

NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

Vol. - 4 >>> Issue - 5 >>> November, 2020



2020 NOBEL LAUREATES

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 31st 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 October to 31st October) 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

Nobel Prize in Economics

Question: Who has been conferred the 2020 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences?

(a) Paul R. Milgrom (b) Robert B. Wilson (c) Both (a) & (b) (d) Elinor Ostrom

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- The 2020 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences was awarded jointly to American Economists Paul R. Milgrom and Robert B. Wilson.
- They have been awarded for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats benefitting sellers, buyers and taxpayers around the world.
- They have not just clarified how auctions work and why bidders behave in a certain way, but used their theoretical discoveries to invent entirely new auction formats for the sale of goods and services.
- Both economists are affiliated to Stanford University in California.

About the Award:

- Technically known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, the prize was firstly awarded to Ragnar Frisch and Jan Tinbergen in 1969.

Links:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/economic-sciences/2020/press-release/>

Nobel Peace Prize 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) was awarded Nobel Peace Prize 2020.

(2) Goal 1 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) commits to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Nobel Peace Prize 2020 was awarded to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).
- The World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian organisation addressing hunger and promoting food security.
- In 2019, the WFP provided assistance to close to 100 million people in 88 countries who are victims of acute food insecurity and hunger.
- In 2015, eradicating hunger was adopted as one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The WFP is the UN's primary instrument for realising this goal.

SDGs Goal 2:

- End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Links:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2020/press-release/>

Nobel Prize in Literature 2020

Question: Nobel Prize in Literature 2020 is given to which of the following:

(a) Louise Glück (b) Peter Handke (c) Olga Tokarczuk (d) Kazuo Ishiguro

Answer: (a)

- **Context:**
- American poet Louise Glück won the 2020 Nobel Literature Prize on October 8, an unexpected choice known for themes of childhood and family life that draw inspiration from myths and classical motifs.
- **Facts:**
- In the year 1968, Glück made her debut with *Firstborn* and soon rose as one of the most prominent poets in American contemporary literature.
- She has so far published 12 collections of poetry and some essays.
- Glück is often regarded as an autobiographical poet.
- 4- She in her poetries self listens for what is left of its dreams and delusions, and nobody can be harder than she in confronting the illusions of the self.
- She draws inspirations from myths, personal experiences and classical motifs, which are present in her works.
- She has highlighted the aspects of trauma, desire, and nature in her works. Her poetries are known for their frank expressions of sadness and isolation.
- Louise Glück was born on April 22, 1943 in New York, New York City, US. She is an American poet and essayist. She is a professor of English at Yale University, Connecticut.
- She is known for *The Triumph of Achilles* (1985) and *The Wild Iris* (1992). She has received many awards including Pulitzer Prize for Poetry (1993), Bollingen Prize (2001), US Poet Laureate (2003–2004), National Book Award (2014) and National Humanities Medal (2015).

Link:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/2020/summary/>

Nobel Prize in Medicine 2020

Question: The 2020 Nobel Prize for Medicine or Physiology has been awarded for the discovery of:

- (a) How cells sense and adapt to oxygen availability
- (b) Cancer therapy by inhibition of negative immune regulation
- (c) Molecular mechanisms controlling the circadian rhythm
- (d) Hepatitis C

Answer: (d)

- **Context:**

- The 2020 Nobel Prize for Medicine or Physiology has been awarded to Americans Harvey J Alter and Charles M Rice and British scientist Michael Houghton for the discovery of the Hepatitis C virus.
- **Facts:**
- The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and prize money of 10 million Swedish kronor (over \$1,118,000), courtesy of a bequest left 124 years ago by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel.
- The World Health Organisation estimates there are over 70 million cases of hepatitis worldwide and 400,000 deaths each year. The disease is chronic and a major cause of liver inflammation and cancer.
- The medicine prize carries particular significance this year due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has highlighted the importance that medical research has for societies and economies around the world.
- **Hepatitis C:**
- It is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV): the virus can cause both acute and chronic hepatitis, ranging in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a serious, lifelong illness.
- Spread: The hepatitis C virus is a bloodborne virus: the most common modes of infection are through exposure to small quantities of blood. This may happen through injection drug use, unsafe injection practices, unsafe health care, transfusion of unscreened blood and blood products, and sexual practices that lead to exposure to blood.
- Cases of Hepatitis C: According to WHO, about 71 million people (6 -11 million of them in India) have chronic infection with the Hepatitis C virus which also happens to be a major cause of liver cancer.
- How is Hepatitis C treated? Presently there is no vaccine available for HCV. However, it can be treated with antiviral medication.
- **Additional Facts:**
- Hepatitis: It is an inflammation of the liver. The condition can be self-limiting or can progress to fibrosis (scarring), cirrhosis or liver cancer.
- Types of Hepatitis: There are 5 main hepatitis viruses referred to as types A, B, C, D and E.
- Hepatitis A and E are typically caused by ingestion of contaminated food or water.
- Hepatitis B, C and D usually occur as a result of parenteral contact with infected body fluids such as contaminated blood or blood products, invasive blood procedures using contaminated equipment.
- Hepatitis B transmission can also happen from mother to baby at birth, from family member to child and also by sexual contact.

Link:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/2020/summary/>

Nobel Prize in Physics 2020

Question: Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 is given in which field:

(a) Physical cosmology (b) Laser physics (c) Black hole (d) Gravitational waves

Answer : (c)

- Context:

- Nobel Prize in Physics 2020 has been awarded, with one half to Roger Penrose and the other half jointly to Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez for their discoveries about Black hole.
- Facts:
- Roger Penrose used ingenious mathematical methods in his proof that black holes are a direct consequence of Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity.
- Einstein did not himself believe that black holes really exist, these super-heavyweight monsters that capture everything that enters them. Nothing can escape, not even light.
- Reinhard Genzel and Andrea Ghez each lead a group of astronomers that, since the early 1990s, has focused on a region called Sagittarius A* at the centre of our galaxy.
- Their pioneering work has given us the most convincing evidence yet of a supermassive black hole at the centre of the Milky Way.
- Black Hole:
- A black hole is a region of space from which nothing, not even light, can escape. These black holes consist a huge amount of matter packed densely into a small area, giving it an immense gravitational pull.
- Black holes are thought to be formed when very massive stars collapse at the end of their life cycle.
- In 2019, the first ever image of a black hole was taken by the Event Horizon telescope (ETH). The ETH is a project comprised of eight different telescopes at different observatories around the world.
- Additional Facts:
- Dr. Ghez is only the fourth woman to win the Nobel Prize in Physics, following Marie Curie in 1903, Maria Goeppert Mayer in 1963 and Donna Strickland in 2018.

Link:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/physics/2020/summary/>

Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020

Question:In which of the following field was Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2020 was given:

(a) Biofuels (b) Gene editing (c) CRISPR-Cas9 (d) Both b and c

Answer:(d)

- **Context:**
- Emmanuelle Charpentier of France and Jennifer Doudna of the U.S. won the Nobel Chemistry Prize for the gene-editing technique known as the CRISPR-Cas9 DNA snipping "scissors", the first time a Nobel science prize has gone to a women-only team.
- **Facts:**
- Charpentier, 51, and Ms. Doudna, 56, are just the sixth and seventh women to receive the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.
- Using the tool, "researchers can change the DNA of animals, plants and microorganisms with extremely high precision".
- The CRISPR-Cas9 tool has already contributed to significant gains in crop resilience, altering their genetic code to better withstand drought and pests.

- The technology has also led to innovative cancer treatments, and many experts hope it could one day make inherited diseases curable through gene manipulation.
- CRISPR's relative simplicity and widespread applicability has, however, triggered the imaginations of rogue practitioners. In 2018 in China, scientist He Jiankui caused an international scandal when he used CRISPR to create what he called the first gene-edited humans.
- **CRISPR (CaS9):**
- It stands for Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats (CRISPR)
- It is a gene editing technology, which replicates natural defence mechanisms in bacteria to fight virus attacks, using a special protein called Cas9.
- The technology behaves like a cut-and-paste mechanism on DNA strands that contain genetic information.
- The specific location of the genetic codes that need to be changed, or "edited", is identified on the DNA strand and then using the Cas9 protein, which acts like a pair of scissors, that location is cut off from the strand. A DNA strand, when broken, has a natural tendency to repair itself.
- Scientists intervene during this an auto-repair process, supplying the desired sequence of genetic codes that binds itself with the broken DNA strand.
- **Gene Editing:**
- It is the deliberate alteration of a selected DNA sequence in a living cell. It involves editing an organism's DNA by altering, removing or adding nucleotides to the genome.

Link:

<https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/chemistry/2020/summary/>

India's first sand dune parks

Question : World Bank has recently sanctioned an assistance amount for Sand Dune Park in Goa. Which one of the following is correct regarding this statement ?

- (a) sanctioned amount is rupees three crore (b) it will be India's second sand dune park
(c) both (a) and (b) are correct (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- World Bank has recently (October 2020) sanctioned an assistance amount for Sand Dune Park in Goa.
- The sanctioned amount is rupees three crore.

Sand Dune Park

- It will be India's first sand dune park.
- This project is proposed by the Goa State Biodiversity Board (GSBB).
- Park was first conceived by Antonio Mascarenhas, a former scientist at NIO (National Institute of Oceanography) & former member of GSBB. He will now act as the principal investigator for the project.

Significance

- Sand dunes play important role in phenomena like tsunami, tall waves, storms or high winds.
- These are geomorphic structures that are important for maintaining the integrity of the coast.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/world-bank-sanctions-rs-3cr-for-state-to-develop-indias-first-sand-dune-parks/articleshow/78758423.cms>

Uttarakhand's first Ramsar Site

Question: In which of the following state Asan Conservation Reserve is located?

a) Karnataka b) Maharashtra c) Kerala d) Uttarakhand

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:-

- On 15 October 2020; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change announced that Asan Conservation Reserve has become Uttarakhand's first Ramsar site.
- The Reserve is located on the banks of Yamuna River near Dehradun district in Garhwali region of the Himalayan state.
- With this declaration, this reserve became the Wetland of International Importance.
- With this, the number of Ramsar sites in India goes up to 38, the highest in South Asia and Uttarakhand gets its first Ramsar site.
- Asan Conservation Reserve cleared five out of the nine criteria needed to be declared as a Ramsar site and get identified as a Wetland of International Importance.
- It cleared the category on species and ecological communities, one on water-birds and another on fish.
- **The criteria cleared by Asan Conservation Reserve to get Ramsar site tag to include that-**

- i. It supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species.
- ii. It supports populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity,
- iii. It supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles and-
- iv. It is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.

- **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**

- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is an intergovernmental treaty adopted on February 2, 1971 in the Iranian city of Ramsar.
- The name of the Convention is usually written Convention on Wetlands.
- The Convention on Wetlands came into force for India on February 1, 1982.
- Those wetlands which are of international importance are declared as Ramsar sites.
- **Asan Conservation Reserve:**
- Asan Conservation reserve is spread across 4.44 sq km area in Dehradun district on the banks of Yamuna River.

- Asan receives about 40 migratory species, including Rudy Shelduck, Common coot, Gadwall, Kingfisher, Indian cormorant, Baer's pochard, Northern pintail, Bar-headed goose.
- Many endangered birds are found here and some even migrate to the Reserve, making it an ecologically important site.

Links:-

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/asan-conservation-reserve-becomes-uttarakhand-s-first-ramsar-site/story-cDnNE6eCzPYTLvbGr3zk7N.html>

War memorial at Bum La

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) A War Memorial was inaugurated at Bum La in Arunachal Pradesh.

(2) Bum La border pass connects Tibet's Cona County with Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

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 23 October 2020, a War Memorial was inaugurated at Bum La in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The day coincides with on which the Battle of Tongpen La (Bum La) took place in 1962.
- The War Memorial honors Sub Joginder Singh who made supreme sacrifice in the 1962 Sino-Indian War.
- He received highest gallantry award the Param Vir Chakra for the services rendered.
- The war was fought at Bum La by the 1st Battalion of Sikh Regiment.
- Bum La border pass connects Tibet's Cona County with Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=War-memorial-of-1962-braveheart%2C-Sub-Joginder-Singh-inaugurated-at-Bum-La&id=402927>

PM Modi inaugurates three key projects in Gujarat

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Kisan Suryodaya Yojana in Madhya Pradesh.

(2) PM Modi inaugurated a Ropeway at Mount Girnar in Gujarat.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 24 October 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 3 key projects in Gujarat.

Kisan Suryodaya Yojana:

- PM Modi launched Kisan Suryodaya Yojana to provide day-time power supply for irrigation to farmers.
- Under this scheme, farmers can avail electricity from 5 am to 9pm.
- A budget of Rs.3500 crore has been allocated for installing transmission infrastructure under this scheme by 2023.
- 234 '66-Kilowatt' transmission lines, with a total length of 3490 circuit kilometers (CKM) will be established under the project, in addition to 220 KV substations.
- Dahod, Patan, Mahisagar, Panchmahal, Chhota Udepur, Kheda, Tapi, Valsad, Anand and Gir-Somnath have been included under the Scheme for 2020-21. The remaining districts will be covered in a phase-wise manner by 2022-23.

Paediatric Heart Hospital attached with the U.N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research:

- Prime Minister also inaugurated the Paediatric Heart Hospital attached with the U.N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Centre and a Mobile Application for tele-cardiology at the Ahmedabad Civil Hospital in Ahmedabad.
- The U.N Mehta Institute is undergoing expansion to become India's biggest hospital for cardiology equipped with world class medical infrastructure and facilities.

Girnar Ropeway:

- PM Modi inaugurated a Ropeway at Girnar for peoples visiting temples at Girnar Mountain.
- The move will scale up tourism creating local employment opportunities and supporting livelihood.
- Through the ropeway, a distance of 2.3 kms will now be covered in just 7.5 minutes.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1667280>

Mandi

Question: Which district is the most successful implementer of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana?

(a) Chamba (b) Shimla (c) Solan (d) Mandi

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district held top position among 30 districts countrywide in successful implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).
- The list of top performer 30 districts in implementation of PMGSY has been released by Union Ministry of Rural Development.
- Six more districts of Himachal Pradesh-Chamba, Shimla, Kangra, Una, Sirmour, Hamirpur and Solan has also been included under top 30 districts.
- At national level, Himachal Pradesh has been ranked second for road construction under PMGSY.

- The state has improved its performance under PMGSY programme by constructing 1104 Kilometres roads this year from April till date.
- PMGSY, funded by the Union government connects habitations having population of more than 250 in the state.

Links:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/himachal-pradesh-mandi-district-bags-top-position-implementation-pmgsy>

Indian Navy operationalises first batch of 3 women pilots on Dornier Aircraft at Kochi

Question: Who is not among the first batch of three Women Pilots operationalised on Dornier Aircraft?

(a) Divya Sharma (b) Shubhangi Swaroop (c) Shivangi (d) Riti Singh

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Indian Navy has operationalized the first batch of three Women Pilots on Dornier Aircraft by the Southern Naval Command (SNC) at Kochi.
- The three women pilots of the first batch are Lieutenant Divya Sharma, Lieutenant Shubhangi Swaroop, and Lieutenant Shivangi.
- The three women pilots were part of the six pilots of the 27th Dornier Operational Flying Training Course DOFT.
- They graduated as Fully operational Maritime Reconnaissance MR Pilots at a passing out ceremony held at INS Garuda in Kochi.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Indian-Navy-operationalises-first-batch-of-3-women-pilots-on-Dornier-Aircraft-at-Kochi&id=402974#:~:text=Rear%20Admiral%20Antony%20George%2C%20Chief,Shubhangi%20Swaroop%2C%20and%20Lieutenant%20Shivangi.>

SCALE India App

Question : SCALE India App recently launched by LSSC. What is the full form of LSSC ?

(a) Leather Sector Skill Council (b) Leather Sector Skill Committee
(c) Leather Sector Skill Confederation (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- SCALE India App recently (October 2020) launched by Leather Sector Skill Council (LSSC).

SCALE

- SCALE (Skill Certification Assessment for Leather Employees) is an android app.
- It is an endeavour to provide a single platform to integrate quality assurance across all its (LSSC) services.

- The platform caters to the need of all the stakeholders of the skilling and employment ecosystem namely – candidate/trainee, employer, employee, assessor and trainer – all at one place.
- The services are accessible through the web and android application that virtually works on any smart handheld device, desktop/laptop, smartphones, tablets or phablets.
- Apart from providing end to end quality assurance across training, assessment, and certification services, the app will also help employers engage with other stakeholders seamlessly and provide a marketplace for human capital for the leather industry
- From an employer standpoint, the platform will serve as a job portal with access to a certified talent pool of candidates to hire from, leading to increase in productivity and profitability. .

LSSC

- It is a non-profit organisation dedicated to meet the demand for skilled workforce in the leather industry in India. LSSC was set up in 2012 as one of the key sector skill councils approved by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
- Operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship(MSDE), LSSC is committed to strengthen its digital capabilities on quality assurance across training delivery, monitoring, assessments, verification and linkages to ASEEM portal.

ASEEM

- ASEEM(Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping) is a skill management information system.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1664855>

Human Mobility, Shared Opportunities

Question : “Human Mobility, Shared Opportunities” is a —

- (a) Review of the 2005 Human Development
- (b) Review of the 2001 Human Development
- (c) Review of the 2004 Human Development
- (d) None of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- On October 21, 2020, a review report was released by the UNDP(United Nations Development Programme).
- The title of this report is “Human Mobility, Shared Opportunities: A Review of the 2009 Human Development Report and the Way Ahead”.

There are five chapters in this report, which are as follows —

Chapter 1 : Introduction

Chapter 2: Patterns and politics of human mobility

Chapter 3: Revisiting the 2009 pillars

Chapter 4: An evolving agenda on international migration

Chapter 5: Looking ahead to the next decade—how human mobility can advance human development

- These chapters assessed how future policy responses could facilitate safe, orderly, and regular migration.
- This report marked three decades of its annual human development reports.

Key points :

- Mobility of global population in 2019 : a snapshot

Groups	findings of the report
Children	37.7 million
Registered refugees	25.9 million
Asylum seekers	3.5 million
Students	5.3 million
Migrant workers	164 million

- There are 271.6 million migrants registered in 2019.
- Share of immigrants in global population by HDI group, 2019

HDI	Share of Migrants in National Population (%)
Low HDI	1.8
Medium HDI	0.7
High HDI	1.2

Very High HDI	13.0
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- Afghanistan, Chad, Niger, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Benin, Togo, Mali, Pakistan and Mozambique are the top ten countries in 2018 with the greatest gender gaps in ID(identity document) coverage.

Link:

<https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/Human-Mobility-Shared-Opportunities-A-Review-of-the-2009-Human-Development-Report-and-the-Way-Ahead.html>

Smart Black Board scheme

Question: Which state has launched the Smart Black Board scheme?

(a) Tamil Nadu (b) Kerala (c) Karnataka (d) Odisha

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Tamil Nadu government is implementing the Smart Black Board scheme in 80,000 government schools to ensure better teaching environment.
- The Smart Black Board scheme envisages usage of audio visual teaching material that can be fed into the computer screens in classes using widely available pen drives.
- The scheme is in lines with the Digital India and Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=402735>

Life in Miniature project

Question: Life in Miniature project is associated with which Ministry?

(a) Ministry of Textiles (b) Ministry of Culture (c) Ministry of Science & Technology
(d) Ministry of Jal Shakti

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 22 October 2020, Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (I/C) Prahlad Singh Patel virtually launched “Life in Miniature” project.
- The project is collaboration between the National Museum, New Delhi, Ministry of Culture, and Google Arts & Culture.
- The project shows several hundred miniature paintings from the National Museum to people across the globe online on Google Arts and Culture.
- The project uses technologies like machine learning, augmented reality and digitization with high-definition robotic cameras, to showcase these special works of art in a magical new way.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Culture-%26-Tourism-Minister-virtually-launches-Life-in-Miniature-project&id=402813>

India assumes the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of ILO

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Apurva Chandra has been elected the Chairperson of the Governing Body of International Labour Organisation.

(2) International Labour Organization came into existence in 1919.

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:

- India assumed the Chairmanship of the Governing Body of International Labour Organization after 35 years.
- Apurva Chandra, Secretary (Labour and Employment) has been elected as the Chairperson of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the period October 2020- June 2021.
- Prior to him, B.G. Deshmukh, served as Chairmen of the Governing Body for the tenure 1984-85.

Governing Body of ILO:

- The Governing Body (GB) is the apex executive body of the ILO which decides policies, programmes, agenda, budget and elects the Director-General. At present ILO has 187 members.
- It is composed of 56 titular members (28 Governments, 14 Employers and 14 Workers) and 66 deputy members (28 Governments, 19 Employers and 19 Workers).
- Ten of the titular government seats are permanently held by States of chief industrial importance (Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States).
- The other Government members are elected by the Conference every three years (the last elections were held in June 2014). The Employer and Worker members are elected in their individual capacity.

India & ILO:

- India is a founder member of the International Labour Organization, which came into existence in 1919.
- India has ratified 47 ILO conventions and 1 protocol.
- At present the ILO has 186 Members.
- ILO has three organs -International Labour Conferences (General Assembly of the ILO), Governing Body (Executive Council of ILO) and International Labour Office (A permanent secretariat)

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1667036>

COVIRAP

Question: Which institution has developed the diagnostic machine COVIRAP?

(a) IIT Kharagpur (b) IIT Kanpur (c) IIT Patna (d) IIT Madras

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 21 October 2020, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has validated the efficacy of COVIRAP.
- COVIRAP is a diagnostic machine evolved by the IIT Kharagpur researchers for COVID-19 detection.
- This COVID-19 diagnostic testing method is affordable, easy to conduct and can produce results within one hour.
- The new testing method implements a highly reliable and accurate molecular diagnostic procedure that can be conducted in an ultra-low-cost portable device unit developed by the IIT, Kharagpur research team.
- The test results are rendered via a custom-made mobile application for dissemination without requiring manual interpretation.
- The novel diagnostic platform has been approved after rigorous testing at ICMR-NICED (National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases), an Institute authorized by ICMR.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=1666418>

Anemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) Index

Question: Which State has topped the Anemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) Index?

(a) Haryana (b) Punjab (c) Kerala (d) Odisha

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Haryana has topped the Anemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) Index.
- Haryana has AMB Index of 46.7, top among the 29 states.
- The Anemia Mukh Bharat is an initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and UNICEF.
- It has been launched to reduce the prevalence of Anemia all over India.
- Haryana is one of 11 states in the country that has achieved National Health Policy targets well before the set timeline i.e. MMR <100 by 2020.
- Anaemia is a condition in which the number of red blood cells or the haemoglobin concentration is lower than normal. Haemoglobin is needed to carry oxygen.
- As a result, decreased oxygen delivery to the body's vital tissues and organs causes fatigue, weakness, dizziness and shortness of breath, among others.
- The most common causes of anaemia include nutritional deficiencies, particularly iron deficiency, though deficiencies in folate, vitamins B12 and A are also important causes.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=402706>

Two Indian wetlands designated as Ramsar Sites

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Asan Conservation Reserve is the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be recognised as Ramsar site.

(2) India currently has 39 Ramsar sites.

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:

- India has named two new Wetlands of International Importance.
- The Sites are particularly important to the avian diversity of their States, with each hosting hundreds of bird species of which several are critically endangered.

The sites:

- The Asan Conservation Reserve in Dehradun has been included in the Ramsar Wetland sites. It is the first wetland from Uttarakhand to be recognised by Ramsar.
- Kabartal Wetland also known as Kanwar Jheel, covering 2,620 hectares of the Indo-Gangetic plains is in the northern Bihar State.
- With these inclusions the total number of Ramsar Sites in India rose to 39.

