

September, 2020

TEST YOURSELF

Daily Current Affairs MCQs

Q.1. With reference to the Special Frontier Force, recently seen in the news, consider the following statements:

1. It was raised aftermath of the 1962 China-India war.
2. It falls under the purview of Ministry of Defence and headed by an Army officer of the rank of Major General.
3. These units have a similar rank structure as that of the Indian Army.

Which of the statement given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- Recently, the funeral of Nyima Tenzin, a soldier of the Special Frontier Force (SFF), was held in Leh. Also, there have been reports about SFF being involved in the August 29-31 operation to occupy previously unoccupied heights in Chushul sector in eastern Ladakh.

Statement 1 is correct: The SFF was raised by the Intelligence Bureau in the immediate aftermath of the 1962 China-India war. It is commonly believed that the SFF was raised by India in coordination with US intelligence agencies. The covert outfit recruited Tibetan exiles (now it has a mixture of Tibetans and Gorkhas) and was initially named Establishment 22 (Major Gen Sujan Singh Uban, an Artillery officer who raised the group, named it after the 22 Mountain Regiment he commanded).

Statement 2 is not correct: It now falls under the purview of the Cabinet Secretariat. On the ground, it is headed by an Inspector General who is an Army officer of the rank of Major General. The units comprising the SFF are known as Vikas battalions.

Statement 3 is not correct: The SFF units are not part of the Army but function under its operational control. SFF units have their own rank structures, of equivalent status with Army ranks. The SFF training centre is in Chakrata, 100 km outside Dehradun.

Q.2 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)?

1. It is an international measure of multidimensional poverty covering all the nations across the globe.
2. It was first launched in 2010 by Oxford Poverty and United Nations Development Programme.
3. The Global Indices to Drive Reforms and Growth (GIRG) exercise is the initiative of NITI Ayog to monitoring the performance on global indices.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only

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

Answer: B

In News- NITI Aayog recently said it is at an advanced stage for preparation of a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) parameter dashboard to rank states and Union Territories, along with a State Reform Action Plan (SRAP).

Statement 1 is not correct: Global MPI is an international measure of multidimensional poverty covering 107 developing countries.

Statement 2 is correct: It was first developed in 2010 by Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and the United Nations Development Programme for UNDP's Human Development Reports.

Statement 3 is correct: The Global MPI is part of the government's decision to monitor the performance of the country on 29 select global indices, it said in a statement. "The objective of the Global Indices to Drive Reforms and Growth (GIRG) exercise is to fulfil the need to measure and monitor India's performance on various important social and economic parameters

Q.3 'Green-Blue' Infrastructure Policy in his Master Plan 2041 is proposed by which of the following state/UT?

- (a) Gujarat
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Delhi
- (d) Uttar Pradesh

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) is holding public consultations for the preparation of the Master Plan for Delhi 2041, a vision document for the city's development over the next two decades.

Option C is correct: The Green-Blue policy is the focus of the Master Plan for Delhi 2041. The draft policy's focus on water bodies and the land around it, which is referred to as the "Green-Blue policy", would give the city a new shape. 'Blue' infrastructure refers to water bodies like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, and water treatment facilities; while 'Green' stands for trees, lawns, hedgerows, parks, fields, and forests. The concept refers to urban planning where water bodies and land are interdependent, and grow with the help of each other while offering environmental and social benefits.

Q.4 With reference to the Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs), consider the following statements:

1. They enable the direct investment of money from individual/institutional investors in infrastructure.
2. They are regulated and oversight by the Reserve Bank of India.

Which of the statement given above is/are correct?

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

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved monetisation of assets of POWERGRID through the Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) model.

Statement 1 is correct: An Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvITs) is like a mutual fund, which enables direct investment of small amounts of money from possible individual/institutional investors in infrastructure to earn a small portion of the income as a return. InvITs work like mutual funds or real estate investment trusts (REITs) in features. InvITs can be treated as the modified version of REITs designed to suit the specific circumstances of the infrastructure sector.

Statement 2 is not correct: They are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India. Their units are listed on different trading platforms like stock exchanges and are a wholesome combination of both equity and debt instruments. InvITs can be established as a trust and registered with Sebi. An InvIT consists of four elements: 1) Trustee, 2) Sponsor(s), 3) Investment Manager and 4) Project Manager.

Q.5 Which of the following statement(s) is/are **not correct** with respect to the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize?

1. It is a prestigious prize awarded biennially by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust since 2000.
2. It is given to individuals or organizations who are working towards ensuring international peace and development.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- Sir David Attenborough has been conferred with Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for 2019 at a virtual ceremony.

Explanation:

Statement 1 is not correct: The Indira Gandhi Peace Prize which is named after former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is a prestigious prize awarded annually by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust since 1986

Statement 2 is correct: The Indira Gandhi Peace Prize is given to individuals or organizations who are working towards ensuring **international peace and development**.

Q.6 With reference to Mission Karmayogi, consider the following statements:

1. It is primarily aimed at reforming the governance system by leveraging the ICT at the grass-root level.
2. The Prime Minister's Public Human Resource Council will be set up as the apex body to direct the reforms.

Which of the statement given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only

- (c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- The Union Cabinet approved 'Mission Karmayogi', a new capacity-building scheme for civil servants aimed at upgrading the post-recruitment training mechanism of the officers and employees at all levels.

Statement 1 is not correct: Mission Karmayogi aims to prepare Indian civil servants for the future by making them more creative, constructive, imaginative, proactive, innovative, progressive, professional, energetic, transparent and technology-enabled. The mission will focus on individual (civil servants) & institutional capacity building. Comprehensive reform of the capacity building apparatus at the individual, institutional and process levels for efficient public service delivery.

Statement 2 is correct: This council will approve and review civil service capacity building programmes. It will also include state Chief Ministers, Union Cabinet ministers and eminent national and global Academicians, thought leaders, industry leaders.

Q.7 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana?

1. It is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of husbandry sector in the country.
2. The scheme has an estimated investment of Rs. 200 crores for its implementation during a period of 10 years.
3. It focuses on adopting Area-based approach.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- Recently, the Prime Minister digitally launched the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and the e-Gopala app.

Statement 1 is not correct: It is a scheme for focused and sustainable development of the fisheries sector in the country. The scheme focuses on beneficiary-oriented activities in Marine, Inland fisheries and Aquaculture. PMMSY aims at enhancing fish production by an additional 70 lakh tonne by 2024-25, increasing fisheries export earnings to Rs.1,00,000 crore by 2024-25, doubling of incomes of fishers and fish farmers, reducing post-harvest losses from 20-25% to about 10% and generation of additional 55 lakhs direct and indirect gainful employment opportunities

Statement 2 is not correct: With an estimated investment of Rs. 20,050 crores for its implementation during a period of 5 years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25 in all States/Union Territories, it is a part of AatmaNirbhar Bharat Package.

Statement 3 is correct: PMMSY scheme primarily focuses on adopting 'Cluster or Area-based approaches' and creation of Fisheries clusters through backward and forward linkages.

Q.8 With reference to the Representation of People (RP) Act 1951, Consider the following statements:

1. Under Section 8 (1), (2) of RPA 1951, if any of the lawmakers are convicted of crimes like rape and untouchability, he will be disqualified for a minimum period of six years.
2. Under Section 8(4) of RPA 1951, the convicted lawmakers can hold on to their seats provided they filed an appeal in the higher court within three months of their conviction in the lower judiciary.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: Under Section 8 (1), (2) of the Act if any of the lawmakers are convicted of crimes like rape; murder; practising Untouchability or Sati; violating Foreign Exchange Regulation Act; causing enmity over religion, language or region; indulging in electoral violations, insulting Indian Constitution; importing and exporting banned goods, indulging in terrorist activities; etc. will be disqualified for a minimum period of six years. It is irrespective of whether they are fined or imprisoned.

Statement 2 is not correct: Section 8(4) of the RP Act allowed convicted MPs, MLAs and MLCs to continue in their posts, provided they appealed against their conviction/sentence in higher courts within three months of the date of judgment by the trial court. However, in 2013 Lily Thomas vs. Union of India case, SC struck down section 8(4) of RPA, 1951 calling it unconstitutional.

Q.9 With reference to the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM), consider the following statements:

1. Under this, every Indian citizen will have unique health IDs, digitised health records with identifiers for doctors and health facilities.
2. The initiative is implemented by respective states under the National Health Mission.

Which of the statements given is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the launch of National Digital Health Mission on August 15, 2020 during his speech on India's 74th Independence Day. With the launch of the historic mission, every Indian will soon have a digital health account. Under the National Digital Health Mission, every Indian will get a Health ID card that will work as a health account comprising information regarding the person's past medical conditions, treatment and diagnosis.

Statement 2 is not correct: The National Health Authority (NHA), which runs the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, would be designing and implementing the NDHM.

Q.10 With reference to ARISE-Atal New India Challenges programme launched recently, consider the following statements:

1. It will spur applied research and innovation in the education sector as per the New Education Policy 2020.

2. The programme will be driven by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), NITI Aayog and four other ministries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- Government launches Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-Atal New India Challenges programme for MSMEs, start-ups.

