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BASIC SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. In the background of current controversy over Genetically modified crops being illegally cultivated in India, which of these crop is/are legally allowed in India .
 1. BT-Cotton
 2. BT-Brinjal
 3. BT-Tobacco
 - a) 1 and 2
 - b) 2 and 3
 - c) 1, 2 and 3 all
 - d) Only 1

ANS—D---Only Bt-Cotton is allowed in India legally.

The genetically modified brinjal, developed by Mahyco, has a chequered history in India. In 2009, its commercial release was approved by the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee under the environment ministry, but then Union Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh stopped its release in February 2010 and put an indefinite moratorium.

Three years later, four varieties of Bangladeshi Bt brinjal, developed by the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute in collaboration with Mahyco, was approved by the neighbouring country for commercial release. Bangladesh has given permission to the cultivation of Bt-Brinjal . There were reports of illegal import and cultivation of this variety in India .

Haryana agriculture department, which picked up the samples from field and sent it for testing at the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, Delhi – one of the institutes under the Indian Council of Agriculture Research . The NBPGR has reportedly confirmed the brinjals as genetically modified,

2. Recently India had acquired MH 60 R Seahawk helicopters.
 1. MH 60R Seahawk helicopter is a naval multi role helicopter
 2. MH 60 R is equipped with light weight MK 54 Torpedo
 3. MH60 R Seahawk helicopters have been purchased from USA .

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

ANSWER—D –All the above statement are correct.

A long-standing need of Indian Navy to have multi-role helicopters (MRH) for its expanding role in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has been addressed by the government when the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) put its approval on the purchase of 24 MH-60R 24 MH-60R Seahawk maritime helicopters from the US-based Sikorsky-Lockheed Martin.

The MH-60R helicopters will provide the Indian Navy the capability in the Indo-Pacific region, where China is present too. These helicopters will come once the \$ 2.6 billion deal is inked through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) route and will be fully loaded.

The Indian Navy was operating the Sea King 42Bs since the late 90s which were acquired from the UK. These multi-role helicopters were deployed on board the aircraft carrier Viraat and other capital warships viz. Delhi class destroyers, Godavari and Brahmaputra class



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frigates etc. With the passage of time, the effectiveness of their sensors deteriorated and there was a significant void in the Air Anti Submarine Warfare capability of the Indian Navy.

With the induction of these very potent MRH (MH 60 R) the Air Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) capability of the Indian Navy would get a shot in the arm and would be very effective in keeping the submarine threat posed by the extra-regional Navies, including China and Pakistan, in the Indian Ocean Region under check .

3 . Consider The following ststement

1.CRISPR is a DNA editing tool .

2. It can be used to create designer babies .

a) 1 only b) 2 only c) Both 1 and 2 d) neither 1 nor 2

Clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeat/Cas 9 has provided a revolutionary tool for targeted genome engineering with simple elegance .

With the help of a small RNA , bacterial enzyme CaS 9 can be programmed to target specific location within the human genome/organism genome . It enables the scientist to delete ,add or modify sequence that may treat a person with genetic disease .

In the beginning CRISPR technology was used for making change in genome of model animals like monkey . Now human genome editing is being done in China , USA and some other country using the CRISPR technology . Chinese scientist have used it for treating lung cancer . In USA also lung cancer treatment using CRISPR has started. Recently the Chinese scientist have claimed to correct Thalassemia using CRISPR /CaS system .

ICMR recent guideline prohibits the use of CRISPR Cas system for germline gene therapy . The ICMR guidelines on gene therapy product development and clinical trials — prepared in collaboration with the Directorate General of Health Services and the Department of Biotechnology — seeks to fill the gap. It provides for basic guidance for research involving human participants, including clinical trials, pertaining to the broad area of gene therapy covering all the technologies and processes. Disease-specific guidelines will subsequently be developed will subsequently be developed as part of standard operating procedures for different conditions .

4. India has purchased S-400 defence system from Russia . what is this system

a) Anti-submarine system

b) Stealth Destroyer

c) Anti-Ballistic missile defence system

d) Unmanned Aerial vehicle

The S-400 system is highly mobile-all radars, missiles and launchers are mounted on 8x8 cross-country trucks, which makes them harder to detect and destroy. The entire system can be made ready to fire in a matter of minutes. The S-400's crown jewel is its 92N6E electronically-steered phased array radar, dubbed 'Grave Stone', that can track 300 targets over 600 kilometres away and, based on the threat and range, shoot four different missile types at them. Each S-400 system has four types of missiles from the 400-km range, 200-km range, 100-km and 40-km range, forming a nearly impenetrable interlocking grid of missiles. It can detect and destroy targets flying as low as 100 feet to as high as 40,000 feet.

These missiles can address multiple aerial threats, from combat jets to cruise missiles and air-launched smart bombs, and are resistant to electronic jamming.



