

20 Nov 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



TABLE OF CONTENTS
A. GS 1 Related
B. GS 2 Related
C. GS 3 Related <i>INDIAN ECONOMY</i> 1. Export Tax on Iron ore
<i>SECURITY</i> 1. 'No Money for Terror'
D. GS 4 Related
E. Editorials <i>ENVIRONMENT</i> 1. What is India's future strategy on emissions?
<i>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</i> 1. Making sense of the U.S. mid-term polls
F. Prelims Facts 1. Barren Island Volcano
G. Tidbits 1. Nicobari hodi boat
2. Toilet 2.0 Campaign
3. Donyi Polo Airport
4. Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development
H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions
I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

C. GS 3 Related

Category: INDIAN ECONOMY

1. Export Tax on Iron ore

Syllabus: Issues Relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources

Mains: Analysis of Steel sector in India

Context: India recently scrapped export tax on iron ore, steel.

Key Details:

- The Union government of India scrapped export taxes on low-grade iron ore and on some intermediate steel products.
- The Union finance ministry in May 2022 hiked the export duty on pig iron and steel products to 15 percent from 'nil'.
- The tax on export of iron ores and concentrates was hiked to 50 percent from 30 percent, while on iron pellets a 45 per cent duty was imposed.
- The additional tax was imposed to boost domestic supply of iron ore, a raw ingredient for making steel, and thereby hold down inflation.
- Iron & steel are freely importable and freely exportable.

Impact on Exports:

- Indian producers of low-grade ore depend largely on foreign markets as most major domestic steel producers use high-grade iron ore.
- Iron ore and steel saw a big drop in exports in October bringing down overall exports by over 16%.
- India's iron ore exports had dropped to "nearly zero" in October due to higher export taxes and were further expected to go down due to lower demand from China.
- Major miners and steel makers have urged the government to scrap the additional export taxation to fight weakening global demand.

- The high export tax on intermediate steel products also significantly hurt shipments.
- It has a multiplicative effect on the economy stemming from both direct and associated effects on the supply chain and consumption industries.

Significance of the steel sector:

- The iron and Steel industry is one of the most important industries in India. India ranks second-most for the production of Iron and Steel.
- The Government's vision to achieve a \$5 trillion economy by 2024 entails investments worth INR 100 lakh crore in infrastructure sectors, including several steel-intensive sectors like Housing for All, 100% electrification, piped water for all, etc.
- Due to its role in fostering economic development and job creation, the steel industry is also crucial for a country. Many important industries, including the automotive, manufacturing, capital goods, and defence industries, employ steel.

***Nut Graf:** India scrapped export taxes on low-grade iron ore and on some intermediate steel products after months of complaints from miners and steel makers about loss of foreign sales opportunities. Government of India in May, 2022 imposed certain export taxes in the wake of a sharp and steady rise in steel prices.*

Category: SECURITY**1. 'No Money for Terror'**

***Syllabus:** Role of External State & Non-State Actors in Creating Challenges to Internal Security*

***Mains:** Various Initiatives to counter terrorisms*

Context: Recently, third 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Ministerial Conference on Counter-Terrorism Financing was held in New Delhi, India.

No Money for Terror Conference:

- The “No Money for Terror” conference was started in 2018, as an initiative of France.
- France, which was subjected to one of the deadliest Islamic State/ISIS attacks in 2015 held the first NMFT conference in April 2018.
- The idea behind the NMFT ministerial conference is to share expertise and good practice in combating terror financing that can be implemented internationally.
- In 2019, the conference was held in Australia and assessed terror financing risks, especially in the context of the Indo-Pacific.
- It was to be held in India in 2020 but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2022 Conference:

- It was attended by about 450 delegates from across the world, including Ministers, Heads of Multilateral organisations and Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Heads of Delegations.
- During the Conference, deliberations were held in four sessions with focus on:
 - Global Trends in Terrorism and Terrorist Financing.
 - Use of Formal and Informal Channels of Funds for Terrorism.
 - Emerging Technologies and Terrorist Financing.
 - International Co-operation to Address Challenges in Combating Terrorist Financing.

