



EMINENT IAS

EXPLANATIONS OF
Current Affairs
Test Series - 2021

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Explanations of Current Affairs Test - 1

Question 1.

“Rule of Law Index” recently in news was released by which of the following?

- a) International Court of Justice
- b) World Justice Project
- c) International Law Commission
- d) Permanent Court of International Justice

Answer 1. B

- Recently the Supreme Court refused to entertain a plea seeking a direction to the Centre, states and UTs to set up expert committees to improve India’s “pathetic” 69th global ranking on the Rule of Law Index (RLI).
- The petition said that India has never been ranked even among top 50 in the Index, but successive governments did nothing to improve international ranking of India.
- The Supreme Court asked the government to treat the petition, as a “representation” and decide the issue within six months.

About Rule of Law Index (RLI)

- Rule of Law Index is the world’s leading source for original, independent data on the rule of law. It is released by the World Justice Project (WJP) which is an independent, multidisciplinary organization working to advance the rule of law worldwide.

- Covering 128 countries and jurisdictions, the Index relies on more than 130,000 household surveys and 4,000 legal practitioners and experts around the world.

- It measures countries' rule of law performance across eight factors: Constraints on Government Powers, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice.'

Question 2 - . The Urban Learning Internship Programme (TULIP) is an initiative of:

- 1. All India Council of Technical Education**
- 2. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**
- 3. Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**
- 4. Ministry of Commerce and Industry**

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- The All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) and Ministry of State for Housing and Urban Affairs have collaboratively released The Urban Learning Internship Programme (TULIP). It aims to provide one crore internships till 2025.

- Technical support for the platform shall be anchored by AICTE and the programmatic non-technical support shall be anchored by MoHUA.
- Applicants must be Indian citizens who have completed their final year of college within the last 18 months. Internship durations can range from eight weeks to one year.
- Interns will work with urban local bodies as well as established government programmes, including the Swachh Bharat and Smart City plan among others.
- City administrations can register available opportunities on the portal, ranging from positions in urban planning or water supply and waste management to slum improvement and digital governance.
- The programme does not have any budget of its own, but the 100 smart cities and 4,400 urban local bodies can use the administrative expenses allocated by the Centre to pay stipends or perks, if they wish to.
- State Governments/Union Territories are also urged to explore scaling up TULIP to parastatal agencies/ State Financial intermediaries and other organizations/ agencies related to urban development in their respective jurisdictions. Since the technology platform for TULIP is open, scalable and federated, such additions would be very easily possible

Question 3 - . Consider the following statements about Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan (GKRA):

1. GKRA will be implemented in all the states of the country.
2. Ministry of Labour and Employment will be the nodal ministry for GKRA.

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: D

Explanation:

- **The Prime Minister recently launched the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan, a skill-based employment scheme aimed primarily at migrant workers who have returned to their villages to escape the Covid lockdown distress.**
- **A total of 116 districts (including 27 aspirational districts) across Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Odisha have been chosen for the campaign.**
- **The jobs selected in the campaign will enable proper utilisation of the strength and skill of the people and will enable the country to convert Covid crisis into an opportunity.**

Institutional set-up

- **The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal Ministry for the campaign and the campaign will be implemented in close coordination with the State Governments.**
- **The Abhiyaan will be a convergent effort between 12 different Ministries/Departments, namely; Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Road Transport & Highways, Mines, Drinking Water & Sanitation, Environment, Railways, Petroleum & Natural Gas, New & Renewable Energy, Border Roads, Telecom and Agriculture.**

Question 4 - . Consider the following statements about the GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) Alliance:

- 1. GAVI Alliance has an observer status at WHO.**
- 2. GAVI Alliance is a public private health partnership which aims at increasing access to immunisation in poor countries.**

3. The GAVI Alliance includes WHO, UNICEF and World Bank.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

- A \$2 billion procurement fund aimed at ensuring that poorer countries can access doses of a potential coronavirus vaccine has been announced at the third Gavi vaccine alliance replenishment summit, hosted by the UK. During the summit, India also pledged \$15 million to Gavi.**
- The fund is modelled on previous work Gavi has done with pneumococcal and Ebola vaccines.**
- The summit deliberated upon a mechanism to ensure that any effective coronavirus vaccine is produced at a scale possible to ensure its equitable distribution.**
- This global cooperation is necessary to prevent a worldwide rush for the Covid vaccine (similar to masks and ventilators), which can negatively impact the availability of vaccine in poor countries. GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance**
- Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance is a public-private global health partnership with the goal of increasing access to immunisation in poor countries.**
- The Alliance brings together countries which introduce vaccines, donors, the WHO which sets standards for vaccines, manufacturers, UNICEF which manages**

procurement, the World Bank which manages funds and civil society which holds others to account.

- GAVI's approach to public health has been described as business-oriented and technology-focused, using market-oriented measures and seeking quantifiable results.
- Gavi now vaccinates almost half of the world's children, giving it tremendous power to negotiate vaccines at prices that are affordable for the poorest countries and to remove the commercial risks that previously kept manufacturers from serving them.
- Due to these market shaping efforts, the cost of fully-immunising a child with all 11 WHO recommended childhood vaccines now costs US\$ 28 in Gavi-supported countries, compared to about US\$ 1,100 in the US.

Question 5 - Which of the following is not a source of funding for Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY)?

- a) Funds from Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme
- b) Corporate Social Responsibility funds.
- c) Budgetary allocation for SAGY
- d) State Finance Commission Grants

Answer: C

Explanation:

The Common Review Mission (CRM)-2019, an audit of rural schemes, commissioned by the Ministry of Rural Development, has found the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) to be ineffective in bringing about development in chosen gram panchayats.

[Findings Of The Audit](#)

- In many of the SAGY villages, MPs did not give any significant money from MPLADS. In isolated cases, where MPs have been pro-active, some infrastructure development has taken place, but the scheme has not made any noticeable impact.
- With each passing year, fewer MPs have been adopting villages under SAGY. In Phase-1 of SAGY, 703 MPs had adopted gram panchayats but that number went down to 497 in Phase-2 and 301 in Phase-3, showing a gradual decline in subsequent phases.
- Till the end of December 2019, only 252 MPs have adopted gram panchayats under Phase-4 of SAGY — 208 members of Lok Sabha and 44 members of Rajya Sabha.
- The reasons for low adoption are two-fold - there was a concern that picking one village may lead to losing out on votes from other villages in their constituencies, while the absence of budget too played its part.
- The CRM is of the opinion that in the current format, the scheme is not achieving the desired purpose and recommended the Ministry to review the scheme for enhancing its impact.

Findings Of The Audit On Roads

- The CRM has expressed concern over the quality of roads constructed under schemes of state governments and maintenance of rural roads under central Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) after the end of five-year warranty period.
- The audit has urged the Centre to frame a “National Rural Road Policy” to ensure uniform norms of construction and maintenance, irrespective of whether the road belongs to a state scheme or PMGSY.
- It has also urged the Centre to examine if the finance commission can provide funds for maintenance of rural roads, as many states have requested that the Centre should share cost of maintenance.

Question 6 - . Consider the following statements about PM Svanidhi scheme:

- 1. PM Svanidhi provides working capital loans to street vendors.**
- 2. Under PM Svanidhi, SIDBI will manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions.**
- 3. Loans under PM Svanidhi are collateral free.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched PM Svanidhi, 'Pradhan Mantri Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi' - a micro-credit scheme for street vendors.**
- The lockdown has affected the lives and livelihoods of many especially daily wagers including street vendors whose businesses were affected due to the restrictions.**
 - They usually work with a small capital base taken on very high interest rates (sometimes as high as 1% per day- amounting to nearly 400% per annum) from informal sources.**
 - Further, they might have consumed their savings and high cost capital during the lockdown.**

Therefore, there is an urgent need to provide affordable credit for working capital through formal banking channel to street vendors to help them resume their business.

Highlights Of The Scheme

- The Scheme which will be valid till March 2022 and is aimed at benefiting over 50 lakh vendors who had their businesses operational on or before March 24.
- Vendors can avail working capital loan of up to ₹10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments within one year. The loans would be without collateral.
- On timely/early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy of 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) on six-months basis. There will be no penalty on early repayment of loan.
- A timely repayment will also ensure that the vendor gets a credible credit score and are eligible for a higher loan. The scheme also incentivises digital transactions by the street vendors through monthly cash back.
- Moreover, a digital platform is being developed to administer the scheme, which will also help in integrating the vendors into the formal financial system. This platform will integrate the web portal or mobile app with UdyamiMitra portal of SIDBI for credit management and PAiSA portal of MoHUA to administer interest subsidy automatically.

Question 7 - . Consider the following statements about Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS):

1. PLFS is conducted by Ministry of Labour and Employment.
2. The Labour Force Participation Rate under PLFS includes both people who are working and people who are seeking work.

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: B

Explanation:

- According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India's unemployment rate has improved from the 45-year high of 6.1% in 2017-18 to 5.8% in 2018-19.
- The labour force participation rate has also improved marginally from 36.9% in 2017-18 to 37.5% in 2018-19. The report shows the dip came across all categories, though women and rural workers showed the most improvement.
- The survey was conducted during July 2018-June 2019, covering 1,01,579 households (55,812 in rural areas and 45,767 in urban areas) and surveying 4,20,757 persons (2,39,817 in rural areas and 1,80,940 in urban areas).

Various Indicators Under PLFS

- **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR):** LFPR is defined as the percentage of persons in labour force (i.e. working or seeking work or are available for work) in the population.
- **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** is defined as the percentage of employed persons in the population.
- **Unemployment Rate (UR):** UR is defined as the percentage of persons unemployed among the persons in the labour force.

Question 8 - . Consider the following statements about Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS):

- 1. Minors are not allowed to remit money under LRS.**
- 2. Transactions under LRS are allowed only for current account transactions.**

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: D

Explanation

- As Covid and the lockdown cripple the global economy and ground international travel, the amount of money Indians send abroad has plunged to a 50-month low.

- In April 2020, Indians remitted just \$499.14 million under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS)

— a 61% decline from \$1,287.91 million in the same month last year. The monthly outward flow in April 2020 is lowest since February 2016 when it was \$449.28 million.

- Substantial decline has been recorded in money sent for purchase of immovable property abroad; investment in equity/debt; deposit; gift; medical treatment; and other categories during April 2020.

The only exception is “donations” which contribute a negligible amount to the total outflows.

- Remittances sent for travel purposes have been worst hit with the outward flow falling by about 72% in this period.

- Meanwhile, the money sent for education has also seen a hit and has declined by nearly 70%. More than 7 lakh Indian students were studying at foreign institutions in 2018.

- “Maintenance of close relatives” category, which contributes the highest amount to total outward remittances under LRS has recorded a decline of 50%. Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS)

- The Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allows resident individuals, including minors, to remit a certain amount of money during a financial year to another country for investment and expenditure. The Scheme is not available to corporates, partnership firms, Hindu Undivided Family (HUF), Trusts etc.

- According to the prevailing regulations, resident individuals may remit up to \$250,000 per financial year. This money can be used to pay expenses related to travelling (private or for business), medical treatment, studying, gifts and donations, maintenance of close relatives and so on.

- Apart from this, the remitted amount can also be invested in shares, debt instruments, and be used to buy immovable properties in overseas market.

