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Current Affairs

Question 1:

Consider the following statements about the CoP-14 of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD):

1. India hosted COP-14 of UNCCD.
2. The Conference adopted the [Delhi Declaration](#).

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:

The fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 14) is scheduled to take place from 2-13 September 2019, at the India Expo Center and Mart in New Delhi, India.

The Conference adopted the [Delhi Declaration](#) in which parties expressed commitment for a range of issues, including gender and health, ecosystem restoration, taking action on climate change, private sector engagement, Peace Forest Initiative and recovery of 26 million hectares of degraded land in India.

Question 2:

Consider the following statements about the SDG Gender Index:

1. It is developed by the United Nations Development Organisation (UNDP).
2. It accounts for all 17 SDGs.

Which of these statements is / are correct?



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Options:

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

SDG Gender Index is developed by Equal Measures 2030, a joint effort of regional and global organisations including African Women's Development and Communication Network, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, etc.

It accounts for 14 out of 17 SDGs (sustainable development goals) that cover aspects such as poverty, health, education, literacy, political representation and equality at the workplace.

India is ranked 95th among 129 countries in the 2019 SDG Gender Index.

Question 3:

Consider the following statements about Intensified Mission Indradhanush:

1. The programme aims for full immunization to more than 90% coverage by 2018.
2. It is a part of Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) of Govt. of India
3. Intensified Mission Indradhanush previously had the target for full immunization to more than 90% by 2020.

Which of these statements is / are correct?

Options:

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

Answer: D

Explanation:

All the above statements are correct.

To strengthen and re-energize the programme and achieve full immunization coverage for all children and pregnant women at a rapid pace, the Government of India launched "Mission Indradhanush".



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The ultimate goal of Mission Indradhanush is to ensure full immunization with all available vaccines for children up to two years of age and pregnant women.

To further intensify the immunization programme, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI). Through this programme, Government of India aims to reach each and every child up to two years of age and all those pregnant women who have been left uncovered under the routine immunisation programme/UIP. The focus of special drive was to improve immunisation coverage in select districts and cities to ensure full immunisation to more than 90% by December 2018.

Question 4:

The Reserve Bank of India has recently released Vision-2021. It is related to which of the following:

Options:

- A. Payment and Settlement Systems
- B. Cryptocurrency and Blockchain Technology
- C. Non-Performing Assets
- D. None of the above

Answer: A

Explanation:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released 'Payment and Settlement Systems in India: Vision 2019 – 2021', a vision document for a safe, secure, quick and affordable e-payment system.

The core theme of the vision document is 'Empowering Exceptional (E)payment Experience', that stresses on empowering every Indian to access a bunch of e-payment options safely and conveniently.

Question 5:

With reference to the 'Graded Response Action Plan', consider the following statements:

1. It is enforced by the Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA).^[SEP]
2. The graded action plan is to be implemented if PM_{2.5} levels stay over 300 micrograms per cubic metre and PM₁₀ levels stay above 500 micrograms per cubic metre.^[SEP]

Which of these statements is / are correct?



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Options:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

The Graded Response Action Plan defines the measures to be taken based on air quality on the basis of PM 2.5 and PM 10 in the atmosphere. Based on the air quality the grades have been classified as Emergency, Severe, Very Poor and Moderate poor. It will be enforced by the Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA). Thus, statement 1 is correct.

The graded action plan will be implemented if PM_{2.5} levels stay over 300 micrograms per cubic metre and PM₁₀ levels stay above 500 micrograms per cubic metre. Thus, statement 2 is correct.

Science & Technology

1. Consider the following statement The Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020-

1. The ordinance defines violence as harassment and physical injury to the medical personnel

and damage to property

2. The new amendments include heavy fines for any kind of violence against health workers and imprisonment up to 7 years.

3. Such crimes have also been made cognizable and non-bailable.

Of the above, correct statement/s is/are:

(a) Only (1) & (3)

(b) Only 2,&3

(c) Only 1 & 2



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(d) All the above

Answer –d

The Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 was promulgated on April 22, 2020. The Ordinance amends the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897. The Act provides for the prevention of the spread of dangerous epidemic diseases. The Ordinance amends the Act to include protections for healthcare personnel combatting epidemic diseases and expands the powers of the central government to prevent the spread of such diseases. Key features of the Ordinance include. The Ordinance defines healthcare service personnel as a person who is at risk of contracting the epidemic disease while carrying out duties related to the epidemic. They include: (i) public and clinical healthcare providers such as doctors and nurses, (ii) any person empowered under the Act to take measures to prevent the outbreak of the disease, and (iii) other persons designated as such by the state government.

