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NAVATRA

Monthly Magazine on Current Events

Vol. - 4 >>> Issue - 6 >>> December, 2020



Bihar

General Assembly Election, 2020



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

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

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

Our plan will be to publish our monthly PDF on very first day of every month with making appropriate modifications of day-to-day events. In general, the events happened till 30th 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 November to 30th November) 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

Nitish Kumar takes oath as Bihar CM for 4th consecutive term

Question. Janata dal president Nitish Kumar has been elected leader of the NDA legislative party of the Bihar. The chief Minister appointed by the

- A) Prime minister
- B) Government
- C) Judge of supreme court
- D) None of these

Answer :- b

Explanation-

- Why in News – Janata Dal (United) president Nitish Kumar has been elected of the NDA legislative party of the Bihar. He will now take oath as chief minister of the State for the fourth consecutive term.
- About – Chief minister's position in state is analogous to the Prime minister position at the centre.
- Appointment- The chief Minister appointed by the governor .
- 164 of the constitution provides that there shall be Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at its hand to aid and advise the government.



Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/elections/bihar-assembly/nitish-unanimously-elected-as-leader-of-nda-in-bihar-to-return-as-cm/article33101728.ece>

National Population Register

Question. The NPR was first collected in 2010 and then updated in _ .

- (A) 2011 (B) 2015 (C) 2021 (D) 1991

Answer (b)

- Why in news – The office of the Registrar-General of India (RGI) has clarified that the schedule, or the questionnaire, of the National Population Register (NPR) is “being finalised” and the information about the expected date of the first phase of Census 2021 is “not available”.
- What is it? – The National Population Register (NPR) is a register of usual residents of the country. It includes both Indian citizens as well as a foreign citizen.
- TimeLine – The NPR was first collected in 2010 and then updated in 2015.
- It is being prepared at the local (Village/sub-Town), sub-District, District, State and National level under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003.



- It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.
- Objective – To create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country.
- Who is a usual resident? – A usual resident is defined for the purposes of NPR as a person who has resided in a local area for the past 6 months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next 6 months or more.

Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/national-population-register-questionnaire-is-being-finalised-says-registrar-general-of-india/article33126299.ece>

President appoints Additional Judges as Judges of Allahabad High Court

Question . Recently, The president appoints __ Additional Judges as Judges of Allahabad high court.

(A) 28 (B) 25 (C) 31 (D) 10

Answer – a

Explanation-

- Why in news – Recently, the President appoints 28 Additional Judges as Judges of
- Allahabad High Court.
- The President can appoint duly qualified persons as additional judges of a high court under Article 217(1).
- The additional judges are appointed for a temporary period not exceeding two years when: there is a temporary increase in the business of the high court; or there are arrears of work in the high court.



Link:

<http://www.businessworld.in/article/President-appoints-28-Additional-Judges-as-Judges-of-Allahabad-High-Court/18-11-2020-343725/>

Lucknow airport

Question : AAI has recently handed over the Lucknow airport to the Adani group on lease.How much this lease period ?

(a)50 years (b)40 years (c)30 years (d)25 years

Answer (a)

Related facts

- AAI has recently(1 November 2020) handed over the Lucknow airport to the Adani group on lease.



- This lease period is 50 years.

Recent other handovers

- The Airports Authority of India had handed over the Mangaluru airport to the Adani group on October 30 midnight.

Privatisation of the six major airports

- The central government in February 2019 privatised six major airports of the country — Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati.
- After a competitive bidding process, the Adani group won the rights to run all of them for a lease period of 50 years.

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/aai-hands-over-lucknow-airport-to-adani-group-on-lease-for-50-years-120110201317_1.html

Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 launched successfully

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 is intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.

(2) The satellite was launched by PSLV-C49 in its 50th Mission.

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:

- On 7th November 2020, ISRO successfully launched Earth Observation Satellite EOS-01 and nine other customer satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Sriharikota.
- The launch was carried out by India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C49). It was PSLV's 51st Mission.
- Also, it was 2nd flight of PSLV in 'DL' configuration (with 2 solid strap-on motors).
- EOS-01 is an earth observation satellite, intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.
- The satellite will work in coordination with Radar Imaging Satellites, RISAT-2B and RISAT-2BR1 launched in 2019.



- The nine customer satellites comprise of Lithuania (1), Luxembourg (4) and USA (4). These were launched under a commercial arrangement with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL).

Links:

<https://www.isro.gov.in/launcher/pslv-c49-eos-01>

Remittances to India

Question : remittances to India would decrease in 2020 by —

(a)9 % (b)8 % (c)12 % (d)7 %

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The World Bank has recently(October 2020) said remittances to India would decrease this year by nine percent to USD 76 million.
- It is projected to decline fourteen percent by 2021 compared to the pre-COVID-19 levels in 2019.



Reason

- It is due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and global economic recession.

Top five countries in 2020

Top five remittance receiver countries are — China>Mexico>Philippines>Egypt>India.

LMICs

- Remittance flows to these countries are projected to fall by 7 percent to USD 508 billion in 2020.
- Decline may continues in 2021 by 7.5 percent(USD 470 billion).
LMICs stands for — Low and middle-income countries.

Region wise decline in remittance

- Region wise decline in remittances are as follows : —

Region	Decline in remittance(%) (2020)	Decline in remittance(%) (2021)
Europe and Central Asia	16	8
East Asia and the Pacific	11	4
Middle East and North Africa	8	8

Sub-Saharan Africa	9	6
South Asia	4	11
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.2	8

Link:

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/remittances-to-india-to-drop-by-9-in-2020-world-bank-report-11604022300215.html>

Nurturing Neighborhoods Challenge

Question: Union has recently launched the initiative Nurturing Neighborhoods Challenge.

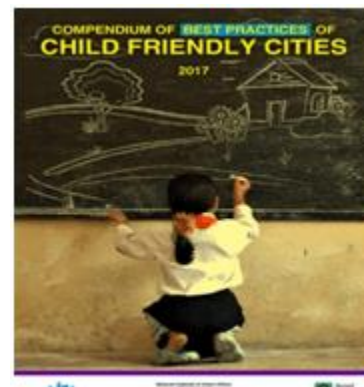
This initiative is related to-

- a) Shaping normal relations Neighboring Countries
- b) Providing food to slums located in big cities
- c) Focusing on shaping cities for young children and their families.
- d) Protecting our neighborhood environment

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- On 04 November 2020; Nurturing Neighborhoods Challenge initiative was launched by the central government.
- Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched the initiative, the focusing on shaping cities for young children and their families.
- Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs launched the initiative.
- The Nurturing Neighborhoods Challenge is a 3-year initiative, will support cities to develop, pilot, and scale solutions that enhance the quality of life of young children, their caregivers and families in the public realm.
- The initiative has been launched with the support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Netherlands with technical support from WRI India.
- The Minister explained following aspects of the initiative-
- Through the challenge, selected cities will receive technical assistance and capacity-building to reimagine parks and open spaces;
- Improve access to early childhood facilities;
- Adapt public spaces with early childhood-oriented amenities;



- It will give impetus to create accessible, safe, walkable streets for young children and families.
- The challenge will be open to all Smart Cities, other cities with more than five lakh population, and capitals of States and UTs.
- The urban environment shapes a young child's health and development, particularly in the crucial and vulnerable first five years of life.
- During the first 1,000 days of a child's life, more than 1 million new neural connections are formed every second.
- By enhancing the primary public domain of young children and their families to be safer and more stimulating for early childhood, the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge can help lay the foundation for more robust social and economic development outcomes in Indian cities for decades to come."
- Families are challenged by inadequate public transport, as well as food, healthcare and childcare deserts.
- Thoughtful urban planning and design can play a major role in addressing such challenges and in giving children a good start in life.
- Parameters of thoughtful urban planning to children a good start in life:-
- Walkable, mixed-use neighbourhoods that cater to the basics a young in family needs within 15 minutes on foot.
- Lively, green public spaces close to home that offer amenities for caregivers while allowing small children to explore safely.
- Safe transport routes and transit systems that make it easy, affordable and enjoyable for families with young children to travel.
- Healthy environments with safe levels of air quality and low noise pollution
- A vibrant community life that supports family well-being.
- For a city to be responsive to all people, it needs to consciously address the needs of the most vulnerable groups.
- Incorporating an early childhood lens in city planning will support more holistic, people-oriented urban development.

Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1670032>

CSIR- CSIO to provide futuristic solutions in the Country

Question: Recently CSIR- CSIO came forward to provide futuristic solutions in the Country, in collaboration with-

a) IBM b) Microsoft c) Dynamatic Technologies Limited d) DRDO

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- Central Scientific Instruments Organization (CSIO) has come forward to provide futuristic solutions in various fields.
- In this regard the organization has signed a MoU with Dynamatic Technologies Limited.
- The two have come together for jointly designing, developing and manufacturing futuristic solutions for the Defence and Aerospace, Healthcare and Agriculture industry.
- The company said that the partnership with CSIO is aligned to Government of India's vision of AtmaNirbhar Bharat.
- CEO of Dynamatic Technologies Limited expressed that the Symbiotic relationships between private sector and government research labs is very important.
- He said that this collaboration will go a long way in our endeavour to build a self-reliant India.
- Dynamatic technologies Limited has been championing Indigenisation of defence production in partnership with PSU's and DRDO since early 90's.
- **About Dynamatic Technologies Limited:-**
- Dynamatic Technologies manufactures highly engineered products and solutions for the Aerospace and Defence, Hydraulics and Automotive businesses.
- The company has manufacturing facilities in India, UK, Germany and USA and is in the global supply chain of leading OEMs in these sectors.
- Dynamatic has three design laboratories in India and Europe and is a leading Private R&D Organisation.
- The company has numerous inventions and patents to its credit and the it owns and operates a sophisticated metrology laboratory, a material sciences laboratory and a research farm.
- The Company and its Subsidiaries employ around 65 scientists and 650 engineers with expertise in Mechanical Engineering, Advanced Computer Aided Engineering, Materials & Metallurgical Engineering, Fluid Dynamics and Defence & Aerospace Research.
- **What it will do with CSIO:-**
- The company with Central Scientific Instruments Organization (CSIO) has to develop collaborative activities in the research areas of mutual interest.
- It will be done on a basis of equality and reciprocity in the areas of-
 - i. Multi-spectral surveillance payloads of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS),
 - ii. Spraying technologies including electrostatic techniques for agricultural purposes.
 - iii. Using UAS Instrumentation for ventilators and respirators.
 - iv. Instrumentation for homeland security applications.



Links:-

<https://www.defenceaviationpost.com/2020/10/dynamatic-inks-pact-with-csir-csio-for-joint-development-of-futuristic-solutions/>

Underserved Women in India to be Imparted with Digital Skills

Question: On 28 October 2020; Microsoft has announced that it has to impart digital skills to more than.....underserved women in India in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).

Which of the following is the most suitable option to fill in the blank space provided above?

a) 25000 b) 10,000 c) 50,000 d) One lakh

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- On 28 October 2020; Microsoft has announced it has collaborated with the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) to impart digital skills to lakh underserved women in India.
- The company said that more than one lakh underserved women in India will undergo digital training over the next ten months.
- As part of the collaboration, more than 70 hours of the course content will be made available free of cost.
- The topics to be covered in this program are digital literacy, enhancing employability, nano entrepreneurship, and communication skills.
- This initiative is an extension of Microsoft's partnership with NSDC to provide digital skills to over 1 lakh youth in the country.
- This partnership is focused on equipping underserved young women from rural communities with the skills.
- Enhancing women's workforce participation is greatly required to thrive in a digital economy.
- The program will curate a series of live training sessions and digital skilling drives to help create opportunities for young girls and women.
- This will create a new opportunity, particularly for first time job seekers and those whose jobs may have been impacted by Covid-19, to join the future workforce.
- In the scenario of Covid-19 epidemic India is going through digital transformation which needs a workforce that is equipped with future-ready skills.
- Women with digital skills will be the key to unlocking the country's next phase of growth.
- Providing equal opportunity and access to digital skills for underserved young women will be an important part of this journey.



- According to Microsoft India President Anant Maheshwari, it will ensure an inclusive economic recovery in the country.
- These live training sessions will be delivered online through the Microsoft Community Training (MCT) platform.
- The MCT platform will also allow the trainees to access rich content already available on MCT as well as provide a forum to engage with peers.
- NSDC is nurturing a conducive ecosystem in which women across formal and informal sectors get access to appropriate skill development opportunities.
- NSDC MD and CEO Manish Kumar said, mainstreaming of content, delivery of training and use of digital platforms are key to increasing participation of women.
- He told that the partnership with Microsoft will help in the economic empowerment of women,.
- Under this partnership, eSkill India – NSDC’s digital skilling initiative – will support in building the outreach of this engagement through its skilling ecosystem.
- It includes sector skill councils, training partners, and training centres.
- Microsoft and NSDC will award a joint e-certificate to participants post-course completion.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/microsoft-nsdc-collaborate-to-empower-1-lakh-women-with-digital-skills/article32961441.ece>

Public Affairs Index 2020

Question : Public Affairs Centre (PAC) has recently launched the Public Affairs Index 2020 (PAI 2020), the annual ranking of the states of India on governance performance. Which one of the following statement is correct regarding PAI 2020 ?

- (a) Kerala emerged the Best Governed State in the Large States Category
- (b) Sikkim emerged the Best Governed State in the Small States Category
- (c) Delhi emerged the Best Governed Union Territory in the Union Territory Category
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Public Affairs Centre (PAC) has recently (30 October 2020) launched the Public Affairs Index 2020 (PAI 2020), the annual ranking of the states of India on governance performance.



About PAI

- It is the assessment of the adequacy and quality of Governance in the states of India for the year 2019-2020.
- The states are ranked on Governance performance based on a Composite Index. The governance performance is analysed in the context of sustainable development defined by 3 pillars –Equity, Growth and Sustainability; 5 Themes;13 Sustainable Development Goals and 50 indicators.

Results

- The results of PAI 2020(Best governed states) are:-

State	Category
Kerala	Large states
Goa	Small states
Chandigarh	Union territory

- Worst governed states (Lowest ranking) in each categories are :-

State	Ranking	Category
Uttar Pradesh	18	Large States
Manipur	11	Small States
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	7	Union territory

Delta value over the last five years from 2015-16

1. In the large states'category, in terms of Equity, Bihar followed by West Bengal, and Odisha who feature at the bottom of PAI 2020 are the top performers, while surprisingly Kerala, Punjab and Maharashtra feature at the bottom.

2. In the case of small states, Mizoram is the top performer, while Goa is placed at the bottom
3. In the Growth pillar, Bihar, Assam and Odisha showed the highest improvement in the Delta value, while Kerala, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu feature at the bottom.
4. Among small states, Mizoram and Meghalaya have the highest growth with Manipur at the bottom. Himachal Pradesh ranks 2nd, but has the least improvement in the Delta value
5. In terms of Sustainability, Odisha and Haryana, show the highest improvement in the Delta value. Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Assam find places at the bottom of the Delta rankings.
6. Among small states, Goa is the top performer followed by Delhi and Tripura. Meghalaya and Mizoram feature at the bottom

Link:

<https://pacindia.org/outreach/2020/pai-2020-press-release/>

Vigilance Awareness Week

Question: When is the Vigilance Awareness Week observed?

- (a) 27 Oct-2 Nov (b) 2 Nov-8 Nov (c) 28 Oct-2 Nov (d) None of These

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- The Central Vigilance Commission observes the Vigilance Awareness Week from **27th October to 2nd November 2020**.
- This is observed every year during the week in which the birthday of **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (31st October)** falls.
- This awareness week campaign affirms commitment to the promotion of integrity and probity in public life through citizen participation.
- 2020 Theme for the awareness week is “**Satark Bharat, Samriddh Bharat (Vigilant India, Prosperous India)**”.
- The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) was set up in February 1964 on the recommendation of K. Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption.
- This statutory status body advises and guides Central Government agencies in the field of vigilance.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1667441>

UP govt secures first rank in disbursing loans under PM SVANidhi Scheme

Question: Which State has secured first rank in disbursing loans under PM SVANidhi Scheme?

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

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Uttar Pradesh has achieved first rank in disbursing loans under PM SVANidhi Scheme.
- The State has ranked first in all the categories – Applications, Sanctions and Disbursements of the loans under the scheme.
- A total to 2, 26,728 beneficiaries has been disbursed loan.
- Seven cities of the state also found place in the list of top 10 cities of the country.
- Varanasi, Lucknow and Aligarh are the top three cities in the list; other cities include Allahabad, Gorakhpur, Ghaziabad and Kanpur.
- The Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme provides Working Capital loan of Rs 10,000 to street vendors to resume their livelihoods hit by Covid-19 lockdown.
- It was launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs on June 01, 2020
- The scheme provides benefits to street vendors or hawkers in urban, pre-urban and rural areas. Duration of the scheme is until March 2022.

**Links:**

<http://www.newsonair.nic.in/News?title=UP-govt-secures-first-rank-in-disbursing-loans-under-PM-Swanidhi-Scheme&id=403059>

Nitin Gadkari virtually lays foundation stones for nine NH projects in Tripura

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Nitin Gadkari virtually laid the foundation stones of nine National Highway projects in Tripura.

(2) India's Act East Policy was unveiled in 2014.

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 27 October 2020, Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSMEs Nitin Gadkari virtually laid the foundation stones of nine National Highway projects in Tripura.
- A sum of Rs. 2752 crore will be spent for development of 262 kilometre roads under the project.
- The project will provide better connectivity, fast and safe movement of traffic in the entire state.
- Tripura is being considered as the gateway for India's Act East Policy seeing its potential feasible connectivity to the ASEAN countries.
- India's Act East policy was unveiled at the 12th ASEAN-India Summit in 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.



Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=1667820>

Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana aims at proper training and distribution of advanced equipment to potter Community.
- (2) It was launched in 2018.

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 29 October 2020, 100 potter families in Nanded and Parbhani districts of Maharashtra were distributed electric potter wheels under Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana.
- The pottery equipments were distributed to potters belonging to total 15 villages – 10 villages in Nanded and 5 villages in Parbhani districts. The distribution of equipment will benefit at least 400 members of the community.
- Kumhar Sashaktikaran Yojana of KVIC (Khadi and Village Industries Commission) aims at proper training and distribution of advanced equipment to potter Community and thereby helping them to increase their productivity and income. It was launched in 2018.
- It is the first-of-its-kind initiative taken since independence to strengthen and improve the living of potters in the country.
- Under the scheme, more than 18,000 electric wheels have so far been distributed across the country benefiting nearly 80,000 people of the community.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Nitin-Gadkari-distributes-electric-potter-wheels-to-100-families-in-Maharashtra&id=403280>

Feni Bridge

Question: Consider the following statements:

- (1) Feni Bridge links India's Sabrum to Ramgah in Bangladesh.
- (2) Feni Bridge was inaugurated in 2015.