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The missile system offers such a quantum jump in its capabilities that, the official says that the IAF advised the government to purchase it even at the risk of incurring US wrath. India also rejected US counter-offers of the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) to stop the sale.

5 . Consider the following statement about Bedaquiline .

1. It is used for treatment of Multi drug resistant Tuberculosis
2. It has been included in the government TB control programme .

Which of these statement are correct

- a) Only 1
- b) Only 2
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither of them.

Bedaquiline has been released specifically to treat TB patients with bacteria that are resistant to rifampicin as well as to isoniazid, another core anti-TB drug, and thus suffer from multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB).

Bedaquiline is a bactericidal drug which belongs to a new class of antibiotics (diarylquinolines). Although the drug is active against many different bacteria, it has been registered specifically for the treatment of MDR-TB(2). The drug is unique among the anti-tuberculosis drugs currently used in that it interferes with the function of an enzyme required by the tuberculosis bacterium to produce energy and to replicate. The drug has been tested for the treatment of MDR-TB in addition to conventional treatment regimens including several drugs. Bedaquiline is being provided to MDR-TB patients in India .

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q1. Consider the following statements about the National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA):

1. It is a statutory body.
2. It is headed by the Union Finance Minister.

Which of the above statements is / are correct?

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

Answer- A

Explanation-The National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA) has been constituted under Section 171 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017. It is to ensure the reduction in rate of tax or the benefit of input tax credit is passed on to the recipient by way of commensurate reduction in prices. The Authority's core function is to ensure that the benefits of the reduction is GST rates on goods and services made by GST Council and proportional change in the Input tax credit passed on to the ultimate consumers and recipients respectively by way of reduction in the prices by the suppliers. The National Anti-profiteering Authority shall be headed by a senior officer of the level of a Secretary to the Government of India and shall have four technical members from the Centre and/or the States.

Q2. Consider the following statements about the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA):

1. CARA is a statutory body under the Ministry of Women & Child Development.
2. It is the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions.
3. CARA is also mandated to frame regulations on adoption-related matters from time to time.



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Which of the above statements is / are correct?

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

Answer- D

Explanation-Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) is a statutory body of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India.

It functions as the nodal body for adoption of Indian children and is mandated to monitor and regulate in-country and inter-country adoptions.

CARA is designated as the Central Authority to deal with inter-country adoptions in accordance with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption, 1993, ratified by the Government of India in 2003.

CARA is also mandated to frame regulations on adoption-related matters from time to time as per Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Q3. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the One Health concept?

- (a) It recognises that health of human beings is connected to health of animals and environment
- (b) One Health can be effectively implemented for reducing incidence of emerging zoonotic threats like COVID-19
- (c) One Health is the collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally, and globally, to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment
- (d) All of the above

Answer-D

Explanation-The concept of 'One Health', which recognises that health of human beings is connected to health of animals and environment, is gaining importance as most of the contagious diseases affecting humans are zoonotic (animal to man origin) in nature. The concept of One Health can be effectively implemented for reducing incidence of emerging zoonotic threats like COVID-19.

One Health is the collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally, and globally, to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment, as defined by the One Health Initiative Task Force.

One Health model facilitates interdisciplinary approach in disease control so as to control emerging and existing zoonotic threats.

Q4. With reference to Coronavirus (Covid-19), consider the following statements:

1. The virus COVID-19 is responsible for spreading the disease
2. The official name of the disease is SARS-CoV-2.

Which of the above statements is / are correct?

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

Answer-D

Explanation-Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. The official naming of disease and virus has been done by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The official names are:

Disease- Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Virus-severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)



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Q5. 'United for Biodiversity' coalition has been launched by which of the following

- (a) UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
- (b) World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- (c) European Commission
- (d) None of the above

Answer-C

Explanation-The European Commission (EC) has launched the 'United for Biodiversity' coalition on World Wildlife Day 2020- 3rd March.

The coalition is made up of zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, national parks, and natural history and science museums from around the world.

ECONOMY

Q.1. Consider the following benefits of change in the Accounting year by RBI from July-June to April-March,

1. Reduce the need for Interim Dividend
2. Improving profitability of RBI

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

Ans. (a)

Explanation;

Earlier, RBI used to take around 3 months to prepare its annual report based upon the analysis of the consolidated reports of the Banks due to lack of computerization. However, in the age of Internet and growing technological solutions such as Big data, the RBI gets access to data related to banks on a real time basis and thus, the RBI can easily align its accounting year with the April-March as followed by the banks and Government. Further, the Bimal Jalan Committee had also recommended for the change in the accounting year of the RBI. Some of the benefits in the change of accounting year as highlighted by the Bimal Jalan Committee include: 1. Reduce the need for Interim Dividend: After accounting for the operating expenses and various reserves which it maintains, the RBI transfers the remaining profits to the central government in the form of dividend. Presently, the dividend is transferred twice from the RBI to Government. First dividend transfer is in the form of the Interim dividend which usually takes place at the time of Union Budget and the second dividend transfer is after the end of accounting year (July-June) of the RBI. Once the accounting year of the RBI is aligned with that of Government, the need for the interim dividend would be done away with. 2. Better Estimates and Projections: The RBI would be able to provide better estimates of the projected surplus transfers to the Government for the financial year for budgeting purposes 3. More Cohesiveness: It would also bring about better cohesiveness in monetary policy projections, reports published by the RBI, etc., many of which are using the fiscal year as the base.