Statement 1 is not correct: The government launched the Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE-Atal New India Challenges programme to support MSMEs and startups for making India innovative, resilient, tech-driven, and research and development (R&D)-oriented.

Statement 2 is correct: The NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), in collaboration with ISRO and four ministries, will focus on challenges in 15 sectors through the programme.

Q.11 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)?

1. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second-largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations.

2. Its headquarters is in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

3. India is a member of the OIC.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: A

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second-largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states.

Statement 2 is correct: It is headquartered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Statement 3 is not correct: India is not a member of the OIC. However, for the first time in five decades, the United Arab Emirates invited the foreign minister of India Sushma Swaraj to attend the inaugural plenary 46th meeting of OIC foreign ministers held in Abu Dhabi overruling strong objections by Pakistan.

Q.12 Recently, Govt sets up an expert panel to look into the issue of waiver of interest during the moratorium period, the committee is headed by:

(a) Anand Sharma

(b) Rajiv Mehrishi

(c) Gopalakrishnan

(d) Anand Sharma

Answer: B

Explanation:

Option B is correct: The government recently has constituted an expert committee under former CAG Rajiv Mehrishi to look into the much-debated issue of waiver of interest on loans during the moratorium period. The announcement came hours after the government informed the Supreme Court that an expert panel has been set up to look into the issue of interest being charged by banks on instalments deferred during the moratorium. The RBI had announced the loan moratorium to help borrowers combat the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q.13 With reference to the PM CARES Fund, consider the following statements:

1. The PM CARES Fund is a public charitable trust registered under the Registration Act, 1908.
2. It is a public authority under the RTI Act.
3. The CAG is responsible for the auditing of the fund.
4. The fund is exempted from all provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- The PM CARES Fund has received an exemption from all provisions of the law meant to regulate foreign donations i.e FCRA 2010.

Statement 1 is correct: The PM CARES Fund is a public charitable trust registered under the Registration Act, 1908. It was not set up through a Central or State Act

Statement 2 is not correct: It is not a public authority under RTI. Earlier, the government refused to provide details about the Fund under the Right to Information Act, stating that PM CARES was not a “public authority” under the definition of the legislation.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Fund is audited by an independent auditor, not by the CAG.

Statement 4 is correct: According to the PM CARES website, the Fund “has received an exemption from the operation of all provisions of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010” or FCRA. Section 50 of the Act allows the Central government to issue orders exempting any organisation (apart from political parties) from the provisions of FCRA if it feels it necessary or expedient in the public interest, subject to conditions specified in the order.

Q.14 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Singapore Convention on Mediation?

1. The convention is related to the framework for the enforcement of international settlement agreements resulting from mediation.
2. India is not signatory to this convention.
3. It is the first UN treaty to be named after Singapore.

Choose the correct option using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- Recently, the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation has come into force.

Statement 1 is correct: The convention will provide a more effective way of enforcing mediated settlements of corporate disputes involving businesses in India and other signatories. It was adopted by UN General Assembly (UNGA) in December 2018.

Statement 2 is not correct: As on September 1 2020, the Convention has 53 signatories, including India, China and the U.S. India signed in 2019, This would boost India's 'ease of doing business' credentials by enabling swift mediated settlements of corporate disputes.

Statement 3 is correct: Also known as the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, this is also the first UN treaty to be named after Singapore.

Q.15 EASE 2.0 Index was in the news recently; it is related to-

- (a) Digitally driven Governance system
- (b) Banking
- (c) Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- (d) Innovation and R&D in the education sector

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News-Recently, the Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs inaugurated the Doorstep Banking Services by PSBs and participated in the awards ceremony to felicitate best performing banks on EASE Banking Reforms Index

Option B is correct: PSBs have shown a healthy trajectory in their performance over four quarters since the launch of EASE 2.0 Reforms Agenda. The overall EASE Index improved 37% over March 2019-20 from 49.2 to 67.4 out of 100. Bank of Baroda, State Bank of India, and erstwhile Oriental Bank of Commerce were felicitated for being the top three in the 'Top Performing Banks' category. Bank of Maharashtra, Central Bank of India and erstwhile Corporation Bank were awarded in the 'Top Improvers' category.

Q.16 With reference to Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a permanent intergovernmental organization of oil-exporting developing nations.
- 2. It is the outcome of the 1960 Riyadh Conference.
- 3. Ecuador has recently withdrawn from the organisation.
- 4. OPEC+ countries include non-OPEC oil-producing countries.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: The year 2020 marks the 60 Year Anniversary since the founding of OPEC in Baghdad in 1960. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent group consisting of 14 of the world's major oil-exporting nations.

Statement 2 is not correct: OPEC was founded in 1960 Baghdad Conference with Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela as founding members to coordinate the petroleum policies of its members and to provide member states with technical and economic aid.

Statement 3 is correct: Ecuador has withdrawn its membership of OPEC. In January 2019, Qatar withdrew its membership from the organisation.

Statement 4 is correct: The OPEC plus countries are the non-OPEC countries which export crude oil. OPEC plus countries include Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Brunei, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Russia, South Sudan and Sudan.

Q.17 Which of the following is correct regarding Project Arunank?

- (a) It aims to link remote regions of the borders (In Arunachal Pradesh) with well-developed strategic roads
- (b) It is a project of DRDO to build new missile technology
- (c) It is an initiative of Arunachal Pradesh government to promote learning outcomes at primary level.
- (d) None of the above

Answer: A

Explanation:

Option A is correct: Project Arunank has reconstructed the Daporijo Bridge across Subansiri river in Arunachal Pradesh. Project Arunank is being implemented by Border Roads Organization (BRO) in Arunachal Pradesh. It aims to link remote regions of the borders with well-developed strategic roads.

About Subansiri river- It originates in the Tibet Plateau and enters India through Miri hills in Arunachal Pradesh. It is the largest tributary of Brahmaputra River.

Q.18 Consider the following statements:

1. Panama disease is caused by a soil-borne fungus.
2. The disease inflicts banana crops and causes major damages across the world.
3. 'Tropical Race 4' or 'TR4' is one of the varieties of banana which is resistant to Panama disease.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- The scientists of Indian Council of Agriculture Research or ICAR, have found a cure for one of the most dreaded agricultural diseases one such as Panama Disease.

Statement 1 and 2 is correct: The Panama disease caused by a soil-borne fungus is threatening banana crops across Kerala, posing a potential crisis for farmers, even as global efforts to control the disease gain momentum. Panama is caused by the soil-borne fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *Cubense* (Foc). The fungus enters the plant through the roots and goes on to colonise the plant through the vascular system. It causes discolouration and wilting of leaves, and eventually kills the plant.

Statement 3 is not correct: A new virulent strain of the disease known as Tropical Race 4 (TR4) is now threatening banana crops in Asia, Australia, Africa and the Middle East. It is a strain of Panama Disease not a variety of Banana, Hence this is wrong.

Q.19 With reference to the Phosphene gas recently discovered in the atmosphere of Venus, consider the following statements:

1. It is a colourless, odourless and toxic gas.
2. It is known to be made only by some species of bacteria under anaerobic conditions.

Which of the above statements is/are true?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- An international team of astronomers discovered phosphine gas in the atmosphere of Venus which triggered global excitement about the possibility of the presence of lifeforms on the neighbouring planet.

Statement 1 is not correct but 2 is correct: Phosphine - a phosphorus atom with three hydrogen atoms attached - is highly toxic to people. It is a colourless but smelly gas which is usually produced when microbes, like bacteria, survive in the absence of oxygen. The researchers examined potential non-biological sources such as volcanism, meteorites, lightning and various types of chemical reactions, but none appeared viable. The research continues to either confirm the presence of life or find an alternative explanation.

Q.20 Consider the following statements:

1. Methane hydrates are formed when hydrogen-bonded water and methane gas come into contact and form crystalline solids.
2. They are formed at high pressures and high temperatures in the oceans.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

In News- The Krishna-Godavari (KG) basin holds a massive reserve of methane hydrate and a rich source of cleaner natural gas, claims a study by the Pune-based Agharkar Research Institute (ARI) of the science & technology ministry.

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct but 2 is not correct: Gas hydrates are formed when a gas such as methane gets trapped in well-defined cages of water molecules forming crystalline solids. In terrestrial conditions, gas hydrates are formed naturally under the sea bed and glaciers under high pressure, low-temperature conditions. Methane hydrate is a potential source of natural gas.

Q.21 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan Dhan Yojna?

1. It is a pension scheme for organized sector workers.
2. Ministry of Finance is the nodal ministry for its implementation.
3. The subscriber should belong to age group 18-40 years.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

Option C is correct: Government of India has introduced a pension scheme for unorganised workers namely Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maan-Dhan (PM-SYM) to ensure old age protection for Unorganised Workers. The unorganised workers mostly engaged as home-based workers, street vendors, mid-day meal workers, head loaders, brick kiln workers, cobblers, rag pickers, domestic workers, washermen, rickshaw pullers, landless labourers, own-account workers, agricultural workers, construction workers, beedi workers, handloom workers, leather workers, audiovisual workers and similar other occupations. Monthly income for eligibility is Rs 15,000/ per month or less and belong to the entry age group of 18-40 years. They should not be covered under the New Pension Scheme (NPS), Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) scheme or Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO). Further, he/she should not be an income taxpayer.

