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A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

MONTHLY PRESTORMING

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01-07-2020

1) With respect to *Globba Andersonii*, also known as the *Dancing ladies* or *Swan Flowers*, consider the following statements:

1. It has been classified as critically endangered and narrowly endemic.
2. The species is restricted mainly to Teesta River Valley region which includes the Sikkim Himalays and Darjeeling hill ranges.
3. The plant usually grows in a dense colony as a lithophyte on rocky slopes in the outskirts of evergreen forests.

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)*

1. It is an International non-governmental Organisation established in 1987 by Commonwealth Professional Associations.
2. It was mandated to ensure the practical realisation of human rights in the countries of the Commonwealth alone.
3. Its headquarters is located in New Delhi, India.

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

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

3) *State of the World Population Report, 2020* was released recently by?

- a. UNESCO

- b. UN Population Fund
- c. Population Action International
- d. All of the above

4) *V G Kannan Committee*, often seen in the news recently, was constituted for which of the following purposes?

- a. To review the entire gamut of ATM charges and fees
- b. To provide Bankruptcy code for small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
- c. To examine the social, economic and educational status of the Muslims in India
- d. None of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Malabar Rebellion of 1921*

1. Mappilas were the Muslim tenants inhabiting the Malabar region where most of the landlords were Hindus.
2. The movement mainly targeted Janmis, feudal landlords who were mostly upper caste Hindus and it supported the British Government.

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 *Indian Stamp Act 1899*

1. Stamp duties are levied by State governments and the rates differ vary from State to State.
2. The Central Government cannot levy stamp duty on any transactions.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *H1N1 Influenza*

1. It is a highly contagious, common respiratory infection found in humans.
2. It is an incurable infection and there are no drugs for treatment.

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 *Interpol*

1. It is an inter-governmental, International Criminal Police Organization under the United Nations.
2. All the member states have the same rights, irrespective of the size of their financial contributions to the Organization.
3. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) designated as the National Central Bureau of India, is the central contact point for the Interpol in India.

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

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

9) Consider the following statements with respect to *state of Mizoram*

1. The provisions of the Sixth Schedule shall apply to the State of Mizoram.

2. Inner Line Pass is not required for entry into Mizoram.
3. Mizoram shares its border with the states of Tripura, Assam and Manipur.

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Papers (ETPB)*

1. Service voters belonging to Armed Forces have the option of either voting through postal ballot or through a proxy voter duly appointed by him/her.
2. Prisoners and people under preventive detention are not allowed to vote through the postal ballot.

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

- A team of researchers from Pune and Kerala have rediscovered a rare and critically endangered plant species called *Globba Andersonii* from the Sikkim Himalayas near the Teesta river valley region after a gap of nearly 136 years.

Globba Andersonii

- The plant, known commonly as Dancing ladies or Swan flowers was thought to have been extinct until its re-collection, for the first time since 1875.

- Classified as Critically Endangered and Narrowly Endemic, the species is restricted mainly to Teesta River Valley region which includes the Sikkim Himalayas and Darjeeling hill ranges.
- As no live collections were made for the last 136 years, it was considered as presumably extinct in the wild.
- The plant usually grows in a dense colony as a lithophyte (plant growing on a bare rock or stone) on rocky slopes in the outskirts of evergreen forests.

2. c

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)

- CHRI** is an independent, non-partisan, international non-governmental organisation, mandated to ensure the practical realisation of human rights in the **countries of the Commonwealth**.
- In 1987, several Commonwealth professional associations founded CHRI.
- The objectives of CHRI are to promote awareness of and adherence to the Commonwealth Harare Principles, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other internationally recognised human rights instruments, as well as domestic instruments supporting human rights in Commonwealth member states.
- Through its reports and periodic investigations, CHRI continually draws attention to progress and setbacks to human rights in Commonwealth countries.
- CHRI is based in **New Delhi, India**, and has offices in London, UK, and Accra, Ghana.

3. b

- According to the **United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA's) State of the World Population 2020 report** released recently, One in three girls missing globally due to sex selection (both pre- and post-natal) is from India — 46 million out of the total 142 million.
- The figure shows that the number of missing women has more than doubled over the past 50 years, who were at 61 million in 1970.

- The **United Nations Population Fund** is formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

4. a

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has constituted a high-level committee under the chairmanship of **VG Kannan**, Chief Executive of Indian Banks' Association (IBA) **to review the entire gamut of ATM charges and fees**.
- The panel had submitted the report in October, 2019, but the central bank hasn't released the report yet.
- The panel suggested charging ATM withdrawals above Rs 5,000 in order to discourage high cash withdrawals.
- Similarly, the panel also proposed to raise the cap on financial transactions over and above the free transaction limit by 20 per cent to Rs 24 per transaction from Rs 20 per transaction, excluding taxes.

5. a

Malabar Rebellion of 1921

- It is also called as the Mappila or Moplah Rebellion by the British.
- It broke out in the southern taluks of Malabar in August 1921.
- Mappilas were the Muslim tenants inhabiting the Malabar region where most of the landlords were Hindus.
- Mappilas had been among the victims of oppressive agrarian relations protected by the British.
- By the time the government troops captured **Kunhamed Haji** in January 1922, the rebellion had fizzled out.
- Initially, the symbols of British authority—courts, police stations, treasuries and offices and unpopular landlords (*jenmies* who were mostly Hindus) were the targets.
- It largely took the shape of guerrilla-type attacks.
- The Khilafat movement launched in 1919 provided a fresh stimulus to the grievances of Mappilas.

Kunhamed Haji

- He was one of the three most important rebel leaders and considered as the face of the Mappila rebellion.
- He was familiar with the commemoration of shaheeds (martyrs) who fought against the tyranny of landlords and their helpers, mostly upper caste Hindus in the region.
- During the rebellion, he led many attacks on individuals, including Muslims, who had been loyal to the British.

6. a

- From July 1, all shares and mutual fund purchases and any transfer of security (MF units) will attract a stamp duty.
- Stamp duty is a tax imposed by the government on the transfer of ownership of real estate/property.
- It is payable under Section 3 of the Indian Stamp Act, 1899.
- The extent of the stamp duty will be based on the value of the house/property at the time of registration.
- The levy of stamp duty is a State subject. As such, the rates of stamp duty vary from State to State.
- Under the Stamp Act, the Central Government can levy stamp duty on some instruments like bills of exchange, cheques, promissory notes, transfer of shares etc.
- The Centre is empowered to levy stamp duty on specified instruments and also to fix the rates for these instruments.
- Under the Stamp Acts, central as well as the State Acts, specify the rates of duty for different documents.

7. d

- Recently, Scientists report a new strain (G4) has descended from H1N1 strain that was responsible for the 2009 swine flu pandemic.
- The G4 strain of influenza virus is infecting Chinese pigs and has the potential of triggering a pandemic.
- Swine flu is an infection caused by a virus. It's named for a virus that pigs can get.

- People do not normally get swine flu, but human infections can and do happen.
- In 2009 a strain of swine flu called H1N1 infected many people around the world.
- The virus is contagious and can spread from human to human.
- The best-known prevention method against swine flu is getting the H1N1 swine flu vaccine.
- Antiviral drugs such as oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza) are also used for treating swine flu.

8. b

- Recently, Iran has issued an arrest warrant for US President and asked Interpol for help in detaining the US President.
- The International Criminal Police Organization (*Interpol*) is an inter-governmental organization with 194 member countries.
- Interpol has an observer status at the United Nations.
- All the member states have the same rights, irrespective of the size of their financial contributions to the Organization.
- In each country, Interpol has a National Central Bureau (NCB) which provides the central point of contact.
- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which is a Federal/Central investigating agency is designated as the National Central Bureau of India.
- CBI provides the central point of contact for India in the Interpol.

9. b

- Mizoram celebrates 34th anniversary of Mizo peace accord.
- The peace accord was signed between the Union government and the erstwhile Mizo National Front (MNF) on 30th June 1986.
- Mizoram became a Union Territory and as a sequel to the signing of the historic memorandum of settlement in 1986.
- It was granted statehood on 20th February 1987.

- Article 244(2) provides, the provisions of the Sixth Schedule shall apply to the administration of the tribal areas in the State of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- The ILP is an official travel document required to visit four Northeastern states, namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and Nagaland.
- Mizoram is bounded by Myanmar to the east and south and Bangladesh to the west and by the states of Tripura to the northwest, Assam to the north, and Manipur to the northeast.

10. a

- Recently, the age limit reduced for voters to opt for postal ballot in Lok Sabha and assembly polls.
- Keeping in mind the safety of senior citizens amid rising cases of the coronavirus, the age limit has been reduced.
- Postal voting is a type of voting in elections whereby Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot Papers (ETPB) are distributed to electors and returned by post.
- Service voters belonging to Armed Forces or forces to which provisions of Army Act, 1950 are applicable, have the option of either voting through postal ballot or through a proxy voter.
- While *prisoners are not allowed to vote, people under preventive detention can cast their votes* through postal ballots as well.
- In 2019, the Law Ministry amended the Conduct of Election Rules to allow people with disabilities and those who are 80 years of age or above to opt for postal ballot during Lok Sabha and assembly elections.
- Now, the ministry notified a fresh change in the rules, allowing those *aged 65 years and above to opt for postal ballot*.

02-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Kalyan Anna Yojana*

1. It aims at ensuring sufficient food only for the people who are below the poverty line.
2. It excludes the beneficiaries under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Priority Household (PHH) ration cardholders.

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 *National Anti Doping Agency (NADA)*

1. It acts as an independent Anti-Doping Organization for India, having a vision of dope free sports.
2. It implements the Anti Doping Code to achieve compliance by all sports organization in the country, except the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), which has its own code.

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 *REDD+*

1. It creates a financial value for the carbon stored in forests by offering incentives for countries to reduce emissions from forested lands.
2. It incentivizes developed countries by offering results-based payments for results-based actions.

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

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

4) Narcondam Island recently seen in news is located in?

- Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- Munroe Island, Kerala
- Lakshadweep Islands
- None of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to the Central Zoo Authority (CZA)

- It is a statutory body constituted under Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972.
- Exchange of animals between Indian and foreign zoos is approved by the CZA.
- It can recognize a zoo but it does not have the power to derecognize a zoo.

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. d

- Recently, Prime Minister announced the extension of *Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana* till the end of November.
- It aims at ensuring sufficient food for the poor and needy during the COVID 19 lockdown.
- 80 crore individuals, i.e, roughly two-thirds of India's population would be covered under this scheme.

- Each one of them would be provided double of their current entitlement over next three months.
- Part of the scheme, the food needs to be provided to all the beneficiaries under Public Distribution System (TPDS) for Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Priority Household (PHH) ration cardholders.

2. a

- Recently, *National Anti Doping Agency (NADA)* launches mobile app to educate athletes on doping.
- It is a virtual learning platform to educate athletes on the consumption of banned substances that enhance performance.
- NADA was set up as registered society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860, on 2005.
- It acts as an independent Anti-Doping Organization for India, with the mandate of Dope free sports in India.
- The primary objectives are to implement anti-doping rules as per WADA code, regulate dope control programme.
- It implements the Anti Doping Code to achieve compliance by all sports organization in the country.
- After years of resistance, the *Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)* came under the ambit of *National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA)* in August 2019.

3. a

- Recently, Uganda has become the first African country to submit results for *Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+)* to the UNFCCC.
- REDD+ is a mechanism developed by the parties to the UNFCCC.
- It aims to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus the sustainable management of forests, and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
- It creates a financial value for the carbon stored in forests by offering incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from

forested lands and invest in low-carbon paths to sustainable development.

- It incentivizes developing countries by offering results-based payments for results-based actions.
- It encourage developing countries to contribute to climate change mitigation efforts by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG).

4. a

- A wildlife photographer tracks the endangered *Narcondam hornbill* to its natural habitat in the *Andamans*.
- An endangered species, *Narcondam hornbill* is endemic to the *Narcondam Island* in *Andamans*.
- *Narcondam Island* is a oceanic island of volcanic origin located northeast of *Port Blair* in the *Andaman Islands*.

5. a

- Recently, the Environment Ministry has reconstituted the *Central Zoo Authority (CZA)*.
- It is to include an expert from the School of Planning and Architecture, Delhi, and a molecular biologist.
- The *CZA* is a statutory body chaired by the Environment Minister and tasked with regulating zoos across the country.
- The authority lays down guidelines and prescribes rules under which animals may be transferred among zoos nationally and internationally.
- Zoos are regulated as per the provisions of *Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972* and are guided by the *National Zoo Policy, 1992*.
- The *Wild Life Protection Act* was amended to establish the *CZA*.
- It can recognize or derecognize a zoo.

03-07-2020

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

- 1. It is a prestigious Global Leadership Summit and Festival on World Environment and Wildlife.**
- 2. It is an annual event held in London.**
- 3. The Cogx Awards are given to the best-of-the-best governments in protecting the environmental ecosystem.**

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

- 2 only
- 1 and 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 2 and 3 only

2) *Ranbir Singh Committee*, often seen in the news recently, was constituted for which of the following purposes?

- To review the gas pricing formula
- To propose reform measures in criminal law
- To review the existing prudential guidelines on restructuring of advances by banks/financial institutions
- None of the above

3) Consider the following statements:

- All medical devices have been notified as Drugs and have come under regulatory regime of the *Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940* and *Drugs (Prices (Control Order), 2013* from 1st April 2020.**
- Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has been entrusted with the task of fixation/revision of prices of pharmaceutical products and enforcement of provisions of the *Drugs (Prices Control) Order*.**

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) "Towards a Clean Energy Economy Report" was released recently by?

- a. NITI Aayog
- b. International Energy Agency
- c. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy
- d. All of the above

5) Kule wetlands is located in which of the following?

- a. Kerala
- b. Assam
- c. Rajasthan
- d. West Bengal

6) Consider the following statements with respect to Current Account Deficit

1. The Current Account of a country is the money it receives and pays for goods and services, investments, and other things such as salaries, and pensions.
2. It factors in the payments from domestic capital deployed overseas.
3. A current account deficit is always detrimental to a nation's economy.

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. None of the above

7) Consider the following statements with respect to Lichens

1. Lichens is a symbiotic partnership of two separate organisms, a Fungus and a Cyanobacterium.
2. They are more sensitive towards habitat and climate changes and are widely used as bio-indicators.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are not 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 Accelerate Vigyan

1. It is an initiative of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.
2. It is to provide a single platform for research internships, capacity building programs and workshops to encourage high-end scientific research across the country.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are not correct?

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

9) Zealandia sometimes seen in news is located in?

- a. Indian Ocean
- b. Pacific Ocean
- c. The Southern Ocean
- d. None of the above

10) Consider the following statements with respect to Pinaka Missile

1. It is an Artillery Missile System developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. The Navigation system of the missile is aided by the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS).

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

- AI enabled **MyGov Corona Helpdesk** bagged two awards under categories “**Best Innovation for Covid-19 – Society**” and “**People’s Choice Covid-19 Overall Winner**”, at the recently held CogX 2020.
- The awards were won by Technical Partner of Mygov, JioHaptik Technologies Limited.

CogX 2020

- It is a prestigious Global Leadership Summit and Festival of **AI & Emerging Technology** held **annually in London**.
- **Cogx Awards** are given out to the best-of-the-best in AI and emerging technologies across the world.
- After a rigorous evaluation, Indian chatbot ‘MyGov Corona Helpdesk’ was chosen among hundreds of entries that made a difference to society during the pandemic.

MyGov

- It is the world’s largest citizen engagement platform, which facilitates two-way communication between the Government and Citizen and facilitates participatory governance in India, the world’s largest democracy.
- In the fight against Covid-19, MyGov, JioHaptik Technologies Limited and WhatsApp team collaborated to develop AI

enabled MyGov Corona Helpdesk in the record time of 5 days including weekend.

2. b

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has recently constituted a national level committee for **reform in criminal law**.
- The committee, which has several leading legal academicians on board, would be gathering opinions online, consulting with experts and collating material for their report to the government.
- The committee includes **Ranbir Singh, chairperson**, Vice-Chancellor, National Law University (NLU), Delhi; G.S. Bajpai, member and convenor, Registrar, NLU Delhi.

3. a

- All the medical devices have been notified as Drugs and have come under regulatory regime of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Drugs (Prices (Control Order), 2013 w.e.f. 1st April 2020.

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)

- It was constituted vide Government of India Resolution dated 29th August, 1997 as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers as an **independent Regulator for pricing of drugs and to ensure availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices**.
- The Authority, interalia, has been entrusted with the task of fixation/revision of prices of pharmaceutical products (bulk drugs and formulations), enforcement of provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order and monitoring of the prices of controlled and decontrolled drugs in the country.

Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)

- Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for **approval of Drugs, Conduct of Clinical Trials, laying down the standards for Drugs**, control over the quality of imported Drugs in the country and coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations by providing expert advice with a view of bring about the

uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

- Further CDSCO along with state regulators, is jointly responsible for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera.

4. a

- **NITI Aayog and Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI)** has recently released “*Towards a Clean Energy Economy: Post-Covid-19 Opportunities for India’s Energy and Mobility Sectors Report*”.
- The report highlights emerging challenges and opportunities for India’s transition to clean mobility and power systems in the context of Covid-19.
- It advocates for stimulus and recovery efforts that work towards building a clean, resilient, and least-cost energy future for India.
- These efforts include electric vehicle, energy storage, and renewable energy programs.
- The report lays out four principles as a framework for policymakers and other key decision-makers considering programmes to support India’s clean energy future:
 1. Invest in least-cost-energy solutions
 2. Support resilient and secure energy systems
 3. Prioritize efficiency and competitiveness
 4. Promote social and environmental equity

5. a

Crocothemis servilia

- Scarlet Skimmer (*Crocothemis servilia*) is a peculiar dragonfly found in the Puzhakkal area of the **Kole wetlands**.
- It had a unique appearance as male dragonflies typically have prominent blood red colouration in almost all their body parts and the female is a pale yellow in colour with a dark brown thorax and legs.
- The individual spotted in Kole wetland had a mix of male and female external characters, ranging from almost entirely female to about equally divided.

- This is due to a rare biological phenomenon known as gyanandromorphism.
- Gynandromorphs are chimeric individuals having both male and female tissues, and are viewed by the scientific community as a genetic aberration.
- It is very rare and only 30 individuals from seven families have been reported with the condition worldwide.

Kole Wetlands

- It is spread over Thrissur and Malappuram districts of Kerala.
- It is a Ramsar site and IBA (Important Bird and Biodiversity Area)
- It accounts for more than 40% of the rice production in the State.
- It is situated in the Central Asian Flyway of migratory birds.
- It contains subterranean habitats that are important habitats for some fresh water fish species which are endemic to southern Western Ghats.
- The Society for Odonate Studies has been conducting Odonate surveys at the Kole wetlands since 2018.
- 37 species of dragonflies and damselflies have been reported from the wetlands so far.

6. a

- India records First Quarterly *Current Account Surplus* in 13 years.
- India recorded a Current Account Surplus of \$0.6 billion, or 0.1% of GDP, for the January-March period.
- Lower trade deficit was one of the prime reasons for the improvement in the current account balances.
- A current account deficit indicates that a country is importing more than it is exporting.
- Current Account Deficit is slightly different from Balance of Trade (BoT).
- BoT measures only the gap in earnings and expenditure on exports and imports of goods and services.

- Whereas, the Current Account also factors in the payments from domestic capital deployed overseas.
 - For example, rental income from an Indian owning a house in the UK would be computed in Current Account, but not in Balance of Trade.
 - A current account deficit is not always detrimental to a nation's economy, external debt may be used to finance lucrative investments.
7. d
- *Uttarakhand* forest department develops *India's first Lichen Park in Kumaon*.
 - A lichen is not a single organism. Rather, it is a symbiosis between different organisms, a Fungus and an Alga or Cyanobacterium.
 - Cyanobacteria are sometimes still referred to as 'blue-green algae'.
 - They are more sensitive towards habitat and climate changes and are widely used as bio-indicator or environmental indicator.
 - They are the Indicators of pollution levels in the Himalayas.
8. a
- Recently, *SERB* launches, *Accelerate Vigyan scheme* to strengthen scientific research mechanism.
 - The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) has launched it to provide a single platform for research internships, capacity building programs and workshops across the country.
 - It is an inter-ministerial scheme to encourage high-end scientific research and prepare scientific manpower, which can lead towards research careers and knowledge-based economy.
9. b
- Recently, a team of scientists, has created a new bathymetric and tectonic maps of *Zealandia*.
 - New maps reveal details about the size and shape of Earth's lost 8th continent.
- *Zealandia* is a narrow microcontinent that is mostly submerged in the *South Pacific Ocean*.
 - Zealandia is about half the size of Australia, but only 7% of it is above sea level.
 - A microcontinent is a landmass that has broken off from a main continent.
 - Zealandia broke off from Antarctica about 100 million years ago, and then from Australia about 80 million years ago.
10. c
- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister cleared proposals to boost the combat capabilities of all three services.
 - The most prominent of these proposals includes *Pinaka and Astra missile systems* and additional fighter jets for the Air Force.
 - *Pinaka* is a multibarrel rocket launch (MBRL) system, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
 - It is an *Artillery Missile System* capable of striking into enemy territory up to a range of 75 kilometres with high precision.
 - The Navigation system of the missile is also aided by the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS).

04-07-2020

1) "Matsya Sampada" is a quarterly newsletter published by which of the following?

- a. Department of Fisheries
- b. Ministry of Earth Sciences
- c. Department of Agricultural Research and Education
- d. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

2) A Portal for registration of MSMEs has become operationalized recently. What is the name of the portal?

- a. Udyam Sakhi
- b. Udyami Mitra



- c. Ishan Uday Registration Portal
- d. Udyam Registration

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967*

1. Under the act, only organizations could be designated as terrorist organizations.
2. The Act will be applicable to the offenders in the same manner, even if the crime is committed on foreign land, outside 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

4) India's first plasma bank was recently established at?

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

5) Consider the following statements:

1. Blood contains Red blood cells, White blood cells, platelets and Plasma.
2. In plasma donation, only plasma is extracted and the other components of blood are returned to the body.

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 *United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)*

1. All the members of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) signed the USMCA.
2. The agreement focuses on a modernized, high-standard Intellectual Property (IP) that provides strong and effective protection and enforcement of IP rights.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Dharma Chakra Day*

1. It commemorates Lord Buddha's first sermon to his disciples.
2. The day is also observed as Guru Poornima by both Buddhists and Hindus.
3. It is organized by the International Buddhist Confederation, under the aegis of Union Ministry of Culture.

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to the *Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)*

1. It is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination, and promotion of biomedical research.
2. It has regulatory control over the import of drugs, approval of new drugs

and clinical trials under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

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

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

9) The Global E-waste Monitor 2020 report is compiled by

- Global E-waste Statistics Partnership (GESP)
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- International Solid Waste Association (ISWA)
- All of the above

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Over The Top (OTT) Platforms*

- It is an online content provider that offers streaming media as a standalone product.
- It does not refer to audio streaming, messaging services, or internet-based voice calling solutions.
- The OTT internet contents are unregulated in India.

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. a

- Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying has recently launched the first edition of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Newsletter "**MATSYA SAMPADA**" published by the **Department of Fisheries, Ministry for Fisheries, Animal**

Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India.

- It also launched the Operational Guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

Matsya Sampada

- The Newsletter "MATSYA SAMPADA" is an outcome of the endeavours of the Department of Fisheries to reach out to the stakeholders especially fishers and fish farmers through various means of communication, and to inform and educate them about the latest developments in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.
- It would be published on a quarterly basis starting from the first quarter of the year 2020-21.

2. d

Udyam Registration Portal

- To improve ease of doing business for new MSMEs, the government has launched a new process for registration and classification of enterprises in the name of a new portal – **Udyam registration.**
- Operational recently, registering as MSME on the portal will be completely paperless and based on self-declaration.
- Small businesses won't have to upload any documents or proof except the Aadhaar number for registration.
- The MSME Ministry has also organized a single-window system at Champions Control Rooms (set up at MSME Development Institutes across India) and district industries centres for facilitating the process.

3. b

UAPA

- It is applicable to the entire territory of India.
- Any Indian or foreign national charged under UAPA is liable for punishment under this Act, irrespective of the location of crime/offense committed.
- UAPA will be applicable to the offenders in the same manner, even if the crime is committed on foreign land, outside India

- The Central Government had amended the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 in August 2019, to include the provision of designating an individual as a terrorist.
- Prior to this amendment, only organizations could be designated as terrorist organizations.

4. a

- *Delhi Chief Minister has recently inaugurated **India's first plasma bank** at the **Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS), New Delhi** to ease access to plasma that is being used as a trial to treat Covid-19 patients.*

5. c

- *Delhi Chief Minister has recently inaugurated **India's first plasma bank** at the **Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS)** to ease access to plasma that is being used as a trial to treat Covid-19 patients.*
- The bank will coordinate with patients who have recovered from Covid-19, and are eligible to donate plasma.

Plasma Bank

- A plasma bank functions like a blood bank, and has been created specifically for those who are suffering from Covid-19, and have been advised the therapy by doctors.
- The facility has been set up at the ILBS, which will be the nodal centre for collection of plasma.
- In plasma therapy, the antibody rich plasma from a recovered patient is extracted and administered to a patient.

Plasma donation Vs Blood donation

- In plasma donation, as opposed to blood donation, only plasma is extracted and the other components of blood are **returned to the body**.
- Blood contains several components, including **red blood cells, platelets, white blood cells, and plasma**.
- During a whole blood donation, donors typically donate a pint (about a half litre) of blood.

- During automated donation (apheresis), you will be connected to the apheresis machine using a fully disposable one-time use apheresis kit.
- The process uses a single needle. The machine will selectively retain the plasma and return all red blood cells and other components of blood.
- All plasma proteins lost by you due to donation will be formed again in 24-72 hours.

Eligible Donors

- Those who had the disease, but have recovered at least 14 days before the donation can be considered — although doctors prefer a time of three weeks between recovery and donation.

6. c

- In 1994, the United States, Mexico and Canada created North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the largest free trade region in the world.
- In 2018, NAFTA members renegotiated their agreement under a new United States-Mexico-Canada Comprehensive Agreement (USMCA).
- The USMCA agreement came into effect on July 1, 2020.
- The agreement focuses on a modernized, high-standard Intellectual Property (IP) chapter that provides strong and effective protection and enforcement of IP rights.
- It has the most Comprehensive Enforcement Provisions of any trade agreement.

7. d

- *Dharma Chakra Day, Asadh Poornima* is celebrated on July 4.
- The celebrations are being organized by *International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)*, under the aegis of Union Ministry of Culture.
- *Dharma Chakra Day* commemorates *Lord Buddha's first sermon* to his first five ascetic disciples at the Deer Park in Rsipatana in the present day Sarnath near Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.
- The day is also celebrated by Buddhists all over the world as the day of *Dharma Chakra*

Parvattana or "Turning of the Wheel of Dharma".

- This day is also observed as *Guru Poornima* by both Buddhists and Hindus as a day to mark reverence to their Gurus.

8. a

- *Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)* is planning to launch the Covid-19 vaccine by August 15.
- *ICMR is the apex body* in India for the formulation, coordination, and promotion of biomedical research.
- The ICMR is funded by the Government of India through the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.
- ICMR also encourages human resource development in biomedical research through research fellowships.
- The *Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)* has the regulatory control over the import of drugs, approval of new drugs and clinical trials, under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

9. d

- The *Global E-waste Monitor 2020* report found that the world dumped a record 53.6 million tonnes of e-waste last year.
- In that just 17.4 percent was recycled.
- China, with 10.1 million tonnes, was the biggest contributor to e-waste, and the United States was second with 6.9 million tonnes.
- India, with 3.2 million tonnes, was third.
- The *Global E-waste Monitor 2020* is a collaborative product of the
 1. Global E-waste Statistics Partnership (GESp), formed by UN University (UNU),
 2. the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and
 3. the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA),
 4. In close collaboration with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).
- The new report also predicts global e-waste discarded products with a battery or plug will

reach 74 Mt by 2030, almost a doubling of e-waste in just 16 years.