Q.2. Consider the following statements regarding Kisan Credit Card scheme,

1. it was launched in 1988
2. only commercial banks can implement

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

Ans.(d)

Explanation;

The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme was introduced in 1998 for issue of Kisan Credit Cards to farmers so that farmers may use them to readily purchase agriculture inputs such as



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seeds, fertilizers, pesticides etc. and draw cash for their production needs. The scheme was further extended for the investment credit requirement of farmers viz. allied and non-farm activities in the year 2004. • The Kisan Credit Card Scheme is implemented by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks and Cooperatives. The farmers eligible under the KCC scheme include small farmers, marginal farmers, share croppers, oral lessee and tenant farmers. The Self Help Groups (SHGs) or Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) are also eligible for availing benefits under the scheme.

Q.3. Which one of the following is newly approved major port of the country,

- Mormugao
- Ennore
- Vadhavan
- None of these

Ans. c.

Explanation;

The Union Cabinet has given its 'in-principle' approval for setting up a Major Port at Vadhavan near Dahanu in Maharashtra. The new major port would be set up on "Landlord Model" in order to expand the port capacity in India and give fillip to Sagarmala programme.

Points to be remembered;

• India has 12 Major ports and about 200 non-major ports. The Major Ports are under the Union List while the Non-Major Ports are under the Concurrent List. Hence, the Major Ports are under the administrative control of Government of India while the Non-major ports are governed by the respective State Governments. Approximately 95% of the country's trade by volume and 68% by value is moved through Maritime Transport. • Major Ports are defined in Section 3(8) of the Indian Ports act, 1908 to mean any port which the Central Government may by notification in the Official Gazette declare. These major ports are Kolkata (including Haldia), Visakhapatnam, Chennai, Tuticorin, Cochin, New Mangalore, Mormugao, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), Mumbai, Kandla and Ennore. • Further, in 2010, the Government has declared Port Blair as major port. However, the Government has so far not taken any action (The Annual Report 2018-19 of Ministry of Shipping mentions only about 12 Major Ports in India)

Q.4. With reference to the PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHA BIMA YOJANA (PMSBY), consider the following statements regarding accidental death insurance –

- Available to people in age group of 18 to 40 years
 - Premium is Rs.10 per annum
- 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

Ans.(d)

Explanation;

ACCIDENTAL DEATH INSURANCE • Eligibility: Available to people in age group 18 to 70 years with bank account. • Premium: Rs.12 per annum. • Payment Mode: The premium is auto-debited by the bank from the subscribers account. • Risk Coverage: For accidental death and full disability - Rs.2 Lakh and for partial disability – Rs.1 Lakh. • Terms of Risk Coverage: A person has to opt for the scheme every year. He can also prefer to give a long-term option of continuing in which case his account will be autodebited every year by the bank. • Who implements this Scheme? The scheme is offered by all Public Sector General Insurance Companies and all other insurers who are willing to join the scheme and tieup with banks for this purpose.

Q.5. With respect to the PRADHAN MANTRI JEEVAN JYOTI BHIMA YOJANA (PMJJBY)-LIFE INSURANCE COVER, consider the following statements,

- Premium is Rs.230 per annum



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2. Risk coverage is Rs. 2 lakh in case of death for any reason

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

Ans.(b)

Explanation;

- Eligibility: Available to people in the age group of 18 to 50 and having a bank account.
- Premium: Rs.330 per annum.
- Payment Mode: The payment of premium will be directly auto-debited by the bank from the subscribers account.
- Risk Coverage: Rs.2 Lakh in case of death for any reason.
- Terms of Risk Coverage: A person has to opt for the scheme every year. He can also prefer to give a long-term option of continuing, in which case his account will be auto-debited every year by the bank.
- The scheme is offered by Life Insurance Corporation and all other life insurers who are willing to join the scheme and tie-up with banks for this purpose.

POLITY

1. The recently in news 'mechanism for marketing of minor forest produce (MFP) through minimum support price (MSP) and development of value chain for MFP' scheme will be monitored by which of the following ministries?

- Ministry for Rural Development
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- Ministry of Finance

Answer – C

The Union government's 'mechanism for marketing of minor forest produce (MFP) through minimum support price (MSP) and development of value chain for MFP' scheme can offer respite to forest-dependent labourers in the wake of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, according to experts.

What is this scheme all about?