Q.22 Consider the following pairs:

Committee headed by — Related Domain

1. Ravi Chopra — Assessment of relief to bank borrowers
2. K N Dikshit — Ecological assessment of Char Dham Project
3. Rajiv Mehrishi — Studying evolution of Indian culture

Which of the pairs given above is/are not correctly matched?

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

Answer: D

Option D is correct: All the statements are wrong. These all the committees were in the news. Recently the government has formed an expert committee headed by KN Dikshit for conducting a study on the origin and evolution of Indian culture dating back to around 12,000 years ago. And, Government has also constituted a three-member expert committee headed by Rajiv Mehrishi to assist in the assessment of relief to bank borrowers. The Rajiv Chopra committee is related to make ecological assessments of Char Dham Project.

Q.23 Abraham Accords recently seen in the news is related to

- (a) Afghanistan Peace Summit
- (b) Israel- UAE Peace Agreement
- (c) Israel- Palestinian Peace Process

(d) UN Treaty on Peace and Disarmament

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- The Abraham Accord between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain is mediated by the USA. It is the first Arab-Israeli peace deal in 26 years.

Option B is correct: Recently, the Israel-United Arab Emirates Peace Agreement or the Abraham Accord was decided by the UAE and Israel. If the agreement is signed then UAE will be the third Arab country to sign a peace agreement with Israel after Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994). It will also be the first Persian Gulf country to sign an accord with Israel. The deal states that UAE would recognise the state of Israel and establish formal diplomatic relations with it, while Israel would halt its controversial plan to annex swathes of the Palestinian West Bank.

Q.24 Consider the following statements:

1. Morphological Phenotypic Plasticity is the ability of an organism to show physical variations in response to various stimuli.
 2. Kalinga cricket frog is a peculiar example of Morphological Phenotypic Plasticity phenomenon.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- Indian scientists have reported a first-of-its-kind discovery of morphological phenotypic plasticity (MPP) in the Kalinga cricket frog.

Both statement 1 and statement 2 are correct: MPP is the ability of an organism to show drastic morphological (physical features) variations in response to natural environmental variations or stimuli. Scientists claim the morphological phenotypic plasticity found in the Kalinga cricket frog is first such in India.

Q.25 With reference to Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS), Consider the following statements:

1. Under this scheme, the funds are released in the form of grants-in-aid directly to the district authorities.
 2. The funds released under the scheme are lapsable if not spent in a particular year.
 3. The implementation and monitoring of the scheme are done by the Ministry of Finance.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- In the Parliamentary session, MPs support Bill reducing their salaries but want MPLADS restored.

Statement 1 is correct: MPLADS is a centrally-sponsored plan scheme fully funded by the government of India. Under this scheme, the funds are released in the form of grants in aids directly to the district authorities. Under the scheme, each MP has the choice to suggest to the District Collector for works to the tune of Rs.5 Crores per annum to be taken up in his/her constituency.

Statement 2 is not correct: The funds released under the scheme are non-lapsable. This means that if the funds for a particular is not spent in that year, it will be carried forward.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Ministry of Statistics and Programme has issued the guidelines on MPLADS Scheme including implementation and monitoring of the scheme. The Department has initiated all necessary steps to ensure that the scheme is successfully implemented in the field.

Q.26 Living Planet Report 2020 released by which of the following organisations?

- (a) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- (b) Yale University in collaboration with Columbia University
- (c) World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- (d) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- Recently, the Living Planet Report 2020 released by international non-profit organisation 'World Wide Fund for Nature'.

Option C is correct: The Living Planet Index (LPI) — a measure of the state of the world's biological diversity based on population trends of vertebrate species in terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats — was used by the report to calculate this decline.

- Key Highlights- World lost 68% vertebrates in 1970-2016.
 - The population of this fish declined by 97 per cent between 1982 and 2015 because of the damming of the river's waterway.
 - Megafauna — or bigger species in terms of size — were more vulnerable because they were subjected to intense anthropogenic threats and overexploitation.
 - Wildlife populations in freshwater habitats suffered a decline of 84 per cent, equivalent to four per cent per year, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Q.27 Mulgaonkar Principles was in the news related to which of the following subjects?

- (a) Defection in the politics
- (b) Child abuse
- (c) Contempt of Court
- (d) Trafficking of Women

Answer: C

Explanation:

Option C is correct: Recently, in the criticism against the Supreme Court's ruling that held advocate Prashant Bhushan guilty of contempt of court, his counsel has invoked the 'Mulgaonkar principles', urging the court to show restraint. S Mulgaonkar v Unknown (1978) is a case that led to a landmark ruling on the subject of contempt of court. In the verdict which had a 2:1 majority, the court held Mulgaonkar, then editor of The Indian Express, not guilty of contempt although the same Bench had initiated the proceedings. Justices P Kailasam and Krishna Iyer formed the majority going against then Chief Justice of India M H Beg. Justice Iyer's counsel of caution in exercising the contempt jurisdiction came to be called the Mulgaonkar principles.

Q.28 Consider the following statements:

1. Heart Attack Rewind campaign and REPLACE initiatives were launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
2. The purpose of these initiatives is to eliminate industrially-produced trans-fats.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan were among countries that need to act urgently against trans-fat, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned

Statement 1 is not correct but 2 is correct: Heart Attack Rewind campaign is a mass media campaign of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for the elimination of industrially-produced trans fat in the food supply. It is not of Ministry of Health. In May 2018, WHO launched a comprehensive plan named 'REPLACE' to eliminate industrially-produced trans fat from the global food supply by 2023. REPLACE provides a roadmap about how countries can remove and replace all trans fat from their food supplies with the intention to eradicate it from the globe.

Q.29 With reference to the Djibouti Code of Conduct/ Jeddah Amendment, consider the following statements:

1. It is a grouping of 18 member states adjoining the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the East coast of Africa on the maritime issue.
2. It was established on January 2014.
3. India and UK are the observer states to this.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- India has joined the Djibouti Code of Conduct/ Jeddah Amendment, DCOC/JA, as Observer.

Statement 1 is correct: DCOC/JA is a grouping on maritime matters comprising 18 member states adjoining the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, the East Coast of Africa and Island countries in the Indian Ocean Region.

Statement 2 is not correct: The DCOC, established in January 2009, is aimed at the repression of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Western Indian Ocean Region, the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.

Statement 3 is correct: India has joined Japan, Norway, the UK and the US as Observers to the DCOC/JA. As an observer at the DCOC/JA, India is looking forward to working together with DCOC/JA member states towards coordinating and contributing to enhanced maritime security in the Indian Ocean Region.

Q.30 Consider the following statements:

1. Dr Kapila Vatsyayan was a leading scholar of Indian Classical music.
2. She is the recipient of Bharat Ratna Award.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

In News- Recently, Renowned scholar of Indian classical dance Dr Kapila Vatsyayan passes away. Both the statements are not correct: Dr Kapila Vatsyayan who was a leading scholar of Indian classical dance, art, architecture and art history recently passed away at the age of 92.

She was born in Delhi in 1928. She was a former Member of Parliament and also served as Secretary to the Government in the Ministry of Education, where she was responsible for the establishment of a large number of national institutions of higher education.

She served as the founding Director of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts and was former President of India International Centre (IIC) and an IIC Life Trustee and the Chairperson of the IIC International Research Division. In 2011, she was bestowed upon with the Padma Vibhushan by the government of India.

Q.31 Which of the following organisation recently released the report titled “Ecological Threat Register(ETR)”?

- (a) Greenpeace International
- (b) World Wide Fund for Nature
- (c) Institute for Economics & Peace
- (d) International Union for Conservation of Nature

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- The first edition of Ecological Threat Register (ETR) by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) recently.

Option C is correct: It is produced by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) which is a world’s leading think tank headquartered in Sydney, Australia. The think tank also released reports such as the Global Peace Index and the Global Terrorism Index. The ETR measures ecological threats that countries are currently facing and provides projections to 2050. The Ecological Threat Register (ETR) covers around 157 independent states and territories.

Q.32 With reference to the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), consider the following statements:

1. These schemes are 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the respective state government machinery.
2. They are mainly formulated on the subjects in the Union List.
3. MGNREGA comes under the category of Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

Statement 1 is not correct: In India's development plan exercise we have two types of schemes i.e central sector and centrally sponsored scheme. Under Central sector schemes, it is 100% funded by the Union government and implemented by the Central Government machinery. Central sector schemes are mainly formulated on subjects from the Union List. Under Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) a certain percentage of the funding is borne by the States in the ratio of 50:50, 70:30, 75:25 or 90:10 and the implementation is by the State Governments.

Statement 2 is not correct: Centrally Sponsored Schemes are formulated in subjects from the State List to encourage States to prioritise in areas that require more attention.

