

POLITY / SOCIAL ISSUE

❖ **Laws against black magic and superstition in India**

❖ **CONTEXT: The brutal murders of two women as part of “ritualistic human sacrifices” in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala.**

❖ **What do the numbers tell?**

- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), provides data for deaths due to witchcraft and human sacrifices. As per the 2021 report, six deaths were linked to human sacrifices, while witchcraft was the motive for 68 killings.
- The maximum number of witchcraft cases were reported from Chhattisgarh (20), followed by Madhya Pradesh (18) and Telangana (11). Kerala saw two cases of human sacrifice. In 2020, India saw 88 deaths due to witchcraft and 11 died as part of ‘human sacrifices’.
- Notably, the NCRB doesn’t provide details of occult-related crimes in the country. It also doesn’t state if the overall figure includes victims of witch-hunting attacks, which have been on the rise.
- A private study by an NGO in 2021 found that 12 States reported cases of witch-branding, while 2,300 murders of so-called ‘witches’ were committed between 1999 and 2013 across the country.

❖ **What are the laws in India?**

- In India, there is no central law that exclusively deals with crimes related to witchcraft, superstition, or occult-inspired activities.
- In 2016, MP Raghav Lakhanpal introduced the Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill in the Lok Sabha, but it wasn’t passed. The draft provisions included punishment for accusing or identifying a woman as a witch, use of criminal force against a woman, or torture or humiliation on the pretext of performing witchcraft.
- The Indian Penal Code (IPC) also prescribes punishment for related crimes like abduction and murder, but not for harming others via furthering superstitious and outdated beliefs. In the absence of a nationwide legislation, a few States have enacted laws to counter witchcraft and protect women from deadly ‘witch-hunting’.

➤ **Bihar (1999) :** Bihar was the first State to enact a law to prevent witchcraft, identification of a woman as a witch and “eliminate torture, humiliation and killing of women.” The Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act came into force in October 1999. The Act describes a witch as a “woman who has been identified as a witch by someone else, having the power or intention of harming any person through the art of black magic, evil eyes, or “mantras” and it is deemed that she will cause harm to other people or the community in any manner.

- Anyone who identifies a person as a “witch” and acts to aid this identification can face a jail term of up to three months, or a fine of Rs 1,000, or both. In case of physical or mental torture, the jail term could be extended to six months, and the fine to Rs. 2,000. All offences under the Act are cognisable and non-bailable.

➤ **Jharkhand (2001) :** Jharkhand enacted a similar law in 2001 -- the Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act. The law, however, hasn’t been effective. A document on the Jharkhand Police website claims that the passage of the Act “has not adequately prevented the identification and murder of women labelled as witches.”

- “Given the severity of the outcomes of identification [women as witches], abetment in identification and curing of ‘witches’, which almost inevitably lead to horrific crimes being committed against the women so identified, including death, inhumane treatment, mutilation, rape and various forms of mental and physical torture, the penal provisions of the Act do not adequately punish the instigators of these crimes or prevent others from engaging ” the comment reads.
- In 2021, Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad, the then Chief Justice of Jharkhand High Court, took suo moto cognizance of an incident where five of family in Gumla were killed after a village council sentenced them to death on the charge of being “witches”.

➤ **Chhattisgarh (2005) :** Chhattisgarh is one of the worst-affected States in terms of witchcraft-related crimes and targeted violence against women. A witch is called a “tonahi” in the State. In 2005 the State enacted the Chhattisgarh Tonahi Pratadna Nivaran Act 2005 along the lines of Bihar and Jharkhand.

As per the law, a person convicted for identifying someone as a witch can be sentenced to up to three years of rigorous imprisonment with a fine. The jail term can extend up to five years if the victim is mentally or physically harassed. The law adds that when a fine is imposed, the court shall take into consideration the physical and mental damage caused to the victim including the cost of treatment.

