



IAS PARLIAMENT

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A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

MONTHLY PRESTORMING

DECEMBER 2020

Shankar IAS Academy™

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01-12-2020

1) Indian Prime Minister has recently announced that an ancient idol of the goddess Annapurna, stolen from India about a century ago, is being brought back from Canada. Which of the following is the official custodian of such repatriated artefacts?

- Archaeological Survey of India
- National Gallery of Modern Art
- Directorate of Intelligence Bureau
- Central Economic Intelligence Bureau

2) Consider the following statements regarding *wild Kiwi*, which was recently granted organic certification

- It was grown in the Ziro Valley of Arunachal Pradesh.
- It is the only certified organic fruit of its kind in India.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mount Vesuvius*

- It is located near the coastal city of Naples in Southern France.
- It is the only active volcano in mainland Europe.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mission Organic Value Chain*

Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER)

- It is a Central Sector Scheme for the northeastern states under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- It is a sub-mission under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA).

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Sanitation and Hygiene Fund*

- It provides accelerated funding to countries with the heaviest burden of diseases stemming from lack of sanitation services.
- It is a fund hosted by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Brereton War Crimes Report*?

- The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report is commonly known as the Brereton Report.
- It is a report into war crimes committed by the US Defence Force during the War in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2016.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *RT-LAMP Testing Method*

1. It is a one-step nucleic acid amplification method to multiply specific sequences of RNA of the coronavirus.
2. The LAMP technology has been recently validated by the Indian Council of Medical Research with sensitivity 98.7%

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Zebra Fish*?

1. Zebrafish a tiny freshwater fish, it is native to Indo-Gangetic plains.
2. Zebrafish can efficiently regenerate its damaged heart within a short time period.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

9) The ritual *Tripura Purnima Snan* recently in news is celebrated by?

- a. Hindu Communities in North-East
- b. Sikh Community across the globe
- c. Buddhist Communities in Bihar
- d. Hindu Communities in Uttar Pradesh

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Aadi Mahotsav*

1. It is a 100 year old festival celebrated by Munda tribal community.
2. TRIFED organises it to familiarize culture of the tribal communities across the country.

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

Answers

1. a

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently announced that an ancient idol of the goddess Annapurna, stolen from India about a century ago, is being brought back from Canada.
- Annapurna is the goddess of food. The 18th-century idol, carved in the Benares style was smuggled out of the country around 100 years ago somewhere around 1913.
- **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** is the official custodian of all such repatriated artefacts.

2. c

- Arunachal is first in the country to obtain Organic Certification for its wild Kiwi under Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER).
- Kiwis of Ziro Valley — located in Lower Subansiri district — were certified as organic following a standard three-year-process.
- The kiwis of the region are the only certified organic fruit of their kind in the country.
- Certification helps producers and handlers, they receive premium prices for the products, and have access to fast-growing, local, regional and international markets.

Organic Farming

- An agricultural practice/product is considered organic when there are no chemical fertilisers or pesticides involved in its cultivation process.
- Such certifications in India can be obtained after strict scientific assessment done by the regulatory body, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

3. b

- *The Italian Culture Ministry has recently announced the discovery of well-preserved remains of two men, who perished during the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD.*
- The eruption was a catastrophic event that destroyed the ancient Roman city of Pompeii and killed around 16,000 people.

Mount Vesuvius

- It is located in southern Italy near the coastal city of Naples.
- The 4,203-ft (1,281 metres) tall Vesuvius is the only active volcano in mainland Europe.
- Vesuvius has been classified as a complex volcano (also called a compound volcano), one that consists of a complex of two or more vents.
- Vesuvius typically has explosive eruptions and pyroclastic flows– defined as a high-density mix of hot lava blocks, pumice, ash and volcanic gas.

4. c

Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER)

- It is a Central Sector Scheme, a sub-mission under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for implementation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, during the 12th plan period.
- The scheme aims to development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the

creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing, marketing and brand building initiative.

5. d

- *The United Nations has recently launched the Sanitation and Hygiene Fund.*

UN Sanitation and Hygiene Fund

- It will fund countries with high burden of diseases stemming from lack of sanitation services and have the least ability to respond to them.
- The fund is hosted by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), which provides technical advice and project implementation to the UN and its partners.

The objectives of the Fund are:

1. Expanding household sanitation
2. Ensuring menstrual health and hygiene
3. Providing sanitation and hygiene in schools and healthcare facilities
4. Supporting innovative sanitation solutions

6. a

Brereton Report

- The Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Afghanistan Inquiry Report is commonly known as the Brereton Report.
- It is a report into war crimes committed by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) during the War in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2016.
- The report found evidence of 39 murders of civilians and prisoners by (or at the instruction of) members of the Australian special forces, which were subsequently covered up by ADF personnel.
- The unlawful killings discussed by the report began in 2009, with most occurring in 2012 and 2013.

7. c

RT-LAMP Technology

- The RT-LAMP test is Reverse Transcriptase loop-mediated isothermal amplification technology.



- It is a one-step nucleic acid amplification method to multiply specific sequences of RNA of the coronavirus.
- Under this technology, the RNA is first made into cDNA (copy DNA) by the usual reverse transcription and then, the DNA is amplified by the LAMP technique.
- The important advantage of the LAMP technology is that the assay is so fast that results can be obtained within 30 minutes and positive samples are amplified as early as 10 minutes.
- The LAMP technology does not need laborious preparation as in the case of RT-PCR.
- The LAMP technology has been recently validated by the Indian Council of Medical Research with sensitivity 98.7% and specificity 100%.

8. c

Zebra Fish

- Zebrafish is a small (2-3 cm long) freshwater fish found in the tropical and subtropical regions.
- The fish is native to South Asia's Indo-Gangetic plains, where they are mostly found in the paddy fields and even in stagnant water and streams.
- The fish become adults at three months and survive 2-3 years in a laboratory condition.
- A zebrafish attracts developmental biologists due to its adequate regeneration capacity of almost all its organs, including the brain, heart, eye, spinal cord.
- Recently scientists at Pune-based Agharkar Research Institute have used this tiny animal model and identified genes that can promote heart regeneration.

9. d

Dev Deepavali

- It is also known as "Diwali of the Gods"
- It is the festival of Kartik Poornima celebrated in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, India.
- It falls on the full moon of the Hindu month of Kartika (November - December) and takes place fifteen days after Diwali.

- The gods are believed to descend to Earth to bathe in the Ganges on this day.
- The festival is also observed as Tripura Purnima Snan.

10. b

Aadi Mahotsav

- The Aadi Mahotsav is a unique celebration of the spirit of tribal culture, crafts, cuisine and commerce.
- It is a 10 day long festival, celebrated annually commenced in 2017.
- It is organized by TRIFED under Union Tribal Affairs Ministry.
- The festival is an attempt to familiarize the people with the rich and diverse craft and culture of the tribal communities across the country, in one place.
- Recently TRIFED has decided to continue with this tradition by organising it on an online platform.

02-12-2020

1) With respect to *Octane ratings in fuel*, consider the following statements

1. It is a measure of a fuel's ability to avoid knock which occurs when fuel is prematurely ignited in the engine's cylinder.
2. The lower the octane number, the more resistant the petrol mixture is to knock.

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

2) With respect to the *World Malaria Report, 2020* released recently, consider the following statements

1. According to the report, India records the largest reduction in cases in South-East Asia.
2. The report is being published annually by the World Health Organization (WHO).

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

3) Which of the following is incorrect regarding the recently constituted Apex Committee for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (AIPA)?

- a. It has the responsibility of regularly communicating and reporting the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- b. The committee will be chaired by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- c. The AIPA will act as a national authority for the regulation of carbon markets in India under the Paris Agreement
- d. None of the above

4) Gale crater, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in which of the following?

- a. Mars
- b. Moon
- c. Saturn
- d. Jupiter

5) Nagaland is inhabited by major tribes along with other sub-tribes. Which of the following are non-Naga Tribes?

- a. Angami, Ao, Lotha, pochury
- b. Kukis, Kacharis, Garos, Karbis

- c. Chakhesang, Chang, Rengma, Sumi
- d. Khamniungan, Konyak, Phom, Sangtam

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to Peacock soft-shelled Turtle?

1. It is a vulnerable species which is widespread in southern parts of the Indian subcontinent.
2. These are found in rivers, streams, lakes and ponds with mud or sand bottoms.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

1. NREGS is a demand-based scheme and central government bears the full cost of unskilled labour and material cost involved in it.
2. Ministry of Skill Development and entrepreneurship in association with state governments, monitors the implementation of the scheme.

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

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to Super Infections?

1. Super Infections are infection occurring after or on top of an earlier infection, especially following treatment with broad-spectrum antibiotics.

2. The most common cause of death in influenza patients is caused by bacteria.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

9) The Volcano *Mt.Lewotolok* recently in news is located in?

- Italy
- Chile
- Japan
- Indonesia

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Tree Rings*

- Tree Rings can show the rainfall pattern of several centuries in the region.
- Wider Tree rings reflect more rainfall and higher river runoff.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answers

1. a

- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has recently launched the nation's first 100 Octane petrol.
- It helps India join a select league of nations globally that have such superior quality fuel.

XP100

- Branded as **XP100**, the premium grade petrol was launched across ten cities in India.

- It will initially be available at select outlet of IOC in 10 cities -- Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida, Agra, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Mumbai, Pune and Ahmedabad.
- IOC plans to roll out XP100 premium grade petrol in the second phase in Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kochi and Kolkata.
- The fuel is manufactured at IOC's Mathura refinery in Uttar Pradesh and supplied at select petrol pumps.
- Previously, the nation leapfrogged from BS-IV (Euro-IV) emission compliant fuel to BS-VI from April 1 this year.

Octane ratings

- They are measures of **fuel stability**.
- It is a measure of a **fuel's ability to avoid knock**.
- Knock occurs when **fuel is prematurely ignited in the engine's cylinder**, which degrades efficiency and can be damaging to the engine.
- The **higher the octane number, the more resistant the petrol mixture is to knock**.
- Worldwide, 100 Octane petrol has a niche market for **luxury vehicles that demand high performance** and is available only in six countries of USA, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Malaysia and Israel.
- At most retail stations, three octane grade are offered, 87 (regular), 89 (mid-grade) and 91-94 (premium).
- Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) had recently launched Octane 99 and now IOC has come to the market with XP100.

2. c

- World Health Organisation has recently released the *World Malaria Report 2020*.
- According to the report, India made impressive gains in the global fight against malaria, recording the largest reduction in cases in South-East Asia from 20 million in 2000 to about 5.6 million last year.
- India also recorded a decrease in the number of deaths from malaria between 2000 and 2019.

- Malaria deaths in India declined from about 29,500 in 2000 to about 7,700 last year, the report said.
- In the WHO South-East Asia Region, malaria deaths reduced by 74 per cent, from about 35,000 in 2000 to 9,000 in 2019.
- India, however, still accounted for 88 per cent of malaria cases and 86 per cent of malaria deaths in the WHO South-East Asia Region in 2019.

3. b

- *The Government of India has recently constituted the Apex Committee for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (AIPA).*

Apex Committee for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement (AIPA)

Composition

- The **Secretary, Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** (MoEFCC) will be the **chairperson** and the additional secretary, MoEFCC will be the vice chairperson of the committee

Functions

It has been constituted with the purpose of ensuring:

1. a coordinated response on climate change matters that protects the country's interests
 2. India is on track towards meeting its climate change obligations under the Paris Agreement including its submitted Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).
- The AIPA has the responsibility of regularly communicating and reporting the NDCs to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
 - It will also define the responsibilities of the government ministries that would be crucial in achieving the country's climate change mitigation and adaptation goals and submit a report every six months.
 - The AIPA will also act as a national authority for the regulation of carbon markets in India under the Article 6.2, Article 6.4 and Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

- They are the accounts of the voluntary efforts to be made by countries that are a part of the Paris Agreement, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of anthropogenic climate change.

The three quantitative goals in the Indian NDCs are:

1. A 33-35 per cent reduction in the gross domestic product emissions intensity by 2030 from 2005 levels
 2. A 40 per cent share of non-fossil fuel based electricity by 2030
 3. Creating a carbon sink of 2.5-3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide through afforestation programmes
- Apart from these, there are five other non-quantitative goals in the Indian NDCs.
 - The NDCs are to be implemented in the post-2020 period.
 - India had submitted its NDCs in 2015.
 - Now, the AIPA, with its 17 members, has the responsibility of formulating policies and programmes for implementing them.

4. a

- A research study published in *Scientific Reports* recently suggests that around four billion years ago floods of unimaginable magnitude washed through Gale Crater on Mars' equator.
- The research findings were ascertained from the data collected by NASA's Curiosity rover.
- This research puts a stamp on the possibility of supporting microbial life on the fourth planet of our solar system.

Gale Crater

- Gale Crater formed when a meteor hit Mars in its early history, about 3.5 to 3.8 billion years ago.
- The meteor impact punched a hole in the terrain.
- The explosion ejected rocks and soil that landed around the crater.
- Gale crater has always fascinated the scientists as the Curiosity rover science team has already

confirmed that it was once home to persistent lakes and streams.

- Scientists chose Gale Crater as the landing site for Curiosity because it has many signs that water was present over its history.

5. b

6. b

Peacock soft-shelled turtle

- Peacock soft-shelled turtle is a turtle of a vulnerable species under IUCN.
- They have a large head which is olive green in colour.
- This species is confined to India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.
- It is widespread in North eastern and central parts of the Indian subcontinent.
- These are found in rivers, streams, lakes and ponds with mud or sand bottoms.
- It is placed under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I, CITES: Appendix I.
- The species is heavily exploited for its meat and calipee (the outer cartilaginous rim of the shell).

7. c

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

- Under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, the NREGS was introduced.
- The Act aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members (at least 18 years of age) volunteer to do unskilled work.
- The central government bears the full cost of unskilled labour, and 75% of the cost of material (the rest is borne by the states).
- It is a demand-driven, social security and labour law that aims to enforce the 'right to work'.
- Ministry of Rural Development in association with state governments, monitors the implementation of the scheme.

- The NREGS is a demand-based scheme and has emerged as a safety net during the pandemic for jobless migrant workers returning to their villages
- Despite a progressive relaxation in Covid-19 curbs to revive the economy, 96% gram panchayats have logged work under the scheme in the financial year (2020-21) as compared to previous seven years.

8. c

Super Infections

- These are infection occurring after or on top of an earlier infection, especially following treatment with broad-spectrum antibiotics.
- It is an overgrowth of an opportunistic pathogen from the bacterial or yeast imbalance of systemic antibiotics.
- For example, influenza is caused by a virus, but the most common cause of death in influenza patients is secondary pneumonia, which is caused by bacteria.
- However, the reason behind influenza infections leading to an increased risk of bacterial pneumonia is not known.
- When an individual is infected by influenza different nutrients and antioxidants, such as vitamin C, leak from the blood.
- The absence of nutrients and antioxidants creates a favourable environment for bacteria in the lungs.
- The bacteria adapt to the inflammatory environment by increasing the production of an enzyme called High temperature requirement A (HtrA).
- The presence of HtrA weakens the immune system and promotes bacterial growth in the influenza-infected airways.

9. d

Mount Ili Lewotolok

- It is located on Lembata island of East Nusa Tenggara province in Indonesia.
- It is one of the three currently erupting in Indonesia along with Merapi on Java Island and Sinabung on Sumatra Island.

- Mount Ili Lewotolok has been erupting on and off since October 2017.

10. c

Tree Rings

- The tree rings grow wider in years when soil moisture is high.
- Indirectly, wider rings reflect more rainfall and higher river runoff.
- Recently a new study analysed that the existing projections of the Brahmaputra flooding are based on observations of rainfall patterns.
- The study looked at rings of ancient trees sampled at 28 sites in Tibet, Myanmar, Nepal and Bhutan, at sites close enough to be affected by the same weather systems as the Brahmaputra watershed.
- The study is based on examinations of tree rings, which showed rainfall patterns going back seven centuries i.e. long before discharge records were compiled.
- The rings showed that the post-1950s period was actually one of the driest since the 1300s.

03-12-2020

1) With respect to *Additional Judges of High Courts*, consider the following statements:

1. The President can appoint duly qualified persons as additional judges of a high court when there is a temporary increase in the business of the high court.
2. No person appointed as an additional or acting Judge of a High Court shall hold office after attaining the age of sixty two years.

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

2) *Phytorid Technology*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is associated with which of the following?

- a. Biological Weathering
- b. Waste water treatment
- c. Air purification using plants
- d. Construction of Eco bridges in forest areas

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS)*

1. It is a voluntary membership organization of insurance supervisors and regulators, headquartered in Switzerland.
2. Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is one of the members of IAIS.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Armed forces Flag Day Fund' (AFFDF)*

1. It was constituted by the Government of India for the welfare and rehabilitation of the Ex-Servicemen (ESM) community.
2. Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) is responsible for the administration of AFFDF.

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)*

1. It was established in 1943 by a group of eminent intellectuals led by Sir Badruddin Tyabji and Motilal Nehru.
2. The ICWA is funded by the Ministry of External Affairs and it enjoys full autonomy.
3. The Vice President of India is the ex-officio President of ICWA.

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

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

6) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to “Emergency Use Authorisation (EAU)”?

1. EAU is a mechanism to grant interim approvals to Vaccines and medicines only if there are evidence they are safe to use.
2. India’s drug regulations have provisions for an EUA, and the process for receiving one is clearly defined by CDSCO

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to “COVID Pneumonia”

1. It is a condition in which the infection starts damaging the tissues of lower respiratory tract and it is different from regular Pneumonia.

2. People who are potentially at the risk of catching COVID pneumonia are children, people with weaker immunity system, elderly and cancer patients.

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to “Roshni Act”?

1. It was targeted to earn Rs.25,000 crore by transferring 20 lakh kanals of State land to existing occupants against payment at market rates.
2. It was implemented with the aim of boosting the Industrial development in J&K.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

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

9) The instrument “Theremin” recently in news is used for

- a. Measuring weight
- b. Measuring Pressure
- c. Measuring Temperature
- d. Making music

10) Consider the following statements with respect to “Contempt of Courts”

1. In the case of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General may bring in a motion before the court for initiating a case of criminal contempt.
2. The Attorney General’s consent is mandatory when a private citizen wants

to initiate a case of contempt of court against a person in Supreme Court.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answers

1. c

- The President of India, in exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 224 of the Constitution of India, appointed 10 persons as Additional Judges of the Madras High Court.

Additional and Acting Judges

The President can appoint duly qualified persons as additional judges of a high court **for a temporary period not exceeding two years** when:

- there is a temporary increase in the business of the high court; or
- there are arrears of work in the high court.

The President can also appoint a duly qualified person as an acting judge of a high court when a judge of that high court (other than the chief justice) is:

- unable to perform the duties of his office due to absence or any other reason; or
 - appointed to act temporarily as chief justice of that high court.
- An acting judge holds office until the permanent judge resumes his office.
 - However, both the additional or acting judge cannot hold office after attaining the age of 62 years.

2. b

- Union Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurates the eco-friendly and efficient Phytorid Technology Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (NCL)-Pune, developed by CSIR- National Environmental

Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur and CSIR-NCL.

PHYTORID

- It is a subsurface mixed flow constructed wetland system developed and internationally patented by CSIR-NEERI, Nagpur with successful demonstration in the field for more than 10 years of continuous operation as a stand-alone sewage treatment system.
- Phytorid is a self-sustainable technology for wastewater treatment that **works on the principle of natural wetland**.
- It uses **certain specific plants which can absorb nutrients directly from wastewater** but do not require soil.
- These plants act as nutrient sinker and remover.
- Using Phytorid Technology for the treatment of sewage, it is possible to recover and reuse the treated water for gardening purposes.
- CSIR-NCL is the first CSIR laboratory to use NEERI Phytorid water treatment technology.
- Compared to the conventional processes, this natural system based Phytorid Technology for sewage treatment is zero energy and zero operation & maintenance (O&M).

3. c

- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has recently obtained membership of International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS).**
- Some of the leading members of IAIS are:
 - United Kingdom- Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)
 - USA- National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC)
 - USA- Federal Insurance Office of the Insurance of the United States Department of Treasury (FIO)
 - Singapore- Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS)
 - India- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS)

- It was established in 1994.
- It is headquartered in Switzerland.
- It is a voluntary membership organization of insurance supervisors and regulators from more than 200 jurisdictions, constituting 97% of the world's insurance premiums.
- It is the international standard-setting body responsible for developing and assisting in the implementation of principles, standards and other supporting material for the supervision of the insurance sector.
- The IAIS also provides a forum for Members to share their experiences and understanding of insurance supervision and insurance markets.

Benefits for IFSCA

- With this membership IFSCA would have access to IAIS's global network and would be able to exchange ideas and information with other global regulators.
- This would help in developing a vibrant global Insurance hub in IFSC at GIFT City.
- Currently, 17 leading Insurance entities are operating from GIFT IFSC undertaking offshore Insurance and Reinsurance business.
- This membership would go a long way in connecting IFSC with global insurance institutions and would facilitate IFSCA in joint development of global insurance business with other global centres.

4. c

- *Since 1949, 7th December is observed as the Armed Forces Flag Day throughout the country to honor the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiantly fought on our borders to safeguard the country's honor.*
- *Speaking at a function recently, Union Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh urged countrymen to voluntarily contribute to AFFD Fund.*

Armed forces Flag Day Fund (AFFDF)

- It has been constituted by the Government of India **for the welfare and rehabilitation of the Ex-Servicemen (ESM) community.**

- It has been utilised for providing financial assistance to needy Ex-Servicemen, War widows and their Dependents; and the Institutions involved in rehabilitation of the Ex-Servicemen, War widows and their Dependents.
- ***Kendriya Sainik Board is responsible for administration of AFFDF.***
- The AFFDF is operated by a Managing Committee, headed by Union Defence Minister at the Centre and Governor / Lt Governor at the State / UT level.
- Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) formulates and operates various welfare and rehabilitation schemes for Ex Servicemen (ESM) and their dependents through Rajya Sainik Boards (RSBs) and Zila Sainik Boards (ZSBs) co-located in the State Capitals and District HQs respectively, across the country.
- Contributions to AFFDF are exempted from Income Tax.
- Corporate contributions to AFFDF are also eligible for fulfilling the CSR obligation under section 135 of Companies Act, 2013.

5. c

- *The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu had recently addressed the 18th meeting of the Governing Council of Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in virtual mode.*

Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA)

- It was established in 1943 by a group of eminent intellectuals led by **Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru** and **Dr. H.N. Kunzru**.
- Its principal objective was to create an Indian perspective on international relations and act as a repository of knowledge and thinking on foreign policy issues.
- It was registered as a non-official, non-political and non-profit organisation under the Registration of Societies Act 1860.
- By an Act of Parliament in 2001, the Indian Council of World Affairs has been declared an institution of national importance.
- The ICWA is **funded by the Ministry of External Affairs** and enjoys full autonomy.

- It has a General Body and Governing Council, headed by Hon'ble Vice President of the Republic of India who is the ex-officio President of the ICWA.

6. b

Emergency Use Authorisation

- Vaccines and medicines, and even diagnostic tests and medical devices, require the approval of a regulatory authority before they can be administered.
- The approval for vaccines and medicines is granted after an assessment of their safety and effectiveness, based on data from trials.
- In emergency situations, regulatory authorities around the world have developed mechanisms to grant interim approvals if there is sufficient evidence to suggest a medical product is safe and effective.
- The final approval is granted only after completion of the trials and analysis of full data and until then, emergency use authorisation (EUA) allows the medicine or the vaccine to be used on the public.
- In India, the regulatory authority for giving grants like EAU is the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).
- India's drug regulations do not have provisions for an EUA, and the process for receiving one is not clearly defined or consistent.
- The CDSCO has been granting emergency or restricted emergency approvals to Covid-19 drugs such as remdesivir, favipiravir and itolizumab.

7. c

COVID pneumonia

- COVID pneumonia is the critical manifestation of COVID infection.
- It may start with symptoms like fever, shortness of breath, fatigue, coughing, chest pain etc.
- It is a condition in which the infection starts damaging the tissues of lower respiratory tract.
- It results in conditions like shortness of breath and severe cough, which may lead a patient to

the ventilator or supplemental oxygen under severe care condition”

- COVID-infected patients may or may not be affected by COVID pneumonia, as it occurs with diverse or no apparent symptoms.
- Regular pneumonia is caused by bacteria or virus that inflames lungs, causes pus or phlegm in the lungs and the supply of oxygen is affected which causes shortness in breath.
- In the case of bacterial pneumonia, there are more chances of patients getting completely cured.
- But in the case of COVID pneumonia, it involves lung tissues as well which may lead to post-COVID complications.

8. a

Recently the Roshni Act was scrapped and declared "unconstitutional" by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court which fell prey to corruption over the course of the last decade.

Roshini Act

- J&K's Roshni Act was targeted to earn Rs.25,000 crore by transferring 20 lakh kanals of State land to existing occupants against payment at market rates.
- It was implemented with the aim of boosting the farming sector and "generating substantial revenue" for funding power projects.
- The land-related law, popularly known as the Roshni Act, was brought into force in 2001.
- The law aimed to grant ownership rights of public land to occupants.
- The Act also sought the conferment of proprietary rights of around 20.55 lakh kanals of land (1250 hectares) to the occupants.
- The law initially set 1990 as the cut-off year for encroachment on State land, based on which ownership would be granted.

9. d

Theremin

- The Theremin is an electronic musical instrument controlled without physical contact by the thereminist (performer).
- The instrument was invented in 1920.

- It is named after its inventor, Leon Theremin, who patented the device in 1928.
- The instrument's controlling section usually consists of two metal antennas that sense the relative position of the thereminist's hands and control oscillators for frequency with one hand, and amplitude (volume) with the other.
- The electric signals from the theremin are amplified and sent to a loudspeaker.

10. c

Contempt of Courts

- The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, lays down the law on contempt of court.
- Section 15 of the legislation describes the procedure on how a case for contempt of court can be initiated.
- In the case of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General or the Solicitor General may bring in a motion before the court for initiating a case of criminal contempt.
- In the case of High Courts, the Advocate General, may bring in a motion before the court for initiating a case of criminal contempt.
- However, if the motion is brought by any other person, the consent in writing of the Attorney General or the Advocate General is required.
- The objective behind requiring the consent of the Attorney General before taking cognizance of a complaint is to save the time of the court.
- The AG's consent is mandatory when a private citizen wants to initiate a case of contempt of court against a person.
- However, when the court itself initiates a contempt of court case, the AG's consent is not required.
- This is because the court is exercising its inherent powers under the Constitution to punish for contempt and such Constitutional powers cannot be restricted because the AG declined to grant consent.