Statement 3 is correct: The centrally sponsored schemes are divided into two categories – core of the core schemes and core schemes. MGNREGA or the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act falls under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes: Core of the core schemes.

Q.33 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Phytoplankton?

1. They are the tiny microscopic plants found in the ocean
2. Diatoms and algae are types of Phytoplanktons.
3. They are present deep into the water and photosynthesise their own food.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- New study helps monitor trends in phytoplankton biomass in the Bay of Bengal.

Statement 1 and 2 are correct: Phytoplanktons are tiny microscopic plants found in the ocean. They are important ecological indicators that regulate life in the ocean. Like land plants, they take up carbon dioxide, make carbohydrates using light energy, and release oxygen. They are what is known as primary producers of the ocean—the organisms that form the base of the food chain. Phytoplankton comprises two very different kinds of organisms. The larger category includes single-celled algae known as protists—advanced eukaryotic cells, similar to protozoans. These forms include diatoms and are most abundant near coasts.

Statement 3 is not correct: Because they need light, phytoplankton lives near the surface, where enough sunlight can penetrate to power photosynthesis.

Q.34 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the interest rate derivatives (IRD)?

1. An interest rate derivative is a financial contract whose value is based on some underlying interest rate or interest-bearing asset.
2. A plain vanilla interest rate swap is the most common type of interest rate derivative.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently proposed to introduce exchange-traded and over-the-counter (OTC) interest rate derivatives products that would be accessible to both foreign investors and retail participants.

Statement 1 is correct: An interest rate derivative is a financial instrument with a value that is linked to the movements of an interest rate or rates. These may include futures, options, or swaps contracts. Interest rate derivatives are often used as hedges by institutional investors, banks, companies, and individuals to protect themselves against changes in market interest rates, but they can also be used to increase or refine the holder's risk profile or to speculate on rate moves.

Statement 2 is correct: A plain vanilla interest rate swap is the most basic and common type of interest rate derivative. There are two parties to a swap: party one receives a stream of interest payments based on a floating interest rate and pays a stream of interest payments based on a fixed rate. Party two receives a stream of fixed interest rate payments and pays a stream of floating-rate payments.

Q.35 With reference to the Salaries of Legislators in India, consider the following statements:

1. Article 106 of the Constitution empowers MPs to determine their salaries through legislation.
 2. The salary and pension of MPs increased every five years on the basis of the cost inflation index.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

In News- The Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 was unanimously passed by the both the Houses. The Bill reduces the basic salary of MPs by 30% for one year to meet the exigencies arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both statement 1 and 2 are correct: Article 106 of the Constitution empowers MPs to determine their salaries through legislation. Until two years ago, MPs periodically passed laws to revise their salaries which raised the issue of conflict of interest. This was changed in 2018 when Parliament amended the salaries of MPs law through the Finance Act. The Finance Act, 2018 provided that the salary, daily allowance, and pension of MPs will be increased every five years, on the basis of the cost inflation index provided under the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Q.36 Consider the following statements:

1. Queen's Counsel is an advocate, appointed Counsel to the UK Crown on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor.
 2. He is recognised in courts of Commonwealth nations only.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only

- (c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- India has called for the appointment of an Indian lawyer or a Queen's Counsel for Kulbhushan Jadhav to ensure a free and fair trial in the review of his death sentence in Pakistan.

Statement 1 is correct: Queen's Counsel is a barrister or advocate, appointed Counsel to the UK Crown on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor. Queen's Counsel has the privilege of sitting within the Bar of court and wear silk gowns of a special design (hence the informal title Silks). The special robes are the reason why becoming a QC is often called "taking silk". A lawyer is required to serve as a barrister or a Scottish advocate for at least 10 years in order to be appointed to the special counsel. In January 2019, Indian advocate Dipen Sabharwal was appointed as the Queen's Counsel.

Statement 2 is not correct: Queen's counsels are recognised in almost all courts around the world.

Q.37 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act?

1. Under this, both an individual or organisation can be designated as terrorist.
2. It empowers any officers of the rank of DySP or above, to investigate cases of terrorism.
3. Both Indian and foreign nationals can be charged under this act.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

In News- Recently, former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student Umar Khalid, had been arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: The UAPA is primarily an anti-terror law – aimed at “more effective prevention of certain unlawful activities of individuals and associations and for dealing with terrorist activities”. It was first promulgated in 1967 to target secessionist organisations and is considered to be the predecessor of laws such as the (now repealed) Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) and Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA). In 2019, it was amended to make it broader, it was amended to designate individuals as terrorists on certain grounds provided in the Act, earlier only organisations were included. Now it included both individual and organisations.

Statement 2 is not correct: The Act empowers the Director-General of National Investigation Agency (NIA) to grant approval of seizure or attachment of property when the case is investigated by the said agency. The Act empowers the officers of the NIA, of the rank of Inspector or above, to investigate cases of terrorism in addition to those conducted by the DSP or ACP or above rank officer in the state.

Statement 3 is correct: Under UAPA, both Indian and foreign nationals can be charged. It will be applicable to the offenders in the same manner, even if the crime is committed on foreign land, outside India.

Q.38 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the International Court Of Justice (ICJ)?

1. It is governed by an international treaty called 'The Rome Statute'.
2. The Court is composed of 15 judges, who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.
3. The judges are not eligible for re-election.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

In News- Recently, India called for the appointment of an Indian lawyer or a Queen's counsel for Indian death-row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav. The assertion by India comes days after Pakistan's Parliament has extended for four months an ordinance that allowed Jadhav to file an appeal against his conviction in a high court as required by the International Court of Justice.

Statement 1 is not correct: It was established in 1945 by the United Nations charter and started working formally in April 1946. It is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, situated at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands).

Statement 2 is correct: It is composed of 15 judges, who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council. These organs vote simultaneously but separately.

Statement 3 is not correct: One-third of the judges are elected every three years, and the judges are eligible for re-election.

Q.39 Which of the following state become the first to institutionalise snake handling in the country?

- (a) Andhra Pradesh
- (b) Odisha
- (c) Madhya Pradesh
- (d) Kerala

Answer: D

In News- Recently, the Kerala Forest Department has framed guidelines for rescuing snakes and releasing them in uninhabited areas.

Explanation:

Option D is correct: Kerala has become the first state to institutionalise snake handling in the country. The Kerala Forest Department has framed guidelines for rescuing snakes from human-dominated places and releasing them in uninhabited areas.

- **Guidelines-** It is mandatory for snake handlers, aged between 21 and 65 years, to seek certification.

- The applications will be screened by the Assistant Conservators of Forest (ACF, Social Forestry) to prepare lists of snake handlers in each district. Various parameters, including experience, age, health as well as track record will be considered during the selection process.

- While the certification will be valid for five years, the respective ACFs can withdraw or cancel the same if the snake handler is found to be involved in any illegal or unethical practices.

- The snake rescuer has to bear protective gears.

Q.40 With reference to the Indus Waters Treaty, consider the statements:

1. It is brokered by World Bank.
 2. India governs Beas, Ravi, Jhelum. and and Pakistan governs Indus, Chenab, and Sutlej.
 3. India is allowed to use 20% of Indus water for irrigation, power-generation, and transportation.
- Which of the statements 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

Answer: B

In News- The Indus Water Treaty (IWT) between India and Pakistan marks its 60th anniversary on 19th September 2020.

Statement 1 is correct: The distribution of waters of the Indus and its tributaries between India and Pakistan is governed by the Indus Water Treaty (IWT). The treaty brokered by World Bank, was signed by the then-Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistani President Ayub Khan on 19 September 1960.

Statement 2 is not correct: The three 'western rivers' (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) went to Pakistan and the three 'eastern rivers' (Sutlej, Ravi and Beas) were portioned to India.

Statement 3 is correct: India is allowed to use 20% water of the western rivers for irrigation, power generation and transport purposes.

Q.41 With respect to the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO), consider the following statements:

1. El Nino events are sometimes referred to as the warm and wet half phase of ENSO and La Nina as the cold phase of the ENSO.
2. Under the El Nino event, the surface temperature of the Pacific Ocean increases more than usual causing heavy rainfalls in Australia.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

In News- El Nino and La Nina are the exact opposite phases of a climatic phenomenon called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle. They impact monsoon rains in the Indian subcontinent.

Statement 1 is not correct: ENSO is a single climate phenomenon; it has three states or phases. The two opposite phases are El Niño and La Niña. El Niño is the warming of the ocean surface, or above-average sea surface temperatures (SST), in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. And, La Nina is basically the opposite of an El Niño: Ocean temperatures along the eastern half of the tropical Pacific cool down and that part of the world dries out.

Statement 2 is not correct: During an El Niño event, the surface of the tropical Pacific Ocean gets warmer than usual, particularly at the equator and along the coasts of South and Central America. Warm oceans lead to low-pressure systems in the atmosphere above, which in turn leads to a lot of rain for the western coasts of South America.

Q.42 In reference to the 'Beirut Declaration' sometimes seen in the news recently, which of the following is correct?

