

NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

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INDIA RANKINGS 2020

RELEASED BY

HON'BLE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
SHRI RAMESH POKHRIYAL 'NISHANK'

ON
11th JUNE, 2020



Overall



University



Engineering



Management



Pharmacy



College



Medical



Law



Architecture



Dental

EPI

ENVIRONMENT PERFORMANCE INDEX (EPI) 2020

Preface

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 31th 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 June to 30th June) 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

India Rankings 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was approved by the MHRD and launched by Honourable Minister of Human Resource Development on 29th September 2015.

(2) In the Overall category Indian Institute of Technology Madras secured top position.

(3) Indian Institute of Science (IISc),Bengaluru held top spot in University category.
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:

- On 11 June 2020, Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' released 'India Rankings 2020'.
- These rankings are released to map the level of higher education in the country under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) launched in 2015.



What is National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)?

- In order to frame a methodology to rank institutions across the country, the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) was launched by Minister of Human Resource Development on 29th September 2015.
- The methodology draws from the overall recommendations broad understanding arrived at by a Core Committee set up by MHRD, to identify the broad parameters for ranking various universities and institutions.
- The parameters broadly cover "Teaching, Learning and Resources," "Research and Professional Practices," "Graduation Outcomes," "Outreach and Inclusivity," and "Perception".

2020 Rankings:

- Ranking for the fifth time (since 2016) was released in 10 categories viz Overall, University, Engineering, Management, Colleges, Pharmacy, Medical, Architecture, Law and Dental.
- In 2020, "Dental" category has been introduced for the first time.
- In this survey, government and non-governmental higher educational institutions across the country have been included.

Top 5 Institutes in Overall Category:

- Indian Institute of Technology Madras
- Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
- Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

- Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur

Top 5 Institutes in University Category:

- Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
- Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi
- Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore
- Jadavpur University, Kolkata

Engineering

- Indian Institute of Technology Madras
- Indian Institute of Technology Delhi
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

Management

- Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad
- Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
- Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

Colleges

- Miranda House, Delhi
- Lady Shri Ram College for Women, New Delhi
- Hindu College, Delhi

Pharmacy

- Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi
- Panjab University, Chandigarh
- National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Mohali

Medical

- All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi
- Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh
- Christian Medical College, Vellore

Architecture

- Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur
- Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee
- National Institute of Technology Calicut

Law

- National Law School of India University, Bengaluru

- National Law University, New Delhi
- Nalsar University of Law, Hyderabad

Dental

- Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences, Delhi
- Manipal College of Dental Sciences, Udupi
- Dr. D. Y. Patil Vidyapeeth, Pune

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1630867>

Environmental Performance Index 2020

Question: What is India's rank in the Environmental Performance Index 2020 prepared jointly by Yale and Columbia University?

(a) 168 (b) 165 (c) 176 (d) 155

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- 12th edition of Environmental Performance Index was released in June 2020.

What is Environmental Performance Index?

- Environmental Performance Index (EPI) is a biennial report prepared by Yale University and Columbia University in collaboration with the World Economic Forum.
- The EPI offers a scorecard that highlights leaders and laggards in environmental performance and provides practical guidance for countries that aspire to move toward a sustainable future.
- EPI ranks countries on environmental health and ecosystem vitality using 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories.
- The report also includes 10-year trends in environmental performance at the national and global levels.
- These indicators provide a gauge at a national scale of how close countries are to established environmental policy targets.
- Further, it offers a powerful policy tool in support of efforts to meet the targets of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2020 Index:

- Denmark with a score of 82.5 has topped the index.
- This was followed by Luxembourg (score 82.3) second, Switzerland (score 81.5) third, United Kingdom (score 81.3) fourth and France (score 80.0) fifth.

- Countries lowest in the index are – Liberia (180), Myanmar(179), Afghanistan(178), Sierra Leone(177), Cote d' Ivoire(176).
- India is ranked 168 with Ghana (score 27.6).In 2018, India was ranked 177.
- Among India's neighbors, Bhutan was ranked 107th, Sri Lanka 109th, China 120th, Pakistan 142nd and Nepal 145th.

Links:

<https://epi.yale.edu/epi-results/2020/component/epi>

MATSYA SAMPADA

Question : Who launched the first edition of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Newsletter “MATSYA SAMPADA” ?

- (a) Giriraj Singh (b) Pratap Chandra Sarangi (c) Narendra singh tomar
(d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Shri Giriraj Singh today (30th June, 2020) launched the first edition of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Newsletter “MATSYA SAMPADA”.
- **Matsya Sampada**
- The Newsletter “MATSYA SAMPADA” is an outcome of the endeavours of the Department of Fisheries to reach out to the stakeholders especially fishers and fish farmers through various means of communication, and to inform and educate them about the latest developments in the fisheries and aquaculture sector.
- It would be published on a quarterly basis starting from the first quarter of the year 2020-21.

Matsya Sampda & PMMSY (Pradhan Mantri MatsyaSampada Yojana)

- Matsya Sampda is associated with PMMSY.
- Releasing the Operational Guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, Shri Giriraj Singh termed the launch of PMMSY as the most important moment in the journey of fisheries and aquaculture development.
- The Government of India in May, 2020 launched a new Flagship Scheme i.e. the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) for sustainable and responsible development of fisheries sector at an investment of Rs. 20050 crore.
- The PMMSY with an array of 100 diverse activities is by far the largest ever investment in fisheries sector.
- Achieving the ambitious targets under PMMSY of an additional 70 lakh tons fish production, rupees one lakh crores fisheries exports, generation of 55 lakh employment over next five years, etc.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1635365>

Index of Eight Core Industries

Question : How much Index of Eight Core Industries declined for May 2020 ?

- (a) declined by 23.4% (provisional) (b) declined by 40.5% (provisional)
(c) declined by 50% (provisional) (d) declined by 60% (provisional)

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Index of Eight Core Industries released on 30th June, 2020.
- Issuer – The Office of Economic Adviser, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade released this index.

Summary

- The growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for May 2020 declined by 23.4% (provisional) compared to decline of 37 percent (provisional) in previous month of April 2020.
- Its cumulative growth during April to May, 2020-21 was -30.0 per cent.
- In view of nationwide lock down during April & May 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic, various industries viz. Coal, Cement, Steel, Natural Gas, Refinery, Crude Oil etc. experienced substantial loss of production.
- Final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for February'2020 is revised at 6.4%.

Industries

- **Coal**- Coal production (weight: 10.33 per cent) declined by 14.0 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Crude Oil**- Crude Oil production (weight: 8.98 per cent) declined by 7.1 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Natural Gas**- The Natural Gas production (weight: 6.88 per cent) declined by 16.8 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Refinery Products**- Petroleum Refinery production (weight: 28.04 per cent) declined by 21.3 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Fertilizers**- Fertilizers production (weight: 2.63 per cent) increased by 7.5 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Steel**- Steel production (weight: 17.92 per cent) declined by 48.4 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Cement**- Cement production (weight: 5.37 per cent) declined by 22.2 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.
- **Electricity**- Electricity generation (weight: 19.85 per cent) declined by 15.6 percent in May, 2020 over May, 2019.

Link :

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=209814>

Updated clinical management protocol for managing COVID-19 cases

Question : The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has recently released an updated clinical management protocol for managing COVID-19 cases. The updated protocol includes the advice to use Dexamethasone as an alternative choice to —

(a) Ozurdex (b) Dextenza (c) Methylprednisolone (d) None of the above

Answer : (c)

Related facts

Context

- The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has today (27th June, 2020) released an updated clinical management protocol for managing COVID-19 cases.
- The last update to the clinical management protocol was done on 13th June, 2020.

Advice

- The updated protocol includes the advice to use Dexamethasone as an alternative choice to Methylprednisolone for managing moderate to severe cases of COVID-19.

Dexamethasone

- Dexamethasone is a corticosteroid drug used in a wide range of conditions for its anti-inflammatory and immunosuppressant effects. The drug is also a part of the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) and is widely available.
- **Trade names** — Dextenza, Ozurdex, others.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634725>

New process for MSME registration

Question : In a historic move, the MSME Ministry on 26th June, 2020 came out with a consolidated notification. According to the notification, An enterprise can be registered just on the basis of —

(a) Aadhaar number (b) Pan number (c) Tan number (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- In a historic move, the MSME Ministry on 26th June, 2020 came out with a consolidated notification in the form of guidelines for classification and registration of MSMEs.
- It will be effective from 1st July, 2020.
- According to the notification, An enterprise can be registered just on the basis of Aadhaar number.
- It is a paperless exercise in true sense.

Highlights

- **Udyam** — The notification also says that hereafter, an MSME will be known as Udyam, as this is more closer to the word Enterprise. Accordingly, the registration process will be known Udyam Registration.
- **Classification** — As declared earlier, Investment in 'Plant and Machinery or Equipment' and 'Turnover' are the basic criteria for classification of MSMEs now; notification clarifies that Exports of goods or services or both shall be excluded while calculating the turnover of any enterprise whether Micro, Small or Medium;
- **Registration** — The process of registration can be done online through the portal which will be made known to the public before 1st July, 2020, the date from which this new arrangement is going to be effective.
- **Facilitation** — In another first, the Ministry of MSME has established a strong facilitation mechanism for the MSMEs. This process is in the form of Single Window Systems at the district level and regional level. It will help those entrepreneurs who are not able to file the Udyam Registration for any reason. At the district level, the District Industry Centres have been made responsible for facilitating the entrepreneurs. Similarly, Ministry's recent initiative of Champions Control Rooms across the country have been made legally responsible for facilitating such Entrepreneurs in registration and even thereafter.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634558>

Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Union Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi laid the foundation stone for "Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap" at Rampur, Uttar Pradesh
- (2) It is being constructed under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karykram

Of the above correct statements/s is/are:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 29 June 2020, Union Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi laid the foundation stone for "Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap" at Rampur, Uttar Pradesh.

- The “Sanskritik Sadbhav Mandap” is being constructed with the cost of Rs 92 crore by Union Minority Affairs Ministry under Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karykram (PMJVK).
- This community centre will be utilized for various socio-economic-cultural activities, skill development training, coaching, relief activities during disaster such as Corona and different sports activities.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karykram- PMJVK:

- The erstwhile Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) has been restructured and renamed as Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram for effective implementation.
- The scheme is designed to address the development deficits of the identified Minority Concentration Areas.
- The restructured scheme is to be implemented during the remaining period of the 14th Finance Commission.
- It will be implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Objective of PMJVK:

- Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) seeks to provide better socio economic infrastructure facilities to the minority communities particularly in the field of education, health & skill development which would further lead to lessening of the gap between the national average and the minority communities with regard to backwardness parameters.
- Under PMJVK, 80% of the resources would be utilized for projects related to education, health and skill development of which at least 33-40% will be earmarked for creation of assets/facilities for women/girls.
- Government conceived the Multi-sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) in the year 2008-09. The scheme continued till 31.3.2018.

Links: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1635101> <https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/pradhan-mantri-jan-vikas-karyakram> <https://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/minority-welfare-1/pradhan-mantri-jan-vikas-karyakram>

Nasha Mukht Bharat: Annual Action Plan (2020-21)

Question: When is the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking observed?

- (a) 26 June (b) 25 June (c) 27 June (d) 28 June

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was observed globally on June 26 2020.
- The day is observed by the United Nations as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.

- 2020 Theme for the day is Better Knowledge for Better Care.
- On this day, in India, Rattan Lal Kataria, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment e-launched Nasha Mukta Bharat: Annual Action Plan (2020-21) for 272 Most Affected Districts.
- Nasha Mukta Bharat Annual Action Plan for 2020-21 would focus on 272 most affected districts (list in Annexure) and launch a three-pronged attack combining efforts of Narcotics Bureau, Outreach/Awareness by Social Justice and Treatment through the Health Dept.
- The Action Plan has the following components: Awareness generation programmes; Focus on Higher Educational institutions, University Campuses and Schools; Community outreach and identification of dependent population; Focus on Treatment facilities in Hospital settings; and Capacity Building Programmes for Service Provider.

National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction:

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has prepared a National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) for the period 2018-2025 which aims at reduction of adverse consequences of drug abuse through a multi-pronged strategy involving education, de-addiction and rehabilitation of affected individuals and their families.
- The Action Plan includes components for preventive education and awareness generation, capacity building, treatment and rehabilitation, setting quality standards, focussed intervention in vulnerable areas, skill development, vocational training and livelihood support of ex-drug addicts, State/UT specific interventions, surveys, studies, evaluation and research etc.

Constitutional relevancy:

- Article 47 of the Constitution provides that “The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavor to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health.”

Links: <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634574> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Article_47_of_the_Constitution_of_India

Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar scheme

Question: Which State has launched the Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar scheme?

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- In an effort to combat infant and maternal mortality and malnutrition, Tripura announced Mukhyamantri Matru Pushti Uphaar scheme.

- This is an ambitious scheme to provide nutrition kits to pregnant and lactating women.
- Under the scheme, pregnant women would be tested four times in nearby Primary Health Centers (PHC), and be given a nutrition kit after each test.
- The kit, costing Rs500, would have food items and grocery supplies, such as peanuts, soyabeans, mixed pulses, jaggery and ghee.
- As many as 40,000 women will benefit annually under the scheme.
- The state government estimates to incur an expense of around Rs 8 crore for the scheme.
- The state scheme will be in addition to the Pradhan Mantri Matru Bandana Yojana.
- **Facts and Figures:**
- A 2019 report suggests that maternal mortality in India is slowing, down from 130 per 1 lakh live births in 2014-16 to 122 in every 1 lakh live births in 2015-17.
- Tripura registered an infant mortality rate of 51 in the 2016 reports, while more recent reports are not available.

Links: <https://indianexpress.com/article/north-east-india/tripura/tripura-announces-schemes-to-combat-infant-maternal-mortality-malnourishment-6474728/>

Govt to setup UPSSF on lines of CISF

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Uttar Pradesh govt will setup UPSSF on lines of CISF
- (2) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) set up in 1969 guards sensitive places such as industrial units, government infrastructure projects, establishments, metro rail projects, airports.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Uttar Pradesh government has decided to set up the Uttar Pradesh Special Security Force (UPSSF) to ensure security of important establishments and buildings.
- The security force which will be constituted on the lines of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) will be deployed at places like metro rail, airports, industrial institutions, courts, religious places, banks and other financial institutions.
- The force would be headquartered in Lucknow.
- In the first phase, five battalions of this force will be formed from Uttar Pradesh Police's Special Forces PAC (Provincial Armed Constabulary).

Links: <https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/adityanath-govt-to-set-up-cisf-like-special-security-force-to-guard-metro-rail-airports-banks-in-up/612795>

Decarbonizing Transport Project in India

Question: Which organization has launched the Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies (DTEE) project in India on June 24, 2020?

(a) DRDO (b) ISRO (c) NITI Aayog & ITF (d) CSIR

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- NITI Aayog and the International Transport Forum (ITF) of OECD jointly launched the 'Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies' (DTEE) project in India on June 24 2020.
- This ambitious five-year project will help India develop a pathway towards a low-carbon transport system through the development of modelling tools and policy scenarios.
- The ITF project team will work in close cooperation and coordination with India's government agencies, local decision-makers, researchers, experts, and civil society organisations.
- This project is part of the Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies family of projects, which supports transport decarbonization across different world regions.
- India, Argentina, Azerbaijan and Morocco are current participants.
- DTEE is a collaboration between the ITF and the Wuppertal Institute, supported by the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

Emission by Transportation:

- In India, CO2 emitted per inhabitant was just about a twentieth of that of an average OECD country, yet, India's transport CO2 emissions are likely to increase by almost 6% annually to 2030.
- India is actively taking a number of measures to tackle its emissions, including newer fuel emission norms as well as the promotion of electric vehicles in the country.
- NITI Aayog has been at the helm for the promotion of electric vehicles and sustainable mobility through its 'National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage'.

Links: <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634052>

COVAXIN, first potential COVID-19 Vaccine developed in the country

Question: On June 29, 2020, Central Drug Standard Control Organisation has granted approval to conduct human clinical trials for Corona Vaccine called 'Covaxin'. By whom it has been developed?

(a) Glenmark (b) Cipla (c) Lupin (d) NIV, Pune & Bharat Biotech

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Central Drug Standard Control Organisation, the National regulatory body for Indian Pharmaceuticals and medical devices, has granted approval to Bharat Biotech India to conduct human clinical trials for Corona Vaccine called 'Covaxin'.
- It is the first indigenous COVID-19 vaccine to receive the approval.
- The Covaxin has been developed in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune.
- The Drug Controller General of India approved Bharat Biotech's application to conduct phase I and II clinical trials for Covaxin.
- The permission was granted after the company submitted results from pre-clinical studies of the vaccine that demonstrated its safety and immune response.
- The SARS-CoV-2 strain was isolated in NIV, Pune and transferred to Bharat Biotech.
- The indigenous, inactivated vaccine developed and manufactured at the Bio-safety level 3 lab of the Bharat Biotech located in Genome Valley in Hyderabad.

Links: <http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=DGCI-gives-approval-for-human-clinical-trials-of-COVAXIN%2C-first-potential-COVID-19-Vaccine-developed-in-the-country&id=392580>

India sends Tri-Service contingent in 75th Victory Day Parade of World War II

Question:Where will the 75th Victory Day Parade of World War II be held?

(a) Moscow (b) London (c) Berlin (d) Paris

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- India has sent Tri-Service contingent to participate in 75th Victory Day Parade of World War II in Moscow, Russia.
- Defence Minister of Russia Sergey Shoygu has invited an Indian contingent to take part in the Victory Day Parade scheduled to be held on June 24, 2020.
- Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has agreed to send a 75-member Tri-Service contingent to participate in the parade.

Victory Day Parade:

- Victory Day Parade commonly known as Russian parade is held every year on May 9, which marks the surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945.
- This military parade is organized to honour the heroism and sacrifices made by the Russian and other friendly people.

Links: <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1632097>

Sankalp parv

Question : The Ministry of Culture has decided to celebrate Sankalp Parva from —

- (a) 28th June to 12 July 2020
- (b) 4th July to 14th July 2020
- (c) 29th June to 10 July 2020
- (d) 30th June to 8th July 2020

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- The Ministry of Culture has decided to celebrate Sankalp Parva from 28th June to 12 July 2020, wherein Ministry expects all its Subordinate Offices, Academies, Attached Institutions, Affiliated Institutions to plant trees in its campus or at the surroundings wherever it is possible.

Five trees plantation campaign

- The Ministry of Culture recommends to plant five trees which have been identified by our Prime Minister and which represent the herbal heritage of our country.
- These trees are (i) "Bargad" (ii) "Awla" (iii) "Pepal" (iv) "Ashok" (v) "Bel".
- If sapling of these trees are not available then people may do plantation of any other sapling of their choice.

Photo sharing

- Prahlad Singh Patel (Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism) has urged all to participate in the Sankalp Parv and share the photo of plantation with #संकल्पपर्व #SankalpParv with Ministry of Culture.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=1634757>

Foundation laid of Indian Oil's R&D Campus

Question: Where did the Indian Oil Research & Development Campus foundation has been laid by Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on June 29, 2020?

- (a) Faridabad
- (b) Dibrugarh
- (c) Jamnagar
- (d) Bhilwada

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Steel Dharmendra Pradhan and Haryana Chief Minister Shri Manohar Lal laid the foundation stone of Indian Oil's state-of-the-art Technology Development & Deployment Centre as its second R&D Campus at IMT, Sector-67, Faridabad on June 29, 2020.

- An investment of Rs. 2282 crore will be done for this campus covering an area of about 59 acres.
- The new campus would focus on demonstration & deployment of various technologies developed by IndianOil R&D.
- Research infrastructure of the campus:
- The research infrastructure at the new campus includes state-of-the-art laboratories and pilot plants in the domains of alternative & renewable energy, e.g., fuel cell, Hydrogen, gasification & solar energy research, semi-commercial nano-material production unit, scale-up/pilot plants in petrochemicals, etc.
- This new extension of Indian Oil's R&D Centre is going to focus on non-conventional energy domains aiming at indigenisation of several frontline and sunrise technologies such as Petrochemicals, Batteries/Energy Storage Devices, Bio-Energy- Greenhouse gas (CO₂) capture etc.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1635087>

PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi "PM SVANidhi" Portal launched

Question: Who launched the beta version of PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi "PM SVANidhi" portal on June 29, 2020?

- (a) Giriraj Singh
- (b) Piyush Goyal
- (c) Amitabh Kant
- (d) Durga Shankar Mishra

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Durga Shanker Mishra, Secretary, Housing & Urban Affairs, launched the Beta version of PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi "PM SVANidhi" Portal on June 29, 2020.
- PM SVANidhi was launched on June 1, 2020.

Important features of the portal:

- An integrated IT platform (pmsvanidhi.mohua.gov.in) to provide an end-to-end solution for scheme administration is being developed by SIDBI, which is the scheme implementation partner for PM SVANidhi.
- The portal will facilitate multiple scheme functions viz. loan application flow, Mobile App, e-KYC of applicants, and other stakeholders, calculation of digital incentives and payment of interest subsidy etc.
- One of the important features of the scheme is to nudge the beneficiaries towards digital transactions by engaging with the Digital Payment Aggregators.
- The PM SVANidhi Portal shall start accepting loan applications from Street Vendors from July 2nd, who can apply directly or with the help of CSCs/ ULBs/ SHGs.
- The portal will also play a very important role in years to come for helping meet the expectations and aspirations of street vendors who play very important role in our urban eco-system.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1635176>

World Drug Report 2020

Question: Which one of the following releases World Drug Report 2020?

- (a) World Health Organization (WHO)
- (b) Central Drug Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)
- (c) International Conference on Harmonization (ICH)
- (d) United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes(UNODC)

Answer:(d)

Context:

United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes(UNODC) has released the World Drug Report 2020 on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

Facts:

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime(UNODC): It was established in 1997 through a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention.
- Aim:To assist Member States in addressing the issues of drugs, crime and terrorism.
- Headquarters: Vienna, Austria.

About:

- By resolution 42/112 of 7 December 1987, the General Assembly decided to observe 26 June as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.
- The date June 26 is to commemorate Lin Zexu's dismantling of the opium trade in Humen, Guangdong, ending in June 25 1839, just before the First Opium War in China.
- This global observance aims to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent to society.
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the nodal agency for observing this day.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020: Key Findings

- Around 269 million people used drugs worldwide in 2018, which is 30 per cent more than in 2009, while over 35 million people suffer from drug use disorders.
- Cannabis was the most used substance worldwide in 2018, with an estimated 192 million people using it worldwide.
- Opioids, however, remain the most harmful, as over the past decade, the total number of deaths due to opioid use disorders went up 71 per cent.
- Cannabis also remains the main drug that brings people into contact with the criminal justice system, accounting for more than half of drug law offences cases.

- Adolescents and young adults account for the largest share of those using drugs.
- Impact of COVID-19: COVID-19 has caused shortages of drugs on the street, leading to increased prices and reduced purity. Rising unemployment caused by the pandemic will make poor more vulnerable to drug use and also to drug trafficking and cultivation in order to earn money.

Link:

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/session/63_Session_2020/special-event-launch-of-world-drug-report-26-june.html.html

eBloodServices' App

Question: Consider the following statements with respect to eBloodServices' App:

- 1) It is launched by Health Ministry and developed under guidance of World Health Organisation.
- 2) This application is developed by the E-Raktkosh team of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) .

Which of the above is correctly matched?

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d)None of these

Answer:(b)

Context:

The Union health minister Society(IRCS) has launched the 'eBloodServices' App in partnership with the Indian Red Cross. The Health Minister is also the Chairman of Indian Red Cross Society.

Facts:

- eBloodServices : It aims to allow people to access safe blood easily especially during COVID-19 pandemic.
- Developed by : It has been developed by the E-Raktkosh team of Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC) under the Digital India scheme.
- Significance : The app will make it easy for a blood seeker to get blood with complete transparency and single window access to the service.

e-Raktkosh:

It is a Centralized Blood Bank Management System that provides a comprehensive IT solution to standardize and streamline the standard operating procedures, guidelines and workflow of blood banks across the country.

Indian Red Cross Society:

It is a voluntary humanitarian organization established in 1920 under the Indian Red Cross Society Act.The Chairman of the Society is Union Health Minister.

Digital India:

It is a flagship programme launched in 2015 by the Government of India with a vision to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.

Link:

<https://www.indianredcross.org/ircs/index.php>

Bhitarkanika National Park

Question: Bhitarkanika National Park is situated in which state?

(a)West Bengal (b)Andhra Pradesh (c)Tamil Nadu (d)Odisha

Answer:(d)

Context:

- Odisha Government has started a two-year conservation project for Fishing Cats in Bhitarkanika National Park.

Fishing Cat:

- They are a medium-sized wildcat found in South and Southeast Asia.
- Habitat: In India, fishing cats are mainly found in the mangrove forests of the Sundarbans, on the foothills of the Himalayas along the Ganga and Brahmaputra river valleys and in the Western Ghats.
- Significance: In 2012, the West Bengal government officially declared the Fishing Cat as the State Animal.
- IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.
- CITES: Appendix II
- Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I
- Threat: Habitat Destruction, Hunting, Poaching among others.

Bhitarkanika National Park:

- Bhitarkanika National Park is a 145 km² large national park in northeast Kendrapara district in Odisha in eastern India.
- It was designated on 16 September 1998 and obtained the status of a Ramsar site on 19 August 2002. The area is also been designated as second Ramsar site of the State after the Chilika Lake.
- It is surrounded by Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, which spread over 672 km². Gahirmatha Beach and Marine Sanctuary are to the east, separating swamp region and mangroves from the Bay of Bengal. The national park and wildlife sanctuary is inundated by the rivers Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, Pathsala.
- It hosts many mangrove species, and is the second largest mangrove ecosystem in India.
- The national park is home to Saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), Indian python, king cobra, black ibis, darters and many other species of flora and fauna.

Link:

[https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/wildlife-biodiversity/odisha-starts-project-to- conserve-bhitarkanika-fishing-cats-71928#:~:text=The%20Odisha%20forest%20department%20has,Conservation%20of%](https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/wildlife-biodiversity/odisha-starts-project-to- conserve-bhitarkanika-fishing-cats-71928#:~:text=The%20Odisha%20forest%20department%20has,Conservation%20of%20)

VaYU

Question: VaYU recently seen in the use is related to which of the following:

- (a) Covid 19 ayurvedic drug
- (b) Yoga university
- (c) App associated with air pollution levels in country
- (d) recently launched ballistic missile

Answer : (b)

Context:

- As part of the 6th International Yoga Day commemorations, the world's first yoga university outside India has been launched in Los Angeles, offering programmes that combine scientific principles and modern research approaches to the ancient Indian practice of yoga.

About:

- The Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU) was jointly launched by Indian Minister of State for External Affairs and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs during a virtual event held at the Consulate General of India in New York.
- Eminent Indian yoga guru Dr. H R Nagendra, Chancellor of Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (SVYASA) is the first Chairman of VaYU.
- VaYU will offer online graduate programmes based on scientific principles and modern research approaches to yoga.

Link:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/worlds-first-yoga-university-named-after-swami-vivekananda-launched-outside-india>

Green Energy Solutions

Question: Consider the following statements with respect to Scheme for Promotion of academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC):

- 1) It is an initiative of Ministry of Human Resource and Development.
- 2) It aims at improving research ecosystem of India's secondary schools by facilitating academic and research collaborations.

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

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

Answer:(a)

Context:

- Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM) are collaborating with their counterparts in Germany to develop new materials for green energy solutions.

About:

- The project, taken up under the Scheme for Promotion of academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC), aims at developing alternative technologies to produce green hydrogen in anticipation of transition to hydrogen-based economy.
- Conventional methods of generating hydrogen result in a large quantity of carbon dioxide. Whereas electrochemical splitting of water, called 'Water Electrolysis' (WE), is clean, facile, and highly efficient technology for large-scale production of high-purity H₂.