04-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements about Food Adulteration

- 1. Food Safety and Security Authority of India (FSSAI) under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs is the nodal agency regulating Food Adulteration in India**
- 2. DART (Detect Adulteration with Rapid Test) is an online platform setup by FAO's Codex Alimentarius Standard to check the quality of various food articles.**
- 3. Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy is a technology used to detect adulteration in Honey products.**

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

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

2) Which of the following species is/are found in India?

- 1. Indian Giant Squirrel**
- 2. Malayan Giant Squirrel**
- 3. Grizzled Giant Squirrel**

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

3) The Ministry of Women and Child Development has recently gave its nod for the India's first home for transgender children. It will be established in which of the following cities?

- a. Kolkata
- b. Chennai
- c. New Delhi
- d. Bengaluru

4) With respect to *Technical Textiles*, consider the following statements

1. They are textile materials manufactured primarily for aesthetic characteristics rather than functional properties.
2. Penetration of technical textiles in India is low against the advanced countries.

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

5) *State of the Global Climate Provisional Report* was released recently by?

- a. Green Peace International
- b. World Meteorological Organization
- c. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- d. Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Intellectual Property Co-operation*?

1. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Intellectual Property Cooperation was signed between India and UK.
2. It will facilitate exchange and dissemination of best practices, experiences and knowledge on IP among the public, Educational institutions and Industries.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Arecibo Telescope*

1. The telescope is in Chile and owned by US National Science Foundation.
2. It played a major role in finding prebiotic molecules in distant galaxies, the first exoplanets, and the first millisecond pulsar.

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Voting Rights of NRI*

1. Voting rights for NRIs were introduced only in 2011, through an amendment to the Representation of the People Act 1950.
2. The bill on proxy voting rights for NRIs was passed in both Houses of the parliament in 2017.

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Near Earth Object*?

1. Near Earth Objects had a significant role in shaping the geological and biological history of the Earth.
2. Near Earth Objects are asteroids but small fraction are comets.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following countries share border with *Suriname*?

1. Venezuela
2. Colombia
3. Guyana
4. Brazil

Select the correct option using the codes given below:

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

Answers

1. c

- FSSAI is under the Ministry of Health and Family welfare
- DART is an online platform setup by FSSAI in India.
- Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy is a technology developed by a German company to redflag samples that use modified sugar syrups.
- It is similar to MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) which uses imaging to get a full picture of the honey and its constituents.

2. d

- *A first-of-its-kind study by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, has projected that numbers of the Malayan Giant Squirrel (Ratufa bicolor) could decline by 90 per cent in India by 2050, and if urgent steps are not taken, the species could be extinct in the country in subsequent decades.*

Malayan Giant Squirrel

- It is one of the world's largest squirrel species that has a dark upper body, pale under parts, and a long, bushy tail, is currently found in parts of West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Nagaland.

- Destruction of its habitat could restrict the squirrel to only southern Sikkim and North Bengal by 2050, according to the ZSI.
 - India is home to three giant squirrel species.
 - The ZSI study says the health of the species is critical because it indicates the health of the forests it inhabits.
 - The Malayan Giant Squirrel is also distributed through Southern China, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Burma, the Malayan Peninsula, Sumatra, and Java.
 - It is found mostly in evergreen and semi-evergreen forests, from plains to hills at elevations of 50 m to 1,500 m above sea level.
 - In India, some 20% of the population of the species is found at elevations between 1,500 m and 2,700 m; the rest live in the plains and up to 1,500 m.
 - India is home to three giant squirrel species, the other two – **Indian Giant Squirrel and Grizzled Giant Squirrel** – are found in peninsular India.
 - Unlike the nocturnal flying squirrels, giant squirrels are diurnal, but arboreal (tree-dwelling) and herbivorous like the flying squirrels.
3. d
- India's first homes for transgender children in need of care and protection will soon be established in Bengaluru.
 - The Ministry of Women and Child Development gave its nod for the project recently.
 - The minutes of the supplementary Project Approval Board (PAB) under child protection services said two government-run homes for transgender children will be established in Bengaluru Urban.
 - Children in need of care and protection include *orphans, abandoned children, street children, child labourers and child victims of abuse.*
4. b
- *Ministry of Textiles has recently invited proposals for constitution of a dedicated*

Export Promotion Council (EPC) for Technical Textiles.

- *The Exporter Association and Trade bodies registered under Companies Act or Society Registration Act have been asked to submit proposal for constitution of a dedicated EPC for Technical Textiles by 15th December 2020.*

Technical Textiles

- These are textile materials and products manufactured primarily for technical performance and rather than aesthetic characteristics.
- They are divided into 12 broad categories (Agrotech, Buildtech, Clothtech, Geotech, Hometech, Indutech, Mobiltech, Meditech, Protech, Sportstech, Oekotech, Packtech) depending upon their application areas.

Technical Textiles in India

- India shares nearly 6% of world market size of 250 Billion USD.
- However, the annual average growth of the segment is 12%, as compared to 4% world average growth.
- ***Penetration level of technical textiles is low in India at 5-10%, against 30-70% in advanced countries.***

National Technical Textiles Mission

- It aims to position India as a global leader in Technical Textiles.
- The Mission would have a four year implementation period from FY 2020-21 to 2023-24.
- ***Constitution of an Export Promotion Council for Technical Textiles is part of one of the components of the National Technical Textiles Mission.***

5. b

State of the Global Climate Provisional Report

- This report was released by the World Meteorological Organization.
- The decade 2011-2020 would be the warmest ever on record.
- Also, the year 2020 is set to be among the three warmest on record.

- The record heat in 2020 has been despite La Niña conditions prevailing in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.
- Scientific evidence indicates increasing temperatures are a direct result of human-led global warming, an impact of Green House Gas emission.
- After record GHG levels of 2019, there has been a slight dip this year due to measures taken by countries to fight the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- Global sea-level rise was similar to 2019 values and the general decreasing trend has continued.
- Extreme weather events such as tropical cyclones, floods, heavy rainfall and droughts which are an expensive consequence of global warming impacted many parts of the world.
- The report states that climate induced human migration is one of the least understood impact of anthropogenic climate change.

6. b

Intellectual Property Co-operation

- Recently, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Intellectual Property Cooperation was signed between India and USA.
- It would facilitate exchange and dissemination of best practices, experiences and knowledge on IP among the public, and between and among the industry, universities, research and development (R & D) organizations.
- The two sides will draw up Biennial Work Plan to implement the MoU which will include the detailed planning for carrying out of the co-operation activities including the scope of action.

7. b

Arecibo Telescope

- The telescope is in Puerto Rico.
- The massive Arecibo telescope is famous for its stellar contributions to astronomy.
- The second-largest single-dish radio telescope in the world, it was first built in 1963.
- Arecibo was used to observe planets, asteroids and the ionosphere, making several discoveries

over the decades, including finding prebiotic molecules in distant galaxies, the first exoplanets, and the first millisecond pulsar.

- In 1967, Arecibo was able to discover that the planet Mercury rotates in 59 days and not 88 days as had been originally thought.
- In the following decades, it also served as a hub in the search for extra-terrestrial life, and would look for radio signals from alien civilisations.
- Arecibo also played a key role in tracking killer asteroids heading towards Earth.

8. a

Voting Rights for NRI

- In 2015, a panel recommended that NRIs should be given the “additional alternative options of e-postal ballot and proxy voting”, apart from voting in person.
- Under proxy voting, a registered elector can delegate his voting power to a representative.
- The Law Ministry accepted the recommendation on proxy voting.
- The Union Cabinet passed the proposal on proxy voting rights for NRIs in 2017.
- The government then brought a Bill amending the Representation of the People Act 1950.
- The Bill was passed by Lok Sabha and was awaiting Rajya Sabha’s approval when it lapsed with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha.
- This proposal hasn’t been revived yet.

9. c

Near Earth Objects

- A near earth object is any small solar system body whose orbit brings it to proximity with Earth.
- By convention, a Solar System body is a NEO if its closest approach to the Sun is less than 1.3 AU (Astronomical Unit)
- Larger asteroids penetrate the atmosphere to the surface of the Earth, producing craters if they impact a continent.

10. d

05-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) Program*

- 1. It is a cancer genomics program that will collect, characterize, and analyze cancer samples and helps to improve the ability to diagnose, treat, and prevent cancer.**
- 2. It is an initiative of National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *The Advertising Standards Council of India*

- 1. It was mandated to maintain public's confidence in Advertising and to ensure the protection of the interests of consumers.**
- 2. It is a statutory autonomous body set up by an Act of Parliament.**
- 3. It functions under the control of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.**

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

- 1 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- None

3) Which of the following is the first country to approve *coronavirus vaccine*?

- Russia

- b. Britain
- c. France
- d. New Zealand

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Djibouti Code of Conduct*

1. It is a tripartite agreement between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia anchored by the Djibouti.
2. It is a comprehensive agreement dealing with the disputes relating to the operation of Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD).

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

5) *Bhashan Char Island*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in which of the following?

- a. Sri Lanka
- b. Myanmar
- c. Indonesia
- d. Bangladesh

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Operation Trident*?

1. Under Operation Trident, the Indian Navy sank three vessels near the Pakistani port city of Karachi.
2. Operation Trident resulted in the first use of anti-ship missiles in the region as well as the first sinking of naval vessels

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

- d. Neither 1 nor 2

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Minimum Support Price*

1. Directorate of Economics & Statistics in the Agriculture Ministry recommends Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) for sugarcane.
2. While recommending MSP both A₂+FL and C₂ costs are considered in which C₂ is primary benchmark reference costs.

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to "*Cultured Meat*"

1. Cultured meat is grown directly from cells in a laboratory, which has same cellular structure of conventional meat.
2. Singapore has approved sale of a lab-grown meat product for the first time in the world.

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

9) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Cannabis Drug*?

1. Cannabis is a generic term used to denote the several psychoactive preparations of the plant Cannabis Sativa.
2. Recently India voted against removing cannabis from "Most Dangerous Drug" category in United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) The famous *Hessell-Tiltman Prize* is given for contributions made in which of the following field?

- Environment Conservation
- Animal Rescue
- Human Rights
- Literary Works

Answers

1. a

- The Minister of Science and Technology and Vice President of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Dr Harsh Vardhan virtually inaugurated the 2nd TCGA 2020 conference in New Delhi recently.

The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA)

- It is a landmark cancer genomics program that molecularly characterized over 20,000 primary cancer and matched normal samples spanning 33 cancer types.
- This joint effort between the **US- National Cancer Institute and the National Human Genome Research Institute** began in 2006, bringing together researchers from diverse disciplines and multiple institutions.
- Over the years, TCGA generated over 2.5 petabytes of genomic, epigenomic, transcriptomic, and proteomic data.
- The data, which has already **led to improvements in the ability to diagnose, treat, and prevent cancer**, will remain publicly available for anyone in the research community to use.

Indian Cancer Genomics Atlas (ICGA)

- On similar lines, the establishment of an '**Indian Cancer Genomics Atlas (ICGA)**' has been initiated by a consortium of key stakeholders in India led by **CSIR, Government of India** in which several government agencies, cancer hospitals, academic institutions and private sector partners.

2. a

- Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has recently issued an advisory on Advertisements on Online gaming, fantasy sports and others.
- It has asked all the broadcasters that the guidelines issued by the Advertising Standards Council of India, ASCI are complied with.

Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI)

- It is a **self-regulatory voluntary organization** of the Advertising Industry established in 1985 to maintain and enhance the public's confidence in Advertising.
- It is committed to the cause of **Self-Regulation in Advertising, ensuring the protection of the interests of consumers.**
- ASCI was formed with the support of all four sectors connected with Advertising, viz. Advertisers, Advertising Agencies, Media (including Broadcasters and the Press) and others like PR Agencies, Market Research Companies etc.
- The **Consumer Complaints Council** is ASCI's heart and soul.
- It is the dedicated work put in by this group of highly respected people that has given tremendous impetus to the work of ASCI and the movement of self-regulation in the advertising.

3. b

- The United Kingdom has recently become the first country in the world to approve of a COVID-19 vaccine developed by Pfizer Inc and its German partner BioNTech SE.
- The British regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), says the vaccination, which claims to

offer up to 95 per cent protection against Covid-19 illness, is safe for roll out.

4. d

- India in September 2020, has joined the Djibouti Code of Conduct as an observer which is expected to provide it a strategic heft in the Indian Ocean region.

The Djibouti Code of Conduct/Jeddah Amendment (DCOC/JA)

- It is a regional maritime security cooperation agreement established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2008.
- It was initially focused on piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Western Indian Ocean Region, the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.
- It was later extended to cover environmental issues as well in 2017.
- It comprises 19 member states adjoining the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the East coast of Africa.
- India has joined Japan, Norway, the UK and the US as observers of the grouping.
- India's joining of the grouping comes at a time China has been making concerted efforts to expand its military influence in the Indian Ocean Region.

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) Dispute

- The conflict between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia dates back to May 2011 when Ethiopia started building the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD); Egypt voiced concern over its water share.
- In 2015, the three countries signed the Declaration of Principles, per which the downstream countries should not be negatively affected by the construction of the dam.
- In 2019, Egypt blamed Addis Ababa for hindering a final agreement concerning a technical problem, calling for mediation.
- Ethiopia is responsible for the failure of reaching a comprehensive agreement with the Nile downstream countries [Egypt and Sudan] regarding the operation and the filling of its dam.

- Another round of tripartite negotiations between Foreign Ministers and Water Ministers of Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia on the controversial Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) kicked off recently.

5. d

- Going ahead with its plan to shift the Rohingyas from Cox's Bazar refugee camp, the **Bangladesh government** has recently started the process of relocating them to the newly developed facility at the **Bhashan char Island**.
- International Human Rights groups are opposing the relocation of Rohingyas to the Bhashan Char.
- They demand independent assessment of the liveability on the Bhashan char by the UN and humanitarian agencies before the process is started.

Bhashan char

- It is an uninhabited island where the government of Bangladesh has made shelter houses for one lakh Rohingya refugees at an estimated cost of Tk. 2,300 crore.
- The environmentalists say that the Bhashan char falls in an ecologically fragile area prone to floods, erosion and cyclones.
- Currently more than a million Rohingya are living in refugee camps in Bangladesh after fleeing the military crackdown in the Rakhine province of Myanmar in August 2017.

6. c

Operation Trident

- Under Operation Trident, the Indian Navy sank three vessels near the Pakistani port city of Karachi in 1971 war.
- The stars of the mission were the then-recently acquired Soviet Osa missile boats, fitted with 4 SS-N-2 (P-15) Styx missiles.
- INS Kiltan, Katchall, Nipat, Nighat and Veer sank PNS Khaibar killing 222 Pakistani sailors, and PNS Muhafiz killing 33 Pakistani sailors.
- Operation Trident resulted in the first use of anti-ship missiles in the region as well as the first sinking of naval vessels during hostilities in the region since World War II.

- The Navy plans to celebrate 2021 as 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' as part of commemorating the 50th anniversary of the victory in the 1971 war.

7. b

Minimum Support Price

- The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) recommends MSPs for 22 mandated crops and fair and remunerative price (FRP) for sugarcane.
 - CACP is an attached office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
 - The CACP projects three kinds of production cost for every crop, both at state and all-India average levels.
1. 'A2' - Covers all paid-out costs directly incurred by the farmer in cash and kind on seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, hired labour, leased-in land, fuel, irrigation, etc.
 2. 'A2+FL' - Includes A2 plus an imputed value of unpaid family labour.
 3. 'C2' - It is a more comprehensive cost that factors in rentals and interest forgone on owned land and fixed capital assets, on top of A2+FL.
- CACP considers all costs in a comprehensive manner which is based on the methodology recommended by Expert Committees from time to time.
 - CACP considers both A2+FL and C2 costs while recommending MSP.
 - CACP reckons only A2+FL cost for return. However, C2 costs are used by CACP primarily as benchmark reference costs.

8. c

Cultured Meat

- Plant based meat is made from plant sources such as soy or pea protein, while cultured meat is grown directly from cells in a laboratory.
- It aims to offer alternatives to traditional meat products that could feed a lot more people, reduce the threat of zoonotic diseases, and mitigate the environmental impact of meat consumption.
- In terms of cellular structure, cultured or cultivated meat is the same as conventional

meat, except that cultured meat does not come directly from animals.

- Cultivated meat is created in clean facilities, that don't have the risk of contamination by pathogens such as salmonella and E coli, which may be present in traditional slaughterhouses and meat-packing factories.
- It does not require antibiotics either, unlike animals raised for meat, thereby reducing the threat posed to public health by growing antibiotic resistance.

9. a

Cannabis Drug

- According to the WHO, cannabis is a generic term used to denote the several psychoactive preparations of the plant Cannabis sativa.
- The major psychoactive constituent in cannabis is Delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).
- The WHO says that cannabis is by far the most widely cultivated, trafficked and abused illicit drug in the world.
- India was part of the voting majority, along with the US and most European nations whereas China, Pakistan and Russia were among those who voted against.
- In India, the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, illegalises any mixture with or without any neutral material, of any of the two forms of cannabis i.e. charas and ganja or any drink prepared from it.

10. d

Hessell-Tiltman Prize

- PEN Hessell-Tiltman Prize is an annual award given for non-fiction book of specifically historical content.
- PEN stands for Poets, Playwrights, Editors, Essayists, and Novelists, is one of the world's oldest human rights organisations championing the freedom to write and read.
- It is the founding centre of PEN International, a worldwide writers' association with 145 centres in more than 100 countries.

- The award is given in the memory of Marjorie Hessel-Tiltman, a member PEN Literary Foundation.
- Entries for the award are required to be works of high literary merit and it should have not primarily written for the academic market.

07-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)*, sometimes seen in the news recently

1. It was instituted by the former President of U.S.A Barack Obama in 2012.
2. The program applied to people who were brought into the United States illegally as children.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Giant African Snail*

1. It is one of the worst invasive species declared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
2. It prefers cold and temperate climates and is mainly found in swamps, agricultural areas and bushes.
3. They are hermaphrodites, meaning they possess both the female and male reproductive organs.

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

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)*

1. RRBs were set up as a regional based rural lending institutions under the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976.
2. They were established based on the recommendations of Rangarajan Committee working group.
3. RRBs are not permitted to access the liquidity windows of the RBI like Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF), Marginal Standing Facility (MSF).

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

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Core Inflation*

1. It excludes transitory or temporary price volatility, especially from prices of items such as fuel and food.
2. Core inflation is calculated using the Wholesale Price Index (WPI).

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

5) Which of the following statements is *incorrect* with respect to *Cannabis*?

- a. It is a generic term used to denote the several psychoactive preparations of the plant Cannabis sativa
- b. The UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) has recently voted to remove cannabis from Schedule IV of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs



c. India had recently voted against the UN CND resolution to remove cannabis from the list of most dangerous substances.

d. None of the above

6) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Houbara Bustard*?

1. Houbara bustard lives in arid climates of North Africa and Asia.
2. It is listed as endangered species under IUCN Red List Status.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Urban Quality of Life Index*

1. Urban Quality of Life Index is released by IIT-Madras.
2. According to the index, Chennai has shown the least gender discrimination and differences and safe city for women.

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to "*Live Conches*"

1. The conch species live in tropical waters throughout the world.
2. It prefers relatively shallow waters, including reef and seagrass habitats.
3. Dahanu in Maharashtra is the only place where live conches can be found in India.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 3 only
- d. All of the above

9) Consider the following pairs on products from Himachal Pradesh

Name - Product

1. Karsog Kulth - A type of Horse Gram
2. Thangi of Pangi - A type of Hazelnut
3. Chamba Chukh - A type of metal craft

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

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1 and 3 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. All of the above

10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Hayabusa2 Mission*?

1. Hayabusa2 mission was launched by Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).
2. It brings back samples from asteroid Benu that orbits the Sun.

Select the incorrect answer using the codes given below:

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

Answers

1. c

- A U.S. judge has recently ordered the Trump administration to fully reinstate the DACA programme that protects from deportation

immigrants who came to the country illegally as children.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

- Former President Barack Obama instituted DACA by executive order in 2012 to help some of the more than 10 million people estimated to be living in America without documentation.
- DACA protected an estimated 7,00,000 people known as Dreamers, offering protection at renewable two-year periods, including authorization to work.
- It applied to people who were brought into the United States illegally as children and then grew up here. For many it is the only country they have ever known.
- As part of his crackdown on all kinds of immigration, Mr. Trump moved to end the programme in 2017, calling it unconstitutional.
- After the restoration, more than 3,00,000 new applicants could now be eligible for DACA, the Center for American Progress think tank said.
- Prospects for Dreamers to live and work in the US permanently, rather than just with renewable permits, remain unclear.
- President-elect Joe Biden has vowed to restore DACA when he takes office in January.

2. b

- *A recent study on the Giant African Snail (Achatina fulica) in Asia and Africa has found that the dangerous pest species had multiple episodes of invasion in India, particularly Kerala, and that new snail populations continue to arrive in India from snail-infested countries across the world.*
- The snail population spread rapidly in the State, spurred by two more waves of invasion in the 1970s and in 2005.

Giant African Snail (Achatina fulica)

- It is one of the worst invasive species declared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- It is suspected to spread eosinophilic meningitis, septicaemia and peritonitis in humans.

- IUCN category – LC (Least concern)
- This snail prefers **hot and humid tropical climates** and is mainly found in swamps, agricultural areas and bushes.
- Like most snails, it can hibernate by digging itself into the ground and can stay in hibernation for up to 18 months.
- They are hermaphrodites though they still require another snail for fertilization and can't self-fertilize.

3. a

- *Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently allowed Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) to access the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF), Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) and call or notice money market, aimed at facilitating better liquidity management for these lenders.*
- At present, RRBs are not permitted to access the liquidity windows of the RBI as well as the call or notice market.

Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)

- They were set up as a regional based rural lending institutions under the **Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976**.
- They were established based on the recommendations of **Narsimham Committee working group**.
- The first Regional Rural Bank "Prathama Grameen Bank" was set up on 2nd October, 1975.

4. a

Core Inflation

- It is an inflation measure which excludes transitory or temporary price volatility as in the case of some commodities such as food items, energy products etc.
- It reflects the inflation trend in an economy.
- A dynamic consumption basket is considered the basis to obtain core inflation.
- Some goods and commodities have extremely volatile price movements.

- Core inflation is calculated using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) by excluding such commodities.

5. c

Cannabis

- The UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) has decided to remove cannabis and cannabis resin from Schedule IV of 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, which lists the most dangerous substances.
- This removal will change the way cannabis is regulated internationally.
- Both cannabis and cannabis resin will continue to remain on Schedule I, which includes the least dangerous category of substances.
- India has voted with the majority at the United Nations for its removal.
- For 59 years, cannabis had been subject to the strictest control schedules, which even discouraged its use for medical purposes.
- Under India's Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, the production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transport, and use of cannabis is a punishable offence.

6. a

Houbara Bustard

- The houbara bustard, which lives in arid climates, and there are two distinct species
1. North African Boubara
 2. Asia Houbara commonly known as MacQueen's bustard.
- The population of the Asian houbara bustards extends from northeast Asia, across central Asia, the Middle East, and the Arabian Peninsula to reach the Sinai desert.
 - After breeding in the spring, the Asian bustards migrate south to spend the winter in Pakistan, the Arabian Peninsula and nearby Southwest Asia.
 - Some Asian houbara bustards live and breed in the southern part of their ranges including parts of Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

- It is listed as Vulnerable under IUCN Red List Status.

7. b

Urban Quality Life Index

- IIT-Bombay, recently released its Urban Quality of Life Index.
- It has various categories of comparisons including water, power, electricity, literacy rate, gender parity, employment rate among others.
- The study found that Jaipur has the highest crime rate against women, Chennai has the lowest.
- The gap in literacy rate between men and women is the widest in Jaipur (13.2%) and lowest in Kolkata (5.4%).
- Literacy was the highest in Pune (91%) and, surprisingly, the lowest in Hyderabad (83%).
- According to the index, Chennai has shown the least gender discrimination and differences and safe city for women, where Patna has high gender discrimination.
- The unemployment rate for women is the highest in Patna at 346, it is more than four times the urban average of 73.

8. c

Live Conches

- Conch is a common name of a number of different medium- to large-sized sea snail or shells.
- The conch species live in tropical waters throughout the world, including the Caribbean, West Indies, and the Mediterranean.
- They live in relatively shallow waters, including reef and seagrass habitats.
- Dahanu was one of the places in India where live conches can be found, and which gives the seafront of Vadhavan the name of "Shankhodar".
- The other places are Rameshwaram and Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu, Mandarmoni Sea Beach, Kolkata West Bengal.

- The rocks, moss, and corals in the sea are favourable not just for fishing but also for fish seeding.
- Conch shell is used as an important ritual object in Hinduism, it is used as a ceremonial trumpet, as part of religious practices.

9. a

Himachal GI Products

- The Himachal Pradesh government is trying to obtain GIs (Geographical Indication) for five products from the state namely.
1. **Karsog Kultho** - Kulth (a type of horse gram) grown in the Karsog area of Mandi district is believed to be particularly rich in amino acids.
 2. **Thangi of Pangi** - It is a type of hazelnut which grows in Pangi valley known for its unique flavour and sweetness.
 3. **Chamba Metal Crafts** - These include items such as metal idols and brass utensils which, historically, were made by skilled artisans in the courts of kings of Chamba.
 4. **Chamba Chukh** - It's a chutney made from green and red chillies grown in Chamba, and prepared in traditional and unique ways
 5. **Rajmah of Bharmour** - It's more specifically called the Kugtalu Rajmah, it is rich in proteins and has a unique flavour

10. b

Hayabusa2 Mission

- The Hayabusa2 mission was launched in December 2014, by Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).
- The spacecraft was sent on a six-year-long voyage to study the asteroid Ryugu and collect samples that it is now bringing back to the Earth.
- The mission is similar to NASA's OSIRIS-REX mission that brought back samples from asteroid Bennu.
- This is the first time that a probe has visited a celestial body that is under 100 metres in diameter.

- Hayabusa2's predecessor, the Hayabusa mission brought back samples from the asteroid Itokawa in 2010.
- Ryugu is classified as a potentially hazardous asteroids (PHAs).

08-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)*

1. It is the only site-specific mission that aims to take suitable measures for safeguarding the Indian Himalayan Region.
2. It is one of the eight missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).
3. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the nodal ministry responsible for the coordination of this mission.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Narmada Landscape Restoration Project*

1. The project will be implemented in Madhya Pradesh, in the catchments of selected tributaries of the River Narmada.
2. The program is jointly funded by NTPC Ltd and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in equal proportions.