An 'act of violence' includes any of the following acts committed against a healthcare service personnel: (i) harassment impacting living or working conditions, (ii) harm, injury, hurt, or danger to life, (iii) obstruction in discharge of his duties, and (iv) loss or damage to the property or documents of the healthcare service personnel. Property is defined to include a: (i) clinical establishment, (ii) quarantine facility, (iii) mobile medical unit, and (iv) other property in which a healthcare service personnel has direct interest, in relation to the epidemic.

Powers of the central government: The Act specifies that the central government may regulate: (i) the inspection of any ship or vessel leaving or arriving at any port, and (ii) the detention of any person intending to travel from the port, during an outbreak. The Ordinance expands the powers of the central government to regulate the inspection of any bus, train, goods vehicle, ship, vessel, or aircraft leaving or arriving at any land port, port or aerodrome. Further, the central government may regulate the detention of any person intending to travel by these means.

Protection for healthcare personnel and damage to property: The Ordinance specifies that no person can: (i) commit or abet the commission of an act of violence against a healthcare service personnel, or (ii) abet or cause damage or loss to any property during an epidemic. Contravention of this provision is punishable with imprisonment between three months and five years, and a fine between Rs 50,000 and two lakh rupees. This offence may be compounded by the victim with the permission of the Court. If an act of violence against a healthcare service personnel causes grievous harm, the person committing the offence will be punishable with imprisonment between six months and seven years, and a fine between one lakh rupees and five lakh rupees. These offences are cognizable and non-bailable.

Compensation: Persons convicted of offences under the Ordinance will also be liable to pay a compensation to the healthcare service personnel whom they have hurt. Such



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compensation will be determined by the Court. In the case of damage or loss of property, the compensation payable to the victim will be twice the amount of the fair market value of the damaged or lost property, as determined by the Court. If the convicted person fails to pay the compensation, the amount will be recovered as an arrear of land revenue under the Revenue Recovery Act, 1890.

Investigation: Cases registered under the Ordinance will be investigated by a police officer not below the rank of Inspector. The investigation must be completed within 30 days from the date of registration of the First Information Report.

Trial: The inquiry or trial should be concluded within one year. If it is not concluded within this time period, the Judge must record the reasons for the delay and extend the time period. However, the time period may not be extended for more than six months at a time.

When prosecuting a person for causing grievous harm to a healthcare service personnel, the Court will presume that person is guilty of the offence, unless the contrary is proved.

2. Which of the following organisms are common pollinating agents in flowering plants?

1. Bat
2. Bees
3. Wasp
4. Ants

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer –d

Flowering plants use a range of animals as pollinating agents. Bees, butterflies, flies, beetles, wasps, ants, moths, birds (sunbirds and humming birds) and bats are the common pollinating agents, particularly bees are the dominant biotic pollinating agents. Even larger animals such as some primates (lemurs), arboreal (tree-dwelling) rodents, or even reptiles (gecko lizard and garden lizard) have also been reported as pollinators in some species.

3. Consider the following statement testing asymptomatic COVID-19 infections

1. It was developed by Seagull BioSolutions.



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2. it is being funded by the ministry of railways.

3. Active Virosome Technology (AVT) developed by Seagull Bio is useful for the production of vaccines & immunotherapeutic agents.

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1, & 3

(d) All of above

Answer –c

Seagull BioSolutions, a startup working on new biological technologies, is being funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), to undertake the development of Active Virosome (AV)-Vaccine and Immunodiagnostic kits for COVID-19 emergency.

Active Virosome Technology (AVT) developed by Seagull Bio is useful for the production of vaccines & immunotherapeutic agents. The AVT platform is useful for producing novel, non-hazardous & economical Active Virosome agents expressing desired antigens from the target pathogen. These will be used to develop a novel vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 infection and also immunodiagnostic ELISA kits for COVID-19.

4. CSIR- National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) Pune ties up with which company for production of medical devices?

(a) BEL

(b) ONGC

(c) BHEL

(d) GAIL

Answer –c

CSIR's constituent Lab, CSIR-NCL Pune, has been leading the way in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship through its Venture Centre for the past decade and new innovations from there are helping in fight against the Corona outbreak. Two of the recent innovations that can help in the mitigation of the Corona outbreak are featured:

Digital IR Thermometer: CSIR-NCL's Venture Centre's incubatee BMEK headed by Mr. Pratik Kulkarni has developed hand held digital IR thermometer which is an important component of measures to mitigate Coronavirus outbreak. Mobile phone or power banks can



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be used as a power source. The design of IR thermometers is available open source where in the complete know-how with mass manufacturing ready hardware and software design will be available to manufacturers across India for free. This is an effort to enable a large number of manufacturers to manufacture the thermometers and cater to their local demands. Now it is being scaled up in partnership with BEL (Bharat Electronics Ltd, Pune). About 100 prototype units will be made for pilot distribution and testing at TUV Rheinland India Pvt Ltd Bangalore.

