



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS** Handout

**7th February 2026**



# The Fragmented Global Climate Governance

**CONTEXT:** There is an illusion of progress in climate negotiations, with more process and less action

## Key International Architecture

- UNFCCC
- CMP & CMA
- COP (Conference of Parties)

### *procedural “buses” with no binding direction*

- Lack – direction and enforceability
- No binding obligation

## Politics Over Planet: National Interest Dominates

- Consensus-based decision-making – “VETO”
- Ambitious goals; binding commitments are avoided
- National interest ~ collective global responsibility
- Markets and corporations ~ climate agenda

## Ordinary Citizens: The Biggest Losers

- For most people, climate change – **distant concern**
- **Climate change becomes real only when it manifests**

## COPs: Symbolic Success, Substantive Failure

- Every COP – “success”; **real climate action – minimal**
- The Kyoto Protocol
- The Paris Agreement

## COP30: More Promises, Less Progress: KEY CHALLENGES

COP30 highlighted – “**global mutirão**” approach, but failed – concrete outcomes.

- 1.5°C Target Losing Credibility
- Climate Finance: Big Gap, Small Flow
- Adaptation: Aspirational, Not Operational
- Loss and Damage: Institutional but Underfunded
- Technology Transfer & Capacity Building
- Just Transition: Recognition Without Resources

## Structural Reality: Drift, Not Collapse

Global climate governance today is characterised by: **Drift, Inadequacy & Lack of Leadership**

## India’s Role in Global Climate Governance

- **Leadership in COP Negotiations**
  - CBDR-RC
- **Climate Finance Advocacy**
  - pressed for predictable, scaled-up, and concessional finance
- **Domestic Climate Action**
  - Renewable Energy and Mitigation
  - Paris Agreement Targets (NDCs)
  - Adaptation Spending
- **Policy & Institutional Framework**
  - NAPCC
  - NDC Implementation
- **Market & Technology Measures**
  - PLIs
  - National Green Hydrogen Mission
  - Carbon Market Mechanism

## Way Forward?

### THE WAY FORWARD



EQUITY &  
JUSTICE



SCALING  
CLIMATE FINANCE



BOOSTING  
ADAPTATION AID



BOOSTING  
ADAPTATION AID



TECHNOLOGY  
TRANSFER





# The Fragmented Global Climate Governance

**CONTEXT:** There is an illusion of progress in climate negotiations, with more process and less action

## Mains Practise Question

Global climate governance is increasingly characterised by ambitious declarations but weak implementation. Discuss the structural challenges in the current UNFCCC framework. In this context, discuss the measures taken by India to address climate change at both domestic and international levels.

(15 Marks, 250 words)





**CONTEXT:** Meghalaya mine blast toll touches 25

## What is Rat-hole Mining?

- **Rat-hole mining** - primitive, crude, labor-intensive and hazardous - coal mining.
- It involves **digging of very small tunnels** - 3-4 feet deep and 2 to 3 feet wide
- It is typically practiced in **NE India**

