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Question 1. In a recent landmark judgment, the Supreme Court upheld the primacy of the Gram Sabha in matters related to Minor Forest Produce (MFP). In this context, which of the following best describes the core implication of the verdict?

- (a) It nationalizes the trade of all Minor Forest Produce, with the Central Government as the sole buyer.
- (b) It grants state governments the final authority to enter into agreements with corporations for MFP collection, superseding Gram Sabha resolutions.
- (c) It affirms that any state-level law or corporate agreement concerning MFP that bypasses the explicit consent of the Gram Sabha is unconstitutional.
- (d) It transfers the ownership of all forest land, including MFP resources, from the state to private entities designated by the Gram Sabha.

Answer: (c)

- The judgment's central theme is the empowerment of the Gram Sabha. Option (c) accurately captures this by stating that bypassing the Gram Sabha's explicit consent is 'ultra vires' or unconstitutional. The news report says the Court ruled that such acts are "ultra vires to the Constitution."
- **Statement (a) is incorrect;** the judgment decentralizes power, it does not nationalize the trade.
- **Statement (b) is the exact opposite of the verdict.** The ruling establishes the primacy of the Gram Sabha over state government authority in this specific matter.
- **Statement (d) is an overstatement and incorrect.** The judgment is about the rights to own, collect, and dispose of MFP as per the Forest Rights Act (FRA), not the wholesale transfer of all forest land to private entities.

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Question 2. Consider the following statements regarding the Tri-Service Theatre Commands structure recently finalized by the Government of India:

- 1.The plan envisages the creation of three integrated theatre commands: Western, Northern, and Maritime.
- 2.Each theatre command will be permanently headed by a four-star officer from the Indian Army only, to ensure command stability.
- 3.The new commands will report directly to the Defence Minister for operational matters.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The news report clearly states that the finalized plan "envisages the creation of three integrated theatre commands: a Western Theatre Command, a Northern Theatre Command, and a Maritime Theatre Command.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** The report mentions that each command will be led by an officer "from any of the three services on a rotational basis," not permanently by an Army officer.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** The report specifies that the commands will report "directly to the Chiefs of Staff Committee, which includes the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)," not directly to the Defence Minister for operational matters.

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Question 3. The 'PM-SURYA 2.0' scheme, recently launched by the government, includes which of the following novel features to promote rooftop solar installation?

- 1.A 'rent-to-own' model to minimize upfront costs for households.
- 2.Mandatory installation of rooftop solar for all new urban constructions.
- 3.A dedicated 'National Solar Fund' for innovative financing.

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: (c)

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The news item highlights a key new feature: the "'rent-to-own' model, allowing households to install solar panels with minimal upfront cost."
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** The news report does not mention any provision for making rooftop solar mandatory for new constructions. The scheme is focused on incentivizing adoption in existing rural and semi-urban households.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** The scheme introduces "innovative financing models through a dedicated 'National Solar Fund,'" as stated in the article.

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Question 4. With reference to the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC-R) or e-Rupee, the recommendations of the recent RBI working group include:

- (a) An immediate replacement of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) with the e-Rupee to avoid redundancy.
- (b) A single-tiered model where the RBI directly handles all retail distribution and payment services.
- (c) A phased rollout with a focus on introducing features like offline and programmable payments.
- (d) Limiting its use exclusively to wholesale transactions and government securities.

Answer: (c)

- **Statement (c) is correct.** The report recommends a "phased, feature-based rollout...starting with offline and programmable payment features."
- **Statement (a) is incorrect.** The working group's report emphasizes a "non-disruptive" approach, ensuring the e-Rupee "coexists with and complements" UPI, not replaces it.
- **Statement (b) is incorrect.** The report proposes a "two-tiered model," where the RBI issues the CBDC and commercial banks handle distribution, not a single-tiered model.
- **Statement (d) is incorrect.** The recommendations are specifically for CBDC-Retail (CBDC-R), meant for public use, not exclusively for wholesale transactions.

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Question 5. The recent India-Japan Maritime Exercise 'JIMEX 25' is significant because:

1. It is the first-ever joint military exercise between the two countries.
2. It was conducted in the South China Sea, reinforcing the commitment to a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific'.
3. It saw the participation of all four Quad nations: India, Japan, Australia, and the USA.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

- **Statement 1 is incorrect.** The news refers to it as the "annual" India-Japan Maritime Exercise, 'JIMEX 25', indicating it is a recurring event, not the first ever.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** The report explicitly states, "The choice of the South China Sea as the venue is significant, underscoring both nations' commitment to a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' (FOIP)."
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** JIMEX is a bilateral exercise between India and Japan. While both are Quad members, the report only mentions the participation of the Indian Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, not Australia or the USA.