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Date: 1st May 2020 (Set 11)

Current Affairs

Question 1:

Consider the following statements about Middle East Peace Plan:

1. It is unveiled by the United Nations (UN).
2. It seeks to give the Israelis an expansive state with Jerusalem as its “undivided capital”.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

Options:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Explanation:

The West Asia Peace Plan is unveiled by the U.S. President Donald Trump. It seeks to give the Israelis an expansive state with Jerusalem as its “undivided capital” and tight security control over a future Palestinian state. The Plan will revive the stalled two-state talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

Question 2:

Consider the following statements about the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal on the Motor Vehicles Agreement (BBIN MVA):

1. All the four nations have ratified the agreement.
2. Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been providing technical, advisory and financial support to the BBIN MVA initiative.

Which of these statements is / are correct?

Options:



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- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Explanation:

The landmark Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal on the Motor Vehicles Agreement (BBIN MVA) was signed by the Transport Ministers of the BBIN countries in Thimphu, Bhutan in 2015.

Only Bangladesh, India and Nepal have already ratified the MVA.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been providing technical, advisory and financial support to the BBIN MVA initiative, as part of its assistance to the South Asia Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Programme.

Question 3:

Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019 contains which of the following provisions:

1. Motor Vehicle Accident Fund
2. National Road Safety Board
3. Recall of vehicles

Options:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

Explanation:

The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2019 seeks to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 to provide for road safety. The Act provides for grant of licenses and permits related to motor vehicles, standards for motor vehicles, and penalties for violation of these provisions.

The central government will develop a scheme for cashless treatment of road accident victims during the golden hour.

The Bill requires the central government to constitute a Motor Vehicle Accident Fund, to provide compulsory insurance cover to all road users in India.



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The Bill defines a good Samaritan as a person who renders emergency medical or non-medical assistance to a victim at the scene of an accident.

The Bill allows the central government to order for recall of motor vehicles if a defect in the vehicle may cause damage to the environment, or the driver, or other road users.

The central government may develop a National Transportation Policy, in consultation with state governments.

The Bill provides for a National Road Safety Board, to be created by the central government through a notification. The Board will advise the central and state governments on all aspects of road safety and traffic management.

Question 4:

A newly discovered species has been named 'Aishani'. Which of the following is that specie:

Options:

- A. Butterfly
- B. Frog
- C. Lizard
- D. None of the above

Answer: B

Explanation:

Researchers have discovered a new species of 'Paddy Frog' from Northeast India, primarily in Assam.

The newly discovered species has been named Aishani, which is derived from Sanskrit word 'aishani' or aisani meaning Northeast.

The frog belongs to the genus *Micryletta*, (a small genus of microhylid frogs). The microhylid genus is a group of narrow-mouthed frogs that are more commonly known as paddy frogs and are primarily and widely distributed in Southeast Asia (SEA). As of now, there are only 4 recognised species in this group and newly discovered *Micryletta aishani* becomes the 5th.

Question 5:



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Consider the following statements about the Inter-State River Water disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019:

1. The Bill contains the provision of setting up a Dispute Resolution Committee.
2. The central government will set up an Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal.

Which of these statements is / are correct?

Options:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: C

Explanation:

Inter-State River Water disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019 amends the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956. The Act provides for the adjudication of disputes relating to waters of inter-state rivers and river valleys.

Under the Bill, when a state puts in a request regarding any water dispute, the central government will set up a Disputes Resolution Committee (DRC), to resolve the dispute amicably.

The central government will set up an Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal, for the adjudication of water disputes.

Under the Act, the central government maintains a data bank and information system at the national level for each river basin.

Science & Technology

1. Consider following statement ultra-fast Hyper loop project-

1. A hyper loop is an ultra-high-speed ground transportation system akin to bullet trains
2. 'Virgin Hyper loop One' firm is led by Richard Branson.



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3. Hyper loops use magnets to levitate pods inside an airless tube, creating conditions in which the pods can shuttle people and freight at speeds of up to 1,200 km per hour.

4. The American transport tech firm 'Virgin Hyper loop One' will be constructing the route between Mumbai and surat

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only1,

(b) Only (2)&3)

(c) Both1,2 and 3 only

(d) All the above

Answer-c

Hyper loop is an ultramodern, superfast transport project planned to be implemented to link Mumbai and Pune, which are located around 200 km apart. The Maharashtra government has already accorded infrastructure status to the Mumbai-Pune ultrafast hyper loop transport project that seeks to reduce the travel time between the two cities to just 23 minutes. Hyper loop will be able to transport people and goods at nearly 700 miles per hour in depressurized environments via magnetic levitation, the statement said adding, it will be able to carry more people than a subway, at airline speeds and with zero direct emissions. Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group, The Los Angeles-based Virgin Hyper loop, in conjunction with Climate Week NYC made its announcement from Rockefeller Plaza at Rockefeller Center in New York City, where it is showcasing its XP-1 test vehicle from its Nevada test track.

2. Recently Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman K Sivan was conferred Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Award by which state government?



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- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Odisha

ANSWER-a

Dr K Sivan, Chairman, ISRO was awarded Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Award by Tamil Nadu government for the year 2019. The award was announced in recognition of Dr Sivan's stellar work in the promotion of science and technology. The award was presented by Shri. K Palaniswami, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on Thursday August 22, 2019 at Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Award is conferred upon those who work for promoting scientific growth, humanities and student's welfare and the awardees should hail from Tamil Nadu. The award was instituted in 2015 in memory of Dr A P J Abdul Kalam, Former President of India and aerospace scientist.