The Union Cabinet, in 2013, approved a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for marketing of non-nationalized / non monopolized Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and development of a value chain for MFP through Minimum Support Price (MSP).

- This was a measure towards social safety for MFP gatherers, who are primarily members of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) most of them in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas.
- The scheme had Rs. 967.28 crore as Central Government share and Rs. 249.50 crore as the States share for the current Plan period.
- Key features of the scheme:
Ensure that the tribal population gets a remunerative price for the produce they collect from the forest and provide alternative employment avenues to them.



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- Establish a system to ensure fair monetary returns for forest dweller's efforts in collection, primary processing, storage, packaging, transportation etc, while ensuring sustainability of the resource base.
 - Get them a share of revenue from the sales proceeds with costs deducted.
 - The responsibility of purchasing MFP on MSP will be with State designated agencies.
 - To ascertain market price, services of market correspondents would be availed by the designated agencies particularly for major markets trading in MFP.
 - The scheme supports primary value addition as well as provides for supply chain infrastructure like cold storage, warehouses etc.
 - The Ministry of Tribal Affairs will be the nodal Ministry for implementation and monitoring of the scheme. The Minimum Support Price would be determined by the Ministry with technical help of TRIFED.
2. Consider the following statements about the G7 and select the correct ones.
1. Its **members account for 85% of the world's GDP, and two-thirds of its population.**
 2. The group has no permanent staff of its own, so every year in December, a G20 country from a rotating region takes on the presidency.
 3. The G20+ group is distinct from the G20 major economies.
- a. 1 & 2 only
 - b. 2 only
 - c. 1 & 3 only
 - d. All of the above

Answer – D

- The virtual summit will be led by King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud of Saudi Arabia, which is the current president of the economic grouping.
- For 2020, Spain, Jordan, Singapore and Switzerland are the invited countries.

What is the G20 - The G20 is an annual meeting of leaders from the countries with the largest and fastest-growing economies. Its members account for 85% of the world's GDP, and two-thirds of its population.

What is G20+?

The G20 developing nations, also called G21/G23/G20+ is a bloc of developing nations which was established on August 20, 2003. It is distinct from the G20 major economies.

- The G20+ originated in September 2003 at the 5th ministerial conference of the WTO held at Cancun, Mexico.
- Its origins can be traced to the Brasilia Declaration signed by the foreign ministers of India, Brazil and South Africa on 6th June 2003.
- The declaration stated that the major economies were still practising protectionist policies especially in sectors they were less competitive in and



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that it was important to see to it that the trade negotiations that took place provided for the reversal of those policies.

- The G20+ is responsible for 60% of the world population, 26% of the world's agricultural exports and 70% of its farmers.
3. Which of the following is not true about **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY)**?
- a. It aims to over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) that form the bottom 40% of the Indian population.
 - b. PM-JAY is **fully funded by the Government and cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments.**
 - c. Citizens till the age of 70 years will be covered under the scheme.
 - d. It covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization expenses such as diagnostics and medicines.

Answer – C

In a change of stance, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government has announced that it would be implementing the Central government's Ayushman Bharat — Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana to provide ₹5 lakh health insurance cover to families per year, after having opposed it for several months.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY):

It is the largest health assurance scheme in the world which aims at providing a health cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.

- It aims to over 10.74 crores poor and vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) that form the bottom 40% of the Indian population.
 - The households included are based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas respectively.
 - PM-JAY was earlier known as the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) before being rechristened. It subsumed the then existing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) which had been launched in 2008.
 - PM-JAY is fully funded by the Government and cost of implementation is shared between the Central and State Governments.
 - It covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization expenses such as diagnostics and medicines.
 - There is no restriction on the family size, age or gender.
 - Benefits of the scheme are portable across the country. a beneficiary can visit any empanelled public or private hospital in India to avail cashless treatment.
4. Consider the following statements about Tuberculosis.
1. TB remains the world's deadliest infectious killer. Each day, over 4000 people lose their lives to TB and close to 30,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease.



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2. The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a joint initiative "Find. Treat. All. #EndTB" with the Global Fund and Stop TB Partnership, with the aim of accelerating the TB response and ensuring access to care, in line with WHO's overall drive towards Universal Health Coverage.
3. WHO has published a global TB report every year since 1997.

Which of these statements is/are true?

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 & 3 only
- c. 2 only
- d. All of the above

Answer – D

World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is observed on March 24 to raise public awareness about the devastating health, social and economic consequences of TB, and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic. The date marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes TB, which opened the way towards diagnosing and curing this disease. The theme of World TB Day 2020 is "It's TIME".

What is TB?

- TB is an infectious disease caused by the bacillus Mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- It typically affects the lungs (pulmonary TB) but can also affect other sites.
- The disease is spread when people who are sick with pulmonary TB expel bacteria into the air, for example by coughing.
- Diagnostic tests for TB disease include – Rapid molecular test, Sputum smear microscopy, Culture-based methods
- Without treatment, the mortality rate from TB is high.

