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Q77

**The term 'Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership' often appears in the news in the context of the affairs of a group of countries known as (a) G20 (b) ASEAN (c) SCO (d) SAARC Official key: B.**

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2016 · General Studies · 2 marks · Economy

Indian economy, budget, schemes - Prelims GS Paper I.

**Explanation****(a)**

G20 is a leaders' forum on the global economy. RCEP is not a G20 trade bloc. This option is not the key.

**(b) Official key**

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is a proposed (later concluded) mega-FTA negotiated by ASEAN and its six FTA partners (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand - India later stepped back). News of RCEP therefore appears in the context of ASEAN-centred regional trade. That is why (b) is the official key.

**(c)**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a Eurasian security-and-politics grouping, not the RCEP table. This option is wrong.

**(d)**

SAARC is the South Asian association; RCEP is East Asian/ASEAN-centred, not a SAARC FTA. This option is not the key.

**Summary**

Official key is (b) ASEAN. RCEP was launched at the 2012 ASEAN Summit to consolidate **ASEAN+1 FTAs** into one regional partnership. G20, SCO and SAARC are different clubs. India participated in negotiations for years and did not join the 2020 signing. The question only asks the group in whose affairs the term appears: ASEAN.

**Related possible facts**

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

**ASEAN+1 FTAs**

ASEAN's existing deals with China, Japan, Korea, India, Australia-New Zealand

**Signed**

November 2020, without India

**India's withdrawal**

Announced at the 2019 RCEP summit over goods, agriculture and rules-of-origin concerns

**CPTPP**

Another Asia-Pacific mega-FTA; distinct from RCEP

**ASEAN centrality**

Diplomatic claim that East Asian economic architecture should revolve around ASEAN

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