India's stand in 2022 Conference:

- PM Modi in his address to the conference warned against nations that use terrorism as a tool of foreign policy.
- India has proposed a permanent secretariat for 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) ministerial conference, in order to sustain the global focus on countering the financing of terrorism.
- India urged the international community to take cognisance of threats emerging from regime change in Afghanistan, as the last one had led to 9/11 attacks.
- India called for the strong cooperation between the United Nations Security Council, Financial Action Task Force, Financial Intelligence Units, and the Egmont Group in the prevention, detection and prosecution of illegal fund flow.
- India alerted that terrorists should not be allowed to misuse differences in legal principles, procedures and processes in different countries. This can be prevented through deeper coordination and understanding between governments with Joint operations, intelligence coordination and extradition.
- India also stressed the need for a uniform understanding of new finance technologies due to the changing dynamics of terrorism in light of advancing technology.
 - New kinds of technology are being used for terror financing and recruitment. Challenges from the dark net, private currencies and more are emerging.

Nut Graf: *India in recent 'No Money for Terror' Ministerial Conference on Counter-Terrorism reiterated its position that all countries will have to agree on one common definition of "terrorism" and "terror financing" and proposed a permanent secretariat in order to sustain the continued global focus on countering the financing of terrorism."*

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ENVIRONMENT

1. What is India's future strategy on emissions?

Syllabus: Environment Conservation and associated global organizations and meetings.

Mains: Climate-change-related negotiation – UNFCCC COP27.

Prelims: COP27.

Context: The deadline for the Climate Change Conference COP-27 at Sharm el-Sheikh was extended.

Details:

- Due to divisions among member countries on the final text of the agreement, COP 27 which was supposed to conclude on 18th November 2022 was extended for a few more days.
- During the conference, India released its Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy.

India's commitment on Carbon neutrality:

- As per the [Paris Agreement of 2015](#), countries were mandated to submit a plan demonstrating their strategies for transforming their fossil fuel reliance to clean energy sources. This should also include measures to restrict global temperatures from rising beyond 2°C and achieve carbon neutrality.
- India has made the commitment to become a net zero emitter by 2070.
- Though the deadline to make commitments was 2020, it was extended because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- India is now in a group of about 60 countries (out of 190 signatories of the Paris Agreement) that have submitted a strategy document to the [United Nations](#).

Elements of India's Low Emission Strategy:

- The Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy is a hundred-page document that underlines India's approach focusing on the use of nuclear power and hydrogen to transition India into a carbon-neutral economy.
- The strategy also highlights India's right to a fair and equitable share of the global carbon budget.

- On the basis of an analysis by the Global Carbon Project the remaining budget for a 50% likelihood to limit global warming to 1.5°C, 1.7°C and 2°C is 380 GtCO₂ (nine years at 2022 emissions levels), 730 GtCO₂ (18 years) and 1,230 GtCO₂ (30 years).
 - It should be noted that one gigatonne (Gt) of CO₂ is a billion tonnes of carbon dioxide.
- India's journey to net zero is fifty years long. India's vision is evolutionary and flexible that accommodates new technological developments along with developments in international cooperation and the global economy.
- India will also focus on improving energy efficiency through Perform, Achieve, and Trade scheme apart from maximizing the use of electric vehicles, ethanol blending, expanding National Hydrogen Mission, etc.
 - The [PAT scheme](#) is an emissions trading scheme where industries like iron and steel, aluminium, fertilizer, that are extremely carbon intensive would have to reduce their emissions by a fixed amount or buy energy saving certificates from firms that have exceeded reduction targets.
 - This scheme was launched in 2012 and, has so far prevented 60 million tonnes of CO₂ from being emitted (as per the Ministry of Power).

Difference of the strategy from Nationally Determined Contributions:

- The Nationally Determined Contributions(NDCs) are voluntary commitments that are made by the countries to reduce emissions in relation to a previous date to achieve the long-term goal of climate agreements of restricting global temperature rise to 1.5°C or 2°C by the end of the century. These commitments should be updated periodically.
- The latest NDC of India ensures half of its electricity consumption from non-fossil sources by 2030 and aims to reduce the emissions intensity by 45% below 2005 levels by 2030. These are concrete targets distinct from low carbon strategy that are usually qualitative and describe a pathway.

