

## 05 Feb 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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### A. GS 1 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

### B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**[1. India's diplomatic boycott of Olympics applauded in U.S.](#)**

*Syllabus: India and its neighbourhood - relations.*

**Mains: What is a diplomatic boycott? Consequences of the diplomatic boycott**

**Context:**

India's diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics in Beijing was praised by the US.

**What is a diplomatic boycott?**

- Given the scale of the Olympics, high-ranking officials from a country's government often travel to the Olympics. These officials are often labeled as the 'VIP visitors'.
- Diplomatic boycott means countries will not send 'VIP visitors' delegations to Beijing during the Games.
- A “full” boycott would mean athletes from said countries wouldn't be permitted to compete.

**Why did India announce a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics?**

- China decided to have a PLA regiment commander who sustained head injury while fighting in the Galwan Valley border skirmish with India, as torchbearer during the ‘Torch Relay’.
- In response, India announced a diplomatic ban on the Beijing Winter Olympics.
- India had termed the appointment “regrettable” and criticized the politicization of the games.

**What is Other Countries' Response to the Diplomatic Boycott?**

- Along with the U.S. and India, other participating countries include Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Lithuania, Denmark and Estonia.
- The U.S., the U.K., Canada and Australia had announced a diplomatic boycott of the games to protest Beijing's human rights record in the Uighur Muslim majority province of Xinjiang.
- The U.S. had voiced its concerns of “Beijing's pattern of ongoing attempts to intimidate its neighbours.”

**What are the consequences of the diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympic games?**

- Experts in human rights say diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in China has the potential to be more than a symbolic gesture.
- This diplomatic boycott isn't a full-on protest of the games, and won't prevent athletes from participating in the 2022 Olympics.
- There are also fears that the move led by the US could provoke China to do the same. The US and Australia are the hosts of the Summer Olympics in 2028 (Los Angeles) and 2032 (Brisbane).

**Nut Graf**

*Diplomatic boycotts of the Olympics aim to snub host nations while keeping athletes free to compete.*

*Refusing to participate in the Olympics would raise awareness of the violations that China stands accused of.*

## Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

### 1. RS debates use of private Bills to amend Preamble to Constitution

*Syllabus: Constitution of India—significant provisions and basic structure; Parliament—functioning,*

*Prelims: Private Bills, Preamble*

*Mains: Amending the Preamble of the Constitution; Procedure of Private member's bill*

#### **Context:**

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman said it was up to the House to take up a private member's bill on amending the Preamble of the Constitution and the Chair cannot give a ruling on the issue.

#### **What is the Issue?**

- A Rajya Sabha member introduced a Private Member bill that seeks to replace the word "Socialist" with "Equitable" in the Preamble.
- The member K.J. Alphons has argued that the term "socialist" has "political connotations" and carries historical baggage that need not be acceptable to a large section of India.

#### **Why was the Bill opposed?**

- Opposition members in Rajya Sabha had opposed the motion to introduce a Bill on the subject.
- They had argued that Preamble is part of the [basic structure of the Constitution](#) and the Bill may not be allowed for introduction.
- Opposition members also referred to Rule 62 (2) of the Rules of Procedure and contended that such a bill, which did not have the previous sanction or recommendation of the President, cannot be introduced in the House.

#### **What is the ruling given by the Deputy Chairman?**

- A Bill to amend the Preamble of the Constitution can be introduced if the House so decides but the Chair does not have the powers to do so.
- There are instances where Private Members' Bills to amend the Preamble have been moved in the past.

### **What is a Private Member's Bill?**

- A member of parliament (MP) who is not a minister is a private member.
- The Bills introduced by private members are referred to as Private Member's Bills.
- Know more about the [Private Member's Bill](#).

### **What about the amendability of the Preamble?**

- The Preamble is an introductory statement, stating the aims and objectives of the Constitution.
- The Preamble is part of the Constitution. According to Article 368 of the Constitution, Parliament may, in exercise of its constituent power, amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of the Constitution and a Bill for the purpose can be introduced in either House of Parliament.
- Know more about the [Preamble](#).