- Individuals can also open, maintain and hold foreign currency accounts with banks outside India for carrying out transactions permitted under the scheme.

Question 9 - Which of the following is true about the Five Eyes (FVEY) network?

a) It is a surveillance mechanism of China

b) It is an intelligence sharing alliance between five countries.

c) It is border surveillance mechanism employed by India

d) None of the above

Answer: B

Explanation

UN -75 Declaration

- A commemorative declaration marking the 75th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations (UN) Charter was delayed.

- It was due to the fact that member states could not reach an agreement on phraseology.

- The declaration by the “Heads of State and Government representing the peoples of the world” to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the UN is to be adopted on September 21, 2020

What Was The Issue

- The draft declaration used a phraseology that read - “to realise our shared vision for a common future”.
- The Five Eyes (FVEY)— Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States— along with India, objected to this phrase.
- The reason the six countries objected to this phrase is because ‘shared vision for a common future’ has some similarity to wording used by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to describe its foreign policy aspirations.
- As a result, ambassador of UK, on behalf of these six countries, broke the silence procedure by raising the objection.
- These countries wanted this wording to be replaced with “to realise our shared vision for a better future as envisaged in the preamble of the UN Charter.”

Question 10 - Athirappally Hydro Electric Project recently in news is proposed to be set up in which among the following states?

- a) Tamil Nadu
- b) Kerala
- c) Maharashtra
- d) Andhra Pradesh

Answer: B

Explanation:

The Kerala government has given the go-ahead for the proposed 163-megawatt (MW) Athirappally Hydro Electric Project (AHEP) on the Chalakudy river in Thrissur district.

Criticisms:

- **Athirappilly project will hit livelihood of over 12 lakh people living on its banks, as they depend on the Chalakudy river for drinking and irrigation water.**
- **According to studies, about 48 per cent of the water from the Chalakudy river is diverted to Tamil Nadu and there is also diversion to the Edamalayar reservoir. The Athirappilly hydroelectric project will be another blow because the project is designed to install a 163-megawatt generator in an area suitable only for 20 MW generation.**
- **The project would be an environmental disaster in the making and would sever the only link between the Peechi Vazhani Wildlife Sanctuary and the Idamalayar basin of the Periyar river.**
- **The vital elephant corridor between the Parambikulam Sanctuary and the Pooyamkutty forests would also be affected. Apart from being home to hornbills, tigers and leopards, the forests also host the Nilgiri langur, the lion-tailed macaque and the rare Cochin forest cane turtle.**
- **On the tourism front, the project would wipe out the majestic Athirappally and Vazhachal waterfalls, which draw 0.6 million domestic and foreign tourists every year.**

Question 11- . 'Jet Zero plan' recently in news was announced by which among the following countries?

- a) India**
- b) Russia**
- c) UK**
- d) Canada**

Answer: C

Explanation:

- **UK announces 'Jet Zero' plan, which aims to drive down greenhouse gas emissions from aviation to make carbon-free transatlantic flights possible within a generation.**
- **The government has formed a group bringing together leaders from aviation, environmental groups and government to form the "Jet Zero Council". This group will be charged with making net zero emissions possible for future flights.**
- **Aviation emissions currently account for more than 2% of global greenhouse gases, and have risen by 70% since 2005. The International Civil Aviation Organization forecasts that they will rise another 300% by 2050 in the absence of measures to bring them down.**

Question12 - . Presena glacier, recently in news, was located in which among the following countries?

- a) Italy**
- b) Argentina**
- c) Canada**
- d) Greenland**

Answer: A

Explanation:

- **A team of conservationists has begun the process of laying vast tarpaulin sheets to cover over 100,000 sq metres of the Presena glacier in Northern Italy to prevent it from melting due to global warming. The six-week process is repeated every year once the ski season is over and summer begins in full force.**
- **Geotextile tarpaulins that reflect sunlight, maintains a temperature lower than the external one, and preserves as much snow as possible**

Question 13 - . Consider the following statements about Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI)

1. It is the only central public sector undertaking dedicated to the solar energy sector.

2. It works under the administrative control of Ministry of Power

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: A

Explanation:

The State-run renewable energy agency SECI has awarded Adani Group's renewable energy arm a project to build an 8 GW solar power plant and 2 GW of additional solar cell and module manufacturing capacity over the next five years.

About Solar Energy Corporation of India

• SECI is a CPSU under the administrative control of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), set up on 20th Sept, 2011 to facilitate the implementation of Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM) and achievement of targets set therein.

• It is the only CPSU dedicated to the solar energy sector.

• The company is responsible for implementation of a number of schemes of MNRE, major ones being the VGF schemes for large-scale grid-connected projects under JNNSM, solar park scheme and gridconnected solar rooftop

scheme, along with a host of other specialized schemes such as defence scheme, canal-top scheme, Indo-Pak border scheme etc.

Question 14 - Consider the following statements with respect to 'Xenobots'.

- 1. It is both a living thing made of living cells and a machine that the researchers can program to express certain behaviors.**
- 2. It is named after the species of aquatic frog found across sub-Saharan Africa from Nigeria and Sudan to South Africa.**

Select the correct statements

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

Solution (c)

Scientists in the United States have created the world's first "living machines" — tiny robots built from the cells of the African clawed frog, that can move around on their own. They have named the millimetre-wide robots "xenobots" — after the species of aquatic frog found across sub-Saharan Africa from Nigeria and Sudan to South Africa, *Xenopus laevis*. They are "neither a traditional robot nor a known species of animal", but "a new class of artifact: a living, programmable organism".

Question 15 - Which of the following statements is correct with respect to 'Crew Dragon'?

- a) It is a spaceship built by SpaceX**
- b) It is a submarine indigenously built by India.**

c) It is a UAV developed by China.

d) It is a supersonic missile developed by Russia.

Solution (a)

Two NASA astronauts, Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley, flew onboard a spaceship named Crew Dragon built by SpaceX

Question 16 - . Consider the following statements:

1. Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairman of the PM CARES Fund.

2. Minister of Defence, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India are ex-officio Trustees of the Fund.

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 Only

(b) 2 Only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (a)

Explanation:

• What is PM CARES fund:

o The PM CARES Fund was created on 28 March 2020, “with the primary objective of dealing with any kind of emergency or distress situation, like posed by the COVID-19 pandemic”.

o It is a “public charitable trust”.

• Who administers the fund?

o Prime Minister is the ex-officio Chairman of the PM CARES Fund and Minister of Defence, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Finance, Government of India are ex-officio Trustees of the Fund.

o Minister of Health and Family Welfare is not ex-officio Trustees of the Fund.

Question 16 - 'INS Kalinga' sometimes mentioned in the news, it is a/an/the:

(a) War Ship

(b) Offshore patrol vessels

(c) Naval station

(d) Landing ship tanks

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

- INS Kalinga is a premier Naval Establishment located on the Visakhapatnam–Bheemunipatnam beach road under the Eastern Naval Command.

Question 17 - . 'Band-tail scorpionfish', a rare fish, which was found recently from:

(a) Sethukarai

(b) Kanyakumari

(c) Pulicat

(d) Muttukadu

Ans: (a)

Explanation:

- Researchers have found a rare fish from Sethukarai coast in the Gulf of Mannar. This was the first time that the particular species was found alive in Indian waters.

- It is well-known for its stinging venomous spines and ability to change colour.
- The fish is called 'scorpionfish' because its spines contain neurotoxic venom.

Question 18 - 'Ishaat Hussain panel', sometimes mentioned in the news with reference to:

- (a) Corporate social responsibility**
- (b) Scientific social responsibility**
- (c) Social stock exchanges**
- (d) Environment social responsibility**

Ans: (c) Explanation:

- A working group constituted by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on social stock exchanges has submitted its recommendations.
- Terms of reference of the panel:
 - o The panel was set up by Sebi in September 2019 under the Chairmanship of Ishaat Hussain, Director at SBI Foundation and former Finance Director at Tata Sons, to suggest possible structures and regulations for creating SSE to facilitate listing and fund-raising by social enterprises as well as voluntary organisations.

Question 19- 'Ultra Swachh', is a disinfection unit, developed by:

- (a) NAL**
- (b) BHEL**
- (c) CSIR**
- (d) DRDO**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- It is a disinfection unit to disinfect a wide range of materials, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), electronics items, fabrics, etc.
- Developed by DRDO.
- The system uses an advanced oxidative process comprising of multiple barrier disruption approach using Ozonated Space Technology for disinfection.

Question 20 - Consider the following statements with respect to 'Great White Sharks'.

1. It is listed as 'Critically Endangered' under the IUCN Red List.
2. Young white sharks take birth in designated 'nurseries', where they are protected from other predators until they grow into adults.

Select the correct statements

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

Solution (b)

- Scientists have discovered the fossilised remains of a nursery area of the great white shark in several sites along the Pacific coast of Chile and Peru, dating back to over two to five million years ago.
- The great white shark is on the brink of extinction, due to its very slow growth and late reproduction with only few offspring — along with disturbances due to human activities.
- Young white sharks take birth in designated 'nurseries', where they can be protected from other predators until they grow into adults. Better

understanding and protecting such nurseries could be key in preventing the extinction of the marine predator.

- This paleo-nursery was active at a time when the climate was much warmer than today, so researchers are considering it to be a window into how global warming may be affecting present day nurseries.
- IUCN – Vulnerable.
- The White Shark is wide-ranging throughout most temperate and tropical oceans but occurs most frequently in temperate waters.

Question 21- Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Cyclones formed in the Bay of Bengal side of the north Indian Ocean are more frequent and stonger than those on the Arabian Sea side.
2. Cyclone Nisarga was formed due to a 'deep depression' in the Bay of Bengal.

Select the correct code:

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

Solution (a)

- Cyclones formed in the Bay of Bengal side of the north Indian Ocean are more frequent and stonger than those on the Arabian Sea side.
- The relatively cold waters of the Arabian Sea discourage the kind of very strong cyclones that are formed on the Bay of Bengal side.
- Cyclone Nisaraga is headed towards the coastline of north Maharashtra and south Gujarat.

Question 22 - "Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana" primarily deals with

- a) Horticulture
- b) Organic Farming
- c) Conservation Agriculture
- d) Zero Budget Natural Farming

Solution (b)

- Under PKVY Organic farming is promoted through adoption of organic village by cluster approach and Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) certification.

Question 23- 'Arsenicum album' was in news recently. What is it?

- a) A chemical to treat waste water
- b) A seaweed which prevents algal bloom
- c) A species of night frog from Western Ghats
- d) A homeopathic medicine to treat anxiety

Solution (d)

☒ A homoeopathic drug, Arsenicum album 30, has become a subject of debate after several states recommended it for prophylactic (preventive) use against Covid-19.

☒ This was after the Ministry of AYUSH listed the drug among “preventive and prophylactic simple remedies” against Covid-19.

☒ Arsenicum album 30, daily once in empty stomach for three days. The dose should be repeated after one month by following the same schedule till Corona virus infections prevalent in the community.

