

ANALOG IAS ACADEMY



JANUARY MONTH

CURRENT AFFAIRS – KEY AND EXPLANATION

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1. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

It defines talaq as talaq-e-biddat or any other similar form of talaq pronounced by a Muslim man resulting in instant and irrevocable divorce. Talaq-e-biddat refers to the practice under Muslim personal laws where pronouncement of the word 'talaq' thrice in one sitting by a Muslim man to his wife results in an instant and irrevocable divorce.

The Bill makes declaration of talaq a cognizable offence, attracting up to three years' imprisonment with a fine. (A cognizable offence is one for which a police officer may arrest an accused person without warrant.) The offence will be cognizable only if information relating to the offence is given by: (i) the married woman (against whom talaq has been declared), or (ii) any person related to her by blood or marriage.

2. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

It is enforced by the Ministry of Home Affairs. According to The Disturbed Areas (Special Courts) Act, 1976 once declared 'disturbed', the area must maintain status quo for a minimum of 3 months. The Home Ministry said the central government is of the opinion that the area comprising the whole of state of Nagaland is in such a disturbed and dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in aid of civilian power is necessary.

3. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The Service for Healthy Use of Technology (SHUT) clinic has developed a Digital Detox app that has been found to be effective in bringing about behavioral changes among users. The app asks

users to specify their addiction-related symptoms, such as sleep disturbance, eye strain, loneliness, boredom, or excess Facebook usage. It asks users if their mobile usage affects their academics, work or interpersonal relationships, and has a feature where you also have the option of sharing your progress with friends.

4. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

As part of its initiatives to empower women, the Odisha government, last year, launched this scheme to provide free sanitary napkins to school girls across the state. The scheme will be implemented by the health and family welfare department of the state at a cost of 70 crore per year. The Centre's recently introduced 'Ujjwala Sanitary Napkins' initiative is being an attempt to counter the 'Khushi' scheme launched by the Odisha State government.

5. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The measures are adopted for sustainable management of agriculture, forestry and fisheries by 2020. The values of biodiversity are integrated into national and state planning processes, development programmes and poverty alleviation strategies by 2020.

6. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The 'Aichi Targets' were adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at its Nagoya conference.

The Aichi Biodiversity Targets with which States will meet in order to achieve the 5 Strategic Goals laid out in the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Goal A - Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

Strategic Goal B - Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

Strategic Goal C - To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

Strategic Goal D - Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

Strategic Goal E - Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building.

7. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

NASA's OSIRIS-Rex spacecraft has set a new milestone in cosmic exploration by entering orbit around an asteroid, Bennu, the smallest object ever to be circled by a human-made spaceship.

8. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) is a component under the PMAY-Urban. Under the scheme, the central government provides interest subsidy or purchase / construction / extension / improvement of a house to cater Economical Weaker Section (EWS)/Lower Income Group (LIG)/Middle Income Groups (MIG).

The CLSS is being implemented by two central nodal agencies in India, namely Housing Urban Development Corp and National Housing Bank.

9. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The bi-annual Fiscal Stability Report discussing issues relating to the development and regulation of the financial sector has been released by the RBI.

10. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Shaala Siddhi is a School Standards and Evaluation Framework which enables the schools to self-evaluate based on seven key domains. It has been developed by National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA).

11. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Performance Indicators for Elementary School Teachers (PINDICS) is a framework for assessing teacher performance and providing constructive feedback for further improvement. It has been developed by NCERT.

12. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Diksha Portal has been launched to provide a digital platform for teachers to learn and train themselves and connect with teacher community.

13. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The government of Pakistan has decided to launch Panda Bonds to raise loans from Chinese capital markets. Launching of Panda Bonds is part of Pakistan's plans to move towards giving the Chinese currency, a status at par with that enjoyed by the US dollar.

14. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

India is likely to achieve 100 per cent household electrification before 2019 Republic Day. India has already provided electricity access to 2.39

crore out of the targeted 2.49 crore households under the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana.

15. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi). The Survey will capture payment habits of individuals in cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati.

16. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

India is the member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) but Sri Lanka and Indonesia are not the member of it.

17. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The proposals of the states would be scrutinised by the Union Home Ministry according to the existing guidelines in consultations with agencies concurred. Recently the Union Home Ministry has approved the proposal of the Uttar Pradesh Government to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj.

18. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Indian Bridge Management System (IBMS) was launched by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways to create an inventory of all bridges in the country and rate their structural condition so that timely repair and rehabilitation work can be carried out based on the criticality of the structure.

19. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Providing last mile connectivity and electricity connections to all un-electrified households in rural areas.

Providing Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) based standalone system for un-electrified households located in remote and inaccessible villages / habitations, where grid extension is not feasible or cost effective.

20. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

As part of the enhanced outreach programme of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), a new platform named "Samwad with Students" (SwS) was launched in Bengaluru today. Through the SwS initiative, ISRO aims to constantly engage youngsters across India to capture their scientific temperament. The new conversation mission will inspire students cutting across schools and colleges. The first SwS event saw 40 wards and 10 teachers from select schools interact with ISRO Chairman Dr K Sivan at the Anthariksh Bhavan.

21. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Bird watchers and researchers recently sighted Cinereous vulture in Hazaribagh in Jharkhand. Cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) draws its name from "monachus", which means hooded (like a monk) in Latin. It is also known as the black vulture, monk vulture, or Eurasian black vulture. It is classified as Near Threatened under the IUCN Red List.

22. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Chief Justice of India is the Patron-in-Chief and the Senior most Judge of the Supreme Court of India is the Executive Chairman of the Authority.

23. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

PARIVESH" is a workflow-based application, based on the concept of web architecture. It has been rolled out for online submission, monitoring and management of proposals submitted by Project Proponents to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC), as well as to the State Level Environmental Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAA). The system has been designed, developed and hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, with technical support from National Informatics Centre, (NIC).

24. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The government of West Bengal has announced the Krishak Bandhu scheme to address the farm distress in the state.

25. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Alkaline Phosphatase or ALP is an indicator of milk quality. Its presence even after pasteurization indicates presence of microbes that may not have been rendered inactive with pasteurization. Scientists at Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, have developed a simple paper kit that can test freshness of milk and tell

how well it has been pasteurized. Aided with a smart phone app, the kit can help ensure that milk is consumed before it turns too sour.

26. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The amendment permits children, who would turn 18 years old, to opt out of the system. The amendments make sharing of Aadhaar details voluntary for opt out of the system. The bill makes it clear that anyone not offering Aadhaar cannot be denied any service, be it a bank account or a SIM card. The bill provides for stiff penalties for violation of norms set for the use of Aadhaar.

27. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2016 seeks to allow illegal migrants from certain minority communities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan eligible for Indian citizenship. In other words, it amends the Citizenship Act of 1955.

The Bill provides that the registration of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders may be cancelled if they violate any law.

28. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Recently Citizens' engagement forum Local Circles has released a report on challenges faced by start-ups in India. The report is based on responses from over 15,000 start-ups, SMEs and entrepreneurs.

Angel Tax is a 30% tax that is levied on the funding received by startups from an external investor. However, this 30% tax is levied when startups receive angel funding at a valuation

higher than its 'fair market value'. It is counted as income to the company and is taxed.

29. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Bharatmala will look to improve connectivity particularly on economic corridors, border areas and far flung areas with an aim of quicker movement of cargo and boosting exports.

30. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The Government has launched the "Green – Ag: Transforming Indian Agriculture for global environmental benefits and the conservation of critical biodiversity and forest landscapes" in association with Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The project would be implemented in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in high-conservation-value landscapes of five States namely,

- (i) Madhya Pradesh: Chambal Landscape
- (ii) Mizoram: Dampa Landscape
- (iii) Odisha: Similipal Landscape
- (iv) Rajasthan: Desert National Park Landscape
- (v) Uttarakhand: Corbett-Rajaji Landscape.

The Green-Ag project seeks to integrate biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land management objectives and practices into Indian agriculture.

31. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The World Bank serves as the GEF Trustee, administering the GEF Trust Fund.

GEF funds are available to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to meet the objectives of the international environmental conventions and agreements.

32. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The Ujjwala Sanitary Napkins initiative by three oil marketing companies – IOCL, BPCL and HPCL – was launched by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. Mr. Pradhan said the mission, which forms part of the CSR initiative of OMCs in Odisha, is aimed to educate women on female hygiene and health, improve accessibility to low cost eco-friendly sanitary pads and boost rural employment and economy.

The three companies will set up 100 manufacturing units at the Common Service Centers (CSC) covering 93 Blocks across 30 districts of Odisha at an estimated cost of ₹2.94 crore.

At least 10 Ujjwala beneficiary women will get employment at each CSC. Each facility will have a capacity to produce 1,200-2,000 pads per day and will have a sterilization room to ensure that the napkins are sterilized before they are packed for use by rural women.

33. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The KALIA scheme has been launched by the government of Odisha.

The KALIA scheme will cover 92% of the cultivators, loaned and non-loaned farmers, sharecroppers and landless agricultural laborers.

34. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

AFSPA empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice, in the region or State which has been declared as 'disturbed' under AFSPA.

Currently the entire state of Nagaland has been declared as 'disturbed area' for next 6 months under AFSPA.

35. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Digital Detox app developed by the Service for Healthy Use of Technology (SHUT) clinic in National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences aims to cure mobile addiction in people.

36. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Ultima Thule is a mysterious distant object in the Kuiper Belt. Ultima Thule is a mysterious distant object in the Kuiper Belt.

37. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The monuments of national importance are declared by the Archaeological Survey of India. Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of monuments of national importance, followed by Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

38. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Plain packaging standardizes the appearance of tobacco products. Other than brand and product names displayed in a standard colour and font style, it prohibits the use of logos, colours, brand images or promotional information.

Besides increasing the effectiveness of health warnings, the idea is to reduce the attractiveness of tobacco products, with no scope for using packaging to advertise and promote consumption. India is yet to take up plain packaging of tobacco products.

39. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Western Ghats lie in the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Two committees led by Madhav Gadgil and K.Kasturirangan have provided suggestions for the conservation of Western Ghats.

40. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Each house of the Parliament, the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha, has a committee on Government resources. There shall be a Committee on Government Assurances to scrutinize the assurances, promises, undertakings, etc., given by Ministers, from time to time, on the floor of the Council. The extent to which such assurances, promises, undertakings, etc., have been implemented and when implemented whether such implementation has taken place within the minimum time necessary for the purpose.

41. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The year 2018-19 was declared by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways as the YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION.

Bhoomi Rashi portal has been launched for extensively speeding up notification for land acquisition. The project envisages development of easy access to the four prominent Dham's, namely, Gangotri, Yamunotri, Kedranath and Badrinath, situated in the state of Utrakhand.

42. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

As part of the enhanced outreach programme of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), a new platform named "Samwad with Students" (SwS) was launched in Bengaluru today. Through

the SwS initiative, ISRO aims to constantly engage youngsters across India to capture their scientific temperament. The new conversation mission will inspire students cutting across schools and colleges. The first SwS event saw 40 wards and 10 teachers from select schools interact with ISRO Chairman Dr K Sivan at the Anthariksh Bhavan.

43. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The Ministry of Home Affairs has launched the National Database on Sexual Offenders (NDSO) on 20th September 2018

This online facility is exclusively for the use of law enforcement agencies having access to Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS). NDSO is a central database of sexual offenders in the country which is being maintained by the NCRB.

44. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Interest Equalisation Scheme targets the Pre- & Post Shipment Rupee Export Credit. The following are the features of the Interest Equalisation Scheme:

- (i) The rate of interest equalisation would be 3 percent. The scheme would be available to all exports of MSME and 416 tariff lines. Scheme would not be available to merchant exporters.
- (ii) The duration of the scheme would be five years with effect from 1.4.2015.
- (iii) The scheme would be funded from the funds available with Department of Commerce under non-plan during 2015-16 and the restructured scheme would be funded from plan side from 2016-17 onwards,

- (iv) Ministry of Commerce & Industry may place funds in advance with RBI for requirement of one month and reimbursement can be made on a monthly basis through a revolving fund system, on completion of three years of operation of the scheme, Department of Commerce may initiate a study on impact of the scheme on export promotion and its further continuation. The study may be done through one of the IIMs.

45. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The RTI applications received in the year 2017-18 saw an increase by 26% than what was reported during 2016-17

Highest percentage of RTI applications rejected was reported by High Court of Delhi (18%) and Ministry of Home Affairs (15.16%). The Central PAs rejected 4% (63,206) of the RTI applications processed during 2017-18 showing a downward trend in rejections which have come down by 2.59% from the 6.59% reported in 2016-17.

46. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has recently launched the BhoomiRashi portal. In the past years, acquisition of land for the purpose of National Highway projects, payment of compensation to the land owners etc. were done manually by physical movement of documents in the form of files. However, in that procedure some constraints viz. delay in issuing notification, errors in the land/area details etc. were being faced. In order to overcome these issues, to cut short delays and avoid parking of public funds with the Competent Authority for Land Acquisition (CALA), Ministry has developed a web-

based Utility –Bhoomi Rashi to fully digitize and automate the entire process of land acquisition. Bhoomi Rashi will fully digitize and automate the entire process of land acquisition.

47. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK) scheme focuses on creating awareness and equipping women with information on issues of gender equality and empowerment

Student Volunteers including, NSS/NCC Cadre will be engaged to undertake activities of Mahila Shakti Kendras.

48. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) is an instrument designed to enhance transparency in international climate politics. Its aim is to put political and social pressure on those countries that have, until now, failed to take ambitious action on climate protection, and to highlight those countries with best practice climate policies.

49. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The traditional wooden toy-and-doll craft, with perfected lacquer-ware of Channapatna (on the Bengaluru-Mysuru highway), may be protected by a geographical indication (GI) tag but today a crisis stares the industry in the face. The second and third generation craftsmen are looking at other professions and migrating to cities for better income.

The Channapatna handcraft can be traced to the reign of Tipu Sultan who invited artisans from Persia to train local artisans in the making

of the wooden toys. Although thousands of families are even now engaged in the trade, the signature hand dexterity associated with Channapatna lacquerware didn't survive.

The Channapatna craft has been granted GI tag.

50. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

To reduce losses due to non-payment of electricity bills and promote solar energy, Maharashtra state government has launched Atal Solar Krishi Pump Yojana.

Eligibility: Under the Scheme, farmers with less than five acres will have to pay 5% of the cost of a 3 HP solar pump while farmers with more than five acres will get a 5 HP solar pump for Rs 30000.

The Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co Ltd (Msedcl) is the implementing agency.

51. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Provide a sustainable service model that obviates the need for upfront capital investment as well as additional revenue expenditure to pay for procurement of LED lights.

Mitigate climate change by implementing energy efficient LED based street lighting.

Reduce energy consumption in lighting which helps DISCOMs to manage peak demand.

52. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

China's Chang'e-4 lunar rover scripted history on January 3 when it made the first-ever soft landing on the far side of the moon and sent back close-up images of the previously unexplored region, a giant leap for cosmic exploration and a

major boost to the Communist nation's quest to become a space superpower.

