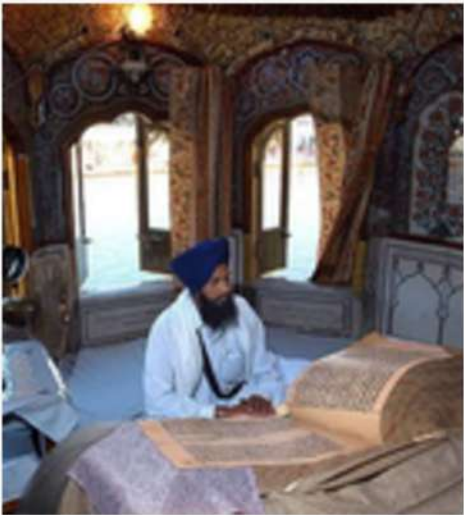


THE PALA CIVIL TIMES

Civil Service Institute | Pala | Thiruvananthapuram | South India' Premier Civil Service Coaching Institute | www.civilservicepala.org

P2. NATIONAL



Punjab's anti-sacrilege law - Examines Punjab's strengthened anti-sacrilege law, its stricter penalties for offences against the Guru Granth Sahib, and the debate over state regulation versus Sikh religious autonomy.

P3. NATIONAL



PM asks Secretaries to focus on ease of doing business, self-reliance - Highlights the government's emphasis on integrated governance, citizen-centric service delivery, infrastructure planning, and coordinated policy implementation.

P4. INTERNATIONAL



UN report captures Israel's crimes against Palestinian children - latest UN Commission's findings on the humanitarian impact of the Gaza conflict on children and the alleged violations of international humanitarian law.

Editor's Note

In today's edition of Pala Civil Times, we focus on a range of contemporary issues that strengthen our understanding of the Constitution, governance, public policy, and international law through real-world developments. Punjab's latest anti-sacrilege legislation provides an opportunity to examine the relationship between religion, law, and constitutional governance, while the recent privilege motion in the Lok Sabha illustrates how parliamentary procedures and constitutional safeguards function in practice beyond textbook explanations.

Our decoded editorials analyse the latest amendments to the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) and the continuing debate on balancing regulatory oversight with the autonomy of civil society organisations. We also examine the implementation of the Three-Language Policy under the National Education Policy, discussing its objectives alongside the practical concerns and opportunities it presents for students, schools, and policymakers.

On the international front, we explore the humanitarian impact of the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, with particular emphasis on the findings of the recent UN Commission of Inquiry regarding the condition of children in Gaza. Alongside these discussions, this edition also examines themes such as research integrity through the issue of fake patents, the constitutional right of every accused person to legal representation, and the ethical responsibilities of the legal profession.

We hope these analyses make complex constitutional, legal, and governance concepts easier to understand by connecting them with current affairs. Our objective is to help students bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and its practical application. Happy reading!

Editorials Decoded

P7. CONTOURS



Fake patents are poisoning India's race for academic excellence - the misuse of design registrations as fake international patents and the larger concerns surrounding research ethics and academic evaluation.

The Indian EXPRESS

New FCRA rules shrink space for civic action



The expansion of regulatory oversight over foreign-funded NGOs and the balance between accountability, national security, and civil society autonomy.

THE HINDU

Indian and foreign



Implementation of multilingual education under NEP 2020 focuses on the debate between linguistic preservation and educational flexibility.

Punjab's anti-sacrilege law

The Punjab Assembly passed the **Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Act, 2026** to strengthen protection of the Guru Granth Sahib. The law defines **sacrilege** broadly to include **damaging, burning, tearing, stealing, insulting, or disrespecting the scripture, including through online content**. It prescribes imprisonment ranging from seven to twenty years and fines from ₹2 lakh to ₹10 lakh. The offence is made cognisable and non-bailable, and investigations can be conducted only by senior police officers.