The second innovation is the oxygen enrichment unit (OEU): One of the critical needs of COVID-19 patients is the need to meet the oxygen requirements due to their lungs being compromised. Oxygen enrichment unit (OEU) to increase the oxygen concentration from the ambient air of 21-22% to 38-40% have been developed by CSIR-NCL and Genrich Membranes, a start-up innovation venture founded by Dr. Ulhas Kharul, Head of Polymer Science & Engineering Division at NCL. OEU is hollow fiber membrane bundles for separation and filtration of ambient air to produce enriched oxygen for patients in home and hospital settings. The prototype units are ready at Pune and will be sent to TUV Rheinland India Pvt Ltd Bangalore for testing/validation. About 10 OEU machines will be assembled by NCL BEL in Pune and after the trials, scale up will be done.

5. Which among the following is/are transported by the blood plasma?

1. Carbon dioxide
2. Nitrogenous wastes
3. Glucose

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

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

Answer –d

Plasma is the liquid portion of blood. Plasma serves as a transport medium for delivering nutrients like glucose, amino acids, ions etc. to the cells of the various organs of the body and for transporting nitrogenous waste products derived from cellular metabolism to the kidneys, liver, and lungs for excretion. Carbon dioxide is transported by the plasma in dissolved form. It is also a transport system for blood cells, and it plays a critical role in maintaining normal blood pressure. Plasma helps to distribute heat throughout the body and to maintain homeostasis, or biological stability, including acid-base balance in the blood and body



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Economy

Question 1.

Which of the following are the benefits of bank merger?

1. Leveraging Economy of Scale
2. Better usage of equity and technological platform of existing banks.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer C:

Question 2.

Consider the following statements related to Bank Investment

Company (BIC):

1. It is proposed to set up by P.J. Nayak Committee on reforming the Governance of Public Sector Banks.
2. It would act as a holding company for the Public sector banks so as to avoid political interference and infuse professionalism into Banks.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only



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

Answer C:

Question 3.

Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. Under the Ethanol blending program Oil Marketing companies have to blend Ethanol up to 5% in the petrol.
2. Government has recently allowed the conversion of old sugar into ethanol.

Select the correct answer using the

codes given below:

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

Answer B:

Question 4.

Which of the following are correct about the PM Laghu Vyapari Yojana?

1. It has been introduced under the unorganised worker's social security Act. 2008
2. Aadhaar Card is not mandatory for the scheme.
3. Central govt will make equal contributions under it.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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



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D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer C:

Question 5.

Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. India ranks in top five in terms of gold reserves
2. World gold council is an intergovernmental organisation.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

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

Answer D:

Polity

Question 1:

As per the National Population Register, a usual resident is defined as a person who has resided in a local area for the past _____ months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next _____ months or more.

Options:

- A. Six, Nine
- B. Nine, Six
- C. Nine, Nine
- D. Six, Six

Answer: D

Explanation:

The objective of the NPR, is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country. Usual resident is defined as a person who has resided in a local area for the past six months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next six months or more. The database will contain demographic as well as biometric particulars. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR. Unlike the NRC, the NPR will also include foreigners living in India. The NPR is being developed under the principles of the Citizenship Act of 1955, and the Citizenship Rules set out in 2003

When was it recently conducted?



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The data for National Population Register was collected in 2010 alongwith the houselisting phase of Census of India 2011. It has been decided to update the National Population Register along with the Houselisting phase of Census 2021 during April to September 2020 in all the States/UTs except Assam.

Question 2:

Every person born in India between which of the following dates is a citizen of India given either of his/her parents is a citizen of the country at the time of his/her birth?

Options:

- A. 01.07.1987 and 02.12.2004
- B. 26.01.1950 and 01.07.1987
- C. 10.12.1992 and 03.12.2004
- D. 07.12.1950 and 26.01.1987

Answer: A

Explanation:

Acquiring Indian citizenship:

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, there are four ways in which Indian citizenship can be acquired: birth, descent, registration and naturalisation. The provisions are listed under Citizenship Act, 1955.