➤ **Odisha (2013) :** Following the directions of the Odisha High Court to frame a law to deal with rising cases of witch-hunting in the State, the Odisha Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill was passed by the Assembly in 2013. The law includes provisions of imprisonment up to seven years and a penalty for offenders. The bill also provides for a penalty for a witch doctor, or a person claiming to be a black magician.

- Earlier in 2022, the Odisha State Commission for Women (SCW) sought stringent provisions in the existing Act after finding them inadequate. The panel demanded both jail and pecuniary punishment for persons found involved in sorcery-related crimes.
- **Maharashtra (2013)** : The Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, 2013 was passed after the murder of anti-superstition activist Dr. Narendra Dabholkar the same year. Dr. Dabholkar headed the anti-superstition outfit Maharashtra Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti (MANS).
- The law was enacted to “bring social awakening and awareness in the society and to create a healthy and safe social environment with a view to protect the common people in the society against the evil and sinister practices”
- It enlists provisions for the prevention and eradication of human sacrifice and other inhuman practices. Punishment under the act is imprisonment of not less than six months and up to seven years, with a fine of not less than Rs 5,000 and up to Rs 50,000.
- **Rajasthan (2015)** : The State enacted the Rajasthan Prevention of Witch-Hunting Act, 2015 to “provide for effective measures to tackle the menace of witch-hunting and prevent the practice of witchcraft.” The law prohibits witch-hunting and practising witchcraft. The punishment for crimes mentioned in the Act goes up to a jail term of not less than one year and up to seven years with a fine of not less than Rs. 50,000.
- A person claiming to have supernatural or magical powers to control or cure a witch can be punished with rigorous imprisonment from one to three years, with a fine not less than Rs 10,000. A person who performs a ritual to free a woman from an evil spirit can face up to three years in prison.
- All those found involved in the unnatural death of a woman due to witch-hunting can be sent to jail for seven years, extendable to imprisonment for life. They may also be fined up to Rs 1 lakh.
- **Assam (2015)** : The Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Act, 2015, which received the President’s assent in 2018, provides for the complete prohibition of witch hunting. “No person shall identify, call, stigmatise, defame or accuse any other person as witch by words, or by signs or indications or by conducts or actions or any other manner or instigate, aid or abet such an act or commit witch hunting.”
- Punishment under the law can go up to seven years with a fine which may extend to Rs 5 lakh. The Act also stipulates punishment for involving the community and lists the measures the police can take to protect people from witch-hunting.
- **Karnataka (2020)** : The Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act, 2017 came into effect in January 2020. The law bans several practices related to black magic and superstition, like forcing a person to walk on fire at religious festivals and the practice of piercing rods from one side of the jaw to the other.
- The law states that a court can direct the police to issue the name of a person convicted under the Act in local newspapers. “Inhuman, evil practices and black magic and advertisement, practice, propagation or promotion of such activities in violation of the Act” is punishable with up to seven years of imprisonment and with a fine ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs 50,000.
- **What about Kerala?**
- The first attempt to frame an anti-superstition law came around a decade ago when back-to-back killings rocked the State. The then Additional Director General of Police (Intelligence), A. Hemachandran, prepared a working draft of the Kerala Exploitation by Superstition (Prevention) Bill in 2014, which covered elements involved in invoking supernatural powers for “wrongful gratification” including those of a monetary or sexual nature. The draft sought to make offences under the Act cognisable and non-bailable. It exempted traditional ceremonies and rituals associated with places of worship or with different faiths.
- The Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishad (KSSP) also submitted a draft ‘Superstitions and Evil Practices (Prevention and Eradication) Bill’ in 2014. In 2015, MLA K. Sivadasan Nair moved a calling attention motion against evil and inhuman practices involving children. Veteran Congress leader P. T. Thomas also moved a private bill against black magic in 2018. All draft legislations, however, failed to see the light of day.
- In 2019, the Kerala Law Reforms Commission, headed by former Supreme Court judge K. T. Thomas, submitted a fresh draft for an anti-black magic law to the State government. The Kerala Prevention of Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices, Sorcery and Black Magic Bill, 2019 proposed strict punishment for any kind of evil practice in the name of black magic — a fine of up to Rs 50,000 and imprisonment of up to seven years, besides the punishments for offences under the Indian Penal Code. The Bill proposed spreading awareness about evil practices and publishing names and details of convicts in newspapers.
- Like the 2014 Bill, the 2019 legislation also excluded harmless rituals performed at home and religious places, festivals, prayers and processions and worship at any religious or spiritual place from its purview. But like its predecessors, the Bill was also in cold storage until October 2022.