How the Law Differs from Earlier Attempts

Previous Punjab governments also attempted to enact stricter anti-sacrilege laws, but those Bills sought amendments to the IPC and CrPC and faced constitutional concerns or did not receive presidential assent. The 2026 law takes a different route by amending the existing Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Act, 2008, which originally focused on respectful handling, storage, and transportation of the scripture. The new amendment adds stringent punishment provisions while retaining the earlier framework relating to care and custody of physical copies.



Guru Granth Sahib in Sikhism

In Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib is regarded as the eternal Guru of the Sikh community. Sikh tradition holds that after the **tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh**, spiritual authority passed permanently to the scripture. Because it is regarded as a living Guru, Sikhs accord it the highest reverence in worship, ceremonies, and daily religious life. Akal Takht, established by Guru Hargobind, is the highest temporal authority of the Sikhs and symbolises the exercise of Miri (temporal) authority alongside Piri (spiritual) authority.

Why the Akal Takht Opposes It

- **Terminology:** It opposes replacing the traditional term "Bir" with "Saroop", arguing that religious terminology should be decided by the Sikh Panth.
- **Custodian Definition:** It rejects the legal definition of custodians, stating that no individual can be the custodian of the eternal Guru.
- **Central Register:** It opposes assigning unique identification numbers to each copy of the Guru Granth Sahib, considering it a religious matter.
- **Online Records:** It objects to publishing custodian and location details online due to security and privacy concerns.
- **Custodian Duties:** It views government-prescribed duties for custodians as interference in Gurdwara administration.
- **Punishment Clause:** It fears the stringent penalties could be misused against Granthis, Sewadars, and Gurdwara committees.
- **Rule-Making Power:** It demands that the government consult the SGPC and Akal Takht before framing any rules.
- **Religious Terminology:** It seeks respectful Sikh terms such as Prakash and Sukhasan instead of administrative language.
- **Handling of Damaged Saroops:** It insists that damaged copies should be cremated according to Sikh tradition rather than produced before police or courts.
- **Religious Authority:** It maintains that only the Akal Takht can determine the maryada governing the Guru Granth Sahib.

The debate ultimately centres on balancing protection of a sacred scripture with constitutional principles, civil liberties, and the authority of Sikh religious institutions.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. How the Indian concept of secularism is different from the western model of secularism? Discuss. (GS I – Indian Society – 2018)

RELEVANCE GS II : Indian Polity; GS I : Indian Culture

PM asks Secretaries to focus on ease of doing business, self-reliance

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting of Secretaries of all Ministries and Departments, urging them to adopt a **whole-of-government approach** to ensure that government schemes produce tangible improvements in citizens' lives while advancing **Aatmanirbhar Bharat**. The meeting focused on **Ease of Doing Business** and **Ease of Living**, highlighting the need to simplify regulations, improve governance, and deliver quality public services that enhance citizens' daily lives. The Prime Minister also emphasised wider use of the **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (2021)** through the Network Planning Group (NPG), thereby improving **administrative efficiency, economic competitiveness, and citizen-centric governance**.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

- **PM Gati Shakti** is an integrated national infrastructure planning initiative launched in October 2021 that uses a geospatial digital platform to enable coordinated, multimodal, and whole-of-government planning for faster, efficient, and seamless infrastructure development.
- **Ease of Doing Business** refers to the extent to which a country's regulatory and administrative environment makes it simple to start, operate, and expand businesses.
- **Ease of Living** is the degree of comfort, convenience, dignity, and quality of life with which citizens can access public services, exercise their rights, and pursue their daily lives without unnecessary obstacles.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. India's ranking in the 'Ease of Doing Business Index' is sometimes seen in the news. Which of the following has declared that ranking? (2016)

- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- World Economic Forum
- World Bank
- World Trade Organization (WTO)

RELEVANCE

GS II : Indian Polity

Venugopal moves privilege notice against Rajnath over Operation Sindoor casualties



Congress General Secretary K.C. Venugopal moved a privilege notice against Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in the Lok Sabha, alleging that he had misled Parliament during the July 2025 debate on Operation Sindoor by stating that no Indian soldiers had been killed. The notice was filed after the government subsequently acknowledged that six armed forces personnel had lost their lives during the operation. The Congress argued that withholding or providing incorrect information to Parliament amounts to a breach of parliamentary privilege and sought privilege proceedings against the Minister under Rule 223 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha.

