



Daily Current Affairs Prelims Quiz - 09-11-2020 - (Online Prelims Test)

1) *AIM-Sirius Innovation Programme*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is a bilateral youth innovation initiative between India and?

- a. U.S.A
- b. Russia
- c. Poland
- d. France

Answer : b

- *Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Sirius, Russia have recently launched 'AIM-Sirius Innovation Programme 3.0'.*
- It is a 14-day virtual programme for Indian and Russian school children.
- Over a two-week programme, from 7-21 November 2020, 48 students and 16 educators and mentors will create 8 virtual products and mobile applications addressing global challenges in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic.

AIM Sirius Innovation Programme

- It is the first Indo-Russian bilateral youth innovation initiative.
- It seeks to develop technological solutions (both web- and mobile-based) for the two countries.

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Other Service Providers (OSPs)* in India

1. These are companies or firms which provides primary, secondary or tertiary services for various companies.
2. The registration of every OSP is mandatory under the Companies Act, 2013.

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

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

Answer : d

- *The Department of Telecom had recently eased the rules registration, submission of bank guarantee and other norms for other service providers (OSP) in the business process outsourcing (BPO) and information technology-enabled services (ITes).*
- The **new rules do away with the registration requirement for OSPs**, with such BPOs that are engaged only in data work have been taken out of the category of OSPs altogether.

Other Service Providers

- OSPs are companies or firms which provide **secondary or tertiary services** such as telemarketing, telebanking or telemedicine for various companies, banks or hospital chains,

respectively.

- Since most of these firms used leased telephone lines, which in turn used the telecom spectrum auctioned by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), the new telecom policy of 1999 suggested that all OSPs register themselves so that the government could keep a check on the usage of its resources.
- Further, the registration was also made mandatory to ensure that firms did not establish fake OSPs which swindled customers under the garb of providing telebanking and other such sensitive services.

New Guidelines

- Registration of OSPs with the DoT is no longer required.
- DoT has now allowed permanent work from home or work from anywhere in India for OSP employees.
- Such employees working either from home or from remote locations would be treated as an extended agent or remote agent of the OSP.
- The new guidelines also do away with the need to furnish any bank guarantees for any of their location in India.

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Wastelands of India*

1. Wastelands in India are classified based on the social, cultural, ecology and ecosystems of the area.
2. 17% of India is classified as wasteland according to the Wasteland Atlas of India 2019.

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

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



Answer : b

- Unique deserts and grasslands are as habitats that support human communities, wildlife, and vegetation.
- Ill-informed attempts to modify these landscapes are the legacy of colonialism, when **many such lands were considered wasteland because they did not generate revenue.**
- As much as 17% of India is classified as wasteland, according to **Wastelands Atlas of India 2019** released by the **Ministry of Rural Development.**
- The term 'wasteland', a colonial construct, obsesses with the monetary benefits that a piece of land may or may not provide.
- Monocultures and plantations were considered productive while wetlands, deserts, and grasslands were not.
- **The classification ignores the social, cultural and historical links of the inhabitants, as well as the ecology and ecosystems of these places.**
- The only true 'wastelands' on earth stem from human industrial activities that render land lifeless.
- Areas deemed wastelands — grasslands, deserts, rocky outcrops and sand dunes — are actually rich ecosystems teeming with unique biodiversity and human cultures finely attuned to the dynamics of such landscapes.
- This categorisation still persists, and these landscapes are thus vanishing.

Wasteland Distribution & its impacts

- About 11% of Gujarat is categorised as wastelands with large swathes of Kutch falling under this classification.
- On the other side of the country, the floodplains of the Ganga and Brahmaputra along the Terai arc are not only one of the most biodiverse parts of the subcontinent, supporting rare

species such as the endangered greater one-horned rhinoceros that thrives in the tall elephant grass, but are also among the most densely populated parts of the country.

- But parts of this region too are classified as wastelands.
- For instance, Assam has approximately 11% of its total area classified as such, while Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim, renowned biodiversity hotspots, have 16% and 46%.
- At the country's southern tip, the biodiversity hotspot that is the Western Ghats is home to the rare Shola grasslands of the sky islands; these natural grasslands are the last refuge for several endemic species of birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals, including the Nilgiri tahr, and unique flora such as the neelakurinji that blossoms every 12 years and gives the Nilgiris its name.
- Parts of this ecosystem too come under the umbrella term 'wastelands'.
- As do parts of the central Indian grasslands, the last refuge of the tiger.
- Over 12% of Madhya Pradesh, which has national parks such as Kanha, Pench, and Panna, is categorised as scrub forest, degraded pastures, etc.
- Large chunks of the Himalaya and its foothills, with their cold deserts and montane grasslands, the strongholds of the snow leopard, are similarly classified.
- As much as 79% of Jammu and Kashmir, 41% of Himachal Pradesh, and 23% of Uttarakhand, are considered wastelands.
- The Asiatic cheetah that once roamed India's grasslands is already extinct, as is the pink-headed duck that once thrived in the Gangetic swamps.
- A grassland denizen, the great Indian bustard, once in the running for national bird status, is critically endangered today.

4) Which of the following sectors in India are included so far under the ambit of *Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme*?

1. Textiles
2. Mobile Phones
3. Medical devices
4. Food processing



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Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer : b

- *The government aims to expand the ambit of the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to include as many as ten more sectors such as food processing and textiles.*

Production Linked Incentive Scheme

- In order to boost domestic manufacturing and cut down on import bills, the central government in March 2020 introduced a scheme that aims to give companies incentives on incremental sales from products manufactured in domestic units.
- Apart from inviting foreign companies to set shop in India, the scheme also aims to encourage local companies to set up or expand existing manufacturing units.
- ***So far, the scheme has been rolled out for mobile and allied equipment as well as pharmaceutical ingredients and medical devices manufacturing.***
- These sectors are labour intensive and are likely, and the hope is that they would create new jobs for the ballooning employable workforce of India.
- The objective is really to make India more compliant with our WTO (World Trade Organisation) commitments and also make it non-discriminatory and neutral with respect to domestic sales and exports.

5) Consider the following pairs

1. Kari Ishad – A water bird
2. Gajani Kagga – A Mango Variety
3. Bellakki – A Salt tolerant paddy variety

Which of the pair(s) given above is/are correctly matched?

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. All of the above
- d. None of the above

Answer : d

- *Karnataka Biodiversity Board has recently recommended the Union government to grant Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Kari Ishad, a variety of mango grown in Ankola taluk of Uttara Kannada, the Gajani Kagga paddy cultivated in Kumta taluk in the same district, and the Rajamudi variety of paddy grown in Hassan district.*
- *The board had also recommended that the wildlife board declare Mundige Kere, a waterbody in Sonda village of Sirsi taluk in Uttara Kannada, a bird sanctuary as it is home to “**Bellakki**”, a **water bird**.*

Ishad mango

- It is unique to Ankola taluk.
- It has two variants — Kari Ishad, which has a thin skin, more pulp and is sweeter, and Bili Ishad, which has a thick skin and has less pulp and sweetness.

Gajani Kagga

- It is a salt-tolerant paddy variety and it survives in standing water.
- It is grown in Kumta taluk in patches of water in small quantities now.

Rajamudi

- It is usually consumed as unpolished rice.
- Originally it was red in colour, but with evolution, it is now available in red mixed with light white colour.