By birth:

1. Every person born in India on or after 26.01.1950 but before 01.07.1987 is an Indian citizen irrespective of the nationality of his/her parents.
2. Every person born in India between 01.07.1987 and 02.12.2004 is a citizen of India given either of his/her parents is a citizen of the country at the time of his/her birth.
3. Every person born in India on or after 3.12.2004 is a citizen of the country given both his/her parents are Indians or at least one parent is a citizen and the other is not an illegal migrant at the time of birth.

Question 3:

Consider the following statements regarding citizenship in India.

1. The amended Citizenship Act of 1955 does not provide for dual citizenship or dual nationality.
2. Any citizen of India, who by registration, naturalisation or otherwise voluntarily takes the citizenship of another country, shall upon such acquisition cease to be a citizen of India.
3. Cases of termination or cessation of citizenship will be determined ultimately by the Union Home Ministry.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:



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

Answer: C

Explanation:

By naturalisation:

A person can acquire citizenship by naturalisation if he/she is ordinarily resident of India for 12 years (throughout 12 months preceding the date of application and 11 years in the aggregate) and fulfils all qualifications in the third schedule of the Citizenship Act.

Dual citizenship:

The amended Citizenship Act of 1955 does not provide for dual citizenship or dual nationality. Any citizen of India, who by registration, naturalisation or otherwise voluntarily takes the citizenship of another country, shall upon such acquisition cease to be a citizen of India. Cases of termination or cessation of citizenship will be determined ultimately by courts of law.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019:

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill or CAB, which grants Indian citizenship to the non-Muslims of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh (Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhist, Jains and Parsis). The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill proposes to grant citizenship to the non-Muslims Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhist, Jains and Parsis — from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh who arrived in India before December 31, 2014. CAB paves way for Indian citizenship to lakhs of immigrants, who identify themselves with any of the given religions, even if they lacked any document to prove their residency. It also means that any immigrant who does not belong to the said communities would not be eligible for Indian citizenship. Any illegal immigrant from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh who belongs to these said communities will not be deported or imprisoned if they are not carrying any valid documents for their residency in India. The duration of the immigrants' residency was 11 years. The amended bill has reduced it to five years. This means that immigrants from the three countries and from the mentioned religions, who have entered India before December 31, 2014, would not be treated as illegal immigrants.

Question 4:

As per the guidelines issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), creamy layer includes sons and daughters of people with a gross annual income of _____ and above.

Options:

- A. Rs. 6 Lakh
- B. Rs. 8 Lakh
- C. Rs. 10 Lakh
- D. Rs. 12 Lakh

Answer: B

Explanation:



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The 1993 creamy layer norms - Following the SC judgment, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) had laid down categories under the creamy layer in 1993. According to the 1993 order, sons and daughters of Group A/Class I Officers of All India Central and State Services (direct recruits), Group B/Class II Officers of Central and State Services (direct recruits), employees of Public Sector Undertakings etc. and armed forces fall within the creamy layer, and, therefore, they would not be entitled to reservation benefits. The order also included within the creamy layer sons and daughters of people with a gross annual income of Rs 1 lakh above or possessing wealth above the exemption limit as prescribed under the Wealth Tax Act for a period of three consecutive years. It, however, clarified that income from salaries and agricultural land will not be clubbed, and asserted that the income criteria in terms of rupee will be modified taking into account the change in its value every three years. However, the ceiling has been revised only four times since 1993 — the last time it happened was in September 2017 when the cap was raised to Rs 8 lakh per annum.

Question 5:

The '6x6x6' strategy is being followed by the Union government to fight against which of the following conditions/diseases?

Options:

- A. AIDS
- B. Malaria
- C. Anaemia
- D. Tuberculosis

Answer: C

Explanation:

As many as 58.5% of children between the ages of 6 months and 59 months, and 53.1% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 years, are anaemic in the country. □ Anaemia means that either the level of red blood cells or the level of haemoglobin is lower than normal. □ When a person has anaemia, their heart has to work harder to pump the quantity of blood needed to get enough oxygen around their body. □ The data, based on the findings of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) IV (2015-16), divide the incidence of anaemia into 'Mild', 'Moderate' and 'Severe' kinds for both rural and urban India. □ Government had launched in 2018 Anaemia Mukh Bharat (AMB) Strategy under POSHAN Abhiyaan with the aim to reduce anaemia prevalence by three percentage points every year till 2022 □ AMB is a 6x6x6 strategy that is targeting six age groups, with six interventions and six institutional mechanisms. □ The six age groups include pre-school children (6-59 months), children (5-9 years), adolescent girls (10-19 years), adolescent boys (10-19 years), women of reproductive age group (15-49), and pregnant women and lactating mothers

International Relations

Question 1:



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Consider the following statements about the International Court of Justice.

1. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN).
2. It was inherited by the United Nations from the League of Nations.
3. Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:

- E. 2 & 3 only
- F. 1 & 2 only
- G. 1 & 3 only
- H. 1 only

Answer: C

Explanation:

Myanmar's civilian leader and Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi will head up a delegation to the UN's top court to defend a case accusing the mainly Buddhist country – Myanmar- of genocide against Rohingya Muslims. West African nation Gambia is due to open its case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in December, 2019 on behalf of the 57 member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. The complaint accuses Myanmar of breaching the 1948 UN Genocide Convention through its brutal military campaign in 2017, which targeted the Rohingya in Rakhine state.

About ICJ

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN).

Origin: It was established in June 1945 by the Charter of the United Nations and began work in April 1946.

HQ: The seat of the Court is at the Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands). Of the six principal organs of the United Nations, it is the only one not located in New York (United States of America).

Question 2:

'Dokdo islands', recently in the news, is a point of dispute between

Options:

- A. China and Japan
- B. Russia and Japan
- C. South Korea and Japan
- D. Philippines and Indonesia

Answer: C

Explanation:

South Korea has decided to continue a 2016 military intelligence-sharing agreement with Japan that it previously said it would terminate amid ongoing tensions over wartime history and trade. Previously, South Korea had decided to discontinue the intelligence pact GSOMIA by November 22, unless Japan decided to review its export control measures. The need for GSOMIA was felt amidst a growing threat from North Korea, especially when it started conducting nuclear tests and developing ballistic missiles. The agreement was eventually signed in November 2016. The US' interest in this



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agreement stems from its need to forge alliances in the northeast to be able to analyse and respond to any threats from North Korea. Significantly, it may be China's perception that GSOMIA is an attempt by the US-Japan South Korea trilateral alliance to contain Beijing, thereby maintaining a degree of opposition between this trilateral alliance and that of China-North Korea-Russia.

In recent years, the relationship between South Korea and Japan has deteriorated, given the territorial dispute over the Dokdo islands — known as Takeshima in Japan. While South Korea controls them, the islands are claimed by Japan.

Question 3:

Which of the following nations has been demanding the return of Chagos islands from the UK?

Options:

- A. Mauritius
- B. Indonesia
- C. Argentina
- D. Japan

Answer: A

Explanation:

Mauritius called the UK an “illegal colonial occupier”, after UK ignored a UN mandated deadline to return the Chagos Islands, a small archipelago in the Indian Ocean, to Mauritius. Mauritius has argued that the Chagos Islands has been a part of its territory since at least the 18th century. UK broke the archipelago away from Mauritius in 1965 and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches from the Seychelles in the region to form the British Indian Ocean Territory. After Mauritius gained independence from the UK in 1968, the United Kingdom refused to return the Chagos Islands to Mauritius UK claimed in petitions submitted to the Permanent Court of Arbitration(at The Hague) that Chagos island was required to “accommodate the United States’ desire to use certain islands in the Indian Ocean for defence purposes”.

The largest island on the Chagos Islands archipelago, Diego Garcia, is where the US and the UK operate a large military base and was also used as a US military base for the US-led attacks against Afghanistan and Iraq in the 2000s. In June 2017, at the UN General Assembly, 94 countries voted in support of Mauritius’ resolution to seek an advisory opinion on the legal status of the Chagos Islands from the International Court of Justice in The Hague. In February 2019, the UN’s highest court of justice, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), ordered the UK to return the Chagos Islands to Mauritius “as rapidly as possible. For now, the UK might possibly be searching for reassurance in the fact that the ICJ ruling is not binding and no immediate sanctions or adverse actions will be taken against it.

Question 4:

Consider the following statements about BRICS.

1. South Africa joined the BRICS in 2010
2. All members of BRICS are members of G20
3. BRICS represent over 3.1 billion people, 41% of the world population.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:



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

Answer: D

Explanation:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was in Brazil for the 11th BRICS Summit. This year's summit is significant for India as the joint working group on counter-terrorism has decided to constitute five sub-working groups on counterterrorism in areas like terrorist financing, use of the internet for terrorist purposes, countering radicalisation, issue of foreign terrorist fighters and capacity-building.

The summit will revolve around "economic growth for an innovative future" and focus on "cooperation on digital economy" and "fight against transnational crime". BRICS Business Council will take place, and BRICS MoU among Trade and Investment Promotion agencies will be signed. BRICS: Acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. South Africa joined in 2010. All are members of G20. Represent over 3.1 billion people, 41% of the world population. As of 2018 BRICS have US\$40.55 trillion (32% of World's GDP PPP). Bilateral relations among BRICS nations will be conducted on the basis of non-interference, equality, and mutual benefit.