The issue illustrates the working of parliamentary privileges, which safeguard the authority and functioning of Parliament by ensuring that Ministers provide accurate and truthful information to the House. A Privilege Motion may be moved when a member believes that a Minister has breached the privileges of the House by suppressing facts or giving misleading or distorted information, with the objective of censuring the Minister if the breach is established. The procedure is governed by the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business framed under Article 118 of the Constitution, which empowers each House of Parliament to regulate its own procedure and conduct of business.

STATIC CORE LINKAGE

A Privilege Motion is a parliamentary device moved when a member believes that a minister or another member has breached the privileges of the House.

Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business are the rules framed by each House of Parliament under Article 118 of the Constitution.

UN report captures Israel's crimes against Palestinian children

The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry has reported that the humanitarian impact of the Israel– Hamas conflict on children in Gaza has been severe since the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack and the subsequent Israeli military operations. In its June 2026 report, the Commission documented widespread deaths, injuries, displacement, destruction of schools, food shortages, and malnutrition affecting Palestinian children.

Findings of the Report

The report concluded that several actions by Israeli forces amounted to the alleged war crime of *wilful killing and the alleged crime against humanity of extermination*, and stated that much of the harm inflicted on children appeared to be deliberate rather than incidental. Israel has rejected these allegations.

According to the June 2026 report of the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry:

- Over 73,000 people have reportedly been killed in Gaza since the conflict escalated following the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack.
- Around 1.8 lakh people have reportedly been injured.
- Children accounted for about 30% of all deaths.
- Children accounted for about 26% of all injuries.
- The report states that children killed represent nearly 2% of Gaza's entire child population.

Who Prepared the Report?

The report was prepared by the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, an independent investigative body established by the UN Human Rights Council in May 2021. The Commission is mandated to investigate alleged violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, examine the root causes of the conflict, collect and preserve evidence, identify patterns of violations, and make recommendations to promote accountability and justice. It submits periodic reports to both the UN Human Rights Council and the UN General Assembly.

Acts of Genocide

The data was sourced from UN's 'The essence of childhood has been destroyed': Israel's deliberate targeting of Palestinian children in the Occupied Palestinian Territory since 7 October 2023'



Table 1: The nearly three-year-long aggression by Israel on Palestine has resulted in mounting casualties. About one-third of those killed were children

Children killed and injured (as of February 2026)			Children who were killed under the age of five		Additionally, 5,160 children are estimated to be buried under the rubble
Killed	21,289	30% of those killed	Under 5	5,031	
Injured	44,500	26% of those injured	Under age 1	1,029	
			Newborns	420	

Table 2: Indicators related to amputation and disability among children in Gaza

Gaza now has the highest concentration of child amputees per capita in the world	
One or more limbs amputated (Oct-Dec 2023)	Over 1,000
Children disabled during the conflict (as of September 2025)	21,000
Hearing loss (as of June 2025)	10,000
Severe hearing loss (as of June 2025)	5,000

Table 3: Thousands of children have been orphaned or separated since October 7, 2023

Orphaned and unaccompanied children	
Children who lost one or both parents (Oct 7 2023 to Oct 7 2025)	58,554
Unaccompanied or separated (Between Oct 7 2023 – Oct 7 2025)	17,000 & 18,000
Families led by a child under 16 (as of June 2024)	One in 4
Families reportedly caring for non-biological children (as of Jun 2024)	>40%

Table 4: Select indicators that show the impact of the conditions of life imposed by Israel in Gaza

