

THE PALA CIVIL TIMES



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P2. NATIONAL



74 new land ports proposed along International Border'

India is expanding its land port network and digitising border management

P4. INTERNATIONAL



India's road through Myanmar is one of engagement

India is pursuing pragmatic engagement with Myanmar to advance connectivity, security and trade interests

P8 ECONOMICS



Govt notifies rules to establish coal exchanges for market-driven pricing

The Coal Exchange Rules, 2026 establish a regulated electronic marketplace for competitive and market-based trading of coal

Editor's Note

Today's edition of the Pala Civil Times is a special combined issue covering the key developments of **10th and 11th June**. Across national, international and economic fronts, major events continue to shape governance, security and global affairs.

On the national front, we examine India's plans to strengthen border management through new land ports and smart security systems, the National Disaster Management Authority's push for enhanced preparedness, and the Supreme Court's use of Article 142 to deliver complete justice. Internationally, the spotlight remains on the escalating West Asian crisis, with rising tensions between the United States and Iran, and Turkey voicing concerns over the wider regional implications of Israeli military actions. We also analyse the strategic significance of India-Myanmar relations and the future of key connectivity projects linking India with Southeast Asia.

In the economy, we decode India's new coal exchange framework and its implications for energy markets. Our editorials further explore recurring industrial safety failures, the Aviation Turbine Fuel stabilisation policy, and the growing ethical and geopolitical debates surrounding the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Together, these developments highlight the complex interplay of governance, security, diplomacy, economics and ethics in an increasingly interconnected world. We invite you to explore these issues in greater depth in the pages ahead. Happy reading.

Editorials Decoded

THE HINDU

Strategic afterthought



Recent accidents in Surat and Visakhapatnam have highlighted persistent workplace safety lapses and weak enforcement of occupational safety standards.

The Indian EXPRESS

Let game start, let political cloud recede



The tournament has sparked debate over the intersection of sport, geopolitics and human rights amid the U.S.-Iran conflict.

BusinessLine

Timely support



The Union Government has introduced a ₹10,000-crore fund to provide airlines with predictable aviation fuel prices



74 new land ports proposed along International Border

India plans to establish 74 additional land ports along its international borders to strengthen trade, connectivity and border management. The proposed ports include three along the China border (Namgia, Gunji and Nathu La) and six along the Pakistan border. Additional ports are also planned along the borders with Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar, reflecting a broader strategy to improve cross-border movement of goods and people.

Role of the Land Ports Authority of India

The Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI) is responsible for developing and managing integrated land ports that combine customs, immigration, security and cargo-handling facilities. Since 2014, land ports have evolved from being viewed primarily as security installations to becoming instruments of trade facilitation, people-to-people connectivity and border area development. They also contribute to reducing migration from border regions and strengthening economic activity.

Existing and Proposed Strategic Land Ports

India currently has 15 operational land ports, with 11 more expected to become operational in the next two to three years. Along the China border, Nathu La, Lipulekh Pass and Shipki La are designated trade points, though border trade remains suspended since 2020. On the Pakistan border, the only operational land port is Attari, while additional facilities are proposed at locations such as Teetwal, Chakan Da Bagh, Hussainiwala and Munabao.



Existing and Proposed Strategic Land Ports

To modernise border management, the government has launched the Land Port Management System (LPMS-VINIMAY). The platform provides an integrated digital system for managing cargo, passengers and vehicles while enabling seamless coordination among customs, security and regulatory agencies. Features such as a Single Electronic Window, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and real-time data sharing aim to reduce paperwork, waiting times and processing delays.

Land ports are increasingly being integrated into India's Smart Border strategy, which seeks to combine security with economic development. Reflecting this transformation, trade through land ports has increased from ₹5,000 crore in 2014 to ₹83,000 crore, highlighting their growing role in India's economic integration, border security and regional connectivity.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Terrorist activities and mutual distrust have clouded India – Pakistan relations. To what extent the use of soft power like sports and cultural exchanges could help generate goodwill between the two countries? Discuss with suitable examples. (GS II – International Relations – 2015)



RELEVANCE

GS I : Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity

NDMA rolls out push for 'Resilient India 2047'

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has initiated a nationwide effort to require Union Ministries to prepare Ministry Disaster Management Plans and hazard-specific response frameworks under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The initiative aims to strengthen institutional preparedness, integrate disaster risk reduction into government policymaking, and support the vision of building a "Resilient India 2047" in line with the Viksit Bharat goal.