Facts:

- SPARC is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- It aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's Higher Educational Institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world from 28 selected nations to jointly solve problems of national and/or international relevance.

Areas:

- A set of 5 Thrust Areas which are Fundamental Research, Emergent Areas of Impact, Convergence, Action-Oriented Research, and Innovation-Driven and sub-theme areas in each thrust area has been identified.
- A set of Nodal Institutions (NI), from India, for each participating foreign country has been identified.
- The role of an NI is to help and coordinate with willing Participating Indian Institutions to forge an alliance with the Institutions of the concerned participating foreign country.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

- The IPR developed out of the project will be decided as per norms of the participating Institutes. The Indian Institute will get the benefits out of Patents / Royalty, rather than the foreign institute or the individual faculty.
- All disputes will have Indian jurisdiction. Any special deviation will be resolved by MHRD through the SPARC Liaison cell and approved by the Apex Committee.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/iitm-german-institute-collaborating-to-develop-green-energy-solutions/article31917999.ece>

Government Bans 59 mobile apps

Question: Which of the following apps of chinese origin has been banned by the government authorities in India due to risk of security breach?

(a)Tiktok (b)Wechat (c)UC Browser (d)All of the above

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- The Ministry of Information Technology has decided to block 59 apps of chinese origin on June 29, 2020 including Tiktok, Wechat and UC Browser.

- This decision was taken by invoking section 69A of the Information Technology Act read with the relevant provisions of the Information Technology (Procedure and Safeguards for Blocking of Access of Information by Public) Rules 2009.
- This decision was taken in view of the emergent nature of threats as they are engaged in activities which is prejudicial to sovereignty and integrity of India, defence of India, security of state and public order.

Complains regarding the ban:

- The Ministry of Information Technology has received many complaints from various sources including several reports about misuse of some mobile apps available on Android and iOS platforms for stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users' data in an unauthorized manner to servers which have locations outside India.
- The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, Ministry of Home Affairs has also sent an exhaustive recommendation for blocking these malicious apps.
- The Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN) has also received many representations from citizens regarding security of data and breach of privacy impacting upon public order issues.
- This move will safeguard the interests of crores of Indian mobile and internet users. This decision is a targeted move to ensure safety and sovereignty of Indian cyberspace.

Links:

https://www.google.com/amp/s/m.economictimes.com/tech/software/india-bans-59-chinese-apps-including-tiktok-helo-wechat/amp_articleshow/76694814.cms

CBIC Programme : Turant Customs

Question : Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs launched its flagship programme Turant Customs, at—

- (a) Surat and Kolkata
- (b) Mumbai and Hyderabad
- (c) Bengaluru and Chennai
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (C)

Related facts

Context

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs on 8th June, 2020 launched its flagship programme 'Turant Customs', at Bengaluru and Chennai.

Turant Customs

- This is a giant leap forward to leverage technology for faster Customs clearance of imported goods.
- Now, the goods imported at Chennai may be assessed by the Customs officers located at Bengaluru and vice versa, as assigned by the Customs' automated system.

First Phase

- The start of Turant Customs at Bengaluru and Chennai will be the first phase of the All India roll out which would get completed by 31st December this year.
- The first phase will cover imports of Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics machineries at the ports, airports and ICDs of Bengaluru and Chennai.

Link:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=CBIC-launches-its-flagship-programme-%26%2339%3BTurant-Customs%26%2339%3B-at-Bengaluru-%26-Chennai&id=390791>

KVIC initiative : Sandalwood and Bamboo plantation

Question : Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) comes under —

- (a) Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
- (b) Ministry of Commerce & Industries
- (c) Ministry of Rural Development
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Seeking to encourage commercial plantation of sandalwood and bamboo, the KVIC has recently (June, 2020) begun a drive with plantation of 500 saplings each of sandalwood and bamboo.
- Location of this initiative is Nashik training center(KVIC) spread over 262 acres of land.

Procurement

- KVIC has procured sandalwood saplings from Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC) Kannauj.
- Bamboo saplings — from Assam.

Sandalwood & Bamboo : Characteristics and importance

- The plantation of the Sandalwood is estimated to fetch between Rs 50 crore to Rs 60 crore in the next 10 to 15 years.
- A sandalwood tree matures in 10 to 15 years and as per the current rate, sells at Rs 10 lakh to Rs 12 lakh each.
- Sandalwood and its oil have high demand in countries like China, Japan, Taiwan, Australia and the USA.
- 'Bambusa Tulda', used for making Agarbatti sticks, brought from Assam has been planted in Maharashtra.
- The 500 bamboo saplings will provide at least 2500 bamboo logs in the third year and will generate an additional income of nearly Rs 3.25 lakh to the institution which will grow every year by nearly two-times.

- Further, in terms of quantity, 2500 bamboo logs will weigh approximately 65 MT of bamboo that will be used for making Agarbatti sticks and thus create large-scale local employment.

KVIC & aim of the initiative

- KVIC comes under MSME.
- In the last few months, KVIC has planted nearly 2500 trees of Bambusa Tulda in different parts of India.
- Bamboo plantation will support the local Agarbatti manufacturers in the light of recent decision taken by the Central government to make India 'Aatmanirbhar' in Agarbatti making.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634279>

Indian Railways' most powerful 12000 HP 'Made in India' locomotive

Question : By which factory first 12000HP Locomotive manufactured ?

- (a) Madhepura Electric Loco Factory
- (b) Golden Rock Railway Workshop, Tiruchirapalli
- (c) Chittaranjan Locomotives Works
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Country's first 12000 horsepower locomotive WAG-12 manufactured by Madhepura Electric Loco Factory in Bihar was put into operation at Habibganj Railway Station on 24th June, 2020.

Characteristics & Name

- This locomotive (WAG-12) can run a train with general speed as 100 KMPH and maximum as 120 KMPH.
- The model name stands for broad gauge (W), AC Current (A), Goods traffic (G) locomotive.
- This locomotive is more trustable as it has a master loco and a slave loco.
- In case of any problem in master loco, power of slave loco will be useful to run the train.
- There will be no need to change the locomotive.

Link :

https://m.timesofindia.com/city/bhopal/bhopal-powerful-loco-wag-12-chugs-in-to-habiganj-railway-station/amp_articleshow/76618979.cms

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Tuberculosis(TB):

(1) It is an infectious airborne viral disease .

(2) Nikshay Poshan is a direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme to provide nutritional support to TB patients.

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

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

Answer:(b)

Context:

- Union Minister for Health released the annual TB Report 2020. He also released a Joint Monitoring Mission (JMM) report, a manual on Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to TB patients under NIKSHAY system, a Training Module, and the quarterly newsletter NIKSHAY Patrika.

Facts:

- **Tuberculosis(TB):** It is an infectious airborne bacterial disease caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- **Nikshay Poshan Yojana:** It is a direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme to provide nutritional support to TB patients.
- **National Strategic Plan (NSP) for TB Elimination (2017-2025):** It is a framework to provide guidance for the activities of various stakeholders to reduce the burden of TB mortality and morbidity. It aims to work towards the elimination of TB in India by 2025.

Achievements listed in the Report:

- **TB Cases:** Over 24 lakh TB patients have been notified in 2019. This amounts to a 14% increase in TB notification as compared to 2018.
- **TB Deaths:** The report shows 79,144 deaths due to tuberculosis were reported in 2019 which is much lower than the WHO estimate of 4.4 lakh fatalities.
- **TB cases in Children's:** The proportion of children diagnosed with TB increased to 8% in 2019 compared to 6% in 2018.
- **Missing cases:** There has been a reduction in the number of missing cases to 2.9 lakh cases in 2019 as against more than 10 lakhs in 2017.
- **HIV associated TB Deaths:** India accounts for 9% of all HIV-associated tuberculosis (TB) deaths in the world, the second-highest number globally.
- **Treatment:** Expansion of treatment services has resulted in a 12% improvement in the treatment success rate of notified patients. For 2019, it was 81% compared to 69% in 2018.
- **States:** Over half of the total TB cases were notified from five states — Uttar Pradesh(20%), Maharashtra(9%), Madhya Pradesh(8%) Rajasthan(7%) and Bihar(7%).

Ranking of states:

- For the first time Central TB Division (CTD) introduced a quarterly ranking on TB elimination efforts by all the states and UTs.

- In the categories of larger states with more than 50 lakh population, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh were awarded as best performing States.
- In the category of smaller states with less than 50 lakh population, Tripura and Nagaland were awarded.
- In the category of Union Territory, Dadara and Nagar Haveli, and Daman & Diu were chosen as the best performers.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1633922>

Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan

Question : How many migrant workers returned in Uttar Pradesh due to COVID-19 pandemic situation?

- (a) nearly 30 lakh migrant workers
- (b) 20 lakh migrant workers
- (c) 10 lakh migrant workers
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Prime Minister launched Atma Nirbhar Uttar Pradesh Rojgar Abhiyan on 26 th June, 2020.
- Villages across all districts of Uttar Pradesh joined the launching ceremony through the Common Service Centers and Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

Background

- COVID-19 pandemic has had an adverse impact on workforce in general and migrant workers in particular.
- In Uttar Pradesh, nearly 30 lakh migrant workers returned.
31 districts of Uttar Pradesh have more than 25,000 returnee migrant workers.
- These include 5 aspirational districts.

Focus area

- This Abhiyan is intensely focused towards providing employment, promote local entrepreneurship and create partnership with Industrial associations and other organizations to provide employment opportunities.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634226>

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh e-inaugurates Devika Bridge in Udhampur & Puneja Bridge in Doda

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh e-inaugurated Devika and Puneja bridges in Jammu and Kashmir
- (2) Bhaderwah-Basholi-Pathankot road is a 185 km long under construction National Highway that will provide a vital alternate link to the Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts beside Kashmir valley from Pathankot (Punjab) without entering Jammu and Udhampur via Lakhanpur

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 24 June 2020, Union Minister of State PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions, Dr Jitendra Singh e-inaugurated two important Bridges Devika and Puneja in Udhampur and Doda districts respectively in Jammu and Kashmir.

Devika Bridge:

- 10-meter-long Devika Bridge is situated in Udhampur District of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Total outlay on the bridge was Rs 75 lakhs constructed in about one-year time span.
- This bridge is of strategic importance as will help in smooth passage of Army convoys and vehicles.

Puneja Bridge:

- It is a 50-meter-long bridge at Bhaderwah in Doda District of Jammu & Kashmir.
- The bridge was constructed at a cost of Rs 4 Crore.
- Bhaderwah-Basholi-Pathankot road is a 185 km long under construction National Highway that will provide a vital alternate link to the Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts beside Kashmir valley from Pathankot (Punjab) without entering Jammu and Udhampur via Lakhanpur.

Links:

[https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1633953#:~:text=Union%20Minister%20of%20State%20\(Independent,in%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir%20through](https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1633953#:~:text=Union%20Minister%20of%20State%20(Independent,in%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir%20through)

Cabinet declares Kushinagar Airport as an International Airport

Question: Recently which Airport has been declared International Airport?

(a) Kushinagar (b) Lalitpur (c) Prayagraj (d) Dimapur

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 24 June 2020, Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has given its approval for declaration of Kushinagar Airport in Uttar Pradesh as an International Airport.
- Kushinagar Airport is located in the vicinity of several Buddhist Cultural Sites like Sravasti, Kapilvastu, Lumbini.
- Declaration as an “International Airport” will offer improved connectivity, wider choice of competitive costs to the air-travellers.
- It will result in boosting of domestic/international tourism and economic development of the regions.

About Kushinagar:

- Kushinagar is located in the north-eastern part of Uttar Pradesh about 50 km east of Gorakhpur and is one of the important Buddhist pilgrimage sites.
- After independence, Kushinagar remained part of the district of Deoria. On 13 May 1994, it came into being as a new district of Uttar Pradesh.
- It is the site where Buddhists believe Gautama Buddha attained Parinirvana after his death.
- The present Kushinagar is identified with Kusavati (in the pre-Buddha period) and Kushinara (in the post-Buddha period). Kushinara was the capital of Mallas which was one of the sixteen mahajanpads of the 6th century BCE.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1633913#:~:text=Cabinet%20approve%20declaration%20of%20Kushinagar%20Airport%20in%20Uttar%20Pradesh%20as%20an%20International%20Airport&text=The%20Union%20Cabinet%20chaired%20by,Pradesh%20as%20an%20International%20Airport.>

Rapid Antigen Test

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Antigens are foreign substances which induce an immune response in people
(2) For faster detection of Covid 19 infections, Government of India has approved Rapid Antigen Test in combination with RT-PCR test.

(3) South Korea based company SD Biosensor has got approval to manufacture Rapid Antigen Test kits

of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On June 15, 2020, The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has recommended the use of Standard Q COVID-19 Ag antigen detection test in containment zones and healthcare settings in combination with the RT-PCR test.
- In due process nasal swabs will be taken out from the desired persons and checked whether the presence of antigens which are found on or within the SARS-CoV-2 virus.
- Antigens are foreign substances which induce an immune response in people.
- Further, if the test result of the antigen test is positive then it can be considered as a confirmation of the infection but if it shows negative result then according to ICMR an RT-PCR test also be done to find out the infection.
- The result will take a maximum of 30 minutes.
- Specificity of the test ranged from 99.3 to 100% at the two sites and sensitivity of the test [i.e. ability to detect true positives] ranged from 50.6% to 84% in two independent evaluations, depending upon the viral load of the patient.
- The kit has been approved of only one manufacturer, SD Biosensor, having its manufacturing unit in Manesar, Gurugram.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/icmr-recommends-use-of-faster-covid-19-testing-kit/article31834925.ece>

Drugs approved for treatment of Covid 19

Question: Which body in India is responsible for approval of new drugs?

- (a) Central Drugs Standard Control Organization
- (b) Indian Council of Medical Research
- (c) Drug Regulatory Authority of India
- (d) Food and Drug Administration

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Considering the emergency and unmet medical need for Covid-19 disease, CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organization) has approved Restricted Emergency Use of Remdesivir Injectable Formulations for treatment of patients with severe COVID-19 infection.
- Also CDCSO has approved Favipiravir Tablets for mild to moderate COVID-19 infection subject to various conditions and restrictions.
- The drug Favipiravir will be sold under the brand name FabiFlu by Glenmark Pharmaceuticals.
- Remdesivir Injection production has been approved to Cipla Ltd and Hetero Drugs.
- Both Remdisivir and Favipiravir formulations are required to be sold under the prescription of medical specialists only.

Central Drugs Standard Control Organization:

- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) is the Central Drug Authority for discharging functions assigned to the Central Government under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.
- It exercises regulatory control over the import of drugs, approval of new drugs and clinical trials, meetings of Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC) and Drugs

Technical Advisory Board (DTAB), approval of certain licenses as Central License Approving Authority.

- It has its headquarter in New Delhi.
- Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) heads the CDSCO.

Links:

https://cdsco.gov.in/opencms/opencms/system/modules/CDSCO.WEB/elements/download_file_division.jsp?num_id=NjAwOA==

NDRF – INDIA

Question: Consider the following statements regarding National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF):

1) It is defined in Section 44 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

2) National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005.

3) National Calamity Contingency Duty (NCCD) is levied to finance the NDRF.

Which of the pairs given above is/are correct?

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

Answer : (b)

Related Fact :

Context:

The Finance Ministry has given approval to a proposal to allow individuals and institutions to contribute directly to the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF).

About :

- Defined in Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DM Act).
- It is a fund managed by the Central Government for meeting the expenses for emergency response, relief and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster.
- Constituted to supplement the funds of the State Disaster Response Funds (SDRF) of the states to facilitate immediate relief in case of calamities of a severe nature.
- National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) with the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005.

Sources of Financing NDRF:

- Financed through the levy of a cess on certain items, chargeable to excise and customs duty, and approved annually through the Finance Bill.
- The requirement for funds beyond what is available under the NDRF is met through general budgetary resources.

- Currently, a National Calamity Contingency Duty (NCCD) is levied to finance the NDRF and additional budgetary support is provided as and when necessary.
- Although Section 46 includes a clause for grants made by any person or institution, provisions for such donations had not been made.

Features :

- Located in the “Public Accounts” of Government of India under “Reserve Funds not bearing interest”.
- Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) audits the accounts of NDRF.

Link :

<http://www.ndrf.gov.in/>

Reliance industries

Question : India's first 150 billion dollar company is —

(a) cReliance industries (b) TCS (c) HDFC bank (d) Hindustan Uniliver

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The market capitalisation of Reliance Industries Ltd crossed 150 billion dollar on 19 June 2020.
- Reliance industries is now net debt-free.
- India's top 5 companies according to market capitalisation (in billion dollar)

Company	12 August 2019	19 June 2020
RIL	103	150(up)
TCS	118	100(down)
HDFC Bank	87	73(down)
HUL	56	64(UP)
HDFC	53	42(down)

- Mukesh Ambani, the chairman and managing director of RIL, today (19 June 2020) became the 11th richest person in the world as his real-time net worth crossed the \$60 billion mark for the first time.

Link :

https://m.economictimes.com/et-now/daily/ril-becomes-indias-first-150-billion-company-mukesh-ambanis-net-worth-surges-to-60-bn/amp_videoshow/76470359.cms#aoh=15929293740741&csi=1&referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com&tf=From%20%251%24s

YUKTI 2.0 launched

Question: Who launched the 'YUKTI 2.0' platform for Higher Education Institutes in New Delhi on June 23, 2020?

- (a) Ravishankar Prasad
- (b) Piyush Goyal
- (c) Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank
- (d) Ram Vilas Paswan

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On June 23, 2020, Union Minister of Human Resource Development Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' launched an initiative 'YUKTI 2.0' to help systematically assimilate technologies having commercial potential and information related to incubated startups in our higher education institutions.
- The YUKTI (Young India combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) web portal was launched earlier on 11 April, 2020.
- The portal intends to cover the different dimensions of COVID-19 challenges in a very holistic and comprehensive way.
- The Ministry will ensure that students, teachers and researchers in higher educational institutions are getting appropriate support to meet the requirements needed to advance their technologies and innovations.
- This will also help the government to identify bottlenecks and formulate appropriate policies to strengthen the innovation ecosystem in the country.
- YUKTI 2.0 could also emerge as Market place for connecting innovators with investors, so that innovative technologies can be taken forward for commercialization.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1633700>

Vande Bharat Mission : 1000 more flights

Question :Aviation Ministry announced that it has allowed Indian airlines to operate over 1,000 flights under the __ of the Vande Bharat Mission.

- (a) Two phases (3 & 4) (b) Two phases (5 & 6)
- (c) Two phases (6 & 7) (d) Two phases (7 & 8)

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Aviation Ministry announced today (June 20, 2020) that it has allowed both private airlines and Air India to operate about 1050 flights under the two phases (3 & 4) of the Vande Bharat Mission.

- Under the two phases of the VB mission, Ministry has allowed Air India to operate 300 flights and Indian private carriers have been allowed to operate 750 flights.
- Air India is the only Indian carrier that has the capability to fly to countries in the UK, US, Europe and Canada. All other private airlines can operate short-haul international destinations.
- Among private airlines, Vistara has dual aisle aircraft that can easily fly to the UK but the airline could not start long-haul international flights due to COVID.
- Vande Bharat Mission aims at bringing home stranded Indians in many countries due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Vande Bharat Mission began on May 7, 2020.
- The Vande Bharat flights, announced and planned by the Indian government and operated mainly by Air India, is in its third phase and already brought back about 100,000 Indians in 389 flights from across the globe.
- While Air India is operating flights under the Vande Bharat Mission, various international airlines from across the globe have operated charter flights and brought in about 143,000 Indians from across the world.

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/transportation/airlines/-aviation/india-to-operate-over-1000-more-flights-under-vande-bharat-private-carriers-to-operate-70-of-it/articleshow/76481484.cms?from=mdr>

India Attends FATF 32nd Meet

Question: Which of the following countries come under Financial Action Task Force (FATF) black list?

1. Pakistan
2. North Korea
3. Russia
4. Iran

Which of the following is /are correct?

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

Answer:(b)

Context:

Recently, India has attended the virtual 32nd special Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) plenary meeting, under the aegis of the Financial Action Task Force.

About FATF:

- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 during the G7 Summit in Paris.
- Its Secretariat is located at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) headquarters in Paris.
- The objectives of the FATF are to (a) set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures (b) for combating

money laundering (c) terrorist funding and (d) other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

- Currently, the FATF comprises 37 member jurisdiction and 2 regional organisations representing most major financial centres in all parts of the globe. India is one of the members.

FATF'S View on Crime amid Covid-19:

The FATF which is actively monitoring the impact of the pandemic on measures to combat illicit financing, released a paper on "Covid-19-related Money Laundering and Terrorist Funding Risks and Policy Responses".

It observed an increase in the Covid-19 related crimes, including fraud, cyber-crime, misdirection or exploitation of government funds or international finance assistance.

Listing by FATF:

Grey List: Countries that are considered favourable for supporting terror funding and money laundering are put in the grey list. This inclusion serves as a warning to the country that it may enter the blacklist.

Black List: Countries known as Non-Cooperative are put in the blacklist. These countries support terror funding and money laundering activities. The FATF revises the blacklist regularly adding or deleting entries.

Status of Pakistan:

Pakistan, which continues to remain on the "grey list" of FATF, had earlier been given the deadline till the June 2020 to ensure compliance with the 27-point action plan against terror funding networks and money laundering syndicates, or face "black listing". However, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, the deadline has been shifted to October 2020.

Black list countries:

As at 21 February 2020, only two countries were on the FATF blacklist: North Korea and Iran.

Link :

<https://www.fatf-gafi.org/publications/fatfgeneral/documents/plenary-february-2020.html#:~:text=On%20Sunday%2016%20February%2C%20more,FATF%20Week%20in%20Paris%2C%20France.>

Annular solar eclipse

Question: Consider the following statements with respect to Solar Eclipse:

- 1) Annular solar eclipse happens when the sun, moon and Earth are in a direct line.
- 2) Partial solar eclipse happens when the shadow of the moon appears on a small part of the sun.
- 3) Total solar eclipse, which happens when the moon is farthest from the Earth, which is why it seems smaller.

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

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

Answer : (a)

Context:

A rare celestial event, annular solar eclipse popularly called as ring of fire eclipse has been visible on June 21, 2020.

About Solar Eclipse:

When the Sun, the Moon and the Earth are aligned in a straight line or an almost straight configuration, such that the Moon comes between the Sun and Earth blocking the rays of Sun from directly reaching the Earth, we witness a solar eclipse. Based on the alignment, there are three kinds of solar eclipses — total, partial, and annular.

Total solar eclipse occurs when the sun, moon and Earth are in a direct line. The dark silhouette of the Moon completely covers the intense bright light of the Sun. Only the much fainter solar corona is visible during a total eclipse which is known as a Totality.

Partial solar eclipse occurs when the shadow of the moon appears on a small part of the sun.

Annular solar eclipse, which occurs when the moon is farthest from the Earth, which is why it seems smaller. In this type of an eclipse, the moon does not block the sun completely, but looks like a “dark disk on top of a larger sun-colored disk” forming a “ring of fire”.

Link :

<https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/science/solar-eclipse-2020-live-updates-timing-date-live-streaming-online-updates-6468225/>

India elected as Non-Permanent member of the UN Security Council

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) India was elected Non-Permanent member of the UN Security Council from the Asia-Pacific Group

(2) UN Security Council consists of five permanent and 12 non-permanent members

(3) Term of UNSC non-permanent members is of two years

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 18 June 2020 India was elected Non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from the Asia-Pacific Group.
- India garnered 184 votes out of the 192 ballots cast in the General Assembly
- Along with India, Ireland, Mexico and Norway also won the Security Council elections.
- This is the eighth time that India will sit at the UN high-table. Its preceding terms were 1950–51, 1967–68, 1972–73, 1977–78, 1984–85, 1991–92, and 2011–12.

Other non-permanent UNSC members:

- Earlier this month, Estonia, Niger, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam were also elected as non-permanent members to UNSC.
- These countries will take their seats on the Council beginning January 1, 2021.

United Nation Security Council:

- United Nation Security Council is one of the six organs of the United Nations.
- It has the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security.
- Article 23 under Chapter fifth (The Security Council) defines UN Security Council composition.
- It has 15 Members of which five are permanent (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States) and other 10 are non-permanent elected for two-year terms by the General Assembly.
- Each year, the General Assembly elects five non-permanent members (out of ten in total) for a two-year term. The ten non-permanent seats are distributed on a regional basis:
 - five for African and Asian countries;
 - one for Eastern European countries;
 - two for Latin American and Caribbean countries;
 - two for Western European and other countries.
- A member country aspiring to have a seat at UNSC need to get two-third vote from a total strength of 193 member countries.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indias-unsc-non-permanent-seat-modi-thanks-global-community/article31857249.ece>

ArogyaPath portal

Question: Which institution has launched ArogyaPath portal for the national health care supply chain on June 12, 2020?

(a) DRDO (b) CSIR (c) DSD (d) DoT

Answer:(b)

Related facts:

- On 12 June 2020, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) launched the ArogyaPath portal.
- AarogyPath is a web based solution for the healthcare supply chain launched to serve manufacturers, suppliers and customers to effectively deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.
- It will provide seamless access to suppliers, manufacturers and importers for prevailing needs and demand related to medical equipment, diagnostic instruments, drugs, Personal Protective Equipment, respiratory assistance devices.
- This will remove supply chain bottlenecks during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The portal has been developed in partnership with Sarvodaya Infotech and institutional users, manufacturers and authorized suppliers of healthcare essentials are encouraged to register and participate actively.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1631339>

Question : What is 'GermiBan' ?

(a) A robot (b) A drug (c) A mobile app (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy, on Sunday(June 14), launched 'GermiBAN' — a robot that carries essentials products to frontline COVID-19 workers in Telangana.
- The robot was developed by a Hyderabad-based company, namely Atal Incubation Centre, ALEAP Women Entrepreneurs Hub (AIC ALEAP We-Hub).
- 'GermiBAN' is a device that kills surface and air microbes and could be used in isolation wards, quarantine centres, hospitals and public spaces.

Atal Incubation Centres

- The Government of India has setup the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) at NITI Aayog.
- The overarching purpose of this Mission is to promote a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in India. The scheme is being implemented by NITI Aayog.
- The objective of the scheme is to promote and establish world class incubation centres in specific subjects/sectors such as manufacturing, transport, energy, health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation etc. in India.
- These incubation centres would support and encourage innovative technology based start – ups that have an application and/or impact in the core sectors of the economy.

Link:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2020/jun/15/mos-home-g-kishan-reddy-launches-robot-to-assist-covid-19-workers-in-telangana-2156713.html>

Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Cow Slaughter Prevention (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act was implemented in the state on January 6, 1956

(2) Uttar Pradesh Cabinet Cow Slaughter Prevention (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 provisions for maximum rigorous imprisonment of 10 years and a fine up to Rs. 5 lakh for the second time offence of cow slaughter

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Noth 1&2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- In order to give effect a stringent Act to protect cows and prevent their slaughter, Uttar Pradesh government approved Cow Slaughter Prevention (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020.

Changes made:

- The Act(amended)under its section 5 suggests punishment for transportation of bovine animals.
- It penalizes for the conviction of danger to their lives through physical damage or mutilation.
- There is a provision of rigorous imprisonment of at least 1 year if someone is guilty of putting cow's life in danger by not providing food and water intentionally.
- For the first time offence of damage to cow, a person can be given a rigorous punishment of one to seven years with a fine ranging from ₹1 lakh to ₹3 lakh.
- For the second offence, the person can be given a 10-year rigorous imprisonment with a fine up to ₹5 lakh.

