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NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

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TRUMP



DELHI

**Assembly Election
Results, 2020**



Dear readers, we have started edristi English edition as well since August, 2015. We are hopeful that it will help us to connect to the broader audience and amplify our personal bonding with each other.

While presenting Day-to-day current affairs, we are very cautious on choosing the right topics to make sure only those get the place which are useful for competitive exams perspective, not to increase unnecessary burden on the readers by putting useless materials. Secondly, we have also provided the reference links to ensure its credibility which is our foremost priority. You can always refer the links to validate its authenticity.

We will try to present the current affairs topics as quickly as possible but its authenticity is given higher priority over its turnaround time. Therefore it could happen that we publish the incident one or two days later in the website.

Our plan will be to publish our monthly PDF on very first day of every month with making appropriate modifications of day-to-day events. In general, the events happened till 29th day will be given place in the PDFs. The necessity of this is to ensure the contents factual authenticity.

Reader's satisfaction is our utmost priority so requesting you to provide your valuable feedback to us. We will warmly welcome your appreciation/criticism given to us. It will surely show us the right direction to improve the content quality. Hopefully the current affairs PDF (from 1st Feb. to 29th Feb.) will benefit our beloved readers.

Current affairs data will be useless if it couldn't originate any competitive exam questions. E-Dristi has been very successful in that direction. Almost all the questions from UPPCS and other examinations have been asked from our materials. You can verify that by matching the question papers and e-Dristi contents from yourselves.

National

Uttar Pradesh Budget 2020-21

Question- On February 18, 2020, Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna presented the budget for the financial year 2020-21 in the Legislative Assembly.

Consider the following statements related to this:

- (i) The size of the budget presented is Rs. 5,12,860.72 crores.
- (ii) The Budget 2020-21 is the largest budget in the history of Uttar Pradesh.
- (iii) The budget proposes to establish 7 universities.

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

- (a) Only (i), and (ii)
- (b) Only (ii) and (iii)
- (c) Only (i) and (iii)
- (d) All the above

Answer- (d)

Related facts:



- On February 18, 2020, Uttar Pradesh Finance **Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna presented the budget for the financial year 2020-21 in the Legislative Assembly.**
- It is worth mentioning that this is the most massive budget presented to date in the history of Uttar Pradesh.
- The budget size **presented is Rs 5,12,860.72 crore.**
- This is **33,159 crore more** than the previous budget.
- The presented budget will help in moving the economy of the state **towards \$ 1 trillion.**
- The Chief Minister Apprenticeship (Apprenticeship) scheme **for educated unemployed youth is proposed in the presented budget.**
- Under this scheme, an amount of Rs. 2,500 per month will be provided as a training allowance.
- A 'Youth Hub' will be established in every district for self-employment of youth.
- It is proposed to **establish 7 universities in the budget.**
- It proposed funds for **11 other airports including the airport at Jewar International Airport Ayodhya.**
- In the budget, arrangements were made to make **the benefit of crop insurance scheme accessible to the original farmer as well as the sharecroppers.**
- A budget arrangement is proposed for the **destitute cow dynasty as a shelter, maintenance of the bovine and development of the improved breed.**
- New **schemes worth Rs 10,967.87 crore have been included in the budget.**
- The fiscal deficit is estimated at Rs 53,195.46 crore which is 2.97 percent of the estimated gross state domestic product for the year.
- The state's indebtedness is estimated at 28.8 percent of GDP.

Other salient features of the U.P. budget, 2020-21 are as follows-

- Awareness program for prevention of female feticide is being **conducted in 68 districts under the "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" scheme.**
- A provision of **1 thousand 200 crore rupees is proposed for the Chief Minister Kanya Sumangala Scheme.**
- Under the destitute women pension scheme, an amount of Rs 500 is sent to the beneficiaries account directly every month for the maintenance of destitute women and their children. A provision of Rs. 1 thousand 432 crores is proposed under this scheme.

For youth

- It has been **decided to start two essential schemes - Chief Minister Apprenticeship Incentive Scheme and Youth Entrepreneurship Development Campaign (YUVA)** to connect the youth of the state with self-employment and employment.
- Through the youth entrepreneurship development campaign (YUVA), innovative initiatives are being taken to move from employment to self-reliance through youth entrepreneurship development campaign (YUVA).
- YUVA HUB will be set **up in every district of the state, which will help aspiring youth to run the project, from concept to financial assistance, with financial support for the plans for 1 year.**
- To promote higher education, **three new state universities are being established in Saharanpur, Azamgarh and Aligarh. Establishment of Police Forensic University is proposed in the state. In addition, a "law university" is proposed in Prayagraj district and an Ayush University in Gorakhpur is proposed.**
- Engineering colleges are being established in **Mirzapur, Pratapgarh, Basti and Gonda districts.**
- The construction of engineering **colleges in Azamgarh and Ambedkar Nagar is almost complete.**
- A provision of **Rs 122 crore** is proposed for the **Police Force Modernization Scheme.**
- A provision of **Rs 60 crore** is proposed for the construction of **Forensic Science Laboratories.**
- A provision of **Rs 97 crore** is proposed for **the Safe City Lucknow scheme.**
- A provision of **Rs 20 crore** is proposed for the establishment of **Uttar Pradesh Police Forensic University.**
- A provision of **Rs 3 crore** for "Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children" is proposed.
- Women PAC in **Lucknow, Gorakhpur and Badaun districts Ducts** are installed.
- There are 76 women police stations in the state.
- Two women police stations are established in **Lakhimpur Kheri district and one woman police station is established in all other districts.**
- "**Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Cancer Institute**" at Kashi Hindu University, Homibabha Cancer Hospital at Lahartara and BRD.
- "**Super speciality blocks**" have been operationalized at Medical College, Gorakhpur.

- In memory of late Atal Bihar Vajpayee Ji, a new medical **university in Lucknow, and a satellite centre of King George Medical University is being established in Balrampur.**
- In the year 2020-2021, the target of food grains production is 641 lakh 74 thousand metric tons and the target of oilseeds production is 13 lakh 90 thousand metric tons.
- In the year 2018-2019, 604 lakh 15 thousand metric tonnes of food grains were produced against the target of 581.03 MT, which is the highest ever record production.
- **More than 13 lakh houses have been constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Rural).**
- **With the construction of toilets for 2 crores 61 lakh families under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin), the state has achieved the first position in the country.**
- Currently 14 crores 59 lakh man-days of employment opportunities have been created under MNREGA scheme till 20 November 2019.
- For the first **time 38 forest villages of Vantangia, Mushar, Kol and Tharu tribals were declared as revenue villages so that the poor of these villages settled in forest areas could get basic facilities like housing, medical, education, roads, electricity and ration cards.**
- **A total of 19 clusters have been selected under the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Rurban Mission in three phases in the state.**
- A provision of Rs. 1 thousand 357 crores is proposed for the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.
- In order to promote **solar power projects in the Bundelkhand region, it has been decided to construct a green energy corridor for 4 thousand MW solar power generation.**
- **Biodiesel, Bio Ethanol, Methanol, Biogas, Bio CNG, under BioEnergy Enterprise Promotion Program Projects like production etc. are being encouraged.**
- 2 thousand 727 solar ROs in various primary schools of the state. Water plants have been set up.
- Metro rail **operates in Lucknow, Ghaziabad and Noida.**
- Work from Delhi to Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System is in progress for **which a provision of Rs 900 crore is proposed.**
- **Approving the Kanpur Metro Rail Project** by the Government of India, the cost of the project has been approved **at Rs 11 thousand 76 crores.**
- The total **length of the project is 32 km.** Work has started on **the Kanpur Metro.** A provision of **Rs 358 crore is proposed for this project.**
- The **Agra Metro Rail project has been approved by the Government of India at the cost of Rs 8 thousand 379 crores.** The total length of the project is 29 km. A provision of **Rs 286 crore is proposed for the project.**
- Proposals for metro rail are being prepared for Gorakhpur and other cities, for which a provision of Rs 200 crore is proposed.
- A provision of Rs 50 crore is proposed for the establishment of **National Inspiration Site in Lucknow.**
- It has been decided to operate electric **buses in Lucknow, Prayagraj, Agra, Ghaziabad, Kanpur, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Mathura and Shahjahanpur.**

- The Uttar Pradesh Electric Vehicle Manufacturing Policy-2019 has been promulgated.
- More than 700 electric buses are being arranged in the state.
- **Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, all 75 districts of the state, ODF. have been announced.**
- Projects worth about Rs. 20 thousand crores are being implemented in **10 cities of the state, Lucknow, Kanpur, Prayagraj, Varanasi, Agra, Saharanpur, Bareilly, Jhansi, Moradabad and Aligarh under the Smart City Mission.**
- In addition to the 10 municipal corporations selected by the central government, it has been decided to develop the remaining 07 municipal corporations - **Meerut, Ghaziabad, Ayodhya, Firozabad, Gorakhpur, Mathura-Vrindavan and Shahjahanpur as smart cities.**

Basic, Secondary and Higher Education

- Continuous efforts are being made to improve education. Under the **School Chalo Abhiyan, 01 crore 80 lakh children were enrolled.**
- Through Operation Education Rejuvenation, work is being done to provide better **facilities in 91 thousand 236 schools. 15 thousand primary schools and 1 thousand higher secondary schools were converted into English medium.**
- The overall education campaign is being implemented by the state government for upgrading school education at the primary and upper primary levels of the state. For this, an arrangement **of Rs 18 thousand 363 crores is proposed.**
- NCERT in state schools has been implemented. The Uttar Pradesh **Independent Schools (Fee Regulation) Bill, 2018 has been enacted to regulate the fees charged from students studying in private schools in the state.**
- For the development of basic facilities in the field of higher education, a provision of Rs 111 crore is proposed under the National Higher Education Campaign.
- Milk production in the state **was 305 lakh metric tons in the year 2018-2019.** The target of milk production has been kept at **340 lakh MT in the year 2019-2020. 175 lakh metric tonnes of milk has been produced untill October 2019.**

Tourism, culture and charitable work

- In the year 2018, more **than 28 crore 88 lakh tourists visited Uttar Pradesh, out of which 28 crore 50 lakh number of Indian tourists and 37 lakh 80 thousand number of foreign tourists.**
- The festival of Deepotsav was held again in Ayodhya **on October 26, 2019, and more than 4 lakh 04 thousand 26 lamps were lit on this occasion. This was a new record which was included in the Guinness Book of World Records.**
- An arrangement of Rs 85 crores is proposed for the development of high-level tourist infrastructure facilities in Ayodhya. A provision of Rs 10 crore is proposed for strengthening the Tulsi memorial building in Ayodhya.
- A provision **of Rs 180 crore is proposed for the establishment of a cultural centre in Varanasi district.**
- For the purpose of preserving the cultural and ancient heritage of the state, some ambitious plans are **proposed for the development of Garhmukteshwar area in Hapur district,**

development of water sports at Ramgarh Tal in Gorakhpur, construction of heliports at important tourist places, implementation of 46 tourism development schemes, etc.

- A provision of **Rs 25 crore** is proposed for the development of water sports **in Ramgarh Tal of Gorakhpur district.**
- A provision of **Rs 200 crore is proposed** for the Shri Kashi Vishwanath temple expansion and beautification scheme.
- An arrangement of **Rs 180 crore is proposed for the construction of Vedic Science Center under Kashi Hindu University.**
- There is a target to increase the forest cover and tree cover **to 15 percent by the year 2030**, for which, in various plantation schemes, large scale rugged, manure and degraded forest land, community land and private land of farmers on the road, railway line and private property of farmers. There is an action plan to plant trees at the level.

Links:

http://budget.up.nic.in/budgetbhashan/budgetbhashan2020_2021.pdf

http://budget.up.nic.in/khand2part1/khand2part1_2020_2021.pdf

Donald Trump First Visit to India

Question: Recently the President of USA, Donald Trump visited India. What was the name of the program organized in Ahmedabad?

(a) Howdy Trump (b) Pranaam Trump (c) Salaam Trump (d)

Namaste Trump

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The President of the USA (POTUS), Donald Trump, visited India from 24th – 25th February, 2020.
- Trump was accompanied by his wife, the first lady, Melania Trump, daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner.
- In the last 60 years, he is the seventh President of America to visit India.
- On 24th February 2020, he addressed the Namaste Trump program held at Sardar Patel (Motera) Stadium, Ahmedabad.
- He also visited the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad. He became the first US President to visit this Ashram.
- He also visited the Tajmahal in Agra.
- He got formal reception with guard of honour in Rashtrapati Bhavan on 25th February, 2020.



Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

- The USA has proposed the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the India and USA.

- FTA will include the restoration of benefits of low or zero duty to certain Indian exports under the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) and market access for each other's agricultural products.

Intellectual Property Rights:

- India and the US have decided to reach a comprehensive agreement on intellectual property rights (IPR).

Defence Deal

- India and the U.S. concluded defence deals worth over \$3 billion for 24 MH-60R Seahawk Multi-Role Helicopters for the Navy and six AH-64E attack helicopters.

Links:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/02/24/trump-india-live-updates/>

LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2020

Question: Who is the winner of LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2020?

(a) Vartika Singh (b) Avriti Chaudhary (c) Neha Jaiswal (d) Adaline Castellino

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2020 competition was organized on 22 February 2020 at Yash Raj Film (YRF) Studios Mumbai.
- Adline Castelino has been crowned winner of LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2020 competition.
- She was crowned by Vartika Singh, the winner of 2019 edition.
- She will represent India at Miss Universe to be held this year.
- Apart from this, Aavriti Choudhary of Jabalpur was bestowed the title of Miss Diva Supranational 2020, the first runner-up in this competition.
- She will be India's contender for Miss Supranational pageant.



Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/lifestyle/celebrity/story/adline-castelino-to-represent-india-at-miss-universe-pageant-2020-1649262-2020-02-23>

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/adline-castelino-wins-miss-diva-universe-2020/1741882>

Host of First Khelo India Winter Games

Question: Which State/ Union Territory will host the first-ever Khelo India Winter Games?

(a) Ladakh (b) Tripura (c) Uttarakhand (d) Himachal Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Union Territory of Ladakh will host the first-ever Khelo India Winter Games.
- Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Kiren Rijiju will inaugurate the games on 25th Feb at NDS Indoor Ice Hockey Rink in Leh.
- About 1,700 athletes of different ages, from Leh and Kargil districts of Ladakh, will compete in the Khelo India Ladakh Winter Games at 10 blocks, district and then at UT level.
- Under Khelo India, in the first edition of Winter Games in the country, the players will compete in ice hockey, figure skating and speed skating events.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Ladakh-all-set-to-host-first-ever-Khelo-India-Winter-Games&id=381860>

National Technical Textiles Mission

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval to set up a National Technical Textiles Mission.

(2) Technical Textiles are futuristic and nice segment of textiles used for automotive applications, medical usages, crop protection, protective clothing etc.

(3) The Mission would have a four year implementation period from FY 2020-21 to 2023-24.

Of the above, correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only 1 (b) only 2 & 3 (c) only 1 & 3 (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval to set up a National Technical Textiles Mission.
- For the implementation of this mission, the Cabinet has allocated total fund of Rs 1480 Crore.
- The mission has been launched with an objective to position India as a global leader in Technical Textiles.
- The Mission would have a four year implementation period from FY 2020-21 to 2023-24.
- Technical textiles are material and products manufactured primarily for their technical performance and functional properties rather than for aesthetic characteristics.
- They have various applications ranging from agriculture, roads, railway tracks, sportswear, health on one end to bullet proof jacket, fire proof jackets, high altitude combat gear and space applications on other end of spectrum.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.n/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1604413>

Bio-Asia Summit, 2020

Question: Where was Bio-Asia Summit, the largest biotechnology and life sciences forum of Central Asia held during 17-19 February, 2020?

(a) Kolkata (b) Hyderabad (c) New Delhi (d) Bangalore

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The largest bio-technology and life sciences forum of Central Asia, Bio-Asia Summit, 2020 was held in Hyderabad, Telangana during 17-19 February 2020.
- The theme of this three-day conference is Today for Tomorrow.
- Switzerland is the partner country for this conference.
- It is organized by the Telangana Government.
- About 2000 delegates from 37 countries are participating in this conference. The delegation also included 800 Corporates, 75 Start-ups.
- It is noteworthy that this conference provides a platform to global industry leaders, researchers, policy makers, innovators and investors.

**Links:**

<http://2020.bioasia.in/>

Childline India Foundation report

Question: Consider the following statements:

(a) **CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF) is the nodal agency of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.**

(b) **According to its report, one in every 10 calls made to the child emergency helpline 1098 was of child abuse.**

Choose the correct statement:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- According to the data from Childline India Foundation, one in every 10 calls made to the child emergency helpline 1098 was of child abuse.
- The largest number of phone calls was made to seek intervention for Child abuse cases followed by those pertaining to child labor, education, runaways and missing children.
- The nature of abuse which children has suffered shows that 37% of the complaints were about child marriage, 27% about physical abuse and 13% regarding sexual abuse among others.
- The data also shows that 35% of the total cases of sexual abuse were committed by neighbors, 25% by strangers and 11% by family members.



CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF):

- Childline India Foundation (CIF) is the nodal agency of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.

- It acts as the parent organisation for setting up, managing and monitoring the childline 1098 service all over the country.
- It is also the sole agency responsible for monitoring childline service delivery and finance, training, research and documentation, creating awareness, advocacy as well as resource generation for the service.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/one-in-10-calls-on-abuse-to-helpline-made-by-children-study/article30863277.ece>

Cabinet Committee clears procurement of 24 US multi-role helicopters

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (a) The Seahawks are a multi-mission maritime helicopter developed by United States.
 (b) It is primary anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface weapons system for Open Ocean and littoral zones.

Choose the correct statement:

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

Answer: (c)

- Union Cabinet has cleared the acquisition of 24 MH-60R Seahawk helicopters for the Indian Navy from the United States.



Seahawk Helicopter:

- The Seahawks are a multi-mission maritime helicopter developed by Lockheed Martin.
- They are deployed by the US Navy as its primary anti-submarine warfare and anti-surface weapons system for open ocean and littoral zones (near shore areas).
- The helicopters are likely to be equipped with Hellfire air-to-surface missiles and Mark 54 anti-submarine torpedoes.
- They can perform a variety of functions including anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, surveillance, communications relay, combat search and rescue, naval gunfire support and logistics support.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-approves-plan-to-buy-us-naval-helicopters-government-source/articleshow/74210648.cms>

Titabor Becomes Assam's First 'Zero Waste Town'

Question: Titabor which became first Zero Waste Town belongs to which State?

- (a) Assam (b) Manipur (c) Tripura (d) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Titabor, a small town in Jorhat district of Assam has become the State's first zero waste town by revolutionizing management of solid waste.
- Zero waste town status is conferred to towns successfully processing its waste for a balanced ecosystem.
- A town processing up to 80 per cent of waste can claim to be a zero waste town.
- Apart from achieving the zero waste town, Jorhat town has also set up the State's first bio-mining project to completely recover the dumpsite and work towards 100 percent waste processing.



Links:

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=feb2020/at059>

GSI discovers gold deposits of in Sonbhadra district

Question: Consider the following statement:

(1) The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has discovered gold deposits of in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh.

(2) India is the 11th largest gold reserve country in the world.

Choose the correct statement:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)



- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has discovered gold deposits of in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh.
- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) has rejected earlier claims of around 3,350 tonnes of gold deposits in UP's Sonbhadra district.
- Now, the Geological Survey of India (GSI) saying the estimated reserve is 160 kg.

Gold Reserves:

- According to the World Gold Council, India is the 10th largest gold reserve country in the world with gold reserves of around 626 tonnes.
- U.S has the highest gold reserves (8133.5 Tonnes) followed by Germany (3366.3 Tonnes) and the International Monetary Fund (2814 Tonnes).

Geological Survey of India:

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) was set up in 1851 primarily to find coal deposits for the Railways.
- It is headquartered at Kolkata.
- The main functions of GSI relate to the creation and update of national geo-scientific information and mineral resource assessment.

Links:

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/india-has-10th-largest-gold-reserves-in-the-world-reveals-world-gold-council-data/story/388189.html>

Bharat-Bangla Paryatan Utsav-Tourism festival

Question: Bharat-Bangla Paryatan Utsav-Tourism festival is being held at which place?

(a) Kolkata, West Bengal (b) Agartala, Tripura (c) Dispur, Assam (d) Imphal, Mizoram

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On February 20, 2020, the first ever Bharat-Bangla Paryatan Utsav-Tourism festival held in Agartala, Tripura.
- The two day long festival is being organized by the Department of Tourism, Government of Tripura in memories of the contribution of Tripura in 1971 Bangladesh liberation war.
- The aim of the festival is to promote tourism in Tripura.
- Seminars, discussions, cultural events, visit the important tourism spots, historical and archeological sites are the main parts of the two-day friendship festival.



Link:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=381678>

National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI)

Question: Railway Board of India joined hands with which university to launch Joint Masters Programme in Railway Systems Engineering and Integration by the National Rail Transportation Institute (NRTI)?

(a) University of Birmingham (b) University of Kolkata (c) University of Yale (d) Oxford University

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- 20 February, 2020, Railway Board of India and the University of Birmingham have announced the launch of a Joint Masters Programme in Railway Systems Engineering and Integration in academic year 2020-2021 by the National Rail Transportation Institute (NRTI).
- The National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI) is India's first and only transportation university established in 2018 at Vadodra, Gujarat.
- It was established to develop interdisciplinary Centers of Excellence which would promote research and education in the transportation sector.
- It also focuses upon sourcing the best expertise from around the world through institutional partnerships for collaborating on developing curriculum, research projects and executive education programs.



Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603899>

RailMadad gets National e-Governance Award

Question: Which rail portal has been conferred National e-Governance Award 2020?

(a) RailMadad (b) Rail Sathi (c) Ask Disha (d) Rail Yatri

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 20 February, 2020, RailMadad, the grievance redressal portal of Indian Railways, has been conferred National e-Governance Award.
- The portal has been under awarded under Category II of National e-Governance Awards themed Excellence in providing Citizen-centric Delivery.
- It was conferred at the 23rd National Conference on e-Governance held in Mumbai during 7-8th February, 2020.
- This award is given every year by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).
- National e-Governance Awards are conferred every year to recognize the units delivering the services via digital mode.
- In this way these awards promote e-Governance initiatives for efficient and transparent services.
- RailMadad is a customer centric grievance redressal portal of Indian Railways where passengers can lodge complaints or give suggestion.



Links:

<https://pib.nic.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1603827>

Finance Commission expert group on agri exports

Question: On 17 February, 2020, under whose chairmanship did the 15th Finance Commission set up a high level expert group on agricultural exports?

(a) Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi (b) Sanjay Sacheti (c) Sanjiv Puri (d) Radha Mohan Singh

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On February 17, 2020, the 15th Finance Commission set up an 8-member high-level expert group on agricultural exports.
- ITC Chairman and Managing Director Sanjiv Puri will preside over this expert group.
- The panel would assess export and import substitution opportunities for Indian agricultural products (commodities, semi processed and processed) in the changing international trade scenario and suggest ways to step up exports sustainably and reduce import dependence.
- In addition, it will also recommend strategies and measures to increase farm productivity, enable higher value addition, ensure waste reduction, strengthen logistics infrastructure etc. related to Indian agriculture, to improve the sector's global competitiveness.
- In order to accelerate the reforms in the agriculture, the committee will also suggest appropriate performance-based incentives to the state governments for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- The committee will submit its recommendations within three months.



Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/finance-commission-constitutes-expert-group-on-agriculture-exports-120021701346_1.html

India slammed Turkey for remarks over Jammu and Kashmir

Question: Recently, India slammed which of the following countries for its remarks on Jammu and Kashmir?

(a) Turkey (b) China (c) Russia (d) Israel

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 15, 2020, India slammed Turkey to not interfere in its internal affairs for its remarks over Jammu and Kashmir.
- The objection was made after Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan raised concerns over Jammu & Kashmir in the joint declaration during his visit to Pakistan.
- India rejected all references made to J&K which is an integral part of India. India urged the Turkish leadership to not interfere in India's internal affairs.
- India reacted sharply to the Kashmir reference and asked Turkey to develop a better understanding of the facts of the grave threat posed by the terrorism originating from Pakistan.
- In the Turkey-Pakistan joint declaration, the two countries had underlined the need for resolving all outstanding disputes between Pakistan and India including the Kashmir issue through dialogue, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.
- This is not the first time that India has rejected requests of third-party mediation on Kashmir issue, as India has previously turned down US President Donald Trump's offer of mediating between India and Pakistan on Kashmir Issue.



Links:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/02/kashmir-india-tells-turkey-don-interfere-internal-affairs-200215182136914.html>

New one rupee currency notes

Question: One Rupee Notes is printed by which of the following?

(a) Ministry of Finance (b) Reserve Bank of India (c) CAG (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Government of India is soon going to circulate new currency notes in one rupee denomination.
- These one rupee denomination notes will be printed by the Ministry of Finance, unlike the other denomination notes which is printed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- The new one rupee denomination notes came into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette, i.e. 7 February 2020.

**Characteristics of New Notes:**

- It contains the words Bharat Sarkar, above the words Government of India.
- The new one rupee notes will have the bilingual signature of Atanu Chakraborty, Secretary, Ministry of Finance.
- It will have the replica of new rupee one coin with ₹ symbol of 2020 issued with Satyamev Jayate and capital inset letter L in numbering panel.
- The numbering shall be in black at right hand bottom portion of the note in ascending size of numerals from left to right.
- The first three alphanumeric characters (prefix) remains constant in size.
- The reverse side of the note will contain the words Bharat Sarkar, above the words Government of India with the year 2020 on the representation of the one rupee coin with ₹ symbol.
- The ₹ symbol will have design of grains, which will depict the agricultural dominance of the country and the surrounding design consist of picture of Sagar Samrat the oil exploration platform and with the authentic rendering of value in fifteen Indian languages in language panel with the year figure shown vertically between Sagar Samrat and language panel in international number.
- The color of the new one rupee currency note shall be predominantly pink green on observe and reverse in combination with others.
- The one rupee currency notes will be rectangular in size — 9.7 x 6.3 cm.
- There will be multi tonal watermarks in the new one rupee denomination notes like Ashoka Pillar in the window without words Satyamev Jayate, hidden numeral '1' in the centre, and hidden word Bharat vertically arranged on the right hand side.

Links:

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/new-one-rupee-currency-notes-key-things-to-know-11581317431206.html>

Supreme Court ruling to give women officers permanent commission in the Army

Question: On which of the following dates the Supreme Court approved the permanent commission to women in the Indian Army?

(a) February 17, 2020 (b) March 17, 2020 (c) January 10, 2020 (d) February 07, 2020

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 17, 2020, Supreme Court has approved the permanent commission to women in the Indian Army.
- The apex court rejected the Central Government's opposition to the permanent commission of women.
- Only male army officers who have served in the Short Service Commission (SSC) for 14 years are given the option of permanent commission. But now, the Supreme Court has made it clear that women officers will also get the same opportunity in the Indian Army.
- The bench of Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice Ajay Rastogi said that the appointment of women officers in the army is an evolutionary process.
- The Ministry of Defence had challenged the Delhi High Court's March 2010 decision in the Supreme Court, which ordered the army to give permanent commissions to all its women officers.
- According to the Supreme Court's order, the Central Government will have three months to implement its order.
- In 2019, women army officers were granted permanent commission in all 10 branches of the Indian Army.
- On the other hand, the Central Government decided to allow permanent permission to women officers in few branches such as intelligence, signals, ordinance corps, engineers, electronics, army aviation and mechanical engineers.
- The Central Government also said only women officers should be given permanent commission who joined the Indian Army in 2014.
- In April 2019, Indian Army has started inducting women officers as jawans in the corps of military police.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/women-officers-can-be-given-permanent-commission-sc/article30840323.ece>

State visit of President of Portugal to India

Question: President of which country was on State visit to India during 13-16 February, 2020?

(a) Poland (b) Netherlands (c) Portugal (d) Vietnam

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa was on State visit to India from 13-16 February, 2020.

- The President of Portugal was accompanied by Minister of State and Foreign Affairs, Professor Augusto Santos Silva, Secretary of State for Internationalization, Professor Eurico Brilhante Dias and Secretary of State for National Defense, Jorge Seguro Sanches.
- This was President Marcelo's first visit to India; the last visit by a President of Portugal to India was in 2007.
- During this visit, he met President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu.
- On 14 February, 2020, delegation-level talks between President Marcelo Rebelo and Prime Minister Narendra Modi took place at Hyderabad House in New Delhi.
- Afterward two countries have signed 14 agreements to increase cooperation in various fields including defense, investment, transport, port, culture, industry and yoga.
- A MoU was signed to develop a world class National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal, Gujarat with the cooperation from the Republic of Portugal.
- The MoU on National Maritime Heritage Complex, Lothal will pay the way for cooperation between the two countries for showcasing common Maritime Heritage.
- A Cooperation Agreement was also signed between India and the Republic of Portugal in the field of Maritime Transport and Ports.
- The objective of the agreement is to strengthen the coordination of Maritime transport between the two countries.



Links:

[https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32381/State visit of President of Portugal to India](https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32381/State%20visit%20of%20President%20of%20Portugal%20to%20India)

SATHI Initiative

Question: On 3 February 2020, 'Saathi' (SATHI) initiative was launched by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India.

Consider the following statements:

- (1) This plan will reduce our dependence from foreign sources.
- (2) Currently two SATHI centers are functioning in the country.
- (3) Department of Science & Technology has planned to set up four SATHI Centers every year for the next four years.

Which of the above statement/s is / are correct?

- (a) Only 1 (b) 1 and 3 (c) 2 and 3 (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 3 February 2020, Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India has launched the SATHI initiative.
- SATHI is acronym of Sophisticated Analytical & Technical Help Institute.

Aims & Objectives of SATHI:

- The aim of SATHI is to provide a shared, professionally managed services and strong Science and Technology infrastructure / facilities, to required individuals/units to carry out Research & Development activities in efficient manner.
- These Saathi Centers are expected to house major analytical instruments to provide common services of high-end analytical testing, thus avoiding duplication and reduced dependency on foreign sources.
- This will empower our scientific community to achieve global leadership in selected frontier areas of science.



Thematic areas:

- The research profile of the supported Departments will align with the national priorities of excellence in manufacturing, waste processing, clean energy and water, and Start-up India, etc.

Institutional expansion:

- DST has already set up three such centers in the country, one each at IIT Kharagpur, IIT Delhi and BHU at a total cost of Rs 375 Cores.
- It is planned to set up five SATHI Centers every year for the next four years.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=198882>

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated projects worth Rs 1,200 crore in Varanasi

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) PM Modi unveiled a 63-feet-tall statue of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay at Chandauli.
- (2) PM Narendra Modi flagged off the Kashi Mahakal Express which will run between Varanasi & Indore.

Choose the correct one:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated development projects worth more than Rs 1,200 crore in Varanasi.
- PM Modi unveiled a 63-feet-tall statue of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay at Chandauli.
- He also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of several schemes worth Rs 1200 crore in Varanasi.

Kashi-Mahakal Express:

- PM Narendra Modi during his visit flagged off the Kashi Mahakal Express, the third corporate passenger train of India.
- The Kashi Mahakal Express will connect three places — Jyotirlinga – Omkareshwar (near Indore in Madhya Pradesh), Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh) and Kashi Vishwanath (Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh), besides also connecting the industrial and educational hub of Indore, and Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh.
- The fully air-conditioned passenger train would be operated by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation.
- Its commercial run began from Feb 20, 2020.
- The Kashi Mahakal train will run thrice a week between Varanasi and Indore — once via Prayagraj and twice via Lucknow.
- IRCTC has prepared series of packages for visiting religious and tourist places of Varanasi, Ayodhya, Prayagraj, Indore, Ujjain, Bhopal.



Other Development inauguration:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 50 projects worth 1250 crores in Varanasi.
- It includes inauguration of 34 projects including 430-bed super-specialty Hospital and Vedic Science Center at BHU, 100-bed Maternity Wing at Kabirchaura, Lahartara-Chaukaghat flyover, Kashi Vishwanath Anna Kshetra.
- Apart from this, he laid the foundation stone for 14 projects including Smart City, Heritage Development and half a dozen roads.

Links:

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/pm-narendra-modi-inaugurates-rs-1200-crore-development-projects-in-varanasi/story/396279.html>

India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy

Question: Consider the following statements:

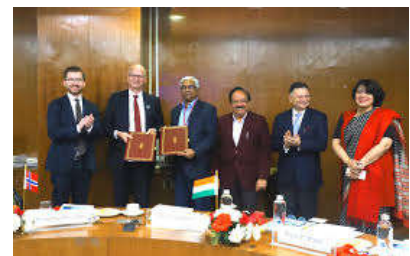
- (1) Blue economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.
- (2) The purpose of the India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy is to develop and follow up joint initiatives between the two countries.

Choose the correct option:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- On 18 February, 2020, India's Minister for Earth Sciences, Dr Harsh Vardhan, and Norway's Minister for Climate and Environment, Sveinung Rotevatn, opened the India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development.
- The two countries signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) confirming that they will develop a new framework for collaboration on Integrated Ocean Management & Research.

- Managing the resources in the oceans in a sustainable manner is a matter of mutual interest and concern for both countries.
- The fact that Norway and India are commencing a new initiative is a signal that the cooperation between the two countries is growing even stronger, making the Indo-Norwegian Ocean Cooperation a key pillar in the bilateral relationship.

The India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy:

- The India-Norway Task Force on Blue Economy for Sustainable Development was launched jointly by the Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, and the Norwegian Prime Minister Ms Erna Solberg, during her visit to India in January 2019.

Objectives:

- The purpose of the task force is to develop and follow up joint initiatives between the two countries.
- The meeting on February 18th 2020 is the third meeting of the Task Force.
- The strength and value added of the India-Norway Joint Task Force on Blue Economy is its ability to mobilize relevant stakeholders from both Norway and India at the highest level, and ensure continued commitment and progress across ministries and agencies.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603594>

Haryana Government announces Rs six crore for Gold Medal winning athletes

Question: Recently, which State Government has announced to reward Rs six crore for gold medal athletes (of the State of Haryana) at Tokyo Olympics?

(a) Haryana (b) Maharashtra (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Bihar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On Feb 17, 2020, Haryana Government has decided to give 6 crore rupees to players of the State who will win gold medals at the Tokyo Olympic Games.
- State Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar declared that 3 crore rupees will be given to those winning gold medals at Asian Games and 1.5 crore rupees to the winners of yellow metal at Commonwealth Games.
- An amount of 15 lakh rupees will be given to each player participating in the Olympic Games so that the players can make the State, as well as the country, proud.
- This reward is aimed in promoting sports in the State and encouraging youths to excel in this field.
- He also promised to provide employment to the sportspersons in addition to the cash incentive.



- The Chief Minister was addressing the concluding function of the four-day 46th Junior National Kabaddi Competition at Maharishi Dayanand University in Rohtak.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Haryana-govt-announces-Rs-six-crore-to-those-winning-gold-medals-at-Olympics&id=381443>

Entire Haj-2020 process goes 100 per cent digital

Question: Which is the first country to make the entire Haj-2020 process 100 per cent digital?

(a) India (b) Pakistan (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Iran

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 17, 2020, Union Minister for Minorities Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi informed that Indian government has done 100 per cent digitization of Haj process.
- Now India has become the first country in the entire world which has made the entire Haj-2020 process 100 per cent digital and transparent.
- Digital services like online application, e-visa, Haj mobile app and Masiha health facility have provided all the information in India regarding accommodation or transportation in Mecca-Madina to the Indian Muslims going for Haj.
- The Indian Government in coordination and cooperation with Saudi Arabian Government and Indian Consulate and various concerned agencies in Saudi Arabia are working to ensure safety and better facilities, medical facilities for the pilgrims during Haj-2020.
- This is for the first time this year more than 21,000 Muslim women will go to Haj without Mahram or the male companion.



Links:

<http://newsonair.nic.in/News?title=India-becomes-first-country-which-makes-Haj-process-100-percent-digital%2c-says-Mukhtar-Abbas-Naqvi&id=381475>

GulFood 2020

Question: Which city hosted the GulFood 2020?

(a) Dubai (b) Mexico (c) Kolkata (d) New Delhi

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 16th February, 2020, Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated the India Pavilion at 25th Edition of the GulFood 2020 held in Dubai.
- The event took place from 16th to 20th February, 2020.
- Gulfood is the world's largest food and beverage trade exhibition held annually.
- FPI Minister took a tour of the fair and interacted with the Indian exhibitors and urged them to make use of the platform of GulFood 2020 for facilitating tie ups between foreign investors and accelerate the pace of export of food products from India to the western market.
- The Minister, while interacting with the exhibitors, discussed the potential of business opportunities available to them in India, UAE and other countries.



Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603347>

16th Foundation Day of NCST

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) 16th Foundation of Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was organized on 19th February, 2020.

(2) The Commission comprises of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and three full time members (including one lady member).

(3) The term of office Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Members of NCST is three years from the date of assumption of charge.

Choose the correct one:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) All the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 19th February, 2020, Shri Arjun Munda, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs inaugurated the function to celebrate 16th Foundation of Day of National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST). The function was organized by National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) here.
- Shri Arjun Munda presented awards for exemplary service towards Scheduled Tribes in the country to the following:
- CPSU – Western Coalfields Ltd. Nagpur (Shri Rajiv Ranjan Mehra, CMD received the award)
- Individual (Shri Ajay Kumar Jaiswal, Secretary, ASHA, Ranchi received the award).



National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST):

- It was set up with effect from 19th February, 2004 by amending Article 338 and by inserting a new article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment Act, 2003) which inter-alia enjoins upon the Commission to oversee the implementation of various safeguards provided to Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for time being in force or under any other order to the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.
- The former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee created a separate Ministry of Tribal Affairs in year 1999 and later on separate National Commission for Scheduled Tribes was created on 19th February, 2004.

Term and Member of Commission:

- The Commission comprises of a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and three full time members (including one lady member).

- The term of office Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Members of NCST is three years from the date of assumption of charge.
- The Chairperson has been given the rank of Union Cabinet Minister, the Vice Chairperson has the rank of a Minister of State and other Members have the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India.
- Nand Kumar Sai is the Chairperson of NCST.

Duties and functions:

- Constitution of India under Clause (5) of Article 338A has assigned the following duties and functions to the Commission:
- To investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Schedule Tribes under the Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the Government and to evaluate the working of such safeguards.
- To inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the Scheduled Tribes.
- To participate and advice in the planning process of socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State.
- To present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, report upon the working of those safeguards.
- To make in such reports, recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Tribes.
- To discharge such other function in relation to the protection, welfare and development and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes as the President may subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament by rule specify.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603616>

First State to implement Community based Nutrition Management

Question: Which State became the first in the country to implement Community based Nutrition Management on February 14, 2020?

(a) Chhattisgarh (b) Rajasthan (c) Delhi (d) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : (d)

Related facts:

- On 14 February 2020, Madhya Pradesh became the first State in the country to implement Community Based Nutrition Management (C-SAM).
- This campaign will address severe malnourished children in order to lift them out of inadequacy.
- The campaign will be implemented in two phases.
- The first phase involves identification of severe malnourished children. The campaign is underway at 97 thousand 135 aanganwadis of the State till 20th February, 2020.



- The second phase involves centre-based five-day health checkup camp and medicine distribution.
- Under this phase, monitoring of nutrition for 12 weeks will be undertaken. Observation, consultation & monthly health checkup along with sanitation and checking of nutrition will be held.
- Better nutrition management at community level will be done of those 85 to 90 percent children facing acute malnutrition, free from any medical complications.

Links:

<https://indiaeducationdiary.in/m-p-becomes-first-state-to-implement-community-based-nutrition-management/>

Cabinet approves Elevation of BISAG as BISAG (N) under MEITY

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geoinformatics BISAG(N) is located in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

(2) It is an Autonomous Scientific Society under Government of India.

Choose the correct one:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved Elevation of Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Applications and Geoinformatics (BISAG), Gujarat as Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics BISAG (N)) under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY), Government of India.
- its elevation, the institute will become an Autonomous Scientific Society under Government of India instead of State Government.
- At present, BISAG is a state agency of Department of Science and Technology of Gujarat, located at Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- It is registered as a Society and Trust with the Charity Commissioner of Ahmedabad.
- Its Governing body is chaired by the Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat.
- BISAG facilitates the use of spatial and geo-spatial technologies for the planning and developmental activities pertaining to Agriculture, Land and Water Resource Management, Wasteland/Watershed Development, Forestry, Disaster Management, Infrastructure and Education.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603633>

154 Clusters Approved Under Sfurti Scheme

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Sfurti Scheme:

(1) The duration of this scheme will be 3 years.

(2) The scheme is being launched to make modern industries more competitive, market-driven, productive and profitable.

(3) 100 new clusters are envisaged to be set up during the year 2019-20 under Sfurti.

(4) The goal of Sfurti scheme is to make cottage industries more productive and profit making.

Which of the above statement/s is / are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:



- On 6th February 2020, Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Minister of Road, Transport & Highways, Nitin Gadkari informed about SFURTI Scheme.
- As per information 154 Clusters were approved during 2018-20 against a target of 100 under SFURTI Scheme.
- SFURTI is Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries. It was launched in 2005 with the view to promote Cluster development.
- The objective of scheme is to organize the traditional industries and artisans into clusters to make them competitive, provide support for their long term sustainability and economy of scale, to provide sustained employment for traditional industry artisans and rural entrepreneurs and to enhance marketability of products.
- The sectors covered under SFURTI include Khadi products, Honey & related products, Coir & related products, Handloom, Traditional dress making, Handicraft, Traditional arts like – Kalamkari, Dokra art, Aipan art, Food processing, Bamboo products etc.
- Under the revised scheme, two types of clusters are set up. The maximum financial assistance provided is Rs. 2.50 core for a Regular Cluster (up to 500 artisans) and Rs. 5.00 crore for a Major Cluster (more than 500 artisans).

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=199068>

Madhya Pradesh radio-tags first-ever Indian Pangolin

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Pangolins are the reptiles wholly-covered in scales
- (2) Madhya Pradesh forest department has radio-tagged Indian Pangolin
- (3) India is home to two species of pangolin

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Both (1)& (2) (d) All of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Recently Madhya Pradesh forest department has radio-tagged first-ever Indian Pangolin.

What is Radio-tagging?

- Radio-tagging involves fixing of a small radio transmitter to an animal in order to track its location.

Benefits of Radio-tagging:

- Radio-tagging of Indian Pangolin will help in knowing its ecology and develop an effective conservation plan for it.
- Pangolins are currently the most trafficked wildlife species in the world.
- Pangolins are in high demand in China and Southeast Asia where they are used for medicines and meat consumption.



