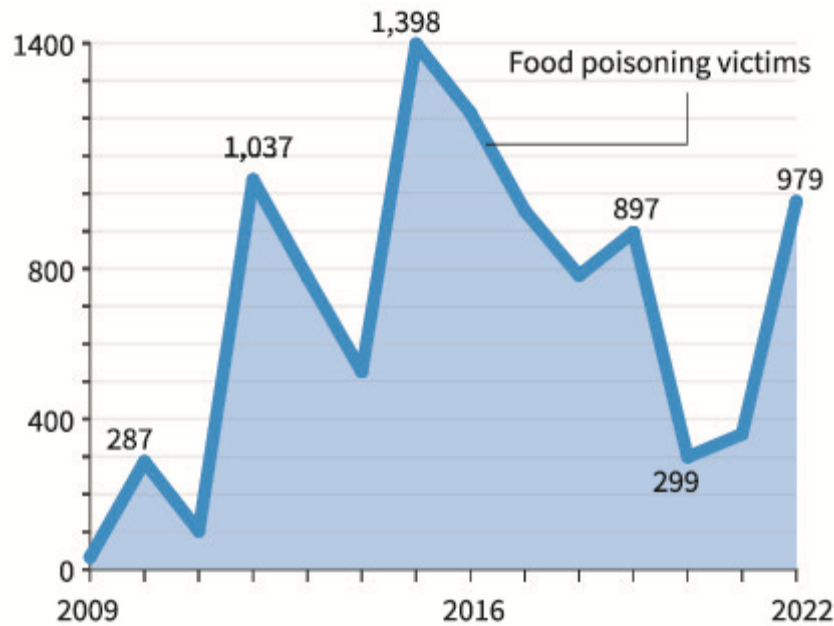
**Mains:** *Issues with Mid-Day Meal scheme.*

**Prelims:** *Mid-Day Meal scheme.*

**Context:** Food poisoning data associated with the scheme.

#### Recent cases of food poisoning:

- Nearly 120 cases of food poisoning after consumption of food provided under Mid-Day Meal schemes were reported in a span of 90 days from schools in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Karnataka.
- The figure for the last thirteen years stands at nearly 9,646 cases, according to the estimates of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme and news reports.
- In the year 2022 (till 14 September 2022), approximately 979 cases of food poisoning were reported. This is the highest number in the last six years. The chart below shows the number of food poisoning cases associated with the Mid-Day meal scheme.



Source: The Hindu

- Approximately twelve percent of victims became ill after the consumption of meals in which cockroaches, rats, lizards, and snakes were found.
- The state-wise split of cases between 2009 and 2022 is as follows:
  - Karnataka with 1,524 cases
  - Odisha had 1,327 cases
  - Telangana the case strength stands at 1,092
  - Bihar reported 950 cases
  - Andhra Pradesh had 794 incidents

#### Findings of Comptroller and Auditor General:

- As per the [Comptroller and Auditor General](#) Audits, the reasons behind low standards of mid-day meal preparation are:
  - Poor infrastructure
  - Inefficient inspections
  - Irregular licensing
  - Low reporting
  - Lack of feedback mechanisms
- CAG found that in Madhya Pradesh the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India did not notify doctors to report food poisoning cases in 2019. Moreover, the Food Safety Commissioner also lacked information/data associated with food poisoning cases that occurred between 2014 and 2019. As a consequence of this, actions could not be taken against Food Business Operators

(FBOs) who were in charge of preparing the meals.

- In Madhya Pradesh, in the year 2015, about 14,500 schools lacked a proper kitchen shed for preparing meals. Similarly, in Arunachal Pradesh during the same period, 40% of the schools did not have a shed facility. It was also found in a CAG survey that between 2011 to 2015 mid-day meal was cooked in open unhygienic areas in nearly 8,932 schools in Chattisgarh.
- CAG also observed that there was an 80% shortfall in inspections of schools due to a shortage of staff. The schools are inspected by Deputy Collectors.
- It was also found in CAG auditing that the grievance redressal mechanism was majorly missing in Jharkhand in 2014. As a result of this, the issues of food poisoning in children were neither reported nor addressed on a timely basis.
- In the case of Himachal Pradesh (in 2017) license and registration certificates were allotted to 97% and 100% of Food Business Operators, respectively, without any inspection.