☒ **Arsenicum album is made by heating arsenic with distilled water, a process repeated several times over three days. Arsenicum album is used commonly by homeopaths to treat anxiety, restlessness, cold, ulcerations, burning pains.**

Question 24 - 'FAITH' Trials which was in news recently is associated with

- a) One Nation One Card Scheme**
- b) Potential COVID-19 treatment strategy**
- c) Electric Vehicles**
- d) Desert Locusts**

Solution (b)

- Testing the combined efficacy of two antiviral drugs — Favipiravir and Umifenovir — as a potential COVID-19 treatment strategy.**
- FAITH – (FA vipiravir plus Um I fenovir (efficacy and safety) Trial in Indian Hospital setting).**

Question 25 - . Consider the following sentences about National Artificial Intelligence Portal

- 1. It is a joint initiative of the NITI Aayog and the Department of Science and Technology.**
- 2. This portal shall work as a one stop digital platform for AI related developments in India.**

Which of the above sentences is/are incorrect

- a) 1 only**
- b) 2 only**
- c) Both 1 and 2 only**
- d) None of the above**

Answer: A

- India's National Artificial Intelligence Portal, called www.ai.gov.in, has been jointly developed by the Ministry of Electronics and IT and IT Industry.
- The National e-Governance Division of Ministry of Electronics and IT and NASSCOM from the IT industry will jointly run this portal.
- This portal shall work as a one stop digital platform for AI related developments in India: sharing of resources such as documents, case studies, research reports, articles, startups, investment funds in AI, resources, companies and educational institutions related to AI in India.
- Such a national portal will lead to democratization of artificial intelligence in the country.

Question 26 - . Consider the following sentences about RECOVERY Trial

1. It is a large randomised controlled trial in the USA to test eight drugs for COVID-19.
2. Trail has found that there is immense clinical benefit from use of hydroxychloroquine in hospitalised patients with COVID-19.

Which of the above sentences is/are correct

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) None of the above

Answer: D

- It is a large randomised controlled trial in the U.K. to test five drugs for COVID-19.
- The RECOVERY Trial are testing these suggested treatments:

- i) Lopinavir-Ritonavir (commonly used to treat HIV)**
- ii) Low-dose Dexamethasone (an anti-inflammatory medication)**
- iii) Hydroxychloroquine (used to treat malaria, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis)**
- iv) Azithromycin (a commonly used antibiotic)**
- v) Tocilizumab (an anti-inflammatory treatment given by injection)**

- **Trail has found no clinical benefit from use of hydroxychloroquine in hospitalised patients with COVID-19. The trial investigators found that there was no significant benefit in mortality reduction in the intervention group, which was the primary objective.**

- **The results for rest are still in trial phase.**

Question 27 - . Operation Desert Chase is

- a) A military exercise conducted by Indian Army**
- b) A joint exercise between Indian Army and Indian Air Force**
- c) An anti-espionage operation**
- d) None of the above**

Answer: C

Explanation

- **Operation Desert Chase - an anti-espionage operation was started by Military Intelligence in early 2019.**
- **It successfully culminated on June 8, 2020 with the arrest of two men. Both the men were civil defence employees.**
- **They were on the payrolls of ISI and allegedly passed information relating to the trains transporting ammunition across the country.**

Question 28- . Changpa community, often seen in news, is a semi-nomadic tribe. It is mainly found in

- a) Arunachal Pradesh**
- b) Uttarakhand**
- c) Himachal Pradesh**
- d) Ladakh**

Answer: D

- The Chinese Army's intrusion in Chumur and Demchok has affected the livelihood of Ladakh's nomadic herding Changpa community.**
- This community has been cut off from large parts of summer pastures. It has also resulted in a sharp rise in deaths of Pashmina goats, a major source of their livelihood, in the Korzok-Chumur belt of Changthang plateau in Ladakh.**
- Changpa are a semi-nomadic Tibetan people found mainly in the Changtang in Ladakh and in Jammu and Kashmir.**
- For many Changpas, rearing of animals, and consuming and selling their produce (milk and its products, hair and meat) is the only means of livelihood.**
- The Changpas rear the Changra goats (Capra Hircus) that yield the rare Pashmina fibre (Cashmere wool).**

Question 29 - . Which of the following countries is NOT a member of Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG)?

- a) France**
- b) China**

c) India

d) Kazakhstan

Answer: A

Explanation

- India attended the virtual 32nd special Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) plenary meeting.

- It was conducted under the aegis of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

- It is an FATF-style regional body, established in 2004. It is currently an associate member of the FATF

- Today the EAG has nine members - Belarus, China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

- Observer status has been granted to 15 countries and 23 international organizations

Question 30 - . Consider the following statements regarding Raja Parba:

1. It is a major festival of Odisha.

2. This festival is dedicated to Mother Earth and womanhood at large.

Which of the above statements is/are Incorrect?

a) 1 Only

b) 2 Only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: D

Explanation

- Raja Parba is a festival celebrated in Odisha for three days during the mid of June. The festival, which started as a tribal practice, has now spread to all parts of Odisha.
- The word Raja in Odia language means menstruation and it is a belief that mother Earth goes for three days long menstrual cycle during this period. Thus, the festival is dedicated to Mother Earth (Bhuma Devi) and womanhood at large.
- During these three days no activities like tilling, construction or any other that hurts mother Earth are undertaken.
- The fourth day is the day of the ceremonial bath. People worship mother Earth by bathing pieces of stone and pray for a prosperous agricultural year in the days to come.
- This ritual of celebrating the menstrual cycle of Mother Earth through Raja festival is an acknowledgement of the fact that the society had no taboo regarding the menstruation of women in past days.
- It was treated as normal in the society where today women are kept in segregated place during their periods and are not allowed to enter a temple treating them impure.

Question 31 -“SPIC MACAY”, sometimes mentioned in the news, it is:

- (a) Human Rights Movement
- (b) Youth Movement
- (c) Environmental Movement
- (d) Migrants Rights Movement

Ans: (b)

Explanation:

- **Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY) is a voluntary youth movement which promotes intangible aspects of Indian cultural heritage.**
- **It does this by promoting Indian classical music, classical dance, folk music, yoga, meditation, crafts and other aspects of Indian culture.**

Question 32- . “Nivar, Tauktae and Yaas”, sometimes mentioned in the news, they are:

- (a) Tropical insect species**
- (b) Water reservoirs**
- (c) Nomadic herding community**
- (d) upcoming cyclones**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- **Cyclones around the world are named by Regional Specialised Meteorological Centres and Tropical Cyclone Warning Centres. There are a total of six RSMCs and five TCWCs, including the India Meteorological Department.**
- **The Indian weather bureau has been mandated with the duty to name cyclones that develop over the North Indian ocean, including Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, by following a standard procedure.**
- **IMD released a list of cyclone names in April 2020 as suggested by the 13 countries.**
- **The next few cyclones will be named Gati (named by India), Nivar (Iran), Burevi (Maldives), Tauktae (Myanmar) and Yaas (Oman).**

Question 33- . “EMC 2.0 and SPECS”, sometimes mentioned in the news, are primarily aimed at:

- (a) universal basic income**
- (b) ease of doing business**
- (c) boosting manufacturing industry**
- (d) attracting more FDI**

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

- With the these new schemes, the government aims to manufacture electronics worth ₹8 lakh crore, while generating employment for about 10 lakh people in the next five years.**
- This is a step towards self-reliant India. A self-reliant India is not an India of isolation. It is not an inward looking India. It is one which enhances its capacity and develops an ecosystem as an asset to the global economy.**

Question 34 - . Which among the following announces MSP for various crops at the beginning of each sowing season?

- (a) Respective State Governments**
- (b) Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**
- (c) Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA**
- (d) Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED)**

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

• The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs announces MSP for various crops at the beginning of each sowing season based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). The CACP takes into account demand and supply, the cost of production and price trends in the market among other things when fixing MSPs.

Question 35 - 'Global Economic Prospects Report' is published by

- a) World Bank
- b) World Economic Forum
- c) International Monetary Fund
- d) United Nations Development Programme

Solution (a)

The World Bank recently launched the Global Economic Prospects Report, 2020.

Question 36-)

Consider the following statements with respect to 'SWADES' initiative

1. It aims to create a database of qualified citizens based on their skillsets and experience, which can be tapped into to fulfil demand of Indian and foreign companies.
2. It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of External Affairs.

Select the correct statements

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution (c)

Question 37 - Consider the following statements

- 1. Kerala accounts for more than 90 percent of the total rubber production in the country.**
- 2. Majority of the natural rubber produce is consumed by the tyre industry.**
- 3. India does not import natural rubber.**

Select the correct statements

- a) 1 and 2**
- b) 2 and 3**
- c) 1 and 3**
- d) All of the above**

Solution (a)

- Kerala accounts for more than 90 percent of the total rubber production in the country.**
- The total area under rubber cultivation in the state is 5.45 lakh hectares.**
- According to the Board's statistics, the country produced 7.10 lakh MTs of natural rubber during fiscal 2019-20, as against the previous year's production of 6.53 lakh MTs.**
- Some 70% of this produce is consumed by the tyre industry, while the rest goes into the non-tyre sector such as rubber bands, tubes and footwear.**
- Under a normal industry scenario, the tyre manufacturers in the country consume around 1 lakh MTs of natural rubber a month and 12 lakh MTs a year. The difference, between the production and consumption, is imported mostly from Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand. Last fiscal, the country imported 4.65 lakh MTs of natural rubber.**

Question 38 - . Consider the following statements about Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS):

- 1. PLFS is conducted by Ministry of Labour and Employment.**
- 2. The Labour Force Participation Rate under PLFS includes both people who are working and people who are seeking work.**

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: B

Explanation:

- According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India's unemployment rate has improved from the 45-year high of 6.1% in 2017-18 to 5.8% in 2018-19.**
- The labour force participation rate has also improved marginally from 36.9% in 2017-18 to 37.5% in 2018-19. The report shows the dip came across all categories, though women and rural workers showed the most improvement.**
- The survey was conducted during July 2018-June 2019, covering 1,01,579 households (55,812 in rural areas and 45,767 in urban areas) and surveying 4,20,757 persons (2,39,817 in rural areas and 1,80,940 in urban areas).**

Question 39 - . The 'e-NAM portal' is managed by:

- (a) NABARD**

(b) NAFED

(c) FCI

(d) SFAC

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

• It was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The electronic market pilot across India was launched on 14 April 2016 by Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. The Portal is managed by Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) with the technology provider, NFCL's iKisan division.

Question 40 -. Innovate in India (I3) is an industry- academia collaborative mission of

(a) NITI Aayog and WIPO

(b) Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) and WTO

(c) Department of Biotechnology (DBT) with World Bank

(d) Department of Higher Education (India) and WIPO

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

• Innovate in India (I3) is an industry- academia collaborative mission of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in collaboration with World Bank for accelerating discovery research to early development of Biopharmaceuticals and to be implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

Question 41 - . Recently, India has signed a historic agreement, called 'Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA)' with which of the following nation?

- (a) China**
- (b) South Korea**
- (c) Sri Lanka**
- (d) Australia**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- India and Australia have signed a historic agreement, called 'Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA)', to allow access to military bases for logistics support.**
- This was agreed upon at the first-ever virtual bilateral summit between India Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Scott Morrison.**

Question 42 - . 'Devonian Period', sometimes mentioned in the news, is primarily related to

- (a) Age of Fishes**
- (b) Cold climate, increased evidence to ice caps**
- (c) Phenomenon of increased dissolved oxygen in oceans**
- (d) All of the above**

Ans: (a)

Explanation:

- Devonian Period, in geologic time, an interval of the Paleozoic Era that follows the Silurian Period and precedes the Carboniferous Period, spanning between about 419.2 million and 358.9 million years ago.**

Question 43- . Why is a plant called 'Carissa kopilii' often mentioned in news?