Pangolins:

- Pangolins are the mammals wholly-covered in scales.
- Pangolins eat ants, termites and larvae and are often known as the scaly anteater.
- There are eight species of pangolins found on two continents. Of the eight, four species live in Africa whereas remaining four are found in Asia.
- They range from Vulnerable to Critically Endangered.
- India is home to two species of pangolin namely Indian Pangolin (*Manis crassicaudata*) and Chinese Pangolin (*Manis pentadactyla*).
- While the Chinese Pangolin is found in northeastern India, the Indian Pangolin is distributed in other parts of the country as well as in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

IUCN status:

- Indian Pangolin is listed Endangered Species in IUCN Red List while Chinese Pangolin is listed as Critically Endangered species.
- Both these species are protected and are listed under the Schedule I Part I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

World Pangolin Day:

- World Pangolin Day is a global initiative to raise awareness about pangolins and bring together various stakeholders to help protect them from extinction.
- It is celebrated every year on the third Saturday of February.
- The ninth annual World Pangolin Day was celebrated on 15 February 2020.

Links:

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/wildlife-biodiversity/world-pangolin-day-madhya-pradesh-radio-tags-first-ever-indian-pangolin-69293>

World's cheapest gunshot locator: Parth

Question: Which of the following statements are correct about world's cheapest gunshot locator?

(1) World's cheapest gunshot locator has been named Parth.

(2) The device can identify the location of a bullet from a distance of 1km.

Choose the correct option/s from the following:

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- World's cheapest gunshot locator has been named Parth.
- The device was showcased at the DefExpo 2020 (5-8 February 2020) at Lucknow.
- The cost of the device is Rs.3 lakhs. If the device is inducted into the Army, it will replace a similar imported item which costs around Rs.65 lakhs.
- The device has been developed by Army's College of Military Engineering (CME), along with a private firm developed the gun.
- CME is responsible for training of personnel of the Corps of Engineers besides imparting instructions in Combat Engineering, CBRN Protection, Works Services and GIS matters to the personnel of All Arms & Services.
- It can detect the exact location of a bullet from a distance of 400m and will help with locating and neutralizing terrorist faster.

Links:

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/indian-army-pvt-firm-develop-worlds-cheapest-gun-shot-locator-parth-2177575>



Apiary on Wheels

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Apiary on Wheels unique concept is designed by KVIC for bees.

(2) It is a platform carry 20 Bee Boxes from one place to another without any difficulty.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Union Minister of MSME Nitin Gadkari flagged off Apiary on Wheels in New Delhi on February 13 2020.
- This is a unique concept designed by KVIC (Khadi and Village Industries Commission) for bees.
- This project is aimed at up keeping bees in boxes to manage Bee colonies.
- The Apiary on Wheels is connected with a solar panel system which automatically triggers a fan inside the compartment as soon as the temperature reaches 35 degree centigrade or above.
- Apiary on Wheels also has sugar drips which help to feed the bees in the summer season.
- The Apiary on Wheels is like an attachment which can be easily connected with a Tractor or a Trolley and may be pulled to any suitable destination.
- The reports said as a pilot project the Apiary on Wheels will be placed near the mustard farms near Delhi border under the supervision of local bee keepers and KVIC.



Apiary on Wheels:

- Apiary on Wheels is a platform which can carry 20 Bee Boxes from one place to another without any difficulty.
- Two large wheels on either side of the Apiary on Wheels and 4 separate compartments with independent doors, having 5 bee boxes each help the platform to remain intact without disturbing the live bee colonies.

Background:

- The KVIC launched Honey Mission in 2017 and has been training beekeepers, distributing Bee Boxes and helping rural, educated but unemployed youth to earn extra income through beekeeping activities at their doorstep.
- It has been continuously evolving new ways so as to make this process easier and less laborious as bee keeping involves laborious and mentally challenging tasks such as placing the bee boxes in a strategic position so as to provide enough nectar from flowers to the bees.

Links:

<https://pragativadi.com/apiary-on-wheels-a-holistic-approach-to-address-beekeepers-challenges/>

Public Safety Act (PSA)

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Public Safety Act is very similar to the National Security Act that is used by other state governments for preventive detention.
- (2) It comes into force by an administrative order passed either by Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate.

Choose the correct one:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Former civil servant and chief of Jammu and Kashmir Peoples' Movement (JKPM) Shah Faesal has been booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) which enables authorities to detain any individual for two years without trial
- Two former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Ministers Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti have also been detained under the State's stringent Public Safety Act (PSA).



About Public Safety Act:

- The Jammu & Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978 is a preventive detention law, under which a person is taken into custody to prevent him or her from acting in any manner that is prejudicial to the security of the state or the maintenance of the public order.
- It is very similar to the National Security Act that is used by other state governments for preventive detention.
- It comes into force by an administrative order passed either by Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate. This Act does include any detention made by order by police based on specific allegations or for a specific violation of laws.

Supreme Court Directive:

- The Supreme Court has held that while detaining a person under the Public Safety Act, the DM has a legal obligation to analyze all the circumstances before depriving that person of his/her personal liberty.
- It has also held that when a person already under police custody is slapped with the PSA, the DM has to record compelling reasons for detaining that person.
- While the DM can detain a person multiple times under the PSA, he or she has to produce fresh facts while passing the subsequent detention order.
- Also, all the material on the basis of which the detention order has been passed, the Supreme Court has held, should be provided to the detained person for making an effective representation.
- The grounds of their detention should be explained and communicated to the person in the language understood by the detained person.

Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/omar-abdullah-s-detention-under-psa-challenged-in-supreme-court-1644898-2020-02-10>

Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra renamed as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan

Question: Recently Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra was renamed after which personality?

- (a) Sushma Swaraj Bhawan (b) Atal Bhawan (c) Shayama Prasad Mukherjee Bhawan
(d) Deendayal Bhawan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 13, 2020, Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra was renamed as Sushma Swaraj Bhawan.
- Another key institution, Foreign Service Institute was also renamed as Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service.
- The decision to rename the two important institutions was announced by the External Affairs Ministry on February 13.



- The move aims to pay tribute to Sushma Swaraj's invaluable contribution as former External Affairs Minister.
- The announcement was made on the eve of Sushma Swaraj's birth anniversary, which is on February 14.
- The External Affairs Ministry stated that the decision to rename the two institutions was taken to honor Swaraj's legacy and her decades of public service.

Links:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=sushma+swaraj+bhawan&oq=sushma+swaraj+bhawan&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i60.4607j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

India's first inter-city electric bus service between Mumbai and Pune launched

Question: India's first inter-city electric bus service has been started between which two cities?

- (a) Mumbai & Pune (b) Ahmedabad & Surat (c) Kochi & Thiruvananthapuram
(d) Varanasi & Lucknow

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In synergy with National Mission for a Green India, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has launched India's first inter-city electric bus service between Mumbai and Pune.
- This kind of service will be additive to climate reform initiatives as it will be emission free unlike fuel operated buses.
- This is a 43-seater capacity luxury electric bus manufactured by Mitra Mobility Solution.
- The bus can be operated around 300 kilometers on a single charge and would be operated twice daily between the two cities.
- The bus will be operated by Prasanna Purple Mobility Solutions.
- In order to facilitate the smooth operation of electric vehicles, government has proposed to build electric lane on Rs 1.03 lakhs crore Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.



Links:

<https://www.saurenergy.com/ev-storage/gadkari-inaugurates-first-inter-city-electric-bus-service-in-maharashtra>

Arth Ganga

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Arth Ganga implies a sustainable development model with a focus on economic activities related to Ganga.
(2) National Waterway-1 is an inland water transport route between Haldia in West Bengal and Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh.

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- During the first meeting of the National Ganga Council in Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh) in 2019, the Prime Minister urged for a holistic thinking process where Namami Gange evolves to Arth Ganga.
- In simple terms, Arth Ganga implies a sustainable development model with a focus on economic activities related to Ganga.

- As part of this process, farmers will be encouraged to engage in sustainable agriculture practices, including zero budget farming, planting of fruit trees and building plant nurseries on the banks of Ganga.
- Above practices, along with creation of infrastructure for water sports and development of campsites, cycling and walking tracks etc., would help to tap the hybrid tourism potential of the river basin area- for purposes of religious as well as adventure tourism.
- Almost half of the Indian population lives around the Ganges River belt. Moreover, of India's total freight, about 1/5th originates and 1/3rd terminates in the states around Ganges Belt. Thus, inland waterway is one of the most important pillars of Arth Ganga project.
- National Waterway-1 is an inland water transport route between Haldia in West Bengal and Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh.
- The Ministry of Shipping is also developing Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) Freight Village and Sahibganj (Jharkhand) Industrial Cluster-cum-Logistics Park with an objective of creating synergy with Inland Waterways.
- The income generated from encouraging ecotourism and Ganga wildlife conservation and cruise tourism etc. would help to generate sustainable income streams for cleaning of Ganga.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=199309>

25 foreign envoys arrived in Srinagar

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) To become familiar with Kashmir 25 foreign envoys has arrived in Srinagar.
 (2) The trip will help the diplomats assess for themselves the situation in Kashmir.

Choose the correct options:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 12 February 2019, a second batch of 25 foreign envoys arrived in Srinagar on a government facilitated two-day trip aimed at familiarizing them with the situation in Kashmir.

The Purpose:

- The trip will help the diplomats assess for themselves the situation in Kashmir, which has seen curbs on communication and movement of people besides the detention of key political leaders after Parliament revoked its special status in August.
- Diplomats from countries including France, Germany, Afghanistan, Canada, and Uzbekistan.
- The diplomats could not make a scheduled visit to Baramulla because of bad weather. They, however, met members of Kashmir's trading community in Srinagar.
- This came ahead of the proposed visit to Europe by foreign minister S. Jaishankar and the India-European Union Summit in March for which Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to travel to Brussels.
- The diplomats are also schedule to meet representatives of the civil society, including youth from different ethnic, religious and socio-economic communities, local business and political leaders, civil administration and representatives of mainstream media.



- They will also receive briefing about the development programmes being implemented, get assessment of the security situation, and witness for themselves the progressive normalization of the situation.
- The visit of the envoys comes after New Delhi rolled back some restrictions on communications, including mobile phone services and messaging services as well internet services via mobile telephony.
- The international community has largely agreed with India's position on the need for development in the region, but the continuing restrictions on communications and detentions of politicians have attracted criticism.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/25-ambassadors-reach-srinagar-on-two-day-visit/article30804227.ece>

Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival

Question: First-ever 'Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival' will be held in which of the following cities?

(a) Mumbai (b) Jerusalem (c) Kolkata (d) Chennai

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 15, 2020, the first-ever Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival will be held in Mumbai to promote artistic and cultural ties between India and Israel.
- The festival is being organized by the Jerusalem municipality in collaboration with the Consulate General of Israel in Mumbai and the Federation of India-Israel Chamber of Commerce.
- The key objective of the Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival will be to promote cooperation in diverse fields of culture such as culinary art, music and dance.
- The festival will promote cultural collaborations between the two cities and give a boost to the already growing partnership between India and Israel.
- The festival will provide a common platform for cooperation not only among artists but also individuals from other fields including high-technology, cinema and tourism.



Background

- The decision to hold a Jerusalem-Mumbai Festival was taken during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel in July 2019.
- This is the first such collaboration between India and Israel.
- However, the Jerusalem municipality has done such cultural collaborations before with cities such as Moscow, Prague and Brussels to expose young artists to different cultures.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/israeli-hit-the-mossad-to-be-screened-at-jerusalem-mumbai-festival-120021100697_1.html

Delhi Assembly Election Results 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Arvind Kejriwal is set to become Chief Minister of Delhi for the third consecutive term.
 (2) The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) won the Delhi Assembly Elections 2020 by winning 62 seats in the 70-member assembly.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On February 16, 2020, AAP Chief Arvind Kejriwal will take oath as the Chief Minister of Delhi at the Ramlila Maidan.
- This would be his third consecutive term as the Chief Minister.
- AAP's success in the elections was a remarkable feat, considering the party had finished at the third place in Delhi during the Lok Sabha Elections 2019.



Results 2020:

- As per official figures released by the Election Commission, the AAP won 62 seats with a total vote share of 53.57 percent.
- The BJP won the remaining eight seats with a vote share of 38.51 percent.
- Arvind Kejriwal won his New Delhi seat by margin of 21,697 votes defeating his BJP rival Sunil Kumar Yadav.
- Delhi's Deputy CM Manish Sisodia also won from Patparganj constituency by a narrow margin of 3000 votes.
- The Congress did not win a single seat and finished third with an extremely low vote share of 4.26 percent.

Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/delhi-assembly-polls-2020/story/arvind-kejriwal-oath-delhi-cm-february-aap-election-1645647-2020-02-12>

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve

Question: Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located at which of the following state?

(a) Maharashtra (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Chhattisgarh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in Chandrapur district in Maharashtra.
- It is Maharashtra's oldest and largest national park.
- It is one of India's 50 "Project Tiger" – Tiger reserves.
- Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve was established as the second Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra in 1993-94.
- The first Tiger Reserve established in the State is Melghat Tiger Reserve (1973-74).
- It represents Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Teak Forests in the Tiger habitat and has viable tiger population of more than 40 tigers.

Why in news?

- Recently a deer was hunted by a pack of wild dogs after which the forest officials disposed the prey depriving dogs of their food.
- This raised a conflicting views between the forest officials and local conservationists with conservationists labeling the act against nature.
- Conservationists argued that should a wild animal killed by predators be removed by the forest department.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/foresters-remove-deer-killed-by-wild-dogs-near-village/articleshow/73676316.cms>

National Horticulture Fair – 2020 (NHF – 2020)

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) 'ICAR-IIHR Seed Portal' is capable in capturing information on seed handling & seed process flow, seed quality testing.

(2) 'Arka Bagwani' app provides information in three languages.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On February 05, 2020, Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra, Secretary (DARE) and Director General (ICAR) inaugurated the four-day "National Horticulture Fair – 2020 (NHF – 2020)".
- The festival was hosted by Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), the country's premier institute located in Hessarghatta, Bengaluru.
- This national horticulture fair showcased its popular crop varieties, cropping practices, and innovative technologies.
- The Fair also organizes scientists – farmer – stakeholder discussions on emerging challenges in horticulture for effective dissemination of horticultural technologies.
- Dr. Mohapatra regarded the horticultural produces as the hope for addressing the malnutrition problem in the country.
- He highlighted about the Government of India's various agricultural policies aimed at doubling the farmers' income that are supporting the steady progress of horticulture in the country too.
- Dr. Mohapatra felicitated 8 farmers representing Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram and Odisha for their contributions in the field of horticulture and popularizing the varieties / technologies of the ICAR-IIHR.
- A web application – "ICAR-IIHR Seed Portal" was launched which is capable in capturing information on seed handling & seed process flow, seed quality testing, seed packaging and storage in the back-end of application and online sale of seeds and planting material produced by the institute.
- He also released tri-lingual Mobile App "Arka Bagwani" in English, Hindi and Kannada.
- The App provides the information on varieties & technologies, success stories, availability of seeds & planting material, glimpses of earlier horticulture fairs & exhibitions and training & symposia conducted by the Institute.

**Links:**

<https://krishijagran.com/agriculture-world/national-horticulture-fair-2020-begins/>

23 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Defence Expo 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The 11th edition of biennial DefExpo 2020 was held during February 5-9 in Lucknow.

(2) Uttar Pradesh government has signed 23 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at DefExpo.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

Context:

- Uttar Pradesh government has signed 23 memorandum of understanding (MoU) with different firms during the DefExpo-2020.
- These agreements would create employment opportunities for 300,000 people and fetch investments worth Rs 50,000 crore for UP Defence Corridor, which spans six nodes at Luck now, Kanpur, Jhansi, Chitrakoot, Aligarh and Agra.



Infrastructure development in UP:

- Two expressways viz. Yamuna Expressway and Agra-Luck now Expressway are operational, two other expressways including Purvanchal Expressway and Bundelkhand Expressway are touted to be thrown open for public use in the next couple of years.
- Work on third proposed Ganga Expressway is in progress and this expressway will connect Meerut and Prayagraj (Allahabad).
- The Chief Minister also mentioned about the proposed Asia's biggest Greenfield international airport at Jewar, Greater Noida and the development of 11 new airports under the regional connectivity scheme, and noted the DefExpo was an important event to this end.

About 11th edition of biennial DefExpo 2020

- The 11th edition of biennial DefExpo 2020 was organized on February 5-9, in Luck now.
- It featured 1,000 exhibitors, including 165 foreign companies from the US, France, Germany, Russia, Israel, Australia etc.
- It is the largest ever defence show surpassing the 10th edition of DefExpo 2018 in Chennai, when about 700 exhibitors had participated.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/up-will-sign-23-mous-worth-rs-50-000-crore-during-defexpo-cm-yogi-120020501242_1.html

Fourth East Asia Summit (EAS) Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The fourth East Asia Summit Maritime Security Conferences was held in Chennai in

2020.

(2) India in partnership with Australia and Indonesia has organized the Conference.

Choose the correct option from the following:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India in partnership with the Governments of Australia and Indonesia has organized the fourth EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation in Chennai on 6th and 7th February, 2020.
- The National Maritime Foundation (NMF) and the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) were the knowledge partners of the Conference.
- First EAS Maritime Security Conferences was organized in New Delhi in November 2015, the second was hosted by Goa in November 2016 and the third was held in Bhubaneswar in June 2018.
- More than 100 participants attended the Conference including about 50 delegates nominated by the EAS participating countries; MEA officials; officials from Indian Navy, RIS and NMF; and academicians and research scholars.
- The Conference provided a platform for free and open dialogue among all the EAS partners on various issues of maritime security cooperation and to come up with useful suggestions on tackling in a cooperative manner, the challenges in the maritime domain.



About East Asia Summit:

- The East Asia Summit (EAS) was established in 2005. It is a forum of 18 countries.
- The concept of an East Asia Grouping was first promoted in 1991 by then Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.
- It comprises the ten member states of the ASEAN countries along with 8 members Australia, China, Japan, India, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Russia and the United States.
- The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14th December, 2005.
- India is a founding member of the East Asia Summit.

Links:

[https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32342/Fourth East Asia Summit EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation](https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32342/Fourth+East+Asia+Summit+EAS+Conference+on+Maritime+Security+Cooperation)
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East Asia Summit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Asia_Summit)

Cabinet gives in-principle approval for setting up a new Major Port at Vadhavan in Maharashtra

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Vadhavan port located in Maharashtra.

(2) The port will be developed on 'land lord model'.

Select the correct options from the following:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Union Cabinet has given its 'in-principle' approval for setting up a major port at Vadhavan near Dahanu in Maharashtra.

- With the development of Vadhavan port, India will break into the countries with top 10 container ports in the world.
- A container port is a port which specializes in handling goods transported in containers.
- The port will be developed on 'land lord model'. Total cost of the project is likely to be Rs.65,544.54 crore.
- In the landlord port model, the publicly governed port authority acts as a regulatory body and as landlord while private companies carry out port operations—mainly cargo-handling activities.
- A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) will be formed with Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) as the lead partner to implement the project.
- The Jawaharlal Nehru Port is the biggest container port in India and is 28th in the world in terms of traffic handling capacity with 5.1 million TEUs.
- With the completion of the 4th terminal at JN Port, its capacity will increase to 10 million TEUs (Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units) making it the 17th largest container port in the world.
- The SPV will develop the port infrastructure including reclamation, construction of breakwater, besides establishing connectivity to the hinterland.
- All the business activities would be undertaken under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode by private developers.



Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601988>

India's 1st War Memorial for Animals

Question: On January 23, 2020 the govt has announced to set up country's 1st war memorial for service animals in-

(a) New Delhi (b) Shimla (c) Meerut (d) Pathankot

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On January 23, 2020 the govt has announced to set up country's 1st war memorial for animals in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh (UP).
- This will be a tribute to service animals such as dogs, horses, mules for their heroic contribution in the battlefield.
- This war memorial will be opened at Remount and Veterinary Corps (RVC) Centre and College in Meerut.
- RVC is Indian army's specialized breeding, rearing training centre for animals.
- Animals had dedicated their life in various military operations conducted by the Indian defense forces.
- Operations like Kargil war etc took the help of trained dogs mules and horses.
- These animals silently had done the great job therefore their names will be inscribed in the granite tablets in the memorial.
- Mansi, a Labrador breed dog who was awarded the highest honour of animals will top the list of animals to be remembered.



Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/coming-soon-india-s-first-war-memorial-for-animals/story-PHTnUO6k2lxMRL9NsThJUO.html>

Tripartite agreement between Govt. of India and NDFB

Question: Recently India has signed a tripartite agreement with the banned National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB). NDFB is active in-

(a) Assam (b) Jammu & Kashmir (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Sikkim

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On January 27, 2020 Govt. of India has signed a tripartite agreement with the banned National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB).
- The tripartite agreement was signed in the presence of Union Minister of Home Affairs (MoHA) Amit Shah, Assam CM and representatives of the organisation at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- The pact was signed to boost peace in the Northeastern state of Assam.
- The agreement would fulfill political and economic demands besides safeguarding the language and culture of the Bodo community people.
- NDFB is an armed separatist outfit which seeks to obtain a sovereign Bodoland for the Bodo people. This is the 3rd bodo accord signed in the last 27 years.



Important Points of the agreement:

- Over 1500 armed cadres will abjure violence and join the mainstream.
- A Special Development Package Rs. 1500 crores for over 3 years will be given by the Govt. to undertake specific projects for the development of Bodo areas.
- A commission under Section 14 of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India will be set up.
- The commission will work in recommending inclusion or exclusion of tribal population residing in villages adjoining the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD) areas.
- In this commission, apart from State government, representatives will also be from ABSU and BTC.
- The recommendation will be submitted within 6 months from the date of notification.
- The All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), which has been spearheading a movement for a separate Bodoland state also signed the accord.
- The Assam govt will establish a Bodo-Kachari Welfare Council and will also notify Bodo language as an official language in the state.
- A separate directorate for Bodo medium schools will also be established.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/centre-assam-govt-signs-tripartite-agreement-with-banned-ndfb-120012700601_1.html

State-wise Horticulture Production data released by Union Government

Question: Which of the following states has retained its top position regarding amount of fruit production in India?