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:

- In lines with 'Act East Policy' of the Government of India, a bridge connecting India and Bangladesh is being built over Feni river.
- The 1.8 kilometre long Feni bridge will connect Sabrum (Tripura) in India with Ramgarh (Chittagong Division) in Bangladesh.
- Feni Bridge is known as Maitree Setu in Chattogram.
- The bridge being built at the cost of Rs. 129 crore will be developed as a corridor for trade and commerce between India's North-East and Bangladesh.
- The foundation of the bridge was laid in 2015 jointly by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The project is scheduled to be completed by December this year.
- The bridge is being constructed by the National Highways Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd of Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Government of India.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Feni-bridge-connecting-India-and-Bangladesh-to-be-completed-by-December%3a-Road-Transport-Minister-Nitin-Gadkari&id=403152>

e-Dharti Geo Portal

Question: Who has launched e-Dharti Geo Portal?

(a) Hardeep Singh Puri (b) Harsh Vardhan (c) Prakash Javdekar (d) Jitendra Singh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri has launched the 'e-Dharti Geo Portal'.
- The portal will integrate legacy drawings such as maps and lease plans in the management information system and make it geographic information system (GIS)-enabled.
- The portal provides an easy access to the property certificate details and its outline map.
- The portal will assist a purchaser to gather details about the property, if any lawsuit is pending or not.



Links:

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/union-minister-hardeep-singh-puri-puri-launches-e-dharti-geo-portal/article32914796.ece>

Dharani Portal

Question: Which state has launched Dharani Portal?

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 29th October 2020, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao launched 'Dharani' Portal at Mudu Chinatalapalli village of Medchal-Malkajgiri district.
- The portal is a step ahead in revenue reforms by providing an easy land and property registrations.
- Through the portal one can register their property, succession and also the partition of agriculture lands and after the registration is done, the owner will be provided with e-pattadar passbook
- The portal keeps record of property of all citizens. Those not included will be treated as illegal and will not be allowed for further registrations or mutation.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Telangana-CM-launches-%e2%80%98Dharani%e2%80%99-Portal-for-land-%26-property-registrations&id=403286>

International 15th G20 summit

Question 2. Prime Minister has virtually participated in the ___ G20 Summit.

(A) 16th (B) 15th (C) 20th (D) None of these

Answer – b

- Explanation –
- Why in news – Prime Minister has virtually participated in the 15th G20 Summit.
- About 15th G20 summit : – Converted by – Saudi Arabia in the virtual format.
- Theme – “Realising the opportunity of 21st Century for all.
- The focus of the G20 summit Was on an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19.
- Key takeaways:-
- Indian PM called for a New Global Index for the post Corona world that comprises four key elements-
- Creation of a Vast talent pool
- Ensuring that Technology reaches all segments of the society.
- Transparency in the system of Government.
- Dealing with the Mother Earth with the spirit of trusteeship.
- The G20 leaders have also announced that India will be hosting the G20 summit in 2023.
- About G20 or Group of twenty:-
- Founded in :- 1991
- Members country:- Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, and the European Union.



UKIBC: 6TH ANNUAL REPORT ON DOING BUSINESS IN INDIA

Question: UK Minister for investment, Lord Gerry Grimstone, has recently released UK India Business Council's 'DOING BUSINESS IN INDIA REPORT 2020' at a roundtable with Indian industry captains during his virtual visit to India. This year's report is based on an in-depth survey of —

- (a) 106 UK organisations operating in India
- (b) 76 UK organisations operating in India
- (c) 116 UK organisations operating in India
- (d) 126 UK organisations operating in India

Answer (a)

Related facts

**UKIBC'S 6TH ANNUAL
REPORT ON DOING
BUSINESS IN INDIA:
THE UK PERSPECTIVE**

- UK Minister for investment, Lord Gerry Grimstone, has recently (October 2020) released UK India Business Council's 'DOING BUSINESS IN INDIA REPORT 2020' at a roundtable with Indian industry captains during his virtual visit to India.
- Report outlines the point of view of UK businesses and higher education institutions on India's business environment and the ease of doing business.
- This year's report is based on an in-depth survey of 106 UK organisations operating in India.
- This report details why companies want to do business in India, the challenges they face in doing so, priorities for the future, and rating of India's business environment.
- It is notable that in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) rankings, India has made extraordinary – and indeed unprecedented – progress in recent years, rising from 142nd globally in 2014 to 63rd in 2019.

Findings of the report

Some of the key findings of this report include:

1. In spite of new challenges to business such as Brexit, COVID-19, and the global economic slowdown, UK companies not only remain deeply committed to India, but many are optimistic of expanding their business footprint in India.
2. More than three-quarters of respondents were positive about Atmanirbhar Bharat, believing it is an opportunity to do more investments in India and expand the trading ties.
3. The most frequently selected obstacle to business was 'legal and regulatory barriers' with just over half of all respondents selecting it in their top 5.
4. The second greatest barrier was 'price points'. In contrast to legal and regulatory barriers, this has been a noticeable increase as compared to previous years apparently due to the pandemic-induced pressure on margins.
5. Completing the top 5 were 'taxation issues', 'corruption', and 'finding a suitable partner'.
6. 'Telecommunication facilities', 'the availability of support and service providers', 'the availability of skilled labour', and 'the availability of supply chain' were the top 4 most noted strengths in India's business environment.
7. More than half of respondents identified 'improving bureaucratic processes with accountability' as one of their top 5 reform priorities, making it the most frequently cited. 'Increasing regulatory certainty' was the second most popular reform, followed by 'simplification of the GST processes' and 'improving the quality of infrastructure'.
8. For the third year running, Maharashtra came out as the state with maximum incremental improvement, followed by Karnataka, Delhi, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu, in that order. Next in sequence were Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh and Haryana to complete the top ten.

Link:

<https://www.ukibc.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKIBC-Doing-Business-in-India-Report-2020.pdf>

French airstrike on Al-Qaeda

Question: At the end of October 2020 French forces had killed more than 50 Al-Qaeda jihadists in –

a) Paris b) Mali c) Islamabad d) UAE

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 30 October 2020; the French forces had killed more than 50 jihadists aligned to Al-Qaeda in airstrikes in central Mali.
- The French forces conducted the operation near the borders of Burkina Faso and Niger.
- It should be known that French troops in this part of the world are struggling to rout an Islamic insurgency.
- French Defence Minister Florence Parly said after meeting members of Mali's transitional government.
- French Defence Minister Florence Parly informed that on October 30 in Mali, the Barkhane force conducted an operation to neutralise jihadists.
- Government forces confiscated a huge amount of arms and material from the area.
- This is also known as French-led anti-jihadist Operation Barkhane.
- The Defence Minister said that the operation was launched after a drone detected a very large motorcycle caravan in the three borders area.
- Jihadists moved under trees to escape surveillance but the French force sent in two Mirage jets and a drone to launch missiles, leading to the "neutralisation" of the insurgents.
- Explosives and a suicide vest had been found, he told reporters in a conference call, saying that the group had been "about to attack (an army) position in the region".
- Another operation also underway by French forces this time targeting the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara, with the participation of a total of 3,000 soldiers.
- A significant blow to the **Ansarul Islam group**:
- Airstrike undertaken by French forces made a significant blow to the Ansarul Islam group which was linked to Al-Qaeda via the GSIM alliance led by Iyad Ag Ghaly.
- After the death of the Qaeda commander Abdelmalek Droukdel, who was killed by French forces in Mali in June 2020, Ghaly has emerged as a top jihadist leader in the Sahel.
- The United Nations has some 13,000 troops deployed in Mali as part of its peacekeeping mission, known as MINUSMA.
- France has 5,100 deployed in the Sahel region.
- Mali has been struggling to contain a brutal jihadist insurgency which first emerged in the north of the country in 2012.



Link:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/french-airstrikes-kill-over-50-qaeda-linked-jihadists-in-mali/article33009760.ece>

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,by%20the%20end%20of%202019.>

No Mask, No Service policy

Question: Which country has ordered no mask, no service policy?

(a) Bangladesh (b) China (c) Russia (d) Canada

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- In an attempt to contain the Covid 19 spread,the Bangladesh government ordered no mask, no service policy.
- As per policy no service will be provided to people who don't wear masks.
- The cabinet meeting Chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina decided that all offices must install notice boards saying 'no mask, no service'.



Links:

<http://www.newsonair.com/News?title=Bangladesh-govt.-orders-%E2%80%98no-mask%2C-no-service%E2%80%99-policy&id=403041>

Japan to carbon neutral by 2050

Question: Which country has set zero carbon emission by 2050 as its policy target?

(a) Japan (b) China (c) Vietnam (d) Malaysia

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Japan's newly elected Prime Minister announced that his country will achieve zero carbon emission by 2050.
- The country will shift away from fossil fuels to counter climate change risks fostering sustainable development.
- Currently, Japan meets its 56 percent energy requirements by fossil fuels, 22-24% from renewables, 20-22% from nuclear power.
- The policy shift brings Japan into line with the European Union, which set itself a similar target last year, while China recently announced to become carbon-free by 2060.

**Links:**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/26/japan-will-become-carbon-neutral-by-2050-pm-pledges>

2020 Bolivian general election

Question: Who has been elected the President of Bolivia?

(a) Luis Arce (b) Carlos Mesa (c) Jeanine Anez (d) Evo Morales

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Luis Arce Catacora has been elected the President of Bolivia.
- His party, Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), has won the majority 55.10 percent vote in the 2020 Bolivian general election held on 18 October 2020.
- Among major opponent, Carlos Mesa, Presidential candidates of Civic Community party got 28.83 percent vote.
- Bolivia is a landlocked country located in western-central South America. The constitutional capital is Sucre, while the seat of government and executive capital is La Paz.

**Links:**

<http://www.aa.com.tr/en/americas/luis-arce-wins-landslide-in-bolivian-elections/2017297>

Economics

12th BRICS Summit

Question . Recently, Prime Minister attended the 12th BRICS Summit hosted by _ virtually, under the theme Global Stability, Shared security and Innovative Growth.

(A) Brazil (B) Russia (C) India (D) None of these

Answer – b

Explanation-

- Why in news – Recently, Prime Minister attended the 12th BRICS Summit hosted by Russia
- virtually, under the theme Global Stability, Shared Security and Innovative Growth.
- About – BRICS is the acronym association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- Originally the first four were grouped as BRIC before the induction of South Africa in 2010. BRICS Summit
- The Chairmanship of the forum is rotated annually among the members, in
- accordance with the acronym B-R-I-C-S.
- BRICS countries are influential members of leading international organisations and agencies, including the UN, the G20, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77.
- The first Independent summit took place in 2009 in Russia.
- The BRICS is known as an influential bloc that represents over 3.6 billion people, or half of the world's population. The BRICS countries have a combined GDP of USD 16.6 trillion.
- New Development Bank is an outcome of this platform.



Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pm-modi-to-attend-virtual-summit-of-brics-on-november-17/article33108563.ece>

Banking Sector : Government provides Rs 670 crore support to RRB

Question : One-third of RRBs are in difficult condition in the country. Hence government provides rupees 670 crore support for RRBs. Which of the following states has the maximum number of Regional Rural Bank ?

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

Answer (c)

Related Facts

- Government has recently provided capital of Rs 670 crore to the Regional Rural Banks.
- This support was necessary to RRBs to meet regulatory capital.
- It is notable that one third of the RRBs in the country are in a difficult situation.
- Of the 43 Regional Rural Banks, about one-third especially from north-eastern and eastern regions are in losses and they needed fund to strengthen capital base.



The ratio of 50:15:35

- Above mentioned ratio denotes the current scheme for recapitalisation of RRBs. Details are as follows :-

Provider	Capital support ratio(%)
Central Government	Fifty
Concerned State Governments	Fifteen
Sponsor Banks	Thirty five

- This recapitalization scheme enable them to meet the regulatory requirement of capital to risk weighted assets ratio (CRAR) of 9 per cent.

Regional Rural Bank

- Products of these banks are — Retail banking, corporate banking, investment banking, mortgage loans, wealth management, debit cards, UPI, internet banking, mobile banking, finance and insurance.
These banks founded 45 years ago(October 2, 1975).
- There are 43 RRBs in the country.
- Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh have maximum number of RRB.

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/banking/finance/banking/govt-provides-rs-670-crore-support-to-regional-rural-banks-to-meet-regulatory-capital/articleshow/78979148.cms?from=mdr>

Banking sector : ICICI Bank launches 'Mine' for millennials

Question : ICICI Bank has recently announced the launch of India's first comprehensive banking programme for millennial customers. What is the age group of these customers ?

- (a) 18 years to 35 years (b) 28 years to 55 years
(c) 8 years to 15 years (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts



- ICICI Bank has recently(5 November 2020) announced the launch of India's first comprehensive banking programme for millennial customers.
- The age group of these customers are 18 years to 35 years.
- Inspired by 'Millennial Network', the proposition is called 'ICICI Bank Mine' and offers an instant savings account, a feature driven iMobile application that offers investment guidance to suit the demand of millennials, curated credit and debit card, instant personal loans & overdrafts, and even an experiential branch with social engagement space.

- 'ICICI Bank Mine' also offers investment guidance to customers through a completely user experience focused iMobile application.

key points of Mine

1. It is the first-of-its-kind proposition in the industry
2. It offers an instant savings account that a millennial can open online and start transacting immediately
3. It also provides users access to a new-look mobile app that provides investment guidance
4. It is bundled with the country's first credit card with flexible monthly plans; offers instantaneous personal loan and overdraft facilities
5. Even the branch format is different with an experiential engagement area

Link:

<https://www.icicibank.com/managed-assets/docs/about-us/2020/launches-mine-a-banking-stack-for-millennial-customers.pdf>

HDFC Bank : Numero uno in Indian Financial Sector

Question : HDFC Bank has recently become numero uno in Indian financial sector. Which poll revealed that ?

- (a) Asia's Outstanding Companies Poll 2019
- (b) World's Outstanding Companies Poll 2019
- (c) India's Outstanding Companies Poll 2019
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts



- HDFC Bank has recently become numero uno (first position) in Indian financial sector.

Asia's Outstanding Companies Poll 2019

- HDFC Bank has been conferred first position in this poll.
- This survey recognises publicly listed companies across the region for their excellence in a variety of business areas and markets.
- Winners by sector in India

Sector	Company
Automobiles & Components:	Maruti Suzuki India
Consumer Discretionary:	Voltas

Consumer Staples:	Hindustan Unilever
Energy:	Reliance Industries
Financials:	HDFC Bank
Healthcare:	Apollo Hospitals Enterprise
Healthcare:	Cipla
Healthcare:	Divi's Laboratories
Healthcare:	Sun Pharmaceutical Industries
Industrials:	Larsen & Toubro
Infrastructure:	Larsen & Toubro
Insurance:	HDFC Life Insurance Company
IT Services:	Tata Consultancy Services
Materials:	Shree Cement
Media:	PVR
Media:	Zee Entertainment Enterprises
Real Estate:	Oberoi Realty
Telecommunication Services:	Bharti Airtel

Transportation & Logistics:	Container Corporation of India
Utilities:	Power Grid Corporation of India

Overall winners by market

Market	Company
China	Jiangsu Hengrui Medicine
Hong Kong	Galaxy Entertainment Group
India	Tata Consultancy Services
Indonesia	Astra International
Korea	Samsung Electronics
Malaysia	Bermaz Auto
Pakistan	Pakistan Telecommunication
The Philippines	Globe Telecom
Singapore	DBS
Taiwan	TSMC
Thailand	Bangkok Dusit Medical Services
Vietnam	FPT

Link:

<https://www.hdfcbank.com/personal/about-us/news-room/press-release>

Scientific UMANG APP

Question 2. UMANG APP :- developed by

(A) Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Communications and Law & Justice.

(B) Ministry of JAL shakti (C) Only b (D) None of these

Answer – A

Explanation :-

- Why in news – To mark the occasion of 3 years of UMANG an online conference was organized under the chairmanship of Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Communications and Law & Justice.
- Coverage – The international version is for select countries that include USA, UK, Canada, Australia, UAE, Netherlands, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.
- Benefits- It will help Indian international students, NRIs and Indian tourists abroad, to avail Government of India services, anytime.
- What is it? – The UMANG mobile app (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) is a Government of India all-in-one single, unified, secure, multi-channel, multi-lingual, multi-service mobile app.
- Developed by – the National e-Governance Division (NeGD), Ministry of Electronics & IT.



Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1675131#:~:text=To%20mark%20the%20occasion%20of,Justice%20on%20November%2023%2C%202020.>

Shukrayaan

Question. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has short-listed 20 space-based experiment proposals for its proposed _ orbiter mission ‘Shukrayaan’.

(A) Mars (B) Venus (C) Jupiter (D) None of these

Answer – B

Explanation-

- Why in news – The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has short-listed 20
- space-based experiment proposals for its proposed Venus orbiter mission ‘Shukrayaan’.
- About – It is a mission to study Venus for more than four years.
- Scientific objectives: Investigation of the surface processes and shallow subsurface stratigraphy (study of rock layers); and solar wind interaction with Venusian Ionosphere, and studying the structure, composition and dynamics of the atmosphere.
- The satellite is planned to be launched on board GSLV Mk II rocket
- About Planet Venus
- Venus is the hottest planet of the solar system.



- Venus is often described as the “twin sister” of the Earth because of the similarities in size, mass, density, bulk composition and gravity.
- It is believed that both planets share a common origin, forming at the same time out of a condensing nebulousity around 4.5 billion years ago.
- Venus is around 30 per cent closer to the Sun as compared to Earth resulting in much higher solar flux.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/sweden-getting-on-board-indias-venus-mission-with-payload-to-explore-planet/article33176322.ece>

One Health Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance

Question .1. World Organization for animal health:- Intergovernmental organization created in 1924 for improving animal health worldwide.2. Organization for animal health:- Intergovernmental organization created in 1950.

(A) only 1 (B) only 2 (C) both 1 and 2 (D) none of these

Answer – a

Explanation:-

- Why in news – Recently, a global group called ‘ one health global leader group on antimicrobial resistance’ was launched in the wake of rising antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
- About: – The World Organisation for Animal Health, formerly the Office International des Epizooties is an intergovernmental organization coordinating, supporting and promoting animal disease control.
- Headquarters location: Paris, France
- President: Mark Schipp
- Founder: Emmanuel Leclainche
- Founded: 25 January 1924
- Membership: 182 member states
- Official languages: French; English; Spanish.



