

**UPSC Prelims Exam Based on Current Affairs MCQs – 9
Sept 2025**

Question 1. The construction of the Rishikesh-Karnaprayag Rail Link Project in the Himalayas involved the use of advanced technology to overcome geological challenges. What specific technology, mentioned as being used for the first time on a large scale in a Himalayan railway project, significantly expedited the tunneling process?

- (a)** Drill and Blast Method (DBM)
- (b)** New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM)
- (c)** Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs)
- (d)** Cut-and-Cover Tunnelling

Answer: (c)

- The analysis of the tunnel completion explicitly states, "For the first time in a railway project in the Himalayas, Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) were deployed for a significant portion of the tunneling work, a technology previously used mainly for hydroelectric projects in the region." TBMs are advanced, cylindrical machines that bore through rock, creating a smooth tunnel wall, which is generally faster and safer in suitable geological conditions than the conventional Drill and Blast Method (DBM).



Question 2. The expert appraisal committee's approval for an EIA study for a mine in Rajasthan has raised concerns among conservationists. This is primarily because the proposed site is a potential habitat for the Great Indian Bustard (GIB). What is the current conservation status of the GIB on the IUCN Red List?

- (a) Vulnerable
- (b) Endangered
- (c) Critically Endangered
- (d) Extinct in the Wild

Answer: (c)

- The news item explicitly refers to the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) as "critically endangered." The GIB is one of the most threatened bird species in the world, with its population having dwindled to less than 150 individuals, primarily found in the grasslands of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Its status as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List means it faces an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild.

Question 3. The electoral college for the election of the Vice-President of India consists of:

- (a) Elected members of both Houses of Parliament only.
- (b) Elected and nominated members of both Houses of Parliament.
- (c) Elected members of both Houses of Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies.
- (d) All members of the Lok Sabha and elected members of the Rajya Sabha.



Answer: (b)

- According to Article 66 of the Indian Constitution, the Vice-President is elected by the members of an electoral college consisting of the members of both Houses of Parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha). Unlike the Presidential election, this includes both elected and nominated members of Parliament. Also, unlike the Presidential election, the members of State Legislative Assemblies are not part of the electoral college for the Vice-President. The news of the ongoing Vice-Presidential election makes this a relevant topic.

Question 4. The Onam festival, celebrated with great fervor in Kerala, is culturally associated with:

- (a) The celebration of the spring harvest and the worship of the Sun God.
- (b) The commemoration of the victory of Goddess Durga over the demon Mahishasura.
- (c) The homecoming of the legendary King Mahabali.
- (d) The birth anniversary of the social reformer Sree Narayana Guru.

Answer: (c)

- The analysis of the Onam celebrations clearly mentions that "The Onam festival is a celebration of Kerala's agrarian past and is associated with the legend of King Mahabali." According to mythology, Onam celebrates the annual return of the



benevolent demon king Mahabali from the netherworld (Patalam), to visit his beloved subjects. The festival is a tribute to his prosperous and just rule.

Question 5. A recent scientific study warned that a significant portion of the Earth's land has been pushed beyond safe ecological limits, severely disrupting key natural cycles. This concept of "safe ecological limits" is central to which of the following environmental frameworks?

- (a) The Kyoto Protocol
- (b) The Paris Agreement
- (c) The Planetary Boundaries Framework
- (d) The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Answer: (c)

- The Planetary Boundaries framework, first introduced in 2009 by a group of scientists led by Johan Rockström, proposes a set of nine interconnected ecological limits within which humanity can continue to develop and thrive for generations to come. The news item's mention of disrupting carbon, water, and nitrogen cycles and the loss of "biosphere integrity" directly relates to the core concepts of this framework. While the other options are related to environmental governance, they do not specifically define the biophysical "safe operating space" for humanity in the way the Planetary Boundaries framework does.