10. b

- Over-The-Top (OTT) video platform Zee5 expanded its service by adding HiPi, a short-video service similar to TikTok.
- An Over-The-Top media service is any online content provider that offers streaming media as a standalone product.
- OTT is commonly applied to video-on-demand platforms, but also refers to audio streaming, messaging services, or internet-based voice calling solutions.
- The government has said it does not have powers to regulate internet content, but suggested an institutional self-regulatory model similar to traditional media.
- Recently, the Centre gives OTT platforms 100 days to put self-regulatory code in place.

06-07-2020

1) "Prerak Dauur Samman" is a new category of awards launched by which of the following Ministries?

- a. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- b. Ministry of Human Resource Development
- c. Ministry of Women and Child Development
- d. Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

2) Consider the following statements:

1. He believed in the fundamental oneness of God and said, "For our own motherland a junction of the two great systems, Hinduism and Islam, is the only hope.
2. His mission was to bridge the gulf between *paramartha* (service) and *vyavahara* (behaviour), and between spirituality and day-to-day life.
3. Envisaging a new culture for the whole world, he called for a blend of the materialism of the West and the spiritualism of the East into a new

harmony to produce happiness for mankind.

Identify the personality who correctly matches the above description:

- Guru Nanak
- Aurobindo Gosh
- Swami Vivekananda
- None of the above

3) Indian Railways had recently operated its longest freight train. What is the name of the train?

- Kaalamban
- Shesh Naag
- Viswa Bharat
- Lifeline Express

4) "Bon Bibi'r Palagaan" is a centuries-old folk theatre form in which of the following regions?

- Sunderbans
- Western Ghats
- Western Himalayas
- Andaman & Nicobar Islands

5) "Mount Rushmore", often seen in the news recently, is located in?

- Japan
- Russia
- North Korea
- United States of America

6) Consider the following statements with respect to the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- Membership in the Bank is open to members and associate members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.
- ADB's Country Partnership Strategy (2018–2022) aims to accelerate India's inclusive economic transformation.

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 Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO)

- It aims to make a 3D map of the Moon's surface from lunar polar orbit.
- It is a European Space Agency mission, in preparation for future manned missions to the moon.

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 the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)

- It was set up as an autonomous body under the IRDA Act, 1999.
- The main function of IRDAI is to regulate the substantial acquisition of shares and take over of companies.

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

- Hong Kong
- Macau



3. Shanghai

4. Hainan

Which of the place(s) given above is/are a part of Mainland China?

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

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Disinvestment*

1. Strategic Disinvestment refers to the sale of a substantial portion of the Government shareholding in a Central Public Sector Enterprises of less than 50%.
2. Corporatization refers to reorganizing the structure of a government-owned entity into one that resembles a private entity while government retaining the ownership.

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

- A new category of awards titled '**Prerak Dauur Samman**' as part of **Swachh Survekshan 2021** was recently launched by the **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs**.
- The Prerak Dauur Samman has a total of five additional sub- categories -Divya (Platinum), Anupam (Gold), Ujjwal (Silver), Udit (Bronze), Aarohi (Aspiring) - with top three cities being recognized in each.
- In a departure from the present criteria of evaluating cities on 'population category', this new category will categorize cities on the basis

of six select indicator wise performance criteria which are as follows:

1. Segregation of waste into Wet, Dry and Hazard categories
2. Processing capacity against wet waste generated
3. Processing and recycling of wet and dry waste
4. Construction & Demolition (C&D) waste processing
5. Percentage of waste going to landfills
6. Sanitation status of cities

2. c

- **Narendranath Datta** (1862-1902), who later came to be known as **Swami Vivekananda** spread Ramakrishna's message and tried to reconcile it to the needs of contemporary Indian society.
- He emerged as the preacher of **neo-Hinduism**.
- Certain spiritual experiences of Ramakrishna, the teachings of the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* and the examples of the Buddha and Jesus are the basis of Vivekananda's message to the world about human values.
- He subscribed to the Vedanta which he considered a fully rational system with a superior approach.
- His mission was **to bridge the gulf between paramartha (service) and vyavahara (behaviour)**, and between spirituality and day-to-day life.
- Vivekananda believed in the **fundamental oneness of God**.
- He said, "**For our own motherland a junction of the two great systems, Hinduism and Islam, is the only hope.**"
- At the **Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893**, Swami Vivekananda made a great impression on people by his learned interpretations.
- Envisaging a new culture for the whole world, he called for a blend of the materialism of the West and the spiritualism of the East into a new harmony to produce happiness for mankind.

3. b
- In the history of Indian Railways, the national transporter has for the first time run a 2.8 km long “**SheshNaag**” train.
 - It is the longest train ever to run on the Indian Railways network.
 - According to details shared by the Railway Ministry, the South East Central Railway zone of Indian Railways recently operated the SheshNaag Train service, a 2.8 km long train amalgamating four empty BOXN rakes.
 - The SheshNaag Train was powered by four sets of electric locomotives.

4. a
- **Bonbibir Palagaan** is a dramatic performance tradition connected with the worship of the cult **goddess Bonbibir**.
 - It is a popular performance-ritual **exclusively practised in the Sundarbans** in lower delta region West Bengal (India) and Bangladesh.
 - The word ‘pala’ means a ‘long narrative verse’ and ‘gaan’ means ‘song’ in Bengali.

Bon Bibi

- Shrines to Bon Bibi and her twin brother Shah Jongoli dot the landscape of the Sundarbans.
- The followers of Bon Bibi are fishermen, crab-collectors and honey-gatherers — a large chunk of the population of the islands, many of them impoverished — who go into the wild mangroves, teeming with wild animals such as tigers and crocodiles, to earn a livelihood.
- They believe that only Bon Bibi protects them when they enter the forest.
- One of the important ways in which people express their belief in Bon Bibi is through Bon Bibir Palagaan, a dramatic storytelling form that is enacted throughout the island.

How it helps Sunderbans survive?

- The Bon Bibi faith is a check on human greed and acquisition.
- An unwritten code prohibits islanders from carrying guns or weapons into the forest.

- They must enter the forest only if they absolutely need to earn a livelihood and not take more — honey or crabs, fish or prawns — than they need.
- They must not desecrate the forest in any way, by smoking, defecating or washing utensils.
- According to local lore, poachers, pirates and those who disobey Bon Bibi are attacked by tigers as punishment.

5. d

- The US President Mr. Donald Trump had recently delivered his Independence Day Speech for the year 2020 at **Mount Rushmore National Memorial**.

Mount Rushmore

- It is a memorial situated in South Dakota.
- It features 60-foot face carvings of four US Presidents — **George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln**.

6. c

- Recently, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) joined the Central Banks and Supervisors Network for Greening the Financial System (NGFS).
- NGFS was launched at the Paris One Planet Summit in 2017.
- NGFS is a group of central banks and supervisors willing to share best practices and contribute to the development of environment and climate risk management in the financial sector.
- ADB is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific.
- Membership in the Bank is open to members and associate members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East.
- ADB’s *Country Partnership Strategy, 2018–2022* for India aims to accelerate the country’s inclusive economic transformation.
- The strategy focuses on building industrial competitiveness to create more jobs, extending infrastructure and services to low-income

states, and addressing environmental and climate change concerns.

7. a

- Recently, NASA research says the Moon is more metallic than thought before.
- NASA's *Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO)* spacecraft had found evidence that the Moon's subsurface might have greater quantities of metals such as iron and titanium.
- LRO's primary goal was to *make a 3D map of the Moon's surface* from lunar polar orbit. It continues to orbit the Moon.
- LRO gathered information on day-night temperature maps, conducted high-resolution imaging.
- The spacecraft paid particular emphasis to the Moon's polar regions where scientists suspected there might be water in the permanently shadowed areas.

8. a

- IRDAI to examine the feasibility of insurers offering *surety bonds* for road contracts.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways had requested the regulator to examine possible offerings of surety bonds by the general insurance companies, to ease the economic impact on liquidity and cash-flows in the Indian banking sector.
- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) set up as an autonomous body under the IRDA Act, 1999
- Its mission is to protect the interests of policyholders, to regulate, promote, and ensure orderly growth of the insurance industry.
- It is a *function of SEBI to regulate the substantial acquisition of shares* and take over of companies.

9. d

- China has passed a New Security Law for Hong Kong which reduces the city's autonomy.
- *Mainland China* is the geopolitical area under the *direct jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China (PRC)*.

- Mainland China excludes the Special Administrative Regions Of Hong Kong And Macau.

- China (the PRC) has no actual control over the island of Taiwan, but they consider Taiwan to be a part of China and officially Taiwan as a part of the Republic of China.

- *Hainan Island* is *southernmost province of China* and is also the smallest in terms of land area.

10. b

- The DIPAM Secretary said that, Government is set to focus on *Strategic Stake Sales* to meet disinvestment target.

- When the *government decides to transfer the ownership and control of a public sector entity to some other entity*, either private or public, the process is called *Strategic Disinvestment*.

- It would imply the sale of a substantial portion of the Government shareholding of a CPSE of up to 50%, or such higher percentage along with *transfer of management control*.

- *Corporatization* occurs when a government attempts to reorganize the structure of a government-owned entity into one that resembles a private entity.

- In *Corporatization*, the goal of the *government is to retain ownership* while allowing the entity to operate efficiently and competitively.

07-07-2020

1) "MSME Emergency Response Programme" that aims to support the increased flow of finance into the hands of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in India, was recently signed between India and?

- World Bank
- New Development Bank
- Asian Development Bank
- International Monetary Fund

2) Consider the following statements with respect to the *National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization (NATMO)*

1. It is the sole authority for depicting National framework data in the form of thematic maps and atlases.
2. It functions as a subordinate office under the Ministry of Science & 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

3) “*World Drug Report*” was released recently by which of the following organizations?

- a. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- b. Intergovernmental Agency on World Trafficking
- c. Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
- d. United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute

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

1. It is a form of embroidery, native to Western Europe that came to India via British invasion.
2. The embroidery, also known as Pukhoor, appears like a woven cloth but is made with the use of red and black threads with a white cotton cloth background.

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) “*Natanz Nuclear Complex*”, often seen in the news recently, is one of the main uranium enrichment plants of which of the following countries?

- a. Iran
- b. Israel
- c. North Korea
- d. Pakistan

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Winter Diesel*

1. It loses its fluidity function in extreme winter conditions and has lower sulphur content.
2. It meets the Bureau of Indian Standards specification, BS-VI grade.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to the *National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)*

1. It ensures accessibility and availability of only the National List of Essential Medicines to people at affordable prices.
2. It is an attached office to the Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

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 *Mars Orbiter Mission*

1. The mission aims a specific search for Methane in the Martian atmosphere.
2. It is the Israel's first mission to the Red Planet and first entry into interplanetary spaceflight.

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 Country recently finalized a plan to phase out Coal and Nuclear Energy?

- a. Greenland
- b. Denmark
- c. Germany
- d. Japan

10) Consider the following statements with respect to the Ice in Italian Alps that turned Pink

1. The pink hue is caused by algae that accelerate the effects of climate change.
2. The ice with the algae on its surface, reflects more than 80% of the sun's radiation.

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

- *The World Bank and the Government of India have recently signed the 750 million dollar agreement for the MSME Emergency Response Programme to support the increased flow of finance into the*

hands of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

- The World Bank's MSME Emergency Response Programme will address the immediate liquidity and credit needs of some 1.5 million viable MSMEs to help them withstand the impact of the current shock and protect millions of jobs.

2. c

- **National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization** has recently published the 4th updated version of COVID-19 Dashboard on its official Portal.

National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization (NATMO)

- It is a subordinate office under **Department of Science & Technology**, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- This organization was assigned with responsibility in the field of thematic cartography and geographical research at national level.
- It is the **sole authority for depicting National framework data in the form of thematic maps and atlases** to cater the actual picture of the development and planning initiatives of the country among the users.

3. a

- *According to the latest World Drug Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the fourth highest seizure of opium in 2018 was reported from India, after Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.*
- In terms of heroin seizure (1.3 tonnes), India was at the 12th position in the world.
- Heroin is manufactured from the morphine extracted from the seed pod of opium poppy plants.
- Outside Asia, the largest total quantity of heroin and morphine was seized in Europe (22% of the global total in 2018).

4. d

- **Zardozi** is a form of embroidery that came to India **from Persia**.
- Done with metal wire and metal pieces or sequins on velvet, satin and heavy silk bases, Zardozi is one of the most famous and elaborate techniques in **metal embroidery**.
- The **original embroidery of Zardozi** was done with pure silver wires coated with real gold, and was known as **Kalabatun**.
- Though silver and gold wires have now been replaced with synthetic threads, the art remains the same.

Toda Embroidery

- The Toda Embroidery, also locally known as **Pukhoor**, is an art work among the Toda pastoral people of Nilgiris, in Tamil Nadu, made exclusively by their women.
- The embroidery, which has a **fine finish, appears like a woven cloth but is made with use of red and black threads with a white cotton cloth background**.
- Both sides of the embroidered fabric are usable and the Toda people are proud of this heritage.
- Both men and women adorn themselves with the embroidered cloaks and shawls.
- This handicraft product is listed as a geographically tagged product and is protected under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act (GI Act) 1999 of the Government of India.

5. a

- An accident happened recently at a warehouse under construction at the **Natanz Nuclear Complex in Central Iran**.
- Natanz is one of Iran's main uranium enrichment plants.

6. b

- Indian armed forces may soon be using **Winter Diesel** for operations in high altitude areas such as Ladakh.
- State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), has sought approval from the Directorate General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) of the armed forces to approve winter diesel.

- Winter Diesel contains additives to maintain lower viscosity can be used in temperatures as low as -30°C .
- It has lower sulphur content, which would lead to lower deposits in engines and better performance.
- It **does not lose its fluidity function** even in extreme winter conditions, unlike the normal grade of Diesel which becomes difficult to utilize in such extreme winter conditions.
- It meets the Bureau of Indian Standards specification, **BS-VI grade**.

7. d

- Recently, **National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)**, allowed pharmaceutical companies to increase the price of essential blood thinner **Heparin** by as much as 50%.
- Heparin is among the essential medicines that are needed for combating the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.
- **NPPA** is an **independent regulator** for the pricing of drugs, to ensure the availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices.
- It is as an attached office to the **Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers**.
- It regularly publishes lists of medicines and their maximum ceiling prices under the Drug Price Control Orders (DPCO).
- It monitors the availability of drugs, identifies shortages, if any, and to take remedial steps.

8. a

- Recently, **ISRO's Mangalyaan** Captures Image Of **Phobos**, biggest Moon of Mars.
- The Mars Colour Camera (MCC) onboard Mars Orbiter Mission has captured the image of Phobos.
- The **Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM)**, also called **Mangalyaan** is the India's first mission to the Red Planet and first entry into interplanetary spaceflight.
- The mission is to explore and observe Mars surface features, morphology, mineralogy and the Martian atmosphere.



- Further, a specific search for methane in the Martian atmosphere.
 - This will provide information about the possibility or the past existence of life on the planet.
9. c
- Germany is first major economy to phase out coal and nuclear.
 - The plan envisions the phase-out of coal and nuclear energy between now and 2038.
 - The plan is part of Germany's 'energy transition', an effort to wean Europe's biggest economy off planet-warming fossil fuels and generate all of the country's considerable energy needs from renewable sources.
10. a
- Recently, the Ice in Italy's Alps have turned pink.
 - According to reports, the appearance of pink glacial ice is caused due to Algae that accelerate the effect of climate change
 - Normally ice reflects more than 80% of the sun's radiation.
 - However, with the arrival of the algae, it absorbs the heat and starts to melt faster.
 - Everything that darkens the snow causes it to melt because it accelerates the absorption of radiation.
 - More algae appear as the ice melts more rapidly, giving them vital water and air.

08-07-2020

1) Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) that aims at taking punitive measures against which of the following countries?

1. Iran
2. Cuba
3. China
4. Russia
5. North Korea

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

2) With respect to Sitana Dharwarensis, sometimes seen in the news recently, consider the following statements:

1. It is a new species of fan-throated lizard from the barren lands of northern Karnataka.
2. Its name has been derived from the Dharwar craton — a piece of the Earth's crust formed 3.6-5 billion years ago.
3. The species appears to be restricted to the area encompassed by the two major rivers Narmada and Tapti.

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

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

3) Which of the following is India's largest butterfly, according to a recent research?

- a. Blue Mormon
- b. Dark Blue Tiger
- c. Golden Birdwing
- d. Malabar Banded Peacock

4) Consider the following statements with respect to Kawasaki Disease

1. It is a rare illness which typically affects children aged under five.
2. The symptoms of the disease includes red eyes, rashes, and a swollen tongue and an inflamed blood vessel system all over the body.

3. The disease is caused by a plasmodium parasite, transmitted by the bite of infected mosquitoes.

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

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

5) “Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary”, often seen in the news recently, is located in which of the following countries?

- Bhutan
- Nepal
- Srilanka
- Myanmar

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Article 164 (1A) of the Indian Constitution*

- It states that the total number of Ministers, excluding the Chief Minister, in the Council of Ministers in a State shall not exceed 15% of the total number of members of the Legislative Assembly of that State.
- The number of Ministers, including Chief Minister in a State shall not be less than twelve.

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 *High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) Programme*

- The project is signed between India and Afghanistan.

- It focuses on developing the educational infrastructure in Afghanistan.

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 *North Eastern Region Community Resource and Management Programme (NERCORMP)*

- It is a livelihood and rural development project.
- It aims to transform the lives of the poor and marginalized tribal families.
- It operates only in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Meghalaya.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

9) *Herd Immunity* often seen in news is?

- Occurs when a large portion of a community becomes immune to a disease
- Vaccine helps to establish herd immunity
- Both (a) and (b)
- None of the above

10) Which State in India has become the first state in the country where 100% households have *Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connections*?

- Kerala
- Goa
- Punjab

d. Himachal Pradesh

- Many of these newly described species occur outside protected areas and are at risk of being wiped out.

Answers

1. c

- The **Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) of United States of America (USA)**, aims at taking punitive measures against **Russia, Iran, and North Korea**.
- The Act primarily deals with sanctions on the Russian oil and gas industry, defence and security sector, and financial institutions, in the backdrop of its military intervention in Ukraine and its alleged meddling in the 2016 US presidential elections.
- The Act empowers the US President to impose at least five of 12 listed sanctions enumerated in Section 235 on persons engaged in a "significant transaction" with the Russian defence and intelligence sectors.

2. b

- **Sitana Dharwarensis** is a large-sized species when compared to other fan throated lizards.
- A species appears to be restricted to the area encompassed by the two major rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra.
- These rivers likely act as biogeographic barriers for terrestrial lizards.
- The new species is similar to a fan-throated lizard species *Sitana laticeps*.
- But *Sitana dharwarensis* bears a much larger throat fan or dewlap.
- Its distinctness was confirmed after comparing the DNA sequences and micro-CT-scans of the two species.
- Its name *Sitana dharwarensis* has been derived from the Dharwar craton — a piece of the Earth's crust formed 3.6-2.5 billion years ago.
- This is the second species to be discovered from the open scrub and rock terrain of northern Karnataka after *Hemidactylus vijayraghavani*, a gecko.



3. c

- A Himalayan butterfly named **Golden Birdwing** is India's largest butterfly.
- This record had been held by an unknown specimen for 88 years.

Golden Birdwing

- With a wingspan of 194 mm, the female of the species is marginally larger than the **Southern Birdwing (190 mm)** that Brigadier William Harry Evans, a British military officer and lepidopterist, had recorded in 1932.
- But the male Golden Birdwing (*Troides aeacus*) is much smaller at 106 mm.



State Butterflies – Concerned State

1. Maharashtra – Blue Mormon
2. Uttarakhand – Common peacock
3. Karnataka – Southern bird wings
4. Kerala – Malabar banded peacock

4. b

Kawasaki Disease

- Around the world, children with Covid-19 infection have often shown some symptoms similar to those associated with a rare illness called Kawasaki disease
- It typically affects **children aged under five** with symptoms like red eyes, rashes, and a swollen tongue with reddened lips often termed strawberry tongue and an inflamed blood vessel system all over the body.
- There is constant high fever for at least five days, it also affects coronary functions in the heart.
- **The causes of the Kawasaki Disease are not yet known.**
- The strawberry tongue may or may not be present in those with Covid-19.
- In Covid-19 cases, even adolescents are presenting these symptoms.
- Steroids remain a key treatment to reduce inflammation.

5. a

- **Bhutan's foreign ministry has issued a demarche to the Chinese embassy for china's claim over Sakteng Wildlife sanctuary.**
- The recent claim was made at the 58th meeting of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council, by trying to "oppose" funding to a project for sanctuary saying that it was "disputed" territory.
- Bhutan's western and middle sector have been in dispute with China, however, the eastern sector has not been part of the boundary talks and China had not claimed rights over Sakteng wildlife sanctuary earlier.

Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary

- Sakteng is based in Eastern Bhutan, or Trashigang Dzongkhag (district) that borders Arunachal Pradesh.
- It protects several endemic species including the eastern blue pine and the black-rumped magpie.

6. b

- The Congress party has alleged that strength of Madhya Pradesh Ministry exceeds the Constitutional limit.

- **Article 164 (1A) of the Constitution** that prescribed, "The total number of Ministers, including the Chief Minister, in the Council of Ministers in a State shall *not exceed 15%* of the total number of members of the Legislative Assembly of that State."
- Provided that the number of Ministers, including Chief Minister in a State shall not be less than twelve.

7. c

- Recently, India, Afghanistan ink 5 agreements to develop educational infra in Afghan provinces.
- The 5 MoUs were signed under the *High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP) Programme*.
- It is being implemented by India to further strengthen the bilateral development partnership.
- It focuses on development of the educational infrastructure in Afghanistan.
- It includes the construction of classrooms, a higher education building and a road within the campus of Albironi University.

8. d

- Recently, Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region, interacted with various self-help groups associated with the *North Eastern Region Community Resource and Management Programme (NERCORMP)*.
- NERCORMP is a livelihood and rural development project.
- It aimed to transform the lives of the poor and marginalized tribal families in North East India.
- It is a joint developmental initiative of the North Eastern Council(NEC), Ministry of DoNER, Govt. of India and International Fund for Agricultural Development(IFAD).
- *The project operates in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Meghalaya.*

9. c

- When most of a population is immune to an infectious disease, this provides indirect protection or *Herd Immunity* (also called herd



protection) to those who are not immune to the disease.

- *Herd Immunity* can happen in two ways:
 1. Many people contract the disease and in time build up an immune response to it (natural immunity).
 2. Many people are *vaccinated* against the disease to achieve immunity.
- The vaccine also helps to establish herd immunity.

10. d

- Recently, *Himachal Pradesh* becomes the *first State with 100% LPG Connections*.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana, gas connections were provided free of cost to women of rural areas.
- The state government had launched '*Himachal Grihini Suvidha Yojana*'.
- It is to cover the left out families in the state, who were not covered under the Centre's scheme.

09-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Agriculture Infrastructure Fund*

1. It is a pan India Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
2. The fund will provide a medium - long term debt financing facility for post-harvest management Infrastructure and community farming assets.

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) Assertion (A): No star has been found with high lithium content so far.

Reason (R): Stars, as per known mechanisms of evolution, actually destroy lithium as they evolve into red giants.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- a. Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A
- b. Both A and R are true and R is not the correct explanation of A
- c. A is true but R is false
- d. A is false but R is true

3) Consider the following statements

1. **Match-fixing is not an independent offence in India and there are no laws covering it.**
2. **Sri Lanka is the first South Asian country to pass a law against offences related to match-fixing.**

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) Who among the following can avail the facility of Postal Voting in India?

1. Absentee Voters
2. President of India
3. Members of Armed Forces
4. Person under Preventive Detention

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

5) Which of the following Cabinet committees are chaired by the Prime Minister?

1. Political Affairs committee
2. Economic Affairs committee
3. Appointment committee
4. Parliamentary Affairs committee

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

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

1. These are semi-arid, grassy plain, occurs in temperate climates.
2. These regions have distinct seasonal temperature changes, with cold winters and warm summers.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Bubonic Plague*

1. It is an infectious disease caused by a zoonotic virus.
2. It is transmitted by fleas and infected respiratory droplets.

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 *Bad Bank*

1. It is set up to buy the bad loans and other illiquid holdings of only banks.
2. The original institution cannot clear its balance sheet even after transferring such assets to the bad bank.

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) *Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary* recently seen in news is located in?

- a. Assam
- b. Uttarakhand
- c. Arunachal Pradesh
- d. Punjab

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Permanent Commission in Indian Army*

1. A Permanent Commission allows officers to serve in the army till they retire.
2. Only the male Short Service Commission officers can opt for Permanent Commission at the end of 10 years of service but they could not qualify for government pension.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are not correct?

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

Answers

1. b

- The Union Cabinet has recently given its approval to a new pan India **Central Sector Scheme-Agriculture Infrastructure Fund**.

Agriculture Infrastructure Fund

- The scheme shall provide a **medium - long term debt financing facility** for investment in viable projects for **post-harvest management Infrastructure and community farming assets** through interest subvention and financial support.
- The Project by way of facilitating formal credit to farm and farm processing-based activities is expected to create numerous job opportunities in rural areas.

About the Scheme

- Under the scheme, Rs. One Lakh Crore will be provided by banks and financial institutions as loans to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), Marketing Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producers Organizations (FPOs), Self Help Group (SHG), Farmers, Joint Liability Groups (JLG), Multipurpose Cooperative Societies, Agri-entrepreneurs, Startups, Aggregation Infrastructure Providers and Central/State agency or Local Body sponsored Public Private Partnership Project.
- Loans will be disbursed in four years starting with sanction of Rs. 10,000 crore in the current year and Rs. 30,000 crore each in next three financial years.
- All loans under this financing facility will have interest subvention of 3% per annum up to a limit of Rs. 2 crore.
- This subvention will be available for a maximum period of seven years.
- Further, credit guarantee coverage will be available for eligible borrowers from this financing facility under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) scheme for a loan up to Rs. 2 crore.
- The fee for this coverage will be paid by the Government.
- In case of FPOs the credit guarantee may be availed from the facility created under FPO promotion scheme of Department of

Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare (DACFW).

- The duration of the Scheme shall be from FY2020 to FY2029 (10 years).
- Agri Infra fund will be managed and monitored through an online Management Information System (MIS) platform.
- It will enable all the qualified entities to apply for loan under the fund.
- The online platform will also provide benefits such as transparency of interest rates offered by multiple banks, scheme details including interest subvention and credit guarantee offered, minimum documentation, faster approval process as also integration with other scheme benefits.
- The National, State and District level Monitoring Committees will be set up to ensure real-time monitoring and effective feed-back.

2. d

- Stars, as per known mechanisms of evolution, actually destroy lithium as they evolve into red giants.
- Planets were known to have more lithium than their stars — as is the case with the Earth-Sun pair.
- However, leading to a contradiction, some stars were found that were lithium-rich.
- This puzzle has been solved by Indian researchers through a study which has been published in the journal *Nature Astronomy*.

Lithium's interesting story

- Lithium, a light element commonly used today in communication device technology.
- It was first produced in the Big Bang, around 13.7 billion years ago when the universe came into being, along with other elements.
- While the abundance of other elements grew millions of times, the present abundance of lithium in the universe is only four times the original [Big Bang] value.
- It is actually destroyed in the stars.
- The Sun, for instance, has about a factor of 100 lower amount of lithium than the Earth.

- **About 40 years ago, a few large stars were spotted that were lithium-rich.**
- This was followed by **further discoveries of lithium-rich stars**, and that posed a puzzle – if stars do not produce lithium, how do some stars develop to become lithium rich?
- The team has shown that **when stars grow beyond their Red Giant stage into what is known as the Red Clump stage, they produce lithium in what is known as a Helium Flash and this is what enriches them with lithium.**
- They set a lower limit for helium abundance which will classify the star as “lithium-rich”.
- This value is about 250 times lower than the previous limit.

3. c

- *The Mohali police had recently arrested alleged match-fixer Ravinder Dandiwal, who has been linked to two betting scandals exposed over the last fortnight.*
- *But, Dandiwal has been charged with cheating under Section 420 of the IPC.*
- **Match-fixing is not an independent offence in India and there are no laws covering it.**

How, then, have alleged match-fixers been punished in the past?

- Those punishments were handed out by the cricket board under its anti-corruption rules and not by law enforcement (these punishments, too, were later reduced or overturned by courts).
- In fact, lawyers use these cases to illustrate the need to have separate, foolproof laws for match-fixing.