**Nut Graf:** *There are many lacunae in the efficient working of the Mid-Day Meal scheme across the country as observed from various Comptroller and Auditor General Audit reports. The incidents of food poisoning have resurfaced post-pandemic. The need of the hour is that all the concerned stakeholders should take the matter seriously and address the concerns on an urgent basis.*

## 2. India Inc. needs a neurodiverse workplace

**Syllabus:** *Welfare Schemes for Vulnerable Sections.*

**Mains:** *Issues related to persons with neurodivergent disorders.*

**Context:** Neurodiversity in the workplace.

**Details:**

- Various organizations have started focusing on aspects like inclusion and diversity. According to a McKinsey study in 2019:
  - The corporations that had gender diversity were 25% more likely than other organizations to have profitability figures above average.
  - Similarly, companies with ethnic diversity can outperform their rivals by 36%.
- Moreover, the 'India's Best Workplaces in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion 2021' report highlighted that diverse work teams perform better, strengthen leadership, build trust within the organization, and can ultimately increase revenue. However, the companies are lacking in inclusivity because of the absence of workers that suffer from neurodiversity.

**Neurodiversity:**

- Neurodiversity in the workplace can be defined as the inclusion of people with neurodivergent conditions like autism spectrum disorders, Asperger's Syndrome, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, and dyslexia.
- As per Harvard Health Publishing, neurodiversity is a notion that every individual interacts with their surroundings distinctly. There is no ideal way of behaving, thinking, or learning. Moreover, these differences should not be considered disorders or defects.
- Neurodiverse persons are denied jobs because of the perception that they may react differently than non-neurodiverse people.
- Some recent trends across the world:
  - Approximately 2 million people suffer from such neurological and developmental disorders in India.
  - According to a Deloitte study, around 20% of the world's population is neurodiverse.
  - In the United States of America, 85% of people belonging to the autism spectrum are unemployed.

**Neurodiversity in the Workplace:**

- Corporations that embrace neurodiversity are comparatively more efficient, creative, and cultured.
- As per a study by JPMorgan Chase, professionals in its unique initiative of 'Autism at Work' made less number of errors and were 90 to 140% more productive than other employees.
- Moreover, teams comprising both neurodivergent and neurotypical employees are much more efficient than teams with only neurotypical employees.
- It should also be noted that Neurodivergent people have excellent attention capabilities and can focus on repetitive and complex tasks for a longer span of time.
- In another study by the University of Montreal, it was inferred that in the case of tasks involving visual patterns, the autistic person can complete their task 40% faster than a neurotypical individual.
- Furthermore, people with dyslexia have the out-of-the-box problem-solving capability as they can analyze multiple dimensions of a problem. They have average or above-average intelligence.
- Various companies like Microsoft, Deloitte, SAP, and JPMorgan Chase are incorporating neurodiversity hiring programmes in their work culture. Some examples of Indian companies are Hatti Kaapi and Lemon Tree Hotels.

**Measures Ahead:**

- Human Resources Management should ensure that the workplace is open and cooperative for neurodiverse people.
- Various measures can be adopted in this direction like customized interviews, day-to-day

assistance, and an enabling infrastructure so that they can perform at their optimal levels.

- Moreover, various customized mentorship programs can also be used to benefit this section.

**Nut Graf:** It is important to create a work environment that is conducive to the neurodiverse individual, as in this way they can realize their true potential. Moreover, it will help corporations to widen their definition of inclusiveness.