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

3) *Global Wage Report, 2020-21* was released recently by?

- a. World Bank
- b. World Economic Forum
- c. International Monetary Fund
- d. International Labour Organization

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Millets*

1. These are the dried, edible seeds of plants in the legume family.
2. These are plants that are grown, harvested, and sold for cash rather than for sustenance.
3. The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has decided to observe 2023 as the International Year of Millets.

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

- a. 3 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None

5) Which of the following is the first Union Territory in India to become 100 per cent organic?

- a. Chandigarh
- b. Lakshadweep Islands
- c. Andaman & Nicobar Islands
- d. Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu

6) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *China's Artificial Sun*?

1. It is HL-2M Tokamak reactor, China's largest and most advanced nuclear fusion experimental research device.

2. It uses a powerful magnetic field to fuse hot plasma and can reach temperatures 100 times hotter than the core of the sun.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *India Mobile Congress (IMC)*

1. India Mobile Congress (IMC) is the largest digital technologies forum in India and South Asia.
2. IMC is jointly organized by the Cellular Operators Association of India and the Department of Department of Science and Technology.

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to "*Preferential Trade Agreements*"

1. A Preferential Trade Agreement is a trading bloc that gives preferential access to certain products from the participating countries.
2. Bangladesh has recently signed its first ever PTA with India.

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

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

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to astronomical event “Greater Conjunction”?

1. If two biggest worlds in the solar system visually appear close to each other from Sun, it is called greater conjunction.
2. It is the result of the orbital paths of two celestial bodies coming into line, as viewed from Earth.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Which of the following organization declare *Investment Promotion Award*?

- a. World Bank
- b. World Trade Organization
- c. World Trade Organization
- d. UN Conference on Trade and Development

Answers

1. d

- Three Centre of Excellence (CoE) was set up under National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) at Central Universities from Kashmir, Sikkim and Tezpur were inaugurated by Secretary Department of Science & Technology (DST), recently through Video Conferencing.
- With capacity building the major focus of NMSHE, India have set up Climate Change (CC) cells in 12 out of the 13 states and Union territories of Himalayan region and will soon have 13th state CC cell in Ladakh,

National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)

- It is **one of the eight missions** under the **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**.

- Out of the 8 national missions which are part of the National Action Plan on Climate Change, NMSHE is the **only site-specific mission** that aims to take suitable measures for safeguarding the Indian Himalayan Region.
- NMSHE is a multi-pronged, cross-cutting mission across various sectors.
- It contributes to the sustainable development of the country by enhancing the understanding of climate change, its likely impacts and adaptation actions required for the Himalayas- a region on which a significant proportion of India’s population depends for sustenance.
- NMSHE seeks to facilitate formulation of appropriate policy measures and time-bound action programmes to sustain ecological resilience and ensure the continued provisions of key ecosystem services in the Himalayas.
- Recognizing the importance of scientific and technological inputs required for sustaining the fragile Himalayan Ecosystem, the **Ministry of Science and Technology** has been given the **nodal responsibility of coordinating this mission**.
- However, the **mission involves** valuable cooperation of Indian Himalayan States, the Planning Commission and the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change** to achieve its goals.

2. c

- NTPC Ltd., one of India’s largest integrated energy company and a PSU under Ministry of Power had recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal to implement the Narmada Landscape Restoration Project.
- The program is in partnership with a grant in aid from **NTPC Ltd and United States Agency for International Development (USAID)** in equal proportions.
- The 4-year project will be implemented in Khargone District of Madhya Pradesh, in the catchments of selected tributaries of the River Narmada between Omkareshwar and Maheshwar dams.

- IIFM, Bhopal, an Autonomous Institute under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), GoI with the grant-in-aid from NTPC, Ltd. will be jointly implementing this project with Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), an intergovernmental organization that promotes sustainable and inclusive economic growth in emerging economies.
 - GGGI will participate in this project with funding support from USAID, the international development arm of the US Government.
3. d
- *The Global Wage Report 2020 / 21 was published recently by the **International Labour Organization**.*
 - The report found out that not all workers were equally affected by the crisis.
 - Those in lower-skilled occupations lost more working hours than higher-paying managerial and professional jobs.
 - According to the report, the average wages in two-third countries — for which official data was available — fell or grew more slowly in the first six months of 2020 due to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.
 - Low-paid workers, disproportionately women, were the most affected by loss of working hours.
 - In the remaining one-third countries — including Brazil, Canada, France, Italy and the United States — an increase in average wages was the result of a large numbers of low-paid workers losing their jobs or leaving the labour market.
4. a
- Considering the potential of increasing exports of Millets and Millet products, **APEDA is preparing a perspective Action Plan with Indian Institute of Millet Research (IIMR)** and other stakeholders for increasing export of Millet and Millet Products for a period five years i.e. 2021-2026 to enable all concerned stakeholders for taking necessary action in a time bound manner for achieving the target.
- Millets**
- Millets represent a collective term referring to a number of **small-seeded annual grasses** that are cultivated as **grain crops**, primarily on marginal lands in dry areas of temperate, subtropical and tropical regions.
 - They are often termed nutri-cereals, and includes Sorghum, Pearl Millet, Ragi, Small Millet, Foxtail Millet, Proso Millet, Barnyard Millet, Kodo Millet and other millets.
 - Millets are the cereal crops generally small-seeded and known for high nutritive value.
 - **They are regarded as a subsistence product and generally looked upon as a famine crop for the poor.**
 - The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has decided to observe 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
 - Cash crops are simply plants that are grown or managed, harvested, and sold for cash rather than for sustenance.
 - Pulses are the dried, edible seeds of plants in the legume family.
 - The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recognizes 11 types of pulses: dry beans, dry broad beans, dry peas, chickpeas, cow peas, pigeon peas, lentils, Bambara beans, vetches, lupins and pulses nes.
5. b
- *After Sikkim, Lakshadweep is the first Union Territory to become 100 per cent organic as all farming is carried out without the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, providing access to safer food choices and making agriculture a more environment-friendly activity.*
- Lakshadweep**
- India's smallest Union Territory Lakshadweep is an archipelago consisting of 36 islands with an area of 32 sq km.
 - It is a uni-district Union Territory and comprises 12 atolls, three reefs, five submerged banks and ten inhabited islands.
6. a
- HL-2M Tokamak Nuclear Reactor**

- China successfully powered up its “artificial sun” nuclear fusion reactor for the first time recently.
- The HL-2M Tokamak nuclear reactor is expected to provide clean energy.
- HL-2M Tokamak device is used in it to replicate the nuclear fusion process that occurs naturally in the sun.
- It uses a powerful magnetic field to fuse hot plasma and can reach temperatures of over 150 million degrees Celsius, approximately ten times hotter than the core of the sun.
- The reactor is often called an “artificial sun” on account of the enormous heat and power it produces.
- **Other Similar Experiment** - International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) is a collaboration of 35 nations launched in 1985, it is located in France.
- ITER’s cryostat is manufactured by India’s L&T, Cryostat is a chamber that can maintain very low temperatures.

7. a

India Mobile Congress (IMC)

- IMC 2020 is being organised by the Department of Telecommunications, and the Cellular Operators Association of India.
- It was first launched in 2017.
- It aims to align to the Prime Minister’s vision to promote ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat’, ‘Digital Inclusivity’, and ‘Sustainable development, entrepreneurship and innovation’.
- It also aims to drive foreign and local investments, encourage Research and Development in the telecom and emerging technology sectors.
- It will see the participation from various domain experts in 5G, Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Data Analytics, Cloud and Edge computing, Block chain, Cyber-security, Smart Cities and Automation.

8. b

Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)

- Bangladesh signed its first Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with Bhutan allowing duty

free access to a range of goods between the two countries.

- This is the first PTA Bangladesh has signed with any country in the world.
- Under the PTA 100 Bangladeshi products will get duty free access to Bhutan.
- Goods like Jute and Jute products, baby clothes and accessories, men’s trousers, jackets and blazers are among the 100 items from Bangladesh which will get duty free access to Bhutan.
- On the other hand fruit juice, natural honey, wheat flour jams, jellies and lime stone, quartzite etc. from Bhutan will have duty free access to Bangladesh.
- Bangladesh is expected to sign 11 more PTAs and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with countries like Indonesia and Nepal by June next year.

9. b

Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn

- If two celestial bodies visually appear close to each other from Earth, it is called a conjunction.
- Astronomers use the term great conjunction to describe meetings of the two biggest worlds in the solar system, Jupiter and Saturn.
- It happens about every 20 years.
- The conjunction is the result of the orbital paths of Jupiter and Saturn coming into line, as viewed from Earth.
- Jupiter orbits the sun about every 12 years, and Saturn about every 29 years.
- The conjunction will be on 21st December, 2020, also the date of the December solstice.
- It will be the closest alignment of Saturn and Jupiter since 1623, in terms of distance.
- The next time the planets will be this close is 2080.
- They will appear to be close together, however, they will be more than 400 million miles apart.

10. d

Investment Promotion Award

- United Nations Investment Promotion Award is given by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- Recently Invest India was declared as the winner of the award.
- The Award recognizes and celebrates the outstanding achievements of the World's best-practice investment promotion agencies.
- The evaluation was based on UNCTAD's assessment of work undertaken by 180 national Investment Promotion Agencies across the world.
- Invest India is the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency that helps investors looking for investment opportunities and options in India.

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

09-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements

- The President can appoint a judge of a High Court as an acting Chief Justice, when the office of Chief Justice of High Court is vacant.**
- The newly-created Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh will have common High Court.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

2) Consider the following statements with respect to India International Science Festival (IISF) 2020

- It is celebrated every year to promote Science and Technology since 2015.**
- The proposed theme for IISF-2020 is Research, Innovation, and Science Empowering the Nation' (RISEN India).**

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

3) Production Gap report 2020 was published recently by?

- World Economic Forum
- World Trade Organization
- UN Environment Programme
- UN Conference on Trade and Development

4) Consider the following statements with respect to Organochlorides

- They are a group of chlorinated compounds that belong to the class of persistent organic pollutants (POPs).**
- They are widely used as pesticides.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

5) Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) is published annually by?

- German Watch
- UN Environment Programme
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Both A and C

6) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to Tharu Tribes?

- They belongs to the Terai lowlands, amid lower Himalayas and can be found only in India.**

2. They speak various dialects of Tharu, and variants of Hindi, Urdu, and Awadhi.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Eco-Bridges*

- These are eco-friendly structures designed as a part of green highway project for promoting better travel experience.
- Usually these bridges are overlaid with planting from the area to give it a contiguous look with the landscape.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Havana Syndrome*

- It was recently reported in the Pacific Ocean Islands.
- Directed microwave radiation is found to be the “plausible” cause of the Havana Syndrome

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

9) Which of the following Indian Cities has received *UNESCO World Heritage City tag*.

- Ahmedabad
- Chennai
- Gwalior
- Mumbai

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 & 3 only
- 1, 2 & 4 only
- 1, 2 & 3 only
- 1, 3 & 4 only

10) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Operation Blackface*?

- It is part of the larger action taken against Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) across the country.
- For this operation TN Police department has acquired crawler software from Interpol.

Select the incorrect answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answers

1. c

- The President of India, in exercise of the power conferred by Article 223 of the Constitution of India, appointed **Shri Justice Rajesh Bindal**, senior-most Judge of **Common High Court** for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh.
- He was appointed after the retirement of Kumari Justice Gita Mittal recently.

Article 223

- According to **Article 223** of Indian Constitution, **President can appoint** a judge of a High Court as an acting Chief Justice of the High Court when,
 1. the office of Chief Justice of High Court is vacant; or
 2. the Chief Justice of the High Court is absent; or
 3. the Chief Justice of the High Court is unable to perform the duties of his office.
2. a
- *The 6th India International Science Festival (IISF)-2020 is being organised from 22 to 25 December 2020 in virtual mode.*

India International Science Festival (IISF)

- It was launched in **2015**.
- It is a celebration to promote Science and Technology and demonstrate how science could lead India towards a developed nation within a short span of time.
- The aim is **to engage the public with science and celebrate the joy of science** and show the ways how science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) provide us with the solutions to improve our lives.
- Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Earth Sciences in association with Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA), has created a unique platform of India International Science Festival which intends to inspire curiosity and make learning more rewarding.
- The proposed theme for the 6th edition of IISF 2020 is: *Science for Self-reliant India and Global Welfare*.

3. c

- *The **Production Gap Report** was released recently by the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**.*

Highlights of the report

- This report highlights the discrepancy between countries' planned fossil fuel production levels and the global levels necessary to limit warming to 1.5°C or 2°C.

- To limit warming to 1.5°C or well below 2°C, as required by the 2015 Paris Agreement, the world needs to wind down fossil fuel production.
- Instead, governments continue to plan to produce coal, oil, and gas far in excess of the levels consistent with the Paris Agreement temperature limits.
- This gap is large, with countries aiming to produce 120% more fossil fuels by 2030 than would be consistent with limiting global warming to 1.5°C.
- The production gap report modelled after the UNEP's Emissions Gap Report series and conceived as a complementary analysis.

4. c

- *A 'mystery disease' has left 450 patients in Eluru, Andhra Pradesh with seizures, nausea, dizziness and headaches.*
- It is being investigated that organochlorines may be behind the unknown illness.

Organochlorines (OC)

- They are a group of chlorinated compounds that belong to the class of **Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)** with high persistence in the environment.
- They are **widely used as pesticides**.
- OC insecticides were earlier used to control malaria and typhus; they were later banned in most countries.
- They are relatively cheaper; as a result Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT), hexachlorocyclohexane (HCH), aldrin and dieldrin are among the most widely used pesticides in developing countries of Asia.
- A review statistics on the use of different pesticides has shown that 40 per cent of all pesticides used belong to the organochlorine class of chemicals.
- Organochlorine pesticides accumulate in the environment.
- They are persistent and move long distances in surface runoff or groundwater.
- OC can cause several adverse are substances capable of causing adverse effects in the

central and peripheral nervous system; as a result, several such chemicals were banned in the United States.

- OCs, in the mid-1970s in India, resulted in widespread reproductive failure among birds; they laid eggs with thin shells that cracked before hatching.

5. a

Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI)

- CCPI is published annually by Environment think tank Germanwatch since 2005.
- It is an independent monitoring tool for tracking countries' climate protection performance.
- It compares the climate protection performance of 57 countries and the European Union (EU), which are together responsible for more than 90% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- India, for the second time in a row ranked among the top 10, along with the EU and the UK. It scored 63.98 points out of 100.
- It received high ratings on all CCPI indicators except 'renewable energy', where it was categorised as having a 'medium' performance.
- The index found that no country was doing enough to meet the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement.
- Six G20 countries were ranked among very low performers.
- The United States, with a rank of 61, was the worst performer.

6. b

Tharu Tribes

- The community of Tharu people belongs to the Terai lowlands, amid the Shivaliks or lower Himalayas.
- The Tharus live in both India and Nepal.
- In the Indian terai, they live mostly in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar.
- Most of them are forest dwellers, and some practice agriculture.

- They speak various dialects of Tharu, a language of the Indo-Aryan subgroup, and variants of Hindi, Urdu, and Awadhi.
- Tharu women have stronger property rights than is allowed to women in mainstream North Indian Hindu custom.
- Recently, the UP government is working to connect Tharu villages in the districts of Balrampur, Bahraich, Lakhimpur and Pilibhit bordering Nepal, with the home stay scheme of the UP Forest Department.

7. a

Eco-Bridges

- Eco-ducts or eco-bridges aim to enhance wildlife connectivity that can be disrupted because of highways or logging.
- These include
 1. Canopy bridges - usually for monkeys, squirrels and other arboreal species).
 2. Concrete underpasses or overpass tunnels or viaducts - Usually for larger animals.
 3. Amphibian tunnels or culverts.
- Usually these bridges are overlaid with planting from the area to give it a contiguous look with the landscape.
- Ramnagar Forest Division in Nainital district, Uttarakhand, recently built its first eco-bridge for reptiles and smaller mammals.
- The proposals for Eco-bridges include the
 1. Chennai-Bangalore National Highway, in the Hosur-Krishnagiri segment for elephant crossings.
 2. Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve in Chandrapur, Maharashtra.

8. a

Havana Syndrome

- In 2016, US diplomats and other employees stationed in Havana reported felt ill after hearing strange sounds and experiencing odd physical sensations in their hotel rooms or homes.
- The symptoms included nausea, severe headaches, fatigue, dizziness, sleep problems,

and hearing loss, which have since come to be known as “Havana Syndrome”.

- USA’s National Academies of Sciences (NAS) has found directed microwave radiation to be the “plausible” cause of the Havana Syndrome.
- The NAS report, examined four possibilities to explain the symptoms i.e. Infection, chemicals, psychological factors and microwave energy.
- The report concluded that directed pulsed RF energy appears to be the most plausible mechanism in explaining these cases among those that the committee considered.

9. d

UNESCO World Heritage City

- UNESCO World Heritage Sites are important places of cultural or natural heritage as described in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, established in 1972.
- India has the sixth largest number of World Heritage sites in the world.
- Gwalior & Orchha are recent additions to the UNESCO World Heritage Cities in India.
- Gwalior was the capital of Gurjar Pratihara, Tomar, Baghel Kachhwahs and Scindia Rajvansh.
- Orchha is located in the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh was the 16th century capital of the erstwhile Bundela dynasty.
- It has famous temples and palaces are famous for a unique confluence of Rajput and Mughal architectural influences.
- The other UNESCO World Heritage Cities in India are Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Jaipur.

10. a

Operation Blackface

- It is recently conducted by Maharashtra Police department.
- Under the operation Maharashtra Cyber cops acting on the tip off provided by NCRB, and started forwarding complaints to the districts where FIR’s were registered against accused persons.

- For this operation they acquired Crawler Software from Interpol, which automatically searches documents on the Web.
- In 2019, the state police department has also setup a Tactical Response against Cyber Child Exploitation (TRACE) to counter child pornography.

10-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)

1. It aims to boost employment in informal sector during the COVID recovery phase.
2. Under the scheme, Government of India will provide subsidy for two years in respect of new employees engaged.
3. It is a program approved under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Package 0.

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to Better Than Cash Alliance

1. It is a partnership of 75 members based at the United Nations (UN).
2. Its main aim is to abolish physical cash and to provide responsible digital payment options.
3. India is a member of the Better Than Cash Alliance since 2015.

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Airavatesvara temple*

1. It is a temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu located at Darasuram, Tamil Nadu.
2. It was built by the great Chola king Rajaraja II in 12th Century AD.
3. It is a recognised UNESCO World Heritage monument.

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

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Vanchit Ikai Samooch aur Vargon ki Aarthik Sahayta (VISVAS) Scheme*

1. It is an interest subvention scheme for the self-help groups (SHGs) or Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) households.
2. It will be launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

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

5) *The Least Developed Countries Report 2020* was released recently by?

- a. UN Development Programme
- b. UN Conference on Trade and Development
- c. UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network
- d. Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Molnupiravir*

1. Molnupiravir is the first demonstration of an orally available drug to rapidly block SARS-CoV-2 transmission.
2. It can stop the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in 48 hours.

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

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

7) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Countries of Particular Concern (CPC)* ranking

1. CPC is released by Financial Action Task Force annually.
2. Nigeria is the first secular democracy that has been named a CPC.
3. It is followed by Special Watch List countries for severe misuse of Money laundering and terrorist financing.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

8) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *PM-WANI Scheme*

1. Under the scheme, WiFi will be provided through public data offices (PDOs) for which there will be no licence, registration or any other fees.
2. The PDOs can only provide the internet on their own and cannot lease it from service providers.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Policy on School Bag*

- The policy is released by union ministry of education that recommends to monitor the weight of the school bag on a regular basis.
- It also recommends that the weight of each textbook may come printed on them by the publishers.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) Consider the following statements with respect to Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act

- It has provisions for the court to grant immunity from prosecution to an addict involved in a small quantity of drugs.
- Charas an important crop in Himachal Pradesh was banned in India under the NDPS Act.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answers

1. c

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has recently

given its approval for Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY).

Atmanirbhar Bharat Rojgar Yojana (ABRY)

- It aims to boost employment in **formal sector** and incentivize creation of new employment opportunities during the Covid recovery phase **under Atmanirbhar Bharat Package 3.0**.
- Cabinet has approved an expenditure of Rs.22,810 crore for the **entire Scheme period i.e. 2020-2023**.
- Under the scheme, Government of India will provide **subsidy for two years** in respect of new employees engaged on or after 1st October, 2020 and up to 30th June, 2021.
- Government of India will pay **both 12% employees' contribution and 12% employers' contribution** i.e. 24% of wages towards EPF in respect of new employees in establishments employing **up to 1000 employees** for two years and **only 12%** of wages in establishments employing **more than 1000 employee** for two years.
- EPFO will credit the contribution in Aadhaar seeded account of members in electronic manner.

2. a

- India and UN-Based Better Than Cash Alliance has recently organized a joint Peer learning exchange on **fintech solutions for responsible digital payments at the last mile**.

Better Than Cash Alliance

- It is a partnership of **governments, companies and international organizations** that accelerates the transition from cash to responsible digital payments to advance the Sustainable Development Goals.
- It is **based at the United Nations**.
- The Alliance has 75 members which are committed to digitizing payments and helps in building economies that are digital and inclusive.
- Members do not want to abolish physical cash** – it is legal tender – **but rather want to provide responsible**

digital payment options that are “better than cash”.

- **India became a member of the Better Than Cash Alliance in 2015** to digitize payments to achieve financial inclusion and to share success stories from Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, the world's largest financial inclusion program.

3. c

- The Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram was built by the great Chola king **Rajaraja II (1143-1173 CE)**, and it is placed third, after the two famous Chola temples of Thanjavur and Gangaikondacholapuram.
- It is a temple dedicated to **Lord Siva**.
- This is termed as one of the **Great Living Chola Temples** along with Big Temple and the Gangai konda Cholapuram temple.
- During the 14th century the large stone statues surrounding the temple was replaced with brick and mortar statues similar to that of Big Temple at Thanjavur.
- **UNESCO declared it as World Heritage Monument in its 2004 list.**

4. c

- **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** will introduce **Vanchit Ikai Samooh aur Vargon ki Aarthik Sahayta (VISVAS) scheme.**

VISVAS Scheme

- It is an interest subvention scheme for the self help groups (SHGs) or Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) households with an annual income of up to Rs.3 lakh.
- SC and OBC beneficiaries could avail an interest subvention of 5% p.a. on bank loans of up to Rs.4 lakh per SHG and Rs.2 lakh per individual.
- It aims to ensure more credit in the hands of the most-deprived households for productive and economic activities.
- With subvention of interest, banks too would be encouraged to lend to the disadvantaged sections.

- The scheme would help in immediate liquidity as it would entail direct beneficiary transfer mode of crediting the accounts of beneficiaries.

5. b

- **Least Developed Countries Report 2020 was released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).**

Least Developed Countries Report 2020

- It found that the Least Developed Countries (LDC) will put in their worst economic performance in three decades this year due to the pandemic.
- Between October 2019 and October 2020, the economic growth forecast for LDCs was revised sharply downwards from 5 to -0.4%.
- This revision was expected to lead to a 2.6% reduction in per capita income in LDCs in 2020.
- The number of people living in extreme poverty (earning less than Rs 150 per day), will increase by 32 million in 2020 because of COVID-19.
- Total remittances to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are also forecast to fall by one-fifth in 2020, with an even sharper contraction in South Asian and sub-Saharan African countries.
- This increase in poverty will roll back some of the progress made towards sustainable development and possibly lead to long-term damage.
- Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), especially Goal 1 ('No Poverty') as well as those related to health and education will stall.
- The report urged the international community to support LDCs with adequate financial resources.

6. b

Molnupiravir

- Recently researchers has shown that Molnupiravir can stop the transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in 24 hours.
- It is an antiviral drug also known as MK-4482/EIDD-2801.

- It is being developed by the biotechnology firm Ridgeback Biotherapeutics in collaboration with pharmaceutical firm Merck.
- It is the first demonstration of an orally available drug to rapidly block SARS-CoV-2 transmission.
- It is a pro-drug of the synthetic nucleoside derivative N4-hydroxycytidine, and exerts its antiviral action through introduction of copying errors during viral RNA replication.

7. b

Countries of Particular Concern

- Designation of the CPC is the top tier recommendation by the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) for violation of international religious freedom.
- This is in line with the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 which was passed to promote religious freedom as a foreign policy of the United States.
- Pakistan and China along with Myanmar, Eritrea, Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan were recently added to CPC for violation of religious freedom.
- Nigeria is the first secular democracy that has been named a CPC.
- It is followed by Special Watch List Countries that have engaged in or tolerated severe violations of religious freedom.
- The report placed Comoros, Cuba, Nicaragua and Russia on a Special Watch List.
- Notably, the State Department did not accept the USCIRF recommendation that India, Russia, Syria and Vietnam be also designated as CPCs.

8. a

PM-WANI (Wi-Fi Access Network Interface) Scheme

- The scheme was cleared by parliament recently, it will revolutionise the tech world and significantly improve WiFi availability across India.
- It will further improve Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living.

- The scheme will enable small shopkeepers to provide WiFi service and this will boost incomes as well as ensure the youth gets seamless internet connectivity.
- For the scheme the Cabinet as approved setting up of public Wi-Fi networks to provide public Wi-Fi service through Public Data Offices without levy of any License Fee.

9. c

Policy on School Bag 2020

- The new 'Policy on School Bag 2020' of the Union ministry of education also recommends that the weight of the bag needs to be monitored on a regular basis in schools.
- They should be light-weight with two padded and adjustable straps that can squarely fit on both shoulders and no wheeled carriers should be allowed.
- The policy even recommends that the weight of each textbook may come printed on them by the publishers.
- The recommendations have been arrived based on various surveys and studies conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

10. c

Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act

- The NDPS Act, enacted in the country in 1985, is the primary legislation for dealing with drugs and their trafficking.
- It has various provisions to punish manufacturing, sale, possession, consumption, use, transport of banned drugs.
- The Act has provisions for the court to grant immunity from prosecution to an addict involved in a small quantity of drugs after they voluntarily seek to undergo medical treatment for deaddiction under section 64A.
- The Act also has the maximum punishment of the death penalty under section 31A for certain offences involving commercial quantities of a drug if the accused has been convicted before as well.



- Charas a resin obtained from strain of the cannabis plant was banned in India under the NDPS Act.