Srilanka

- In November 2019, **Sri Lanka** became the **first South Asian country** to pass a law against offences related to match-fixing.
- So, apart from a fine, a player could also land himself in jail for participating in corrupt practices.
- In 2013, the **Indian Sports Ministry** drafted the **Prevention of**

Sporting Fraud Bill, which suggested a jail term for offenders. That Bill has died a slow death.

4. d

Postal Voting

- A restricted set of voters can exercise postal voting.
- Through this facility, a voter can cast her vote remotely by recording her preference on the ballot paper and sending it back to the election officer before counting.

Who can avail this facility?

- **Members of the armed forces** like the Army, Navy and Air Force, members of the armed police force of a state (serving outside the state), **government employees posted outside India** and their spouses are entitled to vote only by post. In other words, they can't vote in person.
- **Voters under preventive detention can also vote only by post.**
- Special voters such as the **President of India, Vice President, Governors, Union Cabinet ministers, Speaker of the House and government officers on poll duty** have the option to vote by post.
- But they have to apply through a prescribed form to avail this facility.
- Recently, the Law Ministry, at the Election Commission's behest, introduced a new category of **'absentee voters'**, who can now also opt for postal voting.
- These are voters employed in essential services and unable to cast their vote due to their service conditions.

5. b

Four Cabinet committees which are headed by the Prime Minister are:

1. Committee on Political Affairs
2. Cabinet Committee on Security
3. Appointments Committee of the Cabinet
4. Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs

The Committee on Parliamentary Affairs and the Cabinet Committee on Accommodation are headed by the Union Home Minister.

6. c

- Recently, NASA captured Shifting seasons on Russian *Steppe*.
- Significant seasonal changes have been observed in southwestern Russia's *Kulunda Steppe*.
- A *Steppe* is a dry, grassy plain, which occur in *temperate climates*, which lie between the tropics and polar regions.
- Temperate regions have *distinct seasonal temperature changes, with cold winters and warm summers*.
- *Steppes are semi-arid*, as they receive 25 to 50 centimeters (10-20 inches) of rain each year.

7. b

- Recently, China reports case of suspected *Bubonic Plague*.
- *Plague is caused by the Bacteria Yersinia Pestis, a zoonotic bacteria* usually found in small mammals and their fleas.
- It is transmitted between animals and humans by the bite of infected fleas, direct contact with infected tissues, and inhalation of infected respiratory droplets.
- Antibiotic treatment is effective against plague bacteria, early diagnosis and early treatment can save lives.

8. d

- The banking sector, led by the Indian Banks Association, had recently submitted a proposal for setting up a *Bad Bank* to the finance ministry and the RBI.
- These are typically set up in times of crisis when long-standing financial institutions are trying to recuperate their reputations and wallets.
- A bad bank is a bank set up to buy the bad loans and other illiquid holdings of another financial institution.

- The entity holding significant Non-Performing Assets will sell these holdings to the bad bank at market price.
- By transferring such assets to the bad bank, the *original institution may clear its balance sheet*, although it will still be forced to take write-downs.
- *A bad bank structure may also assume the risky assets of a group of financial institutions, instead of a single bank.*

9. a

- The Assam government has decided to upgrade *Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary* into a National Park.
- The announcement comes just months after the National Board of Wildlife's (NBWL) conditional clearance to a coal mining project in the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve sparked a spate of virtual protests in the state.
- As a National Park, its importance will increase and new rules will bring increased vigilance to the area.
- While Wildlife Sanctuaries are protected areas which permit some activities such as grazing, National Parks call for a complete protection status under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

10. b

- Recently, Supreme Court gives one more month to Centre for giving *Permanent Commission* to all women officers in Army.
- The SC had directed that women officers in the Army be granted Permanent Commission and command postings.
- The male Short Service Commission officers could opt for Permanent Commission at the end of 10 years of service and they could qualify for government pension.
- This *option is not available to women officers* and they could not qualify for government pension.
- The SC had in February said women should be considered for command roles and that all women officers are entitled to Permanent Commission.

10-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Mission for Manuscripts*

1. The Mission was established in 2003 by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.
2. It was mandated to document, conserve and disseminate the knowledge preserved in the manuscripts.

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) *Mongolian Kanjur*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is associated with?

- a. Jainism
- b. Buddhism
- c. Zoroastrianism
- d. Mongolian shamanism

3) With respect to *Manuscripts*, consider the following statements:

1. A manuscript is a handwritten composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material dating back at least seventy-five years.
2. Manuscripts are distinct from historical records such as epigraphs on rocks, firmans, revenue records.
3. Lithographs and printed volumes are not manuscripts.

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) Indian Prime Minister has recently inaugurated the 750 MW *Rewa Solar Project*, Asia's largest solar power project, at which of the following states?

- a. Rajasthan
- b. Tamil Nadu
- c. Uttar Pradesh
- d. Madhya Pradesh

5) With respect to *Malabar exercise*, consider the following statements

1. Malabar began as a bilateral naval exercise between India and Japan in 1992.
2. Currently, it was expanded into a quadrilateral format with the inclusion of U.S.A and Australia.

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 *Sovereign Wealth Funds*

1. It is a state-owned investment fund or entity which comprises of pools of money derived from a country's reserves.
2. The primary functions of a sovereign wealth fund are to stabilize the country's economy.
3. The National Infrastructure and Investment Fund (NIIF) is India's Sovereign Wealth Fund.

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Measles*

1. It is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by a Virus.
2. India and Maldives have eliminated the Measles ahead of 2023 target.

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 *Equalisation Levy*

1. The equalisation levy shall be charged, when the non-resident providing the specified service has a permanent establishment in India.
2. All services are covered under the ambit of equalisation Levy.

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 about *Ethiopia*

1. Ethiopia is a landlocked country located on the Horn of Africa.
2. It shares its border with Djibouti, Kenya and Somalia.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to the *National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)* of India

1. The Paris Principles was the focal point for the development for the development of NHRC.
2. The complaint to NHRC should only be in Hindi or in English language.
3. It can intervene in any proceeding involving any allegation of violation of human rights pending before a court with the approval of such court.

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

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

Answers

1. c

- The Ministry of Culture has taken up the project of reprinting of 108 volumes of *Mongolian Kanjur* under the *National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)*.
- The first set of five volumes of Mongolian Kanjur published under the NMM was presented to the President of India recently.
- It is expected that all the 108 volumes of the Mongolian Kanjur will be published by March, 2022.

National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM).

- NMM was launched in February 2003 by the Government of India, under the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, with the mandate of documenting, conserving and disseminating the knowledge preserved in the manuscripts.
- One of the objectives of the mission is to publish rare and unpublished manuscripts so that the knowledge enshrined in them is spread to researchers, scholars and general public at large.

2. b

- The Ministry of Culture has taken up the project of reprinting of 108 volumes of **Mongolian Kanjur** under the **National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM)**.

Mongolian Kanjur

- It is the **Buddhist canonical text** in 108 volumes is considered to be the most important religious text in Mongolia.
- In the Mongolian language 'Kanjur' means 'Concise Orders'- the words of Lord Buddha in particular.
- It is held in high esteem by the Mongolian Buddhists and they worship the Kanjur at temples and recite the lines of Kanjur in daily life as a sacred ritual.
- The Kanjur are kept almost in every monastery in Mongolia.
- Mongolian Kanjur has been translated from Tibetan.
- The language of the Kanjur is Classical Mongolian.
- The Mongolian Kanjur is a source of providing a cultural identity to Mongolia.

India and Mongolia

- Buddhism was carried to Mongolia by Indian cultural and religious ambassadors during the early Christian era.
- As a result, today, Buddhists form the single largest religious denomination in Mongolia.
- India established formal diplomatic relations with Mongolia in 1955.
- Since then, the overwhelming relationship between both the countries has now reached a new height.
- Now, the publication of Mongolian Kanjur by the Government of India for the Government of Mongolia will act as a symbol of cultural symphony between India and Mongolia and will contribute to furtherance of bilateral relations during the coming years.

3. d

- A manuscript is a handwritten composition on paper, bark, cloth, metal, palm leaf or any other material dating back at least seventy-five

years that has significant scientific, historical or aesthetic value.

- Lithographs and printed volumes are not manuscripts.
- Manuscripts are found in hundreds of different languages and scripts.
- Often, one language is written in a number of different scripts.
- For example, Sanskrit is written in Oriya script, Grantha script, Devanagari script and many other scripts.
- Manuscripts are distinct from historical records such as epigraphs on rocks, firmans, revenue records which provide direct information on events or processes in history.
- Manuscripts have knowledge content.

4. d

- *Indian Prime Minister has recently inaugurated the 750-megawatt "**Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Power Project**", Asia's largest, in **Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district**.*
- The project is aimed at reducing carbon emission equivalent to approximately 15 lakh tonne of carbon dioxide every year.
- The Project also exemplifies India's commitment to attain the target of 175 GW of installed renewable energy capacity by the year 2022, including 100 GW of Solar installed capacity.
- The solar park was developed by the Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Ltd (RUMSL), a joint venture of Madhya Pradesh Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd and Solar Energy Corporation of India, a central undertaking.
- The park comprises three solar generating units of 250MW each located on a 500-hectare plot of land inside a solar park with a total area of 1500 hectare.
- With this solar plant at Rewa, the industries here will not only get electricity, but even Delhi Metro will get its benefits.

5. d

- *India will take a key decision on whether to include Australia in the Malabar exercises*

with Japan and the U.S. at a Defence Ministry meeting early next week.

- The Malabar exercise, which has been delayed this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, should take place towards the end of 2020.
- The inclusion of Australia in the Malabar exercises would mark a major shift for India's Indo-Pacific plans.
- The decision, if taken, could bring all Quad countries together as part of the annual war games.

About Malabar Exercise

- Malabar began as a bilateral naval exercise between **India and the U.S.** in 1992.
- It was expanded into a **trilateral format** with the **inclusion of Japan** in 2015.

6. d

- Recently, Income tax department notifies exemption for *Sovereign Wealth Funds*.
- This move is aimed at attracting more investments into the country.
- A sovereign wealth fund is a state-owned investment fund that is used to benefit the country's economy and citizens.
- Funding comes from central bank reserves, currency operations, privatizations, transfer payments, and revenue from exporting natural resources.
- These funds generally invest in financial instruments such as bonds, stocks, gold, and real estate.
- Their primary objective is to generate good returns over a long-term duration.
- The *National Infrastructure and Investment Fund (NIIF)* is India's first-ever Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF).

7. a

- Recently, *Maldives and Sri Lanka* have become the first two countries in the South-East Asia region to eliminate both Measles and Rubella ahead of the 2023 target.

- Member countries of WHO South-East Asia region had set 2023 as the target for elimination of measles and rubella.
- Bhutan, DPR Korea and Timor-Leste are other countries in the region who have eliminated measles.
- Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by virus.
- Rubella is also a contagious disease caused by a virus.

8. d

- The government is not considering extending the deadline for payment of *Equalisation Levy*.
- The 2% Equalisation Levy was introduced in the 2020-21 Budget and has come into effect from April 1, 2020.
- The deadline for payment of first installment of tax for April-June is July 7.
- Equalisation Levy was introduced in India in 2016, with the intention of taxing the digital transactions i.e. the income accruing to foreign e-commerce companies from India.
- It is aimed at taxing business to business transactions.
- Currently, *not all services are covered* under the ambit of equalisation Levy.
- The following services covered:
 1. Online advertisement;
 2. Any provision for digital advertising space or facilities/ service for the purpose of online advertisement.
- The Equalisation Levy *shall not be charged*, when the non-resident providing the specified service has a permanent establishment in India, and the specified service is effectively connected with such permanent establishment.

9. c

- The killing of popular musician has triggered *widespread protests* across Ethiopia.
- The Musician was seen as a symbol of resistance against oppression among

the *Oromos*, one of the largest ethnic groups in Ethiopia.

- The non-Oromo ethnic groups were seen to be dominating the political landscape.
- A lot of Oromo were displaced by government projects, many without receiving sufficient compensation.
- Ethiopia is a landlocked country located on the Horn of Africa.
- It is bordered by Eritrea to the north, Djibouti and Somalia to the east, Sudan and South Sudan to the west, and Kenya to the south.

10. c

- The *National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)* has constituted an 11-member expert committee to assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on human rights.
- The *Paris Principles* was the focal point for the development for the development of NHRC to many countries in the world.
- The *complaint to NHRC can be in any language* included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- NHRC can intervene in any proceeding involving any allegation of violation of human rights pending before a court with the approval of such court.

11-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *ASEEM Portal*

1. It is an Artificial Intelligence-based platform that will be used as a match-making engine to map skilled workers with the jobs available.
2. It was launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
3. It was developed and managed by the National Skill Development Corporation.

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

- a. 1 only

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Aids to Navigation Bill 2020*

1. The bill is proposed to replace the National Highways Authority of India Act, 1988.
2. It aims to establish a body to regulate and monitor the toll plazas in the National Highways.

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 *Hagia Sophia* – a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is often seen in the news recently?

- a. It has been converted into a Museum from Mosque
b. It was demolished by the terrorist organisations
c. It was declared as a largest heritage monument in the world
d. None of the above

4) *Index of Cancer Preparedness* was released by which of the following?

- a. World Health Organisation
b. Economist Intelligence Unit
c. Union for International Cancer Control
d. All of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *India Global Week 2020*

1. It is a week-long event which commemorates the process of

globalization happened in India in 1990s

2. Be The Revival: India and a Better New World is the theme for the event.

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

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO)*

- It is a multi-disciplinary organisation for detecting and prosecuting white collar crimes and frauds.
- It has powers to arrest people for violations of companies law.

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 *Quorum For Standing Committee Meetings in the Parliament*

- Two-third of the total members of the committee is required for the quorum to constitute a sitting of the committee.
- If at anytime during a meeting of a committee there is no quorum, it shall be the duty of the Chairperson, to adjourn the meeting.

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 *Apache Helicopters*

- It is an advanced multi-role combat helicopter inducted into IAF from Russia.
- It is day and night, all weather capable, and have high agility and survivability against battle damage.

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

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

9) *Bhashan Char Island* sometimes seen in news is located in?

- South China Sea
- Pacific Ocean
- Bay of Bengal
- New Zealand

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Criminal Laws in India*

- Crimes are generally referred to as offenses against the state.
- Criminal law, including all matters included in the Indian Penal Code are in Concurrent List.
- Criminal laws are governed only by Indian penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

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

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

Answers

1. d

- In an endeavour to improve the information flow and bridge the demand-supply gap in the skilled workforce market, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has recently launched '**Aatamanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM) portal**' to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.

ASEEM Portal

- ASEEM will be used as a match-making engine to map skilled workers with the jobs available.
- The portal and App will have provision for registration and data upload for workers across job roles, sectors and geographies.
- The skilled workforce can register their profiles on the app and can search for employment opportunities in their neighbourhood.
- Through ASEEM, employers, agencies and job aggregators looking for skilled workforce in specific sectors will also have the required details at their fingertips.
- It will also enable policymakers take more objective view of various sectors.
- ASEEM, also available as an App, is developed and managed by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with Bengaluru-based company Betterplace, specialising in blue collar employee management.
- The portal consists of three IT based interfaces -
 - Employer Portal – Employer onboarding, Demand Aggregation, candidate selection
 - Dashboard – Reports, Trends, analytics, and highlight gaps
 - Candidate Application – Create & Track candidate profile, share job suggestion

2. d

- Ministry of Shipping has issued the draft of **Aids to Navigation Bill, 2020** for suggestions from the stakeholders and general public.*

- The draft bill is proposed to replace the nine decades old colonial law "**Lighthouse Act, 1927**".

Aids to Navigation Bill, 2020

- With the advent of modern technologically improved aids to maritime navigation, the role of authorities regulating and operating maritime navigation has changed drastically.
- Therefore the new law encompasses a major shift from lighthouses to modern aids of navigation.
- The new law aims to incorporate the global best practices, technological developments and India's International obligations in the field of Aids to Marine Navigation.
- The draft bill provides for empowering Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL) with additional power and functions such as Vessel Traffic Service, Wreck flagging, training and certification, implementation of other obligations under International Conventions, where India is a signatory.
- It also provides for identification and development of heritage lighthouses.
- The draft bill comprises a new schedule of offences, along with commensurate penalties for obstructing and damaging the aids to navigation, and non-compliance with directives issued by the Central Government and other bodies under the draft bill.

3. d

- The world-famous **Hagia Sophia museum in Istanbul** has been turned back into a **mosque**.*
- Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the decision after a court annulled the site's museum status.

Hagia Sophia

- Built 1,500 years ago as an Orthodox Christian cathedral, Hagia Sophia was converted into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in 1453.
- In 1934 it became a museum and is now a Unesco World Heritage site.

4. b

- India has been ranked eighth for cancer preparedness among 10 Asia-Pacific countries, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) report on "Cancer preparedness in Asia-Pacific: Progress towards universal cancer control".
 - The report examines the findings from the **EIU's Index of Cancer Preparedness**.
 - The report describes the complexities of the challenge of cancer facing 10 Asia-Pacific countries -- Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.
 - India was ranked 19th out of 28 countries in the Index of Cancer Preparedness (ICP), 2019 released by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
 - It was released as part of the report titled "Cancer preparedness around the world: National readiness for a global epidemic" prepared by EIU.
5. b
- Indian Prime Minister had recently delivered the inaugural address at the **India Global Week 2020**.
 - It is a **3-day virtual conference** being organised by **India Inc.** in the UK, which will also feature a "never-seen-before" performance on the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat campaign.
 - It is a three - day virtual conference themed '**Be The Revival : India and a Better New World**'.
 - This forum brings together global thought leaders and captains of industry, who will discuss aspects relating to opportunities in India as well as the global economic revival post-COVID.
6. c
- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has reported a fraud of Rs 3,688.58 crore in a NPA of DHFL to the RBI.
 - The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has set the **Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO)** in the case.
- SFIO is a multi-disciplinary organisation consisting of experts from various field for detecting and prosecuting or recommending for prosecution white collar crimes/frauds.
 - It has the powers to arrest people for violations of companies law, with the government notifying relevant provisions amid the crackdown on illicit fund flows.
7. b
- Recently, Rajya Sabha Secretariat told that, Standing committees of Parliament can hold discussions without quorum.
 - Rajya Sabha secretariat added that *quorum was essential only when the committees are taking decisions or adopting reports*.
 - *One-third of the total members of the committee is required for the quorum to constitute a sitting of the committee.*
 - Quorum for these meetings is generally 11 out of 30 members.
 - If at anytime during a meeting of a committee there is no quorum, it shall be the duty of the Chairperson, either to adjourn or suspend the meeting.
 - According to the reports that out of 281 meetings of the 8 department-related standing committees that are headed by Rajya Sabha members, 16% were held without quorum.
8. b
- Recently, India gets final batch of **Apache attack helicopters**.
 - **Apache** is the most advanced multi-role heavy attack helicopter in the world manufactured by **US aerospace giant, Boeing**.
 - It is day and night, all weather capable, and have high agility and survivability against battle damage.
 - It's modern capabilities includes, fire-and-forget, anti-tank missiles, air-to-air missiles, rockets, and other ammunition.
 - It has their ability to operate at much higher altitudes, unlike the aging Russian Mi-24/Mi-35 attack helicopters.
9. c

- Recently, Bangladesh said that Rohingyas to remain at *Bhashan char Island*.
- *Bhashan Char Island* also known as *Thengar Char Island* is located in the Bay of Bengal.
- It is an uninhabited island where the government of Bangladesh has made shelter houses for one lakh Rohingya refugees.

10. a

- A committee was constituted by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to introduce reforms in *Criminal Law*.
- Judges, lawyers and academicians, in a letter, suggest including more experts in the committee.
- Crimes are generally referred to as offenses against the state.
- *Criminal law, including all matters included in the Indian Penal Code* at the commencement of this Constitution,
 1. *but excluding offences* against laws with respect to any of the matters specified in List I or List II and
 2. *excluding* the use of naval, military or air forces or any other armed forces of the Union in aid of the civil power are in *Concurrent List*.
- Criminal law is governed by Indian penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, Evidence Act, etc.

13-07-2020

1) *Itolizumab* is a drug that has been granted Restricted Emergency Use for moderate to severe COVID-19 patients recently by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). *Itolizumab* is a drug used to treat?

- a. Malaria
- b. Psoriasis
- c. Hepatitis
- d. Tuberculosis

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Family Planning 2020 Movement*

1. The movement is an outcome of the 2012 Brazil Summit on Family Planning.
2. India is a fundamental part of the global FP2020 movement.
3. The movement, hosted by the United Nations Foundation, is based on the principle that all women, no matter where they live should have access to lifesaving contraceptives.

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

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

3) With respect to Tiger Estimation in India, consider the following statements

1. The All India Tiger Estimation is a survey conducted once in every 5 years.
2. The estimation is steered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority with technical backstopping from the Wildlife Institute of India.
3. India has achieved its target of doubling its tigers, made at St. Petersburg in 2010, much before the target year of 2022.

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

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

4) With respect to *Ophiocordyceps sinensis*, also known as the "*Himalayan Viagra*", sometimes seen in the news recently, consider the following statements:

1. It is a fungus endemic to Himalayan and Tibetan Plateau.



2. It has been listed as critically endangered under the IUCN Red list of Threatened Species.

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 *Tetrastemma Freyae*, sometimes seen in the news recently

- It is a new species of marine invertebrate found along the regions of Northern Tripura.
- It feeds on dead and decaying material and helps to recycle nutrients in coastal and deep water sediments.

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

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *The Apollo Missions*

- It is the NASA's first unmanned mission to the Moon.
- It aimed to carry out a scientific exploration of the Moon.

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 *National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)*

- It is an advanced web-based monitoring system to efficiently manages the electricity data across India.
- It works based on GPRS technology for accurate bill readings, catalysing a pan-India movement towards energy efficiency.

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 *Fish Cryobanks*

- It is to facilitate all time availability of fish sperms of desired species to fish farmers.
- It is a collaborative effort of National Fisheries Development Board and the National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources.

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

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

9) Which of the following is *not true* with respect to *India Cycles4Change Challenge*, seen in the news recently?

- It aims to inspire and support Indian cities to quickly implement cycling-friendly initiatives in response to COVID-19
- It is an initiative of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs along with Smart Cities Mission
- The challenge is currently open only to capital cities of states/union territories

d. None of the above

10) Consider the following statements with respect to the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB)

1. It lay down the technical standards for the construction and operation of pipeline and infrastructure projects related to downstream petroleum and natural gas sector.
2. It ensures the display of information about the maximum retail prices fixed by the entity for consumers at retail outlets.

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. b

- **Itoлизumab** (rDNA origin), a monoclonal antibody which was already approved for severe chronic plaque **Psoriasis**, has recently been granted Restricted Emergency Use authorisation by the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) based on clinical trials data.
- Biocon has been manufacturing and marketing this drug for the treatment of patients with moderate to severe chronic plaque psoriasis since 2013 under brand name Alzumab.
- This indigenous drug has now been repurposed for COVID-19.

2. c

Family Planning 2020

- It is an outcome of the **2012 London Summit** on Family Planning where more than 20 governments made commitments to address the policy, financing, delivery and socio-cultural barriers to women accessing contraceptive information, services and supplies.

- The movement is led by a 23-member Reference Group, operated daily by a Secretariat, and **hosted by the United Nations Foundation**.
- FP2020 is based on the principle that all women, no matter where they live should have access to lifesaving contraceptives.
- The vision is for FP2020 to serve as an inclusive and results-oriented partnership that is working with a diverse group of stakeholders and experts to accelerate action and to address the most significant global and country-level barriers to progress against FP2020 goals.
- **India is a fundamental part of the global FP2020 movement.**
- The Government of India has invested substantial domestic funding to achieve the ambitious FP2020 goals.

Steps taken by India and its Achievements

- The major initiatives under Family Planning include Mission Parivar Vikas, Injectable Contraceptive MPA, Family Planning – Logistics Management Information System (LMIS), Family Planning Communications Campaign.
- The National Family Planning Program has introduced the Injectable Contraceptive in the public health system under the “Antara” program.
- This contraceptive is highly effective and will meet the changing needs of couples and help women space their pregnancies.
- All this investment has paid us rich dividends in terms of averting nearly 5.5 crore unintended pregnancies, 1.1 crore total births, 18 lakh unsafe abortions and 30,000 maternal deaths as a result of contraceptive use in 2019 alone, as per Track 20 Estimates.

3. c

- **The fourth cycle of the All India Tiger Estimation 2018**, results of which were declared to the nation on Global Tiger Day last year by the Indian Prime Minister has recently entered the Guinness World Record for being the **world’s largest camera trap wildlife survey**.
- It is 4th such tiger survey since 2006.

- India has fulfilled its resolve to double the tiger numbers four years before the target.
- The country now has an estimated 2967 tigers as per the latest census.
- With this number, India is home to nearly 75% of the global tiger population and has already fulfilled its resolve of doubling tiger numbers, made at St. Petersburg in 2010, much before the target year of 2022.

All India Tiger Estimation

- It is a gargantuan exercise and is conducted once in **4 years**.
- The All India Tiger Estimation is steered by the National Tiger Conservation Authority with technical backstopping from the Wildlife Institute of India and implemented by State Forest Departments and partners.

4. a

- ***Ophiocordyceps sinensis***, also known as **Himalayan Viagra, Chinese Caterpillar fungus** has recently entered the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, the world's most comprehensive information source on the global conservation status of animal, fungi and plant species.
- The list placed the fungus in the **Vulnerable** category.

Himalayan Viagra

- It is the world's costliest **fungus**, which sells in international markets for upwards of Rs 20 lakh per kg.
- The fungus is known for its aphrodisiac and rejuvenation properties.
- The fungus, also known as **keeda jadi** in Uttarakhand because of its caterpillar-like appearance, is endemic to the Himalayan and Tibetan plateau and is found in China, Bhutan, Nepal and India.
- In India, it is primarily found in Uttarakhand in the higher reaches of districts like Pithoragarh and Chamoli.
- The reason cited for this inclusion is its spread has declined by at least 30% over the past 15 years as a result of overharvesting.



5. b

Tetrastemma Freyae

- Recently, researchers have identified a new species of marine invertebrate i.e. '**Tetrastemma Freyae**', found along the **coast of Tamil Nadu**.
- It feeds on dead and decaying material and helps to recycle nutrients in coastal and deep water sediments.
- It is associated with sediments and is predatory as it has a role in maintaining the food chain.
- It uses its proboscis, similar to a butterfly which does to collect nectar.
- It has neurotoxins in its proboscis which could lead to developing drugs.



6. b

- It marks the 51st anniversary of the *Apollo 11* lunar landing.

- The *Apollo program* was designed to land humans on the Moon and bring them safely back to Earth by the US.
- Apollo 8 was the first Apollo mission to go around the Moon.
- Apollo 11 was man's first landing on the Moon.
- Its mission is to, carrying out a program of scientific exploration of the Moon.
- To develop human capability to work in the lunar environment.

7. d

- The *National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)* has signed a MoU with the *National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)* to access the centralised online database on FIRs and stolen vehicles.
- *NATGRID* to have access to database that links around 14,000 police stations.
- *NATGRID* is set up to track any terror suspect and prevent terrorist attacks with real-time data.
- It is a robust intelligence gathering mechanism related to immigration, banking, individual taxpayers, air and train travels.
- It will have data related to all immigration entry and exit, banking and financial transactions, credit card purchases, telecom, individual taxpayers, air flyers, train travellers besides others to generate intelligence inputs.

8. c

- Government to set up *Fish Cryobanks* in different parts of the country.
- This will facilitate all time availability of fish sperms of desired species to fish farmers.
- *Fish Cryobanks* will be the first of such initiative in the world.
- *National Fisheries Development Board* in collaboration with the *National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources* to take up the work to establish *Fish Cryobanks*.
- This scheme will address the critical gaps in fish production and productivity, quality, modernisation and establishing a robust

fisheries management framework and fishermen's welfare.

