



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**17th March 2026**



# Self-perceived gender identity - Transgenders



**CONTEXT:** Provisions under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, has led to protests within the transgender community, calling for the government to withdraw the Bill and protect the right to self-perceived gender identity.

## Transgenders in India – Background

### National Legal Service Authority vs Uoi - 2014

#### Background

- PIL filed due to **systemic discrimination & social exclusion** of transgender persons

#### Supreme Court Findings

- Recognised **transgender as “third gender”**

#### Affirmed:

- **Self-identification of gender**
- **Right to dignity, privacy, equality**

#### Key Directions

- Legal recognition of transgender identity
- **Affirmative action (reservation as SEBC)**

#### Access to:

- Healthcare
- Public facilities
- Awareness & sensitisation measures

## Transgenders in India – status

## THIRD GENDER STATISTICS IN INDIA



**4.8** lakh The total population of transgenders according to the 2011 Census.

Transgenders registered with the Election Commission **30** thousand

As per estimates, there are 50 to 60 lakh transgenders in India. Many hide fearing discrimination.

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



## Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 protects the rights of transgender persons and ensures their social, educational, and economic empowerment. The Act prohibits discrimination in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, housing, and access to public services, ensuring equal opportunities and dignity for transgender persons

#### Key Features

- ▶ Prohibition of discrimination in education, employment, healthcare, housing, and public services
- ▶ Right to self-perceived gender identity through certification
- ▶ Establishment of welfare schemes and programmes for social, economic, and educational support
- ▶ Protection from abuse, violence, and neglect
- ▶ Mandate for inclusive policies across institutions and workplaces



For assistance, support or to report discrimination,

please contact the transgender helpline: 14427

## THE TRANSGENDER PERSONS (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS) ACT, 2019

(k) “transgender person” means a person whose gender does not match with the gender assigned to that person at birth and includes trans-man or trans-woman (whether or not such person has undergone Sex Reassignment Surgery or hormone therapy or laser therapy or such other therapy), person with intersex variations, genderqueer and person having such socio-cultural identities as *kinner*, *hijra*, *aravani* and *jogta*.

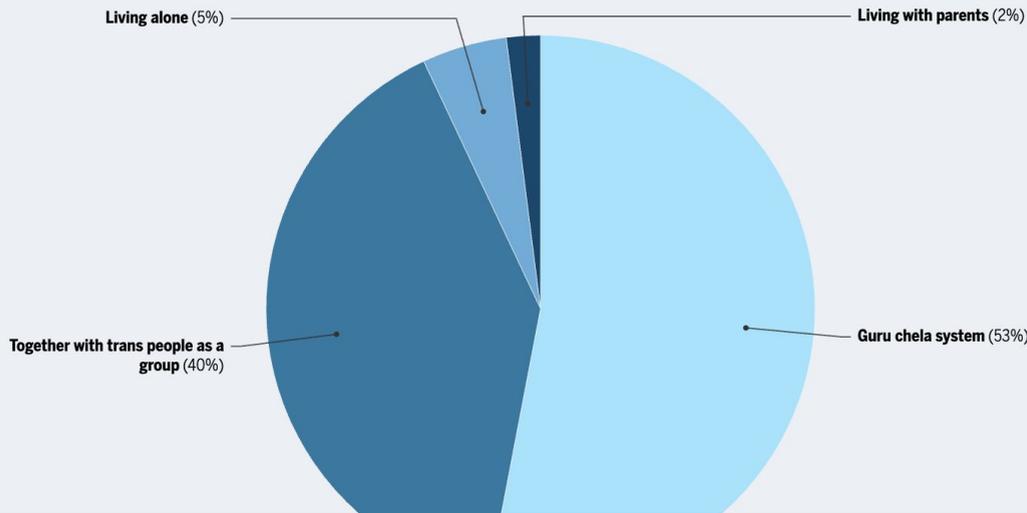


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## Transgender living pattern



## Transgenders in India – Challenges

### 1. Social Exclusion & Stigma

- **99% face social rejection** (NHRC)
- Severe mental health impact: **~31% suicide rate**, ~50% attempt before age 20

### 2. Educational Exclusion

- Literacy rate only **56.1%**
- **52% harassment by peers**, 15% by teachers (high dropout)