Links:-

<https://www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/one-health-global-leaders-group-on-antimicrobial-resistance>

SITMEX-20

Question 1. Recently, the second edition of the India, Thailand and Singapore trilateral Naval Exercise SITMEX-20 conducted in the — .

(A) Andaman sea (B) Delhi (C) Thailand (D) None of these

Answer – a

Explanation-

- Why in news – Recently, the second edition of the India, Thailand and Singapore trilateral naval exercise SITMEX-20 conducted in the Andaman sea.
- Aims – The SITMEX- 20 series of the exercise in conducted to enhance mutual inter-operability and imbibing best practices between Indian navy, and republic of Singapore Navy (RSP) Robal Thai Navy (RTN).
- History- The first edition of SITMEX, hosted by Indian navy, was conducted off port Blair in September 2019.

- The 2020 edition of the exercise is being hosted by Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).
- Other military exercises between India and Singapore:
 1. Bold kurukshetra (Army)
 2. Joint military training (Air force)
 3. SIMBEX (Navy)
- Other military exercises between India and Thailand :
 1. MAITREE (Army)
 2. Siam Bharat (Air force)
 3. Indo-Thai CORPAT (Navy)



Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indian-navy-participates-in-two-day-trilateral-exercise-sitmex-20-in-andaman-sea/article33154462.ece>

Exploration of Virgin Hyperloop technology for ultrahigh speed travel in India

Question: Which of the following has formed high-level panel to explore Virgin Hyperloop technology for ultrahigh speed travel in India?

a) DRDO b) Indian Railways c) NITI Aayog d) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- Central Government is now started exploring opportunity to introduce Virgin Hyperloop technology for ultrahigh speed travel in India.
- Government think-tank NITI Aayog has formed a high-level panel for this purpose.
- The panel will explore the technological and commercial viability of the Virgin Hyperloop technology for ultrahigh speed travel in the country.
- The committee has NITI Aayog member VK Saraswat as its Chairman and Adviser (Infrastructure Connectivity, NITI Aayog) Sudhendu Jyoti Sinha as its convener.
- The Indian government taken the initiative in this regard weeks after its first test was completed with humans on board in Las Vegas, USA.
- It should be known that The Virgin Hyperloop test run was conducted on a 500-meter track in Las Vegas in the USA with a pod.
- The pod, as the Hyperloop vehicles are called, travelled with passengers, including an Indian, inside an enclosed tube at more than 100 mph or 161 kmph.
- A NITI Aayog document in this regard stated that in view of the emerging transport technology and for gaining the first-mover advantage, it is essential to look into the technological and commercial viability of the Virgin Hyperloop technology.
- NITI Aayog document says It is relevant to explore technological, commercial, financial (viability) and (assess) safety standards and regulations to procure new technology.
- Its other members are Railway Board Chairman & CEO VK Yadav, the secretaries of the ministries of Housing and Urban Affairs, Road Transport and Highways, and the Maharashtra government's Transport Secretary.



- The DRDO's Chairman, the Delhi Metro's Managing Director, the IIT-Delhi Director and the Chairman (Technology Information) of the forecasting and assessment council are also its members.
- The document says Six months time has been given about the mandate of the committee, from its first meeting.
- Within this period the panel has to study Virgin Hyperloop technology and its commercial viability, (and) safety, regulation and finalize the document.
- The committee may also invite domain experts and representatives from various organisations to its meetings as it may deem fit, the document says.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/niti-aayog-forms-panel-to-study-feasibility-of-hyperloop-technology-in-india/article33170133.ece>

Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich Satellite

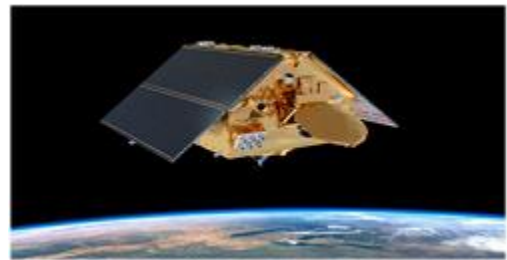
Question: Sentinel-6, which has been launched recently as joint effort of US-European space program, is a-

a) Military satellite b) Navigational Satellite c) Space Telescope d) Global Ocean Monitor

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- On November 21, 2020, the Sentinel-6 a US-European satellite was launched to undertake measurements regarding global sea level rise.
- The satellite was projected into the orbit by SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, from California's Vandenberg Air Force base.
- The Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich satellite after acquiring its orbit deployed its solar panels and made the first contact with controllers at a ground station in Alaska.
- NASA has renamed this key ocean observation satellite in honor of Earth scientist Michael Freilich, who retired last year as head of NASA's Earth Science division, a position he held since 2006.



Description of the Satellite:

- Sentinel-6 is actually a series of two satellites Sentinel-6a and Sentinel-6b
- The present one is Sentinel-6a, the first of two identical satellites — the second to be launched in five years.
- Sentinel-6b will provide measurements of unprecedented precision until at least 2030.
- The twin satellites will measure sea-level rise, tracking changes threatening to disrupt tens of millions of lives within a generation.
- Each Sentinel-6 probe carries a radar altimeter, which measures the time it takes for radar pulses to travel to Earth's surface and back again.
- The satellites will circle the planet in the same orbit as earlier missions that supplied sea-surface height data over the last three decades, mapping 95 percent of Earth's ice-free ocean every ten days.
- The satellite's main instrument is an extremely accurate radar altimeter that will bounce energy off the sea surface as it sweeps over Earth's oceans.
- In the next launch Sentinel-6B will ensure continuity of the record.
- The Sentinel satellites are each about the size and shape of a large minivan topped with slanted solar panels and weigh nearly 1,200 kilos, including rocket fuel.
- They are designed to last for five-and-a-half years but could provide data for far longer.

- Europe and the United States are sharing the \$1.1 billion (900 million euro) cost of the mission, which includes the twin satellite.

Sea level rise a grave problem:

- Nearly 800 million people live within five metres of sea level, and even an increase in sea level of a few centimeters can translate into vastly more damage from high tides and storm surges.
- Sea-surface heights are affected by heating and cooling of water, allowing scientist to use the altimeter data to detect such weather-influencing conditions as the warm El Nino and the cool La Nina.
- The measurements are also important for understanding overall sea-level rise due to global warming that scientists warn is a risk to the world's coastlines and billions of people.
- Karen St. Germain, NASA's Earth Science Division director said our Earth is a system of intricately connected dynamics between land, ocean, ice, atmosphere and also, of course, our human communities, and that system is changing,.
- She explained that 70 percent of the Earth's surface is the ocean, the oceans play an enormous role in how the whole system changes.

Links:-

<https://www.firstpost.com/tech/science/nasa-esa-launch-sentinel-6-michael-freilich-satellite-to-monitor-the-oceans-9042931.html>

Varunastra

Question: Varunastra which was recently in news is a-

a) Anti Submarine Torpedo b) Surface to air missile c) Air to surface missile d) Anti- tank missile

Answer: (a)

Related Facts:

- On 21 November 2020; anti submarine torpedo Varunastra was delivered to the Indian Navy.
- G. Satheesh Reddy, Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman, DRDO flagged off the first Varunastra, at a ceremony held at BDL, Visakhapatnam Unit.
- This is a heavy weight torpedo that has been designed and developed by Naval Science & Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam.
- Bharat dynamics Limited BDL being the production agency, is manufacturing Varunastra at its Visakhapatnam Unit for the Indian Navy.



Specialties associated with Varunastra:

- It is powered by electric propulsion system with multiple 250 kw silver oxide Zinc (AgOZn) batteries.
- It is capable of being launched both from Ships and Submarines.
- It weighs near about 1.25 tons and can carry upto 250 kg of conventional warhead.
- Varunastra is capable of achieving the speed of 40 Knots(74 kms/hr)

Links:-

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/drdo-flags-off-first-varunastra-a-heavy-weight-torpedo/article33150441.ece>

Bioluminescent Mushroom

Question: In which of the following state the researchers have discovered a species of bioluminescent mushroom?

a) Assam b) Karnataka c) Kerala d) Meghalaya

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:-



- Researchers have discovered a very peculiar mushroom in the forests of Meghalaya, which has bio-luminescence.
- This mushroom shines at night.
- Scientists have named it Roridomyces phyllostachydis.
- Research study regarding the discovery of this new mushroom species recently published in the journal Phytotaxa.
- During the day, it looks like any ordinary mushroom, but as soon as it becomes dark, it starts emitting blue-green light.
- And it can be recognized even from a distance. Locals call it electric mushroom.
- The mushroom was discovered by an NGO from Assam and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.
- Together they were working on fungal biodiversity in the four northeastern states – Meghalaya, Assam, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.
- During the working upon the project, they asked the locals who heard about the electric mushroom.
- Researchers then following the tips provided by the locals, searched for it in the jungles of Jantia Hills and Khasi Hills in Meghalaya.
- A total of 96 mushrooms with bioluminescent characteristics have been seen all over the world till now and this variety of Meghalaya is the 97th variety.
- They are usually found in the marine environment, but many varieties are also found on land.
- The color of the light will be like; it depends on the chemical composition inside the fungus or mushroom.
- In Meghalaya, these mushrooms grow near the roots of a bamboo plant in bamboo forests.
- A scientist involved in the research said that a particular type of enzyme luciferase is found in mushrooms, which is responsible for this light.
- In the case of the mushroom of Meghalaya, they work in such a way that the enzyme luciferase found in it reacts in the presence of oxygen.
- During this chemical reaction there is production many compounds, which shine as green-blue light in the dark.
- At the same time, according to the scientist Rajesh Kumar of Rain Forest Research Institute, Jorhat, there can be many reasons for glow in the mushroom..
- One reason, may it also be that due to the bioluminescent nature of mushrooms, insects and insects get attracted, which in turn help in scattering their segments in vast area.
- Or it can also be due to the defense system of mushrooms to avoid pest eating insects.

Links:-

<https://www.indiatimes.com/news/india/mysterious-new-mushroom-species-glow-like-the-northern-lights-in-meghalaya-forests-528051.html>

Defence Minister launches portal for defence land management system

Question. Recently, the Ministry of _____ has launched the portal for Defence Land Management System (LMS).

- (A) Ministry of defence (B) Jal Shakti ministry
(C) Indian army (D) None of these

Answer – a
Explanation-

- Why in news – Recently, the Ministry of defence has launched the portal for Defence Land Management System (LMS).
- Developed by – Department of Defence in collaboration with Directorate General Defence Estates (DGDE) and Armed forces.
- The Intra-net portal (Restricted communications network) shall digitize all requests of defence land management received by the Department in future.
- The MoD is the biggest landholder in the government, holding 17 lakh acres of land across the country, Army occupies almost 80 per cent of the land.
- It will integrate several mapping tools into the existing “Raksha Bhoomi” software, which was launched with the data updated in 2011
- Raksha Bhoomi
- In 2006 Defence Estates Department has developed Raksha Bhoomi software in collaboration with NIC (National Informatics Centre), Chennai.
- This software records complete defence land data.
- This software can be used to generate area wise, state wise and category wise reports of defence lands throughout the country.
- The present version of Raksha Bhoomi Software is 3.3. updated in 2011.



Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/rajnath-launches-portal-for-defence-land-management-system/articleshow/79307877.cms#:~:text=NEW%20DELHI%3A%20Defence%20Minister%20Rajnath,dealing%20with%20land%20management%20matters.&text=%22All%20data%20for%20cases%20since,are%20available%20in%20the%20portal.>

30th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol

Question . The _ edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is being conducted.

(A) 30th (B) 20th (C) 29th (D) None of these

Answer a

Explanation: –

- Why in news – The 30th edition of India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT) between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy is being conducted
- India and Thailand have been carrying out CORPAT along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2005.
- About – Participated Ships è Indian Naval Ship (INS) Karmuk (an indigenously built Missile Corvette) and Thailand Frigate HTMS Kraburi, along with Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both the navies participated in the 30th edition.
- Other Military Exercises between India and Thailand:
 1. Exercise MAITREE (Army).
 2. Exercise SIAM BHARAT (Air Force).



Link:

<https://www.indiannavy.nic.in/content/indo-thai-coordinated-patrol-corpat-2>

India On Reports That China Used “Microwave Weapons” In Ladakh

Question . Indian Army has rejected “fake” a report which claimed that the _ had used “microwave weapons” to drive Indian soldiers away from their positions in eastern Ladakh.

(A) Chinese army (B) Indian army (C) Pakistan (D) None of these

Answer (a)

Explanation –

- Why in news – The Indian Army has rejected “fake” a report which claimed that the Chinese army had used “microwave weapons” to drive Indian soldiers away from their positions in eastern Ladakh.
- Microwave Weapons are supposed to be a type of direct energy weapons, which aim highly focused energy in the form of sonic, laser, or microwaves, at a target.
- Microwave Weapons use beams of high frequency electromagnetic radiation to heat the water in a human target’s skin, causing pain and discomfort.
- Which countries have these microwave weapons ?
 1. China had first put on display its “microwave weapon”, called Poly WB-1, at an air show in 2014.
 2. The United States has also developed a prototype microwave-style weapon, which it calls the “Active Denial System”.



Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/microwave-weapons-india-china-7056441/>

Chapare virus

Question. United states’ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced that the ‘Chapare virus ‘ that causes Ebola-like illness can spread through _ transmission.

(A) Human-to-animal (B) Animal-to-human (C) Human-to-human (D) None of these

Answer (c)

Explanation –

- Why in news – United States’ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC) has announced that the ‘Chapare virus’ that causes Ebola-like illness can spread through human-to-human transmission.
- What is it? – Chapare Virus belongs to the same Arenavirus family that is responsible for illnesses such as the Ebola virus disease (EVD). It causes Chapare Hemorrhagic Fever (CHHF).
- History- It was first discovered in 2004 in Bolivian province of Chapare, from where it gets its name. Though it disappeared in 2004, an outbreak last year infected at least five people.
- Symptoms – Some symptoms of Chapare are fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, bleeding gums, skin rash and pain.



- Treatment – Since there are no specific drugs to treat the disease, patients generally receive supportive care such as intravenous fluids.

Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-all-about-the-rare-ebola-like-chapare-virus-that-can-spread-from-human-to-human-7055914/>

DRDO successfully test-fires QRSAM

Question 1. — has successfully test-fired Quick Reaction Surface-to-air missile System (QRSAM) .

(A) DRDO (B) ISRO (C) NASA (D) None of these

Answer – A

Explanation:-

- Why in News – DRDO (Defence and Research Department Organization) has successfully test-fired Quick Reaction Surface-to-air missile System (QRSAM) .
- About QRSAM – It is a short range surface-to-air missile system primarily designed and developed by DRDO .
- Purpose -To provide a protective shield to moving a armoured columns of the Army from enemy aerial attacks.
- Range – It has a range of around 25 to 30 km .
- Features – The missile is based on a canister-based-missile which means that it is stored and operated by specially designed compartments.



Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-successfully-test-fires-qrsam-for-second-time-in-4-days/articleshow/79265658.cms>

Pfizer and BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine

Question: On 20 November 2020; Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech announced they are going to submit a request for Emergency Use of their COVID-19 vaccine. To which of the following country BioNTech belongs?

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

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 20 November 2020; Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech announced they are going to submit a request for Emergency Use of their COVID-19 vaccine.
- These companies are applying for it to US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of their mRNA vaccine candidate, BNT162b2.
- This authorization will potentially enable use of the vaccine in high-risk populations in the U.S. by the middle to end of December 2020.
- The submission is based on a vaccine efficacy rate of 95% ($p < 0.0001$) demonstrated in the companies' Phase 3 clinical study.
- Phase 3 clinical studies were done in participants without prior SARS-CoV-2 infection (first primary objective) and also in participants with and without prior SARS-CoV-2 infection (second primary objective).
- In each case it has been measured from 7 days after the second dose.



- The first primary objective analysis was based on 170 confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- This submission also is supported by solicited safety data from a randomized subset of approximately 8,000 participants ≥ 18 years of age.
- It has also taken unsolicited safety data from approximately 38,000 trial participants who have been followed for a median of two months following the second dose of the vaccine candidate.
- The submission also includes solicited safety data on approximately 100 children 12-15 years of age.
- Approximately 42% of global participants and 30% of U.S. participants in the Phase 3 study have racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds.
- It should be known that 41% of global and 45% of U.S. participants are 56-85 years of age.
- Most importantly till date, the Data Monitoring Committee (DMC) for the study has not reported any serious safety concerns related to the vaccine.
- Companies said that filing in the U.S. represents a critical milestone in our journey to deliver a COVID-19 vaccine to the world.
- Companies informed, they now have a more complete picture of both the efficacy and safety profile about this vaccine.

Link:-

<https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-and-biontech-submit-emergency-use-authorization>

UN to bust Covid-19 Vaccine Myths

Question: Read the following statements about the COVID-19 and select the correct answer using code given below-

- COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.
- Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus and recover without requiring special treatment.
- Mosquito bite can cause Corona disease.

Which one of above statement is wrong-

- a) Only (i) b) (i) and ii c) Only (iii) d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- Under an UN initiative, over 100 scientists have joined hands to tackle the issue of misinformation around Covid-19 vaccines.
- Under this initiative they will put their best effort to build confidence by busting myths and sharing information on the safety and effectiveness of vaccines via the social media.
- The United Nations (UN) in this regard has teamed up with Team Halo in collaboration with The Vaccine Confidence Project at the University of London.
- The UN through this team will tackle misinformation and misleading information about the Kovid-19 vaccine.
- Globally, the initiative is supported by scientists who are involved in the race of coronavirus vaccine development across the world's top institutes.
- Institutes, like Imperial College London, Harvard Medical School, University of Sao Paulo and University of Barcelona etc. have associated with the initiative.
- In India, over 22 scientists have joined the campaign.
- Besides India; Team Halo aims to highlight the work undertaken by scientists in the UK, the US, South Africa, France, Spain etc.



- It wants create a platform for communication between the scientists working on Covid-19 vaccines and the citizens of these countries.
- Scientists participating in Team Halo are keen to emphasise the global nature of their work and recognise the contribution made by thousands around the world.

About COVID-19 :-

- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.
- Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment.
- Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.
- The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to be well informed about the COVID-19 virus.
- You should know how the disease it causes and how it spreads.
- Protect yourself and others from infection by washing your hands or using an alcohol based rub frequently and not touching your face.
- The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- It is therefore important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).