### ■ **Methods of Extraction:**

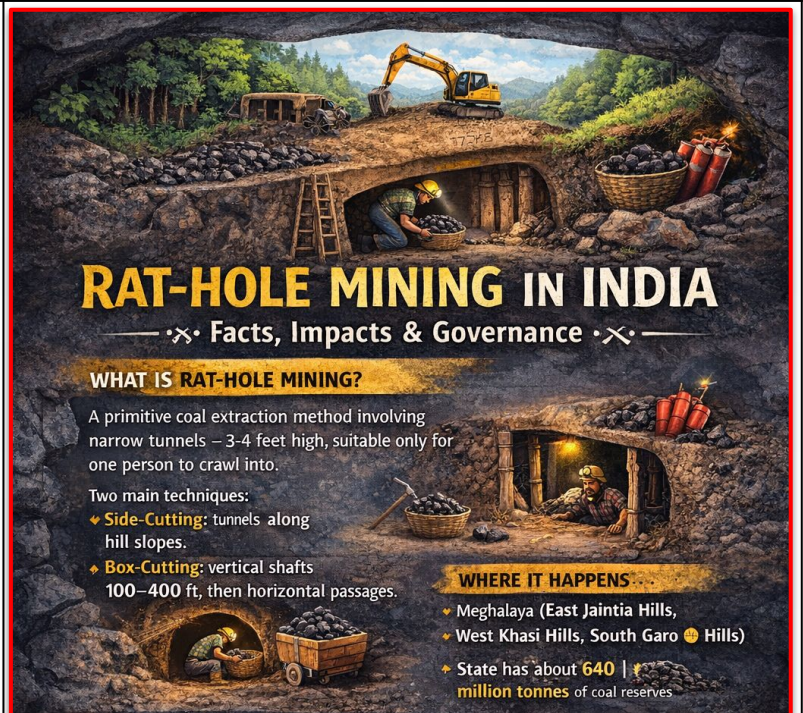
- Side-Cutting Procedure
- Box-Cutting

### ■ **Reasons for Rat-Hole Mining:**

- **Poverty:** limited livelihood options - immediate financial gain from selling extracted coal
- **Land Ownership Issues:** Ambiguities in land titles and lack of regulation
- **Coal Demand:** Continuous demand for coal - sustains the practice.

## What are the Challenges Associated with Rat-hole Mining?

- **Safety Hazards:** The narrow tunnels - prone to collapses - trapping miners; poor ventilation - suffocation + Lack of safety measures - frequent accidents, injuries, and life-threatening diseases.
  - Eg: The 2024 Wokha; 2018 Ksan
- **Environmental Impact:** Rat-hole mining contributes to deforestation, soil erosion, and water contamination.
  - Improper waste disposal - Acidic runoff - degrades water quality and harms biodiversity;
  - Eg: In Meghalaya, AMD - Lukha; Nagaland - Wokha and Mon districts.



- **Social Issues:** exploitation of child labor and poorly paid workers; displacement - local communities.
  - Reports by NGO Impulse - 70,000 child labor



# The Illegal Rat-Hole Mining



**CONTEXT:** Meghalaya mine blast toll touches 25

## How is Rat Hole Mining Regulated?

### ■ Regulation in India:

- Status in India: illegal; jurisdiction of the State/District
- Ban by the NGT - In 2014
  - The Supreme Court of India, in July 2019, upheld the ban; SC - illegal under the MMDR Act, 1957.
- Regulation of Rat-Hole Mining in Nagaland: The Nagaland Coal Policy, 2006 regulates - SPDs; Article 371A
- Sixth Schedule: The Sixth Schedule grants autonomy to tribal areas - AMTM - through ADCs, complicating mining regulation.
  - Local tribal communities own both land and minerals, limiting oversight and enforcement of
  - ADCs' authority to legislate - conflicts with central regulations under the MMDR Act, 1957 - regulatory ambiguities.

- **International Context:** There's no specific international law directly addressing rat-hole mining.

- International regulations - sustainable mining methods and prioritise worker safety

### Mains Practise Question

*Rat-hole mining continues in parts of India despite judicial prohibitions. Discuss the challenges associated with rat-hole mining and the regulatory framework governing such mining practices in India.*

**(10 Marks, 150 words)**





**SYLLABUS : PRELIMS:** Institutions

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 12

# U.S. urges new three-way nuclear weapons deal with Russia, China

U.S. official DiNanno slams New START for its 'fundamental flaws' and argues that China's nuclear arsenal lacks transparency and limitations; Trump rejects Putin's proposal to extend New START for one year; China and Russia resist U.S. proposals

Agence France-Presse  
GENEVA

The United States on Friday urged three-way talks with Russia and China to set new limits on nuclear weapons, after the last treaty between top nuclear powers Washington and Moscow expired.

Thomas DiNanno, the under secretary of state for arms control, told the UN Conference on Disarmament that the New START treaty, which was allowed to lapse on Thursday, had "fundamental flaws".