3. Consider the statement. Innovating for Clean Air (IfCA)-

1. It would provide a unique air quality measurement system by integrating satellite and sensor data and support India's transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs).
2. It was launched by British Deputy High Commissioner Dominic McAllister.
3. a two-year UK-India joint initiative- Innovating for Clean Air (IfCA) was launched in New Delhi city of India

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

- (a) Only(1)**
- (b) Only (2)&3)**



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(c) Both(1) and (2)

(d) All the above

ANSWER-C

The Innovating for Clean Air (IfCA), a two-year UK-India joint initiative providing Indian and UK stakeholders opportunities to test interventions related to air quality and EV integration, was launched in Bengaluru. Speaking at the IfCA launch, British Deputy High Commissioner Dominic McAllister said such collaborative initiatives are an example of how the UK and India can work as a joint force for good on innovative solutions, and can bring the best of our research communities, academia and businesses together to address shared challenges, such as clean air."The initiative provides a unique measurement system for air quality by integrating satellite and sensor data, and helping to support Indias transition to electric vehicles",

The programme is led by Innovate UK -- part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) -- and is funded by the Newton Fund with matched resources from various partners in Karnataka and India.The key partners for the programme are the Indian Institute of Science, Enzen, Project Lithium, Confederation of Indian Industry, C40 Cities and Clean Air Platform.

4. Researches of which of the following country recently came out with new technique of effective and less expensive treatment of cancer?

(a) USA

(b) France

(c) UK

(d) China

ANSWER –C



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A pioneering new technique that could make light-based cancer treatment more effective and safer for patients, while reducing its cost, has been developed by researchers from a British university pioneering new technique that could make light-based cancer treatment more effective and safer for patients, while reducing its cost, has been developed by researchers from a British university.

Light-based or photodynamic therapy is already a clinically-approved treatment, which uses drugs that only work when exposed to light to destroy cancer cells. However, many of these drugs are frequently toxic even without light, causing many side effects in patients and leading to treatment failure. The study carried out by Jose Ricardo Aguilar Cosme, a PhD student at the University of Sheffield, and overseen by an interdisciplinary team of researchers from the varsity's Department of Materials Science and Engineering and Department of Oncology and Metabolism, has developed tiny carbon nanoparticles that can deliver cancer drugs to tumours. Carbon dots are fluorescent nanoparticles with very little toxicity, making them extremely useful for this application. These nanoparticles were made using common ingredients such as sucrose and citric acid, which occur naturally in various fruits.

Two different versions of the carbon dots were developed as part of the research, one with the drug bound on the surface and the other where the drug was inside the dot. When the drug was bound to the surface of a carbon dot it was four times less toxic without light while maintaining its cancer-killing effect in a lab model of melanoma skin cancer. This increases the overall effectiveness of the drug,

5. consider the following statement about ICGS Varaha-

1. The ship's special features include the integrated Bridge System, Automated Power Management System and indigenously built Integrated Platform Management System and Halo Traversing System.



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2. The ship will add to the ICG's strength in responding to the threats of maritime terrorism, smuggling and challenges of maritime enforcement.

3. The ICGS Varaha, the fourth in the series of seven 98-m Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), was commissioned on September 25, 2019 by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

4. It is fit with the latest navigation and communication equipment

Of the above correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only 1,2,3

(b) Only (2)&3

(c) Both(1) and (2)

(d) All the above

ANSWER-D

The ICGS Varaha, the fourth in the series of seven 98-m Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). The ship, which was commissioned at the Chennai port, would be based at New Mangalore under the administrative and operational control of Commander Coast Guard region (west). The ship will have on board 14 officers and 89 men, says a press release from ICG. The ship has been designed and built indigenously by Larsen & Toubro (L&T) at its Katupalli ship building yard in North Chennai. It is fit with the latest navigation and communication equipment. It also has some of the most advanced sensors and machinery as well as a 33-millimetre (mm) gun. It will be fitted with 12.7 mm gun with fire control system.

The ship's special features include the integrated Bridge System, Automated Power Management System and indigenously built Integrated Platform Management System and Halo Traversing System.



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It ship is also designed to carry one twin engine helicopter and four high speed boats. The ship will operate from the port of New Mangalore covering up to Kanyakumari. The ship will add to the ICG's strength in responding to the threats of maritime terrorism, smuggling and challenges of maritime enforcement. The Coast Guard ship 'Varaha' launched by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here recently was the 51st such vessel built by Larsen and Toubro. Larsen and Toubro Shipyard Ltd here had been mandated by the Ministry of Defence for design and construction of seven offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) in 2014.

Economy

Question 1.

Consider the following statements related to India's External Debt:

1. The Non-Resident Deposits account for the highest share of India's External Debt.
2. The Share of Short-term External Debt is much higher than long term external Debt.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer D:

Explanation:

Cumulative External Debt: At end-June of 2019, India's external debt was placed at US\$ 557.4 billion (19.8% of the GDP), recording an increase of US\$ 14.1 billion over its level at end-March 2019. This increase is primarily on account of an increase in commercial borrowings, non-resident deposits, and short-term trade credit.