### 3. Economic Marginalisation

- **92% face economic exclusion** (NHRC)
- **48% unemployment** (ILO 2022)
- **96% forced into informal/undignified work** (begging/sex work)

### 4. Healthcare Barriers

- **27% denied healthcare** due to gender identity
- Gender-affirming surgery costs **₹2-5 lakh**, mostly uninsured



**99 percent** have suffered social rejection on more than one occasion, including from their family.

**96 percent** of transgenders are denied jobs and are forced to take low paying or undignified work for livelihood



**50 to 60 percent** of transgenders have never attended schools. Those who do face discrimination.

- **30%-50%** of transgender people experience violence at some point.
- **Emotional violence** topped the list, followed by physical violence and sexual violence.
- **Four out of 10** transgender people face sexual abuse before they turn 18.

### AGE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

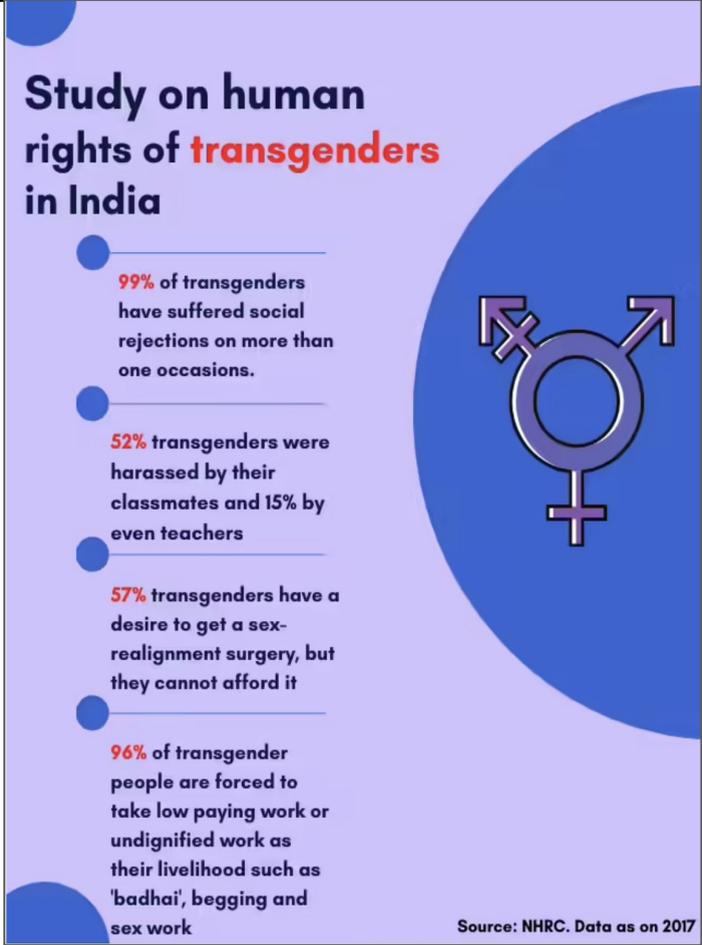


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## Transgenders in India – Challenges

- 5. Data Deficiency & Undercounting**
  - Census 2011 - ~4.88 lakh transgender persons
- 6. Legal & Implementation Gaps**
  - Weak implementation at state level
  - Complex certification process
  - Limited awareness of schemes
- 7. Housing & Civic Exclusion**
  - Discrimination by landlords; frequent eviction
  - Limited inclusion in housing schemes
- 8. Violence & Police Harassment**
  - Higher exposure to **gender-based violence**
  - Reports of **police harassment** and abuse
- 9. Digital & Welfare Exclusion**
  - Difficulty accessing **DBT, welfare platforms**



## Transgenders in India – Government steps

Initiative / Scheme	Year	Features	Target Area
Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019	2019	Legal recognition; prohibits discrimination; right to identity certificate; welfare mandate	Legal protection
Transgender Persons Rules, 2020	2020	Procedure for identity certificate; welfare measures; grievance redressal	Implementation framework
SMILE Scheme	2022	Includes sub-scheme for transgender persons; rehabilitation, skill training, medical support	Livelihood & rehabilitation
Garima Greh	2020	Shelter, food, medical care, skill training for transgender persons	Housing & social security
National Portal for Transgender Persons	2020	Online application for identity certificate & ID card	Identity & governance
National Council for Transgender Persons	2020	Advises govt on policies; monitors implementation; grievance redressal	Institutional mechanism