Chang'e-4, named after a Chinese moon goddess and comprising a lander and a rover, touched down at the preselected landing area at 177.6 degrees east longitude and 45.5 degrees south latitude on the far side of the moon at 10:26 a.m. (Beijing time), China National Space Administration (CNSA) said.

It landed on the Von Karman crater in the South Pole-Aitken basin and then sent back a picture of the landing site shot by one of the monitor cameras on the probe's lander, marking the world's first image taken on the moon's far side.

The first-ever soft landing is being a major milestone in space exploration because unlike previous moon missions that have landed on the Earth-facing side, this is the first time any craft has landed on the unexplored and rugged far side of the moon. The successful landing formally inaugurated the world's first expedition to the far side that never faces the Earth and is expected to fulfil scientists' long-held aspiration to closely observe the enormous region, state-run China Daily reported.

53. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Io is the innermost of the four Galilean moons of the planet Jupiter. It is the fourth-largest moon, has the highest density of all the moons. It is believed to be the most volcanic body in the Solar system.

54. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Kadaknath Chicken is traditionally reared by the Jhabua'sadivasi communities from Madhya

Pradesh. GI tag has been granted to the Kadaknath Chicken.

55. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Jharkhand has the highest dropout rate among the states (due to its high tribal population). Dropout rate among Adivasis is the highest among all the communities. There is no gender disparity among in dropouts.

56. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The LCA is being designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) in Bengaluru. The IAF has asked HAL to make 40 LCA. Of this, 20 will be in the advanced 'FOC' (final operational clearance) format. The remaining 20 are in the earlier IOC (initial operational clearance) version.

The FOC tag signals that the novice LCA is fully equipped and fit for battle. It adds many features over the IOC version, which Tejas achieved in December 2013. The IOC enabled the IAF to start flying it and in getting acquainted with its competences. Until then, only test pilots and the ADA handled Tejas.

57. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been implementing this scheme for promotion of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in the age group of 10-19 years primarily in rural areas as part of the Rashtriya Kishor SwasthyaKaryakram.

The scheme has the following objectives:

To increase awareness on menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls

To increase access to and use of good quality sanitary napkins among adolescent girls residing primarily in rural areas

To ensure safe disposal of sanitary napkins in an environmentally friendly manner.

58. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) is a joint venture of NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation, Rural Electrification Corporation and POWERGRID. It was set up under Ministry of Power (India) to facilitate implementation of energy efficiency projects.

EESL undertakes social audits in all states post the completion of the Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP).

59. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) is an instrument covering 58 countries and supposed to enhance transparency in international climate politics. Its aim is to encourage political and social pressure on those countries which have, up to now, failed to take ambitious actions on climate protection as well as to highlight countries with best-practice climate policies.

60. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

NASA's latest planet-hunting probe has discovered a new world outside our solar system, orbiting a dwarf star 53 light years away. The planet, named HD 21749b, orbits a bright, nearby dwarf star about 53 light years away, in

the constellation Reticulum, and appears to have the longest orbital period of the three planets so far identified by TESS. This is the third new planet confirmed by the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) since its launch in April last year.

61. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Swachh Rail Survey 2018 recorded a general improvement in the cleanliness of stations. The survey gives score based on process evaluation, direct observation and citizen feedback.

62. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The central bank has made it clear that no charges should be recovered from the customer for availing this service. Tokenisation involves a process in which a unique token masks sensitive card detail. The token is then used to perform card transactions in contact-less mode at Point of Sale (POS) terminals, Quick Response (QR) code payments, etc.

63. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, has launched an online campaign, '#www: Web- Wonder Women'. The Campaign aims to discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been driving positive agenda of social change via social media. Smt. Maneka Sanjay Gandhi, Union Minister for Women and Child Development; Mr. Colin Crowell, Global Head, Public Policy, Twitter; and Ms. Sohini Bhattacharya, President & CEO, Breakthrough, were present during the launch.

64. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Between 2015-2018, the number of Rohingya arrested by the BSF was the highest in the year 2018. Between 2015 and 2018, the Border Security Force (BSF) arrested around 478 Rohingya along the India-Bangladesh borders, with 230 held in 2018 alone.

While the number of arrests in 2015 and 2016 were 54 and 71, respectively, it rose to 123 in 2017.

The border in West Bengal is said to be the most porous stretch and used for illegal crossings. As recently as December 21, 2018, a group of 14 Rohingya, including six children, were apprehended for illegally entering the country at Habra in the State's North 24 Parganas. Rohingya apprehended in other States like Manipur have also claimed that they had entered India through West Bengal.

65. Answer: (a)**Explanation:**

Humans can get infected by the Monkey fever.

KFD is caused by the Kyasanur Forest Disease Virus (KFDV). The virus was identified in 1957 when it was isolated from a sick monkey from the Kyasanur Forest in Karnataka (formerly Mysore State).

Since then, between 400-500 human's cases per year have been reported. Hard ticks (*Hemaphysalis spinigera*) are the reservoir of the KFD virus and once infected, remain so for life. Rodents, shrews, and monkeys are common hosts for KFDV after being bitten by an infected tick, KFDV can cause epizootics with high fatality in primates.

