

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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Important News Articles

1. IIA's observatory captures red-hued Aurora from Hanle, Merak - Times of India
2. Bihar House passes Bill raising ceiling on caste quota to 65% - The Hindu/ Bihar House passes Bill to raise quota cap from 50% to 65% - Indian Express
3. Nagaland nod for 33% quota for women in urban local bodies - The Hindu/ Nagaland passes Bill retaining 33% women's reservation for ULB polls - Indian Express
4. India set to be in UK safe states list, ruling out asylum rights for illegal migrants-Indian Express
5. 'Food price shocks, a risk to inflation' - The Hindu/ India remains vulnerable to recurring, overlapping food price shocks: Das - Indian Express
6. Online gambling ban won't apply to poker, rummy: HC - The Hindu/ Madras HC sets aside TN ban on online rummy & poker, says they're 'games of skill' - Indian Express
7. Health sector poorly equipped to prevent heat hazards & impacts of other extreme weather events, says WMO report - Down To Earth

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. Women in red - The Hindu
2. Why has the govt. issued a directive on deepfakes? - The Hindu
3. UNESCO declares Gwalior 'city of music': story of its melodious past - Indian Express

Quick Look

1. Geographical Indication (GI) Tag
2. Semiconductors
3. Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme
4. CBI
5. Representation of the People Act, 1951

Important News Articles**GS I****1. IIA's observatory captures red-hued Aurora from Hanle, Merak - Times of India**

Relevance: Important Geophysical phenomena and the effects of such changes.

News:

- The **Hanle and Merak observatories in Ladakh**, designed for capturing night sky phenomena, recently **witnessed a rare occurrence in India - an intense red aurora**.

Prelims Takeaway

- Aurora

Aurora Overview

- Auroras are luminous patterns in the sky **caused by the interaction of solar particles with Earth's magnetic field**.
- **Typically observed near the poles**, this phenomenon was captured closer to the equator in Ladakh.

Observatory Details

- The Hanle observatory **recorded the red aurora toward the northern horizon**.

Scientific Explanation

- Vemareddy, a solar astronomer from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, explained that **solar flares' plasma interacting with Earth's magnetic field causes auroras**.
- While often not visible in equatorial regions like India, **intense events may lead to sightings**.

Upcoming Aurora Activity

- A surge in aurora events is anticipated over the next two years **due to the current phase of the solar cycle, with increased solar flares**.
- The cycle is **expected to peak in 2025**, followed by decreased activity.

Hanle's Unique Advantage

- Hanle is India's sole dark sky reserve, **designed to minimize light pollution**, making it an ideal location for observing auroras.

Correlation with Solar Activity

- The recent aurora event was **linked to a Coronal Mass Ejection (CME) from the Sun's outer layer**.

GS II**2. Bihar House passes Bill raising ceiling on caste quota to 65% - The Hindu/ Bihar House passes Bill to raise quota cap from 50% to 65% - Indian Express**

Relevance : Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

News :

- The Bihar Assembly **unanimously passed** a Bill to hike the overall quota from **50% to 65%** in educational institutions and government jobs for
 - Scheduled Castes (SCs)
 - Scheduled Tribes (STs)
 - Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs)
 - Other Backward Classes (OBCs)

Prelims Takeaway

- Indira Sawhney v Union of India

Features of the Bill

- The **main beneficiaries** are the EBCs and OBCs, whose quota is proposed to be raised from 12% to 25% and 8% to 18% respectively.
- According to the state's **caste survey**, 36.01% of the population are EBCs, and 27.13% are OBCs.
- For SCs, the proposed **new quota** is 20%, up from the existing 14%.
- The SC population is **estimated at 19.65%**.
- The quota for STs, however, is proposed to be **slashed from 10% to 2%**.

- After partition of Jharkhand from Bihar **tribal population in Bihar** is less than **2%**.
- With the existing 10% quota for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), the **effective quota** will be **75%**.