Question 5:

Consider the following statements about the New Development Bank.

1. It is based in Shanghai.
2. This multilateral development bank operated by the BRICS states.
3. The bank will have starting capital of \$50 billion, with capital increased to \$100 billion over time.
4. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa will initially contribute \$10 billion each to bring the total to \$50 billion.

Which of these statements is correct?

Options:

- A. 2 & 4 only
- B. 1 & 3 only
- C. 1, 2 & 4 only
- D. All of the above

Answer: D

Explanation:

New Development Bank based in Shanghai. Multilateral development bank operated by the BRICS states. The bank's primary focus of lending will be infrastructure projects with authorized lending of up to \$34 billion annually. The bank will have starting capital of \$50 billion, with capital increased to \$100 billion over time. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa will initially contribute \$10 billion each to bring the total to \$50 billion. BRICS CRA: BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement Framework for providing protection against global liquidity pressures. This includes currency issues where members' national currencies are being adversely affected by global financial pressures. The CRA is generally seen as a competitor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and along with the New Development Bank is viewed as an example of increasing South-South cooperation.



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History

QUESTION 1. The so called 'Black Hole' tragedy refers to-

- Confinement of the English prisoners in a dark cell by the Nawab.
- Alleged imprisonment of 146 Englishmen into a small room, resulting in the death of most of them.
- Covering the heads of the English prisoners from fort William with black masks which suffocated them to death.
- Killing of Bengal peasants by the Englishmen for the refusal of rents.

Ans. b.

Explanation:

- **Black Hole of Calcutta**, scene of an incident on June 20, 1756, in which a number of Europeans were imprisoned in Calcutta by Siraj ud daullah and many died.
- [John Zephaniah Holwell](#), one of the British prisoners and an employee of the [East India Company](#), said that, after the fall of Fort William, the surviving British soldiers, Anglo-Indian soldiers, and Indian civilians were imprisoned overnight in conditions so cramped that many people died from suffocation and [heat exhaustion](#), and that 123 of 146 prisoners of war imprisoned there died.

Question 2. Who was the secretary of state for India at the time of the foundations of the Indian National Congress?

- Lord Morley.
- Lord Randolph Churchill.
- Lord Hamilton
- Lord Cross.

Ans. b.

Explanation:

- When the Congress met for the first time on 28 December 1885, the Secretary of State for India was Lord Randolph Churchill, whose tenure was from 24 June 1885 to 28 January 1886, just 6 months.
- After that Earl of Kimberley again became secretary of state for India and served in this capacity from 6 February 1886 to 20 July 1886.

Question 3. Who are known as the liberators of the Indian press?

- Sir Charles Metcalfe.
- Lord Minto.
- Sir Thomas Munro.
- Lord Macaulay.
- Lord Wellesley.



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Select the correct code:

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

Ans. c.

Explanation:

- James Augustus Hicky may rightly be called the father of Indian journalism.
- However, due to the liberal policy towards press, Lord Metcalfe is known as Liberator of India Press but soon he became a victim of party politics in England and was succeeded by Lord Auckland in 1836.
- The Press of India was liberated on the 15th of September, 1835, by Sir Charles Metcalfe.
- Macaulay who headed the law commission, also favoured the new Press act, pointed out that the existing licensing regulations were wrong and the press in India should be free. The proposed Act, was intended to establish a perfect uniformity in the laws regarding the press throughout the Indian Empire.
- Macaulay's new Act found favour with Metcalfe. On August 3, 1835, Metcalfe the successor of Bentinck with the unanimous support of the Council passed the Press Act of 1835- the most liberal Press Act in Indian history. The new law was made applicable to the entire territories of the East India Company. The law favoured the growth of the Indian press.

Question 4. Which of the following statements about the Ilbert bill is/are not correct?

- 1. The controversy around the Ilbert bill helped Indian nationalism to take up an organised form.
- 2. According to the original bill, Indian judge could try European also.
- 3. It was passed without any amendment despite the vehement opposition of the British residents in India.
- 4. The Indians did not organise any campaign in favour of the bill.

Select the correct code:

- a. 1 and 4 .
- b. 2 and 3.
- c. 3 and 4.
- d. 4 only.

Ans. c.

Explanation:

- Ilbert Bill is named after Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, who was appointed as legal adviser to the Council of India.
- The bill was introduced in 1883 by Viceroy Ripon, who actually desired to abolish the racial prejudice from the Indian Penal Code.
- Ripon had proposed an amendment for existing laws in the country and to allow Indian judges and magistrates the jurisdiction to try British offenders in criminal cases at the District level.