- (a) Its extract is used in the synthesis of pesticides.**
- (b) It tends to reduce the biodiversity in the area in which it grows.**
- (c) Its extract is widely used in medicines.**
- (d) Its extract is widely used in Cosmetics.**

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

- The Carissa kopilii is threatened by the very river it is named after — Kopili in central Assam. It is a distant cousin of multiutility wild berry.**
- It has been used as a traditional herbal medicine for a number of ailments such as diarrhoea, anaemia, constipation, indigestion, skin infections and urinary disorders. The leaves have been used as fodder for silkworms while a paste of its pounded roots serves as a fly repellent.**

Question 44- . 'Kara Strait', sometimes mentioned in the news, it connects:

- (a) Kara Sea and Barents Sea**
- (b) Beaufort Sea and Chukchi Sea**
- (c) Kara Sea and Baltic Sea**
- (d) Laptev Sea and White Sea**

Ans: (a)

Explanation:

- The Kara Strait or Kara Gates is a 56 km (35 mi) wide channel of water between the southern end of Novaya Zemlya and the northern tip of Vaygach Island. This strait connects the Kara Sea and the Barents Sea in northern Russia.**

- The Kara Strait was an important waterway in the early exploration of the Northern Sea Route.

Question 45- "Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC)" functions under the control of:

- (a) Ministry of Finance
- (b) Ministry of External Affairs
- (c) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- (d) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

- It is a fully government-owned company that was established in 1957 to promote exports by providing credit insurance services.
- The ECGC provides Export Credit Insurance to Banks (ECIB) to protect the banks from losses on account of export credit at the Pre and Post-Shipment stage given to exporters due to the risks of insolvency or protracted default of the exporter borrower.
- It functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Department of Commerce.

Question 46 - 'Ambarnaya' river was in news recently. Where is it located?

- a) Sudan and Ethiopia
- b) Siberia
- c) Iceland
- d) Cambodia and Laos

Solution (b)

Ambarnaya is a river in Siberia which flows in a northerly direction into Lake Pyasino. Russia declared a state of emergency after a power plant fuel leak in its Arctic region caused 20,000 tonnes of diesel oil to escape into a local river, turning its surface crimson red. The Ambarnaya river, into which the oil has been discharged, is part of a network that flows into the environmentally sensitive Arctic Ocean.

Question 47 - The report “Indian wildlife amidst the COVID-19 crisis: An analysis of status of poaching and illegal wildlife trade” was released by

- a) NITI Aayog**
- b) WWF India**
- c) TRAFFIC India**
- d) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau**

Solution (c)

The report titled “Indian wildlife amidst the COVID-19 crisis: An analysis of status of poaching and illegal wildlife trade” was released by TRAFFIC India and it points out that reports of poaching for consumption and local trade have more than doubled during lockdown.

Question 48- ‘Li’, a folk song was in news recently. It is primarily associated with which of the following states?

- a) Tripura**
- b) Nagaland**
- c) Mizoram**
- d) Manipur**

Solution (b)

Li is folk songs of the Chakesang tribe of Nagaland. Literally, Li means Folksong in the Chokri language spoken by the Chakhesang tribe of Nagaland. It often takes the place of conversation and is known to beautifully communicate feelings, ideas and engage people in a circle of warmth and friendship.

Question 49 - 'Tocilizumab', a drug is seeing increased use in treating severe COVID-19 patients. It is originally used to treat

- a) Malaria**
- b) Hepatitis B and C**
- c) Rheumatoid arthritis**
- d) Zika and Ebola Virus**

Solution (c)

Tocilizumab, a drug originally used for rheumatoid arthritis is seeing increased use in treating severe COVID-19 patients.

Question 50 - 'Natuna Regency' is often seen in news. Where is it located?

- a) Yellow Sea**
- b) Bering Sea**
- c) South China Sea**
- d) Persian Gulf**

Solution (c)

The Natuna Regency is an archipelago of 272 islands located in the south part of the South China Sea in the Natuna Sea. It is part of Indonesia. China as always, is trying to poke its nose in neighboring countries (Indonesia here) territories & affairs.

Question 51 - Consider the following statements about Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):

- 1. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations.**
- 2. It is depository of Seed Treaty.**
- 3. One of FAO's strategic goals is the sustainable management of the world's forests.**

Which of the given above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2**
- (b) 2 and 3**
- (c) 1 and 3**
- (d) All of the above**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- Stat1: The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger and improve nutrition and food security.**
- Stat2: FAO is depository of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, also called Plant Treaty, Seed Treaty or ITPGRFA, entered into force on 29 June 2004.**
- Stat3: FAO is both a global clearinghouse for information on forests and forest resources and a facilitator that helps build countries' local capacity to provide their own national forest data. In collaboration with member countries, FAO carries out periodic global assessments of forest resources, which are made available through reports, publications and the FAO's Web site. The Global Forest Resources Assessment provides comprehensive reporting on forests worldwide every five years.**

Question 52 - Chhattisgarh govt launches 'Spandan Campaign' recently, to check:

- (a) deforestation**
- (b) foeticide and infanticide**
- (c) food insecurity**
- (d) suicide and fratricide**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- Chhattisgarh government has launched the Spandan Campaign to contain incidents of suicide and fratricide involving police personnel.

Question 53- . Recently, 'NAIMISHA 2020' has been in news, it was organized to primarily help:

- (a) COVID19 patients**
- (b) Migrants**
- (c) School children**
- (d) Art enthusiasts**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- It is an initiative to provide a chance to participants and art enthusiasts to create and learn from practising artists.
- The programme includes online workshops sessions on painting, sculpture, printmaking and indrajaal (an interdisciplinary creative workshop).

- Organised by National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA).
- The exhibition of selected artworks from the program will be displayed on So'ham, the cultural media platform of NGMA.

Question 54 - . India's first online waste exchange platform was recently launched by:

- (a) Odisha**
- (b) Kerala**
- (c) Telangana**
- (d) Andhra Pradesh**

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

- Launched by the Andhra Pradesh Government.
- It will help the authorities monitor the movement of hazardous waste real-time using the tools incorporated in the platform.
- The platform will be handled by the AP Environment Management Corporation (APEMC).
- The APEMC will streamline collection of the waste from industries, sort and streamline the waste as hazardous or non-hazardous or e-waste according to category, and scientifically dispose it off at various waste disposal centres.

Question 55- . Recently the Government launched Mission Purvodaya. It is related to

- (a) Development of tourism in Eastern India.**

(b) Turtle conservation on India's eastern coast.

(c) Develop Eastern India as an integrated steel hub.

(d) Petroleum and Natural gas production in Eastern India.

Ans: (c)

Explanation:

• Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel launched

PURVODAYA: Accelerated development of eastern India through integrated steel hub.

• Purvodaya in steel sector is aimed at driving accelerated development of Eastern India through establishment of integrated steel hub. Eastern states of India (Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal) and Northern part of Andhra Pradesh collectively hold ~80% of the country's iron ore, ~100% of coking coal and significant portion of chromite, bauxite and dolomite reserves. There is presence of major ports such as Paradip, Haldia, Vizag, Kolkata etc., with >30% of India's major port capacity. In India's march towards a \$5 trillion economy, the 5 Eastern states can play a major role where steel sector can become the catalyst. This Eastern belt has the potential to add more than 75% of the country's incremental steel capacity envisioned by the National Steel Policy. It is expected that out of the 300 MT capacity by 2030- 31, over 200 MT can come from this region alone, driven by Industry 4.0.

• The proposed Integrated Steel Hub, encompassing Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Northern Andhra Pradesh, would serve as a torchbearer for socio-economic growth of Eastern India.

• The objective of this hub would be to enable swift capacity addition and improve overall competitiveness of steel producers both in terms of cost and quality.

Question 56- "Turant Customs", sometimes is in the news, has been launched by:

(a) Central Board of direct Taxes (CBDT)

(b) RBI

(c) SEBI

(d) None of the above

Ans: (d)

Explanation:

• Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), not CBDT, has launched its flagship programme Turant Customs, at Bengaluru and Chennai. • Under this, Importers will now get their goods cleared from Customs after a faceless assessment is done remotely by the Customs officers located outside the port of import.

• Now, the goods imported at Chennai may be assessed by the Customs officers located at Bengaluru and vice versa, as assigned by the Customs' automated system.

Question 57 - The International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime (ICWC) is a collaboration between

1. CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) Secretariat

2. TRAFFIC (The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network)

3. INTERPOL

4. World Customs Organization

5. World Bank

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

(a) 1 and 2

(b) 1, 3, 4 and 5

(c) 1, 2, 4 and 5

(d) 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

Explanation:

• ICCWC is the collaborative effort of five inter-governmental organizations working to bring coordinated support to the national wildlife law enforcement agencies and to the sub-regional and regional networks that, on a daily basis, act in defense of natural resources. The ICCWC partners are

o The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat,

o INTERPOL,

o the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,

o the World Bank and

o the World Customs Organization.

• This powerful alliance was formally established in 2010 in St. Petersburg, Russia during the International Tiger Forum.

• ICCWC's mission is to strengthen criminal justice systems and provide coordinated support at national, regional and international level to combat wildlife and forest crime to ensure perpetrators of serious wildlife and forest crime will face a formidable and coordinated response.

Question 58- The term 'Poonam Avlokan' is associated with

a) Gir Wildlife Sanctuary

b) Moidams

c) Ancient water harvesting concept

d) Saffron Farming

Solution (a)

Gujarat Forest Department announced the population of Asiatic lions in the state — 674, up from 523 in a Lion Census five years ago. Unlike in previous years, this count was estimated not from a Census, but from a population “observation” exercise called Poonam Avlokan.

Through Poonam Avlokan, which is a monthly in-house exercise carried out every full moon.

Field staff and officers spend 24 hours assessing the number of lions and their locations in their respective jurisdictions. It was a mechanism developed by the Forest Department in 2014 as part of preparations for the 2015 Lion Census.

Question 59- ‘Locust Environmental Booklet’ is brought out by the

a) Food and Agricultural Organization

b) Lancet Journal

c) UN Environment

d) World Economic Forum

Solution (a)

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO, this is a part of the United Nations, and based in Rome, Italy) co-ordinates and helps these nations with advice and funds in combating this plague. The informative document from FAO, called the Locust Environmental Booklet, gives an update on the situation and methods of handling locust swarms.

Question 60- Consider the following statements with respect to 'RTGS' & 'NEFT' payment system.

- 1. RTGS is the largest mode for online high-value transactions.**
- 2. Transactions under RTGS are processed continuously on real time basis, whereas NEFT transactions are processed in batches of half-hourly intervals.**

Select the correct statements

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

Solution (c)

The RBI-operated Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS) system, the largest mode for online high-value transactions. RTGS and NEFT combined account for a little over 90 per cent of total payments in the country. Transactions under RTGS are processed continuously on real time basis, whereas NEFT transactions are processed in batches of half-hourly intervals.

Question 61- Consider the following statements with respect to 'Gateway Lunar Orbit outpost'.