National Disaster Management Authority

What is NDMA? – The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), established under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and chaired by the Prime Minister, is India's apex body for disaster management.

What are its objectives? – NDMA formulates policies, plans and guidelines based on the principles of prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response to reduce disaster risks and strengthen resilience.

How does India manage disasters? – India follows a multi-tier disaster management framework comprising the NDMA at the national level, SDMAs at the state level and DDMA's at the district level.

What are NDMA's major divisions? – NDMA functions through five divisions: Policy & Plans, Mitigation, Operations & Communications, Information & Technology, and Administration & Finance.

Why is disaster preparedness important? – A technology-driven, proactive and multi-hazard approach helps minimise loss of life and property from natural and human-induced disasters through coordinated action by governments, institutions and communities.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. What is disaster resilience? How is it determined? Describe various elements of a resilience framework. Also mention the global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030).
(GS III – Disaster Management – 2024)

RELEVANCE

GS III : Disaster Management

GS II : Indian Judiciary

SC invokes Article 142 to quash POCSO conviction



Supreme Court invoked its extraordinary powers under Article 142 to set aside a conviction under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 in a case where the victim and the accused, who had been in a relationship while she was a minor, later married as consenting adults. Observing that the couple should be allowed to live peacefully as spouses, the Court used Article 142 to deliver "**complete justice**", highlighting its power to provide equitable relief in exceptional cases where strict application of law may not adequately address the circumstances.

Article 142

Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass any decree or order necessary for doing "complete justice" in any case before it. It is a unique constitutional provision that enables the Court to provide remedies even when existing statutory law may not adequately address a situation.

The provision has been invoked in several exceptional cases involving environmental protection, matrimonial disputes, governance reforms, victims' compensation and institutional accountability.

However, Article 142 is an extraordinary and discretionary power, intended to be used sparingly. While it allows the Court to bridge gaps in law and ensure equitable outcomes, it cannot ordinarily be used to override substantive constitutional provisions. The article reflects the Supreme Court's role not merely as an interpreter of law but also as a guardian of justice in exceptional circumstances.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. "Constitutional morality is the fulcrum which acts as an essential check upon the high functionaries and citizens alike..." In view of the above observation of the Supreme Court, explain the concept of constitutional morality and its application to ensure balance between judicial independence and judicial accountability in India. (GS II – Indian Polity)

India's road through Myanmar is one of engagement

Myanmar President Min Aung Hlaing visited India from 30 May to 3 June 2026, marking his first visit to India as President. His visit to the Mahabodhi Temple highlighted the civilisational and Buddhist links between India and Myanmar. The visit reflects the growing strategic importance of India-Myanmar relations in South and Southeast Asia.

India- Myanmar relations

Despite international criticism of Myanmar's military-backed government following the 2021 coup, India has chosen engagement over isolation. Myanmar is central to India's Act East Policy and Neighbourhood First Policy and shares a 1,643-km border with four northeastern States of India. Stability in Myanmar is therefore directly linked to India's security interests in the Northeast. Continued engagement is also driven by concerns that any diplomatic vacuum would allow China to further expand its strategic, economic and political influence in Myanmar and the wider region.

Connectivity and Strategic Infrastructure

The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project links Kolkata Port to Sittwe Port in Myanmar by sea, follows the Kaladan River to Paletwa, and then connects Paletwa to Zorinpui in Mizoram through a road corridor. While the sea and inland waterway components are operational, the crucial 109-km Paletwa-Zorinpui road section remains under construction and is expected to be completed by 2027.

The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway seeks to connect Moreh in Manipur with Mae Sot in Thailand through Myanmar over a distance of about 1,360 km. The project is envisioned as a major land corridor linking India with Southeast Asia, with proposed future extensions to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam. However, progress has been slowed by internal conflict and security challenges in Myanmar.