#### **Nut Graf**

*The Rajya Sabha debates on the use of private Bills to amend the Preamble to the Constitution is significant as it comes in the backdrop of a private member's bill seeking to replace the word 'socialist' with 'equitable'.*

## **2. Aware of data theft concerns on e-passports: Jaishankar**

*Syllabus: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.*

*Prelims: What are e-passports?*

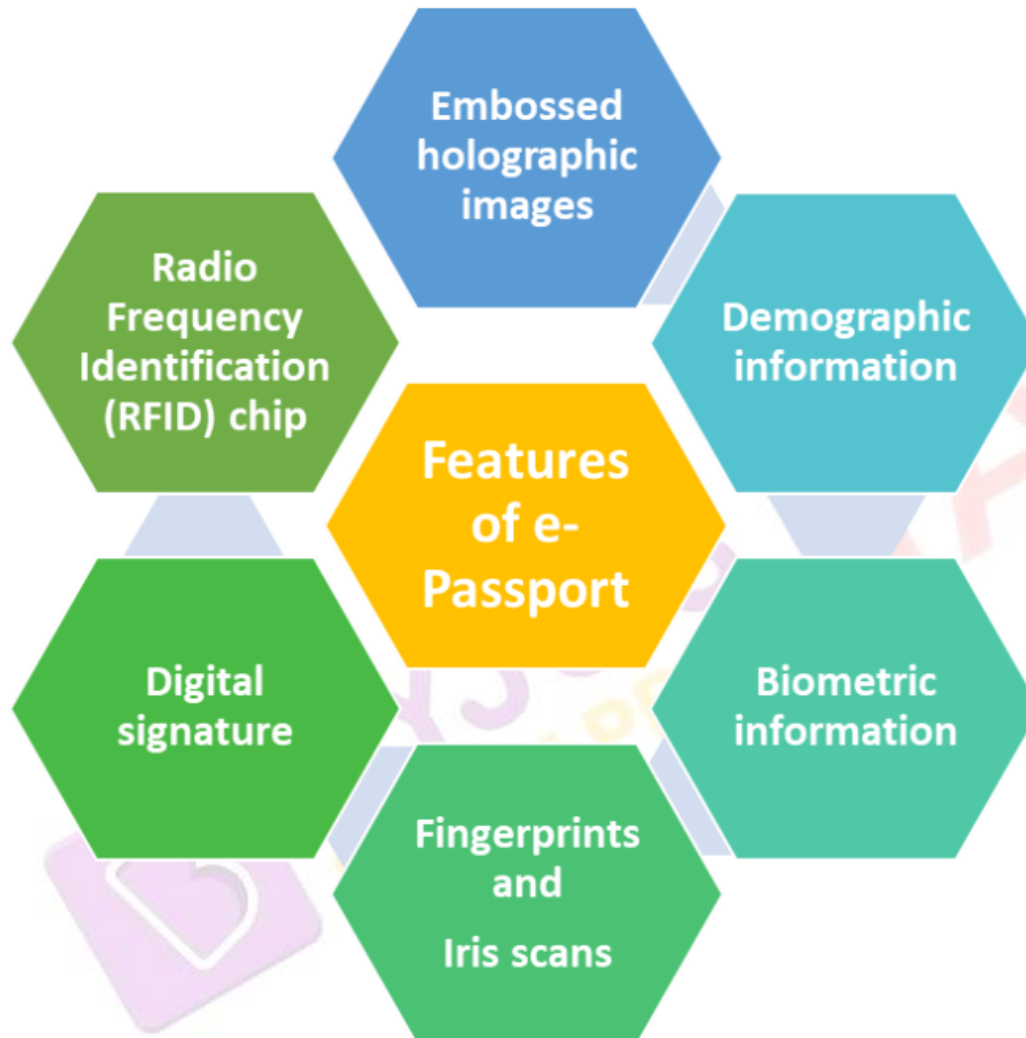
*Mains: Privacy and Security issues with e-passports*

### **Context:**

The government stated that adequate precautions to ensure the privacy and safety of e-passports have been taken.

