

UPSC Prelims Current Affairs MCQs (4th September 2025)

Question 1. With reference to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, consider the following statements:

1. It is a constitutional body established under Article 279A of the Indian Constitution.
2. The Union Finance Minister is its chairperson.
3. Decisions are taken by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the weighted votes of the members present and voting.
4. Its recommendations are binding on the Union and the States.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The GST Council is a constitutional body established by the 101st Constitutional Amendment Act, 2016, under Article 279A.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Union Finance Minister is the ex-officio Chairperson of the GST Council.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Decisions in the GST Council are made with a majority of not less than three-fourths of the weighted votes. The Centre has a one-third weightage, and all states combined have a two-thirds weightage.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The Supreme Court has clarified that the recommendations of the GST Council are not binding on the Union and the States. They have only persuasive value.



Question 2. Consider the following statements regarding the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM):

1. It is an independent business division within the Digital India Corporation.
2. The mission is authorized to provide up to 50% of the project cost as a fiscal subsidy for setting up semiconductor and display fabrication units.
3. The Design Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme is a key component of the mission aimed at promoting fabless startups.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The India Semiconductor Mission (ISM) was established as a specialized and independent business division within the Digital India Corporation to drive the strategy for developing the semiconductor ecosystem.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** A key component of the mission is the scheme to set up semiconductor and display fabs, which provides fiscal support of up to 50% of the project cost to eligible applicants.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Design Linked Incentive (DLI) scheme is a crucial part of the ISM, offering financial incentives and design infrastructure support to domestic fabless startups and companies involved in semiconductor design.



Question 3. India's partnership with Singapore is of critical importance to its 'Act East' Policy. In this context, which of the following best describes Singapore's role?

1. It is India's largest trading partner in the ASEAN bloc.
2. It has been one of the largest sources of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for India.
3. It serves as a key partner in maritime security through joint naval exercises like SIMBEX.

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: (d)

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Singapore is India's largest trade partner within the ASEAN region.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Singapore has consistently been among the top sources of FDI into India, highlighting the strong economic relationship.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The two nations collaborate closely on maritime security, with the annual Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) being a cornerstone of their defense cooperation.



Question 4. The Sundarbans ecosystem, frequently in the news for environmental threats, is facing severe challenges primarily due to:

1. Reduced freshwater flow from upstream rivers leading to increased salinity.
2. Sea level rise at a rate higher than the global average, causing land erosion and submergence.
3. Increased frequency and intensity of cyclones.

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: (d)

The Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, is under immense threat from a combination of factors.

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Diversion of water and construction of dams upstream have significantly reduced the flow of fresh water into the delta, leading to a substantial increase in soil and water salinity, which adversely affects the mangrove species.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Reports indicate that the sea level in the Sundarbans region is rising at a rate almost double the global average, leading to severe coastal erosion and the submergence of islands.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The Bay of Bengal is witnessing a higher frequency of intense cyclones, which cause widespread damage to the mangrove forests, infrastructure, and livelihoods of the local population.

Question 5. With reference to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), which of the following statements is correct?

- (a) It is a constitutional body established to handle environmental cases.
- (b) The NGT is bound by the procedure laid down under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908.
- (c) The NGT has the power to take up environmental cases suo motu (on its own motion).
- (d) The NGT's jurisdiction does not cover laws related to forests and biodiversity.

Answer: (c)

- **Statement (a) is incorrect:** The NGT is a statutory body established under the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010.
- **Statement (b) is incorrect:** The NGT is guided by principles of natural justice and is not bound by the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908. This allows for more flexible and expeditious disposal of cases.
- **Statement (c) is correct:** The NGT is empowered to take suo motu cognizance of environmental issues based on reports in the media or other sources, without waiting for a formal complaint.
- **Statement (d) is incorrect:** The NGT's jurisdiction covers civil cases under seven major environmental laws, including the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.