Security and Economic Cooperation

India and Myanmar discussed strengthening trade, expanding the rupee-kyat settlement mechanism, and cooperation in critical minerals and rare earths. Myanmar also reiterated that its territory would not be used against India's security interests. Cooperation against insurgent groups, cybercrime networks and human trafficking remains an important component of bilateral relations.

Broader Strategic Implications

The visit signals India's pragmatic approach towards Myanmar, based on geography, security and strategic interests rather than ideological considerations. For Myanmar, closer ties with India help reduce excessive dependence on China. The engagement illustrates how regional diplomacy increasingly prioritises stability, connectivity and strategic balance while navigating complex political realities.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. With reference to India–Myanmar relations, consider the following statements:

1. Under the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, cargo moves from Kolkata to Sittwe by sea, then to Paletwa through the Kaladan River, and finally to Zorinpui in Mizoram by road.
2. The 109-km Paletwa–Zorinpui road segment is the critical incomplete component of the Kaladan project.
3. The India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway connects Moreh in Manipur with Mae Sot in Thailand and is planned to be extended to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam.

Which of the statements given above are correct?
 (a) 1 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. How far are India's internal security challenges linked with border management particularly in view of the long porous borders with most countries of South Asia and Myanmar? (GS III – Internal Security – 2013)

RELEVANCE

GS II : International relations.

GS III : Internal Security

US–Iran Tensions Escalate Amid Military Exchanges

The conflict between the United States and Iran escalated sharply after President Donald Trump warned that the US would launch severe military action against Iran if a peace agreement was not finalized. Trump also claimed that the US had been removing millions of barrels of Iranian oil, which he said had helped prevent a sharp rise in global oil prices. The tensions followed Iranian missile and drone attacks on US military bases in Jordan, Kuwait and Bahrain, which Tehran described as retaliation for American strikes on Iranian targets near the Strait of Hormuz. Despite the exchange of attacks, US officials reported no significant damage or casualties, as most projectiles were intercepted.

The latest hostilities represent one of the most serious escalations since the US and Iran agreed to a ceasefire in April. Iran accused Washington of repeated ceasefire violations and indicated that future diplomatic engagement would depend on a more stable environment. At the same time, both sides continued to signal interest in negotiations, with Trump stating that he still sought a meaningful agreement and Qatar sending a mediation delegation to Tehran. The conflict has also affected maritime security in the Gulf region, with reported attacks near the Strait of Hormuz and disruptions to shipping, highlighting the broader geopolitical and economic risks arising from continued instability.

Israeli attacks on Syria, Lebanon threaten Turkiye, says Erdogan

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that Israel's military actions in Syria and Lebanon have reached a stage where they also pose a threat to Turkey's security. He argued that Ankara's security is closely linked to developments in neighbouring countries and described Israel's actions as a broader source of regional instability. Turkey, a member of NATO, has been among the strongest critics of Israel's operations in Gaza, Lebanon and Iran, viewing them as obstacles to regional peace and stability.

Erdogan further accused Israel of pursuing policies that destabilise not only the Middle East but also parts of Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean, including the ethnically divided island of Cyprus. He alleged that certain regional actors were supporting Israel's strategic objectives and contributing to tensions in the region. Turkey has also blamed Israeli actions and provocations for contributing to the outbreak and escalation of the recent US–Iran conflict, underscoring Ankara's concerns about the widening geopolitical consequences of regional confrontations.



PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. In what ways would the ongoing U.S–Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to this situation? (GS II – International relations – 2018)

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



- Q. Turkey is located between (2014)
- Black Sea and Caspian Sea
 - Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea
 - Gulf of Suez and Mediterranean Sea
 - Gulf of Aqaba and Dead Sea

RELEVANCE

GS II : International relations.

In law, need to write a new marriage story (Indian Express : 11-06-2026)

The 2026 edition of the FIFA World Cup, which begins on 11 June, will feature 48 teams playing a total of 104 matches. The prestigious sport event highlights the tension between sport and geopolitics. While the United States hosts most tournament matches, its ongoing conflict with Iran has created uncertainty for Iranian players, officials and supporters. The situation raises questions about whether global sporting events can remain politically neutral when host nations are directly involved in international conflicts affecting participating countries.