"Serial Russian violations, growth of more worldwide stockpiles and



The expiration of New START marks the first time in decades that the world finds itself without a treaty to curb nuclear weapons. AFP

flaws in New START's design and implementation gives the United States a clear imperative to call for a new architecture that addresses the threats of to-

day, not those of a bygone era," he told the conference at the United Nations' European headquarters in Geneva.

"As we sit here today,

China's entire nuclear arsenal has no limits, no transparency, no declarations, had no controls," he lamented.

He added that "the next era of arms control will require the participation of more than just Russia".

The expiration of New START, which restricted the U.S. and Russia to deploying 1,550 nuclear warheads each, marks the first time in decades that the world finds itself without a treaty to curb the positioning of the planet's most destructive weapons.

U.S. President Donald Trump did not accept a proposal from Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin

to keep New START's restrictions in place for another year, and called on Thursday for a "new, improved and modernised treaty".

China has already publicly rejected joining disarmament negotiations. China's ambassador Shen Jian reiterated that position on Friday, insisting that "China's nuclear capabilities are nowhere near the level of those of the U.S. or Russia".

Russia's ambassador Gennady Gatilov meanwhile insisted that any new nuclear talks should also include other nuclear-armed states such as France and Britain.

## Conference on Disarmament



United  
Nations

Office for Disarmament Affairs

## History

The **Conference on Disarmament (CD)**, was recognized by the **Tenth Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly (SSOD-I)** (1978) as a single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. It succeeded other Geneva-based negotiating forums, including the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1960), the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1962-1968) and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (1969-1978).

The CD and its predecessors have negotiated major multilateral arms limitation and disarmament agreements such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.



**SYLLABUS : PRELIMS:** Institutions

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No : 12**

## Agenda items of the CD

Since 1997, the CD has considered the following agenda items:

1. Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.
2. Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters.
3. Prevention of an arms race in outer space.
4. Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.
5. New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons.
6. Comprehensive programme of disarmament.
7. Transparency in armaments.

## Work of the CD

The Conference is comprised of **65 member States**, including the nuclear weapon States and 60 other States. In addition, every year, non-member States participate, upon their request, in the CD's work. Their number reached 50 in 2019, the highest in 20 years.

The CD meets in an annual session, which is divided into three parts of ten, seven and seven weeks, respectively. The first week begins in the penultimate week of January. The CD is presided by its members on a rotating basis. Each President presides for a period of four weeks. In addition to formal and informal plenary meetings, since 2006, an informal coordination mechanism between the six Presidents of the year, in addition to the last President of the preceding year and the first President of the forthcoming year, helps to coordinate the work of the Conference.

The CD adopts its own **Rules of Procedure** and its own agenda, taking into account the recommendations of the General Assembly and the proposals of its member States. The CD conducts its work by consensus. It reports to the General Assembly annually, or more frequently, as appropriate.

The Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, is the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, and she also acts as the personal representative of the United Nations Secretary-General. Staff members of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs Geneva Branch provide substantive and secretariat support to the CD.





**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2: Health**

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 03**

## ASHA workers hit the streets, reject ₹1,000 honorarium increase

**Shrabana Chatterjee**  
KOLKATA

Hundreds of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) took to the streets in Kolkata on Friday to express dissatisfaction with the ₹1,000 hike in their honorarium announced in the West Bengal interim budget a day earlier.

The protesting workers reiterated their long-standing demand for an increase in their monthly honorarium from ₹5,250 to ₹15,000, along with official recognition as healthcare workers. ASHA workers across the State have been on a cease-work protest since the end of December and are only providing emergency services.

### 'More like alms'

ASHA workers from many districts gathered outside Swasthya Bhawan, the headquarters of the State Health Department, on Friday and sought a meeting

with the Health Secretary. However, police barricades were put up, and the protesters were stopped from entering the premises.

The Mamata Banerjee government announced on Thursday that the ASHA workers' honorarium would be increased by ₹1,000, taking the monthly amount to ₹6,250.