11-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Assam Movement*

- It is a movement against illegal immigrants in Assam led by All Assam Students Union (AASU).
- The movement came to an end following the signing of Assam Accord in 1985.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Aerosols*

- Aerosol is a colloidal solution of gas dispersed in liquid.
- Presence of Aerosol, like Black Carbon, is high in the Indo-Gangetic Plain, which led to high precipitation events over the Himalayan region.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

3) India has recently announced the introduction of satellite-based Narrow Band-Internet of Things (IoT). Consider the following statements in this regard:

- It will be the Worlds' first, satellite-based narrowband-IoT network to be launched in India.

- It is a network developed indigenously by Reliance Communications Limited (RIL), in partnership with Skylotech India (Skylo).

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *India Water Impact Summit (IWIS), 2020*

- The Summit is based on the concept of Arth Ganga, a vision raised during the 2nd India Water Impact Summit held in 2017.
- The summit was jointly organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and Center for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga).

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

5) With respect to *Ischaemum Janarthanamii*, sometimes seen in the news recently, consider the following statements:

- It is a new species of Indian Muraingrasses, which are known for their ecological and economic importance, found in the Western Ghats of Goa.
- The species has adapted to survive harsh conditions, low nutrient availability, and blossoms every monsoon.

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

6) Which of the following statements is/are incorrect with respect to *Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)*

1. It utilizes the unique properties of quantum mechanical systems to generate and distribute cryptographic keying.
2. Recently CSIR has developed a Quantum Key Distribution (QKD) technology.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Northern Lights Phenomena*

1. These are usually witnessed far up in the Polar Regions or the high latitude regions of Europe and America.
2. These Auroras occurs when solar wind enter the Earth's atmosphere.

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

8) Consider the following pairs on *Lunar Missions*

Mission - Nation

1. ARTEMIS - USA
2. Kaguya - European Union

3. Beresheet - UAE

4. LUNA - Russia

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

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

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Shakti Act*

1. It will provide protection to victims of molestation and even acid attack from their names getting reported in Media.
2. It proposes to make changes to IPC, CrPC and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Bharati Award*

1. It is a literary honour given by Ministry of Human Resource Development, in the memory of Tamil poet Subramanya Bharati.
2. The award is presented to eminent persons who have done laudable service in any field of social relevance.

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

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

Answers

1. c

- *India Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi has recently paid his tributes to the people who sacrificed their lives in the **Assam movement**.*

Assam Movement (1979-1985)

- It was a popular movement **against illegal immigrants in Assam**.
- The movement was led by All Assam Students Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad (AAGSP).
- They developed a program of protests and demonstration to compel the Indian government to identify and expel illegal, (mostly Bangladeshi), immigrants and protect and provide constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards to the indigenous Assamese people.
- The agitation programs were largely non-violent, but the Nellie massacre was a case of extreme violence.
- The agitation program **ended in August 1985** following the **Assam Accord**, which was signed by leaders of AASU-AAGSP and the Government of India.
- During the movement, it was reported that 855 (later on 860 as submitted by AASU) number of peoples sacrificed their lives in the hope of an "Infiltration Free Assam" in the 1979-1985 Assam agitation.

2. b

- *Scientists have recently found that aerosols like **black carbon and dust**, which makes the **Indo-Gangetic Plain** one of the most polluted regions of the world, have led to **increased incidents of high rainfall events** in the foothills of the Himalayan Region.*
- The study highlighted the crucial role of the **aerosol direct radiative effect** on high precipitation events over the Himalayan region.
- Aerosol is a colloidal dispersion of **solid or liquid particles in a gas**.
- (e.g) smoke or fog.

Indo-Gangetic Plain

- The Indo-Gangetic Plain is located South and upwind of the Himalayan foothills.
- The region is associated with high aerosol loading, much of which is black carbon and dust, and thus provides an opportunity for studying how aerosol affects extreme rainfall events, particularly when air mass is forced from a low elevation to a higher elevation as it moves over rising terrain technically called orographic forcing.

3. a

- *Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), in partnership with Skylotech India (Skylo), to introduce **worlds' first, satellite-based NB-IoT (Narrow Band-Internet of Things) network** in India.*
- This new '**Made in India' Solution**, which is **indigenously developed by Skylo**, will connect with BSNLs satellite- ground infrastructure and provide PAN-India coverage, including Indian seas.
- The coverage will be so vast that it will not leave any dark patch within the boundary of India, from Kashmir & Ladakh to Kanyakumari, and from Gujarat to the North East, including the Indian seas.
- With this solution, India will now have access to a ubiquitous fabric of connectivity for millions of yet unconnected machines, sensors and industrial IoT devices.

4. b

- *The 5th India Water Impact Summit (IWIS), 2020 had begun recently.*

India Water Impact Summit (IWIS), 2020

- The summit was organized by the **National Mission for Clean Ganga** and **Center for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (cGanga)**.
- It held with the theme of **comprehensive analysis and holistic management of local rivers and water bodies** with focus on **Arth Ganga** - river conservation synchronised development.
- **Arth Ganga** is a vision invoked by the Hon'ble **Prime Minister of India in the First Meeting of the National Ganga**

Council held in Kanpur in December 14, 2019.

- The 5th summit, like the 3rd and the 4th summit, will also host the “**Finance Forum**”, a special track that will bring together global financial institutions and investors interested in river restoration and conservation programme (Namami Gange).

5. c

- A **new species of Indian Muraingrasses** known for their ecological and economic importance, such as fodder, have been spotted by scientists in **Goa in the Western Ghats**, one of the four global biodiversity hotspots of India.

Ischaemum Janarthanamii

- The species was named **Ischaemum Janarthanamii** in honour of Prof. M. K. Janarthanam, Professor of Botany, Goa University, for his contribution to the Indian grass taxonomy and documentation of the floristic diversity of Goa state.
- **Ischaemum Janarthanamii** grows on **low altitude lateritic plateaus** in the outskirts of Bhagwan Mahavir National Park, Goa.
- The vegetation is **exposed to extreme climatic conditions** like **desiccation in drier months** and **soils with low nutrient availability**.
- However, withstanding these, the species has adapted to **survive harsh conditions** and **blossom every monsoon**.
- Globally 85 species are known from **Ischaemum**, of which 61 species are exclusively found in India.
- The Western Ghats have 40 species with the highest concentration of the genus.

6. b

Quantum Key Distribution (QKD)

- Quantum cryptography is a technology that uses quantum physics to secure the distribution of symmetric encryption keys.
- Quantum key distribution utilizes the unique properties of quantum mechanical systems to generate and distribute cryptographic keying material using special purpose technology.

- The technology is developed by CAIR, Bengaluru and DYSL-QT, Mumbai.
- Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) undertook the project for development of Quantum Key Distribution (QKD).
- The work being done at DRDO will be used to enable start-ups and SMEs in the domain of Quantum information technologies.

7. c

Northern Lights

- Northern Lights, also known as aurora borealis, are usually witnessed far up in the Polar Regions or the high latitude regions of Europe, like in Norway.
- Auroras occur when charged particles ejected from the Sun’s surface called the solar wind enter the Earth’s atmosphere.
- At the north and south poles, the charged particles interact with different gases in the atmosphere, causing a display of light in the sky.
- This display, known as an aurora, is seen from the Earth’s high latitude regions (called the auroral oval), and is active all year round.
- In the northern part of our globe, the polar lights are called aurora borealis or Northern Lights, and are seen from the US (Alaska), Canada, Iceland, Greenland, Norway, Sweden and Finland.
- In the south, they are called aurora australis or southern lights, and are visible from high latitudes in Antarctica, Chile, Argentina, New Zealand and Australia.

8. d

Lunar Missions

- **Beresheet** It was Israel's first lunar mission and the first attempt by a private company to land on the Moon.
- It is a collaborative effort of Israeli non-profit SpaceIL, Israel Aerospace Industries and the Israeli Space Agency.
- The Beresheet-2 mission is scheduled to be launched in 2024.

- **Kaguya** - is a Japanese Space Agency (JAXA) lunar orbiter mission.
- The primary objective of the mission is a global survey of the Moon, obtaining data on elemental abundance, mineralogical composition.
- The mission was ended in year 2009.

9. c

Shakti Act

- Maharashtra government introduced a draft bill making changes to existing laws on violence against women and children.
- The Bill, proposed to be enacted as Shakti Act, 2020, has provisions for enhancing punishment including capital punishment for rape, fine up to Rs 10 lakh on culprits of violence, quicker investigations and quicker disposal of cases.
- The draft Bill proposes to make changes to the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act.
- The Bill also proposes amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code, directing for an investigation in these cases to be completed within 15 days after an FIR is filed, extendable only by seven days.
- If it is not done within this time, the investigating officer will have to explain the reasons in a written report to the commissioner of police or special inspector general.

10. a

Bharati Award

- Bharati Award was instituted in 1994 by Vanavil Cultural Centre, Chennai in memory of poet Mahakavi Bharathiyar.
- Every year it is being conferred on eminent persons who have done laudable service in any field of social relevance and thus worked towards the fulfilment of Bharathi's dreams.
- This year the award will be given virtually by Indian PM to the receiver as the part of 138th birthday anniversary celebration of the Tamil poet.

- This award is different from the Subramaniam Bharati award, a literary honour given by Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, under Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- Subramaniam Bharati award is annually conferred on writers of outstanding works in Hindi literature.

12-12-2020

1) Which of the following Countries signed Normalization Agreement with Israel so far?

1. Sudan
2. Morocco
3. Palestine
4. Saudi Arabia

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 2 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1, 2 and 4 only
- d. None of the above

2) Consider the following statements with respect to District Development Council

1. It is a form of elected local government of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.
2. The Cabinet minister or a minister of state in the Union Territory would be the ex-officio chair of District Development Councils.

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

3) Consider the following statements

1. El Nino is the only climatic condition that cause droughts in India.
2. Rossby waves, also known as planetary waves, naturally occur in rotating fluids.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians*

1. The Prize is awarded annually to a researcher from a developing country who is less than 45 years of age.
2. The award is being funded by the Department of Science and Technology.

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

5) *Koilwar Bridge* was recently inaugurated across which of the following rivers?

- a. R. Sone
- b. R. Kosi
- c. R. Chambal
- d. R. Ghaghara

6) Which of the following statements is/are incorrect with respect to *Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)*

1. RTGS transactions don't have a maximum limit for funds that can be transferred in a single day.
2. Once completed RTGS payments are final and irrevocable.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Global Health Estimates*

1. According to the report, Malaria is the top disease that has caused more deaths between 2000-2019.
2. The report states that in South Asian Region deaths from diabetes have more than doubled, it is greatest percentage increase of all WHO regions.

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

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

8) Which one of the following agencies organizes *Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS)*?

- a. Indian Mountain Initiative (IMI)
- b. Centre for Inter-Disciplinary Studies of Mountain and Hill environment (CISMHE)
- c. Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology
- d. Wildlife Institute of India

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *mRNA Vaccines*

1. mRNA vaccines for immune response carry the molecular instructions to make the protein in the body through a synthetic RNA of the virus.
2. India's first indigenous mRNA vaccine HGCO19 was approved by Indian Drug regulators for human clinical trials.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *TURF 2020*

- It is an annual conference organized by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for promoting Fitness among youths.
- It will deliberate on profitable promotion and development of Sports/Fitness in the country.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answers

1. b

- Israel and Morocco** has recently agreed to normalize relations in a deal brokered with the help of the United States.
- Morocco is the fourth Muslim majority state to agree to normalize ties with Israel in 2020.
- Israel signed the Abraham Accords with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain in September.
- In October, Sudan agreed to normalize ties with the Jewish State.
- Egypt became the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel in 1979.
- Jordan signed the agreement in 1994.

2. a

- The District Development Council elections is being held in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K).

- This is the first electoral exercise after the Reorganisation Bill was passed, abrogating the special status and creation of Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh.

District Development Council (DDC)

- In October, 2020, J&K adapted the J&K Panchayati Raj Act, 1989.
- Now every district in J&K will have a District Development Council (DDC) having jurisdiction over the entire district, excluding municipal areas.
- Every DDC will have 14 directly-elected members.
- The 20 districts of J&K would have 280 directly-elected members.
- Every DDC shall comprise directly-elected members, the chairpersons of all Block Development Councils and members of the legislative assembly from the district.
- With the adaptation of 73rd constitutional amendment to J&K that led to the formation of DDCs, the government has paved way for the establishment of all three tiers of Panchayati Raj Institutions— Panchayat, Block Development Council and DDC.
- The DDC will be responsible for the formulation of development programmes of the area under its authority.
- Five standing committees, one each for finance, development, public works, health and education, and welfare will now be constituted in every DDC.
- The **DDC replaced the District Development Board** of the erstwhile state of J&K, **in which a cabinet minister or a minister of state would chair DDBs**, and members included MLAs, MLCs and MPs.
- In DDBs, the planning and execution of development works was mostly done by the district development commissioners, which would not be done by the elected representatives.

3. b

- Droughts in India have historically been associated with El Nino, an **anomalous warming of the equatorial Pacific**, but

scientists from IISc Bengaluru has recently suggest that not all Indian droughts are caused by El Nino.

- The study that appears in journal Science says that nearly six out of 10 droughts, in non-El Nino years, that occurred during the Indian summer-monsoon season in the past century may have been driven by atmospheric disturbances from the North Atlantic region.

Rossby waves

- It is also known as planetary waves.
- They naturally occur in **rotating fluids**.
- Within the Earth's ocean and atmosphere, these waves form as a result of the rotation of the planet.
- These waves play a significant role in shaping the planet's weather and climate.

Atmospheric Rossby Waves

- Atmospheric Rossby waves form primarily as a result of the Earth's geography.
- Rossby waves **help transfer heat from the tropics toward the poles and cold air toward the tropics** in an attempt to return atmosphere to balance.
- They also help locate the jet stream and mark out the track of surface low pressure systems.
- The slow motion of these waves often results in fairly long, persistent weather patterns.

Oceanic Rossby Waves

- Waves in the ocean come in many different shapes and sizes.
- Slow-moving oceanic Rossby waves are fundamentally different from ocean surface waves.
- Unlike waves that break along the shore, Rossby waves are huge, undulating movements of the ocean that stretch horizontally across the planet for hundreds of kilometers in a westward direction.
- They are so large and massive that they can change Earth's climate conditions.

4. c

- *Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians, 2020 was awarded to Dr. Carolina Araujo,*

Mathematician from the Institute for Pure and Applied Mathematics (IMPA), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in a virtual ceremony recently.

- The prize awarded by the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India in collaboration with ICTP (International Centre for Theoretical Physics), and the International Mathematical Union was given for her outstanding work in **algebraic geometry**.
- Dr. Araujo, who is Vice President of the Committee for Women in Mathematics at the International Mathematical Union, is the **first non-Indian women mathematician** to receive this prize and will be a role model for all women around the world.

Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians

- The award has been awarded **annually since 2005**.
- It was originally instituted by ICTP, the **Niels Henrik Abel Memorial Fund**, and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).
- The participation of the Abel Fund ended in 2012.
- The Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India (DST) is funding the Prize, starting with the 2014 Prize.
- The Prize is awarded annually to a researcher from a developing country who is **less than 45 years of age** on 31 December of the year of the award, and who has conducted **outstanding research in a developing country**.
- Researchers working in any branch of the mathematical sciences are eligible.
- The Prize carries a \$15,000 cash award.
- The Prize is usually awarded to one person, but may be shared equally among recipients who have contributed to the same body of work.
- The award is given in the memory of Srinivasa Ramanujan, a genius in pure mathematics who was essentially self-taught and made spectacular contributions to elliptic functions, continued fractions, infinite series, and analytical theory of numbers.

5. a

- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shri. Nitin Gadkari recently inaugurates three lane 1.5 km long Koilwar bridge over Sone river in Bihar.
- The bridge is major road for transport between Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

6. d

Real-Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)

- The term real-time gross settlement (RTGS) refers to a funds transfer system that allows for the instantaneous transfer of money and/or securities.
- RTGS is the continuous process of settling payments on an individual order basis without netting debits with credits across the books of a central bank.
- Once completed, real-time gross settlement payments are final and irrevocable.
- The available hours for RTGS transactions vary based on the individual banks and their branches, the standard timing ranges in between 7:00 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.
- Recently RBI permitted the round the clock availability of RTGS for extended flexibility to businesses for effecting payments.
- However there are no changes made to transaction limits it is capped at minimum limit of Rs. 2 lakhs for RTGS transactions, and there's no maximum limit as such.

7. c

Global Health Estimates

- The WHO Global Health Estimates provide a comprehensive and comparable assessment of mortality and loss of health due to diseases and injuries for all regions of the world.
 - The new data of Global Health Estimates cover the period from 2000 to 2019.
 - Highlights of the recent report are
1. Top Ten Causes of Death: Ischaemic heart disease, Stroke, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Lower respiratory infections, Neonatal conditions, Trachea, bronchus and lung cancers, Alzheimer disease

and other dementias, Diarrhoeal diseases, Diabetes mellitus, Kidney diseases.

2. Non-communicable diseases: Make up 7 of the world's top 10 causes of death, an increase from 4 of the 10 leading causes in 2000.
3. In the Eastern Mediterranean, deaths from diabetes have more than doubled and represent the greatest percentage increase of all WHO regions.
4. Communicable diseases: They still take in low-income countries: 6 of the top 10 causes of death in low-income countries are still communicable diseases, including malaria (6th), tuberculosis (8th) and Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (9th).

8. a

Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS)

- The ninth edition of the Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS) in Dehradun has begun.
- Every year it is organised by Indian Mountain Initiative (IMI), the first edition was organized in 2011 in Nainital.
- It is a four-day-long summit seeks to deliberate on issues such as migration, water security, climate resilience and innovative solutions for the farm sector, and disaster risk reduction in the Indian Himalayas.
- Every year 3-5 salient themes engaging the immediate attention of and relevant to the mountains and hills are taken up for threadbare discussion and debate.
- Conclusions and recommendations emerging from this exercise are pursued by IMI subsequently for actionable output.

9. c

m-RNA Vaccine HGC019

- The mRNA vaccines do not use the conventional model to produce immune response. Instead, they carry the molecular instructions to make the protein in the body through a synthetic RNA of the virus.
- mRNA-based vaccines are scientifically the ideal choice to address a pandemic because of their rapid developmental timeline.

- The mRNA vaccine is considered safe as is non-infectious, non-integrating in nature, and degraded by standard cellular mechanisms.
- India's first indigenous mRNA vaccine candidate has received approval from Indian Drug regulators to initiate Phase one and two human clinical trials.
- The novel mRNA vaccine candidate, HGCO19 has been developed by Gennova, Pune and supported with seed grant under the Ind-CEPI mission of the Department of Biotechnology.

10. b

TURF 2020

- FICCI in association with Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), GoI, has been organizing "TURF" International Conference on Business of Sports & Fitness.
- Components of TURF 2020 are
 1. Conference on Business of Sports
 2. India Sports Awards
 3. India's First Virtual - Global Sports & Fitness Exhibition
- The Conference will bring together senior decision-makers, Indian and International Sports and Fitness industry to deliberate on profitable promotion and development of Sports/Fitness in the country.
- Expert speakers will bring innovative ideas and exclusive insights into the major issues and growing opportunities in the field of sports and fitness.

14-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Bullion Market*

1. It is an exclusive spot exchange where buyers and sellers trade only gold and silver metals.
2. Union Budget 2020 approved an International Bullion Exchange in the MEPZ-Special Economic Zone (MEPZ-SEZ), Chennai.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Climate Ambition Summit 2020*

1. At the Summit, participating countries will set out new and ambitious commitments under the three pillars of the Paris Agreement.
2. The summit is convened by the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Myristica swamp Tree Frog*

1. It is a rare species endemic to the Eastern Himalayas.
2. It is truly arboreal and does not come to land even during its reproduction phase.

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

4) UNESCO has recently declared 2021 as the?

- a. International Year of Indigenous Languages
- b. International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development
- c. International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements

d. International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure*

1. The Scheme is aimed at boosting tax revenue of State Governments to compensate shortfall of capital expenditure arising from the COVID pandemic.
2. All States except West Bengal have availed the benefits of the scheme.
3. The scheme was announced as a part of the AatmaNirbhar Bharat package.

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

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

6) Which of the following statements is/are incorrect with respect to *National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2019*

1. International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) is nodal agency responsible for co-ordinating NFHS.
2. For the first time data on percentage of women and men who have ever used the Internet was included in the survey.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *UNESCO Award for Creative Economy*

1. It is a new international prize launched in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Nobel laureate Amartya Sen.
2. It will recognise exceptional initiatives taken by cultural workers and organizations in the development of the creative economy.

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

8) Which of the following are reasons of *Microclimatic Zones Shifting*

1. Land-use patterns
2. Urban heat islands
3. Disappearing wetlands
4. El-Nino

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1,3 and 4 only
- b. 1, 2 and 3 only
- c. 2, 3 and 4 only
- d. All of the above

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Quality Control Order*

1. It shall apply to (Toys) Product or material designed or clearly intended for use in play by children under 14 years of age.
2. It exempts goods manufactured & sold by registered Handicrafts artisans from use of BIS Standard Mark.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

d. Neither 1 nor 2

10) Consider the following statements with respect to 3D Printing

1. It produces new products by using successive layers of materials such as plastic, resin, thermoplastic, metal, fibre or ceramic.
2. China remains the global leader in 3D printing, with more than 35% market share.

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

Answers

1. d

- International Financial Services Centres Authority IFSCA has recently notified the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Bullion Exchange) Regulations, 2020.

Background

- In the **Union Budget 2020**, Union Minister of Finance Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman had made an announcement for setting up an International Bullion Exchange at the International Financial Services Centre in **GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat**.
- IFSCA has been entrusted with the responsibility of operationalization of this Exchange.
- In this regard, International Financial Services Centres Authority (Bullion Exchange) Regulations 2020 were recently approved by the Authority in its meeting held on October 27, 2020.

Bullion

- According to the regulation, bullion means **precious metals, including gold, silver or any other precious metal in**

the form of bars or unallocated gold, silver, or such other precious metals, as the Authority may consider relevant in this regard.

2. a

- India is not only on track to achieve its Paris Agreement targets, but to exceed them beyond expectations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said during the Climate Ambition Summit 2020 held recently.
- He also highlights that the country has reduced its emission intensity by 21 percent over 2005 levels.
- India's solar capacity has grown from 2.63 gigawatts in 2014 to 36 gigawatts in 2020.

Climate Ambition Summit, 2020

- The United Nations, United Kingdom and France are co-hosting the Climate Ambition Summit 2020, in partnership with Chile and Italy.
- This is a monumental step on the road to the UK-hosted COP26 next November in Glasgow.
- It aims to bring leaders together who are ready to make new commitments to tackle climate change and deliver on the Paris Agreement, five years since it was adopted on December 12, 2015.
- At the Climate Ambition Summit 2020, **countries will set out new and ambitious commitments under the three pillars of the Paris Agreement:** mitigation, adaptation and finance commitments.

3. d

- Myristica Swamp Tree Frog has been recorded for the first time north of the Shencottah gap in the Vazhachal Reserve Forest in Kerala's Thrissur district.

Myristica Swamp Tree Frog

- It is a rare **arboreal** species **endemic to the Western Ghats**.
- These frogs are rare and elusive for the reason that they are arboreal and **active only for a few weeks during their breeding season**.

- During this season, there is a large aggregation of males that descend from the high canopy of the trees.
- The breeding season, unlike for other frogs, starts in the pre-monsoon season (May) and ends before the monsoon becomes fully active in June.
- Before the end of the breeding season, the female frogs along with their male counterparts descend on the forest floor.
- The female digs the mud and lays eggs in shallow burrows in mud. After breeding and egg-laying, they retreat back to the high canopies of the tree and remain elusive till next breeding season.

4. d

- **UNESCO has recently declared 2021 as 'International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development'.**

5. a

- All the States except Tamil Nadu have availed benefits of the scheme for "Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure".
- The scheme was announced by the Finance Minister on 12th October, 2020 as a part of the AatmaNirbhar Bharat package.

Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure

- The Scheme is aimed **at boosting capital expenditure** by the State Governments who are facing difficult financial environment this year due to the **shortfall in tax revenue** arising from the COVID 19 pandemic.
- Capital Expenditure has a higher multiplier effect, enhancing the future productive capacity of the economy, and results in a higher rate of economy growth.
- Therefore, despite the adverse financial position of the Central Government, it was decided to extend a special assistance to the State Governments in respect of capital expenditure, in financial year 2020-21.

6. d

National Family Health Survey (NFHS)

- The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is a large-scale, multi-round survey conducted in a representative sample of households throughout India.
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) designated IIPS as the nodal agency, responsible for providing coordination and technical guidance for the NFHS.
- NFHS was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) with supplementary support from United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
- According to recent survey, on an average less than 3 out of 10 women in rural India and 4 out of 10 women in urban India ever used the Internet.

7. b

UNESCO Award for Creative Economy

- The UNESCO has decided to launch an international prize in the field of 'creative economy' in the name of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman former president of Bangladesh.
- Currently, there are 23 UNESCO International Awards in the name of international celebrities and organisations.
- Starting November 2021, the dollar 50 thousand award will be given away once in two years for global economic initiatives of the youth.
- The award will recognise exceptional initiatives taken by cultural workers and organizations in the development of the creative economy.

8. b

Microclimatic Zones Shifting

- Microclimatic zones, or areas where the weather is different from surrounding areas, they are shifting across various districts of India.
- A shift in microclimate zones may lead to severe disruptions across sectors – every 2 degrees C rise in annual mean temperature will reduce agricultural productivity by 15-20%.
- Some reasons identified behind this shift in microclimatic zones is change in land-use

patterns, disappearing wetlands and natural ecosystems by encroachment, and urban heat islands that traps heat locally.

9. c

Quality Control Order

- The Quality Control Order shall apply to (Toys) Product or material designed or clearly intended for use in play by children under 14 years of age or any other product as notified by the Central Government from time to time.
- Recently, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has released the Toys (Quality Control) Second Amendment Order, 2020.
- It exempts goods manufactured & sold by artisans registered with Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), from use of Standard Mark under licence from Bureau of Indian Standards.
- It also exempts products registered as Geographical Indications from following Indian Toy Standards & compulsory use of Standard Mark licence from Bureau.

10. a

3D printing

- 3D printing or additive manufacturing uses computer-aided designing to make prototypes or working models of objects by laying down successive layers of materials such as plastic, resin, thermoplastic, metal, fibre or ceramic.
- With the help of software, the model to be printed is first developed by the computer, which then gives instructions to the 3D printer.
- One of the key applications for such products is in the medical and allied sector.
- The USA remains the global leader in 3D printing, with more than 35% market share.
- In Asia, about 50% of its market is cornered by China, followed by Japan at 30%, and South Korea at 10%.
- Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is working on a policy aimed at promoting 3D printing on an industrial scale in view of its emerging market.