- Highest Component: Commercial borrowings remained the largest component of external debt, with a share of 38.4 per cent, followed by non-resident deposits and short-term trade credit.
- Composition of Debt: The Non-Sovereign Debt (Non-Government Debt) is much higher at 16% of the GDP as compared to Sovereign Debt (Government Debt) which stood at 3.8% of the GDP.

Question 2.

Consider the following statements related to Small Finance Banks (SFBs):

1. The Small Finance Banks can accept deposits and lend loans only up to Rs 1 lakh.
2. They are required to extend 75% of their loans towards the priority sectors.
3. They are subjected to all prudential norms and regulations of RBI as applicable to existing commercial banks such as maintenance of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer C:

Explanation:



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The Small Finance Banks (SFBs) are the differentiated banks which have been set up to further the objective of financial inclusion by primarily undertaking basic banking activities of acceptance of deposits and lending to un-served and underserved sections without any restriction in the area of operations. Scope of activities:-

- Accept deposits and extend loans
- Undertake non-risk financial services activities such as distribution of mutual fund units, insurance products, pension products, etc. with the prior approval of the RBI
- Open at least 25 per cent of its banking outlets in unbanked rural centers
- Sell Forex to Customers
- No restriction in the area of operations of small finance Banks

Capital requirement: The minimum equity capital for small finance banks shall be Rs.200 crore.

Prudential norms: The small finance bank will be subject to all prudential norms and regulations of RBI as applicable to existing commercial banks including requirement of maintenance of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR).

Priority sector Lending Requirements: The SFBs would be required to extend 75% of their loans for the priority sectors.

Dominance of Small value Loans: In order to ensure that the bank extends loans primarily to small borrowers, at least 50 per cent of its loan portfolio should constitute loans and advances of up to Rs.25 lakh.

Question 3.

Consider the following statements related to Golden Share, which was in news recently:

1. A Golden Share is the share which provides the shareholder the majority ownership in a company.
2. It enables the entity owning the shareholder to veto the decision of other shareholders.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer B:

Explanation:

The Golden Share is the share which enables the entity owning the golden share to veto the decisions of the other shareholders. The Golden shareholder can veto the decision even when he/she does not own the majority shares. In case of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), the Government can exercise veto power (if it has Golden Share) even when it holds less than 51% ownership.

Question 4.

Which among the following International agencies publishes the "World Digital Competitiveness" report?

- A. World Economic Forum
- B. UNCTAD
- C. World Bank
- D. International Institute for Management and Development (IMD)

Answer D:

Explanation:

It is compiled and published by the Switzerland-based International Institute for Management and Development (IMD)'s World Competitiveness Center (WCC). The 2019 report is the third edition of the World Digital Competitiveness Ranking.

- It seeks to measure the capacity and readiness of 63 economies to adopt and explore digital technologies as a key driver for economic transformation in business, government and wider society.
- To evaluate an economy, WDCR examines three factors: 1. Knowledge - the capacity to understand and learn the new technologies
- 2. Technology - the competence to develop new digital innovations



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3. Future readiness - the preparedness for the coming developments

• This year, two new variables related to robotics were introduced in the calculation of the WDCR: "industrial robot" to measure the total number of robots in operation, and "robots in education and R&D" worldwide. The data is provided by the International Federation of Robotics.

Question 5.

With reference to Equalisation levy, consider the following statements:

1. It is tax which is applicable on both Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Customer (B2C) transactions in the digital economy.
2. The tax would be applicable only when the payment is made to non-resident service provider.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer B:

Explanation:

India has introduced an equalisation levy of 6% to tax digital economy transactions in the Union Budget 2016. This would be applicable to the income accruing to a foreign E-commerce company which is not a resident of India. Any person or entity in India which makes a payment exceeding Rs 1 lakh in a financial year to a non-resident technology company (such as Google) for some B2B (Business to Business) transactions needs to withhold 6% of the gross amount to be paid as equalisation levy. The two conditions to be met to be liable to equalisation levy:

- The payment should be made to a non-resident service provider;
- The payment should be made only for Business to Business (B2B) transactions.

The annual payment made to one service provider exceeds Rs. 1,00,000 in one financial year.

Polity

Question 1:

Consider the following statements regarding the President's address to the Parliament.

1. Article 87(1) says: "At the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year the President shall address both Houses of Parliament assembled together and inform Parliament of the causes of its summons."
2. Originally, the Constitution required the President to address both Houses of Parliament at the commencement of "every session". This requirement was changed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.
3. The President or a Governor cannot refuse to perform the constitutional duty of delivering an address to the legislature. But there can be situations when they deviate from the text of the speech prepared by the government.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 & 3 only
- C. 1 & 2 only
- D. All of the above



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Answer: D

Explanation:

On first day of the Budget Session of Parliament, President Ram Nath Kovind will address a joint sitting of the two Houses.

What does the Constitution say about this?

Article 87(1) says: "At the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year the President shall address both Houses of Parliament assembled together and inform Parliament of the causes of its summons."

First Constitutional Amendment: Originally, the Constitution required the President to address both Houses of Parliament at the commencement of "every session". This requirement was changed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.

What procedures follow the address?

After the President or Governor delivers the address, a debate takes place not only on the contents of the address but also the broad issues of governance in the country. This then paves the way for discussion on the Budget.

If the President disagrees with the text of the speech, are they still bound to read it?