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- So naturally, the Europeans living in India looked it as a Humiliation and the introduction of the bill led to intense opposition in Britain as well as India (by the British residents). So, it was withdrawn but was reintroduced and enacted in 1884 in a severely compromised state.
- The amended bill had the provisions that the Europeans would be conferred on European and Indian District Magistrates and Sessions Judges alike. However, a defendant would in all cases have the right to claim trial by a jury of which at least half the members must be European.
- Thus, this enactment held that Europeans criminals would be heard only by the Indian Judges “helped by the European Judges”.
- The passage of this bill opened the eyes of the Indians and deepened antagonism between the British and Indians.
- The result was wider nationalism and establishment of Indian National Congress in the next year.
- The amended Ilbert Bill was passed on 25 January 1884, **as the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Act 1884.**

Question 5. Which of the following was not the new industries introduced by the Britishers?

- Cotton.
- Iron and steel.
- Cement.
- Ornaments.

Ans. d.

Explanation:

- Large scale private industry between 1850 and 1914 is associated with the developments in mainly plantations like jute, cotton, cement and steel. Beginning of these modern Indian industries was the ‘product of India’s economic contact with Britain’.
- However, the credit for the development of large scale manufacture of steel in India goes to Jamshedji Tata and his son Dorabji. Tata Iron and Steel Company were set up in 1907 and it started function of producing pig iron in 1911 and steel ingots in 1912.
- Ornaments designing had been an old aged profession among Indians. Thus, it was not the new industry introduced by the Britishers in the 19th and early 20th Century.

Geography

- 1) **UNCLOS** refers to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Consider the following statements on that :-
 - (i) It was a replacement for the quad-treaty 1958 Convention on the High Seas.
 - (ii) It came into force in 1994.

Choose the correct alternative :-

- only i
- only ii
- both



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(d) none

Answer c

Explanation :-

ANTI-MARITIME PIRACY BILL: The Bill seeks to provide for stringent punishment, including death penalty or life imprisonment, to those involved in piracy at sea. It was introduced with an aim to promote the safety and security of India's maritime trade, and the safety of the crew members. The government is bringing the law as part of commitment made by India while signing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 1982. The UNCLOS was ratified by India in 1995.

External Affairs Minister Jaishankar introduced the Anti-Maritime bill in parliament. It was introduced on the 10th of December, 2019 after the kidnapping of 18 Indians aboard in Nigeria.

The Bill includes death penalty to those involved in piracy at sea. Under Section 3 of the Bill, persons involved in the act of piracy shall be punished with life imprisonment or death penalty.

It enables the Central Government, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the concerned High Court to specify certain courts as Designated Courts for speedy trial of offences of piracy under the proposed legislation.

UNCLOS: It refers to United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It is also called the Law of the Sea Convention or the Law of the Sea treaty. It is an International Agreement that resulted from the third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, which took place between 1973 and 1982. As of June 2016, 167 countries and the European Union have joined in the Convention. The Convention, concluded in 1982. It replaced the quad-treaty 1958 Convention on the High Seas. It came into force in 1994, a year after Guyana became the 60th nation to ratify the treaty. The Law of the Sea Convention defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources.

- 2) **The Recycling of Ships Bill, 2019** is a Bill passed by the Parliament for safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships in India. Consider the following statements on that :-
- (i) Ships to be recycled in India will need to obtain a 'Ready for Recycling Certificate' in accordance with Hong Kong Convention.
 - (ii) The Bill will be applicable only to Indian ships.

Choose the correct alternative :-

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

Answer a



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Explanation :-

The Recycling of Ships Bill, 2019: It is a Bill passed by the Parliament for safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships in India. It was passed On December 9, 2019 with Rajya Sabha approving it after its clearance in the Lok Sabha. Shipping Minister, Mansukh Mandaviya moved the bill. It shall ensure environment friendly recycling process of Ships and adequate safety of the yard workers.