## What are e-passports?

- An e-Passport is a chip-enabled passport with a biometric identification card strengthening the transparency and security of travel documents.
- The E-passport will be based on the use of contactless smart card technology.



## What are the Security and Privacy Concerns?

- The issue of security and a citizen's right to privacy has been much debated in the Indian as well as the global context.
- Initiatives like E-passports may hamper this right as it puts all of the personal data of the citizens on a domain of privacy.
- The e-passports are criticized for violating the [right to privacy](#) protected under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.

- There were also security issues raised when the citizens were expected to link their mobile and other personal details with their Aadhaar.

### **What is the Government's Response?**

- The current Passport Seva Project includes robust safeguards for data privacy, as well as adequate measures for data security.
- Passport data is used for the specific purpose for which it is obtained.
- The introduction of e-passports does not envisage any deviation from this practice.
- The chip characteristics are in line with guidelines of the [International Civil Aviation Organization \(ICAO\)](#) which defines standards for international travel documents, including e-Passports.

#### **Nut Graf**

*As the Indian government plans to deploy e-passports integrating RFID and biometrics for domestic use, the privacy and security implications of e-passports need to be considered and given utmost priority.*

#### **C. GS 3 Related**

*Nothing here for today!!!*

#### **D. GS 4 Related**

*Nothing here for today!!!*

#### **E. Editorials**

**Category: POLITY**

### **1. Interrogating the false merit-reservation binary**

*Syllabus: Constitution of India - features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.*

*Mains: Supreme Court's Judgement on all India quota and its consequences*

#### **Context**

The Supreme Court of India's ruling on an All India Quota (AIQ).

### **Background**

- The case was laid before the Supreme Court to look into the issues around the implementation of Other Backward Classes (OBC) and economically weaker sections (EWS) quotas in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET)-All India Quota (AIQ) admissions to medical colleges.
- All India Quota refers to a judicially created category where 15% of undergraduate seats and 50% of post-graduate seats are filled on a domicile-free, all-India basis.
- The Government recently decided to extend the existing SC and ST reservations within the AIQ category to provide for OBC reservations as well.
- Writ petitions were filed that challenged,
  - The order on the grounds that the implementation of OBC reservation would impact professional merit and is discriminatory against general category candidates.
  - The notification of EWS reservation as the hearings on the 103rd Constitutional Amendment Act were pending.
  - To justify ₹8 lakh as the income limit for EWS reservations.

### **Supreme Court's View**

- The Court, in view of the public health implications of the delay in medical admissions, upheld the admissions notice, and a hearing on the validity of the ₹8 lakh limit would be held in March.
- The Court took this as an opportunity to address the issues of merit and reservations.
- Critics of affirmative action have argued that reservations violate merit. The defenders of reservation argue that affirmative actions serve goals of social representation.
- The Court's judgement takes a fresh stand in this regard. It builds on a long tradition of progressive jurisprudence, but takes it in a new direction.
- The Court reaffirmed the principle of substantive equality that underlies the constitutional promise of equality of opportunity, rather than formal equality.
- Relying on the [debates in the Constituent Assembly](#), the Court reaffirms that the intent of the framers was to provide a remedy to the structural barriers that prevented the realisation of equality of opportunity.
- The Court gave the judgement based on previous landmark cases.