The President or a Governor cannot refuse to perform the constitutional duty of delivering an address to the legislature. But there can be situations when they deviate from the text of the speech prepared by the government. So far, there have been no instances of President doing so. But there has been an occasion when a Governor skipped a portion of the address to the Assembly. In 1969, the Governor of West Bengal, Dharma Vira, skipped two paragraphs of the address prepared by the United Front government. The skipped portion described as unconstitutional the dismissal of the first United Front government by the Congress-ruled central government.

Question 2:

Which of the following is true with regards to 'Star campaigners' as appointed by the Political parties before elections?

Options:

- A. A recognised political party can have 40 star campaigners and an unrecognised (but registered) political party can have 20.
- B. An unrecognized Political party can't have any star campaigners
- C. A recognised political party can have 30 star campaigners and an unrecognised (but registered) political party can have 15.
- D. There is no limit on the number of star campaigners that can be appointed by a Political Party

Answer: A

Explanation:

The Election Commission (EC) has removed BJP leaders Anurag Thakur and Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma from the party's list of star campaigners. The move comes after Thakur encouraged the crowd at a rally this week to chant "desh ke gaddaron ko goli maaro (gun down traitors)" and Singh, in an interview, claimed that Shaheen Bagh protestors could "enter homes and rape sisters and daughters".

Who is a star campaigner? How are they chosen?



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A recognised political party can have 40 star campaigners and an unrecognised (but registered) political party can have 20. The list of star campaigners has to be communicated to the Chief Electoral Officer and Election Commission within a week from the date of notification of an election.

Advantages:

The expenditure incurred on campaigning by such campaigners is exempt from being added to the election expenditure of a candidate. However, this only applies when a star campaigner limits herself to a general campaign for the political party she represents.

Candidates cannot afford to breach their expenditure limit (Rs 28 lakh in case of Delhi elections).

Question 3:

Who amongst the following is the President of Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO?

Options:

- A. Prime Minister
- B. Union Home Minister
- C. Union HRD Minister
- D. Union External Affairs Minister

Answer: C

Explanation:

Initially Setup in 1949, it is a governmental body functioning under the Department of Secondary and Higher Education in the Ministry of Human Resource Development. A permanent Commission was established in 1951. The objective of the Commission is to advise the Government in matters relating to the UNESCO. The Constitution of the UNESCO mandates each member to form a national commission to function as agencies of liaison between the national government and UNESCO.

Composition:

- The Minister for Human Resource Development is the President of the Commission.
- The Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Higher Education is the Secretary-General of the Commission.

Important functions:

- To promote understanding of the objects and purposes of UNESCO among the people of the Republic of India.
- To serve as a liaison agency between the Government of India and the institutions concerned with the working for the advancement of education, science and culture.
- To cooperate with the Government departments and with services, organizations and institutions concerned with questions within UNESCO's competence.
- To collaborate with the National Commissions of Asia and the Pacific and with UNESCO's Regional Offices and centres in fostering regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation in education, the sciences, culture and information, particularly through the joint formulation and execution of programmes.

Question 4:



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Consider the following statements about Legislative Councils in the states.

1. Our constitution does not force a bicameral legislature on states. It gives states the option of having a second House.
2. The process of creating an Upper House in the states is not clearly mentioned in the Constitution, leaving it to the Parliament to decide.
3. No Legislative Council in India right now has less than 40 members.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:

- 1 & 3 only
- 2 only
- 2 & 3 only
- All of the above

Answer: A

Explanation:

Andhra Pradesh is the latest State to favour the alteration of the status quo regarding the Upper House, in an Assembly resolution for its Legislative Council's abolition. A.P. Chief Minister drastic step comes after key legislation intended to take forward his three-capital proposal was referred to a select committee by the Council, in which his party does not have a majority.

What are the Legislative Councils, and why are they important?

- India has a bicameral system - two Houses of Parliament. At the state level, the equivalent of the Lok Sabha is the Vidhan Sabha or Legislative Assembly; that of the Rajya Sabha is the Vidhan Parishad or Legislative Council.
- A second House of legislature is considered important for two reasons:
- One, to act as a check on hasty actions by the popularly elected House and,
- Two, to ensure that individuals who might not be cut out for the rough-and-tumble of direct elections too are able to contribute to the legislative process.
- Our constitution does not force a bicameral legislature on states. It gives states the option of having a second House.
- The process of creating an Upper House is lengthy. Under Article 169 of the constitution, Parliament may by law create or abolish the second chamber in a state if the Legislative Assembly of that state passes a resolution to that effect by a special majority.
- As per Article 171 (1), the total number of members in the legislative council of a state shall not exceed one third of the total number of the members in the legislative Assembly of that state.
- Also, the total number of members in the legislative council of a state shall in no case be less than 40.
- As of today, six states have Legislative Councils. These are Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Question 5:

The Bhuvan Panchayat V 3.0 web portal has been recently launched by



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Options:

Ministry of Rural Development
ISRO
Ministry for Tribal Affairs
CSIR

Answer: B**Explanation:**

The Bhuvan Panchayat V 3.0 web portal was recently launched. Bhuvan Panchayat is part of ISRO's Space-based Information Support for Decentralised Planning Update project.

Aim: For better planning and monitoring of government projects.

Services: This version of the portal will provide database visualisation and services for the benefit of panchayat members, among others.

The targeted audiences for this portal are Public, PRIs and different stakeholders belonging to the gram panchayats.