15-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to Project 17A

1. Under the Project, a total of seven ships are being built with enhanced stealth features.
2. Hingiri, which was launched recently, is the first ship of the Project 17A.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to Maharashtra Shakti Criminal Law (Maharashtra Amendment) Act, 2020

1. It aims to curb land grabbing activity in the state by providing stringent punishments and heavy fines on the perpetrators.
2. The bill aims to setup a special tribunal to deal land grabbing case exclusively.

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

3) San Isidro Movement, sometimes seen in the news recently, is demanding which of the following?

- a. Exit from Cuba
- b. Freedom of Expression
- c. Equal representation of women in legislature
- d. None of the above

4) Union Ministry of Environment has recently released an advisory that allows owners of

exotic live species that have been acquired illegally, or without documents, to declare their stock to the government. Consider the following statements with respect to the scheme:

1. It is a new law which mandates the disclosure of exotic species through MoEFCC's Parivesh portal.
2. According to the advisory, exotic live species are animals named under the Appendices I, II and III of the CITES and does not include species from the Schedules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 197

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

5) The World's largest hybrid renewable energy park is being setup in?

- a. Gujarat
- b. Tamil Nadu
- c. West Bengal
- d. Chhattisgarh

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *UNESCO State of the Education Report for India*

1. The report highly condemns the implementation of New Education Policy 2020 (NEP)
2. It aims to support skills development under the Skill India Mission.

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

7) Which of the following statements is/are incorrect with respect to *Geminids Meteor Shower*

1. They emerge from an asteroid or an extinct comet.
2. They travel at speed that is 1000 times faster than a cheetah.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

8) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Himalayan Serow*

1. Himalayan serow resembles a cross between a goat, a donkey, a cow, and a pig.
2. Himalayan serows are typically found at altitudes between 2,000 metres and 4,000 metres.
3. It is listed under Schedule I of The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, which provides absolute protection.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Apple Scab Disease*

1. It is a fungal disease caused by *Venturia Inaequalis*, that affects Apple orchids.
2. The disease can be minimised by exposing the plant in sunlight.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 only

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Chandra X-ray Observatory*

1. It is sensitive to X-ray sources 100 times fainter than any previous X-ray telescope.
2. It can detect X-ray emissions from very hot regions of the universe such as exploded stars, and matter around black holes.

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

Answers

1. c

Himgiri

- It is the first of the three Project 17A ships being built at Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata.
- She made her first contact with the waters of Hoogly River recently.

Project 17 A

- Under the Project 17A program, a total of seven ships, four at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and three ships at GRSE are being built with enhanced stealth features, advanced indigenous weapon and sensor fit along with several other improvements.
- P17A ships are the first gas turbine propulsion and largest combat platforms ever built at GRSE.
- Since its inception, Project 17A has upheld India's vision for Atmanirbhar Bharat.

2. d

- The Maharashtra Cabinet has recently approved the introduction of two draft bills pertaining to the prevention of incidents of violence and atrocities against women and children in the state.

Maharashtra Shakti Criminal Law (Maharashtra Amendment) Act, 2020

- The bill intended to **curb crimes against women**.
- The Shakti act is modelled on the lines of Andhra Pradesh's Disha act, which was brought last year.
- Stringent punishment, including the death penalty and heavy fines on the perpetrators is a key feature of the draft bill.
- The perpetrators will be punished with imprisonment for life for not less than ten years but may extend to the remainder of natural life or with death.
- The bill also proposes setting up of a "Women and Children Offenders Registry" linked to the National Registry of Sexual Offenders with details of persons convicted of specified offences of sexual violence against women and children.

3. b

- In Cuba, a country under an authoritarian communist regime for more than six decades, a campaign by artists and activists demanding greater **freedom of expression** is fast grabbing the limelight.
- The Movimiento San Isidro, or the San Isidro Movement (MSI), started two years ago to **protest state censorship of artistic works**, and has now become a platform for Cuban dissidents both within and outside the Caribbean nation.
- The movement started in September 2018, when the Cuban government sought to enforce Decree 349, a law that would have given powers to the nation's Culture Ministry to restrict cultural activity it did not approve of.

4. b

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change came out with an advisory on a **one-time voluntary disclosure scheme**, an amnesty scheme.

- This scheme allows owners of exotic live species that have been acquired illegally, or without documents, to declare their stock to the government between June and December 2020.
- It has defined **exotic live species as animals named under the Appendices I, II and III** of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (**CITES**).
- It **does not include species from the Schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972**. So, the advisory excludes exotic birds.
- The disclosure has to be done online through MoEFCC's **Parivesh portal**.
- In its current form, the amnesty scheme is **just an advisory, not a law**.

5. a

- *Indian Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi had recently laid foundation stones for several development projects in the state of Gujarat.*
- These projects include **world's biggest Renewable Energy Park** which aims to generate 30,000 MW power through solar panels and windmills on 72,600 hectares area along the India-Pakistan border in Gujarat's Kutch district.
- The park is being set up by the Gujarat government with the participation of private players like the Adani Group, which is the country's largest renewable power generator; Suzlon, a dominant player in wind energy, and others.

6. b

UNESCO State of the Education Report for India

- The State of the Education Report for India, is one of UNESCO New Delhi's flagship reports to be published annually.
- Its main objective will be to monitor progress towards the education targets in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The 'State of the Education Report for India 2020' is named as Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

- The recent report identifies TVET as a key tool for recovery and rehabilitation through a rapid response system of skilling, upskilling and re-skilling.
- With the recent launch of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, the relevance of this report is enhanced further as it provides useful inputs for implementing the ideas proposed in the 2020 NEP.

7. d

Geminids Meteor Shower

- Meteors are bits of rock and ice that are ejected from comets as they manoeuvre around their orbits around the sun.
- Meteors are best visible on a cloudless night and when the Moon is not extremely bright.
- When a meteor reaches the Earth, it is called a meteorite and a series of meteorites, when encountered at once, is termed a meteor shower.
- The Geminids meteor showers are unique because their origin does not lie in a comet, but what is believed to be an asteroid or an extinct comet.
- The Geminids emerge from 3200 Phaethon, which meteor scientists consider to be an asteroid.
- Geminids travel at a speed of 78,000 mph or 35 km/s, which is over 1000 times faster than a cheetah.

8. d

Himalayan Serow

- The Himalayan serow is a subspecies of the mainland serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*).
- It has been recently sighted for the first time in the Himalayan cold desert region in Spiti, Himachal Pradesh.
- It's a medium-sized mammal with a large head, thick neck, short limbs, long, mule-like ears, and a coat of dark hair.
- There are several species of serows, and all of them are found in Asia.
- They are known to be found in eastern, central, and western Himalayas, but not in the Trans Himalayan region.

- It is now been categorised as ‘vulnerable’ in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

9. c

Apple Scab Disease

- The apple scab generally did not kill trees, but can cause defoliation, that weakens the tree and influences its survival during winter conditions.
- It observed that early infections could lead to abnormal growth (fruit deformation) and fruit drop.
- If the fruit is infected late in the summer or just before harvest, black, circular, minimal (0.1-4 mm diameter) lesions called ‘pin-point scab’ would appear during storage.
- The disease can be minimised / prevented through good horticultural practices such as
 1. Selecting sites that provide more than six hours of sunlight a day.
 2. Spacing trees adequately following proper pruning practices to open the tree canopy.
 3. Sanitising in orchards to prevent pseudothelial formation in overwintering apple leaves.

10. c

Chandra X-ray Observatory

- The Chandra X-ray Observatory (CXO), is a Flagship-class space telescope launched by NASA on July 23, 1999.
- Chandra is sensitive to X-ray sources 100 times fainter than any previous X-ray telescope, enabled by the high angular resolution of its mirrors.
- The Chandra X-ray Observatory is a telescope specially designed to detect X-ray emissions from very hot regions of the universe such as exploded stars, clusters of galaxies, and matter around black holes.

16-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Vigyanika 2020*

1. It is one of the prominent events of India International Science Festival (IISF), 2020.

2. The event will deliberate on the challenges of science communication and also critically evaluate scientific literature.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *DakPay*

1. It is a new digital payment app launched by the India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) to provide digital financial and assisted banking services.
2. The app will also provide interoperable banking services to the customers with any bank in the country.

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

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Food Hygiene Rating Scheme*

1. It is a voluntary certification system applicable for food businesses supplying food directly to consumers, either on or off premise.
2. It was launched by the Quality Council of India (QCI).
3. The recognized Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies will be responsible for verifying the compliance with food hygiene and safety procedures laid by FSSAI and get Hygiene Rating.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a. 1 and 2 only



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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *GRIHA Summit*

1. It is an annual flagship event organized by GRIHA Council to discuss and deliberate on furtherance of Sustainable Habitat Development in India.
2. The theme of the 12th GRIHA Virtual Summit is 'Approach to Integrated Sustainability'.

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)*

1. Union Finance Minister is the Chairman of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC).
2. A sub-committee of FSDC will be under the chairmanship of Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

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

6) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Cabomba Furcata*

1. It is a submerged perennial aquatic plant that grows in stagnant to slow-flowing freshwater.

2. It is prohibited from cultivation and planting, covered under Schedule VI of Wild Life Protection Act 1972.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *IUCN Red Data Book*

1. It is mainly created to document and protect species that are newly identified from a particular area.
2. So far, none of the Indian grasshopper species have been listed in the Red Data Book.

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

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

8) Which of the following are reasons of *Cold Day in North India*

1. Western Disturbance
2. Lack of cloud cover
3. La-Nina
4. North-westerly winds

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1, 2 and 4 only
- c. 2, 3 and 4 only
- d. All of the above

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Himalayan Griffon*

1. It can only be found within Sino-Himalaya and Central Asia.
2. It is listed as 'Near Threatened' under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Biomass Co-firing*

1. The method will use Biomass as a primary fuel in coal boilers by partly reconstructing it.
2. It is an option to convert biomass to electricity, in an efficient and clean way, and to reduce GHG emissions of the power plant.

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

Answers

1. c

- *International Science Literature Festival-VIGYANIKA 2020 will be organized as one of the prominent events of IISF 2020.*

The International Science Literature Festival – Vigyanika 2020

- The event centered around the theme “Science Communication & Science Literature – Networking Science & Society.
- It will deliberate on the challenges of science communication and also critically evaluate scientific literature and many other issues through Keynote Lectures, Panel Discussions,

Scientific Sessions, and Vigyan Kavi Sammelan.

- The other features of Vigyanika would include Virtual Science Book Fair, National Science Song Making Competition, and National Essay Writing Competition on “Leveraging S&T for Self-reliance and Global Welfare”.

2. d

- *Department of Posts (DoP) and India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has unveiled a new digital payment app 'DakPay' at a virtual event held recently.*

DakPay

- The App is launched as part of its ongoing efforts to **provide Digital Financial inclusion at the last mile** across India.
- DakPay is not just a digital payment app but a **suite of digital financial and assisted banking services** provided by India Post & IPPB through the trusted Postal ('Dak') network across the nation to cater to the financial needs ('Pay') of various sections of the society.
- The app will also **provide interoperable banking services to the customers with any bank in the country.**

India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)

- It has been established under the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communication with 100% equity owned by Government of India.
- IPPB was launched by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on September 1, 2018.
- The fundamental mandate of India Post Payments Bank is to remove barriers for the unbanked & underbanked and reach the last mile leveraging the Postal network comprising 155,000 Post Offices (135,000 in rural areas) and 300,000 Postal employees.

3. b

- **Quality Council of India (QCI) at the behest of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has come out with a Scheme for approval of Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies to scale up Hygiene Rating by increasing the number of recognized Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies in the country.**

Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

- Hygiene rating is a **voluntary scheme** applicable to food businesses supplying food directly to consumers either on or off the premises and food businesses are rated on the basis of food hygiene and safety conditions found at the time of inspection.
 - It is an initiative of **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)**.
 - The food establishments are rated based on food hygiene and safety conditions observed at the time of audit.
 - The hygiene rating will be **in the form of smileys (1 up to 5)** and the certificate should be displayed prominently in the consumer facing area.
 - The recognized Hygiene Rating Audit Agencies will be responsible for verifying the compliance with food hygiene and safety procedures laid by FSSAI and get Hygiene Rating.
 - It was launched with an intent of ensuring that **consumer make informed choices while eating out** and also encouraging food businesses to showcase and improve their food hygiene standards.
 - This scheme is being implemented in:
 1. Bakeries
 2. Sweet Shops
 3. Meat Retail Shops
 4. Food Service Establishments such as restaurants, cafeteria, dhabahs, etc.
4. b
- *Union Minister of State (IC) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, has recently inaugurated the 12th GRIHA Virtual Summit in New Delhi.*

12th GRIHA Summit

- The 12th GRIHA Summit to be held from December 15-16, 2020 has been scheduled as a Virtual Conference.
- The summit has been themed around "**Rejuvenating Resilient Habitats**" and shall serve as a platform to deliberate on innovative technologies and solutions which shall help in creating robust mechanisms for

developing sustainable and resilient solutions for the benefit of the entire community.

GRIHA Summit

- It is the annual flagship event organized by GRIHA Council in association with key stakeholders in construction industry to discuss and deliberate on furtherance of Sustainable Habitat Development in India.
- The first conference, held in January 2010, had 400 participants representing all the key stakeholders in the construction industry.

5. c

- *Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has recently chaired the 23rd Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) through video conference.*

Highlights of the meeting

- The meeting reviewed the major macroeconomic developments and Financial Stability issues (global and domestic) with special reference to vulnerability related issues.
- The Council also discussed the budget proposals submitted by RBI and other Regulators.
- The Council discussed the challenges involved in smooth transition of London Interbank Offer Rate (LIBOR) based contracts and noted that a multipronged strategy involving relevant stakeholder institutions and departments is required in this regard.
- The Council also took note of the activities undertaken by the FSDC Sub-Committee chaired by the Governor of RBI and the action taken by members on FSDC decisions earlier.

Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

- In pursuance of the announcement made in the **Union Budget 2010–11** and with a view to strengthen and institutionalize the mechanism for maintaining financial stability and enhancing inter-regulatory coordination, Indian Government has setup an apex-level Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) **in 2010**.

- FSDC has replaced the **High Level Coordination Committee on Financial Markets (HLCCFM)**, which was facilitating regulatory coordination, though informally, prior to the setting up of FSDC.
- The **Chairman of the FSDC is the Finance Minister of India** and its members include the heads of the financial sector regulatory authorities (i.e, SEBI, IRDA, RBI, PFRDA and FMC), Finance Secretary and/or Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Secretary, Department of Financial Services and the Chief Economic Adviser.
- A **sub-committee of FSDC** has also been set up under the chairmanship of **Governor RBI**.
- The Sub-Committee discusses and decides on a range of issues relating to financial sector development and stability including substantive issues relating to inter-regulatory coordination.

6. a

Cabomba Furcata

- Cabomba is a submerged perennial aquatic plant that grows in stagnant to slow-flowing freshwater.
- It dominantly belongs to Central and South America.
- The plant will spread in the water bodies across, choking them as well as the drainage canals.
- It requires a huge amount of oxygen to grow and that could badly affect freshwater biodiversity.
- The plant has a high natural dispersal potential due to its ability to readily fragment and spread.
- Recently the plant has caused the 'pink phenomenon' in Kerala by covering the water bodies.

7. a

IUCN Red Data Book

- The Red Data Book is a public document which is created for recording endangered and rare species of plants, animals, fungi as well as

some local subspecies which are present in a particular region.

- This book is mainly created to identify and protect those species which are on the verge of extinction.
- IUCN is initiating the Red List Assessment of grasshoppers in India for the first time by the end of this year.
- The assessment will include *Tettilobus trishula*, a new species of grasshopper discovered recently in the Eravikulam National Park in Kerala's Idukki district.
- So far, none of the Indian grasshopper species have been listed in the Red Data Book.
- Red List assessment of endemic grasshoppers of NBR would update their conservation status and kick off India's grasshopper conservation activities.

8. d

Cold Day

- A cold day is when the maximum temperature dips 4.5 degrees Celsius below normal temperature which has been set based on climatological data of 30 years between 1981 and 2010.
- In winters, whenever an active Western Disturbance passes through the western Himalayan region, it leads to a dip in temperatures across northwest India.
- North-westerly winds blowing over Delhi from the direction of this high altitude area, and clearing of cloud cover with the passing of Western Disturbance, and leads to a fall in temperatures.
- The lack of cloud cover also leads to higher radiation from the Earth's surface into the atmosphere at night time, which also cools the ground, Srivastava said.
- Under the influence of an active La Niña climate pattern, temperatures across the globe have been dipping.

9. b

Himalayan Griffon

- The Himalayan vulture (*Gyps himalayensis*) or Himalayan griffon vulture is an Old World

vulture native to the Himalayas and the adjoining Tibetan Plateau.

- They live mainly in the higher regions of the Himalayas, the Pamirs, Kazakhstan and on the Tibetan Plateau.
- Recently, Himalayan griffon vulture has been sighted for the first time at the Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary near Vedaranyam.
- It was formerly accepted as resident or migrating only attitudinally within Sino-Himalaya and Central Asia.

10. b

Biomass Co-Firing

- Biomass co-firing stands for adding biomass as a partial substitute fuel in high efficiency coal boilers.
- Coal and biomass are combusted together in boilers that have been designed to burn coal.
- For this purpose, the existing coal power plant has to be partly reconstructed and retrofitted.
- Co-firing is an option to convert biomass to electricity, in an efficient and clean way, and to reduce GHG emissions of the power plant.
- Biomass co-firing is a globally accepted cost-effective method for decarbonising a coal fleet.
- Decarbonising means reducing carbon intensity, i.e. reducing the emissions per unit of electricity generated (often given in grams of carbon dioxide per kilowatt-hour).

17-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Golden Peacock Environment Management Award*

1. World Environment Foundation (WEF) instituted this Annual Award in 1998, in furtherance of its aims and objectives.
2. Indian Railways has been awarded with the Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for the year 2020.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS)*

1. It aims to build the capacities of the youths of lesser developed districts of North Eastern States by Educating, Enabling and Empowering them to compete in the normal course.
2. It is being implemented by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Institute of Excellence*

1. They are exempted from reservation policies under the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act of 2019.
2. In India, all Indian Institute of Technologies' (IITs) and Indian Institute of Managements' (IIMs) comes under the category of Institutes of Excellence.

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

4) Consider the following statements

1. S-400 Triumpf is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system (SAM) designed by Russia.
2. The United States has recently imposed sanctions on Morocco pursuant to Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), citing its acquisition of S-400 air defense systems.

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

5) Which of the following countries share borders with Eswatini?

1. Lesotho
2. Botswana
3. Namibia
4. South Africa
5. Mozambique

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 4 only
- b. 4 and 5 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3 only
- d. 2, 4 and 5 only

6) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *National Water Informatics Centre*

1. It is an independent organization established by Ministry of Jal Shakti under National Hydrology Project.
2. National Hydrology Project is a central sector scheme to strengthen the capacity of targeted water resource management institutions in India.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Which of the following are *Communication Satellites of India*

1. GSAT
2. IRNSS
3. CMS
4. RISAT
5. INSAT

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1, 2, and 3 only
- b. 1, 4, and 5 only
- c. 1, 3 and 5 only
- d. All of the above

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Plasmodium Ovale Malaria*

1. It is a common type of malaria found in Indian sub-continent and South Asia.
2. It is a killer form and can cause severe illness like jaundice

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

9) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Asset Quality Review*

1. It was introduced in 2015 by the Ministry of Finance.
2. It has created widespread destruction on banks' profit & loss accounts.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mucormycosis Fungal Infection*

- It is caused by group of fungus that are present particularly in soil and in association with decaying organic matter.
- It is a contagious infection that spread between people or between people and animals.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answers

1. a

- Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)** has been awarded with the prestigious Golden Peacock Environment Management Award for the year 2020 in the Steel Sector by the Institute of Directors.
- SAIL has been the winner of this award for successive two years.

Golden Peacock Environment Management Award

- It is the coveted and prestigious recognition that any organization could strive to win for environment management.
- World Environment Foundation (WEF) takes pride to have instituted the Annual Award in 1998, in furtherance of its aims and objectives.

- The applications for the Awards relate to performance during the previous financial year.
- Golden Peacock Awards**, instituted by the **Institute of Directors (IOD)**, India in 1991, are now regarded as a benchmark of Corporate Excellence worldwide.
- The Golden Peacock awards are in two categories:
 - Global Awards
 - National Level Awards

2. b

Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS)

- An Expert Group was constituted by the Prime Minister for enhancing **employment opportunity among youths of J&K and Ladakh** and formulate job opportunities in public and private sectors.
- Subsequently, Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS) is being implemented by the All India Council for Technical Education(AICTE), New Delhi.
- The Scheme aims to build the capacities of the youths of J&K and Ladakh by Educating, Enabling and Empowering them to compete in the normal course.
- Under the Scheme, the youths of J&K and Ladakh are supported by way of scholarship in two parts namely the **academic fee & maintenance allowance**.
- The academic fee is paid to the institution where the student is provided admission after on-line counselling process conducted by the AICTE.
- The academic fee covers tuition fee and other components as per the ceiling fixed for various professional, medical and other undergraduate courses.
- In order to meet expenditure towards hostel accommodation, mess expenses, books & stationery etc., a fixed amount of Rs.1.00 Lakh is provided to the beneficiary and is paid in instalments @ Rs. 10,000/- per month directly into students account.

3. a

- A committee constituted by the Union Ministry of Education (MoE) **to suggest measures for effective implementation of reservation policies in IITs** has recommended that **these institutions be exempted from following the policies in faculty recruitment.**

Committee

- The Committee was constituted in April 2020 with Director of IIT Delhi, **V. Ramgopal Rao**, as its **Chairperson** and the Director of IIT Kanpur, Registrars of IIT Bombay and IIT Madras, and representatives from Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Department of Personnel and Training and Department of Persons with Disabilities as members.
- It was asked to suggest measures on effective implementation of reservation policies not only in recruitment, but also for admissions.
- The committee met twice in May and submitted its report on June 17, 2020.

Highlights of the report

- The committee suggested that IITs be included in the list of **Institutes of Excellence (IoE) that are exempted from reservation policies under the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act (CEI Act) of 2019.**
 - The committee based its recommendations primarily on arguments claiming the **need for IITs to maintain their academic excellence** and the lack of candidates from the reserved categories who fulfil the qualification criteria.
 - Currently, eight institutions, including the Homi Bhabha National Institute and its constituent units, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Space Physics Laboratory and Indian Institute of Remote Sensing are on the list.
4. a
- *The United States has recently imposed sanctions on Turkey over Ankara's acquisition of Russian S-400 air defence systems.*

- Ankara acquired the Russian S-400 ground-to-air defenses in mid-2019 and says they pose no threat to NATO allies.
- Washington has long been threatening sanctions on Turkey and had removed the country from an F-35 jet program last year.
- India got a waiver from buying the Russian S-400 air defence systems from the outgoing Trump administration.

S-400 Air Defence Missile System

- The S-400 Triumf, (NATO calls it SA-21 Growler), is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system (SAM) designed by Russia.
- It is the most dangerous operationally deployed modern long-range SAM (MLR SAM) in the world, considered much ahead of the US-developed Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD).

Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)

- It was passed unanimously by the US Congress and signed reluctantly by US President Donald Trump.
- Enacted on August 2, 2017, its core objective is to counter Iran, Russia and North Korea through punitive measures.
- Section 231 of the Act empowers the US President to impose at least five of the 12 listed sanctions — enumerated in Section 235 of the Act — on persons engaged in a "significant transaction" with Russian defence and intelligence sectors.

5. b

- *Eswatini's Prime Minister Ambrose Dlamini died recently after testing positive for Covid-19.*

Eswatini

- It was formerly and still commonly known in English as Swaziland.
- It was officially renamed in 2018.
- It is a landlocked country in Southern Africa.
- It is bordered by Mozambique to its northeast and South Africa to its north, west, and south.

6. c

National Water Informatics Centre

- National Hydrology Project (NHP) was started in the year 2016 as a Central Sector Scheme.
- It provides 100% grant to Implementing agencies on pan India basis, with a budget outlay of Rs 3680 Crore to be spent over a period of 8 years.
- The project aims at improving the extent, reliability and accessibility of water resources information and to strengthen the capacity of targeted water resource management institutions in India.
- Under the NHP, a nationwide repository of water resources data - NWIC has been established.
- NWIC has three components, namely
 1. Water Resources Monitoring Systems
 2. Water Resources Information Systems
 3. Water Resources Operations and Planning Systems

7. c

Communication Satellites of India

- **CMS-01** - ISRO is gearing up for the launch of India's communication satellite CMS-01 using the rocket PSLV-C50.
- India's new communication satellite CMS-01 will be positioned into the geosynchronous transfer orbit.
- Generally, communication satellites are heavier and therefore the PSLV rocket carrying it requires an extra thrust to take them to the geo-synchronous transfer orbit.
- The satellite CMS-01 will have transponders that will be useful in covering mainland India and also far-flung island territories of Andaman and Nicobar and the Lakshadweep for communication purposes.
- **GSAT** - The GSAT (Geostationary Satellite) satellites are India's indigenously developed communications satellites, used for digital audio, data and video broadcasting.
- As of now 20 GSAT satellites of ISRO have been launched out of which 14 satellites are in service.

- **INSAT** - The Indian National Satellite (INSAT) system is one of the largest domestic communication satellite systems in Asia-Pacific region with nine operational communication satellites placed in Geo-stationary orbit.
- The INSAT system with more than 200 transponders, it provides services to telecommunications, television broadcasting, satellite newsgathering, societal applications, weather forecasting, disaster warning and Search and Rescue operations.

8. d

Plasmodium Ovale Malaria

- Plasmodium Ovale Malaria is endemic to tropical Western Africa, and a not very common type of malaria found across the world.
- It is relatively unusual outside of Africa and, where found, comprises less than 1% of the isolates.
- P ovale rarely causes severe illness and there is no need for panic, it is very similar to P vivax, which is not a killer form.
- Symptoms include fever for 48 hours, headache and nausea, thus P ovale is no more dangerous than getting a viral infection.
- There are five kinds of malarial parasites
 1. Plasmodium falciparum,
 2. Plasmodium vivax (the commonest ones),
 3. Plasmodium malariae,
 4. Plasmodium ovale
 5. Plasmodium knowlesi.

9. b

Asset Quality Review

- Under AQR, a small sample of loans is inspected to check if asset classification was in line with the loan repayment and if banks have made provisions adequately.
- AQR was introduced in 2015, when RBI believed that asset classification was not being done properly and it tried to avoid banks which were postponing bad-loan classification.