- According to the latest reports, in the aftermath of the Elanthoor killings, the Kerala government is likely to consider the Kerala Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices, Sorcery and Black Magic Bill, 2019.

IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

❖ **Is Jerusalem recognised as the capital of Israel?**

❖ **CONTEXT: Australia has revoked its recognition of West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel recently.**

- Former Prime Minister Scott Morrison had formally recognised West Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December 2018 following a similar move by then-U.S. President Donald Trump, although Australia's embassy remained in Tel Aviv.
- Israel considers "complete and united" Jerusalem as its capital. Palestinian officials are of the view that East Jerusalem should be the capital of the future State of Palestine.

❖ **What prompted the move?**

- According to Australia it remains committed to a two-State solution in which "Israel and a future Palestinian state coexist, in peace and security, within internationally recognised borders" and it will not support an approach that undermines this prospect.
- The Australian Government also guaranteed its support to both Israel and Palestine. Australia among the first countries to formally recognise Israel. The government will not waver in its support of Israel and the Jewish community in Australia. The government said it will equally unwavering supporters of the Palestinian people, providing humanitarian support every year since 1951 and advocating for resumed peace negotiations.
- The move was criticised by Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid.
- Palestinian Authority's welcomed the move by Australia as an "affirmation" that Jerusalem's status depends on the final status of talks.

❖ **What is the two-State solution?**

- The internationally-accepted resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict is called the two-State solution. If achieved, the two-State solution will provide for the coexistence of the State of Israel alongside the independent State of Palestine.

❖ **The change in Australian policy**

- Labour Party's Anthony Albanese was elected Australia's prime minister in May 2022, defeating the coalition led by the Conservative Party that ruled for almost a decade.
- When Australia recognised West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in 2018, Mr. Morrison had said that the embassy would be moved from Tel Aviv "when practical, in support of and after final status of determination".
- He announced the establishment of a defence and trade office in West Jerusalem in the interim period. Mr. Morrison had also said that his government was committed to the two-State solution and "resolved to acknowledge the aspirations of the Palestinian people for a future State with its capital in east Jerusalem".
- Both the Israelis and the Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital.

❖ **How is Indonesia involved?**

- Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim nation and Australia's immediate neighbour. Mr. Morrison's earlier announcement of the possible recognition of West Jerusalem as Israel's capital in October 2018 angered Indonesia.
- Due to the ensuing tension, Australia warned its citizens to "exercise a high degree of caution" while travelling to Indonesia due to protests in the capital Jakarta and popular holiday hotspots, including Bali.
- The move to revoke the recognition of West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel has been welcomed by Indonesia.

❖ **Do other countries recognise West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel?**

- Most countries still have their embassies in Tel Aviv and not Jerusalem. Before 1980, many embassies were located in Jerusalem.
- However, U.N. Security Council Resolution 478 urged countries to move their diplomatic missions out of Jerusalem, and 10 countries – Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, the Netherlands, Panama, and Uruguay – complied. Chile, Ecuador, and Venezuela had already withdrawn their missions prior to the adoption of the resolution.
- Costa Rica and El Salvador were the last countries to move their embassies out of Jerusalem in 2006.
- In December 2017, USA under Mr. Trump announced the recognition of West Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The U.S. embassy in Jerusalem opened in May 2018.
- The move, however, was not brand new for the U.S. In 1995, the U.S. Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Act was legally binding; however, a clause allowed Presidents to postpone its application for six months for "national security interests". Bill

Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama re-ratified the clause every six months during their tenure as U.S. Presidents.