Indicators related to health	
Children aged 6-59 months admitted for malnutrition treatment	>3,200
Children identified with acute malnutrition (by 2025)	95,000
Children under five at risk of malnutrition (as of Dec 2025)	~ 320,000
Confirmed child deaths due to malnutrition (as of Oct 2025)	151
Children aged 6-59 months expected to suffer acute malnutrition	~101,000
Severe cases of malnutrition	31,000
Decline in birth rate compared to 2022	41%
Percentage increase in miscarriage rates since October 2023	300%
Share of surveyed children who felt their death was imminent	96%
Children needing mental health and psychological support	~all of 1.2 mn
Indicators related to education	
School-aged children without sustained access to formal education	637,475
Children under five at risk of severe developmental delays (as of Jan 2026)	Over 335,000
School buildings requiring full reconstruction or major rehabilitation	~93%

PYQ Compass

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



Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. Recently, all the countries of the United Nations have adopted the first-ever compact for international migration, the 'Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)'.
 2. The objectives and commitments stated in the GCM are binding on the UN member countries.
 3. The GCM addresses internal migration or internally displaced people also in its objectives and commitments.
- How many of the above statements are correct?
 a) Only one b) Only two c) All three d) None

New FCRA rules shrink space for civic action (Indian Express : 01-07-2026)

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) (Amendment) Rules, 2026 have attracted attention for expanding the regulatory framework governing foreign-funded NGOs. The new rules require **organisations to classify their activities into specified categories, identify their geographical areas of operation, provide more detailed disclosures, and comply with stricter reporting requirements**. They also enhance government oversight of organisations undertaking activities with religious dimensions. While the **government has justified these measures as necessary to improve transparency, prevent misuse of foreign funds, and curb unlawful conversions**, critics argue that they significantly increase executive control over the functioning of civil society organisations.

Evolution of the FCRA

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) was enacted in 1976 to prevent foreign influence in India's political and public affairs. It was comprehensively revised in 2010, introducing stricter registration, reporting, and compliance requirements for organisations receiving foreign contributions. The 2020 amendment further tightened the regime by prohibiting the transfer of foreign contributions to partner NGOs, reducing the permissible administrative expenditure from 50% to 20%, and strengthening government oversight over fund utilisation. The 2026 Rules continue this trajectory by expanding disclosure requirements and increasing regulatory supervision, reflecting a gradual shift from regulating foreign funding to more closely monitoring the activities of recipient organisations.

Significance of Civil Society Organisations

Civil society organisations play an important role in complementing the state's developmental efforts by working in areas such as education, healthcare, environmental conservation, legal aid, disaster relief, women's empowerment, and the welfare of marginalised communities. They often reach vulnerable populations where government services are limited and contribute to democratic participation by promoting awareness, accountability, and community engagement. Consequently, an effective regulatory framework must balance the need for financial transparency with the need to preserve an enabling environment for voluntary action.



Rationale and Concerns

The government has justified the stricter disclosure requirements as necessary to **enhance transparency and accountability** in the utilisation of foreign contributions, prevent financial irregularities, and safeguard national security from undue foreign influence.

However, concerns have been raised that the amendments may:

- Expand executive discretion over the functioning of civil society organisations.
- Increase compliance burdens through extensive disclosure requirements relating to organisational activities, publications, and social media accounts.
- Constrain the operational autonomy of legitimate NGOs by creating a more restrictive regulatory environment.

Way Forward

A balanced regulatory approach should uphold transparency, financial accountability, and national security while protecting the constitutional role of civil society in a democratic society. Enforcement should remain risk-based and evidence-driven, targeting proven violations rather than imposing disproportionate compliance obligations on all organisations.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. Examine critically the recent changes in the rules governing foreign funding of NGOs under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976. (GS II – Governance – 2015)

RELEVANCE

GS III : Indian Economy

Indian and foreign (The Hindu : 01-07-2026)

The implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 has revived the debate over India's three-language formula. Under the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE), 2023, the CBSE has made the study of three languages compulsory from Class 6 to Class 10 from the 2026–27 academic session. Unlike the earlier system, where the third language was taught only up to Class 8, students will now continue learning all three languages until Class 10. The policy does not prescribe specific languages but mandates that at least two of the three must be Indian (Bharatiya) languages, leaving the choice to States, schools, and students.