- 1. It is a mission by the European Space Agency.**
- 2. It is being launched to replace the International Space Station (ISS).**

Select the correct statements

- a) 1 Only**
- b) 2 Only**
- c) Both 1 and 2**

d) Neither 1 nor 2

Solution (d)

NASA's Gateway Lunar Orbit outpost

- **Essentially, the Gateway is a small spaceship that will orbit the Moon, meant for astronaut missions to the Moon and later, for expeditions to Mars. It will act as a temporary office and living quarters for astronauts, distanced at about 250,000 miles from Earth.**
- **Further, astronauts will use the Gateway at least once per year and not stay around the year like they do on the International Space Station (ISS).**

Question 62- Consider the following statements with respect to 'The Solar Orbiter (SolO)'.

- 1. It is intended to perform detailed measurements of the inner heliosphere and nascent solar wind, and perform close observations of the polar regions of the Sun.**
- 2. It is developed by NASA as a replacement to Parker Solar Probe.**

Select the correct code:

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

Solution (a)

- **SolO is a European Space Agency (Esa) craft that was assembled in the UK by the aerospace company Airbus.**
- **SolO is intended to perform detailed measurements of the inner heliosphere and nascent solar wind, and perform close observations of the polar regions of the Sun, which is difficult to do from Earth, both**

serving to answer the question "How does the Sun create and control the heliosphere ?"

Q:) Regarding PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme, Which of the following is correct:

- 1. The scheme aims to supplement the financial needs of the farmers in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields.**
- 2. This scheme is extended to all land holding eligible farmer families.**

Choose the correct code-

- A) 1 only**
- B) 2 only**
- C) Both 1 and 2**
- D) Nither 1 nor 2**

Answer (c)

Both 1 and 2 is correct

Explanation-

- It is in news because the eligibility for PM Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme is extended to All landholder farmers' families in the country with few exceptions. This is to help them meet farm input and other costs during the crop season.**
- Earlier, the vulnerable landholding farmer families, having cultivable land upto 2 hectares, to be provided direct income support at the rate of Rs. 6,000 per year per family payable in three equal installments, every four months.**
- The revised Scheme is expected to cover around 2 crore more farmers, increasing the coverage of PM-KISAN to around 14.5 crore beneficiaries, with an estimated expenditure by Central Government of Rs. 87,217.50 crores for year 2019-20.**

• Responsibility of identifying the landholder farmer family eligible for benefit under the scheme shall be of the State/UT Government.

✓ Exclusion Categories

The following categories of beneficiaries of higher economic status shall not be eligible for benefit under the scheme:

• All Institutional Land holders.

Farmer families in which one or more of its members belong to following categories

• Former and present holders of constitutional posts

• Former and present Ministers/ State Ministers and former/present Members of Lok Sabha/ Rajya Sabha/ State Legislative Assemblies/ State Legislative Councils, former and present Mayors of Municipal Corporations, former and present Chairpersons of District Panchayats.

• All serving or retired officers and employees of Central/ State Government Ministries /Offices/Departments and its field units Central or State PSEs and Attached offices /Autonomous Institutions under Government as well as regular employees of the Local Bodies (Excluding Multi-Tasking Staff /Class IV/Group D employees)

• All superannuated/retired pensioners whose monthly pension is Rs.10, 000/- or more (Excluding Multi-Tasking Staff / Class IV/Group D employees) of above category

• All Persons who paid Income Tax in last assessment year

• Professionals like Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants, and Architects registered with Professional bodies and carrying out profession by undertaking practices.

Q:) Which of the following is NOT correct about International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO):

A) The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) is the technical body within ICAO.

B) It is not a specialised agency of UN.

C) It fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth.

D) India is a member state of ICAO.

Answer (b)

It is not a specialised agency of UN

•Second statement is NOT CORRECT because ICAO is a specialised agency of UN.

•It is in news because senior bureaucrat Shefali Juneja was appointed as representative of India in council of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Montreal, Canada.

✓About ICAO

•The International Civil Aviation Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations.

•ICAO works with the Convention's 193 Member States and industry groups to reach consensus on international civil aviation Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and policies in support of a safe, efficient, secure, economically sustainable and environmentally responsible civil aviation sector.

•These SARPs and policies are used by ICAO Member States to ensure that their local civil aviation operations and regulations conform to global norms, which in turn permits more than 100,000 daily flights in aviation's global network to operate safely and reliably in every region of the world.

•ICAO also coordinates assistance and capacity building for States in support of numerous aviation development objectives; produces global plans to coordinate

multilateral strategic progress for safety and air navigation; monitors and reports on numerous air transport sector performance metrics; and audits States' civil aviation oversight capabilities in the areas of safety and security.

- **It codifies the principles and techniques of international air navigation and fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth.**

- **Its headquarters is located in the Quartier International of Montreal, Quebec, Canada.**

- **The ICAO Council adopts standards and recommended practices concerning air navigation, its infrastructure, flight inspection, prevention of unlawful interference, and facilitation of border-crossing procedures for international civil aviation. ICAO defines the protocols for air accident investigation that are followed by transport safety authorities in countries signatory to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation.**

- **The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) is the technical body within ICAO. The Commission is composed of 19 Commissioners, nominated by the ICAO's contracting states and appointed by the ICAO Council.**

- **Commissioners serve as independent experts, who although nominated by their states, do not serve as state or political representatives. International Standards And Recommended Practices are developed under the direction of the ANC through the formal process of ICAO Panels. Once approved by the Commission, standards are sent to the Council, the political body of ICAO, for consultation and coordination with the Member States before final adoption.**

- **ICAO is distinct from other international air transport organizations, particularly because it alone is vested with international authority (among signatory states): other organizations include the International Air Transport Association (IATA), a trade association representing airlines; the Civil Air Navigation Services Organization (CANSO), an organization for Air navigation service providers (ANSPs); and the Airports Council**

International, a trade association of airport authorities.

✓Background of Chicago convention:

- **Convention on International Civil Aviation also known as Chicago Convention, was signed on 7 December 1944 by 52 States.**
- **Pending ratification of the Convention by 26 States, the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization (PICAO) was established.**
- **It functioned from 6 June 1945 until 4 April 1947.**
- **It functioned from 6 June 1945 until 4 April 1947. By 5 March 1947 the 26th ratification was received. ICAO came into being on 4 April 1947.**
- **In October of the same year, ICAO became a specialized agency of the United Nations linked to Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).**
- **The Convention establishes rules of airspace, aircraft registration and safety, and details the rights of the signatories in relation to air travel. The Convention also exempts air fuels in transit from (double) taxation.**

Q:) In context of Cess, Consider the following statements-

- 1. A cess can be levied on both direct and indirect taxes.**
- 2. A cess is levied to meet a specific purpose and its proceeds cannot be spent on any kind of government expenditure.**

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (C)

Both 1 and 2 is correct

Explanation- It is in news because Kerela government has planned to collect Rs 600 crore in the current fiscal through flood cess for rebuilding the state's infrastructure ravaged by the devastating floods of 2018.

✓About Cess

- **A cess is levied on the tax payable and not on the taxable income. In a sense, for the taxpayer, it is equivalent to a surcharge on tax.**
- **CESS is tax on tax and usually levied for the specific purposes. Once its purpose is solved they are stopped.**
- **A cess can be levied on both direct and indirect taxes. The revenue obtained from income tax, corporation tax, and indirect taxes can be allocated for various purposes.**
- **The proceeds of all taxes and cesses are credited in the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI), an account of the Government of India.**

✓Difference between tax and cess?

- **Unlike a tax, a cess is levied to meet a specific purpose; its proceeds cannot be spent on any kind of government expenditure.**
- **While the tax proceeds are shared with the States and Union Territories according to the guidelines by the Finance Commission, the cess proceeds need not be shared with them.**

✓Types of Cess:

- **As of now some cess are being subsumed under the GST with effect from 1 July 2017.**

Name of subsumed cess are;

- 1. Krishi Kalyan Cess**
- 2. Swacch Bharat Cess**
- 3. Clean energy cess**
- 4. Cess on Tea, sugar and jute etc.**

✓Currently there are 6 cess continued to be levied by the centre government namely;

- 1. Primary Education Cess**
- 2. Secondary Education Cess**
- 3. Cess on Crude Petroleum Oil**
- 4. Road Cess**
- 5. NCCD on tobacco and tobacco products**
- 6. Education cess on imported goods**

Q:) Which of the following functions is performed by Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) sometimes seen in news:

- 1. Coordinating technical parameters to maintain universal connectivity.**
- 2. Approval of companies that can become accredited registrars for domain names.**
- 3. Decision making regarding the addition of new Top Level Domains (TLDs) to the Root system.**

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- A) 1 only**
- B) 1, 2 and 3 only**

C) 1 and 2 only

D) 2 only

Answer (b) 1, 2 and 3 only is correct

Explanation- It is in news because Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Services Companies) have announced collaboration for working in developing standards and identifier technology that will feed into the global consultation for managing Internet- of-Things (IoT) devices and infrastructure using internet.

✓What is ICANN?

- **The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers is a nonprofit organization responsible for coordinating the maintenance and procedures of several databases related to the namespaces and numerical spaces of the Internet, ensuring the network's stable and secure operation.**
- **ICANN performs the actual technical maintenance work of the Central Internet Address pools and DNS root zone registries pursuant to the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) function contract. functioning of the cybernetic framework.**
- **The global nature of the Web today means that there are constantly increasing numbers of Domain Names, Host Names, IP addresses and web sites that are emerging on a daily basis. ICANN oversees this interconnected network and ensures that computers across the internet can find one another through defined unique pathways and identifiers.**
- **ICANN's primary principles of operation have been described as helping preserve the operational stability of the Internet; to promote competition; to achieve broad representation of the global Internet community; and to develop policies appropriate to its mission through bottom-up, consensus-based processes.**

✓ICANN performs four major functions namely:

- Approval of companies that can become accredited registrars for domain names.
- Decision making regarding the addition of new Top Level Domains (TLDs) to the Root system.
- Coordinating technical parameters to maintain universal connectivity.
- Creating a Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) for competing domain names.

Q:) Recently, scientists developed more potent Anthrax vaccine. Regarding this consider the following statements:

1. It is caused by a spore-forming bacterium.
2. It spreads directly from one infected animal or person to another.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (a) 1 only is correct

Explanation- Second statement is NOT CORRECT because Anthrax does not spread directly from one infected animal or person to another; it is spread by spores. These spores can be transported by clothing or shoes.

•It was in news because DRDO, JNU scientists develop more potent Anthrax vaccine. Claim new vaccine superior than existing ones as it can generate immune response to anthrax toxin as well as spores.

✓Use in Bioterrorism:

•Anthrax has been used in biological warfare by agents and by terrorists to intentionally infect.

✓Symptoms & Infection:

•In most cases, symptoms develop within seven days of exposure to the bacteria. The one exception is inhalation anthrax, which may take weeks after exposure before symptoms appear.

Respiratory infection in humans initially presents with cold or flu-like symptoms for several days, followed by pneumonia and severe (and often fatal) respiratory collapse.

•Gastrointestinal (GI) infection in humans is most often caused by consuming anthrax-infected meat and is characterized by serious GI difficulty, vomiting of blood, severe diarrhea, acute inflammation of the intestinal tract, and loss of appetite.