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:

- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975.
- The convention entered into force in India on 1 February 1982.
- It is the intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Links:

<https://www.ramsar.org/news/india-designates-two-wetland-biodiversity-hotspots>

Mission Shakti

Question: Which state has launched women safety centric campaign Mission Shakti?

(a) Uttar Pradesh (b) Madhya Pradesh (c) Rajasthan (d) Bihar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 17 October 2020, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched the six month long Nari Shakti campaign from Devi Paatan Shakti Peeth in Balrampur.
- The campaign started on the first day of Shardiya Navratri and will be continued till Basantik Navratri next year.
- The campaign aims to conduct different awareness and training programs for the safety and security of women and girls.
- The campaign also provides for handling effectively the crime committed against females by initiating legal actions.
- It was launched in all the 75 districts by various ministers, public representatives and senior officials.

- The six month long campaign involves two phases Mission Shakti and Operation Shakti.
- Mission Shakti is awareness driven while Operation Shakti is action based, punishing those committing any sort of misbehavior or crime against women.
- The unsocial elements who don't improve morally will be boycotted socially and their pictures will be displayed publicly.
- Governor Anandiben Patel launched the campaign at Raj Bhawan Lucknow by flagging off 100 Pink Scooty and 10 four wheeler women police vehicles under Safe City Project.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=UP-government-launches-%E2%80%98Mission-Shakti%E2%80%99-campaign-to-tackle-crime-against-women&id=402483>

Heeng cultivation introduced in India

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The first sapling of heeng has been planted in Himachal Pradesh's Kwaring village in Lahaul valley.

(2) Asafoetida is extracted from roots.

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:

- CSIR constituent laboratory, Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology (IHBT), Palampur, recently made history by introducing asafoetida (Heeng) cultivation in Indian Himalayan region.
- The first sapling of heeng has been planted in Himachal Pradesh's Kwaring village in Lahaul valley.
- Asafoetida, or heeng, is a high value spice crop in India commonly used in Indian Kitchens. It is not cultivated in India.
- India imports about 1,200 tonnes of raw heeng worth Rs 600 crore from Iran, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan.
- **About Heeng:**
- Ferula asafoetida is a herbaceous plant of the umbelliferae family.
- It is a perennial plant whose oleo gum resin is extracted from its thick roots and rhizome. The plant stores most of its nutrients inside its deep fleshy roots.
- The plant takes about five years to produce the extractable oleo gum resin.
- Asafoetida is endemic to Iran and Afghanistan, the main global suppliers.
- **Conditions essential for Heeng cultivation:**
- Heeng thrives best in dry and cold desert conditions.
- The plant can withstand a maximum temperature between 35 and 40 degree, whereas during winters, it can survive in temperatures up to minus 4 degree.
- Regions with sandy soil, very little moisture and annual rainfall of not more than 200mm are considered conducive for heeng cultivation in India.
- During extreme weather, the plant can get dormant.
- **Future of Heeng cultivation in India:**
- By the end of this year, the target is to cover one hectare with heeng cultivation.
- In the next five years the cultivation is to be extended to 300 hectares.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/why-scientists-are-trying-to-cultivate-heeng-in-the-indian-himalayas-6792923/>

Ayushman Sahakar scheme

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Ayushman Sahakar assists cooperatives in creation of healthcare infrastructure in the country.

(2) The scheme has been formulated by National Cooperative Development Corporation.

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 19th October 2020, Union Minister of State for Agriculture Parshottam Rupala launched Ayushman Sahakar scheme.
- It is a unique scheme to assist cooperatives to play an important role in creation of healthcare infrastructure in the country.
- Ayushman Sahakar specifically covers establishment, modernization, expansion, repairs, renovation of hospital and healthcare and education infrastructure.
- The scheme has been formulated by National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), the apex autonomous development finance institution under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- **Corpus Fund of NCDC:**
- NCDC would extend term loans to prospective cooperatives to the tune of Rs.10,000 Crore in the coming years.
- There are about 52 hospitals across the country run by cooperatives.
- **Working Methodology:**
- Any Cooperative Society with suitable provision in its byelaws to undertake healthcare related activities would be able to access the NCDC fund.
- NCDC assistance will flow either through the State Governments/ UT Administrations or directly to the eligible cooperatives.
- The scheme also provides working capital and margin money to meet operational requirements.
- The scheme provides interest subvention of one percent to women majority cooperatives.
- **About NCDC:**
- NCDC was set up under an Act of Parliament in 1963 for promotion and development of cooperatives.
- Since 1963, it has extended around Rs.1.60 lakh crore as loans to cooperatives.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1665800>

Ministry of Power : Liquidity Infusion Scheme under “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan” for the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory

Question : Which organizations has recently signed and exchanged an agreement for Liquidity Infusion Scheme under “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan” for the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory ?

(a) PFC & JKPCCL (b) Powergrid & JKPCCL (c) NTPC & NHPC (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Power Finance Corporation Ltd (PFC) has recently(16 October 2020) sanctioned Rs 2790 crore to Jammu Kashmir Power Corporation Ltd (JKPCCL) for clearing its outstanding dues.
- For this purpose both parties signed and exchanged an agreement for Liquidity Infusion Scheme under “Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan” for the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory.
- The money sanctioned under the scheme will be used to clear the outstanding dues of CPSU, GENCOs & TRANSCO, IPPs and RE Generators on 31st March 2020.
- Few months ago, the government announced a Rs 90,000 crore liquidity infusion for discoms under which these utilities would get loans at economical rates from PFC and REC.
- This was an initiative of the government to help gencos to remain afloat. Later, the liquidity infusion package was increased to Rs 1.2 lakh crore.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=1665183>

Zozila Tunnel

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Zoji La tunnel connects Srinagar valley to Leh.

(2) Zojila Pass tunnel will be Asia’s longest 2-lane bi-directional pass.

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 15 October 2020, Union Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari started ZojiLa Tunnel works with ceremonial blast.
- Zoji La is a high mountain pass located in the Kargil district of Ladakh.
- The 14.15 Km long tunnel links Srinagar valley (Kashmir)and Leh (Ladakh plateau) through Drass and Kargil on NH-1.
- The project will reduce the travel time between Srinagar and Leh to 15 minutes from the current 3.5 hours with providing all-weather connectivity to the region.
- Zojila Pass tunnel will be Asia’s longest 2-lane bi-directional pass.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1664707>

Rajnath Singh dedicates 44 bridges to the nation

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 44 bridges built by Border Road Organisation (BRO) in seven States & UTs.

(2) Ministry of Defence is the parent organization of BRO.

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 12 October 2020, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated 44 bridges built by Border Road Organisation (BRO) to the nation.
- The 44 bridges of various spans ranging from 30 mtrs to 484 mtrs are located in J&K (10), Ladakh (08), Himachal Pradesh (02), Punjab (04), Uttarakhand (08), Arunachal Pradesh (08) and Sikkim (04).
- They are of strategic importance and have been designed to facilitate movement of heavy civil & military traffic in border areas.
- Rajnath Singh also laid the Foundation Stone of the strategically important Nechiphu Tunnel on the road to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.
- This 450 mtrs long, bi-lane tunnel would ensure all weather connectivity across Nechiphu Pass besides providing a safe and secure passage through accident prone areas.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1663654>

PM Modi releases Rs 100 commemorative coin in honour of Vijaya Raje Scindia

Question: Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative 100 rupee coin in the honour of Vijaya Raje Scindia. She is related to which princely state of India?

(a) Gwalior (b) Patiala (c) Dholpur (d) Mewar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 12th October 2020, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi released commemorative coin of Rs. 100 denomination to celebrate the Birth Centenary of Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia.
- One of the founder members of BJP, Vijaya Raje Scindia is also popularly known as the Rajmata of Gwalior.
- She was married to the last ruling Maharaja of Gwalior, Jivajirao Scindia.
- In later life, she became a politician of considerable influence and was elected repeatedly to both houses of the Indian parliament.
- She was also an active member, for many decades, of the Jana Sangh and co-founder of Bharatiya Janata Party.
- Vijaya Raje and Jivajirao had four daughters and a son including:
- Madhavrao Scindia (1945–2001), Indian politician belonging to the Indian National Congress and former Union Minister, and the titular Maharaja of Gwalior. He was the father of Jyotiraditya Scindia.
- Vasundhara Raje (b. 1953) BJP politician and a two-term Chief Minister of Rajasthan. She was formerly married to the titular Maharaja of Dholpur.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=PM-Modi-releases-Rs-100-commemorative-coin-in-honour-of-Vijaya-Raje-Scindia&id=401931>

India has joined the Five Eyes

Question: On 11 October 2020; India has joined the Five Eyes, an intelligence alliance of five countries for-

- a) Cooperation in defense b) Cooperation in health sector
c) Cooperation in signals intelligence d) Cooperation in Biotechnology

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- On 11 October 2020; India has joined the Five Eyes in asking big tech companies to come up with a solution for law enforcement to access end-to-end encrypted communications.
- Five Eyes is an intelligence alliance comprising Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- These countries are parties to the multilateral UKUSA Agreement, a treaty for joint cooperation in signals intelligence.
- It has now become the campaign of seven countries as India and Japan also joined the campaign against messages being sent in code language on social media.
- The seven governments demanded backdoors into end-to-end encrypted chats as end-to-end encryption prevents authorities from looking into serious crimes and matters like national security.
- The Five Eyes have made similar calls to tech giants in 2018 and 2019.
- The representatives from the seven governments asserted the need for encryption backdoors.
- These should not just for encrypted instant messaging applications, but also for device encryption, custom encrypted applications and encryption across integrated platforms.
- The statement noted that tech companies themselves cannot identify and respond to violations of their terms of service.
- These include responses to illegal content and activity on its platform, including child sexual exploitation and abuse, violent crime, terrorist propaganda, and attack planning.
- It further noted that end to end encryption makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies “to access content in limited circumstances where necessary and proportionate to investigate serious crimes and protect national security.”
- Seven governments in a press release appealed technology companies to work with governments.
- **They have also instructed to take the following steps, focused on reasonable, technically feasible solutions-**
 - i. Embed the safety of the public in system designs, thereby enabling companies to act against illegal content and activity effectively with no reduction to safety, and facilitating the investigation and prosecution of offences and safeguarding the vulnerable.
 - ii. Enable law enforcement access to content in a readable and usable format where an authorisation is lawfully issued, is necessary and proportionate, and is subject to strong

safeguards and oversight.

iii. Engage in consultation with governments and other stakeholders to facilitate legal access in a way that is substantive and genuinely influences design decisions.

Links:-

<https://www.computing.co.uk/news/4021518/japan-india-five-eyes-encrypted-apps>

Starlink Mission

Question: A Starlink Internet Constellation, known as Starlink Mission being built by-

a) SpaceX b) ISRO c) ESA d) Pixxel(An Indian Space start-up)

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:-

- On 06 October 2020; American aerospace company SpaceX successfully delivered a new batch of its Starlink Satellites under its 13th Starlink Mission.
- These satellites were launched from Launch Complex 39A (LC-39A) at Kennedy Space Center in Florida (United States).
- This is the 17th mission launched by SpaceX in the year 2020.
- SpaceX has launched more than 700 Starlink satellites so far.
- A Falcon 9 Booster has been reused for this mission.
- In May 2020, two NASA astronauts were sent to the International Space Station (ISS) to fly using the Falcon 9 rocket.
- **Starlink Mission:**
- Starlink is a Satellite Internet Constellation being built by SpaceX that provides Satellite Internet Access.
- This Constellation consists largely of small satellites in the Low Earth Orbit (LEO), acting in conjunction with transceivers.
- The company stated that Starlink network is still in its early stages, but as the network grows it will be able to cover vast area.

Link:-

<https://www.spacex.com/launches/>

Banking Sector : A debit card facility for customers availing the Loan Against Securities

Question : ICICI Bank has recently introduced a debit card facility for customers availing the Loan Against Securities (LAS) from the Bank. Which one of the following statement is correct regarding this facility ?

- (a) ICICI Bank is the first bank in the country to launch this type of facility
- (b) ICICI Bank is the second bank in the country to launch this type of facility
- (c) ICICI Bank is the third bank in the country to launch this type of facility
- (d) ICICI Bank is the fourth bank in the country to launch this type of facility

Answer (a)

Related facts

- ICICI Bank today(6 October 2020) announced that it has introduced a debit card facility for customers availing the Loan Against Securities (LAS) from the Bank.

- The card is available on the Visa platform.
- Customers can use the debit card across domestic online portals and physical POS transactions
- ICICI Bank is the first bank in the country to launch the facility after the RBI allowing banks to issue electronic cards to customers who avail an OD facility, which is of the nature of a personal loan with no specific end-use restriction.

Key benefits of the debit card include:

- **Transaction limit:** The card offers a maximum daily transaction limit of Rs. 3 lakh each for POS and online transactions.
- **Digital card:** The Bank provides a digital card to customers, which is made available on iMobile app within one business day.
- **Automatic renewal:** The card is automatically renewed upon renewal of the LAS account.

Indian banking system

The Indian banking system consists of 12 public sector banks, 22 private sector banks, 46 foreign banks, 44 regional rural banks and 1,538 urban cooperative banks in addition to cooperative credit institutions..

on January 31, 2020, the total number of ATMs in India increased to 210,263 and is further expected to increase to 407,000 by 2021.

Public sector banks' assets stood at Rs 72.59 lakh crore (US\$ 1,038.76 billion) in FY19.

- In 2019, banking and financial services witnessed 32 M&A (merger and acquisition) activities worth US\$ 1.72 billion.

Link:

<https://www.icicibank.com/aboutus/article.page?identifier=news-icici-bank-offers-debit-card-for-customers-availing-las-20200610112549340#:~:text=Mumbai%3A%20ICICI%20Bank%20today%20announced,available%20on%20the%20Visa%20platform.&text=They%20also%20get%20the%20physical,also%20get%20this%20card%20shortly.>

State Startup Ranking 2019

Que. Which state has been named the best performer in State Startup Ranking 2019?

(a) Kerala (b) Maharashtra (c) Karnataka (d) Gujarat

Ans. (d)

Related facts:

- On September 11, 2020, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal released the second edition of the State Startup Ranking, 2019.
- The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Government of India has undertaken an exercise to assess States/UTs on key areas of interventions that are germane to a healthy Startup ecosystem.
- The 2019 Ranking Framework has seven broad reform areas consisting of 30 action points ranging from institutional support, easing compliances, relaxation in public

procurement norms, incubation support, seed funding support, venture funding support, and awareness and outreach.

- A total of 22 states and 3 Union Territories participated in the exercise, including four states from North East India.
- To establish uniformity and ensure standardization in the ranking process, States and UTs were divided into Category-X and Category-Y.
- Category-X entails states and UTs with a well-established startup ecosystem.
- Category-Y includes all UTs, except Delhi, and all states in North East India, except Assam.
- The States and UTs were classified as: Best Performers, Top Performers, Leaders, Aspiring Leaders and Emerging Startup Ecosystems.
- Gujarat was the Best performer in Category X followed by Karnataka and Kerala. Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu occupied the lowest positions.
- Andaman and Nicobar Islands was the Best performer in Category Y. Sikkim secured the bottom place.

Reference:

https://www.startupindia.gov.in/content/dam/invest-india/compendium/National_Report_09092020-Final.pdf

RBI excludes six PSBs from Second Schedule of RBI Act

Question : RBI excludes six PSBs from Second Schedule of RBI Act; cites merger. What is the name of these six banks ?

- (a) Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Bank of Baroda
- (b) Syndicate Bank, Punjab National Bank(PNB), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank
- (c) Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), Union Bank, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank
- (d) Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank

Answer (d)

Related facts

- The RBI has recently(September 2020) excluded six public sector banks, including OBC and Allahabad Bank, from the Second Schedule of the RBI Act following their merger with other banks.
- The six banks are Syndicate Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), United Bank of India, Andhra Bank, Corporation Bank, and Allahabad Bank.
- “We advise that Syndicate Bank has been excluded from the Second Schedule to the RBI Act, 1934 with effect from April 01, 2020 since it has ceased to carry on banking business with effect from April 01, 2020 vide Notification of March 27 which is published in the Gazette of India...dated September 26 October 02, 2020,” RBI said in a notification on Wednesday(30 September 2020).
- It has issued similar notifications regarding the other five state-owned banks.
- A bank mentioned in the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act is known as ‘Scheduled Commercial Bank’.

- These six banks merged with other public sector banks (PSBs) with effect from April 1.
- OBC and United Bank of India merged into Punjab National Bank; Syndicate Bank into Canara Bank; Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank into Union Bank of India; and Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank.
- After the consolidation, there are now seven large PSBs, and five smaller ones.
- There were as many as 27 PSBs in 2017. The total number of PSBs in the country has now come down to 12

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/rbi-excludes-six-psbs-from-second-schedule-of-rbi-act-cites-merger-120093001516_1.html

Mubadala-Reliance Retail deal : Mubadala picks up 1.4% stake in Reliance Retail

Question : Mubadala has recently picked up 1.4% stake in Reliance Retail for Rs 6,247.5 cr. Mubadala Investment Company belongs to which country ?

(a) United Arab Emirates (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Turkey (d) Kuwait

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Mubadala has recently(01 October 2020) picked up 1.4% stake in Reliance Retail for Rs 6,247.5 cr.
- This is the second investment by Mubadala in a subsidiary of Reliance Industries. It had previously invested Rs 9,093.60 crore for a 1.85 per cent stake in Jio Platforms.
- Reliance has since September raised Rs 24,847.5 crore by selling 5.65 per cent in its retail arm.
- It operates about 12,000 stores in nearly 7,000 towns, with 640 million footfalls across core categories of grocery, consumer electronics and apparel. Revenues for Reliance Retail in FY20 stood at Rs 1.63 lakh crore.
- Headquartered in Abu Dhabi(UAE), Mubadala has a portfolio of USD 232 billion spanning over six continents with interests in multiple sectors and asset classes.

Link:

<https://www.deccanherald.com/business/business-news/mubadala-picks-up-14-stake-in-reliance-retail-for-rs-62475-cr-895882.html>

Indian Bank : IB-eNote facility launched

Question : Which Bank has recently unveiled IB-e Note facility for paperless working environment ?

(a) Indian Bank (b) SBI (c) Canara Bank (d) Bank of Baroda

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Public sector Indian Bank has recently(September 2020) unveiled its IB-eNote facility, aimed at providing a paperless working environment and to improve the turnaround time considerably.

- The initiative is expected to save costs on paper, printing and other administrative expenses.
- The bank has customised SharePoint, one of the features provided by Microsoft Office.
- Indian Bank also unveiled 'Ind Guru', an e-learning platform for its employees that offers technology enabled solutions aimed at capacity building.
- With the successful amalgamation of Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank from April 1, Indian Bank has the strength and scale to come out with further innovations to improve offerings.

Commenting on the launch of IB-eNote, Microsoft India MD Sashi Sridharan said "process automation and this digital workflow tool will be one among the many other initiatives of the bank to drive digital transformation.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/finance/indian-bank-unveils-ib-enote-facility-for-paperless-working-environment-120092901175_1.html

India's External Debt as at the end of June 2020

Question : How much India's external debt stood at end-June 2020 ?

- (A) 554.5 billion dollar (B) 545 billion dollar (C) 515 billion dollar
(D) 485 billion dollar

Answer (a)

Related facts

The major developments relating to India's external debt as at end-June 2020 are presented below :-

Highlights

- At end-June 2020, India's external debt was placed at US\$ 554.5 billion, recording a decrease of US\$ 3.9 billion over its level at end-March 2020 .
- The external debt to GDP ratio increased to 21.8 per cent at end-June 2020 from 20.6 per cent at end-March 2020.
- Valuation loss due to the depreciation of the US dollar vis-à-vis major currencies such as euro, yen and SDR2 were placed at US\$ 0.7 billion. Excluding the valuation effect, the decrease in external debt would have been US\$ 4.5 billion instead of US\$ 3.9 billion at end-June 2020 over end-March 2020.
- Commercial borrowings remained the largest component of external debt, with a share of 38.1 per cent, followed by non-resident deposits (23.9 per cent) and short-term trade credit (18.2 per cent).
- At end-June 2020, long-term debt (with original maturity of above one year) was placed at US\$ 449.5 billion, recording a decrease of US\$ 2.0 billion over its level at end-March 2020.
- The share of short-term debt (with original maturity of up to one year) in total external debt declined to 18.9 per cent at end-June 2020 from 19.1 per cent at end-March 2020; the ratio of short-term debt (original maturity) to foreign exchange reserves declined to 20.8 per cent at end-June 2020 (22.4 per cent at end-March 2020).

- Short-term debt on residual maturity basis (i.e., debt obligations that include long-term debt by original maturity falling due over the next twelve months and short-term debt by original maturity) constituted 44.0 per cent of total external debt at end-June 2020 (42.4 per cent at end-March 2020) and stood at 48.2 per cent of foreign exchange reserves (49.6 per cent at end-March 2020).
- US dollar denominated debt remained the largest component of India's external debt, with a share of 53.9 per cent at end-June 2020, followed by the Indian rupee (31.6 per cent), yen (5.7 per cent), SDR (4.5 per cent) and the euro (3.5 per cent).
- The borrower-wise classification shows that the outstanding debt of both government and non-government sectors decreased at end-June 2020.
- The share of outstanding debt of non-financial corporations in total external debt was the highest at 42.3 per cent, followed by deposit-taking corporations (except the central bank) (28.1 per cent), general government (18.0 per cent) and other financial corporations (7.4 per cent).
- The instrument-wise classification shows that the loans were the largest component of external debt, with a share of 35.4 per cent, followed by currency and deposits (24.3 per cent), trade credit and advances (18.8 per cent) and debt securities (16.3 per cent).
- Debt service (principal repayments plus interest payments) increased to 8.1 per cent of current receipts at end-June 2020 as compared with 6.5 per cent at end-March 2020, reflecting lower current receipts.

Link:

https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/BS_PressReleaseDisplay.aspx?prid=50440

Prime Minister dedicates to the Nation the Atal Tunnel

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Atal Tunnel is world's longest highway tunnel in Rohtang.

(2) The 9.02 Km long Atal Tunnel connects Manali to Lahaul-Spiti valley.

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 03 October 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Atal Tunnel, world's longest highway tunnel in Himachal Pradesh's Rohtang.
- The 9.02 Km long tunnel connects Solang Valley near Manali to Sissu in Lahaul and Spiti district throughout the year. Earlier the valley was cut off for about 6 months each year owing to heavy snowfall.
- The tunnel reduces the distance between Manali and Leh by 46 km. The tunnel will also reduce the time taken to cover the same distance from 4 hours to just around 15 minutes.
- The Tunnel is built with ultra-modern specifications in the Pir Panjal range of Himalayas at an altitude of 3000 Mtrs (10,000 Feet) from the Mean Sea Level (MSL).
- The construction, which used 15,000 tonnes of steel, took nearly a decade and cost around Rs 3,200 crore.

Background:

- The Atal Bihari Vajpayee government had taken the decision to construct a strategic tunnel below the Rohtang Pass on June 3, 2000.
- The foundation stone for the access road to the south portal of the tunnel was laid on May 26, 2002.
- In December 2019, the Government decided to name the Rohtang Tunnel as Atal Tunnel in honour of the former Prime Minister and scholar Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1661260>

Time 100 Most Influential People of 2020

Question: Who among the following has been included in the Time 100 most influential people list 2020?