Indira Sawhney v Union of India

- In its 1992 decision in 'Indra Sawhney vs Union of India', the Supreme Court had **fixed the reservation ceiling** at 50%.
- The Supreme Court recently **upheld** the 27% quota for backward classes
 - But **invalidated a government notification** reserving 10% of government jobs for economically backward classes among higher castes.
- The court held that the **total beneficiaries** of combined reservations **should not exceed 50%** of India's population.
- The judgment **introduced the concept** of the 'creamy layer,'.
- The judgment **also held** that
 - Reservation for backward classes should be limited to initial appointments and should not extend to promotions.

3. Nagaland nod for 33% quota for women in urban local bodies - The Hindu/ Nagaland passes Bill retaining 33% women's reservation for ULB polls - Indian Express

Relevance : Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

News:

- The Nagaland Assembly **unanimously passed** a Bill that retained 33 per cent reservation for women in urban local bodies
 - a **contentious factor** that has stalled civic polls in the state for around two decades.
- But the Nagaland Municipal Bill 2023 has **done away** with **women's reservation** for the **post of chairperson** in municipal bodies.

Prelims Takeaway

- | | |
|------------|---------------------|
| • Nagaland | Municipal Act 2001 |
| • Nagaland | Municipal Bill 2023 |

Background of Reservation for Women

- In **2017**, an attempt by the state to implement the **33% reservation** and conduct urban local body polls was met with **violent protests** in which two people died.
- After that the then Chief Minister **resigned**.

Electoral Developments in Nagaland

- In March, 2023 the State Election Commission (SEC) had **notified** elections to municipal bodies on the basis of the earlier Act
 - a long-pending matter since the municipal polls in the state were last held in **2004**.
- However, voices of opposition and calls for boycott from **civil society** organisations and **tribal bodies** once again surfaced.
- Consequently the **Nagaland Assembly** moved to repeal the **Nagaland Municipal Act 2001** altogether.
- The apex tribal bodies, which had earlier opposed such a reservation, now have accepted it
- The **SEC** will announce the dates for municipal polls soon.

Taxes on Immovable Property Abolished

- A significant change in the new Bill is **doing away with** provisions for **taxes on immovable property**.
- The Government of State referred to a **historical opposition** to taxation by the Naga people.
- Now there is no tax on immovable properties but the other revenues that the public has to pay in the form of **fees, service charges, maintenance charges**.

4. India set to be in UK safe states list, ruling out asylum rights for illegal migrants-Indian Express

Relevance : Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

News:

- The UK government has tabled plans to add **India** to an **expanded list of safe states**.
- This would speed up the process of returning **Indians** who **travel** from the country **illegally**.
- This would also rule out their chance of seeking **asylum** in Britain.

Prelims Takeaway

- UK's Expanded List of Safe States
- Human Rights Convention

Feature and Expected Outcomes of the Legislation

- **Draft legislation** laid in the House of Commons includes India and Georgia as the countries to be added to the list.
- Indian and Georgian **small boat arrivals** have increased in the UK in 2022.
 - despite individuals from these countries not being at obvious risk of persecution.
- The draft legislation adding India and Georgia to the **Section 80AA** list will be made pursuant to
 - the **UK's Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002** after the ability to do so was put in place through the **Illegal Migration Act 2023**.
- The move is aimed at strengthening the **country's immigration system** and help prevent abuse by people making unfounded protection claims.
- Expanding this list will allow us to **more swiftly remove people** with no right to be in the UK.
- This would be in the furtherance of the **Illegal Migration Act**, which will play a part in the fight against illegal migration.
- The Illegal Migration Act of the UK is an effort to break the cycle and exploitation by **gangs** and prevent further **loss of life**.
- This will help UK illegal immigration across the **English Channel** under its 'stop the boat' perspective.
 - The UK Government is also working with the **French Government** in this regard.

Safe States List of UK

- Other **countries deemed safe by** the UK include
 - Albania
 - Switzerland
 - The European Union (EU)
 - The European Economic Area (EEA) states.
- A country **can only be added** to the UK's safe states list, if the Home Secretary is **satisfied** that there is,
 - **no serious risk** of persecution of its nationals
 - removal of nationals to that country cannot go against the UK's obligations under the **Human Rights Convention**.
- The provisions are provided under **Section 80AA** of the List.