•Cutaneous anthrax, also known as Hide porter's disease, is the cutaneous (on the skin) manifestation of anthrax infection in humans. It presents as a boil-like skin lesion that eventually forms an ulcer with a black center (eschar).

✓Exposure:

•Occupational exposure to infected animals or their products (such as skin, wool, and meat) is the usual pathway of exposure for humans. Workers who are exposed to dead animals and animal products are at the highest risk, especially in countries where anthrax is more common.

•It does not usually spread from an infected human to a noninfected human. But, if the disease is fatal to the person's body, its mass of anthrax bacilli

becomes a potential source of infection to others and special precautions should be used to prevent further contamination.

- Inhalational anthrax, if left untreated until obvious symptoms occur, may be fatal.

- Anthrax can be contracted in laboratory accidents or by handling infected animals or their wool or hides.

✓Treatment:

- The standard treatment for anthrax is a 60-day course of an antibiotic. Treatment is most effective when started as soon as possible.

- Although some cases of anthrax respond to antibiotics, advanced inhalation anthrax may not. By the later stages of the disease, the bacteria have often produced more toxins than drugs can eliminate.

Q:53) What are the merits of Simultaneous elections:

1. Reduced Expenditure of Money and Administration.
2. Continuity in policies and programmes.
3. It can also be a means to curb corruption.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A) 1 and 2 only

B) 1 only

C) 1 and 3 only

D) All are correct

Answer (d) All are correct

It is in news because PM Modi calls for all-party meet on 'one nation, one election'.

• Simultaneous elections refer to holding elections to Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, Panchayats and Urban local bodies simultaneously, once in five year.

✓ Merits of Simultaneous elections:

• **Governance and consistency:** The ruling parties will be able to focus on legislation and governance rather than having to be in campaign mode forever.

• **Reduced Expenditure of Money and Administration:** The entire State and District level administrative and security machinery will be busy with the conduct of elections twice in a period of five years as per the current practice. Expenditure can be reduced by conducting simultaneous elections.

• **Continuity in policies and programmes.**

Efficiency of Governance: Simultaneous elections can bring the much-needed operational efficiency in this exercise. Populist measures by governments will reduce.

• Simultaneous elections can also be a means to curb corruption and build a more conducive socio-economic ecosystem.

• The impact of black money on the voters will be reduced as all elections are held at a time.

• **Why it is difficult to go for simultaneous elections?**

The biggest challenge is achieving political consensus, which seems to be “chimerical”. Regional parties will be more opposed to the idea than national parties because there is always a tendency for voters to vote the same party in power in the state and at the Centre in case the Lok Sabha polls and the state elections are held together.

• Also, according to IDFC, there is a 77% chance that the Indian voter will vote for the same party for both the state and Centre when elections are held simultaneously.

✓Changes to be made in Constitution and Legislations for simultaneous elections to be implemented:

- Amendments needed in the following articles:-
- Article 83 which deals with the duration of Houses of Parliament need an amendment
- Article 85 (on dissolution of Lok Sabha by the president)
- Article 172 (relating to the duration of state legislatures)
- Article 174 (relating to dissolution of state assemblies)
- Article 356 (on President's Rule).
- The Representation of People Act, 1951 Act would have to be amended to build in provisions for stability of tenure for both parliament and assemblies. This should include the following crucial elements:
 - Restructuring the powers and functions of the ECI to facilitate procedures required for simultaneous elections.
 - A definition of simultaneous election can be added to section 2 of the 1951 act.

Q:) Recently, Vice President of India inaugurated India's first proton therapy center in Chennai. It is used in the treatment of which of the following disease?

- A) Cancer**
- B) HIV AIDS**
- C) Nipah Virus infection**
- D) Tuberculosis**

Answer (a) Cancer

Explanation:

• It was in news because Vice President of India inaugurated India's first proton therapy centre in Chennai for the treatment of Cancer.

About Proton Therapy

- It is a type of radiation therapy which uses protons rather than x-rays to treat cancer.
- It is considered as one of the most advanced forms of external beam radiation therapy for cancer treatment in the world. It is also known as Proton Beam Therapy and offers high levels of precision as compared to other treatment options.
- It is particularly effective for paediatric cancers and tumours affecting the brain, eye, colon, breast, gastrointestinal area, pelvis, and prostate and those close to the spinal cord, brain stem and other vital organs.

Q:) Consider the following statements regarding Program Towards Elimination of Tuberculosis:

- 1. Recently, WHO and the Government of India signed a loan agreement of \$400 million for the Program towards Elimination of Tuberculosis.**
- 2. This program will cover nine States and it will support the government's National Strategic Plan to end TB in India by 2025.**
- 3. It will provide financial incentives to private sector care providers.**
- 4. It will also provide Direct Benefit Transfers to patients for acquiring the critical nutrition needed during treatment.**

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A) 1, 2 and 3 only

B) 2 and 4 only

C) 2, 3 and 4 only

D) All are correct

Answer (c) only 2, 3 and 4 are correct

Explanation:

• It was in news because Recently, World Bank (Not WHO) and the Government of India signed a loan agreement of \$400 million for the Program towards Elimination of

Tuberculosis. Hence statement 1 is not correct.

• This program will cover nine States and it will support the government's National Strategic Plan to end TB in India by 2025.

• It will provide financial incentives to private sector care providers for reporting cases of TB and ensuring that their patients complete the treatment regimen.

• It will also provide Direct Benefit Transfers to patients for acquiring the critical nutrition needed during treatment.

• It will strengthen the detection, treatment and monitoring of Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis and will track progress in the detection of additional drug resistance.

• The program will help the Government of India strengthen the monitoring and implementation of Nikshay—the government's web-based TB case monitoring system.

Q:) Kharga Prahar was recently in news. What is it?

A) A surface to surface missile.

B) A major training exercise conducted by the Indian Army.

C) A newly inducted tank of Indian army.

D) None of the above.

Answer (b) A major training exercise conducted by the Indian Army.

Explanation:

- **Kharga Prahar is a major training exercise conducted by the Indian Army.**
- **The latest edition was undertaken in plains of Punjab by various units and formations of Army's Kharga Corps.**

Q:) Consider the following statements about The National Defence Fund (NDF):

- 1. It was set up after recent pulwama attack in J&K.**
- 2. The National Defence Fund does not accepts online voluntary contributions.**

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer (a) neither 1 nor 2

Explanation:

- **The National Defence Fund (NDF) was set up in 1962 to take charge of the: Voluntary donations in cash and kind received for promotion of the national Defence effort, and to decide on their utilisation. Hence both the statements are Incorrect.**

- Currently the fund is being used for the welfare of the members of the Armed Forces, Para Military forces and Railway Protection Force, and their dependents.
- The fund is administered by an Executive Committee with the Prime Minister as the Chairperson and the Defence, Finance and Home Ministers as Members.
- Under National Defence Fund major scheme of 'Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme (PMSS)' is being implemented to encourage technical and post-graduate education for the widows and wards of the deceased/ex-service personnel.
- Scholarships are available for education at technical institutions (medical, dental, veterinary, engineering, MBA, MCA and other equivalent technical professions with suitable AICTE/UGC approval).
- The National Defence Fund accepts online voluntary contributions through the website.

Q:) Consider the following statements related to India's performance in Human Development Report, 2020:

- 1. India's performance in terms of the Global Human Development Index (HDI) ranking was worse than that in 2019.**
- 2. India's Gross National Income per capita at PPP decreased in 2019 as compared to that in 2018.**
- 3. About 21% of India's labour-force was considered 'skilled' under the HDR.**
- 4. India was categorised as one of the 'low human development countries'.**

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1, 2 and 3 only**
- b) 2, 3 and 4 only**

c) 1, 3 and 4 only

d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: a

Explanation: India dropped one spot to 131 among 189 countries in the 2020 human development index, according to a report released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). India's HDI value for 2019 is 0.645, which put it in the medium human development category. India has been positioned at 131 out of 189 countries and territories, according to the report. India had ranked 130 in 2018 in the index. So, statement (1) is correct, and statement (4) is not correct.

According to the report published by the United Nations Development Programme, India's gross national income per capita fell to USD 6,681 in 2019 from USD 6,829 in 2018 on purchasing power parity (PPP) basis. Purchasing power parity or PPP is a measurement of prices in different countries that uses specific goods' prices to compare the countries' currencies' absolute purchasing power. The report also states that about 21% of the Indian labour-force is 'skilled'. So, statements (2) and (3) are correct.

Therefore, the correct answer is (a).

Q:) Under 'Atmanirbhar Rozgar Yojana' launched by the Government of India recently

- a) Generation of new self-employment opportunities will be encouraged.**
- b) The government will pay the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) contributions for two years for the selected category of the new employees.**
- c) The government plans to set up innovative skill development centres where industries can hire the best talent in less time.**

d) The government will provide tax benefits to the labour-intensive industries in terms of factory set-up and other supporting infrastructure.

Ans: b

Explanation: Atma Nirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana is a new Indian government scheme to incentivise jobs creation in the country. Under the scheme, the government will give subsidy to establishments for new hirings. The subsidy would be to cover for provident fund contributions by employees as well as employers for two years for the selected category of the new employees.

Therefore, the correct answer is (b).

Q:) New Arrangement to Borrow (NAB), a funding mechanism, recently in news, is related to which of the following organisations?

a) World Bank

b) Asian Development Bank

c) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

d) International Monetary Fund

Answer: d

Explanation: The NAB constitutes a second line of defense to supplement IMF resources to forestall or cope with an impairment of the international monetary system. Through the New

Arrangements to Borrow (NAB), a number of member countries and institutions stand ready to lend additional resources to the IMF.

The NAB was proposed for the first time at the 1995 G-7 Halifax Summit following the Mexican financial crisis. In January 1997, the IMF's Executive Board adopted a decision establishing the NAB, which became effective in November 1998. The NAB was revived in the context of the

global financial crisis in 2009; to meet the lending requirements of the Eurozone crisis.

In January 2020, the IMF's Executive Board approved a doubling of the NAB resources from the current SDR 182 billion to SDR 365 billion, for a new NAB period from 2021 to 2025.

Therefore, the correct answer is (d).

Q:) With reference to the 'MATRICS Scheme', consider the following statements:

1. It is implemented by the Union Ministry of Human Resource and Development.
2. It provides fixed grant support to mathematicians or theoreticians.

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: b

Explanation: The MATRIX scheme was launched in 2017 by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology. So, statement (1) is not correct.

It aims to provide fixed grant support to active researchers with good credentials in Mathematical Sciences, Theoretical Sciences and Quantitative Social Sciences. Research grant of Rs. 2 lakh p.a. with overheads for a period of three years will be provided as well. So, statement (2) is correct.

Therefore, the correct answer is (b).

Q:) Consider the following statements with respect to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU):

- 1. It is an international organisation of parliaments of sovereign states under the aegis of the United Nations (UN).**
- 2. India is a member of this organisation.**
- 3. It has recently urged legislatures to achieve Zero Child Labour Policy by 2030.**

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- a. 2 only**
- b. 1 and 3 only**
- c. 2 and 3 only**
- d. 1, 2 and 3**

Answer: a

Explanation: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is an international organization of parliaments of sovereign states, established in 1889 in Paris to promote representative democracy and world peace. It is not under the aegis of the United Nations (UN). So, statement (1) is not correct.