Some facts on TB:

- TB remains the world's deadliest infectious killer. Each day, over 4000 people lose their lives to TB and close to 30,000 people fall ill with this preventable and curable disease.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched a joint initiative "Find. Treat. All. #EndTB" with the Global Fund and Stop TB Partnership, with the aim of accelerating the TB response and ensuring access to care, in line with WHO's overall drive towards Universal Health Coverage.
- WHO has published a global TB report every year since 1997.

5. Which of the following is first supercomputer assembled indigenously in India?

- a. Param Shivay
- b. Param Shakti
- c. Param Brahma
- d. Pratyush

Answer – A



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What is National Supercomputing Mission (NSM)?

It is being implemented and steered jointly by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY).

Focus of the mission:

- The Mission envisages empowering national academic and R&D institutions spread over the country by installing a vast supercomputing grid comprising of more than 70 high-performance computing facilities.
- These supercomputers will also be networked on the National Supercomputing grid over the National Knowledge Network (NKN). The NKN is another programme of the government which connects academic institutions and R&D labs over a high speed network.
- The Mission includes development of highly professional High Performance Computing (HPC) aware human resource for meeting challenges of development of these applications.

Achievements:

The first supercomputer assembled indigenously, called Param Shivay, was installed in IIT (BHU) and was inaugurated by the Prime Minister. Similar systems Param Shakti and Param Brahma were installed at IIT-Kharagpur and IISER, Pune. They are equipped with applications from domains like Weather and Climate, Computational Fluid Dynamics, Bioinformatics, and Material science.

6. Which of the following is not one of the criteria to be called 'creamy layer' amongst the OBC community?
- a. Annual income of Rs. 8 lakh or more
 - b. For the jobs under the Central Government, if the parents of an applicant entered the service as Class I officer before the age 40 (direct recruitment), the applicant is considered as a creamy layer.
 - c. Junior management grade scale 1 and above of public sector banks, financial institutions and public sector insurance corporations will be treated as equivalent to group 'A' in the government and considered as OBC 'creamy layer'.
 - d. None of the above

Answer – D

The Supreme Court has rejected a bunch of pleas seeking exclusion of **creamy layer or better-off individuals** among Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) communities at the entry-level when it comes to **the reservation in promotions**. The court observed the pleas were an attempt by the petitioners to challenge the actions of the Karnataka government taken pursuant to a law, which was already held to be valid by the top court in 2019.

Facts about creamy layer -

- Check your parent's income for the last three consecutive years. If in any of the last 3 years it is below 8 lakhs, you are qualified for OBC Non-creamy layer status.
- If your parents are earning more than 8 lakhs but their rank is below that of group B officers, you will still come under Non-Creamy Layer.



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- As per rules, group category A & B (Service Category), the son(s) and daughter(s) of Group A/Class I Officers and both the parents of Group B/Class II Officers only are excluded from availing the benefit of reservation. All other Officers i.e. if only one of the parents is a Group B/Class II Officer and all the Officers below the Category II Officers are entitled to avail the rule of reservation unless their other income other than the salaries and agricultural land exceeds the income criteria limit prescribed.
 - As far as Group B/Class II Officers are concerned, if one of the parents of the children while working as Group B/Class II Officer gets into Group A/Class I Officer at the age of 40 or earlier, then also the children are not entitled to the benefit of reservation. But in case the Group B/Class II Officer gets into Group A/Class I Officer after the age of 40 years, the children are entitled to get the reservation.
 - In PSUs, all executive-level posts, board-level executives and managerial-level posts are treated as equivalent to Group 'A' posts in the government and will be considered 'creamy layer'.
 - Junior management grade scale 1 and above of public sector banks, financial institutions and public sector insurance corporations will be treated as equivalent to group 'A' in the government and considered as OBC 'creamy layer'.
 - OBC reservation eligibility is entirely different from EWS reservation eligibility. Don't mix up things. Income and Asset Certificate needed for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among General Category is different from the Income and Wealth certificate mandated for the Other Backward Castes (OBC) Non-Creamy Layer.
7. As per the anti-defection law, the decision on disqualification of the members will be taken by the presiding officer of the house. However, recently, the Supreme Court stripped Manipur Cabinet Minister T. Shyamkumar, who is facing disqualification proceedings for defection, of his office and banned him from entering the Assembly with immediate effect. Which article of the Constitution gives such powers to the Supreme Court?
- a. Article 142
 - b. Article 159
 - c. Article 137
 - d. Article 209

Answer – A

In an extraordinary display of its constitutional powers under **Article 142 of the Indian Constitution**, the Supreme Court has stripped Manipur Cabinet Minister T. Shyamkumar, who is facing disqualification proceedings for defection, of his office and banned him from entering the Assembly with immediate effect.