## Category: GOVERNANCE

### 1. Over the top

**Syllabus:** *Government policies and intervention.*

**Mains:** *Draft Telecommunication bill.*

**Context:** Opening of Draft telecommunication bill for public comments.

#### Details:

- India is presently using a centuries-old law, the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885. Thus it is very important to devise a new statute that is based on the technological advancements of the 21st century.
- The draft telecommunication Bill has hinted at more regulation for digital applications and over-the-top streaming services. As evident from the fact that it would be licensed and brought under the ambit of telecommunication services. It implies that services like Netflix will be considered telecommunication services.
- The Government would expand the definition of telecom services by including everything from broadcasting to electronic mail, video, and data communication services, from Internet and broadband services to over-the-top communication services.
- However, the new law has disappointed a large section of the population as it goes against the right to privacy. For example, Government can prevent a message from being transmitted “on the occurrence of any public emergency or in the interest of the public safety”.
- Moreover, the draft clause requires a licensed entity to “unequivocally identify the person to whom it provides services”. This has the potential to jeopardize encryption and make all communications vulnerable.

**Nut Graf:** *The data privacy and security is a crucial aspects that should be adequately protected by the government. Until a data protection law is implemented, Government needs to be very attentive, so that the fundamental rights of the common man are not jeopardized.*

## F. Prelims Facts

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## G. Tidbits

### 1. Neelakuranji

- The blooming of neelakuranji (*Strobilanthus kunthiana*) a plant that blooms once in 12 years can be seen recently in seethalayana Giri hill ranges, Karnataka.
- Kurinji is a shrub found in the [Western Ghats](#) especially Nilgiri Hills in Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. This plant flowers during September–October.
- This flower gave the Nilgiri Mountains its name, from the Tamil neelam (blue) + giri (mountain).
- Locally known as Kurinji, the flowers grow at an altitude of 1,300 to 2,400 metres. The shrub is usually 30 to 60 cm high.
- This kind of mass flowering is known as 'gregarious flowering', where plants of the same gene pool in a landscape bloom en masse.
- Karnataka has around 45 species of Neelakurinji, with different species having been catalogued on different altitudes.
- The Paliyan tribal people living in Tamil Nadu used it as a reference to calculate their age.
- Each species blooms at intervals of six, nine, 11 or 12 years.

### 2. Local Dialects

- The Bihar government recently decided to set up new academies to promote local dialects — Surjapuri and Bajjika.
- This will help in protecting indigenous language and culture and have a positive social, cultural and political impact on people speaking these two dialects.
- According to the 2011 census, the total number of Surjapuri speaking population in Bihar stood at 18,57,930. Surjapuri language is a mix of Hindi, Maithili and Bangla.
- As per 2001 census data, about 20 million Bajjika speakers resided in Bihar at that time.
- Two academies were to be set up on the lines of eight already existing centres constituted for the promotion of other dialects.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

**Q1. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to Neelakurinji Flower (Strobilanthes kunthiana)? (Level-Difficult)**

1. The flower has no smell, but has medicinal value and is used in treatment of Arthritis.
2. Some species of Strobilanthes are examples of a mass seeding phenomenon termed as masting, which is also seen in the bamboo species.
3. The Paliyan tribal people living in Tamil Nadu used it as a reference to calculate their age.

Options:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 01 is incorrect**, Neelakurinji Flower has no smell or any medicinal value.
- **Statement 02 is correct**, Some species of Strobilanthes are examples of a mass seeding phenomenon termed as masting. Which can be defined as "synchronous production of seed at long intervals by a population of plants".
- **Statement 03 is correct**, The Paliyan tribal people living in Tamil Nadu used it as a reference to calculate their age.