Background:

- As a result of government's firm determination to save cows, the Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955 was implemented in the state on January 6, 1956.
- The Act was amended in 1958, 1961, 1979 and 2002. The rules were amended in 1964 and 1979.

Links:

<http://information.up.nic.in/attachments/files/5edfb217-3e54-43d7-a950-28fc0af72573.pdf>

IFLOWS-Mumbai

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) IFLOWS-Mumbai is a state-of-the-art flood warning system
- (2) In 2005 Mumbai faced massive flood causing heavy loss of human lives

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

- (a) Only 1 (b) Only 2 (c) Both 1&2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Stepping up in Disaster Management preparedness, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray inaugurated IFLOWS-Mumbai, a state-of-the-art flood warning system on 12 June 2020.
- This flood warning system will enhance the resilience of city by making future action plan meticulously to deal with predicted high rainfall events and cyclones.
- The system has been developed in coordination with Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) leveraging in-house expertise and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).
- Chennai is already equipped with such kind of system.

Methodology:

- I-FLOWS is built on a modular structure and comprises of seven modules, namely Data Assimilation, Flood, Inundation, Vulnerability, Risk, Dissemination Module and Decision Support System.

- The system incorporates weather models from National Centre for medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), India Meteorological Department (IMD), field data from the rain gauge network stations setup by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and IMD, thematic layers on land use, infrastructure etc provided by MCGM.
- Based on inputs from weather models, Hydrologic models are used to transform rainfall into runoff and provides inflow inputs into the riversystems.
- The land topography, land use, infrastructure, population etc., was provided by MCGM and it was integrated into a Decision Support System to accurately estimate flood levels at ward level using thematic layers in GIS.
- A web GIS(Geographic Information System) based decision supports system is build to calculate the vulnerability and risk of elements exposed to flood.

Need:

- Having learned from the massive floods witnessed in 2005 and 2017 which swallowed thousands of lives,it was necessary to incorporate such Flood Warning System.
- Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020 unfurls that nearly five million people were displaced in India in 2019 because of disasters related to Southwest Monsoon and Cyclones.
- According to the State of India's Environment, 2020 report India witnessed highest number of internal displacements in the world in 2019 caused by disasters and extreme weather conditions.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1630928>

Anti-microbial multilayer face mask to annihilate pathogenic microorganisms

Question: Which institution has developed anti-microbial five-layered face mask to combat the Covid 19?

(a) IIT BHU (b) IIT Kanpur (c) IIT Guwahati (d) IIT Kharagpur

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- A team of researchers led by Dr Marshal at the School of Biomedical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT-BHU), have developed an anti-microbial five-layered face mask.
- It is superior to the available masks as it will annihilate the pathogenic microorganisms that are stuck to its outer surface and thereby limit the spread of secondary infections.
- The mask is stacked with different layers of nanometal conjugated with protonated amine matrix that will degrade the viral or bacterial load on outer surface.
- The first layer of the mask can degrade any type of RNA, the next layer is anti-microbial, the third one is for air filtration, and the fourth and fifth layers are 'comfortable layers', which will remain close to the nose and mouth.
- The mask is made up of cocktail combination of copper, copper oxides, silver, and activated charged silver, which can help degrade RNA.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1630720>

Brand NIPER shines again: makes its place in top ten institutes of Higher Education in pharma category

Question : In how many categories Ministry of HRD has released “India Rankings 2020” ?

(a) Six (b) Seven (c) Eight (d) None of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Ministry of Human Resource Development has released “India Rankings 2020” of Institutions of Higher Education in ten categories on the basis of their performance on five broad parameters.

pharma category : Brand NIPER and others

- National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPERs), under the aegis of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers makes its place in top ten Institutions of Higher Education in pharma category.
- This clearly underlines their improving performances and commitments to the cause of education, research and innovation in field of pharmaceuticals and medical devices.
- Most importantly, this year ranking saw the remarkable stellar performances by other three NIPERs at Guwahati, Raebareli and Kolkata, who have entered for the first time and ensured 11th, 18th and 27th spots for themselves.
- According to ranking top ten pharmacy institutes are given below : –

Jamia Hamdard> Panjab University> National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Mohali> Institute of Chemical Technology> National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Hyderabad> Birla Institute of Technology & Science> Manipal College of Pharmaceutical Sciences> National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Ahmedabad> JSS College of Pharmacy> JSS College of Pharmacy.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1631147#:~:text=National%20Institute%20of%20Pharmaceutical%20Education,Higher%20Education%20in%20pharma%20category.>

National Company Law Tribunal :Sbi – RCom loan recovery matter

Question : Sbi – Rcom(Reliance Communications) loan recovery matter is related to –

(A) personal guarantee clause (B) bankruptcy law (C) both (A) and (B)
(D) none of the above

Answer (c)

Related facts

- Sbi on june, moved the insolvency court (NCLT) to recover more than Rs 1,200 crore from Anil Ambani under the personal guarantee clause of the bankruptcy law.
- SBI moved the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) under Section 97(3) of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), seeking its intervention to direct the insolvency board to nominate a resolution professional (RP).
- The bank is aimed to recover a sizeable amount from the personal guarantees made by Anil Ambani on loans to Reliance Communications.
- This matter is related to personal guarantee clause of the bankruptcy law .
- The State Bank of India board had approved a resolution plan for Reliance Communications in March that envisaged lenders recovering around Rs 23,000 crore of their money, entailing a haircut of nearly 50%.
- RCom owes nearly Rs 5,000 crore to SBI.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code

- Once the personal guarantee clause under the IBC is invoked, individuals are granted a moratorium of six months during which no fresh claims can be made with respect to corporate entities in which they are promoters.

Link:

<https://www.jansatta.com/business/state-bank-of-india-moves-to-nclt-against-anil-ambani-to-recover-loans/1435732/>

Madhya Pradesh : largest procurer of wheat for rabi season 2020-21

Question : How many wheat has procured by Madhya Pradesh for rabi season 2020-21 ?

- (a) 170 lakh tonne
- (b) 150 lakh tonne
- (c) 180 lakh tonne
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (d)

Related facts

Context

- On June 8, Madhya Pradesh recorded a total procurement of 1,28,69,553 tonnes (128 lakh tonnes) of wheat as against 1,27,67,473 tonnes (127 lakh tonnes) by traditional leader Punjab and state has emerged the top state in the country in wheat procurement on support price by purchasing from farmers, which accounts for 33 per cent of all wheat procured in the country.
- Wheat procurement in Madhya Pradesh has increased by 74 percent as compared to last year's 73.69 lakh tonne at the minimum support price.

All India procurement

- The Food Corporation of India and other state agencies have procured 386 lakh tonnes of wheat as against an estimate of 440.66 lakh tonnes .
The total procurement in the country in 2019 was 368 lakh tonnes.

Direct Cash Transfer in Madhya Pradesh and Procurement Strategy

- Madhya Pradesh follows a decentralised model of procurement, under which, the state government procures wheat on behalf of the Centre and retains only the quantity required to run the state's public distribution system (PDS), while the remaining stocks are moved out by the union government.
- Over 14.19 lakh farmers got direct cash transferred to their accounts by the state government in an average of seven days.
- An amount of Rs 20,253 crore has been deposited in the accounts of the farmers.

Link :

<http://pibarchive.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=202815>

Establishment of Farmers' Producers Company in Assam

Question : How many "Farmers' Producers Company" has decided to set up in the assam ?

(a) 100 (b) 200 (c) 300 (d) 400

Answer : (a)

Related facts

- Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project will set up 100 Farmers' Producers Company in the state for ramping up agricultural production, collection and ensuring linkage with the national and international markets.
- On June 8, 2020 State Government instructed the agency to setup these companies.
- In order to ensure supply of certified seeds to farmers, the Chief Minister of Assam has instructed for setting up at least one seed distribution centre in every district.

Assam : Agriculture & economy

- At current prices, the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Assam is estimated to reach Rs 4.09 trillion (US\$ 58.47 billion) in 2020-21.
- The GSDP of the state grew at a CAGR (in Rs) of 12.36 per cent from 2011-12 to 2020-21.
- An agrarian economy since time immemorial, agriculture is the major contributor to the state economy.
- The agro-climatic conditions support cultivation of a wide range of horticultural crops, including plantation crops and various fruits and vegetables, flowers, spices, medicinal and aromatic plants, nut crops and tuber crops.
- During 2018-19(provisional), production of tea in the state stood at 701.35 million kgs and reached 682.44 million kgs in 2019-20 (till Jan 2020).
- Pineapple, banana, cauliflower, Broccoli, rose, rice, papaya, sugarcane, turmeric, jute, potato and Bougainvillea are among high yielding varieties of horticulture crops in Assam.
- Total production of horticulture crops in the state in 2018-19(As per 3rd Advance Estimate) stood at 7.18 million tonnes with 702.53 thousand hectares area under production.
- The state accounts for around 95 per cent of global Muga production.

- Moreover, Assam is the country's major Eri silk producer (accounts for 65 per cent of the country's Eri silk production).

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/assam-to-set-up-100-farmers-producers-company-for-ramping-up-agricultural-production/articleshow/76268218.cms>

Cyclone Nisarga

Question: Cyclone 'Nisarga' named by which of the following country?

(a) Thailand (b) Pakistan (c) Sri Lanka (d) none of the above

Answer:(d)

Related facts :

Background :

- During May 31, 2020, an area of low pressure developed over the South Eastern Arabian Sea and remained as a well marked low pressure area over the same region till evening of May 31.
- It strengthened into a depression over east-central and south-east Arabian Sea in the early morning the of June 1 when it was centered about 340 km south-west of Goa, 630 km south-southwest of Mumbai and 850 km south-southwest of Gujarat.
- On June 2, around noon, the prevailing deep depression intensified into a cyclonic storm thereby receiving the name Nisarga

Landfall and impact

- Nisarga intensified into a severe cyclonic storm before making landfall near the coastal town of Alibag in Maharashtra at 12:30 (IST) on June 3, 2020.
- The cyclone subsequently weakened into a deep depression by June 4, 2020.
- Two people diedas the storm uprooted trees in neighbouring districts, but no major damages were reported

The naming of cyclones

- Cyclone Nisarga was termed by India's neighbouring country — Bangladesh.
- The name was accorded in a list formulated by a group of countries.
The next eight names from the list of North Indian Ocean storm names are listed below :-
 - Amphan (used)
 - Nisarga (used)
 - Gati (unused)
 - Nivar (unused)
 - Burevi (unused)
 - Tauktae (unused)
 - Yaas (unused)
 - Gulab (unused)

Link :

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/cyclone-nisarga-top-developments-june-3-2020/article31735916.ece>

Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana :Allotment under 'Per Drop More Crop'

Question : 'Per Drop More Crop' is the component of which scheme ?

- (a) Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- (b) Uttar Pradesh Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- (c) Madhya Pradesh Krishi Sinchayee Yojana
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts :

- On June, 2020 Central government has allocated Rs 4,000 crore as annual allotment to states for the current financial year under "Per Drop More Crop" .
- 'Per Drop More Crop' is the component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana.
- PMKSY- PDMC(Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana-Per Drop More Crop) focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at farm level through Micro Irrigation technologies viz. Drip and Sprinkler irrigation systems.
- Drip micro irrigation technique not only helps in water saving but also in reducing fertilizer usage, labour expenses and other input costs.
- During the last five years (2015-16 to 2019-20), an area of 46.96 lakh ha. has been covered under Micro Irrigation through PMKSY-PDMC.

Link :

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1562545>

95th annual plenary session of the Indian Chamber of Commerce

Question : Who delivered the inaugural address of the 95th annual plenary session of the Indian Chamber of Commerce ?

- (a) Nirmala Sitharaman
- (b) Rashesh Shah
- (c) Rajiv Kumar
- (d) None of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- On June 11, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi delivered the inaugural address of the 95th annual plenary session of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) .
- Indian Chamber of Commerce
- Founded in 1925, Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is the leading and only National Chamber of Commerce having headquarter in Kolkata, and one of the most pro-active and forward-looking Chambers in the country today.
- The Indian Chamber of Commerce, or ICC as it is popularly known, is the premier body of business and industry in Eastern and North-Eastern India.

- ICC is the only Chamber from India to win the first prize in World Chambers Competition in Quebec, Canada.
- Set up by a group of pioneering industrialists led by Mr G D Birla, the Indian Chamber was closely associated with the Indian Freedom Movement, as the first organised voice of indigenous Indian Industry.

Link:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/pm-modi-to-deliver-inaugural-address-of-95th-annual-plenary-session-of-indian-chamber-of-commerce/story-FWdBErMFObStX8EOA1MuwJ.html>

Turant Customs

Question: On June 8, 2020, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) launched Turant Customs programme in which cities?

- (a) Kolkata and Bangalore
- (b) Bangalore and Chennai
- (c) Pune and Kochi
- (d) Kolkata and Chennai

Answer :(b)

Related facts:

- On 8 June 2020, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, CBIC launched its flagship programme Turant Customs, at Bengaluru and Chennai.

What is Turant Customs?

- As the name expresses, it is a way faster customs clearance of imported goods.
- Now, Importers will get their goods cleared from Customs after a faceless assessment is done remotely by the Customs officers located outside the port of import.
- So now, the goods imported at Chennai may be assessed by the Customs officers located at Bengaluru and vice versa, as assigned by the Customs' automated system.
- Turant Customs will benefit the importers by eliminating routine interface with the Customs officers and providing uniformity in assessment across the country.
- Turant Customs is a mega reform for the ease of doing business.

Roadmap for implementation:

- The start of Turant Customs at Bengaluru and Chennai will be the first phase of the All India roll out which would get completed by 31st December this year.
- The first phase will cover imports of Mechanical, Electrical and Electronics machineries at the ports, airports and ICDs of Bengaluru and Chennai.

About CBIC:

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (erstwhile Central Board of Excise & Customs) is a part of the Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

- It deals with the tasks of formulation of policy concerning levy and collection of Customs, Central Excise duties, Central Goods & Services Tax and IGST, prevention of smuggling and administration of matters relating to Customs, Central Excise, Central Goods & Services Tax, IGST and Narcotics to the extent under CBIC's purview.
- The Board is the administrative authority for its subordinate organizations, including Custom Houses, Central Excise and Central GST Commissionerates and the Central Revenues Control Laboratory.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=CBIC-launches-its-flagship-programme-%26%2339%3BTurant-Customs%26%2339%3B-at-Bengaluru-%26-Chennai&id=390791>

Highest ever allocation of funds under MNREGA

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is a rural sector social security scheme in India under which poor household individual can get at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year.

(2) A provision of Rs. 1,01,500 crore has been made under MGNREGS in the financial year 2020-2021.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- As of Ministry of Rural Development, a provision of Rs. 1,01,500 crore has been made under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the current financial year 2020-2021.
- It is the highest ever provision of funds under the programme.
- A sum of Rs. 31,493 crore has already been released in 2020-2021, which is more than 50% of the budget estimate of the current Financial Year.
- A total of 60.80 crore person days has been generated so far and work has been offered to 6.69 crore persons.
- Average number of persons to whom work offered in May 2020 has been 2.51 crore per day, which is 73% higher than the work offered in May last year, which was 1.45 crore persons per day.
- A total of 10 lakh works have been completed so far during the current Financial Year 2020-2021.

About MGNREGA:

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is a rural sector social security scheme in India.
- The scheme provides at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year, to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

- It was enacted in 2005 and is the largest work guarantee programme in the world.
- MGNREGA is implemented mainly by gram panchayats (GPs).
- Earlier launched as National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, it was renamed MGNREGA in 2009.

Background:

- To ensure economic security and livelihood, the P.V Narashima Rao government proposed a pilot scheme for generating employment in rural areas in 1991. Goals ascertained were:
- Employment Generation for agricultural labour during the lean season.
- Infrastructure Development
- Enhanced Food Security
- In way to sustain so, a scheme called Employment Assurance Scheme was launched which later evolved into the MGNREGA after the merger with the Food for Work Programme in the early 2000s.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1630332#:~:text=A%20provision%20of%20Rs.%201,of%20funds%20under%20the%20programme.>

Andhra Pradesh launches online waste management platform

Question: Which state has launched the online waste management platform to ensure effective waste treatment?

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

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On World Environment day (June 5), Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jaganmohan Reddy launched country's first online waste management platform.
- The online platform will ensure proper tracking, scrutiny and audit of the (industrial) waste.
- The online platform will be handled by newly formed Andhra Pradesh Environment Management Corporation (APEMC).

Task entrusted to APEMC:

- APEMC is charged with the collection, segregation and scientific disposal of industrial waste.
- The unit will be held responsible for safe disposal of all industrial waste generated in the state.
- The corporation will work in close coordination with Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB) within the regulatory framework.
- This initiative will foster cleaner environment as Andhra Pradesh has a large number of industries falling under red and orange categories.

- These industries generate significant quantities of liquid waste, hazardous and non-hazardous solid waste, e-waste and air pollutants.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/andhra-pradesh-online-waste-management-platform-6443531/>

Swades

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Swades is a skill mapping exercise for the returning Indian citizens under the Vande Bharat Mission.

(2) It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of External Affairs

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:

- Government of India has launched a new initiative SWADES (Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support) to conduct a skill mapping exercise of the returning citizens under the Vande Bharat.
- This is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Civil Aviation and the Ministry of External Affairs.
- The initiative will ensure India returning citizens to make available job opportunities based on their skillsets.
- The returning citizens are required to fill up an online SWADES Skills Card. Through this card information will be shared with the companies for suitable placement opportunities in the country.
- Amid ongoing pandemic, the initiative will bridge the demand-supply gap to mobilize the production process.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1628976>

Cabinet approves renaming of Kolkata Port Trust

Question: Which port has been renamed as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port by the Government of India?

(a) Kolkata Port (b) Chennai Port (c) Kochi Port (d) Vishakhapatnam Port

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 3 June 2020, Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has renamed Kolkata Port as Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port.

- It is situated on the left bank of the Hooghly River, about 203 kilometres (126 mi) from the sea.
- The Kolkata Port is the first Major Port as well as the only riverine port in the city of Kolkata.
- The port was commissioned in 1870.
- It is a freshwater port ornated by names such as Diamond Harbor, Gateway to Eastern India.

Other ports renamed:

- In due consideration of contribution made by eminent national leaders in past, several ports have been re-named.
- Nhava Sheva Port Trust-Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (year 1989).
- Tuticorin Port Trust-V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust (year 2011)
- Ennore Port Limited-Kamarajar Port Limited (year 2014)
- Kandla Port-Deendayal Port (year 2017)

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1629041>

Greenfield Expressway

Question: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has recently the demand of Greenfield Expressway for which of the following city?

- (a) New Delhi
- (b) Bengaluru
- (c) Amritsar
- (d) Hyderabad

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari announced the development of a new Greenfield connectivity to Amritsar City from Nakodar via Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as part of Delhi-Amritsar Expressway on June 2, 2020.
- The road from Amritsar to Gurdaspur would also be fully developed and made completely signal free.
- With this, traffic would have option to travel to Gurdaspur onwards from Nakodar, i.e. via Amritsar or via Kartarpur.
- This greenfield alignment will not only provide shortest and alternate express connectivity to Amritsar city but also to other religious centres of Sultanpur Lodhi, Goindwal Sahib, Khadoor Sahib as well as the recently developed Dera Baba Nanak/Kartarpur Sahib International Corridor in Punjab.
- The first phase of expressway would involve investment of about Rs 25,000 crore.
- Ministry of Road Transport & Highways have taken up development of Delhi Amritsar Katra Expressway under Bharatmala Pariyojana.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1628631>

International

Alliance for Poverty Eradication

Question: Which of the following organization has launched Alliance for Poverty Eradication?

- (a) European Union
- (b) United Nations
- (c) SAARC
- (d) ASEAN

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- India has become a founding member of an Alliance for Poverty Eradication at the United Nations.
- The alliance aimed at focussing on efforts to boost global economy in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This will serve as a forum for Member States to raise awareness about the danger that poverty poses to world peace, human rights and sustainable development.
- India has joined the alliance as a founding member and stressed that ending poverty is not just about monetary compensation but guaranteeing access of the poor to quality education, healthcare, clean water, sanitation, decent housing and social security.
- President of the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly Tijjani Muhammad-Bande will formally launch the 'Alliance for Poverty Eradication' on June 30.

Need:

- While the extent of the damage wrought by COVID-19 to world economy is yet to be determined, the pandemic threatens not only to erase past gains but also to force an additional half a billion of the world population into poverty
- COVID-19 practically shut down socio-economic activities across the globe, the number of people classified as poor was approximately 2.1 billion. Of this number, 767 million were found to be living in extreme poverty.
- The regions that are most at risk are Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia.

Indian Context:

- According to United Nations Development Programme, between 2006-2016 over 271 million people in India moved out of poverty, recording the fastest reductions in the multidimensional poverty index values during the period.

SDG 2.0:

- Goal 1 of Sustainable Development Goals aims to end poverty. In this regard it targets to end extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030.

Power sector : Solar project contract worth USD 99 million in United States

Question : Which company has bagged a contract worth USD 99 million (around Rs 747 crore) to construct a solar project in the United States of America?

- (a) Adani power
- (b) Vikram solar
- (c) Tata Solar
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (d)

Related facts

Context

- Sterling and Wilson Solar Solutions (SWSS) has recently (June, 2020) bagged a contract worth USD 99 million to construct a solar project in the United States of America.
- SWSS is a subsidiary of Sterling and Wilson Solar Ltd.

Sterling and Wilson

- Sterling & Wilson an associate company of SPCL (Shapoorji Pallonji group), is one of India's leading turnkey MEP (Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing) service providers with a varied range of solutions from HV & LV Electrical Systems, HVAC, Plumbing, Fire Fighting, Fire Alarm Systems to Security Systems etc.

Contract

- SWSS, has been awarded a USD 99 million contract to construct a 194 MW project in the US.

commencement

- Construction for the project will commence in September 2020 and the project will be commissioned by November, next year.

Significance

- SWSS will be managing the entire turnkey execution for the photovoltaic project, and once commercially operational, the plant will produce enough solar energy to power over 35,000 homes, saving approximately 275,000 metric tonnes of carbon emissions.

Link:

<https://m.economictimes.com/industry/energy/power/sterling-and-wilson-solar-solutions-bags-usd-99-million-solar-project-in-us/articleshow/76639660.cms>

Global Education Monitoring Report 2020

Global Education Monitoring Report 2020 is released by which institution:

- (a) UNESCO
- (b) UNICEF
- (c) Education International
- (d) Association for Childhood Education International

Answer : (a)

Context:

- UNESCO has released a report titled “Global Education Monitoring Report 2020”. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities in education systems across the world.
- According to a UNESCO report about 40% of low- and lower-middle-income countries have not supported learners at risk of exclusion during this crisis, such as the poor, linguistic minorities and learners with disabilities.
- **Theme:**
- “Inclusion and education: All means all”.
- **Agenda:**
- To monitor progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on education as well as other education-related points in the SDG Agenda.

Related Facts:

- **SDG 4:** It aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.
- **Incheon declaration:** It is a declaration on education adopted at the World Education Forum in Incheon, South Korea in 2015.
- **Qingdao Declaration:** It provides UN Member States with policy recommendations for using ICT to address educational challenges and to ensure equitable education and lifelong opportunities for all.

About UNESCO:

It is a specialized agency of the United Nations(UN) based in Paris,France.India has been a member of the UNESCO since its inception in 1946.

Link:

<https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/taxonomy/term/237>

World’s first yoga university outside India

Question:Where was the world’s first Yoga University inaugurated outside India on June 23, 2020?

- (a) Tokyo (b) London (c) Paris (d) Los Angeles

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On June 23, 2020, the world’s first yoga university outside India has been launched in Los Angeles, USA.

- It has been named Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU).
- It was jointly launched by Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan and Chairperson of the Standing Committee on External Affairs P P Chaudhary during a virtual event held at the Consulate General of India in New York.
- Eminent Indian yoga guru Dr. Nagendra, Chancellor of Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (SVYASA) is the first Chairman of VaYU.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/yoga-university-named-after-swami-vivekananda-launched-in-us/article31902902.ece>

Serbia's Parliamentary Election

Question: Who is the President of Serbia?

- (a) Aleksandar Vucic
- (b) Stefan Lofven
- (c) Lenin Moreno
- (d) Tomislav Nikolic

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic won the controversial parliamentary election.
- Alexander's right wing Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) won over 60% of the vote, or some 190 seats in the 250-seat Serbian parliament.
- The general election was originally scheduled for 26 April 2020 but was postponed after a state of the emergency was declared to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

About Serbian Parliament:

- The National Assembly is the unicameral legislature of Serbia.
- The assembly is composed of 250 proportionally elected deputies by secret ballot, on 4 years term.
- The assembly elects a president who presides over the sessions.

Links:

<https://www.euronews.com/2020/06/19/serbia-votes-all-you-need-to-know-about-europe-s-first-national-election-since-covid-19-lo>

H1B visa suspended

Question: Consider the following statement and choose the correct option:

- (1) US has announced the suspension of H1-B visa for immigrants.
- (2) The suspension will be valid for 2 years.
- (3) H1-B visa is very popular among the India IT Professional for working in US.

Correct option:

- (a) 1 and 3
- (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 2 and 3
- (d) All of the above

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- U.S. President Donald Trump signed executive order regarding suspension of H-1B visas, along with other foreign work visas for the rest of the year.
- H4 visas (H-1B dependents), L visas (intra-company transfers), as well as H-2B (non-agricultural workers) and J visas will also be on hold through the year end.
- The order was released on June 24 2020.
- This decision will impact a large number of Indian IT professionals and several American and Indian companies whom H-1B visas were issued by the U.S. government for the 2021 fiscal year beginning on October 1 2020.
- A large number of Indian IT professionals who are seeking H-1B visa renewal will also be impacted.
- This decision was taken as the overall unemployment rate in the United States nearly quadrupled between February and May of 2020.
- Workers coming through the H-1B, H-2B, J, and L non-immigrant visa programmes are therefore a significant threat to employment opportunities for Americans.
- The new rule would apply only to those who are outside the U.S., do not have a valid non-immigrant visa and an official travel document other than a visa to enter the country.
- This rule would not however impact the lawful permanent residents of the United States and foreign nationals who are spouses or child of an American citizen.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/reform-h-1b-visa-system-move-towards-merit-based-immigration-trump-to-officials/article31895379.ece/amp/>

Mount Merapi

Question: Mount Merapi which got erupted recently is located in which country?

- (a) Indonesia
- (b) Phillipines
- (c) Italy
- (d) Colombia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 21 June 2020, Indonesia's most active volcano, Mount Merapi has erupted fuming ash and smoke more than three miles into the sky.
- Mount Merapi is an active stratovolcano located on the border between Central Java and Yogyakarta provinces, Indonesia.
- A stratovolcano, also known as a composite volcano, is a conical volcano built up by many layers (strata) of hardened lava, tephra, pumice and ash.
- Merapi is the most active volcano in Indonesia and has erupted regularly since 1548.
- Its last major eruption in 2010 killed 347 people.

Volcano:

- A volcano is a rupture in the crust of a planetary-mass object, such as Earth, that allows hot lava, volcanic ash, and gases to escape from a magma chamber below the surface.
- Volcanoes are classified into three distinct groups: dormant, extinct and active.
- Dormant volcanoes are those who haven't erupted in a long time, but they could again. Extinct volcanoes have erupted for thousands of years and might be dead.
- Active volcanoes, on the other hand, are those currently erupting or showing signs of unrest. Example, Stromboli in Italy known as the "Lighthouse of the Mediterranean".

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/indonesias-merapi-volcano-ejects-towering-column-of-ash/article24054071.ece>

International Transport Forum

Question: Consider the following statements with respect to International Transport Forum:

1) The International Transport Forum is a non governmental organisation within the OECD system.