Associated Challenges:

- COP- 27 was termed an "implementation conference" because the countries were determined to solve outstanding questions on climate finance.
 - Climate finance implies money that developed nations had committed to developing countries to assist them to move away from fossil fuels, build infrastructure resilient to climate shocks, and help them access technologies to enable the widespread use of renewable energy.
- It should be noted that out of the \$100 billion annual commitments that were mooted in 2009 and formalized in 2020, less than a third has been pooled till now.
- There is a demand that developed countries should propose new targets, described in negotiations as a New Collective Quantified Goal. It demands a clear approach to

delivery with a higher amount in the tune of “trillions of dollars” to account for the increased costs of the energy transition.

- Another major concern is Loss and Damage (L&D) aspect. This aims to compensate the most vulnerable countries and developing countries that face the highest brunt of [climate change](#) for the damage that has already been incurred.
- However, the European Union was reluctant to announce a fund this year as these would take years to materialize and there is the availability of other alternatives to get money flowing where it was most needed.

***Nut Graf:** The climate change conference COP-27 has met with some challenges and reservations resulting in its extension. India has released its strategy to achieve net zero emissions by 2070. To deal with the sticking points of climate finance and loss and damage, all the stakeholders should come to a consensus as early as possible to deal with the severe issue of climate change.*

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Making sense of the U.S. mid-term polls

***Syllabus:** Effects of policies and politics of the developed world.*

***Mains:** U.S. midterm elections.*

Context: The results of U.S. midterm elections and their consequences.

Details:

- The U.S. midterm elections were conducted on November 8 for positions in both houses of Congress and various state-level political offices.
- Democrats retained control of the Senate, whereas Republicans narrowly took back the House of Representatives. This would further leave the seat of the U.S. federal government more divided necessitating the White House of President to seek policy compromises with Republican Congressmen.
- It would become difficult to pass important legislation and overcome the challenges associated with the economy, diplomacy, and public health. It would also make it difficult for President Joe Biden to leave a legacy on issues like immigration, reproductive rights, and criminal justice reform.
- It should be noted that U.S. mid-term elections serve as a referendum on the sitting President.
- The voter surveys earlier in the year favoured Republicans. However, the election results were different.

- The results of elections were impacted by the bipartisan Congressional committee report into the deadly attack by a mob on the Capitol buildings (January 6, 2021,) as it instigated violence and fuelled the politics of hate.
- Another major factor in Democrats winning the election was the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to overrule women's constitutional right to abortion as enshrined in the ruling of the 1973 Roe vs Wade case. It should be noted that the balance of the apex body is more toward Conservatives.
 - According to a survey nearly 60% of the participants said showed their anger or dissatisfaction towards the decision and approximately 60% favoured a law that guarantees access to legal abortion across the nation.

Consequences of the mid-term elections:

- The Senate, which earlier had a 50-50 razor's edge seat distribution has now tipped towards the Democrats.
- However, the House of Representatives has flipped from Democrat to Republican, with Republicans gaining the majority in the House.
- Democrats can proceed with the policy decisions including the nomination of judges without much interference from the Republicans in the upper house. They can also comfortably reject bills passed by the House and set their own agenda to counter the narrative of the House.
- Republicans can also launch probes into various policy issues like immigration, vaccine mandates, bureaucratic decision-making, etc.

***Nut Graf:** The mid-term elections in the United States have shown the public mandate for the present government. While Democrats hold the Senate, Republicans in the lower house can freely launch probes into a number of policy issues because of their majority in the House of Representatives.*

F. Prelims Facts

1. Barren Island Volcano

Syllabus: GS01-Indian Geography

Prelims: Volcanoes and Volcanic landforms

Context: INCOIS keeps watch on Barren Island volcano in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Key Details:

- The volcano on the Barren Island of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands is being closely watched to check for signs of an eruption which could lead to a tsunami or undersea landslide.
- The monitoring is being carried out by the [Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services \(INCOIS\)](#), which houses the Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) in the Island.
- The volcano has been emitting smoke and is not capable of causing major destruction as per the scientists at INCOIS.
- INCOIS has seven tide gauges in the Indian Ocean and there are plans to put a seismic sensor and another tide gauge to catch any movement generated underwater.
- Recent tsunamis, including in Tonga, Tongan archipelago in the southern Pacific Ocean, have brought to the fore the challenge of tsunamis triggered by non-earthquake sources such as submarine landslides and volcanic eruptions which can wash away the regions near the source within a few minutes.
- INCOIS is aiming to address this lack of awareness and preparedness by local communities and officials leading to slow responsiveness.