(a) Ayushmann Khurrana (b) Narendra Modi (c) Bilkis (d) All of these

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- TIME Magazine's annual list of the world's 100 most influential people was released in September 2020.
- The List has named people in five categories: Pioneers, Artists, Leaders, Titans, Icons.

Indians in the List:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been featured in TIME Magazine's annual list for the fourth time since 2014.
- Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana has been included in Artist category.
- Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai has been named under the category of 'Titans'.
- Professor Ravindra Gupta who spearheaded a study that led to the second man in history being cured of HIV in London, last year, has been listed under the 'Pioneers' category. He is a professor of clinical microbiology at the Cambridge University.
- TIME's list this year also featured 82-year-old Bilkis, who was one of the most prominent faces during the anti-CAA protests at Shaheen Bagh in Delhi, earlier this year. She is in the list under the category of 'Icons'.

Links:

<https://time.com/collection/100-most-influential-people-2020/>

Harijan Sevak Sangh

Question: Who was the founding president of Harijan Sevak Sangh?

(a) Amritlal Takkar (b) Ghanshyam Das Birla (c) Sachindra Bakshi
(d) Subodh Roy

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- Harijan Sevak Sangh celebrated its foundation day on September 30, 2020.
- On this day in 1932, Harijan Sevak Sangh was founded, when Mahatma Gandhi was in Yervada Jail, Pune and on fast.

- The immediate historical background dates back to the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1931 when Gandhi ji opposed the segregation of the depressed classes of the Hindu community into a separate electoral group.
- Gandhi Ji saw in it a sinister device of the British government to create a split in the Hindu community in furtherance of its policy of divide and rule.
- Earlier founded as All India Anti Untouchability League, the organization was later renamed as Harijan Sevak Sangh.
- Ghanshyam Das Birla was its founding president with Amritlal Takkar as its Secretary.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=401069>

Expansion of National Investigation Agency

Question: Which city is not among the recently sanctioned additional branches of National Investigation Agency?

(a) Imphal (b) Chennai (c) Ranchi (d) Kohima

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Ministry of Home Affairs has sanctioned 3 (Three) additional branches for National Investigation Agency on 25 September to be located at Imphal, Chennai and Ranchi.
- This decision of Government of India will help in ensuring quick response to any emergent situation in the concerned States by the premier anti-terror investigation agency of the country.
- Presently, NIA has nine branches located at, Guwahati, Mumbai, Jammu, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Kochi, Lucknow, Raipur and Chandigarh, besides specialized units at HQRs, New Delhi.

Links:

https://www.nia.gov.in/writereaddata/Portal/PressReleaseNew/895_1_Pr1.pdf

40th Foundation Day of CSIR-NISTADS

Question: CSIR-NISTADS celebrates its 40th Foundation Day on —

(a) 30th September 2020 (b) 28th September 2020
(c) 26th September 2020 (d) 24th September 2020

Answer- a

Related facts

- The Minister of Science & Technology, Earth Sciences and Health & Family Welfare, Dr. Harsh Vardhan today (30 September 2020) launched CSIR Technologies for rural development under a joint initiative of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR), Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA), Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD) and Vijnana Bharti (VIBHA).
- The event was organized through online platform on the occasion of CSIR-NISTADS 40th Foundation Day,

The technologies released included:

- Improved bee hive for quality and hygienic extraction of honey, CSIR-IHBT, Palampur
- Technology for manufacturing of Ginger paste, CSIR-CFTRI, Mysore
- Dehumidified drier for food and agri products, CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram; and
- Technology for agricultural waste (wheat bran, sugarcane bagasse and fruit peels) based biodegradable plates, cups and cutlery, CSIR-NIIST, Thiruvananthapuram
- The Minister also released CSIR-NISTADS e-Compendium and e-Coffee Table Book, on the occasion.
- A tripartite MoU to this effect was signed by the three parties on 28th July 2020 at CSIR to work jointly for post-COVID fast track action plan to create livelihood opportunities in rural areas, particularly for the people who have returned to their native villages in the lockdown period.
- “Unnat Bharat Abhiyan” is a flagship programme of Ministry of Education conceptualised and launched in IIT Delhi, with a vision of transformational change in rural development processes by leveraging knowledge institutions to help build the architecture of an Inclusive India.
- CSIR-National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies(NISTADS), New Delhi is one of the constituent laboratory of CSIR.
- Vijnana Bharti(Vibha): VIBHA, a science movement with swadeshi spirit, has a greater role to play. Swadeshi Science Movement was started in Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru by some eminent scientists under the guidance of Prof. K. I. Vasu.

Link:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1660427>

International

Pakistan remains in Grey List

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Pakistan has been kept in Grey List by Financial Action Task Force.**
- (2) Financial Action task Force is a global watchdog to tackle money laundering and terror financing.**

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:

- Pakistan has been continued to be kept in Grey List by the Financial Action task Force (FATF).
- This continuance has been carried for lagging behind the six key mandates out of the 27.
- The FATF strongly urged Pakistan to swiftly complete its full action plan by February 2021.
- Pakistan was put in Grey list in a plenary meeting of FATF held in 2018.

- Pakistan was provided with 27 point-action plans to curb the intense money laundering and terror funding prevalent.

About FATF:

- The Financial Action task Force (FATF) is a global watchdog .It was established by G7 countries in 1989 to curb the money laundering.
- However it included tackling terror financing its objective after the 9/11 attacks.
- It maintains two list-Black and Grey.
- Till now,only two countries Iran and North Korea have been blacklisted.
- Currently,total 39 countries are members of FATF.
- India became the member of FATF in 2010.

Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Pakistan-to-remain-in-grey-list-of-global-terror-financing-watchdog-FATF-till-February-2021&id=402950#:~:text=Pakistan%20will%20remain%20on%20the,mandates%20to%20check%20terror%20funding.&text=The%20implementation%20plan%20to%20curb,b y%20the%20end%20of%202019.>

International Webinar on Textile Traditions

Questions : International Webinar on Textile Traditions organized by ICCR.ICCR stands for —

- (a) Indian Council for Cultural Relations (b) Indian Committee for Cultural Relations
(c) Indian Confederation for Cultural Relations (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently(03 October 2020) said that the textiles sector is a key sector that will help build an Atmanirbhar Bharat or self-reliant India.
- Addressing an International Webinar on Textile Traditions organized by Indian Council for Cultural Relations – ICCR Yesterday Mr Modi said to assist our weavers in continuing to make world class products, we want to learn global best practices and also our best practices.
- Mr Modi said, the programme is organized in the context of Gandhiji's 150th Birth Anniversary celebrations.
- Indian Council for Cultural Relations
- The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was founded in 1950 by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister.
- Its objectives are to actively participate in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes pertaining to India's external cultural relations; to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries; to promote cultural exchanges with other countries and people, and to develop relations with nations.
- Indian textile industry
- India's textiles industry contributed seven per cent of the industry output (in value terms) in FY19.

- It contributed two per cent to the GDP of India and employed more than 45 million people in FY19.
- The sector contributed 15 per cent to India's export earnings in FY19.

Link:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Prime-Minister-Narendra-Modi-says-textile-sector-is-key-to-realising-self-reliant-India&id=401326>

Economics

World Economic Outlook, October 2020

Question : How much India's economy contract as estimated for the year 2020 according to the World Economic Outlook Update, October 2020, published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)?

(a)-10.3 percent (b)-11.3 percent (c)-12.6 percent (d)-9.2 percent

Answer (a)

Related facts

- World Economic Outlook Update released on October 2020.
- The Indian economy, severely hit by the coronavirus pandemic, is projected to contract by a massive 10.3 percent this year(2020), the International Monetary Fund said on October.
- However, India is likely to bounce back with an impressive 8.8 percent growth rate in 2021, thus regaining the position of the fastest growing emerging economy, surpassing China's projected growth rate of 8.2 percent.
- In 2019, India's growth rate was 4.2 percent.
- Released ahead of the annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank, the report said global growth would contract by 4.4 percent this year and bounce back to 5.2 percent in 2021.
- After the rebound in 2021, global growth is expected to gradually slow to about 3.5 percent into the medium term.
- China is the only country, among the major economies, to show a positive growth rate of 1.9 percent in 2020.

Link:

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2020/09/30/world-economic-outlook-october-2020>

RBI : Non-implementation of provisions made under Basel III capital

Question : RBI has recently deferred implementation of provisions made under Basel III capital due to uncertainty related to Covid crisis.What is the minimum capital adequacy ratio that banks must maintain Under Basel III ?

(a)1.5 percent (b)2.5 percent (c)0.5 percent (d)none of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- RBI has recently(29 September 2020) deferred implementation of provisions made under Basel III capital due to uncertainty related to Covid crisis.

- In two separate notifications, RBI said it would push back the final tranche of the capital conservation buffer (CCB) and the implementation of net stable funding ratio by six months.
- The capital conservation buffer (CCB) is designed to ensure that banks build up capital buffers during normal times which can be drawn down as losses are incurred during a stressed period.

As per the guidelines, banks in India were required to maintain NSFR(Net Stable Funding Ratio) of 100% from 1 April 2020. The RBI has now deferred it for a second time to 1 April 2021.

Capital Adequacy Ratio

Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) is the ratio of a bank's capital in relation to its risk-weighted assets and current liabilities.

It is decided by central banks and bank regulators to prevent commercial banks from taking excess leverage and becoming insolvent in the process.

The formula used to measure Capital Adequacy Ratio is = (Tier I + Tier II + Tier III (Capital funds)) / Risk weighted assets)

Link:

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=11970&Mode=0>

Scientific

New species, under the genus Echinops Discovered

Question: Recently researchers have discovered a new species of flowering plant Echinops sahyadricus. It has been found in the state of-

a) Arunachal Pradesh b) Maharashtra c) Karnataka d) Kerala

Answer (b):

Related Facts:-

- Recently researchers have discovered a new species of flowering plant from India, named as Echinops sahyadricus.
- This new flowering plant is also known by the English name Sahyadri globe thistle has been obtained from the Rajgad Fort area, Pune Maharashtra.
- It should be noted that this region is located in the Sahyadri hills in the northern Western Ghats of Maharashtra.
- Researchers from India and Italy have achieved success with their collaborative effort.
- The newly discovered species, under the genus Echinops (spiny thistle) and an erect branched flowering herb with stout stems.
- It is endemic to western Maharashtra and found only on a few open hilltops in the northern Western Ghats.
- Information regarding this new species was published on 23 October 2020 in Nordic Journal of Botany.

- The credit to the discovery of Echinops Sahyadricus goes to the Mumbai-based botanist Sushant More from Sathaye College, Vile Parle, Mumbai, and Fabio Conti from the University of Camerino, Italy.
- Harshal Bhosale from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Mumbai, has also given his valuable contribution in the discovery of this plant.
- The new species grows mostly on open mountain slopes from 800 to 1400 metres (m) above sea level in the northern Western Ghats.
- It is distributed from Salher in Nashik District, which is located in the north and south of Kolhapur district.
- It grows during monsoon – between June and September — and flowers bloom in November. The fruiting occurs in December.
- Researchers said the new species was unique due to the size of its composite inflorescence because a large number of small flowers clustered together.
- They measure up to 9 centimetres (cm) in diameter, which is relatively large compared to other Echinops species around the world.
- Researchers emphasised for the conservation of these plants as infrastructure projects such as road widening and construction activities along these forts could affect the population of the species,
- According to the botanists, this discovery highlights the hidden treasures of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra.
- There are about 130 species of Echinops in the world, out of which five species are found in the country and two in Maharashtra alone.

Link:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/maharashtra-new-plant-species-discovered-in-northern-western-ghats/story-xYzo17LNW3hckQf7ntMDFN.html>

COVID19 Testing Technology COVIRAP

Question: COVIRAP is a low-cost Covid-19 testing method developed by IIT Kharagpur. It has recently got the certification of which organization?

(a)ICMR (b)NDRI (c)CSIR (d)None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- COVIRAP is a low-cost Covid-19 testing method developed by IIT Kharagpur.
- It has recently(October 2020) got the certification of ICMR.
- ICMR stands for – Indian Council of Medical Research

COVIRAP

- It is an ultra-low-cost portable device.
- This new testing method implements a highly reliable & accurate molecular diagnostic procedure, conducted in an ultra-low-cost portable device unit & costs only around Rs. 500 per test.
- Covirap can be developed at a cost of less than Rs. 10,000/- with minimal infrastructural requirement making the technology affordable to common people.

Testing cost

- The cost of COVID – 19 testing is around ₹ 500/- which can further be reduced through government intervention.

Link:

<http://www.iitkgp.ac.in/news;jsessionid=1E434AB9C2F1E922368F7CAB4AC897E7>

Successful night trial of Prithvi-2 missile

Consider the following statements related to Prithvi-2 missile.

- (i) On 16 October 2020, the Prithvi-2 missile was successfully conducted a night trial.
- (ii) It is a surface-to-surface missile.
- (iii) Its strike range is 350 km. is.

Which of the statements given above is / are correct?

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

Answer- (d)

Related facts

- On 16 October 2020, successfully conducted a night trial of the indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-2 missile from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Balasore district, Odisha.
- The missile was randomly chosen from the production stock and the entire launch activity was carried out by the Strategic Force Command (SFC) of the Army and monitored by scientists of the DRDO as part of a training exercise
- Its strike range is 350 km.
- It has been developed by the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program.
- The Prithvi-2 missile is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kg of warheads and is powered by liquid propulsion twin engines.
- Earlier on 23 September 2020, a successful night trial of Prithvi-2 was done.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/defence/india-conducts-successful-night-trial-of-nuclear-capable-prithvi-2-missile-120101601207_1.html

SANT (Stand-off Anti-tank) Missile

Que: Which country successfully test-fired the SANT (Stand-off Anti-tank) Missile?

- (a) India (b) China (c) Russia (d) United States

Ans. (a)

Related facts:

- India successfully test-fired SANT (Stand-off Anti-tank) missile off the coast of Odisha. The missile is being developed by Imarat (DRDO's research centre) in collaboration with the IAF.
- The missile is reported to be the upgraded version of India's Helina (Helicopter Launched Nag) missile. SANT missile has a range between 15 to 20 km.
- It will have both Lock-on After Launch and Lock-on before Launch capability.
- It is, reportedly, an upgrade on India's Helina missile believed to have a range of 7 to 8km.

- The new missile is said to have a range of between 15 and 20km and comes equipped with a nose-mounted active radar seeker, enabling the launch platform to be located at a safe distance from the target area.

Links:-

<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/sant-missile-successfully-test-fired-its-lock-on-capabilities-explained/670122>

Shortest Unit of Time

Que. According to a recently research, what is the shortest unit of time?

- (a) 247 zeptoseconds (b) 297 zeptoseconds (c) 197 zeptoseconds
(d) 107 zeptoseconds

Ans. (a)

Related Facts:

- Scientists have measured the shortest unit of time (247 zeptoseconds) ever : the time it takes a light particle to cross a hydrogen molecule.
- A zeptosecond is a trillionth of a billionth of a second, or a decimal point followed by 20 zeroes and a 1 or 10^{-21} seconds .
- Zeptosecond was measured when scientists at Germany's Goethe University were recording the time taken by a photon to cross a hydrogen molecule.

Links:-

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/10/201016090209.htm>

INS Kavaratti

Question: INS Kavaratti is which type of Naval Vessel?

- (a) Frigate (b) Destroyer (c) Corvette (d) Cruiser

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 22 October 2020, Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane commissioned INS Kavaratti at a ceremony held at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.
- It is last of the four Anti-Submarine Warfare stealth corvette built under Project 28 (Kamorta Class).
- Kavaratti is indigenously designed by the Indian Navy's in-house organization, Directorate of Naval Design (DND) and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.
- The ship is the reincarnation of the erstwhile Arnala Class missile corvette of the same name (INS Kavaratti – P 80).

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1666771>

Final User Trial of NAG Missile

Question: Nag that completed its final user trial is which class of missile?

- (a) Anti Tank Guided Missile (b) Anti-ship missile (c) Anti-submarine missile
(d) Anti-radiation missile

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 22 October 2020, Anti Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) NAG completed its final user trial from Pokhran range.
- This 3rd generation missile was launched from NAG Missile Carrier NAMICA.
- ATGM NAG has been developed by DRDO to engage highly fortified enemy tanks in day and night conditions.
- The missile has “Fire & Forget” “Top Attack” capabilities with passive homing guidance to defeat all MBTs equipped with composite and reactive armour.
- The NAG missile carrier NAMICA is a BMP II based system with amphibious capability. With this final user trial, NAG will enter into production phase.
- The missile will be produced by Defence PSU Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), whereas Ordnance Factory Medak will produce the NAMICA.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1666723>

DRDO Procurement Manual 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Rajnath Singh released a new version of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Procurement Manual 2020.

(2) DRDO was formed in 1958.

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 20th October 2020, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh released a new version of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Procurement Manual 2020 (PM-2020).
- The manual is in line with ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ Abhiyan.
- The manual encourages more participation of Indian industry, including Start-ups and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Defence Research & Development (R&D).

Key Amendments:

- Bid security declaration option for earnest money deposit, increase of threshold limit for advance payment, placement of order on lowest bidder 2 (L2) in case L1 backs out are some of the salient features of the new manual.
- Some more enabling measures of PM-2020 are exemption of bid security and performance security up to Rs 10 lakh, no negotiations for commercial off-the-shelf

(COTS) items/services wherever price discovery is happening through market forces.

- Performance security for service contracts is linked to the payment cycle instead of total contract value.
- Procurement of stores from development partners, safeguarding of free issue material through insurance cover instead of bank guarantee (BG) are other facilitating measures adopted to help the industry.
- The liquidated damage (LD) rate for development contracts has been reduced.
- The delivery period (DP) extension process has been simplified for faster decision making.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1666125>

National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)

Question: Department of Science and Technology announced that the third phase of the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) will commence in-

(a) December 2020 (b) November 2020 (c) January 2021 (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- On 21 October 2020; Department of Science and Technology announced that the third phase of the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM) will commence in January 2021.
- The mission will do forward with enhancing the computing speed to around 45 petaflops in the country.
- The NSM is rapidly boosting high power computing in the country through its various phases.
- It will meet the increasing computational demands of academia, researchers, medium, small and micro enterprises and start-ups.
- It will cover the areas like oil exploration, flood prediction as also genomics, and drug discovery.
- The Rs 4,500 crore-National Supercomputers Mission (NSM) envisages nearly 50 supercomputers across the country in three phases.
- The Department of Science and Technology (DST) said, as the infrastructure planned in NSM phase I has already been installed and much of Phase II is in place, the speed of supercomputers in the country will soon reach to around 16 PF.
- According to the Phase III, to be initiated in January 2021, (it) will take the computing speed to around 45 petaflops.
- Department of Science and Technology (DST) explained following facts about NSM-
- The NSM is jointly steered by the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) and Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- The Mission is being implemented by the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Pune and the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.
- Param Shivay, the first supercomputer assembled indigenously, was installed in IIT (BHU).
- It then followed two more supercomputers by Param Shakti and Param Brahma at IIT-Kharagpur and IISER, Pune, respectively.

- Thereafter, supercomputing facilities were set up in two more institutions, and one is being set up under Phase I, ramping up high power computing speed to 6.6 PF.
- In Phase II, eight more institutions will be equipped with supercomputing facilities by April 2021, with a total of 10 PF compute capacity.

Links:-

https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/third-phase-of-national-supercomputing-mission-to-start-in-jan-next-year-120102101418_1.html

Naval Exercise: SLINEX-20

Question: Recently the Naval Exercise SLINEX-20 held between India and—

a) Japan b) UAE c) Israel d) Sri Lanka

Answer: (d)

Related Facts

- On 19 October 2020; bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-20 has been started Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.
- This is the eighth edition of the annual naval exercise between the Indian Navy (IN) – Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) and will go for three days 19 to 21 October 2020.
- In this exercise the Sri Lanka Navy will be represented by SLN Ships Sayura (Offshore Patrol Vessel) and Gajabahu (Training Ship).
- These ships of SLN are being led by Rear Admiral Bandara Jayathilaka, the Flag Officer Commanding Naval Fleet.
- From India's side indigenously built ASW corvettes Kamorta and Kiltan participated in the exercise.
- India ships are under the command of Rear Admiral Sanjay Vatsayan, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet.
- In addition, Indian Navy Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Chetak helicopter and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft were also participated.
- According to the Defence Ministry, previous edition of SLINEX was conducted off Visakhapatnam in September 2019.
- It further said, "SLINEX-20 aims to enhance inter-operability, improve mutual understanding and exchange best practices and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations between both navies.
- The exercise conducted also to showcase capabilities of our indigenously constructed naval ships and aircraft.
- Surface and anti-air exercises including weapon firing, seamanship evolutions, manoeuvres and cross deck flying operations are planned during this exercise.
- India and Sri Lanka are which will further enhance the high degree of inter-operability already established between the two friendly navies."
- SLINEX series of exercise emphasises the deep engagement between India and Sri Lanka which has strengthened mutual cooperation in the maritime domain.
- Interaction between the SLN and IN has also grown significantly in recent years, in consonance with India's policy of 'Neighbourhood First'.
- It should be noted that Neighbourhood First is Hon'ble PM Narendra Modi's vision of 'Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR).
- Defence Ministry informed that the exercise is being conducted in a non-contact at-sea-only format in the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic.

Links:-

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/slinex-20-india-sl-begin-eight-edition-of-bilateral-maritime-exercise/story-ZgJgSPgRHqNMrdifTX8oN.html>

India – Kazakhstan Defence Cooperation: Webinar and Expo

Question : A webinar between India and Kazakhstan was held on 15/10/2020.

What was the theme of webinar ?

- (a) Make In India For The World, India – Kazakhstan Defence Cooperation: Webinar and Expo
- (b) Make In India For The Asia, India – Kazakhstan Defence Cooperation: Webinar and Expo
- (c) Make In India For The Central Asia, India – Kazakhstan Defence Cooperation: Webinar and Expo
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- A webinar between India and Kazakhstan was held on 15/10/2020. The Theme of webinar was “Make In India For The World, India – Kazakhstan Defence Cooperation: Webinar and Expo”.
- It was organized under the aegis of Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence through FICCI.
- This webinar is the part of the series of webinars which are being organized with friendly foreign countries in order to boost defence exports and achieve defence export target of \$5 billion in the next five years.
- Ambassadors of both countries and senior MoD officials from both sides participated in the webinar and spoke about need to leverage opportunities not only for co-development and co-production but also to meet each other's requirements.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1664989>

New crab species: Abortelphusa Namdaphaensis

Question : A new crab species of fresh water named as Abortelphusa Namdaphaensis recently found in –

- a) Andhra Pradesh b) Arunachal Pradesh c) Kerala d) Assam

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- Researchers have recently found a new crab species named as Abortelphusa Namdaphaensis.
- It is a newly discovered freshwater species of crab on the edge of a small stream in Namdapha Tiger Reserve, Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Description of Abortelphusa Namdaphaensis:-**
- The genus Abortelphusa is named after the Abor Hills, while the species Namdaphaensis is named after Namdapha.

- In local Singphoo language Nam means water or river and Dapha is the name of a clan of Singphoo tribe.
- Namdapha Reserve
- Namdapha Reserve is for its rich biodiversity, and believed to be the rare area that harbours four large cats: tigers, snow leopards, clouded leopards and leopards.
- This is the eastern most tiger reserve in India with its borders shared with Myanmar. This park is named after Namdapha river flowing through it.
- The species, a small freshwater crab species, is a tribute to Namdapha, the largest protected area in the Eastern Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot and the Abor Hills.
- Of the 125 freshwater crabs in India, the north-east accounts for 37. Arunachal Pradesh has 15 and Assam has 21.
- The discovery highlights the potential of Arunachal Pradesh as one of the richest biodiversity hotspots in the country.