GS III

5. 'Food price shocks, a risk to inflation' - The Hindu/ India remains vulnerable to recurring, overlapping food price shocks: Das - Indian Express

Relevance: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

News:

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor underscores **India's susceptibility to recurring food price shocks** and reiterates the central bank's commitment to align inflation with the 4% target.

Prelims Takeaway

- Inflation

Inflation Outlook:

- October's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) projected CPI inflation at 5.4%** for 2023-24, down from 6.7% in the previous year.
- Headline inflation remains vulnerable** due to persistent food price shocks, necessitating a watchful and actively disinflationary monetary policy.

Monetary Policy Stance:

- The RBI has **maintained a steady repo rate of 6.5%** over the last four monetary policy reviews, prioritizing concerns over inflation.

Global Economic Challenges:

- Heightened challenges in the global economy**, exacerbated by:
 - recent West Asian development
 - the ongoing pandemic
 - the Ukraine war
 - unprecedented monetary policy tightening.
- Policymaking faces **intricate trade-offs between growth and inflation**, price stability and financial stability, and current exigency versus future sustainability.

Avoiding Complacency:

- In the uncertain environment, there is **a need to avoid complacency, remaining agile to fortify macroeconomic** fundamentals and buffers.

Economic Growth Outlook:

- India's GDP grew by 7.8% in Q1** of 2023-24, with high-frequency indicators signaling a continuation of this momentum.

Current Account and Forex Reserves:

- The **country's current account deficit remains manageable**, and the RBI has bolstered forex reserves.

Persisting threats

RBI Governor notes that policymakers have managed to temper price gains, but risks to inflation still remain

■ RBI Governor says the global economy continues to face multiple macroeconomic and geopolitical shocks

■ Policymaking in the current scenario is extremely challenging given a difficult trade-off between growth and inflation, he adds

■ Mr. Das notes while core inflation has moderated, monetary policy still remains disinflationary to align inflation to target



6. Online gambling ban won't apply to poker, rummy: HC - The Hindu/ Madras HC sets aside TN ban on online rummy & poker, says they're 'games of skill' - Indian Express

Relevance: Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

News:

- The Madras High Court has ruled on a batch of writ petitions **challenging the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Games Act, 2022.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Games Act

Key Highlights

- The court **distinguishes between skill and chance-based online games**, upholding the Act
- It **excluded rummy and poker from its prohibition** due to their classification as "games of skill."

Background of the Act

- Enacted in 2022 based on **recommendations from a committee led by retired Justice K Chandru**
- The Act faced **constitutional challenges from the All India Gaming Federation** and online gaming companies.

Legislative Competence and Regulation

- Court affirms the **state's legislative competence to regulate online gambling** while recognizing its authority to regulate online skill-based games.
- Suggests **reasonable regulations under Section 5 of the Act**, allowing the state to impose restrictions on time limits and age for playing online games.

Industry Considerations

- Court **acknowledges rummy and poker as card games requiring skill**, providing a clear distinction from chance-based games.
- The court **exempts these skill-based games from the Act's restrictive schedule**, emphasizing that state intervention is possible if malpractices like bot usage are detected

7. Health sector poorly equipped to prevent heat hazards & impacts of other extreme weather events, says WMO report - Down To Earth

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

News:

- Recently, the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** released **Climate Services Report 2023.**

Key Findings

Projected Increase in Climate-Related Disasters

- It predicts, by 2030, an **anticipated surge in medium- to large-scale disaster events poses a threat**, with 560 events per year.
- Extreme weather events** due to climate change, including heatwaves, droughts, floods, and wildfires, will **adversely affect vulnerable countries and populations.**
- Urgent preparations are required** as unprecedented weather events are likely to increase.
- It also reveals a **lack of preparedness in the health sector** for climate-related health risks.

Recognition in National Climate Plans (NDCs)

- National climate plans increasingly **recognize climate change as a threat** to human well-being.
- Climate targets acknowledge the **positive impact of mitigation activities**, including climate services, on human health.

Role of Climate Information and Services

- Climate information and services are crucial** for reducing disaster risks and mitigating the impact of climate hazards on public health.
- Less than **25% of health ministries globally utilise climate information** for monitoring health risks related to climate sensitivity.