What's the issue?

The apex court took this decision after Speaker Y. Khemchand Singh, even after the one month's period given by the apex court, failed to decide on the disqualification petition pending against Shyamkumar. Instead, the Speaker sought adjournment for eight weeks on the matter.

What is Article 142?



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Article 142 “provide(s) a unique power to the Supreme Court, **to do “complete justice” between the parties**, i.e., where at times law or statute may not provide a remedy, the Court can extend itself to put a quietus to a dispute in a manner which would befit the facts of the case. **Article 142(1) states that** “The Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it, and any decree so passed or order so made shall be enforceable throughout the territory of India in such manner as may be prescribed by or under any law made by Parliament and, until provision in that behalf is so made, in such manner as the President may by order prescribe”.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. The term ‘**Kurzabeit**’, **recently seen in the news, means which of the following?**
 - a. Compulsory donations imposed on its citizens by Russia
 - b. Short term work allowance introduced by Germany
 - c. Hungary’s scheme to build special shelters for the migrants in the country
 - d. Switzerland’s plan to seal its International borders for all nations for the next six months

Answer – B

Amid the all-round disruption caused to the economy by the novel coronavirus outbreak, a concern across the world is the possibility of loss of jobs.

Germany’s Kurzabeit is being mentioned time and again in this context. Also, the German cabinet is planning to extend the benefit of short-time work allowance by the first half of April through legislation.

About Kurzarbeit:

Kurzarbeit is German for “short-work”. The policy provides for a short-time work allowance, called kurzarbeitgeld, which partially compensates for lost earnings during uncertain economic situations. The policy was rolled out during the 2008 economic crisis while its origins date back as far as the early 20th century, before and after World War I.

2. India recently finalized an extradition treaty with Belgium. In this context, which of the following is the nodal authority for extradition in India?
 - a. Prime Minister’s office
 - b. Union Home Ministry
 - c. Union External Affairs Ministry
 - d. Office of National Security Advisor

Answer – C

Salient features of the agreement:

- **Obligation to Extradite:** Each Party agrees to extradite to the other any person found in its territory, who is accused or convicted of an extraditable offence in the territory of the other Party.
- **Extraditable Offences:** An extraditable offence means an offence punishable under the laws of both the Parties with imprisonment for a period of one year or more severe punishment.



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- Duration of sentence: Where extradition is sought in respect of a convicted person, the duration of the sentence remaining to be served must be at least six months at the time of making the request.
- Offences relating to taxation, or revenue or is one of a fiscal character also fall within the scope of this Treaty.
- Extradition of Nationals is discretionary. The nationality will be determined at the time the offence was committed.

Under the Treaty, extradition shall be refused if:

- The offence involved is a political offence. However, the Treaty specifies certain offences, which will not be considered as political offences.
- The offence for which extradition is requested is a military offence
- The request for prosecution has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing the person on account of his race, sex, religion, nationality or political opinion.
- The prosecution of enforcement of sentence has become time barred.

What is the Legislative Basis for Extradition in India?

The Extradition Act 1962 provides India's legislative basis for extradition. It consolidated the law relating to the extradition of criminal fugitive from India to foreign states. The Indian Extradition Act, 1962 was substantially modified in 1993 by Act 66 of 1993.

Who is the nodal authority for Extradition in India?

CPV Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India is the Central/Nodal Authority that administers the Extradition Act and it processes incoming and outgoing Extradition Requests.

3. Recently seen in the news, Reunion Island, is an overseas territory of which of the following nations?
 - a. Italy
 - b. United Kingdom
 - c. France
 - d. USA

Answer – C

India and France, For the first time, have conducted **joint patrols from the Reunion Island**. India has so far carried out **Coordinated Patrols (CORPAT)** only with maritime neighbours and had rejected a similar offer by the US. **Reunion is an overseas department and region of the French Republic** and an island in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar and 175 km southwest of Mauritius.

PT - HISTORY

1. Who among the following was the first Indian woman President of Indian National Congress ?
 - a. Anie Besant.
 - b. Madam Bikhaji Cama.
 - c. Sarojini Naidu
 - d. Aruna Asaf Ali.



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Ans. C

Explanation:

- **Sarojini Naidu** presided the Indian National Congress at Kanpur session in 1925. She was the first Indian woman to hold this post.
- Annie Besant was the first woman President of the Indian National Congress. She was a British socialist, theosophist, women's rights activist, writer, orator, educationalist, and philanthropist. In late 1917 she was elected as the President of INC.

2. Who among the following resigned from the membership of the Viceroy's Executive Council as a protest against Jallianwala Bagh Massacre?

- a. Muhammad Ali Jinnah
- b. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer
- c. Shankaran Nair
- d. S. P. Sinha.

Ans. C.