2) India is not a member of International Transport Forum.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of these

Answer: (d)

Context:

NITI Aayog in collaboration with International Transport Forum (ITF) will launch the "Decarbonising Transport in India" project on 24 June, with the intention to develop a pathway towards a low-carbon transport system for India.

About:

- The "Decarbonising Transport in India" project will design a tailor-made transport emissions assessment framework for India.
- It will provide the government with a detailed understanding of current and future transport activity and the related CO2 emissions as a basis for their decision-making.

Decarbonising Transport in Emerging Economies (DTEE)

- It is part of the "Decarbonising Transport in Emerging Economies" (DTEE) family of projects, which supports transport decarbonisation across different world regions. India, Argentina, Azerbaijan, and Morocco are current participants.
- The DTEE is a collaboration between the ITF and the Wuppertal Institute, supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

International Transport Forum:

- The International Transport Forum is an inter-governmental organisation within the OECD system. It is the only global body with a mandate for all modes of transport. It acts as a think tank for transport policy issues and organises the annual global summit of transport ministers.
- The ITF is administratively integrated with the OECD, yet politically autonomous.
- India has been a member of ITF since 2008.

Link :

<https://www.itf-oecd.org/>

Institute for Management Development IMD World Competitiveness Index 2020

Question: World Competitiveness Index 2020 is released by which institute?

- (a) Institute for Management Development(IMD)
- (b) World Bank
- (c) UNESCO
- (d) International Monetary Fund

Answer:(a)

Context:

India continues to remain ranked 43rd on an annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by Institute for Management Development (IMD) with some traditional weaknesses like poor infrastructure and insufficient education investment keeping its ranking low, the international business school .

Some Facts:

- World Competitiveness Index is an annual report published since 1989.
- It ranks 63 countries using 235 indicators grouped under four factors: economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency and infrastructure.
- In BRICS countries India is ranked second after China(20th) followed by Russia (50th), Brazil (56th) and South Africa (59th).
- Singapore has retained its top position on the 63-nation list.

India's performance:

- While India's overall position has remained unchanged in the 2020 list, it has recorded improvements in areas like long-term employment growth, current account balance, high-tech exports, foreign currency reserves, public expenditure on education, political stability and overall productivity.
- India has moved down in areas like exchange rate stability, real GDP growth, competition legislation and taxes.

Link:

<https://www.imd.org/news/updates/IMD-2020-World-Competitiveness-Ranking-revealed/>

G20 countries pledges over \$21 billion to fight Covid-19

Question: What amount of fund did G20 countries pledge to fight Covid-19?

(a) US\$21 billion (b) US\$28 billion (c) US\$16 billion (d) US\$31 billion

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- To help fight the ongoing pandemic Covid-19, G20 countries pledged over US\$21 billion.
- The fund pledged will be routed towards diagnostics, vaccines, therapeutics, and research and development.
- Earlier in March 2020, G20 nations pledged to inject USD 5 trillion into the global economy to combat upcoming deep recession.

About G20:

- The group of twenty (G20) is a leading forum of the world's major economics that seeks to develop global policies to address today's most pressing challenges.
- The G20 is made up of 19 countries and the European Union.
- The 19 countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, France, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United states.
- The G20 was born out of a meeting of G7 finance ministers and central bank governors in 1999 who saw a need for more inclusive body with broader representation to have a stronger impact on addressing the world's financial challenges.
- The G20 consists of both developed and developing countries.
- Collectively, G20 members represent all inhabited continents, 85% of total economic output, two –third of the world's population and 75% of international trade.

Links:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/g20-countries-pledge-over-21-billion-to-fund-fight-covid-19-pandemic-120060600406_1.html

Economics

Info exchange on tax matters

Question : What is the rank of India in Information exchange on tax matters?

- (a) India among Switzerland's top-3 partners for info exchange on tax matters
(b) India among Switzerland's top-10 partners for info exchange on tax matters
(c) India is Switzerland's top partner for info exchange on tax matters
(d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- India figures among the top-three countries getting detailed information from Switzerland about bank accounts and beneficiary ownership of entities established by their residents in the Alpine nation, according to the latest study on transparency and exchange of information for tax purposes.
- The other two countries were France and Germany.

Important facts of the study

- Report – The name of the report is Peer Review report.
- Issuer – The issuer of the report is OECD's Global Forum.
- Period – The latest peer review by the Global Forum, referring to the period from July 2015 to June 2018, named India among the top-three jurisdictions to which Switzerland provided information on request.

500 cases

- With regard to India itself, Switzerland has shared detailed information in more than 500 cases over the past one year regarding the accounts in Swiss financial institutions of Indian individuals and enterprises suspected to have indulged in tax frauds and other financial irregularities, while the numbers increase multi-fold after taking into account such cases from across the world.

Pacts

- Switzerland has entered into pacts with more than 100 countries, including India, for automatic exchange of information on tax matters.

Link:

<https://m.economictimes.com/news/economy/finance/india-among-switzerlands-top-3-partners-for-info-exchange-on-tax-matters-global-forum/articleshow/76671272.cms>

Anxious about finances : A Survey

Question : The survey 'Anxious about finances' was conducted by global market research company—

- (a) Mackenzie
- (b) Nielsen
- (c) Kantar
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (d)

Related facts

Context

- The survey 'Anxious about finances' was conducted by global market research company Ipsos in the last week of May 2020.

Location& findings

- One in every five consumers surveyed in Mumbai and Bengaluru is feeling anxious and barely coping when it comes to finances as a result of COVID-19.
- The findings are based on a survey of 1,000 consumers in Mumbai and Bangalore by the Swiss Re Group, a global reinsurer.
- Nearly 64 per cent of consumers surveyed are concerned about their mental health.
- The survey showed that to make up for the financial strain, many Indian consumers were happy to sacrifice home / motor insurance (28 per cent) while a quarter would cut life insurance premiums (25 per cent) to help ease the burden.
- When it came to health issues brought on by COVID-19, social disruption was the biggest concern (71 per cent), followed by physical fitness (67 per cent) and the inability to care for others (66 per cent).
- While it was last on the list, mental health issues resulting from isolation and loneliness were the highest of any other market – for 64 per cent of Indian respondents, it showed.

Link :

https://m.economictimes.com/news/economy/indicators/one-in-five-consumers-in-mumbai-bengaluru-anxious-about-finances-due-to-covid-19-survey/amp_articleshow/76464990.cms#referrer=https://www.google.com

India's GDP according to purchasing power parity (PPP)

Question : India has retained its position as the third-largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), behind the —

- (a) UK and Russian Fed.
- (b) Japan and France
- (c) Canada and Germany
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (d)

Related facts

Context

- India has retained its position as the third-largest economy in the world in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP), behind the China and US.
- The findings are part of the World Bank new PPPs for reference year 2017, under the International Comparison Programme (ICP) that adjust for differences in the cost of living across economies of the World.

India : A lower-middle-income economy

- Globally 176 economies participated in the 2017 cycle of ICP.
- The next ICP comparison will be conducted for reference year 2021.
- Overall, 19 economies contributed three-quarters of global GDP; three of these economies (India, Indonesia, and the Arab Republic of Egypt) were classified as lower-middle-income economies and six (China, the Russian Federation, Brazil, Mexico, Turkey, and the Islamic Republic of Iran) were classified as upper-middle-income economies, with the remainder classified as high income economies.

- India accounts for 6.7% or \$8,051 billion, out of the world's total of \$119,547 billion of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in terms of PPP compared to 16.4 % in case of China and 16.3 % for the US, World Bank data for reference year 2017 show.
- India, was the third-largest economy, followed by Japan, Germany, and the Russian Federation.

India's position in Asia-Pacific Region

- India retained its regional position, as the second largest economy, accounted for 20.83 % in terms of PPPs where China was first at 50.76% and Indonesia at 7.49% was third.
- Purchasing Power Parities
- Purchasing Power Parities are vital for converting measures of economic activities to be comparable across economies.

Link:

https://m.economictimes.com/news/economy/indicators/india-retains-its-position-as-3rd-largest-economy-on-ppp-basis-for-2017/amp_articleshow/76532262.cms#referrer=https://www.google.com

Supervision issue of cooperative banks

Question : Under which authority cooperative banks to be brought?

(a) RBI (b) All India Banking Association (c) Finance secretary (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

Union Cabinet on 24th June, 2020 approved a slew of proposals, including an ordinance bringing cooperative banks under supervisory powers of the RBI.

Background

In her February 1 Budget speech, Sitharaman had proposed amendments to the Banking Regulation Act with an aim to increasing professionalism and improving governance among the co-operative banks.

Significance

- Coming under both RBI and State Registrars, these banks pose specific supervisory challenges.
- Now all urban cooperative banks and multi-state cooperative banks will come under the supervision of the RBI, a development aimed at providing comfort to depositors and prevent repeat of Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank-like scams.

Cooperative banks statistics

There are 1,482 urban cooperative banks and 58 multi-state cooperative banks having about 8.6 crore depositors with total savings deposit of about Rs 4.85 lakh crore.

Link:

https://m.timesofindia.com/business/india-business/co-operative-banks-to-be-brought-under-rbi-supervision/amp_articleshow/76553770.cms

Government e-Marketplace (GeM)

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Government e-Marketplace (GeM):

(1) It is a National Public Procurement portal launched in 2016 for procurement of common use Goods & Services

(2) It functions under Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare

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

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a)

Context:

- In a push to promote local products, the Union government has made it mandatory for all sellers on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM), a platform for public procurement, to list the country of origin while registering new products.
- **Facts:**
- **Government e-Marketplace (GeM):** It is a National Public Procurement portal launched in 2016 for procurement of common use Goods & Services required by various Government Departments / Organizations / PSUs.
- **Aim:** To enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement.
- **Nodal agency:** It functions under the Directorate General of Supplies and Goods (DGS&D), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **SWAYATT:** It stands for Start-ups, Women and Youth Advantage Through eTransactions on Government e Marketplace (GeM). It is an initiative to promote women and young entrepreneurs through e-transactions on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM).
- **Saras Collection:** It showcases daily utility products made by rural self-help groups.
- It is an initiative of Government e Marketplace (GeM) and the Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM).
- **About:**
- The changes to the Government e-Marketplace (GeM), a Special Purpose Vehicle under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, are in line with the Centre's Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India policies.
- Buyers on the platform can now see the percentage of local content in various products. They can also switch on a new Make in India filter to see products that match their preferences on local content.
- For example, buyers can choose to buy only those products that meet a minimum 50% local content criteria.
- In case of bids, buyers can now reserve any bid for Class I local suppliers (local content > 50%). For those bids below INR 200 crore, only Class I and Class II local suppliers (local content > 50% and > 20% respectively) are eligible to bid, with Class I supplier getting purchase preference.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/country-of-origin-must-on-government-e-marketplace-platform-says-government/article31897319.ece>

Consumer Durable : Investment of Rs 1000 crore by SPPL

Question : Consumer durables can be broadly categorized into the —

- (a) Blue goods and Green goods
- (b) Yellow goods and Black goods
- (c) White goods, Brown goods and Consumer Electronics
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (c)

Related facts

Context

- SPPL(Super Plastronics Pvt Ltd) is the licensee for French Electronics' brand Thomson.
- It would invest Rs 1,000 crore in the next five years to expand its manufacturing capacity and strengthen its presence in the consumer electronics and appliances segment.
- Firm is making a foray into the home appliances segment under brand Thomson, starting with washing machines as part of its expansion plans.
- It also has a plan to enter several other product categories such as cooling items.

Firm

- The company has been allotted land by the UP government at the Delhi-Meerut highway.
- Besides, it has manufacturing units at Noida, Jammu and Una (Himachal Pradesh). It expanded its Noida plant in the last financial year.

Consumer durables

Consumer durables can be broadly categorized into the following three heads — Whitegoods, Brown goods and Consumer Electronics.

White Goods: White goods mainly include air conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, audio equipment and speakers.

Brown Goods: This kind of consumer durables mostly include kitchen appliances like chimneys, electric fans, grinders, iron, microwave ovens, mixers and varied other cooking ranges

Consumer Electronics: Some of the mostly used consumer electronic goods are DVD players, MP3 players, mobile telephones, telephones, VCD players etc.

Link:

<https://m.economictimes.com/industry/cons-products/electronics/thomson-brand-licensee-super-plastronics-to-invest-rs-1000-crore-in-5-years/articleshow/76466983.cms>

World Investment Report: UNCTAD

Question: World Investment Report 2020 is released by which institution?

- (a) World Trade Organization
- (b) International Monetary Fund
- (c) World Bank
- (d) United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Answer: (d)

Related Fact:

Context:

Recently, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) released the World Investment Report 2020.

The World Investment Report focuses on trends in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) worldwide, at the regional and country levels, and emerging measures to improve its contribution to development.

Key Points:

- According to the report, global FDI flows are forecast to decrease by up to 40% in 2020, from their 2019 value of \$1.54 trillion.
- This would bring global FDI below \$1 trillion for the first time since 2005. The FDI is projected to decrease by a further 5% to 10% in 2021.
- Developing economies are expected to see the biggest fall in FDI because they rely more on investment in Global Value Chain (GVC) based industries, which have been severely hit due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- They have also not been able to put in place the same economic support measures as developed economies.
- However, the investment flows are expected to slowly recover by the start of 2022.
- Global FDI flows rose modestly in 2019, following the sizable declines registered in 2017 and 2018.
- The rise in FDI was due to the waning of the impact of the 2017 tax reforms in the United States.

India's position:

- India jumped from 12th position in 2018 to 9th position in 2019 among the world's largest FDI recipients. In 2019, the FDI inflows into India jumped over 20% to \$51 billion.
- The report also observed that FDI into India may decline sharply in 2020 because of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown measures, supply chain disruptions, and economic slowdown.

- In India, the number of greenfield investment announcements declined by 4% in the first quarter of the financial year 2020-21.
- Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) also contracted by 58%.
- A greenfield investment is a type of FDI in which a parent company creates a subsidiary in a different country, building its operations from the ground up.
- However, the report mentioned that India's large market will continue to attract market-seeking investments to the country.

Link :

<https://worldinvestmentreport.unctad.org/world-investment-report-2020/>

NRE Deposits in April

Question : What is the NRE Deposits figure in April,2020 ?

- (a)1.95 billion dollar (b)1.50 billion dollar
(c)1.05 billion dollar (d) none of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

- Global Indians sent home \$1.95 billion in the April in their non-resident rupee deposit accounts.
- This is the highest single month flow in 26 months.
- This is an indication of the kind of optimism that the Indian diaspora has on the outlook of their economy back home which could result in some gains for the rupee.

NRI Depostis

- NRI deposits are foreign currency deposits made in an Indian bank by a non-resident Indian. These deposits can be repatriated by the NRI on maturity along with the interest earned.

Different NRI deposit accounts

1. Foreign currency non-resident or FCNR(B) deposit — the currency risk is borne by the bank which accepts the deposits.
2. Non-resident rupee or NRE (RA), non-resident external (rupee) account — where forex risk is borne by the depositor. Money parked in these deposit accounts can be repatriated back.
The flows from such deposits predominantly come from the middle-east Asian countries, where working Indians typically use the money on return to the home country after retirement.
3. There is also another option -Non-resident ordinary or NRO accounts, which is meant for NRI's local use.

NRI Remittances

- Remittances, on the other hand, are foreign currency funds sent by NRIs to their folks in India.

Conclusion

- Of the billions dollar of foreign exchange reserves, about one fourth are reckoned to be the combined contribution from the Indian diaspora through remittances and deposits.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/nri/forex-and-remittance/nris-park-almost-2-billion-in-nre-deposits-in-april-at-26-month-high/articleshow/76445599.cms>

CII Report : Indian roots, American soil

Question : Which one of the following came out as the top investment destination for Indian FDI ?

- (a) Texas
- (b) New Jersey's
- (c) New York
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- According to the report titled 'Indian Roots, American Soil' which surveyed 155 Indian companies in the US, Texas came out as the top investment destination for Indian FDI, receiving \$9.5 billion, followed by New Jersey's \$2.4 billion and \$1.8 billion in New York.
- The latest (sixth) edition of the Indian Roots, American Soil report continues to examine the contributions of Indian industry in the US via a survey of 155 responding companies spread throughout the 50 US states, as well as the District of Columbia and the territory of Puerto Rico.
- In addition to listing the top states for investments and job creation, this edition also denotes Indian industry's contributions to local communities through corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs, their financing of US-based Research and Development (R&D) projects, and their perceptions of states with the most business-friendly environments.

FDI

- Indian companies pumped in over \$22 billion worth of foreign direct investment (FDI) into the United States (US) and created 125,000 jobs covering all 50 states, Washington DC and Puerto Rico.
- While 20 US states had received over \$100 million in investments from these Indian firms, the survey found 77% of them reported plans to increase investments with 83% stating they would hire more employees locally over the next five years.

Jobs

- In terms of jobs, it found that Indian firms created 17,578 jobs in Texas.
- This was followed by 8,271 jobs in California and 8,057 jobs in New Jersey.

- The report also found that Indian companies contributed \$175 million towards corporate social responsibility (CSR) and about \$900 million on research and development.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/indian-companies-pump-22-billion-in-us-as-fdi-cii-survey/articleshow/76403765.cms?from=mdr>

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) : 750 million dollar loan to India

Question : AIIB (Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) started operation after the agreement entered into force on —

- (a) 25 December 2012
- (b) 26 March 2011
- (c) 1 July 2010
- (d) None of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has recently (June,2020) approved a \$750 million loan to India to help the government strengthen its battle against the adverse impact of COVID-19 pandemic on poor and vulnerable households.
- Co-financed with the Asian Development Bank, the budgetary support will go toward bolstering economic aid for businesses, including for the informal sector, expanding social safety nets for the needy, and strengthening the country's health care systems.
- AIIB's sovereign loans to India that have already been approved amount to \$3.06 billion, including a recent \$500-million COVID-19 emergency response.
- The current loan will be the second for India under AIIB's COVID-19 CRF.
- The multilateral lender initially set up its Covid-19 CRF, with a \$5 billion investment which was later doubled to \$10 billion, to make funds available to its members for urgent economic, financial and public health pressures and quick recovery from the crisis
CRF stands for – Crisis Recovery Facility.
- In total the AIIB has approved \$4.05 billion to its members under this facility, including \$355 million to China, \$500 million to Pakistan, \$250 million to Bangladesh and \$750 million to Indonesia and the Philippines each.

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank that aims to support the building of infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region.
- The bank currently has 78 members as well as 24 prospective members from around the world.

Formation

- The bank started operation after the agreement entered into force on 25 December 2015, after ratifications were received from 10 member states holding a total number of 50% of the initial subscriptions of the Authorized Capital Stock.
- On 25 December 2015, the Articles of Agreement entered into force. On 16 January 2016, the board of governors of the bank convened its inaugural meeting in Beijing and declared the bank open for business.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/aiib-approves-additional-750-million-loan-to-strengthen-indias-covid-response/articleshow/76417874.cms?from=mdr>

‘Tech Pioneers’ list

Question : “Tech Pioneers” is a list compiled by —

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) World Bank
- (c) Asian development Bank
- (d) World Trade Organisation

Answer : (a)

- List “Tech Pioneers” released on June by the World Economic Forum. Two Indian firms – ZestMoney and Stellapps – figure in this list.

About List

- From artificial intelligence (AI) to carbon capture, these companies are using innovations to protect the climate, improve healthcare and much more, helping us to reset society and build towards a better future, the WEF said.
- These are the companies that think differently and stand out as potential game-changers.
- Launched in 2000, the Technology Pioneer community is composed of early to growth-stage companies from around the world that are involved in the design, development and deployment of new technologies and innovations, and are poised to have a significant impact on business and society.
- Of the 100 firms selected, over one-quarter are female-led and these firms also come from diverse regions that stretch beyond traditional tech hubs, with companies using innovative technology in novel ways all around the world.
- The list comprises six regions- Africa,Asia-Pacific,Europe,Latin America,Middle East & North Africa and North America.

ZestMoney

- The company is using its technology to transform the financial services industry, offering affordable credit to those who are unable to access this through traditional finance paths.
- The company uses AI-based digital lending platform for disbursing affordable credit. Stellapps, another Indian firm in the list, is a data-led, internet of things-based, farm-to-consumer dairy supply chain digitisation service provider.

Stellapps

- Stellapps, another Indian firm in the list, is a data-led, internet of things-based, farm-to-consumer dairy supply chain digitisation service provider.

Link :

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/technology/two-indian-firms-zestmoney-and-stellapps-in-wef-list-of-tech-pioneers-for-2020/>

Fitch Ratings estimates Indian economy to grow at 9.5 pct in next fiscal

Question:What is the forecasted growth rate of Indian economy in 2021-22 fiscal according to Fitch Ratings?

- (a) 9.5
- (b) 8.5
- (c) 6.5
- (d) 8.2

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- American credit rating agency Fitch has forecasted Indian economy to bounce back with a sharp growth rate of 9.5 percent next fiscal.
- It has forecasted a 5 percent contraction in the GDP in the ongoing financial year.
- The Agency emphasized that India's GDP growth is likely to return to higher levels than 'BBB' category peers.
- The up-geared economy is as a result of eased monetary policy by RBI combined with downed policy rates and liquidity provided through long-term repo operations.
- Prudential requirements for banks have also been eased to free up liquidity for lending.
- The estimated growth rate is also supported by government 's stimulus measures amounting to 10 percent of GDP.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Indian-economy-to-grow-at-9.5-pct-in-next-fiscal%2C-says-Fitch-Ratings&id=391003>

India's foreign exchange reserves : Recent data

Question : India's foreign exchange reserves have recently crossed a milestone mark .What is that milestone figure ?

- (a) 501.70 billion dollars
- (b) 100 billion dollars
- (c) 1000 billion dollars
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

- India's foreign exchange reserves rose to 501.70 billion dollars for the week ended 5th of June, helped by a whopping rise in foreign currency assets.

Components of the foreign currency assets

- Foreign currency assets, a major part of the overall reserves, rose by 8.42 billion dollars to 463.63 billion dollars.
- In the previous week, the reserves had advanced by 3.44 billion dollars to end at 493.48 billion dollars.
- Total value of the gold reserves, however, continued to decline. Gold reserves declined by 329 million dollars to end at 32.352 billion dollars.
- India's special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund went up by 10 million dollars to 1.44 billion dollars, while the country's reserve position also rose by 120 million dollars to 4.28 billion dollars.

Impact to the economy

- Foreign exchange identifies the process of converting domestic currency into international banknotes at particular exchange rates.
- These transactions present distinct ramifications for the global economy.
- Foreign exchange rates affect international trade, capital flows and political sentiment.

Link:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=391178#:~:text=India's%20foreign%20exchange%20reserves%20have,rise%20in%20foreign%20currency%20assets.>

Oecd economic outlook, june 2020

Question : The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) recently projected that India may see 7.3% contraction if –

- (a) Coronavirus strikes again
- (b) unemployment rate hikes again
- (c) poverty rate hikes again
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

Context

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an intergovernmental economic organisation with 37 member countries, [founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade.
- OECD recently released its 'Economic Outlook, June 2020'.
- OECD projected that India may see 7.3% contraction if coronavirus strikes again.

Indian economy

- The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) projected that India's economy will contract 7.3 per cent in the current fiscal year if there is a second wave of the coronavirus (Covid-19) later this year.
- This is so far the steepest contraction that any agency has predicted for the country.

- If there is no second wave, the grouping of advanced countries — in its OECD Economic Outlook — expects the economy to contract 3.7 per cent during the year.

Global economy

- In the case of a double-hit by the pandemic, the OECD pegged global economic contraction at 7.6 per cent in 2020 and six per cent in case of a single-hit scenario.
- It said both scenarios are sobering, as economic activity cannot return to normal under these circumstances.

Link:

<http://www.oecd.org/economic-outlook/june-2020/>

FDI in the food processing sector

Question : Food processing sector belongs to –

- (a) Agriculture and allied industries
- (b) FMCG industry
- (c) Ministry of commerce & industry
- (d) None of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts

Context

- Food processing sector comes under FMCG industry and Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector is the 4th largest sector in the Indian economy with Household and Personal Care accounting for 50 per cent of FMCG sales in India.
- The government has allowed 100 per cent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in food processing and single-brand retail and 51 per cent in multi-brand retail.

Recent fdi statistics

- Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the food processing sector rose 44 per cent to USD 904.7 million in the financial year 2019-20, according to government data.
- The sector had received FDI worth USD 628.24 million in 2018-19 and USD 904.90 million in the financial year 2017-18.

India's food processing sector attracted global investors as it received FDI inflows worth USD 904.70 mn in the 2019-20 (up by 44 per cent over 2018-19)

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/finance/fdi-in-food-processing-rises-44-pc-to-904-7-mn-in-2019-20/articleshow/76326264.cms>

Cash withdrawal from ATMs dips in April

Question : By which bank the first ATM in India was set up in 1987 in Mumbai ?

(a) Sbi (b) Icici bank (c) Standard Chartered bank (d) HSBC

Answer : (d)

Related facts**Context**

- According to data released by the RBI in monthly bulletin for June, Cash withdrawals from automated teller machines (ATMs) nearly halved to about Rs 1.27 lakh crore during April, 2020.
- This is due to coronavirus-induced lockdown.

Statistics

- The withdrawals were Rs 2.51 lakh crore in March.
- The number of transactions or cash withdrawal volume from ATMs also declined 28.66 crore in April from 54.71 crore in the previous month.
- April was the first full month of lockdown, due to which movements were restricted in a majority parts of the country.
- The number of transactions through ATMs using debit cards also fell to nearly half to 28.52 crore in April, compared with 54.41 crore in the preceding month.
- There were over 88.68 crore cards in April, including 5.73 crore credit cards and 82.94 debit cards.
- The total number of cards in March were about 88.63 crore.
- Cash withdrawal volumes at PoS machines, however, increased in April to 40.87 lakh, from 33.69 lakh in March.
- In terms of value, cash withdrawal at PoS machines stood at Rs 111 crore, compared with Rs 110 crore in March, the RBI data showed.
- The number of transactions at micro ATMs using the Aadhaar-enabled payment system more than doubled to 875.54 lakh in April from 344.98 lakh.

ATMs in India

- The first ATM in India was set up in 1987 by HSBC in Mumbai.
- In 1997, the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) set up Swadhan, the first network of shared ATMs in India.
- It was managed by India Switch Company (ISC) for five years, and allowed cardholders to withdraw cash from any ATM in the network, for a fee if they did not have an account with the bank that owned the ATM.

Link :

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/cash-withdrawal-from-atms-dips-in-april/article31800942.ece>

Scientific

Torpedo Decoy System

Question : What is the name of recently inducted advanced anti-torpedo decoy system in the Indian Navy?

- (a) Maareech
- (b) garun
- (c) Shark
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- The Indian Navy has recently (June, 2020) inducted an advanced anti-torpedo decoy system.

Characteristics

- 'Maareech' has been designed and developed indigenously by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and it is capable of detecting, locating and neutralizing incoming torpedo. It is capable of being fired from all frontline warships.

Significance

- This induction not only stands testimony to the joint resolve of the Indian Navy and DRDO towards indigenous development of Defence technology, but has also given a major fillip to the Government's 'Make in India' initiative and the country's resolve to become 'Atmanirbhar' in niche technology.
- Bharat Electronics Limited, a Defence PSU, would undertake the production of this decoy system.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634460>
<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/navy-inducts-indigenously-developed-torpedo-decoy-system>

BeiDou Navigation Satellite System(BDS)

Question:Consider the following:

(1) BeiDou – China (2) GPS – USA (3) Galileo – Russia (4) Glonass – European Union

Which of the above is correctly matched?

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

Answer:(a)

Context:

- China has successfully launched the last satellite of its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System(BDS).