Features:

Using Bhuvan satellite imagery, hi-resolution database at 1:10,000 scale is applied to identify land use land cover, settlements, road and rail network etc. The portal offers database visualization, data analytics, generation of automatic reports, model-based products and services for Gram Panchayat members and other stake-holders.

Implementation:

In the project that will last for at least two years, ISRO will collaborate with the gram panchayat members and stakeholders to understand their data requirements.

Background:

- The space-based information support for decentralised planning programme was taken up in 2011 to empower panchayati raj institutions and its stake-holders to enable participatory and decentralised planning in the country.
- Taking advantage of information and communication technology, the Bhuvan Panchayat web portal was launched for visualisation, planning and monitoring of schemes at panchayat levels.

International Relations

Question 1:



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Consider the following statements about Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

1. Pakistan's grey listing is not new since it was placed on it in 2012, and was removed in 2015 after it passed a National Action Plan to deal with terrorism following the 2014 Peshawar School massacre.
2. The FATF is backed by the UN Security Council passed resolutions which made its recommendations binding and in case of deficiencies, sanctions could be imposed.
3. The FATF currently has 35 members and two regional organisations — the European Commission and ASEAN.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:

- E. 1 & 2 only
- F. 2 & 3 only
- G. 1 & 3 only
- H. All of the above

Answer: A

Explanation:

The deliberations, in Beijing, of the Asia-Pacific joint group of the global watchdog on terror financing and money laundering, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), gave Pakistan some encouraging news: that it had progressed in its efforts to avoid a blacklisting.

About Financial Action Task Force (FATF):

FATF is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1989 on the initiative of the G7 to develop policies to combat money laundering. In 2001 its mandate expanded to include terrorism financing. The objectives of the FATF are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

The FATF is therefore a "policy-making body" which works to generate the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas.

Pakistan has placed in grey list in 2018:

- The 39-member body had determined that Pakistan was to be placed on the grey list in 2018, and presented it a 27-point list of actions.
- These included freezing the funds of UN Security Council entities such as 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed and the LeT, the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and other Taliban-affiliated groups.
- The actions entailed a sustained effort to bring legal action against these groups, and also called for changes to Pakistani law in line with global standards for measures against money laundering and financing terrorism.
- Unlike in October 2019, when Pakistan had completed five points, the Beijing meeting has cleared it on 14 points.
- While Pakistan's progress will come as a disappointment to India, it wants more scrutiny of Pakistan's support to terror groups lest Islamabad feels it has been let off the hook there are a few points to consider.
- First, the grey listing is not new. Pakistan was placed on it in 2012, and was removed in 2015 after it passed a National Action Plan to deal with terrorism following the 2014 Peshawar School massacre. It was also placed under severe restrictions in the years 2008-2012, after the Mumbai attack.



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- Second, this last grey list period has already seen some Indian demands met, including the chargesheeting of Hafiz Saeed for terror financing, and the addition of JeM chief Masood Azhar to the UNSC 1267 list.
- Finally, although the FATF is a technical organisation, there is no doubting that geopolitics and bilateral deals play a part in deciding outcomes.

'Grey List' by the FATF on Pakistan in June 2018:

- The FATF is backed by the UN Security Council passed resolutions which made its recommendations binding and in case of deficiencies, sanctions could be imposed.
- In the Beijing meeting, Pakistan provided a list of its action taken to comply with the FATF diktat.
- Pakistan was placed on the 'Grey List' by the FATF in June 2018 and was given a plan of action to complete it by October 2019 or face the risk of being placed on the blacklist along with Iran and North Korea.
- The FATF currently has 35 members and two regional organisations — the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council.
- India is a member of the FATF consultations and its Asia Pacific Group and was represented in the meeting by a team of officials from the ministries of Home, External Affairs and Finance.

Question 2:

Which of the following is not true about the International Court of Justice?

Options:

- A. It has a 15-judge panel
- B. The judges serve for a 9-year term
- C. The ICJ is the successor of the International Criminal Court
- D. It settles disputes between states and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues referred to it by the UN.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Recently, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that Myanmar must take effective measures to protect its Rohingya Muslims, including protecting evidence relating to allegations of genocide.

About ICJ

- It is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN).
- It settles disputes between states and gives advisory opinions on international legal issues referred to it by the UN.
- The ICJ is the successor of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), which was established by the League of Nations in 1920.
- The ICJ comprises a panel of 15 judges elected by the General Assembly and Security Council for nine-year terms.
- The court is seated in the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands.

Question 3:



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In November 2019, the _____ moved the ICJ against Myanmar over alleged violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Options:

- A. Malaysia
- B. Maldives
- C. Gambia
- D. Oman

Answer: C

Explanation:

- In November 2019, the Republic of the Gambia moved the ICJ against Myanmar over alleged violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
- Both Gambia and Myanmar are parties to the Genocide Convention that allows a party to move the ICJ for violations of the convention under article 9 of the Convention.
- Gambia was backed by the 57-member Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC).
- Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi in response stated that the army may have used "disproportionate force" against some terrorist groups, however, there is no proof the army was trying to wipe out the community. Implications of the ICJ Ruling
- The ICJ's ruling meant that a global legal body for the first time officially recognized the real threat of abuse against the Rohingya.
- Although a ruling against Myanmar dents its image internationally, the order of provisional measures does not translate into a finding against Myanmar. The court is not required to ascertain whether Myanmar violated the Genocide Convention.
- Provisional measures are essentially a restraining order against a state when a case is pending in the court. Though, the ruling of the court is binding on Myanmar, and cannot be appealed, there are no means available to the court to enforce it.