- (a) It seeks to prepare a Global action plan for the mitigation of terrorism.
- (b) It addresses the challenges posed by global climate change and prepares a roadmap.
- (c) It chalks out a plan for the refugee crisis and preventing the violation of their human rights.
- (d) It enhances the role of religions in promoting human rights.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Option D is correct: Beirut Declaration enhances the role of religions in promoting human rights. A "Faith for Rights" initiative launched by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in 2017. Building on the 2012 Rabat Plan of Action that laid out religious leaders' core responsibilities in countering incitement to hatred, the Beirut Declaration expands those responsibilities to the full spectrum of human rights. It calls on believers of all faiths to join hands and hearts in articulating ways in which they can stand together in defending fundamental rights against discrimination and violence.

Q.43 Consider the following statements:

1. Fiscal deficit is the difference between the Revenue Receipts and the total expenditure excluding Non-debt Capital Receipts (NDCR).
2. High Fiscal deficit boosts the demand and hence more private production.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

In News- The central government's fiscal deficit have significantly rise in the current fiscal year due to a fall in revenue and rising expenditure to support lives and livelihoods amid the pandemic.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Union Budget defines Fiscal Deficit as the difference between the Revenue Receipts plus Non-debt Capital Receipts (NDCR) and the total expenditure. In other words, it is reflective of the total borrowing requirements of the Government.

Statement 2 is not correct: In the economy, there is a limited pool of investible savings. These savings are used by financial institutions like banks to lend to private businesses (both big and small) and the governments. If the FD ratio is too high, it implies that there is a lesser amount of money left in the market for private entrepreneurs and businesses to borrow.

Q.44 Global Smart City Index 2020 was released recently by which of the following organisations?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) World Economic Forum
- (c) Institute for Management Development (IMD)
- (d) Harvard University

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- The Institute for Management Development (IMD) in collaboration with Singapore University for Technology and Design (SUTD) released the 2020 Smart City Index.

Option C is correct: Smart City Index is prepared by the Institute for Management Development World Competitiveness Centre, Smart City Observatory and Singapore University of Technology and Design. The index offers a balanced focus on the economic and technological aspects of smart cities. It also includes humane dimensions of smart cities including the quality of life, environment and inclusiveness. The 2020 Smart City Index (SCI) was topped by Singapore, followed by Helsinki and Zurich in the second and the third place respectively.

Q.45 Consider the following statements:

1. Brucellosis is a viral disease that mainly infects cattle.
2. It is a highly contagious zoonotic disease.
3. It is also known as Mediterranean fever.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: B

In News- Recently, Several thousand people in northwest China tested positive for the bacterial disease named Brucellosis

Statement 1 is not correct but 2 & 3 are correct: It is a bacterial disease caused by various Brucella species, which mainly infect cattle, swine, goats, sheep and dogs among others. It also is known as Malta fever or Mediterranean fever. Humans generally acquire the disease through direct contact with infected animals or eating, drinking contaminated animal products or by inhaling airborne agents. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that person-to-person transmission of brucellosis is “extremely rare” but some symptoms may reoccur or never go away.

Q.46 A web-form namely ‘SPICE+’ was in the news recently, it is an initiative of which of the following ministry?

- (a) Ministry of Finance
- (b) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- (c) Ministry of Civil Aviation
- (d) Ministry of Home Affairs

Answer: B

In News- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has notified and deployed a web-form namely ‘SPICE+’ as a part of Govt of India’s Ease of Doing Business (EODB) initiatives.

Option B is correct: SPICE+ Portal offers 10 services by three Central Government Ministries and Departments (Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Ministry of Labour & Department of Revenue in the Ministry of Finance), one State Government (Maharashtra) and various Banks. Thus it saves the procedure, time and cost for Starting a Business in India.

Q.47 Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform was launched recently by which of the following organisation?

- (a) G20 Nations
- (b) United Nation

- (c) BRICS
- (d) WWF

Answer: A

In News- During the Environment Ministerial Meeting (EMM) of the G20 countries, the Global Coral Reef R&D Accelerator Platform was launched recently.

Option A is correct: It is an innovative action-oriented initiative aimed at creating a global research and development (R&D) program to advance research, innovation and capacity building in all facets of coral reef conservation, restoration, and adaptation, and strengthen ongoing efforts and commitments made to enhance coral reefs conservation and their further degradation.

Q.48 Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Budapest Convention of 2004?

1. It is an international treaty seeking to address the problem of illegal trade in armaments across the nations.
2. India is a signatory to this convention.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

Statement 1 is not correct: The Budapest Convention is the first international treaty seeking to address Internet and computer crime (cybercrime) by harmonizing national laws, improving investigative techniques, and increasing cooperation among nations. It serves as a guideline for any country developing comprehensive national legislation against Cybercrime and as a framework for international cooperation between State Parties to this treaty.

Statement 2 is not correct: India did not participate in the negotiation of the Convention. India's is concerned due to data sharing with foreign law enforcement agencies as it infringes on national sovereignty.

Q.49 With reference to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), consider the following statements:

1. India is one of the founding member states of the bank.
2. India is the second-largest shareholder in AIIB.
3. AIIB has more than 80 member nations.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is an international financial institution proposed by China. It has officially approved 57 nations as prospective founding members, with Sweden, Israel, South Africa, Azerbaijan, Iceland, Portugal and Poland

the latest to be included. Countries accepted as AIIB founding members include China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Myanmar, the Philippines, Pakistan, Britain, Australia, Brazil, France, Germany and Spain.

Statement 2 is correct: China is the largest shareholder with 26.61 % voting shares in the bank followed by India (7.6%), Russia (6.01%) and Germany (4.2 %). The regional members hold 75% of the total voting power in the Bank.

Statement 3 is correct: AIIB has now grown to 102 approved members overall around the world.

Q.50 Which of the following statement(s) are correct with respect to the cyanobacteria?

1. They are microscopic organisms found naturally in soils and also called blue-green algae.
2. These multi cellular organisms which makes their own food using photosynthesis.
3. They contain phycocyanin which they use to capture light for photosynthesis.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- According to the investigation, toxins in water produced by cyanobacteria are behind the killing of more than 300 elephants in Botswana earlier this year.

Statement 1 is correct: Cyanobacteria are a group of photosynthetic bacteria, some of which are nitrogen-fixing. Cyanobacteria are microscopic organisms common in water and sometimes found in soil. They are also called blue-green algae.

Statement 2 is not correct: These single-celled organisms (bacteria) live in fresh, brackish (combined salt and freshwater), and marine water. In warm, nutrient-rich (high in phosphorus and nitrogen) environments, cyanobacteria can multiply quickly.

Statement 3 is correct: Cyanobacteria get their name from the bluish pigment phycocyanin, which they use to capture light for photosynthesis. They also contain 'chlorophyll a', the same photosynthetic pigment that plants use.

Q.51 Consider the following statements:

1. The Bondas and Didiayis are found in the North Eastern region of India especially Assam and Meghalaya.
2. 75 tribal groups have been categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)s and Bondas and Didiayis are among them.
3. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)s categorized on the recommendation of erstwhile Planning Commission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- Six members of two Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (Bondas and Didiayis) in Odisha contracted Covid-19. The the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes termed this as a “matter of grave concern”.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Bondas and Didiayis are found in the Malkangiri district of the Odisha state, which shares its border with Andhra Pradesh on the east and south and Chhattisgarh on the west. They are believed to have come to India as part of the first wave of migration out of Africa about 60,000 years ago. The Didayis – a little known Austro-Asiatic tribe – live in the immediate neighbourhood of the Bondas.

Statement 2 is correct: 75 tribal groups have been categorized categorized by Ministry of Home Affairs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)s. PVTGs reside in 18 States and UT of A&N Islands. The Bondas and Didiayis are belong of the PVTGs category.

Statement 3 is not correct: A PVTG (earlier, Primitive tribal group) is a Government of India classification for tribes based on their relative physical isolation, stagnant or declining population, low levels of literacy and pre-agricultural stage of economy, such as hunting, food gathering, shifting cultivation and terrace cultivation. The classification was adopted by the GOI after the Dhebar Commission (1960-1961) stated that within the Scheduled Tribes there existed an inequality in the rate of development.

Q.52 With reference to the Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs), consider the following statements:

1. They enable the direct investment of money from individual/institutional investors in infrastructure.
 2. They are regulated and overseen by the Reserve Bank of India.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- Recently, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has decided to use Infrastructure Investment Trust(s) (InvIT) as a vehicle for mobilising funds for constructing road infrastructure.

Statement 1 is correct: An Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvITs) is like a mutual fund, which enables direct investment of small amounts of money from possible individual/institutional investors in infrastructure to earn a small portion of the income as a return. InvITs work like mutual funds or real estate investment trusts (REITs) in features. InvITs can be treated as the modified version of REITs designed to suit the specific circumstances of the infrastructure sector.

Statement 2 is not correct: They are regulated by the Securities and Exchange Board of India. Their units are listed on different trading platforms like stock exchanges and are a wholesome combination of both equity and debt instruments. InvITs can be established as a trust and registered with Sebi. An InvIT consists of four elements: 1) Trustee, 2) Sponsor(s), 3) Investment Manager and 4) Project Manager.

