

12 July 2025

Question 1. With reference to the Delimitation exercise in India, as mentioned in recent news, consider the following statements:

1. The latest delimitation proposal is based on the population figures from the 2021 Census.
2. The number of seats in the Lok Sabha has been frozen as per the 1971 census, and this freeze is set to expire after the first census post-2026.
3. The implementation of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation Act) is contingent upon the completion of this delimitation exercise.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The news item explicitly states that the Delimitation Commission has used the 2021 census data as the basis for its draft proposal, as stipulated by the constitutional provisions.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The 84th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002 extended the freeze on the number of Lok Sabha and State Assembly seats based on the 1971 census until the first census taken after the year 2026 is published. The current exercise is to redraw boundaries based on a new census, which will also lead to an increase in the number of seats.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (106th Constitutional Amendment Act) states that the reservation for women in Lok Sabha and state assemblies shall come into effect after the first census, post the commencement of the Act is published, and the subsequent delimitation exercise is completed. The news item also links the two events.

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Question 2. The "Kisan-Drone 2.0" scheme, as recently launched, aims to democratize drone technology in agriculture primarily by:

- (a) Providing free drones to all small and marginal farmers.
- (b) Nationalizing all drone manufacturing units in the country.
- (c) Empowering FPOs and PACS to offer "drone-as-a-service" at the village level.
- (d) Exclusively focusing on using drones for land record surveys by government officials.

Answer: (c)

- **Statement (a) is incorrect.** The scheme provides a subsidy (up to 60% or ₹6 lakhs), not free drones.
- **Statement (b) is incorrect.** The scheme aims to boost the domestic manufacturing industry, not nationalize it.
- **Statement (c) is correct.** The news item explicitly highlights that the scheme's main focus is on leveraging Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to create drone service hubs, making the technology accessible and affordable for farmers on a rental basis ("drone-as-a-service").
- **Statement (d) is incorrect.** While land surveys are one application, the scheme's focus is much broader, including precision spraying of nutrients and pesticides and crop health monitoring.

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Question 3. With reference to the Digital India Act, 2025, recently tabled in the Parliament, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to replace the Information Technology Act, 2000.
2. It proposes to grant unconditional "safe harbour" immunity to all digital intermediaries.
3. It introduces a regulatory framework for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and establishes a new regulatory body.

How many of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The news clearly states that the bill "aims to replace the 23-year-old Information Technology Act, 2000."
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** The bill does not grant unconditional immunity. In fact, the news mentions it includes provisions for 'safe harbour' immunity, but with "stricter due diligence requirements," making it conditional.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The news highlights that the bill "introduces clauses on AI governance" and proposes the establishment of a "Digital India Authority' as a new super-regulator."

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Question 4. With respect to the BIMSTEC grouping, recently in the news, consider the following statements:

1. All member nations of BIMSTEC are littoral countries of the Bay of Bengal.
2. The recent Foreign Ministers' meeting focused on finalizing a regional Motor Vehicles Agreement and enhancing maritime security cooperation.
3. India views BIMSTEC as a key platform for its 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East' policies.

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: (b)

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** While most members are littoral, Nepal and Bhutan are landlocked countries. They are members because their economies and connectivity are closely linked to the Bay of Bengal region.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The news report from Colombo mentions that the ministers reviewed progress on the BIMSTEC Master Plan for Transport Connectivity and called for the "early finalization of the Motor Vehicles Agreement." It also states that a key outcome was the finalization of the "BIMSTEC Maritime Security Cooperation" agenda.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The news item explicitly concludes by stating that India "views it as a key platform for its 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East' policies".

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Question 5. Key features of the newly approved "National Urban Health Mission - Phase II" (NUHM-II) include:

1. A primary focus on addressing non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like hypertension and diabetes in urban centres.
2. Deep integration with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) to create a digital health ecosystem.
3. The exclusion of ASHA and Anganwadi workers, as their role is confined to rural areas.

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

Answer: (a)

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The news report clearly states that a "major thrust area is the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs)" and the mission will establish dedicated NCD clinics.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The news highlights that a "key feature of NUHM-II is its deep integration with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM)."
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** The news explicitly contradicts this, stating that NUHM-II will "strengthen outreach services through an expanded network of ASHA and Anganwadi workers in urban areas." This recognizes the need for community health workers in urban settings as well.