(a) West Bengal (b) Maharashtra (c) Andhra Pradesh (d) Himachal Pradesh

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On January 20, 2020, the State-wise horticulture production data was released by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare.

- The state of West Bengal (WB) has topped in vegetable production in 2018-19 (3rd advance estimates) in the country.
- In West Bengal the production of vegetables was 29.55 million tonnes (MT).
- Uttar Pradesh with 27.70 MT remained at the second position, followed by Madhya Pradesh (17.77 MT).
- Top spot in fruits with 17.61MT was retained by Andhra Pradesh (AP) in 2018-19. It was followed by Maharashtra (10.82 MT) and UP (10.65 MT).
- West Bengal's share in total vegetable production is 15.9 % of the country's total vegetable production.
- UP accounted for 14.9 % of the total vegetable production.
- The total area under vegetable cultivation rose to 10.10 million hectare (mh) in 2018-19 from 6.74 mh in 2004-05.
- The production of vegetable rose to 185.88 tonnes in 2018-19 from 101.25 mt in 2004-05, while the fruit production accounted 98.58 mt.



Link:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/west-bengal-emerges-at-the-top-in-vegetable-production/article30609191.ece>

Special Edition of Khadi Watches

Question: Which of the following cabinet minister has launched the special edition of Khadi watches on January 30, 2020?

(a) Smriti Irani (b) Rajnath Singh (c) Babul Supriyo (d) Nitin Gadkari

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On the occasion of Martyrs' Day, paying tribute on the 72nd death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Union Minister for MSME, Nitin Gadkari, launched the limited edition of Khadi wrist watches in New Delhi.
- Designed by Titan, a non-horological material like Khadi has been used on the dial and strap of the watches for the first time ever.
- Since Khadi is handwoven, every single watch in this collection is unique because of the distinctive weave and texture.
- The straps of the watches have also been treated with a special coating to make them more durable without compromising on its authentic texture. The collection is a unique and elegant blend of simplicity and modernity.
- Titan and KVIC have collaborated to create a modern watch that celebrates the fabric which is integral to our Indian heritage. Khadi and a watch were two integral parts of Mahatma Gandhi's life.
- Khadi is one of the most eco-friendly materials with zero carbon footprint and requires least water consumption.
- The watches are available in two variants (men and women) and are priced at Rs. 4,995/.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601189>

First Waste to Energy Plant

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Indian Railways has commissioned first Waste to Energy Plant in Bhubaneswar.

(2) All types of waste including plastic and e-waste can be converted to Light Diesel Oil which is used to light furnaces.

Which of the following statement (s) is/are true?

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer : (c)

Related facts:



- On 28th January 2020, the Indian Railways has commissioned first Waste to Energy Plant in Bhubaneswar in Mancheswar Carriage Repair Workshop at Bhubaneswar in East Coast Railway.
- Member Rolling Stock, Rajesh Agarwal inaugurated this plant on 22nd January 2020 along with GM, East Coast Railway.
- The capacity of this Waste to Energy Plant is 500 Kg waste per day.
- All types of waste including plastic and e-waste can be converted to Light Diesel Oil which is used to light furnaces.
- The Waste to Energy Plant has been constructed in three months.
- This Waste to Energy Plant, a patented technology called POLYCRACK, is first-of-its-kind in Indian Railways and fourth in India.
- It is world's first patented heterogeneous catalytic process which converts multiple feed stocks into hydrocarbon liquid fuels, gas, carbon and water.
- Polycrack Plant can be fed with all types of Plastic, Petroleum sludge, Un-segregated MSW (Municipal Solid Waste) with moisture up to 50%, E-Waste, Automobile fluff, Organic waste including bamboo, garden waste etc., and Jatropa fruit and palm bunch.
- Waste generated from Mancheswar Carriage Repair Workshop, Coaching Depot and Bhubaneswar Railway Station will be feeder material for this plant.
- The process is a closed loop system and does not emit any hazardous pollutants into the atmosphere.
- The combustible, non-condensed gases are re-used for providing energy to the entire system and thus, the only emission comes from the combustion of gaseous fuels.
- The emissions from the combustion are found to be much less than prescribed environmental norms.
- This process will produce energy in the form of Light Diesel Oil which is used to light furnaces.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1600784>

Indian National Commission for Cooperation (INCCU) meeting with UNESCO

Question: Who chaired the meeting of Indian National Commission for Cooperation (INCCU) with UNESCO?

(a) Amit Shah (b) Rajnath Singh (c) Ramesh Pokhriyal (d) Venkaiah Naidu

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Union Human Resource Development Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' chaired the meeting of the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO (INCCU) in New Delhi on January 30, 2020.

- The membership of National Commission consists of members of five Sub Commissions namely, Sub Commission for (i) Education (ii) Natural Sciences (iii) Social Sciences (iv) Communication (v) Culture.
- The members of the Sub Commissions briefed the chair about the activities carried out by their respective Sub Commissions.
- The National Commission can play a powerful role in coordinating the activities that are being carried out by the institutions under each of the five sub commissions so that India's efforts and achievements get due support, acknowledgement and recognition across countries.
- India is one of the founding members of UNESCO and has always played an active role in promoting its ideals and objectives in the fields of education, culture, communication, natural sciences and social and human sciences.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601180>

Implementation of Automatic Identification and Data Collection (AIDC) of Rolling Stock (RFID Project)

Question: Which of the following has announced for the implementation of Automatic Identification and Data Collection (AIDC) of Rolling Stock?

(a) NTPC (b) Coal India (c) SAIL (d) Indian Railways

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Indian Railways is amongst the largest Railway systems in the world, addressing a significant part of the country's transportation needs, both in the passenger and freight segment.
- It carries about 23 million passengers per day and over 3 million tons of freight every day over 65000 route kilometers.
- It has major growth plans and as a part of this endeavor, the RFID project has been taken up which aims to automatically and accurately track and trace rolling stock as they move across the country with a special focus on improving their safety and reliability.
- Two works for RFID project have been sanctioned by Railway Board for a total of Rs. 112.96 Crores.
- For implementing this project over Indian Railways, the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS, the IT arm of the Indian Railways), GS1 India and the Indian Industry have come together thereby creating a new segment in the AIDC (Automatic Identification and Data Collection) industry in India uniquely suited for the Indian Railways requirements.



Benefits of the project:

- The project enables real time visibility of railway wagons through the National Rail Network using cutting edge technologies like RFID with GS1 global standards for unique & universal identification, in line with global best practices.
- It enables enhanced operational efficiency of the Indian Railways. In order that RFID tags can be used in all locations in the country including those with poor connectivity, Indian Railways opted to use the GIAI-202 standard.
- Indian Railways has successfully field tested these CRIS designed GIAI202 encoded tags at a speed of 182.7 kmph.

Implementation plans:

- The Indian Railways has aggressive implementation plans for RFID. All Rolling Stock, roughly 3,50,000 vehicles, are expected to be tagged by 2021.
- Till now approximately 22,000 wagons and 1200 coaches have been fitted with RFID tags. Additionally, roughly 3500 fixed RFID readers are expected to come up which shall communicate to a central control center using GS1's LLRP (low level reader protocol) standard.
- AIDC is being expanded on the Indian Railways to more areas such as Direct Part Marking and material management based on GS1 standards such as GTIN, CPID, SSCC, GLN etc.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601118>

Hydrogen-powered Train in India

Question: Indian Railways has recently announced that it will build a hydrogen-powered rail engine by the end of-

(a) 2023 (b) 2022 (c) 2021 (d) 2024

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Indian Railways, during 107th Indian Science Congress (ISC) (on 3rd January 2020 in Bengaluru), has announced that it will build a hydrogen-powered rail engine by the end of 2021.
- The Indian Railways Organisation for Alternate Fuels (IROAF) will be developing a hydrogen-powered rail engine.
- Hydrogen-powered rail engine will help to reduce reliance on fossil fuel-based energy sources like diesel and electricity and to find alternative sources of fuel to power its trains.
- Hydrogen-powered rail engine technology has been demonstrated successfully only in Germany so far.
- The proposed train will have four passenger coaches operating at 75 km/hr speed.
- One coach will carry the hydrogen gas cylinders, fuel cells, super capacitors and DC converters.
- Hydrogen will be the input to the fuel cell and the power output of the fuel cell will drive the train.
- The next phase is to generate hydrogen on board the train from water. This means that water will be converted into hydrogen through water splitting technologies and hydrogen will then be used as the input for fuel cells.



Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/railways-plans-hydrogen-powered-engine-for-passenger-trains-by-end-of-2021-6203317/>

Facility of Life Certificate by banks from the door of the pensioners

Question: Recently, which of the following Ministry has taken the decision of providing the facility of Life Certificate submission from the doors of the pensioner?

- (a) Ministry of Human Resource (b) Ministry of Social Justice
(c) Ministry of Finance (d) Ministry of Personnel & Grievance

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW), has taken a landmark step to make life easier for senior citizens to submit their Annual Life Certificate for continued pension.
- The Department by a circular on 17 January 2020 has issued directions to all the Pension Disbursing Banks to send SMSs/Emails to all their pensioners on 24th October, 1st November, 15th November and 25th November every year reminding them to submit their Annual Life Certificates by 30th November.



Highlights of the decisions:

- The Department for stricter monitoring in order to ensure that no pensioners are left out, directed all Pension Disbursing Banks to make an exception list as on 1st December every year of those pensioners who fail to submit their Life Certificate and issue another SMS/Email to them for submitting the Life Certificate.
- The bank in addition will also ask such pensioners through SMS/Email as to whether they are interested in submission of Life Certificate through a chargeable doorstep service, the charge not exceeding Rs.60.
- The Central Pension Processing Cells (CPPC) of the Pension Disbursing Banks shall now be duty bound to submit a report to DoPPW in the month of January, February & March respectively, indicating the total number of pensioners who have not given their Life Certificate along with a breakup of the Certificates submitted physically and through Digital means.
- This step is in addition to the order issued recently dated 18.07.2019 vide which all pensioners age 80 years and above have been given an exclusive window to submit their Life Certificate w.e.f. 1st October every year instead of 1st November every year.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601152>

Digital Gandhi Gyan Vigyan Exhibition Phase-II

Question: Where did the Digital Gandhi Gyan Vigyan Exhibition Phase II was inaugurated on January 30, 2020?

(a) Gandhinagar (b) Vardha (c) Porbandar (d) New Delhi

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Secretary, Department of Science & Technology, Prof. Ashutosh Sharma inaugurated the Phase-II of the Digital Gandhi Gyan Vigyan Exhibition in New Delhi on the occasion of Martyr's Day, i.e. 30 January 2020.
- The Exhibition showcasing Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) based exhibits on the events related to life of Mahatma Gandhi has been launched by the DST, in collaboration with M/s Vizara Technologies Pvt. Ltd, Delhi, a technology start-up under incubation of IIT Delhi.



The Exhibition

- The following five Exhibits being showcased are:
- ViRaasat Sabarmati Ashram – A Mixed reality installation with a 3D fabricated physical model of the Ashram with an interactive Virtual walk-through and a Guided Tour.
- Models of Gandhiji's Utensils with an AR experience showcasing his experiments with food, his changing food habits over time and the science behind his food choices.
- Gandhiji's letters mounted on a wall, augmented by an AR App to show related text, images, videos, etc.
- A Physical Map of India with an Augmented Reality (AR) Experience showcasing Gandhiji's travels over India using a Smart-phone / Tablet.
- 3D Printed Gandhi Mementos (Statue and Signatures) augmented with an AR App.

The Exhibits of Digital Gandhi Gyan Vigyan Exhibition Phase-I:

- The following two Exhibits which were showcased in the "Digital Gandhi Gyan-Vigyan Exhibition" inaugurated on the 2nd October 2019 are also being exhibited:
- Sabarmati Ashram – Treasure Hunt in VR: This is an Immersive VR experience based on the life of Gandhi ji, specially focussing on the Sabarmati Ashram.
- Augmented, Physical Charkha with an AR App: A Physical model of a Charkha similar to the one owned and used by Gandhi ji, is placed at on a table top. It gets animated when seen through an AR app on a hand-held device such as a smart-phone or tablet.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601188>

Raisina Dialogue 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) The Raisina Dialogue is a multilateral conference held annually in New Delhi, India.
- (2) Raisina Dialogue 2020 will bring together 700 international participants of which 80 are from Africa, from over a 100 countries.
- (3) The first Raisina Dialogue held in 2014.

Choose the correct one:

- (a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) Only (3)

Answer ☐ c)

Related Facts:

- The 5th edition of Raisina Dialogue held on 15th January , 2020 in New Delhi
- The Raisina Dialogue is a multilateral conference held annually in New Delhi. Since its inception in 2016, the conference has emerged as India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics.

- The conference is hosted by the Observer Research Foundation, an independent think tank, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs of India.
- The conference is structured as a multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral discussion, involving a variety of global policymakers including heads of state, cabinet ministers and local government officials.
- The Dialogue also welcomes major private sector executives, as well as members of the media and academia.
- The name “Raisina Dialogue” comes from Raisina Hill, an elevation in New Delhi, seat of the Government of India, as well as the Presidential Palace of India, Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- The Dialogue, jointly organised by MEA and the Observer Research Foundation, has been India’s contribution to global efforts to discover solutions, identify opportunities and provide stability to a century that has witnessed an eventful two decades.



Raisina Dialogue 2020:

- It brings together 700 international participants from over a 100 countries, of which 80 are from Africa, in one of the largest gathering of its kind. A remarkable 40% of the Speakers was women, emphasising our commitment to gender equality.
- The Dialogue had high level participation from 12 Foreign Ministers including the Foreign Ministers of Russia, Iran, Australia, Maldives, South Africa, Estonia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Uzbekistan and EU.

Highlights of Raisina 2020:

- India & Finland signed Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) in order to enhance cooperation in the field of production, procurement, research and development in defence sector.
- ‘Green Strategic Partnership’ with Denmark foreign minister was explored.
- 20th anniversary of partnership between India and Russia has been celebrated.
- Former heads of international governments with rich experience in governance were engaged in discussion on the important challenges in the world like climate change and counter-terrorism etc.

Links:

<https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32286/Raisina+Dialogue+2020+begins+tomorrow>

Piyush Goyal to lead Indian delegation to WEF 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Union Minister of Commerce and Industry & Railways, Piyush Goyal, will lead the Indian delegation to the 50th World Economic Forum (WEF) at Davos from January 20th to 24th 2020.

(2) Commerce and Industry Minister will also participate in an informal WTO Ministerial gathering being held in Davos during this period.

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both(1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer:(c)

Related facts:

- On January 18, 2020, it is announced that, Commerce minister Piyush Goyal will lead Indian delegation to World Economic Forum 2020 in Davos.

- The theme of the 50th World Economic Forum 2020 meeting is stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World.
- Commerce and Industry Minister will hold bilateral meetings with Ministers of Australia, South Africa, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Korea and Singapore.
- The Commerce and Industry minister will also meet Director General of World Trade Organization and Secretary General of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- The WEF annual meeting in Davos engages the world's top leaders to shape global, regional and industry agendas at the beginning of the year. The theme of the 2020 meeting is stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World.
- The World Economic Forum (WEF), based in Cologny-Geneva, Switzerland, is an NGO, founded in 1971.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1599749>

Mega Science Exhibition Vigyan Samagam

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Union minister, Jitendra Singh inaugurates global Mega Science Exhibition “Vigyan Samagam” in New Delhi.
- (2) This is fourth such exhibition after being organised at Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.

The correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On January 21, 2020, Union Minister, Jitendra Singh inaugurated global Mega Science Exhibition “Vigyan Samagam” in New Delhi.
- This is fourth such exhibition after being organised at Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kolkata.
- During the exhibition, Science & Technology enthusiasts witnessed the world-renowned Mega Science projects and listen to eminent scientists at the National Science Centre Delhi.
- Projects are being showcased by CERN, FAIR, INO, ITER, LIGO, MACE, SKA and TMT, under the aegis of Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Science and Technology and the National Council of Science Museums.
- Two Hall's was also being set upped for students in Pragati Maidan, Delhi i.e. 'Hall of Nuclear Energy' and 'Hall of space technology'.
- The Exhibition is designed in such a way that it ignite the minds of students, academia and industry to look for opportunities to pursue fundamental science and research as a strong career option.
- The Exhibition has themed galleries consisting of infographics, working models and exhibits, informative audio-visual content, electronic displays and interactive kiosks for each of the Mega Science Projects.
- In the inauguration event, different technological achievements and technological visions of India was discussed.
- Various aspects of India's upcoming space missions like Gaganyaan, Mangalyaan and Chandrayaan missions were also discussed.
- The exhibition will be open to public till 20th March, 2020



Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1599971>

India's second semi high-speed train by IRCTC

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas Express became the second semi high-speed train to be run by Railway subsidiary IRCTC.

(2) Lucknow-Delhi Tejas Express was the first semi high-speed train operated by IRCTC.

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both(1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer:(c)

Related facts:

- On January 17, 2020, India's second semi high-speed train 'Tejas' was flagged off between Ahmedabad-Mumbai.
- The inaugural run of this second Tejas Train was flagged off by Chief Minister of Gujarat, Vijay Rupani from Ahmedabad.
- The commercial run of the train, to be operated by IRCTC like the first Tejas train, will start with effect from 19th January, 2020 from Ahmedabad.
- Lucknow-Delhi Tejas Express was the first semi high-speed train that runs by IRCTC

**Links:**

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1599684a>

ELECAMA 2020 inaugurated

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Union Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurated ELECAMA 2020, at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.

(2) The focus of this year's event is on e-mobility, energy storage, start-ups, grid transformation, and revenue security with special attention on small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Which of the following statement (s) is/are true?

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer :(c)

Related facts:

- On 18th January 2020, the Union Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurated ELECAMA 2020, at India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh(UP).
- It's a five-day event from January 18 to January 22, 2020.
- Elecrama is power industry event organised by IEEMA every two years.
- Over 1,300 exhibitors are participating in the event. Out of these about 450 are exhibitors from 120 nations.
- In the event, the government has set up a target of making India a USD 5 trillion economy and his industry will play a significant in achieving this goal.
- The UP government asked investors to invest in UP, as Uttar Pradesh government has set a target of installing 2,000 MW of solar power generation capacity every year.
- UP government has given 1.2 crore power connections in past two years.
- The goal to achieve triple per capita consumption was also setup to reach the global average of 3600 units.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=197498>

Bhil Tribe Dispute in MP

Question: Consider the following statements about Bhil tribe:

- (1) The Bhil are one of the largest tribal groups, living in Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh only.
- (2) They are known to be excellent archers coupled with deep knowledge about their local geography.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer:(b)

Related facts:

- Recent controversial references to the Bhil tribe by Madhya Pradesh Public Service Commission (MPPSC) has received severe criticism.
- The MPPSC exam paper says 'Bhil' as criminal-minded and alcoholic.

About Bhil Tribe:

- The Bhil are one of the largest tribal groups, living in Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- The name is derived from the word 'billu', which means bow.
- The Bhil are known to be excellent archers coupled with deep knowledge about their local geography.
- Traditionally, experts in guerrilla warfare, most of them today are farmers and agricultural labourers. They are also skilled sculptors.
- Bhil women wear traditional saris while men are dressed in long frock and pyjamas.
- The woman put on heavy ornaments made of silver, brass along with rosaries of beads and silver coins and earring.

**Links:**

<https://tribal.nic.in/DivisionsFiles/tribalFaces.pdf>

Bharat Parv 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) The annual event Bharat Parv is being celebrated from 26th to 31st January, 2020.
- (2) The Theme for the Year 2020 is 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat'.

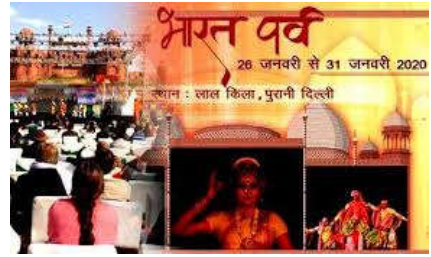
Choose the correct one:

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

Answer :(c)

Related facts:

- The annual event Bharat Parv is being celebrated from 26th to 31st January, 2020 in New Delhi.
- It is organised by the Ministry of Tourism.
- The objective of Bharat Parv is to encourage Indians to visit different tourist places of India and to inculcate the spirit of 'Dekho Apna Desh'.
- The Theme for the Year 2020 is 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' and 'Celebrating 150 Years of Mahatma'.
- It also includes display of tourism theme pavilion by State Governments/ Union Territory Administrations and line Ministries, handicraft & Handloom Stalls by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, Commission Handloom / Handicrafts/ TRIFED.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselFramePage.aspx?PRID=1600526>

APNA UREA-SonaUgle brand of HURL

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) The APNA UREA-SonaUgle brand of HURL (Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited) was launched by the Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers D V Sadananda Gowda.
- (2) HURL is a joint venture of Indian Maharatna companies namely IOCL (Indian Oil Corporation Limited), NTPC (National Thermal Power Corporation) and Coal India Limited.

Which of the following statement (s) is/are true?

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

Answer : (c)

Related facts:

- On January 17, 2020, Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers D V Sadananda Gowda launched the APNA UREA-SonaUgle brand of HURL (Hindustan Urvarak & Rasayan Limited).
- The Union Government approved revival of three sick Urea plants located in Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), Barauni (Bihar) and Sindri (Jharkhand).
- HURL, a joint venture firm promoted by three PSUs – Coal India Limited (CIL), NTPC Ltd and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL).
- HURL's three units are expected to be commissioned in February 2021, while Ramagundam (Telangana) and Talcher (Odisha) units are also likely to commence operations next year.
- The objective of HURL is to make India self-reliant in Urea.