9. c

- To support Indian cities to quickly implement cycling-friendly initiatives *India Cycles4Change Challenge* was launched.
- It is an initiative of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs along with Smart Cities Mission and the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP).
- It is to inspire and support Indian cities to quickly implement cycling-friendly initiatives in response to COVID-19.
- The challenge is open to all cities under the Smart Cities Mission, capital cities of states/union territories, and all cities with more than 5 lakh population.
- The Challenge aims to help cities connect with their citizens as well as experts to develop a unified vision to promote cycling.

10. c

- The government has proposed for a unified gas price system.
- Currently, tariffs for transportation of gas are set by the *Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB)*, separately for each pipeline based on the assumptions of volume of gas transported.
- The proposal, is part of a effort to boost the share of natural gas in India's energy basket from around 6% currently to 25 % by 2030.
- The PNGRB was constituted under The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006.
- It lay down the technical standards for the construction and operation of pipeline and infrastructure projects related to downstream petroleum and natural gas sector.
- It ensures the display of information about the maximum retail prices fixed by the entity for consumers at retail outlets.

14-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *India Voluntary National Review Report 2020*

1. It is the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) on sustainable development submitted by India.
2. The Report is prepared and presented by NITI Aayog.

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 United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, consider the following statements:

1. It replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development, which had met annually since 1993.
2. The forum plays a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level.
3. The forum meets annually under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly.

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) *Chusul*, sometimes seen in the news recently, share its border with which of the following countries?

- a. India and China
- b. China and Nepal

- c. China and Bhutan
- d. None of the above

4) *World Wildlife Crime Report, 2020* was released recently by?

- a. TRAFFIC
- b. UN Environment Programme
- c. UN Office on Drugs and Crime
- d. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau

5) Consider the following statements

1. In India, the category of Persons with disabilities are also socially backward.
2. They are entitled to the same benefits of relaxation as Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates in public employment and education.

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 the *Competition Act, 2002*

1. The Act prohibits, abuse of dominant position by enterprises and regulates acquisition which causes or likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition only within India.
2. Competition Commission of India (CCI) is a statutory body responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)*

1. It is a flagship initiative set up by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the country.
2. ARISE, to stimulate innovation and research in the MSME industry is one of the major initiatives under AIM.

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 *Tangams community*

1. The Tangams are a community within the Adi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. As per the UNESCO World Atlas of Endangered Languages, Tangam, an oral language, is marked as critically endangered.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are not correct?

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

9) *Rozgar Setu Portal*, to provide work to the migrant labourers was launched in?

- a. Uttar Pradesh
- b. Bihar
- c. Rajasthan
- d. Madhya Pradesh

10) The country's first ever *e-Lok Adalat* was recently organised in?

- a. Kerala
- b. Punjab
- c. Maharashtra
- d. None of the above

Answers

1. b

- *NITI Aayog* had recently presented India's **second** Voluntary National Review (VNR) report titled **Decade of Action: Taking SDGs from Global to Local** at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, 2020.
- India presented its VNR along with other second time presenters like Bangladesh, Georgia, Kenya, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria and Uganda.
- The VNRs presented by Member States at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development are a critical component of the review of progress and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
- The reviews are voluntary and state-led and are aimed at facilitating the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned.
- The process of preparation of a country's VNR provides a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of various relevant stakeholders.
- *NITI Aayog* prepared and presented India's **first VNR in 2017**.

India VNR 2020

- India's VNR this year has undertaken a paradigm shift in terms of **embodying a "whole-of-society" approach** in letter and spirit.
- NITI Aayog engaged with sub-national and local governments, civil society organizations, local communities, people in vulnerable situations and the private sector.

2. d

- NITI Aayog presented India's second Voluntary National Review (VNR) report titled **Decade of Action: Taking SDGs from Global to Local** at the United Nations High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development, 2020.

UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

- The establishment of the HLPF was mandated in 2012 by the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), "The Future We Want".
 - The HLPF is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level.
 - The Forum meets **annually under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council** for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment and **every four years** at the level of Heads of State and Government **under the auspices of the General Assembly** for two days.
 - The Forum **replaced the Commission on Sustainable Development**, which had met annually since 1993.
3. a
- *The Commander-level talks between India and China began recently at **Chushul Border post** in Eastern Ladakh.*
 - This is the fourth round of talks between the Indian Army and People's Liberation Army of China, since June.
 - The Army sources said that the talks mainly focus on the second phase of disengagement at the friction point along the Line of Actual Control.



4. c

- **UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** has recently released its **World Wildlife Crime Report**.
- The threat that wildlife trafficking posed to nature and biodiversity was cited by the report.
- It outlined how trafficking of wild species, their butchering and subsequent illegal sale increased the transmission of zoonotic diseases from animals to humans.
- According to the report, Pangolins are the most trafficked wild mammals in the world, with the seizure of their scales increasing tenfold between 2014 and 2018.
- The animals have, recently, been vilified because of reports that linked them to the emergence of the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that causes the COVID-19 disease.
- The past few years, however, illustrate how much the wild species has been of use to mankind, for which they are trafficked across the world.
- There has been a jump in pangolin seizures since 2014.

5. c

- The Supreme Court, in a significant decision, confirmed that persons with disabilities are also **socially backward**.

- The decision highlighted Divyangian are **entitled to the same benefits** of relaxation as Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates in public employment and education.
- SC upheld a 2012 judgment of the Delhi High Court in **Anamol Bhandari vs. Delhi Technological University**.

6. c

- Recently, Competition Commission of India (CCI) approves acquisition in Kubota Agricultural Machinery India Pvt Ltd by Escorts.
- The *Competition Act 2002*, prohibits anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominant position by enterprises and regulates combinations (acquisition, acquiring of control and M&A), which causes or likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition *within India*.
- The objectives of the Act are sought to be achieved through the *Competition Commission of India*, which has been established by this Act.

7. b

- Recently, *Atal Innovation Mission* has launched the ATL App Development Module for school children across the country.
- It is a project-based learning modules and online mentoring sessions for young innovators to learn to build mobile apps in various Indian languages and showcase their talent.
- The *AIM* is a flagship initiative set up by the *NITI Aayog* to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country.
- *ARISE* - To stimulate innovation and research in the MSME industry, is one of the major initiative under *AIM*.
- *ARISE* is an initiative to promote research, innovation and competitiveness of Indian startups and small enterprises.

8. d

- Recently, *Arunachal Pradesh* CM released a book titled *Tangams: An Ethnolinguistic*

Study Of The Critically Endangered Group of Arunachal Pradesh.

- The book will help the future generations of the *Tangam community*, which has reportedly 253 speakers concentrated in one small hamlet of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The *Tangams* are a little-known *community within the larger Adi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh*.
- As per *UNESCO World Atlas of Endangered Languages* (2009), *Tangam*, an oral language that belongs to the Tani group, is marked '*Critically Endangered*'.

9. d

- '*Rozgar Setu Portal*' inaugurated in *Madhya Pradesh* to provide work to migrant labourers.
- *Madhya Pradesh* is the first state in the country which has completed the survey of all migrant labourers and started to provide jobs according to their skill.
- All migrant labourers as well as employers have been registered on the *Rozgar Setu portal*.

10. d

- Recently, *Chhattisgarh* organises India's first *e-Lok Adalat*.
- The *Chhattisgarh High Court* and the *State Legal Services Authority* organized the *e-Lok Adalat*.
- Cases related to money like settlements, accident claims, bouncing of cheques besides family disputes among others are usually resolved by *Lok Adalat*.
- In case the parties and lawyers face difficulty in connecting through video-conferencing, they can present their cases even through *WhatsApp video call*.

15-07-2020

1) India is planning to acquire Heron Surveillance Drones and Spike Anti-tank Guided Missiles. They belong to which of the following countries?

- a. Israel

- b. Russia
- c. United Kingdom
- d. United States of America

2) With respect to the *Draft Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020*, published recently, consider the following statements

1. According to the Rules, all educational institutions are to have a committee which transgender persons can approach in case of any harassment or discrimination.
2. A District Magistrate would issue a transgender identity certificate based on an affidavit by the applicant, without any medical examination.

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) *Project Cheetah*, is associated with which of the following?

- a. Indian Air Force
- b. Wildlife Institute of India
- c. National Super Computer Mission
- d. Defence Research and Development Organisation

4) Consider the following statements with respect to the *National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)*

1. The Institute constituted under an Act of Parliament, works under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. It has been entrusted with the responsibility for planning and promoting training and research in the area of disaster management.

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 government of India has recently released the *PRAGYATA Guidelines*. It is associated with?

- a. Digital Education
- b. Women and Child Safety
- c. Prevention of Lock-up deaths
- d. Rising Encounters in India

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Naming the Indian Railways Stations*

1. Indian Railways own the railway stations and it names the Railway station signboards on its discretion.
2. The station names shall be exhibited in the following order of Regional Language, Hindi and English uniformly across all the railway stations in 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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020*

1. A farmer is defined as a person engaged in the production of farmers' produce by self or by hired labour.
2. As per the Ordinance, no licences from the state government are required and any PAN cardholder can do trade.



3. The Ordinance allows state governments to levy market fee on traders.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to Yeti Territory seen in news recently

- It is the Nepal's territory located in India-Nepal border.
- The region lies in protected areas of Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary.

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

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

9) Paradip Port recently seen in news is located in?

- Gujarat
- West Bengal
- Goa
- Odisha

10) Consider the following statements with respect to National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

- It is a statutory refinance institution for fostering rural prosperity.
- The NABSKILL digital portal is a initiative by NABARD through which training institutions can apply online for financial support from NABARD for providing training to rural youth.

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

- Engaged in a boundary dispute with China in eastern Ladakh, India is planning to enhance its surveillance capabilities and firepower by placing orders for **Heron surveillance drones** and **Spike Anti-tank Guided Missiles** from **Israel** under the emergency financial powers granted by the government.
- The Heron unmanned aerial vehicles are already in the Air Force, Navy, and the Army and are being used extensively at the moment by both Army surveillance and Target acquisition batteries and Air Force in the Ladakh sector.

2. c

- The draft of the **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020**, was recently published in the gazette.
- It stated that a District Magistrate would issue a transgender identity certificate and card based on an affidavit by the applicant, "but **without any medical examination**".
- The Union government has scrapped the earlier provision that requires a medical examination by a government-appointed doctor for a transgender person to be identified as such.
- The trans rights movement had opposed this, as it was seen as going against a trans person's right to self-identification, which was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2014.
- Trans persons would be required to fill out a form and submit an affidavit saying they perceive themselves to be "a transgender person whose gender does not match with the gender assigned at birth" and that they "declare" themselves to be transgender.

- In case of **change of gender**, the application for new identification certificate would require a certificate from the medical superintendent or chief medical officer of the medical institution where the applicant underwent the intervention, the rules stated.
 - In an annexure to the rules, the Ministry has proposed a series of welfare schemes, including making at least one hospital in each State equipped to provide “safe and free gender-affirming surgery”, counseling and hormone replacement therapy; providing medical insurance cards; giving scholarships to trans persons; facilitating accommodation and schooling for trans, gender non-conforming and intersex children at government-run schools and colleges; and universal access to food security.
 - Also, according to the Rules, all educational institutions are to have a committee which transgender persons can approach in case of any harassment or discrimination.
3. a
- *India is planning to enhance its surveillance capabilities and firepower by placing orders for **Heron surveillance drones and Spike Anti-tank Guided Missiles from Israel** under the emergency financial powers granted by the government.*
 - The forces are also working towards inducting an armed version of the UAV, as well as upgrading the existing fleet into combat UAVs under the ambitious '**Project Cheetah**' spearheaded by the **Indian Air Force**.
4. c
- Union Minister of State for Home Affairs has recently presided over the inaugural session of the webinar “Thunderstorms and Lightning”, organised by the **National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)** in collaboration with **India Meteorological Department**.
 - The aim of the webinar was to sensitize the participants about Hazard Vulnerability Risk Capacity Assessment (HVRC), forecast, preparedness, and mitigation of thunderstorms and lightning beside technical

knowledge and available resources for timely response and recovery.

National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)

- NIDM was constituted under the **Disaster Management Act 2005**.
 - It works under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
 - It has been entrusted with the responsibility for planning and promoting training and research in the area of disaster management, documentation, and development of national-level information base relating to disaster management policies, prevention mechanism, and mitigation measures.
 - It was re-designated as NIDM from the **National Centre for Disaster Management** of the Indian Institute of Public Administration in 2003.
 - Both as a national Centre and then as the national Institute, NIDM has performed a crucial role in bringing disaster risk reduction to the forefront of the national agenda.
 - NIDM provides Capacity Building support to various National and State level agencies in the field of Disaster Management & Disaster Risk Reduction.
 - The Institute's vision is to create a Disaster Resilient India by building the capacity at all levels for disaster prevention and preparedness.
5. a
- **Union Human Resource Development Ministry** has recently released **PRAGYATA Guidelines on Digital Education** through online medium in New Delhi to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

PRAGYATA

- The guidelines include eight steps of online/digital learning that is, Plan- Review- Arrange-Guide- Yak(talk)- Assign- Track- Appreciate.
- These steps guide the planning and implementation of digital education step by step with examples.
- These guidelines on Digital/ Online Education provide a roadmap or pointers for

carrying forward online education to enhance the quality of education.

- The guidelines will be relevant and useful for a diverse set of stakeholders including school heads, teachers, parents, teacher educators and students.
- The guidelines stress upon the use of alternative academic calendar of NCERT, for both, learners having access to digital devices and learners having limited or no access.
- The PRAGYATA guidelines have been prepared by the Ministry of HRD to ensure the safety and academic welfare of the students.

6. d

- Recently, a tweeted picture showing the name of Dehradun written in Sanskrit “Dehradunam” along with Hindi and English, and replacing Urdu, purportedly on a railway station signboard.
 - Railways officials said this was not the case on ground.
 - *Indian Railways may own the station, it does not get involved in naming it as it leaves to the discretion of the state governments concerned.*
 - When a state government wants to change the name of a city to reflect on signboards in railway stations, it writes to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the nodal ministry for such matters.
 - The languages to be displayed on the signboard is governed by the Indian Railway Works Manual document.
 - The Manual says that Railways should obtain approval of the state government concerned on the spelling of the names (in all three languages) before putting them on its signboards.
 - The station names shall be exhibited in the following order: Regional Language, Hindi and English.
1. except for Tamil Nadu where the use of Hindi will be restricted to important stations and pilgrim centres as determined by the Commercial Department.

7. a

- Punjab government amended APMC Act in 2017 to allow private mandis to operate.
- Recently, Punjab government and state’s farmer unions, oppose the farm ordinances brought by the Centre, as it will end the state’s Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) Act.
- The *Farmers’ Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020* was promulgated on June 5, 2020.
- It seeks to provide for barrier-free trade of farmers’ produce outside the markets notified under the various state agricultural produce market laws (state APMC Acts).
- The Ordinance will prevail over state APMC Acts.
- A farmer is defined as a person engaged in the production of farmers’ produce by self or by hired labour.
- As per the Ordinance, no licences from the state government are required and any PAN cardholder can do trade.
- The Ordinance prohibits state governments from levying any market fee, cess or levy on farmers, traders, and electronic trading platforms for any trade under the Ordinance.

8. b

- Recently, India proposes to build road in Bhutan’s ‘Yeti territory’ which China claimed recently.
- The road has strategic significance, enabling India to quickly access Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, which borders China.
- This will enable India to deploy troops faster across Tawang and also towards the eastern region of Bhutan.
- The region lies in protected areas of Sakteng Wildlife Sanctuary.
- China argued that the sanctuary as well as the areas around it were parts of the disputed territory on the China-Bhutan boundary.

9. d

- Recently, Odisha’s Paradip Port has commenced EXIM service (freight).

- A regular EXIM service is starting from Paradip to Port Klang, Malaysia.
- This service will reduce logistics costs for most of the industries of Odisha.

10. c

- The NABARD announced Rs 5,000 crore of refinance scheme for banks and financial institutions for providing finance to watershed development projects.
- It is a *statutory refinance institution* for fostering rural prosperity.
- The *NABSKILL* digital portal is a new initiative by NABARD to capture the details of training related data.
- Through this portal, training institutions can apply online for financial support from NABARD for providing training to rural youth.

16-07-2020

1) Which of the following is the theme for World Youth Skills Day, 2020?

- Skills for a Resilient Youth
- Skills for the Future of Work
- Youth Skills for Sustainability and Innovation
- Improving the image of Technical & Vocational Education and Training

2) With respect to India Energy Modelling Forum, which was launched recently, consider the following statements

- It provides a platform to examine important energy and environmental related issues in India.
- Bureau of Energy Efficiency will initially coordinate the activities of the forum and finalizing its governing structure.

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

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

3) Trans-shipment Hub is the terminal at the port which handles containers, stores them temporarily and transfers them to other ships for the onward destination. India's first trans-shipment hub was developed at which of the following states?

- Tamil Nadu
- Maharashtra
- Andhra Pradesh
- None of the above

4) Kris Gopalakrishnan Committee, sometimes seen in the news recently, was constituted for which of the following purposes?

- To study the flaws in food processing policy of India
- To study various issues relating to Non-Personal Data
- To suggest the feasibility of transit oriented development in Indian cities
- To make specific suggestions to strengthen the grass root primary health centres

5) Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) is a free trade agreement between India and ?

- UK
- USA
- Russia
- European Union

6) Consider the following statements with respect to Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

- All members of UN General Assembly are the members of ECOSOC.
- The decisions taken at the council are taken by simple majority vote.

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 *Nagorno-Karabakh region*

- It is a disputed region located between India and Bhutan.
- The region shares its border with China.

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 *Hope Mission*

- It is the United Arab Emirates, first interplanetary spacecraft.
- It aims to create integrated model of the Mars atmosphere and its interaction with outer space and solar winds.

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 with respect to *Mont Blanc*

- It is the highest peak in Europe, located in the Andes.
- The massif lies along the French-Italian border and reaches into Switzerland.

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 *Snakes*

- Snakes are found in every continent, in the sea, forests, deserts and prairies.
- Radio telemetry has been used to study the movement patterns of snakes and to tackle snake bite problem.

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

World Youth Skills Day

- In December 2014, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring 15th July as World Youth Skills Day.
- The goal is to achieve better socio-economic conditions for today's youth as a means of addressing the challenges of unemployment and under employment.
- The theme for 2020 World Youth Skills Day is "**Skills for a Resilient Youth**".
- This year marks the fifth anniversary of the launch of Skill India Mission.

2. a

- Sustainable Growth Pillar** is an important pillar of India-US Strategic Energy Partnership co-chaired by **NITI Aayog and USAID**.
- The SG pillar entails energy data management, energy modelling and collaboration on low carbon technologies as three key activities.

- In the joint working group meeting of the Sustainable Growth Pillar held recently, an **India Energy Modeling Forum** was launched.

India Energy Modeling Forum

- There exist energy modelling forums in different parts of the World. The Energy Modelling Forum (EMF) in USA was established in 1976.
 - In India, there was no formalized and systematic process of having a modeling forum.
 - Even then, various think-tanks/research organizations like TERI, IRADe, CSTEP, CEEW, NCAER, etc., have been consistently developing scenarios and contributing through modelling studies and analyses to provide required inputs to MoEF&CC and other relevant ministries, including NITI Aayog.
 - The India Energy Modelling Forum will accelerate this effort and aim to:
 1. Provide a platform to examine important energy and environmental related issues;
 2. Inform decision-making process to the Indian government;
 3. Improve cooperation between modelling teams, government, and knowledge partners, funders;
 4. Facilitate exchange of ideas, ensure production of high-quality studies;
 5. Identify knowledge gaps at different levels and across different areas;
 6. Build capacity of Indian institutions.
 - **NITI Aayog** will initially coordinate the activities of the forum and finalizing its governing structure.
 - The forum would include knowledge partners, data agencies and concerned government ministries.
3. d
- **Minister of State for Shipping (I/C)** has recently reviewed the development activities of **Vallarpadam Terminal of Cochin Port, Kerala**.

- It is envisaged as **first trans-shipment port of India**, managed by DP World.

Trans-shipment Hub

- It is the terminal at the port which handles containers, stores them temporarily and transfers them to other ships for the onward destination.
 - The Kochi International Container Trans-shipment Terminal (ICTT), locally known as the Vallarpadam Terminal is located strategically on the Indian coastline.
 - It successfully fulfills all the criteria which are needed to develop it as trans-shipment hub which include:
 1. It is best positioned Indian port with regard to proximity to International sea routes;
 2. It is located at least average nautical distance from all Indian feeder ports;
 3. It entails a connectivity which has multiple weekly feeder connections to all ports on West & East Coast of India, From Mundra to Kolkata;
 4. It has proximity to key hinterland markets of India;
 5. It has the infrastructure to manage large ships and capacity to scale it up as per requirement.
 - Vallarpadam Terminal of Cochin Port is proposed to be developed as most preferred gateway for South India and leading trans-shipment hub of South Asia.
4. b
- The government of India has constituted a committee of experts in last September under the chairmanship of **Shri Kris Gopalakrishnan, Co-Founder Infosys**, to deliberate on a Data Governance Framework and recommend measures relating thereto.

Terms of Reference of the Committee

1. **To study various issues relating to Non-personal Data.**
2. To make specific suggestions for consideration of the Central Government on regulation of Non-Personal Data.
- The committee has recently suggested that non-personal data generated in the country be

allowed to be harnessed by various domestic companies and entities.

- It has also suggested setting up of a new authority which would be empowered to monitor the use and mining of such non-personal data.

What is Non-Personal Data?

- In its most basic form, non-personal data is any set of data which does not contain personally identifiable information.
- This in essence means that no individual or living person can be identified by looking at such data.
- For example, while order details collected by a food delivery service will have the name, age, gender, and other contact information of an individual, it will become non-personal data if the identifiers such as name and contact information are taken out.
- The government committee has classified non-personal data into three main categories, namely **public non-personal data, community non-personal data and private non-personal data.**
- Depending on the source of the data and whether it is anonymised in a way that no individual can be re-identified from the data set, the three categories have been divided.

Public Non-Personal Data Sets

- All the data collected by government and its agencies such as census, data collected by municipal corporations on the total tax receipts in a particular period or any information collected during execution of all publicly funded works has been kept under the umbrella of public non-personal data.

Community Non-Personal Data Sets

- Any data identifiers about a set of people who have either the same geographic location, religion, job, or other common social interests will form the community non-personal data. For example, the metadata collected by ride-hailing apps, telecom companies, electricity distribution companies among others have been put under the community non-personal data category by the committee.

Private Non-Personal Data Sets

- Private non-personal data can be defined as those which are produced by individuals which can be derived from application of proprietary software or knowledge.

5. d

- **15th India-European Union (Virtual) Summit** was held recently.

Highlights of the summit

- The two sides issued a joint political statement, a five-year roadmap for the India-E.U. strategic partnership, a civil nuclear research and development cooperation agreement between EURATOM and the Department of Atomic Energy, a declaration on “resource efficiency and circular economy” to exchange best practices in range of areas and the renewal of their science and technology agreement for another five years.

Bilateral trade and Investment Agreement

- In a new initiative to **revive talks** on a free trade agreement that have been **suspended since 2013**, the two sides announced a “high level dialogue” between Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and E.U. Trade Commissioner Phil Hogan to try and take the Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) forward.

EU and India

- EU is India’s largest trading partner, while India is the E.U.’s ninth biggest trading partner.

6. b

- On UN’s 75th anniversary, Indian PM to virtually address *ECOSOC*.
- This High-Level Segment is held annually by *ECOSOC*.
- It convenes a diverse group of high-level representatives from the Government, the private sector, civil society and academia.
- The theme of the High-level Segment is “Multilateralism after COVID19: What kind of UN do we need at the 75th anniversary”.
- *Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)*, one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.

- It has 54 Members, elected by the UN General Assembly for overlapping three-year terms.
- The membership is based on geographic representation.
- Decisions taken at the council are taken by simple majority vote.
- Four of the five permanent members of the Security Council have been continuously reelected because they provide funding for most of ECOSOC's budget.
- The council was designed to be the UN's main venue for the discussion of international economic and social issues.

7. d

- Recently, Tensions escalated recently at the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan resulting in the death of at least four Azerbaijani soldiers.
- Conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region began following the breakdown of the Soviet Union.
- Territorial disputes and ethnic conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in Central Asia is on for approximately four decades.
- In 1994, Russia mediated a ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- The conflict continued, and there have been instances of ceasefire violations and violence instigated from both sides.
- The border between Armenia and Azerbaijan has been tense since 2018.

8. c

- The United Arab Emirates is set to launch its first-ever interplanetary mission to Mars.
- The mission, called Hope or the Emirates Mars Mission, is the Arab world's first mission to Mars.
- It aims to create integrated model of the Mars atmosphere and its interaction with outer space and solar winds.
- It will help answer key questions about the global Martian atmosphere and the loss of hydrogen and oxygen gases into space over the span of one Martian year.

9. b

- Recently, a melting glacier at Europe's Mont Blanc mountain range recently disintegrated newspapers buried there for 54 years.
- The Mont Blanc area has lost a quarter of its glacial ice due to climate change.
- It is the highest peak in Europe, located in the Alps.
- The massif lies along the French-Italian border and reaches into Switzerland.
- Mont blanc is also known as White Mountain in French.

10. b

- The World Snake Day is observed on July 16 every year.
- There are more than 3,5000 species of a snakes around the world.
- They live almost everywhere, in deserts, forests, oceans, streams, and lakes.
- Snakes cannot survive in places where the ground stays frozen year round so there are no snakes in Antarctica.
- Some island like Iceland, Ireland, Greenland, and New Zealand, do not have snakes at all.
- Radio telemetry has been used to study the movement patterns of snakes to tackle India's huge snake bite problem.
- It is a technique whereby a radio transmitter generating a radio signal at a unique frequency is attached to an animal.
- The researcher uses an antenna and receiver to locate that transmitter.
- Recently, two non-profits in rural Karnataka, uses Radio telemetry, along with solar lanterns and gum boots, in a unique pilot project to tackle India's huge snake bite problem.

17-07-2020

1) An announcement was recently made that the Poba Reserve Forest would be upgraded to a Wildlife Sanctuary. Poba Reserve Forest is located in which of the following states?



- a. Assam
- b. Mizoram
- c. Maharashtra
- d. Madhya Pradesh

2) With respect to the National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive, consider the following statements

1. It is a central sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Tourism.
2. The main objective of the scheme is to identify circuits that have immense tourist potential and develop it in a planned and prioritized manner.

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 ZyCoV-D

1. It is an indigenous vaccine for COVID-19 under the National Biotechnology Mission.
2. It was designed and developed by Biotechnology Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

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 National BioPharma Mission

1. It is an Industry-Academia Collaborative Mission implemented by

the National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA).

2. The mission is co-funded by the World Health Organisation (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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)

1. It is an Interface Agency to strengthen and empower the emerging Biotech enterprise to undertake strategic research and innovation, addressing nationally relevant product development needs.
2. It is a not-for-profit Public Sector Enterprise set up by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

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 Consumer Price Index (CPI)

1. The changes in the CPI are used to assess price changes associated with the cost of living.
2. CPI also takes into account the online prices of products while computing retail inflation.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Housing Finance Company (HFC)*

1. A HFC is a company registered under the Companies Act, 1956 which is a part of payment and settlement system.
2. HFCs are regulated by the National Housing Bank (NHB).

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 the *Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)*

1. The Maternal Mortality Ratio in India is well below the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) target.
2. Maternal death is the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy.

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) *Cozy Bear* recently seen in news is?

- a. A newly discovered brown bear of Siberia
b. A strain of ransomware
c. A Russian hacker group
d. None of the above

10) *Ker Puja* recently seen in news is celebrated in?

- a. Tripura
b. Nagaland
c. Odisha
d. Bihar

Answers

1. a

- Assam Chief Minister has recently announced that the Poba Reserve Forest in Dhemaji district of **Assam** would be upgraded to a wildlife sanctuary.
- The Reserved Forest (RF) was created in the year 1924 and covers an area of 10,221 hectares.
- Poba is one of the richest rain forests of North-East India in terms of the flora and fauna found in it and can be very well termed a biodiversity hotspot.

2. b

- Union Minister of State(IC) for Tourism Sh. Prahlad Singh Patel has recently inaugurated the **Project "Development of Pilgrimage Amenities at Somnath, Gujarat"** recently.
- The project "Development of Pilgrimage Amenities at Somnath, Gujarat" sanctioned under the PRASHAD scheme in March 2017 has been successfully completed with the cost of Rs. 45.36 crores.
- High quality world class facilities for Parking, Tourism Amenities Centre and Solid Waste Management have been developed under the project.