It was established in 1889 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. India is a member of this organisation. So, statement (2) is correct.

The Nobel Prize for Peace was awarded eight times to leading personalities of the IPU in the organization's early years (1901-27). The IPU moved its headquarters to Geneva in 1921. It's membership inches ever closer to being universal, with 179 Member Parliaments, 13 associate members, and increasing numbers of parliamentarians from all over the world.

A resolution passed recently by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)-has urged legislatures to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030. So, statement (3) is not correct

Therefore, the correct answer is (a).

Q:) Vande BHARAT Mission, recently in news, is related to

- a. mission to double up production of India's first semi high-speed train**
- b. a military exercise that aims to demonstrate the operating capability of Indian tri services.**
- c. the massive evacuation exercise to bring back Indians stranded in different parts of the world due to coronavirus pandemic**
- d. None of the above**

Ans: c

Explanation: Vande Bharat Mission is the biggest evacuation exercise to bring back Indian citizens stranded abroad amidst the coronavirus-induced travel restrictions. It is considered as the largest exercise to bring back Indian citizens since the evacuation of 177,000 from the Gulf region in the early 1990s at the start of hostilities between Iraq and Kuwait during the first Gulf War.

The mission has given priority to Indian citizens with "compelling reasons to return" -like those whose employment has been terminated, those whose visas have expired and not expected to be renewed under the present circumstances and those who have lost family members in recent times.

The Indian Navy has also launched Operation "Samudra Setu" (Sea Bridge) to repatriate Indian citizens from overseas.

Therefore, the correct answer is (c).

Q:) With the reference of Garib Kalyan Rozgar Abhiyaan, consider the following statements:

- 1. The scheme will work in a mission mode in select districts across all States, where the maximum number of migrant workers have returned back to their districts due to Covid- 19.**
- 2. It is a massive employment cum rural public works campaign.**
- 3. The scheme will contribute towards provision of modern facilities, such as internet connectivity, laying of optic fibre cables and to increase internet speed in villages.**

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: b

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the mega 'Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan' aimed to boost livelihood opportunities in rural India amid the ongoing Covid-19 crisis. The 'Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan' campaign is for 'shramik' workers who returned to their villages during the lockdown. They want to put their skills to use and contribute to the development of their villages.

The campaign is of 125 days, which will work in mission mode. It will involve intensified and focused implementation of 25 different types of works to provide employment to migrant workers on one hand and create infrastructure in the rural regions of the country on the other, with a resource envelope of Rs 50,000 crore. So, statement (2) is correct.

Migrant workers engaged in every type of profession will get work in 'Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan', skill mapping of workers has been done, women will be linked with self-help groups so that they are able to get maximum items for their family. A total of 116 districts with more than 25,000 migrant workers each across Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and Odisha have been chosen for the campaign and includes 27 aspirational districts.

So, statement (1) is not correct.

The 25 schemes of the government will be brought together and would help build gram panchayat bhawans and aganwadi centres, assist in national highway works, railway works and water conservation projects among others.

The scheme will be a coordinated effort by 12 different ministries including rural development, Panchayati Raj, Road transport and highways, mines, drinking water and sanitation, environment, railways, petroleum and natural gas, new and renewable energy, border Roads, Telecom and agriculture.

For first time, internet is being used more in villages. The campaign will contribute towards provision of modern facilities, such as internet connectivity, laying of optic fibre cables, to increase internet speed in villages, so that children in villages are able to study and learn like those in cities.

So, statement (3) is correct.

The migrant workers will be able to get employment near their homes through this campaign.

Therefore, the correct answer is (b).

Q:) Recently, new Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs) for reference year 2017 were released under International Comparison Program (ICP). The ICP is an initiative that is managed by:

A. International Monetary Fund (IMF)

B. World Bank

C. World Economic Forum (WEF)

D. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

Answer: B

Explanation :

Recently, World Bank released new Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs) for reference year 2017 under its International Comparison Program (ICP). ICP is worldwide data-collection initiative that is managed by World Bank under auspices of UN Statistical Commission. The main objective of the ICP is to produce comparable volume measures of GDP and its expenditure components based on Purchasing Power Parities (PPPs). India has participated in ICP rounds since its inception in 1970. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is National Implementing Agency for ICP in India.

Q:) The report titled 'Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region' was released recently by:

A. Ministry of Earth Sciences

B. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

C. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

D. The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI)

Answer: A

Explanation :

The Ministry of Earth Sciences' (MoES) released a report titled 'Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region'. It is a first ever attempt to document and assess climate change in different parts of India.

• The report highlights the observed and projected changes in various climatic dimensions over the Indian region, their impacts and various policy actions to deal with the regional climate change.

Q:) Which of the following is the objective of the Seabed 2030 project?

A. Promoting efficient utilization of Seabed resources.

B. Controlling the bottom trawling that destroys far more ocean habitat than any other fishing practice

C. To bring together all available bathymetric data to produce the definitive map of the world ocean floor

D. None of the above.

Answer: C

Explanation :

Recently, researchers under Seabed 2030 project had finished mapping nearly one-fifth of the world's ocean floor. It is a collaborative project between the Nippon Foundation of Japan and the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO). It aims to bring together all available bathymetric data to produce the definitive map of the world ocean floor by 2030 and make it available to all.

Q:) With reference to National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), consider the following statements:

1. The NIRF was launched by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development in 2015.

2. The framework ranks only Universities and not individual institutions.

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: A

Explanation :

Statement 1 is correct: Recently, “India Rankings 2020” under National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The NIRF was launched by the MHRD in 2015.

Statement 2 is not correct: This framework outlines a methodology to rank institutions both universities and individual institutions across the country on a yearly basis under 10 categories

Overall, University, Engineering, Management, Pharmacy, College, Medical, Law, Architecture and Dental (newly added in 2020).

Q:) With reference to the ‘Talamaddale art’ recently seen in the news, consider the follow-ing statements:

- 1. It is a variant of Yakshagana theatre.**
- 2. Yakshagana emerged in the Vijayanagara Empire and was performed by Jakkula Varu.**
- 3. In the conventional ‘talamaddale art,’ the artists sit across in a place without any costumes and engage in testing their oratory skills.**

Which of the given statements are correct?

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2 and 3 only

C. 1 and 3 only

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

Explanation :

Statement 1 is correct: The traditional art of 'Talamaddale', a variant of Yakshagana theatre, has gone virtual in times of COVID-19. Tala-Maddale is an ancient form of performance dialogue or debate performance in Southern India in the Karavali and Malnad regions of Karnataka and Kerala.

Statement 2 is correct: Yakshagana is the oldest theatre form popular in Karnataka. It emerged in the Vijayanagara Empire and was performed by Jakkula Varu. The stories are drawn from Ramayana, Mahabharata and other epics from both Hindu and Jain tradition.

Statement 3 is correct: Unlike the Yakshagana performance, in the conventional 'tala-maddale,' the artists sit across in a place without any costumes and engage in testing their oratory skills based on the episode chosen.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the International Day of Light:

- 1. It is an initiative by the United Nations Environment Programme to raise global awareness of the achievements of light science and its applications.**
- 2. It is celebrated every year to commemorate the anniversary of the first successful operation of the laser in 1960 by physicist and engineer, Theodore Maiman.**

Which of the statements give above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only**
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2**

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The International Day of Light (IDL) is celebrated on 16th May each year, the anniversary of the first successful operation of the laser in 1960 by physicist and engineer, Theodore Maiman

- **It is an initiative by the UNESCO.**
- **In 2015, to raise global awareness of the achievements of light science and its applications observed the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies 2015 (IYL 2015).**
- **Following the success of the IYL 2015, Ghana, Mexico, New Zealand and Russia placed a resolution before the UNESCO Executive Board supporting the idea of an International Day of Light. It was adopted on September 19, 2016 at the Board's 200th session the UN the headquarters in Paris, France.**

Some of the major objectives of the IDL is to improve the public understanding of the light and light-based technologies, highlight and explain the intimate link between light, and art and culture, enhancing the role of optical technology to preserve cultural heritage, emphasise the importance of basic research and promote the importance of lighting technology.

Q:) Which among the following international agencies publishes the "Energy Transition Index"?

- (a) The World Bank**
- (b) The World Economic Forum**
- (c) The International Energy Agency**
- (d) The International Monetary Fund**

Answer: (b)

Explanation: 'Energy Transition' refers to the shift in the energy system from the fossil-based fuels towards renewable energy. The

Energy Transition Index (ETI) measures

the extent of energy transition taking place across 115 countries, including India. It is published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Q:) With reference to the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), consider the following statements:

1. It is a digital currency which is accepted as a legal tender for transactions within a country.

2. The currency can be programmed to be used only for certain selected transactions.

3. China has recently issued the world's first CBDC.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) is a digital currency backed by the Central Bank of a country. Just like the currency notes issued by the Central

Bank, the CBDC is a legal tender and accepted for the payment of various transactions within a country.

Secondly, unlike the crypto-currencies, the CBDC is backed by the Central Bank and hence, enjoys more amount of stability and less volatility.

Thirdly, it is considered as a "programmable money". The Central Bank can enable the usage of the CBDC for certain selected users - either the people or only the Financial Institutions.

Further, the CBDC is also referred as a programmable money, because it can be programmed only for certain selected transactions or they may be enabled in certain specific regions of the country only.

Lastly, just like the crypto-currencies, the CBDC works on the 'Blockchain Technology' and hence, the details of every transaction- amount, accounts involved, purpose etc., are recorded. Tunisia became one of the first countries in the world to issue a 'Blockchain based National Currency', called eDinar, also known as Digicash and BitDinar.

Q:) The ILO Convention 144, which was recently in the news, is related to which of the following?

- (a) Ban on the child labour**
- (b) Promotion of tripartism**
- (c) Protection of the migrant labourers**
- (d) Social security for the labourers**

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The ILO Convention 144 has been in the news, after some state governments passed amendments to the labour laws, diluting the protection of labour in the country.

These ordinances were passed by the state governments without consultations with the labour organizations, such as the trade unions. India is a signatory to the ILO Convention 144. According to the ILO Convention 144, each signatory to the Convention should create procedures for ensuring effective consultations between the governments, the employers and the employees. The employers and the workers shall be represented on an equal footing on anybody/bodies, through which the consultations are undertaken.

Q:) Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)?

1. It is a Swedish think-tank dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
2. India and China have been reported to have emerged among the top three military spenders.
3. The Trends in World Military Expenditure is an annual report released by the SIPRI.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The global military expenditure rose to \$1,917 billion in 2019, with India and China emerging among the top three spenders, according to a report by the Swedish think-tank, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

“In 2019, China and India were, respectively, the second and the third largest military spenders in the world. China’s military expenditure reached \$261 billion in 2019, a 5.1% increase compared with 2018, while India’s grew by 6.8% to \$71.1 billion,” the report said.

In 2019, the top five largest spenders – U.S. (\$732 billion), China, India, Russia (\$65.1 billion) and Saudi Arabia (\$61.9 billion) – accounted for 62% of the global expenditure. The annual report ‘Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2019’ was released by the SIPRI, recently. The SIPRI is an international institute based in Sweden, dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, the SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on the open sources, to the policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public. The SIPRI is based in Stockholm

Q:) Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme?