66. Answer: (c)**Explanation:**

Lakhonkhol is a dance form from Cambodia, which depicts the Ramayana.

There are different variations in southeast Asia, all featuring dancers wearing elaborate painted masks depicting the Ramayana.

LakhonKhol was recently listed by UNESCO, the United Nations' cultural agency, as an intangible cultural heritage, along with neighbouring Thailand's version of the dance, known as Khon.

67. Answer: (a)**Explanation:**

The Agasthyarkoodam peak is a peak in Kerala. Agasthyarkoodam peak lies in the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary. High Court order has lifted the long-standing ban preventing women from summiting Agasthyarkoodam, the second highest peak in the State at 1,868 metres in the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary, Thiruvananthapuram.

68. Answer: (c)**Explanation:**

The Qasr al-Farid tomb, a UNESCO World Heritage site is situated in Saudi Arabia.

69. Answer: (c)**Explanation:**

The Koh Phangan and Koh Samui, are islands seen recently in news, are part of Thailand.

70. Answer: (b)**Explanation:**

Development of Gandhi Circuit is taking place in Bihar.

The Gandhi circuit is being developed under the Rural Circuit theme of Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

71. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Centre has set up a high-level committee headed by former IAS officer M.P. Bezbaruah to assess the appropriate level of reservation of seats in the Assam Assembly and local bodies for the Assamese people, besides providing employment opportunities.

72. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The number of asylum seekers crossing the Mediterranean has been the lowest in the year 2018, since the beginning of the European Refugee crisis.

Refugees increasingly prefer to enter Europe through Spain, rather than Italy or Greece.

The Refugee crisis peaked in the year 2015.

73. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The proposed reservation will be over and above the existing 50 per cent reservation enjoyed by the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes, taking the total reservation to 60 per cent.

The constitutional amendment bill would be required as the constitution does not provide for reservation on the ground of economic conditions. It envisages amendment to Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution.

As there will be need for a constitutional amendment, so bill will have to be passed by a special majority i.e. Passing of such a bill by the

Parliament by absolute majority and a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.

74. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Gas hydrates are formed when a gas such as methane gets trapped in well-defined cages of water molecules forming crystalline solids.

In terrestrial conditions, gas hydrates are formed naturally under the sea bed and glaciers under high pressure, low temperature conditions.

75. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The commercials which are broadcast on AIR during news bulletins shall also have to be carried along with the news in toto.

The Private FM Broadcasters will have to carry AIR News bulletins either simultaneously or deferred live by not more than 30 minutes.

76. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The historic walled city of Ahmadabad, dotted with 28 protected ASI sites was inscribed as India's first heritage city by UNESCO on July 8, 2017.

77. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Border Area Development Programme (BADP) is part of the National Development Agenda.

The Border Area Development Programme (BADP) has been classified as a Core Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)

The funding pattern of BADP (like other Core CSSs), in respect of 8 North Eastern States (viz. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya,

Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura) & 3 Himalayan States (viz. Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand) is in the ratio 90:10 and in respect of 6 other States.

78. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Development of Gandhi Circuit is taking place in Bihar. Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank will be merged with Bank of Baroda, with effect from 1st April 2019.

The pay and allowances and services of the employees of all three banks will remain same as earlier.

79. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

According to the recent GST council meeting, traders and manufacturers can avail composition scheme capped at Rs 1.5 crore annual turnover at 1% GST while services are capped at Rs 50 lakh annual turnover at 6% GST. Tax payments need to be made quarterly while return filing can be done annually, to ease the burden on small businesses that opt for the composition scheme.

80. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The NCAP is not a pan-India, but a city-specific programme. The Centre has launched a programme to reduce particulate matter (PM) pollution by 20-30% in at least 102 cities by 2024.

81. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Renuka dam will be built on the Giri River (tributary of the Yamuna) in Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh.

82. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Chardhaam project aims to connect four hilly towns of Uttarakhand, which are Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath and Badrinath.

83. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

PSLV-C44 mission will see a new variant of the PSLV in use, tagged PSLV-DL, will be the first to sport two strap-on boosters for providing added thrust. With this mission, ISRO is planning to keep the fourth and final stage of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) 'alive' in space as a useful 'orbital platform', the rocket.

84. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Samagra Shiksha envisages 'school' as a continuum from pre-school, primary, upper primary, secondary to senior secondary levels.

In order to complement the activities under Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat and inculcate the reading habits among students of all ages, strengthening of school libraries is being undertaken including provision of books by providing library grant for government schools, under the newly launched centrally sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha from 2018-19.

For the first time the provision for separate annual library grant has been made covering schools from Primary to Senior Secondary. Reading corners have been created to inculcate habit of reading among children. Library Grant of

Rs.5,000 to Rs.20,000 has been provisioned from Primary to Senior Secondary Schools. The girls in the age group 10-18 aspiring to study in Classes VI to XII and belonging to SC, ST, OBC, Minority communities and BPL families form the target group of the scheme.

85. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The National Clean Energy Fund (NCEF) is a fund created in 2010-11 using the carbon tax - clean energy cess - for funding research and innovative projects in clean energy technologies of public sector or private sector entities, up to the extent of 40% of the total project cost.

86. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

It is a scheme working for medical, legal, psychological and police help for victims of gender-based abuse such as sexual assault or domestic violence. It is sponsored fully by the Central government under the Nirbhaya fund set up for safety of women.

87. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Moon missions such as Chandrayaan-1, Kaguya, Chang'e-1 and Artemis have found evidence of refilling of near lunar wake (heights of 100 km to 200 km above the lunar surface on the night side) with solar wind protons

Unlike the Earth, the Moon has no global magnetic field originating from a magnetized core. It has weak crustal fields that are too small to shield it globally from charged solar plasma particles incident on it.

88. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Clean Ganga Fund was established as a Trust under the Indian Trusts Act.

The Fund would be managed by a Trust to be headed by Finance Minister.

Development of public amenities including activities such as Ghat redevelopment, is one of the activities financed by the fund.

89. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (MoT) launched the Swadesh Darshan Scheme (Central Sector Scheme)– for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits in the country.

90. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Open market operations is the sale and purchase of government securities and treasury bills by RBI or the central bank of the country.

RBI carries out the OMO through commercial banks and does not directly deal with the public.

OMO is one of the tools that RBI uses to smoothen the liquidity conditions.

91. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Currently, GST on the under-construction flats and houses is 12% whereas ready-to-move-in flats with a completion certificate attract no GST.

92. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

In one of the most inhospitable places on Earth, Seno Ballena, the southernmost part of Chile's

Patagonia region, scientists are studying whales, dolphins and algae in order to help predict how climate change will affect the world's oceans in an 'Open-air Lab'.

The fjord currently produces the kind of conditions that should be seen in other marine systems in the next few decades, when dramatic changes are expected in the environment due to increased carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere and the melting of glaciers.

93. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Almost 16,000 desalination plants worldwide produce bigger-than-expected flows of highly salty waste water and toxic chemicals that are damaging the environment, a U.N.-backed study said.

Fog harvesting to aquifers below the seabed are some of the methods of water harvesting.

94. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Four fairs are held periodically at one of the following places by rotation: Prayagraj, Haridwar, Nashik district (Nashik and Trimbak), and Ujjain. At Nashik and Ujjain, the Mela may be held while a planet is in Leo (Simha in Hindu astrology); in this case, it is also known as Simhastha. At Haridwar and Prayagraj, a Maha ("Great") KumbhMela is held every 12 years, with an Ardha ("Half") KumbhMela six years later.

95. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Chief Minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis launched 'MahaAgritech,' a project under which area under cultivation from sowing to harvesting,

climate, and diseases on crops will be monitored digitally using satellite and drone technology. It is being supported by Maharashtra Remote Application Centre (MRSAC) and ISRO.

96. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRSs) for ST students are set up in States / UTs. EMRS is to be setup where there is more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons.

97. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The 'Gandhi Peace Prize' was launched in 1995 on the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The jury under the chairmanship of Prime Minister of India consists of the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the Chief Justice of India and two other eminent persons decides the awardee each year.

Only achievements within 10 years immediately preceding the nomination are considered for the award.

98. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The ASER (Annual status of Education) Report is an annual report presented by an NGO Pratham. As per the ASER 2018 rural survey, more than half the students of class VIII cannot correctly solve a numerical division problem. The gender gap has reduced.

99. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The fisheries sector employs 4-9 million people. The self-reliant fisher communities generate ₹48,000-₹75,000 crore for the economy, with almost no support from governments in the form of subsidies.

Over 3,000 fishing hamlets reside along India's coast, park and repair their nets and boats and organise their economic and social activities here.

100. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The 45th World Skills Competition will be hosted by Russia in the year 2019.

India is member and participant in the World Skills Competition.

101. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The new framework makes it mandatory for the service provider to offer every channel on an a la carte basis. Along with giving customers a la carte choice, broadcasters and distributors can offer bouquets of channels. However, the price of the bouquet is also to be published transparently. Given that the MRP of the channels will be displayed to users, the distributor will not be able to charge more than what has been declared by a broadcaster. This is likely to bring down the monthly cable/DTH bill.

The MRP of the channels needs to be displayed on the TV screen through the Electronic Program Guide.

102. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The National Industrial Classification Code ("NIC Code") is a statistical standard for developing and maintaining a comparable data base for various economic activities. This code has been developed

with an intent to ascertain and analyses as to how each economic activity is contributing towards national wealth.

The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation is the nodal authority for bringing out the National Industrial Classification in India.

103. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Manipur is the first and the only state in the country to have anti-lynching law.

The Supreme Court has prescribed the Union government to form a law to combat lynching. Though there is no such directive related to section 153A of the IPC.

104. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Bal Sabhas have been set up to identify and resolve issues in upper primary schools situated in the rural areas.

The Sabhas are for students and teachers exclusively.

105. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

H1N1 influenza (or swine flu) is a highly contagious acute respiratory disease of pigs caused by type A influenza virus that regularly causes outbreaks of influenza in pigs. Swine flu viruses do not normally infect humans.