Human Rights and FIFA's Institutional Responsibility

Although FIFA statutes do not prohibit countries at war from hosting tournaments, the organization is committed to upholding international human rights standards. The treatment of Iranian officials, visa restrictions and barriers faced by supporters challenge FIFA's ability to ensure equal participation. The controversy underscores the broader responsibility of international institutions to balance sporting objectives with principles of *fairness, dignity and non-discrimination*.

Concerns Over Discriminatory Treatment and Inclusion

A Somali referee selected by FIFA was reportedly denied entry into the United States, while Iranian football officials faced visa restrictions and Iranian supporters encountered barriers in accessing matches. Senegal's players were subjected to extensive security checks upon arrival, and Uzbekistan's national team reportedly underwent unusually intrusive screening procedures. Such actions create perceptions of bias and exclusion, undermining the spirit of mutual respect that international sporting events seek to promote and raising ethical concerns regarding procedural fairness, equal treatment and non-discrimination.



Soft Power, National Image and Political Instrumentalisation

Major sporting events often serve as instruments of soft power, allowing host nations to project a positive international image. Critics argue that governments may use the World Cup to divert attention from controversial policies or geopolitical disputes. This creates an ethical dilemma: while sport can foster international goodwill and cultural exchange, it can also become a tool for political legitimisation and image management.

The Limits of Boycotts and the Need for Ethical Engagement

Historical experience suggests that public enthusiasm for football often outweighs calls for boycotts, as seen during previous controversial tournaments. Nevertheless, fans, athletes and civil society must remain conscious of the ethical issues surrounding such events. Equally important is the responsibility of the host nation to ensure that security concerns, immigration policies and geopolitical tensions do not undermine the principles of openness, fairness and equal participation. The challenge lies in preserving the unifying power of sport while holding institutions and governments accountable to values of justice, inclusivity, human rights and peaceful international engagement.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. "With the waning of globalization, post-Cold War world is becoming a site of sovereign nationalism." Elucidate. (GS II – International Relations – 2025)

RELEVANCE

GS II : International Relations

Timely support (TH BusinessLine : 10-06-2026)

The Union Government has launched a ₹10,000-crore Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) Price Stabilisation Fund to protect airlines from volatile fuel prices and compensate oil marketing companies (OMCs) for losses arising from subsidised fuel sales. The measure comes amid rising global jet fuel prices driven by geopolitical tensions in West Asia and aims to support the aviation sector while preserving regional air connectivity.

Challenges Facing the Aviation Sector

Indian airlines are facing significant financial pressure due to elevated fuel prices, a weakening rupee, high taxation and airport charges. Since aircraft lease rentals and many maintenance costs are dollar-denominated, operating expenses have risen sharply. Domestic carriers have responded through fare hikes, fuel surcharges and route rationalisation, but these measures have been insufficient to fully offset rising costs and declining profit margins.

Key Features of the New Framework

The scheme allows airlines to voluntarily purchase ATF at a fixed price of about ₹115 per litre for up to three years, compared to market-linked prices estimated at around ₹142 per litre. The benchmark ATF price has been fixed at ₹86.32 per litre, with taxes and other charges determining the final cost. By providing predictable fuel costs, the scheme seeks to improve financial planning and operational stability for airlines.



Benefits for Airlines and Oil Companies

ATF constitutes nearly 40 per cent of airline operating costs, rising further during periods of fuel volatility. Price certainty can therefore help airlines manage costs more effectively and sustain expansion plans. Simultaneously, OMCs will receive interest-free government support to cover under-recoveries when global fuel prices exceed benchmark levels, ensuring that fuel supply remains viable without imposing unsustainable losses on public-sector companies.

Concerns and Long-Term Implications

While the stabilisation fund provides immediate relief, questions remain regarding the adequacy of the ₹10,000-crore allocation and the sustainability of the scheme under prolonged high fuel prices. The initiative represents a short-term buffer rather than a permanent solution. For India's aviation sector to maintain its growth trajectory and global competitiveness, broader reforms addressing fuel taxation, operational costs, infrastructure and financial resilience will be necessary.