- **BeiDou Navigation Satellite System(BDS):** It is a Chinese satellite navigation system.
- **Type:** Military and commercial
- **Coverage:** Global
- **Total satellites:** 35 (2020)

Additional Facts:

- Global Navigation Satellite System:GPS (US), GLONASS (Russia), Galileo (EU), BeiDou (China).
- Additionally, there are two regional systems – QZSS (Japan) and IRNSS or NavIC (India).
- **NavIC:** It is an independent regional navigation satellite system developed by the Indian Space Research Organization(ISRO).It provides accurate position information service to users in India as well as the region extending up to 1500 km from its boundary.

Facts about BeiDou:

Pakistan has become the first country to use the BeiDou system ending its reliance on the Global Positioning System (GPS).

About BeiDou Satellite System:

Named after the Chinese term for Big Dipper, the BeiDou system started providing independent services over China in 2000. It is being projected by Beijing as a rival to the American Global Positioning System (GPS).

1. The full constellation is scheduled to comprise 35 satellites.
2. BeiDou has two separate constellations, BeiDou-1 and BeiDou-2. BeiDou-1 also known as first generation was a constellation of three satellites.
3. BeiDou-2, also known as COMPASS, is the second generation of the system. It became operational in the year 2011.

Link:

<https://www.space.com/china-launches-final-beidou-navigation-satellite.html#:~:text=China%20successfully%20launched%20the%20final,Launch%20Center%20in%20southwest%20China.>

Fishing Cat

Question:Fishing Cat has been specified in which category of IUCN Red List?

(a) Critically Endangered (b) Endangered (c) Vulnerable (d) Near Threatened

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The Odisha forest department has started a two-year conservation project for fishing cats in Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara district.

- The species is listed as 'endangered' on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List. This means it faces a high threat of extinction in the wild.
- The fishing cat, however, is not a well-known species and does not enjoy the same status as crocodiles do. One purpose of conservation measures was to create awareness among people for the species.
- The project will be funded by the forest department of Odisha.
- In 2019, during a mammal census in Bhitarkanika, only 20 fishing cats were spotted, according to Dash.
- This was, however, not indicative of the exact number of the species, as the census was conducted during the day.

Status under international and national laws:

- The United Nations Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) lists the fishing cat on Appendix II in Article IV of CITES.
- The species is also classified under the first schedule of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Food storage:

- Fishing cats hunt fish and crustaceans for food from the park's water bodies. They dive in to catch prey with their hooked claws.
- They can also hunt livestock and poultry in villages near forests and have also known to encroach human habitations.

Threats:

- A major threat for fishing cats is the destruction of wetlands, their preferred habitat.
- The prawn mafia in the area have reportedly destroyed aquatic ecologies in Satabhaya, Bagapatia and other water bodies within the park in the past by converting wetlands and mangrove forests into prawn farms.

Reptile Census:

- Similar conservation measures were recently completed for the park's salt-water crocodiles.
- The rivers and creeks of Bhitarkanika — the second-largest mangrove forest in the country after the Sundarbans in West Bengal — are home to 1,757 salt-water crocodiles, according to the January 2020 reptile census.
- The mangrove forests of the national park are also inhabited by spotted deer, wild boar, water monitors and several other animals.

Links:

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/wildlife-biodiversity/odisha-starts-project-to- conserve-bhitarkanika-fishing-cats-71928#:~:text=The%20Odisha%20forest%20department%20has,of%20extinction%20in%20the%20wild.>

First Mobile I-LAB (Infectious Disease Diagnostic Lab) launched

Question: Who launched country's first mobile I-LAB (Infectious Disease Diagnostic Lab) for COVID-19 testing on June 18, 2020?

- (a) Narendra Modi
- (b) Dr. Harshvardhan
- (c) Arvind Kejriwal
- (d) Piyush Goyal

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched India's first mobile I-Lab (Infectious disease diagnostic lab) for COVID-19 testing on June 18, 2020 for last mile testing access.
- These I-Labs will be deployed in remote, interior and inaccessible parts of the country and have capability to perform 25 COVID-19 RT-PCR tests/Day, 300 ELISA tests/day, additional tests for TB, HIV etc. as per CGHS rates.
- The Infectious Disease Diagnostic Lab (I-LAB) is supported by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, under the Covid Command strategy.
- This I-Lab has been created by the Andhra Pradesh Med-tech Zone team with the support of DBT under the National Biopharma Mission in a record time of 8 days. The unit has biosafety facility and is capable of performing RT-PCR as well as ELISA tests.
- This is a mobile diagnostic unit with biosafety facility. The I- lab is a BSL-2 facility with on-site ELISA, RT-PCR, Bio chemistry analysers. It can run 50 RT-PCR reactions and about 200 ELISA in a day. Double set of Machines can help increase the capacity to about 500 per day in 8 hours shift.
- Specification of the I-LAB:
- Automotive Chassis, Diagnostic Equipment, Clean Room, BSL-2 lab, bio-safety cabinets.
- 25 tests (RT-PCR) per I-Lab per Day, 300 ELISA tests/day.
- Additional test for other diseases for TB, HIV etc. to be costed as per CGHS rates.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=209597>

ISRO Cyberspace Competitions-2020

Question : ISRO is organizing 'Cyberspace Competitions-2020'. This competition is for ____

- (a) school students studying in India
- (b) research scholars
- (c) university students studying in India
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- ISRO has recently made an announcement that will most certainly bring about happiness and enthusiasm amongst school children aiming to take up the field of Cyberspace.

The competitions planned in ICC–2020 are:

1. Drawing competition for Class 1 to 3,
 2. Model making competition for Class 4 to 8,
 3. Essay competition for class 9 to 10 (both Hindi and English),
 4. Essay competition / Space-Quiz contest for class 11 to 12 (both Hindi and English).
- ICC–2020 would avoid the physical travel of the students to different places and facilitates their participation online keeping them safe within their home during these testing times.

Vision

During the present scenario, when all the outreach programmes related to space science and technology are apparently on halt, this cyberspace based competition will be a frontrunner in motivating the student community to explore the concepts and boundless mysteries in the space science and technology domain.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1631500>

Photography competition on medicinal and aromatic plants

Question : In an effort to create awareness about the usefulness of these plants, CIMAP has announced a photography competition on medicinal and aromatic plants. Of which organization, 'Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants' (CIMAP) is a frontier plant research laboratory ?

- (a) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
- (b) Indian forest research institutes
- (c) Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research
- (d) Medical research institutes in India

Answer (a)

Related facts

- In an effort to create awareness about the usefulness of medicinal and aromatic plants, the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic plants (CIMAP) has recently (June 11, 2020) announced a photography competition on medicinal and aromatic plants.
- Through this competition, CIMAP also wants to convey the message of conservation of these medicinal plants.
- The theme of the competition is 'Know your Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs)'.
- The winners will receive cash awards of Rs. 5000, Rs. 3000, and Rs. 2000 for first, second, and third prizes, respectively.
- In addition, there will be consolation prizes of Rs. 1000 each for another 10 entries.
- The competition is open to all Indian amateur and professional photographers.
- Up to three photographs may be submitted for each entry. Indigenous plants are preferred and the Institute has requested to avoid images of very common horticulture or ornamental plants.

Medicinal and Aromatic plants statistics

State wise area and production of aromatic and medicinal plants in india are given below : –

Table 2: State wise area and production of Aromatic and medicinal plants in India
(Area: 000'ha, Production: 000't)

Sl.No.	States/UTs	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		Average	
		Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production
1	Andhra Pradesh	0.26	3.84	0.29	4.36	1.88	3.51	0.45	1.19	1.18	0.83	2.47	1.18	3.83	13.54
2	Arunachal Pradesh	5.15	109.18	5.15	109.18	5.15	109.18	5.15	109.18	0.46	0.99	0.46	0.99	3.07	62.67
3	Assam	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.35	0.16	4.99	0.16	4.40	0.17	4.43	0.17	2.60	0.09
4	Bihar	3.56	0.45	3.82	0.50	4.56	0.59	4.00	0.69	4.40	0.60	4.5	0.6	3.55	0.49
5	Chhattisgarh	12.12	91.41	10.27	60.28	8.44	50.25	7.95	55.19	8.53	59.97	8.54	60.39	9.58	63.14
6	Karnataka	3.41	19.80	3.71	21.66	3.70	21.10	3.38	24.84	2.24	16.35	2.38	16.56	3.22	20.36
7	Madhya Pradesh	43.60	106.81	62.63	393.00	63.95	404.60	65.62	414.00	72.18	497.10	72.9	502.07	59.25	359.87
8	Mizoram	0.02	0.06	1.02	0.71	1.11	0.90	1.10	0.95	1.75	0.69	0.93	0.9	1.12	2.59
9	Odisha	1.92	0.64	1.92	0.64	1.92	0.64	1.90	0.60	1.90	0.60	1.92	0.61	1.91	0.62
10	Punjab	7.12	1.29	8.97	1.43	14.01	2.51	15.10	2.90	12.46	2.36	12.52	2.43	11.04	2.03
11	Rajasthan	280.62	149.60	308.66	164.53	231.24	124.30	249.07	128.86	369.61	186.78	401.02	195.2	303.63	156.50
12	Tamil Nadu	12.26	68.04	15.15	147.41	16.37	162.12	13.45	76.67	15.01	240.11	11.92	175.15	13.45	132.94
13	Uttar Pradesh	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	135.04	13.53	133.89	13.42
14	Others	0.00	1.20	0.00	0.00	2.87	2.04	1.99	2.22	6.13	2.50	5.13	1.87	2.30	1.40
	All India Total	503.74	565.72	555.29	917.10	493.25	895.30	507.84	830.85	633.9	1022.5	664.16	971.65	552.45	829.67

Link

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1631499>

Sanitising chamber ‘GermiKlean’

Question : Which organization has developed a sanitising chamber named ‘GermiKlean’ to sanitise uniforms of security forces ?

- (a) DRDO
- (b) IISC
- (c) IIT Delhi
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has recently (June,2020) developed a sanitising chamber named ‘GermiKlean’ to sanitise uniforms of security forces.
- The sanitising chamber has been set up at Parliament Street Police Station.
- DRDO’s move came after Delhi Police gave their requirement for sanitising their uniforms, canes, cane shields, helmets, etc.

GermiKlean

- It is a dry heat treatment chamber.
- This chamber is designed to sanitise 25 pairs of uniforms within 15 minutes.

DRDO

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation is an agency of the Government of India, charged with the military’s research and development, headquartered in Delhi, India.
- It was formed in 1958 by the merger of the Technical Development Establishment and the Directorate of Technical Development and Production of the Indian Ordnance Factories with the Defence Science Organisation.
- With a network of 52 laboratories, which are engaged in developing defence technologies covering various fields, like aeronautics, armaments, electronics, land combat engineering, life sciences, materials, missiles, and naval systems, DRDO is India’s largest and most diverse research organisation.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/drdo-develops-germiklean-to-sanitise-uniforms-of-police-security-forces-120061300128_1.html

Mission Sagar: INS Kesari returns to Port Louis of Mauritius to embark Indian Navy Medical Team

Question : Which of the following Indian Naval Ship is a part of Mission Sagar ?

(A) INS Kesari (B) INS Vikrant (C) INS Viraat (D) INS Chakra

Answer (A)

Related facts

- As part of Mission Sagar, Indian Naval Ship Kesari returned to Port Louis, Mauritius, on 14 June 2020, to embark the Indian Navy Medical Team, which was disembarked during her last visit to Port Louis on 23 May 2020.
- The 14-member medical team comprising specialist doctors and paramedics was disembarked at Port Louis with an aim to assist in management of COVID-19 pandemic, share expertise to help contain the spread of the disease and minimize risk to life.
- During their deployment at Port Louis, the team visited various healthcare facilities including Regional Hospitals, Flu Clinics, ENT Hospital (the designated COVID Hospital in Mauritius), Quarantine Centre, Central Health Laboratory (the COVID testing facility in Mauritius) and the SAMU (Emergency Medical Services) Headquarters cum Control Centre located at Victoria Hospital.

The team interacted with healthcare warriors at all levels and held meaningful discussions towards sharing best practices on COVID-19 management.

Mission Sagar

- 'Mission Sagar', is in line with India's role as the first responder in the region and builds on the excellent relations existing between the two countries to battle the COVID-19 pandemic and its resultant difficulties.
- The deployment is in consonance with the Prime Ministers vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region 'SAGAR' and highlights the importance accorded by India to relations with the countries of the IOR.

India-Mauritius relations

- Indo-Mauritian relations refers to the historical, political, economic, military, social and cultural connections between the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius.
- The relationship between Mauritius and India date back to the early 1730s, when artisans were brought from Puducherry and Tamil Nadu.
- Diplomatic relations between India and Mauritius were established in 1968.

Trade

Share of top five investing countries in FDI inflows for India. (Apr 2000 – Sept 2016)

Rank	Country	Inflows (Million USD)	Inflows (%)
1	<u>Mauritius</u>	101,759.68	32.81%
2	<u>Singapore</u>	50,559.91	16.30%
3	<u>United Kingdom</u>	24,072.30	7.76%
4	<u>Japan</u>	23,760.47	7.66%
5	<u>United States</u>	19,380.43	6.25%

Source: FDI in India Statistics

Military Cooperation

Mauritius is part of India's security grid including Coastal Surveillance Radar (CSR) station of Indian Navy's National Command Control Communication Intelligence network.

Link:

<http://newsonair.nic.in/News?title=Mission-Sagar%3A-INS-Kesari-returns-to-Port-Louis-of-Mauritius-to-embark-Indian-Navy-Medical-Team&id=391320#:~:text=Mission%20Sagar%3A%20INS%20Kesari%20returns%20to%20Port%20Louis%20of%20Mauritius,embark%20Indian%20Navy%20Medical%20Team&text=As%20part%20of%20Mission%20Sagar,Port%20Louis%20on%2023rd%20May>

⋮

Ultra Swachh for disinfection of PPEs and other materials

Question: Which of the following organization of India has developed Ultra Swachh which will be used for disinfection of PPEs and other materials?

- (a) ICMR
- (b) IIT Kanpur
- (c) DRDO
- (d) Indian Railways

Answer: (c)

Related facts

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed a disinfection unit named Ultra Swachh to disinfect a wide range of materials, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), electronics items, fabrics, etc.

- It has been developed by Delhi based DRDO laboratory; Institute of Nuclear Medicine & Allied Sciences (INMAS) with industry partner M/s Gel Craft Healthcare Private Ltd, Ghaziabad.
- Major highlights of the system:
- The system uses an advanced oxidative process comprising of multiple barrier disruption approach using Ozonated Space Technology for disinfection.
- The system is double layered with specialised Ozone sealant technology assuring trapping of ozone for the necessary disinfection cycle. It also has catalytic converter to ensure environment friendly exhaust i.e. only oxygen and water.
- The system is in compliance with International Standards of Industrial, Occupational, Personal and Environmental Safety.
- The Ultra Swachh comes in two variants namely Ozonated Space and Trinetra Technology. Trinetra technology is the combination of Ozonated space and radical dispenser. Treatment is optimised with automation for quick disinfection cycle.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1628355>

CHAMPIONS: Technology Platform to empower MSMEs

Question: Who has launched the technology platform named Champions to MSMEs on June 1, 2020?

- (a) Nitin Gadkari
- (b) Nirmala Sitharaman
- (c) Narendra Modi
- (d) Narendra Singh Tomar

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the technology platform CHAMPIONS which stands for Creation and Harmonious Application of Modern Processes for Increasing the Output and National Strength on June 1, 2020.
- This portal is developed for making the smaller units big by solving their grievances, encouraging, supporting, helping and handholding.
- This ICT based system is set up to help the MSMEs in present difficult situation and also to handhold them to become national and international champions.
- Major objective of CHAMPIONS:
- Grievance Redressal: To resolve the problems of MSMEs including those of finance, raw materials, labor, regulatory permissions etc particularly in the Covid created difficult situation;
- To help them capture new opportunities: including manufacturing of medical equipments and accessories like PPEs, masks, etc and supply them in National and International markets;
- To identify and encourage the sparks: i.e. the potential MSMEs who are able to withstand the current situation and can become national and international champions.

- It is a technology packed control room-cum-management information system. It is also fully integrated on real time basis with GOI's main grievances portal CPGRAMS and MSME Ministry's own other web based mechanisms.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1628317>

Sports

Football

India bags right to host Women's Asian Cup 2022

Question: Which country will host Women's Asian Cup 2022?

- (a) India
- (b) Chinese Taipei
- (c) Bangladesh
- (d) Uzbekistan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In Football, India has bagged the right to host the Women's Asian Cup 2022.
- This is the first time that India will be hosting the event since 1979, in which India had finished as the runner-ups.
- The tournament will feature 12 teams, expanded from the previous slot of eight teams. India will qualify directly as hosts.
- The event will also serve as the final qualification tournament for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- Japan is the defending champion.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Football%3a-India-bags-right-to-host-Women%26%2339%3bs-Asian-Cup-2022&id=390499>

Short Notes

Personalities

Mícheál Martin

Question: On 27 June 2020, Mícheál Martin became the Prime Minister of which country?

(a) Ireland (b) Mexico (c) Poland (d) Netherlands

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- Mícheál Martin has been elected Ireland's Taoiseach or Prime Minister on June 27 2020.
- He replaced Leo Varadkar.
- He has been the leader of the Fianna Fáil party since 2011.
- Mícheál Martin will lead a three-party coalition consisting of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green Party.
- Former Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, leader of Fine Gael Party, became the Deputy Prime Minister of the country.
- Under an agreement struck by the parties, Martin will lead the country until December 2022. Afterwards, he will be replaced by Leo Varadkar.

Links: <https://www.euronews.com/2020/06/27/ireland-to-form-new-coalition-government-with-micheal-martin-as-taoiseach>

First woman Chief Secretary of Punjab

Question: Who became the first woman Chief Secretary of Punjab?

- (a) Aruna Sundararajan
(b) Vini Mahajan
(c) Smita Sabharwal
(d) Ritu Maheshwari

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Vini Mahajan became the first woman bureaucrat in the history of Punjab to be elevated to the top post of the state's Chief Secretary.
- She is a 1987-batch IAS officer.
- She took charge replacing Karan Avtar Singh.
- Also, she was the first woman Deputy Commissioner in Punjab when she was appointed as DC, Ropar, in 1995.

Links: <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/punjab-gets-its-first-woman-chief-secy-vini-mahajan-6478266/>

Question: Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan was appointed the Head of the National Science Foundation of which country?

- a. Japan
- b. Australia
- c. America
- d. Germany

Answer:(c)

Related facts:

- Eminent Indian-American scientist Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan was appointed as the Director of the National Science Foundation.
- He is currently the Executive Vice President and the Chief Research and Innovation Officer at the Arizona State University.
- He would replace France Cordova.
- The NSF is a top American body supporting fundamental research in non-medical fields of science and engineering.

Links: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-senate-confirms-indian-american-scientist-sethuraman-panchanathan-as-head-of-national-science-foundation/article31875976.ece>

Hamza Koya

Question: Hamza Koya died of COVID-19 in Kerala.He was-

- a. Footballer
- b. Cricketer
- c. Politician
- d. Actor

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Former Indian footballer Hamza Koya has died of COVID-19 in Kerala.He was 61.
- He was Indian team member in Nehru trophy.
- He had also represented Maharashtra at the Santhosh Trophy.
- Rovers Cup,Durand Cup,F.A. Shield,Federation Cup,Kalinga Cup,D C M Trophy are the other prominent football tournaments in India.

Links: <http://newsonair.com/News?title=Former-India-footballer-Hamza-Koya-died-of-COVID-19-in-Kerala&id=390583>

Question : Who is Pralay Mondal?

- (a) Newly appointed President of CSB(Catholic Syrian Bank)
- (b) Newly appointed CEO of Microsoft
- (c) Newly appointed Chairman of Sebi
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts**Context**

- Private sector lender CSB Bank today(19th June, 2020) announced that its board has appointed Pralay Mondal as the organization's President (Retail, SME, Operations and IT).

Joining month

- He is expected to join the private sector lender in September 2020.
- Past organisations& Experience
- Pralay Mondal has recently tendered his resignation from his current position as executive director and head of retail banking at Axis Bank.
- Before joining Axis Bank, he was the Senior Group President and Head of Retail and Business Banking at Yes Bank.
- Prior to that he had a 12 years' stint at HDFC Bank and was earlier associated with Standard Chartered Bank, Wipro InfoTech and Colgate Palmolive.
- He has around 30 years of banking experience across multiple business and functions including retail assets, retail liabilities, business banking, products and technology.

Brief Intro

- Mr. Mondal is an graduate from IIT, Kharagpur and a management graduate from IIM, Calcutta.

CSB Bank

- CSB Bank is one of the oldest private sector banks in India, with a strong base in Kerala along with significant presence in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.
- The Bank offers a wide range of products and services to its overall customer base of 1.5 million as on March 31, 2020.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/axis-banks-pralay-mondal-to-join-csb/article31872705.ece>

Urjit Patel

Question: Consider the following statements with respect to NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC FINANCE AND POLICY (NIPFP):

- (1) NIPFP is an autonomous body under Ministry of Finance.
- (2) It maintains an independent non-government character and pursues research in public policy

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of these

Answer:(b)

Context:

- Almost 18 months after his early exit as Reserve Bank of India Governor, Urjit Patel has been appointed as the chairman of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), India's premier economic think tank.
- **Facts:**
- NIPFP is an autonomous body set up jointly by the Ministry of Finance, the erstwhile Planning Commission, and several state governments.
- It maintains an independent non-government character and pursues research in public policy, advising the Central government as well as states.
- It was founded in 1976 and is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- NIPFP's Governing Council includes the Revenue Secretary, Economic Affairs Secretary and the Chief Economic Advisor from the Union Finance Ministry, besides representatives from Niti Aayog, RBI and three state governments.

Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/urjit-patel-is-back-as-chief-of-key-economic-think-tank-6467265/#:~:text=Almost%2018%20months%20after%20his,NIPFP%20for%20almost%20six%20years.>

Sunil Rayan

Question : Who is Sunil Rayan ?

- (a) Newly appointed president and head of Disney+ Hotstar India
- (b) Newly appointed CEO of JioCinema
- (c) Newly appointed chairman of Netflix
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Disney+Hotstar is a streaming service provider in India.
- It has recently (June,2020) appointed Sunil Rayan as president and head.
- Since former Hotstar CEO Ajit Mohan left the company in 2018 to head Facebook's India operations, the company had primarily been managed by its Star and Disney India chairman Uday Shankar.
- Former Star and Disney India managing director Sanjay Gupta had joined Google as country manager and vice-president of sales and operations for India last November.

Rayan : profile

- Rayan comes from Google where he was managing director for Google Cloud for Games.
- At Google, Rayan helped oversee product, engineering and business development strategies.
- Before that, he was managing director for the mobile app advertising business, associate principal at American management consulting firm McKinsey & Co with expertise in sales force productivity, sales growth and technology-enabled selling topics and software engineer at IT service management company iGate Mastech.

Over-the-top media services in india

- There are currently about 40 providers of over-the-top media services (OTT) in India, which distribute streaming media over the Internet.
- In fiscal year 2018, the OTT market in India was worth ₹2,150 crore (₹21.5 billion, US\$303 million as of 2018), and its value grew to ₹35 billion in 2019.
- According to a KPMG report, the average time spent by Indian subscribers on various OTT platforms is 20–50 minutes.
- According to KPMG Media and Entertainment Report 2018, the Indian OTT market is expected to grow 45 percent to reach ₹138 billion by the end of fiscal 2023.

Hotstar

- Hotstar, (now Disney+ Hotstar), is the most subscribed-to OTT platform in India, owned by Star India as of 2018, with around 150 million active users and over 350 million downloads.
- According to Hotstar's India Watch Report 2018, 96% of watch time on Hotstar comes from videos longer than 20 minutes, while one-third of Hotstar subscribers watch television shows.

Link:

<https://www.livemint.com/industry/media/disney-hotstar-appoints-google-s-sunil-rayan-as-president-and-head-11592580710912.html>

Shobha Sekhar

Question: Which Indian origin musician was announced to be awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia?

(a) Shobha Sekhar (b) Usha Ganguly (c) Devika Thakur (d) Deepa Mehta

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- In June 2020, Indian musician Shobha Sekhar was announced to be conferred the Medal of the Order of Australia.
- She is the founder of Kalakruthi, music organisation in Australia.
- She was selected for the Medal of the Order for his services to the community and the country.
- The award recognises outstanding Australians — ordinary people, who do extraordinary things for their local community and for Australia.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/music/australian-honour-for-indian-musician/article31802213.ece>

Pankaj Tripathi

Question: Who became the brand ambassador of Bihar Khadi in June 2020?

(a) Pankaj Tripathi (b) Manoj Tiwari (c) Shweta Tiwari (d) Prakash Jha

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In June 2020, famous Bollywood actor Pankaj Tripathi was made the brand ambassador of Bihar Khadi by the Bihar government.
- He hails from Gopalganj District of Bihar.
- He will promote Bihar Khadi and the country's largest Khadi Mall in Patna.
- Madhubani Khadi of the state is being promoted throughout the country.

Links:

<https://zeenews.india.com/hindi/india/bihar-jharkhand/actor-pankaj-tripathi-appointed-brand-ambassador-of-khadi-mall-in-bihar/695639>

Kathryn D. Sullivan

Question: In June 2020, who became the world's first woman to reach the deepest known spot,the Challenger Deep in Mariana Trench?

(a) Sally Ride (b) Margaret H. Wright (c) Shannon W. Lucid (d) Kathryn D. Sullivan

Answer :(d)

Related facts:

- Former NASA astronaut and geologist, Kathryn D. Sullivan became the first woman to reach the deepest known spot in the planet, called the Challenger Deep in the Mariana Trench.
- She is also the first American woman to walk in space in 1984.
- Also, she became the only person to walk-in space and descend to the deepest point.

The Mariana Trench:

- The Mariana Trench is a crescent shaped deepest oceanic trench in the world.
- It is located in the western Pacific Ocean about 200 kilometres east of the Mariana Islands
- The Challenger Deep, in the southern end of the Mariana Trench (sometimes called the Marianas Trench), is the deepest spot in the ocean.

Links:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidbressan/2020/06/09/geologist-and-former-nasa-astronaut-becomes-first-woman-to-reach-earths-deepest-point/#1bbfb6486c1d>

Anmol Narang

Question: Who became the first Sikh woman to graduate from US Military Academy in June 2020?

(a) Deepa Narang (b) Anmol Narang (c) Anjali Singh (d) Neha Bhatia

Answer:(b)

Related facts:

- In June 2020, Anmol Narang became the first observant Sikh to graduate from the United States (US) Military Academy at West Point, New York.
- She did a year of undergraduate study at the Georgia Institute of Technology before transferring to West Point.
- She obtained a degree in nuclear engineering.
- She was born in Roswell, Georgia.

Links:

<https://swarajyamag.com/insta/anmol-narang-becomes-first-observant-sikh-to-graduate-from-us-military-academy-grandfather-had-served-in-indian-army>

Anand Mohan Zutshi ‘Gulzar’ Dehlvi

Question: On June 12, 2020, Anand Mohan Zutshi ‘Gulzar’ Dehlvi passed away. He was-

(a) Urdu poet (b) Hindi poet (c) Telugu poet (d) Odia poet

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- On June 12, 2020, veteran Urdu poet Anand Mohan Zutshi ‘Gulzar’ Dehlvi passed away. He was 93.
- He was the editor of Science ki Duniya, the first Urdu science magazine published by the Government of India in 1975.
- He is credited with establishing Urdu schools across the country.
- He was also associated with the independence movement.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/urdu-poet-gulzar-dehlvi-dies-days-after-recovering-from-covid-19/article31815510.ece>

Sushant Singh Rajput

Question: On June 14, 2020, famous Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput passed away. Which was his first film in a leading role?