**Q2. Arrange the following hills from North to South: (Level-Medium)**

1. Javadi Hills
2. Nilgiri Hills
3. Anamalai Hills
4. Cardamom Hills

Options;

- a) 1-2-3-4
- b) 2-1-4-3
- c) 2-3-4-1
- d) 3-2-1-4

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:** The correct sequence from North to South is: Javadi hills-Nilgiri Hills-Anamalai hills-Cardamom hills

**Q3. Mankading often seen in the news is related to which amongst the following Sports? (Level-Medium)**

- a) Cricket
- b) Fencing
- c) Football
- d) Wrestling

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- In Cricket, 'Mankading' is the act of a bowler running out a batter on the non-striker's end if he/she is backing up and too far ahead of the crease before the ball is delivered.
- The act got its name through an action by Indian all-rounder *Vinoo Mankad* way back during India's tour of Australia in the 1947-48.
  - This incident was the first time such an event occurred in international cricket. Till date, this act has been performed only a handful number of times.

**Q4. Which of the following scripts is/was written from right to left? (Level-Difficult)**

- 1. Gurmukhi
- 2. Kharosthi
- 3. Shahmukhi
- 4. Takri

Options:

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only
- b) 1 and 4 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 2, 3 and 4 only

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- **Gurmukhi script** was developed by the Sikhs in India for their sacred literature.
  - It was standardised and used by the second Sikh guru, Guru Angad (1504–1552).
  - Gurmukhi is written from left to right.



- **Shahmukhi** is written from right to left. It is also used as the main alphabet to write Pahari–Pothwari in Azad Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir. The Shahmukhi alphabet was first used by the Sufi poets of Punjab.
- The **Kharosthi script** is an ancient script used in ancient Gandhara. It is a sister script of Brahmi and was deciphered by James Prinsep. It is written from right to left.
- **Takri** (also called Tankri) script was widely used in several northern princely Indian states from the 16th century.
  - It was patronised by Dogra rulers of Jammu and Kashmir in the 17th century and employed extensively by them for official purposes, developing several regional variants and coexisting with the Persian script used to write Urdu and the Devanagari script.
  - It is written from left to right.

**Q5. With respect to Pallavas, which of the following statements is/are incorrect? (Level-Difficult)**

1. Kanchipuram was the capital of the Pallavas
2. Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram and the Kanchi Kailasanathar Temple at Kanchipuram are famous temples that were constructed during the reign of Pallavas
3. Mahendravarman took control of Vatapi, the Chalukya capital and assumed the title ‘Vatapikonda’.

Options:

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 3 only
- d) None

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 01 is correct**, The [Pallavas](#) ruled south-eastern India from the 3rd through the 9th centuries CE with Kanchipuram as capital. Their empire covered what is today the Tamil Nadu state.
- **Statement 02 is correct**, Shore Temple at [Mahabalipuram](#) was built in the reign of Pallava ruler Narasimhavarman II, also known as Rajasimha who reigned from 700 to 728 CE.
  - The Kailasanathar temple, also referred to as the Kailasanatha temple, is a Pallava-era Hindu temple in Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu. Dedicated to Shiva, it is one of the oldest surviving monuments in Kanchipuram. It reflects a Dravidian architecture and was built about 700 CE by Narasimhavarman II with additions by Mahendra III.
- **Statement 03 is incorrect**, The Pallava King Narsimhavarman I assumed the title of ‘Vatapikonda’ (Conqueror of Vatapi), when he defeated and killed Pulakesin II (Chalukya King) and captured the Chalukyan capital, Badami/Vatapi in 642 AD.

**Q6. Which one of the following has been constituted under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 ? (Level-Difficult)(PYQ-2022)**

- a) Central Water Commission
- b) Central Ground Water Board
- c) Central Ground Water Authority
- d) National Water Development Agency

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:** Central Ground Water Authority was constituted under Section 3 (3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to regulate and control development and management of groundwater resources in the country.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Critically evaluate the draft Indian Telecommunication Bill, 2022. (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS-2; Governance)
2. Explain how states are increasingly using sports mega-events as part of their 'soft power' strategies. (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS-2 ; International Relations)