Targets for HURL:

1. The revival of three sick Urea plants by end of 2021.
2. Increase neem coated urea production capacity to 38.1 lakh metric tonnes per annum.
3. To start operations of energy efficient and environment friendly natural gas-based fertilizer plants by 2021. The feedstock (Natural Gas) is to be supplied by GAIL.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1599732>

International

International Intellectual Property Index

Question: Consider the following statements with reference to International Intellectual Property Index:

(a) The International Intellectual Property Index- 2020 is released by U.S Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC).

(b) In this group of 53 countries, India has been ranked at 40th.

Choose the correct statement:

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The U.S Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC) has released the International Intellectual Property Index- 2020.
- The index maps the Intellectual Property (IP) ecosystem in 53 global economies representing over 90% of global GDP.
- It uses 50 unique indicators which span across nine categories of protection namely patents, copyrights, trademarks, design rights, trade secrets, commercialization of IP assets, enforcement, systemic efficiency and membership and ratification of international treaties.



Important facts:

- The US, the UK, Sweden, France and Germany remained the top five economies on the index.
- India has been ranked at 40th out of 53 countries in the index.
- It was placed at 36th position among 50 countries in 2019.

Links:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/economy/india-slips-to-40th-position-on-international-intellectual-property-index/1857611/>

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival 2020

Question: Who has been conferred the Best Actor Award at the Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival- 2020?

(a) Hrithik Roshan (b) Ayushman Khurana (c) Vicky Kaushal

(d) Raj Kumar Rao

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards- 2020 was held on February 20, 2020, in Mumbai.

Awardees:

- Best Film – Super 30
- Best Actor – Hrithik Roshan
- Most Promising Actor – Kiccha Sudeep
- Best Actor in Television Series – Dheeraj Dhoopar
- Best Actress in Television – Divyanka Tripathi
- Most Favorite Television Actor – Harshad Chopda



- Most Favorite Jodi in Television Series – Sriti Jha and Shabbir Ahluwalia (Kumkum Bhagya)
- Best Reality Show – Bigg Boss 13
- Best Television Series – Kumkum Bhagya
- Best Playback Singer Male – Armaan Malik

Links:

<https://www.dpiff.in/event/dadasaheb-phalke-international-film-festival-awards-mumbai-2020/>

Worldwide Educating for the Future Index (WEFFI) 2019

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Worldwide Educating for the Future Index (WEFFI) 2019 was released by Economist Intelligence Unit.

(2) India has been ranked 35th on the overall index in 2019.

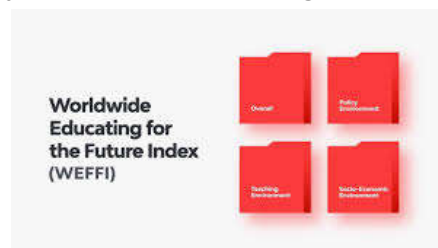
Choose the correct one:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Economist Intelligence Unit has released the Worldwide Educating for the Future Index (WEFFI) 2019.
- The index assesses countries based on their abilities to equip students with skill-based education.
- It has ranked countries based on three pillars namely policy environment, teaching environment and overall socio-economic environment.
- The theme of the index is From Policy to Practice.



Important Facts:

- Finland has been ranked at the top of the index. It was followed by Sweden and New Zealand at the third position.
- India has been ranked 35th on the overall index in 2019 with a total score of 53. In 2018, it was ranked at 40th position.
- The bottom three nations in the index were Kenya (48th), Nigeria (49th) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (50th).
- The report and index were commissioned by the Yidan Prize Foundation.

Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/education/india-jumps-5-ranks-to-35th-in-worldwide-education-for-the-future-index-2019/article30851541.ece>

Palestine threat to quit Oslo peace accord

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Palestine has threatened to withdraw from key provisions of the Oslo Accords.

(2) Oslo Accords are a series of agreements between Israel and the Palestinians signed in the 1990s.

Choose the correct one:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Palestine has threatened to withdraw from key provisions of



the Oslo Accords if the US announces its Middle East Peace Plan.

- It is being said that the plan will turn Israel's temporary occupation of Palestinian territory into a permanent occupation.

Oslo Accords:

- Oslo Accords are a series of agreements between Israel and the Palestinians signed in the 1990s.

Oslo I (1993):

- It is formally known as the Declaration of Principles (DOP). The pact established a timetable for the Middle East peace process. It planned for an interim Palestinian government in Gaza and Jericho in the West Bank.

Oslo II(1995):

- It is officially called the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza (1995), expanded on Oslo I.
- It included provisions for the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from six West Bank cities and about 450 towns.
- Additionally, the pact set a timetable for elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council.
- The interim pact was only supposed to last five years while a permanent agreement was finalised but it has tacitly been rolled over for more than two decades.
- The question of Jerusalem was left undecided under the Oslo Accords.

Links:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/01/palestinians-threaten-quit-oslo-accords-trump-peace-plan-200126153012929.html>

India out of US' developing nations list for trade benefits

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) United States Trade Representative (USTR) has taken off India from the list of developing countries.

(2) According to USTR, new lists consist of 36 developing countries and 44 least developed countries

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) has removed the name of India from the list of developing and least-developed countries that are eligible to claim benefits for preferential treatment with respect to Countervailing duties (CVDs) investigations.



- The preferential treatment with respect to CVDs investigations falls under the US' Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) scheme.
- Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) is an umbrella that comprises the bulk of preferential schemes granted by industrialized nations to developing countries.
- Countervailing duty (CVD) is an import tax imposed on certain goods in order to prevent dumping or counter export subsidies.
- Along with India, USTR has also eliminated other countries including Brazil, Indonesia, Hong Kong, South Africa, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Argentina from getting preferential treatment.
- The new lists consist of 36 developing countries and 44 least developed countries.
- The move comes ahead of US President Donald Trump's visit to India to talk and potentially sign a trade deal.

India is USTR's Developed Country

- According to USTR, India's share in global trade was 2.1 % for exports and 2.6% for imports in 2017.
- India along with nations like Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia, and South Africa, is part of the G20 bloc and G20 membership indicates that a country is developed.
- As the G20 members account for large shares of global economic output and trade.
- Further, being a part of G20 India can be classified as a developed country despite having a per capita GNI below \$12,375.

Indian Context:

- India is the largest beneficiary nation under the GSP, with total benefits from tariff exemptions amounting to \$260 million in 2018, according to the data from the USTR's office.
- In 2018, India exported goods worth \$6.3 billion (as per USTR figures) to the US under the GSP, accounting for around 12.1% of India's total export to that country.
- India no longer in the list of developing countries allows the USA to hold a CVD investigation.
- The CVD laws allow the US to hold an investigation into the trade policies of other countries to determine whether they are harming the US trade.
- If the investigation finds that India's policies allow exporters to sell their products in the US at a lower rate the US can impose a countervailing duty, to make the Indian goods more expensive in the US markets.
- Despite having a minimal impact on India's overall outbound trade with the US, specific exports from India in a diverse set of sectors such as jewellery, leather, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and agricultural products may face higher costs and competition.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-out-of-us-developing-nations-list-for-trade-benefits/articleshow/74089409.cms>

New Zealand Police unveils first artificial intelligence officer

Question: Which country has launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI) cop Ella to the force?

(a) New Zealand (b) China (c) USA (d) Japan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In its way to modernize the policing, New Zealand has inducted an Artificial Intelligence (AI) cop called Ella to the forces.
- Ella is the abbreviation for Electronic Lifelike Assistant, it is a digital person that is powered by AI and uses real-time animation to emulate face-to-face interactions.
- Ella will be stationed in the lobby of New Zealand Police's National Headquarters in Wellington.
- This virtual assistant will help the visitors in sorting common issues such as the force's non-emergency number and police vetting procedures.
- Homegrown tech firms Intela AI and Soul Machines led the AI and digital human development of Ella.



Links:

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12307902

Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)

Question: Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), is located at which of the following rivers?

(a) Nile River (b) Dajla Farat (c) Po river (d) Yellow river

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Ethiopia is building one of the largest dams in the world, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), on the river Nile near the Sudan border.
- It is Africa's biggest dam project and will have lasting impacts on its longest river- Nile.
- The hydroelectric dam is being built on the Nile (north-flowing river in Africa), in the lowlands of Ethiopia.



Concerns:

- The Nile is under serious threat of severe pollution, climate change and Egypt's growing population.
- Egypt is one of the driest countries on earth, with 95% of its people living along the Nile (or its overflowing Delta).
- It relies almost totally on the Nile for its water supply and the construction of this dam will further cut down Egypt's water supply by 12-25%.

Links:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ethiopia-dam-factbox/factbox-key-facts-about-ethiopias-giant-nile-dam-idUSKBN1XG21L>

Question: Where was African Union 2020 summit organized?

(a) Libya (b) Congo (c) Addis Ababa (d) Brazzaville

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The annual African Union Summit was organized in Addis Ababa, Capital of Ethiopia.
- This 33rd general summit that began on 21st January lasted till 10th February 2020.
- The African Union's theme for the year 2020 was- Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development.
- The theme outlines the commitment to achieve the Aspirations of Africa's Agenda 2063, specifically Aspiration 4, which envisions a peaceful and secure Africa, thereby making peace a reality for African people.



Focus of the Summit

- The focus was to end regional violence at the summit, including conflicts in South Sudan and Libya.
- This summit highlighted three challenges in Africa namely: eradicating poverty, tackling the climate crisis and silencing guns.

Future Summits

- AU chair announced that they will host two summits in May on conflict resolution and the other on implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- This year the chair is being assumed by South Africa.
- President Cyril Ramaphosa is officiating as the chairperson of the African Union (AU).
- The AU has announced that the Democratic Republic of the Congo would replace South Africa as AU chair in 2021.

Links:

<https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20200205/african-union-2020-summit-commences>

Global intellectual property index 2020

Question: Consider the following statements with reference global intellectual property index 2020:

(1) India has been ranked 40th out of 53 countries on a global intellectual property index, 2020.

(2) According to this report India has shown improvement in terms of scores when it comes to the protection of IP and copyright issues.

Choose the correct statement/s from the following:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- India has been ranked 40th out of 53 countries on a global intellectual property index.
- According to US Chamber India has shown improvement in terms of scores when it comes to the protection of IP and copyright issues.
- India was placed at 36th position among 50 countries in 2019.
- The US, the UK, France, Germany and Sweden are the top five economies on the IP Index in 2020.



Important Points:

- India's score, however, increased from 36.04 per cent (16.22 out of 45) in 2019 to 38.46 per cent (19.23 out of 50) in 2020, a 2.42 per cent jump in absolute score.
- However, India's relative score increased by 6.71 per cent, according to the International IP Index released by Global Innovation Policy Center or GIPC of the US Chambers of Commerce.
- Two new Index economies (Greece and the Dominican Republic) scored ahead of India.
- According to the eighth edition of the annual report, India's score on the Chamber's International IP Index demonstrates the country's growing investment in IP-driven innovation and creativity.
- The Index specifically highlights a number of reforms over the last year that strengthen India's overall IP ecosystem.

U.S. Chamber International IP Index

- The U.S. Chamber International IP Index benchmarks the IP framework in 53 global markets, representing over 90% of global GDP.
- The IP Index evaluates the ecosystem in each economy across 50 unique indicators which industry believes represent economies with the most effective IP systems.
- The IP Index serves as a roadmap for policymakers who seek to support innovation, creativity, and economic growth through more robust IP policy.

Links:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2020/feb/05/india-ranks-40-out-of-53-countries-on-global-intellectual-property-index-2099497.html>

Sagarmatha Sambad

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Sagarmatha Sambad is an initiative of the Government of Nepal to host a permanent biennial global dialogue starting from 2020.

(2) Government of Nepal has invited the Prime Minister of India to maiden Sagarmatha Sambaad 2020.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On January 24, 2020, Nepalese Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali informed that, the Prime Minister of India has been invited for maiden Sagarmatha Sambaad 2020.
- The Sagarmatha Sambaad is a multi-stakeholder dialogue forum of Government of Nepal, which is committed to deliberate on the most prominent issues of global, regional and national significance
- It brings together people from all walks of life from broader spectrum, having the stake, influence and capacity to shape and drive the discourse for positive change.
- The dialogue is named after the world's tallest mountain Sagarmatha (Mt. Everest) which stands for friendship.
- The first Sagarmatha Sambaad is scheduled to be held from April 2 to 4.
- Theme of the first edition of the Sagarmatha Sambaad is 'Climate Change, Mountains and the Future of Humanity'.
- The main objectives of the first edition of the Sambaad are to forge a common consensus among countries on the impending climate crisis and encourage political leaders to mobilise their political willpower to tackle its menace.
- Besides many global figures, the event draws all the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) leaders.
- Sagarmatha Sambaad can provide an opportunity to break the ice between India and Pakistan.



Links:

<https://www.newdelhitimes.com/pm-modi-gets-invited-for-sagarmatha-sambaad-to-be-held-in-nepal/>

World Record for organizing highest altitude Fashion Show on earth

Question: Which of the following country has made a world record of organizing Fashion Show at the highest altitude of earth?

(a) Nepal (b) China (c) Switzerland (d) Australia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Nepal has created a new Guinness World Record for organizing highest altitude Fashion Show on the earth.
- The Mount Everest Fashion Runway was held at 5340 meters (17515 feet) elevation at Kala Patthar, near Everest base camp on January 26, 2020.
- 18 super models from 10 different countries walked the ramp to create the history. The event was part of Nepal Government's Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign.
- The Guinness world record registered the title and awarded certificate to the organizers including Dr. Pankaj Gupta from India and Ramila Nemkul and Riken Maharjan from Nepal.
- The main objective of fashion show was to create awareness about climate change and also to give a message to the World that Nepal is the destination for all activities.
- The designs, patterns and apparel used in the fashion show were bio degradable.
- The models also used pro biotic detergent to lessen the carbon foot print.



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/international/nepal-creates-new-guinness-world-record-organizing-highest-altitude-fashion-show-earth>

TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit 2020

Question: Who has given the keynote address at the TERI World Sustainable Development Summit 2020 held on January 30, 2020?

(a) Narendra Modi (b) Piyush Goyal (c) Dharmendra Pradhan (d) Anurag Thakur

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- The Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Dhamendra Pradhan delivered the key note address at the TERI's World Sustainable Development Summit 2020 on 'Energy Future Road Map' in New Delhi on January 30, 2020
- India will continue to lead the global sustainable energy agenda. India is in the midst of a major transformative shift in the energy sector, both in scale and complexity and also the interdependence across different systems.
- The trajectory to end energy poverty in India, as compared to the rest of the world, is based on special national circumstances.
- It was mentioned that to end energy poverty in the country, there is a need to remain cognizant of the need to root economic development firmly to achieve the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals and commitments made at COP 21.

Energy sector in India:

- India is now the third largest energy consumer after the US and China. The energy demand increased to 882 million tonnes of oil equivalent (Mtoe) in 2017, the per capita consumption of energy is still 30% of the global average.
- The energy consumption is projected to grow at 4.2 percent per annum up to 2035.
- India's share of the total global primary energy demand is set to roughly double to about 11 percent by 2040, driven by strong economic development.
- In India, government is finding ways to achieve the twin objectives of more energy availability and less carbon through a healthy mix of all commercially-viable energy sources.
- The Government has set out a road map for reducing India's crude oil imports by 10% by 2022 by working towards transformation to a gas-based economy, tapping into indigenously produced biofuels, apart from adopting renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.
- Given the abundance of biomass in the country, the use of Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) will be promoted in a big way in automotive, industrial and commercial uses in the coming years.
- India is expanding the collaboration with countries, such as Brazil and the US, to improve blending technologies in transport sector. To reduce vehicular pollution, BS VI quality fuel, equivalent to Euro 6 standard, will be supplied in the entire country from 1 April this year.
- Dharmendra Pradhan also released a report 'Towards a low carbon steel sector' – Overview of the changing market, technology and policy context for Indian steel on this occasion.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601115>

One Trillion Trees Initiative

Question: Recently which of the following organization has launched the One Trillion Trees Initiative to grow, restore and conserve trees across the world by 2030?

(a) World Economic Forum(WEF) (b) WWF (c) UNICEF (d) UNDP

Answer: (A)

Related facts:

- The World Economic Forum has launched 'One Trillion Trees Initiative' to grow, restore and conserve 1 trillion trees across the world by 2030.
- The global initiative is aimed at restoring biodiversity and help fight climate change.
- This initiative will provide the much-needed progress against climate, biodiversity and SGD goals.
- This reduction can be about one-third of the emissions required to be cut by 2030 to meet the Paris Agreement targets.
- The one trillion trees (1t.org) project is also aimed at uniting governments, non-governmental organisations, businesses and individuals in mass-scale nature restoration.
- US President Donald Trump announced that the United States will also join the one trillion trees initiative.



Inspiration to launch Initiative:

- The WEF launched the initiative after gaining inspiration from a presentation by Swiss ecologist Thomas Crowther at the organization's meeting in 2019.
- Crowther and his team had calculated in July 2019 that planting over 1 trillion additional trees will help cool the earth and reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations to where they stood a century back.

Link:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/01/one-trillion-trees-world-economic-forum-launches-plan-to-help-nature-and-the-climate/>

Brexit approved by EU Parliament

Question: What will be the size of the European Union after the departure of Britain from the European Union per the exit approval given by the British parliament recently?

(a) 22 (b) 27 (c) 29 (d) 28

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- European Parliament has voted overwhelmingly to approve the Brexit deal with London, clearing the final hurdle for Britain's departure from the EU.
- The vote was 621 to 49 in favour of the Brexit deal that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson negotiated with the other 27 EU leaders.
- UK's official departure will reduce the number of countries in the bloc to 27.
- UK will not be having any control over the policies of EU as it will not be a member of the EU anymore.
- With Brexit, Britain is the first country to leave the EU.



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/international/eu-parliament-approves-brexite-deal-britain>

India ranked 5th in Carbon Disclosure Project 2019

Question: What is India's rank in Carbon Disclosure Project 2019 report?

(a) Second (b) Third (c) Fifth (d) Sixth

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- On January 20, 2020, "Climate and business partnership of the future: CDP India Annual Report 2019" was released by CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project).
- CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project) is a not-for-profit charity running the global disclosure system for investors, companies to manage their environmental impacts.
- India was ranked 5th among the countries surveyed for corporate commitments to science-based targets (SBT).
- 58 Indian companies shared details about the environment-related activities undertaken by them in 2019.
- The report has ranked countries as per their responsibilities taken by the corporate business towards carbon reduction.
- **Top 3 countries with SBT companies:**
 1. United States of America (135 SBT Companies)
 2. Japan (83 SBT Companies)
 3. United Kingdom (78 SBT Companies)

Key Points of CDP 2019:

- The report surveyed a total of 6900 companies across the globe to compile their annual report for 2019. These firms contribute to 55% of world capitalization.
- The report notified that more than 98 % of leading Indian companies have formed some committee / group within its organization to meet & address climate-related issues.
- The report also found that investors responded to companies in a good manner who has disclosed their climate risk. The report also claimed that investors also took into account the environmental activity from Indian companies before investing in an organization.
- India secured 5th spot ahead of Germany (30 companies) and Sweden (27 companies) & becomes the 1st developing nation with maximum number of companies committing to the SBTs.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/science/india-5th-among-countries-with-corporate-commitments-to-science-based-targets-report/articleshow/73434464.cms?from=mdr>

Economics

Cash is king, but digital is divine

Question: Which bank has launched the new motto 'Cash is King, But Digital is Divine to promote digital transactions in the country?

(a) State Bank of India (b) Reserve Bank of India (c) Central Bank of India
(d) Punjab National Bank

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On February 24, 2020, the Reserve Bank of India launched a new slogan Cash is King, but Digital is Divine to promote digital transactions in the country.
- According to the Reserve Bank, after demonetisation there has been over Rs 3.5 lakh crore reduction in the notes in circulation (NIC).
- During the last 5 years, overall digital payments in the country have witnessed a growth (CAGR) of 61 per cent and 19 per cent in terms of volume and value.
- Notes in Circulation (NIC) increased at an average rate of 14 per cent between October 2014 and October 2016.
- NIC, however, was Rs 22,31,090 crore, indicating that digitalization and reduction in cash usage helped reduce NIC by over Rs 3.5 lakh crore.



Links: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/rbis-new-moto-cash-is-king-but-digital-is-divine/articleshow/74288195.cms?from=mdr>

Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED) project

Question: Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED) project is related to which of the following sea?

(a) North Sea (b) Yellow Sea (c) Black Sea (d) Mediterranean Sea

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On February 19, 2020, scientists have proposed the construction of the Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED) enclosing all of the North Sea to protect Northern European countries from Sea-level Rise (SLR).



Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED)

- The Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED) project involves the construction of dams of a combined length of 637 km enclosing all of the North Sea and protect 25 million people and important economic regions of 15 Northern European.
- The scientists have proposed the construction of two dams of a combined length of 637 km; the two dams are as follows:
- France and England (measuring 161 kms)
- Scotland and Norway (measuring 476 kms).
- The dams will hence separate the North and Baltic Seas from the Atlantic Ocean to protect Northern European countries against Sea level Rise (SLR).
- Similar projects namely Saemangeum Seawall in South Korea and the Maasvlakte 2 extension of the Rotterdam harbor in the Netherlands will express the utility of the project NEED.

Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/can-dams-to-control-rising-sea-levels-work-6274997/>

United States has become India's top trading partner

Question: Which country has become India's top trading partner?

