

Q: Recently, the World Gold Council (WGC) report titled ‘Gold refining and recycling’ was released. Consider the following statement:

1. Tax advantages have underpinned the growth of India’s gold refining industry.
2. India topped the global gold recycling chart.

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) 1 and 2 Both
- d) None of the above

Ans: a

Explanation:

- Tax advantages have underpinned the growth of India’s gold refining industry like the import duty differential on dore over refined bullion has spurred the growth of organised refining in India.
- China topped the global gold recycling chart as it recycled 168 tonnes of the yellow metal, **followed by Italy** in the second position with 80 tonnes and the **US in the third rank** with 78 tonnes in 2021.
- India was ranked fourth in the list as the country recycled 75 tonnes in 2021.

Q: Recently, an expert committee appointed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) with the mandate to devise a legal framework to regulate noise pollution in Delhi. Consider the following statement:

1. D Murugesan heads the committee.
2. There is presently 31 noise monitoring network station in Delhi.
3. At present, only the Delhi Police can take penal action.

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

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

Ans: b

Explanation:

- Justice (retd) SP Garg headed the expert committee appointed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).
- It called for the expansion of Delhi’s current noise monitoring network of 31 stations in proportion to the city’s area and population, while also suggesting that agencies other than the Delhi Police be empowered to act against violators.
- At present, **only the Delhi Police can take penal action**, while agencies such as the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Delhi Cantonment Board have no powers to take on-the-spot action against noise polluters.

Q: Consider the following statement regarding drug resistant typhoid strains and choose the incorrect option:

- a) South Asia accounts for 70% of the global disease burden.
- b) The effectiveness of antibiotics for typhoid fever is threatened by the emergence of resistant strains.
- c) Multi-drug-resistant (MDR) S Typhi has increased in Bangladesh and India.
- d) MDR are being replaced by strains resistant to other antibiotics.

Ans: c

Explanation:

- Typhoid fever causes 11 million infections and more than 100,000 deaths per year. **South Asia accounts for 70% of the global disease burden.**
- The effectiveness of antibiotics for typhoid fever is threatened by the emergence of resistant strains, according to a large genome sequencing study of the bacteria Salmonella Typhi.
- Since 2000, **multi-drug-resistant (MDR) S Typhi has declined steadily in Bangladesh and India**, remained low in Nepal, and increased slightly in Pakistan.

- However, these are being replaced by strains resistant to other antibiotics.
- The genome analysis also reveals that resistant strains, almost all originating in South Asia have spread to other countries 197 times since 1990.
- The study sequenced 3,489 S Typhi isolates from 2014-19 from people in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, and 4,169 samples isolated from over 70 countries during 1905-2018.

Q: A review of a series of exemptions and inverted duty structure was taken up for discussion in the upcoming Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council meeting. Consider the following statement:

1. Decrease in the GST rate on electronics-waste.
2. An increase in rent of hospital rooms with rent over Rs 5,000.
3. Business class travel from airports in the north-eastern states increased by 15 percent.

Choose the incorrect option from the codes given below:

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

Ans: d

Explanation:

- The GoM, in its interim report to the GST Council, have suggested **an increase in the GST rate on electronics-waste to be raised to 18 per cent from 5 per cent** along with an increase in the rate on exploration activities of goods related to petroleum and coal bed methane from 5 per cent.
- A recommendation has been made to **remove exemption on rent of hospital rooms with rent over Rs 5,000** as against complete exemption at present.
- **Business class travel from airports in the north-eastern states** could also end soon if the recommendation of the GoM gets accepted in the Council. This compares with a levy of 12 per cent GST on business travel by air in the rest of the country.
- The panel has also looked at the **possibility of withdrawing exemption on services provided by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** to food business operators as against 18 per cent levy on services at present.
- The panel is also likely to have suggested a review of the unbranded food items, which at present do not attract GST.

Q: Consider the following statement:

1. Venkatchaliah Report recommended that the retirement age of the Judges of the High Court should be increased to 65 years and that of the Judges of the Supreme Court should be increased to 68 years.
2. 110th Amendment Bill made an attempt but lapsed with the dissolution of the 14th Lok Sabha.

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) 1 and 2 Both
- d) None of the above

Ans: a

Explanation:

- The Venkatchaliah Report (Report of the National Commission to review the working of the Constitution, 2002) **recommended that the retirement age of the Judges of the High Court should be increased to 65 years** and that of the **Judges of the Supreme Court should be increased to 68 years**. The age should be unanimous in both the Higher and Lower Courts.
- A half-hearted attempt was made in 2010 through Constitution (114th Amendment) Bill to increase the retirement age of High Court judges to 65.
- However, it was not taken up for consideration in Parliament and **lapsed with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha**.