Question 4:

Consider the following statements about India's Republic Day celebrations.

1. Bolsonaro is the third Brazilian President to be invited as Chief Guest for India's Republic Day Parade.
2. On 26th January 1950, the Indian Independence Act was consequently repealed and India was established as a democratic republic, no longer a dominion of the British Crown.
3. January 26, 1930 was marked as 'Purna Swaraj Diwas', or the day the nation would attain complete freedom from its colonisers by the Congress.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:

- A. 1 & 2 only
- B. 3 only
- C. 1 & 3 only
- D. All of the above

Answer: D

Explanation:



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- India celebrated its 71st Republic Day on January 26, 2020.
- Guest of Honour: Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.
- Bolsonaro is the third Brazilian President to be invited as Chief Guest for India's Republic Day Parade.
- Before him, India hosted President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in 1996 and President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in 2004, as chief guests for the Republic Day Parade.

Why January 26th?

- The Constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950, a date specially chosen to coincide with the anniversary of 'Purna Swaraj Diwas'.
- January 26, 1930 was marked as 'Purna Swaraj Diwas', or the day the nation would attain complete freedom from its colonisers by the Congress.
- The members of the drafting committee felt that the birth of the constitution should be observed on a day that held some significance in their fight for independence.
- When India was ultimately granted freedom by the British in 1947, but on August 15 and not January 26, the date was instead assigned to celebrating India's Republic Day.
- This was the day the Indian Independence Act was consequently repealed and India was established as a democratic republic, no longer a dominion of the British Crown.

What was showcased at the parade?

Dhanush Artillery Gun.
Rafale and Tejas aircrafts.
Anti-Satellite Weapons System (ASAT).
Gujarat – Rani ki Vav – Jal Mandir.
Meghalaya – Living Root Bridge.
Punjab – 550th Birth Anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

Question 5:

Which of the following is true with regards to the Oslo Accords?

Options:

- A. Under the Oslo Accords of the 1993, both Israel and the Palestinians agreed that the status of settlements would be decided by negotiations.
- B. It ended the Vietnam war
- C. It settled the European Refugee crisis
- D. None of the above

Answer: A

Explanation:

Palestinians threaten to quit Oslo Accords, if U.S. President Donald Trump announces his West Asia peace plan next week. The main worry is that this initiative will turn Israel's "temporary occupation (of Palestinian territory) into a permanent occupation".

The Palestinians see east Jerusalem as the capital of their future state and believe Mr. Trump's plan buries the two-state solution that has been for decades the cornerstone of international West Asia diplomacy.

Under the Oslo Accords of the 1993, both Israel and the Palestinians agreed that the status of settlements would be decided by negotiations. But the negotiations process has been all but dead for several years now. Israel walked into East Jerusalem in 1967, and subsequently annexed it. For



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Israel, Jerusalem is non-negotiable. The Palestinians want East Jerusalem as the capital of their future state. Most of the world's nations look at it as occupied territory.

About the Oslo Accords:

Formally known as the Declaration of Principles (DOP), the pact established a timetable for the Middle East peace process. It planned for an interim Palestinian government in Gaza and Jericho in the West Bank. Oslo II, officially called the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza, expanded on Oslo I. It included provisions for the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from six West Bank cities and about 450 towns. Additionally, the pact set a timetable for elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council.

The Details of Oslo Accords:

The Declaration calls for:

- Israel to withdraw from Jericho and Gaza, and eventually the West Bank.
- Five years of limited autonomy for Palestinians in those areas.
- Election of Palestinian Legislative Council within nine months.
- Establishment of a Palestinian police force.
- The question of Jerusalem was left undecided.

History

Question 1. Who was the founding president of Harijan Sevak Sangh?

- Mahatma Gandhi.
- Ratan Tata.
- Jamnalal Bajaj.
- G.D. Birla.

Ans. D.

Explanation:

- Birla was the founding president of the Harijan Sevak Sangh in 1932 and remained so till 1959.

Question 2. Who among the following were known as 'responsivists'?

- Motilal Nehru.
- N. C. Kelkar.
- Madan Mohan Malviya.
- C. R. Das.

Select the correct code:

- 1 and 2 only.
- 2 and 3 only.
- 3 and 4 only.
- All the above.



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Ans. B.

Explanation:

- The 'Responsivists' were **Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai and N.C.Kelkar.**
- They came out from Swarajist Party on the issue of communal line of politics.
- They offered support to the Govt.so that the so-called Hindu interests might be safeguarded.

Question 3. **Who intervened and played an important role in the settlement of the Strike in the TATA Iron and Steel Works at Jamshedpur in 1928 ?**

- Jawahar Lal Nehru.
- Mahatma Gandhi.
- Subhas Chandra Bose.
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

Ans. C

Explanation: NCERT-XII -BIPAN CHANDRA (pg no. 240).

- After the Non-Cooperation movement was called off by Gandhiji, several reflections of new mood among the revolutionaries became visible.
- One among them the rise of left inside Congress and outside both were witnessed. Nehru and Subhas Bose also showed their left leniency. The peasants and workers and labourers organisations came into national prominence.
- The famous Bardoli Satyagraha occurred in 1928 and Sardar Patel took up the leadership of peasant organisation and launched a No Tax Campaign.
- Trade Unions also went for strikes. Hence, the labourers of TATA Iron and Steel works also went for strike which was successfully resolved by **S C Bose.**

Question 4. Who along with Bhagat Singh threw a bomb in the Central legislative Assembly on 8 April,1929 ?