"The ₹1,000 they gave us was more like alms. We want to end our protest with dignity, only when our demands are accepted," said a worker.

While the primary demand for a higher honorarium remains unmet, the interim budget has addressed two other key demands - ₹5 lakh compensation in the event of death on duty and maternity leave for pregnant ASHA workers.

Meanwhile, the State government employees held a separate protest over the payment of pending Dearness Allowance.



## About Accredited Social Health Activist

- ASHA is a trained female community health activist.
- The ASHA program was conceived and funded by the Indian National Rural Health Mission (NHRM) in an effort to promote public health awareness amongst local, rural populations, and increase the utilization and accountability of existing health services.
- Selected from the community itself and accountable to it, the ASHA will be trained to work as an interface between the community and the public health system.
- The ASHA scheme is presently in place in all States/UTs (except Goa).
- The states are mandated to employ at least one ASHA worker per every 1000 people.
- They receive basic public health training and are equipped with a standard drug kit, which allows them to deliver first-contact healthcare.
- They are chosen through a rigorous process of selection involving various community groups, self-help groups, Anganwadi Institutions, Block Nodal officer, District Nodal officer, the village Health Committee, and the Gram Sabha.





**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2: Health**

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 03**

## Accredited Social Health Activist Functions

- Act as a care provider at the community level.
- Facilitating access to healthcare, medicine, and sanitation services.
- Raising the level of awareness of health issues among the marginalised sections within the community.
- Advocate for female health and hygiene standards.
- Advocate for a health-conscious behaviour and approach to livelihood.

## Accredited Social Health Activist Selection Criteria

- In rural areas, ASHA must primarily be a woman resident of the village married/widowed/divorced, preferably in the age group of 25 to 45 years and literate, preferably qualified up to 10th standard (formal education up to Class 8).
- In urban areas, ASHA must be a woman resident of the "slum/vulnerable clusters" and belong to that particular vulnerable group which have been identified by the City/District Health Society for selection of ASHA and must have good communication and leadership skills.
- The States have been given the flexibility to relax the population norms as well as the educational qualifications on a case-to-case basis, depending on the local conditions as far as her recruitment is concerned.

## Accredited Social Health Activist Compensation

- An ASHA worker is primarily an "honorary volunteer" but is compensated for her time in specific situations (such as training attendance, monthly reviews, and other meetings).
- On average, an ASHA worker's monthly income varies from Rs 2,000 per month to Rs 7,000 per month, depending on the state.
- In addition, she is eligible for incentives offered under various national health programmes.
- She would also have income from the social marketing of certain healthcare products like condoms, contraceptive pills, sanitary napkins, etc.
- Her work should be so designed that it is done without impinging on her main livelihood and adequate monetary compensation for the time she spends on these tasks- through performance based payments should be provided.



**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2 : International Relations**

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 01**

## \$120 million committed to Chabahar port in Iran completely paid: Centre

**Suhasini Haidar**  
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Friday told Parliament that it has completely paid up its commitment of \$120 million for Chabahar port, well before the U.S. sanctions waiver runs out in April 2026.

Iran's Ambassador to India, however, said the Union government has not so far conveyed its plans for the future of the port, even as Opposition Congress MP Manish Tewari accused the government of acting prematurely to "opt out" of the port deal.

The government's state-



The government's statement indicates it will be unable to manage Chabahar port unless the U.S. withdraws sanctions. GETTY IMAGES

ment, which comes days after it ended its annual Budget allocation for Chabahar port, indicates it will be unable to manage the port unless the U.S. withdraws sanctions. Rather

than risk a drawn-out process later, the government appears to have disbursed its total standing commitment, made in a 10-year MoU with Iran, signed in May 2024.

"India has fulfilled its commitment of contributing \$120 million for the procurement of port equipment," the Ministry of External Affairs said in its response to a query in the Lok Sabha.