PRASHAD Scheme

- The 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD) Scheme was launched by the **Ministry of Tourism** in the year 2014-15.
- Its main objective is **integrated development of identified pilgrimage and heritage destinations.**

- The scheme aimed at **infrastructure development such as entry points, last mile connectivity, basic tourism facilities**, etc.
- This scheme is proposed to be implemented as a **Central Sector Scheme** during the 12th Five Year Plan and beyond.

Swadesh Darshan Scheme Objectives

1. To position tourism as a major engine of economic growth and job creation.
2. **Develop circuits having tourist potential in a planned and prioritized manner.**
3. Promote cultural and heritage value of the country to generate livelihoods in the identified regions.

3. d

- **Vaccine Discovery Programme, supported by the Department of Biotechnology under the National Biopharma Mission, implemented by Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) moves into clinical trials.**
- BIRAC has recently announced that **ZyCoV-D** has initiated Phase I/II clinical trials in healthy subjects, making it **the first indigenously developed vaccine for COVID-19** to be administered in humans in India.

ZyCoV-D Vaccine

- It is a plasmid DNA vaccine **designed and developed by Zydus** and partially funded by the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India.
- **Zydus Cadila** is an innovative, global pharmaceutical company that discovers, develops, manufactures and markets a broad range of healthcare therapies, including small molecule drugs, biologic therapeutics, and vaccines.
- The adaptive Phase I/II dose escalation, multi-centric study will assess the safety, tolerability and immunogenicity of the vaccine.

4. d

National BioPharma Mission

- It is an **Industry-Academia Collaborative Mission of Department of Biotechnology (DBT)** for Accelerating Early Development for Biopharmaceuticals.
- It is being implemented by the **Biotechnology Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)** – a Public Sector Undertaking of DBT.
- The National Biopharma Mission was approved by the Cabinet for implementation in May 2017 with a total cost US\$ 250 million which is **co-funded World Bank 50%**.
- This program is dedicated to deliver affordable products to the nation with an aim to improve the health standards of India's population.
- Vaccines, medical devices and diagnostics and biotherapeutics are few of its most important domains, besides, strengthening the clinical trial capacity and building technology transfer capabilities in the country.

5. b

Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)

- BIRAC is a not-for-profit Section 8, Schedule B, Public Sector Enterprise, set up by Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India.
- It is an Interface Agency to strengthen and empower the emerging Biotech enterprise to undertake strategic research and innovation, addressing nationally relevant product development needs.

6. a

- The actual inflation is 90 bps higher than imputed inflation of NSO, according to the SBI's Ecowrap.
- NSO under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) released the CPI for June 2020.
- SBI's Economic Research Department (ERD), in its report titled 'Ecowrap', observed that the Covid-19 pandemic has introduced an outlet bias.
- It states that *online prices of products should take into account while computing retail inflation* as more and more people are relying

on online stores, especially after the outbreak of COVID-19.

- As per SBI Computed COVID CPI, the actual headline inflation is much higher than the imputed inflation.

7. d

- Recently, the *National Housing Bank (NHB)* stepped in to bail out cash-starved *Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)* by disbursing a record Rs 25,000 crore.
- A *Housing Finance Company (HFC)* is a company registered under the *Companies Act, 1956*.
- It primarily transacts or has as one of its principal objects, the transacting of the business of providing finance for housing, whether directly or indirectly.
- *HFCs are treated as one of the categories of NBFCs for regulatory purposes and it is under RBI's direct oversight.*
- It was announced in Budget 2019-20 that the National Housing Bank (NHB) will not remain as the regulator for the HFCs.
- *HFCs cannot accept demand deposit and it is not a part of payment and settlement system.*

8. b

- The Office of the Registrar General's Sample Registration System (SRS) released a special bulletin on *Maternal Mortality in India 2016-18*.
- The *Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) in India has declined to 113 in 2016-18* from 122 in 2015-17 and 130 in 2014-2016.
- MMR is defined as the number of maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births.
- The *target 3.1 of SDG* set by UN aims to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 1,00,000 live births.
- As per the WHO, maternal death is the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management.

9. c

- Recently, Western Nations said that Russia is trying to steal Virus Vaccine Data.
- The hackers have been targeting British, Canadian and American organizations racing to create coronavirus vaccines.
- *Cozy Bear*, classified as advanced persistent threat APT29, is a *Russian hacker group*.
- It is believed to be the *hacking arm* of the GRU or *Russian military intelligence*.
- It is more commonly known as *Fancy Bear*.

10. a

- *Ker puja* is a century old celebrations begin in *Tripura*.
- Ker is considered as a Vastu Devata of Tripura's Royal family.
- According to the royal family, tradition Ker puja includes offerings, sacrifices, and a prescribed boundary which both safeguards people from calamities and saves people from external aggression.
- The Tripura police offer a gun salute before the puja begins.
- The tribals and people around the Ker Puja areas carry the fire to their homes believing that it would ensure their well-being and thwart the evil spirit.

18-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Pension System (NPS)*

- Both resident and Non-resident citizen of India in the age group of 18-65 years can join NPS.**
- The money invested in NPS is managed by Life Insurance Corporation of India.**

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 *5G Technology*

1. The 5G network uses spectrum of radio frequencies and the millimeter-wave frequency.
2. It will provide high speed with high latency connectivity to enable a new generation of Internet of Things (IoT).

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 *Paracel Islands*

1. It is a group of coral islands and reefs in the South China Sea.
2. It is a disputed territory between China, Taiwan and Vietnam.

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) *Jaigaon-Ahllay trade route* recently seen in news is between,

- a. India - Myanmar
- b. India - Nepal
- c. India - Bhutan
- d. None of the above

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ebola Virus*

1. It is a viral disease transmitted to people from wild animals.

2. The human-to-human transmission is through direct contact with body fluids of a infected person.

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

- The National Pension System's corporate subscriber base has registered a growth of 30% during Q1FY21.
- The *National Pension System (NPS)*, is a pension scheme of Government of India.
- The Scheme is regulated by *Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)*.
- *National Pension System Trust (NPST)* established by PFRDA is the registered owner of all assets under NPS.
- Both resident and Non-resident citizen of India in the age group of 18-65 years can join NPS, an NRI can also open an NPS account.
- The money invested in NPS is managed by PFRDA.

2. a

- Reliance Industries announced that Jio has designed, developed a complete indigenous *5G solution* ready for deployment.
- 5G or Fifth Generation is the latest upgrade in the long term evolution (LTE) mobile broadband networks.
- The *5G spectrum is a range of radio frequencies* in the sub-6 GHz range and the *millimeter-wave frequency* range that is 24.25 GHz and above.
- The speed and latency of which improved with 4G networks.
- The 5G networks will have even faster speeds with *low latency* between 1-10 milliseconds.



- Latency is the time a device takes to communicate with the network, which stands at an average of up to 50 milliseconds for 4G networks across the world.

3. c

- Recently, China sends Flanker Fighter Jets to *South China Sea*, as the USS Ronald Reagan carrier battle group sails into Sea.
- The *Paracel Islands* and the *Spratly Islands* are disputed territories located in South China Sea.
- *Paracel Islands* is a disputed territory between China, Taiwan and Vietnam.

4. c

- *India and Bhutan* recently launched a *new trade route*.
- The new route will operate between *Jaigaon in West Bengal* and *Ahllay in Bhutan*.
- It will enable smoother trade of goods and strengthening of sub-regional cooperation amid Chinese inroads into South Asia.
- It will also lead to decongestion of vehicular traffic along the *Jaigaon-Phuentsholing route*.

5. c

- Recently, there was a second deadliest *Ebola Virus Disease* outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).
- Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) formerly known as Ebola haemorrhagic fever, is a rare but severe, often fatal illness in humans.
- The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals.
- The virus spreads to people initially through direct contact with the blood, body fluids and tissues of animals.
- *Human to Human transmission* is through direct contact with body fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from EVD.

20-07-2020

1) *Chattogram and Mongla Ports*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is located in which of the following?

- Odisha
- Karnataka
- West Bengal
- None of the above

2) Which of the places given below is/are *not* associated with *Gautama Buddha in India*?

- Sravasti
- Sarnath
- Lumbini
- Kushinagar

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- All except 3
- 1 and 4 only
- All of the above
- None of the above

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *U.S.-India Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)*

- India had elevated the India-US Energy dialogue into a Strategic Energy Partnership in 2018.
- Under the Partnership, India can store its crude oil in the Strategic Petroleum Reserves of the United States of America (USA).

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

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

4) *AsiaEDGE initiative*, sometimes seen in the news recently, is an initiative of which of the following?

- ASEAN

- b. World Bank
- c. U.S. Government
- d. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Indian Council of Agricultural Research*

1. It is an autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE).
2. The Council is the apex body for co-ordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire 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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Plea Bargaining*

1. It is a process whereby the accused may bargain with the prosecution for a lesser punishment.
2. The Indian code makes plea bargaining can be initiated only by the accused.
3. It is available only to those accused of civil offences in India.

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

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to the *International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)*

1. It is a UN specialized agency, established to manage the administration and governance of Chicago Convention.
2. The Convention on International Civil Aviation shall not be applicable to State 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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *T cells*

1. It is one of the major components of the adaptive immune system.
2. Memory T cells provide the immune system with memory against previously encountered antigens.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are not 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 *Global Manufacturing Risk Index*

1. India ranked one of the top most suitable locations for global manufacturing.
2. The report is released by the World Economic Forum.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone*

1. This zone is an interwoven interdependent fragile Ganga-Himalayan basin, located in the upper Himalayas.
2. The Eco-Sensitive Zones are fragile areas notified under Environment Protection Act 1986.

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

- Union Minister of State for Shipping (I/C) Shri Mansukh Mandaviya has recently flagged off the first trial container ship from **Kolkata to Agartala** through **Chattogram Port of Bangladesh**, in a virtual ceremony.
- This has been done under the Agreement on use of **Chattogram and Mongla Ports** for movement of **India's transit cargo through Bangladesh**.

India and Bangladesh Partnership

- India & Bangladesh have enhanced cooperation in shipping and inland water trade in the recent years.
- Under the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade, in addition to the six existing Ports of Call, five more in each country have been added recently.
- Dredging of inland waterway routes is ongoing under an MoU, signed by the two countries on development of fairway in selected stretches of Bangladesh waterways with the Government of India bearing 80% of the project expenditure and the balance being borne by the Government of Bangladesh.

- Cruise services have also commenced between the two countries promoting tourism and people to people contacts.

2. a

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism & Culture has recently inaugurated the Webinar on **"Cross Border Tourism"** organised by the Association of Buddhist Tour Operators.
- Inaugurating the Webinar, the minister also listed the important sites in India related to the life of Lord Buddha.
- The Minister also shared the initiative of having signage in international languages at important Buddhist sites in the country including signages in Chinese language that have been put up at 5 Buddhist sites / monuments in Uttar Pradesh including Sarnath, Kushinagar and Sravasti.
- Similarly, since Sanchi receives a large number of tourists from Sri Lanka, signages in Sinhalese language have been put up at the Sanchimonuments.

Gautama Budha

- Born to a royal couple from Kapilavastu, Siddhartha who is popularly known as Gautama Buddha grew up in an environment that hid the fundamental realities of life.
- His father never wanted his son to be touched by human sufferings and raised him luxuriously.
- But Siddhartha was destined to detach himself from materialistic life.
- He chose to lead a life that would inspire the world.

Major places in India that are associated with the life of Gautama Buddha are:

- **Lumbini in Nepal (Not in India)** is believed to be the birthplace of Gautama.
- Bodh Gaya in Bihar is where he is believed to have attainment enlightenment under the Mahabodhi tree.
- Gautama delivered his first speech in Sarnath.
- Kushinara is believed to the place where Gautama breathed his last.

- Besides these, Sravasti, Rajgir, Sankassa and Vaishali are also closely associated with the life of Gautama.
- Sravasti is known for his miracles; Rajgir is supposedly the place where he pacified a furious wild elephant; Sankassa is believed to be the place where Buddha returned after preaching the Adidhamma in the heaven and last but not the least Vaishali is where he set up the Bhikshuni Sangha.

3. a

- The second **India-US strategic energy partnership (SEP) Ministerial Meet** was held recently.
- The ministerial was co-chaired by India's petroleum minister Dharmendra Pradhan and US energy secretary Dan Brouillette.
- During the meeting, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to begin cooperation on Strategic Petroleum Reserves operation and maintenance, including exchange of information and best practices.
- They also **discussed the possibility of India storing oil in the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve** as part of its energy security strategy to increase their nation's strategic oil stockpile.
- Such an arrangement will help India, the world's third-largest oil importer, to tackle emergency situations and help it tide over short-term supply disruptions.
- India has an existing storage capacity of 5.3 million tonnes – **Visakhapatnam** (1.33 mt), **Mangaluru** (1.5 mt) and **Padur** (2.5 mt).
- This is operational and can support 9.5 days of net imports.
- The Indian government has also approved the construction of an additional 6.5 mt of strategic crude oil reserves at **Chandikhol** (4 mt) in Odisha and **Padur** (2.5 mt) in Karnataka.
- The SEP also supports USG (US government) efforts under the AsiaEDGE initiative, which establishes India as a strong energy partner in the Indo-Pacific region.

India-U.S. Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)

- In February 2018, India had elevated the India-US Energy dialogue into a Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP).
- The first ministerial meet was held in New Delhi on April 17, 2018.
- The United States and India share an all-of-the-above approach to energy security and energy access.
- The SEP organizes inter-agency engagement on both sides across four primary pillars of cooperation:
 1. Oil and Gas
 2. Renewable Energy
 3. Sustainable Growth
 4. Power and Energy Efficiency

4. c

AsiaEDGE Initiative

- In July 2018, U.S. Secretary Pompeo announced **the Asia EDGE (Enhancing Development and Growth through Energy) initiative** as part of the economic pillar of the **U.S. Indo-Pacific vision**.
- The Asia EDGE initiative is a **U.S. whole-of-government effort** to grow sustainable and secure energy markets throughout the Indo-Pacific.
- Asia EDGE seeks to strengthen energy security, increase energy diversification and trade, and expand energy access across the region.
- Asia EDGE draws on the expertise and resources of the U.S. government, private sector, and international financial institutions.
- The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Energy Resources leads this initiative with the support of eight other U.S. agencies.
- The initiative establishes India as a strong energy partner in the Indo-Pacific region.

5. c

- **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) celebrated its 92nd foundation day recently.**

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

- It is an autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.
- It was established on 16 July 1929 as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- The Council is the apex body for co-ordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country.
- With 102 ICAR institutes and 71 agricultural universities spread across the country this is one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world.

6. c

- Many members of the Tablighi Jamaat belonging to different countries have obtained release from court cases in recent days by means of *Plea Bargaining*.
- It refers to a *person charged with a criminal offence negotiating with the prosecution for a lesser punishment than what is provided in law by pleading guilty to a less serious offence*.
- It was introduced in 2006 as part of a set of amendments to the CrPC, containing Sections 265A to 265L.
- In the U.S. and other countries, the prosecutor plays a key role in bargaining with the suspected offender.
- The *Indian code makes plea bargaining a process that can be initiated only by the accused*.

7. c

- Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE had challenged the authority of the *International Civil Aviation Authority (ICAO)* to adjudicate on the legality of the air blockade against Qatar in ICJ.
- *ICAO is a UN specialized agency, established by States in 1944 to manage the administration and governance of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention)*.

- The *Convention shall be applicable only to civil aircraft, and shall not be applicable to State aircraft*.

- Aircraft used in military, customs and police services shall be deemed to be state aircraft.

8. d

- Scientists have uncovered *T cell immunity specific to SARS-CoV-2 in recovered Covid-19 and SARS patients and also in uninfected individuals*.
- *T cells, along with antibodies, are part of the adaptive human immune response against viral infections*.
- The T cells directly target and kill infected cells.
- *Memory T cells provide the immune system with memory against previously encountered antigens*.
- They can quickly expand to large numbers of effector T cells upon re-exposure to the antigen.
- They inferred that infection and exposure to coronaviruses induces long-lasting *Memory T cells*, which could help in the management of the current pandemic.

9. a

- *India ranks third in Global Manufacturing Risk Index, a list of most-suitable locations for global manufacturing*.
- It is ranked in terms of cost competitiveness and operating conditions among 48 countries.
- China and the U.S. retain the top two positions, while India has moved one place higher to rank third.
- It is released by the US-based property consultant Cushman & Wakefield.
- The countries has been assessed in 4 key areas: Bouncebackability, Conditions, Costs and Risks.

10. c

- The Union Environment Ministry has approved the Zonal Master Plan for the *Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Zone*.

- The approval of ZMP will give a boost to conservation and ecology of the area.
- It will help to undertake developmental activities as permitted under ZMP and it will pave way for faster execution of the Chardham Project.
- This zone is an interwoven interdependent fragile Ganga- Himalayan Basin, located in the upper Himalayas.
- Geographically the area falls under Garhwal lesser Himalayas and Higher Himalayas.
- The Eco-Sensitive Zones are fragile areas notified by MoEFCC under *Environment Protection Act 1986*.

21-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *NISHTHA Programme*

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme under the Samagra Shiksha Mission.
2. It is a capacity building programme that aims to build competencies among all the teachers and school principals at the elementary stage.
3. The program is being organized by constituting both National and State Resource Groups at the National and the State level respectively.

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

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration*

1. The award aims to recognize the performance of the District Collectors towards outcome indicators, economic development, peoples' participation and redressal of public grievances.

2. The award shall be conferred by the Prime Minister of India on Rashtriya Ekta Diwas.
3. The award for the very first time seeks to recognize the efforts of District level officials in the Namami Gange Programme.

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) *ASPIRE* is an e-portal launched recently to facilitate which of the following sectors to become self-reliant?

- a. Machine Tools
- b. Automotive Sector
- c. Power Sector Equipment
- d. Manufacturing Technology

4) *RAISE Programme*, which was launched recently by the Ministry of Power, is a joint initiative of which of the following?

1. Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)
2. Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE)
3. US Agency for International Development (USAID)

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

5) *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), 2020 Report* was produced by?

- a. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

- b. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- c. World Health Organization (WHO)
- d. All of the above

6) Consider the following statements with respect to the *National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)*

1. It is an independent accounting and auditing regulator set up under the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949.
2. It oversees the quality of service of the auditors and suggest measures required to improve the quality of service.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)*

1. It is a transcontinental long-term investment program which aims to connect Asia with Africa, America and Europe.
2. Iran is not a part of Belt and Road Initiative.

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 *Solar Orbiter (Solo) probe*

1. It will be the first to provide images of the Sun's poles.
2. It is a Sun-observing mission by ESA and NASA.

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) *Maguri-Motapung Wetlands* sometimes seen in news is located in?

- a. Assam
- b. Manipur
- c. Gujarat
- d. Tripura

10) Consider the following statements with respect to the *National Investigation Agency (NIA)*

1. It functions as the Central Counter Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency.
2. It is the nodal agency in India which coordinates investigation on behalf of Interpol Member 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

Answers

1. b

- The first on-line NISHTHA programme for 1200 Key Resources Persons of Andhra Pradesh was launched recently by the Union HRD Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriya 'Nishank' in New Delhi.
- Keeping in view the COVID-19 pandemic situation, it is now planned to organise SRG and Teachers training in online mode.

National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA)

- The **Department of School Education and Literacy** has launched a National Mission to improve learning outcomes at the elementary level through an Integrated Teacher Training Programme called NISHTHA under the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** of **Samagra Shiksha** in 2109-20.
- It is a capacity building programme for "Improving Quality of School Education through Integrated Teacher Training".
- It aims to build competencies among all the teachers and school principals at the elementary stage.
- The functionaries (at the state, district, block, cluster level) shall be trained in an integrated manner on learning outcomes, school based assessment, learner – centred pedagogy, new initiatives in education, addressing diverse needs of children through multiple pedagogies, etc.
- This is being organized by constituting **National Resource Groups (NRGs) and State Resource Groups (SRGs)** at the National and the State level.
- A robust portal/Management Information System (MIS) for delivery of the training, monitoring and support mechanism has been infused with this capacity building initiative.

2. d

- *Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions has recently launched the restructured **Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration 2020** scheme and web portal.*

About the Award

- Government of India has instituted a scheme in 2006 namely, "The Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration" - to acknowledge, recognize and reward the extraordinary and innovative work done by Districts/ Organizations of the Central and State Governments.
- The Scheme was restructured in 2014 for recognizing the performance of District Collectors in Priority Programs, Innovations and Aspirational Districts.
- The Scheme has been restructured again in 2020, to recognize the performance of the

District Collectors towards outcome indicators, economic development, peoples' participation and redressal of public grievances.

- Nominations have been called in for four major categories:
 1. District Performance Indicators Programme
 2. Innovation General Category
 3. Aspirational Districts Program
 4. Namami Gange Program
- The award **for the very first time** seeks to recognize the efforts of District level officials in the Namami Gange Programme.
- The award under the restructured scheme shall be **conferred by the Prime Minister** on Rashtriya Ekta Diwas - October 31, 2020 at the Statue of Unity, Kevadia, Gujarat.

3. b

- *Department of Heavy Industry (DHI), Govt of India, has embarked on a mission to promote innovation, R&D and product development in India for various sectors.*
- A step towards this mission is the creation of technology platform e-portals where such technology development, information exchange and innovation can be facilitated.
- There are **five portals** being developed for specific sectors by different organizations viz:
 1. BHEL for power sector equipment
 2. HMT for machine tools
 3. CMFTI for manufacturing technology
 4. ICAT and ARAI for automotive sector
- The objective of these portals is to create an ecosystem which will bring solution seekers and problem solvers together.
- These include, industry, academia, research institutes, start-ups, professionals and experts.

ASPIRE Portal

- International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) is developing technology platform for **automotive industry** called **ASPIRE - Automotive Solutions Portal for Industry, Research and Education**.

- The key objective of this portal is to facilitate the Indian Automotive Industry to become self reliant by assisting in innovation and adoption of global technological advancements by bringing together the stakeholders from various associated avenues.
4. b
- *Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy, RK Singh, has recently inaugurated **India's first public Electric Vehicle (EV) charging plaza at Chelmsford Club in New Delhi.***
 - The charging plaza has been set up with a focus on enhancing energy efficiency and promoting e-mobility.
 - This plaza will host 5 EV chargers of different specifications.
- RAISE Programme**
- The Minister also launched retrofit of air-conditioning to improve indoor air quality for safety and efficiency (RAISE) - a joint initiative of **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).**
 - EESL has undertaken a retrofit of its office air-conditioning and ventilation system.
 - This is a part of the larger initiative to "Retrofit of Air-conditioning to improve Indoor air quality for Safety and Efficiency" developed for healthy and energy-efficient buildings, in partnership with USAID's **MAITREE programme.**
 - EESL's corporate office in Scope Complex has been taken up as a pilot for this initiative.
 - The pilot focuses on improving indoor air quality (IAQ), thermal comfort, and energy efficiency (EE) in the office's air conditioning system.
5. d
- The **State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2020 Report** was released recently on the sidelines of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development.
 - It is produced jointly by the
1. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 2. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
 3. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
 4. UN World Food Programme (WFP)
 5. World Health Organization (WHO)
- Its first edition was brought out in 2017.
6. b
- Recently, Prof. R. Narayanaswamy appointed as Chair of Technical Advisory Committee of *National Financial Reporting Authority.*
 - The *National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA)*, is an *independent accounting and auditing regulator set up* by the Government of India *under the Companies Act, 2013.*
 - It *oversee the quality of service of the professionals, auditors and suggest measures* required to improve the quality of service.
 - It is different from the *Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI).*
 - *ICAI is a statutory body* established by an Act of Parliament, viz. the *Chartered Accountants Act, 1949.*
 - *ICAI would perform its role and shall submit its recommendations on Auditing Standards to the government through the NFRA.*
7. d
- *China* is considering investing in developing *Iran's* oil, gas and petrochemical sectors and \$120 billion in upgrading *Iran's* manufacturing infrastructure.
 - *China* is *Iran's* top trading partner and a key market for *Iranian* crude oil exports.
 - *China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)* is a transcontinental long-term policy and investment program.
 - It *aims to connect Asia with Africa, and Europe.* *America* is not a part of *BRI.*
 - *Iran* is a part of *Belt and Road Initiative.*
 - According to the *Belt and Road Portal*, currently 71 countries are taking part in the *Initiative.*

- India has so far stayed away from Belt and Road initiative (BRI).

8. c

- Recently, *Solar Orbiter Mission shares closest ever images of the Sun.*
- The mission observes the Sun, giving scientists a better understanding of how our star can affect the space environment throughout the solar system.
- The *spacecraft also will be the first to provide images of the Sun's poles.*
- It is a *Sun-observing mission by ESA and NASA.*

9. a

- A major gas leak and blowout at the *Baghjan oil field*, in Assam has severely damaged the nearby *wetlands of Maguri-Motapung.*
- It also polluted the tributaries of the Brahmaputra River, as well as adjacent areas of the *Dibru-Saikhowa National Park.*
- It is a home to some of the largest congregations of waterbirds in the country, including rare migratory species from the imperilled East Asian-Australian Flyway.
- It is an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA).

10. a

- The *National Investigation Agency (NIA)* is recently seen in news regarding Thiruvananthapuram airport gold smuggling case.
- The *NIA* was created under the *NIA Act.* It *functions as the Central Counter Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency.*
- It aims to set the standards of excellence in counter terrorism and other national security related investigations at the national level.
- It also aims to develop as a storehouse of all terrorist related information.
- *CBI* is the nodal police agency in India which *coordinates investigation on behalf of Interpol Member countries.*

- CBI is a criminal investigation agency, while NIA was formed with the main aim of tackling terrorism.

22-07-2020

1) With respect to *Maheswar/Mahismati*, one of the serene and captivating destinations of Madhya Pradesh with historical significance, consider the following statements:

1. It was the capital of Malwa during the Maratha Holkar reign till the capital was shifted to Indore by Malhar Rao Holkar III in 1818.
2. The town lies on the north bank of the River Narmada.
3. It served as the capital of the great Maratha Queen Rajmata Ahilya Devi Holkar during the late eighteenth century.

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

2) Consider the following statements with respect to *Manodarpan Initiative*

1. It aims to provide psychosocial support to students for their Mental Health and Well-being.
2. It is an initiative of Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD) as part of Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

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) *Neowise*, often seen in the news recently is a/an?

- Comet
- Asteroid
- Dwarf Planet
- Exo-planet

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *India Ideas Summit*

- The Summit is being hosted by the NITI Aayog in partnership with Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- The theme for this year's event is 'Building a Better Future'.

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

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

5) The Report on Household Social Consumption: Education Survey was released recently. The survey was conducted by?

- NITI Aayog
- National Statistical Office
- Ministry of Human Resources and Development
- All of the above

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Consumer Protection Act, 2019*

- The consumers have to file complaints only at the location where the service or products were sold.
- It includes a person who obtain goods for resale or for any commercial purpose, as a consumer.
- It covers transactions through all modes including offline, online through electronic means, teleshopping, multi-level marketing or direct selling.

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

- 1 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 3 only
- None of the above

7) Consider the following statements with respect to a *Serological Survey*

- It is used to check if a person has developed immunity to certain diseases.
- The IgG is the first antibody produced by the immune system when a virus attacks and its presence indicates that the person is infected with the virus.

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 *Quadrilateral Security Dialogue*

- It is a strategic dialogue between India, the US, South Korea and Japan.
- All the member countries are a part of Malabar Maritime exercise.

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

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

9) *YuWaah Initiative* sometimes seen in news is related to?

- Facilitate youth to gain relevant skills for productive lives
- Scout sports talent in the age group of 8-14 years from schools

- c. Provide vocational training to develop skilled manpower for industry
- d. None of the above

10) Consider the following

1. Stamp Duty
2. Road Tax
3. Vehicle Tax

Which of the above mentioned tax are outside the purview of GST?