(a) Kedarnath (b) MS Dhoni-The Untold Story (c) Raabta (d) Kai Po Che!

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Famous Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput passed away on 14 June 2020. He was 34.
- According to Mumbai Police, he committed suicide at his home in Bandra.
- He was born on 21 January 1986 in Patna, Bihar.
- He started his career with serial 'Kis Desh Mein Hai Meraa Dil', but got recognition from Ekta Kapoor's 'Pavitra Rishta'.
- He made his Bollywood debut with "Kai Po Che!" released in year 2013.
- He got massive fame for his role in 2016 hit movie 'MS Dhoni: The Untold Story'.
- Afterwards, he starred in 'Shuddh Desi Romance', 'PK', 'Raabta', 'Kedarnath' and 'Chhichhore'.

Links:

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

New Chief of Staff of Eastern Naval Command

Question: Who took over as the new Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command (ENC) on June 12, 2020?

(a) Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta
(b) Vice Admiral Vikram Singh
(c) Vice Admiral Devendra Pathak
(d) Vice Admiral K.N. Thakur

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On June 12, 2020, Vice Admiral Biswajit Dasgupta assumed the charge as Chief of Staff, Eastern Naval Command (ENC), Visakhapatnam.
- He succeeded Vice Admiral SN Ghormade.
- Earlier he was the Controller Personnel Services at Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (Navy) at New Delhi.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1631160>

Renjith Kumar

Question: Which Indian has been honored with NASA Distinguished Service Medal?

(a) Renjith Kumar (b) Shekhar Sharma (c) Parag Agarwal (d) Rahul Sachan

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Indian aerospace entrepreneur Renjith Kumar was awarded the 'NASA Distinguished Service Medal'.
- He was given this honor for his service to NASA through executive leadership, engineering contribution, technical excellence and customer satisfaction.
- He has been associated with NASA for almost 30 years and has contributed significantly in redesigning the International Space Stations (ISS).
- He is CEO Emeritus of the Virginia based Analytical Mechanics Associates(AMA).
- He is the only second Indian to receive this honor.
- Earlier, RK Chetty Pandipati received this award in the year 2002.

Links:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/2020/jun/08/keralite-honoured-by-nasa-with-nasa-distinguished-service-medal-2153584.html>

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw Wins EY World Entrepreneur of the Year 2020 Award

Question: Who has been named EY World Entrepreneur of the Year 2020?

(a) Mukesh Ambani (b) Isha Ambani (c) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw (d) Rishad Premji

Answer:(c)

Related facts:

- Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Executive Chairperson of Biocon Ltd has been named the EY World Entrepreneur of the Year 2020 (WEOY).
- She is the First Woman Entrepreneur from India and third Indian to win this Award.
- Also, she is the Second woman worldwide to hold this prestigious title, following Olivia Lum of Hyflux Limited, Singapore, who won the award in 2011.
- Uday Kotak of Kotak Mahindra Bank (2014) and Narayana Murthy of Infosys Technologies Limited (2005) are the other world title winners from India.
- Biocon Limited is an Indian biopharmaceutical company based in Bangalore, India.

Links:

https://www.ey.com/en_gl/news/2020/06/dr-kiran-mazumdar-shaw-from-india-named-ey-world-entrepreneur-of-the-year-2020#:~:text=Dr.%20Kiran%20Mazumdar%2DShaw%2C,ying%20for%20the%20world%20title.

M. Nethra

Question: Who has been appointed Goodwill Ambassador (GWA) for the Poor by the United Nations Association for Development and Peace (UNADAP)?

(a) M. Nethra (b) Shikha Gaikwad (c) Charu Dutta (d) Barkha Sharma

Answer: (a)

Related facts

- A 13-year-old girl M Nethra was appointed as 'Goodwill Ambassador (GWA) for the Poor' by the United Nations Association for Development and Peace (UNADAP).

- She has been honored in due recognition of her philanthropy to spend his savings of Rs 5 lakh on the hapless migrant labourers, who are hit hard by the Coronavirus-induced lockdown.
- In this position she will get the opportunity to address the upcoming Civil Society forums at the UN conferences in New York and Geneva.

Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 1-No Poverty:

- The United Nation General Assembly has proposed Goal 1 as No Poverty.
- In this regard it targets to eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030.
- Globally, 647 million people still live in extreme poverty.

Key findings related to India:

- In India 27.5 percent of the population is multidimensionally poor. This can be interpreted as one in every four persons in India is poor.
- 38.4 percent children under 5 year are stunted.
- 35.8 percent children under five years are underweight.

Links:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/good-news/2020/jun/06/madurai-girl-declared-goodwill-ambassador-for-the-poor-2152838.html>

Uday Kotak

Question: Who has been appointed as President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)?

(a) Uday Kotak (b) Sunil Mittal (c) Vikram Kirloskar (d) Aditya Birla

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Uday Kotak, CEO and MD of Kotak Mahindra Bank has been appointed President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) for the year 2020-21.
- He will replace Vikram Kirloskar.
- Also, Sanjiv Bajaj has been appointed as Vice President of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

About CII:

- Founded in 1895, CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization.
- It works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.
- It is headquartered in New Delhi.

Links:

<https://www.cii.in/PressreleasesDetail.aspx?enc=v3+1p/W0x3xhtmlcOKaoW+bLooDrKvzj2TVNWRmgcnXs=>

Question: On 3 June 2020, Indian Foreign Service officer Raveesh Kumar was appointed Ambassador of India to which country?

(a) UK (b) Singapore (c) Finland (d) France

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 3 June 2020, Ravish Kumar was appointed the Ambassador of India to Finland.
- Presently he is Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- He has also been a spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs.
- Capital of Finland – Helsinki
- Finland's Prime Minister – Sana Marin(world's youngest Prime Minister)

Links:

<https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32721/Shri+Raveesh+Kumar+appointed+as+the+next+Ambassador+of+India+to+Finland>

Next High Commissioner of India to UK

Question: Who has been appointed the next High Commissioner of India to United Kingdom on 2 June 2020?

(a) Anurag Srivastava (b) Vikas Swarup (c) Gaitri I. Kumar (d) T.S. Tirumurti

Answer:(c)

Related facts

- On 2 June 2020, Central Government has appointed Gaitri I. Kumar, a senior Indian Foreign Service officer, as the new High Commissioner of India to the United Kingdom.
- Presently, she is serving as Indian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union.
- She will succeed Ruchi Ghanashyam.

Links:

<https://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/32718/Ms+Gaitri+I+Kumar+appointed+as+the+next+High+Commissioner+of+India+to+the+United+Kingdom>

Basu Chatterjee

Question: Basu Chatterjee passed away on 4 June 2020. He was-

(a) Litterateur (b) Historian (c) Mathematician (d) Filmmaker

Answer :(d)

Related facts:

- Legendary Filmmaker Basu Chatterjee passed away on 4 June 2020.
- He worked in the Hindi and Bengali cinema.
- He is best known for his films Sara Akash, Chhoti Si Baat, Chitchor, Rajnigandha, Ek Ruka Hua Faisla.

- Apart from this, he has also directed famous TV series like Byomkesh Bakshi and Rajni for Doorsarshan.
- In 1992, he had won the National Film Award for Best Film on Family Welfare for his film Durga.

Links:

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

Awards & Honors

Word Food Prize 2020

Question: On June 11, 2020, who was announced to be conferred Word Food Prize 2020?

(a) Dr. Sanjay Rajaram (b) Dr. Rattan Lal (c) Dr. Subra Suresh (d) Dr. Dinesh Lal

Answer:(b)

Related facts:

- Eminent Indian-American pedologist (soil scientist) Rattan Lal has been conferred the 2020 World Food Prize.
- He will be awarded for developing and mainstreaming a soil-centric approach to increase food production that restores and conserves natural resources and mitigates climate change.
- He is a Distinguished University Professor of Soil Science and is also the Founding Director of the Carbon Management and Sequestration Centre at The Ohio State University (OSU).

About the World Food Prize:

- The World Food Prize is the foremost international honor which recognizes the achievements of individuals who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity or availability of food in the world.
- The World Food Prize is often referred to as the “Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture”.
- It was founded by Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1970), also considered as Father of the Green Revolution.
- It was first awarded in 1987 with M. S. Swaminathan of India being the first recipient.
- The Prize carries cash award of \$250,000.

Links:

https://www.worldfoodprize.org/en/laureates/2020_lal/

Richard Dawkins Award, 2020

Question: Which Indian was announced to be conferred the Richard Dawkins Award on 7 June 2020?

(a) Javed Akhtar (b) Akshay Kumar (c) Sachin Tendulkar (d) A.R. Rahman

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On June 7, 2020, India's famous Poet, lyricist and writer Javed Akhtar was announced to be conferred the Richard Dawkins Award 2020.
- He became the first Indian to receive this award.
- He has been conferred for critical thinking, holding religious dogma upto scrutiny, advancing human progress and humanist values.

About Richard Dawkins Award:

- In 2003, Atheist Alliance of America created the Richard Dawkins Award to honor an outstanding atheist whose contributions raised public awareness of the nontheist life stance.
- This award is named after Richard Dawkins, an English evolutionary biologist.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/entertainment/javed-akhtar-first-indian-to-receive-richard-dawkins-award/article31775080.ece>

Indian to win regional award for Asia in Commonwealth Short Story Prize

Question: Who has won Regional Award for Asia In 2020 Commonwealth Short Story Prize?

(a) Kritika Pandey (b) Nikita Singh (c) Meghna Pant (d) Sudeep Nagarkar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Indian writer, Kritika Pandey has been conferred Commonwealth Short Story Prize 2020 for the Asia region.
- She was honored for her story "The Great Indian Tee and Snakes".
- The story is about a Hindu girl falling in love with a Muslim man trying to navigate the idea of love in an era of hatred and prejudice.
- The Commonwealth Short Story Prize is awarded since 2012 for the best piece of unpublished short fiction (2000 – 5000 words).
- The prize is given to five regional winners from Asia, Pacific, Africa, Canada and Europe, and Caribbean.

Links:

<https://www.commonwealthwriters.org/2020-cssp-regional-winners/>

Operations & Campaign

Roadmap for NCERT for the year 2020-21

Question: Which of the following mission is decided to be setup in the Education sector under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan?

- (a) Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission
- (b) Foundational Cultural and Civilizationa; Mission
- (c) Online Learning Mission
- (d) None of the above.

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- NCERT has been directed by the Ministry of Human Resource and Development in view of the decision of setting up of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy Mission under Atma Nirbhar Bharat, and in view of the focus of Samagra Shiksha towards a Learning Outcome centric approach.
- For this, MHRD has released the roadmap for NCERT for the year 2020-21 on June 24, 2020.
- The Learning Outcomes (LOs): For the implementation of the learning outcomes for grades 1-10 prepared by NCERT:
- Infographics/posters/presentations explaining each of the Learning Outcomes, for each subject and for each grade for classes 1 to 5 to be completed by October, 2020; for classes 6 to 12 by March, 2021.
- Online Teacher training courses for teachers of each grade for classes 1 to 5 in phases by December, 2020; for classes 6 to 12 in phases by June, 2021.
- On the basis of NAS, 2017, hard spots have been identified by NCERT. Material to demystify hard spots to be prepared for classes 1 to 5 by December, 2020; for the rest of the classes by March, 2021.
- At least 10 items/questions each to measure each Learning Outcome of each subject for each grade in at-least two levels of proficiency to be prepared for classes 1 to 5 by November, 2020; for the rest of the classes by March, 2021.
- New National Curriculum Framework (NCF)
- The new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for School Education has also been initiated. NCERT will be expected to make changes in the textbooks in accordance with the new NCF. Subject experts will initiate this process for school education, and give interim report by December 2020.

- While redesigning textbooks, it is to be ensured that nothing but the core content is placed in textbooks. The new NCF is expected to be ready by March 2021.
- Under AtmaNirbhar Bharat, for PM E-Vidya, NCERT is also expected to prepare content for Class 1 – 12 for SWAYAM PRABHA channels (1 class 1 channel) and start the channels by August this year.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1633937>

Commission & Committee

Facebook's investment in Jio Platforms

Question : CCI (Competition Commission of India) approved Facebook's purchase of a stake in Jio Platforms for

- (a) Rs43,574crore
- (b) Rs 32,000 crore
- (c)Rs 25,000 crore
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- The Competition Commission of India has recently (June, 2020) approved acquisition of 9.99 per cent stake in Jio Platforms by Jaadhu Holdings.
- **Investment/Acquisition amount**
Acquisition amount of 9.99% stake in Jio Platforms is Rs 43,574 crore.

Significance

- The deal will strengthen the social media company's presence in its largest market and help Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) pare debt.
- The regulatory approval came about two months after the two companies signed a deal that was touted to be the largest investment for a minority stake by a technology company anywhere in the world.
- It was also said to be the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) in the technology sector in India.
- The deal may open up the debt-laden telecom sector for other technology and Internet players.

Jaadhu Holdings

- Jaadhu is an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Facebook.
- It is a newly incorporated company for med in March this year under the laws of the State of Delaware in United States.

JioPlatforms

- It is a subsidiary of Reliance India Limited.
- Jio Platforms houses RIL's telecom business under Reliance Jio Infocomm, the largest in the country with nearly 400 million subscribers, besides other digital properties and investments.

Recent Investments in JioPlatforms

- Facebook was the first of 10 global entities that are buying a total 24.70% stake in Jio Platforms for Rs 1.16 lakh crore.
- These investments, along with Rs 53,124 crore from a rights issue, are helping Mukesh Ambani achieve his aim of making RIL net debt free.
- The other nine investors include Abu Dhabi's two largest sovereign investment arms, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and Mubadala, along with private equity firms Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic, KKR, TPG, L Catterton and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund.

Link:

<https://m.economictimes.com/tech/internet/cci-okays-facebooks-investment-in-jio-platforms/articleshow/76561345.cms>

<http://newsonair.nic.in/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=39215>

Acquisition by MacRitchie

Question : Competition Commission of India became fully functional in —

(a) May 2000 (b) April 1998 (c) June 1996 (d) None of the above

Answer : (d)

Related facts

- The Competition Commission of India has recently (June 2020) approved the acquisition of certain stakes in 91Streets Media Technologies, Ascent Health and Wellness Solutions, and API Holdings by MacRitchie Investments.
- As per a combination notice filed with the Competition Commission of India (CCI), the proposed transaction is a "financial investment for MacRitchie, which is taking place in ordinary course of business."
It would provide an opportunity for MacRitchie to invest and participate in the long-term growth of the market for wholesale sale and distribution of drugs in India.
- Besides, 91Streets Media Technologies, Ascent Health and Wellness Solutions and API Holding will use this financing to deepen their distribution network across India and build innovative technology-first products to connect the entire ecosystem and give affordable access to healthcare.

Competition Commission of India

- Competition Commission of India is a statutory body of the Government of India responsible for enforcing The Competition Act, 2002 throughout India and to prevent activities that have an appreciable adverse effect on competition in India.
- It was established on 14 October 2003. It became fully functional in May 2009 with Dhanendra Kumar as its first Chairman.

- On 8 February 2013, CCI imposed a penalty of ₹522 million (US\$7.3 million) on the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for misusing its dominant position.
- On 25 August 2014, CCI imposed a fine of ₹2544 crores on 14 Indian car manufacturers for failure to provide branded spare parts and diagnostic tools to independent repairers, hampering their ability to repair and maintain certain car models. The companies fined were Maruti Suzuki, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors, Toyota, Honda, Volkswagen, Fiat, Ford, General Motors, Nissan, Hindustan Motors, Mercedes Benz and Skoda.
- In May 2019, the commission ordered an antitrust probe against Google for abusing its dominant position with Android to block market rivals. This probe was ordered on basis of the analysis of a similar case in the EU where Google was found guilty and fined.

Link:

<https://www.businessinsider.in/business/news/macritchies-stake-buy-in-91streets-ascent-health-wellness-solutions-api-holdings-gets-cci-nod/articleshow/76342440.cms>

Planning & Project

PM FME Scheme

Question : Who launched the PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME) scheme on 29th June 2020 ?

- (a) Harsimrat Kaur Badal
- (b) Smriti Irani
- (c) Menaka Gandhi
- (d) none of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Minister for Food Processing Industries Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal launched the PM Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM FME) scheme on 29th June 2020 as a part of “Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”.
- The importance of these local units and their role has been amply emphasised by the Hon’ble Prime Minister in his Address to the Nation on 12.5.2020.
- Union Minister said that the Scheme would generate total investment of Rs 35,000 crore and generate 9 lakh skilled and semi-skilled employment and benefit 8 lakh units through access to information, training, better exposure and formalization.

Highlights of the scheme

- **Implemention period** – Five years from 2020-21 to 2024-25 with an outlay of Rs 10,000 crore.
- **Sponsorship** – The expenditure under the scheme would to be shared in 60:40 ratio between Central and State Governments, in 90:10 ratio with North Eastern and Himalayan States, 60:40 ratio with UTs with legislature and 100% by Centre for other UTs.

- **Approach** – The Scheme adopts One District One Product (ODODP) approach to reap benefit of scale in terms of procurement of inputs, availing common services and marketing of products.
- **Subsidy** – Existing Individual micro food processing units desirous of upgradation of their unit can avail credit-linked capital subsidy @35% of the eligible project cost with a maximum ceiling of Rs.10 lakh per unit.
- **Seed Capital** – Seed capital @ Rs. 40,000/- per SHG member would be provided for working capital and purchase of small tools. FPOs/ SHGs/ producer cooperatives would be provided credit linked grant of 35% for capital investment along the value chain.
- Support would be provided through credit linked grant @ 35% for development of common infrastructure including common processing facility, lab, warehouse, cold storage, packaging and incubation center through FPOs/SHGs/cooperatives or state owned agencies or private enterprise to use by micro units in the cluster.
- Support for marketing & branding would be provided to develop brands for micro units and groups with 50% grant at State or regional level which could benefit large number of micro units in clusters.
- Training provider – NIFTEM and IIFPT, two academic and research institutions under MOFPI along with State Level Technical Institutions selected by the States would be provided support for training of units, product development, appropriate packaging and machinery for micro units.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1635088>

Second National Ganga River Basin Project

Question : The World Bank recently enhanced its support for the Government of India's program to rejuvenate the Ganga River with a __ operation.

(a)400 million dollar (b) 200 million dollar (c)100 million dollar (d)None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- Ganga river basin is the home to more than 500 million people.
World Bank recently enhanced its support for rejuvenating the Ganga river.

Second National Ganga River Basin Project (SNGRBP)& World Bank

- The Second National Ganga River Basin Project (SNGRBP) has been approved by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors on 25th June, 2020.
- Project will support the government's Namami Gange program and its long-term vision for controlling pollution in the river and restoring its water quality.
- The World Bank has been supporting the government's efforts since 2011 through the ongoing National Ganga River Basin Project, which helped set up the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) as the nodal agency to manage the river, and financed sewage treatment infrastructure in several riverside towns and cities.

Loan amount

- The Second National Ganga River Basin Project comprises a loan in the amount of \$381 million and a proposed Guarantee in the amount of up to \$19 million.
- The variable spread loan has a maturity of 18.5 years including a grace period of 5 years.
- The Guarantee Expiry Date will be 18 years from the Guarantee Effectiveness Date.

Link:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2020/06/24/world-bank-enhances-support-for-rejuvenating-the-ganga>

Goa Maritime Cluster

Question : For which purpose Goa government has allotted land to MSME units ?

- (a) for setting up Goa Maritime Cluster
- (b) for setting up palm oil plant
- (c) for setting up Goa handloom Cluster
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- The Goa government has recently (June, 2020) allotted land to the consortium of 49 Goan MSME units for setting up Goa Maritime Cluster.

Purpose

- The cluster aims at creating world class facilities for ship designers, ship and boat builders, ship repairers and marine equipment manufacturers.

Some important facts

- Ships built in Goa are serving the entire coastline of India and are being exported to European and Asia- Pacific regions.
- Goa holds one of the largest and most competent force in terms of skill, manpower and experience in maritime field in the form of 150 strong enterprises spread over two generations

Link:

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/govt-allots-land-to-msme-units-to-set-up-go-maritime-cluster/1879287>

Devika And Puneja Bridges Inaugurated

Question: DEVIKA AND PUNEJA BRIDGES recently inaugurated is in which state/Union Territory?

- (a) Meghalaya (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Jammu and Kashmir (d) Ladakh

Answer:(c)

Context:

- Puneja in Udhampur and Doda districts respectively in Jammu and Kashmir.

- **Border Road Organization:**
- The BRO in the last 4 to 5 years has constructed 200 bridges in the region. This includes the famous Atal Setu Cable Bridge.
- **Devika Bridge:** Apart from taking care of traffic congestion and developmental needs of the Udhampur town area, Devika Bridge will also help in smooth passage of Army convoys and vehicles.
- **Puneja Bridge:** The 50-meter-long Puneja Bridge was constructed by BRO at Bhaderwah in Doda District. Basoli-Bani-Bhaderwah road is a vital alternate link to the Doda, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah and Kashmir valley from Pathankot (Punjab) region without passing Jammu and Udhampur.

Link:

[https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1633953#:~:text=Union%20Minister%20of%20State%20\(Independent,in%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir%20through](https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1633953#:~:text=Union%20Minister%20of%20State%20(Independent,in%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir%20through)

Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana:

- (1) It's objective is to refinance collateral-free loans given by the lenders to small borrowers.
- (2) It has a feature of a Mudra Card which permits access to Working Capital through ATMs and Card Machines.

Which is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of these

Answer: (c) **Context:**

- Union Cabinet approved a scheme for interest subvention of 2% for a period of 12 months, to all Shishu loan accounts under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) to eligible borrowers.

Background

- Under PMMY, loans for income generating activities up to Rs. 50,000 are termed as Shishu loans.
- PMMY loans are extended by Member Lending Institutions viz. Scheduled Commercial Banks, Non-Banking Finance Companies and Micro Financial Institutions, registered with Mudra Ltd.

Eligibility:

- **The scheme will be extended to loans** which meet the following criteria – outstanding as on 31st March, 2020; and not in Non-Performing Asset (NPA) category, as per Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines, on 31st March 2020 and during the period of operation of the Scheme.

- **The interest subvention would be payable** for the months in which the accounts are not in NPA category including for the months that the account becomes a performing asset again, after turning NPA.

Implementation:

- The Scheme will be implemented through **the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** and will be in operation for 12 months.

Significance:

- The Scheme has been formulated as a specific response to an unprecedented situation and aims to alleviate financial stress for borrowers at the 'bottom of the pyramid' by reducing their cost of credit.
- It will incentivize people who will make regular repayments of loans.

PMMY scheme:

- Launched in April, 2015. The scheme's objective is to refinance collateral-free loans given by the lenders to small borrowers. Mudra's unique features include a Mudra Card which permits access to Working Capital through ATMs and Card Machines.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/government-approves-2-interest-subsidy-to-shishu-borrowers-under-mudra-joyna/articleshow/76554206.cms#:~:text=NEW%20DELHI%3A%20The%20Union%20Cabinet,50%2C000%20are%20given%20to%20beneficiaries.>

Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies' (DTEE) project launched

Question: International Transport Forum (ITF) of OECD has launched the Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies (DTEE) project in India on June 24, 2020. This project was launched in collaboration with?

- (a) Ministry of Finance
- (b) Ministry of Human Resource
- (c) NITI Aayog
- (d) National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The International Transport Forum (ITF) of OECD has launched 'Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies' (DTEE) project in India on 24 June 2020 in collaboration with NITI Aayog.
- The launch was held via a webinar and was inaugurated by ITF Secretary General Young Tae Kim and NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.
- This is a five-year project which will help India to develop a pathway towards low-carbon transport system through the development of modelling tools and policy scenarios.

- This is a very important and promising undertaking that will provide practical support for the Indian government for making the right choices on the way to a low-CO₂ transport system.
- Decarbonization of the transport sector would create a cleaner, healthier and more affordable future for everyone.
- Highlights of the project:
- The Decarbonizing Transport in India project will design a tailor-made transport emissions assessment framework for India providing a detailed understanding of current and future transport activity and the related CO₂ emissions as a basis for their decision-making.
- The ITF project team will work in close cooperation and coordination with India's government agencies, local decision-makers, researchers, experts, and civil society organisations.
- The India project is carried out in the wider context of the International Transport Forum's Decarbonizing Transport initiative. It is part of the Decarbonizing Transport in Emerging Economies family of projects, which supports transport decarbonization across different world regions.
- India, Argentina, Azerbaijan and Morocco are current participants. DTEE is a collaboration between the ITF and the Wuppertal Institute, supported by the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.
- CO₂ emission in India:
- CO₂ emitted per inhabitant in India was just about a twentieth of that of an average OECD country.
- But India's transport CO₂ emissions are likely to increase by almost 6% annually to 2030. India is actively taking various measures to tackle its emissions, including newer fuel emission norms as well as the promotion of electric vehicles in the country.
- NITI Aayog too is promoting electric vehicles and sustainable mobility through its 'National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage'.
- The transport sector of India is the third most greenhouse gas (GHG) emitting sector, where the major contribution comes from the road transport sector.
- Out of the total carbon dioxide emissions in India, 13% come from the transport sector. These emissions have more than tripled since 1990.
- The increasing motorization and demand for mobility in India have contributed to air pollution, congestion, as well as the increase of greenhouse gas emissions, in the urban area.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1634052>

Free Digital Learning Platform “Skills Build Reignite” launched

Question: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship has partnered with which of the following technological firm in launching Skills Build Reignite free digital learning platform?

(a) Microsoft (b) Infosys (c) IBM (d) Google

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Directorate General of Training (DGT), under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE), is responsible for implementing long term institutional training to the nation's youth through its network of training institutes and infrastructure.
- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in partnership with IBM has introducing the SkillsBuild Reignite and the SkillsBuild Innovation Camp on June 24, 2020.
- This project is launched to address the current skill gap in the country.
- Major highlights of the project:
- The SkillsBuild Reignite tends to provide job seekers and entrepreneurs, with access to free online coursework and mentoring support designed to help them reinvent their careers and businesses.
- Job seekers, individual business owners, entrepreneurs and any individual with learning aspirations can now tap into host of industry relevant content on topics including Artificial intelligence, Cloud, Data analytics and security to reskill and upskill themselves, at no cost.
- Its special feature is the personalized coaching for entrepreneurs, seeking advice to help establish or restart their small businesses as they begin to focus on recovery to emerge out of the COVID 19 pandemic.
- The SkillsBuild Innovation camp is a 10 week program which supports 100 hours of structured learning to learners who are interested in gaining hands-on project experience to enhance learning and are intent on building their network and enhance their employability.
- In November 2019, IBM India, in partnership with Directorate General of Training (DGT), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India, and its implementation partners, made the SkillsBuild online learning platform available to Indian students through Bharatskills (<https://bharatskills.gov.in>) of DGT.
- It currently has impacted 14,135 learners who have completed 40,000 of courses and 77,000 hours of e-learning. SkillsBuild has been rated as India's Top 10 online learning platform by National Skills Network.
- As per India Skill Report (2019), only 45.6% of the youth graduating from educational institutions are employable.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1633965>

Yukti 2.0

Question:Yukti 2.0 is an initiative of which ministry of government of India?

- (a) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- (b) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- (c) Ministry of Human Resource Development
- (d) Ministry of Women and Child Development

Answer : (c)

Context:

- Union Minister of Human Resource Development(MHRD) has launched 'YUKTI 2.0' (Young India Combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) Portal.