"Pursuant to discussions with the U.S. side, the [U.S.] issued guidance extending the conditional sanctions waiver until 26 April 2026. The Government of India remains engaged with all concerned in order to address the implications of these developments," the MEA said.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 8

### About Chabahar Port:

- It is a **deep-water port** located in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province.
- It is on the **Gulf of Oman** at the **mouth of the Strait of Hormuz**.
- It is the **only Iranian port** having **direct access to the Indian Ocean**.
- It consists of **two separate ports** called **Shahid Beheshti** and **Shahid Kalantari**.
- Its geographic **proximity** to countries such as **Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India**, as well as its status as a **key transit center** on the burgeoning **International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**, gives it the potential to develop into one of the most important commercial hubs in the region.
  - INSTC is a **multi-modal transportation route** linking the **Indian Ocean** and the **Persian Gulf** to the **Caspian Sea** via Iran, and onward to **northern Europe** via Saint Petersburg in Russia.
- **Kandla port** in Gujarat is **550 Nautical Miles** from Chabahar port, while the distance between Chabahar and Mumbai is **786 Nautical Miles**.
- **Chabahar Project:**
  - In May 2016, India signed a **tripartite agreement** with Iran and Afghanistan to develop the **Shahid Beheshti Terminal** at Chabahar.
  - It is India's **first foreign port project**.
  - The deal agreement aims to **establish an international transport and transit corridor** in Chabahar.





**SYLLABUS : G.S. 2 : International Relations**

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 01**

• Chabahar Project:

- In May 2016, India signed a tripartite agreement with Iran and Afghanistan to develop the Shahid Beheshti Terminal at Chabahar.
- It is India's first foreign port project.
- The deal agreement aims to establish an international transport and transit corridor in Chabahar.
- The construction of the Chabahar Port and the construction of a rail line from Chabahar Port to Zahedan are the major highlights of this project.
- The idea was that the port would enable India to bypass Pakistan and access Afghanistan, and ultimately Central Asia.
- Moreover, the port could serve as a hub for transit trade between India, Iran, and Afghanistan and provide an alternative route to the traditional Silk Road that passes through China.

## PROJECT ROADMAP



### TRADE CORRIDOR TO BE COMPLETED

- Chabahar port to Zahedan 1,380km

### PARTIALLY COMPLETED

- Zahedan to Zaranj 200km

### COMPLETED

- Zaranj to Delaram 218km



**SYLLABUS : Prelims:** Institutions

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 4**

## HC seeks timeline for filling NCM vacancies, calls Centre's affidavit 'absolutely vague'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday asked the Centre to submit a "better affidavit" on the issue of filling up vacancies that have left the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) non-functional.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia said the previous status report filed by the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Minority Affairs was "absolutely bald and vague".

"It does not say as to when the Ministry initiated the process of appointment and what all are the different stages of the process, and after initiation of the said process, it has progressed to what extent," the court observed.

"We thus require the respondent to file a better affidavit giving the aforesaid details and also putting in place a timeline within which the appointments can be enforced," it ordered.

### Court call

■ The Delhi HC granted two weeks to the Centre to file the affidavit, and listed the matter for hearing on February 27. It said the affidavit didn't say as to when the Ministry initiated the process of appointment and what all are the different stages of the process.

■ The court was dealing with a PIL plea, which stated that the systematic incapacitation of the NCM was due to the govt.'s abject failure to appoint its chairperson, vice-chairperson and all five members.

The court granted two weeks to the Centre to file the affidavit, and listed the matter for hearing on February 27.

The court granted two weeks to the Centre to file the affidavit, and listed the matter for hearing on February 27.

On January 30, the court had expressed concern over the vacancies in the NCM and observed that the commission was a statutory body, which was without any chairperson or member since April last year.

The court was dealing with a public interest litigation (PIL) application by petitioner Mujahid Nafees, who alleged that the complete and systematic incapacitation of the NCM was due to the government's abject failure to appoint its chairperson, vice-chairperson and all five members.

### 'Executive dereliction'

"This executive dereliction has rendered a vital statutory body, created by an Act of Parliament for the protection and welfare of India's notified minority communities, entirely defunct and headless," the plea said.