- The AQR created widespread destruction on banks' profit & loss accounts.
- After introduction of the asset quality review (AQR) since 2015, many hidden bad loans had surfaced, forcing the government to enact the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) for resolution of bad loans.

10. a

Mucormycosis Fungal Infection

- Mucormycosis is also called Black Fungus or Zygomycosis and is a serious but rare fungal infection.
- It is caused by a group of molds called mucormycetes.
- It usually occurs in people who have health problems or take medicines that lower the body's ability to fight germs and sickness.
- It occurs through inhalation, inoculation, or ingestion of spores from the environment.
- Mucormycosis does not spread between people or between people and animals.
- It may lead to loss of vision and brain damage that may lead to death of infected patient.

18-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Prithvi Missile*

1. It is a tactical surface-to-surface Long-Range Ballistic Missile developed by DRDO.
2. Prithvi-II is powered by Solid fuel propulsion twin engines.

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

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

2) The term "Bio Bubbles" which is recently in news related to

- a. Adaptative mechanism by certain insects to protect them from predators
- b. A new innovative green technology to reduce CO2 emission
- c. Sanitised area to contain the spread of Covid-19
- d. None of the above

3) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Erasmus Scholarship Programme*

1. India is a partner country to this program which can only take part in some parts of the Erasmus programme.
2. Chinese Students were the biggest beneficiaries of EJMDS, a full degree scholarship for master's students worldwide.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *SpaceX's Crew-3 Mission*

1. It will transport four members of the crew to the International Space Station.
2. The mission will provide cost-effective crew access to the space station and the low-Earth orbit.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Currency Manipulator*

1. **China issues such label to countries that deliberately devaluing their currency against the Yuan.**
2. **Only criteria to place a country under such watch list is “significant” bilateral trade surplus with the China that is at least \$20 billion.**

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

Answers

1. c

Prithvi Missile

- Prithvi is a tactical surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) developed by DRDO.
- It is deployed by India's Strategic Forces Command.
- The recently test fired liquid-propelled Prithvi-2 has a range of 250 km and can carry a 1 tonne warhead.
- It is India's first indigenous surface-to-surface strategic missile.
- The state-of-the-art missile uses an advanced inertial guidance system with manoeuvring trajectory to hit its target.
- The Prithvi-2 missile is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines.

2. c

Bio Bubbles

- Bio-Bubbles are sanitised areas that can be accessed only by a certain set of people who are not infected with the virus.
- The bubble entails being confined to certain areas and limits who one can meet and interact with.

- Thus nobody can enter or leave the bubble is in effect.
- International sport requires frequent travel and bio bubbles create a safe environment for players.
- The bubble can be parts of a hotel or stadium.
- For example at the US open the parking area of the hotel was outside the bubble and players could travel only from the hotel to the stadium and back

3. a

Erasmus scholarship programme

- European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students EU's (Erasmus) exchange programme provides scholarships to students studying in Europe.
- It provides opportunities for over 40 lakh Europeans to study, train, and gain experience abroad.
- The eligibility of individuals and organisations to participate in Erasmus depends on where they are based.
- The scheme divides eligible countries into two groups:
 1. **Programme countries** - which include all EU members and some non-EU countries such as Turkey and Iceland, These countries can take part in the scheme in its entirety.
 2. **Partner countries** - which includes India can only take part in some parts of the Erasmus programme, and are subject to specific conditions.
- In 2017, Indian students were the biggest beneficiaries of EJMDS, with 74 students from the country getting their scholarships approved for masters and doctoral degrees.
- UK recently announced its departure from the programme.

4. c

SpaceX's Crew-3 Mission

- Crew-3 mission is part of NASA's contract with SpaceX, under its Commercial Crew Programme, as per which SpaceX will provide six crew missions to the ISS for NASA astronauts.

- The idea is to provide reliable, safe and cost-effective crew access to the space station and the low-Earth orbit.
- It will transport four members of the crew to the International Space Station.
- The crew members will spend six months at the ISS.
- They stay will overlap for a short duration with the Crew-2 astronauts.

5. d

Currency Manipulator

- The term ‘currency manipulator’ is a label given by the US government to countries it feels are engaging in “unfair currency practices” by deliberately devaluing their currency against the dollar.
 - The practice would mean that the country in question is artificially lowering the value of its currency to gain an unfair advantage over others.
 - An economy meeting two of the three criteria in the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 is placed on the Monitoring List, ae
1. A “significant” bilateral trade surplus with the US — one that is at least \$20 billion over a 12-month period.
 2. A material current account surplus equivalent to at least 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) over a 12-month period.
 3. “Persistent”, one-sided intervention — when net purchases of foreign currency totalling at least 2 percent of the country’s GDP over a 12 month period are conducted repeatedly, in at least six out of 12 months.

19-12-2020**1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Oceanus Procellarum***

1. It is a vast lunar mare on the western edge of the Moon, accounting for 10.5% of the total lunar surface area.
2. ISRO’s Chandrayaan 2 will be the first lunar mission to collect samples from this region.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Young Champions of the Earth Award*

1. It aims to celebrate and support individuals below age of 25 who have outstanding potential to create a positive environmental impact.
2. It is awarded by UNFCCC, which carries a cash prize of USD 10,000.

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

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

3) Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to *Intentional Genomic Alteration (IGA)* in animals

1. It is used to make an animal more susceptible to certain diseases such as cancer.
2. Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) has approved an IGA in a line of domestic pigs.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4) Which of the following statements is/are incorrect with respect to *National Security Directive*

1. It aims to classify telecom products and their sources under the 'trusted' and 'non-trusted' categories.
2. It seeks Telecom Service Providers to mandatorily replace the old and existing equipment that does not meet specified criteria.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Border Surveillance System (BOSS)*

1. It transmits real time video and data at a distance 50km to control station through satellite communication.
2. It is designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organization.

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

Answers

1. a

Oceanus Procellarum

- Oceanus Procellarum or, the "Ocean of Storms" is a vast lunar mare on the western edge of the near side of the Moon.
- It is the only one of the lunar maria to be called an "Oceanus" (ocean), due to its size.
- The region is near a site called the Mons Rumker that was believed to have been volcanic in ancient times.
- It stretches more than 2,500 km (1,600 mi) across its north-south axis and covering

roughly 4,000,000 km² accounting for 10.5% of the total lunar surface area.

- Recently China's Chang'e 5 lunar mission collected around 2 kilograms of lunar samples from this area.
- These lunar samples could help to understand the moon's volcanic activity and evolution.
- This the first fresh rock samples from this region of the moon.
- These are also the first samples to be collected by any country after Russia in 1976.
- With this, China became the third country after the United States and the Soviet Union, to collect lunar samples.

2. c

Young Champions of the Earth Award

- The award Introduced in 2017, it aims to celebrate and support individuals aged between 18 and 30 who have outstanding potential to create a positive environmental impact.
- It is given by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- In 2020, seven Young Champions of the Earth will be selected from each global region: Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, West Asia and two from Asia and the Pacific.
- Each winner will receive:
 1. USD 10,000 in seed funding (Funding in form of securities offering such as equity stake or convertible note stake)
 2. Attendance at a high-level UN meeting,
 3. An introduction to dignitaries at the Champions of the Earth award ceremony,
 4. Publicity and recognition through interviews and online and global media.

3. a

Intentional Genomic Alteration

- Intentional genomic alteration in animal means making specific changes to the genome of the organism using modern molecular technologies that are popularly referred to as "genome editing" or "genetic engineering".

- One example is of using IGAs to make an animal more susceptible to certain diseases such as cancer, which helps researchers get a better understanding of the disease and develop new therapies to treat it.
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a first-of-its-kind intentional genomic alteration (IGA) in a line of domestic pigs referred to as Gal Safe pigs.
- These pigs may be used for food and human therapeutics such as to produce human medical products.

4. b

National Security Derivative

- It aims to classify telecom products and their sources under the 'trusted' and 'non-trusted' categories.
- It will make its decision based on approval of the National Security Committee on Telecom.
- It will be headed by the deputy National Security Advisor (NSA) .
- The National Cyber Security Coordinator is the designated authority and will devise the methodology to designate trusted products.
- From among the sources declared as trusted sources by the designated authority, those which meet the criteria of the Department of Telecom's preferential market access policy will be certified as India trusted sources.
- Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) are required to connect new devices which are designated trusted products.
- However, the directive will not ask TSPs to mandatorily replace the old and existing equipment and does not impact the ongoing annual maintenance contracts or upgrades to old equipment either.

5. d

Border Surveillance System (BOSS)

- It is an all-weather electronic surveillance system successfully designed and developed by Instruments Research & Development Establishment (IRDE), Dehradun.
- The system has been deployed at Ladakh border area for day and night surveillance.

- The system facilitates monitoring and surveillance by automatically detecting the intrusions in harsh high-altitude sub-zero temperature areas with remote operation capability.
- The system is being produced by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Machlipatnam.
- It is equipped with hybrid energy source for round the clock functionality.
- It consist of battle field surveillance radar & payload consists of day camera, GPS etc. mounted at an observation tower.
- It transmits real time video and data at a distance 20km to control station through wireless & fibre optic link.

21-12-2020

1) Consider the following pairs

- 1. Gatka – Punjab**
- 2. Kalaripayattu – Tamil Nadu**
- 3. Thang-Ta – Manipur**
- 4. Mallakhamba – Kerala**

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

- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 4 only
- 1, 3 and 4 only
- 1, 2, 3 and 4

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Himalayan trillium*

- 1. It is found in tropical and Sub tropical climate zones at an altitude from 2,400-4,000 metres above sea level.**
- 2. In India, it is found only in four states.**
- 3. It can be used as an anti-cancer and anti-aging agent.**

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only



- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3

3) Consider the following statements

1. Santiniketan was originally an ashram built by Rabindranath Tagore.
2. Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his book of poems *Gulamgiri* in 1913.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme*

1. It is an initiative under AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan to support Micro Level Food Entrepreneurs, FPOs/SHGs/ Co-operatives.
2. The scheme provides for seed capital of up to Rs.40000/- to be given to members of SHGs and others engaged in food processing for working capital and purchase of tools.
3. The scheme is being implemented by Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI).

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Khudiram Bose*

1. He was a member of Anushilan Samiti that propounded revolutionary activities in Bengal.
2. In 1908 he attempted to murder Edward Norman Baker, the then governor of Bengal presidency.

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *ASTRA Mk-I*

1. It is the indigenously developed first Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Missile which has capability to carry a nuclear warhead.
2. The missile is designed to engage and destroy highly manoeuvring supersonic aircraft.

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

7) *World's Largest Private Zoo* will be setup at which of the following Indian City

- a. Mumbai, Maharashtra
- b. Nainital, Uttarakhand
- c. Jamnagar, Gujarat
- d. Alipore, West Bengal

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Sunflower Sea Star*

1. The Critically Endangered animal was sighted all along the western coast of North America.

2. Marine wildlife epidemic known as Seas Star wasting syndrome is the reason behind their decline in population.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Hypersonic Wind Tunnel*

- It is a pressure vacuum driven enclosed free jet facility having nozzle exit diameter of 1 meter and will simulate speed of sound.
- It is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) *Human Freedom Index 2020* was released recently by?

- World Health Organization
- UN Human Rights Council
- UN Development Programme
- None of the above

Answers

1. a

- The Sports Ministry has recently approved the inclusion of four Indigenous Games to be a part of Khelo India Youth Games 2021, scheduled to take place in Haryana.
- The games include: *Gatka*, *Kalaripayattu*, *Thang-Ta* and *Mallakhamba*.

- The four selected games represent different parts of the country.
- Kalaripayattu* has its origin from Kerala and has practitioners all over the world.
- Mallakhamba*, meanwhile, has been well-known across India and Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra have been the hotspots of this sport.
- Gatka* originates from the State of Punjab and this traditional fighting style of the Nihang Sikh Warriors is used both as self-defense as well as a sport.
- Thang-Ta*, a Manipur marital art has passed into oblivion in the recent decades, but the sport will get national recognition again with the help of the Khelo India Youth Games 2021.

2. c

Himalayan Trillium

- It is an himalayan herb, often called as Nagchatri in local areas.
- It is found in temperate and sub-alpine zones of the Himalayas at an altitude from 2,400-4,000 metres above sea level.
- In India, it is found in four states only - Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand.
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has placed Himalayan trillium in "Endangered" category.
- Its population is expected to decline by at least 50% between 2010 and 2079.
- It can cure diseases like dysentery, wounds, skin boils, inflammation, sepsis, as well as menstrual and sexual disorders.
- It can be also used as an anti-cancer and anti-aging agent.

3. d

Santiniketan

- It was popularly known today as a university town.
- It was originally an ashram built by *Debendranath Tagore*, where anyone, irrespective of caste and creed, could come and

spend time meditating on the one Supreme God.

- Debendranath, who was father of the Poet, Rabindranath, was also known as Maharshi (which means one who is both saint and sage) was a leading figure of the Indian Renaissance.
- In the year 1913, Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his book of poems **Gitanjali**.

4. d

- *A joint Communique was recently signed between M/O Tribal Affairs and M/O Food Processing Industries defining Convergence Mechanism in Implementation of PMFME Scheme for Micro Food Processing Industries.*
- *The Joint communique addressed to States clearly defining Convergence mechanism in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme of MoFPI and role of both Central Ministries and their respective departments at State level.*

Prime Minister Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises (PM FME) Scheme

- The scheme is being implemented by MoFPI.
- It is a landmark initiative under AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan to support Micro Level Food Entrepreneurs, FPOs/SHGs/ Co-operatives.
- The program has four major components i.e.,
 1. Support to individual and groups of micro enterprises
 2. Branding and Marketing support
 3. Strengthening institutional support and
 4. Setting up robust project management frameworks with Tribal Sub plan
- M/oFood Processing Industries (MoFPI) would fund for development by incubation centers in tribal focused districts under PMFME Scheme for common processing and training to tribal entrepreneurs.
- PMFME Scheme provides for seed capital of up to Rs.40000/- to be given to members of SHGs and others engaged in food processing for working capital and purchase of tools.

5. a

Khudiram Bose

- He was born in 1889 at a small village in Midnapore district, he was inspired by a series of public lectures given by Sri Aurobindo and sister Nivedita in the early 1900s.
- In 1905, when Bengal was partitioned, he actively participated in protests against the British.
- At the age of 15, Bose joined the Anushilan Samiti, an early 20th century organisation that propounded revolutionary activities in Bengal.
- On April 30, 1908, Bose threw a bomb on a carriage which he suspected was carrying district magistrate of Muzaffarpur, Douglas Kingsford.
- But it turned out that it was carrying the wife and daughter of a barrister named Pringle Kennedy, who lost their lives, as Kingsford escaped.
- Following this incident, after a judicial trail Khudiram Bose was executed.

6. b

ASTRA Mk-I

- It is the indigenously developed first Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Missile.
- It can be launched from Sukhoi-30, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Mig-29 and Mig-29K.
- The missile is designed to engage and destroy highly manoeuvring supersonic aircraft.
- The warhead weighs 15kg (33lbs) and is of a high-explosive pre-fragmented type activated by a proximity fuse.
- ASTRA weapon system is developed by Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) Hyderabad and produced by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), Hyderabad.
- Agni-V is an Indian nuclear-capable ballistic missile developed by DRDO.

7. c

World's Largest Private Zoo

- Reliance Industries Ltd will build the world's largest zoo, It will come up on 280 acres of land at Moti Khavdi near Jamnagar, Gujarat.

- It will house 100 different species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians.
- The wildlife to be displayed at the zoo will be from across India, Africa and South America.
- That the zoo will be opened to the public within two years if there are no other delays.

8. c

Sunflower Sea Star

- Recently Sunflower Sea Star has been listed as 'Critically Endangered' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
- The study showed that there had been a 90.6 per cent decline in the species' population between 2013 and 2020.
- The year 2013 was when a marine wildlife epidemic known as seas star wasting syndrome began.
- The disease seems to be associated with raised water temperatures in some places, but not others.
- It starts with the emergence of lesions, followed by body fragmentation and death.
- The animal was found all along the western coast of North America in the past, from Alaska to the tip of Baja California.
- However, sunflower sea stars were now nearly absent in Mexico as well as the continental United States.
- Sea star wasting disease or starfish wasting syndrome is a disease of starfish and several other echinoderms that appears sporadically, causing mass mortality of those affected.

9. d

Hypersonic Wind Tunnel

- It is pressure vacuum driven enclosed free jet facility having nozzle exit diameter of 1 meter and will simulate Mach No 5 to 12 (Mach represents the multiplication factor to the speed of sound).
- After USA and Russia, India is the third country to have such a large facility in terms of size and operating capability.

- The facility recently inaugurated in Hyderabad is indigenously designed and developed by DRDO.
- The facility has the capability to simulate hypersonic flow over a wide spectrum and will play a major role in the realisation of highly complex futuristic aerospace and defence systems.

10. d

Human Freedom Index 2020

- It is released by the *Cato Institute in the United States and Fraser Institute in Canada*.
- The index consists of 76 indicators -personal, civic and economic freedom.
- India is placed at 111 out of 162 countries.
- It is ranked 110 in terms of personal freedom and 105 on economic freedom with an overall score of 6.43 out of 10.
- New Zealand topped in the index, followed by Switzerland and Hong Kong.
- China, Bangladesh and Pakistan are placed at 129, 139 & 140 position respectively.

22-12-2020

1) With respect to Leopards in India, consider the following statements

- 1. India has increased its leopard population by more than 60% compared to 2014.**
- 2. The States of Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest leopard estimate followed by Karnataka and Kerala.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

2) Government of India had recently decided to constitute a High Level Committee to

commemorate the 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The committee will be headed by?

- Union Home Minister
- The Chairman of NITI Aayog
- The Prime Minister
- Union Home Secretary

3) "From Our Home to your Home Campaign" is associated with which of the following ministries?

- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- Ministry of Civil Aviation
- Ministry of External Affairs

4) Consider the following pairs

- Lohra Tribes – Karnataka
- Sadeibaraini Tribes – West Bengal
- Kattunayakan Tribes – Tamil Nadu

Which of the pairs given above is/are incorrect?

- 3 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 1, 2 and 3
- None

5) "Catch the Rain Awareness Campaign" was launched recently by which of the following?

- Krishi Vigyan Kendras
- National Water Mission
- National Water Research Institute
- Both A and B

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Guru Tegh Bahadur*

- He stood up for the rights of Kashmiri Pandits who approached him against

religious persecution by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

- He organized Sikh groups into a distinct, symbol-patterned community known as Khalsa.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *E20 Fuel*

- It is an automotive fuel with a blend of 20% of ethanol with liquid hydrogen.
- It is capable of reducing vehicular emissions such as carbon dioxide, and hydrocarbons.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Shigellosis*

- It is caused by *Shigella* bacteria, which leads to diarrhoea, stomach cramps and fever.
- It is highly contagious and can be transmitted after using a common toilet.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2



9) Consider the following statement with respect to *Positive Pay System*

1. It is introduced for cheques transactions above Rs 1,00,000 in a bid to enhance safety and eliminate frauds.
2. It is developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Angiotensin Converting Enzyme 2 (ACE2)*

1. It would cause blood vessels to dilate and helps in lowering blood pressure.
2. The spikes or S1 proteins of Covid-19 virus will binds to the ACE2 enzymes to get into cells and causes infection.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answers

1. a

- Status of Leopards report was released recently in New Delhi.

Highlights of the report

- India now has 12,852 leopards as compared to the previous estimate of 7910 conducted 2014.
- More than 60% increase in population has been recorded.
- The States of Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra recorded the highest leopard

estimates at 3,421, 1,783 and 1,690 respectively.

- The leopard was estimated across forested habitats in tiger range areas of the country but other leopard occupied areas such as non-forested habitats (coffee and tea plantations and other land uses from where leopards are known to occur), higher elevations in the Himalayas, arid landscapes and majority of North East landscape were not sampled and, therefore, the population estimation should be considered as minimum number of leopards in each of the landscapes.

2. a

- The Government of India has decided to constitute a High Level Committee to commemorate the 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.
- This High Level Committee will decide on the activities for a one year long commemoration starting 23rd January, 2021.
- The High Level Committee will be headed by the **Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah**.
- The Commemoration is being held as a tribute and as a mark of gratitude to the colossal contribution Netaji made to India's freedom struggle.

3. b

- Tribes India is an outlet focusses on sourcing new, natural, attractive as well as immunity-boosting tribal products and bringing them to the customer.
- Exquisite Dhokra products from different tribes of India were among the main items added in its 7th edition of "From Our Home to your Home" campaign on Tribes India.
- 35 new products were included in the Tribes India catalogue over the past week.
- Key among them are the dhokra style metal work.

4. b

- Exquisite Dhokra products from different tribes of India were among the main items added in its 7th edition of "From Our Home to your Home" campaign on Tribes India.

- Among the *dhokra* products being introduced on Tribes India campaign are attractive statues of fish, elephants and hangers in the boat jail design from the **Lohra tribes of Jharkhand**.
- From the **Sadeibaraini** tribals from **Odisha**, Ganesha statues, including a dancing Ganesha, a mask of Goddess Durga and Lord Jagannath, a Buddha Jaali and beautiful diyas in different shapes have been sourced.
- Other products include products from the **Kattunayakan tribes of Tamil Nadu**.
- These include different variants of pure, unadulterated honey, tasty pickles such as amla, vadu mango, ragi and types of rice.
- From the tribes of Assam, pure ghee, organic poha, pickles, raw honey have been sourced.

5. b

- **National Water Mission (NWM)**, Ministry of Jal Shakti in collaboration with **Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS)**, Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports launched the “**JSA II: Catch the Rain**” Awareness Generation Campaign recently.
- NWM has launched a campaign “Catch the rain” with tag line “catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls” in order to nudge all stakeholders to create Rain Water Harvesting Structures (RWHS) suitable to the climatic conditions and sub-soil strata to store rain water as rains falling in the four/five months of monsoon are the only source of water for most parts of the country.
- Some of the activities suggested to be taken up with peoples’ active participation under this campaign are:
 1. To make water harvesting pits
 2. Rooftop RWHS and check dams
 3. Removal of encroachments and de-silting of tanks to increase their storage capacity
 4. Removal of obstructions in the channels which bring water to them from the catchment areas
 5. Repairs to traditional water harvesting structures like step-wells and using defunct bore-wells and old wells to put the water back to aquifers

- The collaboration with NYKS is a step to engage people at the grassroots through effective campaigning & IEC activities for implementation of the campaign.

6. a

Guru Tegh Bahadur

- Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth of ten Gurus of the Sikh religion, he was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind.
- He stood up for the rights of Kashmiri Pandits who approached him against religious persecution by Aurangzeb.
- He was publicly killed in 1675 on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in Delhi for himself refusing Mughal rulers and defying them.
- His martyrdom helped all Sikh Panths consolidate to make the protection of human rights central to its Sikh identity.
- Inspired by him, the 10th guru, Guru Gobind Singh organized the Sikh group into a distinct, formal, symbol-patterned community came to be known as Khalsa (Martial) identity.

7. b

E-20 Fuel

- E20 fuel, i.e. blend of 20% of ethanol with gasoline (petrol), as an automotive fuel and for the adoption of mass emission standards for this fuel.
- Ethanol is a biofuel and a common by-product of biomass left by agricultural feedstock such as corn, sugarcane, hemp, potato, etc.
- E20 is an automobile fuel which is capable of reducing vehicular emissions such as carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons, etc.
- It will help reduce the oil import bill, thereby saving foreign exchange and boosting energy security.
- It added the compatibility of vehicles with the percentage of ethanol in the blend would be defined by the vehicle manufacturer, which would have to be displayed on the vehicle with a sticker.

8. d

Shigellosis

- Shigella is a Gram-negative, non-motile bacillus belonging to the Enterobacteriaceae family, it causes an infection called shigellosis.
- The infected will have diarrhoea, stomach cramps and fever.
- Diarrhoea, often containing blood or mucus in stool, stomach pain, cramps, fever and vomiting are the main symptoms of the infection.
- Infants, non-breast fed children, children recovering from measles, malnourished children, and adults older than 50 years have a more severe illness and a greater risk of death.
- It is highly contagious and can be transmitted after using a common toilet also.
- The transmission occurs via the faecal-oral route, person-to-person contact, household flies, infected water, and inanimate objects.
- Pivmecillinam and Ceftriaxone were the only antimicrobials that are usually effective for treatment of multi-resistant strains of Shigella in all age groups.

9. b

Positive Pay System

- Recently, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that it will introduce the 'Positive Pay System' for cheques transactions above Rs 50,000 in a bid to enhance safety and eliminate frauds.
- Under this process, the issuer of the cheque submits electronically (through channels like SMS, mobile app, Internet banking and ATM) certain minimum details of that cheque to the drawee bank, details of which are cross-checked with the presented cheque by Cheque Truncation System (CTS).
- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) will develop the facility of Positive Pay in CTS, and make it available to participant banks.
- The Positive Pay System will be implemented from January 1, 2021.
- While availing of this facility is at the discretion of the account holder, banks may consider making it mandatory in case of

cheques for amounts of Rs 5,00,000 and above.

10. c

Angiotensin Converting Enzyme 2 (ACE2)

- An enzyme called ACE alters a chemical, Angiotensin I, and converts it into Angiotensin II, which causes blood vessels to constrict.
- The tightening of the blood vessels leads to an increase in blood pressure.
- The ACE2 molecule comes in to counteract the effects of ACE, causing blood vessels to dilate and lowering blood pressure.
- The spikes that make up the 'crown' of coronavirus bind to ACE2 enzymes to get into our cells.
- These spikes on the surface of virus are called S1 proteins, and they are what binds to the ACE2 molecule on our cells.
- The virus is then able to invade the cell by a process called endocytosis, where the cell membrane engulfs the virus and internalises it within a bubble called an endosome.
- SARS-CoV-2, the virus behind COVID-19, has a high binding capacity for ACE2 between 10 and 20 times more that of the original SARS virus.
- Men have higher levels of the angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2), which is a protein in the blood that Sars-CoV2, the virus that causes Covid-19, uses to enter human cells.

23-12-2020

1) Which of the following places has received UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation Programme

- 1. Lodhi Gardens, in Delhi**
- 2. Guruvayoor Temple in Kerala**
- 3. Sunder Nursery in Delhi**
- 4. Amar Singh College, Kashmir**

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

- a. 1 and 2 only

- b. 1, 2 and 3 only
- c. 2, 3 and 4 only
- d. All of the above

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Legion of Merit Award*

1. It was instituted by former US president Barack Obama.
2. It is the first US medal to be awarded to citizens of other nations.