About Team Halo:-

- Team Halo was established in partnership with the Vaccine Confidence Project at the University of London's school of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
- The 'halo' represents the ring of connected science that circles the globe.
- It is proud to collaborate with the UN Verified Initiative and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.
- Support is provided by Luminate, IKEA Foundation and the Global Challenges Foundation.

Links:-

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/over-100-scientists-join-hands-with-un-to-bust-covid-19-vaccine-myths-120111700548_1.html

Global Prevention Coalition (GPC) for HIV Prevention

Question: What is the target year for 2016 UNGA commitment to end AIDS from the world?

a) 2021 b) 2022 c) 2030 d) 2024

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- On 18 November 2020; Ministerial conference of the Global Prevention Coalition (GPC) for HIV Prevention held in New Delhi.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare digitally addressed the Ministerial meeting of the Global Prevention Coalition (GPC) for HIV Prevention.
- The conference was Hosted by UNAIDS and UNFPA on behalf of the Global HIV Prevention Coalition (GPC).
- The conference this year holds significance in achieving the 2016 UNGA commitment to end AIDS by 2030.



- Member States of GPC had agreed to reduce new adult HIV infections by 75% at the end of 2020 from 2010 levels.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan Acknowledged that Global AIDS response has shown remarkable success in reducing new infections.
- It has improved access to prevention services for key population and treatment services for People living with HIV (PLHIV).
- It has also reduced AIDS related mortality, enabling reduction in mother to child transmission of HIV and creating an enabling environment.
- Dr. Vardhan also noted that the organization has shown to the world a model where multiple stakeholders can come together and work cohesively towards a common goal.
- The minister expressed his elation at the fact that the provision of generic Anti-Retroviral drugs (ARV) from India to the world has had a critical impact in controlling the HIV epidemic.
- He also observed that the global AIDS response in general has been a fountainhead of innovative service delivery models with rich civil society involvement and cross learning.
- Dr. Harsh Vardhan elaborated how India protected the gains made in HIV prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic.

About Global HIV Prevention Coalition:-

- Global HIV Prevention Coalition was established In 2017.
- It is a global coalition of United Nations Member States, donors, civil society organizations and implementers to support global efforts to accelerate HIV prevention.
- Its Membership includes the 25 highest HIV burden countries, UNAIDS Cosponsors, donors, and civil society and private sector organizations.
- The overarching goal of the Global HIV Prevention Coalition is to strengthen and sustain political commitment for primary prevention by setting a common agenda among key policy-makers, funders and programme implementers.
- Countries and communities at the centre seek to ensure accountability for delivering prevention services.
- It is being done at scale in order to achieve the targets of the 2016 Political Declaration on Ending AIDS by 2030.
- The coalition aspires to maintain a global accountability process with score cards, reflecting progress against national targets, to track yearly progress.
- It is establishing a coordinated and responsive modality for providing technical support to needs assessments, target-setting, planning and implementation.

Links:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1673749>

L&T delivers first hardware for Gaganyaan to ISRO

Question: ISRO's Gaganyaan mission is related to taking the Indian men to-

a) Mars b) Moon c) Space d) International Space Station (ISS)

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- Larsen & Toubro Ltd. (L&T) has delivered the first hardware, a booster segment, for Gaganyaan Launch Vehicle to ISRO.

- The L&T Company said in a statement that it has provided this hardware segment ahead of schedule.
- It is the critical booster segment, with a diameter of 3.2 meters, 8.5 meters in length and weighing 5.5 tons.
- The segment was produced at L&T's Powai Aerospace Manufacturing Facility, in Mumbai.
- It was jointly flagged off in a virtual event by Dr. K Sivan, Secretary Department of Space & Chairman ISRO and Jayant Patil Whole-time Director and Member of L&T board.
- Director L & T informed that the company is committed in meeting the enhanced quality and timeline requirements for India's maiden manned mission.
- L&T is playing a vital role in powering ISRO's Human Space Flight Program (HSFP). L&T is a trusted partner of ISRO for almost five decades.
- The same company has been involved in the production of a range of hardware for every mission of ISRO Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan missions.



Links:-

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/west/lt-delivers-first-launch-hardware-for-gaganyaan-despite-covid-19-restrictions-916608.html>

Defence Pact to Counter China

Question : Recently Australia signed a defence pact with which of the following country to counter China?

a) India b) Japan c) Philippines d) South Korea

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 17 November 2020; Japan and Australia agreed for defence cooperation to deal with China 's ambitions to exhibit itself as a great power.
- In a bid to counter China's growing influence a landmark defence pact known as the Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) has been signed between the two countries.
- This agreement has been signed by Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and his Australian counterpart, Scott Morrison.
- China is continuously flexing muscles in the South China Sea and over the Pacific island nations nowadays.



- The Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) comes weeks after foreign ministers of the Quad alliance, which includes the US and India, met in Tokyo.
- Australian Prime Minister said that both the countries have reached an agreement in principle on a defence treaty.
- They are confident that this treaty will strengthen their security ties and facilitate cooperation between defence forces, Sputnik reported.
- Mr Morrison said in a statement that this landmark defence treaty will further deepen the countries' strategic and security relationship.
- This defence agreement has taken six years to negotiate and would need to be ratified by lawmakers of both countries.
- Australian Prime Minister again asserted that this agreement will pave the way for a new chapter of advanced defence cooperation between our two countries.
- The only other such agreement that Japan has struck with another country is with the United long ago.
- The significance of the RAA cannot be understated. It will form a key plank of Australia's and Japan's response to an increasingly challenging security environment in our region.
- Without mentioning Beijing, the statement also expressed serious concern about the situation in the South China Sea.
- They reconfirmed their strong opposition to any coercive or unilateral attempts to change the status quo and thereby increase tensions in the region.

Link:-

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/reciprocal-access-agreement>

NASA and SpaceX's Joint Mission: Resilience

Question: On 15 November 2020; NASA and SpaceX's Joint Mission, Resilience headed for-

a) Mars b) Jupiter c) International Space Station d) Moon

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- On 15 November 2020; NASA and SpaceX's Joint Mission, Resilience headed for International Space Station.
- It has taken an international crew of four astronauts to the International Space Station.
- The event has become the first successful launch on NASA-certified commercial human spacecraft system in history.
- NASA's SpaceX Crew-1 mission lifted off at 7:27 p.m. EST on 15 November 2020 from Launch Complex 39A at the agency's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket propelled the Crew Dragon spacecraft into orbit to begin a six-month science mission aboard the space station.
- NASA astronauts Michael Hopkins, Victor Glover, and Shannon Walker, along with Soichi Noguchi of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) travelled to the space station with it.
- This is an important mission for NASA, SpaceX and Japan's space agency JAXA.



- The Crew Dragon spacecraft, named Resilience, has docked autonomously to the forward port of the station's Harmony module about 11 p.m. November 16.
- The Crew-1 mission is the first of six crewed missions NASA and SpaceX will fly as part of the agency's Commercial Crew Program.
- **This mission has several firsts, including:**
- The first flight of the NASA-certified commercial system designed for crew transportation, which moves the system from development into regular flights;
- The first international crew of four to launch on an American commercial spacecraft;
- The first time the space station's long duration expedition crew size will increase from six to seven crew members, which will add to the crew time available for research; and
- The first time the Federal Aviation Administration has licensed a human orbital spaceflight launch.

Mission Objectives:

- The crew will conduct science and maintenance during a six-month stay aboard the orbiting laboratory and will return in spring 2021.
- It is scheduled to be the longest human space mission launched from the United States.
- The Crew Dragon spacecraft is capable of staying in orbit for at least 210 days, as a NASA requirement.
- Crew Dragon also is delivering more than 500 pounds of cargo, new science hardware.
- Experiments will be conducted inside, including Food Physiology, a study of the effects of an optimized diet on crew health and, Genes in Space-7.
- A student-designed experiment that aims to better understand how spaceflight affects brain function.
- Such kind of experiment will enable scientists to keep astronauts healthy as they prepare for long-duration missions in low-Earth orbit and beyond.

Following science and research investigations will be performed by the crew during its six-month mission-

- i. study using chips with tissue that mimics the structure and function of human organs to understand the role of microgravity on human health and diseases.
- ii. These findings then will be translated to improve human health on Earth.
- iii. Growing radishes in different types of light and soils as part of ongoing efforts to produce food in space.
- iv. Testing a new system to remove heat from NASA's next generation spacesuit, the Exploration Extravehicular Mobility Unit (xEMU).

During their stay on the orbiting laboratory, Crew-1 astronauts expect to see a range of uncrewed spacecraft including-

- i. The next generation of SpaceX cargo Dragon spacecraft,
- ii. The Northrop Grumman Cygnus, and
- iii. The Boeing CST-100 Starliner on its uncrewed flight test to the station.
- iv. They also will conduct a variety of spacewalks and welcome crews of the Russian Soyuz vehicle and the next SpaceX Crew Dragon in 2021.

Link:-

<https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-s-spacex-crew-1-astronauts-headed-to-international-space-station/#:~:text=A%20SpaceX%20Falcon%209%20rocket,Nov.%2015%2C%202020%2C%20at>

Discovery of five new Species of Vine Snakes

Question: Center for Ecological Sciences (CES) is part of which of the following institution?

a) Tata Institute of Fundamental Research b) CSIR c) Indian Institute of Science d) IIT Madras

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- Recently researchers from Center for ecological sciences have discovered five new species of Vine snakes.
- It should be known that CES is department operating under the Indian institute of Science, Bangaluru.
- Researchers from the CES discovered these species based on extensive sampling across peninsular India.
- Researcher's team carried out field visits across India to collect morphological data, tissue samples and specimens.
- The purpose of such collection was to understand the patterns of distribution and diversification of vine snakes.
- They were surprised to discover that the common green vine snake (*Ahaetulla nasuta*) in India was a complex of several species.
- They also found four other distinct small-bodied and short-nosed species.
- **These other four species are—**



i. Northern Western Ghats vine snake (*Ahaetulla Borealis*).

ii. Farnsworth's vine snake (*Ahaetulla farnsworthi*),

iii. Malabar vine snake (*Ahaetulla malabarica*) and-

iv. Wall's vine snake (*Ahaetulla isabellina*) in the Western Ghats rainforests alone.

- These species were superficially similar in their morphology but separated by geographic (or ecological) barriers.
- Another morphologically distinct and much larger species, the long-nosed vine snake (*Ahaetulla oxyrhyncha*), was distributed in the lowlands and drier parts of peninsular India.
- One of the researcher informed that all the vine snakes were assigned names related to the locality or based on a morphological character.
- He said that, but we named the species *Ahaetulla farnsworthi* after my favorite mad scientist who inspired me to become one, Dr. Hubert Farnsworth from [the cartoon] *Futurama*.
- In fact, the snake also looks a lot like him, says Achyuthan Srikanthan, a researcher at CES who was part of the team.

Links:-

<https://phys.org/news/2020-11-discovery-species-vine-snakes-india.html>

W.H.O listed the nOPV2 vaccine for emergency use

Question: Recently World Health Organisation (WHO) listed nOPV2 vaccine for emergency use. This vaccine will be used to addressed the rising cases of—

a) COVID-19 b) Polio c) Ebola d) Zika

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 13 November 2020; World Health Organisation (WHO) listed the nOPV2 vaccine (Bio Farma, Indonesia) for emergency use.
- Vaccine nOPV2 has been developed by Indonesia's national vaccine manufacturer Bio Farma.
- This vaccine will be used to address the rising cases of a vaccine-derived polio strain in a number of African and East Mediterranean countries.
- Countries in WHO's Western Pacific and South-East Asia regions are also affected by these outbreaks.
- The emergency use listing, or EUL, is the first of its kind for a vaccine and paves the way for potential listing of COVID-19 vaccines.
- The world has made incredible progress toward polio eradication, reducing polio cases by 99.9% in the last 30 years.
- Researchers are now concentrated on last steps to ending this disease which are proving to be most difficult.
- Scientists faced this difficulty particularly with continuing outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived polio viruses (cVDPVs).
- cVDPVs are rare and occur if the weakened strain of the poliovirus contained in the oral polio vaccine (OPV) circulates among under-immunized populations for a long time.
- Researchers speculated that, If not enough children are immunized against polio, the weakened virus can pass between individuals and over time genetically revert to a form that can cause paralysis.
- 2 cVDPVs are currently the most prevalent form of the vaccine-derived virus.



Links:-

<https://www.who.int/news/item/13-11-2020-first-ever-vaccine-listed-under-who-emergency-use>

Discovery of fossil of giant Pelagornithids

Question: Scientists have declared that they identified the fossil of a giant bird called Pelagornithids. From where the scientists got these fossils.

a) South Africa b) Australia c) Antarctica d) Alaska (USA)

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- October 2020; Scientists have declared that they identified the fossil of a giant bird called Pelagornithids.
- The team of American and Chinese researchers has undertaken the research about this large sized bird.



- Pelagornithids are known as bony-toothed birds, because of the bony projections on their jaws.
- These birds lived on Earth about 50 million years ago and the details have been published in a journal called Scientific Reports.
- Fossils of this kind of bird already recovered from Antarctica in the 1980s but now the scientists have revealed the results of their extensive study about this bird.
- It belongs to the oldest giant members of an extinct group of birds that patrolled the southern oceans.
- The wingspans of these birds went up to 21 feet much greater than the present day albatross which has wingspan of eleven-and-a-half foot.
- It should be known that albatross is today's largest bird, wandering the earth.
- Scientists believe that the Pelagornithids evolved to a gigantic size relatively quickly after the extinction of dinosaurs.
- The last known bird of this species lived an estimated 2.5 million years ago, a time when the climate was changing as Earth cooled, and the ice ages began.
- Pelagornithids are known as 'bony-toothed' birds because of the bony projections on their jaws.
- Although these birds appear to be bony-toothed, but these protrusions are not like human teeth.
- Tooth like projections in their beak are actually pseudo teeth (false teeth) as they were covered by a horny material, keratin, which is like our fingernails.
- These pseudo teeth or the protrusions helped the birds snag squid and fish.
- Pelagornithids though evolved after the dinosaurs were wiped out, but never reached the colossal size of pterosaurs.

Links:-

<https://theprint.in/scientifx/fossils-found-in-antarctica-in-1980s-belong-to-giant-bony-toothed-birds-from-2-5m-yrs-ago/534460/>

Sprites and Elves detected in Jupiter's Atmosphere

Question: According to the recent findings NASA's Juno mission detected Sprites and 'Elves in Jupiter's Atmosphere. Consider the following statements-

- i. Sprites and Elves occur above intense thunderstorms in upper atmosphere of the Earth.**
- ii. It represents unpredictable and extremely brief flashes of light.**
- iii. This phenomenon is formally known as transient luminous events, or TLE's.**
- iv. Named after a mischievous, quick-witted character in English folklore**

Which of the above given statement/statements is/are correct?

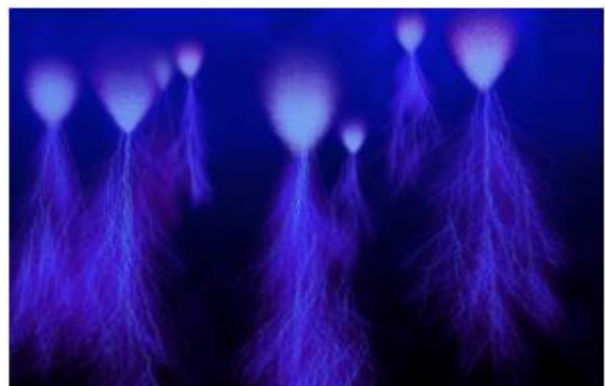
Select the correct answer from the following code-

- a) I b) i & ii c) iii & iv d) I ,ii, iii & iv

Answer: (d)

Related Facts:

- October 2020; Scientists have now also detected sprites and elves in the upper atmosphere of the Jupiter, solar system's largest planet.
- It should be known that sprites and elves, formally known as transient luminous events, or TLE's, occur above intense thunderstorms in upper atmosphere of the Earth.



- Now scientists from American space agency NASA informed that during the observation of data obtained from Juno mission they found it also in Jupiter's upper atmosphere.
- The findings were published on Oct. 27, 2020, in the Journal of Geophysical Research: Planets.
- It is the first time these bright, unpredictable and extremely brief flashes of light (sprites and elves) have been observed on another world.
- Earlier Scientists only predicted these bright, superfast flashes of light should also be present in Jupiter's immense roiling atmosphere, but their existence remained theoretical.
- It is only in the summer of 2019, that researchers working with data from Juno's ultraviolet spectrograph instrument (UVS) discovered this kind of atmospheric activity on Jupiter.
- They observed through this UVS data something unexpected: a bright, narrow streak of ultraviolet emission that disappeared in a flash.
- UVS was designed to characterize Jupiter's beautiful northern and southern lights, in Jovian atmosphere.
- Researchers say that they discovered UVS images that not only showed Jovian aurora, but also a bright flash of UV light in the area where it wasn't supposed to be.
- Team of researchers when looked again and again into it to finally conclude that Juno's UVS may have detected a TLE on Jupiter.
- **Sprites and Elves:**
- Sprites are transient luminous events triggered by lightning discharges from thunderstorms.
- Named after a mischievous, quick-witted character in English folklore.
- On Earth, they occur up to 60 miles (97 kilometers) above intense, towering thunderstorms and brighten a region of the sky tens of miles across,.
- They appear and last only a few milliseconds (a fraction of the time it takes humans blink an eye).
- Almost resembling a jellyfish, sprites feature a central blob of light (on Earth, it's 15 to 30 miles, or 24 to 48 kilometers, across), with long tendrils extending both down toward the ground and upward.
- Elves (short for Emission of Light and Very Low Frequency perturbations due to Electromagnetic Pulse Sources) appear as a flattened disk glowing in Earth's upper atmosphere. They, too, brighten the sky for mere milliseconds but can grow larger than sprites – up to 200 miles (320 kilometers) across on Earth.
- Their colors are distinctive as well. "On Earth, sprites and elves appear reddish in color due to their interaction with nitrogen in the upper atmosphere.
- On Jupiter, it differs as the upper atmosphere here mostly consists of hydrogen, so they would likely appear either blue or pink.
- **Location on Jupiter**
- The occurrence of sprites and elves at Jupiter was predicted by several previously published studies.
- Synching with these predictions, the 11 large-scale bright events Juno's UVS instrument has detected occurred in a region where lightning thunderstorms are known to form.
- Juno scientists could also rule out that these were simply mega-bolts of lightning because they were found about 186 miles (300 kilometers) above the altitude where the majority of Jupiter's lightning forms – its water-cloud layer.
- And UVS recorded that the spectra of the bright flashes were dominated by hydrogen emissions.
- **Juno around the Jupiter:-**
- A rotating, solar-powered spacecraft, Juno, arrived at Jupiter in 2016 after making a five-year journey.
- Juno Since then, has made 29 science flybys of the gas giant, each orbit taking 53 days.
- Scientists are working hard to look for more and more signs of elves and sprites every time Juno does a flyby near the Jupiter.
- Scientists say, now that we know what we are looking for, it will be easier to find them at Jupiter and on other planets.