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

Answers

1. d

Maheshwar or Mahishmati

- It is one of serene and captivating destinations of **Madhya Pradesh** with historical significance. It is located 90 kms away from Indore city.
- The Town lies on the **north bank of the Narmada River**.
- The city got its name after Lord Shiva/Maheshwara, it also finds a mention in the epics Ramayana and Mahabharatha.
- It was the **capital of the Malwa during the Maratha Holkar** reign till 6 January 1818, when the capital was shifted to Indore by Malhar Rao Holkar III.
- In the **late eighteenth century, Maheshwar served as the capital of the great Maratha queen Rajmata Ahilya Devi Holkar**.

Rajmata Ahilya Devi Holkar

- The queen was known for her simplicity, this is evident to present day through Rajwada or the Royal Residence where the queen used to meet her people, a two-storied building.
- She was a generous patron of the arts.

- Textile is an important aspect that is developed by Ahilya Devi, she invited master weavers from Surat and South India to weave sarees that are unique from the existing ones.
- The designs used on these are inspirations from fort architecture and Narmada river. These were gifted to royal guests.
- Under the princely state the weavers arts flourished and specialized into the present day **Maheshwari cloth**.
- She embellished the city with many buildings and public works, and it is home to her palace, as well as numerous temples, a fort, and riverfront ghats.
- Ahilyeshwar temple, where Ahilya devi used to offer prayers, Vitthal temple near Ahilleshwar temple were known for its architecture.
- There are around 91 temples that are built by the Rajmata.
- Baneshwar temple which is dedicated to Lord Shiva is also located Maheshwar.

2. c

- **Union HRD Minister, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank had recently launched the MANODARPAN initiative of HRD Ministry to provide psychosocial support to students for their Mental Health and Well-being in New Delhi.**
- As part of Manodarpan initiative, the Ministry of HRD had also launched a National Toll-free Helpline (8448440632), a special web page of Manodarpan on the portal of HRD Ministry, and a Handbook on Manodarpan.

ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAN

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the **Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan**, a stimulus package for revitalising the economy of India post COVID-19 outbreak.
- The 'Manodarpan' initiative has been included in the ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT ABHIYAN, as a part of strengthening human capital and increasing productivity and efficient reform and initiatives for the Education sector.

3. a

- The recently discovered comet called **C/2020 F3**, also known as **NEOWISE** after the NASA

telescope that discovered it, will make its closest approach to the Earth on July 22, 2020.

- On July 3, the comet was closest to the sun at 43 million km.
- On this day, the comet cruised inside Mercury's orbit and, due to its proximity to the sun, its outer layer was released creating an atmosphere – referred to as coma – of gas and dust from its icy surface.
- This atmosphere sometimes leads to formation of a bright tail of debris that can extend for thousands or millions of kilometres.

Comets

- Comets or “dirty snowballs” are mostly made of dust, rocks and ice, the remnants from time the solar system was formed over 4.6 billion years ago.
- The word comet comes from the Latin word “Cometa” which means “long-haired” and the earliest known record of a comet sighting was made by an astrologer in 1059 BC.
- Comets can range in their width from a few miles to tens of miles wide. As they orbit closer to the sun, like in the case of C/2020 F3, they heat up and release debris of dust and gases that forms into a “glowing head” that can often be larger than a planet.

4. b

- *Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate and deliver the keynote address at the India Ideas Summit scheduled to be held on 22nd July, 2020.*

India Ideas Summit, 2020

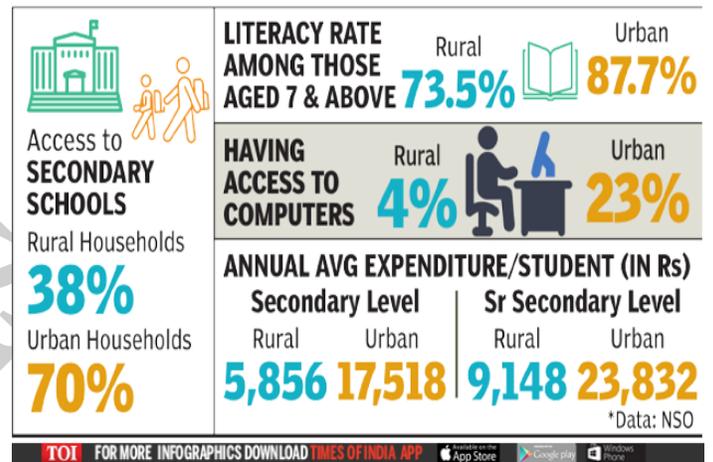
- The Summit is being hosted by the **US-India Business Council**.
- It is a virtual summit featuring high-level presence from Indian and US government policymakers, state-level officials, and thought leaders from business and society.
- This year marks the 45th anniversary of the formation of the Council.
- The theme for this year's India Ideas Summit is '**Building a Better Future**'.

- The Summit will witness discussions on areas including India-US cooperation and future of the relation between the two countries in a post pandemic world.

5. b

- A Report titled **Household Social Consumption: Education** was released recently.
- The survey was conducted by the **National Statistical Office (NSO)**.
- The report analyses the trends in rural-urban gap in education.

STARK DIVIDE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION



6. c

- The *Consumer Protection Act, 2019* came in to force recently.
- Its salient features includes the establishment of the *Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA)* to promote, protect and enforce the rights of consumers.
- A *consumer* is defined as a person who buys any good or avails a service for a consideration.
- It *does not include a person who obtains a good for resale* or a good or service for commercial purpose.
- The *consumers can file complaints at a district or state consumer commission closest to their residence*, rather than the location where the service or products were sold.

- It covers transactions through all modes including offline, and online through electronic means, teleshopping, multi-level marketing or direct selling.
7. a
- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has declared that the *Serological Survey* in Delhi shows antibodies in 23% participants.
 - The presence of *IgG antibodies* indicates that a person has been exposed to the virus that causes Covid-19.
 - A *Serological Survey* seeks to assess the prevalence of disease in a population by detecting the presence of specific antibodies against the virus.
 - It can also be conducted to check if a person has developed immunity to certain diseases.
 - *IgM antibody* is usually the first antibody produced by the immune system when a virus attacks.
 - When *IgM* is detected, the person may still be infected, or may have recently recovered from a COVID-19 infection.
 - The presence of *IgG antibodies* indicate that the person may have had COVID-19 in the recent past and have developed antibodies.
 - The *IgG antibodies develop in most patients within 7 to 10 days* after symptoms of COVID-19 begin.
8. d
- The *Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD)* is a strategic dialogue between India, the US, Australia and Japan.
 - It was set up in the backdrop of growing Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea.
 - *Malabar Maritime exercise* is between India, the US and Japan.
 - *Australia is almost certain to join the Malabar naval war exercise* scheduled for later this year.
9. a
- Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, *YuWaah* and UN agencies join hands for *empowering young people in India*.
- The partnership aims to develop the potential of young people through meaningful engagement and participation in social, civic and community initiatives.
 - *YuWaah* aims to facilitate youth to gain relevant skills for productive lives and the future of work.
 - The target age group of *YuWaah* includes adolescent girls and boys.
 - Its key mission is to promote access to foundational, transferable and 21st century skills for youth inside and outside formal education systems.
10. d
- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has enabled the filing form GSTR-4 annual return by Composition Taxpayers on GST Portal.
 - *Alcohol, Petroleum, Petroleum Products, Import Duty, Mandi Tax, Stamp Duty, Registry, Road Tax, Vehicle Tax, some entertainment (levied by local bodies) are some of the taxes that are still out of the framework of the GST.*
- 23-07-2020**
- 1) With respect to the *International Union of Railways*, consider the following statements**
- 1. It is the global platform for railway systems working on inter-operability, developing common technical standards for railways across the world.**
 - 2. India is a member to this organisation which is headquartered in Paris, France.**
- 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 *Directorate General of Goods and Service Tax Intelligence (DGGI)*

1. It is an apex intelligence organization functioning under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs.
2. It has been entrusted with the task of collection, collation and dissemination of intelligence relating to evasion of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and also duties of Central Excise and Service Tax on an all India basis.

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 *Venus*

1. Venus is one of the two planets that rotate from East to West.
2. Venus doesn't have any moons similar to Mercury.
3. It has a thick atmosphere full of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and clouds made of sulfuric acid.

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) With respect to "AZD1222", sometimes seen in the news recently, consider the following statements

1. It is a recombinant viral vector vaccine developed by Oxford University for the COVID-19.
2. It uses weakened version of a common-cold virus that infects chimpanzees.

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 Ministry of Food Processing and Industries had recently operationalized the *Zoram Food Park*. It is the first Mega Food Park (MFP) of?

- a. Odisha
- b. Mizoram
- c. Telangana
- d. Jammu and Kashmir

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Insider Trading*

1. It involves trading in a public company's stock by someone who has non-public, material information about that stock.
2. It is prohibited under the Companies Act, 1956.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are *not* correct?

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR) technique*

1. In DSR, farmers prepare nurseries where the paddy seeds are first sown and raised into young plants, before replanting.
2. This process saves water, as mostly water is replaced by herbicides.

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 *Heat Waves*

1. The Dry North-Westerly Winds causes heat waves conditions over the plains of northwest India and Central India.
2. To declare heat wave, the listed criteria should be met at least in two stations in a Meteorological subdivision for at least two consecutive days and it will be declared on the second day.

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) *Kakrapar Atomic Power Project* recently seen in news is located in?

- a. Maharashtra
b. Rajasthan
c. Uttar Pradesh
d. Gujarat

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Superbugs*

1. These are strains of microorganism that are resistant to several types of antibiotics after being exposed to it.
2. They are known to breed in wastewater plants and releases the extracellular Antibiotic-Resistant Genes (ARG).

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

- Under the 96th *Union Internationale Des Chemins (UIC) General Assembly*, Shri Arun Kumar, DG/RPF has been nominated as **the Vice-Chairman** of the Security platform from July 2020 to July 2022.
- DG/ RPF will then take over as **Chairman** of the Security Platform from July 2022 to July 2024.

International Union of Railways

- Union Internationale Des Chemins (UIC) is a French word, the meaning of which in English is **International Union of Railways**.
- The UIC is the global platform for railway systems working on inter-operability, developing common technical standards for railways across the world and strengthening what is called "Rail Diplomacy".
- It is headquartered in **Paris, France**.
- The UIC Security Platform is empowered to develop and formulate analysis and policy positions on behalf of the rail sector in matters relating to security of persons, property and installations.
- The security platform promotes the exchange of information and experience among the security agencies of UIC members and proposes common interest projects and activities in the field of railway security as dictated by requirement of members or external events.
- **Railway Protection Force (RPF)**, on behalf of Indian Railways, has always been an **active member of the UIC** security platform and contributed to discussions, deliberations, exchange of ideas and best practices since long.
- It has also organized UIC Security Conferences in 2006 and 2015 in New Delhi.
- RPF involves itself in working groups, forums and meetings and its contribution in working

of UIC security platform has been appreciated by UIC leadership since long.

2. c

- *Acting on specific intelligence the Directorate General of Goods and Service Tax Intelligence, Headquarters (DGGI, Hqrs) has unveiled a racket of clandestine clearance of cigarettes through a factory run in Kota.*

Directorate General of Goods and Service Tax Intelligence (DCGI)

- *Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) was known as Directorate General of Central Excise Intelligence (DGCEI) erstwhile.*
- *It is an apex intelligence organization functioning under the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs**, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.*
- *It has been entrusted with the task of **collection, collation and dissemination of intelligence relating to evasion of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and duties of Central Excise and Service Tax** on an all India basis.*

History of the Organisation

- *It was earlier known as Directorate General of Anti-Evasion (DGAE).*
- *It was established in the year 1979 as an independent wing under the control of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, New Delhi with the Regional Units located at Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.*
- *It became a full-fledged Directorate in 1983, headed by a Director.*
- *In 1988, the Directorate was upgraded to Directorate General under a Director General with four Zonal Units located at Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai, headed by Additional Director Generals.*

3. d

- *An International group of researchers have recently identified 37 volcanic structures on Venus that were recently active and are likely still active today.*
- *The results, published in the Nature Geoscience, **overturn** the long-held*

*assumptions that the second planet from the sun is largely **dormant**.*

What we thought?

- *Unlike Earth, Venus doesn't have plate tectonics that are constantly moving and gradually shaping its surface, leaving many scientists to assume the planet had been inactive for perhaps the last half-billion years.*
- *But this assumption has never been truly tested, since the planet's incredibly thick atmosphere and scorching temperatures have made it very difficult to study.*

The new findings

- *It focused around ring-like structures called coronae, upwells of volcanic material from the planet's interior, which are a sign of geological activity.*
- *The researchers developed simulations of what the planet's active coronae should look like based on thermal data collected by the European Space Agency's Venus Express orbiter (whose mission ended in 2014).*
- *Using these simulations, the researchers had an idea of what surface characteristics to look for to identify active coronae.*
- *Specifically, they would have trenches around their outer rings and protuberances around the trenches' edges.*

About Venus

- *Even though Venus isn't the closest planet to the sun, it is still the hottest.*
- *It has a **thick atmosphere** full of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and **clouds made of sulfuric acid**.*
- *The gas traps heat and keeps Venus toasty warm. In fact, it's so hot on Venus, metals like lead would be puddles of melted liquid.*
- *Venus looks like a very active planet. It has mountains and volcanoes. Venus is similar in size to Earth. Earth is just a little bit bigger.*
- *Venus is unusual because it spins the opposite direction of Earth (i.e from East to West) and most other planets.*
- *And its rotation is very slow. It takes about 243 Earth days to spin around just once.*

- Because it's so close to the sun, a year goes by fast.
- It takes 225 Earth days for Venus to go all the way around the sun. That means that a day on Venus is a little longer than a year on Venus.
- Since the day and year lengths are similar, one day on Venus is not like a day on Earth.
- Here, the sun rises and sets once each day. But on Venus, the sun rises every 117 Earth days. That means the sun rises two times during each year on Venus, even though it is still the same day on Venus.
- Because of its rotation, the sun rises in the west and sets in the east.
- **Just like Mercury, Venus doesn't have any moons.**

4. c

- The researchers recently announced the results of the first phase of a **Covid-19 vaccine, AZD1222**, developed by the **University of Oxford**.
- The vaccine appears safe and induces a strong immune response within the body, the results published in leading scientific journal The Lancet show.
- The results show they induced strong antibody and T-cell immune responses for up to 56 days after they were given.
- T-cells are crucial for maintaining protection against the virus for years.

About the Vaccine

- The shot, **AZD1222**, is a recombinant viral vector vaccine developed by Oxford University.
- It is licensed to British pharma giant AstraZeneca.
- It is a chimpanzee adenovirus viral vector (ChAdOx1) vaccine that expresses the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein.
- The experimental vaccine uses weakened version of a common-cold virus that infects chimpanzees which are given encoded instructions for making proteins from the novel coronavirus to build immunity.
- It is likely to provide protection for about a year.

- Data from late-stage studies is expected by August to September and the Delivery of first dose expected between September and October 2020.

5. b

- *Recently, Ministry of food processing industries has operationalized the first Mega Food Park (MFP) of Mizoram.*
- The Zoram Mega Food Park has been set up under the 'Mega Food Park Scheme'.
- It will boost the North-East Region's potential to become the organic destination of the world due to its rich agricultural and horticultural produce.

Mega Food Park

- A Mega food Park typically consists of supply chain infrastructure including
 1. Collection centers (CC),
 2. Primary processing centers (PPC)
 3. Central processing centers (CPC),
 4. Cold chain,
 5. Around 25-30 fully developed plots for entrepreneurs to set up food processing units.
- The Scheme is based on the "Cluster" approach and envisages creation of state of art support infrastructure in a well-defined Agri/horticultural zone.
- The central government provides financial assistance up to Rs. 50 Crore per Mega Food Park (MFP) project.
- The MFP project is implemented by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) which is a Body Corporate registered under the Companies Act, 2013.

6. d

- Recently, *SEBI amends Insider Trading Norms* and it entities to maintain database on unpublished price-sensitive information.
- Insider trading involves trading in a public company's stock by someone who has non-public, material information about that stock for any reason.
- It is *prohibited under the Companies Act, 1956*.

- It is an unfair practice, wherein the other stock holders are at a great disadvantage due to lack of important insider non-public information.
- This form of insider trading is illegal and comes with stern penalties including both potential fines and jail time.

7. b

- There are reports that paddy sown with *Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR) technique* has been attacked by rodents and farmers are facing big challenges in Punjab.
- In *Traditional Transplanting*, farmers prepare nurseries where the paddy seeds are first sown and raised into young plants.
- These seedlings are then uprooted and replanted 25-35 days later in the main field.
- In *DSR*, there is no nursery preparation or transplantation.
- The paddy seeds are, instead, directly drilled into the field by a tractor-powered machine.
- This process saves water, as there is no flooding of fields during sowing and water is replaced by herbicides to kill weeds.
- It also saves labour cost.

8. c

- The first '*Assessment of Climate Change over Indian Region*', released by the Ministry of Earth Sciences recently.
- It warns of tropical cyclones, thunderstorms, heat waves, floods and droughts in India.
- Heat wave is considered if maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C or more for Plains, 37°C or more for coastal stations and at least 30°C or more for Hilly regions.
- The *Dry North-Westerly Winds* causes heat waves conditions over plains of northwest India and Central India.
- To declare heat wave, the listed criteria should be met at least in two stations in a Meteorological subdivision for at least two consecutive days and it will be declared on the second day.

9. d

- The third unit of the *Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP-3)* in Gujarat achieved its 'first criticality'.
- *Criticality* is a term that signifies the initiation of a controlled but sustained nuclear fission reaction.
- It is the *biggest indigenously developed variant* of the Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR).
- The PHWRs, which use natural uranium as fuel and heavy water as moderator, are the mainstay of India's nuclear reactor fleet.

10. c

- A research shows that, a new 'wrap, trap and zap' strategy that employs microspheres wrapped in graphene oxide, forming a graphene shield helps destroy antibiotic-resistant bacteria.
- It also destroys the free-floating *Antibiotic-Resistant Genes (ARG)* produced by them in wastewater treatment plants.
- *Superbugs* are known to breed in wastewater plants and release extracellular ARGs when they are killed while disinfecting effluent.
- These are strains of microorganism that are resistant to several types of antibiotics after being exposed to it.
- The Antimicrobial resistance happens when microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites) change when they are exposed to antimicrobial drugs (such as antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals, antimalarials, and anthelmintics).

24-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Vriksharopan Abhiyan*

- 1. It is a tree plantation campaign during which largescale plantation would be carried out in mines, colonies, offices and other suitable areas of coal and lignite PSUs.**
- 2. The campaign is being organised by the Ministry of Coal involving all coal and lignite PSUs.**

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 *Study in India Programme*

- It is a flagship project under the Ministry of External Affairs that aims to facilitate and encourage the global student community to study in India.
- University Grants Commission (UGC) under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, is the implementing agency of the programme.

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

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

3) According to a notification issued by the Union Environment Ministry which declares the area as an ecologically sensitive zone, Ministry of Coal has recently removed the *Bander Coal Mine* from the list of mines that are up for the auction under the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015. *Bander Coal Mine* was a part of?

- Kawal Tiger Reserve
- Simlipal Tiger Reserve
- Bandipur Tiger Reserve
- Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve

4) Which of the following is the objective of *Tianwen 1* or *Quest for Heavenly Truth 1 Mission* launched recently by China?

- To orbit the red planet for comprehensive observation, landing on Martian soil and sending a rover to roam the landing site

b. To explore the still unexplored zone beyond Kuiper belt after the NASA' Voyager II

c. To build the first space telescope to investigate how dark energy and dark matter control our universe

d. None of the above

5) Consider the following statements

- He was involved in incidents like the Kakori conspiracy, bombing of assembly, killing of assistant superintendent of police, Saunders, among others.
- Under his leadership, the name of Hindustan Republican Association/Army (HRA) was changed to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).
- He died in a park in Allahabad in February 1931 during an encounter with the British.

Identify the personality who correctly matches with the above description:

- Bhagat Singh
- Sukhdev Thapar
- Shivaram Rajguru
- Chandra Sekhar Azad

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *All India Radio (AIR)*

- The AIR is under Prasar Bharati board which is an autonomous body under Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
- Broadcast on AIR by individuals will not permit direct publicity for or on behalf of an individual or organization which is likely to benefit only that individual or organization.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Dhruvastra*

1. It is an indigenously developed anti-tank guided missile by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. It operates in, lock-on before launch mode which can only be launched from land based platform.

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 the *World Trade Organization (WTO)*

1. It is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.
2. Any state or customs territory having full autonomy in the conduct of its trade policies may join the WTO.
3. The United States of America has pulled out of WTO membership.

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

9) *ANASIS-2 Mission* recently seen in news is?

- a. China's most ambitious Mars mission
- b. Israel's telecommunication satellite
- c. UAE's Mission to Mars
- d. South Korea's military communications satellite

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA)*

1. It is released by the World Wide Fund for Nature.
2. India ranked one among the top countries that have gained in forest areas in the last decade.

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

Vriksharopan Abhiyan

- Union Home Minister has recently launched the campaign "Vriksharopan Abhiyan".
- It is **being organized by the Ministry of Coal** which involves all coal and lignite PSUs.
- It is a part of going green Initiative of Ministry of Coal.
- Under this initiative, large scale plantation will be carried out in colonies, offices, and mines and in other suitable areas of coal and Ignite PSUs.
- Seedlings will also be distributed under the campaign in the nearby areas for promoting plantation by society.
- Under this initiative six eco-parks were inaugurated by Home Ministry, it will provide avenues for the adventure, water sport, recreation, bird watching, etc.
- Going Green initiative involves maximization of green cover through ecological reclamation of the mined-out areas and overburden dumps, avenue plantation at suitable places, and plantation in and around the mines.

2. d

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development has recently conducted the first ever **Indian Scholastic Assessment (Ind-SAT) Test 2020** under its 'Study in India' programme.
- **EdCIL (India) Limited, a PSU under MHRD** and the implementing agency of SII handled the registrations and other aspects of the examinations.

Indian Scholastic Assessment Test (Ind-SAT)

- Ind-SAT is an eligibility test for granting scholarships and admissions to foreign students to study in selected Indian universities under the Study in India programme.
- Ind-SAT is designed to measure the scholastic capabilities of students seeking admission in educational institutes in India.
- The scores obtained in Ind-SAT will serve as a criterion to shortlist the students for the allocation of scholarships in the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- Ind-SAT 2020 was held in remote-proctored mode and was administered by the National Testing Agency, or NTA.
- Around five thousand students from Nepal, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Sri-Lanka, Kenya, Zambia, Indonesia and Mauritius took Ind-SAT 2020.
- As per a statement the eligibility test of Ind-SAT was held in 12 countries on a pilot basis this year. There are plans to extend this to other countries in the future.

Study in India Programme

- It is a flagship project under the **Ministry of HRD**, the Govt. of India, was launched in April 2018.
- This program has been put together to facilitate and encourage the global student community to study in India, which offers a plethora of courses with its top-ranked institutes.
- EdCIL India Limited, a PSU under MHRD, is the implementing agency of the programme.

EdCIL (India) Limited

- It is a **Mini Ratna Category-1 CPSE** continuously profit making and fast growing CPSE under Ministry of Human Resource Development offering management and consultancy services in all areas of education and human resource development, both within India and overseas.

3. d

- The Union Ministry of Coal has recently removed the Bander coal mine in Chandrapur district of **Maharashtra** from the list of mines that are up for the auction under the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015.
- **Bander was a part of the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve**, the ministry said in a withdrawal notice issued on July 21, 2020.
- This was according to the notification declaring the area as an ecologically sensitive zone issued by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

4. a

- China successfully launched its **first Mars probe Tianwen 1** or **Quest for Heavenly Truth 1** using Long March-5 rocket – China's largest and most powerful launch vehicle.
- It carries the spacecraft with a mass of about five tonnes and soared into the sky from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site on the coast of southern China's island province of Hainan.
- The probe consists of three parts – the orbiter, the lander and the rover – and they will separate in Mars orbit.
- The orbiter will remain in the orbit for scientific operations and to relay signals while the lander-rover combination makes an autonomous descent and landing.
- The rover has six wheels and four solar panels and carries six scientific instruments.
- It weighs over 200 kilogrammes and will work for about three months on the planet.
- China aims to catch up with India, the US, Russia and the European Union to reach the red planet.

Mission Objective

- The Mission will fulfil three scientific objectives:

1. Orbiting the red planet for comprehensive observation
 2. Landing on Martian soil
 3. Sending a rover to roam the landing site
 - It will conduct scientific investigations into the planet's soil, geological structure, environment, atmosphere and water.
 - It should arrive in orbit around the red planet in February.
5. d
- The country celebrated the 114th birth anniversary of a revolutionary leader Chandrashekhar Azad.
 - Azad was one of those few leaders who gave nightmares to British administration during the struggle for Independence.
 - His journey as a revolutionary leader began in 1920 when he participated in Mahatma Gandhi-led Non-Cooperation Movement.
 - This happened a year after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Azad got arrested at the age of 15 for taking part in the movement.
 - Azad decided to take the revolutionary route after suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement.
 - He rose to the position of chief strategist in the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.
 - Under the leadership of Chandra Shekhar Azad, the name of HRA was changed to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).
 - He was involved in incidents like the Kakori conspiracy, bombing of assembly, killing of assistant superintendent of police, Saunders, among others.
 - Azad was involved in a bid to blow up Viceroy Irwin's train near Delhi in December 1929.
 - He died in a park in Allahabad in February 1931 during an encounter with the British.
6. c
- *National Broadcasting Day* is being observed 23rd July.
 - *All India Radio (AIR)* is the National Public Service Broadcaster.
- *AIR* is under *Prasar Bharati* board which is an autonomous body under Ministry of I&B, Govt. of India.
 - According to *All India Radio Code*, broadcast on AIR by individuals will not permit direct publicity for or on behalf of an individual or organization which is likely to benefit only that individual or organization.
7. a
- India has successfully conducted flight tests of its *indigenously developed anti-tank guided missile "Dhruvastra"*.
 - The anti-tank guided *Nag Missile (HELINA)*, which has been named now as *Dhruvastra*.
 - Developed by the DRDO, the helicopter-launched anti-tank guided missile is one of the most advanced anti-tank weapons in the world.
 - It operates in, *lock-on before launch mode* which can be launched from land and air based platform.
 - The ground-based Nag missile was also successfully tested earlier.
8. a
- Recently, *Turkmenistan* gets observer status in *World Trade Organization (WTO)*.
 - *WTO* is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.
 - Any state or customs territory having full autonomy in the conduct of its trade policies may join the WTO.
 - The WTO has 164 members and 23 observer countries. The US is the member of WTO.
 - Only 16 countries are not WTO members. They are Aruba, Curacao, Eritrea, Kiribati, Kosovo, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Monaco, Nauru, North Korea, Palau, the Palestinian Territories, San Marino, Sint Maarten, and Tuvalu.
9. d
- *ANASIS-2* is South Korea's first military communications satellite.
 - It was recently launched successfully by SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.

- The *ANASIS-2* telecommunications satellite will operate in geostationary Earth orbit.
- The *Chinese Mars Mission*, named *Tianwen-1* was also launched successfully recently.

10. b

- The latest *Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA)* has brought out by the *Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)* of the UN.
- *India has ranked 3rd among the top 10 countries that have gained in forest areas in the last decade, 2010-2020.*
- This report assesses the state of forests, their conditions and management for all member countries.
- The Asian continent reported the highest net gain in forest area in 2010-2020, according to the report.
- The top 10 countries that have recorded the maximum average annual net gains in forest area are China, Australia, India, Chile, Vietnam, Turkey, the United States, France, Italy and Romania.
- The forest area managed by local, tribal and indigenous communities in India increased from zero in 1990 to about 25 million ha in 2015.
- However, the naturally regenerating forest rate is disappointing, according to the assessment.

25-07-2020

1) With respect to *India-Russia Joint Technology Assessment and Accelerated Commercialization Programme*, consider the following statements

1. The programme was launched by the Department of Science and Technology.
2. The programme, which is implemented by FICCI in India, will connect Indian, and Russian Science & Technology (S&T) led SMEs and Start-ups.

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) *DP Singh Committee* was constituted recently for which of the following purposes?