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## Transgenders in India – Way Ahead

### 1. Strengthen Legal Enforcement

- Ensure **strict implementation** of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019
- Simplify **identity certification** → **move closer to self-identification principle**

### 2. Inclusive Education Ecosystem

- Introduce **gender-sensitisation curriculum** in schools & universities
- Provide **anti-bullying enforcement**
- Train teachers for **inclusive classrooms**

### 3. Economic Empowerment

- Mandate **diversity hiring norms** (public + private sector)
- Expand **skill development + entrepreneurship support**
- Provide **reservation clarity (as per NALSA intent)**

### 4. Accessible & Sensitive Healthcare

- Establish **dedicated transgender health clinics**
- Include **gender-affirming procedures under insurance (Ayushman Bharat)**
- Train medical staff in **gender-sensitive care**

### 5. Social Infrastructure & Dignity

- Create **gender-neutral public facilities** (toilets, hostels, prisons)
- Ensure **safe housing & anti-discrimination enforcement**

### 6. Awareness & Behavioural Change

- Nationwide **IEC campaigns** to reduce stigma
- Promote **positive media representation**
- Engage **community leaders & civil society**

### 7. Institutional & Data Reforms

- Strengthen role of **National Council for Transgender Persons**
- Improve **data collection in Census & surveys**
- Use **data-driven policymaking**

### 8. Capacity Building of Institutions

Mandatory **sensitisation training** for:

- Police
- Judiciary
- Ensure **zero-tolerance for harassment**

## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** “Inclusion of transgender persons requires more than legal safeguards; it demands societal transformation.” Analyse the statement with some policy suggestions. (250 word / 15 Marks)

# Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)



**CONTEXT:** At the climate summit in Belém, Brazil proposed the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) to finance conservation of standing forests. While it signals a shift in climate finance and inclusion of indigenous communities, concerns persist over equity, governance, and whether it truly addresses structural drivers of deforestation.

## Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)

- Innovative multilateral global permanent fund dedicated to **supporting tropical forest conservation over the long-term**.
- Led by the **Government of Brazil** - COP28 (2023) in the United Arab Emirates.
- **Blended finance structure** that seeks to mobilize **US\$125 billion** in capital from public and private sector sources.
- It aims to raise capital from two main sources, **sponsors and market investors** through financial markets by issuing debt instruments such as bonds.
- **Sponsors:** Sponsors would be the 'high income' countries as classified by the World Bank, along with philanthropies. (account for 20 per cent of the total corpus)
- **Market Investors:** Institutional investors, sovereign wealth funds, and endowments (account for 80 per cent of the total corpus) investing through debt instruments.
- **Fund Management:** Through a Multilateral Development Bank (MDB), e.g., World Bank

## Tropical Forest Forever Facility TFF Significance

### 1. Shift in Conservation Paradigm

- Moves beyond **"avoided deforestation"** → **"rewarding preservation"**
- Recognises **ecosystem services value** (carbon sink, biodiversity, rainfall regulation)

### 2. Climate Change Mitigation

- Tropical forests act as **major carbon sinks**
- Essential for achieving **Paris Agreement goals**