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. With reference to the Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) Price Stabilisation Fund announced by the Government of India, consider the following statements:

1. The scheme seeks to reduce the impact of volatile global fuel prices on airlines by allowing them to purchase ATF at a fixed price for a specified period.
2. Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) will be compensated through interest-free government support when international fuel prices rise above the benchmark level.
3. Airlines participating in the scheme will always pay less for ATF than they would under market-linked pricing.
4. The scheme attempts to balance the objectives of maintaining airline viability and preventing large under-recoveries for OMCs.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. What is the need for expanding the regional air connectivity in India? In this context, discuss the government's UDAN Scheme and its achievements (GS III - 2024)

Q. Examine the development of Airports in India through joint ventures under Public - Private Partnership (PPP) model. What are the challenges faced by the authorities in this regard. (GS III - 2017)

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy

Foreseeable accidents (The Hindu : 11-06-2026)

Recent industrial accidents in Surat and Visakhapatnam highlight a troubling pattern of recurring workplace safety failures in India. In Surat, four workers died after entering a septic tank filled with toxic gases, while in Visakhapatnam, nine workers were killed in an explosion at a steel plant. Though occurring in different industries, both incidents involved hazards that are well understood and preventable, indicating persistent gaps in the implementation of basic occupational safety measures.

Direct and Underlying Causes

The immediate causes included exposure to toxic fumes in a confined space and a major process failure in steel production. However, deeper structural factors are equally significant. Allegations of staff shortages, ageing equipment, deferred maintenance, excessive workloads and growing reliance on contract labour point to organisational weaknesses. Contract workers often receive inadequate training and operate within systems of fragmented accountability. These incidents also reflect broader issues such as weak safety culture, manpower constraints and a tendency to prioritise cost reduction over worker safety.

Impacts and the Way Forward

Such accidents result in loss of life, economic disruption, erosion of worker confidence and reputational damage to industries. They also expose continuing social inequalities, as hazardous occupations are often concentrated among vulnerable sections of society. Addressing these challenges requires strict enforcement of occupational safety standards, regular maintenance and safety audits, adequate staffing, comprehensive worker training, stronger accountability for employers and full implementation of the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020. A proactive safety culture must replace the reactive approach that treats preventable tragedies as isolated accidents.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020

OSH code 2020 consolidates 13 Central Labour Laws into a single legislation to improve worker welfare and workplace safety.

Health, Safety and Welfare Provisions

Before OSH 2020, such provisions were largely limited to factories, mines, and other construction work.

The latest code significantly broadens the scope of worker protection.

Safety Committees and Health Coverage

The Code mandates the constitution of Safety Committees in:

- factories employing 500 or more workers,
- building and construction establishments employing 250 or more workers,
- mines employing 100 or more workers.

These committees include representatives of both employers and workers.

National Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Board

: existing six separate boards were replaced with a single **National Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Board**. This tripartite body comprises representatives of trade unions, employer associations and State Governments to advise the Central Government on occupational safety, health and working condition standards.

Protection of Contract Labour : The Code strengthens the welfare of contract workers by making the principal employer responsible for providing welfare facilities and ensuring health and safety measures. In cases where a contractor fails to pay wages, the principal employer is required to make the payment.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. Discuss the merits and demerits of the four 'Labour Codes' in the context of labour market reforms in India. What has been the progress so far in this regard? (GS III - 2024)

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q.) The proposed International Container Transshipment Port (ICTP) at Great Nicobar is primarily intended to:

- Increase inland river transport
- Reduce India's dependence on foreign transshipment hubs
- Expand offshore oil production
- Promote deep-sea fishing

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy

Govt notifies rules to establish coal exchanges for market-driven pricing

The government has notified the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026 to establish regulated coal exchanges in India. The reform follows the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2025, which introduced the concept of mineral exchanges. The objective is to create a transparent and efficient market for coal trading, improve price discovery and modernise India's coal supply chain through competitive electronic trading platforms.

How Will the New System Work?

Coal exchanges will replace the traditional one-to-many sales model with a many-to-many trading platform, allowing multiple buyers and sellers to transact electronically. This is expected to expand market access for coal producers, including commercial and captive miners, while giving buyers more procurement options. According to the rules, all trades must result in physical delivery of coal, supported by independent quality verification to ensure reliability and transparency.