- a. To suggest ways to ensure more students stay and study in India
- b. To bring out a safety manual for the Central Public Works Department
- c. To assess key challenges, and suggest reforms in logistics development and associated commerce
- d. None of the above

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ind-CEPI Mission*

1. The Mission aims to strengthen the development of vaccines for the diseases of epidemic potential in India.
2. Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a PSU under the Department of Biotechnology is the implementation agency of the 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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *WHO Traditional Medicine (TM) Strategy 2014–2023*

1. The strategy was developed in response to the UN General Assembly resolution on traditional medicine.
2. The strategy seeks to build upon the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2002–2005, which reviewed the status of Traditional Medicine globally and in Member States.



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 *Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana*

- It aims for the empowerment of potters community in the remotest of locations in the country.
- It is an initiative of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission(KVIC).

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

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

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Transit Pass System*

- It is a pan India pass system launched by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways which enhances seamless movement of essential commodities across India.
- The passes can be applied from mobile phones and it can be received as e-passes in mobile phones.

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 *Lonar Lake*

- It is located in the world's high velocity impact formed in basaltic rock.
- The mud belt of the lake is rich in vegetation.

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 *Brahmaputra River*

- It flows through Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Assam before entering into Bangladesh.
- Majuli, the largest river island is located in Brahmaputra River.

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 with respect to the *National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD)*

- It is under administrative control of the Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, which focuses only on the control of communicable diseases.
- It does the outbreak investigations and recommendations on control measures for the out-break of various diseases in the States/UTs all over the country.

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

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

10) Consider the following statements with respect to the *Tenth Schedule to the Indian Constitution*

1. When a political party merge with or into another party with at least two-thirds of its legislators, then neither the members who decide to merge, nor the ones who stay with the original party will face disqualification.
2. The law specify a 15 days time-period for the Presiding Officer to decide on a disqualification plea.

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

- The **Department of Science and Technology** has recently launched the **India-Russia Joint Technology Assessment and Accelerated Commercialization Programme** in partnership with the **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)** and **Foundation for Assistance to Small Innovative Enterprises (FASIE)** of the Russian Federation.
- The programme will connect Indian, and Russian Science & Technology (S&T) led SMEs and Start-ups for joint R&D for technology development and for cross-country technology adaptation.

About the Programme

- The programme will run through **two annual cycles** with up to five projects to be funded under each cycle.
- Projects are being sought on leading S&T focus areas, including but not limited to, IT & ICT (including AI, AR, VR), Medicine &

Pharmaceuticals, Renewable Energy, Aerospace, Alternative Technologies, Environment, New Materials, Biotechnologies, Robotics and Drones.

- **On behalf of DST, FICCI will implement the program in India.**
- Over a period of two years, the Department of Science and Technology will fund up to INR 15 Crores to ten Indian SMEs/Start-ups and FASIE will provide similar funding to the Russian projects.
- The programme will provide access to partial public funding for jointly selected projects with the participation of at least one start-up/SME from India and one SME from Russia.
- The selected projects will be required to bear partial funding as well, either through own funds or alternate sources of funding.
- In addition to the financial support, the teams will also be supported through capacity building, mentorship and business development.

2. a

- **Ministry of Human Resources Development** had constituted a committee recently for preparing guidelines and measures to **ensure more and more students stay in India and study in India.**
- **Prof. D P Singh**, Chairman of University Grant Commission (UGC) will be the head of the committee.
- The committee is also supposed to recommend a mechanism to increase the intake in well-performing universities.
- The Committee will submit the report in a fortnight.

3. c

- **A Vaccine Discovery Programme** supported by the Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India under **Ind CEPI**, implemented by **BIRAC** will soon move into clinical trials.
- DBT-BIRAC has facilitated the establishment of 'first-of-its-kind' mRNA-based vaccine manufacturing platform in India.
- DBT has provided seed funding for the development of Gennova's novel self-

amplifying mRNA-based vaccine candidate for COVID19 – **HGCO19**.

Ind-CEPI

- The Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India is supporting the implementation of the Ind-CEPI, which is **“Epidemic preparedness through rapid vaccine development: Support of Indian vaccine development aligned with the global initiative of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)”**, at Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) and the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI).
 - Ind-CEPI aims to and associated competencies/technologies developing countries and diseases that can potentially be a threat to populations build coordinated preparedness in the Indian public health system and vaccine industry to address existing and emergent infectious threats in India, and support the global initiative of CEPI through a dedicated Program Management Unit (PMU) at BIRAC.
 - **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC)**, a Public Sector Undertaking of the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology has been entrusted the responsibility of implementing this Program.
 - It will house the Program Management Unit (PMU) that would work as an operational and functional arm to oversee and monitor program implementation.
4. b
- *Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare digitally participated in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Health Minister's Digital Meet at Nirman Bhawan recently.*
 - The meet was chaired by Mr. Mikhail Murashko, Minister of Health of the Russian Federation.
 - The ongoing COVID crisis was the key topic of discussion.
 - During the meeting, India pointed out that **“there is currently no institutional**

mechanism within SCO to discuss cooperation in Traditional Medicine that has the potential to fulfil the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023 and also reinforce the effective implementation of the Joint Statement on cooperation in combating epidemics signed at the Qingdao Summit in 2018.

- Finally, India proposes to set up a Sub-Group on Traditional Medicine under the existing Institutional Meetings of the SCO Health Ministers to fulfil the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023.

Traditional medicine (TM)

- It is an important and often underestimated part of health services.
- In some countries, traditional medicine or non-conventional medicine may be termed complementary medicine (CM).
- TM has a long history of use in health maintenance and in disease prevention and treatment, particularly for chronic disease.

WHO Traditional Medicine (TM) Strategy 2014–2023

- It was developed in response to the **World Health Assembly resolution on traditional medicine** (WHA62.13).
- The main goals of the strategy are to support Member States in:
 1. Harnessing the potential contribution of TM to health, wellness and peoplecentred health care
 2. Promoting the safe and effective use of TM by regulating, researching and integrating TM products, practitioners and practice into health systems, where appropriate.
- The strategy aims to support Member States in developing proactive policies and implementing action plans that will strengthen the role TM plays in keeping populations healthy.
- The strategy seeks to build upon the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2002–2005, which reviewed the status of TM globally and in Member States.

5. c

- The Union Home Minister had recently distributed 100 electric potter wheels to 100 trained artisans under the **Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana**.

Kumbhar Sashaktikaran Program

- It is an initiative of the **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** for **empowerment of potters community in the remotest of locations** in the country.

6. b

- Ministry of Environment has launched piloting of the *National Transit Pass System*.
- It is a pan India pass system to enhances seamless movement of forest produce across India.
- The passes can be applied from mobile phones as well as it can be received as e-passes in mobile phones.

7. a

- The colour of Lonar lake water turned pink due to a large presence of the salt-loving 'Haloarchaea' microbes.
- Haloarchaea or Halophilic Archaea is a bacteria culture which produces pink pigment and is found in water saturated with salt.
- The oval-shaped Lonar lake, formed after a meteorite hit the earth some 50,000 years ago.
- The lake is located in the world's only high velocity impact formed in basaltic rock.
- The water in the lake is both saline and alkaline.
- There is an absence of any kind of vegetation in the mud belt, which is due to the alkaline content of the area.

8. b

- A severe flood warning was issued for Assam and Arunachal Pradesh after the water in the Brahmaputra River started flowing above danger mark.
- Brahmaputra River, Bengali Jamuna, Tibetan Tsangpo, Chinese Yarlung Zangbo Jiang, is a major river of Central and South Asia.

- The Brahmaputra's source is the Chemayungdung Glacier, which covers the slopes of the Himalayas.

- It flows through the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, and Bangladesh.

- Majuli, the world's largest river island is located in the Brahmaputra River.

9. c

- The National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is mandated to collect data about diseases from each village of the country as the spread of COVID-19 continues unabated.

- It carries out disease surveillance through its Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP).

- The institute was established to function as a national centre of excellence for control of communicable diseases.

- It takes leading role in undertaking investigations of disease outbreaks all over the country employing epidemiological and diagnostic tools.

- It does the outbreak investigations and recommendations on control measures for the out-break of various diseases in the States/UTs all over the country.

10. a

- The Rajasthan MLAs have challenged the Constitutional validity of para 2(1)(a) of the Tenth Schedule, which is the anti-defection law.

- The Tenth Schedule has the provisions as to disqualification on ground of defection.

- When a political party merge with or into another party with at least two-thirds of its legislators, then neither the members who decide to merge, nor the ones who stay with the original party will face disqualification.

- The law does not specify a time-period for the Presiding Officer to decide on a disqualification plea.

27-07-2020



1) Consider the following statements with respect to *National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM)*

1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme that aims for overall promotion & development of scientific beekeeping and production of quality honey & other beehive products.
2. The scheme is being implemented through National Dairy Development Board.

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 *Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)*

1. It is a Central Sector Scheme launched for the holistic growth of the horticulture sector.
2. National Horticulture Board will be the formulation body giving overall direction and guidance to Mission, monitor and review its progress and performance.

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 *Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)*

1. It is a quasi judicial institution set up in 1941 and specializes in dealing with appeals under the Direct Taxes Acts.
2. The orders passed by the ITAT are final, an appeal lies to the High Court only if a

substantial question of law arises for determination.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)*

1. It is a flagship national programme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).
2. It envisions the transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help build the architecture of an Inclusive 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

5) Consider the following statements with respect to *Khelo India Youth Games*

1. Khelo India Youth Games is a part of the revamped national programme for development of sports, Khelo India.
2. The 4th edition of the Khelo India Youth Games will be held in Haryana.

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 *Revised FDI Policy*

1. All proposals from China and Pakistan origin investors only are required to get prior approval and security clearance by Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Investors from countries that are not covered by revised FDI policy only have to inform the RBI after the completion of a transaction and no need to seek prior clearance form Ministry.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF)*

1. The fertilization which happens inside the body is called In-Vitro Fertilization.
2. It is a non-surgical method of fertilization.

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 *Kashmir Saffron*

1. It is cultivated in the Karewa highlands of Jammu and Kashmir.
2. It is the only saffron in the world which grows at an altitude of 1,600 meters.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are *not* correct?

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

d. Neither 1 nor 2

9) *Dobra Chanti bridge* recently seen in news is located in?

- a. Ladakh
- b. Arunachal Pradesh
- c. Uttarkhand
- d. None of the above

10) Consider the following statements with respect to the *Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)*

1. It is a voluntary arrangement which restricts only the export of nuclear capable delivery systems.
2. India is not a member of MTCR.

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

- World Class State of Art Honey Testing Laboratory was recently established by the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) in Anand, Gujarat with the support of **National Bee Board (NBB)**.
- Government has taken up several activities to promote bee keeping under '**Mission on Integrated Development of Horticulture**' and '**National Mission for Beekeeping**'

National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM)

- It is a **Central Sector Scheme** that aims for **overall promotion & development of scientific beekeeping and production of quality honey & other beehive products.**

- The scheme will be implemented through **National Bee Board** as a **Central Sector Scheme (100% funded by Central Govt.)**.
- The NBHM will have following sub-schemes/ three Mini Missions:

Mini Mission-I

- Under this Mission, thrust will be given on production & productivity improvement of various crops through pollination assisted by adoption of scientific beekeeping;

Mini Mission-II

- This Mission will concentrate on post harvest management of beekeeping/ beehive products including collection, processing, storage, marketing, value addition, etc. with a thrust to develop requisite infrastructural facilities for these activities.

Mini Mission-III

- This Mission will concentrate on Research & Technology generation for different Regions/ States/ Agro-Climatic and Socio-Economic conditions.

2. d

Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)

- It is a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** for the holistic growth of the horticulture sector covering **fruits, vegetables, root & tuber crops, mushrooms, spices, flowers, aromatic plants, coconut, cashew, cocoa and bamboo**.
- While **Government of India (GOI)** contributes **85%** of total outlay for developmental programmes in all the states except the states in North East and Himalayas, **15%** share is contributed by **State Governments**.
- In the case of North Eastern States and Himalayan States, GOI contribution is 100%.
- Similarly, for development of bamboo and programmes of National Horticulture Board (NHB), Coconut Development Board (CDB), Central Institute for Horticulture (CIH), Nagaland and the National Level Agencies (NLA), GOI contribution will be 100%.

- The Mission will have a **General Council (GC)** at National level under Chairmanship of Union Agriculture Minister.
- **General Council will be the formulation body giving overall direction and guidance to Mission, monitor and review its progress and performance.**

3. d

- *In a major relief for Tata Education and Development Trust, the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) bench consisting of Justices PP Bhatt has recently ruled in favour of the trust in their appeal against commissioner income tax (CIT) appeal order wherein a demand of more than Rs.220 crore was levied by the tax department.*
- ITAT also stayed the matter of that demand without any minimum pay.

Background

- The case pertains to assessment years 2011-12 and 2012-13 on money spent by the Trust for creating an endowment fund at Cornell University, US, to provide scholarships to Indian students, and granting financial assistance to the Harvard Business School for constructing an executive building to be named Tata Hall.
- It donated Rs.197.79 crore in 2011-12 and Rs.25.37 crore in 2012-13.
- The controversy began after the Public Account Committee (PAC) of the Lok Sabha in 2018 sought an enquiry in the matter as it believed that exemption granted by the direct tax body was in violation of the I-T Act.
- Concluding the matter, the Income-tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) stated that all other grounds of appeals will be “rendered, academic and infructuous” and decided this issue in favour of the assessee and thus allowed this ground of appeal.
- Thus, the tribunal uphold the plea of the assessee and delete the resultant disallowance of claim of exemption.

Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)

- ITAT is a **quasi judicial institution** set up in **January, 1941** and specializes in dealing with appeals under the **Direct Taxes Acts**.

- Starting in 1941 with six Members constituting three Benches - one each at Delhi, Kolkata (Calcutta) and Mumbai (Bombay), the numbers of Benches have progressively increased and presently ITAT has 63 Benches at 27 different stations covering almost all the cities having a seat of the High Court.
- The orders passed by the ITAT are **final**, an appeal lies to the High Court only if a substantial question of law arises for determination.

4. c

- *TRIFED* has recently entered into a partnership with IIT Delhi for the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA).
- To cement and formalise this partnership, a tripartite MOU was signed between TRIFED, IIT Delhi (on behalf of the UBA, as the National Coordinating Institute) and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA, a Swadeshi Science Movement) at IIT, Delhi.
- Tribal entrepreneurs under TRIFED's Van Dhan programme will now be able to get access to the expertise of the entire network of 2600+ academic and research institutions under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA).
- With the partnership with IIT Delhi and Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, these tribal forest dwellers engaged in Minor Forest Produces will get an exposure to newer processing technologies, product innovation, mentorship, transformational digital systems and handholding.
- The MoU opens gates for the best of brains in the country to attend to the problems of sustainable tribal livelihoods.

Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA)

- It is a flagship national programme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India.
- The programme envisions the transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help build the architecture of an Inclusive India.

5. c

- *Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports and Haryana Chief Minister has recently announced **Haryana as the host state for the fourth edition of Khelo India Youth Games.***

- The 4th edition, which is currently scheduled to take place after Tokyo Olympics will be held in Panchkula in Haryana.

- **Khelo India Youth Games** is a part of the revamped national programme for development of sports, Khelo India.

6. b

- About 200 investment proposals from China are awaiting security clearance from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) after *Revised FDI Policy* were notified.

- The *Revised FDI Policy* makes prior government approval mandatory for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) from countries which share a land border with India.

- The earlier FDI policy was limited only to Bangladesh and Pakistan via the government route in all sectors.

- The revised FDI rule has brought companies countries which shares land border with India.

- India shares land borders with Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

- Investors from countries that are not covered by revised FDI policy only have to inform the RBI after the completion of a transaction and no need to seek prior clearance form Ministry.

7. d

- *World In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) day* is celebrated on 25th July.

- When *fertilization happens outside of the body*, it is called IVF.

- IVF is a type of Assistive Reproductive Technology (ART).

- It is a *surgical method of fertilization*.

- When fertilization happens inside the body, it is called *In-Vivo Fertilization*.

- It is a natural/normal method of reproduction.

8. d

- The Kashmir *Saffron* gets Geographical Indication (GI) Tag.
- It is the only one spice in the world grown at an altitude of 1,600 metres,
- It's one-of-a-kind variant that is known for its unique characteristics such as longer and thicker stigma, natural deep-red colour, high aroma, bitter flavour, etc.
- It is cultivated in the Karewa highlands of Jammu and Kashmir.

9. c

- Prime Minister to inaugurate the *Dobra-Chanti* bridge.
- It is the country's longest motorable single-lane bridge in Tehri district, Uttarkhand.
- The construction of this bridge would enable people of Pratapnagar to commute to Tehri.

10. d

- Recently, the U.S tweaks the *MTCR* rules for Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS).
- This has opened doors for India to acquire the armed drones as well as systems to counter them.
- So, India eyes acquisition of *Predator-B* drones from US.
- It is capable of collecting intelligence through surveillance and reconnaissance.
- It also locates and destroys the target with missiles or laser-guided bombs.
- *MTCR* is a voluntary arrangement which restricts the exports of all Weapons Of Mass Destruction (WMD - nuclear, chemical, and biological).
- The *MTCR* considers Missiles to include, ballistic missiles, space launch vehicles (SLVs) and sounding rockets, Unmanned air vehicles (UAVs) include cruise missiles, drones, UAVs, and remotely piloted vehicles (RPVs).
- India has officially joined the *MTCR* as a full member in 2016.
- India is now a member of three of the four international export control groups.

28-07-2020

1) "Mausam Mobile App" was launched recently by which of the following?

- Ministry of Earth Sciences
- Ministry of Science and Technology
- Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying
- None of the above

2) Consider the following statements with respect to Knowledge Resource Centre Network (KRCNet), which was launched recently

- Under the initiative, traditional libraries of the Ministry of Earth Sciences will be upgraded into Knowledge Resource Centres (KRCs) and integrated into KRCNet portal.
- It was launched by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) under the Digital India initiative.

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

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

3) Dare to Dream 2.0 Challenge is an innovation contest that aims to promote Indian innovators and startups, was launched recently by?

- NITI Aayog
- Indian Space Research Organisation
- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
- Defence Research and Development Organisation

4) Consider the following statements with respect to Tuting-Tidding Suture Zone (TTSZ)

1. It is a major part of Western Himalayas.
2. It is where the Himalaya takes a sharp southward bend and connects with the Hindu Kush Range.

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 boundary between the crust and the mantle is technically called as?

- a. The Conord Discontinuity
- b. The Lehmann Discontinuity
- c. The Mohorovicc Discontinuity
- d. The Guttenberg Discontinuity

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Governor's Discretionary Powers*

1. The Governor can carry out any function at her/his discretion, without the aid and advice of the council of ministers only if the Constitution requires her or him to do so.
2. The governor shall summon the House at a time and place, as she or he thinks fit.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Pantanal*

1. It is one of the largest pristine temperate wetlands in the world.
2. Whole of wetland is protected under Ramsar Convention and UNESCO World

Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves.

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

1. Syria
2. Israel
3. Jordan

Which of the Countries given above shares its border with *Lebanon*?

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

9) *BeYo* recently seen in news is?

- a. A Digital COVID 19 contact tracing application
- b. A COVID 19 antigen test kit
- c. A COVID-19 blockchain platform
- d. None of the above

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *St. Petersburg Declaration*

1. It hopes for doubling tiger numbers in the 13 tiger range countries by 2022.
2. India became the first tiger range country to double its national tiger population under the ambitious Tx2 program.

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

- Ministry of Earth Sciences had recently launched the mobile App "**Mausam**" for India Meteorological Department on its foundation day celebration.
- This Mobile App is dedicated to the general public and designed to communicate the weather information and forecasts in a lucid manner without technical jargons.
- Users can access observed weather, forecasts, radar images and be proactively warned of impending weather events.
- The mobile app has been designed and developed jointly by ICRISAT's Digital Agriculture & Youth (DAY) team, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and India Meteorological Department.

Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)

- The MoES was formed in 2006 by a merger of the India Meteorological Department, the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting, the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, the Earth Risk Evaluation Centre and the Ministry of Ocean Development.

2. c

- MoES-Knowledge Resource Centre Network (KRCNet) was launched recently on the Foundation Day of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

KRCNet

- Under the **Digital India initiative** of Government of India, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) aims to develop a World-Class Knowledge Resource Centre Network (KRCNet).
- Keeping in mind the spectacular developments in information technology, the traditional libraries of the MoES system will be upgraded into a top-notch Knowledge Resource Centres (KRC).
- KRCs will be connected with each other and integrated into the KRCNet portal.

- It will be a single point entry to the intellectual world of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).
- The resources and services of MoES system will be accessible 24X7 through a one point dynamic, updated and integrated KRCNet portal.
- A pilot project has been developed at MoES headquarters which will be integrated with other MoES institutes.

3. d

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has recently launched its innovation contest 'Dare to Dream 2.0' on the 5th death anniversary of former President and noted scientist Dr APJ Abdul Kalam.
- The scheme is being launched for emerging technologies to promote the individuals & startups for innovation in defence and aerospace technologies in the country.
- Award money, up to Rs 10 lakh for startup and Rs 5 lakh to individual category, will be given to the winners.

4. d

- A recent study by the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, explores the elastic properties of rocks and seismicity in this easternmost part of India.
- It revealed that the area is generating moderate earthquakes at two different depths.
- Low magnitude earthquakes are concentrated at 1-15 km depth, and slightly higher than 4.0 magnitude earthquakes are mostly generated from 25-35 km depth.
- The intermediate-depth is devoid of seismicity and coincides with the zone of fluid/partial melts.

Background

- The exhumation and growth of the Himalaya is a continuous process that results predominantly from **reverse faults** in which the **rocks on the lower surface of a fault plane move under relatively static rocks on the upper surface**, a process called **Underthrusting** of the Indian plate beneath its Eurasian counterpart.

- This process keeps modifying the drainage patterns and landforms and is the pivotal reason for causing an immense seismic hazard in the Himalayan mountain belt and adjoining regions.
- It necessitates assessment and characterization of earthquakes in terms of cause, depth and intensity before construction activities are initiated.

Tuting-Tidding Suture Zone (TTSZ)

- TTSZ is a major part of the Eastern Himalaya, where the Himalaya takes a sharp southward bend and connects with the Indo-Burma Range.
- This part of the Arunachal Himalaya has gained significant importance in recent times due to the growing need of constructing roads and hydropower projects, making the need for understanding the pattern of seismicity in this region critical.

5. c

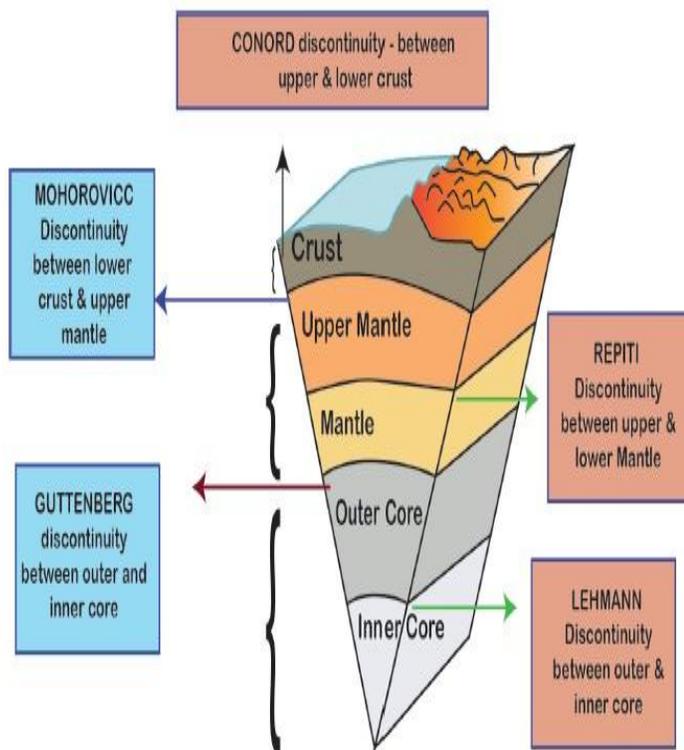


Figure 3.4 Layers of the Earth

6. c

- Recently, Rajasthan Chief Minister called upon Governor and reiterated his request to summon the House.
- Under *Article 174*, a governor shall summon the House at a time and place, as she or he thinks fit.
- Article 174 (2) (a) says a governor may from “time to time” prorogue the House and 174 (2) (b) allows her or him to dissolve the Legislative Assembly.
- *Article 163* says the governor shall exercise her or his functions with the aid and advice of the council of ministers.
- But it also adds that she or he would not need their advice if the Constitution requires her or him to carry out any function at her/his discretion.
- A 2016 verdict of the Supreme Court in the *Nabam Rebia* case, had expressly stated that a “governor can summon, prorogue and dissolve the House, only on the aid and advice of the council of ministers”.

7. d

- Recently, number of fires increases in *Brazil's Pantanal Wetland* in 21 years.
- The Fires nearly doubled in the first half of 2020, compared to the same period last year.
- The *Pantanal* is the world's largest tropical wetland and one of the most pristine in the world.
- It sprawls across three South American countries—Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay.
- The wetland has the largest concentration of crocodiles in the world and also home to the biggest parrot on the planet, the hyacinth macaw.
- It supports millions of people there, as well as communities in the lower Rio de la Plata Basin.
- *Less than 5% of the Pantanal is protected*, with parts that fall under an Ramsar agreement, and some that are UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves.

- Around 95% of the Pantanal is under private ownership, the majority of which is used for cattle grazing.

8. a

- Recently, Israeli forces exchanged fire with Hezbollah militants along the volatile Israel-Lebanon border.
- Israel had been bracing for an attack since an Israeli airstrike in neighboring Syria killed a Hezbollah fighter.
- Hezbollah is a Shia Islamist political party and militant group based in Lebanon.
- Lebanon shares its border with Syria and Israel.
- It has a narrow coastal strip along the Mediterranean Sea.

9. c

- India's first-ever COVID-19 Blockchain Platform, *BelYo* launched.
- *BelYo* uses the blockchain platform to convert COVID-19 related clinical and vaccination data of citizens currently from the physical form into digital assets.
- It can be retrieved by any contact tracing apps like Aarogya Setu via APIs.
- Using these APIs, an individual can scan and retrieve data as colour-coded results through a QR code.
- It will make the process 100% contact less and seamless at any point of entry during and post the COVID-19 crisis.
- It is developed by BelfricsBT, a global blockchain start-up, along with YoSync, a start-up incubated at IITB-IMACX Studios.

10. a

- *International Tiger Day* is celebrated on 29 July every year.
- Under the *St. Petersburg Declaration*, the 13 tiger range countries agreed to a *Global Tiger Recovery Program*.
- All the 13 countries with tiger populations at the time made a commitment to double wild tigers by 2022, *Tx2*.

- Nepal become first country in the world to double its tiger population as part of *Tx2* program.

29-07-2020

1) India Report- Digital Education 2020 was launched recently by which of the following?

- UNICEF
- UNESCO
- NITI Aayog
- None of the above

2) Match the following Digital Education Initiatives with their respective states

<i>Initiatives</i>	<i>– States</i>
1. SMILE	– a. Bihar
2. Unnayan	– b. NCT of Delhi
3. Mission Buniyaad	– c. Rajasthan
4. Padhai Tunhar duvaar	– d. Chhattisgarh

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- 1-a; 2-b; 3-c; 4-d
- 1-b; 2-a; 3-c; 4-d
- 1-c; 2-a; 3-b; 4-d
- 1-c; 2-d; 3-b; 4-a

3) Recently, the Union Ministry of Rural Development had released a “Financial Management Index for Rural Development Programmes” to rank the performance of the States. The ranking is based on which of the following parameters?

- Social Audit
- Internal Audit
- Preparation of annual plan and timely utilization of funds
- Optimum implementation of PFMS & Direct Benefit Transfer

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research (AWSAR) programme*

1. It is an initiative that aims to disseminate Indian research stories among the masses in an easy to understand and interesting format to a common man.
2. The initiative is conceptualized and supported by the National Council for Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC) and coordinated by VigyanPrasar.

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) *Istanbul Convention*, often seen in the news recently, is associated with?

- a. Recycling of e-wastes
- b. Sustainable Oil Drilling
- c. Violence against Women
- d. None of the above

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)*

1. The BIS is the National Standard Body of India established under the BIS Act 2016.
2. BIS is a founder member of ISO and is actively involved in development of International Standards by acting as Observer member on various committees.