(a) USA (b) China (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Israel

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The United States has become India's top trading partner surpassing China, according to 2018-19 data from the Commerce Ministry.
- In 2018-19, the bilateral trade between the US and India stands at USD 87.95 billion as compared to USD 87.07 billion with China.
- India has a trade surplus of USD 16.85 billion with the USA while it has a deficit of USD 53.56 billion with China.
- Currently, the top five trading partners of India are US, China, UAE, Saudi Arabia and Hong Kong.



Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/us-becomes-indias-top-trading-partner-6282438/>

India emerged as the world's fifth largest economy

Question: Consider the following statement:

(1) India emerged as the world's fifth largest economy.

(2) India's GDP (PPP) is higher than that of Japan and Germany in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP).

Choose the correct statement:

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- World Population Review, a US-based think tank, in its report said that India emerged as the world's fifth largest economy by overtaking the UK and France in 2019.
- India's economy is the fifth largest in the world with a GDP of \$2.94 trillion.
- In purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, India's GDP (PPP) is \$10.51 trillion exceeding that of Japan and Germany.
- Purchasing power parity (PPP) defined as the rate at which the currency of one country would have to be converted into that of another country to buy the same amount of goods and services in each country.
- India's economic liberalization began in the early 1990s and included industrial deregulation, reduced control on foreign trade and investment, and privatization of state-owned enterprises.
- Currently, India's service sector is the fast-growing sector in the world accounting for 60% of the economy and 28% of employment.
- However, India's real GDP growth is expected to weaken for the third straight year from 7.5 per cent to 5 per cent.



Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/india-becomes-5th-largest-economy-overtakes-uk-france-report/articleshow/74181024.cms>

15th Finance Commission Report for FY 2020-21

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The 15th Finance Commission recommends reduction of centre's fund to states by 1% in FY21.

(2) Income distance is the distance of the state's income from the state with the highest income.

Of the above correct statement/ is/are

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:



- The Finance Commission is a constitutional body formed by the President of India to give suggestions on centre-state financial relations.
- The 15th Finance Commission (Chair: Mr N. K. Singh) was required to submit two reports.
- The first report, consisting of recommendations for the financial year 2020-21, was tabled in Parliament on February 1, 2020. It is the interim report.
- The final report with recommendations for the period 2021-26 will be submitted by October 30th, 2020.

Key recommendations in the first report (2020-21 period) include:

- Devolution of taxes to states: The share of states in the centre's taxes is recommended to be decreased from 42% during the 2015-20 period to 41% for 2020-21.
- The 1% decrease is to provide for the newly formed union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh from the resources of the central government.
- Income distance: Income distance is the distance of the state's income from the state with the highest income. The income of a state has been computed as average per capita GSDP during the three-year period between 2015-16 and 2017-18. States with lower per capita income would be given a higher share to maintain equity among states.
- Demographic performance: The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Commission required it to use the population data of 2011 while making recommendations.
- Accordingly, the Commission used only 2011 population data for its recommendations.
- The Demographic Performance criterion has been introduced to reward efforts made by states in controlling their population.
- It will be computed by using the reciprocal of the total fertility ratio of each state, scaled by 1971 population data.
- States with a lower fertility ratio will be scored higher on this criterion. The total fertility ratio in a specific year is defined as the total number of children that would be born to each woman if she were to live to the end of her child-bearing years and give birth to children in alignment with the prevailing age-specific fertility rates.
- Forest and ecology: This criterion has been arrived at by calculating the share of dense forest of each state in the aggregate dense forest of all the states.
- Tax effort: This criterion has been used to reward states with higher tax collection efficiency.
- It has been computed as the ratio of the average per capita own tax revenue and the average per capita state GDP during the three-year period between 2014-15 and 2016-17.

Grants-in-aid

- In 2020-21, the following grants will be provided to states: (i) Revenue deficit grants, (ii) Grants to local bodies, and (iii) Disaster management grants. The Commission has also proposed a framework for sector-specific and performance-based grants. State-specific grants will be provided in the final report.

- Revenue deficit grants: In 2020-21, 14 states are estimated to have an aggregate revenue deficit of Rs 74,340 crore post-devolution. The Commission recommended revenue deficit grants for these states (see Table 4 in the annexure).
- Special grants: In case of three states, the sum of devolution and revenue deficit grants is estimated to decline in 2020-21 as compared to 2019-20. These states are Karnataka, Mizoram, and Telangana. The Commission has recommended special grants to these states aggregating to Rs 6,764 crore.
- Sector-specific grants: The Commission has recommended a grant of Rs 7,375 crore for nutrition in 2020-21. Sector-specific grants for the following sectors will be provided in the final report: (i) nutrition, (ii) health, (iii) pre-primary education, (iv) judiciary, (v) rural connectivity, (vi) railways, (vii) police training, and (viii) housing.
- Performance-based grants: Guidelines for performance-based grants include: (i) implementation of agricultural reforms, (ii) development of aspirational districts and blocks, (iii) power sector reforms, (iv) enhancing trade including exports, (v) incentives for education, and (vi) promotion of domestic and international tourism. The grant amount will be provided in the final report.
- Grants to local bodies: The total grants to local bodies for 2020-21 has been fixed at Rs 90,000 crore, of which Rs 60,750 crore is recommended for rural local bodies (67.5%) and Rs 29,250 crore for urban local bodies (32.5%).
- This allocation is 4.31% of the divisible pool. This is an increase over the grants for local bodies in 2019-20, which amounted to 3.54% of the divisible pool (Rs 87,352 crore). The grants will be divided between states based on population and area in the ratio 90:10. The grants will be made available to all three tiers of Panchayat- village, block, and district.
- Disaster risk management: The Commission recommended setting up National and State Disaster Management Funds (NDMF and SD MF) for the promotion of local-level mitigation activities. The Commission has recommended retaining the existing cost-sharing patterns between the centre and states to fund the SD MF (new) and the SDRF (existing). The cost-sharing pattern between centre and states is (i) 75:25 for all states, and (ii) 90:10 for north-eastern and Himalayan states.
- For 2020-21, State Disaster Risk Management Funds have been allocated Rs 28,983 crore, out of which the share of the union is Rs 22,184 crore.
- The National Disaster Risk Management Funds has been allocated Rs 12,390 crore.

Links:

<https://www.prsindia.org/report-summaries/report-15th-finance-commission-fy-2020-21>

Vivad se Vishwas Scheme

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) The Vivad se Vishwas scheme was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her budget speech on February 1, 2020.
- (2) Under this scheme 'taxpayers whose tax demands are locked in dispute in multiple forums, can pay due to taxes by March 31, 2020, and get a complete waiver of interest and penalty.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Vivad se Vishwas scheme was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her budget speech on February 1, 2020.
- Under this scheme, taxpayers whose tax demands are locked in dispute in multiple forums, can pay due to taxes by March 31, 2020, and get a complete waiver of interest and penalty.



- If a taxpayer is not able to pay within the deadline, he gets a further time till June 30, but in that case, he would have to pay 10% more on the tax.
- The Vivad se Vishwas scheme is similar to the 'Indirect Tax, Sabka Vishwas' scheme, which was introduced by Finance Minister during her maiden budget presentation in July 2019.
- The "Sabka Vishwas" legacy dispute resolution scheme was aimed at reducing disputes related to excise and service tax payments.

Links:

<https://www.taxscan.in/vivad-se-vishwas-scheme-you-need-know/47561/>

Scientific

Exercise Indra Dhanush-2020

Question: Indra Dhanush is a joint military training exercise between India and which country?

(a) United Kingdom (b) Russia (c) Iran (d) Japan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The 5th edition of the Exercise Indra Dhanush commenced on 24th February, 2020 and it will formally conclude on the 29th of February, 2020.
- It is a joint air force exercise between the Indian Air Force and the Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom.
- The Exercise was held in Hindan Air Force Station located in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.
- Exercise Indra Dhanush seeks to strengthen bilateral relationships & enhance operational capabilities to counter terror threats to their installations.
- The focus of this edition of the exercise is Base Defence and Force Protection.
- Around 36 specialized combatants of the Royal Air Force participated in the exercise. From the Indian side, 42 combatants of Garud Commando Force participated in the exercise.



Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1604402>

Deepfake technology

Question: The term Deepfake technology was used in which of the following context?

(a) Delhi Election (b) Carbon Cycle (c) Atmosphere (d) Hydrosphere

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- February 21, 2020, Deepfake technology was used during the Delhi assembly elections by a political party for campaigning purposes.



Deepfake Technology:

- The word deepfake combines the terms deep learning and fake.
- The technology uses artificial intelligence to manipulate videos or other digital representations that yield fabricated images and sounds that appear to be real.
- Deep learning is a subset of Artificial intelligence.

- It refers to the arrangements of algorithms that can learn and make intelligent decisions on their own.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/deepfakes-enter-indian-election-campaigns/article30880638.ece>

ISRO to manufacture low cost satellite launch vehicles

Question: What will be the value of low cost satellite launch vehicle to be manufactured by ISRO?

(a) 10-15 crores (b) 15-20 crores (c) 20-25 crores (d) 30-35 crores

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Recently ISRO announced the preparation of a low-cost satellite launch vehicle.
- These launch vehicles can carry satellites weighing around 500 kg to put them in the desired orbit.
- Such launch vehicles will cost around Rs 30-35 crore each.
- This capability will give ISRO a big commercial boost as it will be able to cater to micro, mini and medium segments of the market.
- The first such launch from the country is expected to take place in the next four months.



Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/science/isro-readying-for-low-cost-satellite-launch-vehicles/articleshow/73808029.cms>

BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise-2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The 2nd BIMSTEC Disaster Management Exercise-2020 was conducted in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

(2) The focus of the 2nd edition of Exercise is on heritage structures' protection.

Choose the correct one:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 11 February 2020, Chief Minister of Odisha Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the 2nd Bay of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Disaster Management Exercise-2020 at Hotel Mayfair, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- The exercise took place between 11-13 February, 2020.
- The focus of the 2nd edition of Exercise is on heritage structures' protection.
- The first edition of the BIMSTEC DMEx was also hosted by India in 2017.
- The exercise seeks to provide a platform for member states to evaluate existing capabilities, share best emergency response practices, improve emergency preparedness and strengthen regional response mechanisms, to conduct risk assessment in the context of cultural heritage sites at the time of disasters and to test the multi-stakeholders' coordination in a disaster scenario involving international, national, state, district and local agencies.



- Participants in the exercise included Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Bhutan and Thailand did not participate.
- Global institutions like United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration Cultural Property (ICCROM) and others however participated in the event.
- The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is building the capacity of its forces to play the role of first responder at heritage sites, which are vulnerable to disasters such as earthquake, floods, cyclones and tsunami across India.
- Reasons for Focus on the Heritage Sites: In the backdrop of recent losses suffered in an earthquake in Nepal (2015), damages to Heritage Sites in Gujarat earthquake (2001), the need was felt to protect the Heritage Sites during disasters and build the capacity of NDRF personnel.

Links:

<http://www.ndrf.gov.in/pressrelease/press-note-shri-naveen-patnaik-inaugurates-2nd-bay-bengal-initiatives-multi-sectoral>

Yaravirus

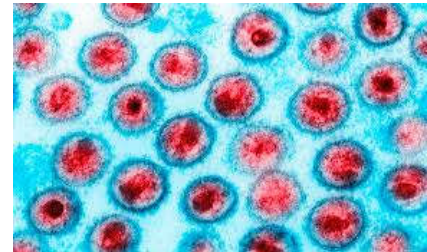
Question: Yaravirus has been invented by which of the following country?

(a) Brazil (b) USA (c) China (d) India

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In a lake in Brazil, Researchers have discovered an unusually small virus in a lake in Brazil.
- The virus has been named Yaravirus after Yara, a water-queen figure in Brazilian mythology.
- The Yaravirus infects amoeba and has genes that have not been described before, something that could challenge how Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) viruses are classified.
- DNA viruses are classified based on the protein that makes up their shell, or capsid. The Yaravirus capsid doesn't resemble any previously known protein.
- The Yaravirus does not infect human cells.



Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/this-word-means-yaravirus-6265066/>

Qualcomm launches 3 new chipsets

Question: Qualcomm, an American multinational chipset manufacturer has recently launched 3 chipsets in India with the support of

(a) DRDO (b) IISc (c) IIT Delhi (d) ISRO

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On January 21, 2020, Qualcomm along with the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has launched 3 chipsets in India.
- These chipsets are Snapdragon 720G, 662 and 460. All 3 chipsets feature Wi-Fi 6 connectivity and Bluetooth 5.1 support.
- The most important thing is that these 3 chipsets of Qualcomm have been developed with support for ISRO's Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC).
- Qualcomm is an American multinational chipset manufacturer

- It is a technology considered an advanced location positioning and navigation system than the GPS technology currently in use.
- This launch of chipsets is being considered as a major step to Made in India GPS (Global Positioning System) alternative.
- Apart from NavIC, these chipsets will also support the widely used GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System).
- Chinese smartphone brands Xiaomi and Realme have confirmed that it will soon launch new smartphones with Snapdragon 720G chipset processor.
- The navigation feature of ISRO with NavIC with which these chipsets have been launched is considered more accurate than with position accuracy of up to 5 meters.
- Along with this, NavIC comes with dual frequency S and L band whereas GPS used to come only with S band.
- The accuracy of the navigator will be 6 times higher in urban areas than with GPS.
- Navic is also engaged in aircraft of the Indian Air Force.
- At the same time, more than 30 Indian companies are making NavIC trackers for cars.



NAVIC

- It is also known as the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) & is an autonomous regional satellite navigation system built by India.
- It has been developed to provide accurate real-time positioning and timing services over India and the region extending to 1,500 kilometres around India.
- The NAVIC system consists of a constellation of 3 satellites in Geostationary orbit (GEO), 4 satellites in Geosynchronous orbit (GSO) and 2 satellites on the ground as stand-by to give precise information on position, navigation and time (PNT) of objects or persons to users on ground, sea and air.

Links:-

<https://www.qualcomm.com/news/releases/2020/01/20/qualcomm-launches-three-new-snapdragon-mobile-platforms-address-ongoing>

Joint Military Exercise – AJEYA WARRIOR-2020

Question: The 5th edition of Joint Military Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR-2020 held between?

(a) India – United Kingdom (b) India – Japan (c) India – USA (d) India – Russia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The 5th edition of Joint Military Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR – 2020 between India and United Kingdom will be held from 13 to 26 February 2020.
- It will be conducted at Salisbury Plains, located in Chalk Plateau in United Kingdom.
- The exercise is conducted alternatively in United Kingdom and India.
- The exercise is being held from 2005.

Aim:

- To conduct company level joint training with emphasis on counter terrorists operation in Urban and Semi Urban areas.

Significance:

- The joint military exercise displays a bilateral willingness to work jointly and share operating procedures to deal with a situation in a specified operational setting.
- It will promote defence cooperation and enhance interoperability while sharing experiences between both the armies.



Other Exercises with United Kingdom:

- Joint naval exercises called Konkan exercise, since 2004.
- Joint air-to-air exercise called Indra Dhanush, since 2006.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=1602654>

IIT-H developed new drug delivery system to treat fungal infections

Question: Researchers from which of the following institutes has recently developed oil-based drug delivery system to treat fungal infections?

(a) IIT-Hyderabad (b) IIT-Mumbai (c) IIT-Delhi (d) IIT-Kanpur

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad (IIT-H) have developed essential oil-based drug delivery system to treat fungal infections without the risk of inducing drug resistance.
- The medication can even counter fungi that have developed resistance to conventional, anti-fungal drugs.
- Microorganisms such as bacteria and fungi have a remarkable capacity to evolve resistance to antimicrobial agents used to destroy them.
- The Research has been led by Mudrika Khandelwal, Associate Professor and her student Shivakalyani Adepu, Department of Materials Science and Metallurgical Engineering, IIT-H.
- The research was supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Grants from the US conglomerate AT&T.



Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/science/iit-h-team-develops-essential-oil-delivery-system-to-treat-fungal-diseases/article30673843.ece>

New Species of Meat-Eating Dinosaurs

Question: Recently Natural History Museum of Utah, US unveiled which new meat-eating dinosaur species, which lived on the earth 157-152 million years ago?

(a) Allosaurus jimmandseni (b) Allosaurus fragilis (c) Bellusaurus Sui (d) Balaur Bondoc

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 26th January 2020, the Natural History Museum of Utah, US unveiled a new meat-eating dinosaur species- Allosaurus jimmandseni.
- Paleontologists informed that this creature lived on the earth between 157-152 million years ago.
- It was a new meat-eating dinosaur species that lived in the food plains of western North America during the Late Jurassic period.
- Detailed scientific study about this dinosaur has been published in the scientific journal PeerJ.
- George Engelmann of the University of Nebraska, Omaha first discovered the initial skeleton of new species within Dinosaur National Monument in 1990.
- The species belongs to the allosauroids (a group of small to large-bodied, 2 legged carnivorous dinosaurs that lived during the Jurassic & Cretaceous period).
- Allosaurus jimmandseni weighed over 4000 pounds stretched out to a massive 26 to 29 feet in length.
- It had a full grin of 80 sharp teeth & crest stretching from just in front of the eyes to the nose and one of the top predators in its ecosystem.
- The study now reveals that Allosaurus jimmandseni evolved earlier than its younger cousin, Allosaurus fragilis.



Links:

<https://www.deseret.com/utah/2020/1/24/21079473/new-species-of-meat-eating-allosaurus-announced-by-utah-scientists>

New NATO grade diesel: HFHSD- IN 512

Question: Which of the following Oil Company of India has developed the NATO grade diesel: HFHSD- IN 512?

- (a) Bharat petroleum (b) Indian Oil Corporation (c) Hindustan Petroleum
(d) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On January 13, 2020 Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) has developed a special class diesel (HFHSD- IN 512) High Flash High Speed Diesel.
- The quality of this diesel is at par with NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) grade.
- The new diesel results in a reduced carbon footprint. It has lesser environmental impact due to low Sulphur content and would result in the better performance of engine.
- It has been developed for the use in ships and vessels of Indian Army.
- Vice Admiral Gurtej Singh Pabby, Indian Navy launched the HFHSD- IN 512 during an occasion in New Delhi.
- The upgraded HFHSD- IN 512 blend, NATO specifications, is being supplied from Haldia and Pardip refinery, Kolkata, West Bengal.
- The revised technical specification of new fuel arrived consisting of 22 test parameters including critical parameters cetane number, flash point, sulphur content, sediment content, oxidation stability and Cold Filter Plugging Point (CFPP).



- The new fuel is expected to benefit other IOCL consumers like the Indian Coast Guard and other merchant marine in the coming years.
- This new development will now allow India to fuel the vessels of friendly foreign countries where fuel conforming NATO grade is supplied.

Links:

<https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-gas/indian-oil-corporation-launches-special-nato-class-diesel-for-indian-navy/73251236>

ISRO identifies astronauts for Gaganyaan

Question: ISRO has identified how many astronauts for India's maiden manned space mission 'Gaganyaan'?

(a) 3 (b) 4 (c) 5 (d) 6

Answer:(b)

Related facts:

- On January 1, 2020, ISRO chief K Sivan announced that , 4 astronauts have been identified for the India's first manned space mission Gaganyaan.
- The astronauts were selected based on the results of the medical examinations including fitness tests conducted at the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) a premier institute of the Indian Air Force and in Russia.
- They are all from the Indian Air Force and the training of astronauts will begin in January in Russia.
- Gaganyaan is a crewed orbital spacecraft intended to send astronauts to space for a minimum of seven days by 2022, as part of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme.
- If Gaganyaan is successful, India would become the fourth nation to achieve the feat.



Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/science/story/gaganyaan-4-astronauts-identified-isro-k-sivan-1633024-2020-01-01>

Humanoid 'Vyommitra' for Gaganyaan

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) ISRO will send humanoid Vyommitra in unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft ahead of human spaceflight.

(2) Vyommitra is a female humanoid – something that has an appearance resembling a human but is robotic.

Which of the following statement (s) is/are true?

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both(1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer :(c)

Related facts:

- On 22nd January 2020, ISRO introduced a humanoid Vyommitra at a seminar, 'Human Space Flight and Exploration-Present Challenges and Future Trends', that was held in Bengaluru.
- Vyommitra is a female humanoid – something that has an appearance resembling a human but is robotic and has no legs.
- ISRO Inertial Systems Unit has developed the humanoid in Thiruvananthapuram.
- Vyommitra is built for ISRO's first unmanned Gaganyaan mission.



- Gaganyaan will undertake two unmanned space flights before the manned mission in which the vyomitra will be used.
- Vyommitra can monitor module parameters, alert astronauts and perform life support operations.
- Vyommitra can simulate the exact human functions in space; it will check whether the systems are right.
- Vyommitra is capable of switching panel operations, performing Environment Control and Life Support Systems (ECLSS) functions, conversations with the astronauts, recognising them and solving their queries.
- Vyommitra will be very useful to simulate, as if a human is flying.
- Vyommitra can understand and speak english and hindi both languages.

Gaganyaan:

- Gaganyaan is India's ambitious human spacecraft mission which envisages sending three astronauts to space by 2022.
- The Gaganyaan mission is scheduled for December 2021.
- Gaganyaan will undertake two unmanned space flights before the manned mission.
- The ISRO has set target of achieving country's ambitious manned mission by 2021, with the first unmanned programme of Gaganyaan in December 2020, into lower earth orbit(LEO) by 2022.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/science/isro-to-send-humanoid-vyommitra-in-unmanned-gaganyaan-spacecraft-ahead-of-human-spaceflight/articleshow/73576959.cms>

High accuracy TB diagnostic test 'Truenat MTB'

Question: World Health Organisation (WHO) recently admitted that Truenat MTB is a high accuracy TB diagnostic test. This TB diagnosis test has been developed by-

(a) UK (b) India (c) USA (d) Italy

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 14 January, 2020; the World Health Organization (WHO) in its Rapid Communication had mentioned that TB diagnostic test developed in India has high accuracy.
- This new TB diagnostic test is India-made Truenat MTB, a molecular diagnostic test for pulmonary and extra pulmonary TB and rifampicin-resistant TB.
- It will be used as an initial test thus replacing sputum smear microscopy.
- Truenat is developed by the Goa-based Molbio Diagnostics.



Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/tb-diagnostic-test-developed-in-india-has-high-accuracy-says-who/article30577819.ece>

Retirement of the Giant Tortoise Diego

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Diego, a Galapagos giant tortoise who lives on the island of Espanola, which is the southernmost in the Galapagos Archipelago.

(2) Diego belongs to the species Chelonoidis hoodensis.

Which of the following statement (s) is/are true?

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer : (c)

Related facts:

- On 12 January 2020, Diego, the giant tortoise is retiring after his high sex drive helped save his entire species.
- The Galapagos National Park announced the end of the breeding program, saying an evaluation showed it had met its conservation goals.
- Diego belongs to the species *Chelonoidis hoodensis*.
- Diego was among 14 male tortoises selected to take part in a breeding programme on Santa Cruz Island.
- The programme has been a success, producing more than 2,000 giant tortoises since it began in the 1960s.
- The 100-year-old tortoise has fathered hundreds of progeny, around 800 by some estimates.
- The programme has now finished and Diego will be returned to his native island of Espanola in March 2020.



Links:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/diego-galapagos-tortoise-saving-species-having-lots-of-sex/>

Sports

Cricket

ICC Test rankings

Question: Which test player held number one position in the ICC Test rankings on February 26, 2020?

(a) Virat Kohli (b) Steve Smith (c) Kane Williamson (d) Ben Stokes

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- In the ICC World Test Championship, India continues to be placed at the top of the latest Test rankings with 360 points.
- However, in the ICC Men's Test Rankings Indian skipper Virat Kohli lost the top spot. Australia's Steve Smith was back on top of the list for the eighth time after first occupying the top position in June 2015.
- India vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane gained a spot to 8th rank. Mayank Agarwal returned to a career-best 10th position after amassing 92 runs. Cheteshwar Pujara dropped two places to 9th rank.
- In the ICC Test Bowling Rankings, off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin slipped a place to ninth but remained the only Indian featuring in the top 10. Fast bowler Ishant Sharma gained a place to be at the 17th spot. Top spot is held by Pat Cummins of Australia.
- In the ICC Test All-rounder Rankings Jason Holder of West Indies is ranked number 1 followed by England's Ben Stokes at second spot. Indian all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja is at third position.



**International
Cricket Council**

Links:

<https://www.icc-cricket.com/rankings/mens/player-rankings/test>

Chess

India's 13-year old Grandmaster D Gukesh wins 34th Cannes Open

Question: Who has won the 34th Cannes Open organized in France?

(a) Sasikiran Krishnan (b) P. Harikrishna (c) Sandipan Chanda (d) D Gukesh

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 22 February 2020, in chess, India's 13-year old Grandmaster D Gukesh emerged champion in the 34th Cannes Open in France.
- Gukesh defeated Harutyun Bargseghyan of the host nation in the final round to end with 7.5 points.
- Gukesh, who last year became the world's second youngest Grandmaster ever, beat the Frenchman in 50 moves to emerge clear winner.
- The Tamil Nadu player had last week won his first open tournament, bagging top honors in the Hillerod 110th Anniversary Open event in Denmark.
- He remained unbeaten in the tournament and posted wins over top-seeded Chongsheng Zeng of China and Bargseghyan among others.
- Siva Mahadevan was the next best Indian performer after Gukesh, taking the 10th place with six points.

**Links:**

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=India%26%2339%3bs-13-year-old-Grandmaster-D-Gukesh-wins-34th-Cannes-Open&id=381836>

Athletics

2020 Asian Wrestling Championships

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) India hosted the 2020 Asian Wrestling Championships

(2) Sunil Kumar won Greco-Roman Asian Wrestling Championships gold after the gap of 27 years

(3) India finished 3rd rank with 20 medals

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only 1&2 (b) Only 1&3 (c) Only 2 &3 (d) All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The 2020 Asian Wrestling Championships, organized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and United World Wrestling (UWW), was held at the KD Jadhav Indoor Stadium, Indira Gandhi Arena, New Delhi, from February 18 – 23, 2020.
- The event had a total of 30 weight classes in action under 3 events: Men's freestyle, Men's Greco-Roman and Women's freestyle.
- Japan topped the medal tally with 16 medals (8 Gold, 4 Silver, 4 Bronze).
- Second rank was held by Iran with total of 17 medals including 7 gold, 3 silver and 7 bronze.



- India finished 3rd rank with 20 medals (5 Gold, 6 Silver, and 9 Bronze).
- Sunil Kumar became the first Indian wrestler in 27 years to win a Greco-Roman gold at the Asian Wrestling Championships .In 1993 Pappu Yadav won the gold medal in the 48 kg category.
- China was barred from entering into the competition due to the 2019–20 coronavirus outbreak.
- North Korea and Turkmenistan were unable to participate in the tournament due to circumstances stemming from the outbreak.
- **Indian winners:**

S.No	Player Name	Category	Medal
1	Ravi Kumar Dahiya	Men's freestyle- 57kg	Gold
2	Sunil Kumar	Men's Greco-Roman-87 kg	Gold
3	Pinki	Women's freestyle-55 kg	Gold
4	Sarita Mor	Women's freestyle- 59 kg	Gold
5	Divya Kakran	Women's freestyle- 68 kg	Gold
6	Bajrang Punia	Men's freestyle-65 kg	Silver
7	Jitender Kumar	Men's freestyle -74 kg	Silver
8	Gourav Baliyan	Men's freestyle -79 kg	Silver
9	Satyawart Kadian	Men's freestyle -97 Kg	Silver
10	Nirmala Devi	Women's freestyle -50Kg	Silver
11	Sakshi Malik	Women's freestyle -65 kg	Silver
12	Rahul Aware	Men's freestyle-61 kg	Bronze

13	Deepak Punia	Men's freestyle-86 kg	Bronze
14	Arjun Halakurki	Men's Greco-Roman-55 Kg	Bronze
15	Ashu	Men's Greco-Roman-67 Kg	Bronze
16	Aditya Kundu	Men's Greco-Roman-72 Kg	Bronze
17	Hardeep Singh	Men's Greco-Roman-97 Kg	Bronze
18	Vinesh Phogat	Women's freestyle- 53 kg	Bronze
19	Anshu Malik	Women's freestyle- 57 kg	Bronze
20	Gursharan Preet Kaur	Women's freestyle- 72 kg	Bronze

Links:

<https://unitedworldwrestling.org/database>

Rakhi Halder bags gold

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Rakhi Halder has bagged gold at Senior Women's National Weightlifting Championships.

(2) She was ranked 19th in the Olympic qualifiers list.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Rakhi Halder of Bengal has won gold at the Senior Women's National Weightlifting Championships.
- She won in the 64kg category. This championship was the 35th edition and the event was held in Kolkata.
- Though way short of her personal best, Halder lifted 93 kg in snatch and 117 kg in clean and jerk to clinch the gold medal.
- She was 10kg ahead of her nearest rival Harjinder Kaur of Chandigarh.



Rakhi Halder:

- She was ranked 19th in the Olympic qualifiers list.

- Halder had produced a personal best of 218 kg at the Qatar International Cup to win the bronze medal.
- At the Commonwealth Championship in June 2019, Halder who is also an Indian Railways employee had clinched the gold with a total lift of 214-kg.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=380901>

Short Notes

Personalities

Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi

Question: Which cricket player has been banned by ICC from all forms of cricket for seven years?

- (a) Mohammad Sohail (b) Mashrafe Murtaja (c) Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi
(d) Sohail Tanveer

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has banned Oman player Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi from all forms of cricket for seven years.
- He was banned on charges of his involvement in trying to fix matches.
- The charges are related to the ICC men's T20 World Cup Qualifiers- 2019 held in the United Arab Emirates.
- As per the ICC, Al Balushi breached Article 2.1.1 of the Anti-Corruption Code – being party to an agreement or effort to fix or contrive in any way the result, progress, conduct or any other aspect of matches.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=ICC-bans-Oman-player-Yousuf-Abdulrahim-Al-Balushi-from-all-forms-of-cricket-for-7-years&id=381864>

New MD & CEO of CIBIL

Question: On 25 February 2020, who was appointed the new MD and CEO of CIBIL, the largest credit information company operating in India?

- (a) Satish Pillai (b) Rajesh Kumar (c) Dinesh Agarwal (d) Parag Agarwal

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 25 February, 2020, Rajesh Kumar became the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of CIBIL (Credit Information Bureau India Limited), the largest company providing information on credit ratings in India.
- He succeeded Satish Pillai.
- Prior to this appointment, he was serving as the group head for retail credit and risk at HDFC Bank.



About CIBIL:

- TransUnion CIBIL Limited is India's first Credit Information Company, also commonly referred as a Credit Bureau.
- It is part of the American multinational conglomerate Trans Union.
- CIBIL aggregates consumer borrowing and payment information for the purpose of assessing loan risk and pricing credit (setting the interest rate).
- A Credit Bureau is licensed by the RBI and governed by the Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act of 2005.
- Establishment year 2000
- Headquarters-Mumbai

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/sme-sector/cibil-ropes-in-hdfc-banks-rajesh-kumar-as-md-ceo/articleshow/74302383.cms>

Maria Sharapova

Question: Five-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova has announced her retirement from tennis, she belongs to which country?

(a) Australia (b) Russia (c) USA (d) Serbia

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 26 February, 2020, five-time Grand Slam winner Maria Sharapova announced her retirement from tennis.
- The Russian won her first Grand Slam at Wimbledon in 2004 aged 17 and completed the career slam, all four major titles, by winning the French Open in 2012.
- In 2016, she served a 15-month ban after testing positive for meldonium.
- After returning from her ban in 2017, Sharapova struggled to recapture her best form and suffered from a number of injuries.
- She has dropped to 373 in the world, her lowest ranking since August 2002, and has lost in the first round of her past three Grand Slam tournaments.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Sharapova-says-goodbye-to-Tennis&id=381982>

Suella Braverman appointed as the UK's new Attorney General

Question: Who has been appointed as the new Attorney General of United Kingdom?

(a) Suella Braverman (b) Geoffrey Cox (c) Sukhwinder Singh (d) Robert Buckland

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Indian-origin Suella Braverman was appointed Attorney General of United Kingdom on 13 February, 2020.
- Braverman will involve reviewing the work of the law officers' departments. It will include independent prosecuting authorities, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Serious Fraud Office among others.



- She was previously Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Exiting the European Union from January to November 2018.
- Suella was elected as the Conservative MP for Fareham in May 2015.

Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/braverman>

Hosni Mubarak passed away

Question: Hosni Mubarak which passed away recently was President of which of the following countries?

(a) Egypt (b) Turkey (c) Saudi Arabia (d) Mongolia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Former President of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, passed away in Cairo (capital of Egypt) on February 25, 2020. He was 91-years-old.
- Hosni Mubarak had served as the fourth President of Egypt from 1981 to 2011.
- He was appointed as the Vice President of Egypt on October 14, 1981 and eight days later, on October 22, he was sworn in as the President of Egypt after Islamist militants assassinated the ruling President Anwar Sadat during a military parade.
- Under Mubarak's reign, Egypt joined hands with the US to fight against Islamic terrorism. He had also sent troops as a part of the US-led coalition in the 1990-91 Gulf War. He had also made efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- The Gulf war was led by United States against invasion of Iraq to annex Kuwait. The war was code named Operation Desert shield.
- After almost three decades in power, Mubarak, was forced to resign on February 11, 2011, following 18 days of protests around the country.
- Mubarak was later arrested and put on trial over the deaths of protesters during the 18-day revolt as well as for corruption. He was condemned to life in jail in 2012, but by 2017, he was cleared of all charges and released.
- Mubarak was Egypt's longest-serving ruler after Muhammad Ali Pasha, who had ruled the nation for 43 years from 1805 to 1848.



Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/international/egypts-former-president-hosni-mubarak-passes-away-91>

Srinivas Gowda- Kambala Event

Question: Which Indian competing in Kambala event has covered 100m in 9.55 seconds?

(a) Srinivas Gowda (b) Rupesh Chaudhary (c) Abhjeet Kumar (d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- February 15, 2020, Srinivas Gowda competing in a Kambala event has covered 100m in 9.55 seconds ahead of Jamaican Usain Bolt's world record of 9.58 seconds.
- Kambala is an annual Buffalo Race festival celebrated in the Tulu Region of Dakshina Kannada district which is situated in the State of Karnataka.
- The festival involves the traditional buffalo race generally held from November to March.
- The buffaloes are made to race one after another in paddy fields as a thanksgiving to the Gods for protecting the animals from diseases.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sport/karnatakas-kambala-buffalo-jockey-srinivas-gowdas-run-draws-comparison-to-usain-bolt/article30828501.ece>

New Chief Vigilance Commissioner

Question: Recently who has been appointed Chief Vigilance Commissioner?

(a) Sanjay Kothari (b) Rajiv Kumar (c) Ravikar Pandey (d) Sudhir Ranjan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Sanjay Kothari has been appointed as the new Chief Vigilance Commissioner.
- Prior to this he has served as the Secretary to the President Ram Nath Kovind.
- The Central Vigilance Commission is a statutory body set up in February, 1964 on the recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by K. Santhanam, to advise and guide Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance.
- The Commission consists of a Central Vigilance Commissioner and Vigilance Commissioners not more than two.

**Links:**

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/scrap-selection-of-sanjay-kothari-as-cvc-demands-congress-1648631-2020-02-21>

CMD of New Space India Ltd

Question: Who assumed charge as the Chairman cum Managing (CMD) of New Space India Ltd (NSIL), the newly formed commercial arm of ISRO?

(a) G. Narayanan (b) G. Satish Reddy (c) V.Y. Menon (d) Dr. V.K. Reddy

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In February 2020, leading space scientist G. Narayanan assumed charge as the Chairman cum Managing (CMD) of New Space India Ltd (NSIL), the newly formed commercial arm of Indian Space Agency ISRO.
- Prior to this, he was working as deputy director (systems reliability and quality assurance) at the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC), at Thiruvananthapuram unit.
- This unit of ISRO designs develops liquid propulsion stages for launch vehicles.

**New Space India Limited (NSIL):**

- NSIL is a wholly owned Government of India undertaking/ Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE), under the administrative control of Department of Space (DOS).
- It commercially exploits the research and development work of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Centers and constituent units of DOS.

Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/isro-veteran-g-narayanan-to-head-space-psu-nsil/articleshow/74071920.cms>

RBI has elevated five officials to the executive directors' post

Question: Recently Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has elevated how many officials to the executive directors' post?

(a) 5 (b) 6 (c) 7 (d) 8

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has elevated five officials to the executive directors' post.
- The elevated officials will take charge during 2020.
- Currently, the RBI has 12 executive directors (ED).
- Out of 12, five of them are due to retire in 2020.
- **The officials are:**

- (1) Indrani Banerjee, Regional Director, Nagpur;
- (2) Saurav Sinha, chief general manager-in-charge;
- (3) Vivek Deep, chief general manager-in-charge;
- (4) J.K. Dash, chief general manager-in-charge and
- (5) P. Vijaya Kumar, the senior-most RBI ombudsman.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/rbi-appoints-five-executive-directors/article30812697.ece>

TERI chief RK Pachauri passed away

Question: Name the former TERI chief who recently passed away at the age of 79.

(a) RK Pachauri (b) Ajay Mathur (c) Ashok Chawla (d) Ajay Singh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 13 February, former The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) chief RK Pachauri, 79, passed away due to a prolonged battle against heart illness.
- RK Pachauri played a pivotal role in growing the New Delhi-based The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and making it a premier global organization in the sustainability space.
- He was the founder-director and former chairman of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
- He became chief executive of TERI in 1981 and headed TERI for more than three decades.
- IPCC got the Nobel Peace Prize jointly with former US vice-president Al Gore under the leadership of Pachauri.
- The prize recognized IPCC's efforts to build and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change. He headed the body from 2002 to 2015.
- Pachauri resigned from Teri in 2015.



The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI):

- The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a research institute in New Delhi that specializes in the fields of energy, environment and sustainable development. Established in 1974, it was formerly known as the Tata Energy Research Institute.
- As the scope of its activities widened, it was renamed The Energy and Resources Institute in 2003.

Links:

<https://theprint.in/india/rk-pachauri-former-teri-chief-passes-away-at-79/365095/>

Rajiv Bansal

Question: Who has been appointed the new Chairman and Managing Director of Air India?

(a) Rajiv Bansal (b) Tarun Goswami (c) Ravindra Srivastava (d) Rajendra Khattar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 13 February 2020, Rajiv Bansal was appointed as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Air India.
- He will replace Ashwani Lohani.
- This is second stint for Mr. Bansal as CMD for Air India. He had served briefly to the post in 2017.
- His appointment to the key post came in crucial times when Government has invited bids to sell its 100 per cent stake in debt ridden Air India.
- After the acquisition, the airline management will go in the hands of successful bidder.



Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rajiv-bansal-is-new-cmd-of-air-india/article30813178.ece>

Awards & Honors

IOC Coaches Lifetime Achievement Awards 2019

Question: Who has received the International Olympic Committee's Coaches Lifetime Achievement Awards for the year 2019?

(a) Pullela Gopichand (b) Prakash Padukone (c) Sachin Tendulkar (d) Rahul Dravid

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Top Indian badminton coach, Pullela Gopichand was awarded International Olympic Committee's Coaches Lifetime Achievement Awards 2019 for his excellence and contribution in the field of coaching.
- Gopichand received the mention in the male category of the awards.
- He is the first-ever Indian to receive the prestigious honor.
- The International Olympic Committee said in a statement that the panel wishes to recognize Gopichand's efforts in the development of Badminton sport in India, his efforts to support athletes across sports as well as his contribution to the Olympic Movement.



IOC Coaches Lifetime Achievement Awards:

- The IOC Athletes' Entourage Commission gives these awards to recognize the outstanding achievements of coaches and their contributions towards developing and encouraging athletes to compete in winter or summer Olympic sports.

Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/sports/badminton/story/pullela-gopichand-receives-honourable-mention-ioc-coaches-lifetime-achievement-awards-1644644-2020-02-09>

Operations & Campaign

Joint Exercise SAMPRITI-IX

Question: With which country will India start the ninth edition of Joint Exercise Sampriti from February 3 to 16, 2020?

(a) Mongolia (b) USA (c) Turkey (d) Bangladesh

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- As part of the ongoing Indo-Bangladesh defence cooperation, a joint military training exercise SAMPRITI-IX is being conducted at UMROI, Meghalaya, India from 03 Feb to 16 Feb 2020.
- Exercise SAMPRITI is an important bilateral defence cooperation endeavour between India and Bangladesh and will be the ninth edition of the exercise which is hosted alternately by both countries.
- During the joint military exercise SAMPRITI-IX a Command Post Exercise (CPX) and a Field Training Exercise (FTX) will be conducted.
- For both the CPX and FTX, a scenario where both nations are working together in a Counter Terrorism environment will be simulated under the UN Charter.
- The FTX curriculum is progressively planned where the participants will initially get familiar with each other's organizational structure and tactical drills.
- The training will culminate with a final validation exercise in which troops of both armies will jointly practice a Counter Terrorist Operation in a controlled and simulated environment.
- In addition, to understand each other at tactical level, greater cultural understanding will be emphasized to strengthen military trust and cooperation between two nations.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1601128>

Planning & Project

NABARD approves over Rs 400 Cr to boost infrastructure in J&K

Question: Recently NABARD has sanctioned Rs 400Cr to which State/ Union Territory?

(a) Jammu & Kashmir (b) Assam (c) Jharkhand (d) Madhya Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned an amount of 400.64 crore rupees to UT of J&K during the current financial year for giving boost to the infrastructure in the rural areas.
- The funding is a part of the NABARD's 'Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF)- Trench XXV' which aims at augmenting rural infrastructure.

Background:

- Earlier in 2020, NABARD has sanctioned Rs.209.87 crore for the construction of 82 rural roads and 3 bridges.
- A road length of 291kms has been proposed to be constructed benefiting 9.15 lakh people in 19 districts of UT of J&K.
- The construction of roads and bridges will provide all-weather improved connectivity to 461 remote villages.
- Rs.143.66 crore has been sanctioned for the implementation of 38 water supply schemes.
- The schemes are expected to benefit over 3.54 lakh people across 86 villages in 17 districts of UT of J&K.
- Similarly, NABARD has also sanctioned an amount of Rs.47.11 crore towards improving the Animal and Sheep Husbandry sectors.



Link:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=381887>

Ministry of Road Transport & Highways launches Integrated Road Accident Database Project

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Ministry of Road Transport & Highways launched a central accident database management system that will help in analyzing causes of road crashes and in devising safety interventions to reduce such accidents in the country.
- (2) Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD), has been developed by the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) and will be implemented by the National Informatics Centre.

Choose the correct one:

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

Answer :(c)

Related facts:

- On 13th January 2020, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways launched a central accident database management system that will help in analysing causes of road crashes and in devising safety interventions to reduce such accidents in the country.
- The IT tool, known as the Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD), has been developed by the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) and will be implemented by the National Informatics Centre and the project costs ₹258 crore and is being supported by the World Bank.
- The system will be first piloted in the six States with highest fatalities from road crashes — Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.