Link:-

<http://nisargnationalnetwork.com/abortelphusa-namdaphaensis-sighted-in-namdapha-tiger-reserve/>

New species of perennial woody herb

Question: Recently a team of researchers have reported a new species of perennial woody herb of genus *Lepidagathis* from the state of—

a) Karnataka b) Kerala c) Arunachal Pradesh d) Assam

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- A team of researchers have reported a new species of perennial woody herb.
- It is of the genus *Lepidagathis* found the northern laterite plateaus of Kasaragod district in Kerala.
- *Lepidagathis Ananthapuramensis* is the name given to this perennial woody herb since this rare plant was spotted in the neighborhoods of the Ananthapura lake temple.
- Ananthapura lake temple is the famed temple dedicated to Ananthapadmanabha of Kerala
- An article on the discovery has been published in the latest edition of *Phytotaxa*, a journal on plant taxonomy.
- The plant was spotted during field explorations in the region.
- With its discovery, the number of species of the genus *Lepidagathis* (family *Acanthaceae*) found in India has risen to 34.
- Plants of this species are locally called 'Paramullu'.
- To date, eight species of the genus *Lepidagathis* and three varieties have been reported from Kerala, of which four are endemic to the Western Ghats.
- *Lepidagathis Ananthapuramensis* is closely related to *Lepidagathis keralensis* reported from Madayippura in Kannur district.
- Detailed studies have established the former as a hitherto undescribed species with following characteristics-
- It is an erect woody herb that grows to a height of 50-100 cm.
- It is characterized by a hairy and branched stem, thick and woody rootstock, and hairy leaf veins.
- Its flowers clustered on one side of the inflorescence.

Link:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/new-perennial-woody-herb-species-spotted-in-kerala/article32814851.ece>

India Successfully test-fired Anti-radiation Missile

Question: Recently India successfully test-fired Anti-radiation missile, named as-

- a) Rudram-1
- b) Pinaka
- c) Pechora
- d) BrahMos

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:-

- On 09 October 2020; India successfully test-fired Rudram-1, the tactical anti-radiation missile.
- This missile has been built by India to take down enemy radars and surveillance systems.
- The Defence Research and Development Organisation developed this new generation weapon.
- It was tested at the interim test range Balasore, off the coast of Odisha in the Bay of Bengal.
- The New Generation Anti-Radiation Missile (NGARM), integrated on Su-30MKI fighter aircraft and fired to test its all parameters.
- The IAF will now have the capability to perform SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defence) operations deep into enemy territory.
- This would allow the IAF's strike aircraft to carry out their mission unhindered effectively.
- This test demonstrates the capability of an Anti-Radiation Missile with large stand-off ranges.
- Its range depends on the height at which the fighter jet is flying.
- It can be launched from a height ranging from 500 metres to 15 km and can hit radiation emitting targets within a range of 250 km.
- All radars and Electro Optical Tracking System tracked the launch and point of impact
- The tactical, air-to-surface anti-radiation missile is equipped with a passive homing head that tracks sources of radiation of a wide range of frequencies.
- It can lock into a target not only before launch but also after it has been launched.
- The missile is comparable to the tactical air-to-surface missile AGM-88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile that was inducted by the US Navy only in 2017.
- It can engage and relocate integrated air Defence targets and other targets even if equipped with shutdown capability.
- This means even if the enemy shuts down the radar after the missile Rudram is launched, it will still hit the target.

Links:-

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-tests-new-anti-radiation-missile-to-destroy-enemy-radars/articleshow/67676064.cms>

Astronomers produce largest 3-D catalog of galaxies

Question: Quasar is an astronomical object of very high luminosity found in the-

- a) Centres of some galaxies b) Centres of all galaxies
- c) Centres of red giants d) Centres of white dwarfs

Which one statement among the above is true?

Answer: (a)

Related Facts

- A team of astronomers at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Institute for Astronomy (IfA) has produced the world's largest three-dimensional astronomical imaging catalog of stars, galaxies and quasars.
- The team used data from UH's Panoramic Survey Telescope and Rapid Response System or Pan-STARRS1 (PS1) on Haleakalā.
- The PS1 3 π survey is the world's largest deep multi-color optical survey, spanning three-quarters of the sky.
- If A astronomers applied novel computational tools to the catalog, to decipher which of the 3 billion objects are stars, galaxies or quasars.
- It should be known that a quasar is an astronomical object of very high luminosity found in the centres of some galaxies.
- Quasars are powered by gas spiraling at high velocity into an extremely large black hole at the center of a galaxy.
- For the galaxies, the software also derived estimates of their distances.
- The resulting 3-D catalog is now available as a high-level science product through the Mikulski Archive for Space Telescopes.
- It is approximately 300 GB in size, and science users can query the catalog through the MAST CasJobs SQL interface, or download the entire collection as a computer-readable table.
- Astronomers took publicly available spectroscopic measurements that provide definitive object classifications and distances.
- They fed them to an Artificial Intelligence (AI) algorithm as the AI process was key to figure out and accurately determine the same properties from various measures of the colors and sizes of the objects.

Link:-

<https://phys.org/news/2020-10-astronomers-largest-d-galaxies.html>

Discovery of new family of Boney Fish Species: Aenigmachannidae

Question: The new family of boney fish species that has been named as

Aenigmachannidae was recently discovered in-

- a) Kerala b) Karnataka c) Maharashtra d) Andhra Pradesh

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- Recently scientists have discovered a new family of bony fish from Western Ghats in India.
- This fish species has been named as Aenigmachannidae.
- This discovery became possible by the collaborated effort of Scientists from India, Germany, United Kingdom and Switzerland.
- Results of this study were published in Scientific Reports, the open-access mega-journal of the Nature Publishing Group.

- It is important to note that the discovery of Aenigmachannidae came just a year after the discovery of the enigmatic fish, Gollum Snakehead.
- Interestingly both these species were discovered from the same rice fields of northern Kerala.
- Scientists have now conducted detailed studies on its skeleton and genetic assembly of Aenigmachannidae.
- The study led to the recognition that this species, and its congener Aenigmachanna mahabali, represents a new family different from Channidae, in which both species were initially placed.
- These suggest that members of Aenigmachannidae are “living fossils” and comprise an ancient gondwanan lineage.
- It survived during the break-up of the supercontinent (Gondwana) and the northward drift of the Indian subcontinent, about 100 million years ago.

Links:-

<http://www.thehawk.in/science/scientists-discover-new-family-of-bony-fish-in-western-ghats-176857>

India successfully test-fires BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) BrahMos is a subsonic cruise missile.

(2) BrahMos is jointly developed by India’s DRDO and Russian Federation’s NPO Mashinostroyeniya.

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

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

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 30 September 2020, India successfully test-fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile with several indigenous features.
- The test firing of the missile was carried out by the Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO from Balasore in Odisha.
- BrahMos surface-to-surface supersonic cruise missile features indigenous Booster and Airframe Section along with many other ‘Made in India’ sub-systems.
- The BrahMos Land-Attack Cruise Missile (LACM) was cruising at a top speed of Mach 2.8. The missile weighs around 2.5 tonnes and has a strike range of more than 400 km.
- This successful launch has paved the way for the serial production of the indigenous booster and other indigenous components of the powerful BrahMos Weapon System.

About BrahMos:

- The BrahMos (designated PJ-10) is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from submarine, ships, aircraft, or land.

- It is a joint venture between the Russian Federation's NPO Mashinostroyeniya and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The name BrahMos is a portmanteau formed from the names of two rivers, the Brahmaputra of India and the Moskva of Russia.
- It is the fastest supersonic cruise missile in the world.

Links:

<http://brahmos.com/pressRelease.php?id=96>

Covid-19 crisis inspires a “Research Culture” in Ayush disciplines

Question: The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the spotlight on the health-promotive and disease-preventive solutions of Ayush disciplines. The number of new trials registered in Ayurveda during __ was seen to be 58.

- (a) March 01, 2020 to June 25, 2020 (b) March 31, 2020 to July 25, 2020
(c) March 01, 2020 to August 25, 2020 (d) March 01, 2020 to April 25, 2020

Answer- a

Related facts

- A government press release(30 September 2020) showing the significance of 'Ayush'.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the spot light on the health – promotive and disease- preventive solutions of Ayush disciplines.
- The number of new trials registered in Ayurveda during March 01, 2020 to June 25, 2020 was seen to be 58.
- News reports in August 2020 had revealed that out of the 203 trials registered in Clinical Trial Registry of India (CTRI), 61.5% were from Ayush disciplines.
- A recent study published in the 'Journal of Research in Ayurvedic Sciences' titled "Ayurveda Research Studies on COVID-19 Registered in CTRI: A critical appraisal" throws more light on this growing "research-culture" in Ayush disciplines.
- Here is some additional insight into these CTRI registered trials involving Ayurveda and COVID-19. Of the total trial registered, approximately 70% of the trials were sponsored by the Government and various stakeholders of Ayurveda associated with the Ministry of AYUSH.
- Out of the said 58 registered trials, 52 (89.66%) are interventional trials and 6 (10.34%) are observational trials.
- The majority of the trials included adult participants of both the gender as the target population. A total of 53 (91.38%) trials intend to recruit participants aged 18 years or more, and only 05 (8.62%) trials intended to recruit participants younger than 18 years.

Link:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1660259>

Sports

Tennis

2020 French Open

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Rafael Nadal has won 2020 French Open Men's Singles title.

(2) 2020 French Open women's singles title was won by Iga Świątek

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:

- The 2020 French Open was held at the Stade Roland Garros in Paris, France from 27 September to 11 October.

Men's Singles:

- The men's singles title was won for the 13th time by Rafael Nadal, who won his 20th Grand Slam title, defeating Novak Djokovic in the final.

Women's Singles:

- The women's singles title was won by Iga Świątek of Poland. She defeated Sofia Kenin in the final.

Men's Doubles

- Kevin Krawietz/Andreas Mies(both Germany)

Women's Doubles

- Tímea Babos (Hungary)/ Kristina Mladenovic (France)

Links:

<https://www.rolandgarros.com/en-us/palmares>

Sports Miscellaneous

Khelo India State Centre of Excellence

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) The Sports Ministry has selected Nine States and Union Territories for upgradation to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE).

(2) The 'Khelo India – National Programme for Development of Sports' was launched in October, 2017.

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:

- Nine States and Union Territories have been selected by the Sports Ministry for upgradation to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE).
- The States and UTs include Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Chandigarh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Puducherry, Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir.
- The centres have been selected based on their past performances, quality of infrastructure, management and sports culture in the State.
- Earlier this year, the Sports Ministry had identified a total of 14 centres to be upgraded to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence. The overall number now stands at 24 KISCEs from 23 States and UTs.
- The assistance to these centres will be provided in the form of bridging the gaps in sports equipment, high performance managers, coaches, sports scientists and technical support.

About Khelo India:

- The 'Khelo India – National Programme for Development of Sports' was launched in October, 2017 with the aim to strengthen the entire sports ecosystem to promote the twin objectives of mass participation and promotion of excellence in sports across the country.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Nine-States%2C-Union-Territories-selected-for-upgradation-to-KISCE&id=402478#:~:text=Nine%20States%20and%20Union%20Territories,Tripura%20and%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir.>

Short Notes

Personalities

Priyanka Chopra

Question: Which company has appointed actress Priyanka Chopra as brand ambassador for B-Fizz?

(a)Nestle India Limited (b)ITC Limited (c)Parle Agro (d)Britannia Industries

Answer (c)

Related facts

- Parle Agro is an FMCG(Fast Moving Consumer Goods) company. It has appointed actress Priyanka Chopra as brand ambassador for B-Fizz.
- B-Fizz is a new malt flavoured fruit juice-based drink set to provide a new drinking experience of consumers.

- The brand has roped in mega-star, Priyanka Chopra Jonas as the national brand ambassador to maximize reach and awareness of the new launch while Jr. NTR has been roped in as the brand ambassador for Southern India.

FMCG sector

- It is the fourth largest sector in the Indian economy and is expected to grow nine to ten percent in the year 2020.
- It is estimated that forty percent of all FMCG consumption in India will be made online by 2020.
- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) is beneficial for the FMCG industry as many of the FMCG products such as soap, toothpaste and hair oil now come under the 18% tax bracket against the previous rate of 23–24%. Also, GST on food products and hygiene products have been reduced to 0–5% and 12–18% respectively. (As on October 2020)

Link:

<https://www.parleagro.com/uploads/images/0601415f9271c5bfc3e>

Aishwarya Sridhar

Question: Wildlife Photographer of the Year is an annual international wildlife photography exhibition owned by the NHM. What is the full form of NHM?

- (a) Natural History Museum
- (b) National History Museum
- (c) Natural History Mission
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Aishwarya Sridhar is a wildlife photographer, presenter and filmmaker from India.
- She has recently (October 2020) received the 'Highly Commended' award at Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition under the 'Behaviour-Invertebrates' category.

Winning Photograph

- Her winning photograph titled 'Lights of Passion'.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year

- It is an annual international wildlife photography exhibition owned by the NHM (Natural History Museum).
- **Awards received by Aishwarya Sridhar :-**

Year	Awards

2020	Highly Commended award at Wildlife Photographer of the Year
2019	Woman Icon Award in media category by the Hon. Governor of Tamil Nadu ,Diana Award by the Princess Diana Foundation
2011	Sanctuary Asia “Young Naturalist Award”

Link:

<https://www.nhm.ac.uk/wpy/gallery/2020-lights-of-passion?tags=award.hghlycmmndd&tags=ed.current>

Wavel Ramkalawan

Que: In which country Wavel Ramkalawan has won Presidential election?

(a) Fiji (b) Madagascar (c) Comoros (d) Seychelles

Ans. (d)

Related facts:

- Context:
- India origin Wavel Ramkalawan was elected as the President of Seychelles on 25 October, 2020.
- This is for the first time the Seychelles opposition has won election since 1977.
- Wavel Ramkalawan was born in MAhe, Seychelles. His grandfather was from Bihar, India.
- Seychelles is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean.
- It was a British colony till 1976. A year after its independence, in 1977 Mr Faure seized power in a coup and retained presidency in elections.
- He was in power till multi-party democracy was restored in the country in 1993.
- It is an archipelago of 115 islands. Also, it is home coral reefs, beaches and nature reserves. The Green Turtle, an endangered species is found in the Island country.

Links:-

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/indian-origin-wavel-ramkalawan-is-elected-seychelles-president/articleshow/78864411.cms>

Saad Hariri

Question : Who has returned to power in Lebanon as Prime Minister?

(a) Tammam Salam (b) Fouad Siniora (c) Najib Mikati (d) Saad Hariri

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Saad Hariri has recently(October 2020) returned to power in Lebanon as Prime Minister.
- President Michel Aoun has nominated Sunni Islamic politician Hariri as prime minister to form the new government.
- Hariri is taking over the power of the country at a time when the country is in its worst phase after the civil war which took place during 1975-1990.

Recent years political chronology of Lebanon

Year	Incidence
June 2005	Anti-Syrian alliance led by Saad Hariri wins control of parliament at elections. Hariri ally Fouad Siniora becomes PM.
June 2009	The pro-Western March 14 alliance wins parliamentary elections and Saad Hariri forms unity government.
January 2020	Mass protests against economic stagnation and corruption bring down the government of Saad Hariri, who is succeeded by the academic Hassan Diab.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/saad-hariri-renamed-lebanon-pm/article32922061.ece>

Vijayalakshmi Ramanan

Question: Vijayalakshmi Ramanan who recently passed away was

- (a) Poet
- (b) Indian Air Force officer
- (c) Kannada singer
- (d) Scientist

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- The first woman Indian Air Force officer Vijayalakshmi Ramanan passed away on 18 October 2020. She was 96.
- Dr Ramanan was commissioned in the Army Medical Corps on August 22, 1955. She was promoted to the rank of Wing Commander in August 1972.
- She was honoured with the Vishist Seva Medal(VSM).

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/iafs-first-woman-commissioned-officer-dies-at-96-6821413/>

Sushil Kumar Singhal

Question: Who has been accredited the High Commissioner of India to Solomon Islands?

(a) Sushil Kumar Singhal (b) Rajnish Kumar (c) Rajiv Kumar (d) Taranjit Singh Sandhu

Answer: (a)

- On 22 October 2020, Sushil Kumar Singhal has been concurrently accredited as the next High Commissioner of India to the Solomon Islands.
- He is a 2000-batch Indian Foreign Service officer.
- He is presently serving as the High Commissioner of India to the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Sushil-Kumar-Singhal-accredited-as-next-High-Commissioner-of-India-to-Solomon-Islands&id=402783>

Dr. Saman Habib

Question: Who has been elected the fellow of Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi on 22 October 2020?

(a) Saman Habib (b) Gopinath Kartha (c) Ghanshyam Swarup (d) K Sridhar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Dr. Saman Habib has been elected the fellow of Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi.
- She is the Chief Scientist and Professor (AcSIR) in Molecular Biology Division, CSIR-CDRI, Lucknow.
- She has done outstanding work for understanding the malaria parasite.
- The Indian National Science Academy was established in January 1935 with the object of promoting science in India and harnessing scientific knowledge for the cause of humanity and national welfare.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1666799>

Book: Mr. Prime Minister, We Shrank the Dragon

Question: Recently a book has been released with the name, Mr. Prime Minister; We Shrank the Dragon written by—

a) Vikram Seth b) General V.P Malik c) Rajnath singh d) Pradeep Goorha

Answer: (d)

Related Facts: –

- Recently a book named as Mr. Prime Minister, We Shrank the Dragon was released. It has been written by the author Pradeep Goorha.

- The book, though fiction, is inspired by reality revolving around the currently developing story on India's northern borders.
- It also raises perennially neglected issues like Pakistan's illegal occupation of PoK, Gilgit-Baltistan.
- The book tries to find the ways, how these could be solved at this opportune time.
- Goorha has attempted at providing that solution. Befriending Iran at an altogether different level is central to the approach.
- Through his, work Goorha hopes to introduce the readers to believe that no problem is as intractable as it may appear.
- **About the Author :-**
- Pradeep Goorha is an alumnus of IIT Roorkee and Clemson University, SC, USA.
- He worked as consultant for international organizations, e.g. the London-based Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Here he carried out macro and micro industrialization assignments in several developing countries including Tanzania in East Africa and Vanuatu in Oceania.
- He has been a columnist for Business World Online where he regularly contributed with his articles on Management.
- Lately, he then channelized his writing interest to fiction.
- Goorha's first historical fiction novel, "Survival Redux" was published in the United States in 2016.

Links:-

<https://www.aninews.in/news/business/book-mr-prime-minister-we-shrank-the-dragon-by-author-pradeep-goorha-all-set-to-launch20201015151815/>

Sooronbai Jeenbekov

Question: Which central Asian country president Sooronbai Jeenbekov had resigned amid election turmoil?

(a) Kazakhstan (b) Kyrgyzstan (c) Turkmenistan (d) Uzbekistan

Answer: (b)

Related facts:

- On 15th October 2020, Kyrgyzstan President Sooronbai Jeenbekov announced his resignation amid political unrest broke out after disputed parliamentary election.
- Parliamentary election for the Central Asian country was held on 4th October. The opposition rejected the election accusing of vote-buying and other irregularities.
- The disputed vote triggered protests and unrest as protesters then took over government buildings and looted some offices.
- Kyrgyzstan has a history of political volatility – two of its presidents have been toppled by revolts in the past 15 years.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/world/kyrgyzstan-president-sooronbai-jeenbekov-steps-down-amid-election-turmoil-6738190/>

Bhanu Athaiya

Question: Bhanu Athaiya who passed away recently was associated with which designation?

(a) Costume designer (b) Film Director (c) Poet (d) Painter

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Costume designer Bhanu Athaiya passed away in Mumbai on 15th October 2020. She was 91.
- She is India's first Oscar winner Costume designer honoured for her work in the 1982 film Gandhi.
- Athaiya also designed costumes for Bollywood movies like C.I.D, Pyaasa, Kagaz Ke Phool, Guide, Satyam Shivam Sundaram, Geeta Mera Naam, Razia Sultan, Agneepath (1990), 1942 – A Love Story and many more.
- Some of her best designs include Vyjayantihkala in Aamrapali, Waheeda Rehman in Guide and Zeenat Aman in Satyam Shivam Sundaram.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/costume-designer-bhanu-athaiya-passes-away-6740971/>

Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri

Question: Renowned poet Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri who passed away recently was related to which language?

(a) Malayalam (b) Kannada (c) Telugu (d) Gujarati

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Noted Malayalam poet and Jnanpith laureate Akkitham Achuthan Namboothiri passed away on 15th October 2020.
- He was conferred the coveted 55th Jnanpith Award in 2019. He was honoured with Padma Shri in 2017, the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1973.
- His literary works of over 40 includes poetry, short stories, plays, translations and essays.
- He has penned many poems in Malayalam and 'Irupatham Noottandinte Ithihasam' (Epic of the 20th Century) one of his major works, is regarded amongst the first modernist poems in Malayalam.

Links:

<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/renowned-malayalam-poet-akkitham-achuthan-namboothiri-passes-away-at/667499>

S K Saini

Question : S K Saini will travel to the United States from October 17 to 20, 2020. The aim of the visit is to enhance military cooperation between both the armies. Who is S K Saini ?

- (a) Defence Secretary of India
(b) Vice Chief of the Army Staff
(c) Vice Chief of the Naval Staff

(d) None of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts

- Lt Gen SK Saini, Vice Chief of the Army Staff is proceeding on a visit to the United States of America from 17 to 20 Oct 2020.
- The aim of the visit is to enhance military cooperation between both the armies.
- The Vice Chief of the Army Staff will visit the US Army Pacific Command (USARPAC), the Army component of Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and exchange ideas extensively with the military leadership apart from witnessing training and equipment capabilities of US Army.
- Later, the Vice Chief of the Army Staff will also visit INDOPACOM where aspects of military cooperation and furthering military to military engagement including procurements, training in niche domains, joint exercises and capability building will be discussed.
- The visit will further enhance the operational and strat level collaboration between both armies, which is emphasised by the fact India is participating in two joint exercises with the US despite COVID-19 restrictions.
- These are Yudh Abhyas (February 2021) and Vajra Prahar (March 2021).

India –US military relations : Chronology

- The first of the four agreements, the General Security Of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), was signed by India and the U.S. in 2002.
- The second agreement, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), was signed by the two countries on 29 August 2016.
- The LEMOA permits the military of either country to use the others' bases for re-supplying or carrying out repairs.
- The third agreement, Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) was signed during the inaugural 2+2 dialogue in September 2018.
- The fourth agreement, Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) has not yet been signed. It permits the exchange of unclassified and controlled unclassified geospatial products, topographical, nautical, and aeronautical data, products and services between India and the US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA).
- In June 2015, US defence secretary Ashton Carter visited India and became the first American defence secretary to visit an Indian military command.
- In March 2016, India rejected a proposal by the US to join naval patrols in the South China Sea alongside Japan and Australia.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1665031>

Syeda Anwara Taimur

Question: Syeda Anwara Taimur who passed away recently was

- (a) Politician
- (b) Lyricist
- (c) Filmmaker
- (d) Poet

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Syeda Anwara Taimur, the only woman to have become the Chief Minister of Assam till now, passed away in Australia on September 28, 2020. She was 84.
- Taimur, a Congress politician then, was the CM from December 1980 to June 1981. At that time, the anti-foreigner movement in the state (1979-85) was at its peak.
- Taimur became an MLA in 1972, 1978, 1983 and 1991; was a minister in Assam twice; and a Rajya Sabha MP twice (nominated in 1988 and elected in 2004).
- In 2011, Taimur joined the Badruddin Ajmal-led AIUDF, reportedly after being denied a ticket from Congress.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/assams-only-woman-cm-syeda-anwara-taimur-passes-away-6619516/>

Shekhar Kapur

Question: Who has been appointed FTII governing council chairman?