- Ram Prasad Bismil.
- Asfaquallah.
- Rajguru.
- B.K.Dutt.

Ans. D.

Explanation:

- **Batukeshwar Dutt** or B K Dutt was an Indian revolutionary and independence fighter in the early 1900s.
- He is best known for having exploded a few bombs, along with Bhagat Singh, in the Central Legislative Assembly in New Delhi on 8 April 1929.
- After they were arrested, tied and imprisoned for life, he and Bhagat Singh initiated a historic hunger strike protesting against the abusive treatment of Indian political prisoners, and eventually secured some rights for them. He was also a member of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.



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Question 5: Consider the following:

1. To reconcile the militant left wing of the Congress, Jawahar Lal Nehru was made the President of the INC.
2. Declaration of Poorna Swaraj as the goal of INC.
3. Newly adopted Tricolour was hoisted.
4. 26 January ,1930 was to be celebrated as first Independence day of India.

Which among the above were the outcome of the famous Lahore session of 1929?

Code.

- a. 1 and 3 only.
- b. 2 ,3 and 4 only.
- c. 2 and 4 only.
- d. All the above.

Ans. D.

Explanation:

- The Lahore session of the Indian National Congress was held in 1929 under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru.
- In this session Congress had taken such decisions which had far-reaching consequences. Besides, the signs of the imminent Civil Disobedience Movement were visible in this Congress.
- However, the importance of the Lahore session of the Congress may be summed up as follows:
- First, the election of Jawaharlal Nehru to the post of Presidentship of the Congress was a clear indication of the growing strength of the Leftists in the Congress.
- Secondly, it was in this session that the Congress for the first time raised the demand for complete independence. Such demand was not raised from the Congress platform earlier.
- The Lahore Congress accepted the new interpretation for Swaraj which was now to mean 'complete independence'.
- Thirdly, it was in the Lahore session that the Congress decided not to participate in the Round Table Conference.
- Fourthly, the Nehru Report was declared to be null and void in the Lahore Congress.
- Fifthly, it was further decided in the Congress that 26th January, 1930 was to be celebrated as the 'Independence Day'.
- Sixthly. Tricolour flag was also hoisted for the first time.

Geography

1) Consider the following statements on Vigyan Jyoti Scheme :-

- (i) It was launched by Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) under Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology.
- (ii) It is an initiative to promote science among rural people above the age group of 40 years.



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Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) only ii
- (c) both
- (d) none

Answer a

Explanation :-

TIFAC: It refers to Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council. The TIFAC is an autonomous body under ministry and it functions under the Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Science & Technology. It was founded in 1988. Its function is to foresee the technological innovation in select technology areas that are of national importance.

Recently, TIFAC launched the Vigyan Jyoti scheme. The scheme was launched on International Women's Day. The main aim of the scheme is to encourage women to pursue science.

Vigyan Jyoti: It was launched by the President of India Ram Nath kovind. It is an initiative to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education among girls.

Under the scheme, selected women from more than 500 districts will be given opportunities to attend science camps at Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), NITs, and other leading institutions of science and technology education where women are not adequately represented.

2) Consider the following statements on Sagarmala Programme :-

- (i) It was initiated in 2015 by the NDA government.
- (ii) It is to develop only new ports in India for port led increment of GDP.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) only ii
- (c) both
- (d) none

Answer d

Explanation :-

The Sagarmala is a series of projects to leverage the country's coastline and inland waterways to drive industrial development. It was originally mooted by the Vajpayee government in 2003 as the waterways equivalent of the Golden Quadrilateral. Sagarmala, integrated with the development of inland waterways, is expected to reduce cost and time for transporting goods, benefiting industries and



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export/import trade. The Sagarmala Programme is an initiative by the government of India to enhance the performance of the country's logistics sector. The programme envisages unlocking the potential of waterways and the coastline to minimize infrastructural investments required to meet these targets. It entails investing ₹8.5 trillion (equivalent to ₹8.9 trillion, US\$130 billion or €120 billion in 2018) to set up new mega ports, modernizing India's existing ports, developing of 14 Coastal Economic Zones (CEZs) and Coastal Employment Units, enhancing port connectivity via road, rail, multi-modal logistics parks, pipelines & waterways and promoting coastal community development, with the aim of boosting merchandise exports by US\$110 billion and generating around 10,000,000 direct and indirect jobs. The Sagarmala Programme is the flagship programme of the Ministry of Shipping to promote port-led development in the country by exploiting India's 7,500 km long coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways and its strategic location on key international maritime trade routes. Sagarmala aims to modernize India's Ports so that port-led development can be augmented and coastlines can be developed to contribute to India's growth. It also aims at "transforming the existing Ports into modern world-class Ports and integrate the development of the Ports, the Industrial clusters and hinterland and efficient evacuation systems through road, rail, inland and coastal waterways resulting in Ports becoming the drivers of economic activity in coastal areas. To implement this, State governments would set up State Sagarmala committees, headed by the chief minister or the minister in charge of ports. At the central level, a Sagarmala Development Company (SDC) will be set up to provide equity support to assist various special purpose vehicles (SPVs) set up for various projects.