### 3. Inclusion of Indigenous Communities

- **20% funds earmarked** for indigenous peoples

people

- Acknowledges their role as **primary forest stewards**

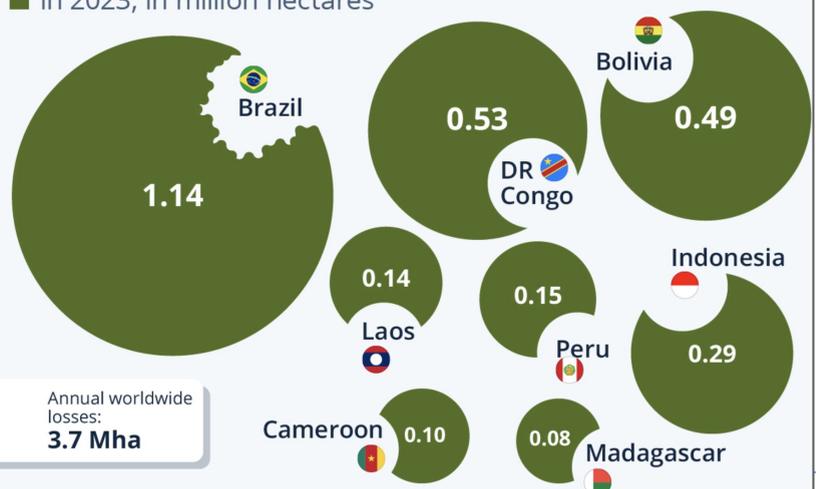
### 4. Innovative Climate Finance Model

- Not just aid → **performance-based financial mechanism**

- Attempts to blend **market logic + conservation goals**

## The Tropical Rainforest Is Disappearing at an Alarming Rate

Countries with the highest primary tropical forest losses in 2023, in million hectares



Source: World Resources Institute (Global Forest Review)

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## Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) – Need

### 1. Persistent Deforestation Drivers

- Agribusiness expansion
- Mining and infrastructure
- Weak governance

### 2. Failure of Traditional Models

- Donor-driven
- Top-down
- Poorly accountable

### 3. Climate Justice Imperative

Forest communities:

- Contribute least to emissions
- Bear disproportionate costs

### 4. Urgency of Amazon Protection

- Amazon nearing **tipping point** → savannisation risk

Tropical primary forest loss, 2002-2023



## Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) – Issues

### 1. Power Imbalance

- Indigenous groups lack **voting rights in governance bodies**
- Risk of **tokenistic participation**

### 2. Market-based Approach Concerns

- Criticism by groups like **Global Forest Coalition**

• Focus on finance may ignore: Structural causes (mining, oil, agribusiness)

### 3. Inadequate Compensation

- ~\$4/hectare (earlier estimates) →
- undervalues ecosystem services

### 4. Leakage & Elite Capture

Funds may be absorbed by:

- National governments
- Intermediaries
- Limited trickle-down to communities

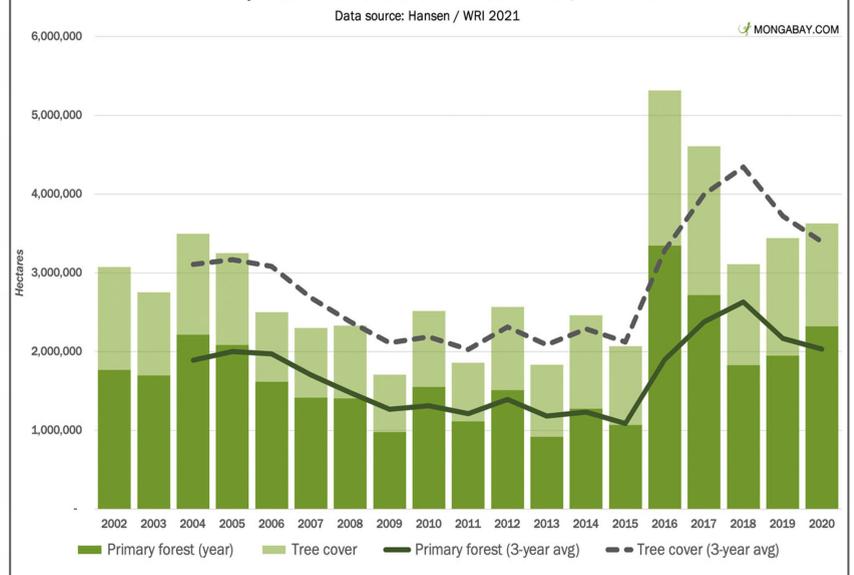
### 5. Weak Accountability Mechanisms

- Transparent monitoring
- Community-led auditing

### 6. Land Rights Issues

- Without **secure land tenure**, conservation remains fragile

Primary forest loss and tree cover loss in the Amazon, 2002-2020



# Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)



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## Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) – Way Ahead

### 1. Community–Centric Governance

- Ensure **decision-making power (not just participation)**
- Provide **voting rights to indigenous representatives**

### 2. Strengthen Land Tenure Security

- Legal recognition of **community forest rights**

### 3. Improve Financial Design

- Increase **payment rates** reflecting full ecosystem value
- Ensure **direct benefit transfer to communities**