- (a) Imtiaz Ali
- (b) Anurag Kashyap
- (c) Mukul S Anand
- (d) Shekhar Kapur

Answer : (d)

Related facts:

- Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur has been appointed the new President of FTII Society and Chairman of FTII Governing Council.
- His tenure will be till March 3, 2023.
- Kapur, known for films like Masoom (1983), Mr India (1987), Elizabeth (1998) and Bandit Queen (1994), will replace television producer B P Singh.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/shekhar-kapur-appointed-ftii-society-president-6635917/>

Awards & Honors

Stevie Awards for Women in Business

Question : Who has been named the winner of GOLD Stevie® Award in the LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT- BUSINESS category in the 17th annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business.

- (a) Seema Gupta (b) Karie Kaufmann (c) Julianna Yau (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Seema Gupta has recently (October 2020) been named the winner of GOLD Stevie® Award in the LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT- BUSINESS category in the 17th annual Stevie Awards for Women in Business.

- She is the Director(Operations) of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, a PSU under Ministry of Power.
- The Award would be presented to Mrs. Seema Gupta during a virtual awards ceremony scheduled on December 9, 2020.
- She has been earlier conferred with Special Commendation Award for Outstanding Women Manager in Public Sector Enterprises by the Honourable President of India in 2017 and was adjudged as the Best Contributor at the ITOMS 2018 Conference in Malaysia.

Stevie Awards

- This award honours women executives, entrepreneurs, employees, and the companies they run– worldwide.
- The Stevie Awards have been hailed as the world's premier business awards.
- For this year, the Gold, Silver, and Bronze Stevie Award winners were determined by the average scores of more than 180 business professionals around the world, working on seven juries.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1664436>

2019-20 AIFF Footballer of the Year Award

Question:Who has been conferred the 2019-20 AIFF Men's Footballer of the Year Award?

(a) Gurpreet Singh Sandhu (b) Sanju Yadav (c) Both (a) & (b) (d) Ngangom Bala Devi

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- All India Football Federation (AIFF) awards 2019-20 have been announced.
- Indian National Team goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu has won the 2019-20 AIFF Men's Footballer of the Year Award.
- The women's squad's midfielder Sanju Yadav has won the 2019-20 AIFF Women's Footballer of the Year Award.

Links:

<https://www.the-aiff.com/article/gurpreet-and-sanju-declared-winners-of-aiff-player-of-the-year-awards>

Yamin Hazarika Award 2020

Question: Who has been conferred Yamin Hazarika Award on 23 September 2020?

(a) Rana Safvi (b) Naveen Kumar (c) Neelam Sharma (d) Harshita Kumar

Answer:(a)

Related facts:

- Renowned historian and author Rana Safvi has won this year's Yamin Hazarika Award.

- The prestigious award is given in the memory of Yamin Hazarika, the first woman police officer from Assam.
- She was also the first woman police officer from the North East.

Links:

<http://twocircles.net/2020sep23/439118.html>

CDRI Award 2020

Question: CSIR-CDRI felicitates young researchers with CDRI Award for their outstanding contribution in drug discovery and development. Who is the winner of CDRI Award 2020?

(a) Dr Bushra Ateeq (b) Dr Surajit Ghosh (c) Dr Ravi Manjithaya (d) all above

Answer- d

Related facts

- The CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow yesterday (29 September 2020) felicitated young researchers with CDRI Award for their outstanding contribution in drug discovery and development, at a virtual event.
- Dr Bushra Ateeq, Dr Surajit Ghosh and Dr Ravi Manjithaya received the prestigious CDRI Award 2020.
- These scientists have made outstanding contribution in unfolding the knot of Cancer.
- CDRI Awards were instituted in the year 2004 to promote scientific excellence in the country and to recognize outstanding contribution in the area of Drug Research and Development.
- These prestigious awards are given annually to the Indian Nationals below 45 years of age who have carried out outstanding research work in the area having direct bearing on Drug Research and Development.
- There are two separate individual awards in the area of Chemical Sciences and Life Sciences. Each award carries a Cash prize of Rs. 20,000/- and a citation.
- One of the CDRI awardee Dr Bushra Ateeq also got this year's Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award in medical sciences.
- Dr Bushra Ateeq's quest for new therapeutic avenues for prostate cancer bagged her CDRI Award-2020
- Dr Surajit Ghosh's contribution in Discovery of Nuclear Localizing Cell Penetrating Peptide (CPP) for anticancer drug paved the way for his CDRI award 2020
- Dr Ravi Manjithaya's outstanding work on Chemical genetics-based identification of autophagy-modulating small molecules which provides mechanistic insights and therapeutic potential, paved the way for his CDRI award 2020

Link:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1660343>

Planning & Project

Blue Dot Network

Question: Blue Dot Network, which is related certification of projects based on global infrastructure principles-

(a) Japan

- (b) Australia
- (c) China
- (d) USA

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- Recently A bipartisan group of senators in the US has supported the decision to invite Australia for the annual naval exercise 'Malabar'.
- It is important to note that this group of senators in the US also invited India to join the Blue Dot Network.
- The Blue Dot Network was launched during the 35th ASEAN Summit held in Bangkok (Thailand) in November 2019.
- Blue Dot Network is led by the US International Development Finance Corporation of America.
- It works under the shared collaboration between the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
- Its objective is to bring government, private sectors together and emphasize on global infrastructure development within the framework of common standards.
- Its task is to certify projects based on global infrastructure principles.
- The certification issued by this network will act as a recognized global symbol for market-driven, transparent and sustainable development projects.
- Thus BDN will attract private capital investment for infrastructure related projects in developing and emerging economies.
- BDN is being seen as a reaction against China's Belt and Road Initiative, led by the United States.
- It is noteworthy that China's Belt and Road Initiative provides for direct finance and public debt, while BDN has no such system.

Link:-

www.thehindu.com/news/international/bipartisan-senate-letter-backs-indias-inclusion-of-australia-in-malabar-naval-exercise/article32910969.ece

Launch of second phase of thalassemia bal sewa yojna

Question : Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan has recently launched the second phase of thalassemia bal sewa yojna. Which one of the following fact is incorrect regarding this yojana ?

- (a) This scheme was launched in 2017 under the Coal India CSR funded Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) program.
- (b) This scheme was launched in 2016 under the Coal India CSR funded Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) program.
- (c) This scheme was launched in 2015 under the Coal India CSR funded Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) program.
- (d) This scheme was launched in 2014 under the Coal India CSR funded Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplantation (HSCT) program.

Answer (A)

Related facts

- Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan today(14 October 2020) virtually launched the second phase of a Coal India CSR(corporate social responsibility) initiative to provide financial assistance for treatment of underprivileged thalassemic patients.
- Launched in 2017, the Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana is a hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT) programme that aims to provide a one-time cure opportunity for haemoglobinopathies like thalassaemia and sickle cell disease for patients who have a matched family donor.
- The CSR initiative was targeted to provide financial assistance to a total of 200 patients by providing a package cost not exceeding Rs 10 lakh per HSCT.

Link:

http://newsonair.com/News?title=Union-Health-Minister-launches-2nd-phase-of-%E2%80%9CThalassemia-Bal-Sewa-Yojna%E2%80%9D&id=402183#:~:text=Health%20and%20Family%20Welfare%20Minister,Aarogya%20Yojana%20for%20targeted%20populace.https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/vardhan-launches-2nd-phase-of-csr-initiative-for-thalassemic-patients-120101401236_1.html

Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana

Question : Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana is a flagship scheme of which state ?

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

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Uttarakhand CM Trivendra Singh Rawat on Thursday (October 8, 2020) launched Mukhya Mantri Saur Swarojgar Yojana. The Yojana aims at creating self-employment for nearly 10,000 youths in the state.
- The beneficiaries will be allocated solar plants of 25 kilowatts each. 10,000 people will get self-employment under this scheme.
- The targeted beneficiaries, including the youth and migrants who have returned home after leaving their jobs in various parts of the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The yojana will not only provide them employment but also promote production of green energy.
- A total of 1.5-2 nalis (land measurement unit) of land and Rs 10 lakh at the rate of Rs 40,000 per unit are required to set up each of these plants, which will generate 38,000 units of electricity per annum and will be bought by Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd for 25 years.”
- Cooperative banks will grant loans at an interest rate of eight per cent per year for 15 years to set up the solar plants on private land or on land taken on lease.

Link:

<http://www.businessworld.in/article/Uttarakhand-CM-launches-Mukhya-Mantri-Saur-Swarojgar-Yojana-/09-10-2020-329552/>

Jaganna Vidya Kanuka scheme

Question : Jaganna Vidya Kanuka is the flagship scheme of which state ?

(a)Andhra Pradesh (b)Tamil Nadu (c)Kerala (d)Telangana

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday(8 October 2020) launched 'Jaganna Vidya Kanuka' scheme for students studying in government schools.
- This is a scheme for students studying in Government schools.
- Putting an end to the earlier practice of delay and erratic supply of textbooks, school uniforms, and other essentials, this scheme aims to improve government schools' quality and enrolments.
- The school kits will bring relief to the parents and save the new academic year expenditure, motivating them to send their children to school and continue their education
- Under this scheme, 42,34,222 kits will be distributed to Government school students studying from class 1 to 10 standard.
- These kits will be distributed across the state at an estimated cost of Rs 650 crore. The kit consists of three pairs of uniforms, one pair of shoes, two pairs of socks, prescribed textbooks, notebooks, a belt, and a school bag.

Close to 44 lakh students studying in government schools will receive these kits by November 2.

Apart from distributing the kits, the Government has also embarked on the Nadu-Nedu initiative to provide ten necessary facilities in all the schools before the academic year begins.

- The facilities include basic infrastructures such as blackboards, fans, compound walls, and other furniture to give a new look to the Government schools.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/news/andhra-cm-launches-jaganna-vidya-kanuka-scheme-for-students-in-govt-schools/articleshow/78570020.cms#:~:text=KRISHNA%3A%20Andhra%20Pradesh%20Chief%20Minister,students%20studying%20in%20government%20schools.&text=These%20kits%20will%20be%20distributed,cost%20of%20Rs%20650%20crore.>

India to give Impetus for its Smartphone Manufacturing Plan

Question: How many companies have been approved by the Indian Government, for the incentives to boost domestic Smartphone production?

a) 5 b) 12 c) 9 d) 16

Answer: (d)

Related Facts

- On 06 October 2020 Government of India declared that it has been approving incentives under a federal plan to boost domestic Smartphone production to 16 companies.
- These companies include top Apple suppliers Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron.

- It is now well established fact that India's Smartphone industry has become a showpiece for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Make in India" drive.
- The \$6.65 billion incentive scheme is part of the government's aim to make the country into an export and manufacturing hub.
- It should be known that the companies have to invest to tap into the scheme and Apple suppliers Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron yet to start Indian operations.
- The government did not disclose what will be the amount of investment Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron, which will make.
- Previously from some other sources, though the news came that these three companies plan to invest a total of almost \$900 million in India in the next five years.
- Samsung, which runs the world's biggest mobile phone manufacturing plant on the outskirts of New Delhi, also got approval under this scheme.
- Five Indian companies, including Lava and Micromax also got confirmation
- The approved companies are expected to produce smartphones and components of more than 10.5 trillion rupees (\$143.05 billion).
- The scheme offers a production-linked incentive involving cash worth 4% to 6% of additional sales of goods made locally over five years, with 2019-2020 as the base year.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/india-approves-16-companies-including-top-apple-suppliers-for-smartphone-plan/article32789324.ece>

Treaty & Agreements

Partnership between CSB Bank & IIFL Finance

Question : CSB Bank has recently partnered with IIFL Finance for gold loan origination. Which one of the following statement is correct regarding organised gold loan sector in India ?

- (a) It is regulated by RBI (b) It is regulated by Ministry of Corporate Affairs
(c) Both (a) and (b) (d) none of the above

Answer (c)

Related facts

- CSB (Catholic Syrian Bank) has recently (October 2020) partnered with IIFL Finance for gold loan origination.
- Here, origination means sourcing and managing retail gold loan assets.

IIFL Finance

- India Infoline (IIFL) is a BC (Business Correspondent) of the Catholic Syrian Bank.
- This will become a source of new business in markets where CSB does not have sufficient branch network.

Organised gold loan market in India

- The organised gold loan markets include banks (public, private, small finance and co-operative), NBFCs (Non-Banking Finance Companies) and Nidhi companies.

- In order to make the regulatory regime more effective for NIDHI companies and to meet transparency and investor friendly objectives in the corporate environment of the country, the Central Government has recently amended the provisions relating to NIDHI under the Companies Act and Rules. (Effective from 15th August 2019)
- Organised gold loan sector in India is regulated by RBI & Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Link:

https://www.indiaonline.com/article/news-sector-banking-financials/csb-bank-partners-with-iifl-finance-for-gold-loan-origination-via-business-correspondent-model-120102700529_1.html

Partnership between BSE and ICCI

Question: Bombay Stock Exchange has recently signed an agreement with ICCI. Which one of the following is correct regarding this agreement?

- (a) ICCI stands for – Inventivepreneur council of Commerce and Industries
- (b) The agreement is related to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups, and promote their listing on the exchange.
- (c) Both (a) and (b) are correct
- (d) None of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts

- Bombay Stock Exchange has recently (October 2020) signed an agreement (MoU) with ICCI.

Objective

- Agreement is related to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and start-ups, and promote their listing on the exchange.

ICCI

- ICCI stands for – Inventivepreneur Chamber of Commerce and Industries. It is operational as the biggest platform to support entrepreneurship globally.
- It will offer assistance in evaluating SMEs and start-ups for listing on BSE SME (Small & Medium Enterprise) board.

Link:

<https://www.bseindia.com/markets/marketinfo/DispMediaRels.aspx?page=52263729-431f-48a1-b74d-752b6243c54f>

Government of Telangana partnership with BSE & GlobalLinker

Question : Which one of the following statement is correct regarding Government of Telangana partnership with BSE & GlobalLinker ?

- (a) MoU has been signed on 18th October 2020
- (b) Partnership aims to help MSMEs raise equity funds
- (c) Partnership aims to help banking sector
- (d) None of the above

Answer (b)
Related facts

- The Government of Telangana along with GlobalLinker, has recently (19 October 2020) signed an MOU with BSE to help MSMEs raise equity funds.
- Early in 2019, the Industries & Commerce Department had introduced Telangana State GlobalLinker portal as a way to digitize MSMEs of the state and to help them with their business growth.
- Telangana is focused on creating a conducive eco-system for promoting growth of the MSMEs of the state.
- To address challenges that MSMEs face in their day to day operations, the Telangana Government offers various benefits on the portal like – free e-commerce store with a payment gateway and logistics capabilities integrated, opportunity for buyers and sellers to connect with each other, support exports and more.
- The partnership with BSE, India's premier exchange came into picture to address a vital challenge of access to finance and increasing credibility of the MSME.
- BSE will provide intellectual & manpower support to create awareness about the importance and benefits of listing. Lack of awareness around this subject has led to a lot of preconceived notions that listing involves increased compliance levels, increased costs and more.

Link:

<https://www.bseindia.com/markets/marketinfo/DispMediaRels.aspx?page=830ae9fc-4486-4e51-a835-307c98fe3ecc>

Goa Government – India post partnership

Question : Which of the following statement is correct regarding Goa government – India post partnership ?

- (a) This deal is for Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme
- (b) This is the second such exercise in India to enroll farmers in the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, whereby the postman will be utilized to benefit farmers.
- (c) A total of 14,000 Goan farmers who could not enroll so far for PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, are being reached to their doorstep
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- In the country's first and unique drive, the Goa government has tied up with India Posts to get 11,000 farmers enrolled in the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, Deputy Chief Minister Chandrakant Kavlekar said on Friday (9 October 2020).
- A total of 11,000 Goan farmers who could not enroll so far for PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, are being reached to their doorstep through the Postman.
- This is the first such exercise in India to enroll farmers in the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, whereby the postman will be utilized to benefit farmers.
- There are 38,000 Krishi cardholders in Goa, out of which 21,000 are eligible for this scheme.

- This PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme where the farmers directly received direct benefit transfer of Rs 2,000 in three installments every year, is for the economically weaker farmers

Link:

<http://www.businessworld.in/article/Postman-to-get-Goa-farmers-enrolled-in-PM-Kisan-Samman-Nidhi-scheme/10-10-2020-329905/>

Agreements for Supercomputing Infrastructure in Premier Institutions in India

Question: The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) is located in-

a) Mumbai b) Kolkata c) Pune d) New Delhi

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- On 12 October 2020; MoUs were signed to establish supercomputing infrastructure in premier institutions in India.
- In this regard, 13 MoUs were signed with the premier academic and R&D institutions by C-DAC.
- The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) is, an autonomous body under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, located in Pune.
- This agreement will help the major institutions of India to establish supercomputing infrastructure with assembly and manufacturing for the National Supercomputing Mission in the country.
- The mission is being implemented and steered jointly by the DST and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology for seven years.
- The objective is to make India one of the world leaders in supercomputing.
- According to an official statement this is the Rs 4,500-crore mission envisages empowering our national academic and R&D institutions spread over the country.
- Under this mission by a vast supercomputing grid comprising more than 70 high-performance computing facilities will be installed.
- It also includes the development of highly professional High-Performance Computing (HPC) aware human resource for meeting the challenges of development of these applications.
- The implementation of the mission will bring supercomputing within the reach of the large scientific and technology community.
- It will enable the country with a capacity to solve multi-disciplinary grand challenge problems.
- The MoU was signed with a host of institutes like IIT Kharagpur, IISC Bangalore, IIT Kanpur, IIT Roorkee, IIT Hyderabad, IIT Guwahati, IIT Mandi, IIT Gandhinagar etc.
- MoU signing with the premier institutes is being considered as the beginning of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- **Benefits related to supercomputing:-**
- Supercomputing is the key to so many areas like Computational Biology, Molecular Dynamics, National Security, Computational Chemistry etc.
- It is also useful for Cyber-Physical Systems, Big Data Analytics and Government Information Systems.

- Supercomputing is armed with artificial intelligence and machine learning makes it a formidable tool.
- Progress in this mission will break silos to empower people and make India future-ready and tackle future challenges.

Link:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/technology/top-academic-institutes-sign-mous-for-establishing-supercomputing-infrastructure-in-india/2104541/>

Meghalaya – Israel partnership

Question : The Meghalaya government has recently(October 2020) decided to partner with Israel for establishing a Centre of Excellence (CoE) on high-value vegetables in the state in order to improve and promote the livelihood of farmers.Which one of the following statement is incorrect regarding Meghalaya ?

- (a) Meghalaya, with an average annual rainfall of 1,150 cm, receives the highest amount of rainfall in the country.
- (b) During 2018-19(3rd Advanced estimates), the state produced 331.67 thousand tonnes of fruits and 74.26 thousand tonnes of spices.
- (c) Turmeric produced in Meghalaya is considered to be one of the best in the world as it contains 7.5 per cent of curcumin.
- (d) At current prices, Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Meghalaya reached Rs 0.63 trillion (US\$ 3.47 billion) in 2019-20

Answer (d)

Related facts

- The Meghalaya government has recently(7 October 2020) decided to partner with Israel for establishing a Centre of Excellence (CoE) on high-value vegetables in the state in order to improve and promote the livelihood of farmers.
- The CoE is vital to tap the diverse bio-diversity and resources available in the state in terms of its soil and agro-climatic conditions.
- It will also act as an impetus for further research and expansion into multi-fold aspects, including tourism potential, considering that the state has a gene pool of important vegetables, fruits and plants such as the citrus fruits in Nokrek, East Garo Hills District.
- The state is expected to benefit from the wide expertise offered by Israel in terms of protected cultivation, quality planting materials.
- It is also expected that the collaboration will bring in technology support, technology know-how and quality planting materials from the partner country.

Meghalaya at a glance

Meghalaya is located in the northeast of India. The state shares its border on the north and the east with Assam and on the south and the west with Bangladesh.

Meghalaya, with an average annual rainfall of 1,150 cm, receives the highest amount of rainfall in the country.

During 2018-19(3rd Advanced estimates), the state produced 331.67 thousand tonnes of fruits and 74.26 thousand tonnes of spices.

Turmeric produced in Meghalaya is considered to be one of the best in the world as it

contains 7.5 per cent of curcumin.

At current prices, Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Meghalaya reached Rs 0.93 trillion (US\$ 5.47 billion) in 2019-20

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/shillong/meghalaya-partners-with-israel-to-set-up-centre-of-excellence/articleshow/78551395.cms>

BSE – YES bank partnership

Question : BSE has recently joined hands with Yes Bank to empower SMEs. Statistics(upto june 2019) show that SME accounts for _ and 40% of the total exports in India.

Fill in the blank with appropriate option given below:-

- (a) 45% of industrial output (b) 55% of industrial output
(c) 65% of industrial output (d) 75% of industrial output

Answer (a)

Related facts

- BSE has recently joined hands with Yes Bank to empower SMEs. It was declared on 28 September 2020.
- The pact aims at empowering the SME segment through awareness and knowledge-sharing programmes.
- As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), BSE and Yes Bank will conduct knowledge events for SMEs, export promotion of SMEs, in addition to providing banking and financial solutions.
- The bank will also offer customised services and products to the listed SME members of the platform.

SMEs in India at a glance

- Statistics(Upto June 2019) show that SME accounts for 45% of industrial output and 40% of the total exports in India.
- It generates employment for 60 million people and creates 1.3 million jobs every year.
- Given that a majority of India's population lives in villages and Tier-1/Tier 2 cities, the SME sector has also emerged as a key factor to urbanize rural India.
- NASSCOM, India's industry association for the IT and IT-enabled products has formed SME Council for its SME members who account for 80% its total member-base.

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/bse-joins-hands-with-yes-bank-to-empower-smes/articleshow/78365688.cms>

Conference

Invest India Conference

Question : On which date Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered the keynote address via video conferencing at the Invest India Conference in Canada ?

(a) 8 October 2020 (b) 7 October 2020 (c) 6 October 2020 (d) 5 October 2020

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday (8 October 2020) virtually delivered the keynote address at the Invest India Conference in Canada. The forum aims to give Canadian business community a first-hand perspective of the opportunities to invest in India and showcase India as an investment destination.
- Canada is home to some of the largest & most experienced infrastructure investors.
- Canadian Pension Funds were the first ones to start investing in India.

India – Canada relation

- India-Canada bilateral ties are driven by their shared democratic values and many common interests.
- Both are former British colonies and full members of the Commonwealth of Nations, with Canada being home to one of the largest Indian diasporas in the world.
- Despite the warm relationship, trade between Canada and India is less than their potential. India accounts for less than 1% of Canada's total export and total import in 2014, with bilateral trade of C\$5.77 billion in 2014 (compared to more than C\$56 billion bilateral trade between China and Canada).
- Following several acts of terrorism in the 20th Century, most prominent of which was the bombing by Sikh separatists of Air India Flight 182 in 1985, Canada and India maintain a bilateral dialogue on anti-terrorism, including an annual meeting of the Canada-India Strategic Dialogue, as well as regular meetings of the aforementioned Canada-India Working Group on Counter-Terrorism.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pm-modi-addresses-invest-india-conference-in-canada-key-points/articleshow/78556412.cms>

RAISE 2020

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) RAISE 2020 is a Mega Virtual Summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

(2) RAISE 2020 Summit was organized by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and NITI Aayog.