- Scientists are now quite optimistic that by comparing sprites and elves from Jupiter with those here on Earth will help us better understand electrical activity in planetary atmospheres.

Links:-

<https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?feature=7769>

Sports

Formula One

Portuguese Grand Prix 2020

Question: Who has won the Portuguese Grand Prix 2020?

(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Max Verstappen (c) Valtteri Bottas (d) Charles Leclerc

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes-Great Britain) has clinched the 2020 Portuguese Grand Prix, held on 25 October 2020.
- This was the 12th round of the 2020 Formula One World Championship.
- The victory marks Hamilton's 8th win of the season and 92nd of the career.
- With this win he broke the record of 91 wins set by German great Michael Schumacher.
- Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes- Finland) came second while Max Verstappen (Red Bull – Netherlands) secured third position.



Links:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/formula-1/2020/10/25/f1-portuguese-grand-prix-2020-live-algarve-race-results-hamilton/>

Short Notes

Personalities

Navneet Munot

Question : Which mutual fund investment company has appointed Navneet Munot as MD & CEO ?

(a) HDFC Mutual Funds (b) SBI Mutual Funds (c) IDFC Mutual Funds
(d) LIC Mutual Funds

Answer (a)

Related facts

- HDFC Mutual Funds has recently (November 2020) announced the name of Navneet Munot as MD & CEO.

Successor

- He will be the successor of Milind Barve.
- Milind Barve, has been MD and CEO of HDFC AMC since inception in 2000.

Past Position

- Munot was earlier chief investment officer (CIO) at SBI Mutual Fund.

Change of management : Background

- SBI Mutual Fund overtook HDFC AMC to become India's largest asset manager in the fourth quarter of financial year 2019-20.
- SBI MF has many senior fund managers and a good second rung. In case of HDFC AMC, the fund house has been hiring managers from other AMCs such as Gopal Aggarwal recently from DSP Mutual Fund.
- Key schemes of HDFC AMC have lagged their peers in the recent years prompting speculation of changes in the senior management at the fund house.



Link:

<https://www.livemint.com/companies/people/navneet-munot-departs-sbi-mf-to-become-md-and-ceo-at-hdfc-mutual-fund-11605516693442.html>

Kris Gopala Krishnan

Question. ___ has announced the setting up of an Innovation Hub under the chairmanship of Kris Gopala Krishnan.

(A) SBI (B) RBI (C) NABARD (D) None of these

Answer – (b)

Explanation-

- Why in news – Reserve Bank of India(RBI) has announced the setting up of an Innovation Hub under the chairmanship of Kris Gopala Krishnan.
- About – The RBI set up the hub to promote, support and hand-hold cross thinking.
- The hub will aim to increase the use of innovative technologies across the finance sectors.
- The hub acts as a Centre for incubation and ideation of new capabilities that can be leveraged to create innovative financial services and products.
- The hub will aid in achieving the following objectives :-
 - Efficient Banking services.
 - Deepen Financial Inclusion.
 - Strengthen consumer protection.
 - Business Continuity in times of emergency
- Also remember :-
 - The Committee was formed by the Ministry of Information Technology in September 2019. It submitted a report on Non-Personal Data Governance Framework in July 2020.



Link:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Nitish Kumar takes oath as Bihar CM for 4th consecutive term

Question. Janata dal president Nitish Kumar has been elected leader of the NDA legislative party of the Bihar. The chief Minister appointed by the

- A) Prime minister
- B) Government
- C) Judge of supreme court
- D) None of these

Answer :- b

Explanation-

- Why in News – Janata Dal (United) president Nitish Kumar has been elected of the NDA legislative party of the Bihar. He will now take oath as chief minister of the State for the fourth consecutive term.
- About – Chief minister's position in state is analogous to the Prime minister position at the centre.
- Appointment- The chief Minister appointed by the governor .
- 164 of the constitution provides that there shall be Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at its hand to aid and advise the government.



Link:

<https://www.thehindu.com/elections/bihar-assembly/nitish-unanimously-elected-as-leader-of-nda-in-bihar-to-return-as-cm/article33101728.ece>

Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha

Question: Who has been appointed the Chief Information Commissioner of India?

- (a) Girish Chandra Murmu (b) Neeraj Kumar Gupta
- (c) Suresh Chandra (d) Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha

Answer: (d)

Related facts:

- On 7 November 2020, Yashvardhan Kumar Sinha took oath as the Chief Information Commissioner of India.
- He will have a tenure of three years as CIC.
- In 2019, he was appointed Information Commissioner to the Central Information Commission(CIC).
- The post of Chief Information Commissioner was lying vacant after Bimal Julka retired in August 2020.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Yashvardhan-Kumar-Sinha-takes-oath-as-Chief-Information-Commissioner&id=403829#:~:text=Yashvardhan%20Kumar%20Sinha%20today%20took,of%20three%20years%20as%20CIC.>

Sashidhar Jagdishan

Question: Who has been appointed the managing director and chief executive officer of HDFC Bank?

(a) Sashidhar Jagdishan (b) Shyamala Gopinath (c) Malay Patel (d) Sanjiv Sachar

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Sashidhar Jagdishan has been appointed as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of the HDFC Bank.
- He took over Aditya Puri, who was HDFC Bank managing director and CEO for 26 years.
- Sashidhar Jagdishan had served the India's largest private bank with illustrious posts and has an overall experience of 30 years.



Links:

<https://www.hdfcbank.com/personal/about-us/overview/board-of-director>

Mahesh Kanodia

Question: Mahesh Kanodia who passed away recently was

(a) Musician (b) Poet (c) Scientist (d) Journalist

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Veteran Gujarati film musician, singer and former Lok Sabha MP from Patan constituency Mahesh Kanodia passed away on 25 October 2020.
- His tie with Naresh Kanodia was popularly known as the "Naresh-Mahesh duo" in the Gujarati film industry.
- His actor-singer brother Naresh Kanodia, died on 27 October 2020 following COVID infection along with other comorbidities.
- Mahesh Kanodia was known for singing in 32 different voices including female voices.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/ahmedabad/gujarati-superstar-dies-of-covid-days-after-singer-brothers-death-6906109/>

Lee Kun-hee

Question: Lee Kun-hee who died recently is associated with which tech giant company?

(a) Samsung (b) Huawei (c) Intel (d) Microsoft

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Lee Kun-hee, the chairman of South Korea's largest conglomerate, Samsung Group died on 25 October 2020. He was 78.
- Under Lee's leadership Samsung transformed from a small trading business to the world's largest producer of smartphones and memory chips.
- The firm's overall turnover today is equivalent to a fifth of South Korea's GDP.



- As of Forbes, Lee was the richest person in South Korea, with a net worth of nearly \$21bn (£16bn).

Links:

<https://www.deccanherald.com/international/samsung-electronics-chairman-lee-kun-hee-passes-away-at-78-906669.html>

Keshubhai Patel

Question: Consider the following statements:

(1) Keshubhai Patel had served as Chief Minister of Gujarat in 1995.

(2) In 2012, Keshubhai Patel formed Gujarat Parivartan Party.

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:

- Former Gujarat Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel passed away on October 29, 2020. He was 92.
- He served as the Chief Minister of Gujarat in 1995 and again from 1998 to 2001.
- He was member of legislative assembly for six times.
- He began his political journey as a worker for the Jan Sangh in 1960, had joined Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1980.
- Later in 2012, he formed the Gujarat Parivartan Party. The party was merged back with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in February 2014.
- In 2012, he was elected Member of Legislative Assembly of Gujarat from Visavadar constituency but resigned in 2014 due to ill health.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Former-Gujarat-CM-Keshubhai-Patel-passes-away-at-92&id=403276>

Anzar Mustaeen Ali

Question: Who has won a special prize of USD 1000 in the global art competition United Against CORONA- Express through Art organized by Indian Council of Cultural Relations?

(a) Anzar Mustaeen Ali (b) Prabhakar Pachpute (c) Abdus Shakoore Shah
(d) Dheer Kaku

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Anzar Mustaeen Ali, a six year old from Bangladesh has won a special prize of USD 1000 for his artwork in the global art competition organised by the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).
- The ICCR had launched a global painting competition named 'United Against CORONA- Express through Art'.
- The competition attracted 8000 artwork entries from around the world.
- High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh Vikram Doraiswami handed over the prize money to Anzar Mustaeen Ali in a function held at the Chancery in Dhaka on 27 October 2020.



Links:

<http://newsonair.com/News?title=Young-Bangladeshi-boy-wins-special-prize-in-Global-Art-Competition-conducted-by-ICCR&id=403158>

Awards & Honors

Dr Tulsi Das Chugh Award-2020

Question: Who has been conferred Dr Tulsi Das Chugh Award-2020?

(a) Satish Mishra (b) Saman Habib (c) Aparup Das (d) Vineeta Singh

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Dr Satish Mishra bagged Dr. Tulsi Das Chugh Award for the year 2020 in recognition of his research work on Malaria parasite's life cycle.
- His outstanding work focused on "Secreted Protein with Altered Thrombospondin Repeat (SPATR) which is Essential for Asexual Blood Stages but not Required for Hepatocyte Invasion by the Malaria Parasite Plasmodium Berghei".
- The award is given by National Academy of Medical Sciences (India).
- The award carries a Scroll, a Commemorative Medal and Cash Incentive.

**Links:**

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1668145>

Planning & Project

India's Shukrayaan Mission

Question: India has planned a Venus orbiter mission named as Shukrayaan. According to ISRO Future launch opportunity for the Shukrayaan mission is either in-

a) 2028 b) 2029 c) 2024 or 2026 d) 2030

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:

- India has planned a Venus orbiter mission named as Shukrayaan.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was earlier eyeing June, 2023 for the country's first mission to Venus.
- ISRO now cleared that due to COVID-19 pandemic, the mission may be delayed.
- ISRO has informed that the Future launch opportunity for the Shukrayaan mission is either in 2024 or 2026.
- It should be noted that the optimal launch window (when Venus is closest to the Earth) comes about every 19 months.
- ISRO has short-listed 20 space-based experiment proposals, including from France, for its proposed Venus orbiter mission 'Shukrayaan'.
- These space based experiments will be conducted by the Shukrayaan to study the planet for more than four years.



- These include collaborative contributions from Russia, France, Sweden and Germany.
- Sweden is getting on board India's Venus orbiter mission 'Shukrayaan' with a scientific instrument to explore the planet.
- Ambassador of Sweden to India, Klas Molin said Swedish Institute of Space Physics (IRF) is engaged in the venture, its second collaborative project with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- IRF's satellite instrument Venusian Neutrals Analyzer (VNA) will study how the charged particles from the Sun interact with the atmosphere and exosphere of the planet.
- One was a detector for energetic neutral atoms and the other was an instrument to measure the flow of ions in the solar wind.
- The instrument studied how the plasma around the Moon interacts with the moon where the surface is not protected by an atmosphere or a magnetic field. According to French space agency CNES, France's VIRAL instrument (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gas Linker) will fly on Shukrayaan.
- VIRAL has been co-developed with the Russian space agency Roscosmos, and the LATMOS atmospheres, environments and space observations laboratory attached to the French national scientific research centre CNRS.

Scientific objectives of ISRO's Venus mission:

The orbiter will investigate-

- The Venusian surface processes, and its shallow subsurface stratigraphy.
- Interaction of the Solar wind with Venusian Ionosphere.
- Composition and dynamics of the atmosphere and its structure.

Venus and the Earth:-

- Venus is often described as the twin sister of the Earth because of the similarities in size, mass, density, bulk composition and gravity.
- It is believed that both planets share a common origin, forming at the same time out of a condensing nebula around 4.5 billion years ago.
- Venus is around 30 per cent closer to the Sun as compared to Earth resulting in much higher solar flux.
- Exploration of Venus began in the early 1960s.
- Until now Venus has been explored by flyby, orbiter, a few lander missions and atmospheric probes.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/sweden-getting-on-board-indias-venus-mission-with-payload-to-explore-planet/article33176322.ece>

Free Internet for poor families

Question . _ aims to provide free Internet for poor families, public offices by December.

(A) Uttar Pradesh (B) Bihar (C) Kerala (D) Assam

Answer – c

Explanation-

- Why in news – Kerala aims to provide free Internet for poor families, public offices by December.
- About – The project seeks to fulfil the government's aim of making internet access a 'citizen's right'.



- Aim – Aims to provide free high-speed internet to over 20 lakh below poverty line (BPL) households.
- Involved Bodies – It is a collaborative initiative of the state's power utility Kerala State Electricity Board and Kerala State IT Infrastructure Ltd.
- Internet service providers and cable television operators can also join the optic-fibre network project to provide their services.

Link:

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/india/kerala-may-provide-free-internet-to-poor-families-public-offices-by-december-6051081.html>

Mansar Lake Development Plan

Question : Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has recently laid foundation Comprehensive Mansar Lake Rejuvenation/Development Plan in Jammu. Consider the following statements related to Mansar Lake Development Plan.

1. After its implementation, the number of Tourists/pilgrims will increase from current 10 lakhs to 20 lakhs per year in Mansar region
 2. Plan will lead to employment generation of about 3.15 crore man-days
 3. It will generate more than Rs 800 crore of income per year
- Which of the above mentioned statement(s) is/are correct.

(a) 1 & 2 only (b) Only 2 (c) 1 & 3 only (d) none of the above

Answer : (c)

Related facts

- Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has recently laid foundation (e-Foundation) Comprehensive Mansar Lake Rejuvenation/Development Plan in Jammu.

Characteristics of the plan

- After its implementation, the number of Tourists/pilgrims will increase from current 10 lakhs to 20 lakhs per year in Mansar region.
- Mansar Rejuvenation Plan will lead to employment generation of about 1.15 crore man-days and will generate more than Rs 800 crore of income per year.
- Rejuvenation and renovation projects of Devika River and Mansar Lake have been taken up, similar to Namami Gange and Ganga cleaning project.
- Both these projects, namely Devika Project and Mansar project, will cost about Rs.200 Crore
- Tourism contributes 7 percent to the GDP of Jammu and Kashmir, but due to the Corona epidemic, the tourism sector has been badly affected.
- Centre has given Rs 706 Crore for tourism sector and multi-pronged approach is being adopted to bring Jammu and Kashmir as one of the most preferred tourist destination in the World Map.



Link:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1669346>

Project Parivartan

Question : Project Parivartan is a contract signed between Tech Mahindra and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. Which one of the following statement is correct regarding this deal ?

- (a) Contract size is 400 crore rs (b) It is an ERP implementation project
(c) ERP stands for – Enterprise Resource Planning (d) all above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- Tech Mahindra has recently (October 2020) inked Rs.400 crore deal (Project Parivartan) with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.



Main points of Deal

1. It is an ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) implementation project.
2. The program will allow HAL to implement the systems adopted in the global industry.
3. This will provide an opportunity to serve the armed forces more effectively.
4. Tech Mahindra's selection for this project by HAL is in line with the government's vision of self-reliant India.

HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited) : Chronology

- HAL founded in 1940 as Hindustan Aircraft Limited.
- Its founder was Seth Walchand Hirachand. In January 1951, Hindustan Aircraft Limited was placed under the administrative control of Ministry of Defence, Government of India.
- Meanwhile, in August 1963, Aeronautics India Limited (AIL) was incorporated as a Company wholly owned by the Government of India, to undertake manufacture of MiG-21 aircraft under licence.
- Amalgamation of the two companies i.e. Hindustan Aircraft Limited and Aeronautics India Limited was brought about on 1st Oct 1964 by an Amalgamation Order issued by the Government of India and the Company after the amalgamation was named as "Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)" with its principal business being design, development, manufacture, repair and overhaul of aircraft, helicopters, engines and related systems like avionics, instruments and accessories.
It is a Navratna CPSE (Central Public Sector Enterprise).

Tech Mahindra

- Tech Mahindra is a leading provider of digital transformation, consulting and business reengineering services and solutions

Link:

<https://www.techmahindra.com/en-in/techmahindra-inks-inr400-crore-project-parivartan-contract-with-hindustan-aeronautics-limited/#:~:text=New%20Delhi%20%E2%80%93%20October%2029%2C%202020,Project%20Parivartan'%20by%20Hindustan%20Aeronautics>

SERB – POWER Schemes launched

Question: SERB – POWER schemes recently launched by the Union government are related to-

a) Hydro-electricity b) Solar –power c) Thermal- power d) Encouraging women researchers in R&D

Answer: (d)

- On 29 October 2020; Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan launched the SERB – POWER schemes.
- The schemes have been launched to promote emerging as well as eminent women researchers to undertake R&D activities.
- The scheme aims to encourage women researchers in frontier areas of science and engineering.
- The schemes will promote women researchers in regular service in academic and research institutions to take up R&D at the highest level.
- This will be done through two categories of research support: SERB – POWER Fellowship and SERB – POWER Research Grants.
- POWER Fellowship
- The SERB-Power Fellowship offers a personal fellowship and a research grant to top-performing women researchers for a period of three years.
- The fellowship will be of Rs 15,000 per month in addition to regular income.
- The SERB – Power Fellowship will be given to women researchers in the age group of 35-55 years.
- SERB – Power Research Grants
- The SERB – Power Research Grants ensure funding to undertake highly impactful research across all disciplines of Science & Technology.
- The power research grant will be of Rs 10 lakh per annum for a period of three years.
- It should be known that The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) is a body under the Department of Science and Technology.
- Mr Vardhan emphasized the significance of empowering women researchers in the S&T landscape at the virtual event.
- The minister said globally, just 30 per cent of the world's researchers are women while 18.6 per cent of India's full-time R&D personnel are women.
- Vardhan explained that women in this field need special attention and alternate ways of a support system as they are faced by career interruptions especially related to caregiving responsibilities.
- He said that the new Science Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP) 2020 will also emphasize on encouraging women scientists.
- The fellowship will be of Rs 15,000 per month in addition to regular income, while the research grant will be of Rs 10 lakh per annum for a period of three years.
- Under the SERB – Power Research Grants, women researchers will be funded under two categories.
- The first category includes women scientists from IITs, IISERs, IISc, NITs, central universities, and national labs of the Central government institutions. They will be eligible for funding up to Rs 60 lakhs for three years.
- Level two will comprise scientists and researchers from state universities/ colleges and private academics. They will be eligible for funding up to 30 lakhs for three years.