### **Landmark Cases and other views referred by the Supreme Court in the Judgement**

- **Principle of substantive equality**
  - **State of Kerala vs N.M. Thomas, K.C. Vasanth Kumar (1985), and Indra Sawhney vs Union of India (1992)**

- Reiterate that the provision of reservations in Article 16(4) of the Constitution is not an exception but an extension of the principle of equality enunciated in Article 16(1).
    - Reservations are important to achieving the goal of equality of opportunity and status amongst all citizens.
  - Based on the above judgement the court held that, “Reservation is one of the measures that is employed to overcome the barriers. The individual difference may be due to privilege, or circumstances but it cannot be used to negate the role of reservation in remedying the structural disadvantage that certain groups suffer.”
- **The mechanisms through which social privileges work**
  - **K.C. Vasanth Kumar vs State of Karnataka (1985)**
    - The judge had criticised the purely economic understanding of claims for reservation, by emphasising the rigid nature of the socio-cultural institution of caste.
  - **Marc Galanter’s insight** - that the processes of resource accumulation impact the performance of candidates in examinations.
  - **K.V. Shyamprasad’s works** - that recognised for the first time, the role of cultural capital.
  - Based on the above views the Court’s order held that, “The cultural capital ensures that a child is trained unconsciously by the familial environment to take up higher education or high posts commensurate with their family’s standing. This works to the disadvantage of individuals who are first-generation learners and come from communities whose traditional occupations do not result in the transmission of necessary skills required to perform well in open examination”.
- **Exposing social prejudices**
  - **B.K. Pavitra vs State of Karnataka (2019)**
    - Court held that, “the benchmark for the efficiency of administration is not some disembodied, abstract ideal measured by the performance of a qualified open category candidate. The efficiency of administration in the affairs of the Union or of a State must be defined in an inclusive sense, where diverse segments of society find representation as a true aspiration of governance by and for the people”.
  - Relying on the judgement the Court recognises that there is a need to rectify prejudicial stereotypes about the skills of persons belonging to weaker sections.
- **Examinations as a measure of merit**
  - **Ashwini Deshpande’s study** - highlights a sharp difference between what examinations claim to measure, and what they actually do.
  - **Satish Deshpande’s research**
    - Shows that “what examinations measure have an indirect link to the tasks the candidate is supposed to perform”.



- He argues that the prestige of competitive entrance examinations and the unimpeachability of its evaluator standards are a manufactured construct.
- He calls these examinations ‘traumatic bloodbaths’ that are administered to guard the social prestige of the professional class.
- He concludes that if the examinations were to be less ruthless, their main social function of persuading ‘the vast majority of aspirants to consent to their exclusion’ would be prevented.
- The judgment opines that exams can “only reflect the current competence of an individual but not the gamut of their potential, capabilities or excellence”.
- The judgement focuses on the importance of individual character, experiences, and training.

### **Consequences of the Judgement**

- The judgment has far-reaching consequences for judicial orders, public policy, and public discourse.
- The claims of reverse discrimination by candidates from the general or unreserved category would have to be justified under the ideals of substantive equality.
  - This implies that a disparity in cut-off marks would not be interpreted in isolation of the structural inequalities that are continued by competitive examinations.
- The judgement invites for a [judicial review](#) of the constitutionality of EWS reservations since it overlooks the role of cultural capital for general category EWS candidates and fixes the same income limits for ‘creamy layer’ OBC and EWS.
- In the policy domain, the judgment opens the way for designing examinations that are free of linguistic, class, school boards, and regional bias.
- The recognition of social privileges behind merit supports the demand for a caste census.

#### **Nut Graf**

*The debate of merit versus reservation has a long-standing history in India and the recent judgement by the Supreme Court has the potential to settle this long, fractious and futile debate in the country by advancing an interpretation that is consistent with the constitutional ideals of equality and social justice.*

### **Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

#### **1. India calling with quite a lot of trade in mind**

*Syllabus: Bilateral agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.*

*Mains: Reasons and factors influencing the FTA arrangement between India and U.K.*

### Context

Meeting between India's Commerce and Industry Minister and Secretary of State for International Trade U.K saw a launch of negotiations for the India-United Kingdom Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

### Aim of India-UK FTA

- To cover more than 90% of tariff lines and to reach the bilateral trade target of around **\$100 billion** by 2030.
- It is suggested that the agreement will be a "new-age FTA" that includes areas such as intellectual property rights, geographical indications, sustainability, digital technology and anti-corruption, along with goods, services and investments.