### 4. Address Structural Drivers

Regulate:

- Agribusiness expansion
- Extractive industries

### 5. Robust Accountability Framework

- Independent monitoring systems
- Community–led social audits

### 6. Capacity Building & Technology

Use platforms (with **UNDP, FAO**) for:

- Technical assistance
- Data transparency

## Mains Practice Question

*Q. “Market-based climate finance mechanisms may not address the structural causes of deforestation.” Examine in the context of the Tropical Forests Forever Facility (TFFF). (15 Marks / 250 Words)*



**SYLLABUS :** Prelims: Places In News  
**Newspaper:** The Indian Express Page Number: 1

## Prelims Pointers



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: **Places In News**  
**Newspaper:** The Indian Express **Page Number: 1**

## PYQs

### CSE - 2022

Q. The term "Levant" often heard in the news roughly corresponds to which of the following regions?

- a) Region along the eastern Mediterranean shores
- b) Region along North African shores stretching from Egypt to Morocco
- c) Region along Persian Gulf and Horn of Africa
- d) The entire coastal areas of Mediterranean Sea

### CSE – 2015

Q. The area known as 'Golan Heights' sometimes appears in the news in the context of the events related to

- a) Central Asia
- b) Middle East
- c) South-East Asia
- d) Central Africa

### CSE - 2017

Q1. Mediterranean Sea is a border of which of the following countries?

- 1. Jordan
- 2. Iraq
- 3. Lebanon
- 4. Syria

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

### CSE – 2015

Q. Which one of the following countries of South-West Asia does not open out to the Mediterranean Sea?

- a) Syria
- b) Jordan
- c) Lebanon
- d) Israel



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Environment Species in News  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number:** 5

## Prelims Pointers

A tiny crab displaying both male and female biological traits on the same body has been discovered in the Western Ghats. Discovered from the forests of the Silent Valley National Park, this freshwater crab belongs to the species *Vela carli* and is both male and female at the same time.

The dual-sex condition was observed in three crabs found in tree holes in Silent Valley.

*Vela carli* is an endemic freshwater crab found only in the forests and streams of the Central Western Ghats.

The study documents

the first instance of **gynandromorphy** (a rare condition in which individuals exhibit both male and female characteristics) in *Vela carli*. **This phenomenon is rare in crustaceans** and has never before been re-

ported in the freshwater crab family *Gecarcinidae*, according to the researchers.

The study was carried out by K.S. Anoop Das and K.T. Fahis from the Centre for Conservation Ecology,



## Silent Valley National Park

- **Location:** It is located along the southwest corner of the Nilgiris in South India, in the State of Kerala.
- It is **one of the last undisturbed tracts of tropical rainforest** in India.
- It constitutes the centerpiece of the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, sanctified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2012.**
- **River:** Kunthipuzha River.
- **Vegetation:** It has four types of vegetation “**West Coast tropical evergreen forest, southern sub-tropical broad-leaved hill forest, montane wet temperate forest, and grasslands.**”
- **Fauna:** It is famous for its population of **lion-tailed macaques, Nilgiri langur, Malabar giant squirrel, Indian elephant, tiger, leopard, and gaur (Indian bison)**



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: History Places in news  
**GS I Paper : Ancient History**  
**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number: 4**

## Prelims Pointers

### About Keeladi Findings

- **Location:** Keeladi is a village in Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu, situated along the Vaigai River, about 12 km southeast of Madurai.
- **Excavation History:** Excavations began in 2015, initially led by the ASI and later by the Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology after a period of administrative dispute.
- **Artefacts Unearthed:** Over 18,000 artefacts have been discovered, including pottery, inscribed potsherds, gold ornaments, copper articles, semi-precious stones, shell and ivory bangles, glass beads, spindle whorls, terracotta seals, and weaving tools.
- **Pottery and Inscriptions:** The site has yielded heaps of pottery and over 120 potsherds with Tamil Brahmi inscriptions, indicating the long survival of the script and literacy in the region.
- **Urban Settlement:** Findings suggest Keeladi was a well-planned urban settlement with evidence of industries such as pottery, weaving, dyeing, and bead-making.
- **Trade and Lifestyle:** Artefacts like agate and carnelian beads indicate trade networks, while items such as dice and hopscotch pieces reveal leisure activities.
- **Chronology:** The findings have pushed the Sangam Age in Tamil Nadu back to around 800 BCE, suggesting a much older and advanced civilization than previously thought.
- **Link to Other Civilisations:** Some symbols on Keeladi artefacts resemble those of the Indus Valley Civilization, though a cultural gap of about 1,000 years remains. Scholars hope further studies will clarify these connections.