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

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

3) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Winter Solstice*

1. During this event the Southern Hemisphere experiences the year's longest day.
2. According to Vedic tradition this event refers to the first day of Uttarayana.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020*.

1. According to the rule new connection has to be given within a maximum time period of three working days in metro cities
2. It has provisions for automatic compensation mechanism that will include no supply to a consumer beyond a particular duration.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana*

1. He was one of the nine important ministers (dewan) in Mughal emperor Shah Jahan's court.
2. He was the first person to build a Mughal tomb for a woman, in memory of his wife.

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

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Dhokra Style Metal Work*

1. Dhokra is a non-ferrous metal casting style which uses the lost-wax technique.
2. This style of metal casting has been out of date in India for centuries.

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

7) The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) along with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) India has come up with a unique initiative – "*Firefly Bird Diverters*" for the conservation of which of the following species?

- Red headed Vulture
- Gangetic Dolphin
- Great Indian Bustard
- Indian Pangolin

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *UN Population Award for 2020*

- The award which recognizes contributions in the fields of population and reproductive health was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 198
- HelpAge India is the first Indian institution to get UN Population award.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

9) Consider the following statements

- The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College (MAO College) was set up in 1877 by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan.
- Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) evolved out of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary*

- It is situated in the flood plains of River Brahmaputra.
- It harbors the highest density of Rhino in the world and second highest

concentration of Rhino in Assam after Kaziranga National Park.

- It is an important bird area and was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1987.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Answers

1. c

UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation Programme

- Since 2000, the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation Programme have been lauding the efforts of private individuals and organisations in successfully restoring, conserving and transforming structures and buildings of heritage value in the region.
- Recently the following places in India has received various awards under the program
- Sunder Nursery, Delhi** was awarded with Award of Excellence, It is a 90-acre Mughal garden which has 20 heritage monuments and landscaped environments, it is partially attached to the Humayun's tomb monument.
- Amar Singh College, Kashmir** that received award of merit was established in 1913 by Maharaja Pratap Singh.
- Koothambalam at Guruvayoor Temple, Kerala** received the Award of Distinction.
- Koothambalam means temple theatre is a closed hall for staging Koothu, Nangiar koothu and Koodiyattam, the ancient ritualistic art forms of Kerala.
- Koothambalams are said to be constructed according to the guidelines given in chapter 2 of Natyasastra of Bharata Muni

2. a

Legion of Merit Award

- The Legion of Merit was instituted in 1942 by former US president Franklin D Roosevelt.
- It is the only US military decoration that has distinct ranks, and the first US medal to be awarded to citizens of other nations.
- The award is conferred to members of the US military and foreign military members and political figures who have displayed exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements.
- The previous Indian recipients of the award include Field Marshal KM Cariappa (1950) and Satyawant Mallana Srinagesh (1955), recently Indian PM Narendra Modi was conferred with this award.

3. c

Winter Solstice

- Winter Solstice means the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- In the Southern Hemisphere, conversely, it was Summer Solstice, the year's longest day.
- During this event the North Pole is most tilted away from the Sun.
- In Vedic tradition, the northern movement of the Earth on the celestial sphere is implicitly acknowledged in the Surya Siddhanta.
- It outlines the Uttarayana (the period between Makar Sankranti and Karka Sankranti). Hence, Winter Solstice is the first day of Uttarayana.

4. b

Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020.

- Recently, the Union Ministry of Power has promulgated rules laying down the rights of power consumers in the country through Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020.
- Electricity is a concurrent subject and the Centre has the power to make rules that have to be enforced by all.
- An automatic compensation mechanism under the rule, will be put in place which will include no supply to a consumer beyond a particular duration and certain number of interruptions in supply, which will be specified by the regulatory commission.

- The new connection has to be given within a maximum time period of seven days in metro cities, 15 days in other municipal areas, and 30 days in rural areas.

5. a

Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan

- Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan (1556 – 1627), popularly known as Rahim, was a poet who lived in India during the rule of Mughal emperor Akbar.
- He was one of the nine important ministers (dewan) in his court, also known as the Navaratnas.
- Rahim translated Babar's memoirs, Baburnama from Chagatai language to Persian language.
- He had an excellent command over the Sanskrit language. In Sanskrit, he wrote two books on astrology, Khetakautukam and Dwatrimshadyogavali.
- His tomb was built by him for his wife in 1598 (the first Mughal tomb built for a woman), and his body was placed in it in 1627.

6. a

Dhokra Style Metal Work

- Dhokra is a non-ferrous metal casting style which uses the lost-wax technique.
- This style of metal casting has been in vogue in all parts of India for centuries.
- The dhokra products reflect the simplicity and motifs of tribal and folk life and make for excellent gifting options.
- Hence they are popular both in India and abroad.

7. c

- *The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), along with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) India, has come up with a unique initiative – a “firefly bird diverter” for overhead power lines in areas where **Great Indian Bustard (GIB)** populations are found in the wild.*

Great Indian Bustard (GIB)

- The GIB is one of the most critically threatened species in India, with fewer than 150 birds left in the wild.
- Power lines, especially high-voltage transmission lines with multiple overhead wires, are the most important current threat for GIBs in the Thar region, and are causing unsustainably high mortality in about 15% of their population.

Firefly bird diverters

- They are flaps installed on power lines.
- They work as reflectors for bird species like the GIB.
- Birds can spot them from a distance of about 50 metres and change their path of flight to avoid collision with power lines.
- The diverters are called fireflies because they look like fireflies from a distance, shining on power lines in the night.
- The selected stretch is opposite the Pokhran Field Firing Range, which offers a safe habitat to a breeding population of GIBs outside the Desert National Park Sanctuary in Jaisalmer.

8. c

- *HelpAge India, an NGO that works for the care of elderly disadvantaged persons and senior citizens, recently received the UN Population Award, a first for an institution in India.*
- The award was last conferred on an Indian 28 years ago, when it was awarded to JRD Tata as an individual laureate in 1992.

UN Population award

- Each year, the Committee for the United Nations Population Award honours an individual and/or institution in recognition of outstanding contributions to population and reproductive health questions and to their solutions.
- The Award was established by the General Assembly in 1981 and was first presented in 1983.
- It consists of a gold medal, a diploma and a monetary prize.

- The Committee for the United Nations Population Award is comprised of 10 UN Member States, with United Nations Secretary-General and UNFPA Executive Director serving as ex-officio members.

9. c

- *Indian Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the Centenary Celebrations of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) recently through video conference.*
- He also released a postal stamp commemorating the event.

Aligarh Muslim University

- In 1877, Sir Syed founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh and patterned the college after Oxford and Cambridge universities that he had visited on a trip to England.
- By 1920 the college was transformed into the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).

10. c

- *Too many cattle are robbing the one-horned rhinos of Assam's Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, referred to as 'Mini Kaziranga' for similar features, of their nutritious food.*
- This has been confirmed by the death of two rhinos whose alimentary canals had a high load of worms because of nutritional stress caused by dry reeds and other such "junk food" of the wilderness, veterinarians said.

Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is situated in the flood plains of River Brahmaputra.
- It harbors the highest density of Rhino in the world and second highest concentration of Rhino in Assam after Kaziranga National Park.
- Besides rhinoceros, the other mammals found are Leopard, Leopard cat, Fishing cat, Jungle cat, Feral Buffalo, Wild pigs, Chinese pangolins etc.,
- It is an Important Bird Area altogether 375 species of both migratory and resident birds of 46 families have been recorded so far, with 14 listed in the Indian Red Data Book, 27 species of reptiles 9 species of amphibians have been recorded in the Sanctuary.

24-12-2020

1) Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to *People's Biodiversity Registers (PBRs)*

1. The Registers entail a complete documentation of biodiversity in the area plants, food sources, wildlife, medicinal sources, etc.
2. PBR's will be prepared under the aegis of Registrar General and ex-Officio Census Commissioner.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mock Egg*

1. It has been developed from very simple farm based crop proteins.
2. It resembles like a real egg and very close in nutritional profile to poultry eggs.

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

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

3) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Food Fortification*

1. Packed foods like pastas, noodles must be fortified mandatorily.
2. Products that are high in fat, salt and sugar will be "excluded" from the fortified processed foods category.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Development Finance Institutions*

1. It raise funds by borrowing funds from governments, by selling their bonds to the general public.
2. India's first DFI was operationalised in 1948 with the setting up of the Industrial Finance Corporation (IFCI).

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

5) Which of the following statement(s) is/are incorrect with respect to *District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT) Funds*

1. The Funds will be used for PM- Kaushal Vikas Yojana Scheme in the mining districts.
2. At least 60 per cent of the fund must be used for certain high-priority areas identified in the state.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

6) Which of the following has been designated as *Intangible Cultural Heritage* by the UNESCO so far?

1. Yoga from India
2. Street hawker culture of Singapore

3. Endangered whistled language of Turkey
4. Kalaripayattu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. 1 and 3 only
b. 2 and 3 only
c. 1, 2 and 3
d. All of the above

7) *Shaheen-IX* is a military exercise held between?

- a. Russia and Pakistan
b. China and Pakistan
c. Russia, China and Pakistan
d. None of the above

8) *CoWIN system*, often seen in the news recently, is associated with?

- a. Women entrepreneurship portal
b. COVID Vaccine Distribution System
c. Employee-Employer integration portal
d. Identification number system for local breeds of Cow

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM)*

- It is a surface to Air Missile developed indigenously by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).
- It is a vertically launched supersonic missile powered by a dual-pulse solid propulsion system.

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

10) *Kilauea volcano*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in?

- a. Tanzania
b. Indonesia
c. Argentina
d. United States of America

Answers

1. a

People's Biodiversity Registers (PBR)

- The Registers entail a complete documentation of biodiversity in the area plants, food sources, wildlife, medicinal sources, etc.
- It will aid in tracing how habitats are changing, and to understand and estimate parts of our forests.
- It envisages a decentralised way through an inclusive approach.
- PBR is prepared in consultation with the local people by Biodiversity Management Committees (BMC), which is established by Biological Diversity Act 2002.

2. d

Mock egg

- Recently, a team of scientists from IIT Delhi won an innovation contest (Innovate 4 SDG) organised by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) Accelerator Lab India for their innovation of a "plant based mock egg".
- It has been developed from very simple farm based crop proteins, which not only looks and tastes like an egg but is also very close in nutritional profile to poultry eggs.
- The development of the mock egg meets the protein needs of the diet-specific, health conscious, vegan and vegetarian people.
- It aims to address the longstanding battle for malnutrition and clean protein food for people.

3. b

Food Fortification Notification

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has notified norms for permissible levels of micronutrients for fortifying processed food products such as breakfast cereals, biscuits, breads, rusks, pasta, noodles, buns and fruit juices.
- Companies that make such products can fortify them with micronutrients voluntarily.
- Also, products that are high in fat, salt and sugar will be “excluded” from the fortified processed foods category.
- The Fortified Processed Food shall provide 15-30% of the Indian adult RDA (Recommended dietary Allowance) of micronutrient, based on an average calorie intake of 600 kcal from processed foods (approximately a third of daily energy requirement for an adult).

4. c

Development Finance Institutions

- Development Finance Institutions (DFI) are type of banks that provide financial as well as the technical support to various sectors.
- They only provide Medium (1 – 5 years) and Long term (>5 years) finance to the borrowers.
- DFIs do not accept deposits from people, instead they raise funds by borrowing funds from governments and by selling their bonds to the general public.
- It also provides a guarantee to banks on behalf of companies and subscriptions to shares, debentures, etc.
- They also provide technical assistance like Project Report, Viability study, and consultancy services.
- IRDI, SIDBI, EXIM Bank, NABARD are few prominent DFI's of India.

5. a

District Mineral Foundation Trust (DMFT) Funds

- DMFTs were instituted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (MMDR) Amendment Act 2015.
- They are non-profit trusts to work for the interest and benefit of persons and areas affected by mining-related operations.

- Its manner of operation comes under the jurisdiction of the relevant State Government.
- There are certain high-priority areas identified in all states' DMF rules, where at least 60 per cent of the fund must be used.
- The various state DMF rules and the Pradhan Mantri Khanij Khestra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY) guidelines stipulate some “high priority” issues for DMFs.

6. c

- *Singapore's vibrant street hawker culture was recently designated as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO.*
- Street Hawker culture is one of Singapore's most popular attractions.
- It is now part of a list that includes practices such as yoga from India, reggae music from Jamaica, Finland's sauna culture and Turkey's endangered whistled language.

Intangible cultural heritage listed in India

2017

- Kumbh Mela

2016

- Navroz – Parsi New Year
- Yoga

2014

- Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab.

2013

- Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur

2012

- Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir.

2010

- Chhau dance
- Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan
- Mudiyetu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala

2009

- Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas, India

2008

- Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre
- Tradition of Vedic chanting
- Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana

7. b

- *The Pakistan-China joint air exercise "Shaheen-IX" culminated recently.*
- The exercise, ninth in the series, saw the participation of latest aircraft and support elements from the People Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and Pakistan Air Force (PAF).
- It is conducted each year in both countries on an alternate basis.
- India recently hosted the Malabar 2020 naval exercise with the U.S., Japan and Australia.

8. b

- *Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) along with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has announced the launching of "CoWIN", a Grand Challenge for strengthening the COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system recently.*
- These challenges try to broadly address the priority areas relating to infrastructure, monitoring and management, dynamic learning and information systems, constraints of human resources-including technical capacities, vaccine logistics management and tracking enlisted beneficiaries for any adverse event following immunization on real time basis.

COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system

- It is a digitalised platform to be used to effectively roll out and scale up the mechanism for COVID Vaccine Distribution System, nationally.

9. c

- *India has recently conducted the first launch of the Army version of the Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM), which is an Air and Missile Defence system developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in collaboration with the Israel Aerospace Industry (IAI).*

Medium Range Surface –To- Air Missile (MRSAM)

- It is a high response, quick reaction, vertically launched supersonic missile, designed to neutralize enemy aerial threats – missiles, aircraft, guided bombs, helicopters.
- Used by Army, Navy and Air Force as different variants.
- MRSAM surface-to-air missile is powered by a dual-pulse solid propulsion system developed by DRDO.
- The MRSAM has been manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Limited, India.

10. d

- *The Kilauea volcano on Hawaii's Big Island erupted recently.*
- Kilauea, a popular tourist attraction, is one of the world's most active volcanoes and has been erupting regularly since the 1950s.
- In 2014 Big Island declared a state of emergency after red-hot lava from Kilauea ignited a house and threatened the entire town of Pahoa on the eastern tip of the island.
- Hawaii Island, or the Big Island, is the largest of the eight main islands which make up the Pacific US state -- an archipelago that includes hundreds of smaller volcanic islands.

26-12-2020**1) Consider the following statements with respect to Tso Kar Wetland Complex**

1. **It is a high-altitude wetland complex and an A1 Category Important Bird Area (IBA) and a key staging site in the East Atlantic Flyway.**

2. It comprises two principal waterbodies, Startsapuk Tso, a freshwater lake and Pangong Tso, a hypersaline lake.
3. In India, 42 wetlands have been designated as Ramsar site of International Importance so far.

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY SEHAT*

1. The scheme provides free of cost insurance cover to all the residents of the UT of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K).
2. The benefits of the scheme will be portable across the country.

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

3) Why is an amoeba called "*Naegleria fowleri*" often seen in the news recently?

- a. It is a deadly brain eating amoeba
- b. It is the world's first electronically designed amoeba
- c. It is an ocean bacteria that survives by eating microplastics
- d. It is used as a probiotic to reduce appetite in obese people

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC)*

1. It is a Government of India Undertaking under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
2. NBCFDC provides Micro Financing through State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) / Self Help Groups (SHGs).
3. It also facilitates skill development of poor persons belonging to De-notified Nomadic Tribe, Senior Citizen, Beggars and Transgender.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

5) *Swachhata Abhiyan* is a mobile application launched recently by?

- a. Ministry of Jal Sakthi
- b. Ministry of Rural Development
- c. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- d. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

6) Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to *Antimatter*

1. Antimatter was created along with matter after the Big Bang and found widely in the universe.
2. The sub-atomic particles of antimatter have properties opposite those of normal matter.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Whale Song*



1. All whales use songs to communicate and socialise.
2. Most of the whale songs are higher in the frequency and audible to human ears.

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Industrial Ammonia*

1. It is stored for industrial use in liquid form under high pressure or in gaseous form at low temperature.
2. In moderate concentration it can cause irritation to eyes, skin, nose and throat.

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

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

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *General Circulation Models (GCM)*

1. IPCC uses GCM to express wide ranges in overall temperature projections.
2. It predicts many physical processes that occur even at very smaller scales.

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

10) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Leprosy Disease*

1. It is a chronic infectious disease caused by *Mycobacterium Leprae*.
2. It affects the peripheral nerves, respiratory tract and the eyes.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answers

1. a

- India has recently added Tso Kar Wetland Complex in Ladakh as its 42nd Ramsar site, which is a second one in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh.

Tso Kar Basin

- It is a high-altitude wetland complex, consisting of two principal water bodies, **Startsapuk Tso, a freshwater lake and Tso Kar itself, a hypersaline lake**, situated in the Changthang region of Ladakh, India.
- It is called Tso Kar, meaning white lake, because of the white salt efflorescence found on the margins due to the evaporation of highly saline water.
- The Tso Kar Basin is an A1 Category Important Bird Area (IBA) as per Bird Life International and a key staging site in the **Central Asian Flyway**.
- The site is also one of the most important breeding areas of the Black-necked Crane (*Grus nigricollis*) in India.
- This IBA is also the major breeding area for
 1. Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)
 2. Bar-headed Geese (*Anser indicus*)
 3. Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*)
 4. Brown-headed Gull (*Larus brunnecephalus*)
 5. Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) and many other species.

Ramsar Convention

- The 'Convention on Wetlands' called the Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.
- India became a party to Ramsar Convention in 1982 and so far, 41 wetlands have been designated as Ramsar sites.
- **With the inclusion of Tso Kar wetland complex, India's number increased to 42 as of now.**
- The aim of the Ramsar list is to develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits.

Wetlands

- They provide a wide range of important resources and ecosystem services such as food, water, fibre, groundwater recharge, water purification, flood moderation, erosion control and climate regulation.
- They are, in fact a major source of water and our main supply of freshwater comes from an array of wetlands which help soak rainfall and recharge groundwater.

2. c

- *Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY SEHAT.*

Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY SEHAT

- The scheme will ensure Universal Health Coverage and focus on providing financial risk protection and ensuring quality and affordable essential health services to all individuals and communities.
- The Scheme provides **free of cost insurance cover to all the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- It provides financial cover up to five lakh rupees per family on a floater basis to all residents.

- It provides for the operational extension of PM-JAY to 15 lakh additional families.
- The scheme will operate on insurance mode in convergence with PM-JAY.
- The benefits of the scheme will be portable across the country.
- The hospitals empanelled under PM-JAY scheme shall provide services under this scheme as well.

Ayushman Bharat

- Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) was launched by Prime Minister in 2018.
- The program with its two pillars – Health and Wellness Centres and Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PM JAY) – is envisaged to achieve UHC.
- It provides a cover of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization for over 10.74 crore vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries), in a cashless and paperless manner, at public and empanelled private hospitals.

3. a

- *A deadly brain-consuming amoeba – Naegleria fowleri – is widely spreading from the southern states of United States of America (USA) towards the northern states.*
- According to a report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the geographic range of these cases has been advancing northward.

Naegleria fowleri

- It is a free-living microscopic amoeba.
- It can cause a rare and devastating infection of the brain called primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM).
- The amoeba is commonly found in warm freshwater and soil.
- *Naegleria fowleri* usually infects people when contaminated water enters the body through the nose.

- Once the amoeba enters the nose, it travels to the brain, where it causes PAM, which is usually fatal.
- Infection typically occurs when people go swimming or diving in warm freshwater places, like lakes and rivers.
- In very rare instances, Naegleria infections may also occur due to contaminated water from other sources.

4. d

- NBCFDC and Apollo Medskills signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) recently for deliverance of Vaccine Administration Training to Nurses, Pharmacists belonging to the Other Backward Classes Communities and Economically Backward Classes persons using the co-funding of NBCFDC.
- Over the next few months a few thousand persons are expected to be trained under this agreement to play a critical role as India proposes to vaccinate crores of its populations for protection against COVID-19.

National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC)

- It is a Govt. of India Undertaking under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- NBCFDC was incorporated under Section 25 of the Companies Act 1956 in 1992 (now section 8 of Companies Act 2013) as a Company not for profit.
- It was incorporated with an objective to promote economic and developmental activities for the benefit of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and to assist the poorer section of these classes in skill development and self-employment ventures.
- NBCFDC provides financial assistance through State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs) nominated by the State Governments/UTs and Banks (RRBs & PSBs).
- NBCFDC also provides Micro Financing through SCAs/ Self Help Groups (SHGs).
- It additionally facilitates skill development of poor persons belonging to OBCs, persons of

Economically Backward Classes (EBCs), **De-notified Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribe, Sr. Citizen, Beggars and Transgender.**

5. d

- In the absence of any authentic data base regarding the location of insanitary latrines, it has been decided to seek the help of NGOs, Social Organisations and general public for collection and compilation of the data.
- For this purpose, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot launched a Mobile Application "Swachhata Abhiyan" in New Delhi recently.

Swachhata Abhiyan App

- The app has been developed to identify and geotag the data of insanitary latrines and manual scavengers so that the insanitary latrines can be replaced with sanitary latrines and rehabilitate all the manual scavengers to provide dignity of life to them.
- He urged all citizens of the country to download the above application and if they notice any insanitary latrine or manual scavenger, their details may be uploaded using the application.

Background

- Traditionally persons of a section of the society has been engaged or employed to clean undecomposed excreta from the dry latrines and latrines from which excreta is flushed into open drains.
- Such workers are called manual scavengers.
- Existence of the above mentioned type of insanitary latrines has been the main reason for manual scavenging.
- The Census 2011 reported the existence of more than 26 Lakh insanitary latrines in the country.
- Existence of insanitary latrines is the main reason for manual scavenging.
- Construction/ maintenance of insanitary latrines and engagement of persons for manual scavenging is prohibited under "Prohibition



of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013”.

- This Act also mandates the local authorities to ensure survey of insanitary latrines, their demolition and construction of sanitary latrines in their place.
- Most of the insanitary latrines have been converted into sanitary latrines under the Swachh Bharat Mission implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Department of drinking water and Sanitation in urban and rural areas respectively.
- The country has been declared open defecation free.

6. b

Antimatter

- The matter is made up of atoms, which are the basic units of chemical elements such as hydrogen, helium or oxygen.
- The sub-atomic particles of antimatter have properties opposite those of normal matter.
- The electrical charge of those particles is reversed.
- Antimatter was created along with matter after the Big Bang, but antimatter is rare in today's universe.
- Scientists believe that in the very hot and dense state shortly after the Big Bang, there must have been processes that gave preference to matter over antimatter.
- This created a small surplus of matter, and as the universe cooled, all the antimatter was destroyed, or annihilated, by an equal amount of matter, leaving a tiny surplus of matter.

7. d

Whale Songs

- Whales use songs to communicate and socialise, songs can be characterised as clicks, whistles and pulsed calls or a composition of “moans, snores, chirps and cries”.
- Only some whales such as the baleen whale, have been found to sing songs.
- Whales use clicks to navigate and identify their surroundings as the sound bounces off objects, helping whales determine their shapes.

- Whale songs are typically below 4 kHz in frequency (human hearing range is between 20 Hz to 20 kHz).
- Some blue and fin whale songs are so low in their frequency that parts may be inaudible to human ears.

8. d

Industrial Ammonia

- A tri-hydrogen of nitrogen (NH_3), ammonia is a building block for ammonium nitrate (NH_4NO_3) that is used in agriculture as a high-nitrogen fertiliser.
- Ammonia, which is highly soluble in water, is found in soil, air, and water.
- It is naturally present in the body and secreted by the kidneys to neutralise excess acid.
- However, it is highly diluted when in the environment and does not affect the human body to a noticeable level.
- Ammonia gas is toxic and affects the lungs with a possibility of causing chemical pneumonitis, inflammation of the lung caused by aspirating or inhaling irritants.

9. a

General Circulation Models (GCM)

- GCM represents physical processes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and land surface.
- It is the most advanced tool currently available for simulating the response of the global climate system to increasing greenhouse gas concentrations.
- GCMs depict the climate using a three-dimensional grid over the globe, typically having a horizontal resolution of between 250 and 600 km.
- Many physical processes, such as those related to clouds, also occur at smaller scales and cannot be properly modelled.
- The data is tricky, and predictions can more often than not be inaccurate.
- For example, an IPCC model would predict a temperature increase of a massive range between 1.9°C and 4.5°C, if carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is doubled.

10. c

Leprosy Disease

- Leprosy mainly affects the skin, the peripheral nerves, mucosal surfaces of the upper respiratory tract and the eyes.
- Symptoms may occur within a year but can also take as long as 20 years or more to occur.
- Based on the number of skin lesions and other symptoms, leprosy is classified as paucibacillary and multibacillary, the latter being more severe.
- Leprosy is known to occur at all ages and is curable, treatment in the early stages can prevent disability.
- Its mode of transmission has never been fully understood, and its likely transmitted via droplets, from the nose and mouth, during close and frequent contact.

28-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Suganya Bharat Abhiyan*

1. It is a nation-wide Campaign for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
2. It was launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Monpa Handmade Paper*

1. It is a 1000-year old heritage art native to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.
2. The paper is used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries.
3. The paper will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

3) In which of the following states, *Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC)* will pass through?

1. Bihar
2. Punjab
3. West Bengal
4. Uttar Pradesh

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. All except 2
- b. All except 2 and 4
- c. All of the above
- d. None of the above

4) *e-Sampada Web Portal* was launched recently by which of the following ministries?

- a. Ministry of Science and Technology
- b. Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- c. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- d. Ministry of Food Processing Industries

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Zero Coupon Bonds*

1. These are non-interest bearing bonds issued by the Central government specifically to a particular institution.
2. These are a type of recapitalization bonds that are not tradable and not transferable.

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

Answers

1. c

Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan

- Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has launched the Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan).
- It is a nation-wide Campaign for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

It has the following three important components:

1. Built Environment Accessibility
2. Transportation System Accessibility
3. Information and Communication Eco-System Accessibility

2. d

- *Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has recently commissioned a Monpa handmade paper making unit in Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.*
- It not only aims at **reviving the art** but also **engaging the local youths** with this art professionally and earn.

Monpa Handmade Paper

- The art of making Monpa handmade paper originated over 1000 years ago.
- The art is an integral part of local custom and culture in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The fine-textured handmade paper is also called as Mon Shugu in the local dialect.
- The paper has great historic and religious significance as it is the paper used for writing Buddhist scriptures and hymns in monasteries.
- The Monpa handmade paper, will be made from the bark of a local tree called Shugu Sheng, which has medicinal values too. Hence

availability of raw material will not be a problem.