- Guatemala followed suit and opened an embassy in Israel two days after the U.S. Paraguay also said that it would move its embassy to Jerusalem but the decision was reversed in just three months when a new government was elected.
- In June 2021, Honduras inaugurated its embassy in Jerusalem. However, a year later, the country's foreign ministry said that it was considering moving the embassy back to Tel Aviv.
- Kosovo opened an embassy in Jerusalem in March 2021., while Suriname announced in May 2022 that it plans to open an embassy in the city, although a definite date was not set.
- In September 2022, British media outlets reported that then-U.K. Prime Minister Liz Truss was considering moving the country's embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and had discussed the same with Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid in a meeting on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.
- India's embassy located at Tel Aviv.
- Israel considers "complete and united" Jerusalem as its capital. Palestinian officials are of the view that East Jerusalem should be the capital of the future State of Palestine.
- Most countries still have their embassies in Tel Aviv and not Jerusalem. Before 1980, many embassies were located in Jerusalem, but a U.N. Security Council Resolution urged countries to move their missions out of Jerusalem

PRELIMS

1. What 'viral spillover risk' means, and how it could lead to new pandemics: Study

- ❖ **CONTEXT:** The effects of climate change range are being witnessed across a range of environments from changes in crop yields due to unreliable weather conditions to the extinction of species. According to new research, yet another effect could be the increased risk of "viral spillover" in some regions that could cause new pandemics over the next few years.

- Climate change could shift the species range of certain viral vectors and reservoirs northwards, and the High Arctic zone could become fertile ground for emerging pandemics. This result was drawn from a research article titled, 'Viral spillover risk increases with climate change in High Arctic lake sediments', which was published recently.

❖ **What is viral spillover?**

- Viruses are some of the most abundant entities on earth, but they need to infect a host's cell in order to replicate. According to the research, these virus/host relationships seem relatively stable within super kingdoms, the major groupings of organisms. However, below this rank, viruses may infect a new host from a reservoir host (in which it usually resides) by being able to transmit sustainably in a novel host – a process defined as 'viral spillover'.

❖ **The study**

- To study the possibility of a viral spillover, researchers from the University of Ottawa collected sediment and soil samples from Lake Hazen in Canada (the largest High Arctic lake by volume in the world, and the region's largest freshwater ecosystem).
- Then they undertook DNA and RNA sequencing to reconstruct the lake area's virus composition. They estimated the spillover risk and found that the chances of a virus moving to a new host increases with runoff from glacier melt, treated by them as a proxy for climate change.
- As temperatures increase, the melting of glaciers increases as well, and there is a greater possibility for previously ice-trapped viruses and bacteria to find new hosts.

❖ **The result**

- In this study, while it was found that the risk of viral spillovers increases with changes in the environment at a particular location, driven by global warming, this by itself does not guarantee a higher possibility of a pandemic occurring via viruses here.
- As long as viruses and their 'bridge vectors' (that act as hosts and lead to their spread) are not simultaneously present in the environment, the likelihood of dramatic events probably remains low. However, that does not by itself signal relief. According to author Climate change leads to shifts in species ranges and distributions, new associations can emerge, bringing in vectors that can mediate viral spillovers, as simulations recently highlight.

2. Scorched-earth tactics

- ❖ **CONTEXT:** German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said Russian President Vladimir Putin was using "energy and hunger" as weapons but his "scorched earth tactics" would not help Russia win the war over Ukraine.