Objective Behind the Policy

The policy seeks to promote multilingualism, strengthen mother tongue-based education, and preserve India's linguistic diversity. It reflects the constitutional vision of respecting regional languages while fostering national integration through the learning of multiple Indian languages. NEP 2020 also recognises that children learn concepts more effectively in their mother tongue or home language, particularly during the foundational years. Accordingly, it advocates the preparation of bilingual learning materials, especially in science and mathematics, enabling students to learn both in their mother tongue and in English.



Rationale and Concerns

The policy seeks to:

- Promote multilingualism and strengthen the use of Indian languages in education.
- Preserve India's linguistic diversity and encourage learning in the mother tongue.
- Improve conceptual learning through mother tongue-based education, while supporting bilingual learning in subjects such as science and mathematics.

At the same time, concerns have been raised that it may:

- Reduce students' flexibility to pursue foreign languages such as French, German, Spanish, or Japanese from an early stage.
- Create academic and administrative challenges for schools that have already developed infrastructure and faculty for teaching foreign languages.
- Disrupt learning continuity if students are required to change languages midway through their schooling, potentially affecting examination preparedness.

RELEVANCE

GS II : Social Services - Education

Wider Educational Debate

The issue reflects the broader challenge of balancing cultural preservation with global competitiveness. Supporters view the policy as a means of strengthening Indian languages, promoting inclusive education, and preserving the country's linguistic heritage. Opponents contend that greater flexibility is needed in an increasingly globalised economy, where proficiency in English and other international languages enhances higher education opportunities, research collaboration, and employability. The debate therefore extends beyond language learning to questions of educational choice, federal autonomy, curriculum design, and the objectives of India's education system.

Way Forward

A balanced approach would reconcile the objectives of multilingualism with the practical needs of students. The mother tongue and English can together provide a strong foundation for conceptual learning and global engagement, while a third language may be offered with greater flexibility based on students' interests, regional context, and institutional capacity. Such an approach would remain consistent with the broader goals of NEP 2020 to improve learning outcomes while preserving India's linguistic diversity.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. Regarding Wood's Dispatch, which of the following statements are true? (2018)

1. Grants-in-Aid system was introduced.
2. Establishment of universities was recommended.
3. English as a medium of instruction at all levels of education was recommended.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Fake patents are poisoning India's race for academic excellence

A new form of academic misconduct has emerged in which private firms allegedly sell inventorship positions on U.K. design registrations to academics, particularly from India, enabling them to falsely claim possession of an "international patent." Unlike genuine patents, these design registrations receive only limited examination and primarily protect the appearance (design) of a product rather than its technical innovation or functionality. As a result, many academics obtain academic credit without conducting any original research or creating a genuine invention.

Why are These Called "Fake Patents"?

Experts argue that these are not genuine patents because the individuals purchasing inventorship have neither developed nor invented the claimed product. In many cases, the product itself does not exist, and the registration merely covers its visual design rather than any technological innovation. Moreover, unlike utility patents, which undergo rigorous scrutiny for novelty, inventiveness, and industrial applicability, design registrations are often granted through a simpler process. Thus, describing these registrations as "international patents" is misleading and undermines the credibility of academic achievements.

- Academics are buying U.K. design registrations in a bid to manipulate their professional evaluations - Design registrations are granted without rigorous novelty reviews, unlike actual patents that require innovation and uniqueness - The misuse of these fake patents is driven by institutional rankings that prioritise quantitative data over quality	- Intense competition for jobs and rankings in India makes these unethical practices particularly attractive to many local academics - These purchased roles are fraudulent because the designs cover only appearance and involve no actual scientific invention - Experts have recommended removing quantitative IP metrics from rankings to discourage this unethical practice	 Rubber-stamping: Some unscrupulous agencies exploit individuals' or institutions' desire to secure better ranks by selling fake patents or research papers. ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES
--	--	---

Why is the Problem More Visible in India?