Prelims Takeaway

- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- Climate Services Report 2023

Discrepancy in Data Services

- 74% of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) provide data services to the health sector, but they are **not tailored to specific needs**.
- **85% of nations lack formal agreements** between the Ministry of Health and NMHSs for data sharing and collaboration.
- Only **23% of health ministries have health surveillance systems utilizing meteorological information** for monitoring climate-sensitive health risks.

Climate-Health Nexus in Africa

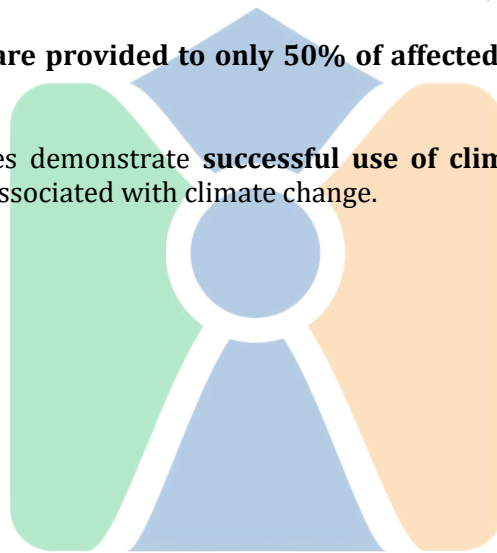
- **Africa**, despite being the least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, **disproportionately suffers from climate change**.
- WMO attributes **health threats in low Human Development Index (HDI) countries**, including Africa, to factors like floods, heat, undernutrition, and malaria risks.
- Around **50 percent of excess mortality** resulting from climate change by the year 2050 will occur in Africa

Gaps in Heat Warning Services

- **Heat** is identified as the **deadliest extreme weather event**, claiming 489,000 lives annually between 2000 and 2019.
- **Heat warning services are provided to only 50% of affected countries** responsible for health decision-making.

Successful Case Studies

- Despite gaps, case studies demonstrate **successful use of climate services in predicting and managing health risks** associated with climate change.

**Mentorship**
India

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. Women in red - The Hindu

Relevance: Social

Context:

- The Supreme Court of India sets a four-week deadline for the government to **finalise a comprehensive menstrual hygiene policy**.
- It further directed the government to establish a **national model for the number of girls' toilets** in government-aided and residential schools.

Historical Context

- Despite over three-quarters of a century post-Independence, India has only recently approached the formulation of a menstrual hygiene policy.
- Over the years, advancements and urbanisation have improved access to menstrual hygiene products.
- However, affordability and access challenges persist, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.

Menstrual Hygiene Statistics

- NFHS-5 indicates progress with 78% of women aged 15-24 using hygienic protection during menstruation, up from 58% in NFHS-4.
- Rural women (73%) and urban women (90%) still face barriers to using hygienic protection.
- It also highlights a direct correlation between education and hygiene, emphasising that women with 12 or more years of schooling are twice as likely to use hygienic methods.
- A link has also been established between menstruation and school dropouts due to stigma and inadequate access to sanitation.

Holistic Approach

- The Centre assures the Court of a draft policy in four weeks, but a policy alone is insufficient.
- The government needs to ensure affordable access to menstrual hygiene products, clean toilets, and water throughout the menstrual cycle.
- The policy should address the entire lifecycle of menstruation, encompassing health and social aspects.

2. Why has the govt. issued a directive on deepfakes? - The Hindu

Relevance: Science and Technology- developments and their applications and effects in everyday life.

Context:

- Recently, the Indian government instructed social media intermediaries to **remove deepfake content within 24 hours** of a complaint being filed, in accordance with a **requirement outlined in the IT Rules 2021**.
- The instructions came as response to the **emergence of deepfake videos of several actors**.

What are Deepfakes?

- Deepfakes, present since 2017, refer to manipulated videos, audios or images created using a form of artificial intelligence called deep learning.
- Initially popularised through a Reddit incident, deepfake technology has evolved, enabling even unskilled individuals to produce fake content.
- A 230% increase in deepfake usage by cybercriminals and scammers has been observed.
- It is predicted that it would replace phishing in a couple of years.