Most commonly, these cases occur in people with direct exposure to pigs (e.g., children near pigs at a fair or workers in the swine industry). However,

there have been cases of human-to-human spread of swine flu.

106. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Microsat-R is a military grade satellite assembled by DRDO.

PSLV-C44 will be the first attempt by ISRO to use the spent fourth stage (PS4) of the vehicle to establish an orbital platform for future experiments.

Kalam, World's lightest and smallest satellite, will be the first to use PS4 as an orbital platform.

107. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The programme has been launched by the Ministry of HRD

It will engage students from Higher Education Institutes for increasing the reach of Digital payments.

108. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

World's first ever thermal battery plant has been set up in Andhra Pradesh.

109. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Fall Armyworm is an insect native of tropical and sub-tropical Americas. It mainly attacks the crop of maize. In India, its infestation can be found in the states of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

110. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Appayya Dikshitar was a great follower of Advaita Vedanta school of Hindu philosophy. He is known for his works of Vedanta and mimamsa.

111. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Aims at achieving 100% coverage and immunize children under the age of 5.

It is an initiative of the Ministry of Health and Family welfare.

112. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Each train is ranked based on process evaluation, direct observation and passenger feedback

Trains operated by Southern Railways are rated as the cleanest. Trains operated by Southern Railways are rated as the cleanest.

113. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

The Hub has received funding from UK government.

114. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Zearalenone toxin is a fungal toxin infesting cereal. It attacks the crops while they are growing but can also develop when cereals are stored without being dried fully.

115. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Yuva Swabhiman Yojna has been launched by the Madhya Pradesh government. It will ensure 100 days of employment every year to the youths from EWS category in urban area.

116. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Sarus crane is the tallest flying bird in the world

The IUCN status of Sarus crane is vulnerable. It plays an important role in controlling the population of harmful insects.

117. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Silkigars are nomadic community from Rajasthan. The Silkigar community is known for its 400-500-year-old skill of refurbishing and making swords.

118. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The INFINET is a Closed User Group Network for the exclusive use of member banks and financial institutions and is the communication backbone for the National Payments System, which caters mainly to inter-bank applications like Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), Delivery Vs Payment, Government Transactions, Automatic Clearing House, etc.

119. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

The PISA Programme was launched in 1997 by the OECD. India will be participating in PISA 2021. PISA is a triennial international survey (every three years) which aims to evaluate the education system worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students.

120. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) has been launched by ICAR. The project will be funded by the World Bank and the Indian Government on a 50:50 basis.

121. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

E-Kuber is the Core Banking Solution of Reserve Bank of India.

E-Kuber provides the provision of a single current account for each bank across the country, with

decentralized access to this account from anywhere-anytime using portal-based services in a safe manner.

122. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Currently, India has highest number of tigers in the world. The number of tigers has gradually improved from the year 2006. There are 50 tiger reserves in India, governed by Project Tiger administered by the NTCA.

123. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The first ever National Conference on "Prison Design" will begin in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (29th January 2019). The two-day conference is being hosted by the DG Prison, Andhra Pradesh on the behalf of State and is being sponsored by the Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D).

124. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Among the projects dedicated to the nation include Integrated Refinery Expansion Project Complex (IREP) at Kochi. IREP will be a modern expansion complex and transform Kochi refinery into the largest PSU Refinery in India with world class standards. It will be equipped for production of cleaner Fuels for India. It will double the production of LPG & diesel and commence production of feedstock for petrochemical projects in this plant.

125. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Baluchari and Jamdani textiles have originated in West Bengal

Vichitrapuri and Bomkai textiles have originated in Odisha. Kancheepuram of Tamil Nadu, Baluchari and Jamdani of West Bengal, Paithani of Maharashtra, Chanderi and Maheswari of Madhya Pradesh, Muga of Assam, Patola of Gujarat, Kani of Kashmir, Tie & Dye, Vichitrapuri and Bomkai of Orissa, Brocades of Varanasi, Balarampuram of Kerala and Pochampally of Andhra Pradesh are a few examples of our precious handloom tradition.

126. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

D-voters are those who have been not able to produce proper citizenship credentials. They are referred to Foreigners Tribunal to verify their citizenship.

If the D-voters are designated as Declared foreigners, they are sent to Detention Camps.

127. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

A financial creditor is a person to whom a financial debt is owed and includes a person to whom such debt has been legally assigned or transferred.

Operational creditors are one who are owed money by the company in the normal course of operations for supply of goods and services.

128. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The National Institute of Virology is an institute under the Indian Council of Medical Research.

The National Institute of Virology is situated in Pune.

129. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Nalbana Bird Sanctuary is situated in the Chilika lake

The Chilika lake is the second largest lagoon in the world.

130. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Golden Langur has been categorized as 'Endangered' in the IUCN Red list

The Golden Langur Conservation Breeding Project was undertaken by the state of Assam.

131. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Curve shows relationship between unemployment rate and job vacancy rate in an economy.

As per the curve, when there is high job vacancy in an economy, there is also relatively low unemployment.

132. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Talwar frigates will incorporate stealth technology. India has signed an Inter-governmental agreement with Russia to locally manufacture the frigates with technology transfer

133. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Unfunded liabilities refers to future fund obligation for which no proper provision has been made in the present.

134. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Artists from Tamil Nadu presented the Karakkatam folk dance, while Taakala Folk Dance was performed by artists from Maharashtra. North Eastern states Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Sikkim and Tripura presented Monpa, Satoiya Nitya, Tamang Seto and Mamita folk dances. Artists from Jammu Kashmir performed the Fusim Dance reflecting the composite culture of the State. The artistes from Gujarat performed Misra Raas, while Hudka Chhudka from Uttarakhand and Bhangra from Punjab were also performed.

135. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Reserve Bank of India has allowed central and state governments and entities owned by them to deposit gold under its Gold Monetization Scheme. Furthermore, charitable institutions have also been made eligible to deposit gold with banks to earn interest under the program. Gold Monetization Scheme was launched in 2015. The basic aim of this scheme is to monetise all the gold which is lying idle with individuals or institutions like banks.

136. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The HPI consists of a ranking of passports according to how many other territories can be reached 'visa-free' (defined below). All distinct destination countries and territories in the IATA database are considered.

137. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The government has announced the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). This is the first ever effort in the country to frame a national framework for air quality management with a time-bound reduction target.

The programme will not be notified under the Environment Protection Act or any other Act to create a firm mandate with a strong legal back up for cities and regions to implement NCAP in a time bound manner for effective reduction.

138. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

The Small Woodbrown butterfly, scientifically known as *Lethe nicetella* is named after its brown-colored wings patched with white round spots. It is amongst the smallest members of the genus *Lethe*, with wings that are up to 50 millimeters long.

Across the world, species of *Lethe* are found in Sunda Islands, Japan, Siberia, Himalayas and peninsular India. Of the 41 species of *Lethe* that are found in India, 32 species are reported from Sikkim alone.

139. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

"Mekedatu dam project" primary objective is to supply drinking water to Bengaluru and recharge the groundwater table in the region. It was set up by the Karnataka government; the project is near Mekedatu, across the river Cauvery from Tamil Nadu.

140. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) will work with the Union Ministry of Textiles in the "Size India" project, which is expected to be launched next month. CMAI will conduct a study across India to arrive at standard sizes.

141. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Recently cabinet has approved creation of National Bench of the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT).

It is the forum of second appeal in GST laws and the first common forum of dispute resolution between Centre and States.

The appeals against the orders in first appeals issued by the Appellate Authorities under the Central and State GST Acts lie before the GST Appellate Tribunal, which is common under the Central as well as State GST Acts.

142. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

Under the scheme, a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.

The group will be taken to the religious places of all major religions in India.

The tour would be completely government sponsored.

Under the eligibility criteria, all people of Indian-origin, aged between 45 and 65 can apply and a group will be selected out of them.

The first preference will be given to people from 'Girmitiya countries' such as Mauritius, Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.

143. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

To promote sustainable development based on scientific principles taking into account the natural hazards such as increasing sea levels due to global warming.

To conserve and protect the environment of coastal stretches and marine areas, besides livelihood security to the fisher communities.

144. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

The Mahotsav will comprise of display and sale of items of tribal art and craft, tribal medicine & healers, tribal cuisine and display of tribal folk performance, in which tribal artisans, chefs, folk dancers/musicians from 23 States of the country shall participate and provide glimpse of their rich traditional culture. It is organized by Ministry of Tribal affairs and TRIFED.

145. Answer: (a)

Explanation:

ITC cannot be claimed for personal use or for goods that are exempt.

It is the tax that a business pays on a purchase and that it can use to reduce its tax liability when it makes a sale. In other words, businesses can reduce their tax liability by claiming credit to the extent of GST paid on purchases.

146. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

As per World Health Organisation's World Malaria Report of 2018, India is the only country among the 11 highest-burden countries that saw substantial progress in reducing disease burden: it saw a 24% decrease in 2017 compared to 2016.

147. Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Odisha has launched Jiban Sampark project for the welfare of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups.

It aims to generate awareness among Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) in Odisha on various development and welfare initiatives of State Government, especially on women and child welfare.

148. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) were established to provide vocational training to non-literate, neo-literate, as well as school dropouts by identifying skills.

Formerly under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Jan Shikshan Sansthan was transferred to the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in 2018.

149. Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) comes under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA). It received statutory powers under the Companies Act, 2013. Cases are assigned to the SFIO based on the scale of financial misappropriation or extent of public interest that is at stake.

150. Answer: (c)

Explanation:

A polar vortex is an upper-level low-pressure area lying near one of the Earth's poles. There are two polar vortices in the Earth's atmosphere, overlying the North and South Poles. Each polar vortex is a persistent, large-scale, low-pressure zone less than 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) in diameter, that rotates counter-clockwise at the North Pole (called a cyclone) and clockwise at the South Pole, i.e., both polar vortices rotate eastward around the poles. As with other cyclones, their rotation is driven by the Coriolis Effect. The bases of the two polar vortices are located in the middle and upper troposphere and extend into the stratosphere. Beneath that lies a large mass of cold, dense Arctic air.
