

Solution: 57 on 2, 32 on 17 and 97 on 3.

Question # 8:

(04 points)

An old woman goes to market and a horse steps on her basket and crushes the eggs. The horse rider offers to pay for the damages and asks her how many eggs she had brought. She does not remember the exact number, but when she had taken them out three at a time, there were 1 egg left. When she took them four at a time, there was one egg left. When she had taken them out five at a time, then too there was one egg left and when she took them seven at a time, there was no egg left. What is the smallest number of eggs she could have had?

Solution:

We will follow the notation used in the proof of the Chinese remainder theorem.

We have $m = m_1 * m_2 * m_3 * m_4 = 420$.

Also, by simple inspection we see that:

$y_1 = 2$ is an inverse for $M_1 = 140$ modulo 3,

$y_2 = 1$ is an inverse for $M_2 = 105$ modulo 4,

$y_3 = 4$ is an inverse for $M_3 = 84$ modulo 5 and

$y_4 = 2$ is an inverse for $M_4 = 60$ modulo 7.

The solutions to the system are then all numbers x such that

$$x = a_1 M_1 y_1 + a_2 M_2 y_2 + a_3 M_3 y_3 = (1 * 140 * 2) + (1 * 105 * 1) + (1 * 84 * 4) + (0 * 60 * 2) = 721 \pmod{420} = 301.$$

She could have 301 eggs.

BEST OF LUCK!