Read more about the [Free Trade Agreement between India and the U.K.](#)

### Proactiveness of India in trade post-pandemic

- As the global economy underwent a fundamental transformation post-COVID-19 and as the supply chains were restructured, India is strategizing a new trade outlook.
- India is expected to conclude its first FTA in over a decade with the **United Arab Emirates in 2022**.
- India is also having talks with Australia for an FTA arrangement.
- If concluded, the India-U.K. FTA will be the next in line at a time when India is negotiating 16 new trade pacts with nations like Canada, the United States, the European Union and South Korea.
- Before the launch of FTA talks with the U.K., India and South Korea decided to expedite the up-gradation of the existing FTA, formally called the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement**.
- The government is showing flexibility in engaging with its partners on trade as it seeks balanced trade pacts at a time when new trade blocs in the Indo-Pacific such as the [Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership \(RCEP\)](#) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) are gaining traction.
- Strategic partnerships without strong economic content would have no meaning in the Indo-Pacific, where China's economic clout is growing by the day.

### India-U.K. bilateral engagement

- Despite challenges, there is a new momentum in the India-U.K. bilateral engagement of late with both sides confident of moving forward swiftly.

### **Reasons for FTA with India**

- Britain has made the trade agreement with India one of its priorities post-Brexit, as it seeks a greater role in the Indo-Pacific.
- India is at the heart of the U.K.'s Indo-Pacific 'tilt', which has generated interest around the world.
- The British Prime Minister came to office promising one of the deepest and broadest British foreign, security, development and defence reviews since the end of the Cold War.
- A Review of the U.K.'s international policy noted that "In the decade ahead, the UK will deepen our engagement in the Indo-Pacific, establishing a greater and more persistent presence than any other European country".
- The U.K. will also be launching trade negotiations with Canada, Mexico and the Gulf to underscore its 'Global Britain' credentials, a trade deal with India along with its membership in the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)** is critical in anchoring the U.K. economically to the Indo-Pacific.

### **Indo-Pacific in the focus**

- The shift in focus is driven by recognising that the Indo-Pacific is now the force behind global economic growth.
- The U.K. is looking to leverage its historical connections, development work, and its credibility in combating climate change to help establish itself as a power in the region.
- Through its Indo-Pacific tilt, the U.K. is carving out a direction and purpose to its post-Brexit foreign policy.
- This prioritisation has given a chance for India and U.K. to finalise their FTA.

### **Factors for U.K.'s tilt in Indo-Pacific strategy**

- The trading implications of Brexit
  - Trade and investment are key factors of the U.K.'s tilt.
  - Brexit has given U.K. greater access to non-EU markets.
- The U.K.'s changing approach towards China
  - The U.K. has shifted from being a major proponent of China to being the most hostile in Europe.
  - The U.K.'s changing relationship with China requires diversification of trading partners.
- The focus of the U.S. (U.K.'s closest ally) on the Indo-Pacific.
  - Like its allies in the region, the U.K. recognises the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific to global stability and prosperity.

- London is trying to intensify its actions by entering into the regional security setup.
- The trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (AUKUS), which was announced in September 2021, that enables Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines with assistance from the U.S. and U.K., has given London a greater voice in the region.

### **Conclusion**

A free trade agreement with India is significant in anchoring the U.K. economically in the Indo-Pacific region and is considered as a unique “now or never” moment that both sides are willing to seize despite the challenges.

### **Nut Graf**

*The shift in the focus of the U.K. on the Indo-Pacific post-Brexit, triggered by various other factors, has offered new opportunities for India and U.K. to seize a Free Trade Agreement that would help overcome several challenges.*

## F. Prelims Facts

### **1. 22nd Law Commission to study UCC**

**Context:** - 22nd Law Commission would take up the issue of a Uniform Civil Code.

#### **Uniform Civil Code:**

- The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) calls for the formulation of one law for India, which would be applicable to all religious communities in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption.
- Article 44 of the Constitution provides that the State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India.
- Know More About [Uniform Civil code.](#)

#### **22nd Law Commission:**

- Law Commissions were constituted by the Government from time to time to recommend legislative reforms.