Link:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/education/dst-launches-schemes-for-women-scientists-researchers-in-science-and-engineering/story-Bhn1RLDfyOHa7xDv2JUGRM.html>

Treaty & Agreements

Partnership between IISc and Indian Oil R&D

Question : For which purpose IISc and the Indian Oil R&D have recently signed an agreement ?

- (a) for setting up a research institute (b) for hydrogen generation technology
- (c) for setting up a bio-diesel plant (d) none of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts

- IISc and the Indian Oil R&D have recently(October 2020) signed an agreement.
- This agreement is related to hydrogen generation technology.



Development and demonstration

- Under this MOU, Indian Institute of Science and IOC R&D(Faridabad) will work jointly to develop and demonstrate biomass gasification-based hydrogen generation technology for producing fuel cell-grade hydrogen at an affordable price.
- This is an academia-industry collaboration.

IOC and its hydrogen economy scenario

- IOC is working on a bigger project towards ushering in the country's hydrogen economy.
- Hydrogen generated from IOC R&D(Faridabad) will be used to power fuel cell buses as part of this project.

IISc(Indian Institute of Science)

- IISc(Bangalore) is a public research university.
- Founders of University – Jamsetji Tata and Krishna Raja Wadiyar IV.

Link:

<https://www.iisc.ac.in/events/iisc-and-indianoil-rd-sign-mou-for-hydrogen-generation-technology/>

IBM – IOCL Collaboration

Question : IBM and IOCL collaboration would transform the customer experience for millions of Indian Oil customers. Which one of the following is a resultant of this collaboration ?

- (a) IndianOil ONE mobile app & portal (b) IndianOil FAST mobile app
- (c) IndianOil FIRST mobile app (d) IndianOil QUICK mobile app

Answer (a)

Related facts

- IBM and IOCL has recently(October 2020) collaborated for digital services.
- IBM and IOCL collaboration would transform the customer experience for millions of Indian Oil customers.
- The resultant of this collaboration is – IndianOil ONE mobile app & portal.
- Around 12,400 IOCL distributors covering about 130 million consumers can now use this app & portal.

ePIC

- The Indian Oil One mobile app & portal are part of IndianOil's Project ePIC, an integrated platform for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Distribution Management System (DMS), developed by IBM Services.
- This platform ensures real-time updates to inventory, orders, invoices, thereby reducing the time to order fulfillment.



Link:

<https://in.newsroom.ibm.com/2020-10-29-IOCL-achieves-digital-transformation-milestone-with-IBM>

Partnership between USAID and Wadhwani AI

Question : United States Agency for International Development(USAID) has recently partnered with Wadhwani AI. This is actually a funding to Support Development of AI-Based Tools to Better Predict and Plan Against Pandemics. How much supportive amount has committed under this deal ?

- (a) 2 million dollar (b) 5 million dollar
(c) 7 million dollar (d) 9 million dollar

Answer (a)

Related facts

- United States Agency for International Development(USAID) has recently(October 2020) partnered with Wadhwani AI.
- This is actually a funding to Support Development of AI-Based Tools to Better Predict and Plan Against Pandemics.

Supportive amount to Wadhwani AI

- USAID also awarded \$2 million to the non-profit research institute Wadhwani AI to develop tools, using mathematical modeling techniques and digital technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, to forecast COVID-19 disease patterns, estimate resources needed, and plan interventions.
- The U.S. Government continues to demonstrate global leadership in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This financial assistance brings USAID's COVID-19 assistance to India to over \$13 million.



Link:

<https://www.usaid.gov/india/press-releases/oct-21-2020-united-states-provides-5-million-support-vulnerable-groups>

Partnership between USAID and Catalyst Management Service's COVID Action Collaborative

Question : USAID has recently partnered with Catalyst Management Service's COVID Action Collaborative. This is a partnership to support vulnerable groups impacted by Covid-19. How much supportive amount has committed under this deal ?

(a) 3 million dollar (b) 5 million dollar (c) 7 million dollar (d) 9 million dollar

Answer (a)

Related facts

- USAID has recently (October 2020) partnered with Catalyst Management Service's COVID Action Collaborative.
- This is a partnership to support vulnerable groups impacted by Covid-19.

Details of partnership

- The two-year, \$3 million partnership with CAC (COVID Action Collaborative) will benefit over 10 million neglected and vulnerable individuals affected by COVID-19, by strengthening the capacity of 100 local organizations, 10 local governments and 15 associations of healthcare providers, small retailers, and street vendors, and will link them with government and private sector resources.
- CAC will provide a platform for industry and development partners to join forces to support COVID mitigation efforts in the country and will also coordinate with other ongoing USAID activities that are addressing the impact of the pandemic and reaching vulnerable populations.



CMS

- Catalyst Management Services is a Bangalore based firm. CMS primarily engaged in market research, feasibility studies, and training in both business and social sectors.
- The #COVIDActionCollab (CAC) drives comprehensive and co-ordinated action with people at the very centre of the response, leading to the prevention of new infections and mitigating impacts for those affected.

Link:

<https://www.usaid.gov/india/press-releases/oct-21-2020-united-states-provides-5-million-support-vulnerable-groups>

Partnership for launching of Visa Direct

Question : RBL Bank and Visa has recently partnered for launching of VISA DIRECT. It is an —

- (a) instant payout service for fintechs
- (b) instant payout service for automobile startups
- (c) instant payout service for housing developers
- (d) none of the above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- RBL Bank and Visa has recently (October 2020) partnered for launching of VISA DIRECT.



- It is an instant payout service for fintechs.
- Under this partnership, RBL Bank will offer fintechs an enhanced value proposition on various domestic transactions and benefit programmes such as refunds, card bill payments, cashbacks and disbursements.

Link:

https://drws17a9qx558.cloudfront.net/document/PRESS_COVERAGE_FILE_DIR_PATH/rbl-bank-and-visa-press-release.pdf

NABARD – Goa lending agreement

Question : Goa has recently borrowed Rs 85 crores from NABARD under RIDF for various infrastructure projects. In which year Government of India created the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) ?

(a) 1995-96 (b) 1997-98 (c) 1998-99 (d) 1992-92

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Goa has recently borrowed Rs 85 crores from NABARD under RIDF for various infrastructure projects.

Bio-digester toilets

- Among the projects taken up with the funds are bio-digester toilets to meet the open defecation free (ODF) norms, drinking water supply and irrigation programs among the many others.



RIDF

- Government of India created the RIDF in NABARD in 1995-96, with an initial corpus of Rs. 2,000 crore.
- With the allocation of Rs. 28,000 crore for 2018-19 under RIDF XXIV, the cumulative allocation has reached Rs. 3,20,500 crore, including Rs. 18,500 crore under Bharat Nirman.
- At present, there are 37 eligible activities under RIDF as approved by GoI.
- The eligible activities are classified under three broad categories i.e.
 - Agriculture and related sector
 - Social sector
 - Rural connectivity

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/goa/nabard-lends-go-rs-85cr-for-rural-infrastructure-projects/articleshow/78941888.cms>

Loan agreement between SBI & JBIC

Question : For which purpose JBIC agreed to provide \$1000 million to SBI ?

- (a) For the manufacturing and sales business of suppliers and dealers of Japanese automobile manufacturers
- (b) For the suppliers of Japanese electrical equipment manufacturers
- (c) For setting up an aerodrome in Ladakh
- (d) None of the above

Answer (a)
Related facts

Japan Bank for International Co-operation has recently(October 2020) agreed to provide USD1000 million to SBI.

The loan scheme is as follows :-

Amount	Provider
USD600 million	JBIC
USD400 million	Co-financed by the private financial institutions under JBIC guarantee

- This loan is intended to provide, through SBI, the funds necessary for the manufacturing and sales business of suppliers and dealers of Japanese automobile manufacturers as well as for the provision of auto loans for the purchase of Japanese automobiles.
- **Indian auto industry & Lockdown scenario**
- Auto industry recovering from a sharp fall in production and sales during the lockdown to post a 26.45% growth in passenger vehicle sales in September.
- Country's automobile market was ranked fifth largest globally in 2019.
Japanese manufacturers was the dominant service provider of the automobile market.



JBIC

- Japan Bank for International Co-operation is a Japanese Government policy-based financial institution.

Link:

<https://www.jbic.go.jp/en/information/press/press-2020/1028-013919.html>

Loan agreement between NTPC & JBIC

Question : NTPC has recently entered into foreign currency loan agreement with the JBIC. Which of the following statement is incorrect regarding this agreement ?

- (a) loan amount is approximately USD 482 million
- (b) JBIC stands for — Jordan Bank for International Co-operation
- (c) JBIC provided 60% of the facility amount and rest facility amount is provided by commercial banks under JBIC guarantee
- (d) This facility is extended under GREEN initiative

Answer (b)

Related facts

- NTPC has recently(October 2020) entered into foreign currency loan agreement with the JBIC.



GREEN initiative

- GREEN stands for — Global action for Reconciling Economic growth and Environment preservation.
- It is an JBIC's initiative.
- USD 482 million facility is extended under this initiative.
- The loan proceeds shall be utilized by the Company for funding its capex for Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) & Renewable Energy projects.
- This is the first loan for NTPC under JBIC's GREEN operations in India.

JBIC

- Japan Bank for International Co-operation is a Japanese Government policy-based financial institution.

Link:

<https://www.ntpc.co.in/en/media/press-releases/details/ntpc-ties-jpy-50-billion-funding-jbic>

Partnership between IISc and Indian Oil R&D

Question : For which purpose IISc and the Indian Oil R&D have recently signed an agreement ?

- (a) for setting up a research institute
- (b) for hydrogen generation technology
- (c) for setting up a bio-diesel plant
- (d) none of the above

Answer (b)

Related facts

- IISc and the Indian Oil R&D have recently (October 2020) signed an agreement.
- This agreement is related to hydrogen generation technology.

Development and demonstration

- Under this MOU, Indian Institute of Science and IOC R&D (Faridabad) will work jointly to develop and demonstrate biomass gasification-based hydrogen generation technology for producing fuel cell-grade hydrogen at an affordable price.
- This is an academia-industry collaboration.

IOC and its hydrogen economy scenario

- IOC is working on a bigger project towards ushering in the country's hydrogen economy.
- Hydrogen generated from IOC R&D (Faridabad) will be used to power fuel cell buses as part of this project.

IISc (Indian Institute of Science)

- IISc (Bangalore) is a public research university.
- Founders of University – Jamsetji Tata and Krishna Raja Wadiyar IV.



Link:

<https://www.iisc.ac.in/events/iisc-and-indianoil-rd-sign-mou-for-hydrogen-generation-technology/>

Collaboration between Ministry of AYUSH and M/s Invest India

Question : For which purpose 'Ministry of Ayush' and 'INVEST INDIA' will collaborate each other ?

- (a) to set up a strategic policy unit (SPFB)
- (b) to set up a covid care centre
- (c) to set up a pharmacy college
- (d) to set up an Investment board

Answer (a)

Related facts



- SPFB stands for – Strategic Policy & Facilitation Bureau.
This is an ambitious move for the AYUSH sector.
- 'Ministry of Ayush' and 'INVEST INDIA' will collaborate each other for this purpose.

Activities of SPFB

- The activities to be undertaken by the SPFB would include :
 - I. Knowledge Creation and Management,
 - II. Strategic & Policy-Making Support,
 - III. State Policy Bench marking: Undertaking State Policy bench marking to formulate uniform guidelines/regulations regarding AYUSH sector in India,
 - IV. Investment Facilitation: Follow up and facilitation of investment cases and MoUs, and coordination among different Department, organisations and States.
 - V. Issue Resolution: Invest India would work with companies and other institutions on issue resolution across States and among various sub-sectors.

Various stages in advancing the groups having stake in AYUSH sector

- The SPFB is the latest in a series of these stages.
- Previous steps which the Ministry has initiated :-

Steps	Purpose
Ayush Grid	To get all the IT projects under one umbrella
Streamlining of ayush education	To modernize AYUSH education

Evolving global standards for Ayush systems	For diagnostics and terminologies in the ICD framework
setting up a vertical for Ayush Drugs Control	To enable the Ayush systems to move into the centre-stage of healthcare activities in the 21 st century

Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1669290>

Law & Justice

Right to constitutional Remedies

Question . Which Article deals with ‘ Right to constitutional Remedies’ .

(A) Article 32 (B) Article 35 (C) Both a and b (D) None of these

Answer – (a)

Explanation-

- Why in news – Recently a Supreme Court Bench headed by Chief Justice of India S. A. Bobde
- observed that it is “trying to discourage” individuals from filing petitions under Article 32 of the Constitution in a plea seeking the release of Kerala-based journalist Siddique Kappan Alleged for planning to incite caste based violence.
- About – It is one of the fundamental rights listed in the Constitution that each citizen is entitled.
- Article 32 deals with the ‘Right to Constitutional Remedies’, or affirms the right to move the Supreme Court by appropriate proceedings for the enforcement of the rights conferred in Part III of the Constitution.
- It states that the Supreme Court “shall have power to issue directions or orders or writs, whichever may be appropriate, for the enforcement of any of the rights conferred by this Part”.
- Types of Writs –
- Habeas corpus (related to personal liberty in cases of illegal detentions and wrongful arrests)
- Mandamus — directing public officials, governments, courts to perform a statutory duty;
- Quo warrant — to show by what warrant is a person holding public office;
- Prohibition — directing judicial or quasi-judicial authorities to stop proceedings which it has no jurisdiction for; and
- Certiorari — re-examination of an order given by judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative authorities.



Link:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Year, Day & Week

Martyrdom Day

Question 3. The President of India's has delivered a special message on the eve of 'Martyrdom Day' of Guru _

(A) Guru Mahavir (B) Guru Sukhdev (C) Guru tegh Bahadur (D) None of these

Answer – c

Explanation-

- Why in news – The President of India's has delivered a special message on the eve of 'Martyrdom Day' of Guru Tegh Bahadur.
- About :- Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621 – 1675) was the ninth
- of ten Gurus of the Sikh religion.
- Name – He was born as Tyaga Mal. He came to be known by the name Teg Bahadur (Mighty of The Sword), given to him by Guru Hargobind (Sixth of ten Gurus) after he shown his valour in a battle against the Mughals.



Links:-

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1675108>

World Vegan Day

Question : World Vegan Day is celebrated every year on —

- (a) November 1
- (b) November 2
- (c) October 31
- (d) November 3

Answer (a)

Related facts

- World Vegan Day is celebrated on November 1 every year.
- The word vegan was coined by Donald Watson from a suggestion by early members Mr George A. Henderson and his wife Fay K. Henderson that the society(The Vegan Society) should be called Allvega and the magazine Allvegan.
- The Vegan Society may have been established 75 years ago(November 1944) but veganism has been around much longer.



Veganism

- "Veganism is a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals."

Link:

<https://www.vegansociety.com/news/news/world-vegan-day>

National Cancer Awareness Day

Question: When is the National Cancer Awareness Day observed?

(a) November 7 (b) November 2 (c) November 9 (d) November 5

Answer: (a)

Related facts:

- Every year National Cancer Awareness Day is observed on 7th November.
- The day was first announced by the Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan in September 2014.
- The day coincides with the birth anniversary of the eminent scientist Madame Curie.
- Marie Curie is known for her discovery of radium and polonium which led to the development of nuclear energy and radiotherapy for the treatment of cancer.



About Cancer:

- Cancer is a large group of diseases caused by uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells. It can start in almost any organ or tissue of the body, go beyond their usual boundaries to invade adjoining parts of the body and/or spread to other organs.
- Spreading of cancer cells in other sites of body is called metastasizing and is a major cause of death from cancer. A neoplasm and malignant tumour are other common names for cancer.
- Lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach and liver cancer are the most common types of cancer in men, while breast, colorectal, lung, cervical and thyroid cancer are the most common among women.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally, accounting for an estimated 9.6 million deaths, or one in six deaths, in 2018.

Links:

https://www.who.int/health-topics/cancer#tab=tab_1

World thrift day

Question : World Thrift Day is celebrated every year on —

(a) 31st October (b) 28th October (c) 29th October (d) 1st November

Answer (a)

Related facts

- World Thrift Day is celebrated every year on 31st October worldwide to promote savings and financial security of individual and nation as a whole.
- In India, World Thrift Day is celebrated every year on 30 October. (Due to the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 31 October)
- World Thrift Day is celebrated in many countries across the world to promote the importance of saving for the country's economy and individuals.



Link:

https://www.nhp.gov.in/World-Thrift-Day_pg

Infantry Day

Question: When is the Infantry Day celebrated in India?

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

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- On 27 October 2020, PM Narendra Modi greeted to all ranks of the courageous infantry on the special occasion of Infantry Day.
- Indian Army celebrates October 27 as Infantry Day to recognize the role of infantry in defending Indian territory from external aggression.
- On this day in 1947, two companies of 1 Sikh battalion were deployed in Srinagar to liberate Kashmir from the invading Pashtun tribals backed by Pakistan Army.
- The order was given by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru after Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, Hari Singh, signed the instrument of accession, making his state a part of Indian dominion on October 26, 1947.



Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-the-kashmir-action-for-which-october-27-is-marked-as-infantry-day-6901036/>

International Animation Day

Question: When is the International Animation Day observed?

(a) 21 October (b) 22 October (c) 28 October (d) 18 October

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- Every year International Animation Day is observed on October 28.
- This day celebrates the art of animation and also recognises the artists, scientists and technicians behind animation.
- The day was proclaimed an international observance in 2002 by the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), a member of UNESCO.
- The day honors birth of animation, recognized as the first public performance of projected moving images: Emile Reynaud's Theatre Optique in Paris, on the 28th October 1892.



Links:

<http://iadasifa.net/>

Books

Book-Till We Win

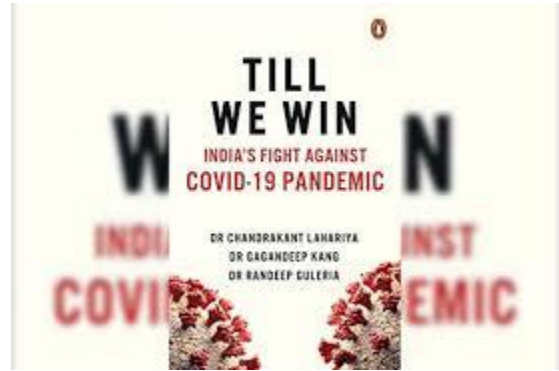
Question: Who is the author of the book Till We Win?