- **Shankaran Nair** was the President of the Indian National Congress in 1897 held at Amravati. Until present he is the only Keralite to hold the post.
- He resigned from the membership of the Viceroy's Executive Council as a protest against Jallianwala Bagh Massacre on April 13, 1919.
- Nair resigned from the Council but went to London and joined the Indian Council of States, as a member, remaining in the position till 1925. While there, he wrote the infamous book, *Gandhi and Anarchy*, in 1922, tarnishing the popular image of Mahatma Gandhi. It is the only book he has written.

3. Why R.C Majumdar mentioned about 'the Revolt of 1857' as "it was neither First nor national nor a war of Independence"?

1. India was not a nation in the mid of 19th century, mere a geographical expression.
2. Indian population was not a homogeneous unit, divided on the lines of religion, castes and region.
3. Revolutionaries were mere attached with the regional territories, having no national consciousness.
4. Between 1763 and 1856 there were more than forty major uprisings and hundreds of minor uprisings.
5. It was merely a sepoy mutiny, having no popular support of the masses.

Select the correct code:

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1, 2 and 3 only
- c. 4 and 5 only



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d. 1,2,3 and 4 only.

Ans. D.

Explanation:

- The book of R C Majumdar's *The Sepoy Mutiny and Revolt of 1857* has explained the nature of the revolt of 1857 under the following arguments:
 - a. There were already uprisings and rebellions taken place in India.
 - b. The concept of nation came into existence only in the early 20th century in India.
 - c. The revolutionaries fought for their regional independence rather for Indian independence.
- Charles Raikes and other British historians regarded it as primarily and essentially a mutiny of sepoys.

4. Who started the journal **Bahiskrit Bharat**?

- a. Mahatma Gandhi.
- b. B.R. Ambedkar.
- c. Jyotiba Phule.
- d. Karsondas Mulji.

Ans. B.

Explanation:

- On 3 April 1927, Ambedkar launched the Marathi fortnightly 'Bahishkrit Bharat'. In one of its many editorials severely critical of upper-caste Hindu society, Ambedkar likened the British rule and the Brahmanical rule to two leeches incessantly sucking the blood of the Indian people.
- **The Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha** came into being on 20 July 1924 with Dr Ambedkar as president of its executive committee. Ambedkar wanted to achieve his objective of liberation of the Untouchables through this organization.
- *Mooknayak*, and *Prabuddha Bharat* were the two other newspaper released by B.R. Ambedkar.

5. Who served as a member of the Central Legislative Assembly for 26 years and was called the "Father of the Assembly in India"?

- a. N.M. Joshi
- b. Tej Bahadur Sapru.
- c. M.R. Jayakar.
- d. Madan Mohan Malviya.

Ans. A.

- **Narayan Malhar Joshi** (1879 – 1955) was an Indian trade union leader and follower of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Joshi got involved in labour issues and started the All India Trade Union Congress in 1921 along with Lala Lajpat Rai.
- **From 1921 till 1947 , he was an elected member of Central Legislative assembly.**



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- He was the general secretary of AITUC from 1925 to 1929 and from 1940 to 1948. In 1931, he left AITUC and started the **All India Trade Union Federation**.
- In 1911, Joshi established an organization called the **Social Service League**. The League conducted training programmes for volunteers, whose services were later utilized for relief work among people suffering from famines, epidemics, floods and other disasters, and also for welfare programmes among the poor and the destitute. Among other titles, he is considered as one of the pioneers in Modern Indian Social Work.

GEOGRAPHY

16) Which state of India has launched the social welfare schemes 'Vijayamritham' and 'Sahachari' :-

- (a) Tamil Nadu
- (b) Karnataka
- (c) Andhra Pradesh
- (d) Kerala

Answer d

Explanation :-

Kerala: It is a state on the southwestern Malabar Coast of India. It was formed on 1 November 1956, following passage of the States Reorganization Act, by combining Malayalam-speaking regions. Kerala is known especially for its ecotourism initiatives and beautiful backwaters. The State Government of Kerala has launched 2 social welfare schemes – 'Vijayamritham' and 'Sahachari'. These schemes are also applicable to NSS(National Service Scheme), NCC(National Cadet Corps) and Student Police Cadet (SPC) units working for their care and welfare.

Vijayamritham Scheme: It has been launched to provide financial assistance to differently-abled students of government or government-approved educational institutions, and students of parallel colleges and distance education programmes.

Sahachari Scheme: The scheme aims to honor National Service Scheme (NSS), Student Police Cadet (SPC) and National Cadet Corps (NCC) units that assist people, with over 40% disability, in their studies and other tasks by conferring award to them. Under the scheme, three best NSS, NCC or SPC units will be selected for the award with each being given a cash award of Rs.10,000 each besides certificates and plaques.

17) What is **StrandHogg** :-

- (a) It is a threat to Android operating system based devices.



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- (b) It is a new variety of corn from Hogg's land of USA.
- (c) It is a disease infecting corn production in USA.
- (d) None of the above.