सत्यमेव जयते

**National Commission for Minorities**  
Ministry of Minority Affairs  
Government of India



## About NCM

The National Commission for Minorities was set up as a statutory body with the enactment of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 by the Parliament. NCM Act, 1992 extends to whole of India. The Act was enforced with effect from 17.5.1993 and amended on 8.9.1995 to provide for a Vice Chairperson in the Commission. As the Act stands after the amendment in 1995, the Commission now consists of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and five Members, out of which 5 Members including the Chairperson shall be from amongst the notified religious minority communities. As per Section 2(c) of the NCM Act, 1992, 'Minority', for the purposes of the NCM Act, means a community notified as such by the Central Government. The functions and responsibilities of the Commission are thus related to the six notified minority communities based on religion namely, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains.

**As per Section 9 (1) of the NCM Act, 1992, the Commission is mandated to perform the following functions:-**

- evaluate the progress of the development of minorities under the Union and States;
- monitor the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution and in laws enacted by Parliament and the State Legislatures;
- Make recommendations for the effective implementation of safeguards for the protections of the interest of minorities by Central Government or the State Governments;
- look into specific complaints regarding deprivation of rights and safeguards of the minorities and take up such matters with the appropriate authorities;





**SYLLABUS : Prelims: Institutions**

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 4**

- (e). cause studies to be undertaken into problems arising out of any discrimination against minorities and recommend measures for their removal;
- (f). conduct studies, research and analysis on the issues relating to socio- economic and educational development of minorities;
- (g). suggest appropriate measures in respect of any minority to be undertaken by the Central Government or the State Governments;
- (h). make periodical or special reports to the Central Government on any matter pertaining to minorities and in particular difficulties confronted by them;
- (i). any other matter which may be referred to it by the Central Government.

**The Commission while performing any of the functions listed in sub- paras (a), (b)& (d) of Para 2 above, has all the powers of a civil court trying a suit and, in particular, in respect of the following matters, namely :-**

- (a). summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of India and examining him on oath;
- (b). requiring the discovery and production of any document;
- (c). receiving evidence on affidavits;
- (d). requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court or office;
- (e). issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses and documents;
- (f). any other matter which may be prescribed.



**SYLLABUS : Prelims :: Mapping**

**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 12**

## BEIRUT

### Lebanon, Syria sign deal to transfer 300 Syrian prisoners back home



AFP

Syria's Justice Minister Mazhar al-Wais and Lebanon's Deputy Prime Minister Tarek Mitri signed an agreement in Beirut on Friday to transfer more than 300 Syrians from Lebanese prisons to continue serving their sentences in their home country. The signing came a week after Lebanon's Cabinet approved a treaty with Syria. AP





**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Conference on Disarmament :**

1. The Conference on Disarmament consists of 80 member states.
2. It submits annual reports, or reports as required, to the United Nations General Assembly.
3. The Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs provides secretariat and substantive support to the Conference.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: b**

**Q2. Consider the following statements regarding Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA):**

1. ASHA workers are trained female health activists who serve as a link between the community and the public health system.
2. The ASHA programme was launched under the National Rural Health Mission.
3. The ASHA scheme is operational in all States and Union Territories of India.

**Which of the statements given above are correct?**

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

**Answer: a**

**Q3. With reference to Chabahar Port, consider the following statements:**

1. It is a deep-water port in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province on the Gulf of Oman.

2. It is Iran's only port with direct access to the Indian Ocean and has two terminals — Shahid Beheshti and Shahid Kalantari.
3. It is a key transit hub on the International North-South Transport Corridor.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

**Answer: c**

**Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the National Commission for Minorities:**

1. It comprises a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and five Members appointed by the Central Government.
2. For the NCM Act, a minority is a community notified as such by the Central Government.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: c**

**Q5. Syria does NOT share a land border with which of the following countries?**

- a) Turkey
- b) Iraq
- c) Jordan
- d) Iran

**Answer: d**





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