About portal:

- Earlier, the Minister had launched the YUKTI (Young India combating COVID with Knowledge, Technology and Innovation) web portal on 11 April, 2020.
- Ministry of HRD prepared the portal in view of Corona virus. Through this portal, the Ministry of HRD will endeavour to ensure that students, teachers and researchers in higher educational institutions are getting appropriate support to meet the requirements needed to advance their technologies and innovations.
- YUKTI 2.0 is logical extension of earlier version of 'YUKTI' to identify ideas relevant in COVID pandemic.
- However, preliminary innovations won't be showcased on this platform but only those which have commercialisation potential.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/hrd-minister-virtually-launches-yukti-2-0-for-higher-education-institutes/articleshow/76543487.cms>

JAL JEEVAN MISSION

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Jal Jeevan Mission :

1) Launched in 2019 to provide drinking water through individual household tap connections to all rural households by 2022.

2) It is being implemented by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

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

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

Answer: (b)

Related Fact:

Context:

The Ministry of Jal Shakti has asked for additional funds of Rs 82,000 crore from the 15th Finance Commission for the Jal Jeevan mission as only 18% of households are currently covered.

Launched Year: 2019

Aim: To provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections (HarGharJal) to all rural households by 2024.

Implementing Agency: It is being implemented by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation under the Jal Shakti Ministry.

About Jal Jeevan Mission:

- Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) envisages supply of 55 litres of water per person per day to every rural household through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) by 2024. JJM focuses on integrated demand and supply-side management of water at the local level.
- Creation of local infrastructure for source sustainability measures as mandatory elements, like rainwater harvesting, groundwater recharge and management of

household wastewater for reuse, would be undertaken in convergence with other government programmes/schemes.

- The Mission is based on a community approach to water and includes extensive Information, Education and Communication as a key component of the mission. JJM looks to create a jan andolan for water, thereby making it everyone's priority.

Funding Pattern:

The fund sharing pattern between the Centre and states is 90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States, 50:50 for other states, and 100% for Union Territories.

Operational guidelines for JJM:

For the implementation of JJM, following institutional arrangement has been proposed:

- National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM) at the Central level
- State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM) at the State level
- District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) at the District level
- Village Water Sanitation Committee (VWSC) at Village level

Every village will prepare a Village Action Plan (VAP) which will have three components:

- Water source & its maintenance
- Water supply and
- Greywater (domestic wastewater) management.

Link:

<http://jaljeevanmission.gov.in/>

Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana Common Review

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) :

- 1) It was launched on 2014 with the aim to translate the comprehensive vision of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar about an ideal Indian village into reality.
- 2) The distinct feature of this yojana is that it is demand driven, inspired by society and based on people's participation.

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

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

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:

Context:

A study commissioned by the Ministry of Rural Development has observed that the Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) has not made "any significant impact" and that "in the current format, it is not achieving the desired purpose".

About SAGY:

- Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) was launched in 2014 with the aim to translate the comprehensive vision of Mahatma Gandhi about an ideal Indian village into reality. Under SAGY, each Member of Parliament adopts a Gram Panchayat and guides its holistic progress giving importance for social development at par with infrastructure.

The goal is to develop three Adarsh Grams by March 2019, of which one would be achieved by 2016. Thereafter, five such Adarsh Grams (one per year) will be selected and developed by 2024.

By involving villagers and leveraging scientific tools, a village development plan is prepared under the leadership of Member of Parliament. The distinct feature of this Yojana is that it is:

- Demand Driven
- Inspired by Society
- Based on People's Participation

Identification of Adarsh gram:

A Gram Panchayat would be the basic unit. It will have a population of 3000-5000 in plain areas and 1000-3000 in hilly, tribal and difficult areas. In districts where this unit size is not available, Gram Panchayats approximating the desirable population size may be chosen.

The MP would be free to identify a suitable Gram Panchayat for being developed as Adarsh Gram, other than his/her own village or that of his/her spouse.

Link :

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pms-model-village-scheme-a-non-starter-finds-govt-audit/articleshow/76500983.cms>

PM-svaNidhi yojana

Question : PM-svaNidhi yojana stands for —

- (a) Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi
- (b) Prime Minister Station Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi
- (c) Prime Minister Supermarket Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM-svaNidhi) yojana is a Special Micro-Credit Facility for Street Vendors.

Implementation Agency

- An agreement has been signed between MoHUA and SIDBI, today (19 JUN 2020), in order to engage SIDBI as the Implementation Agency for PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi.

- As per the agreement, SIDBI will implement the PM SVANidhi Scheme under the guidance of MoHUA.
- It will also manage the credit guarantee to the lending institutions through Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).
- It will develop and maintain a customized and integrated IT Platform providing end-to-end solutions, including documentation of all the processes and workflows for an end-to-end solution, through a Portal and a Mobile App.
- It will leverage the network of lending Institutions like Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), Non-Bank Finance Companies (NBFCs), Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs), Co-operative Banks, Small Finance Banks (SFBs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), etc. for the Scheme implementation.
- With a view to ensure effective implementation, SIDBI shall also provide a Project Management Unit (PMU), comprising of domain experts in training/ capacity building, project and platform management, Information Education and Communication (IEC), banking, NBFC and MFI sectors etc.

PM SVANidhi

- Launching date – June 01, 2020.
- Working capital – Vendors can avail a working capital loan of up to Rs. 10,000, which is repayable in monthly instalments in the tenure of one year.
- Interest subsidy – On timely/ early repayment of the loan, an interest subsidy @ 7% per annum will be credited to the bank accounts of beneficiaries through DBT on quarterly basis.
- Cash back incentives – The scheme promotes digital transactions through cash back incentives up to an amount of Rs. 100 per month.
- First phase – 108 cities have been selected, in consultation with States/Uts, for saturation by September 2020.

Link :

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1632543>

Palm industry : Neera and Palmgur

Question : Dahanu is situated in which district of Maharashtra ?

(a) Palghar (b) Thane (c) Nasik (d) Jalgaon

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) on 16 June, 2020 rolled out a unique project to produce "Neera and Palmgur (jaggery)" which it expects has a huge potential to create employment in the country.

Place & project

- The project was launched at Dahanu in Palghar district of Maharashtra, a state with more than 50 lakh palm trees.

- The project has been rolled out at the initiative of MSME
The initiative will provide direct employment to 400 local traditional trappers.
- The project aims at promoting "Neera" as a substitute to soft drinks while also creating self-employment for tribals and traditional trappers.
- While launching the project, the KVIC distributed tool kits for extraction of Neera and making palmgur to 200 local artisans who were given seven days training.
- A tool kit worth Rs 15,000 comprises a food grade stainless steel kadhai (cooking utensil), perforated moulds, canteen burners and other equipment like knives, rope and axes for extraction of Neera.

Neera

- Neera, extracted from the palm trees before sunrise, is a nutrient-rich health drink consumed in many Indian states.
- However, due to lack of institutionalized marketing technique, the commercial production and large scale marketing of Neera has not commenced yet.
- A wide range of products like candies, milk chocolates, palm cola, ice-cream and traditional sweets can be produced from Neera if properly marketed.
- At present Palmgur Neera worth Rs 500 crore is traded in the country. The turnover is likely to increase manifold with commercial production of Neera.
- India has an abundance of palm fields in states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar that can make India a leading producer of Neera globally.

Palm oil Statistics

Table 4.27: State-wise Production of Crude Palm Oil (CPO)

(Quantity in Tonnes)											
State	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18(P)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Andhra Pradesh	38000	43593	57402	63487	97987	127570	161566	170478	193562	190999	234696
Karnataka	1037	1170	1118	1459	1740	1770	1736	2176	2538	2051	2224
Tamil Nadu	273	366	365	486	759	1035	820	1019	1222	1115	938
Gujarat	NA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	NA	NA	NA
Odisha	NA	476	589	871	2162	443	558	557	618	NA	NA
Goa	342	393	279	329	394	372	371	388	581	NA	NA
Tripura	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Assam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kerala	5750	7400	6600	6900	7500	7378	6303	6515	7015	5929	5191
Andaman & Nicobar	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mizoram	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	365	496	603	648
Telangana	0	4770	5100	5655	8494	6825	9373	10012	12499	8947	27275
Chhattisgarh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	45403	58167	71453	79187	119036	145393	180727	191510	218531	209644	270972

Source: Department of Agriculture, Cooperation & Farmers Welfare
P : Provisional NA- Not Available

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Link:

Urban Forest scheme

Question: Where is the Wajre Urban Forest Located?

a. Ahmedabad b. Bengluru c. Kohima d. Pune

Answer (d)

Related facts :

- On the occasion of World Environment Day(05 June 2020), the government announced implementation of the Nagar van scheme to develop 200 Urban Forests across the country in next five years.
- Urban forestry is an integrated concept of forest resource management to provide improved environment, pleasing and relaxing surroundings in an urban system.
- Urban Forest will revive the age old tradition of village forest in cities
The launch of ' Nagar Van' scheme / Urban Forest Scheme will provide opportunity to the states to manage urban ecosystems.

World Environment Day

- World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated on 5th June every year.
- Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change celebrates WED focusing on the theme declared by United Nation's Environment Programme (UNEP) and organizes several events.

This year's theme is 'Biodiversity'.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1629563>

National Jal Jeevan Mission: Annual action plan of Puducherry for FY 2020-21 approved

Que: Consider the following statements regarding Jal Jeevan Mission.

1. Jal Jeevan Mission envisages providing household tap connections in the rural areas of the country by 2024.
 2. Universal coverage of all rural households for safe access to potable drinking water is being ensured under this ambitious Mission.
- Which of the following above statements is/are correct.**
- a. Only 1 b. Only 2 c. Both 1 and 2 d. Neither 1 Nor 2

Answer (c)

Related facts

- Annual Action Plan of Puducherry for Financial Year 2020-21 was approved by National Jal Jeevan Mission, Govt of India on June 03,2020.
- Puducherry plans to provide household tap connections to remaining households in 2020-21.

Implementation of action plan

- Local community will play a pivotal role in planning, implementation, management, operation and maintenance of water supply systems in villages to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Local communities are encouraged to take responsibility of water supply systems in villages for regular upkeep and operation & maintenance.
- Under Jal Jeevan Mission, water quality testing laboratories at different levels are being established.
- Community is being involved for surveillance of water quality.

Background

- As announced by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in his last Independence Day speech, Jal Jeevan Mission envisages providing household tap connections in the rural areas of the country by 2024.
- A budget of Rs 3.60 lakh Crore has been allocated for this programme.
- Universal coverage of all rural households for safe access to potable drinking water is being ensured under this ambitious Mission.

Link :

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1629009>

Rozgar Setu for skilled worker

Question: Which state government launches Rozgar Setu scheme for skilled worker.

(a) Madhya Pradesh (b) Chattisgarh (c) Kerala (d) Uttar pardesh

Ans (a)

Related Facts:

Related fact:

- Madhya pradesh launches Rozgar Setu for skilled workers.
- The Rozgar Setu scheme will provide employment for migrant workers returning home. The scheme is to conduct a comprehensive survey on state population
- Madhya pradesh govt also planning to implement **swamitva yojana** launched by PM Modi at Panchayati raj day (24 april).

Swamitva yojana

- The Swamitva scheme helps to map rural inhabited lands using drones and latest survey methods.
- The scheme will ensure streamlined planning, revenue collection and provide clarity over property rights in rural areas.
- This will open up avenues for applying for loans from financial institutions by the owners. Disputes related to property would also be settled through the title deeds allotted through this scheme.

Related links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Herbal Roads Project

Question. Which state government launches Herbal Road Project?

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

Ans (b)

Related Facts:

- Uttar Pradesh govt launches project to develop 800 km roads as Herbal roads.
- In this project, the state government planning to plant trees that have medicinal values on both sides of the roads.
- The herbal trees to be planted include Neem, Peepal, Sehjan, etc. The plants will provide raw materials to medicines and will also help in preventing erosion of land.
- The roads are designed to keep out infectious and airborne diseases.
- The project's 800 km road was selected along both the national and state highways.

Related Links:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/lifestyle/health/great-initiative-uttar-pradesh-to-get-800-km-stretch-of-herbal-roads-soon-details/1975906/>

Treaty & Agreements

Russia-India-China (RIC)

Question: Consider the following statements regarding RIC (Russia India China) grouping:

- (1) It is a strategic grouping that was founded in the late 1990s under the leadership of Yevgeny Primakov.
- (2) The group was founded on the basis of "ending its subservient foreign policy guided by the U.S."
- (3) It forms the core of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

Which is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Context:

- Indian Foreign minister has attended the virtual foreign minister level meeting of the trilateral group of Russia-India-China (RIC).
- **Russia-India-China (RIC):**
- It is a strategic grouping that was founded in the late 1990s under the leadership of Yevgeny Primakov, a Russian politician as a counterbalance to the Western alliance.
- **Aim:**
- To end its subservient foreign policy guided by the USA and renew old ties with India and foster the newly discovered friendship with China.
- **Significance:**

- Together, the RIC countries occupy over **19 percent of the global landmass and contribute to over 33 percent of global GDP.**
- All **three are nuclear powers** and two, **Russia and China, are permanent members of the UN Security Council**, while India aspires to be one.
- The trio could also contribute to creating **a new economic structure for the world.**
- They could work together on **disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.**
- **Importance of RIC for India:**

(1) It forms the core of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

(2) India is in a geostrategic sweet spot today.

(3) It is important for India as an aspiring power to be able to thwart China's aspirations of being a hegemon in both the maritime and continental spheres.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/external-affairs-minister-speaks-of-international-law-in-meeting-with-russian-chinese-foreign-ministers/article31898275.ece>

UN Arms Trade Treaty

Question: Which of the following country has recently decided to join the UN Arms Trade Treaty?

(a) Israel (b) South Africa (c) Iran (d) China

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- China has announced to join the Arms Trade Treaty of United Nations on June 22, 2020.
- This announcement was made after voting in the Communist Party leadership's top legislative body which decided on joining the treaty.
- This pact is designed to control the flow of weapons into conflict zones by regulating the arm sales. It will also help in securing regional stability and peace.
- China said that it exports such products to sovereign countries and not to non-state actors.
- China has become the second largest arms producer of world, as per the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.
- US president Donald Trump has earlier announced to come out of this pact which US joined in 2014.

- As per the treaty, member countries has to keep records of international transfers of weapons.
- They also have to prohibit cross-border shipments that could be used in human rights violations or attacks on civilians.

Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/china-to-join-un-arms-trade-treaty-enhance-world-peace/articleshow/76510871.cms>

FMCG Sector :Cargil – Indian firm deal

Question : Cargil is a FMCG company of —

(a) USA (b)France (c) Germany (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

Context

- US-based food major Cargill on Tuesday (June 23,2020) announced foray into the chocolate business in India.
- In India, Cargill markets edible oils such as Nature Fresh, Sweekar, Leonardo Olive and markets wheat flour under the Nature Fresh brand.

Partnership

- Cargill is partnering with a manufacturer in India to launch its first chocolate manufacturing operation in Asia.
- It is expected to begin operating by mid 2021.
- It will manufacture chocolate compounds, chocolate chips and chocolate paste, catering to customers in the bakery, ice cream and confectionery industries.

Location & production

- The facility in west India will initially produce 10,000 tonnes of chocolate compounds.

Chocolate industry in India

- The chocolate industry is annually growing at 13-14% in the domestic market, according to Cargill.
- Industry estimates the market size of chocolate in the confectionery sector alone to be 260,000 tonnes.
- The per capita consumption of chocolate is low in India compared to global markets.

Link :

<https://m.economictimes.com/industry/cons-products/food/cargill-to-partner-with-indian-firm-for-chocolate-plant/articleshow/76532290.cms>

Question : For which purpose LTHE(L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering) has signed a MoU with US-based engineering company KBR ?

- (a) for building refineries
- (b) for building offshore drilling rig
- (c) both (a) and (b)
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- LTHE(L&THydrocarbonEngineering) has recently signed a MoU with US-based engineering company KBR for construction of modular process plants for refinery and petrochemicals projects.
- KBR and L&T Hydrocarbon Engineering (LTHE) will collaborate to develop business opportunities for refineries and petrochemical units.
- LTHE will exclusively bid for KBR's solid acid alkylation technology, solvent de-asphalting technology and catalytic olefins technology for global projects with special emphasis on India, South East Asia, Middle East and Africa.
- L&T is an Indian company.

Hydrocarbon statistics in India

- As of 31 March 2018, India had estimated crude oil reserves of 594.49 million tonnes (MT), declining by 1.59% from the previous year.
- The largest reserves are found in the Western Offshore (Mumbai High, Krishna-Godavari Basin) (40%), and Assam (27%).
- The estimated reserves of natural gas in India as of 31 March 2018 was 1,339.57 billion cubic meters (BCM), increasing by 3.87% from the previous year.
- The largest reserves of natural gas are located in the Eastern Offshore (38.13%) and the Western Offshore (23.33%).

Link :

<https://m.economictimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/lt-signs-mou-with-us-based-kbr-for-building-refineries/articleshow/76506166.cms>

Maruti Suzuki and Karur Vysya Bank partnership

Question : Karur city is situated on which state ?

- (a)Tamilnadu (b)Andhra Pradesh (c)Telangana (d)Kerala

Answer (a)

Related facts

- According to Maruti Suzuki India it has recently partnered with Karur Vysya Bank to offer simpler and flexible financing schemes for new customers.
- Through the partnership with the bank, the company is seeking to offer prospective buyers special scheme of up to 100 per cent on road funding with six months holiday period on all models, except van EECO), loans for both salaried and self-employed customers and repayment period up to 84 months, Maruti Suzuki India said in a statement.

- Apart from “attractive rates of interest”, the partnership will offer loans to customers with non-income proof as well.
- The schemes through the partnership will be available across Maruti Suzuki’s network of 3,086 new car retail outlets across 1,964 cities and towns, along with with 780 branches of Karur Vysya Bank across 22 states across India.
- Karur Vysya Bank and Lakshmi Vilas Bank, Leading Old generation private banks started by the trader community to meet their working capital financing needs, have their headquarters in Karur.
- Karur is a city in Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Karur is the administrative headquarters of Karur district.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/cars-uvs/maruti-partners-with-karur-vysya-bank-for-flexible-financing-schemes/articleshow/76420561.cms>

Great Wall Motor – Maharashtra deal

Question : Great Wall Motor is a —

- (a) Chinese automaker
- (b) South Korean automaker
- (c) Japanese automaker
- (d) German automaker

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Great Wall Motor, the latest Chinese automaker to enter the Indian market, signed a memorandum of understanding with the Maharashtra government on 16th June, 2020.

Talegaon manufacturing plant

- Earlier, in January this year, GWM had signed an agreement to acquire this plant from GM.
- The company had announced that it will be investing \$1 billion in the Indian market during the Auto Expo in February this year.
- Under latest deal, company agreeing to invest in modernising its Talegaon manufacturing plant and generate employment for 3,000 people.
- This would be a highly automated plant in Talegaon with advanced robotics technology integrated in many of the production processes.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/auto/auto-news/chinas-great-wall-motor-signs-mou-with-maharashtra-to-invest-usd-1-bn/articleshow/76403862.cms?from=mdr>

Empays – Mastercard partnership

Question : Why Empays Payment Systems India has recently partnered with Mastercard ?

- (a) to launch contactless ATM solution in India
- (b) to launch contactless PoS (Point of Sale) terminals

- (c) both (a) and (b)
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Cloud-based payment solutions provider, Empays Payment Systems India has recently partnered with Mastercard to launch contactless ATM solution in India due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Under the partnership, Mastercard will help Empays to launch 'Cardless ATM' powered by Mastercard.
- The initiative will help users to digitally locate the nearest enabled ATM.

Contactless ATM Machine

- There are four simple steps to withdraw cash from contactless ATM Machine.
- The four steps involve opening the banking app, scanning the QR on ATM, authenticate the amount which has to be withdrawn on the app itself and the final step is to pick up the cash from the ATM.
- After the USA, India is the only other country to make such contactless ATM facility available to users.

Link:

<https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/adda247-epaper-adda/empays+partners+with+mastercard+to+enable+contactless+atm+withdrawals-newsid-n190809372>

Power sector : India – Denmark deal

Question : Recently, India and Denmark signed an MoU to develop strong cooperation in which sector?

- (a)Trade (b)Communications (c)Medical Research (d)Power

Answer (b)

Related facts

Context

- On June 2020, India and Denmark signed an MoU for developing cooperation in the power sector.
- The MoU signed between the Ministry of Power and the Ministry for Energy, Utilities and Climate, Government of Denmark, is to develop a strong, deep and long-term co-operation between two countries in the power sector on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.
- Deal provides for collaboration in areas like offshore wind, long term energy planning, forecasting, flexibility in the grid, consolidation of grid codes to integrate and operate efficiently variable generation options, flexibility in the power purchase agreements and variability in renewable energy production.
- Under the MoU, a Joint Working Group will also be established. It will be co-chaired by Joint Secretary level officials.

Power sectors in India: Total Installed Capacity (As on 30.04.2020) – Source : Central Electricity Authority (CEA)

Sector	MW	% of Total
Central Sector	93,477	25.2%
State Sector	103,322	27.9%
Private Sector	173,549	46.9%
Total	3,70,348	

Link :

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1630208>

Pharma sector : Panacea Biotec – Refana deal

Question : Panacea Biotec is an Indian research-based pharmaceutical and health management company. It is setting up a joint venture firm in Ireland with which MNC ?

- (a) Refana
- (b) Pfizer
- (c) Abbott
- (d) Novartis

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Panacea Biotec is setting up a joint venture firm in Ireland with US-based Refana Inc to develop a vaccine for COVID-19.
- Panacea involved in research, manufacturing, and marketing of pharmaceutical formulations, vaccines, and natural products.
- The company is advancing its response to address the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19 by collaborating with Refana Inc to make a vaccine widely accessible around the world in an equitable manner.
- As per the partnership, Panacea Biotec will be responsible for product development and commercial manufacturing, while the Joint Venture entity undertaking clinical development and regulatory submissions across the world.
- Both Panacea and Refana will undertake sales and distribution of the vaccine in their respective territories.
- Joint Venture aims to manufacture over 500 million doses of COVID-19 candidate vaccine, with over 40 million doses expected to be available for delivery early next year.

INDIAN PHARMACEUTICALS INDUSTRY AT A GLANCE

- India is the largest provider of generic drugs globally. Indian pharmaceutical sector industry supplies over 50 per cent of global demand for various vaccines, 40 per cent of generic demand in the US and 25 per cent of all medicine in UK.
- Presently over 80 per cent of the antiretroviral drugs used globally to combat AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) are supplied by Indian pharmaceutical firms.
- Pharmaceuticals exports from India stood at US\$ 19.14 billion in FY19 and US\$ 13.69 billion in FY20 (up to January 2020).
- Indian companies received 304 Abbreviated New Drug Application (ANDA) approvals from the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) in 2017 and received a total of 415 product approvals in 2018 and 73 tentative approvals.
- The country accounts for around 30 per cent (by volume) and about 10 per cent (value) in the US\$ 70-80 billion US generics market.
- India's domestic pharmaceutical market turnover reached Rs 1.4 lakh crore (US\$ 20.03 billion) in 2019, growing 9.8 per cent year-on-year (in Rs) from Rs 129,015 crore (US\$ 18.12 billion) in 2018.

Link :

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/coronavirus-vaccine-india-news-panacea-biotec-to-collaborate-with-us-based-refana-inc-for-covid-19-vaccine/articleshow/76297584.cms>

Year, Day & Week Statistics Day

Question: On 29th June, 2020, 14th Statistical Day was celebrated in recognition of the contributions made by Late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics, statistical system and economic planning. What was the theme of this day?

- (a) Agriculture and Agriculture Welfare (b) Quality assurance in official statistics
(c) SDG-3 & SDG-5 (d) Social welfare

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The 14th 'Statistics Day' was celebrated across the country on 29 June 2020 by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation. This day is celebrated to create public awareness about the importance of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation.
- Theme of Statistics Day, 2020 is SDG- 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) & SDG- 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).
- This day is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Prof. P C Mahalanobis, in recognition of his invaluable contribution in establishing the National Statistical System.
- The day was designated by Government of India in 2007.

- The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) was set up by Prof. Mahalanobis in 1931 in Kolkata. It was declared an autonomous “Institute of National Importance” through an act of Parliament in 1959.
- Prof. P C Mahalanobis was one of the members of the first Planning Commission of free India.
- For his contributions, Mahalanobis has been considered the father of modern statistics in India.

Links: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1634923> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prasanta_Chandra_Mahalanobis

Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day

Question: When is the Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day observed?

(a) 26 June (b) 25 June (c) 20 June (d) 27 June

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day was observed on 27 June 2020 across the world.
- United Nations General Assembly in its 74th plenary session held on 6 April 2017 declared 27 June Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, to raise public awareness of their contribution to sustainable development and the global economy.
- MSMEs which generally employ fewer than 250 persons, are the backbone of most economies worldwide and play a key role in developing countries.
- According to the data provided by the International Council for Small Business (ICSB), formal and informal Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) make up over 90% of all firms and account, on average, for 70% of total employment and 50% of GDP.

Role of MSME in India:

- The Indian MSME sector is the backbone of the national economic structure and has unremittingly acted as the bulwark for the Indian economy, providing it resilience to ward off global economic shocks and adversities.
- It is the second largest employer after agriculture.
- MSME sector accounts for 45 percent of total exports and contributes very significant about 25 percent to the GDP.

Classification of micro, small and medium enterprises:

- On 1st June 2020 Government has revised the scales of categorization of MSMEs. As of now:
- A micro enterprise is one where the investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment does not exceed one crore rupees and turnover does not exceed five crore rupees

- A small enterprise is defined as the enterprise where the investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment does not exceed ten crore rupees and turnover does not exceed fifty crore rupees
- An enterprise will be considered a medium, where the investment in Plant and Machinery or Equipment does not exceed fifty crore rupees and turnover does not exceed two hundred and fifty crore rupees.

Links: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/micro-small-medium-businesses-day#:~:text=That%20is%20why%20the%20General,development%20and%20the%20global%20economy.>

Sustainable Gastronomy Day

Question: When is the Sustainable Gastronomy Day observed?

(a) June 18 (b) June 16 (c) June 20 (d) June 17

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Sustainable Gastronomy Day is observed annually on June 18.
- On 21 December 2016, UN General Assembly adopted resolution and designated 18 June as an international observance, Sustainable Gastronomy Day.

What is Sustainable Gastronomy?

- Gastronomy is sometimes called the art of food. It can also refer to a style of cooking from a particular region. In other words, gastronomy often refers to local food and cuisine.
- Sustainability is the idea that something (e.g. agriculture, fishing or even preparation of food) is done in a way that is not wasteful of our natural resources and can be continued into the future without being detrimental to our environment or health.
- Sustainable gastronomy, therefore, means cuisine that takes into account where the ingredients are from, how the food is grown and how it gets to our markets and eventually to our plates.
- So, the day also aims to reaffirm that all cultures and civilizations are contributors and crucial enablers of sustainable development.

Relevant SDG:

- United Nations adopted Sustainable Development Goal 2 seeks to end hunger in all its forms by 2030 and achieve food security.

Links:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Annual Day of Seafarer(DotS)

Question: Consider the following statements regarding Annual Day of Seafarer(DotS):

- (1) It is celebrated each year on 25th June .The theme of this year is “Seafarers are Key Workers”.
- (2)World Customs Organization is the nodal agency for organizing it.

Which of the above is correctly matched?

- (a) 1 only (b)2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d)None of these

Answer:(a)

Context:

- This year, the annual Day of the Seafarer (DotS) is celebrating its 10th anniversary on 25 June under the theme “Seafarers are Key Workers”.

About:

- 25 June of each year is the “Day of the Seafarer”, recognizing the invaluable contribution seafarers make to international trade and the world economy.
- The Day of the Seafarer was first celebrated in 2011, following its establishment by a resolution adopted by the Conference of Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, held in Manila, Philippines, in 2010.
- The Day of the Seafarer has now been included in the annual list of United Nations Observances.