How does Deepfake Technology Work?

- The technology involves modifying or creating images and videos using a machine learning technique called generative adversarial network (GAN).
- The AI-driven software detects and learns the subjects' movements and facial expressions from the source material and then duplicates these in another video or image.
- To ensure that the deepfake created is as close to real as possible, creators use a large database of source images.
- 'Unsupervised learning' makes it challenging for other software to identify deepfakes.

Laws in India Regarding Deepfakes

- India's IT Rules 2021 mandate the removal of reported fake or deepfake content by intermediary platforms within 36 hours.
- Section 66D of the Information Technology Act of 2000 deems online impersonation illegal.
- The rules also prohibit hosting content impersonating others.

Motivations for Creating Deepfake Content

- It could potentially be used to incite political violence, sabotage elections, unsettle diplomatic relations and spread misinformation
- It can also be used for personal harm, humiliation, blackmail, or attacking organisations with false evidence.
- However, positive applications include aiding people with ALS in voice-cloning for future use.

Global Reactions to Deepfakes

- The EU has issued guidelines for an independent network of fact-checkers to analyze content creation sources.
- In the US, the bipartisan Deepfake Task Force Act has been introduced to counter the impact of deepfake technology.

3. UNESCO declares Gwalior 'city of music': story of its melodious past - Indian Express

Relevance: Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of Art Forms, literature and Architecture from ancient to modern times.

Context:

- Recently, **Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh** joined **UNESCO's Creative Cities Network (UCCN)** for its commitment to culture and creativity.

Gwalior's Musical Past

- Gwalior has a rich musical history, particularly known for the Gwalior gharana.
- The Gwalior Gharana is the oldest and one of the most influential musical traditions in Hindustani classical music.
- Raja Man Singh Tomar, a ruler during the 15th century, played a crucial role in the flourishing of the Gwalior Gharana.

Gwalior Gharana's Contribution

- Dungarendra Singh Tomar, a musician, initiated a revival of Indian classical music through academic interest and patronage.
- He is known to have gifted two music treatises in Sanskrit - Sangeet Shiromani and Sangeet Choodamani to his friend and Sultan of Kashmir Zain-ul-Abdin.
- He also composed Vishnupadas (songs in praise of Vishnu) with a unique style of singing
- Man Singh Tomar, is credited with inventing dhrupad, a classical genre, and making Indian music more accessible by using simple Hindi.
- He wrote Manakutuhala (Quest for Learning), considered the first treatise of music in Hindi.
- His Horis and Dhamars also became quite popular.
- The initial ustads of the gharana included Naththan Khan, Naththan Pir Baksh and his grandsons Haddu, Hassu, and Natthu Khan.

Khayal Singing

- Gwalior gharana played a significant role in the evolution of khayal singing from dhrupad, incorporating elements of qawwali.
- Ustad Naththan Pir Baksh was one of the early masters to create khayal.
- Persian words were included in the music.
- The gharana also contributed to the concepts of bandish ki thumri (a more structured style of thumri or love song).

Tansen, Gwalior's Crown Musician

- Mian Tansen, originally named Ramatanu, underwent training under Swami Haridas, a practitioner of dhrupad with a focus on Krishna-centric poetry.
- His musical journey was also influenced by the Sufi saint Mohommad Ghous. Under Ghous's guidance, understood and honed the Gwalior gharana style and was the court musician for King Ram Chandra Singh of Rewa, Madhya Pradesh.
- His musical brilliance and knowledge gained recognition, leading to an invitation from Akbar to join his court musicians in the Mughal court.
- He joined Akbar's court at the age of 60, becoming a prominent figure among the 36 imperial musicians mentioned in Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari.

Bangash Gharana and Ustad Hafeez Ali Khan

- Ustad Hafeez Ali Khan, a significant musician in Gwalior, learned music under Ustad Wazir Khan, a descendent of Mian Tansen.
- He played a crucial role in popularising classical music through performances and training notable musicians.