- In 2020, the Union Cabinet approved the Twenty-second Law Commission of India for a period of three years.
- The 22nd Law Commission will consist of:
  - a full-time Chairperson;
  - four full-time Members (including Member-Secretary)
  - Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs as ex-officio Member;
  - Secretary, Legislative Department as ex officio Member; and
  - not more than five part-time Members.
- Know More About [Law Commission of India](#).

## 2. Villagers resist sanctuary tag for langur habitat

### Context:

Neighbours of a golden langur habitat in western Assam's Bongaigaon district have opposed a move by the State government to upgrade it to a wildlife sanctuary.

### Kakoijana Bamuni Hill Wildlife Sanctuary:

- Kakaijana Wildlife Sanctuary or Kakoijana Reserve Forest is situated on the banks of river Aie.
- Its most famous inhabitants are the golden langurs which are native to western Assam and along the Indo-Bhutan border region.
- The area is mostly covered with mixed wood subtropical moist deciduous forests with teak plantations, scattered bamboo groves and miscellaneous species.

### Golden Langur:

- Golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*) are found only in Assam and Bhutan.
- **IUCN Status:** Endangered
- They are Schedule-I species under the [Wildlife Protection Act of 1972](#).
- Kakoijana Reserve Forest is one of the better-known homes of the golden langur.

## 3. China, Pak. ink new CPEC agreement

### Context:

China and Pakistan signed a new agreement on industrial cooperation as part of the [China Pakistan Economic Corridor \(CPEC\)](#).

### **What is the Agreement signed by China and Pakistan?**

- The industrial cooperation agreement is a key part of what is being called “phase two” of CPEC.
- The first phase primarily involved Chinese investments in energy projects as well as road infrastructure.
- The agreement is aimed at boosting Chinese investment in Pakistan as well as transferring Chinese industrial capacity.

### **China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):**

- China has described CPEC as a “flagship project” of the Belt and Road Initiative.
- The corridor links Xinjiang with Gwadar and also passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) where China is investing in a number of projects.

## **4. Iceland to end whaling in 2024 as demand drops**

### **Context:**

Iceland stated that it will end the practice from 2024 as demand for whale meat dwindles.

### **What is Commercial Whaling?**

- Commercial whaling is the practice of hunting and killing whales for the purpose of selling and trading their meat and other products derived from them.
- Whaling is the process of hunting and killing whales.

### **International Whaling Commission (IWC):**

- In 1946, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was established under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW).
- It aims to oversee the proper management of whale stocks and orderly development of the whaling industry.
- Know more about the issue in detail: [Commercial Whaling](#)

G. Tidbits

*Nothing here for today!!!*

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

**Q1. Consider the following statements with regards to Sri Ramanujacharya:**

1. He was also referred to as Ilaya Perumal which means the radiant one.
2. His philosophical foundations for devotionalism were influential to the Bhakti movement.
3. He is famous as the chief proponent of Vishishtadvaita subschool of Vedānta.

**Choose the correct code:**

- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 & 3 only
- c. 1 & 3 only
- d. All of the above

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- Sri Ramanuja was born in 1017 CE at Sriperumbudur village in Tamil Nadu. He was a great theologian philosopher and thinker of devotional Hinduism.
- He was named Lakshmana at the time of his birth. He was also referred to as Ilaya Perumal which means the radiant one. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- Sri Ramanujacharya was a Bhakti saint who promoted the idea of equality in all aspects of living, including faith, caste and creed. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- Ramanujacharya is famous as the chief proponent of the Vishishtadvaita sub-school of Vedanta. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**

**Q2. Consider the following statements with regards to private member bills in the Parliament:**

1. No private member bill has ever been passed in the Indian Parliament.
2. The government bills can be introduced and discussed on any day, private member's bills can be introduced and discussed only on Fridays.
3. Its introduction in the House requires 15 days' notice.