Q.53 O-SMART Scheme was in the news, the scheme is related to which of the following area?

- (a) Robusting Military surveillance on the border areas.

- (b) Oceanic research and early weather warning system.
- (c) Analysing the Big Data in Disaster Mangement.
- (d) For incentivising the renewable energy startups.

Answer: B

In News- The Union Ministry of Earth Sciences has informed about the progress of O-SMART Scheme.

Option B is correct: O-SMART stands for – Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology scheme. It aims at stepping up ocean research and setting up early warning weather systems. The services rendered under the O-SMART will provide economic benefits to a number of user communities in the coastal and ocean sectors, namely, fisheries, offshore industry, coastal states, Defence, Shipping, Ports etc. It seeks to address issues relating to SDG-14, which aims to conserve the use of oceans, marine resources for sustainable development. It also provides the necessary scientific and technological background required for the implementation of various aspects of Blue Economy.

Q.54 With reference to the Central Vigilance Commission(CVC), consider the following statements:

1. It consists of a Central Vigilance Commissioner and not more than two vigilance commissioners.
2. They are appointed by the President at the recommendation of the PM, Union Minister of Home Affair and Leader of Opposition of the Lok Sabha.
3. The office terms of the members are five years or sixty-four years of age, whichever is earlier.
4. The Central Vigilance Commission is a constitutional body.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

Statement 1 is correct: The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) is the main agency for preventing corruption in the Central government. It is a multi-member body consisting of a Central Vigilance Commissioner (chairperson) and not more than two vigilance commissioners.

Statement 2 is correct: They are appointed by the president by warrant under his hand and seal on the recommendation of a three-member committee consisting of the prime minister as its head, the Union minister of home affairs and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha.

Statement 3 is incorrect: They hold office for a term of four years or until they attain the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier. After their tenure, they are not eligible for further employment under the Central or a state government.

Statement 4 is incorrect: The CVC was set up by the Government in February 1964 on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by Shri K. Santhanam. In 2003, the Parliament enacted CVC Act conferring statutory status on the CVC. The CVC is not controlled by any Ministry/Department. It is an independent body which is only responsible to the Parliament.

Q.55 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the "Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020"?

1. It declares five newly established Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs) as institutions of national importance.
2. All the IIITs are run and owned by the central government.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- Recently, Rajya Sabha passed the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020. It has been already passed by Lok Sabha earlier this year.

Statement 1 is correct: The Bill seeks to declare five IIITs set up under the PPP model in Surat, Bhopal, Bhagalpur, Agartala, and Raichur as institutions of national importance. Currently, these institutes are registered as Societies under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and do not have the power to grant degrees or diplomas. On being declared institutions of national importance, the five institutes will be granted the power to grant degrees.

Statement 2 is not correct: There are 25 IIITs in the country out of which 5 are purely run by the central government and 15 operate under public-private partnership (PPP) model. These 5 IIITs along with 15 other IIITs, which are also built on public-private partnership (PPP) mode will now be able to use the nomenclature of Bachelor of Technology (BTech) or Master of Technology (MTech) or PhD degree.

Q.56 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the "ABHYAS - High-speed Expendable Aerial Target"?

1. It is an air vehicle that can be used as a target for evaluation of various Missile systems.
2. It is designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of ISRO.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- India successfully conducted the flight test of ABHYAS - High-speed Expendable Aerial Target (HEAT) vehicles from a test range in Odisha.

Statement 1 is correct: The air vehicle is launched using twin underslung booster. This can be used as a target for evaluation of various Missile systems. It is powered by a small gas turbine engine and has MEMS-based Inertial Navigation System for navigation along with the Flight Control Computer for guidance and control. The vehicle is programmed for fully autonomous flight.

Statement 2 is not correct: ABHYAS has been designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE) of the DRDO, not of ISRO.

Q.57 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the YuWaah platform?

1. It will help in the upskilling of young people and providing entrepreneurship classes by industry experts.
2. It is launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports along with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

In News- Government has launched YuWaah a multi-stakeholder platform to make young people career ready.

Option C is correct: Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) have signed a “Statement of Intent” on 20.07.2020 to establish YuWaah, Generation Unlimited (GenU), a global multi-stakeholder platform in India. As per the Statement of Intent, the objectives of this project are:

- Support young people by providing entrepreneurship classes (online and offline) with successful entrepreneurs and experts, towards establishing entrepreneurial mindset among young people.
- Upskilling of young people on 21st century skills, life skills, digital skills through online and offline channels and support them through self-learning, for their productive lives and the future of work.
- Create linkages with aspirational economic opportunities to connect young people with employment opportunities, including building pathways to connect them with jobs or self-employment. For this, innovative solutions and technology platforms will be engaged to take maximize the scale and reach.
- Providing career guidance support to young people through career portal as well as through job-readiness and self-exploration sessions to make young people career-ready.

Q.58 Consider the following statements:

1. Medicanes are extra-tropical hurricanes observed over the Mediterranean Sea.
2. They occur in warmer regions as compared to tropical cyclones.
3. They are usually formed during the summer season twice a year.
4. They are larger in diameter.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: B

In News- Recently, Researchers have warned that extra-tropical storms in the Mediterranean Sea, known as ‘Medicanes’ or ‘Mediterranean Hurricanes’, could become more frequent due to human-induced climate change.

Statement 1 is correct, rest are not correct: Medicanes are extra-tropical hurricanes observed over the Mediterranean Sea. Medicanes occur more in colder waters than tropical cyclones, hurricanes and typhoons. Hence, the cores of these storms are also cold, as compared to the warm cores of

tropical cyclones. Warmer cores tend to carry more moisture (hence rainfall), are bigger in size and have swifter winds. The medicanes are usually formed during winter season. They occur once or twice a year. They are also smaller in diameter.

Q.59 Which of the following states is the first to establish the medical device park named 'MedSpark'?

- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Maharashtra
- (c) Telangana
- (d) Kerala

Answer: D

In News- Kerala is set to lay the foundation stone for MedSpark, one of the first medical device parks in the country, in Thiruvananthapuram.

Option D is correct: Kerala has managed to bag one of the four medical device parks proposed to be set up by the government. The other three have reportedly gone to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, leaving Karnataka as the only southern state not to have been favoured. As part of the atma nirbharta policy of the Union government, these parks will provide a full range of services to the medical devices industry, including R&D support, testing and evaluation.

Q.60 Which of the following ministry has recently launched a scheme called Five Star Villages?

- (a) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- (b) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
- (c) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship
- (d) Ministry of Communications

Answer: D

Explanation:

In News- In midst of the pandemic crisis, the Department of Posts/Postal department of India has recently launched the 'Five Star Villages scheme

Option D is correct: The scheme is launched by the Department of Posts (Ministry of Communication) that seeks to bridge the gaps in public awareness and reach of postal products and services, especially in interior villages. The scheme has three components I. E 1. Product and Service Availability; 2. Product and Service Publicity; 3. Product and Service Marketing. The Branch offices will function as one-stop shops to cater to all post-office-related needs of the villagers.

Q.61 With reference to the National Service Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Central- Sector scheme for orienting the student youth towards community service while they are studying in educational institutions.
2. It is implemented by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- President of India confers the National Service Scheme(NSS) Awards for the year 2018-19.

Both the statements are correct: National Service Scheme (NSS) was launched during 1969, the birth centenary year of Mahatma Gandhi, in 37 universities involving 40000 students. NSS is an extension dimension to the higher education system to orient the student youth to community service while they are studying in educational institutions. It is being implemented by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India.

Q.62 Consider the following statements:

1. Adjournment sine die is terminating the both sitting and session of Parliament for an indefinite period.
2. The maximum gap between two sessions of Parliament cannot be more than six months.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- Lok Sabha was adjourned sine die after passing the Major Port Authorities Bill, 2020.

Statement 1 is not correct: Adjournment sine die means when the House is adjourned without naming a day for reassembly. Here, sitting of Parliament is terminated for an indefinite period. It is the prorogation in which the President dismisses the House, resulting in termination of the session itself. In the Adjournment, only sitting is terminated not the session of the House.

Statement 2 is correct: This statement is correct. In the Summoning process it is the duty of Indian President to summon each House of the Parliament from time to time. The maximum gap between two sessions of Parliament cannot be more than six months. In other words, the Parliament should meet at least twice a year.

Q.63 Which of the following statements is/are not correct with respect to the International Whaling Commission (IWC)?

1. It is an international body established under the UN Convention.
2. It regulates the commercial whaling but its schedule is not legally binding.
3. India is not a member state of the IWC.

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: D

In News- At least 380 whales have died in a mass stranding in southern Australia.

All the statements are not correct: The IWC was set up under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling which was signed in Washington DC on 2nd December 1946. The preamble to the Convention states that its purpose is to provide for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry. An integral part of the Convention is its legally binding 'Schedule.' The body is the first piece of International

Environmental Legislation established in 1946. Commercial whaling was banned by the IWC in 1986 after some species were almost driven to extinction. 89 countries have the membership of in IWC and all the member countries are signatories to this convention. India is a member state of the IWC.