How it works:

- The IRAD mobile application will enable police personnel to enter details about a road accident, along with photos and videos, following which a unique ID will be created for the incident. An engineer from the Public Works Department or the local body will receive an alert on his mobile device.
- He or she will then visit the accident site, examine it, and feed the required details, such as the road design. Data thus collected will be analysed by a team at IIT-M, which will then suggest if corrective measures in road design need to be taken.
- It is also expected that road users will also be able to upload data on road accidents on a separate mobile application, which is expected to go live from April 1.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1558915>

Treaty & Agreements

India, Portugal signs seven agreements

Question: Recently how many agreements were signed between India and Portugal?

(a) 5 (b) 6 (c) 7 (d) 8

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On February 14, 2019, India and Portugal signed seven agreements to boost cooperation in a range of areas including investment, transport, ports, culture and industrial and intellectual property rights.
- The agreements were signed after extensive talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa in New Delhi.
- President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa arrived in New Delhi in his first visit to India.
- The President of Portugal is accompanied by Minister of State and Foreign Affairs Professor Augusto Santos Silva, Secretary of State for Internationalization Professor Eurico Brilhante Dias and Secretary of State for National Defence Jorge Seguro Sanches.
- President Ram Nath Kovind will meet the visiting President later in the evening and host a banquet in his honor.
- President de Sousa will travel to Maharashtra and Goa during his visit.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=India%2c-Portugal-sign-seven-agreements&id=381311>

Ministry of Rural Development signs MoU with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Question: The Ministry of Rural Development has signed MoU with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation under which of the following program of the central government?

(a) Swachh Bharat (b) Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (c) Namami Gange
(d) Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) on January 22, 2020 under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM), for furthering their mutual objectives of strengthening grassroots institutions of the rural poor.
- The MoU reiterates DAY-NRLM and the Foundation's shared focus on improving the lives of India's poor and the marginalized with the aim of reducing poverty through institutions of marginalized rural women for promotion of diversified and gainful self-employment while creating skilled wage employment opportunities.
- The foundations support will include assistance in improving implementation quality, documenting best practices, and designing of monitoring learning and evaluation.
- The foundation is already working with self-help groups (SHGs) for layering Maternal and Child Health interventions where rural women from marginalized communities come together to work collectively towards empowerment and poverty alleviation.



Links:

<https://rural.nic.in/press-release/ministry-rural-development-signs-mou-bill-and-melinda-gates-foundation-under-deendayal>

Conference Wings India 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Wings India 2020 is an international exhibition and conference on the civil aviation sector.

(2) 'Wings India 2020'- a four-day event themed: "Flying for All" is an international platform focused on the new business acquisition, investments, policy formation and regional connectivity in the civil aviation industry.

Which of the following statement (s) is/are true?

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer:(c)

Related facts:

- Wings India 2020, an international exhibition and conference on civil aviation sector, will be held at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad from March 12 to 15, 2020.
- This event will be organized by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, GOI, Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) to provide a congenial forum that will cater to the rapidly changing dynamics of the sector.
- 'Wings India 2020'- a four-day event themed: "Flying for All" is an international platform focused on the new business acquisition, investments, policy formation and regional connectivity in the civil aviation industry.
- Wings India 2020 will be Asia's largest event.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=197497>

Law & Justice

Ground Water Act-2020

Question: Consider the following statements with reference to the Ground Water Act:

(1) It makes registration mandatory for installing submersible pumps.

(2) A person caught polluting the groundwater level for the first time will be punished from 6 months to 1 year with a penalty ranging from Rs 2-5 lakhs.

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On February 11, 2020, Uttar Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath approved the Ground Water Act-2020 to improve the falling groundwater level.
- The Ground Water Act makes registration mandatory for installing submersible pumps. An online registration facility has been made available for the same.
- Besides this, the UP government has made rainwater harvesting system mandatory in all private and government schools and colleges.

Ground Water Act-2020:

- The Ground Water Act-2020 is aimed at improving the quality of the groundwater level.
- Under the Act, farmers as well as domestic users will not be required to pay any amount to use the pumps.
- The Act also provides for strict punishment and penalty against those who pollute the groundwater through boring pipes.
- Under the Act, all boring companies will need to get their registration done. They will also have to update all the information in every three months.
- Further, the map of government and private buildings will be cleared when they have a provision to install rainwater harvesting system.



Punishment:

- A person caught polluting the groundwater level for the first time will be punished from 6 months to 1 year with a penalty ranging from Rs 2-5 lakhs.
- The person caught in the act for the second time will have to face punishment for up to 2-5 years and pay a penalty of Rs 5-10 lakh.
- A person caught for the third time will face punishment from 5-7 years and will have to pay penalty amounting to Rs 10-20 lakhs.

Links

<https://www.aninews.in/news/national/general-news/up-govt-brings-ground-water-act-2020-to-improve-ground-water-levels20200211232256/>

Cabinet approves Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill

Question: What is the new raised upper limit for the termination of pregnancy as per the recently approved by Medical Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill?

(a) 20 weeks (b) 22 weeks (c) 24 weeks (d) 15 weeks

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020
- The bill will amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.

Salient features of proposed amendments:

- Proposing requirement for opinion of one provider for termination of pregnancy, up to 20 weeks of gestation and introducing the requirement of opinion of two providers for termination of pregnancy of 20-24 weeks of gestation.
- Enhancing the upper gestation limit from 20 to 24 weeks for special categories of women which will be defined in the amendments to the MTP Rules and would include 'vulnerable women including survivors of rape, victims of incest and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, Minors) etc.
- Upper gestation limit not to apply in cases of substantial foetal abnormalities diagnosed by Medical Board. The composition, functions and other details of Medical Board to be prescribed subsequently in Rules under the Act.
- Name and other particulars of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated shall not be revealed except to a person authorised in any law for the time being in force.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1600916>

Year, Day & Week

Central Excise Day

Question: When is the Central Excise Day celebrated?

(a) 20 February (b) 24 February (c) 18 February (d) 22 February

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Central Excise Day, 2020 was celebrated across the country on 24 February 2020.
- The Central Excise Day is celebrated every year to convey the importance of excise and service tax excise tax among the common people.
- The day is observed to commemorate the Central Excise and Salt Act which was enacted on 24th February 1944.
- In India, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is responsible for administering Customs, Goods, and Service Tax (GST), Central Excise, Service Tax and Narcotics in India.



Links:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/information/story/central-excise-day-2020-all-you-need-to-know-1649420-2020-02-24>

World Pulses Day

Question: World Pulses Day is observed globally on?

(a) 8 February (b) 9 February (c) 10 February (d) 11 February

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- World Pulses Day is observed globally on 10th February.
- World Pulses Day is a day established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations to recognize the importance of pulses (dry beans, lentils, dry peas, chickpeas, lupins) as a global food.
- It has been designated on February 10, each year since 2019 by the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly on December 20, 2018.

Significance:

- Pulses, also known as legumes, are the edible seeds of leguminous plants cultivated for food.
- Dried beans, lentils and peas are the most commonly known and consumed types of pulses.
- World Pulses Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the nutritional benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security and nutrition.



Impact of pulses production on India:

- The country had produced 23.40 million tonnes of pulses during the 2018-19 crop year (July-June), still short of annual domestic demand of 26-27 million tonnes.
- For the current year, the government is targeting pulses output of 26.30 million tonne.
- Promoting pulses production will help in economic stability and household food security.

Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/india-on-track-to-become-self-sufficient-in-pulses-production/article30782487.ece>

World Radio Day

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) World Radio Day is celebrated all over the world on February 13 every year.

(2) This year World Radio Day's theme is "Radio and Diversity".

Of the above correct statement/s is/are

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- World Radio Day is celebrated all over the world on February 13 every year.
- World Radio Day highlights the unique power of radio which connects lives and brings people together from across the globe.
- This year World Radio Day's theme is Radio and Diversity.
- On February 13, 2012, UNESCO celebrated first Radio Day globally.
- On World Radio Day 2020 (WRD 2020), UNESCO calls on radio stations to uphold diversity, both in their newsroom and on the airwaves.



Links:

<https://www.news18.com/news/india/world-radio-day-2020-theme-history-and-significance-2499207.html>

National Women's Day

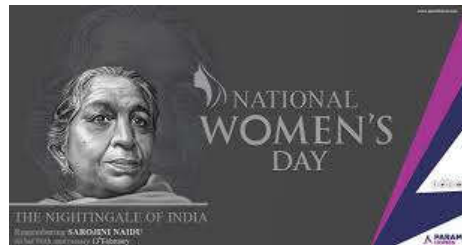
Question: When is the National Women's Day celebrated?

(a) 13 February (b) 12 February (c) 10 February (d) 11 February

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- National Women's Day is celebrated annually on 13 February.
- The day emphasizes the contribution of women in the society and advocates about the women rights in the process of women empowerment.
- Formal observance of this day began from the year 2014.
- This day marks the birth anniversary of eminent Indian political activist Sarojini Naidu who fought for the women rights in colonial rule.
- She is the first female governor of India with her appointment in the Indian state United Province (now Uttar Pradesh) in 1947.
- Sarojini Naidu became the first Indian woman and second woman overall to preside over the Congress after Annie Besant in its 1925 Kanpur session.
- For her poetic creations, she earned the sobriquet Nightingale of India.



Links:

<https://www.jansatta.com/lifestyle/sarojini-naidu-birthday-national-womens-day-date-2020-quotes-speech-essay-biography-images-jivan-parichay-in-hindi/1316678/>

World Leprosy Day 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) World Leprosy Day is observed internationally every year on the last Sunday of January to increase the public awareness of the Leprosy or Hansen's Disease.

(2) This year it was observed on 30 January 2020.

Choose the correct one:

(a) Only(1) (b) Only(2) (c) Both(1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer : (c)

Related facts:

- World Leprosy Day 2020 was observed on January 30 .
- World Leprosy Day is observed internationally every year on the last Sunday of January to increase the public awareness of the Leprosy or Hansen's Disease.
- This date was chosen by French humanitarian Raoul Follereau as a tribute to the life of the Mahatma Gandhi who had compassion for people afflicted with leprosy.
- Leprosy is one of the oldest recorded diseases in the world. It is an infectious chronic disease that targets the nervous system, especially the nerves in the cooler parts of the body: the hands, feet, and face.
- India, which has the highest burden of the disease, has reported a decreasing number of new cases for the past 2 years.



- Government of India has launched certain programs since 1955 to tackle leprosy i.e. National Leprosy Control Programm, National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP), Sparsh Leprosy Awareness Campaign, 2018 etc.

What is leprosy?

- Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by a bacillus, Mycobacterium leprae (M. leprae).
- The symptoms of the disease occur generally after a long period of getting infection on average 5 years, as M. leprae multiplies very slowly.
- The disease mainly affects the skin, the peripheral nerves, mucosa of the upper respiratory tract, and the eyes.
- The signs and symptoms of leprosy is – Dark-skinned people might have light patches on the skin, while pale-skinned people have darker or reddish patches, Loss or decrease of sensation in the skin patches, Numbness or tingling in hand or feet, Weakness of hands, feet or eyelids, Painful nerves, Swelling or lumps in the face or earlobes, Painless wounds or burns on hands or feet etc.

Links:

https://www.nhp.gov.in/world-leprosy-day-2020_pg

World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day

Question: When was the first ever World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day observed?

(a) 25 January (b) 29 January (c) 30 January (d) 20 January

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- January 30, 2020 was observed as the first-ever World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day (World NTD Day), a day when the celebration of achievements made towards control of the world's NTDs is done, yet recognize the daunting challenges we face in the control and elimination of these conditions.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies 20 major conditions as NTDs, which includes four major soil-transmitted helminth infections (ascariasis, hookworm infection, trichuriasis, and strongyloidiasis), followed by lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, scabies, leishmaniasis, Chagas disease, and dengue.
- It is to be mentioned that all of the world's population living below the World Bank poverty line of US\$1.90 per day are infected with one or more of the WHO's 20 NTDs, corresponding to at least 10% of the global population.
- These NTDs also disproportionately affect indigenous populations living in extreme poverty.
- NTDs are generally described as chronic and debilitating illnesses with the ability to promote poverty because of their effects on productivity, child development, societal stigma, and the health of women.
- Based on those criteria, PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases has expanded the WHO list to include a total of 40 NTDs.



Links:

<https://journals.plos.org/plosntds/article?id=10.1371/journal.pntd.0007999>

Miscellaneous

Shri Siddhant Shikhamani Granth Mobile App

Question: Shri Siddhant Shikhamani Granth Mobile App is devoted to which one of the following deities?

(a) Lord Krishna (b) Lord Ram (c) Lord Vishnu (d) Lord Shiva

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Prime Minister has released the translated version of the Shri Siddhant Shikhamani Granth in 19 languages He also launched the Shri Siddhant Shikhamani Granth Mobile App.

Siddhant Shikhamani:

- Siddhant Shikhamani is a religious scripture of the Panchacharya tradition of Veerashaivas also known as Lingayatism.
- The scripture was written in Sanskrit and gives an elaboration of the primitive traits of Veerashaivism found in the Vedas and the Upanishads.

About Lingayat:

- The Lingayat also known as Veerashaiva community are devotees of Shiva.
- They follow the 12th-century saint-philosopher Basavanna who had rejected ritualistic worship and pre-eminence of the Vedas.
- They are strict monotheists.
- They worship only one God namely Linga (Shiva)



Links:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siddhanta_Shikhamani

Asur Tribe

Question: Asur Tribe is found mostly in which of the following States?

(a) Jharkhand (b) Rajasthan (c) Telangana (d) Himachal Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Asur tribe has been using mobile radio to transmit local news and songs which are helping them to revive the dying tribal language.
- Asur Tribe is an Austro-Asiatic ethnic group living primarily in the Indian State of Jharkhand. Asur in Jharkhand is one of the thirty major tribes of people who have made the state of Jharkhand their home.
- They are included in the list of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups are categorized on the basis of :
 - Pre-agricultural level of technology,



- Low level of literacy,
- Economic backwardness,
- A declining or stagnant population.
- They speak the Asuri language which is on the verge of extinction with less than 8,000 people speaking it.
- The main festival of the tribe includes Sarhul, Phagua, and Navakhans among others.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/radio-aids-revival-of-dying-tribal-language/article30831074.ece>

Sammakka Saralamma Jatara

Question: Sammakka Saralamma Jatara festival is being celebrated in which of the following state?

(a) Telangana (b) Andhra Pradesh (c) Uttar Pradesh (d) Kerala

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Sammakka Saralamma Jatara is being celebrated in the State of Telangana.
- Sammakka Saralamma Jatara also known as Medaram Jatara is a tribal festival held biennially in the state of Telangana. It is a State Festival of Telangana.
- The festival commemorates the fight of a mother and daughter, Sammakka and Saralamma, with the reigning rulers against an unjust law.
- It is believed that after Kumbh Mela, the Medaram Jatara attracts the largest number of devotees in the country.



Links:

<https://telanganatourism.gov.in/partials/about/festivals-of-telangana/samakka-saarakka-jaathara.html>

Department of Telecommunications launches ‘5G Hackathon’

Question: Which among of the following departments has launched ‘5G Hackathon’?

(a) Department of Telecommunications (DoT) (b) Department of Science and Technology
(c) Department of Earth Science (d) Department of Space and Technology

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has launched 5G Hackathon in association with the Government, academia and Industry Stakeholders.
- The Hackathon aims at short listing India’s cutting edge ideas that can be converted into workable 5G products and solutions.
- The 5G Hackathon will be spread across in three phases.
- 5G Hackathon is open to developers, start-ups, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), academic institutions & registered companies in India and NRIs.
- Stakeholders can participate as individuals or as a team to present use cases for the 5G network in the Indian context.



Link:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Department-of-Telecommunications-launches-%e2%80%98G-Hackathon%e2%80%99&id=381735>

Seed sowing festival Lui-Ngai-Ni

Question: Lui-Ngai-Ni festival is celebrated by which of the following States?

(a) Manipur (b) Nagaland (c) Assam (d) Tripura

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Naga tribes of Manipur celebrated their seed sowing festival Lui-Ngai-Ni under the theme Oneness through Culture in Ukhrul, Manipur.



Lui-Ngai-Ni festival:

- Lui Ngai Ni is the seed-sowing festival celebrated by the Naga clans of Manipur, India.
- This festival is celebrated every year on 14–15 February on the commencement of the spring season.
- The festival commemorates the season of seed sowing and is also embarks the beginning of the new year for the people of Naga clan.

Link:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Manipur%3a-Seed-sowing-festival-%26%2339%3bLui-Ngai-Ni%26%2339%3b-celebrated-at-Ukhrul&id=381387>

Herath Festival

Question: Herath festival is dedicated to which of the following God?

(a) Lord Shiva (b) Lord Rama (c) Lord Krishna (d) Lord Vishnu

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Prime Minister has greeted the people on the occasion of the Herath festival.
- The word Herath comes from the Sanskrit word Hararatri or the Night or Hara (another name of Lord Shiva).
- It is one of the biggest festivals of Kashmiri Pandits.
- The festival is marked by a night of praying followed by a day of feasting.



Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pm-greets-on-herath-festival/articleshow/74230136.cms>

Van Vihar National Park

Question: Van Vihar National Park is located in which state?

(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Maharashtra (d) Gujarat

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Van Vihar National Park is located in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh).

- It is situated next to the famous Upper Lake of Bhopal also known as the “Bada Talab” which is a Ramsar Site and one of the two lakes of Bhoj Wetland.
- It has the unique distinction of being a combination of National Park, a Zoo, Rescue Centre for wild animals and Conservation Breeding Centre for selected vital species.
- It is the only place in central India where its rescue centre harbors a number of Lions and Tigers rescued from the circuses, Sloth Bears rescued from the madaris, Tigers, Panthers and Bears rescued from the zones of human-wildlife conflict.
- It is also a designated co-coordinating zoo and Conservation Breeding Centre for the Hard Ground Barasingha, the state animal of Madhya Pradesh and two species of Gyps Vultures.
- It is a natural habitat for a variety of herbivores and carnivores namely, tiger, white tiger, leopard, hyena and sloth bear, chital, sambhar, blackbuck, blue bull, chousingha, common langur, rhesus monkey, porcupine, etc.



Links:

<http://www.mptourism.com/blog/places-to-visit-in-bhopal-van-vihar-national-park.html>

Event: Know Your Forces

Question: “Know Your Forces” is an event organized by Air Force. This event will be organized in which of the following cities?

(a) New Delhi (b) Saharanpur (c) Lucknow (d) Jabalpur

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Air Force Station Sarsawa located near Saharanpur City, Uttar Pradesh has organized an event Know Your Forces on 14 February 2020.
- The event was a mega display of military assets for the school students of Saharanpur area.
- The event was inaugurated by the Divisional Commissioner, Sh. Sanjay Kumar IAS and Air Commodore Ajay Shukla VM, Air Officer Commanding, Air Force Station Sarsawa.
- The aim of the programme was to reach out to the youths of Saharanpur area and familiarize them with the Indian Armed Forces in general and Indian Air Force in particular.
- More than 3000 school children of various age group participated in the event.
- They were briefed about the role of IAF and various career opportunities available in the IAF.
- They were also apprised about the importance of maintaining the cleanliness in the area to avoid birds’ menace, for safe flying.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1603285>

Income Tax Department deadline on PAN-Aadhaar linkage

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Section 139AA of the Income Tax Act states that every person having PAN as on July 1, 2017, and eligible to obtain Aadhaar, must intimate his Aadhaar number to the tax

authorities.

(2) The deadline to link PAN with Aadhaar will end on March 31, 2020.

Choose the correct one:

(a) Only (1) (b) Only (2) (c) Both (1) and (2) (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The Income Tax Department announced on February 15, 2020 announced that that the Permanent Account Number (PAN) will become inoperative if it is not linked with Aadhaar.
- The deadline to link PAN with Aadhaar will end on March 31, 2020.
- According to the Income Tax department, there are over 17.58 crore PAN cards that are yet to be linked with the 12-digit Aadhaar card.
- Those person who's PANs will become inoperative will also have to face the consequences under the IT Act for not intimating their permanent account number.
- On the other hand, for those linking their permanent account number with Aadhaar after March 31, their PAN will become operative from the date of intimation of Aadhaar number.
- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) amended Income Tax Rules and inserted a new rule 114AAA, which includes the manner of making PAN inoperative.
- The CBDT stated that a person, who has been allotted PAN as on July 1, 2017, has to intimate his Aadhaar number under sub-section (2) of section 139AA of the Income Tax Act.
- If the person fails to intimate the same on or before March 31, 2020, the PAN of such a person will become inoperative immediately.



Links:

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/around-175-crore-pan-to-become-inoperative-after-31-march-if-not-linked-with-aadhaar/story/396239.html>

National Cadet Corps Rally 2020

Question: Recently where the annual National Cadet Corps Rally 2020 has been organised?

(a) Delhi (b) Pune (c) Visakhapatnam (d) Dehradun

Answer : (c)

Related facts:

- On 28th January 2020, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the Annual National Cadet Corps (NCC) rally 2020 at the Cariappa Parade ground in New Delhi.
- Prime Minister inspected the Guard of Honour and reviewed the March Past by the various NCC contingents and also from Cadets from other friendly and neighbouring countries.
- NCC cadets presented their capabilities in fields such as adventure sports, music and performance arts.
- NCC cadets also performed some themed cultural performance.
- Prime Minister distributes awards for the meritorious NCC cadets.
- In this rally, the efforts of NCC cadets has praised in the relief and rescue operations during natural disasters as well as their efforts for the promotion of initiatives such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.



Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1600810>