**Choose the correct code:**

- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 1 & 3 only
- d. 2 & 3 only

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- Since 1952, only 14 private member's bills have become laws. Out of the 300 odd private members' bills that were introduced in the 14th Lok Sabha, only about 4% were discussed and the rest 96% lapsed without any debate. **Hence Statement 1 is not correct.**
- Private member's bills can be introduced and discussed only on Fridays. The number of private member bills has been capped to 3 per session of Parliament. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- The Member must give at least a month's notice before the Private Bill can be listed for introduction. **Hence Statement 3 is not correct.**

**Q3. Consider the following statements with regards to Golden Langur:**

1. They are highly dependent on trees, living in the upper canopy of forests and are thus known as leaf monkeys.
2. They are listed in Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
3. They are endemic to Assam and Bhutan.

**Choose the correct code:**

- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 & 3 only
- c. 1 & 3 only
- d. All of the above

**Answer: d****Explanation:**

- Golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*) are highly dependent on trees and inhabit moist evergreen, riverine, dipterocarp, and tropical deciduous forests. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- They are Schedule-I species under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- Kakoijana Reserve Forest is one of the better-known homes of the golden langur. They are found only in Assam and Bhutan. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**
- IUCN Status: Endangered

**Q4. Consider the following statements with regards to the Preamble of the Indian Constitution:**

1. The ideals behind the Preamble to India's Constitution were laid down by Jawaharlal Nehru's Objectives Resolution, adopted by the Constituent Assembly on January 22, 1947.
2. The date mentioned in the Preamble is when it was adopted i.e. November 26, 1949.



3. The Preamble of the Constitution can't be amended.

**Choose the correct code:**

- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 & 3 only
- c. 1 & 3 only
- d. All of the above

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- In 1946, Objective Resolution was moved by Jawaharlal Nehru, describing the constitutional structure. In 1947 (22nd January) it was adopted. It shaped the Constitution of India and its modified version is reflected in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- The Constitution of India was adopted on November 26, 1949. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- The term 'secular' was added to the Preamble of the Indian Constitution by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1976. Thus, The Preamble of the Constitution can be amended. **Hence Statement 3 is not correct.**

**Q5. Consider the following events in the history of India: PYQ (2020)**

- 1. Rise of Pratiharas under King Bhoja
- 2. Establishment of Pallava power under Mahendravarman – I
- 3. Establishment of Chola power by Parantaka – I
- 4. Pala dynasty founded by Gopala

**What is the correct chronological order of the above events, starting from the earliest time?**

- a. 2 - 1 - 4 - 3
- b. 3 - 1 - 4 - 2
- c. 2 - 4 - 1 - 3
- d. 3 - 4 - 1 - 2

**Answer: c**

**Explanation**

The Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty ruled much of Northern India from the mid-8th to the 11th century. They ruled first at Ujjain and later at Kannauj. Under Bhoja (836-885 CE) and his successor Mahendrapala I,

the Pratihara Empire reached its peak of prosperity and power. The Pallava dynasty existed from 275 CE to 897 CE in South India. Mahendravarman I (r. 600–630 CE) contributed to the greatness of the Pallava dynasty. Parantaka Chola I (c. 907–955 CE) ruled the Chola kingdom in Tamil Nadu for forty-eight years, annexing Pandya. Gopala (ruled c. 750s–770s CE) was the founder of the Pala Dynasty of the Bengal region of India. **Therefore, the correct answer is (c).**

### I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Many countries have announced a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics. What can a diplomatic boycott achieve and what are its limits? [GS2: International Relations](10 Marks, 150 Words)
2. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is envisaged as a transformational project in Pakistan is unlikely to ever fulfil the aspirations of the people. Substantiate. [GS2: International Relations](10 Marks, 150 Words)