Notable Names from Gwalior Gharana

- Haddu Khan, Bade Inayat Hussain Khan, Vasudeva Buwa Joshi, Balakrishnabuwa Ichalkaranjekar, Pt Kumar Gandharv, and others are notable figures from the Gwalior gharana.
- The gharana's influence is evident in the techniques and nuances passed down to contemporary students of Hindustani classical music.

Quick Look

1. Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

- It is an indication used to identify goods having special characteristics originating from a definite geographical territory.
- The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999 seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.
- It is governed and directed by the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).
- It is primarily an agricultural, natural or a manufactured product (handicrafts and industrial goods).
- Validity: 10 years following which it can be renewed.

2. Semiconductors

- These are materials which have a conductivity between conductors and insulators.
- They can be pure elements, silicon or germanium or compounds, gallium, arsenide or cadmium selenide.
- They are the basic building blocks that serve as the heart and brain of all modern electronics and information and communications technology products.
- These chips are now an integral part of contemporary automobiles, household gadgets and essential medical devices such as ECG machines.

3. Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme

- The PLI scheme was conceived to scale up domestic manufacturing capability, accompanied by higher import substitution and employment generation.
- Launched in March 2020, the scheme initially targeted three industries namely
 - Mobile and allied Component Manufacturing
 - Electrical Component Manufacturing and
 - Medical Devices
- So far, the government has announced PLI schemes for 14 sectors .
- Objectives
 - To reduce India's dependence on China and other foreign countries.
 - It supports the labour-intensive sectors and aims to increase the employment ratio in India.
 - Reduce the import bills and boost up domestic production.
- However, PLI Yojana invites foreign companies to set up their units in India and encourages domestic enterprises to expand their production units.

4. CBI

- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the premier investigating police agency in India.
- It provides assistance to the Central Vigilance Commission and Lokpal.
- It functions under Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances, Government of India - which falls under the prime minister's office.
- For investigations of offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act, its superintendence vests with the Central Vigilance Commission.
- It is also the nodal police agency in India which coordinates investigation on behalf of Interpol Member countries.

- Its conviction rate is as high as 65 to 70% and it is comparable to the best investigation agencies in the world.

5. Representation of the People Act, 1951

- RP Act 1951 was enacted before first general elections. The act provides for the actual conduct of elections in India.
- It deals with the following aspects of the election:
 - Actual conduct of elections;
 - Administrative machinery for conducting elections;
 - Poll;
 - Election offences;
 - Election disputes;
 - By-elections;
 - Registration of political parties.



Mentorship
India

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following statements about Aurora

1. It results from the interaction between charged particles from the Sun and the Earth's magnetic field and atmosphere.
2. These are typically observed closer to the Earth's polar regions, such as the Arctic and Antarctic circles.
3. The intensity and frequency of auroras are influenced by solar activities, including solar flares and Coronal Mass Ejections

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q2. With reference to the Indira Sawhney v Union of India case of the Supreme Court of India, consider the following statements

1. The court upheld the 27% quota for other backward classes.
2. The court validated reservation of 10% of government jobs for economically backward classes among higher castes.
3. The judgment introduced the concept of the 'creamy layer'.
4. The judgment held that reservation for backward classes should be limited to initial appointments and should not extend to promotions.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

Q3. With reference to the Naga Municipal Bill-2023, consider the following statements

1. The provisions related to taxes, land and buildings have been excluded in the bill.

2. The provision for 33 percent reservation for women in the Urban Local Bodies has been retained in the bill.
3. The provision for one-third reservation of the offices of the Chairperson in the Urban Local Bodies for women was also included in the bill.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q4. With reference to the various statutory and legal developments in the world, consider the following statements

1. Illegal Migration Act 2023
2. Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002
3. Expanded List of the States
4. Atlantic Declaration

How many of the above given developments is/are related to the United Kingdom ?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

Q5. Consider the following statements about Monetary Policy Committee

1. It consists of six members, with three nominated by the Government of India and three from the RBI.
2. The committee meets bi-monthly to review economic indicators and make decisions on interest rates.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q6. Consider the following statements about online gambling

1. India has just one central law that governs gambling in all its forms.
2. The distinction between gaming and gambling depends on the element of skill involved

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Q7. Who published the “The Climate Services Report 2023”?