International Maritime Organization:

- It is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. IMO’s work supports the UN SDGs.

Link:

<http://www.imo.org/en/About/Events/dayoftheseafarer/Pages/Day-of-the-Seafarer-2020.aspx>

United Nations Public Service Day

Question: When is the United Nations Public Service Day celebrated?

- (a) 20 June (b) 15 June (c) 18 June (d) 23 June

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- United Nations Public Service Day was observed on 23 June 2020.

- UN Public Service Day celebrates the value and virtue of public service to the community; highlights the contribution of public service in the development process; recognizes the work of public servants, and encourages young people to pursue careers in the public sector.
- The day was designated by UN General Assembly on December 20 2002.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/public-service-day>

International Widows' Day

Question: When is the International Widows' Day observed?

(a) 23 June (b) 21 June (c) 20 June (d) 25 June

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- International Widows Day is observed globally on 23rd June every year.
- The day is observed to draw attention to the voices and experiences of widows and to galvanize the unique support that they need.
- The day raises concerns regarding widows magnified by a long-term struggle for their basic needs, their human rights and dignity.
- This day was designated by United Nations in 2011.

Reforms regarding widows in India:

- In a move to uplift the misery of widows, Indian social reformer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar began campaign for widow remarriage in 1854.
- Ravaging the stereotype, the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act was passed in 1856.
- It was drafted by Lord Dalhousie and passed by Lord Canning.
- Before this law the custom of Sati was also abolished by the Lord William Bentinck in 1829.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/widows-day>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_Widows%27_Remarriage_Act,_1856

International day of the celebration of solstice

Question : International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice was observed on —

(a) June 21 (b) June 15 (c) June 16 (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice was observed on June 21.
- The Day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on June 20th of 2019.

Background

- A solstice — derived from the Latin sol (“sun”) and sistere (“to stand still”), because the seasonal movement of the Sun’s daily path (as seen from Earth) appears to “stand still” at a northern or southern limit before reversing direction — is an event that occurs when the Sun reaches its most northerly or southerly day-arc relative to the equator.
- Therefore, there are two solstices that occur annually: around June 21 (commonly known as “Summer Solstice” for being the first day of summer and the longest day of the year) and December 21 (commonly known as “Winter Solstice” for being the first day of winter and the shortest day of the year).

Link :

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/solstice-day>

International Yoga Day 2020

Question: Consider the following statements regarding International Yoga Day:

- 1) The International Day of Yoga is celebrated annually on 21 June since 2014, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2013.**
- 2) The theme for year 2020 is “Yoga for Health – Yoga at Home”.**

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

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

Answer:(b)

Related Facts:

Context:

International Yoga Day 2020 is being celebrated on June 21. This year, due to social distancing measures adopted by most countries, the theme set by the United Nations is “Yoga for Health – Yoga at Home”.

About International Yoga Day:

- The United Nations declared June 21 as the International Day of Yoga in 2014 after PM Modi called for the day to be adopted as a global celebration of yoga.
- The date of 21 June was suggested as it is the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere and shares a special significance in many parts of the world.
- The first International Yoga Day celebration was organised at Rajpath in New Delhi on June 21, 2015.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) mentions yoga as a means to improve health in its Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030: More active people for a healthier world.

References:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/yoga-day>

World Refugee Day

Question: When did World Refugee Day start?

(a) June 20, 2001 (b) June 20, 2000 (c) June 20, 1999 (d) June 20, 1998

Answer (a)**Related facts**

- World Refugee Day falls each year on June 20 and is dedicated to refugees around the world.
- World Refugee Day was held globally for the first time on June 20, 2001, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.
- 2020 Theme of this day is : Every Action Counts.

Important fact

- It was originally known as Africa Refugee Day, before the United Nations General Assembly officially designated it as an international day in December 2000.

Link :

<https://www.unhcr.org/world-refugee-day.html>

World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

Question : On which date 'World Day to Combat Desertification And Drought' is observed ?

(a) 17 June (b) 16 June (c) 14 June (d) 13 June

Answer : (a)**Related facts**

- On 17 June 2020, World Day to Combat Desertification And Drought was observed globally.
- In December 1994, the United Nations General Assembly acknowledged this day to bring attention to the association between consumption and land.
- The World Day to Combat Desertification And Drought was declared in the United Nations General Assembly resolution on January 30, 1995, after the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
As per the UN General Assembly, World Day to Combat Desertification And Drought is marked to make people aware that solutions are present to tackle desertification and drought.
- The idea is to make the key tools effective at all levels and places where serious drought or desertification is experienced.

Theme

- This year the theme for World Day to Combat Desertification And Drought is “Food. Feed. Fibre”.

Size of Deserts and Drylands in the world

- 41.2% of the land is deserts and drylands.
- 6.6% is deserts and 34.6% is drylands.

Value of Drylands for Livelihoods

- billion people live in the world’s deserts and drylands.
- 90% of the population is in developing countries.
- 50% of world’s livestock is supported by rangelands.
- 46% of global carbon is stored in drylands.
- 44% of all cultivated land is in drylands.
- 30% of all cultivated plants came from drylands.

Link :

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/desertification-day>

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Question: When is the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day celebrated?

(a) 13 June (b) 18 June (c) 15 June (d) 14 June

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was observed globally on June 15 2020.
- The day aims to raise awareness about the neglect and abuse elderly peoples suffer by the prevailing social, cultural, economic and demographic processes.
- Around 1 in 6 people of 60 years and older experienced some form of abuse in community settings during the past years.
- This year the world organization has launched a campaign “Safeguard older persons during COVID-19 and beyond”.
- This campaign is significant as elderly peoples are more vulnerable to Covid 19 lacked of optimal immunity standards.
- According to the United Nations, around 66% of old age people are placed under the risk of COVID-19.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/elder-abuse-awareness-day>

World Blood Donor Day

Question: When is the World Blood Donor Day celebrated?

(a) 14 June (b) 12 June (c) 10 June (d) 15 June

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- On 14 June 2020, World Blood Donor Day was celebrated all over the world.
- 2020 Theme -Safe blood Saves lives

- Slogan – Give Blood and Make the World a Healthier Place
- This day is celebrated to raise awareness about the need for safe blood and their importance in treatments.
- Also this day promotes the need for voluntary blood donation.

Background:

- The day was first observed on 14 June 2004.
- This day began to be observed in the year 2005 as a joint initiative of WHO & International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies(IFRC).
- This day is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of Karl Landsteiner.
- He was an Austrian scientist who has been conferred the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1930 for his discovery of the ABO blood group system. He is recognized as the father of transfusion medicine.

Links:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2020/06/14/default-calendar/world-blood-donor-day-2020>

International Albinism Awareness Day

Question: When is the International Albinism Awareness Day celebrated?

(a) 10 June (b) 20 June (c) 13 June (d) 8 June

Answer:(c)

Related facts:

- On June 13, 2020, International Albinism Awareness Day was celebrated all over the world.
- The day is celebrated annually to bring awareness among the people about albinism and the human rights of people with albinism.
- Albinism is a congenital disorder characterized in humans by the complete or partial absence of pigment in the skin, hair and eyes.
- Lack of skin pigmentation makes for more susceptibility to sunburn and skin cancers.
- This day was adopted formally by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2014.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/albinism-day>

World Day Against Child Labour

Question:When is the World Day Against Child Labour observed?

(a) 15 June (b) 8 June (c) 12 June (d) 10 June

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 12 June 2020, World Day Against Child Labour was observed globally.
- This day aims to increase the awareness and activism to eliminate child labour in all its forms.

- 2020 theme of the day is 'COVID-19: Protect children from child labour, now more than ever'.
- It was launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2002.

What is Child Labour?

- The term “child labour” is often defined as work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that:
- is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and/or
- interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Constitutional provisions against Child Labour in India:

- Article 24 of the Indian constitution provisions that No child below the age of fourteen years shall be employed to work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.
- Article 45 and Article 21-A(Fundamental Right) inserted by Eighty-sixth Constitutional Amendment Act, 2002 provisions that state shall provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen year
- Also,Article 39(f) establishes that children are given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment
- The Right to Education Act 2009 has made it mandatory for the state to ensure that all children aged six to 14 years are in school and receive free education.

Sustainable Development Goals(SDG) 8.7:

- Target 8.7 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals calls for an end to child labour in all its forms by 2025.

Facts And Figures:

- Worldwide,there are 152 million child laborers, of which 72 million are engaged in hazardous works.
- In absolute terms, almost half of child labour (72.1 million) is to be found in Africa; 62.1 million in the Asia and the Pacific; 10.7 million in the Americas; 1.2 million in the Arab States and 5.5 million in Europe and Central Asia.
- Child labour is concentrated primarily in agriculture (71%), which includes fishing, forestry, livestock herding and aquaculture, and comprises both subsistence and commercial farming; 17% in Services; and 12% in the Industrial sector, including mining.

International Labour Organization:

- International Labour Organization is the nodal agency to formulate and observe the labour concerns globally.

- It sets labour standards, develops policies and devises programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.
- ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) was created in 1992. The IPEC currently has operations in 88 countries

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/world-day-against-child-labour>

World Oceans Day

Question:When is the World Oceans Day celebrated?

(a) 6 June (b) 5 June (c) 4 June (d) 8 June

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 8 June 2020, World Oceans Day was celebrated all over the world.
- 2020 Theme – Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean.
- The day aims to remind people of the major role of oceans in everyday life.
- The concept of a 'World Oceans Day' was first proposed in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.
- However, in December 2008, United Nations made an official proclamation to celebrate the day on 8 June every year from 2009.

Sustainable Development Goal 14-Life Below Water:

- In relevancy with the conservation of marine ecosystem,SDG 14 aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/oceans-day>

World No tobacco day

Question:World No Tobacco Day is celebrated on which date?

(a) 30 May (b) 29 May (c) 31 May (d) 28 May

Ans : (c)

Related Facts:

Related facts:

- World No Tobacco Day is observed annually on 31 May by the World Health Organization.
- **Theme** : "Protecting youth from industry manipulation and preventing them from tobacco and nicotine use".
- In 1987 the WHO introduced the initiative of the World No Tobacco Day.
- The day raises awareness of the risks of tobacco use.

WHO:

- Founded in 1948.

- **Headquarter** : Geneva, Switzerland
- WHO works worldwide to promote health, keep the world safe, and serve the vulnerable.

Related Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/world-no-tobacco-day-lockdown-covid19-pandemic-quit-tobacco-6434722/>

World Environment Day

Question: What is theme of World Environment Day 2020?

- (a) Connecting People to Nature
- (b) Beating plastic pollution
- (c) Biodiversity
- (d) Air Pollution

Answer : (c)

Related facts:

- World Environment Day is observed annually on 5 June.
- The day is celebrated to mark the environmental awareness among the people.
- 2020 Theme is 'Biodiversity'.
- This year the day is to be hosted in Colombia in partnership with Germany.

History:

- The United Nations founded the World Environment Day in 1972 on the first day of the Stockholm Conference on the "Human Environment", which resulted from discussions on the integration of human interactions and the climate.
- Two years later, the first World Environment Day with the theme "Just One World" was conducted in 1974.

International Organization for environment:

IUCN – 1948

- International Union for Conservation of nature
- Headquarters: Gland, Switzerland
- Working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources
- RED data list released by IUCN

UNEP – 1972

- United Nations Environment Programme
- Headquarters- Nairobi, Kenya
- As a result of Stockholm Conference in 1972

IPCC – 1988

- Inter governmental Panel on Climate Change

- Headquarters- Geneva,Switzerland.
- Working for climate change.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1629563>

Miscellaneous

World Bank aid for Improvement in education

Question : Which one of the following is related to improvement in education?

- (a) STARS
- (b) MOON
- (c) SUN
- (d) None of the above

Answer : (a)

Related facts

Context

- The World Bank approved a loan for Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States Program (STARS) on June 24, 2020.
- Loan amount – The loan amount is USD 500 million (about Rs 3,700 crore).
- STARS program – The STARS program builds on the long partnership between India and the World Bank (since 1994), for strengthening public school education and to support the country's goal of providing Education for All.
- Prior to STARS, the bank had provided a total assistance of more than USD 3 billion towards this goal.

Maturity & Grace period

- The USD 500 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a final maturity of 14.5 years, including a grace period of five years.

Link:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/business/2020/jun/28/world-bank-clears-usd-500-million-to-improve-quality-of-education-system-in-six-indian-states-2162601.html>

The Home of Golden Langurs

Question: In which of the following state Chakrashila wildlife sanctuary situated?

- (a) Assam (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Bihar (d) West Bengal

Answer:(a)

Context:

Primatologists have observed that the Gee's golden langur (*Trachypithecus geei*), endemic to the semi-evergreen and mixed-deciduous forests straddling India and Bhutan, induce stillbirth of babies killed inside the womb of females, besides practising infanticide.

Distribution:

The geographic range of golden langurs is limited to Assam, India and neighboring Bhutan where they live year-round.

Habitat:

Golden langurs occupy moist evergreen and tropical deciduous forests as well as some riverine areas and savannas in Assam and Bhutan.

Colour:

Their hair ranges from dark golden to creamy buff and their faces are black and hairless except for a long pale beard. It has been noted that their fur changes colors according to the seasons.

Conservation Status:

IUCN Red list: Endangered

CITES: Appendix I

Wildlife Protection Act: Schedule I

Threats:

The main reason for low numbers of golden langurs is because of their localized habitat and the rapid loss of this habitat due to deforestation.

Chakrashila sanctuary:

Chakrashila is India's first wildlife sanctuary with golden langur as the primary species. Chakrashila has about 600 golden langurs whose population is scattered across western Assam and the foothills of Bhutan.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/golden-langur-to-get-fruits-of-mgnrega/article27699541.ece>

Virtual India Pavilion inaugurated at Cannes Film Market 2020

Question: Who inaugurated the virtual Indian pavilion in the Cannes Film Market 2020 on June 22, 2020?

- (a) Ravishankar Prasad
- (b) Amitabh Bacchan
- (c) Prakash Javadekar
- (d) Dilip Kumar

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Minister of Information & Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar did the e-inauguration of the Virtual India Pavilion on June 22, 2020.
- The Festival will be held from 22 – 26 June, 2020.
- The international film fraternity was invited to come and shoot in India and sell in the world market.
- Major highlights of the event:
- Indian film makers and delegates interact with the international community, who while experiencing the colour, flavor and aroma of Indian cinema at the Indian Pavilion.

- The Pavillion will facilitate B2B meetings and linkages between film makers and other media and entertainment industries stake holders.
- Two film screenings, MaiGhat: Crime No 103/200 (Marathi) and Hellaro (Gujarati) which are National Film Award winning movies are being screened in the Market.
- Film Bazaar is featuring at Cannes for the first time, wherein NFDC's Film Bazaar is partnering with Marche' du Films and is taking 5 Films from Film Bazaar 2019 for pitching in the Market.
- The festival, in its virtual mode, apart from facilitating from B2B meetings, will also have a series of round table sessions each day on various aspects of the media and entertainment industry with panelists participating from the world over as also B2G and G2G meetings.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1633398>

Photography competition on medicinal and aromatic plants

Question : In an effort to create awareness about the usefulness of these plants, CIMAP has announced a photography competition on medicinal and aromatic plants. Of which organization, 'Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants' (CIMAP) is a frontier plant research laboratory ?

- (a) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
- (b) Indian forest research institutes
- (c) Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research
- (d) Medical research institutes in India

Answer (a)

Related facts

- In an effort to create awareness about the usefulness of medicinal and aromatic plants, the Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic plants (CIMAP) has recently (June 11, 2020) announced a photography competition on medicinal and aromatic plants.
- Through this competition, CIMAP also wants to convey the message of conservation of these medicinal plants.
- The theme of the competition is 'Know your Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs)'.
- The winners will receive cash awards of Rs. 5000, Rs. 3000, and Rs. 2000 for first, second, and third prizes, respectively.
- In addition, there will be consolation prizes of Rs. 1000 each for another 10 entries.
- The competition is open to all Indian amateur and professional photographers.
- Up to three photographs may be submitted for each entry. Indigenous plants are preferred and the Institute has requested to avoid images of very common horticulture or ornamental plants.

Medicinal and Aromatic plants statistics

State wise area and production of aromatic and medicinal plants in india are given below : –

Table 2: State wise area and production of Aromatic and medicinal plants in India
(Area: 000'ha, Production: 000't)

Sl.No.	States/UTs	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17		Average	
		Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production	Area	Production
1	Andhra Pradesh	0.26	3.84	0.29	4.36	1.88	3.51	0.45	1.19	1.18	0.83	2.47	1.18	3.83	13.54
2	Arunachal Pradesh	5.15	109.18	5.15	109.18	5.15	109.18	5.15	109.18	0.46	0.99	0.46	0.99	3.07	62.67
3	Assam	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.35	0.16	4.99	0.16	4.40	0.17	4.43	0.17	2.60	0.09
4	Bihar	3.56	0.45	3.82	0.50	4.56	0.59	4.00	0.69	4.40	0.60	4.5	0.6	3.55	0.49
5	Chhattisgarh	12.12	91.41	10.27	60.28	8.44	50.25	7.95	55.19	8.53	59.97	8.54	60.39	9.58	63.14
6	Karnataka	3.41	19.80	3.71	21.66	3.70	21.10	3.38	24.84	2.24	16.35	2.38	16.56	3.22	20.36
7	Madhya Pradesh	43.60	106.81	62.63	393.00	63.95	404.60	65.62	414.00	72.18	497.10	72.9	502.07	59.25	359.87
8	Mizoram	0.02	0.06	1.02	0.71	1.11	0.90	1.10	0.95	1.75	0.69	0.93	0.9	1.12	2.59
9	Odisha	1.92	0.64	1.92	0.64	1.92	0.64	1.90	0.60	1.90	0.60	1.92	0.61	1.91	0.62
10	Punjab	7.12	1.29	8.97	1.43	14.01	2.51	15.10	2.90	12.46	2.36	12.52	2.43	11.04	2.03
11	Rajasthan	280.62	149.60	308.66	164.53	231.24	124.30	249.07	128.86	369.61	186.78	401.02	195.2	303.63	156.50
12	Tamil Nadu	12.26	68.04	15.15	147.41	16.37	162.12	13.45	76.67	15.01	240.11	11.92	175.15	13.45	132.94
13	Uttar Pradesh	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	133.70	13.40	135.04	13.53	133.89	13.42
14	Others	0.00	1.20	0.00	0.00	2.87	2.04	1.99	2.22	6.13	2.50	5.13	1.87	2.30	1.40
	All India Total	503.74	565.72	555.29	917.10	493.25	895.30	507.84	830.85	633.9	1022.5	664.16	971.65	552.45	829.67

Link

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1631499>

Yemen separatists seize remote island from Saudi-backed government

Question: Consider the following statements:

1. Socotra island is officially part of Oman.
2. The Amami Islands is an archipelago in the Satsunan Islands, which is part of the Ryukyu Islands, Japan.

Which is/are correct?

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only (c) Both 1 and 2 (d) None of these

Answer: (b)

Related Fact:

Context:

Southern separatists have seized control of Yemen's island of Socotra in the Arabian Sea, deposing its governor and driving out forces of the Saudi-backed government. Amid rising tensions with china, Japanese Defence Ministry reported sighting an unidentified submarine around Amami Islands in the island nation's contiguous zone on June 20.

About Socotra Islands:

- Socotra, located between the Guardafui Channel and the Arabian Sea, is the largest of four islands in the Socotra Archipelago. The island of Socotra constitutes around 95% of the landmass of the Socotra archipelago.
- The territory is officially part of It sits at the mouth of the Gulf of Aden and lies some 240 kilometres east of the coast of Somalia and 380 kilometres south of the Arabian Peninsula.
- In 2008 Socotra was recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The Southern Transitional Council (STC) declared self-rule in the south in April, complicating U.N. efforts to forge a permanent ceasefire in a war that has separatists and the government fighting as nominal allies in a Saudi-led coalition against the Houthi group, who control the north.

About Amami Islands:

- The Amami Islands is an archipelago in the Satsunan Islands, which is part of the Ryukyu Islands, and is southwest of Kyushu.
- Administratively, the group belongs to Kagoshima Prefecture. The Amami Islands are limestone islands of coralline origin.

Link :

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/21/yemen-separatists-seize-remote-island-from-saudi-backed-government.html>

Insta FlexiCash

Question : Which Bank has launched an overdraft (OD) facility, Insta FlexiCash, for its salaried account customers ?

(a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) IDBI Bank

Answer : (a)

Related facts

- ICICI Bank has recently (June, 2020) launched an overdraft (OD) facility, Insta FlexiCash, for its salaried account customers who are facing a cash crunch.
- It is designed to protect ICICI Bank Salary Account customers from missing their Equated Monthly Instalments (EMIs) or cheque bounces due to insufficient funds by providing short-term instant credit.
- Customers can easily avail of this facility by initiating their application online.
- Insta Flexicash is an end-to-end fully digital facility which can be availed using the bank's Internet banking platform.
- According to the bank, the facility can be sanctioned immediately while customers can start using the approved OD limit within 48 hours.
- The interest payable on the OD is calculated on the basis of the actual amount availed by the customer, not on the full amount of the OD sanctioned.

Features

- The auto sweep-in facility automatically sweeps in funds from the OD account to the salary account to meet scheduled payments, when required.
 - Customers get an instant approval for the OD facility with no documentation, using the Bank's internet banking platform.
- The Bank offers customers a credit limit worth up to three times their net salary.

- Interest should be paid only on the actual OD amount utilised. FlexiCash comes with a fixed rate of interest that is calculated on a daily reducing balance.
- The interest is charged only on the amount you use and the period for which you use it. In case there is no usage of the funds, there will be no interest payable.
- Customers have the flexibility to clear the outstanding limit at their convenience. They are only required to pay the interest that is due every month.
- The facility offers customers the flexibility to repay the OD amount that they avail, as and when they choose to, without any foreclosure charges
- Customers enjoy the convenience of the automated process enhancement and renewal of OD limit every 12 months.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/wealth/save/icici-bank-launches-overdraft-facility-for-salary-account-customers-heres-how-to-use-it/articleshow/76381675.cms>

Indian Railways : First high rise Over Head Equipment (OHE)

Question : Recently, Indian Railways has become the first railway to run double-stack container train in electrified territory. Where is this electrified territory situated ?

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

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Indian Railways has proudly become the first railway to run double-stack container train with high reach pantograph in high rise OHE territory, the operations of which successfully commenced on June 10 from Palanpur and Botad stations in Gujarat.
- This tremendous achievement is a first of its kind in the entire world and will also boost the ambitious mission of Green India as a latest green initiative over Indian Railways.

Indian Railways at a glance

- The Indian Railways is among the world's largest rail networks. The Indian Railways route length network is spread over 1,23,236 km, with 13,452 passenger trains and 9,141 freight trains from 7,349 stations plying 23 million travellers and 3 million tonnes (MT) of freight daily.
- Indian Railways' revenues increased at a CAGR of 6.20 per cent during FY08-FY19 to US\$ 27.13 billion in FY19.
- Earnings from the passenger business grew at a CAGR of 6.43 per cent during FY07-FY19 to reach US\$ 7.55 billion in 2018-19P.
- Freight revenue rose at a CAGR of 4.30 per cent during FY08-FY19 to reach US\$ 18.20 billion in 2018-19.
- The gross revenue stood at Rs 145,333.61 crore (US\$ 20.79 billion) in FY20P (up to January 2020). Passenger earnings of Indian Railways is estimated at Rs 44,279.72 crore (US\$ 6.34 billion) in FY20 (up to January 2020).

- Freight earnings in FY20 (up to January 2020) stood at Rs 92,960.65 crore (US\$ 13.30 billion).

Few recent initiatives taken up by the Government are:

- As per Union Budget 2020-21, Ministry of Railways have been allocated Rs 72,216 crore (US\$ 10.33 billion).
- Dedicated Freight Corridor Corp. of India Ltd (DFCCIL), is already building the first two freight corridors—Eastern Freight Corridor from Ludhiana to Dankuni (1,856km) and Western Freight Corridor from Dadri to Jawaharlal Nehru Port (1,504km)—at a total cost of Rs 81,000 crore (US\$ 11.59 billion).

Link :

<https://www.railpost.in/indian-railways-creates-a-new-world-benchmark-by-successfully-running-1st-double-stack-container-train-in-high-rise-ohe-electrified-sections/>

Nuclear engineering : L&T – made major cryostat base installed in France

Question : The heavy engineering arm of Larsen & Toubro (L&T) said recently its 1,250 tonne cryostat base — the single largest section of the world’s largest nuclear fusion reactor — was successfully lifted and placed into a reactor. This reactor is situated in which country ?

(a) Germany (b) United States (c) Canada (d) France

Answer (d)

Related facts

Context

- Larsen & Toubro(L&T) is a major technology, engineering, construction, manufacturing and financial services conglomerate, with global operations headquartered in Mumbai.
- Its heavy engineering arm recently(June,2020) accomplished a major milestone in the nuclear engineering world.

Success story

- According to L&T its 1,250 tonne cryostat base — the single largest section of the world’s largest nuclear fusion reactor — was successfully lifted and placed into a reactor building in Cadarache (France) recently, accomplishing a major milestone in the nuclear engineering world.
- The tools of cryostat were delivered during the Covid-19 lockdown to ensure uninterrupted assembly.
- A cryostat forms a vacuum-tight container surrounding the reactor vacuum vessel and superconducting magnets, and acts essentially as a very large refrigerator.
- The cryostat is the largest vacuum vessel ever built with 29.4 metres in diameter, 29 metres in height weighing 3,850 tonnes.
- L&T had delivered the lower cylinder of cryostat in March 2019 and upper cylinder in March this year.
- The top lid sectors will be dispatched from Hazira in July.

- The reactor base — the single largest and heaviest Tokamak component of the world's largest stainless-steel, high-vacuum pressure chamber cryostat — will eventually contain the rest of reactor.

International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)

- India is among the seven elite countries funding the 20 billion dollar International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) programme at Cadarache in France.
- This is one of the world's largest research project that seeks to demonstrate the scientific and technical feasibility of fusion power.

Link :

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/indl-goods/svs/engineering/It-made-major-cryostat-base-installed-in-worlds-largest-nuclear-fusion-project-in-france/articleshow/76279725.cms#:~:text=The%20heavy%20engineering%20arm%20of,in%20the%20nuclear%20engineering%20world.>

QS World University rankings

Question: Which of the following statements is not true with reference to QS World University Ranking 2021?

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology(MIT) of USA took the first place.
- Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru is the top Institution In India.
- Only three educational institute from India feature among the top 200 list.
- QS World University ranking is based on six Indicators.

Answer (b)

Related facts

Context

- Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings released on June, 2020.
- Not a single Indian institute has made it to the top 100 of the latest Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings.

Highlights of ranking

- The top three institutions in the overall rankings remain American: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) topped the list for the ninth consecutive year, followed by Stanford University and Harvard University.
- Fourteen Indian institutes have slipped in rank compared with last year, while four have improved their standing.
- Three Indian institutes — IIT-Bombay (172nd), IISc Bangalore (185th) and IIT Delhi (193rd) — feature among the top 200, while 21 are in the first 1,000.
- Despite slipping 20 places from last year's 152nd spot, IIT-Bombay continues to hold on to its position as India's top university.
- IISc Bangalore moves down one spot but has managed to edge out IIT-Delhi (down 11 places) to take second place among Indian institutes this year.

- Other Indian institutes in the top 500 include IIT-Madras, IIT-Kharagpur, IIT-Kanpur, IIT-Roorkee and IIT-Guwahati.

About ranking

- The QS World University Rankings, produced by global higher education consultancy QS Quacquarelli Symonds, are compiled based on six indicators: academic reputation, employer reputation, citations per faculty, faculty/student ratio, international faculty ratio and international student ratio.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1576736>