- 3) The Union Ministry of Environment has released Rs 47,436 crore of CAMPA funds to various states for afforestation projects. The transferred funds will not affect the state budget for forests, it will be an additional fund. Consider the following statements on that :-
- (i) The National Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (National CAMPA) was set up in 2010.
 - (ii) CAMPA funds can be used for payment of salary, travelling allowances and medical expenses of employees of forest department only.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) only ii
- (c) both
- (d) none

Answer d

Explanation :-

The Union Ministry of Environment has released Rs 47,436 crore of CAMPA funds to various states for afforestation projects. The transferred funds will not affect the state budget for forests, it will be an additional fund. The funds were handed over by Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar. The Environment Ministry has released the additional fund to the states to give a boost to forestry activities to achieve the objectives of the Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs) of increasing forest and tree cover. The increase in forest and tree cover will create an additional carbon sink equivalent to 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide by the year 2030. The Environment Minister said that the funds will be used for compensatory afforestation, wildlife management, improvement of wildlife habitat, assisted natural regeneration, soil and moisture conservation works in the forest, catchment area treatment,



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forest fire prevention and control operations, management of biological diversity and biological resources and research in forestry and monitoring of CAMPA works. The CAMPA funds cannot be used for payment of salary, travelling allowances and medical expenses. The Supreme Court ordered for the establishment of Compensatory Afforestation Fund and Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) in 2001. This was after the top court observed that the funds collected for afforestation were underutilized by the states. The court ordered for central pooling of funds under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund. The National Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (National CAMPA) was set up to manage the fund. In 2009, states set up State CAMPAs, which receive 10 percent of the funds from National CAMPA for afforestation and forest conservation activities. In the same year, the apex court also permitted the release of Rs 1000 crore every year to States/UTs for compensatory afforestation and other activities. As per the CAG report 2013 noted that the funds continued to be underutilized. The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Bill 2015 was then introduced by the government in Lok Sabha in May 2015 to regulate the collected funds. The bill was then sent for examination under a standing committee and it was passed by Rajya Sabha in July 2016. With the approval of the Supreme Court in January 2019, after notification of CAF Rules, an amount worth Rs.54,685 crore from Ad-hoc CAMPA was brought under the control of the Union Government. Overall, 27 States and UTs have created accounts for receiving the government funds and those states will be the beneficiary of the additional funds announced by the government. The fund shall be utilized as per the provisions of the CAF Act and CAF Rules.

- 4) Noting the high mortality of Great Indian Bustard, the National Green Tribunal has directed the government to prepare within two months a time-bound action plan for protection of these birds. Consider the following statements on Great Indian Bustard :-
- The Great Indian Bustard is an endangered species having the scientific name as *Ardeotis nigriceps*.
 - It is found in maximum numbers in the state Rajasthan.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- only i
- only ii
- both
- none

Answer c

Explanation :-

NGT asks centre to prepare plan for protection of Great Indian Bustard: Noting the high mortality of Great Indian Bustard, the National Green Tribunal has directed the government to prepare within two months a time-bound action plan for protection of these birds. A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel constituted a joint committee to prepare the action plan for implementation of suggestions submitted by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) over the issue. The panel comprises director general and additional director general, Forest (Wildlife) from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, nominees of Ministry of Power, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and nominees of Energy Departments of Gujarat and Rajasthan. The tribunal was hearing a plea filed by the Centre for Wildlife and Environment Litigation. The plea said according to the 30th Forest Advisory Committee meeting, power lines, especially high-voltage transmission lines with multiple overhead wires, are the major threat to the critically endangered species as they have poor frontal vision. It said 75 per cent of



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the birds have died due to collision with power lines in the past 30 years. The Great Indian Bustard is an endangered species. Its scientific name is *Ardeotis nigriceps*. Its largest populations are found in Indian state Rajasthan. It is listed in the Schedule I of Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) or Bonn Convention, Appendix I of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), IUCN Red List - as Critically Endangered and National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016). It has also been identified as one of the species for recovery programme under Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

5) **Nuakhai', a harvest festival welcoming the new crop, celebrated in which state of India :-**

- (a) Odisha
- (b) West Bengal
- (c) Bihar
- (d) Assam

Answer a

Explanation :-

Nuakhai', a harvest festival welcoming the new crop, celebrated in Odisha: Nuakhai Juhar is one of the most ancient festivals celebrated in Odisha to welcome the new crop of the season. The agricultural festival is mainly observed by the people of western Odisha. On the auspicious occasion, "Nuakhai Juhar! One of the most ancient festivals of Odisha, may this auspicious occasion further the spirit of prosperity, especially among our hardworking farmers. Nuakhai Juhar is also called Nuakhai Parab or Nuakahi Bhetghat and is a greeting exchanged on the special day. Nuakhai is a combination of two words, 'nua' meaning new and 'khai' means eat, it thus signifies "eating of new rice". People worship food grain on this auspicious day. Special meals are prepared and everyone eats it together. The farmers offer the first produce from their lands to Goddess Samaleswari, the famous mother goddess of Sambalpur district of the state. Nuakhai is celebrated across districts like Kalahandi, Sambalpur, Balangir, Bargarh, Sundargarh, Nuapada, Jharsuguda, Sonapur and Boudh and also across several areas of Jharkhand. Several cultural programmes - folk songs and dances are organised on this day to display the state's local culture and tradition.