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 5th October 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated RAISE 2020, a Mega Virtual Summit on Artificial Intelligence (AI).

- The Responsible AI for Social Empowerment (RAISE 2020) is a global meeting of minds to exchange ideas and chart a course for using Artificial Intelligence for social transformation, inclusion and empowerment in areas like Healthcare, Agriculture, Education and Smart Mobility, among other sectors.
- The summit is being organized by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and NITI Aayog from October 5-9, 2020.
- The event will witness robust participation from global industry leaders, key opinion makers, Government representatives, and academia.
- More than 38,700 stakeholders from academia, the research industry and government representatives from 125 countries are participating in RAISE 2020.
- The RAISE 2020 Summit will feature some of the most exciting start-ups working in Artificial Intelligence and related fields.
- Industry analysts predict that AI could add up to USD 957 billion to India's economy by 2035.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1661356>

Year, Day & Week

World Polio Day

Question: When is the World Polio Day observed?

(a) 21 October (b) 22 October (c) 24 October (d) 18 October

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Every year World Polio Day is observed on 24 October.
- The day calls global world to stay vigilant in fight against Polio.
- The day was established by Rotary International to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop the vaccine against the disease.
- Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), led by national governments and the WHO, has been monitoring the disease situation globally. It was launched in 1988.

About Polio:

- Polio, or poliomyelitis, is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus.
- The disease largely affects children under 5 years of age
- The disease spreads from person to person by the faecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (e.g. contaminated water or food) and multiplies in the intestine, from where it can invade the nervous system and cause paralysis.
- There are three strains of wild poliovirus (type 1, type 2 and type 3). A country must have to be zero cases of all three kinds to be declared as Polio-free.
- India was declared Polio free in January 2014.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-why-is-world-polio-day-observed-where-india-stands-6882895/>

World Development Information Day

Question: When is the World Development Information Day celebrated?

(a) 21 October (b) 22 October (c) 24 October (d) 18 October

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Every year World Development Information Day is observed on 24 October.
- The day draws attention of World towards the issues in way of development and urges the need to counter them through unisted efforts.
- The day was adopted in 1972 by UN general assembly.
- 2020 Theme for the day is Information and Communications Technologies — New Solutions to Development Challenges.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/development-information-day>

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage

Question: When is the World Day for Audiovisual Heritage observed?

(a) 21 October (b) 22 October (c) 27 October (d) 18 October

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Every year World Day for Audiovisual Heritage is observed on 27 October.
- The day was chosen by UNESCO for the need to recognize the audio-visual content and contain their preservation risks.
- 2020 theme for the day is “Your Window to the World”.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/audiovisual-heritage-day>

United Nations Day

Question: When is the United Nations Day celebrated?

(a) 21 October (b) 22 October (c) 24 October (d) 18 October

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Every year United Nations day is observed on 24th October since 1948.
- The day marks the coming in force of UN Charter and the organization foundation in 1945.
- Year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of United Nations Day. The name was coined by US President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
- United Nations was established in the wake of World War 2 to promote international peace and achieve peace and security. Its forerunner was League of Nations established in 1919 under the Treaty of Versailles.
- The main organs of the UN are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, the UN Secretariat.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/un-day>

World Snow Leopard Day

Question: When is the World Snow Leopard Day observed?

(a) 23 October (b) 16 October (c) 15 October (d) 22 October

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Every year World Snow Leopard day is observed on 23 October.
- The day aims to raise awareness and put efforts to protect the snow leopard.
- Snow leopards are categorized as Vulnerable by IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- They have been listed under schedule 1 of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972.
- The day was recognized by the countries that encompass the snow leopard's range including Tajikistan, Russia, Pakistan, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, India, China, Bhutan, and Afghanistan.

Links:

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/calendar/world-snow-leopard-day>

UDAN day

Question: When is the UDAN day celebrated?

(a) 21 October (b) 22 October (c) 24 October (d) 18 October

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- On 21 October 2020, Ministry of Civil Aviation has celebrated the UDAN day.
- The day marks the 4th anniversary of the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) Scheme.
- In the pursuance of the National Civil Aviation Policy, 2016, the Government had launched the Regional Connectivity Scheme(RCS)-UDAN(Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) on 21 October 2016.
- RCS-UDAN, "Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik" aims to provide affordable, economically viable and profitable air travel on regional routes.
- 50 unserved and underserved airports (including 5 heliports) with 285 routes have been added under UDAN across the length and breadth of India.
- As the implementing agency, AAI has an ambitious plan to develop at least 100 airports/waterdromes/heliports by 2024 under the Scheme.

Links:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1666421>

International chefs day

Question : When 'International Chefs Day' is celebrated ?

(a) 20th October (b) 19th October (c) 18th October (d) 17th October

Answer(a)

Related facts

- Each year on October 20th, Worldchefs organisation celebrates International Chefs Day.
- International Chefs Day was created by Late Chef Dr Bill Gallagher in 2004.
- He was a renowned chef and the former president of the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS).
- This year's(2020) International Chefs Day campaign theme is Healthy Food for the Future

Link:

<https://www.internationalchefsday.worldchefs.org/>

Police Commemoration Day

Question : On which date Police Commemoration Day is observed ?

(a)21 October (b)22 October (c)20 October (d)19 October

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Police Commemoration Day is observed on October 21 every year to remember and honour the brave policemen who have laid down their lives in the line of duty.
- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi paid tributes to police personnel martyred in the line of duty on Police Commemoration Day.

Origin

- Police Commemoration Day owes its origin to the unflinching dedication and commendable courage of CRPF men.
- It was on this very day in 1959 when CRPF scripted a saga of valour and sacrifice in the snow-laden, inaccessible, inhospitable terrain of Hot Springs in Ladakh.
- A patrol party of twenty personnel of CRPF and Intelligence Bureau had gone to search for a missing reconnaissance party when it was ambushed by PLA (Chinese Army).
- In spite of the sudden attack and disadvantageous tactical position, they fought valiantly against the Chinese army personnel who were in large numbers and heavily armed.
- In this battle, ten CRPF men were martyred in defense of the country. Since then, Police Commemoration Day is observed on 21st October every year to honor the loyalty and supreme sacrifice of police personnel for the nation.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1666320>

World Food Day

Question:When is the World Food Day observed?

(a) 16 October (b) 14 October (c) 18 October (d) 10 October

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Every year World Food Day is observed on October 16.
- The day marks the foundation of Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in 1945.
- In 1979 for the first time it was observed as a Day for action against hunger.
- World Food Day makes a call for global solidarity to end hunger worldwide and achieve food security.
- 2020 Theme for the day is “Grow, Nourish, Sustain. Together.”

Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=World-Food-Day-being-observed-today&id=402317>

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

Question: When is the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty observed?

(a) 17 October (b) 14 October (c) 18 October (d) 10 October

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Every year International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is observed on October 17.
- The day recognizes the poverty prevailing worldwide and calls for united efforts to uplift the peoples living in poverty in underdeveloped and developing countries.
- 2020 theme for the day is “Acting together to achieve social and environmental justice for all”.
- Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG1) aims to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/day-for-eradicating-poverty>

International Day of Rural Women

Question: When is the International Day of Rural Women observed?

(a) 15 October (b) 10 October (c) 22 October (d) 12 October

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- International Day of Rural Women is observed annually on 15 October.
- The Day recognizes the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.
- 2020 Theme for the day is “Building rural women’s resilience in the wake of COVID-19”.
- The first International Day of Rural Women was observed on 15 October 2008.
- In India, this day is celebrated as Mahila Kisan Diwas since 2016.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/rural-women-day/background>

Global Handwashing Day 2020

Question: When is the Global Handwashing Day observed?

(a) 15 October (b) 10 October (c) 22 October (d) 12 October

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Global Handwashing Day is observed every year on 15th October.
- This day promotes handwashing with soap as an effective and affordable way to prevent diseases and save lives.
- In current scenario hand hygiene is proving an important tool to retard the growth the Covid 19 pandemic.
- This year's theme is Hand Hygiene for All.

Links:

<https://globalhandwashing.org/global-handwashing-day/>

world arthritis day

Question- When 'World Arthritis Day' is celebrated?

(a) October 11 (b) October 12 (c) October 5 (d) October 8

Answer- (b)

Related Facts:

- World Arthritis Day is celebrated every year on 12 October across the world.
- World Arthritis Day (WAD) was established in 1996 by Arthritis and Rheumatism International (ARI).
- WAD is a global initiative bringing people together to raise awareness of issues affecting people with rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases (RMDs).
- Arthritis is an informal way of referring to joint pain or joint disease.
- There are more than 100 different types of arthritis and related conditions.

Link:

https://www.eular.org/world_arthritis_day.cfm

International Translation Day

Question:When is the International Translation Day observed?

(a) September 17 (b) September 20 (c) September 14 (d) September 30

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- Every year International Translation Day is celebrated on September 30.
- International Translation Day is meant as an opportunity to pay tribute to the work of language professionals, which plays an important role in bringing nations together, facilitating dialogue, understanding and cooperation, contributing to development and strengthening world peace and security.

- The day was adopted on 24 May 2017 by the United Nations General Assembly.
- 30 September celebrates the feast of St. Jerome, the Bible translator, who is considered the patron saint of translators.
- Jerome was a priest from North-eastern Italy, who is known mostly for his endeavour of translating most of the Bible into Latin from the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-translation-day>

International Day of Older Persons

Question: When is the International Day of Older Persons observed?

(a) October 1 (b) October 2 (c) October 4 (d) October 10

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Every year International Day of Older Persons is observed on 1 October.
- The day was designated by United Nations General Assembly on 14 December 1990.
- The year 2020 has also been recognised as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife”.
- International Day of Older Persons 2020 will highlight the role of the health care workforce in contributing to the health of older persons, with special recognition of the nursing profession.
- The 2020 observance will also promote the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030) and help bring together experts to discuss the five strategic objectives of the Global Strategy and Action plan on Ageing and Health.
- SDG Goal 3 aims to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being of all at all ages”.

Links:

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/older-persons-day>

Books

Book – Night of the Restless Spirits

Question: Who is the author of the book ‘Night of the Restless Spirits: Stories from 1984’?

(a) Sarbpreet Singh (b) Jaswant Singh Neki (c) Randhir Singh
(d) Giani Sant Singh Maskeen

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The author of the book ‘Night of the Restless Spirits: Stories from 1984’ is Sarbpreet Singh.
- The book is published in October 2020.
- The book is based on the 1984 Sikh Massacre.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/books/author-sarbpreet-singhs-latest-book-is-on-the-sikh-massacre-of-1984/article32944961.ece>

Book-Portraits of Power

Question: Who is the author of autobiography Portraits of Power?

(a) N K Singh (b) Rajiv Kumar (c) Shashi Tharoor (d) Rajnish Kumar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Veteran Economist and bureaucrat NK (Nand Kishore) Singh has released his autobiography titled “Portraits of Power: Half a Century of Being at Ringside”.
- The book portrays the life of NK Singh and roles accredited to them as government official.
- He is currently the Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission.
- The book is published by Rupa Publications India.

Links:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/bureaucrat-n-k-singh-writes-about-the-evolution-of-the-prime-ministers-office-in-his-new-book/articleshow/78751557.cms>

Shashi Tharoor's new book

Question : Shashi Tharoor has recently(October 2020) announced that his next book will be out in November. What is the title of that ?

(a) An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India
(b) India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond
(c) Riot (d) The Battle of Belonging

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Shashi Tharoor has recently(October 2020) announced that his next book will be out in November.
- Titled ‘The Battle Of Belonging: On Nationalism, Patriotism, And What It Means To Be Indian’, the book is about nationalism, patriotism, citizenship, belonging and what they really mean.
- It looks into the historical meanings of those words, along with definitions on liberalism, democracy, and humanism and explores how the understanding of these words has changed over time.
- Tharoor has written many books, mostly nonfiction like the upcoming book, and a novel. His most recently published is ‘Tharoorosaurus’ a vocabulary book that released in September.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/books/features/shashi-tharoor-announces-new-book/articleshow/78704008.cms>

Book: Mr. Prime Minister, We Shrank the Dragon

Question: Recently a book has been released with the name, Mr. Prime Minister; We Shrank the Dragon written by—

a) Vikram Seth b) General V.P Malik c) Rajnath singh d) Pradeep Goorha

Answer: (d)

Related Facts: –

- Recently a book named as Mr. Prime Minister, We Shrank the Dragon was released. It has been written by the author Pradeep Goorha.
- The book, though fiction, is inspired by reality revolving around the currently developing story on India's northern borders.
- It also raises perennially neglected issues like Pakistan's illegal occupation of PoK, Gilgit-Baltistan.
- The book tries to find the ways, how these could be solved at this opportune time.
- Goorha has attempted at providing that solution. Befriending Iran at an altogether different level is central to the approach.
- Through his, work Goorha hopes to introduce the readers to believe that no problem is as intractable as it may appear.
- **About the Author :-**
- Pradeep Goorha is an alumnus of IIT Roorkee and Clemson University, SC, USA.
- He worked as consultant for international organizations, e.g. the London-based Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Here he carried out macro and micro industrialization assignments in several developing countries including Tanzania in East Africa and Vanuatu in Oceania.
- He has been a columnist for Business World Online where he regularly contributed with his articles on Management.
- Lately, he then channelized his writing interest to fiction.
- Goorha's first historical fiction novel, "Survival Redux" was published in the United States in 2016.

Links:-

<https://www.aninews.in/news/business/book-mr-prime-minister-we-shrank-the-dragon-by-author-pradeep-goorha-all-set-to-launch20201015151815/>

Miscellaneous

V.O. Chidambaranar Port

Question: Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has recently inaugurated 'Direct Port Entry Facility' at V.O. Chidambaranar port. What are the benefits of this facility?

- (a) Logistic cost can be reduced
- (b) Cargo depart process can be speeded up
- (c) Ease of doing business can be a boost
- (d) All above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Mansukh Mandaviya has recently(October 2020) inaugurated 'Direct Port Entry Facility' at V.O. Chidambaranar port.
- He is the Union Minister of State for Shipping (Independent Charge)

V.O. Chidambaranar port

- V.O. Chidambaranar port was declared to be a major port in 1974. It is situated in Tamil Nadu.
- **Benefits of DPE(Direct Port Entry) Facility:-**
 1. The logistic cost can be reduced
 2. Cargo depart process can be speeded up
 3. Ease of doing business can be a boost
 4. Exporters will be more competitive at the international level.
 5. The state-of-the-art Direct Port Entry (DPE) facility(IT-enabled infrastructure)
 6. Facility for exporters to depart their containers directly from the factories to the container terminal round the clock

Memorandum of Understanding

- Port entered into an MoU with M/S. Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) to operate the facility for 30 years and the Customs department has also approved operating the DPE facility in the port.Maritime Vision 2030
- This vision is related to world class infrastructure at the ports.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1667782>

Property details and outline map in property certificate a plan of Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs

Question : Hardeep Singh Puri has recently launched the service to provide Property Certificate by L&DO through e-Dharti Geo Portal.What is L&DO ?

- (a) Land & Development Office (b) Land & Development Organisation
(c) Lease & Development Office (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Hardeep Singh Puri has recently(October 2020) launched the service to provide Property Certificate by L&DO through e-Dharti Geo Portal.
- Hardeep Singh Puri is the Minister of State (I/C) for Housing & Urban Affairs.
- L&DO stands for – Land & Development Office.

Property Certificate

- It includes property details; viz. land type, property type, date of allotment, property status, sub-type, plot area, date of execution of lease deed, property address, details about present lessee, litigation status, as well as cadastral map.

www.ido.gov.in.

- Above mentioned website will be responsible for downloading the property certificate.
- The charge for property certificate is rupees one thousand only.

Developer

- Above mentioned website is developed by National Informatics Centre(NIC).

Helpful for a prospective purchaser

- This measure will also help a prospective purchaser to ascertain the details of the property as well as any suit or proceeding is pending in respect of the property.
- It will also reduce the property related litigation.

Next plan : GIS enabled property details

- L&DO is working on their next plan. That is GIS enabled property details. L&DO is dealing with approx. 60,000 properties, which include commercial, residential, industrial & institutional properties.
- Of the 60,000 properties, 49,000 are rehabilitation properties which were given on leases to persons displaced from erstwhile East & West Pakistan.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1666461>

The Suture zone of the Himalayas

Question: At which of the following place Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), is located?

a) Shimla b) Dehradun c) Itanagar d) Dispur

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- Recently it has been observed through a research that The suture zone of the Himalayas or the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) is tectonically active.
- This is an observation obtained from the detailed mapping of geological features of the region.
- The study in this regard has been conducted by a group of Scientists from Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG), Dehradun.
- It should be noted that WIHG is an autonomous institute under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- Scientists through their study concluded that the suture zone of Himalaya that was conventionally thought to be locked is tectonically active.
- The suture zone of the Himalayas or the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) is located in the Ladakh region where Indian and Asian Plates are joined.
- This could have major implications in terms of earthquake study, prediction, understanding the seismic structure of the mountain chains well as its evolution.
- They carried out the mapping of the remote regions of Ladakh that forms the most hinterland part of the Himalaya.
- The study was published recently in the journal Technophysics.

- **The geologists observed following details about this zone-**
- Here sedimentary beds are tilted and thrust broken
- The rivers are associated with uplifted terraces, and the bedrock shows brittle deformation that occurred at much shallower depths.
- **Laboratory Study:-**
- These deformed geological features were then dated in the laboratory at Dehradun using a technique called Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL).
- OSL is the method for carrying Luminescence dating of geological sediments
- Scientists then reviewed the data of seismicity and denudation rate.
- The combination of field and lab data suggested the region of the Indus Suture Zone (ISZ) has been neo-tectonically active since the last 78000 — 58000 years.
- Scientists are of the view that recent earthquake in 2010 of low magnitude 4.0 near the village of Upshi that occurred due to a thrust rupture.
- Himalaya were known to be made up of north dipping thrusts like the Main Central Thrust (MCT), the Main Boundary Thrust (MBT), and the Main Frontal Thrust (MFT).
- As per the established models, all of these thrusts except MFT are locked, and overall deformation in Himalaya is being accommodated only along with the MFT.
- The new findings, which suggest a more remote fault at the suture zone being neo-tectonically active, could call for a serious relook into the existing evolutionary models using new techniques and a larger geological database.

Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1667585>

OSIRIS-Rex

Question: OSIRIS-Rex is a-

a) Spacecraft b) Asteroid c) Comet d) Neutron star

Answer: (a)

Related Facts

- On 20 October 2020; NASA spacecraft OSIRIS-REx touched down on the rugged surface of the Bennu asteroid.
- The mission has gone there with the objective to grab a sample of rocks dating back to the birth of the solar system to bring home.
- The spacecraft launched in 2016 from Kennedy Space Center for the journey to Bennu.
- It has been in orbit around the asteroid for nearly two years preparing for the Touch and Go manoeuvre.
- The mission was planned to perform “Touch-And-Go” manoeuvre, which was managed by Lockheed Martin Space in Denver, Colorado USA.
- Most importantly it was a first for the United States, only Japan has previously secured asteroid samples.
- The robotic arm’s collection device, shaped like an oversized shower head, is designed to release pressurised gas to kick up debris.
- Bennu, which is more than 4.5 billion years old, was selected as a target because scientists believe it is a small fragment of what was once a much larger space rock that broke off during a collision between two asteroids early on in the history of the solar system.
- **Scientific reason in studying Asteroids:-**

- Asteroids are like time capsules floating in space that can provide a fossil record of the birth of our solar system.
- Asteroids can provide valuable information about how planets, like our own, came to be.
- **Asteroid Bennu:**
- The NASA team has determined two key discoveries about Bennu-
- First, that between 5 and 10 percent of Bennu's mass is water.
- Second, its surface is littered with carbon-rich molecules.
- Atomic-level analysis of samples from Bennu could help scientists better understand what role asteroids played in bringing water to the Earth and seeding it with the prebiotic material that provided the building blocks for life.
- Studying that material could also help scientists discover whether life exists elsewhere in the solar system, as well.

Links:-

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-nasas-osiris-rex-mission-asteroid-bennu-6870837/>

Large Cat figure found in Nazca Lines

Question: Recently an unknown carving of a cat discovered in the famous Nazca Lines. In which of the following country the Nazca Lines are located?

a) Italy b) Argentina c) Paraguay d) Peru

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:-

- Recently an unknown carving of a cat discovered in the famous Nazca Lines of the South American country of Peru.
- Geoglyphs are large-sized (usually more than 4 m) images that are constructed on the ground by stones, gravel, clastic rocks, or durable elements.
- Recently discovered cat geoglyphs are believed to be older than the previously found Nazca figures.
- Archaeologists discovered these Nazca figures during the COVID-19 epidemic.
- This picture of a cat has been discovered on the slope of a hill in Pampa de Nazca.
- Archaeologists reported that the cat was made in 200 BC
- Nazca Lines were first discovered by archaeologists in 1927 and were declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in the year 1994
- It is known for its depiction of large animals, plants and imaginary creatures.
- Many of these figures are so huge that they can also be seen from the sky.
- The Peruvian Ministry of Culture said that after several weeks of conservation and cleaning work, a cat-like figure has now emerged.
- Its drawings are 12 to 15 inches thick. This entire figure is about 121 feet long.
- It has been calculated that the cat's shape was drawn in the last days of the Parakas period, which was between 500 BCE and 200 CE.
- Important to note that in November 2019 140 Nazca lines were found in this mysterious desert of Peru which is about 2100 years old.
- Japanese researchers had done research for 15 years with the help of drones and AI.

- A bird, human-shaped animal, two-faced snake and a killer whale fish were also found in these 140 Nazca lines.
- Experts believe that the then Nazca people believed that the gods could see it from the sky.
- These lines are dug on the upper surface of the ground parallel to the lower stone.
- **Peru:-**
- Peru is a South American Country, situated on the coast of the Pacific Ocean and forms a border line with five countries, which are: Ecuador, Colombia in the north, Brazil in the east, Bolivia in the southeast and Chile in the south.

Links:-

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-54593295>

Israel Embassy in India

Question : Israel Embassy here will have a separate _ from January 2021 to help share their country's best practices and technologies for advancements in India's water management.

Fill in the blank with appropriate option,given below –

- (a)Water Attache
- (b) Optimize Cooling Towers
- (c) Control Reverse Osmosis System Operation
- (d)None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Israel Embassy here will have a separate 'Water Attache' from January 2021 to help share their country's best practices and technologies for advancements in India's water management and agriculture sectors.
- This has been recently(October 2020) disclosed by Israeli ambassador to India. Ron Malka is the current Israeli ambassador to India.

Honorary Consul in the North-East

- In another significant development, Israel will soon nominate an honorary Consul in the North-East with the aim to increase its presence and collaboration in that region, Malka said.
- 'Water Attache & centres of excellence for agriculture
The Israeli envoy also said that in January his country for the first time is going to nominate a 'Water Attache' who will join the 'Agriculture Attache' who has been here for many years and together they will go to the centres of excellence for agriculture established as part of Indo-Israel collaboration and bring to India technology and systems in water management and agriculture.
- He said as many as 29 such centres of excellence have already been established across India and nearly 1.5 lakh farmers have been trained at these centres in just one year.