Q.64 A hackathon named “KRITAGYA” has been planned by which of the following?

- (a) NITI Aayog
- (b) Ministry of Science & Technology
- (c) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
- (d) Bombay Natural History Society

Answer: C

Option C is correct: A hackathon named “KRITAGYA” has been planned by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP). This hackathon has been planned to promote potential technology solutions for enhancing farm mechanization with special emphasis on women friendly equipments. Students, faculties and innovators/entrepreneurs from any university / technical institution across the country can apply and participate in the event in the form of a group. This will give an opportunity to the students, faculties, entrepreneurs, innovators and other stakeholders to showcase their innovative approaches and technology solutions to promote farm mechanization in India.

Q.65 JIMEX 20 Maritime Exercise is between India and which of the following nations?

- (a) Australia
- (b) Japan
- (c) USA
- (d) South Africa

Answer: B

In News- The 4th edition of India - Japan Maritime bilateral exercise JIMEX will be held in the North Arabian Sea from 26th - 28th September 2020.

Option B is correct: It is a bilateral maritime exercise conducted biennially between the Indian Navy and Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). JIMEX-20 will showcase a high degree of interoperability and joint operational skills through the conduct of a multitude of advanced exercises, across the spectrum of maritime operations. Multi-faceted tactical exercises involving weapon firing, cross-deck helicopter operations and complex surface, anti-submarine and air warfare drills will consolidate the coordination developed by the two navies

Q.66 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the 'Positive Pay' mechanism:

1. It is a fraud-prevention system offered by most commercial banks to companies to protect them against forged, altered and counterfeit checks.
2. It allows an account holder to electronically upload the details of the high-value cheque through the bank's net banking system.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- Recently, RBI said that a Positive pay system for cheque payments to come into effect from January 1, 2021.

Statement 1 is correct: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to introduce a mechanism of 'Positive Pay' for all cheques of value Rs 50,000 and above. This will cover approximately 20 percent and 80 percent of total cheques by volume and value, respectively. Positive Pay is a fraud detection tool adopted by banks to protect customers against forged, altered or counterfeit cheques.

Statement 2 is correct: The introduction of Positive Pay means that an added layer of security has been provided to the instrument. While issuing a high-value cheque, one can upload its details (such as front and back images) to the bank. Customers will need to put in a cheque number, issuance date, payee name, account number, amount payable along with an image of the front and reverse side of the instrument on the Positive Pay system.

Q.67 With reference to National Medical Commission Act, 2019, consider the following statements:

1. The Act provided for setting up of a National Medical Commission replacing Medical Council of India.
2. The Act proposes a common final year undergraduate examination to obtain a license for practice and it also serves as the basis for admission into postgraduate courses.
3. NMC doesn't have regulation over fees in private colleges and deemed universities.

Which of the statements given is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (1) of section 60 of National Medical Commission Act, 2019, the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 is hereby repealed with effect from Sept 25, said Health Ministry.

Statement 1 is correct: The Union government has set up the National Medical Commission (NMC) along with four other autonomous boards while abolishing the MCI. The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Medical Education Boards, Medical Assessment and Rating Board, and Ethics and Medical Registration Board have been constituted to help the NMC in day-to-day functioning. The National Medical Commission Bill was passed by both houses of Parliament last year after facing stiff resistance from doctors. Apart from the Chairman, the NMC will consist of 10 ex-officio members and 22 part-time members appointed by the Central government.

Statement 2 is correct: The Act proposes a common final year undergraduate examination, the National Exit Test, for the students graduating from medical institutions to obtain the license for the practice.

Statement 3 is not correct: In private colleges and deemed universities, NMC will have regulation over the fees and all other charges for 50% of the seats. The Act provides that there should be an upper limit restriction for the fee charged by unaided medical colleges.

Q.68 'Magawa' was recently seen in the news, it is a:

- (a) A cybersecurity tool to deal with crimes on the dark web.

- (b) A robot to assist astronauts in ISS
- (c) African giant pouched rat
- (d) A recently discovered exoplanet by NASA

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- A rat called Magawa was awarded the PDSA Gold Medal for his “life-saving” work in Cambodia.

Option C is correct: Magawa who is an African Giant Pouched Rat and is just under eight years old, is the first rat to win this medal and was given the award by PDSA’s Director-General in a virtual presentation. The PDSA Gold Medal was initiated in 2002 and rewards civilian acts of animal bravery and “devotion to duty”. It is the highest honour recognising extraordinary bravery of animals. Till now, Magawa has discovered over 39 landmines and 28 items of unexploded ordnance to date.

Q.69 Which of the following statement(s) is/are not correct with respect to the Election Commission of India?

1. The Commission has the power to disqualify a candidate who has failed to lodge an account of his election expenses.
2. The members hold office for a term of five years or until they attain the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
3. The retired election commissioners are barred from further appointment under the Constitution.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

In News- Election Commission of India (ECI) announced the schedule for Bihar Assembly polls 2020.

Statement 1 is correct: Under the Constitution, the Commission also has advisory jurisdiction in the matter of post-election disqualification of sitting members of Parliament and State Legislatures. Further, the cases of persons found guilty of corrupt practices at elections which come before the Supreme Court and High Courts are also referred to the Commission for its opinion on the question as to whether such person shall be disqualified. The Commission has the power to disqualify a candidate who has failed to lodge an account of his election expenses within the time and in the manner prescribed by law. The Commission has also the power for removing or reducing the period of such disqualification as also other disqualification under the law.

Statement 2 is not correct: The office is held by them for a term of 6 years or until they attain 65 years, whichever happens first. They can also be removed or can resign at any time before the expiry of their term.

Statement 3 is not correct: The Constitution has not debarred the retiring election commissioners from any further appointment by the government.

Q.70 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Sandalwood Spike Disease (SSD)?

1. The disease is caused by phytoplasma, which is a bacterial parasite of plant tissues.
2. It was first reported in Kodagu in 1899 and as of now, there is no cure for this disease.
3. It targets Red Sanders which are endemic to South and North East India and are categorised as endangered species under IUCN Red List.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News- India's sandalwood trees are facing a serious threat with the return of the destructive Sandalwood Spike Disease (SSD) with the disease has resurfaced in the aromatic tree's natural habitats in Karnataka and Kerala.

Statement 1 is correct: Sandalwood Spike Disease is an infectious disease which is caused by phytoplasma. Phytoplasmas are bacterial parasites of plant tissues — which are transmitted by insect vectors and involved in plant-to-plant transmission. So far, no cure has been found for SSD but to cut down and remove the infected tree to prevent the spread of the disease.

Statement 2 is correct: The disease was first reported in Kodagu in 1899. More than a million sandalwood trees were removed in the Kodagu and Mysuru region between 1903 and 1916, prompting the Maharaja of Mysuru to announce a reward in 1907 for anyone finding a remedy.

Statement 3 is not correct: Red sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*) is endemic to South India. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has put it under the category of near threatened from earlier endangered species in the Red List.

Q.71 Recently, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the report of a survey titled 'Health in India', consider the following statements in this context:

1. The Jain community remains the most susceptible to ailments.
 2. Women are more susceptible to suffering from ailments than men in both rural and urban areas.
- Which of the statements given is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the report of a survey titled 'Health in India. The report details aspects of the role played by government and private sector facilities, and also contains health information for separate religious communities.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Zoroastrian community remains the most susceptible to ailments. Results from the National Sample Survey (NSS)'s 75th Round released in July show that 31.1 % of Zoroastrians reported that they were suffering from an ailment at the time the survey was conducted. This number for other communities is: Jains, 11.2 %; Sikhs 11 %; Christians 10.5 %; Muslims 8.1 %; Buddhists 8 %; and Hindus 7.2 %.

Statement 2 is correct: The survey shows that women remain more susceptible to suffering from ailments than men. In rural India, 6.1 % of males said that they were suffering from ailments, while 7.6 % of rural women said the same. While 8.2 % of urban males said that they were sick, 10 % of urban females said the same.

Q.72 Consider the following statements:

1. The Government of India is committed to increase in public healthcare spending from the existing 2.5 per cent of the GDP to 6.5 per cent by 2025.
2. The 15th Finance Commission has concurred for an increase in healthcare spending substantially in the next five years in view of the present pandemic.

Which of the statements given is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- Recently, the Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said that the government has decided to increase public healthcare spending.

Statement 1 is not correct: The Government is committed to increase in public healthcare spending from the existing 1.15 per cent of the GDP to 2.5 per cent by 2025.

Statement 2 is correct: The 15th Finance Commission's high-level group on health has concurred that healthcare spending must be raised substantially in the next five years in view of the present pandemic. In union budget 2017-18, the government increased budget for the health sector by 27.7% and National Health Policy (NHP) 2017 also envisages to increase health expenditure as a percentage of GDP from the existing 1.15% to 2.5 % by 2025.

Q.73 Consider the following statements:

1. The 'Destination Northeast' is an annual festival organised by the DONER ministry for showcasing the Northeast culture.
2. The Prime Minister is the Chairman of the North-East Council.

Which of the statements given is/are correct?

