

**26 June 2025**

**Question 1. With reference to the proposed BRICS common digital payment platform, consider the following statements:**

1. The primary objective is to create a single common digital currency, replacing the national currencies of member nations for intra-bloc trade.
2. It intends to leverage the Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) of member states to facilitate seamless cross-border transactions.
3. The New Development Bank (NDB) has been tasked with leading the technical development of the platform's prototype.

**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) 2 and 3 Only
- (c) All three
- (d) None

**Answer: (b)**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** The news report from 'The Hindu' explicitly states that the proposed platform "will not be a single currency but an integrated system allowing seamless cross-border transactions using the members' national currencies." The goal is to create a payment platform, not a monetary union with a single currency.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The report mentions that the platform will potentially leverage "Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs)" of the member nations to achieve its objectives of interoperability and efficiency.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The report clearly states that "The New Development Bank (NDB) has been tasked with leading a technical working group to create the prototype's architecture."

**26 June 2025**

**Question 2. Consider the following statements regarding the delimitation of parliamentary constituencies in India, in the context of the recent Supreme Court judgment:**

1. The next delimitation exercise is constitutionally mandated to be undertaken based on the population figures of the first census conducted after the year 2026.
2. The implementation of the Women's Reservation Act (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam) is contingent upon the completion of the forthcoming delimitation exercise.
3. The constitutional freeze on delimitation until 2026 was enacted by the 84th Amendment Act, 2001, primarily to encourage states to implement population control measures.

**Which of the statements given above 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.** As per Article 82 of the Constitution, amended by the 84th Amendment Act, the next delimitation is to be based on the first census taken after the year 2026. The Supreme Court upheld this framework.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The news report from 'Indian Express' explicitly mentions that the judgment "directly impacts the implementation of the Women's Reservation Act (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam), which is contingent upon the completion of the delimitation exercise." This is a key feature of the Act itself.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The news report states that the Supreme Court ruled the constitutional amendment (84th Amendment Act), which froze delimitation, was a temporary measure to encourage population control measures in states." This was the primary rationale given for not using later census figures, which would have 'penalized' states that were successful in family planning.

**26 June 2025**

**Question 3. The recently launched Phase II of the 'Jal Jeevan Mission-Urban' (JJM-U) marks a strategic shift from its first phase. Which of the following best captures the primary new focus of JJM-U Phase-II?**

- (a) Exclusively focusing on achieving 100% functional tap water connections in all statutory towns.
- (b) Prioritizing the establishment of desalination plants in all coastal cities to augment the water supply.
- (c) Integrating wastewater management and promoting a circular economy in water use as core components.
- (d) Transferring the responsibility of urban water supply entirely to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) without central funding.

**Answer: (c)**

- **Option (a) is incorrect.** While achieving universal coverage of water supply remains a goal, it was the primary focus of Phase I. The news report from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs highlights that Phase II has a "renewed focus" beyond just providing connections.
- **Option (b) is incorrect.** While desalination may be a part of water security for some cities, the report does not mention it as the primary, universal focus of Phase II. The core focus mentioned is on wastewater management for all AMRUT cities.
- **Option (c) is correct.** The news report clearly states that Phase II introduces a "renewed focus on wastewater management and promoting a circular economy in water usage." It mentions mandatory sewage management, treatment of wastewater, and its reuse as key components, which perfectly aligns with this option.
- **Option (d) is incorrect.** The report mentions a massive outlay of ₹3.5 lakh crore approved by the Cabinet, indicating significant central funding, not its withdrawal.

**26 June 2025**

**Question 4. According to the NITI Aayog's performance review of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes, what were the key impediments observed in sectors like textiles and food processing?**

- (a) A lack of foreign investment and a failure to boost exports across all targeted sectors.
- (b) Excessive government control and rigid regulations stifled innovation in all sectors.
- (c) High investment thresholds are unsuitable for MSMEs and weak backward linkages with farm producers.
- (d) The schemes were found to be inconsistent with WTO subsidy norms, leading to international disputes.

**Answer: (c)**

- **Option (a) is incorrect.** The news report from 'Economic Times' explicitly states that the schemes were successful in sectors like "mobile manufacturing and pharmaceuticals," where they attracted investment and boosted exports. The failure was not across the board.
- **Option (b) is incorrect.** The report doesn't suggest that excessive control was a universal problem; rather, it points to specific design flaws in certain schemes that hindered uptake.
- **Option (c) is correct.** The news report directly highlights the challenges identified by NITI Aayog. For textiles, it points to "challenges in meeting the high investment and turnover thresholds for incentives, especially for MSMEs." For food processing, it identifies a "lack of backward linkages with farmers" as a key impediment. This option accurately summarizes these findings.
- The article does not mention any findings related to WTO violations or international disputes. The review was an internal performance assessment focused on domestic implementation and outcomes.

**26 June 2025**

**Question 5. With reference to India's maiden human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan-1, consider the following mission parameters:**

1. The crew will be launched into a Geostationary Orbit (GEO) to ensure continuous communication.
2. The mission duration for the astronauts in orbit is planned for approximately three days.
3. The recovery of the crew module is planned via a splashdown in the Arabian Sea.

**How many of the above statements are correct?**

- (a) Only one
- (b) 2 and 3 Only
- (c) All three
- (d) None

**Answer: (b)**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** The news report from PIB states that the crew will be launched into a "400 km orbit." This is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO), not a Geostationary Orbit (GEO), which is at an altitude of approximately 36,000 km.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The report explicitly mentions that the mission will involve orbiting for a "three-day mission."
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The report clearly states that the crew will "safely return to Earth, splashing down in the Arabian Sea."