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Awards in News  
**Newspaper:** The Indian Express **Page Number:** 11

## *Prelims Pointers*

### Sahitya Akademi Awards

- It was formally **inaugurated by the Government of India on 12 March 1954.**
- It was **registered as a society** under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- It is the **central institution for literary dialogue, publication and promotion in the country**
- It is the **only institution that undertakes literary activities in 24 Indian languages**, including English.
- Ministry: **An autonomous organization** under the **Ministry of Culture.**
- Head office: **New Delhi**

- It is awarded for the **most outstanding books of literary merit published in any of the major Indian languages** recognised by the Akademi.
- Along with the **22 languages enumerated in the Constitution of India**, the **Sahitya Akademi has recognised English and Rajasthani** as languages in which its programme may be implemented.
- The authors and poets receive a **copper plaque, a shawl and an amount of ₹1 lakh** in an award



**SYLLABUS:** Prelims: Festivals, History and Culture.

**GS I Paper : Art and Culture**

**Newspaper:** The Hindu **Page Number:**

## Prelims Pointers

- **Nature:** Annual syncretic cultural festival symbolising Hindu–Muslim communal harmony.
- **Origin:** Started in 1812 during the reign of Akbar Shah II.
- **Historical Background :** Began after the exile of Mirza Jahangir, son of Akbar Shah II, when the queen vowed to offer a floral chadar if he returned safely.
- **Location:** Celebrated mainly in Mehrauli, Delhi.

**Key Ritual:** Offering of floral fans (Pankhas) and Chadar at

- **Yogmaya Temple** (Hindu shrine)
- **Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki Dargah** (Sufi shrine).
- **Colonial Period:** Festival declined after the **Indian Rebellion of 1857** and banned after 1942 ( **Quit India Movement** )
- **Revival:** Revived in 1962 by **Jawaharlal Nehru** to promote national integration.
- Organized by the **Anjuman Sair-e-Gul Faroshan** with support from the Delhi Government.



**Q1. With reference to the *Levant region*, consider the following statements:**

1. It broadly includes countries along the eastern Mediterranean such as Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan.
2. The term "Levant" is derived from a French word meaning "rising," referring to the direction of the sunrise.
3. Iraq is considered a core part of the Levant region.

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

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

**Answer : b**

**Q2. Which of the following statements regarding Silent Valley National Park is/are correct?**

- a) It is located in the State of Kerala along the southwestern part of the Nilgiris.
- b) It forms the core of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, which was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012.
- c) The Bharathapuzha River directly flows through this national park.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- a) a and b only
- b) b and c only
- c) a and c only
- d) a, b and c

**Answer: a**

**Q3. Which of the following statements regarding the Keeladi excavations is/are correct?**

- a) Keeladi is located in Tamil Nadu along the Vaigai River basin.
- b) The excavations have revealed evidence of an urban settlement with industrial activities such as pottery and bead-making.

c) Findings from Keeladi have pushed the Sangam Age in Tamil Nadu to around 8th century BCE.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

- a) a and b only
- b) b and c only
- c) a and c only
- d) a, b and c

**Answer: d**

**Q4. The Sahitya Akademi Awards are given for works in which of the following languages?**

- a) The 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution
- b) Only Hindi, English and Sanskrit
- c) The 22 Eighth Schedule languages along with English and Rajasthani
- d) All official languages of the 28 States

**Answer: c**

**Q5. With reference to the Sair-e-Gul Faroshan (Phool Walon Ki Sair) festival, consider the following statements:**

- a) It originated during the reign of Akbar Shah II in the early 19th century.
- b) It symbolizes communal harmony and involves offerings at both a Hindu temple and a Sufi dargah.
- c) The festival was continuously celebrated without interruption during the British colonial period.
- d) It was revived after Independence to promote national integration.

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

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only three
- d) All four

**Answer: c**





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