Tsunami in Indian Ocean:

- Tsunamis can travel from 800 kmph in the deep ocean and about 30 kmph near the shore, with wave heights ranging from less than a metre to nine metres when they reach the shoreline.
- Scientists at INCOIS have calculated that it would take a magnitude of more than 6.5 on the Richter scale for a 'tsunamigenic' earthquake occurring in the Indian Ocean to hit the Indian coast, with travel time being 20 to 30 minutes to reach the A&N islands and two or three hours to hit the mainland.
- On India's west coast, off the Arabian Sea, Tsunami could emerge from the Makran region and take two or three hours to reach the Gujarat coast.

Read more on [Tsunamis](#)

Indian Tsunami Early Warning System:

- The Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) established at Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Sciences, (INCOIS), Hyderabad, under Ministry of Earth Sciences is the national authority to issue tsunami advisories for India since 2007.
- It is an integrated effort of different organisations including the Department of Space (DOS), Department of Science and Technology (DST), the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Survey of India (SOI) and National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT).

- The ITEWC functions as an approved Tsunami Service Provider of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning & Mitigation System (IOTWMS) that is an integral part of the Global Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, established and coordinated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of [UNESCO](#).
- The ITEWS system consists of a real-time network of seismic stations, tidal gauges, and a tsunami warning centre that operates around-the-clock to monitor tsunamis, detect earthquakes that could cause them, and alert vulnerable areas in a timely manner.
- ITEWC keeps vigil for unusual happenings on the sea to give advance warnings to 25 countries apart from India.
 - Whenever an earthquake of more than 6.5 on the Richter scale occurs within the Indian Ocean (or above 8 on the Richter scale in other regions), timely and accurate tsunami bulletins are generated.

G. Tidbits

1. Nicobari hodi boat

- Tribal Development Council, Andaman & Nicobar Islands is seeking the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the Nicobari hodi boat.
- This is the first application from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands seeking a tag for one of its products.
- The hodi is the Nicobari tribe's traditional craft. It is an outrigger canoe, very commonly operated in the Nicobar group of islands.
 - The design of Hodi slightly varies from island to island. In Andaman and Nicobar Islands, except the Jarawa tribe other tribes are using different kinds of outrigger canoes.
 - These canoes have proper buoyancy and stability for racing. Hodi races are held between islands and villages.
 - The technical skills for building a hodi are based on indigenous knowledge inherited by the Nicobarese from their forefathers. The hodi is built using either locally available trees or from nearby islands, and its design varies slightly from island to island.
- The tuhet, a group of families under a headman, consider the hodi an asset.



Image Source: The Nicobar Diaries

2. Toilet 2.0 Campaign

- The Union government recently launched Toilets 2.0 campaign at Bengaluru on the occasion of the World Toilet Day 2022.
- The campaign aims to change the face of public and community toilets in urban India through collective action involving citizens and Urban Local Bodies.
- One of the objectives of the campaign is to forge partnerships with potential organisations for the adoption of community and public toilets for interim cleaning, annual operations and maintenance, one-time financial aid, IEC activities, beautification activities, innovation, feedback etc.

World Toilet Day:

- The United Nations observes World Toilet Day on November 19 annually.
- The main aim is to raise public awareness of broader sanitation systems such as wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and hand washing.
- The UN officially recognized the right to water and sanitation as a human right in 2010, which focused attention on the campaigns to raise awareness of the sanitation crisis.
- The theme of this year's World Toilet Day, "Making the Invisible Visible," is how inadequate sanitation systems transport human waste into rivers, lakes, and soil, damaging subsurface water supplies.