- 1. The Scheme aims to facilitate the indigenous defence production and reduce the imports of the military equipment.**
- 2. It aims at setting up of the Greenfield Defence Testing Infrastructure, a common facility under the private sector, with the government assistance.**
- 3. It is limited to setting up the test facilities in the Defence Industrial Corridors (DICs) only.**

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 2 only

(b) 1 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 2 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c)

Background –

- Under “Make in India”, the government has accorded high priority to the development of the manufacturing base of the Defence and the Aerospace sectors in the country, to reduce dependence on imports. Towards this, the government has announced establishment of the Defence Industrial Corridors (DICs) in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- One of the main impediments for domestic defence production is the lack of easily accessible state-of-the-art testing infrastructure. The Defence Testing Infrastructure is often capital intensive, requiring continuous upgradation and it is not economically viable for the individual defence industrial units to set up in-house testing facilities.
- The Scheme aims at setting up of the Greenfield Defence Testing Infrastructure (required for the Defence and the Aerospace related production), as a common facility under the private sector, with government assistance, mainly in the DICs.

Objective:

The objective of the proposed Scheme is to promote the indigenous defence production, with special focus on the participation of the MSMEs and the Start Ups, by bridging gaps in the Defence Testing Infrastructure in the country. Setting up of the Defence Testing Infrastructure will provide easy access and thus, meet the testing needs of the domestic defence industry.

About the Defence Testing Infrastructure Scheme –

- The Scheme would run for duration of five years and it envisages to set up six to eight new test facilities in partnership with the private industry.
- This will facilitate the indigenous defence production and consequently reduce the imports of the military equipment, and help make the country self-reliant.

- The projects under the Scheme will be provided with up to 75% government funding, in the form of 'Grant-in-Aid'.
- The remaining 25% of the project cost will have to be borne by the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), whose constituents will be the Indian private entities and the state governments.
- The SPVs, under the Scheme, will be registered under the Companies Act, 2013, and shall also operate and maintain all the assets under the Scheme, in a self-sustainable manner by collecting the user charges.
- The equipments/systems tested will be certified as per the appropriate accreditation.
- While majority of the test facilities are expected to come up in the two Defence Industrial Corridors (DICs), the Scheme is not limited to setting up the test facilities in the DICs only.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the Open Skies Treaty (OST):

- 1. Under the Treaty, a member state can "spy" on any part of the host nation, with the latter's consent.**
- 2. The Treaty was signed after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1992.**
- 3. India is not a member country.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- The Open Skies Treaty (OST) was first proposed in 1955 by the former US President, Dwight Eisenhower, as a means to de-escalate tensions during the Cold War.
- The landmark Treaty was eventually signed after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1992, between the NATO members and the former Warsaw Pact countries.
- The Treaty entered into force on January 1, 2002, and currently 34 states are party to the Treaty, while a 35th, Kyrgyzstan, has signed, but not ratified it.
- The OST aims at building confidence among the members through mutual openness, thus reducing the chances of an accidental war.
- Under the Treaty, a member state can “spy” on any part of the host nation, with the latter’s consent. A country can undertake aerial imaging over the host state after giving a notice 72 hours before and sharing its exact flight path 24 hours before. The Treaty permits each state-party to conduct short-notice, unarmed, reconnaissance flights over the others' entire territories, to collect data on military forces and activities.
- The information gathered, such as on troop movements, military exercises and missile deployments, has to be shared with all the member states.
- All of a state-party's territory can be overflown. No territory can be declared off-limits by the host nation. Even the Treaty allows for multiple states- parties to take part in an overflight.
- India is not a member country.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the Dekho Apna Desh Initiative:

- 1. It is a programme, where the students from classes 8-12 are promoted to visit the remarkable sites present in India.**
- 2. It is run by the Ministry of Culture.**

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: (d)

Explanation:

Dekho Apna Desh Initiative is a programme by the Ministry of Tourism, under which webinars are conducted, which make people learn about the important tourist destinations of the country. These videos are later uploaded on YouTube.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the Responsible AI for Youth Programme:

- 1. The Programme has been launched by the Ministry of Science and Technology.**
- 2. The Programme is open for the students of classes 8-12, from the central and the state government run schools.**

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: (b)

The Responsible AI for Youth Programme is open to the students of classes 8 – 12, from the central and the state government run schools (including KVS, NVS, JNV), from across the country, in all the 28 states and 8 Union Territories. It aims to bring about a change in the thought process and create a bridge for the digital divide. The Programme will be implemented in a phase-wise manner and in its first phase, each of the State Education Department will nominate 10 teachers, as per the eligibility criteria. The teachers may also self-nominate themselves by fulfilling the eligibility criteria. These teachers will be provided orientation sessions, aimed to help them understand the premise and identify 25- 50 potential students for the Programme. The identified students will attend online training sessions on AI (Artificial Intelligence) and understand how to identify the social impact ideas/projects, that may be created using AI and submit their ideas through a 60 seconds video, explaining a proposed AI enabled solution.

From the submitted ideas, in the form of the videos, top 100 ideas will be shortlisted and these students will be invited to attend the residential boot-camps or online sessions (subject to COVID-19 situation), to take them through a deep dive AI journey. Post the boot-camps/ online sessions, these students will be asked to create real time projects and submit their final project in a video format on the website.

Adequate handholding will be provided by the Intel certified AI coaches and mentors throughout, to ensure that the ideas mature as prototypes. The experts will shortlist top 50 project ideas and the students will be invited to showcase their projects, either face to face or in an online format. Further, top 20 innovative projects will be selected by an independent committee of experts and provided opportunities to showcase at relevant platform.

The Programme has been created and launched by the National e-Governance Division, Ministry of Electronics and IT, in collaboration with Intel India, with support from the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

Q:) With reference to the Government Final

Consumption Expenditure (GFCE) ,

consider the following statements:

- 1. The share of the GFCE to India's GDP is more than 25%.**
- 2. In the recent years, drastic decrease in the rate of the GFCE has led to the present economic slowdown.**

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: (d)

Explanation:

The Government Final Consumption Expenditure (GFCE) accounts for around 12% of India's GDP. As highlighted by the Economic Survey 2019-20, the present economic slowdown is on account of decline in investment, accompanied by decline in consumption expenditure. Even though the contribution of the GFCE is only around 12% of India's GDP, the increase in the rate of the GFCE has enabled the Indian economy to register the GDP growth rate of 4.2% in 2019-20. Had the government not increased its expenditure, the GDP growth rate would have been still lower in 2019-20

Q:) Consider the following statements about the National Coal Index:

- 1. The Index has been developed on the recommendation of the Pratyush Sinha Committee.**
- 2. The Index will be used for the auction of the coal mines for commercial mining on revenue sharing basis.**

3. It does not take into account the prices of the imported coal.

Which of 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)

Explanation:

The National Coal Index (NCI) – It has been developed on the recommendation of the Pratyush Sinha Committee. It will be used for the purpose of the auction of the coal mines for commercial mining on revenue sharing basis.

NCI is the weighted average of the change in the price level of coal, based on the price level of Financial Year 2017-18. The Index is compiled and presented at 5 sub- sectors level, which are the groups of the grades of coal. These sub-sector indices are averaged to compile the Index of the non-coking coal and the coking coal, and finally for the whole of the Indian coal sector.

The Index will use three price channels:

- Notified prices of Coal India; WCL; and SCCL.**
- Auction prices of Coal India.**
- Import prices of coal.**

It would be brought out once in two months. It would be published on the last date of every second month. The Coal Controller's Organization (CCO) would be responsible for collecting all data pertaining to the coal prices, from all the price channels on a bi-monthly basis. The CCO will compile the National Coal Index.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the Open Data Charter:

- 1. It is a Charter to be adopted by the governments, under the auspices of the United Nations.**
- 2. The Government of India has adopted the Open Data Charter.**
- 3. The Charter calls for 'Open by Default', meaning that there is a presumption of the publication of data collected by the governments.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

The Open Data Charter – In 2013, the G8 leaders signed the G8 Open Data Charter, which outlined a set of five core open data principles. Many nations and open government advocates welcomed the G8 Charter, but there was a general sense that the principles could be refined and improved to support the broader global adoption of the open data principles.

Building on these efforts, and through an open, inclusive and representative process, a number of open data champions from the governments, multilateral organizations, civil society and private sector developed the

International Open Data Charter. (It is independent of the United Nations).

The Charter has 6 principles, which were developed in 2015 by the governments, civil society and experts around the world to represent a globally agreed set of aspirational norms for how to publish the data.

The Six Principles are:

1. Open by default;
2. Timely and comprehensive;
3. Accessible and usable;
4. Comparable and interoperable;
5. For improved governance and citizen engagement; and
6. For inclusive development and innovation.

The Government of India has not adopted the Open Data Charter.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the Nagar Van Scheme:

1. The Nagar Van aims at developing 200 Urban Forests pan India in the coming five years.
2. The funding from the CAMPA Fund will be provided for the Scheme.
3. It is a programme under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Nagar Van Scheme

The Nagar Van or Urban Forests aims at developing 200 Urban Forests pan India in the coming five years. Under this Scheme, a minimum of 20 hectares of forests will be created in the city. These city forests will provide the city

dwellers a wholesome natural environment for recreation and will contribute to the improvement of the city's environment by pollution mitigation, cleaner air, noise reduction, water harvesting and the reduction of the heat island effect. The city authorities are encouraged to have a city forest, comprising an area up to 100 ha in the forest area within their jurisdiction, for deriving the maximum ecological and environmental benefits.

This is also linked to the School Nursery Yojana, that aims to build lasting bond between the students and the nature. Assistance under the CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act) Fund will be provided for this initiative. It is a programme of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Q:) Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the 5G Club?

- 1. It is aimed at channelling the investments into the existing telecommunication companies, within the member states.**
- 2. It is basically mooted in order to develop the alternate supply chain of the 5G technology.**

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only**
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) Both 1 and 2**
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2**

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

About the 5G Club –

- Also called the D10, it includes the democracies of the G7 countries, including the UK, the US, Italy, Germany, France, Japan and Canada, as well as Australia, South Korea and India.**

- It is basically mooted in order to develop the alternate supply chain of the 5G technology.
- The main aim is to cut out Huawei out of the 5G supply chain network by 2023.
- It is aimed at channelling the investments into the existing telecommunication companies, within the 10 member states.

Q:) With reference to the rubber production in India, consider the following statements:

- 1. India is the second largest producer and consumer of natural rubber in the world.**
- 2. Karnataka is the largest producer of natural rubber in India.**

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: (d)

Explanation:

India is currently the sixth largest producer and second largest consumer of natural rubber in the world. The traditional rubber-growing states, comprising Kerala and Tamil Nadu, account for 81% of the production. The major non-traditional rubber growing regions are the north-eastern states of Tripura, Assam & Meghalaya, Odisha, Karnataka, Maharashtra and West Bengal.

Q:) Consider the following statements about the New START Treaty:

- 1. It is signed between the USA and the People's Republic of China.**
- 2. The Treaty will expire in 2021, unless both the parties agree to extend it.**

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: (b)

The decrease in the overall number of nuclear weapons in the world is mainly due to Russia and the USA – which together still account for over 90% of all nuclear weapons – further reducing their strategic nuclear forces, pursuant to the implementation of the 2010 Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (The New START Treaty), while also making unilateral reductions.

The New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) Treaty will expire in 2021, unless both the parties agree to extend it.