The growth of this practice has been linked to India's increasing reliance on quantitative performance indicators in higher education. Promotions, institutional rankings, accreditation, and research assessments frequently reward the number of patents, publications, and citations rather than their quality or real-world impact. This creates incentives for individuals and institutions to inflate research output through questionable practices such as purchasing fake patents, publishing in predatory journals, or filing large numbers of low-quality patent applications that rarely receive approval or commercial use.

RELEVANCE GS III : Science and Technology

Implications

The proliferation of fake patents weakens research integrity, damages the credibility of Indian academia, and diverts attention from genuine innovation. It distorts university rankings, misuses public resources, and discourages high-quality research by rewarding quantity over merit. Such practices also erode public trust in scientific institutions and undermine India's aspiration to become a global innovation hub based on original research and technological development.

Way Forward

Experts recommend shifting research evaluation from quantitative metrics to qualitative assessment, giving greater importance to patents that are granted, commercialised, or adopted by industry rather than merely filed. Stronger regulatory oversight, stricter action against agencies facilitating fake patents, improved verification of academic credentials, and greater emphasis on research ethics are essential. Building a robust ecosystem that rewards innovation, originality, and societal impact instead of numerical targets would strengthen both India's higher education system and its innovation ecosystem.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. Consider the investments in the following assets: (2023)

1. Brand recognition
2. Inventory
3. Intellectual property
4. Mailing list of clients

How many of the above are considered intangible investments?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Q. In a globalized world, Intellectual Property Rights assume significance and are a source of litigation. Broadly distinguish between the terms—Copyrights, Patents and Trade Secrets. (2014)

Even the 'wicked' have the right to a lawyer, SC had said in a judgment

The issue arose after the Faizabad Bar Association reportedly resolved not to provide legal representation to the accused in the Ram Temple embezzlement case. Such resolutions have reignited the debate on whether lawyers or Bar Associations can refuse to defend individuals accused of serious offences. The controversy highlights a fundamental principle of the criminal justice system—that every accused person is entitled to a fair trial and legal representation irrespective of the nature of the allegations against them.

Constitutional Right to Legal Counsel

The right of an accused to legal representation is guaranteed under Article 22(1) of the Constitution, which provides that an arrested person shall not be denied the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of their choice. This safeguard forms an essential component of the right to a fair trial and the broader principles of natural justice. It ensures that criminal liability is determined through due process of law rather than public opinion or social prejudice.



Supreme Court's Position

The issue was settled by the Supreme Court in *A.S. Mohammed Rafi v. State of Tamil Nadu (2010)*, where it held that resolutions passed by Bar Associations prohibiting advocates from appearing for particular accused persons are illegal and contrary to professional ethics. The Court observed that every individual, regardless of how grave the alleged offence may be, has a constitutional right to legal defence, and that denying legal representation undermines the administration of justice and the rule of law.

Professional Ethics of Advocates

The Bar Council of India Rules require advocates to accept briefs unless there are valid professional reasons for refusal. A lawyer's duty is to ensure that every accused receives a fair opportunity to present their case, not to endorse or justify the alleged offence. The legal profession functions as an officer of the court, and its primary obligation is to uphold justice, constitutional values, and due process rather than to act on public sentiment or moral judgments about the accused.

The controversy reaffirms that the rule of law requires justice to be administered through impartial legal procedures rather than popular emotions. Protecting the right to legal counsel safeguards the presumption of innocence, ensures equality before the law, and strengthens public confidence in the criminal justice system.