3. Donyi Polo Airport

- PM Narendra Modi recently inaugurated ‘Donyi Polo Airport, Itanagar’ in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Donyi Polo Airport is the first Greenfield airport in Arunachal Pradesh. It will be the fourth operational airport for Arunachal Pradesh, taking the total airport count in the North-East region to 16.
- The Airport Authority of India has developed the Donyi Polo airport at an estimated cost of Rs 645 crore.
- It is equipped with a modern building that uses renewable energy, promotes energy efficiency and recycles resources used in the installation.
- The airport is located in Hollongi, 15 km from Itanagar, and is expected to connect the bordering region with other Indian cities apart from other parts of the state and the region.

4. Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development

- Former Vice-President Hamid Ansari presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development of 2021 to Pratham, an NGO functioning in the field of education.
- The award is in recognition of Pratham’s work in ensuring quality education for children of the country, particularly during the COVID19 pandemic.
- The [Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development](#) was instituted in the memory of the former prime minister by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust in 1986.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following statements with respect to Thiruvalluvar is/are correct? (Level-Medium)

1. He is a celebrated Tamil poet and philosopher, best known as the author of Thirukkural
2. Thirukkural is considered as one of the greatest works ever written on ethics and morality, it is known for its universality and secular nature

Options:

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both
- d) None

Answer: c

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is correct,** The composition of Thirukkural is attributed to the poet Tiruvalluvar, who is thought to have lived in India in the 6th century. Tiruvalluvar, also called Valluvar, was a Tamil poet-saint.
- **Statement 02 is correct,** Tirukkural is comprised of 133 sections of 10 couplets each is divided into three books: Aram (virtue), Porul (government and society), and Kamam (love). It is considered as one of the greatest works ever written on ethics and morality, it is known for its universality and secular nature.

Q2. Which of the following has/have been accorded the GI Tag? (Level-Difficult)

1. Musa indandamanensi
2. Nicobari hodi
3. Zingiber

Options:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- A sweet banana species with orange pulp named as Musa indandamanensis was discovered in Andamans by team of scientists from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) from a remote Krishna Nalah tropical rain forest on the Little Andaman islands. It has not been accorded GI Tag.
- Recently, Tribal Development Council, Andaman & Nicobar Islands has applied for the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the Nicobari hodi boat. It has not been accorded GI Tag yet.
- Zingiber (commonly referred to as ginger) has not been accorded GI Tag.

Q3. Consider the following statements: (Level-Difficult)

1. It is a National Park located in Andhra Pradesh
2. Godavari River flows through the park
3. The park exists in the Eastern Ghats

The above statements best describe:

- a) Anashi National Park
- b) Mollem National Park
- c) Mrugavani National Park
- d) Papikonda National Park

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Papikonda National Park spreads in East and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.
- The park lies on the left and right banks of the river Godavari.
- This National Park cuts through the Papikonda hill range of Eastern Ghats.
- The majority of the area of the park is covered with moist deciduous forest.

Q4. Arrange the following islands from South to North: (Level-Difficult)