Answer a

Explanation :-

StrandHogg: It is a bug in the OS component that allows malware applications to pose as genuine applications. This malware can potentially listen to their conversations, access photo album, read/send messages, make calls, record conversations and get login credentials to various accounts.

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sent an alert to all States warning them about the vulnerability of the Android operating system to this StrandHogg bug. The information was shared by Threat Analytical Unit, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (ICCCC) so as to take steps to create awareness among public on vulnerability of Android to 'StrandHogg'.

18) Consider the following statements on National Broadband Mission (NBM) :-

- (i) It was launched recently by TRAI.
- (ii) It aims to provide affordable and universal access of broadband to all villages by 2022
- (iii) It shall focus on optical fiber.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only ii
- (b) i and ii
- (c) ii and iii
- (d) i and iii

Answer c

Explanation :-

National Broadband Mission (NBM) is a part of government's National Digital Communications Policy, 2018. The Minister for Communications, Law & Justice and Electronics and Information Technology (IT), Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad launched National Broadband Mission (NBM) in New Delhi. The logo of NBM and a booklet was also launched on the occasion. The aim of the mission is to fast track the



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growth of digital communications infrastructure, bridge digital divide and to provide affordable and universal access of broadband to all villages by 2022, to facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services and significantly improve quality of services for mobile and internet for across country and especially in rural and remote areas.

The Missions objectives also include:-

Route for Optical Fiber Cable: Laying of incremental 30 lakhs route kilometers of Optical Fiber Cable(OFC) and increasing the tower density from 0.42 to 1.0 tower per thousand of population by 2024.

Broadband Readiness Index: Develop a Broadband Readiness Index (BRI) which will measure the availability of digital communications infrastructure and conducive policy ecosystem within a State/UT (Union Territory).

Digital fibre map: Creating a digital fiber map of Digital Communications network and infrastructure, including OFC and Towers, nationwide.

Models for Right of Way(RoW): Develop innovative implementation models for Right of Way (RoW). RoW is legal right, established by usage or grant, to pass along a specific route through grounds or property belonging to another.

Investment: investment from stakeholders of \$100 billion (Rs 7 Lakh Crore) including Rs 70,000 Crore from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

19) UNESCO declared the traditional massage of Thailand, Nuad Thai as a cultural heritage. Consider the following statements on that :-

- (i) It is in practice since about last 2000 years.
- (ii) It is also known as Nuad Bo-Ram.
- (iii) its origin can be traced back to India.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) only i
- (b) ii and iii
- (c) only iii
- (d) all are correct

Answer d

Explanation :-

UNESCO: It is the United Nations' agency for education, culture, and science. It was founded in 4 November 1946. It's headquartered in Paris, France. It's Director General is Audrey Azoulay.



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UNESCO declared the traditional massage of Thailand, Nuad Thai as a cultural heritage. It was included in the prestigious list, the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, which features practices and traditions which have been passed across generations and are known globally. The Intangible Cultural Heritage list recognizes traditional practices. It has 550 items from 127 countries which have been split into three categories further. A new list is released every year.

Nuad Thai massage: It is a famous 2000 year old traditional form of massage of Thailand. It is also known as Thai Yoga massage or Nuad Bo-Rarn. It is a type of Oriental bodywork therapy that is based on the treatment of the human body, mind, and spirit. The actual origin of this Thai massage is India. It was brought it to Thailand about 2,500 years ago by doctors and monks who carried its secrets for generations.

20) Consider the following statements on **Vintage Vehicles Policy** declared recently by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways:-

- (i) The ministry has planned to provide a special number plate to signify the vintage vehicles.
- (ii) Before this policy there was no formal procedure or clarity of registering old vintage cars.
- (iii) Any car older than 50 years is considered as a vintage car.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) i and ii
- (b) ii and iii
- (c) all correct
- (d) all wrong

Answer c

Explanation :-

Vintage Vehicles Policy: It is a draft notification. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways formulated a draft order 'Regulation of Vintage Motor Vehicles Order, 2019' to regulate the registration of old vintage vehicles. The ministry has planned to provide a special number plate with letters VA to signify the vintage vehicles. The registration plates of the vehicles will bear letters "XXVAYY", where VA stands for Vintage, XX stands for state code and YY stands for numbers between 1 and 9.

The draft rules are aimed at preservation of vintage vehicles owing to their historic, cultural, technical and aesthetic significance.

As there was no formal procedure or clarity of registering old vintage cars which became an issue especially while conducting vintage car rallies, the need for a policy to be implemented was felt at the 55th meeting of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules-Technical Standing Committee. The committee was



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constituted to receive recommendations from other committees such as Bureau of Indian Standards, Automotive Industry Standards Committee and provide safety recommendations.

According to the current Central Motor Vehicle rules, the central government exempts vehicles taking part in vintage car rallies from registration. The rules define any car older than 50 years as a vintage car.