RELEVANCE GS II : Indian Polity

PYQ Compass

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



Q. With reference to India, consider the following statements: (2022)

1. Government law officers and legal firms are recognised as advocates, but corporate lawyers and patent attorneys are excluded from recognition as advocates.
2. Bar Councils have the power to lay down the rules relating to legal education and recognition of law colleges.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. According to the Constitution of India, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from internal disturbances.
2. The Constitution of India exempts the States from providing legal counsel to person being held for preventive detention
3. According to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002, confession of the accused before the police cannot be used as evidence.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

PYQ Compass

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



Q. India's ranking in the 'Ease of Doing Business Index' is sometimes seen in the news. Which of the following has declared that ranking? (2016)

- a) Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- b) World Economic Forum
- c) World Bank
- d) World Trade Organization (WTO)

Ans : C

The Ease of Doing Business Index, which ranks countries based on the regulatory environment and ease of conducting business, is published by the World Bank. This index assesses parameters like starting a business, obtaining credit, and enforcing contracts. India improved by 79 places to rank 63rd in the World Bank's Doing Business Report 2019, before the rankings were discontinued in 2020. The World Bank has since introduced the Business Ready (B-READY) Assessment, under which India will be evaluated in the third assessment cycle, with the report scheduled for release in 2026.

The Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) is the Government of India's flagship Ease of Doing Business reform programme, launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in 2014. It provides a reform framework for States and Union Territories to simplify regulations, reduce compliance burdens, digitise government services, and improve the business environment.

Q. Regarding Wood's Dispatch, which of the following statements are true? (2018)

- 1. Grants-in-Aid system was introduced.
- 2. Establishment of universities was recommended.
- 3. English as a medium of instruction at all levels of education was recommended.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans : a

Statement 1: Grants-in-Aid system was introduced: **This is Correct.** Wood's Dispatch of 1854 introduced the Grants-in-Aid system to provide financial assistance to private and missionary schools. • This system encouraged private initiatives in education while ensuring oversight by the colonial government.

Statement 2: Establishment of universities was recommended: **This is Correct.** The Dispatch recommended the establishment of universities in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. These universities were modeled on the University of London and were set up in 1857 to promote higher education.

Statement 3: English as a medium of instruction at all levels of education was recommended: **This is incorrect.** Wood's Dispatch recommended English as the medium of instruction for higher education, while advocating for vernacular languages at the primary level. It emphasized the need to balance the use of English and Indian languages in education.

Statements 1 and 2 are correct, but Statement 3 is incorrect.

Correct Answer: (a) 1 and 2 only.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. Consider the investments in the following assets: (2023)

1. Brand recognition
2. Inventory
3. Intellectual property
4. Mailing list of clients

How many of the above are considered intangible investments?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) Only three
- (d) All four

Ans : C

1) Brand Recognition: Brand recognition refers to the awareness and perception of a brand by consumers. It is intangible because it cannot be physically touched or measured directly. **This is an intangible investment.**

2) Inventory : Inventory includes physical stock such as raw materials, work-in-progress items, and finished goods held for sale. It is tangible because it is a physical asset that can be seen, touched, and quantified. **This is not an intangible investment.**

3) Intellectual Property (IP): Intellectual property includes **patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets**, which provide legal rights to creations of the mind. It is intangible because it represents legal rights and economic benefits without physical form. **This is an intangible investment.**

4) Mailing List of Clients: A mailing list of clients refers to a database of customer information used for marketing and communication. While it has value for the business, it is not a physical asset and exists in digital or recorded form. **This is an intangible investment.**

Thus, the correct choice is (c) Only three.

Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. Recently, all the countries of the United Nations have adopted the first-ever compact for international migration, the 'Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)'.
2. The objectives and commitments stated in the GCM are binding on the UN member countries.
3. The GCM addresses internal migration or internally displaced people also in its objectives and commitments.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

Ans : d

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is the first intergovernmental agreement, adopted under the auspices of the United Nations, to cover all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner. It was adopted at an intergovernmental conference on migration in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 10 December 2018.

The pact was agreed by all 193 members, except the United States. But at the ceremony to adopt the text on 10 December, only 164 countries formally adopted it.

