

Q: Consider the following statements with respect to Dusted Apollo

1. It is an extremely rare high-altitude butterfly.
2. It is endemic to the Western Ghats of India.
3. All the Apollo butterfly species are protected under the Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All Three
- d) None of the above

Ans: a

Explanation:

- Dusted Apollo (*Parnassius stenosemus*) is a rare high-altitude butterfly.
- Dusted Apollo is extremely rare and has never been photographed before in Himachal Pradesh.
- It closely resembles Ladakh Banded Apollo (*Parnassius stoliczkanus*).
- Distribution – The distribution range of Dusted Apollo extends from Ladakh to West Nepal and it flies between 3,500 to 4,800 meters in the inner Himalayas.
- Apollos – Are considered commercially important butterflies and they fetch high prices in the poaching industry.
- Not all the Apollo species are protected under the Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- There are 11 Apollo species recorded from Himachal Pradesh and 5 of them are declared as Scheduled species.
- Most of the Apollo butterflies are now endangered and need immediate attention for their conservation and protection.
- Regal Apollo (*Parnassius charltonius*) – is a rare species that is protected under Schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Q: Ilsehhohle Cave Site, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in which of the following country?

- a) England
- b) Germany
- c) Greece
- d) Italy

Ans: b

Explanation:

- The researchers re-excavated the Ilsehhohle cave site in Ranis, Germany, aiming to locate remaining deposits from man excavation in 1930 while also clarifying the chronology of the site.
- The site provides evidence for the first dispersal of *Homo sapiens* across the higher latitudes of Europe.
- The stone artefacts that were thought to be produced by Neanderthals were in fact part of the early *H. sapiens* tool kit.
- During the re-excavation a 1.7-metre-thick rock and human fossils was found.
- The site now has the oldest *H. sapiens* fossils.
- Bones and stone artefacts from the cave showed that these people hunted large mammals including reindeer, horses, bison and woolly rhinoceroses.
- The results from the Ilsehhohle in Ranis fundamentally change our ideas about the chronology and settlement history of Europe north of the Alps.
- The new study's revelations mean that *Homo-sapiens* reached Northern Europe before Neanderthals went extinct.

Q: Consider the following statements with respect to Lantana Camara

1. It is an invasive weed that restricts the growth of indigenous vegetation.
2. It is an evergreen and perennial plant that is native to South America.
3. “Coexistence: The Great Elephant Migration” is an initiative to promote the awareness about it.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All Three
- d) None of the above

Ans: c

Explanation:

- As part of the “Coexistence: The Great Elephant Migration” exhibition, around 100 Lantana elephants life-size models of elephants were made out of Lantana camara.
- Lantana Camara was introduced in the country as an ornamental plant by the British in the 1800s and has since spread over 574,186 sq km, covering 50% of the country.
- It is a thorny shrub upright, half climbing or sometimes more or less hanging, reaching 2-3 m in height.
- It is an evergreen and perennial plant that multiplies by seeds.
- It is an invasive weed that restricts the growth of indigenous vegetation that is native to South America.
- It has affected cultivation, biodiversity and also reduced the area available for grazing of livestock.

Q: Consider the following statements with respect to Kamakhya temple

1. It was reconstructed in 1565 by Chilarai, who was the reigning king of the Koch dynasty.
2. This temple is dedicated to different forms of Mother Shakti.
3. Ambubachi Mela is one of the major festivals of this temple.

How many of the statements given above are incorrect?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All Three
- d) None of the above

Ans: d

Explanation:

- The Kamakhya temple is located on the Nilachal hills, at a distance of 7 km from Guwahati, Assam.
- It is one of the biggest Shakti shrines in the country and an important pilgrimage centre for tantric worshippers and Hindus.
- It is also considered important as it is the temple where the beliefs and practices of the Aryan communities coincide with non-Aryan communities.
- It was reconstructed in 1565 by Chilarai, who was the reigning king of the Koch dynasty.
- This temple is dedicated to different forms of Mother Shakti namely Sundari, Tripura, Tara, Bhuvaneshvari, Bagalamukhi and Chinnamasta.
- Ambubachi Mela is one of the major festivals of this temple. The festival is held every year to commemorate the yearly menstruation of Goddess Kamakhya.
- It is also said that during the month of mid-June, which is also an Ahar, there is a natural spring which flows through the yoni.
- It is also dedicated to different forms of Lord Shiva, there are 5 temples within the complex of Kamakhya temple.
- In addition, the temple complex also houses three temples of Lord Vishnu, present in the form of Kedara, Gadadhara and Pandunath.

Q: With reference to exercises with India, consider the following pairs

Exercises	Partnering Countries
1. Cyclone	– Egypt
2. Sada Tanseeq	– United Arab Emirates (UAE)
3. Desert Knight	– Saudi Arabia

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two

- c) All of the above
- d) None of the above

Ans: a

Explanation:

- Exercise Cyclone is an army exercise between India and Egypt.
- The 2nd edition of the Exercise was conducted at Anshas, Egypt from 22nd January to 1st February 2024.
- Exercise Desert Knight – The Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted Exercise Desert Knight along with French Air and Space Force (FASF) and United Arab Emirates (UAE) Air Force.
- The exercise was conducted over the Arabian Sea, with IAF aircraft operating from bases within India.
- Exercise Sada Tanseeq – It is the inaugural edition of India-Saudi Arabia Joint Military Exercise ‘SADA TANSEEQ’ commenced at Mahajan, Rajasthan.
- The Aim of the Exercise is to train troops of both sides for Joint Operations in Semi Desert terrain under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.