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/israeli-embassy-to-have->

BondEvalue's blockchain-platform

Question : BondEvalue is talking to two leading banks in India to launch the blockchain-platform early next year," Rahul Banerjee(founder) told PTI on Sunday(18 October 2020) after getting approval as a global RMO from the Monetary Authority of Singapore.What is RMO ?

- (a) Reknowned Market Operator (b) Recognised Market Operator
(c) Restructured Market Operator (d) None of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts

- BondEvalue is a Singapore based Fintech company that focuses on Asian bond markets.
- BondEvalue is talking to two leading banks in India to launch the blockchain-platform early next year," Rahul Banerjee(founder) told PTI on Sunday(18 October 2020) after getting approval as a global RMO from the Monetary Authority of Singapore.
- Blockchain-platform aims to facilitate investment in bonds by individuals and common man.
- RMO stands for – Recognised Market Operator.
- The RMO allows BondbloX Bond Exchange (BBX), the world's first blockchain-based bond exchange, to trade globally a wide range of fixed-income securities to the mass markets.
- BondEvalue officially graduated from the MAS' regulatory sandbox on October 1, 2020.
- The MAS' approval will help to accelerate engagements with potential partners.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/singapore-based-bond-trade-platform-set-for-new-year-launch-in-india-120101800564_1.html

Ministry of Shipping : Indigenous software solution for vessel traffic

Question : Who launched the Development of indigenous software solution for vessel traffic ?

- (A) Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya
(B) Secretary for ministry of shipping Sanjeev Ranjan
(C) Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Sanjay Shamrao Dhotre
(D) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Minister of State for Shipping (I/C) Shri Mansukh Mandaviya has recently (October 2020) launched the Development of indigenous software solution for vessel traffic.

VTs and VTMS

- Aligning with the vision of 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat' of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, 'Made In India' VTS and VTMS software will pave the way for 'Make for the world' vessel traffic management systems.
- These software determines vessel positions, position of other traffic or meteorological hazard warnings and extensive management of traffic within a port or waterway.
- Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of the marine environment, adjacent shore areas, work sites and offshore installations from possible adverse effects of maritime traffic.
- Vessels Traffic Management Systems are installed in some of the busiest waters in the world, and are making valuable contribution to safer navigation, more efficient traffic flow, and protection of the environment. Traffic flow in busy approach routes, access channels, and harbours can be coordinated safely, in the best interest of port and its users.

Mandatory under IMO

- VTMS is mandatory under IMO Convention SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea). The VTMS traffic image is compiled and collected by means of advanced sensors such as radar, AIS, direction finding, CCTV and VHF or other co-operative systems and services.
- A modern VTMS integrates all of the information into a single operator working environment for ease of use and in order to allow for effective traffic organization and communication.

15 VTS systems

- Presently, India has approximately 15 VTS systems operational along the Indian Coast and there is no uniformity of VTS software as each system has its own VTS software.

Amount of Rs. 10 Crore

Ministry of Shipping has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 10 Crore to IIT, Chennai for development of indigenous VTS software.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1666070>

Third Assembly of the International Solar Alliance

Question : Which countries were re-elected as the President and Co- President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for a term of two years at the virtual meeting of the Third Assembly held on 14 October ?

- (a) India and France
- (b) China and United States
- (c) Switzerland and Germany
- (d) Saudi Arabia and South Africa

Answer (a)

Related facts

- India and France were re-elected as the President and Co- President of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for a term of two years at the virtual meeting of the Third Assembly held on 14 October.
- The Third Assembly has been attended by 34 ISA Members ministers. 53 Member countries and 5 Signatory and Prospective Member countries participated to the Assembly.
- India's Power and New and Renewable Energy Minister(R.K.Singh) welcomed the seventh initiative on heating and cooling to be introduced for discussion in the Third Assembly.
- He is the president of ISA third assembly.
- **Four new Vice-Presidents were also chosen to represent the four regions of ISA. These are as below —**

Vice-Presidents	Representative region
Fiji & Nauru	Asia Pacific Region
Mauritius & Niger	Africa Region
UK & Netherlands	Europe and others Region
Cuba and Guyana	Latin America and Caribbean Region

Initiatives of the ISA Secretariat

The Assembly also approved the initiatives of the ISA Secretariat in institutionalizing ISA's engagement with the private and public corporate sector through the Coalition for Sustainable Climate Action (CSCA). Ten public sector organisations in India presented a cheque for 1 million USD each at the assembly.

Solar Energy

- Solar Energy has come a long way in last 5 years and is now the fastest growing energy source globally.
- Solar energy is already contributing around 2.8% of global electricity ,and if trends were to continue, by 2030, solar will become most important source of energy for electricity production in large part of the world. Various activities and programmes initiated by ISA since the 2nd Assembly
- Six programmes and two projects are now underway covering various aspects of solar energy. A robust pipeline of more than US\$ 5 Billion has been developed for solar energy applications to meet lighting, irrigation, drinking water and productive energy requirement of the ISA member countries, which have so far been largely deprived of modern energy services.

- ISA has aggregated a demand for more than 270,000 solar pumps across 22 countries, more than 1 GW of Solar Rooftop across 11 countries, and more than 10GW of Solar Mini-grids across 9 countries under its respective programmes. Recently ISA has initiated programmes for segregation of demand for 47 million Home Power Systems which will not only meet subsistence energy needs of the rural households but will also contribute to improving health services and availability of portable water.

France's involvement

- The Co-President of the Assembly Ms Barbara Pompili, France's Minister pointing out that of the 1.5 billion euros of financing France committed for solar projects in ISA member states up until 2022, 1.15 billion € has been committed to concrete projects.
- France has also supported the collaboration with the World Bank to mobilise financing: a facility "Sustainable Renewables Risk Mitigation Initiative" (SRMI) should help mobilize 18 billion € in private investment to finance more than 10 gigawatts of solar projects, and a first project is being launched in Mozambique with the support of France and the European Union.

Commitment of the United Kingdom

According to Mr. Alok Sharma(The President of COP26), The UK planned to phase out coal within the next five years and to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

Solar awards

- For the first time since the inception of the framework agreement of ISA, Solar awards were conferred on countries of the region as well as institutions working for solar. The assembly witnessed the conferment of the Visvesvaraya award which recognizes the countries with maximum floating solar capacity in each of the four regions of ISA.
- The award carries an amount of 12,330 USD as prize money, a scroll and a certificate.
- The awards went to Japan for the Asia Pacific region and the Netherlands for Europe and Others region.

Kalpna Chawla awards

- The Haryana Chief Minister, Shri M. L. Khattar announced the Kalpna Chawla awards named after the American astronaut of Indian origin, to Dr.Bhim Singh from IIT Delhi (India) and Dr.Aaesha Alnuaimi from Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (United Arab Emirates).
- The awards recognise outstanding contribution of scientists and engineers working in the field of solar energy.

Diwakar award

- The Diwakar award instituted by ISA out of the contribution made by India's Minister for Railways and Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal of 25,000 USD received

by him from the University of Pennsylvania, has been awarded to Arpan Institute (Haryana) and Arushi Society.

- The award recognizes organisations & institutions that have been working for the benefit of differently-abled people and have maximised the use of solar energy in the host country.

Work with WRI(World Resources Institute) & Vision of One Sun, One World, One Grid

- Third assembly welcomed the move of the ISA to work with WRI to develop a roadmap for mobilization of USD 1 Trillion by 2030.
The Kingdom of the Netherlands, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Bloomberg New Energy Finance and Climate Works Foundation providing the required financial and technical assistance for preparation of the Roadmap.
The roadmap will also analyse the potential for mobilising further investments in solar energy going beyond solar power projects to solar energy applications in transportation and cooling and heating and for implementing the vision of One Sun, One World, One Grid.

The ISA

- The ISA is an initiative that was launched by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France on 30 November 2015 at Paris, France on the side-lines of the COP-21. The overarching objective of the ISA is to collectively address key common challenges to the scaling up of solar energy in ISA member countries.

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1664423>

QAon

Question: What is QAon, which was recently in news?

- a) Supercomputer b) Hypersonic missile c) Computer game
d) A Conspiracy theory or movement

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:-

- On 15 October 2020; YouTube announced that it would take additional measures to block content that promotes QAon
- QAon is a pro-Donald Trump conspiracy theory or movement.
- QAon has been under the spotlight in recent times.
- In July, Twitter and TikTok blocked some hashtags and removed some accounts related to it.
- In August, Facebook announced a ban on QAon groups.
- Last year, the FBI said fringe political conspiracy theories including QAon are a domestic threat.
- It is anticipated that these movements, likely to motivate some domestic extremists, wholly or in part, to engage in criminal or violent activity.
- **About QAon:-**
- QAon took shape around 2017 when an anonymous user called “Q” or “Q Clearance Patriot” started posting conspiracy theories.

- “Q” refers to a security clearance given by the US Department of Energy for access to top-secret information.
- Q, who claims to be a high-ranking intelligence officer with access to sensitive information of the Trump administration.
- He started posting on the platform 4chan in 2017, and now posts on 8kun, a website run by the founders of 8chan.
- 8chan was shut down after the mass shooting in El Paso, Texas in 2019, the killers had posted hate content on 8chan.
- **The conspiracy theory:-**
- QAnon followers believe that the world is being run by a cabal of paedophiles who worship Satan and that one of Trump’s aims as US President is to unmask the cabal and punish them.
- According to the conspiracy theorists, Trump is secretly preparing for a day of reckoning, “The Storm”, when members of the “deep state” will be executed.
- This theory has been gaining traction among some far-right voters ahead of the November 3 presidential election.
- The conspiracy theorists believe that Democrats such as Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, and Hollywood actors Tom Hanks and Oprah Winfrey, are part of a global child sex-trafficking ring.
- This takes off from the “Pizzagate” theory, long debunked, which circulated during the 2016 presidential election.
- Far-right activists had claimed that Clinton, who contested against Trump, was running a child trafficking racket from the basement of a pizza parlour in Washington, DC.

Link:-

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/qanon-a-conspiracy-theory-feeding-violence-6758120/>

New Municipal Solid Waste Processing Facility

Question: A new Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Processing Facility has recently been developed by CSIR in collaboration with-

a) IIT Kanpur b) IIT Roorkee c) CMERI d) IISc Bengaluru

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed a Municipal Solid Waste Processing Facility.
- It has been developed in collaboration of the Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI).
- **Highlights of the project:**
- The CSIR-CMERI developed Municipal Solid Waste Processing Facility has helped in achieving Decentralised Decimation of Solid Wastes.
- It has also helped in creating value-added end-products from abundantly available redundant stuffs such as Dry Leaves, Dry Grass etc.
- The primary focus of CSIR-CMERI is to unburden the common households from the segregation responsibilities through Advanced Segregation techniques.
- The Bio-Digestion process adopted has minimum pollution factor.

- The MSW facility has been equipped with special capabilities to deal with a diverse range of waste including Masks, Sanitary Napkins, Diapers etc.
- The MSW facility has been with special disinfection capabilities to help Break the COVID Chain through UV-C Lights and Hot-Air Convection methods.
- It has also been achieved optimum Energy Sufficiency in the MSW facility by adding the solar energy technology, which can also feed the surplus Energy Supply onto a Mini-Grid.
- **Present waste management scenario:**
- It is estimated that about 62 million tonnes of waste are generated annually in the country.
- Only about 75- 80% of the municipal waste gets collected and out of this only 22-28 % is processed and treated and rest is dumped in landfill sites.
- It is projected that by 2031 MSW generation shall increase to 165 million tones.
- **Issues associated with MSW management include-**
- limited utilization of recycling activities,
- inadequate management of non-industrial hazardous waste,
- Inadequate landfill disposal, inadequate service coverage etc.
- Poor MSW results in pollution of surface and groundwater (leakages from landfills), health, environmental and economic threats on nearby population and properties etc.
- Government had notified the new Solid Waste Management Rules (SWM), 2016 which are applicable beyond Municipal areas and extend to urban agglomerations, census towns, notified industrial townships etc.
- Decentralised Waste Management technology developed by CSIR-CMERI can result in drastic reduction of expenditure related to Transportation Logistics and can help reductions in CO2 emissions, by reducing fossil fuel usage.
- The Scientifically Decentralised Waste Processing Hubs will help multiply outreach for various locations and will also boost the manufacturing potential for the residents of the region.
- This CSIR-CMERI MSW Technology envisions a Zero-Landfill and a Zero Waste City in addition to developing Job-Creation opportunities.
- This technology will also help create a revived Green Energy reliant India.

Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1665625>

Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Center (CIC)

Question: Recently NITI Aayog announced that it has set up a Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Center (CIC) in collaboration with-

- a) Amazon Web Services b) Microsoft Azure c) Google Cloud Platform
d) Adobe

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:-

- On October 19, 2020, NITI Aayog announced that it has set up a Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Center (CIC) with Amazon Web Services (AWS).
- The center has been established to deal with social challenges through digital innovation.

- The NITI Aayog Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Center is the first AWS CIC in India, and the first such centre that has been set up at a national level.
- It has been declared that remarkable changes in agriculture, health, education, infrastructure and administration in the country would brought about through these new IT technologies.
- The 'Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Center' (CIC) is part of the AWS CIC Global Program.
- It will ensure government institutions; non-profit agencies and educational institutions have access to new technology to meet emerging challenges.
- It provides an opportunity to come together on one platform to form new ideas and innovations.
- The Cloud Innovation Center program is designed with the objective of promoting innovation in the public sector.
- In such center technical experts work together to help NITI Aayog's missions to the public sector in India.
- The Frontier Technologies Cloud Innovation Center (CIC) will prove to be helpful in promoting innovation.
- It will accelerate digital innovation through emerging technologies such as cloud-based artificial intelligence, Internet of Things, Robotics, Blockchain, etc.
- It will identify the priorities of the projects run by the Center and will also partner with local experts of the subject at the state and district levels to resolve complex issues.
- Significantly, NITI Aayog Frontier Technologies CIC' has partnered with a global network of AWS that extends to public sector cloud innovation centers in Australia, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, South Korea and the United States.
- **Amazon Web Services (AWS):**
- Amazon Web Services (AWS)'s 'Cloud Innovation Center' (CIC) program helps nonprofits, education institutions and government agencies.
- It collaborates with other public sector organizations for key challenges.
- Innovating with Amazon's innovation process provides an opportunity to investigate and access the technology expertise of AWS.

Links:-

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/technology/amazon-web-services-niti-aayog-launch-frontier-technologies-cloud-innovation-centre/2109299/>

UNWFP : The cost of a plate of food,2020

Question : UNWFP report Cost of a plate of food released on 16 October 2020.According to the report people in New York State pay just 0.6% of their income on a plate of food.What about figure regarding India ?

(a) 3.5 percent (b) 4.5 percent (c) 5.5 percent (d) 6.5 percent

Answer (a)

Related facts

- A basic meal is far beyond the reach of millions of people in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic joins conflict, climate change and economic troubles in pushing up levels of hunger around the world, according to a new study released today(16 October 2020) by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).
- This study is — “The cost of a plate of food,2020” report.

- WFP's Cost of a Plate of Food 2020 report highlights the countries where a simple meal such as rice and beans costs the most, when compared with people's incomes.
- South Sudan is once again top of the list, with basic ingredients costing a staggering 186 percent of a person's daily income.
- Seventeen of the top 20 countries featured in the index are in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Since the onset of the pandemic, the daily income spent on food by someone living in South Sudan has risen 27 points to 186 percent.
- If a resident in New York State had to pay the same proportion of their salary for a basic meal, the meal would cost US\$393.
- Report estimates that the lives and livelihoods of up to 270 million people will be under severe threat in 2020, unless immediate action is taken to tackle the pandemic.
- According to the report people in New York State pay just 0.6% of their income on a plate of food.
- On an average an Indian spends 3.5% of his/ her daily income for a plate of food.
- This is the third edition of WFP's Cost of a Plate of Food report (formerly called Counting the Beans) with 36 countries featured this year.

Link:

<https://www.wfp.org/news/new-wfp-report-shows-access-food-grossly-unequal-coronavirus-adds-challenges>

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/what-people-around-the-world-spend-on-food/articleshow/78712540.cms>

mooPay : Direct payment platform for dairy farmers

Question : Stellapps is an end-to-end dairy technology solutions company. It has launched the mooPay for which State's dairy farmers ?

(A) Rajasthan (B) Madhya Pradesh (C) Uttar Pradesh (D) Gujarat

Answer (A)

Related facts

- Stellapps has recently announced the launch of a first-of-its-kind, fully-automated direct payment platform — 'mooPay' — for dairy farmers in Rajasthan.
- mooPay acts as a payment gateway for dairies to make payments to every registered farmer, removing the risks and costs of transferring money to many farmers in hundreds of villages.
- It enables dairy officials to transfer milk payments digitally to member farmers from the dairies' existing bank account to farmers' savings bank account.

Stellapps

- Stellapps is an end-to-end dairy technology solutions company.
- The IIT-Madras incubated dairy-tech startup and World Economic Forum's technology pioneer, Stellapps, launched mooPay in Bhilwara district of Rajasthan on October 15.

Link:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/stellapps-launches-moopay-for-dairy-farmers-in-rajasthan/article32869121.ece>

Promotion of equal gender representation in advertising

Question : Which organisations have recently come together to promote equal gender representation in advertising in india ?

- (a) IAA India & UNICEF (b) UNICEF & BBC
- (c) International Broadcasting Association & Indian Broadcasting Association
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- UNICEF and India Chapter of International Advertising Association (IAA) have recently(October 2020) entered into a partnership to support research on gender representation in advertisements in India based on evidence and real-time validation.
- The partnership is aimed at supporting research on gender representation in advertisements in India.
- This research would based on evidence and real-time validation.
- The research will ascertain the level of gender stereotyping found in Indian advertisements and will create a baseline to measure change as well as initiate dialogue with advertising professionals and content creators.
- In a statement, UNICEF said this is based on the understanding that marketing plays a powerful role in shaping gender roles and perceptions, and advertising is an important tool that can influence women's and girls' empowerment.
- IAA will identify the most viewed 1,000 TV and Digital advertisements in India in 2019, provide technical insights and recommendations to the study, and help disseminate the findings to the advertising industry to advocate for more responsible and gender empowering advertising policies and practices, it said.

Link:

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/science-environment/1248657-iaa-india-chapter-unicef-partner-to-promote-equal-gender-representation-in-advertising>

Indian Bank's Partnership with MoHUA(Ministry of Housing & Urban affairs) and SIDBI

Question : On Which date Indian Bank has signed an agreement with MoHUA(Ministry of Housing & Urban affairs) and SIDBI ?

- (a) 15th October 2020 (b) 16th October 2020 (c) 17th October 2020
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Indian Bank has recently(15 October 2020) signed Memorandum of Understanding with Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Govt of India and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for payment of subsidy and cash incentives to street vendors under PM SVANidhi Scheme.
- Street vendors represent a very important constituent in the urban economy and they offer varied services to the general public.

- PM SVANidhi Scheme is a flagship scheme of Government of India in line with agenda of Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- Bank has developed an integrated online system to make payments of interest subvention and cash incentives to all street vendor beneficiaries across the country directly to their Bank accounts through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Link:

<https://www.indianbank.in/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Indian-Bank-signs-MoU-with-Ministry-of-Housing-Urban-Affairs-Government-of-India-and-SIDBI-to-disburse-Interest-Subsidy-and-cash-back-incentive-to-PM-SVANidhi-beneficiaries-Accounts-.pdf>

SeaGuardian Maritime Surveillance Drone

Question: Which of the following country has recently tested an UAV named as SeaGuardian for maritime surveillance?

a) India b) USA c) Japan d) China

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- On 15 October 2020; Coast Guard of Japan has started the test of its new maritime surveillance drone.
- This UAV has been named as SeaGuardian. It is being tested at Maritime Self Defence force's base in Aomori Prefecture North Japan.
- Japan's coast guard tested this drone in coastal area of Sea of Japan.
- This is noticeable that the surveillance drone SeaGuardian is being tested at the times when there is already tension regarding dispute of South China Sea between these countries.
- Under these tests the drone will be checked for its capabilities in carrying out operations like search and rescue, and maritime surveillance.
- The SeaGuardian is being built and developed by the General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, a defence firm, based in United States of America.
- SeaGuardian is equipped with radars and high-definition cameras and can fly continuously for 24 hours.
- The UAV (SeaGuardian) has wingspan of 24 meters and length 12 meters. In a single flight this plane is capable of covering Japan's exclusive economic zone.
- SeaGuardian can come in to the action through pre-programmed flights as well as by remotely piloting it from a ground control base.

Links:-

<http://www.thehawk.in/world/japan-begins-tests-of-drone-for-maritime-border-defense-179193>

KKR TO INVEST ₹ 5,550 CRORE IN RELIANCE RETAIL VENTURES

Question : Reliance Retail Ventures Limited, a subsidiary of the Reliance Industries, has recently received the subscription amount of Rs 5,550 crore from Alyssum Asia Holdings II Pte. Ltd. Alyssum is a part of which global investment firm ?

(a)KKR (b)Vanguard group (c)Fidelity (d)Capital group

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) on 15 October 2020 said it has received Rs 5,550 crore from global investment firm KKR, which has picked up 1.28 per cent stake in its retail arm.
- The investment valued Reliance Retail, which runs grocery stores and fashion chains, at a pre-money equity value of Rs 4.21 lakh crore.
- This marks the second investment by KKR in a subsidiary of Reliance Industries, following a ₹ 11,367 crore investment in Jio Platforms announced earlier this year.
- RIL is India's largest private sector company, with a consolidated turnover of INR 659,205 crore (\$87.1 billion), cash profit of INR 71,446 crore (\$9.4 billion), and net profit of INR 39,880 crore (\$5.3 billion) for the year ended March 31, 2020.

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/retail/reliances-retail-arm-receives-rs-5550-crore-from-kkr-for-1-28-stake-sale/articleshow/78674554.cms?from=mdr>

Commemorative coin of Rs 75 denomination

Question : Who released a commemorative coin of 75-rupee denomination to mark the 75th Anniversary of Food and Agriculture Organization ?

- (a) Prime Minister Narendra Modi (b) Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman
(c) RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin of 75-rupee denomination to mark the 75th Anniversary of FAO today(16 October 2020).
- The commemorative coin marks the respect of 130 crore Indians towards the pivotal role played by FAO(Food and Agriculture Organization) to mitigate the effects of malnutrition.
- Prime Minister also dedicated 17 recently developed biofortified varieties of eight crops to the nation.
- Till 2014 only one variety of seed was made available to the farmers, however, the government has in the last 6 years introduced 45 new varieties of seeds in the country.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
With over 194 member states, FAO works in over 130 countries worldwide.

Link:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=PM-releases-commemorative-coin-of-Rs-75-denomination-to-mark-75th-Anniversary-of-FAO&id=402288>

New ACE Credit card : Axis Bank collaborates with Google Pay and Visa

Question : Axis Bank has recently announced the launch of its ACE Credit Card in India in collaboration with Google Pay and Visa. Which one of the following statement regarding credit card is correct ?

- (a) As of 2019, India had around 22 million credit card users
- (b) As of 2019, India had around 32 million credit card users
- (c) As of 2019, India had around 42 million credit card users
- (d) None of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Axis Bank on Monday(12 October 2020) announced the launch of its ACE Credit Card in India in collaboration with Google Pay and Visa.
- The card meant to help with digital payments. From application to issuance, with the entire user journey for the credit card application will be done digitally.