So, statements 1 and 3 are not correct . The Global Compact for Migration is the first-ever UN global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions. The global compact is non-legally binding. So, statement 2 is not correct.

PYQ Compass

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



Q. With reference to India, consider the following statements: (2022)

1. Government law officers and legal firms are recognised as advocates, but corporate lawyers and patent attorneys are excluded from recognition as advocates.
2. Bar Councils have the power to lay down the rules relating to legal education and recognition of law colleges.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct ?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans : b

Statement 1: This is incorrect. Under the Advocates Act, 1961, any person enrolled with a Bar Council is recognized as an advocate. This includes corporate lawyers and patent attorneys, provided they meet the qualifications and are enrolled. There is no exclusion for corporate lawyers or patent attorneys under the Act.

Statement 2: This is correct. Bar Councils, particularly the Bar Council of India (BCI), have the power to lay down rules relating to legal education and the recognition of law colleges. The BCI sets standards for legal education and approves institutions imparting legal education in India.

Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. According to the Constitution of India, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from internal disturbances.
2. The Constitution of India exempts the States from providing legal counsel to person being held for preventive detention
3. According to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002, confession of the accused before the police cannot be used as evidence.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans : a

Statement 1 is correct: As per Article 355 of the Constitution, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from external aggression and internal disturbances.

Statement 2 is incorrect: The Constitution does not exempt states from providing legal counsel to persons held under preventive detention. Article 22 ensures certain protections, including legal aid, for such persons.

Statement 3 is incorrect: Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), 2002, a confession made before a police officer of a certain rank could be used as evidence in court. This provision was controversial and led to the repeal of POTA in 2004.

Practice Questions and answers

Q. With reference to the Guru Granth Sahib in Sikhism, consider the following statements:

1. It is regarded as the eternal Guru of the Sikh community.
2. It became the permanent Guru after Guru Gobind Singh.
3. The Akal Takht is the highest temporal authority in Sikhism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Statement 1 is Correct. The Guru Granth Sahib is the holy scripture and the eternal Guru of Sikhism. Sikhs believe that it embodies the spiritual wisdom of the Sikh Gurus and serves as the supreme source of religious guidance. Unlike many religious texts that are regarded solely as scriptures, the Guru Granth Sahib is revered as the living spiritual authority of the Sikh faith.

Statement 2 is Correct. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last human Guru, declared that after him there would be no human Guru, and the Guru Granth Sahib would henceforth serve as the eternal and permanent Guru of the Sikh community. This marked the transfer of spiritual authority from the line of human Gurus to the sacred scripture, making it the central authority in Sikh religious life.

Statement 3 is Correct. The Akal Takht, established by Guru Hargobind, is the highest temporal (worldly) authority of Sikhism. While the Guru Granth Sahib represents spiritual authority (Piri), the Akal Takht symbolises temporal authority (Miri) and serves as the institution that guides the Sikh community on matters relating to religious administration, community affairs, and the observance of Sikh Maryada (code of conduct).

Q. Which of the following is NOT examined before granting a standard patent?

- (a) Novelty
- (b) Inventive step
- (c) Industrial applicability
- (d) Market profitability

Ans : d

A patent is an exclusive legal right granted to an inventor for a new invention, allowing the inventor to prevent others from making, using, or selling the invention for a specified period in exchange for public disclosure of the invention.

Before granting a standard (utility) patent, the patent office examines three essential criteria:

- **Novelty** – The invention must be new and should not have been publicly disclosed anywhere in the world before the patent application.
- **Inventive Step (Non-obviousness)** – The invention should involve a technical advancement that is not obvious to a person skilled in the relevant field.
- **Industrial Applicability (Utility)** – The invention must be capable of being made or used in an industry and should have a practical application.

However, market profitability is not a criterion for granting a patent. A patent office does not assess whether an invention will be commercially successful, widely adopted, or financially profitable. Many patented inventions never reach the market, while others may become commercially valuable years after the patent is granted. The patent system evaluates innovation, not business success.