Regulatory and Governance Framework

The Coal Controller Organisation (CCO) has been designated as the regulator responsible for registering, supervising and auditing coal exchanges. Exchange licences will be valid for 25 years, with the possibility of renewal. Only demutualised companies with a minimum net worth of ₹50 crore can operate exchanges. Ownership concentration has also been restricted to prevent excessive control and ensure fair governance.

Safeguards and Risk Management Measures

The rules introduce several safeguards to maintain market integrity. Exchanges must establish surveillance systems, maintain audit trails and create Settlement Guarantee Funds to manage payment and delivery risks. These measures are designed to prevent market manipulation, improve liquidity and ensure smooth settlement of transactions, thereby increasing confidence among market participants.



Significance for the Economy and Energy Sector

The coal exchange framework marks a major shift towards market-based pricing and transparent trading in India's coal sector. By improving efficiency, competition and ease of doing business, the reform is expected to strengthen energy security, support industrial growth and create a more resilient energy ecosystem. It also aligns with the broader goal of building a modern and self-reliant economy under the vision of Viksit Bharat.

PYQ Compass

UPSC questions previously asked from the themes discussed on this page.



Q. With reference to 'fly ash' produced by the power plants using coal as fuel, which of the following statements is/are correct? (2015)

1. Fly ash can be used in the production of bricks for building construction.
2. Fly ash can be used as a replacement for some of the Portland cement contents of concrete.
3. Fly ash is made up of silicon dioxide and calcium oxide only, and does not contain any toxic elements.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

RELEVANCE :

GS III : Indian Economy

PRACTICE QUESTION

Q. With reference to the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026, consider the following statements regarding the significance of establishing coal exchanges in India:

1. They aim to promote transparent and market-based price discovery for coal.
2. They seek to replace bilateral coal sales with a competitive electronic trading platform involving multiple buyers and sellers.
3. They are intended to improve market access for coal producers and enhance overall efficiency in coal trading.

Which of the statements given above best reflect the objectives of the Coal Exchange Rules, 2026?

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

Practice Questions and answers

Q. With reference to India–Myanmar relations, consider the following statements:

1. Under the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, cargo moves from Kolkata to Sittwe by sea, then to Paletwa through the Kaladan River, and finally to Zorinpui in Mizoram by road.
2. The 109-km Paletwa–Zorinpui road segment is the critical incomplete component of the Kaladan project.
3. The India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway connects Moreh in Manipur with Mae Sot in Thailand and is planned to be extended to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (d) 1, 2, and 3

Statement 1 is Correct. The Kaladan Project follows the route Kolkata → Sittwe (sea) → Paletwa (river) → Zorinpui (road).

Statement 2 is Correct. The 109-km Paletwa–Zorinpui road is the key unfinished section.

Statement 3 is Correct. The Trilateral Highway links Moreh (Manipur) and Mae Sot (Thailand) through Myanmar, with planned extensions into mainland Southeast Asia.

Q. With reference to the Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) Price Stabilisation Fund announced by the Government of India, consider the following statements:

1. The scheme seeks to reduce the impact of volatile global fuel prices on airlines by allowing them to purchase ATF at a fixed price for a specified period.
2. Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) will be compensated through interest-free government support when international fuel prices rise above the benchmark level.
3. Airlines participating in the scheme will always pay less for ATF than they would under market-linked pricing.
4. The scheme attempts to balance the objectives of maintaining airline viability and preventing large under-recoveries for OMCs.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (a) 1, 2 and 4 only

Statement 1 is correct. The core objective is to provide airlines with price certainty by allowing them to purchase ATF at a fixed price for a defined period.

Statement 2 is Correct. OMCs receive interest-free government support to offset losses when global fuel prices exceed the benchmark.

Statement 3 is incorrect. The scheme does not guarantee cheaper fuel at all times. Airlines may sometimes pay more than market prices if global fuel prices fall below the fixed benchmark. The benefit is stability, not necessarily the lowest price.

Statement 4 is correct. The policy is designed to protect both airlines and OMCs, thereby supporting connectivity and financial sustainability.