

Q: The Sharmishtha Lake, sometimes mentioned in the news, is located in which of the following Indian states?

- a) Rajasthan
- b) Punjab
- c) Gujarat
- d) Maharashtra

Ans: c

Explanation:

- Vadnagar was a multicultural and multireligious (Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and Islamic) settlement, currently located in the Mehsana district of North Gujarat, India.
- It is also known by names like Vridhanagar, Anandapur, Anantapur and Nagar.
- It is an L-shaped town with Sharmishtha Lake on its northeastern edge.
- The town represents a continuously evolving historic urban landscape/area which played a major role in the hinterland trade network of Western India.
- World Heritage Site (UNESCO): Vadnagar was added to the tentative list in December 2022.

Q: Consider the following reports:

1. Global Gender Gap Report
2. Global Inequality Crisis Report
3. Global Competitiveness Report
4. Global Financial Stability Report

Which of the above are published and or released by the World Economic Forum (WEF)?

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

Ans: a

Explanation:

World Economic Forum (WEF) serves as a platform for global leaders to discuss and address pressing issues, fostering a spirit of cooperation and shared responsibility.

Reports by WEF:

- **Global Gender Gap Report:** It assesses the gender gap in various countries. The gender gap is the difference between women and men as reflected in social, political, intellectual, cultural, or economic attainments or attitudes.
- **The Global Risks Report:** It explores some of the most severe risks we may face over the next decade, against a backdrop of rapid technological change, economic uncertainty, a warming planet and conflict.
- As cooperation comes under pressure, weakened economies and societies may only require the smallest shock to edge past the tipping point of resilience.
- Other reports include Global Competitiveness Report (GCR), Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, and Global Information Technology Report.
- However, the Global Inequality Crisis Report is released by Oxfam International, and the Global Financial Stability Report is released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Q: Recently, India held the maiden Bilateral Maritime Exercise 'Ex-Ayutthaya', with which of the following countries?

- a) Azerbaijan
- b) Thailand
- c) Malaysia
- d) Seychelles

Ans: b

Explanation:

- The maiden Bilateral Maritime Exercise between the Indian Navy (IN) and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) was conducted from 20 to 23 December 2023.
- The Bilateral Exercise is being named as ‘Ex-Ayutthaya’, which literally translates to ‘The Invincible One’ or ‘Undefeatable’, and symbolises the significance of two of the oldest cities Ayodhya in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand, the historic legacies, rich cultural ties and shared historical narratives dating back to several centuries.
- As part of Government of India's vision of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region), the Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with countries in the Indian Ocean Region towards enhancing regional maritime security.

Q: The ‘Annual NeSDA Way Forward Report for 2023’ is released by:

- a) NITI Aayog
- b) Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances
- c) The Reserve Bank of India
- d) Department of Investment and Public Asset Management

Ans: b

Explanation:

- Recently, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has released the ‘Annual NeSDA Way Forward Report’ for 2023.
- It was released by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- It highlights the significant progress made by the States and UTs during the year under mandatory e-Services and total e-Services under the NeSDA Framework.

Q: The recent report, ‘Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics 2023’ was released by which of the following?

- a) Supreme Court of India
- b) Amnesty International
- c) Ministry of Law and Justice
- d) Project 39A

Ans: d

Explanation:

- Recently, a report titled, ‘Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics 2023’ was released by Project 39A, a criminal justice programme linked with the National Law University, Delhi.
- Appellate Courts — Supreme Court and all the High Courts together — confirmed only one death sentence in 2023 while the rest were either commuted or saw the prisoners acquitted altogether.
- There was a 45.71% increase in the number of prisoners under death sentence by the end of December 2023, from that in 2016.
- Similar to the last five years, the majority of death penalty cases in trial courts involved crimes related to sexual offences.