Benefits

- For essential use cases, including mobile recharges and bill payments made via Google Pay, users can earn a cashback of 5 per cent.
- The company is also offering 4 per cent-5 per cent cashback for expenses on food ordering, online grocery delivery, cab rides for transactions made on partner merchant platforms such as Swiggy, Zomato, BigBasket, Grofers and Ola.
- There is also an unlimited 2 per cent cashback on other transactions with certain terms and conditions.
- Involvement of parties
- Users will be able to get cashback directly into their ACE Credit Card accounts.
- The tokenization feature enabled in partnership with Visa will allow Google Pay users to use their ACE Credit Card to make payments through a secure digital token attached to their phone without having to physically share their card details

Credit Cards statistics in India

- As of 2019, India had around 52 million credit card users.
- During 2019-20, the number of card payment transactions carried out through credit cards and debit cards increased by 23.5 per cent and 16.1 per cent, respectively, while the value increased by 21.1 per cent and 35.6 per cent to 7.3 lakh crore and 8.0 lakh crore, respectively.

Link:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/money-and-banking/axis-bank-collaborates-with-google-pay-visa-to-launch-a-new-ace-credit-card/article32835125.ece>

Launch Tech for Tribals Initiative

Question: Recently Ministry of Tribal Affairs has launched Tech for Tribals initiative. Which of the following statement/statements regarding this programme is/are incorrect?

- i. The program titled “Tech for Tribals” aims at the holistic development of tribals.
- ii. It focuses on entrepreneurship development, soft skills, IT etc.

iii. It will undertake its activities through the SHGs operating through Van Dhan Kendras (VDVKs).

iv. It will provide advance level training to the Van Dhan tribal beneficiaries.

Select the correct answer from the following code:-

- a) Only (i) is correct b) (i) & (ii) are correct c) (iii) & (iv) are correct
d) All the four statements are correct.

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- On 13 October 2020; TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs in collaboration with Chhattisgarh MFP Federation and IIT Kanpur has launched Tech for Tribals initiative.
- The program titled 'Tech for Tribals' aims at the holistic development of tribals.
- It focuses on entrepreneurship development, soft skills, IT, and business development.
- It will undertake its activities through the SHGs operating through Van Dhan Kendras (VDVKs).
- It will provide advance level training to the Van Dhan tribal beneficiaries, TRIFED for this purpose has collaborated with MSME through its ESDP scheme.
- Under this initiative, TRIFED has tied up reputed national institutions such as IIT, Kanpur; Art of Living, Bangalore; TISS, Mumbai; KISS, Bhubaneswar; Vivekananda Kendra etc.
- Tech for Tribals is a unique program to make tribals of India Aatmanirbhar, focussing to bridge the gap between tribal entrepreneurs and urban markets.
- The beneficiaries will undergo a 30 days program over six weeks comprising 120 sessions.
- The training will be initially held from 12th Oct. to 7th Nov., 2020, in which Van Dhan beneficiaries across all districts of Chhattisgarh State will be trained on various facets of micro-enterprise creation, management and functioning.
- The training module developed by IIT, Kanpur will be disseminated among beneficiaries in a phased manner through various modes like online lectures and trainings etc.
- It will also gradually move to face to face interactions in class rooms, practical, onsite visits and exposure visits.
- The training also comprises of exposure through onsite demos on best practices in manufacturing, Total Quality, Hygiene, and standards to be followed in the market.
- The relevant branding and implementation of best in class packaging solutions are expected to add value to the indigenous Minor Forest Produces and subsequently propagating entrepreneurship among the tribals.
- The expected outcome shall be successful, aspiring and confident tribal entrepreneurs ready to compete with the best products in the market with feasible business plans.
- IIT, Kanpur will run the skill development program of tribal youth across Chhattisgarh and Kerala to help them build their enterprise by commercializing the products using MFPs.
- This program will mainly entail three aspects of development for sustainable entrepreneurship which can be considered as the three pillars – Engagement, Capacity Building, and Market linkages.
- This will lead to the path of commercialization of the tribal entrepreneurs.

Links:-

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2020/oct/13/chhattisgarh-government-launches-tech-for-tribals-scheme-2209776.html>

India's First Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) Car

Que: In which city, India's First Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) car successfully completed its maiden test run in October 2020?

(a) Pune (b) Ahmadabad (c) New Delhi (d) Jamnagar

Ans: (a)

Related Facts:

- India's first Hydrogen Fuel Cell (HFC) electric hybrid car successfully completed its maiden test run last week in Pune.
- This indigenously developed technology was a collaborative effort between scientists from two Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) labs.
 - I. National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune
 - II. Central Electro Chemical Research Institute (CECRI), Karaikudi along with KPIT, Pune.
- In the HFC technology, hydrogen gas from the on-board gas cylinder interacts with the Membrane Electrode Assembly (MEA) from the anode side to produce protons (positively charged particles) and electrons (negatively charged particles).

References:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/indias-first-hydrogen-fuel-cell-electric-hybrid-car-completes-maiden-test-run-in-city-6721107/>

Indian Beaches get Blue Flag Certification

Question: Recently Indian beaches have got Blue Flag Certification from an international jury, how many are these beaches?

a) 2 b) 3 c) 6 d) 8

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- On 11 October 2020; Ministry of Environment GoI announced about the Blue Flag Certification, given to eight Indian beaches by an international jury.
- Eight beaches spread across five states and two union territories in India.
- These beaches are Shivrajpur (Dwarka-Gujarat), Ghoghla (Diu), Kasarkod and Padubidri (Karnataka), Kappad (Kerala), Rushikonda (AP), Golden (Puri-Odisha) and Radhanagar (A&N Islands)
- The International jury which awarded this recognition have comprised of members of the UN Environment Programme-UNEP, International Union for Conservation of Nature-IUCN) etc.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the Blue Flag certification for eight beaches as a 'wonderful feat'.
- He said that it showcases the importance India attaches to protecting such spots and furthering sustainable development.
- India is also the first country in Asia-Pacific region which has achieved this feat in just about 2 years' time.
- The environment ministry on this occasion also informed that India has also been awarded the third prize by the jury under the "International Best Practices" for pollution control in coastal regions.
- With the feat, India is now in the league of 50 'Blue Flag' countries.
- According to the government, India is planning to achieve Blue Flag certification for 100 such beaches.

About BLUE FLAG CERTIFICATION:-

- The Blue Flag certification is a globally recognised eco-label. Blue Flag is accorded by Foundation for Environment Education (FEE), Denmark.
- **Blue Flag certification is granted based on 33 criteria under four heads –**
 - I. Environmental education and information
 - II. Bathing water quality
 - III. Environment management and conservation
 - IV. Safety and services at the beaches.
- The Blue Flag certification is granted to beaches, marinas, or sustainable boating tourism operators that meet FEE's set standards on the environment.
- In order to qualify for the Blue Flag, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety, and accessibility criteria must be met and maintained.
- India is the only country that has received the Blue Flag certification in 2 years' time.
- Japan, South Korea and UAE are the only other Asian nations that have been conferred with a couple of Blue Flag beaches in a time frame of about 5 to 6 years.

Links:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/travel/travel-news/in-a-first-8-indian-beaches-accredited-with-blue-flag-certificate/as78619887.cms>

World merchandise trade : WTO estimates

Question : The World Trade Organization (WTO) has recently revised upwards its forecast for the decline in world merchandise trade at —

(a) 9.2% in 2020 (b) 8.2% in 2020 (c) 7.2% in 2020 (d) 6.2% in 2020

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The World Trade Organization (WTO) on Tuesday(6 October 2020) revised upwards its forecast for the decline in world merchandise trade at 9.2% in 2020 as against

12.9% drop projected earlier, based on a strong trade performance in June and July as lockdowns were eased and economic activity accelerated.

Main points of WTO estimates

- Trade volume growth should rebound to 7.2% in 2021 but will remain well below the pre-crisis trend.
- Global GDP will fall by 4.8% in 2020 before rising by 4.9% in 2021.
The trade decline in Asia of 4.5% for exports and 4.4% for imports in 2020 will be smaller than in other regions.
- Downside risks still predominate, particularly if there is resurgence of COVID-19 cases in the coming months.
- The 14.3% quarter-on-quarter decline in world merchandise trade in the second quarter is the largest on record, but high-frequency data point to a partial rebound in the third quarter.

Link:

https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres20_e/pr862_e.htm

WEF Annual Meeting 2021

Question : WEF shifts annual meeting 2021 from Davos to —

(a) Lucerne (b) Basel (c) Bern (d) Zurich

Answer (a)

Related facts

- WEF shifts annual meeting 2021 from Davos to Lucerne.
- Detailed information
- The World Economic Forum (WEF) on Wednesday(7 October 2020) said it will hold its Annual Meeting 2021 in Lucerne-Burgenstock, Switzerland, from May 18 to 21, as against the traditional venue of ski resort town Davos in January-end.
- The change in schedule and venue was necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Annual Meeting 2021 in Lucerne-Burgenstock will be held around the theme of 'The Great Reset'.
- The meeting will focus on the solutions required to address the world's most pressing challenges.

WEF(World Economic Forum)

- The World Economic Forum is the International Organization for Public-Private Cooperation
- The WEF hosts an annual meeting at the end of January in Davos, a mountain resort in Graubünden, in the eastern Alps region of Switzerland.
- The WEF was founded in 1971 by Klaus Schwab, a business professor at the University of Geneva.
- First named the European Management Forum, it changed its name to the World Economic Forum in 1987 and sought to broaden its vision to include providing a platform for resolving international conflicts.

Link:

<https://www.weforum.org/press/2020/10/annual-meeting-2021-to-take-place-in-lucerne-burgenstock>

Pechora Surface to Air Systems

Question: Recently the Ministry of Defense (MoD) has awarded a project to an indigenous company for the upgradation of Pechora surface to air systems.

What is the name of this company?

- a) Alpha Design Technologies Limited (ADTL)
- b) BrahMos Aerospace
- c) Bharat Dynamics Limited
- d) None of the above

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- Recently the Ministry of Defense (MoD) has awarded a project to indigenous company Alpha Design Technologies Limited (ADTL) to upgrade the Pechora surface to air systems.
- It should be known that the Pechora surface to air systems was obtained by India for its defense forces more than 30 years ago.
- Pechora surface to air systems now needs upgradation according to modern technological development in this field.
- It is taken as Government of India's Make in India Initiative to push for indigenous defense manufacturing,
- Under this project ADTL will be upgrading and digitizing 16 of the Pechora missile and radar systems which are presently in operation.
- The company has won the contract of worth Rs 591 crore for this upgradation project.
- The contract also, has an options clause, under which the number of systems to be upgraded and digitised could be taken up to a total of 24 in the coming years.
- The entire contract is to be executed within four years.
- It should also be noted that the project would lead to the adoption of a host of indigenously developed technologies.
- The indigenously developed technologies like radar transmitter, thermal imager based electro-optical system and communication equipment will be introduced with Pechora missile systems.

Link:-

<http://www.indiandefensenews.in/2020/10/alpha-design-technologies-to-upgrade.html>

Anglo-Saxon Warrior

Question: Archaeologists in which of the following country have uncovered a Anglo-Saxon warrior burial, known as Marlow Warlord?

- a) Britain b) Italy c) France d) Greece

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- Archaeologists have uncovered a Anglo-Saxon warrior burial in southern Britain.
- It has been found in Berkshire, Southern Britain and is of the period of Anglo-Saxon era.
- The pagan burial had remained undiscovered and undisturbed for more than 1,400.
- Main credit for the discovery goes to two metal detectorists, Sue and Mick Washington as they came across the site in 2018.
- More detailed archaeological investigation was done in August 2020; by a team of archaeologists from the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading.
- Known as 'Marlow Warlord' was a commanding, six-foot-tall man, buried alongside an array of expensive luxuries and weapons.
- These weapons contained a sword in a decorated scabbard, spears, bronze and glass vessels, and other personal accoutrements.
- Historians are of the view that it could change historians' understanding of southern Britain in the early Anglo-Saxon period.
- The Anglo-Saxons were a cultural group that inhabited England in the 5th century.
- The group consisted of people from Germanic tribes who migrated from continental Europe to the British Isles.
- Here indigenous British groups have adopted many aspects of Anglo-Saxon culture and language.
- The Anglo-Saxon people established their empire in England and about half of the words in the modern English language belong to the language of this group.
- Historically the Anglo-Saxon period in Britain is dated to around 450 AD to 1066 AD.
- An English nation was formed in the early Anglo-Saxon period.
- Christianity was established there during this period and literature and language developed rapidly.

Links:-

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/oct/05/archaeologists-unearth-remains-believed-anglo-saxon-warrior>

Investment of Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) into RRVL

Question : Reliance Industries (RIL) and Reliance Retail Ventures (RRVL) recently announced that a wholly owned subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) will invest into RRVL, a subsidiary of RIL. What is the investment amount ?

- (a) Rs 5,512.50 crore (b) Rs 4,512.50 crore (c) Rs 3,512.50 crore
(d) Rs 2,512.50 crore

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Reliance Industries (RIL) and Reliance Retail Ventures (RRVL) announced that a wholly owned subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) will invest Rs 5,512.50 crore into RRVL, a subsidiary of RIL.
- The announcement was made after market hours yesterday, 6 October 2020. Shares of RIL shed 0.05% to settle at Rs 2,210.15 yesterday.
- This investment values RRVL at a pre-money equity value of ₹ 4.285 lakh crore.

- ADIA's investment will translate into a 1.20% equity stake in RRVL on a fully diluted basis.
- With this investment, RRVL has raised Rs 37,710 crore from leading global investors including Silver Lake, KKR, General Atlantic, Mubadala, GIC, TPG and ADIA in less than four weeks.
- Established in 1976, ADIA is a globally-diversified investment institution that prudently invests funds on behalf of the Government of Abu Dhabi through a strategy focused on longterm value creation.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-cm/adia-to-invest-rs-5-512-50-crore-in-reliance-retail-120100700196_1.html

Life Sciences Conclave 2020

Question: Which of the following organization recently organized life sciences Conclave 2020?

- a) Indian Institute of Science b) AIIMS Delhi c) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related Facts

- On 30 September 2020; CII is organized the Life Sciences Conclave 2020.
- The theme of life sciences conclave organized by confederation of Indian industry is: "Energizing Make in India through Life Sciences Sector"
- The conclave was organized via CII Virtual Platform.
- CII Life Sciences conclave 2020 is the 17th edition of pharmaceutical conclave and 4th edition of biotechnology conclave.
- The conclave provided a platform for the convergence of pharma and biotech sectors.
- It has also worked as a platform to discuss and deliberate on what is and can be leveraged for a better and expanding pharmaceutical and biotechnology ecosystem.
- It should be known that this field is already undergoing revolutionary transformation along with focusing on Post Covid world.
- Life Sciences Conclave also provides the necessary platform for stakeholders across the world to converge and embed their ideas in this sector.
- These stake holders can help to usher in a new era of competitiveness of the Indian pharma/biotech segment to lead global markets.
- This platform will seek to curate and create an environment conducive to help build a better future and achieve the targets the nation has set for itself.
- CII is committed to the vision of putting India back on the map, with the Indian pharmaceutical/ Biotechnology sector leading the way.

Link:-

<https://www.ciihive.in/Login.aspx?EventId=LIFESC>

Tribes India E-Marketplace

Question : which one of the following is incorrect regarding 'Tribes India E-Marketplace' ?

- (A) Minister of State of Ministry of Tribal Affairs launched this
- (B) it was launched on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti
- (C) This is the pathbreaking initiative of TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- (D) TRIFED aims to onboard 5 lakh tribal producers for sourcing of various handicraft, handloom, natural food products across the country

Answer (A)

Related facts

- Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda virtually launched India's largest handicraft and organic products marketplace, Tribes India E-Marketplace (market.tribesindia.com) on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti (October 2, 2020) in the presence of Renuka Singh, Minister of State, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Deepak Khandekar, Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- Keeping in line with the vision of the Prime Minister of making India Aatmanirbhar and self-reliant, this pathbreaking initiative of TRIFED under Ministry of Tribal Affairs will showcase the produce and handicrafts of tribal enterprises from across the country and help them market their produce/ products directly, is also a major leap towards the digitisation of tribal commerce.

Other Initiatives

- On this occasion, ministry also flagged off several other TRIFED initiatives that are aimed to support the tribal brethren.
 - These include the inauguration of Tribes India's 123rd and 124th outlets in Rishikesh and Kolkata; inclusion of new tribal product ranges from the states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh; partnership of TRIFED/ Tribes India with Amazon in their Seller Flex program.
 - Sh Arjun Munda also launched Pakur Honey by Trifed & Tribes India.
 - It is 100% natural honey which is Multi Floral , Forest Fresh, gathered by Santhal Tribals and Vulnerable Pahadhiya tribes from Pakur, Jharkhand.
 - Tribes India e-Marketplace is an ambitious initiative through which TRIFED aims to onboard 5 lakh tribal producers for sourcing of various handicraft, handloom, natural food products across the country and brings to you the best of tribal produce.
 - It will also facilitate B2B trade connecting tribals dependent on Minor Forest Produces and Medicinal plants to large buyers /manufacturers.
- Outlets of Rishikesh and Kolkata
Besides stocking products – arts and crafts from all the 27 Indian states, the outlets will also focus on Van Dhan essentials and immunity boosters – essential products during the ongoing pandemic.

New product ranges from Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh:

In addition to these initiatives, two new Tribal product ranges from the states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh will be included in the Tribes India product line-up. Tribes India also introduced attractive handicrafts and decorative items, all made by tribal artisans from Chhattisgarh. Besides these, there are spices such as turmeric and coriander powder, pickles and tangy drinks like Imli chuski processed from tamarind in Sukna.

Link:

<http://ddnews.gov.in/business/tribal-affairs-minister-arjun-munda-launch-largest-market-tribal-products-%E2%80%98tribes-india->

First bank to enable document embedding feature on SFMS

Question : Which bank becomes the first bank to enable the document embedding feature on structured financial messaging system (“SFMS”) managed by Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services ?

(A) IDBI Bank (B) HDFC Bank (C) Axis Bank (D) CSB Bank

Answer (A)

Related facts

- IDBI Bank Limited has become the first bank to enable the document embedding feature on SFMS managed by IFTAS. It was declared on 28 September 2020.
- In an effort to further digitize the trade finance transactions and to secure the financial communication system, IFTAS has introduced a feature of “document embedding”, along with LC / BG (Letter of Credit / Bank Guarantee) messages.
- This new feature of “document embedding” provides banks with the functionality of transmitting a pdf. document upto 1MB size along with the LC / BG messages.
- Transmission of digitally signed documents ensures reliability of the transaction.
- The new feature will ease the current process of manual verification, reconciliation, reduce frauds, and enable documentary evidence for all the parties involved in the transaction.
- Reliability of the BG gets enhanced when a copy of the stamp duty information gets embedded and transmitted along with the message itself, through the straight through processing enabled SFMS.
- In recognition of IDBI Bank Limited's efforts in furthering digitization of trade finance processes, IFTAS has appreciated the efforts put in by IDBI Bank Limited in implementing the enhanced feature ahead of all its peers.
- SFMS
- Structured Financial Messaging System (SFMS) is a secure messaging standard developed to serve as a platform for intra-bank and inter-bank applications. It is an Indian standard similar to SWIFT (Society for World-wide Interbank Financial Telecommunications) which is the international messaging system used for financial messaging globally.

IFTAS

Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services (IFTAS) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India, mandated to design, deploy & support IT-related services to the Reserve Bank of India, and all Banks and Financial Institutions in the country.

Link:

<https://www.idbibank.in/press/PR1400.pdf>

WHO to avail affordable, quality 120 million COVID-19 Rapid Tests

Question: Which of the following, could not be a test for COVID-19-

a) PCR based test b) Rapid Antigen tests c) Antibody tests d) Rorschach test

Answer: (d)
Related Facts:

- On 28 September, 2020 The World Health Organisation (WHO) made an announcement that it will provide about 120 million antigen rapid diagnostic tests in the months ahead.
- These tests will be available to low- and middle-income countries (LMIC).
- W.H.O has done milestone agreements for this purpose with the Abbott, SD Biosensor and the Gates Foundation.
- WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has made following announcement regarding new rapid testing kits-
- This will enable the expansion of testing, particularly in hard-to-reach areas that do not have lab facilities or enough trained health workers to carry out PCR tests.
- The tests are priced at a maximum of \$5 per unit, substantially cheaper than PCR tests.
- This also assured that there may be further coming down of testing costs.
- To achieve this purpose Volume guarantee agreements have been signed with rapid diagnostic test producers Abbott and SD Biosensor and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF).
- WHO has declared that the tests provide reliable results in 15 to 30 minutes, as compared to a few hours or days, and at a lower price.
- This is a vital addition to their testing capacity and is especially important in areas of high transmission.
- It has been explained that the sooner Covid-19 is diagnosed, the quicker action can be taken to treat and isolate those with the virus and trace their contacts.
- Why these test preferred by WHO
- Portability
- The tests developed by Abbott and SD Biosensor are portable, reliable and easy to administer.
- According to the WHO through these kits, testing is possible in near-person, decentralized healthcare settings.
- apid Antigen Testing for SARS-CoV-2:-
- Rapid antigen tests are commonly used in the diagnosis of respiratory pathogens, including influenza viruses and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).
- The US. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted emergency use authorization (EUA) for antigen tests that can identify SARS-CoV-2.
- Antigen tests are immune assays that detect the presence of a specific viral antigen, which implies current viral infection.
- Antigen tests are currently authorized to be performed on nasopharyngeal or nasal swab specimens placed directly into the assay's extraction buffer or reagent.
- The currently authorized antigen tests are not restricted to use on persons of a certain age.
- Antigen tests are relatively inexpensive and can be used at the point-of-care.
- The currently authorized devices return results in approximately 15 minutes.
- Antigen tests for SARS-CoV-2 are generally less sensitive than viral tests.
- Viral tests are highly sensitive and able to detect nucleic acid using reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).

Links:-

<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/28-09-2020-global-partnership-to-make-available-120-million-affordable-quality-covid-19-rapid-tests-for-low-and-middle-income-countries>

Raising of additional financial resources through Open Market Borrowings : finance ministry grants permission to five states

Question : Union Finance Ministry has recently granted permission to raise additional financial resources of Rs. 9,913 crore to five states through Open Market Borrowings. These states are —

(a) Andhra Pradesh (b) Telangana & Goa (c) Karnataka & Tripura (d) All above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Union Finance Ministry has granted permission to raise additional financial resources of Rs. 9,913 crore to five states through Open Market Borrowings.
- These States are Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa, Karnataka and Tripura.
- The permission has been accorded after these States successfully met the reform condition of implementation of One Nation One Ration Card System.
- This permission allows Karnataka to raise Rs. 4,509 crore whereas Andhra Pradesh can borrow Rs. 2,525 crore.
- Telangana has been permitted to borrow Rs. 2,508 crore while Goa can raise Rs. 223 crore and Tripura Rs. 148 crore.
- In view of the unprecedented pandemic the Central Government had in May allowed additional borrowing limit of up to 2 percent of Gross State Domestic Product to the States for the current financial year.
- This made an amount of up to Rs. 4,27,302 crore available to the States.

Link:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=FM-grants-permission-to-raise-additional-financial-resources-of-Rs.-9%2C913-crore-to-five-states-through-Open-Market-Borrowings&id=400645#:~:text=Union%20Finance%20Ministry%20has%20granted,%2C%20Goa%2C%20Karnataka%20and%20Tripura.&text=This%20made%20an%20amount%20of,crore%20available%20to%20the%20States.>