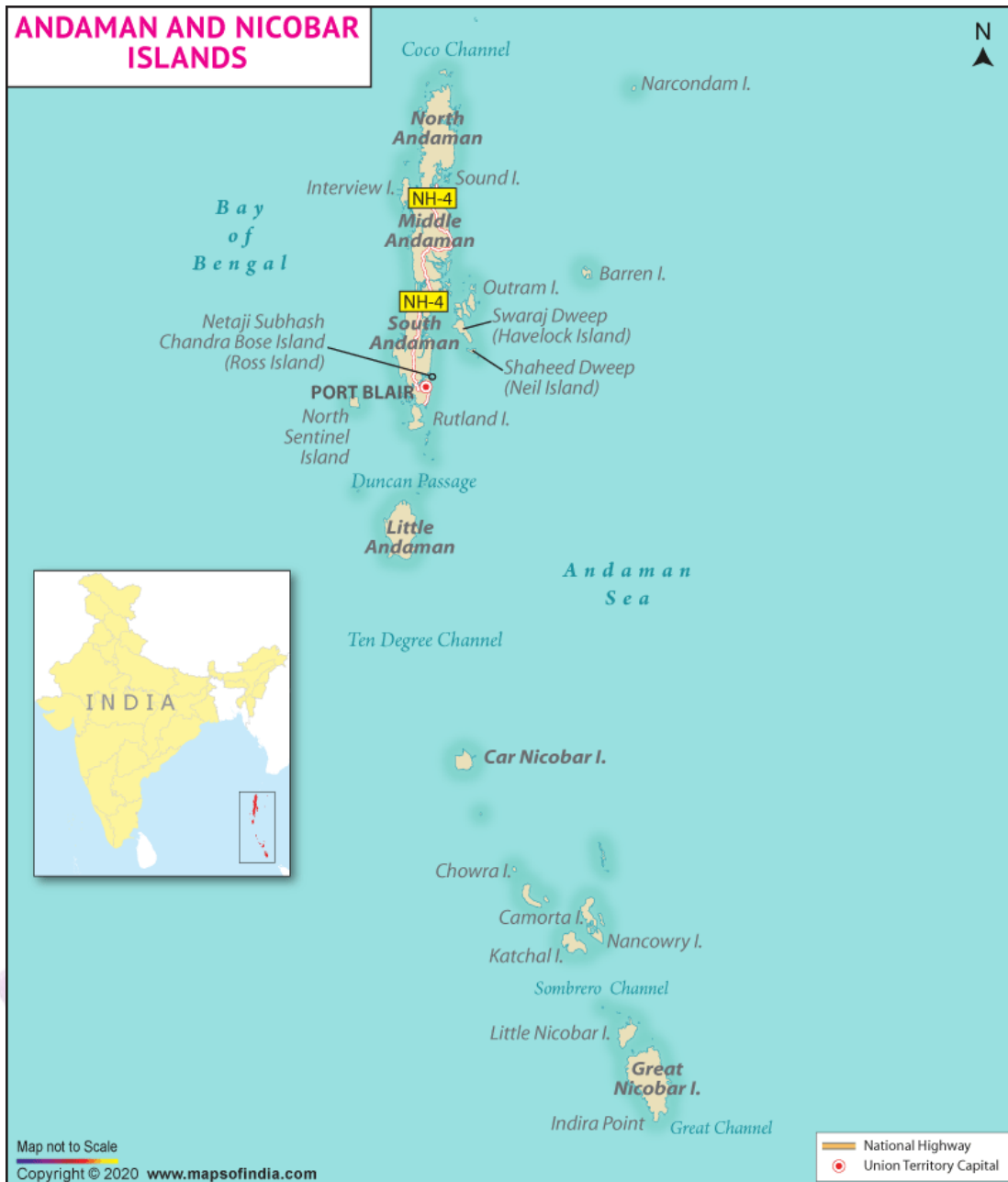
1. Barren Island
2. Rutland Island
3. Chowra Island
4. katchal Island

Options:

1. 1-2-3-4
2. 2-3-4-1
3. 3-4-1-2
4. 4-3-2-1

Answer: d

Explanation:



Q5. The Tunga River flows through the State of: (Level-Medium)

- a) Tamil Nadu
- b) Kerala
- c) Karnataka
- d) Telangana

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The river is born in the Western Ghats on a hill known as Varaha Parvata at a place called Gangamoola. From here, the river flows through two districts in Karnataka - Chikmagalur District and Shimoga District.
- It is 147 km long and merges with the Bhadra River at Koodli, a small town near Shimoga City, The river is given the compound name Tungabhadra from this point on.
- The river flows eastwards and merges with the Krishna River in Andhra Pradesh.

Q6. Which one of the following situations best reflects “Indirect Transfers” often talked about in media recently with reference to India? (PYQ-CSE-2022)(Level-Medium)

- a) An Indian company investing in a foreign enterprise and paying taxes to the foreign country on the profits arising out of its investment
- b) A foreign company investing in India and paying taxes to the country of its base on the profit arising out of its investment
- c) An Indian company purchases tangible assets in a foreign country and sells such assets after their value increases and transfers the proceeds to India
- d) A foreign company transfers shares and such shares derive their substantial value from assets located in India

Answer: d**Explanation:**

- Indirect transfers refer to situations where when foreign entities own shares or assets in India, the shares of such foreign entities are transferred instead of a direct transfer of the underlying assets in India.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. [Discuss the impact of US mid-term Elections on foreign policy and the likely implications on India.](#) (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS-2; International Relations)
2. [Write a note on India's Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy.](#) (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS-3; Environment & Ecology)