(a) Saman Habib (b) Satish Mishra (c) Randeep Guleria (d) Najma Heptulla

Answer: (c)

Related facts:

- AllMS Director Randeep Guleria and two other doctors have authored the book Till We Win on Covid-19.
- The book gives account of India's fight with Covid 19 ;guides the way to be safe and measures to curb its spread.
- The book is co-written by leading public policy and health systems expert Chandrakant Lahariya and renowned vaccine researcher and virologist Gagandeep Kang.



Links:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/books/till-we-win-book-on-covid-19-by-aiims-director-to-hit-stands-this-month/story-0EX90f6TEbk2DhSnETquql.html>

Miscellaneous

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu pushes for highway along Tibet border

Question. ___ has been pushing for the ambitious Frontier Highway project along the “India Tibet border” for facilitating faster movement of troops if a war-like situation arises.

(A) Arunachal Pradesh (B) Uttar Pradesh (C) Madhya Pradesh (D) Kerala

Answer (A)

Explanation –

- Why in news – Arunachal Pradesh has been pushing for the ambitious Frontier Highway project along the “India Tibet border” for facilitating faster movement of troops if a war-like situation arises.
- About Frontier Highway Project:-
- Name – It is also called as the Arunachal Frontier Highway and Mago-Thingbu–Vijaynagar Border Highway.
- Length – The 2,000-kilometre-long road follows the McMahon Line.



- It accompanies the Trans-Arunachal Highway (through the middle) and the Arunachal East-West Corridor (in the foothills along the Assam border) as major highways spanning Arunachal Pradesh, pursuing the Look East connectivity concept.
- The highway will intersect with the proposed East-West Industrial Corridor Highway.
- The highway will cross the Dibang Wildlife Sanctuary, which may raise environmental issues.
- Significance – The highway will generate employment and increase tourism in these hard-to-reach areas.
- The highway will check Chinese incursions into Indian territory.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/frontier-highway-vital-for-troop-movement-along-tibet-border-arunachal-pradesh-cm-pema-khandu/article33155584.ece>

First Moss Garden of India

Question: In which of the following state India's first Moss Garden is located?

a) Uttar Pradesh b) Uttarakhand c) Himachal Pradesh d) Ladakh

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 21 November 2020; Uttarakhand government announced that now the state has first Moss Garden of India.
- This Moss Garden of India has been developed at Khurpatal in Nainital.
- It was approved in 2019, under the CAMPA scheme by the Research Advisory Committee of Uttarakhand Forest Department.
- On 20 November 2020, the moss garden, the first in the country, was inaugurated by renowned water conservation activist Rajendra Singh.
- The main aim behind developing the garden was to conserve the various species of moss and other bryophytes.
- The moss garden of this kind also fulfill the purpose of making people aware of its significance in the environment besides creating a recreation centre for tourists.



Moss and its Species:

- Moss Garden, Khurpatal houses around 30 different species of moss and certain other bryophyte species.
- Two of the moss species found here – *Hyophila involuta* (Cement Moss) and *Brachythecium Buchanani* – figure in International Union for Conservation of Nature's red list.
- It has a moss trail of 1.2 km on which different moss species and scientific information about them is displayed.

Practical utility of Moss

- It has an interpretation centre in which different aspects of moss are displayed through models.
- The interpretation centre of the garden also has a First World War painting showing use of Sphagnum moss as a dressing for wounds.
- Sphagnum moss is useful for treating wounds as absorbs liquids about three times more quickly than cotton.

- Sphagnum is cooler, softer, and less irritating than cotton, besides having antiseptic properties.
- It also produces sterile environment by keeping the pH level around wounds low and thus inhibiting the growth of bacteria.
- The garden also boasts of a dinosaur model showing existence of moss since the Jurassic era.
- Ornaments made of live moss which is very popular in Japan,
- Japan has a moss terrarium depicting live moss ecosystem and nest of birds using moss for temperature regulation and antibacterial purposes.
- Poems and caricatures related to moss are also displayed at the garden.
- Moss is one of the most ancient flora on the planet, existing since Jurassic era.
- Moss is the first plants to grow on rocky land and by breaking down the rocks and the soil. They help create a suitable environment for other plants to grow.

Links:-

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indias-first-moss-garden-comes-up-near-nainital/article33148762.ece>

Airport Council International's (ACI) Airport Carbon Accreditation program

Question : Which airport becomes Asia Pacific's first carbon accredited airport ?

(a)Delhi Airport (b)Mumbai Airport (c)Chennai Airport (d)Kolkata Airport

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Delhi airport has recently(November 2020) been adjudged as the best airport in carbon emission reduction management in the Asia Pacific region.



Achievement

- This achievement is associated with Level 4+ accreditation.
- Delhi Airport has become first airport in the Asia-Pacific Region to achieve this accreditation.
- This accreditation has been given under ACAP(Airport Carbon Accreditation Program).

Next target

- The GMR-led Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has said that it aims to become Net Zero Carbon Emission Airport by 2030.

ACAP

- Airport Carbon Accreditation is the only institutionally-endorsed, global carbon management certification programme for airports.
- It independently assesses and recognises the efforts of airports to manage and reduce their carbon emissions through 6 levels of certification: 'Mapping', 'Reduction', 'Optimisation', 'Neutrality', 'Transformation' and 'Transition'.
- The Airport Carbon Accreditation programme of Airport Council International was launched in 2009. Initially had 4 Levels-

Level 1 : Mapping

Level 2 : Reduction

Level 3 : Optimisation

Level 3+: Neutrality(DIAL has maintained this accreditation since 2016)

- In 2020, ACI had revised the program's Levels and added two new levels(In order to to limit the increase of global average temperature) –

Level 4 : Transformation

Level 4+ : Transition

Link:

<https://www.financialexpress.com/infrastructure/airlines-aviation/delhi-airport-proud-moment-india-gets-best-airport-in-carbon-management-in-asia-pacific/2132031/>

RBI Bulletin : Two new words (Technical recession & Nowcast) coined

Question : RBI has coined two new words (Technical recession & Nowcast) in its November bulletin. In simple terms, 'technical recession' refers to a situation when a country's economy has contractions for –

- (a) three consecutive quarters
- (b) four consecutive quarters
- (c) five consecutive quarters
- (d) none of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- RBI has coined two new words(Technical recession & Nowcast) in its November bulletin.
- It is notable that recession is a common term for economy. But for the first time the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has added the word 'technical' with the recession.
- In simple terms, 'technical recession' refers to a situation when a country's economy has contractions for two consecutive quarters.
- While Nowcasting gives details of near future.(A forecast)
Nowcasting is a part of bulletin.



Key findings of bulletin

- India has entered a technical recession in the first half of 2020-21 for the first time in its history.
- India's economy probably shrank for a second straight quarter.
- Gross domestic product contracted 8.6% in the quarter ended September.
- The economy had slumped about 24% in April to June.
- **GDP growth projections(2020) for major countries are as follows : –**

Country	April WEO	June WEO update	October WEO
USA	-5.9	-8.0	-4.3
UK	-6.5	-10.2	-9.8

JAPAN	-5.2	-5.8	-5.3
CHINA	1.2	1.0	1.9
BRAZIL	-5.3	-9.1	-5.8
RUSSIA	-5.5	-6.6	-4.1
SOUTH AFRICA	-5.8	-8.0	-8.0
INDIA	1.9	-4.5	-10.3
WORLD	-3.0	-4.9	-4.4

Link:

<https://rbidocs.rbi.org.in/rdocs/Bulletin/PDFs/BULLETINNOV20204D16D01144684B1393353EABDFA86897.PDF>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/india-in-historic-technical-recession-signals-rbi-in-its-first-ever-nowcast/articleshow/79182603.cms?from=mdr>

Glaciers of Greenland are Melting at a Faster rate than Previously Expected

Question: Jakobshavn Isbrae glacier is located at –

a) Alaska b) Greenland c) Denmark d) Antarctica

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:

- In a new study it has been found that the three largest glaciers of Greenland are melting at a faster rate than previously expected.
- Together, the three glaciers hold enough ice to increase the global sea level by at least 1.3 metres if melted.
- The study was published in the journal Nature on, 17 November 2020.
- Researchers say that such an extent of sea-level rise could inundate several major coastal cities like Mumbai and Chennai.
- In their study, researchers examined three largest glaciers of Greenland in particular, namely Jakobshavn Isbrae, Kangerlussuaq Glacier and Helheim Glaciers.



- The team used various sets of data derived from historical photographs, recent satellite images.
- Researchers also used aerial stereo-photogrammetric imagery to calculate the ice loss between the time span 1880–2012.
- After studying various datasets, the team found, Jakobshavn Isbrae—situated in west Greenland—lost a total of 1.5 trillion tonnes of ice in the past 132 years.
- Kangerlussuaq—situated on the east coast—lost 1.4 trillion tonnes of ice chunk in-between years 1900-2012.
- Helheim glacier has lost 31 billion tonnes of ice in the same period.
- Combined, the ice melt from these three sources has already contributed to the rise of sea levels by 8 mm.
- The Greenland Ice Sheet is the largest land ice contributor to sea-level rise.
- This will continue in the future but at an uncertain rate and observational estimates are limited to the last few decades.
- The study project that the future sea-level rise from these glaciers can be noted at 9.1–14.9 mm by 2100.
- The study is based on the scenario named Representative Concentration Pathways Model or RCP 8.5.
- The research paper explained that RCP 8.5 implies an additional global temperature increase of 3.7 °C by 2100, approximately four times larger than that which has taken place since 1880.”
- The impact of sea-level rise can be severe as it can impact the lives of nearly 287 million people due to flooding.
- Moreover, the United Nations scientific body, the IPCC, projects that the global sea-level rise could be between 30-110 centimeters by 2100.
- As per the study, until 2000, the main reason for the sea-level rise was attributed to melting glaciers and the expansion of the ocean water.
- But over the last two decades, the ice sheets which largely cover Greenland and Antarctica have become another source of global sea-level rise.

Link:-

<https://weather.com/en-IN/india/environment/news/2020-11-19-greenland-three-largest-glaciers-retreating-ice-faster-than>

Chang’e 5 mission to Moon

Question: which of the following country has recently launched Chang’s-5 mission to the Moon for collecting material and taking back it to the earth?

a) Japan b) China c) South Korea d) None of the above

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:

- On 24 November 2020; China has successfully launched Chang’e 5, its first unmanned space mission to the moon.
- This mission has been sent to the moon to collect samples of surface material, and return to earth.
- This is China’s maiden attempt to retrieve materials from an extra-terrestrial body.
- State-run CGTN reported on 24/11/2020 that China successfully launched the Chang’e-5 lunar probe from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site in the southern province of Hainan.
- The spacecraft was launched by a Long March-5 rocket at 4.30 am (Beijing Time).
- Chang’e-5, comprising an orbiter, a lander, an ascender and a returner, with a total take-off mass of 8.2 tonnes.



- It is expected to accomplish unmanned rendezvous and docking in lunar orbit.
- After it enters the lunar orbit, the lander-ascender combination will separate from the orbiter-returner combination.
- While the orbiter-returner orbits about 200 km above the lunar surface, the lander-ascender will touch down on the moon.
- State-run Xinhua news agency reported, it will land upon the northwest region of Oceanus Procellarum, at moon also known as the Ocean of Storms, in early December 2020.
- Within 48 hours, a robotic arm will be extended to scoop up rocks and regolith on the lunar surface, and a drill will bore into the ground.
- About 2 kg of samples are expected to be collected and sealed in a container in the spacecraft.
- Then the ascender will take off, and dock with the orbiter-returner in orbit.
- After the samples are transferred to the returner, the ascender will separate from the orbiter-returner.
- When the geometric relationship between Earth and the moon is suitable, the orbiter will carry the returner back to the planet.
- The returner will re-enter the atmosphere and land at the Siziwang Banner in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.

Links:-

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/11/23/21594565/china-change-5-mission-lunar-sample-return-long-march-5-launch>

Time Use Survey

Question . The all India Time Use Survey, 2019 has recently been published by ____

(A) NITI Ayog (B) Government of India (C) Both a and b (D) None of these

Answer b

Explanation-

- Why in news – The all India Time Use Survey, 2019 has recently been published by the Government of India.
- Conducted by – National Statistical Office (NSO).
- The primary objective of Time Use Survey (TUS) is to measure participation of men and women in paid and unpaid activities.
- It is an important source of information on the time spent in unpaid caregiving activities, volunteer work, unpaid domestic service producing
- activities of the household members.
- It also provides information on time spent on learning, socializing, leisure activities, self-care activities, etc., by the household members.
- Importance of Conducting Time Use Survey
- The Time Use Survey helps us in identification of extent of burden on the women and girls in a country.
- If the women spend substantial amount of their time on household chores and unpaid services, it will prevent them from engaging in other activities such as employment, leisure etc. leading to gender inequality.



Link:

<http://www.edristi.in/>

Team Halo

Question. Team Halo Initiative –

(1) More than 100 scientists have joined Team Halo, a UN initiative aimed towards dispelling COVID-19 vaccine myths and misinformation.

(2) Launched by United Nations.

(A) Only 1 (B) Only 2 (C) Both 1 and 2

(D) None of these

Answer (c)

Explanation –

- Why in news – More than 100 scientists have joined Team Halo, a UN initiative aimed towards dispelling COVID-19 vaccine myths and misinformation.
- Launched by – United Nations (UN) has collaborated with The Vaccine Confidence Project at the University of London to launch the “Team Halo” initiative.
- Purpose – To counter the misinformation around Covid-19 vaccines.
- Features – Under this, scientists will build confidence among the public by busting myths and sharing information on the safety and effectiveness of vaccines via the social media.



Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/over-100-scientists-join-hands-with-un-to-bust-covid-19-vaccine-myths-120111700548_1.html

BRU TRIBE

Question . BRU TRIBE – lived in

(A) Tripura (B) Odisha (C) Jharkhand (D) Uttarakhand

Answer – (a)

Explanation:-

- Why in news –
- Leaders of the Mizoram Bru refugees have demanded commencement of their permanent rehabilitation in Tripura in the light of the quadripartite agreement signed in New Delhi in January.
- Residence – The Brus, also referred to as the Reangs, are spread across the north-eastern states of Tripura, Assam, Manipur and Mizoram.
- Culture – They speak the Reang dialect of Kokborok language which is locally referred to as Kau Bru. Their Hojagiri folk dance is well known all over the world.
- In Tripura, they are recognized as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group. In Mizoram, they have been targeted by groups that do not consider them indigenous to the state.



Link:

Acquisition of Jio Platforms by Google

Question : Under which act CCI has approved acquisition of Jio Platforms by Google ?

- (a) Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002
- (b) Section 32(1) of the Competition Act, 2003
- (c) Section 33(1) of the Competition Act, 2001
- (d) Section 34(1) of the Competition Act, 2002

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approves acquisition of 7.73% equity share capital of Jio Platforms Limited (JPL) by Google International LLC (GIL) under Section 31(1) of the Competition Act, 2002.
- GIL is a wholly owned subsidiary of Google LLC (collectively with all Google LLC subsidiaries, Google). Google LLC is a Delaware limited liability company and wholly owned subsidiary of Alphabet Inc.
- GIL is a holding company and does not own / operate any of Google's products/ services.
- JPL is a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Limited, which holds the majority of its issued equity share capital.
- JPL along with its subsidiaries primarily offers / will offer digital products / services, including wireless, home broadband and enterprise broadband services, telecommunication services, mobile applications, various digital platforms, back-end technology services for ecommerce entities and other miscellaneous software and technology related services.



Link:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseFramePage.aspx?PRID=1672142>

SEBI : Formation of expert group

Question : For which purpose SEBI has recently formed an expert group ?

- (a) To review norms related to share-based staff benefit
- (b) To review norms related to promoter's benefit
- (c) To review norms related to joint ventures
- (d) All above

Answer (a)

Related facts

- SEBI has recently (November, 2020) formed an expert group.
- This expert group will review the framework of share-based employee benefit and issue of sweat equity.

Sandip Bhagat

- Sandip Bhagat is currently a partner at S&R Associates.
- He would be chaired the above mentioned expert group.
- Structure of expert group



- Structure of expert group is as follows :-

Name	Position held in expert group	Introduction
Sandip Bhagat	Chairman	A partner at S&R Associates
Santosh Haldankar	Member	Company secretary of HDFC Bank
Vikram Shroff	Member	Belongs to Nishith Desai Associates
Narayan Shankar	Member	Company secretary of M&M
Pavan Vijay	Member	Founder of Corporate Professionals
M Sanaulla Khan	Member	Company secretary of Wipro
Jeevan Sonparote	Member	Sebi's Chief General Manager

Sweat equity shares & SBEB

- Sweat equity shares, generally, issued by a company to its employees at a discount or for consideration other than cash.
- SBEB (Share based employee benefits) are five types :-

- employee stock option schemes;
- employee stock purchase schemes;
- stock appreciation rights schemes;
- general employee benefits schemes; and
- retirement benefit schemes

Link:

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/markets/stocks/news/sebi-forms-expert-group-to-review-norms-related-to-share-based-staff-benefit-issue-of-sweat-equity/articleshow/79152048.cms>

IRNSS accepted for World Wide Radio Navigation System

Question: The International Maritime Organization (IMO) a specialized agency of the United Nations, is headquartered at-

- a) New York b) London c) Paris d) Bonn

Answer: (b)
Related Facts:

- The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) has been accepted as a component of the World Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS).
- It should be known that IRNSS is an independent regional navigation satellite system developed by India.
- The decision came during Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of IMO during its recent meeting – 102nd session – held from November 4-11, 2020.
- Now IRNSS will be used for operation in the Indian Ocean Region by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- This will enable merchant vessels to use IRNSS for obtaining position information similar to GPS and GLONASS.
- It has been done to assist the navigation of ships in ocean waters within the area covered by the IRNSS.
- This is a significant achievement of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) and Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) towards Atmannirbhar Bharat.



Links:-

<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/west/irNSS-now-part-of-world-wide-radio-navigation-system-918504.html>

WHO committed for Elimination of Cervical Cancer

Question: ——— vaccine can prevent most cases of cervical cancer if given before a girl or woman is exposed to the virus-

Which of the following can be most suitably filled in blank above to make the sentence meaningful/

- a) HIV b) HPV c) Vivotif d) BCG

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- On 17 November 2020 ; WHO launched its Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer.
- The strategy outlines three key steps: vaccination, screening and treatment.
- Successful implementation of all three could reduce more than 40% of new cases of the disease and 5 million related deaths by 2050.
- This initiative represents a historic milestone because it marks the first time that 194 countries commit to eliminating cancer following adoption of a resolution at this year's World Health Assembly.
- Meeting the following targets by 2030 will place all countries on the path toward elimination:
 - i. 90% of girls fully vaccinated with the HPV vaccine by 15 years of age
 - ii. 70% of women screened using a high-performance test by age 35 and again by 45



iii. 90% of women identified with cervical disease receive treatment (90% of women with pre-cancer treated and 90% of women with invasive cancer managed).