3. The ISI mark is a standards-compliance mark for industrial products in India.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

7) Consider the following statements with respect to *Smallpox*

1. It is an acute contagious disease caused by the virus.
2. It can be spread by humans only.
3. WHO set a target to eradicate Smallpox from the world by 2022.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Ammonia*

1. It is a colourless gas and is used as an industrial chemical.
2. It occurs naturally in the environment from the breakdown of organic waste matter.

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) *Khazan Ecosystems* sometimes seen in news is located in?

- Kerala
- Assam
- Goa
- Gujarat

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Mosquitos*

- Only male mosquito bite causes red itchy welts on human skin.
- Arctic is one of the few places on the planet that is mosquito-free.

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

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

Answers

1. d

- Union Minister for HRD has recently virtually launched the **India Report on Digital Education, 2020**.
- The report elaborates on the innovative methods adopted by Ministry of HRD, Education Departments of States and Union Territories for ensuring accessible and inclusive education to children at home and reducing learning gaps.
- The report has been prepared by Digital Education Division of MHRD in consultation with Education Departments of States and UTs.

2. c

- Union Minister for HRD had recently launched **India Report on Digital Education, 2020**.
- According to the report, besides the central Initiatives State/ UT Governments have also managed the critical task of providing digital education at the door step of the students.

Some of the major **digital initiatives** by State Governments are:

- SMILE** (Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement) in **Rajasthan**
- Project Home Classes in Jammu
- Padhai Tunhar duvaar** (Education at your doorstep) in **Chhattisgarh**
- Unnayan Initiatives** in **Bihar** through portal and mobile application
- Mission Buniyaad** in **NCT of Delhi**
- Kerala's own educational TV channel (Hi-Tech school programme)
- E-scholar portal as well as free online courses for teachers in Meghalaya
- Telangana has online certificate programs for teachers on 'Management of mental well-being during COVID'.

3. d

- Union Ministry of Rural Development has recently released a "**Financial Management Index for Rural Development Programmes**".
- This index seeks to rank the performance of the States on the basis of following parameters:
 - Preparation of annual plan**, projecting the requirement of funds for the financial year, expeditious release of State's share, **timely utilization of the funds** and submission of the Utilization Certificates etc.
 - Optimum implementation of Public Financial Management System (PFMS) & Direct Benefit Transfer
 - Internal Audit
 - Social Audit

4. c

- The National Council for Science & Technology (NCSTC) and Vigyan Prasar**, an autonomous institute of Department of Science and Technology (DST) organised two webinars recently on "Popular Science Writing" for capacity building of research

scholars under AWSAR Programme to create a brigade of science communicators.

Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research (AWSAR)

- It is an initiative that aims to disseminate Indian research stories among the masses in an easy to understand and interesting format to a common man.
- Under this initiative, PhD Scholars and Post-Doctoral Fellows (PDFs) in Science and Technology (S&T) streams would be encouraged to write at least one popular science article during the tenancy of their fellowship, and to participate in a national competition.
- It is conceptualized & supported by National Council for Science & Technology Communication (NCSTC) Division, Department of Science and Technology (DST) which is actively engaged in developing various outreach programs for scientific fraternity.
- This program is being coordinated by VigyanPrasar, an autonomous institute of DST.

5. c

- *Recently, Poland announced that it would withdraw from the Istanbul Convention citing that it requires schools to teach children about gender.*
- Also, it says, the treaty tries to construct a “socio-cultural gender against the biological gender” (e.g. like forming homosexual families).

Istanbul Convention

- Istanbul convention (AKA) Council of Europe Convention on **preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence**.
- The treaty is the world’s first binding instrument to prevent and tackle violence against women.
- It is the most comprehensive legal framework that exists to tackle violence against women and girls, covering domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, female genital mutilation (FGM), so-called honour-based violence, and forced marriage.

- The Convention sets minimum standards for governments to meet when tackling violence against women.
- When a government ratifies the Convention, they are legally bound to follow it.

6. d

- Recently, Ministry of Consumer Affairs launched a *mobile app BIS-Care*.
- The consumers can use the app for checking the authenticity of ISI and hallmark quality certified products.
- The BIS is the National Standard Body of India established under the BIS Act 2016.
- *BIS is a founder member of International Organization for Standardization (ISO).*
- It is actively involved in development of International Standards by acting as Participating (P) member or Observer (O) member on various Technical Committees, Working Groups, etc.
- The ISI mark is a standards-compliance mark for industrial products in India.

7. a

- A new research on *smallpox* provides fresh insight into the origins of the disease caused by the Variola virus (VARV).
- It suggest that the smallpox was in existence as early as during the Viking age in the 8th century CE.
- It is an acute contagious disease caused by the Variola virus.
- It can be *spread by humans only*. Scientists have no evidence that smallpox can be spread by insects or animals.
- On May 8, 1980, the 33rd World Health Assembly officially *declared the world free of this disease*.

8. c

- A high levels of *Ammonia* found in Yamuna water.
- The level of ammonia in raw water was 1.8 parts per million (ppm).

- The acceptable maximum limit of ammonia in drinking water, as per the Bureau of Indian Standards, is 0.5 ppm.
- Ammonia is a colourless gas and is used as an industrial chemical in the production of fertilisers, plastics and other products.
- It occurs naturally in the environment from the breakdown of organic waste matter.
- It may also find its way to ground and surface water sources through industrial effluents or through contamination by sewage.
- If the concentration of ammonia in water is above 1 ppm it is toxic to fishes.
- In humans, long term ingestion of water having ammonia levels of 1 ppm or above may cause damage to internal organs.

9. c

- The Mangroves and *Khazan ecosystem* which is sustaining Goa's promise for fish, curry and rice are in state of decay.
- *Khazans* are human-managed ecosystems, which are reclaimed from coastal wetlands, salt marshes and mangrove areas.
- *Khazans in Goa* have always been nature's defence to its own excesses such as high tides, storms or floods.
- They are predominantly rice and fish fields.

10. d

- A recent study shows that *Arctic's Mosquito Problem* is getting bigger, badder.
- It's mosquito season in Greenland. June and July marks the period when *Arctic mosquitoes (Aedes nigripes)* are in peak abundance.
- While Arctic mosquitoes serve as an important food source to other animals, they are notorious for their role as pests to humans and wildlife.
- Only female mosquitoes bite, causing those red itchy welts on skin.
- They need the nutrition in human blood to develop their eggs.
- Iceland is one of the few habitable places on the planet that is mosquito-free.

30-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards [CA|TS]

1. It is a conservation tool that sets best practice and standards to manage target species, and encourages assessments to benchmark progress.
2. India is the first among the 13 tiger range countries to nationally adopt CA|TS.
3. The Conservation standards can be applicable only in the Tiger Reserves.

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) With respect to Status of Tigers, Co-predators, and Prey in India Report, which was launched recently, consider the following statements

1. It was released by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the Global Tiger Day.
2. Bandipur Tiger Reserve of Karnataka has the highest tiger density among India's 50 Tiger Reserves.
3. Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tigers followed by Karnataka and Uttarakhand.

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) With respect to *Light Detection and Ranging Technology (LIDAR) Technology*, consider the following statements

1. It is a method for measuring distances by illuminating the target with ultraviolet radiation and measuring the reflection with a sensor.
2. It allows scientists and mapping professionals to examine both natural and manmade environments with accuracy, precision, and flexibility.

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

4) Consider the following statements with respect to *Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH) Initiative*

1. It is an initiative launched by the National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB).
2. Department of Science and Technology is the implementation Agency of this initiative.

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) In India, *Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine* is administered routinely to all newborn babies as a part of the National childhood immunization programme to prevent which of the following diseases?

- a. Measles
- b. Diphtheria
- c. Tuberculosis

d. None of the above

6) Consider the following statements with respect to *Aerial Seeding*

1. It is a fire and forget way of plantation where no attention is needed after the dispersal of seeds.
2. A surface that is loose and rough, with cracks or ample residue cover is best for aerial seeding.

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) Consider the following statements with respect to *Perseverance Rover*

1. It is a part of UAE Mission in exploring Mars with a rover.
2. The rover will seek signs of ancient life and collect rock and soil samples for possible return to Earth.
3. The mission includes first ever helicopter to fly on another planet.

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

8) Consider the following statements with respect to *Chambal River*

1. It rises in the Southern Rajasthan and flows through Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
2. It joins the River Ganga at Uttar Pradesh.

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) Okavango Delta sometimes seen in news is located in?

- a. Brazil
- b. Zambia
- c. Mexico
- d. Botswana

10) Consider the following statements with respect to *Safeguard Duty*

1. It is a trade protection measure to safeguard the domestic manufacturing industries.
2. It can be imposed on items, over and above existing customs duties.

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

- In a major boost to tiger conservation ahead of Global Tiger Day, India's National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has recently announced the adoption of the Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards [CA|TS] across all of the country's 50 Tiger Reserves.
- These 50 Tiger Reserves are spread across 18 states containing over 70% of the world's tiger population.

- It means **India is the first among the 13 tiger range countries to nationally adopt CA|TS.**
- This brings India's total number of registered sites to 94 (**which includes sites outside the Tiger Reserves**).
- The other six tiger range countries implementing CA|TS across 75 sites include Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Malaysia, Nepal and Russia.

Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS)

- CA|TS is a conservation tool that sets best practice and standards to manage target species, and encourages assessments to benchmark progress.
 - Tigers are the first species selected for the initiative.
 - CA|TS is **being adopted for use beyond tigers**, including potentially jaguars, lions and freshwater dolphins.
 - Launched in 2013, the tool was developed in collaboration with field managers, tiger experts and government agencies engaged in tiger conservation.
 - CA|TS is a management tool for the effective management of tiger conservation reserves.
 - **It also applies to other conservation reserves and protected areas which have tiger populations.**
 - CA|TS is a partnership of tiger range governments, inter-governmental agencies, institutions, NGOs and conservation organisations.
 - WWF is helping tiger range countries to implement CA|TS, and is joined by other key global organization.
2. b
- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has recently released a detailed '**Status of Tigers, Co-predators and Prey in India (2018) Report**' on the eve of the Global Tiger Day (29th July).
 - The report compares information obtained from the earlier three tiger surveys (2006, 2010, and 2014) with data obtained from the

2018-19 survey to estimate tiger population trends at country level.

- India has 70% of the world's tiger population

Highlights of the report

- The national tiger status assessment of 2018-19 estimated the overall tiger population in India at 2,967 - 33% increase from 2014 (2,226).
- Tigers were observed to be increasing at a rate of 6% per annum in India from 2006 to 2018.
- **Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tigers** at 526, closely followed by Karnataka (524) and Uttarakhand (442).
- The Northeast has suffered losses in population.
- Further, the tiger status in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha has steadily declined, which is a matter of concern.
- With 2,967 tigers, India is four years in advance, has achieved the target set in the 2010 St Petersburg Declaration of doubling tiger population by 2022.
- **Uttarakhand's Corbett Tiger Reserve (CTR)** has reported the highest tiger density among India's 50 reserves with 14 tigers per 100 sq km, followed by Kaziranga, Nagarhole and Orang tiger reserves.

3. a

- *Union Minister for Environment has recently announced that his ministry is working on a programme in which efforts would be made to provide water and fodder to animals in the forest itself to deal with the challenge of human-animal conflict which is causing deaths of animals.*
- For this LIDAR based survey technology will be used for the first time.

LIDAR Technology

- It is a remote sensing method that **uses light in the form of a pulsed laser** to measure variable distances (Ranges) to the Earth.
- It is a method for measuring distances by illuminating the target with **laser light** and measuring the reflection with a sensor.

- These light pulses—combined with other data recorded by the airborne system — generate precise, three-dimensional information about the shape of the Earth and its surface characteristics.
- A lidar instrument principally consists of a laser, a scanner, and a specialized GPS receiver.
- Airplanes and helicopters are the most commonly used platforms for acquiring lidar data over broad areas.
- Two types of lidar are topographic and bathymetric.
- Topographic lidar typically uses a near-infrared laser to map the land, while bathymetric lidar uses water-penetrating green light to also measure seafloor and riverbed elevations.
- Lidar systems allow scientists and mapping professionals to examine **both natural and manmade environments** with accuracy, precision, and flexibility.

4. a

- *The Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH), has recently selected Bangalore based startup Acculi Labs to develop a COVID risk assessment profile called Lyfas COVID score.*
- Acculi Labs is armed with 'Lyfas' a clinical-grade, non-invasive, digital functional **biomarker smartphone tool** for screening, early detection, root cause analysis, acute event risk assessment, prognosis, and home monitoring of chronic diseases which they have repurposed to Lyfas COVID score.
- The new technology will detect the possible infection in an asymptomatic individual to prioritise the conventional testing queue as well as carry out a risk assessment of an asymptomatic individual to become symptomatic and risk assessment of an asymptomatic individual for recovery.

Centre for Augmenting WAR with COVID-19 Health Crisis (CAWACH)

- It is an initiative by National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board (NSTEDB), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.

- CAWACH supports market-ready innovations for the control of COVID-19 and startup ideas to address associated challenges.
- DST has nominated **Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE), IIT Bombay** to implement CAWACH to source and support startups having solutions to fight pandemic COVID-19 by way of funding.
- SINE will be supported by Indian STEPs and Business Incubator Association (ISBA) in implementation of the program.
- CAWACH supports innovations in the areas of diagnostics, devices, informatics including bio-informatics & information management systems, any intervention for the control of COVID-19 and/or startup ideas to address/mitigate various challenges faced by country / society due to severe impact of COVID-19.

5. c

- *Serum Institute of India Pvt Ltd (SIPL) has been supported under Department of Biotechnology's National Biopharma Mission for conduct of a multisite randomized double-blinded placebo-controlled phase III clinical trial of a recombinant BCG vaccine candidate, VPM1002.*
- The objective of this trial is **to evaluate the ability of VPM1002 in reducing infection incidence and severe disease outcomes of COVID-19** among high-risk persons of advanced age or co-morbidities and high-exposure healthcare workers (HCWs).

Bacille Calmette-Guerin (BCG) Vaccine

- BCG vaccine is administered routinely to all newborn babies as a part of the National childhood immunization programme **to prevent tuberculosis (TB).**
- TB is an infection caused by bacteria that mainly affects the lungs.
- It has beneficial heterologous effects and proven antiviral and immune modulatory properties that protect against infectious diseases through induction of trained innate immunity and heterologous adaptive immunity.
- About 6,000 health workers and high-risk individuals including those in close contact of

COVID patients have been enrolled in a clinical trial to determine if the recombinant Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (rBCG) can boost immunity to fight against the virus.

6. c

- The Haryana Forest Department has started *Aerial Seeding* across the state on a pilot basis.
- This technique will allow plantation in sections of the Aravallis that are either difficult to access or inaccessible altogether.
- It is a technique where seed balls, seeds covered with a mixture of clay, compost, and other components are sprayed on the ground using aerial devices, including planes, helicopters or drones.
- It is a fire and forget way of plantation where no attention is needed after the dispersal of seeds.
- *A surface that is loose and rough, with cracks or ample residue cover, works best.*
- With a loose and rough surface the chances of a seed making soil contact and landing in areas with soil moisture is enhanced.

7. c

- NASA is set to launch its *Mars 2020 Perseverance rover*.
- *Perseverance* will carry a unique instrument, MOXIE or Mars Oxygen ISRU Experiment.
- This is for the first time will manufacture molecular oxygen on Mars using carbon dioxide from carbon-dioxide-rich atmosphere.
- *Perseverance will carry Ingenuity, the first ever helicopter to fly on Mars.*
- This is the first time NASA will fly a helicopter on another planet or satellite.
- *The rover will seek signs of ancient life and collect rock and soil samples for possible return to Earth.*
- It is with the goal of looking for biosignatures or signatures of present or past life.

8. d

- The Centre, in collaboration with the World Bank, has decided to convert large area of

ravines in *Gwalior-Chambal belt* of Madhya Pradesh into arable land.

- The Chambal is the *chief tributary of the Yamuna River*.
- It rises in the *Vindhya Range*, south of Mhow, western *Madhya Pradesh* state.
- It flows along Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and joins the *River Yamuna* at Uttar Pradesh.

9. d

- Tension is brewing between communities residing in the *Okavango Delta* and Botswana Defence Force (BDF) soldiers deployed on anti-poaching missions.
- Recently, there was a mass elephant deaths in *Botswana's Okavango Delta* region.
- The landlocked southern African country has the world's largest elephant population.
- *Okavango* is a large low gradient alluvial fan or Inland Delta.
- It is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

10. c

- Finance Ministry extends *Safeguard Duty* on import of solar cells.
- It is a *trade protection measure* to protect domestic manufacturing by imposing in the form of a safeguard duty.
- Safeguard duties *can be imposed on items, over and above existing customs duties*, if it can be conclusively proved that a steep increase in imports over a period of time resulted in disruption for local businesses.

31-07-2020

1) Consider the following statements with respect to *Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment (WEE) Initiative*

1. It is a social national initiative launched by IIT Delhi and supported by the Department of Science and Technology.
2. The initiative aims at helping women, ranging from college going students to middle-aged housewives, to embrace

entrepreneurship as a viable career option.

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 *National Education Policy 2020*, which was recently approved by the Cabinet, consider the following statements

1. The new policy replaces the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1991.
2. It aims for Universalization of Education from pre-school to secondary level with 100% GER in school education by 2030 and 50% GER in higher education by 2035.
3. Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for the entire higher education, including medical and legal education.

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

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

3) Consider the following statements with respect to *International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)*

1. ITER is an experimental fusion reactor facility under construction in France to prove the feasibility of nuclear fusion for future source of energy.
2. India became a full seventh partner of ITER in December 2005.
3. ITER-India, Institute for Plasma Research (IPR) is the Indian Domestic Agency to design, build and deliver the Indian in-kind contribution to ITER.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

4) **V D VAGHELA Committee**, often seen in the news recently, was constituted for which of the following purposes?

- To look into issues related to definition or quality standards of LPG being marketed
- To review the regulatory guidelines and supervisory framework of Core Investment Companies (CIC)
- To come up with suggestions to increase coordination between research institutes in India for drug discovery
- None of the above

5) Consider the following pairs with respect to **Application softwares** launched by various states

Applications – States

- Phoenix – Chandigarh
- Vidyavahini – Bihar
- iScuela Learn – Punjab

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

- 2 only
- 1 and 3 only
- All of the above
- None of the above

6) Consider the following statements with respect to the **Assam Rifles**

- It is one of the central armed police forces under the operational control of Ministry of Home Affairs.

- They have the power to arrest and search without a warrant in all parts of northeastern states.

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 **Kaladan Multimodal Project**

- It connects India's Northeast with Thailand and other ASEAN members through Myanmar.
- The project seeks to give last mile connectivity and port access for the landlocked North East regions of India.

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 **FDI in Defence Sector**

- As per the current FDI policy, 100% overseas investments are permitted in the defence industry.
- Under the automatic route, the investor has to inform the RBI after the investment is made.

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

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

9) BANDICOOT sometimes seen in news is?

- A smart swab robot for COVID 19 sample collection
- A manhole cleaning robot
- A digital COVID 19 contact-tracing and exposure-notification tool
- None of the above

10) Consider the following statements with respect to Yellow fever

- It is an acute viral haemorrhagic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes.
- The virus is endemic in tropical areas of Africa and Central and South America.

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

- Eleven women entrepreneurs have been shortlisted recently for cash awards amounting to Rs 25 lakh under 'Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment' initiative.

Women Entrepreneurship and Empowerment (WEE)

- It is a first of its kind social national initiative by IIT Delhi to strengthen women eco system.
- WEE has been founded under the vision of IIT Delhi Director: Prof V. Ramgopal Rao and is supported by Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- WEE intends to focus and ignite a fire amongst women from a college going student to a middle aged housewife to embrace entrepreneurship as a viable, fulfilling career option.

2. a

- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has recently approved the **National Education Policy 2020**.
- This policy will replace the 34 year old **National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986**.

Highlights of the Policy

School Education

- New Policy aims for **universalization of education** from pre-school to secondary level with **100% Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in school education by 2030**.
- NEP 2020 will bring 2 crore out of school children back into the main stream through open schooling system.
- The current 10+2 system to be replaced by a new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively.
- This will bring the hitherto uncovered age group of 3-6 years under school curriculum, which has been recognized globally as the crucial stage for development of mental faculties of a child.
- The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre schooling.
- Emphasis on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, no rigid separation between academic streams, extracurricular, vocational streams in schools; Vocational Education to start from Class 6 with Internships.
- Teaching up to at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue/ regional language.
- No language will be imposed on any student.
- Assessment reforms with 360 degree Holistic Progress Card, tracking Student Progress for achieving Learning Outcomes.
- A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education, NCFTE 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT.
- By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree.

Higher Education

- Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education to be raised to 50 % by 2035; 3.5 crore seats to be added in higher education.
- The policy envisages broad based, multi-disciplinary, holistic Under Graduate education with flexible curricula, creative combinations of subjects, integration of vocational education and multiple entry and exit points with appropriate certification.
- UG education can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period.
- Academic Bank of Credits to be established to facilitate Transfer of Credits
- Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs), at par with IITs, IIMs, to be set up as models of best multidisciplinary education of global standards in the country.
- The *National Research Foundation* will be created as an apex body for fostering a strong research culture and building research capacity across higher education.
- *Higher Education Commission of India (HECI)* will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education.
- HECI to have four independent verticals - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National Accreditation Council (NAC) for accreditation.
- Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.
- Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.
- Over a period of time, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an Autonomous degree-granting College, or a constituent college of a university.

Others

- An autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF), will be created to provide a platform for the free exchange of ideas on the use of technology to enhance learning, assessment, planning, administration.
- NEP 2020 emphasizes setting up of Gender Inclusion Fund, Special Education Zones for disadvantaged regions and groups.
- New Policy promotes Multilingualism in both schools and higher education.
- National Institute for Pali, Persian and Prakrit, Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation to be set up.
- The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.

3. d

- *The world's biggest nuclear fusion project International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) has entered its five-year assembly phase.*
- *After this is finished, the facility will be able to start generating the super-hot "plasma" required for fusion power.*

International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)

- ITER is an experimental fusion reactor facility under construction in Cadarache, South of France to prove the feasibility of nuclear fusion for future source of energy.
- ITER partners are the European Union, China, **India**, Japan, South Korea, Russia and the United States of America.
- European Union being the host party contributes 45% while the rest of the parties contribute 9% each.
- Most of these contributions are through 'in-kind' procurement of ITER components.
- **India became a full seventh partner of ITER in December 2005.**
- India signed the ITER Agreement between the partners in 2006.

- ITER Organization (IO) is the central team responsible for construction at site and operation, while the ITER partners created their own domestic agencies to deliver their commitments to ITER.
- ITER-India, Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), located in Gandhinagar, western India, is the Indian Domestic Agency to design, build and deliver the Indian in-kind contribution to ITER

Background

- Current nuclear energy relies on fission, where a heavy chemical element is split to produce lighter ones.
- Nuclear fusion, on the other hand, works by combining two light elements to make a heavier one.
- The project uses hydrogen fusion, controlled by superconducting magnets, to produce massive heat energy.
- The magnetic fusion device has been designed to prove the feasibility of fusion as a large-scale and carbon-free source of energy based on the same principle that powers our Sun and stars.

4. c

- *The Centre has recently announced a Rs.10,000-crore booster for ramping up domestic production of raw materials for producing drugs and indigenous medical devices.*
- Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers DV Sadananda Gowda has launched schemes from the Department of Pharmaceuticals for promotion of domestic manufacturing of bulk drugs and medical devices parks in the country.

The proposal is divided into four key segments:

1. Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) which consists of an outlay of Rs. 6,490 crore.
2. Three bulk drug parks with an outlay of Rs. 3,000 crore.
3. PLI scheme for medical devices with an outlay of Rs. 3,420 crore.
4. Grant-in-aid of Rs. 400 crore in all for four medical device parks.

- Also, the department of pharmaceuticals aims to encourage research and development of novel drugs with a new policy.
- For that purpose, Indian government has constituted a committee **chaired by V D Vaghela** to come up with suggestions on schemes and incentives for pharmaceutical companies to conduct research and for increasing coordination between research institutes in India for drug discovery.
- The government-appointed committee comprising officials from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and department of science and technology, besides the likes of Biocon chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and Zydus Cadila chairman Pankaj Patel, will frame the policy.

5. c

- *Union Minister for HRD had recently launched India Report on Digital Education, 2020.*
- According to the report, besides the central Initiatives State/ UT Governments have also managed the critical task of providing digital education at the door step of the students.

Some states have launched **innovative mobile apps and portals** as means to facilitate remote learning.

- **Madhya Pradesh** has launched Top Parent App, a free mobile app that empowers parents of young children (3-8 years) with knowledge and strategies around child development to help them meaningfully engage with their children.
- KHEL (Knowledge Hub for Electronic Learning), a Game Based Application has also been started, that covers class 1-3.
- **Uttarakhand** is making use of Sampark Baithak App through which primary school students can access animated videos, audios, worksheet, puzzles, etc.
- **Assam** has launched the Biswa Vidya Assam Mobile Application for class 6 to 10.
- **Bihar** has launched **Vidyavahini App** with e-books for class 1 to 12.

- Under Unnayan Bihar Initiative, Bihar has also launched Mera Mobile Mera Vidyalaya for students, and Unnayan Bihar Teacher App.
 - **Chandigarh** has launched **Phoenix Mobile application** to assess the learning outcome for the students of class 1 to 8.
 - **Maharashtra** has launched the Learning Outcomes Smart Q Mobile App to facilitate learning for students in the state.
 - **Punjab** has launched **iScuela Learn** Mobile Application for class 1 to 10.
 - **Sikkim** Edutech App connects all the schools of Sikkim under the State Education Department, Parents also have login access along with students, teachers and administrative units.
 - **Tripura** has an application titled 'EmpowerU Shiksha Darpan' in order to facilitate student's appraisal.
 - **Uttar Pradesh** launches 'Top Parent' app targeting children from 3-8years age. The application currently houses three high-quality EdTech apps for children – Chimple, Maths Masti and Google Bolo.
6. d
- Recently, there was a clash between *Assam Rifles* and Manipur terror group in Manipur, near the border with Myanmar.
 - *Assam Rifles* is one of the *central armed police forces* is the leading counter-insurgency force in the Northeast.
 - It is under the *administrative control of the Home Ministry*, while the *Army controls its operations*.
 - They have the *power to arrest and search without a warrant in border districts in five northeastern states*.
 - Also they can arrests without a warrant in areas where the *Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act* is in effect.
7. b
- Recently, the Supreme Court has cleared a major roadblock in the completion of a *Trilateral Highway Connectivity project between India, Myanmar and Thailand (IMT Trilateral Highway)*.
- *IMT Trilateral Highway* connects India's Northeast with Thailand and other ASEAN members through Myanmar.
 - The *project seeks to give last mile connectivity and port access for the landlocked North East regions of India through Myanmar*.
 - The *Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project* connects the Northeast with Myanmar as well as with West Bengal.
8. c
- The government is set to come out with a notification for allowing *74% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in defence*.
 - The decision to permit up to *74% FDI in the defence through the automatic route* was announced by Finance Minister in May 2020.
 - As per the *current FDI policy, 100% overseas investments are permitted in the defence industry, 49% under the automatic route*, while beyond that the government approval is required.
 - Under the *automatic route, the investor has to inform the RBI after the investment is made*.
9. b
- Recently, Guwahati gets Northeast's first *Manhole Cleaning Robot 'BANDICOOT'*.
 - It is the India's first 'manhole cleaning robot' developed by the brainchild of *Genrobotics*, a Thiruvananthapuram-based start-up.
10. c
- The *Yellow fever* burden to shift to central and east Africa by 2050, according to a new Study.
 - It is an *acute, viral haemorrhagic disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes*.
 - The *virus is endemic in tropical areas of Africa and Central and South America*.
 - It is prevented by an extremely effective vaccine.
 - The *Eliminate Yellow fever Epidemics (EYE) Strategy* launched in 2017 is an unprecedented initiative.
 - With more than 50 partners involved, the partnership aims at protecting at-risk

populations, preventing international spread, and containing outbreaks rapidly.

- By 2026, it is expected that more than 1 billion people will be protected against the disease.

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