- ❖ **What are scorched earth tactics?**

- Scholz's comments came as Ukraine was forced to ask its residents to cut down on electricity usage amid sustained Russian bombing of energy infrastructure. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky asked his countrymen to limit electricity consumption between 5 pm and 11 pm.
- Scorched earth tactics form part of a military strategy which seeks to destroy anything that could be of use to the enemy, including energy supplies, bridges, provision stores, agricultural fields, road and railway links, etc. The destruction could be carried out by the enemy, or by the retreating army of a country which does not want invaders to use its resources. Harming civilians as part of this strategy has been banned under the 1977 Geneva Convention.
- According to the Oxford Reference, the "term was first used in English in 1937 in a report of the Sino-Japanese conflict, and is apparently a translation of Chinese jiāotǔ."
- The strategy seeks to deplete the enemy's resources to sustain warfare, and also break their morale by inflicting heavy hardships on combatants and non-combatants alike.
- Over the past week, Russia has rained missiles on Ukraine's cities, destroying civilian infrastructure, including power and water supply lines. As winter approaches, lack of electricity is likely to cause serious suffering. Experts have commented that the tactic is being used by Russia as on the actual battlefield, its military is experiencing setbacks.
- According report, Ukrainian cities are "highly dependent on reliable electricity supplies and centralised heating. Any disruption to these during winter can cause pipes to burst and render high-rises uninhabitable."
- ❖ **Some past instances**
- Scorched earth policy has been part of warfare since ancient times, with the nomad Scythians using the tactics in their war against the Persian Achaemenid Empire led by King Darius the Great (who ruled 522 BCE to 486 BCE). The nomadic herders Scythians would hide in the steppes after destroying food supplies and poisoning wells.
- A notable example of the use of this tactic came during the American civil war in 1864, when Union General William Tecumseh Sherman and his soldiers burnt everything in sight as they marched through Confederate areas. The campaign, known as the March to the Sea, is estimated to have cost the South close to \$100 million. Sherman's men pillaged farms, destroyed railway tracks and factories, set fire to cotton crops, and even burnt land deeds so that plantation owners would not be able to prove ownership.
- The campaign played a major role in breaking the will of the Confederacy and hastening the end of the war.
- Russia itself has used scorched-earth tactics before, including in the World Wars. In 1915, the Imperial Russian Army, when retreating from the Imperial German Army, destroyed anything that could serve the invaders for more than 600 miles, including crops, railway lines, and dwellings.
- During the Second World War, in 1941, the Russian army again destroyed telegraph networks and electrical and industrial resources when invaded by Germany.
- ❖ **In India**
- In India, the armies of Maratha leader Chhatrapati Shivaji were known for their scorched earth tactics. Some historians have said that while the Maratha leaders looted and burnt enemy towns, they were under orders to not harm civilians or desecrate religious sites.
- 3. **Are critically endangered Great Indian Bustards(GIB) now migrating to Pakistan?**
- ❖ **CONTEXT:** The recent sighting of three Great Indian Bustards (GIBs) deep in Pakistan's Cholistan desert has given rise to speculation that the endangered birds might have flown across the international border from India's Desert National Park (DNP). GIBs are critically endangered in Pakistan because of lack of protection and rampant hunting.
- ❖ **GIB**
- It is the State bird of Rajasthan and is considered India's most critically endangered bird. Its population of about 150 in Rajasthan accounts for 95% of its total world population.
- It is considered the flagship grassland species, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- Its population is confined mostly to Rajasthan and Gujarat. Small populations occur in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.
- The bird is under constant threats due to collision/electrocution with power transmission lines, hunting (still prevalent in Pakistan), habitat loss and alteration as a result of widespread agricultural expansion, etc.
- As Rajasthan shares the international border with Pakistan's Sindh and Punjab provinces, it is suspected that the GIBs might have flown across to the neighbouring country's desert amid fears that they could become easy prey for the poachers there
- ❖ **Protection**
- International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List: Critically Endangered
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES): Appendix I
- Convention on Migratory Species (CMS): Appendix I

- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule 1

❖ **Measures taken to protect GIB**

- Species Recovery Programme: It is kept under the species recovery programme under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- National Bustard Recovery Plans: It is currently being implemented by conservation agencies.
- Conservation Breeding Facility: MoEF&CC, Rajasthan government and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) have also established a conservation breeding facility in Desert National Park(DNP) at Jaisalmer in June 2019. The objective of the programme is to build up a captive population of Great Indian Bustards and to release the chicks in the wild for increasing the population. As many as 24 GIB chicks are being reared in DNP by a team supported by the International Fund for Houdara Conservation of United Arab Emirates.
- Project Great Indian Bustard: It has been launched by the Rajasthan government with an aim of constructing breeding enclosures for the species and developing infrastructure to reduce human pressure on its habitats.
- Eco-Friendly Measures: Task Force for suggesting eco-friendly measures to mitigate impacts of power transmission lines and other power transmission infrastructures on wildlife including the Great Indian Bustard.