The bill restricts the use of hazardous materials on ships and regulates recycling of ships. It defines ship recycling as dismantling it at a facility to recover the components and materials for reuse and taking care of the hazardous material so produced. Under the legislation, every ship recycler must ensure safe and environmentally sound removal and management of hazardous materials from a ship. On violating these provisions, the ship recycler will be liable to pay environmental damages and cleanup operation compensation as prescribed. The Bill joins together the existing Ship breaking Code (revised), 2013 and the provisions of the Hong Kong Convention, 2009. So, now, ships to be recycled in India will need to obtain a 'Ready for Recycling Certificate' in accordance with Hong Kong Convention. The Bill will help the ship recycling industry and generate more jobs in the country. The Bill will raise brand value of India's Ships Recycling Yards located at Mumbai Port, Kolkata Port, Azhikkal (Kerala) and Alang (Gujarat). 10% of country's Secondary steel needs, which is an outcome of Recycling of Ships, will be met in an eco-friendly manner. The National Authority will be the nodal agency to supervise, monitor and administer the recycling operations. The Bill will be applicable to any new or existing ship which is registered in India, the ships entering a port or terminal in India or the territorial waters of India, ships owned and operated by an administration or any warships that are used on government non-commercial service, ship recycling facilities operating in India.

3) Consider the following statements on **Aircraft (Amendment) bill, 2019** :-

- (i) The maximum limit of fine is increased from the existing ten lakhs rupees to twenty lakhs rupees.
- (ii) It aims to maintain the safety standards as per International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Choose the correct alternative :-

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

Answer b

Explanation :-

Aircraft (Amendment) bill, 2019: It is a bill approved by the Union Cabinet on December 11, 2019 to amend the Aircraft Act, 1934.



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The Bill is intended to carry out amendments to the Aircraft Act, 1934 (XXII of 1934). The Bill enhances the maximum limit of fine from the existing ten lakhs rupees to one crore rupees failing to comply norms of Government of India. It will increase the safety and security of aircraft operations in the country. It aims to fulfill the safety requirements of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). It will bring the regulations of all areas for air navigation within the ambit of the Act. It will enable three regulatory bodies namely Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) to become more effective in the level of safety and security of aircraft operations in the country.

ICAO: It refers to International Civil Aviation Organization. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations charged with coordinating and regulating international air travel. It was established in 1944 by Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention). Its headquarters is in Quebec, Canada. Its council is composed of 36 states which are elected for a three-year term. It changes the principles and techniques of international air navigation and fosters the planning and development of international air transport to ensure safe and orderly growth.

- 4) Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 has amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 to grant Indian citizenship to illegal migrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who entered India on or before 31 December 2014. The amendment is not applicable to the areas covered under the Inner Line Permit. Which states are included in Inner Line Permit :-

- (i) Tripura
- (ii) Arunachal Pradesh
- (iii) Nagaland
- (iv) Mizoram

Choose the correct alternative :-

- (a) i, ii and iv
- (b) i, ii and iii
- (c) i, iii and iv
- (d) ii, iii and iv

Answer d

Explanation :-

CAB: It refers to Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019. CAB is a bill amending the Citizenship Act of 1955 to grant Indian citizenship to illegal migrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, who entered India on or before 31 December 2014. It also seeks to relax the requirement of residence in India for citizenship by naturalization from 11 years to 5 years for these migrants. President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019, turning it into an Act. The Act has come into effect with its publication in the official gazette. The Act was passed by both Houses of Parliament earlier this week.



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with a clear majority. The amendment is not applicable to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram or Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and in the areas covered under the Inner Line Permit. The Inner Line Permit regime is applicable in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Mizoram. It also proposes to incorporate a sub-section (d) to Section 7, providing for cancellation of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) registration where the OCI card-holder has violated any provision of the Citizenship Act or any other law in force.

Citizenship Act, 1955: According to the provisions of the Citizenship Act, 1955, illegal migrants can either be kept in jail or sent back to their country under the Foreigners Act, 1946 and the Passports (Entry into India) Act, 1920. These two Acts empower the central government to check the entry, exit and residence of foreigners within India. A person is labeled an "illegal immigrant" if he or she has entered India without travel documents or has overstayed the date specified in the documents.

- 5) **Ministry of Tourism:** The ministry has identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country under the Iconic Tourist Sites Development Project. Which is not included in these 17 sites :-
- (a) Qutub Minar
 - (b) Taj Mahal
 - (c) Khajuraho
 - (d) Vivekanand Rock Memorial

Answer d

Explanation :-

Ministry of Tourism: The ministry has identified 17 sites in 12 clusters in the country under the Iconic Tourist Sites Development Project. The 17 sites are TajMahal and Fatehpur Sikri in Uttar Pradesh, Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra, Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort and Qutub Minar in Delhi, Colva beach in Goa, Amer Fort in Rajasthan, Somnath and Dholavira in Gujarat, Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh, Hampi in Karnataka, Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu, Kaziranga in Assam, Kumarakom in Kerala and Mahabodhi in Bihar. The monuments taken up for development under the Iconic Tourist Sites Development Project fall under the jurisdiction of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and State Archaeology Departments.