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

In News-

Statement 1 is correct but 2 is not correct: Union Home Minister inaugurated the "Destination North East -2020". The Union Home Minister is also the Chairman of the North-East Council. Destination Northeast is an annual festival organised by the DONER ministry with the objective of showcasing and celebrating the region to other parts of the country in order to strengthen national integration. The theme for this year's event is 'The Emerging Delightful Destinations' and will be a virtual event due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Q.74 Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict is often seen in the news, the conflict is between which among the following nations?

1. Georgia
2. Armenia
3. Azerbaijan
4. Iran

Choose the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

In News- The clashes erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Option B is correct: Nagorno-Karabakh region is a territorial and ethnic conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts, which are controlled by Armenia in reality but are internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan. The conflict has its origins in the early 20th century when the Soviet Union's Joseph Stalin decided to make the Nagorno-Karabakh region an autonomous region of Soviet Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh broke away from Azerbaijan in a conflict that broke out as the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. Though a ceasefire was agreed in 1994, after thousands of people were killed and many more displaced, Azerbaijan and Armenia frequently accuse each other of attacks around Nagorno-Karabakh and along the separate Azeri-Armenian frontier.

Q.75 Which of the following statements is correct with respect to the "Treaty on Open Skies", was in the news recently?

- (a) It is a bilateral treaty between the Russian Federation and the European Union for energy security cooperation.
- (b) It is a multilateral cooperation treaty among the G20 nations for the promotion of trade.
- (c) It is a nuclear arms reduction agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation
- (d) It is a multilateral treaty among five permanent nations of UNSC to regulate the control of nuclear-related technology.

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- As the United States will withdraw from the Open Skies accord in November 2020. The remaining members of the 1992 Open Skies Treaty are moving forward with determining how the treaty will function following the planned withdrawal of the United States.

Option C is correct: Recently, The United States has insisted Russia that any future arms control talks must include China. The US wants a vision for a trilateral arms control agreement that includes both Russia and China. The New START treaty is a nuclear arms reduction agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation that was signed in Prague in 2010 and is going to expire in February 2021 unless both the countries agree to extend it for up to five years. The US is insisting on bringing China into the new arms control pact because of the growing threat posed by its nuclear arsenal, that the country is currently modernising.

Q.76 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Hydrogen Compressed Natural Gas (H-CNG)?

1. It is a mixture of compressed natural gas and along with 50 per cent hydrogen by energy.
2. It is used as fuel in the internal combustion engine and also for the home appliances.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- In a major step toward adopting substitute clean fuel for transportation, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has allowed the use of H-CNG (18% mix of hydrogen) in CNG engines.

Statement 1 is not correct but 2 is correct: The blending of hydrogen with CNG provides a blended gas termed as HCNG. it stands for hydrogen-enriched compressed natural gas and it combines the advantages of both hydrogen and methane. The Hydrogen Compressed Natural Gas (H-CNG) is a mixture of compressed natural gas and 4-9 per cent hydrogen by energy. It can be used as a fuel in an internal combustion engine and also for home appliances. As compared to conventional CNG, use of H-CNG can reduce the emission of carbon monoxide (CO) up to 70%, besides enabling up to 5% savings in fuel. Hydrogen has been regarded as a future secondary fuel for power system due to carbon-free operation. Hydrogen is an excellent additive to improve the combustion of hydrocarbon fuel due to its low ignition energy, high reactivity, diffusivity and burning velocity.

Q.77 Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP)?

1. The first Defence Acquisition Procedure was promulgated in 2016.
2. Under the Defence Acquisition Procedure, 2020, New Category called Buy (Global – Manufacture in India) has been introduced.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Recently, Defence Minister unveiled the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020.

Statement 1 is not correct: The DAP 2020 will eventually replace the existing Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2016. DAP comprises processes that should be followed by the Government entities while procuring defence items. It is framed to simplify the defence procurement procedure and to achieve the objective of self-reliance. The procedure aims to promote indigenous design and manufacturing of defence weapons in a time-bound manner. The first Defence Acquisition Procedure was promulgated in 2002. Since then it has been revised several times.

Statement 2 is correct: DAP 2020 is padded with an assortment of new ideas – such as integration of artificial intelligence with platforms and systems, use of indigenous high-end material and

special alloys, and setting up of a Project Management Unit to support contract management. Indigenous Content of various categories has been increased by 10%. This has been done to support the Make in India initiative. New Category called Buy (Global – Manufacture in India) has been introduced. The items under this category will hold a minimum of 50% indigenous content on a cost basis of the total contract value.

Q.78 Consider the following statements:

1. National Cooperative Development Corporation is an executive body established for export and import of agricultural produce.
2. The MSP is the rate at which the government buys grains from farmers, it is decided on the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

Which of the statements given is/are not correct?

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] In News- NCDC has sanctioned Rs 19,444 crore as the first instalment to the state of Haryana, Telangana and Chhattisgarh for carrying out Kharif paddy procurement operation at the minimum support price.

Statement 1 is not correct: NCDC was established by an Act of Parliament in 1963 as a statutory Corporation under the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare. The sources of Funds of NCDC includes internal accruals, market borrowings and allocations from the Government of India including International assistance. The objectives of the body are Production, processing, marketing, storage, export and import of agricultural produce, industrial goods and other notified items.

Statement 2 is correct: Minimum Support Price is the price set by the government to purchase crops from the farmers, whatever may be the market price for the crops. The minimum support prices are announced by the Government of India at the beginning of the sowing season for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP).

Q.79 Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) is headed by which of the following?

- (a) Prime Minister
- (b) Defence Minister
- (c) Defence Secretary
- (d) Chief of Defence Staff

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Defence Minister recently released New Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) at Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) meeting

Option B is correct: Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) is headed by the Defence Minister. The objective of the DAC is to ensure expeditious procurement of the approved requirements of the Armed Forces, in terms of capabilities sought, and time frame prescribed, by optimally utilizing the allocated budgetary resources.

Q.80 Amnesty International (AI) is an organisation associated with which of the following fields?

- (a) Protection of historic monuments
- (b) Protection of Human Rights
- (c) Protection of ancient monuments in the world
- (d) Protection of Cruelty to animals

[ANS] b

[SOL] In News- Amnesty International (AI) India has decided to shut its operations in India. The decision came after the recent move by the Enforcement Directorate to freeze the organisation's accounts.

Option B is correct: Amnesty International (AI) is a non-governmental organization with its headquarters in the United Kingdom focused on human rights. The mission of the organization is to campaign for a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments. Amnesty draws attention to human rights abuses and campaigns for compliance with international laws and standards.

Q.81 With reference to the Cat Que virus (CQV), consider the following statements:

- 1. It belongs to the Simbu serogroup virus of the genus Orthobunyavirus.
- 2. It is zoonotic in nature which infects both humans and livestock species.

Which of the statements given is/are correct?

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] In News- In a study published in the Indian Journal of Medical Research, scientists have noted the presence of antibodies against the Cat Que virus (CQV) in two human serum samples.

Both the statements are correct: CQV belongs to the Simbu serogroup virus of the genus Orthobunyavirus. It was first isolated in 2004 from mosquitoes in northern Vietnam. It has also been reported in China. It is found in pigs and Culex mosquitoes. Humans can get infected through mosquitoes as well.

Q.82 Which among the following statement(s) is/are correct with respect to the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) recently seen in the news?

- 1. It is an international initiative to bring together different countries in order to maintain supply chain systems of vaccines.
- 2. It is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

[ANS] b

[SOL] Statement 1 is not correct: The eVIN is an innovative technological solution aimed at strengthening immunization supply chain systems across the country. This is being implemented under the National Health Mission (NHM) by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. It aims

to provide real-time information on vaccine stocks and flows, and storage temperatures across all cold chain points in the country.

Statement 2 is correct: Technological innovation is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Q.83 Consider the following statements with regard to “Forest Rights Act 2006”:

1. It deals with the rights of forest-dwelling communities over land and other resources.
2. Rights under the Act are confined to those who “primarily reside in forests” and who depend on forests and forest land for a livelihood.

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

[ANS] c

[SOL] Option C is correct: Both the statements are correct as the Act deals with the rights of forestdwelling communities over land and other resources. Rights under the Act are confined to those who “primarily reside in forests” and who depend on forests and forest land for a livelihood. Further, either the claimant must be a member of the Scheduled Tribes scheduled in that area or must have been residing in the forest for 75 years.

Q.84 With reference to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, consider the following statements:

1. It is the world’s largest financier of AIDS, TB and malaria prevention, treatment and care programmes.
2. It is one of the implementing arms of United Nation (UN).

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

[ANS] a

[SOL] Statement 1 is correct: The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (or simply the Global Fund) is an international financing organization that aims to “attract, leverage and invest additional resources to end the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria to support attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations.”

Statement 2 is not correct: The Global Fund was formed as an independent, non-profit foundation under Swiss law and hosted by the World Health Organization in January 2002. In January 2009, the organization became an administratively autonomous organization, terminating its administrative services agreement with the World Health Organization. It is a partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and people affected by the diseases