- HPV vaccine approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and can be used for both girls and boys.
- This vaccine can prevent most cases of cervical cancer if given before a girl or woman is exposed to the virus.
- The strategy also stresses that investing in the interventions to meet these targets can generate substantial economic and societal returns.
- An estimated US\$ 3.20 will be returned to the economy for every dollar invested through 2050 and beyond.
- This will happen owing to increases in women's workforce participation.
- The figure rises to US\$ 26.00 when the benefits of women's improved health on families, communities and societies are considered.
- WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that eliminating any cancer would have once seemed an impossible dream.
- He then explained, we now have the cost-effective, evidence-based tools to make that dream a reality.
- He also said that, we can only eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem if we match the power of the tools we have with unrelenting determination to scale up their use globally.
- Cervical cancer is a preventable disease. It is also curable if detected early and adequately treated.
- Yet it is the fourth most common cancer among women globally.
- Without taking additional action, the annual number of new cases of cervical cancer is expected to increase from 570 000 to 700 000 between 2018 and 2030.
- While the annual number of deaths is projected to rise from 311 000 to 400 000. In low- and middle-income countries.
- Its incidence is nearly twice as high and its death rates three times as high as those in high-income countries.
- WHO Assistant Director-General Dr Princess Nothemba (Nono) Simelela expressed that the huge burden of mortality related to cervical cancer is a consequence of decades of neglect by the global health community.
- She also made it clear that this situation can be reverted, and this can be done through the Critical developments which include-

- i. The availability of prophylactic vaccines,
- ii. Low-cost approaches to screening.
- iii. Treating cervical cancer precursors;
- iv. Novel approaches to surgical training.

- Through a shared global commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and leaving no-one behind, the countries of the world are forging a new path to ending cervical cancer.
- The strategy is launched at a challenging time of COVID-19 pandemic.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges in following terms-

- i. In preventing deaths due to cancer,
- ii. Interruption of vaccination, screening and treatment services.
- iii. Border closures that reduced the availability of supplies and that prevent the transit of skilled biomedical engineers to maintain equipment;
- iv. new barriers preventing women in rural areas from travelling to referral centres for treatment;
- v. School closures that interrupt school vaccine programmes.

- Dr. Simelela told WHO request to all countries to ensure that vaccination, screening and treatment can continue safely, with all necessary precautions.
- She said that the fight against cervical cancer is also a fight for women's rights:
- She explained that the unnecessary suffering caused by this preventable disease reflects the injustices that uniquely affect women's health around the world.
- The launch is being celebrated with a day of action across the globe, as ministries of health, partners, and cancer advocates engage in activities to improve access to cancer prevention and treatment for girls and women.

Link:-

<https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2020/11/17/default-calendar/launch-of-the-global-strategy-to-accelerate-the-elimination-of-cervical-cancer>

SBI : First corporate partner of edX from India

Question : SBI has recently become first corporate partner of edX. It(edX) is an American MOOC provider. The creator(s) of edX is/are —

- (a) Massachusetts Institute of Technology (b) Harvard University
(c) Yale and Princeton University (d) Both (a) and (b)

Answer (d)

Related facts

- SBI has recently(October 2020) become first corporate partner of edX.
Partnership aims to offer Massive Open Online Courses(MOOCs).



edX

- edX is an American MOOC provider. It is actually a non-profit education platform.
- Mit and Harvard University launched this platform.
- It has 24 million users(Sep 2020).

Three courses

- SBI will initially offer 3 courses. These courses are — Unleashing Creativity at the Workplace, Relationship Marketing Strategy for Financial Services, and Conflict Resolution.
- Anybody from anywhere may find these courses advantageous for them to gather versatile learnings to add value to their careers.
- Courses will be available from November 2020 onwards.
- The duration of these courses would be for four to six weeks, with an expected spend of two to three hours per week on a course.
- It is notable that SBI is associated with edX as part of their workforce development initiatives.

Link:

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/business/sbi-becomes-first-corporate-partner-of-edx-from-india-to-offer-massive-open-online-courses-6030061.html>

Acquisition of Postbank Systems

Question: TCS has recently announced an agreement under which TCS will acquire 100% of the shares of Postbank Systems AG (PBS) from Deutsche Bank AG. What was the past role of PBS for Postbank AG?

- (a) PBS has been the marketing agent for Postbank AG
- (b) PBS has been the HR provider for Postbank AG
- (c) both (a) and (b)
- (d) none of the above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- TCS has recently(November 2020) announced an agreement under which TCS will acquire 100% of the shares of Postbank Systems AG (PBS) from Deutsche Bank AG.
- The transaction is subject to both parties finalizing further agreements, which they intend to do by end-2020.



Role of PBS for Postbank AG

- PBS is the full-range captive IT service provider that provides project management, application management and infrastructure support services to Postbank and other subsidiaries of Deutsche Bank.
- Deutsche Bank AG is a German multinational investment bank and financial services company.

TCS performance in Germany

- TCS is ranked by analysts as the fastest-growing IT service provider in Germany with a 10-year CAGR of over 24 percent.
- Present in Germany since 1991, TCS currently partners with over 100 leading German corporations in their growth and transformation journeys, including 17 of the DAX30.
- TCS is also recognized as a Top Employer in Germany by the Top Employers Institute.

Link:

<https://www.tcs.com/tcs-to-acquire-postbank-systems-from-deutsche-bank>

Mobile app for the betterment of wildlife

Question : Who launched an app for online monitoring of rescue, reporting and release of wildlife in Chandigarh ?

- (a) V.P. Singh (b) Anil Baijal (c) Praful Patel (d) Dineshwar Sharma

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The Governor of Punjab & the Administrator of UT Chandigarh V.P. Singh Badnore today launched the Mobile Based Application (App) for online monitoring of rescue, reporting and release of the wildlife in Chandigarh.
- This Mobile App works on all Android supporting smart phones.
- The App is made with an objective to rehabilitate wildlife in distress in city areas, parks, reserved or protected forests in urban and rural settlements.
- Through this App, timely dissemination of information to the concerned authorities is possible for injured and distress wild animals



- It is an optimum use of technology and step towards e-Governance in wildlife rescue where a user need not to make a call on the wildlife hotline number (0172-2700217) of the department but the same can be resolved in time bound manner and this has simplified the office process to a great extent.

Link:

<http://newsonair.com/Main-News-Details.aspx?id=403204>

SEBI: Flexi-Cap category' for Mutual Funds (MFs)

Question: SEBI has recently introduced a 'Flexi-cap category' for mutual funds. Which one of the following is correct regarding this?

- (a) Under this at least 65% of the corpus should be invested in equity
- (b) Under this at least 45% of the corpus should be invested in equity
- (c) Under this at least 25% of the corpus should be invested in equity
- (d) Under this at least 75% of the corpus should be invested in equity

Answer (a)

Related facts

- SEBI has recently(November 2020) introduced a 'Flexi-cap category' for mutual funds.



Mutual Fund Advisory Committee

- In order to give more flexibility to the mutual funds and taking into account the recommendations of Mutual Fund Advisory Committee (MFAC), a new category named "Flexi Cap Fund" under Equity Schemes will be available with the following scheme characteristics: —

Category of Scheme	Scheme Characteristics	Type of scheme (uniform description of scheme)
Flexi Cap Fund	Minimum investment in equity & equity related instruments -65% of total assets	An open ended dynamic equity scheme investing across large cap, mid cap, small cap stocks

Role of AMC

- The AMC shall ensure that a suitable benchmark is adopted for the Flexi Cap Fund.
- Here AMC stands for — Asset Management Companies.

Link:

https://www.sebi.gov.in/legal/circulars/nov-2020/circular-on-introduction-of-flexi-cap-fund-as-a-new-category-under-equity-schemes_48108.html

RBI : Co – lending scheme for banks,NBFCs

Question : RBI has recently announced co-lending scheme for banks and NBFCs to priority sector. What are the different categories under priority sector ?

(1) Agriculture,Export Credit

(2) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Renewable Energy

(3) Education,Housing and Social Infrastructure

Answer according to above mentioned codes

(a) (1) only (b) (2) only (c) (3) only (d)All above

Answer (d)

Related facts

- RBI has recently(November 2020) announced co-lending scheme for banks and NBFCs to priority sector.
- This scheme is actually a number of guidelines to improve the flow of credit to the underserved sections of the economy.
- Guidelines are under the co-origination model so that NBFCs and banks can jointly lend(risks and rewards are shared).



Important points of guidelines

1. In terms of the Co-Lending Model, banks are permitted to co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) based on a prior agreement.
2. NBFCs shall be required to retain a minimum of 20 per cent share of the individual loans on their books.
3. Banks shall not be allowed to enter into co-lending arrangement with an NBFC belonging to the promoter Group.
4. The banks can claim priority sector status in respect of their share of credit while engaging in the Co-Lending Model adhering to the specified conditions.
5. The Co-Lending Model shall not be applicable to foreign banks (including WOS) with less than 20 branches.

Priority sector

Different categories under priority sector

- Priority Sector includes the following categories:

(i) Agriculture

(ii) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

(iii) Export Credit

(iv) Education

(v) Housing

(vi) Social Infrastructure

(vii) Renewable Energy

(viii) Others

Link:

<https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=11991&Mode=0>

CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd : Acquisition by Axis Bank

Question : Axis Bank has recently acquired over 57,700 shares in CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd for Rs 36.38 crore. CSC comes under —

- (a) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
- (b) Ministry of Communications
- (c) Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
- (d) Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation

Answer (a)

Related facts

- Axis Bank has recently acquired over 57,700 shares (9.91 percent equity stake) in CSC e-Governance for Rs 36.38 crores.
- It is actually a strategic investment by the Axis Bank and is expected to be completed by December 2020 for a cash consideration of Rs 36.38 crore.



Acquisition Summary

- Above mentioned acquisition pact is summarized as follows : —

Acquirer	Axis Bank
No. of Shares	57,743 (a face value of Rs 1,000 each)
Acquisition rate	Rs 6,300 per equity share
Acquisition amount	Rs 36.38 crore
Stake	9.91 percent
Transaction period	Completed by December 2020 (expected)

CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd

- Common Service Centres (CSC) scheme is one of the mission mode projects under the Digital India Programme (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology).

Performance

- Performance of the CSC is given below : —

Performance Parameter	Year/duration	Value
Total Income	2019-20	Rs 1,105.49 crore
Total Assets	March 31, 2020	Rs 1,495.93 crore
Share price(on the BSE)	5 November 2020	Rs 539.45

Link:

https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/axis-bank-to-acquire-shares-in-csc-e-governance-for-rs-36-crore-120110501595_1.html

Remittances to India

Question: Remittances to India would decrease in 2020 by —

(a)9 % (b)8 % (c)12 % (d)7 %

Answer (a)

Related facts

- The World Bank has recently(October 2020) said remittances to India would decrease this year by nine percent to USD 76 million.
- It is projected to decline fourteen percent by 2021 compared to the pre-COVID-19 levels in 2019.



Reason

- It is due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and global economic recession.

Top five countries in 2020

- Top five remittance receiver countries are — China>Mexico>Philippines>Egypt>India.

LMICs

- Remittance flows to these countries are projected to fall by 7 percent to USD 508 billion in 2020.
- The decline may continue in 2021 by 7.5 percent (USD 470 billion).
- LMICs stands for — Low and middle-income countries.

Region wise decline in remittance

- Region wise decline in remittances are as follows : —

Region	Decline in remittance(%) (2020)	Decline in remittance(%) (2021)
Europe and Central Asia	16	8
East Asia and the Pacific	11	4
Middle East and North Africa	8	8
Sub-Saharan Africa	9	6
South Asia	4	11
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.2	8

Link:

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/remittances-to-india-to-drop-by-9-in-2020-world-bank-report-11604022300215.html>

Detection of Fast Radio Burst

Question: Recently an international group of scientists identified the blast as a fast radio burst first time somewhere in the-

a) Andromeda Galaxy b) Milky Way c) Sun d) Whirlpool Galaxy

Answer: (b)

Related Facts:-

- An international group of scientists identified the blast as a fast radio burst first time somewhere in the Milky Way.
- On 04 November 2020; an article regarding this discovery was published in the general Nature.
- Canada's CHIME telescope was the first to detect the radio burst on April 28, 2020.
- On the same date NASA also spotted a mixture of X-rays and radio signals (a kind of explosion) in the Milky Way (Milky Way) that had never been seen before.
- Significantly, this explosion also includes the first event seen within the galaxy, the Fast Radio Burst- FRB.



- **Detection:**
- With NASA's Wind Mission' several satellites detected the exploding X-ray part at the same time and the radio component was discovered by the Canadian Hydrogen Intensity Mapping Experiment- CHIME.
- CHIME is a radio telescope located at the Dominion Radio Astrophysical Observatory in British Columbia.
- CHIME is headed by McGill University in Montreal, University of British Columbia and University of Toronto.
- NASA-funded project called the Survey for Transient Astronomical Radio Emission 2-STARE2 has also detected the radio explosion (FRB) seen by CHIME.
- STARE2 is operated by Caltech and NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Southern California.
- And its team determined that the burst energy was equal to FRBs.
- **What is Fast Radio Burst- FRB:**
- FRBs are bright bursts of radio waves that last in milli-seconds, as a result it is difficult to detect and determine their position in the sky.
- The first FRB was discovered by scientists in the year 2007.
- Radio waves can be generated by celestial bodies with changes in magnetic fields.
- **From where these FRB originate:**
- The source of FRB discovered in the Milky Way in April 2020 is a very powerful 'Magnetic Neutron Star', referred to as a magnetar.
- It is called SGR 1935 + 2154 or SGR 1935 which is located in the constellation Vulpecula.
- It is about 14000 – 41,000 light years away from Earth.
- The FRB was part of one of Magnetar's largest explosions, with an X-ray explosion rate of less than a second.
- On the other hand, the 'radio explosion' was in the thousandth of a second Magnetar:
- Neutron stars having very powerful magnetic field are known as a magnetar.
- Magnetic field of magnetar can be 10 trillion times stronger than a magnet of the refrigerator and a thousand times stronger than a typical neutron star.
- Neutron stars are formed when the core of a massive star passes through the phase of gravity and reaches the end of its life.

Links:-

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/11/mysterious-fast-radio-burst-spotted-milky-way-first-time/>

First bank to go live as a FIP under RBI's AA Framework

Question : Which Bank becomes the first bank to go live as a FIP under RBI's AA Framework ?

(a) IndusInd Bank (b) HDFC Bank (c) ICICI Bank (d) Axis Bank

Answer : (a)

Related facts

- IndusInd Bank has recently(October 2020) become the country's first bank to go live as a FIP under RBI's AA Framework.

AA (Account Aggregator) framework

- AA (Account Aggregator) framework is related to open banking.
- AA Framework provides many special services to customers on a single window.
- These special services are — viewing statements of customers accounts, track deposits, plan investments (such as shares, mutual funds, Insurance, EPF, PPF), avail credit cards, etc.

- Customers availing these services include individuals as well as small and medium-sized businesses.

Account Aggregator Ecosystem

- Under this ecosystem IndusInd bank turned into a FIP.
FIP stands for — Financial Information Provider.
- As an 'FIP', IndusInd Bank will facilitate customers to share their financial information with Financial Information Users (FIUs).
- This will be done in a safe and comfortable manner.
- Once the other financial institutions go live on the AA framework, it will eliminate the need for collecting/submitting physical documents for getting loans or accessing other financial products and services.



Link:

<https://www.indusind.com/in/en/about-us/mediabrand/FY/2020-2021/October/IndusIndBank-becomes-the-first-bank-to-go-live-RBIs-account-aggregator-framework.html>

DG TAKANO to bring Clean Water Technologies in India

Question: Recently DG TAKANO a Japanese firm has signed an agreement with which of the following IIT of India to provide clean water technologies in the country?

a) IIT Delhi b) IIT Hyderabad c) IIT Madras d) IIT Roorkee

Answer: (c)

Related Facts:-

- November 2020: DG TAKANO, a Japanese firm, to introduce new clean water technologies in India.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to the partnership between the International Centre for Clean Water (ICCW) of IIT Madras and DG TAKANO was signed recently.
- They will collaborate on projects on clean water and to develop innovative products.
- These products will be designed as to solve existing societal and environmental challenges in the area of clean and safe drinking water globally.
- It should be known that India is one of the world's most water-stressed countries.
- According to UNICEF, due to waterborne diseases, India is facing an economic burden of approximately US \$600 million per year.
- Prof. T. Pradeep, Institute Professor, IIT Madras, and Professor-in-charge, ICCW informed about this collaboration.
- He said that conservation of water efficiently needs technological partnerships between nations and we began at right time.
- DG TAKANO will provide its expertise on cutting-edge Japanese sustainable technologies.
- It will also support ICCW to collaborate with Japanese companies to develop innovative products and technologies.
- It will also hire interns from IIT Madras.
- Both ICCW and DG TAKANO will jointly develop new products and services that relate to the projects.
- The projects that they undertake will be in the fields of clean water, water treatment, water security and stewardship covering raw water and waste water.



- To resolve the water crisis, ICCW and DG TAKANO will undertake new projects and will conduct joint R&D.
- **The projects will focus on the following factors-**
- Implementation of proven technology.
- Field testing of emergent technology.
- Developing new technology.
- Educational training and Internship programs.
- **ICCW will provide technical capabilities which will include-**
- Analysis of groundwater, clean water, treated water.
- Assessment of water security.
- Selection and development of the most appropriate technology and its implementation.
- Local technical training and maintenance support.
- ICCW will also conduct research, testing and validation of various water technology solutions of DG TAKANO, including the company's water-saving nozzle called 'Bubble90' in India.
- The Bubble90 can save 90 per cent water when attached to a faucet.
- **Challenges faced by India:**
- India is facing the challenge of groundwater depletion.
- About two-thirds of the total districts in India are under extreme water depletion.
- 54 per cent of the country faces high to extremely high- water stress.

Link:-

<https://www.iitm.ac.in/happenings/press-releases-and-coverages/international-centre-clean-water-iit-madras-collaborate>