- Back then, such was the scale of production that Monpas used to sell these papers to countries like Tibet, Bhutan, Thailand and Japan as no paper making industry existed in these countries at that time.
- However, the handmade paper industry gradually began declining and the indigenous handmade paper was taken over by inferior Chinese paper.

Handmade Pottery and Handmade Furniture

- Apart from handmade paper, Tawang is known for two other local crafts – handmade pottery and handmade furniture – that are also getting extinct with passage of time.
- KVIC is also planning to revive these two local arts.

3. c

- *Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 'New Bhaupur- New Khurja section' of Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC).*

Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC)

- The EDFC (1856 route km) starts from Sahnewal near **Ludhiana (Punjab)** and ends at **Dankuni in West Bengal**.
- It will pass through the states of **Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal**.
- It is being constructed by Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited (DFCCIL), that has been set up as a special purpose vehicle to build and operate Dedicated Freight Corridors.

Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC)

- DFCCIL is also constructing the WDFC (1504 route km) that connects **Dadri in Uttar Pradesh to Jawaharlal Nehru Port in Mumbai** and will traverse through the states of UP, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

4. c

- *Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs recently launched a new Web Portal and Mobile App, e-Sampada.*

e-Sampada

- It is a significant step towards promotion of e-governance to boost transparency and accountability in providing various Estate Services like allotment, retention, regularisation, no dues certificate etc.
- It provides a single window for all these services including allotment for over one lakh government residential accommodations, office space allotment to government organisations in 28 cities and venues like 5, Ashoka Road for social functions.
- In its endeavour to provide 'One Nation, One System', the erstwhile four websites (gpra.nic.in, eawas.nic.in, estates.gov.in, holidayhomes.nic.in), and two Mobile Apps (m-Awas & m-Ashoka5) of the **Directorate of Estates** have been integrated into one, which paves the way for all services on the same platform throughout the country.

5. c

- *The Central Government has used financial innovation to recapitalise Punjab & Sind Bank by issuing the lender Rs 5,500-crore worth of non-interest bearing bonds valued at par.*
- The funds raised through issuance of these instruments are being deployed to capitalise the state-run bank.
- These are a variation of the recapitalisation bonds issued earlier to public sector banks.
- These are special types of zero coupon bonds issued by the government after proper due diligence and these are issued at par.

Zero Coupon Bonds

- A zero-coupon bond is a debt security that does not pay interest but instead trades at a deep discount, rendering a profit at maturity, when the bond is redeemed for its full face value.

About the recent bond

- Unlike the previous tranches of recapitalisation bonds which carried interest and were sold to different banks, these bonds have a maturity of 10-15 years and issued specifically to a particular institution. (In this case, Punjab & Sind Bank).

- It is limited only for a specified period and only those banks, whosoever is specified, can invest in them, nobody else.
- It is not tradable and it is not transferable.
- Since these bonds are not tradable, the lender has kept them in the HTM bucket, not requiring it to book any mark-to-market gains or losses from these bonds.

29-12-2020

1) Consider the following pairs

1. Vasava tribes - Gujarat
2. Lohra tribes - Jharkhand
3. Malayali tribes - Tamil Nadu
4. Patelia tribe – Jammu & Kashmir

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan Project*

1. The project aims to encourage companies from both public and private sectors, NGOs and even individuals to become Monument Mitras.
2. It is a collaborative effort by the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Survey of India.

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Blue Flag Certification Programme*



1. It is a globally recognised voluntary eco-label accorded by the UNESCO based on 33 stringent criteria.
2. India is the first country in the world to receive the Blue Flag Certification for 8 beaches in a single attempt.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Sea of Galilee*

1. It is a lake lies in northern Israel, between the occupied Golan Heights and the Galilee region.
2. The Jordan River flows into the lake and then exits it before ending in the Caspian Sea.

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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Kisan Fasal Rahat Yojana*

1. It is a compensation scheme aimed at providing security cover to farmers in case of crop damage due to natural calamity.
2. It was launched by the Government of Jharkhand.

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

6) Which of the following statements are *incorrect* with respect to *Proxima Centauri*

1. It is a flare star that randomly undergoes dramatic increases in brightness.
2. It is very bright and visible to see during nights from earth.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Pneumococcal Disease*

1. It is an infection caused by the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.
2. People can be infected with the bacteria, or they can carry it in their throat, and not be ill.

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

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Tau Bootes*

1. It is a F-type main-sequence star approximately 51 light-years away in the constellation of Bootes.
2. It is a binary star system, with the secondary star being a red dwarf.

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

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *A68 Ice berg*

1. The term "iceberg" refers to chunks of ice larger than 15 meters (49 feet) across.
2. A68a is the world's largest iceberg in the open ocean with an area of about 12,000 sq.km

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

10) Which of the following statements are *incorrect* with respect to *Udham Singh*

1. He was a political activist who was associated with Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).
2. He assassinated Michael O'Dwyer, a colonial official who was responsible for Jallianwala Bagah Massacre.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answers

1. b

- During the 8th edition of "From Our Home to your Home" campaign, more than 35 new, attractive, immunity-boosting tribal products have found place in the Tribes India outlets and website.

From our Home to your Home Campaign

- The campaign had been launched 8 weeks back by **TRIFED** under the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs** in order to **source as many effective, natural, and attractive products from diverse indigenous tribes across the country** so that these can reach a wide variety of audience.

Major Products included

- Giant Rock Bee Honey - Malayali tribes of Tamil Nadu
- Micro-beaded jewelry - Patelia tribe from Madhya Pradesh.
- Organic varieties of dals and spices - Vasava tribes of Gujarat
- Honey, jams and two unique variants of rice - Kharwar and Oraon tribes of Jharkhand
- Wooden products (chakla and belan) and attractive metal jalis – Adim Janjati tribes and Lohra tribes of Jharkhand

Malayali Tribes

- Malayali is a tribal group from the Eastern Ghats in North Tamil Nadu.
- With a population of around 3,58,000 people they are the largest Scheduled tribes in that region.
- The tribals are usually hill farmers and they cultivate different types of millet.

2. c

Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan

- The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India runs the project.
- It is a collaborative effort by the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture, Archaeological Survey of India and State/ UTs Government for developing tourism amenities at heritage/ natural/ tourist sites spread across India for making them tourist friendly, in a planned and phased manner.
- The project aims to encourage companies from public sector, private sector, trusts, NGOs, individuals and other stakeholders to become 'Monument Mitras' and take up the responsibility of developing and upgrading the basic and advanced tourist amenities at these

sites as per their interest and viability in terms of a sustainable investment model under CSR.

- They would also look after the Operation & Maintenance of the same.

3. b

- *Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Prakash Javadekar virtually hoisted the international blue flags in 8 beaches across the country recently.*
- India secured the International Blue Flag Certification for these 8 beaches on 6th October 2020, when an International Jury announced the award at Copenhagen, Denmark.
- **India has become the first country in the world to receive the Blue Flag Certification for 8 beaches in a single attempt.**
- The beaches where the International Blue Flags were hoisted are: Kappad (Kerala), Shivrajpur (Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Rushikonda (Andhra Pradesh), Golden (Odisha) and Radhanagar (Andaman & Nicobar Islands).
- India sets up an ambitious target of getting the coveted tag for 100 more beaches in next 3 years.

Blue Flag Project

- Blue Flag certification is a globally recognised voluntary eco-label awarded to beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating tourism operators based on 33 stringent criteria.
- It is run by the Denmark-based international, nongovernmental, non-profit organization **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**.
- In order to qualify for the Blue Flag, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety, and accessibility criteria must be met and maintained.

4. a

- *The Sea of Galilee has swelled up due to recent rains, according to reports in the Israeli media.*

Sea of Galilee

- The lake lies in northern Israel, between the occupied Golan Heights and the Galilee region.
- It is fed by underground springs but its major source is the Jordan River.
- The lake, also known as Lake Tiberias or Kinneret, is Israel's largest freshwater body.
- The Jordan flows into the lake and then exits it before ending in the **Dead Sea**, the saltiest and the lowest point on the planet.
- The region the lake is located in, had been suffering from drought till 2018.
- Water is not extracted from the Sea of Galilee. But it is considered to be an important barometer of the water situation in Israel.

5. c

- *Jharkhand is set to replace the Prime Minister's insurance scheme for farmers with its own crop relief scheme.*

Kisan Fasal Rahat Yojana

- It is a compensation scheme aimed at providing security cover to Jharkhand farmers in case of crop damage due to natural calamity.
- It will cover both land owning and landless farmers.
- The Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Co-operative will be the implementing agency and it will work in association with a project management unit, which will be a consultancy firm that will take care of technical requirements.
- Food safety, crop diversification, rapid development in agriculture and paving the way for competition," are among the aims of the scheme.
- It is not an insurance scheme where premiums are paid.
- Every year a large amount is paid as premium to the insurance companies whereas the compensation claim settlement was only 16 per cent of the total premium.
- The Jharkhand government says that since the state pays half the insurance premium, it would rather use that amount for direct compensation.

6. b

Proxima Centauri

- Proxima Centauri is 4.2 light-years away from the Sun, considered a close distance in cosmic terms.
- Its mass is about an eighth of the Sun's, and it is too dim to be seen with the naked eye from Earth.
- Although it has a very low average luminosity, Proxima Centauri is a flare star that randomly undergoes dramatic increases in brightness because of magnetic activity.
- Astronomers recently picked up an "intriguing" radio wave emission from the direction of Proxima Centauri.

7. d

Pneumococcal Disease

- Pneumococcal disease is a significant contributor under-five mortality rate worldwide.
- Lung infection is the most common serious form of pneumococcal disease.
- Recently Serum Institute of India has developed a pneumococcal vaccine, Pneumosil.

8. c

Tau Bootes

- It is a star-system hosting a so-called hot Jupiter, a gaseous giant planet that is very close to its own sun.
- Tau Bootes is an F-type main-sequence star approximately 51 light-years away in the constellation of Bootes.
- It is a binary star system, with the secondary star being a red dwarf.
- Recently Low Frequency Array (LOFAR), a radio telescope uncovered emission bursts from the Tau Bootes.
- The radio detection opens up a new window on exoplanets and provides a novel way to examine alien worlds that are tens of light-years away.
- An F-type main-sequence star (F V) is a main-sequence, hydrogen-fusing star of spectral type F and luminosity class V.

9. d

A68 Ice Berg

- The term "iceberg" refers to chunks of ice larger than 5 meters (16 feet) across.
- The giant iceberg A68, the biggest block of free-floating ice from Antarctica with an area of about 5,800 sq. km, has been drifting in the Atlantic Ocean since 2017.
- This year, due to an ocean current, the iceberg was propelled into the South Atlantic Ocean.
- Since then it has been drifting towards the remote sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia, which is a British Overseas Territory (BOT).
- Recently, US National Ice Center (USNIC) confirmed that two new icebergs calved from A68a and were large enough to be named and tracked. They are called A68E and A68F.

10. a

Udham Singh

- Udham Singh was a freedom fighter known for avenging the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919.
- He was a political activist who got associated with the Ghadar Party.
- The multi-ethnic party was believed to have communist tendencies and was founded by Sohan Singh Bhakna in 1913.
- In 1940, He shot O'Dwyer at a meeting of the East India Association and the Royal Central Asian Society at Caxton Hill.

30-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI)*

- 1. It is a global health organisation launched in 2000 at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos.**
- 2. The Alliance aims to improve access to new and underused vaccines for numerous vaccine-preventable diseases for children who live in the world's poorest countries.**

3. India is the chair of the GAVI Alliance Board for the period 2020 – 2022

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

- 3 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

2) Digital Ocean, the first of its kind digital platform for Ocean Data Management was launched by?

- Ministry of Earth sciences
- Ministry of Science and Technology
- Indian Space Research Organization
- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

3) TiHAN-IIT, India's first Test bed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial) will be established at?

- IIT Chennai
- IIT Bombay
- IIT Kharagpur
- IIT Hyderabad

4) Consider the following statements with respect to National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)

- The Mission aims to create a strong foundation and a seamless ecosystem for Cyber Physical System (CPS) technologies.
- The mission will be implemented by the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- Cyber Physical System (CPS) technologies are a new class of engineered systems that integrate computation and physical processes in a dynamic environment.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

5) Consider the following statements with respect to Digital India Awards (DIA)

- It aims to honor exemplary initiatives/practices in Digital-Governance.
- It is a biennial award, institutionalized under the ambit of National Portal of India.
- The event will be conducted by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) under the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).

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

- 2 only
- 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3
- None of the above

6) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to Green National Highway Corridors

- It will promote in-depth analysis of issues related to gender in the transport sector.
- It will set new standards in the development of safe motorable roads.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Hypothermia*

1. It is a severe medical condition that results in a dangerously low body temperature.
2. Alcohol consumption can decrease the risk of hypothermia during cold exposure.

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

8) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)*

1. It will allow entry and exit from Metro stations known as the automatic fare collection (AFC) system.
2. The idea of NCMC was floated by R P Tiwari committee.

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

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Thermopolium*

1. It is a hot drinks counter found during an excavation in Rakhigarhi, Harayana.
2. It shows the variety of food consumed by the residents of the town traces of pork, fish, snails and beef.

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

10) Which of the following statements are *incorrect* with respect to *Caspian Seal*

1. It is found exclusively in the brackish Caspian Sea.
2. It is a critically endangered species.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answers

1. b

- Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan was recently nominated by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) as a board member.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan will be **representing the South East Area Regional Office (SEARO)/Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO)** constituency on the GAVI Board.
- The seat is currently held by Mr MyintHtwe of Myanmar.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan will be representing India from 1st January 2021 until 31st December 2023.

Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI)

- It is an international organisation that was created in the year 2000 at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos.
- The GAVI Board normally meets twice a year in June and November or December and holds an annual retreat, normally in March or April.
- The GAVI board is responsible for strategic direction and policy-making oversees the operations of the Vaccine Alliance and monitors programme implementation.

- Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala currently serves as chair of the GAVI Alliance Board.

2. a

- *Union Minister of Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan inaugurated the web-based application "Digital Ocean developed by INCOIS of Ministry of Earth sciences, during a Virtual Meeting held in New Delhi recently.*
- The ocean is a storehouse of infinite knowledge and Digital Ocean' helps to share this knowledge about the ocean with a wide range of users including research institutions, operational agencies, strategic users, academic community, maritime industry and policy makers.

Digital Ocean platform

- It is a first of its kind platform for ocean data management.
- Digital Ocean will serve as a one stop-solution for all the data related needs of a wide range of users.
- It includes a set of applications developed to organize and present heterogeneous oceanographic data by adopting rapid advancements in geospatial technology.

3. d

- *Union Minister of Education Shri. Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', virtually laid foundation stone of 'TiHAN-IIT Hyderabad', India's first Test bed for Autonomous Navigation Systems (Terrestrial and Aerial).*
- The Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, has sanctioned Rs. 135 crores to IIT Hyderabad under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to set up a Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation and Data Acquisition Systems (UAVs, RoVs, etc.).
- The Technology Innovation Hub on Autonomous Navigation Systems for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Remotely Operated Vehicles at IIT Hyderabad, known as 'TiHAN Foundation' has been incorporated as a Section-8 company by the institute in June 2020.

4. d

National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS)

- To harness the potential of this new wave of technology and make India a leading player in CPS, the Union Cabinet approved the launch of National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to be implemented by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) with a total outlay of Rs. 3660 Crore for a period of five years.

Cyber Physical Systems (CPS)

- They are new class of engineered systems that integrate computation and physical processes in a dynamic environment.
- CPS encompasses technology areas of Cybernetics, Mechatronics, Design and Embedded systems, Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and many more.
- The CPS systems are intelligent, autonomous and efficient and are expected to drive innovation in sectors as diverse as agriculture, water, energy, transportation, infrastructure, security, health and manufacturing.
- Thus, it is heralded as the next paradigm shift in technology that can exponentially spur growth and development.

5. c

- *President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind will virtually confer the Digital India Awards 2020.*

Digital India Awards (DIA)

- The award has been instituted under the aegis of National Portal of India.
- The award serve the purpose of bringing to the fore innovative digital solutions & thereby inspiring emulation by all government entities.
- National Informatics Centre (NIC) under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) has been conducting the biennial Digital India Awards (DIA) to promote innovation in eGovernance and digital transformation of government service delivery mechanism.

6. d

Green National Highway Corridors

- World Bank and Union government recently signed an agreement for a USD 500-million worth Green National Highway Corridors project.
- It will be developed in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
- It will support analytics to map the freight volume as well as movement pattern on the NH network, point out constraints, as well as offer innovative logistics solutions.
- The project will help in generating job opportunities for women by training women-led micro-enterprises as well as women collectives to implement green technologies in the corridors of national highways.

7. a

Hypothermia

- Hypothermia is a severe medical condition where the body loses heat before it can generate it, resulting in a dangerously low body temperature.
- While normal body temperature lies at around 37 degrees Celsius, the body temperature of a person suffering from hypothermia drops to below 35 degrees Celsius.
- Heavy alcohol consumption is often linked to an increased risk of hypothermia and other conditions linked to extreme cold weather.
- Alcohol can decrease the core temperature of the body and increase the risk of hypothermia during cold exposure.

8. a

National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)

- It will turn smartphones into an inter-operable transport card that commuters can use eventually to pay for Metro, bus and suburban railways services.
- The idea of NCMC was floated by the Nandan Nilekani committee set up by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- NCMC will allow passengers with RuPay debit card, issued in the last 18 months by 23 banks to be swiped for Metro travel.

9. b

Thermopolium

- The snack food counter called the thermopolium at the Pompeii archaeological park, which was partially excavated in 2019.
- Pompeii was a Roman town in Southern Italy's Campania region situated along the Bay of Naples.
- The find is significant because it shows the variety of food consumed by the residents of the town traces of pork, fish, snails and beef have been found in the containers of the stall.
- It is also the first time an entire thermopolium has been excavated, complete with pateras, or bronze drinking bowls, ceramic jars used for cooking stews and soups, wine flasks etc.

10. b

Caspian Seal

- They are endangered species found along the shorelines, and on the many rocky islands and floating blocks of ice that dot the Caspian Sea.
- Caspian seal numbers have declined more than 90% over the past century.
- About 99 per cent of Caspian seal pups are raised on the winter ice of the north Caspian.
- Yet both the winter ice and indeed the whole north Caspian will disappear due to climate change.

31-12-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG)

- 1. It aims to monitor the genomic variations in the SARS-CoV-2 on a regular basis through a multi-laboratory network.**
- 2. It will be led by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science and Technology.**

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

- 1 only
- 2 only

- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

2) With respect to *Ethanol Blending in India* Consider the following statements

1. Ethanol blending first found mention in the Auto fuel policy of 2003.
2. Ethanol blending will immensely help in import substitution, savings of foreign exchange and environment sustainability.
3. India had set an ambitious target of 10% ethanol blending by 2022 and 20% ethanol blending by 2030.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *E-Courts project*

1. It is one of the National e-Governance projects being implemented in District and Subordinate Courts of the Country.
2. The project is being implemented by the eCommittee, Supreme Court of India along with Department of Justice and National Information Centre (NIC).

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

4) *SAHAYAK-NG*, often seen in the news recently, is an?

- a. DRDO's subsonic cruise missile
- b. Indigenously designed Air droppable Container

- c. Indigenous Bridging System dedicated to Indian Army
- d. Indigenous cryogenic engine designed by ISRO

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Akash Missile System*

1. It is a surface to surface missile with a range of 25 Kms.
2. India had recently approved the export of the Akash missile to friendly countries.

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

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

6) Which of the following statements are correct with respect to *Highest Meteorological Centre in India*

1. It is located in Leh and it is the first Meteorological Centre in Himalayas.
2. It will provide specialised weather forecasts for traffic movement on highways, agriculture, and defence personnel.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Dedicated Freight Corridor*

1. Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) is funded majorly by Japan International Cooperation Agency.
2. Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) is funded majorly by World Bank.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

8) Which of the following association publishes *Data on Police Organizations*?

- Central Armed Police Force
- Central Reserve Police Force
- Bureau of Police Research and Development
- Indian Police Foundation and Institute

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *Disturbed Areas under AFSPA*

- Central Government, Governor of the State or administrator of the Union Territory can declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.
- Among North East states only Nagaland and Manipur are existing disturbed areas.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

10) Which of the following statements are incorrect with respect to *Anaemia*

- Blood disorders or cancer, heavy periods are some conditions that may lead to anaemia.
- The condition is mostly prevalent in the cold desert regions.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1 only

Answers

1. c

- The Union government has recently launched the **Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG)**.

Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortia (INSACOG)

- INSACOG is a platform for scientists, virologists, experts studying diseases and government officials to interact and track the genomic variations of the novel corona virus.
- The overall aim of the INSACOG is to monitor the genomic variations in the SARS-CoV-2 on a regular basis through a multi-laboratory network.
- This vital research consortium will also assist in developing potential vaccines in the future.
- It comprises 10 labs namely DBT-NIBMG Kalyani, DBT-ILS Bhubaneswar, ICMR-NIV Pune, DBT-NCCS Pune, CSIR-CCMB Hyderabad, DBT-CDFD Hyderabad, DBT-InSTEM/ NCBS Bengaluru, NIMHANS Bengaluru, CSIR-IGIB Delhi, and NCDC Delhi.
- DBT-NIBMG as the Co-ordinating Unit of Genome Sequencing Consortium and will closely work with a Nodal Unit of NCDC.

2. d

- The Central Government has recently approved the expansion of interest subvention scheme to raise ethanol manufacturing capacity to 1,000 crore litres by **including grain-based distilleries** in addition to just molasses-based units.
- The decision will facilitate capacity addition and greater ethanol blending will immensely help in **import substitution, savings of foreign exchange and environment sustainability**.

Ethanol Blending in India

- Ethanol blending is the practice of blending petrol with ethanol.
- In India, ethanol is mainly derived by sugarcane molasses, which is a by-product in the conversion of sugar cane juice to sugar.
- The practice of blending ethanol started in India in 2001 and ethanol blending first found mention in the Auto fuel policy of 2003.
- The Ethanol Blending Program (EBP) was started in 2003.
- The blending percentage of ethanol in petrol has gone up from 1.53% in 2013-14 to 5% in 2019-20 and estimated to be 8.5% in 2020-21.
- **The Government has setup an ambitious target of 10% ethanol blending by 2022 and 20% ethanol blending by 2030.**

3. c

- *President of India has recently conferred the Platinum award for Excellence in Digital Governance to the E-committee of Supreme Court of India.*

eCourt Project

- The eCourts Integrated Mission Mode Project is one of the National e-Governance projects being implemented in District and Subordinate Courts of the Country.
- The project is visioned and implemented by the **eCommittee, Supreme court of India** along with Department of Justice and NIC(National Information Centre).
- It is a Pan-India Project, monitored and funded by Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice.
- The objectives of the project is to provide designated services to litigants, lawyers and Judiciary through universal computerisation of district and subordinate courts, as well as the upgradation of ICT infrastructure of the Supreme Court and the High Courts.

4. b

- *Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) along with Indian Navy conducted the successful maiden test trial of SAHAYAK-NG, from IL 38SD aircraft of Indian Navy off the coast of Goa.*

SAHAYAK-NG

- It is India's first indigenously designed and developed Air Dropped Container.
- The air droppable container will enhance Indian Navy's operational logistics capabilities and provide critical engineering stores to ships which are deployed more than 2000 kilometres from the coast.
- It reduces the requirement of ships to come close to the coast to collect spares and stores.
- The newly developed GPS aided air dropped container is having the capability to carry a payload that weighs up to 50 kg and can be dropped from heavy aircraft.
- SAHAYAK-NG is an advanced version of SAHAYAK Mk I.

5. a

- *The Union Cabinet has recently approved the export of the Akash Missile to "**friendly countries**" and constituted a committee, headed by the Defence Minister, for faster approval of export of defence platforms.*

Akash Missile

- It is a surface-to-air missile with a range of 25 kms.
- The Akash missile was inducted into the IAF in 2014 and in the Indian Army in 2015.
- The export version of Akash will be different from the system currently deployed with the Indian armed forces.
- Akash is an important missile of the country with over 96 per cent indigenisation.

6. b

Highest Meteorological Centre (MC) in India

- Recently, the Union Minister of Earth Sciences has inaugurated highest Meteorological Centre (MC) in India.
- The Leh centre is the second MC located in the Himalayas after Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The centre will give weather forecasts about tourist places such as Nubra, Changthang, Pangong Lake, Zaskar, Kargil, Drass, Dha-Baima (Aryan valley) and Khalsi.

7. c

Dedicated Freight Corridor

- Recently, 351-km section of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) has been inaugurated.
- It starts at Sahnewal (Ludhiana) in Punjab and ends at Dankuni in West Bengal
- The EDFC route has coal mines, thermal power plants and industrial cities.
- The EDFC route covers Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal
- The World Bank is funding a majority of the EDFC.
- Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) starts at Dadri in Uttar Pradesh and ends at Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust in Mumbai.
- The WDFC covers Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, it touches all major ports.
- It is being funded by the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

8. c

Data on Police Organisations

- The Data on Police Organisations is being published by BPR&D since 1986.
- It shows different aspects of policing in the country like
 1. Woman police,
 2. Police expenditure,
 3. Constabulary ratio,
 4. Transport facilities,
 5. Communication facilities,
 6. Representation of various castes
 7. Police training centres.
- The Government of India established BPR&D, under the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1970.
- It replaced the Police Research and Advisory Council (1966), with the primary objective of modernization of the police force.

9. a

Disturbed Areas under AFSPA

- A disturbed area is the one which is declared by notification under Section 3 of the AFSPA.
- It can be invoked in places where the use of armed forces in aid of civil power is necessary.
- An area can be considered to be disturbed due to differences or disputes between members of different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.
- Once declared 'disturbed', the region is maintained as disturbed for a period of three months straight, according to The Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1976.
- The government of the state can suggest whether the Act is required in the state or not.
- Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh are the four states in North Eastern India which are declared as disturbed areas under AFSPA.

10. d

Anaemia

- Anaemia is the condition of having a lower-than-normal number of red blood cells or quantity of haemoglobin.
- It can make one feel tired, cold, dizzy, irritable and short of breath, among other symptoms.
- A diet which does not contain enough iron, folic acid or vitamin B12 is a common cause of anaemia.
- According to the National Family Health Survey 2019-20 Indian women and children are overwhelmingly anaemic, and the condition is the most prevalent in the Himalayan cold desert.