4. **Agni Prime**

❖ **CONTEXT: India successfully test-fired indigenously-developed new generation medium-range ballistic missile Agni Prime from the Odisha coast. The last trial of the missile was conducted on December 18 2021 from the same base, which was also successful.**

- Agni-P is a two-stage canisterised solid propellant missile with dual redundant navigation and guidance system.
- It has been termed as a new generation advanced variant of Agni class of missiles with improved parameters, including manoeuvring and accuracy.
- Canisterisation of missiles reduces the time required to launch the missile while improving the storage and ease of handling.
- The surface-to-surface ballistic missile has a range of 1,000 to 2,000 km.

❖ **Agni Class of Missiles:**

- Agni-class of missiles are the mainstay of India's nuclear launch capability, which also includes the Prithvi short-range ballistic missiles, submarine launched ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft.
- Agni-V, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km, had been tested several times and validated for induction.
- The Agni-P and Agni-5 ballistic missiles trace their origins back to the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP), which was spearheaded by former DRDO chief and ex-Indian president Dr APJ Abdul Kalam in the early 1980s.
- Other Ranges of Agni Missiles:
 - Agni I: Range of 700-800 km.
 - Agni II: Range more than 2000 km.
 - Agni III: Range of more than 2,500 Km
 - Agni IV: Range is more than 3,500 km and can fire from a road mobile launcher.
 - Agni-V: The longest of the Agni series, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km.

5. **State governments cannot enter into broadcasting on their own: I&B Ministry**

❖ **CONTEXT: The Information and Broadcasting Ministry issued an advisory stating that no Ministry or department of the governments at the Centre, States and Union Territories and their associated entities should enter into broadcasting or distribution of broadcasting activities in future.**

- The advisory had been issued in view of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India's (TRAI) recommendation, the Supreme Court judgment in the Cricket Association of Bengal case and the Law Ministry's legal opinion
- **The Recent Guidelines:** The entry of Central/State/Union Territory governments into the broadcast activity for educational purposes would be allowed through Prasar Bharati route via "suitable". All such existing activities would also have to be brought under its purview. Till then, uninterrupted broadcast of the on-going education channels and other scheduled programmes would be allowed. Under the existing policy guidelines, government universities, colleges, schools, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, certain autonomous bodies and agricultural universities are eligible to set up community radios.
- **Suggestions of TRAI:** In 2012, the TRAI had suggested that the Central and State governments, their companies, undertakings, joint ventures with the private sector and the entities funded by the governments should not be allowed to enter the business of broadcasting and, or, distribution of TV channels. It relied upon the Sarkaria Commission's recommendation and the 'Cricket Association case'

- **Supreme Courts' Verdict:** The SC has observed that public service broadcasting should be in the hands of a corporations set up under a statute and the constitution of such a corporations should be such as to ensure their impartiality in political, economic and social matters and on other public issues.

ANSWER WRITTING

Q. Discuss the meaning of colour-coded weather warnings for cyclone prone areas given by India Meteorological Department.

The IMD uses four colour-coded weather warnings to signify the intensity of the weather situation and alert people about possible widespread disruption or danger to life:

- Green (All is well): No advisory is issued.
- Yellow (Be Aware): Yellow indicates severely bad weather spanning across several days. It also suggests that the weather could change for the worse, causing disruption in day-to-day activities.
- Orange (Be prepared): The orange alert is issued as a warning of extremely bad weather with the potential of disruption in commute with road and rail closures, and interruption of power supply.
- Red (Take Action): When extremely bad weather conditions are certainly going to disrupt travel and power and have significant risk to life, the red alert is issued.

In Cyclone prone areas, the IMD issues cyclone warnings to state government officials in four stages:

- Pre-Cyclone Watch - It is issued 72 hours prior and contains early warning about the development of a cyclonic disturbance in the north Indian Ocean.
- Cyclone Alert - It is issued at least 48 hours prior to the expected commencement of adverse weather over the coastal areas.
- Cyclone Warning - It is issued at least 24 hours in advance. Landfall point is forecast at this stage.
- Post Landfall Outlook - it is issued at least 12 hours in advance of the expected time of landfall. It gives the likely direction of movement of the cyclone after its landfall.

Stage of Warning	Colour Code
Cyclone Alert	Yellow
Cyclone Warning	Orange
Post landfall out look	Red

MCQs

1. With reference to India's Desert National Park, which of the following statements are correct?
 1. It is spread over two districts.
 2. There is no human habitation inside the Park.
 3. It is one of the natural habitats of the Great Indian Bustard.
 Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) **1 and 3 only**
 - d) 1, 2 and 3
2. With reference to Agni P missile consider the following statements
 1. The Agni P is a two-stage canisterised solid propellant Surface to Air ballistic missile.
 2. The missile has a range capability more than Agni V missile
 Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?
 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) **Neither 1 nor 2**
3. Consider the following statements
 1. Prasar Bharati, is an independent statutory, autonomous body set up by an Act of Parliament.
 2. Reuters Institute' Digital News Report 2021 'revealed that DD News and All India Radio are the most trusted News brands in India
 3. Prasar Bharati does not come under the preview of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).
 Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?
 - a) **1 and 2 only**
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 1 and 3 only
 - d) 2 only
4. Consider the following statements:
 1. Asiatic lion is naturally found in India only.

2. Double-humped camel is naturally found in India only.
 3. One-horned rhinoceros is naturally found in India only.
 4. Great Indian Bustard is naturally found in India only.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) **1 only**
 - b) 2 and 4 only
 - c) 1 and 3 only
 - d) 1, 2, 3 and 4
5. With reference to Scorched earth tactics often mentioned in news consider the following
1. Scorched earth tactics is a military strategy used by countries generally over enemy nations
 2. It is a modern warfare technique evolved during WW II
- Choose the correct statement/s using the codes given below
- a) **1 only**
 - b) 2 only
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
6. Israel does not share border with which of the following country?
- a) Iraq
 - b) **Syria**
 - c) Egypt
 - d) Jordan
7. Consider the following statements
1. In India, there is no central law that exclusively deals with crimes related to witchcraft, superstition, or occult-inspired activities.
 2. Bihar is the first state to enact a law related to witchcraft.
 3. Recently a private members bill has been introduced in Lok sabha over witch prohibition.
- Choose the incorrect statement/s using the codes given below
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 1 and 3 only
 - d) **3 only**
8. Recently National Crisis Management Committee has been reviewed the status of cyclone over Bay of Bengal, is headed by:
- a) Prime minister of India
 - b) President of India
 - c) **Cabinet Secretary**
 - d) Principal secretary
9. With reference to Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) consider the followings
1. A Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) is an agricultural extension center in India.
 2. KVKs are set up under PM-Krishi Kalyan Yojana.
 3. The first KVK was established in Pondicherry.
- Choose the correct statement/s using the codes given below
- a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) **1 and 3 only**
 - d) All of the above
10. Recently Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate change participated in Ministerial Meeting of Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC), with reference to LMDC consider the following statements.
1. They represent more than 50% of the world's population.
 2. India is a member of Like Minded group.
 3. The recent ministerial conference which was hosted by India is titled as 'Preparations for COP 27 on Climate Change – Expectations and Challenges'
- Which of the above statement/s is/are correct?
- a) **1 and 2 only**
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) 1 and 3 only
 - d) 1 only