- A. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
- B. World Meteorological Organization
- C. United Nations Environment Programme
- D. International Union for Conservation of Nature

Q8. Consider the following statements with reference to National Family Health Survey (NFHS) - 5

1. It states that there is a direct correlation between education and hygiene, women with 12 or more years of schooling are twice as likely to use hygienic methods.
2. It establishes a link between menstruation and school dropouts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q9. With reference to Deepfake Technology, consider the following statements

1. It involves modifying or creating images and videos using a machine learning technique called Reinforcement Learning (RL).
2. It requires a large database of source images to ensure that the deepfake created is as close to real as possible.
3. India's IT Rules 2021 mandate the removal of reported fake or deepfake content by intermediary platforms within 36 hours.

How many of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q10. With reference to Khayal Singing, consider the following statements

1. Gwalior gharana played a significant role in the evolution of khayal singing from dhrupad, incorporating elements of qawwali.
2. Persian words were also included in the music.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Prelims Track Answer

Ans. 1 Option C is correct

Explanation

- It is resulting from the interaction between charged particles from the Sun and the Earth's magnetic field and atmosphere. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Geographic Occurrence:
- Auroras are typically observed closer to the Earth's polar regions, such as the Arctic and Antarctic circles. However, under specific conditions, particularly during periods of increased solar activity, they can be visible at lower latitudes. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Solar Activity and Auroras:
- The intensity and frequency of auroras are influenced by solar activities, including solar flares and Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs). During periods of heightened solar activity, charged particles interact with the Earth's magnetic field, leading to the spectacular displays of lights known as auroras. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 2 Option C is correct

Explanation

- In its 1992 decision in 'Indra Sawhney vs Union of India', the Supreme Court had fixed the reservation ceiling at 50%.
- The Supreme Court recently upheld the 27% quota for other backward classes. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
 - But invalidated a government notification reserving 10% of government jobs for economically backward classes among higher castes. **Hence, Statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The court held that the total beneficiaries of combined reservations should not exceed 50% of India's population.
- The judgment introduced the concept of the 'creamy layer.'. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**
- The judgment also held that

- Reservation for backward classes should be limited to initial appointments and should not extend to promotions. **Hence, Statement 4 is correct.**

Ans. 3 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The 14th Nagaland Legislative Assembly passed the Nagaland Municipal Bill 2023 by a voice vote at its third Emergent session.
- The provisions related to taxes, land and buildings have been excluded in the Nagaland Municipal Bill, 2023. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- The provision for 33 percent reservation for women in the Urban Local Bodies has been retained as directed by the Supreme Court. **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**
- The provision for one-third reservation of the offices of the Chairperson in the Urban Local Bodies for women, which was there in the earlier Municipal Act was also not included in the Nagaland Municipal Bill, 2023. **Hence, Statement 3 is incorrect.**

Ans. 4 Option D is correct

Explanation

- The Illegal Migration Act was passed in 2023 to curb the coming of illegal immigration to the country through the English Channel. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- The Illegal Migration Act grants has granted enabling provision to the Government of the United Kingdom to make suitable changes in the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**
- Through these changes the UK's Parliament can pass an Expanded List of Safe States in which India and Georgia have been included. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**
- These developments will stop illegal asylum in the UK.
- The Atlantic Declaration is a Framework for the 21st Century US-UK Economic

Partnership. Hence, Statement 4 is correct.

Ans. 5 Option C is correct

Explanation

RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC):

- The MPC is a committee established by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) responsible for making monetary policy decisions. It consists of six members, with three nominated by the Government of India and three from the RBI. The committee operates under the framework of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- The primary objective of the MPC is to maintain price stability and control inflation. It sets an inflation target, typically around 4%, and adjusts monetary policy tools such as the repo rate to achieve this target. The committee meets bi-monthly to review economic indicators and make decisions on interest rates. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

Ans. 6 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Public Gambling Act, 1867:
- At present, India has just one central law that governs gambling in all its forms. It's called the Public Gambling Act, 1867, which is an old law, ill-equipped to handle the challenges of digital casinos, online gambling and gaming. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- Currently, the distinction between gaming and gambling depends on the element of skill involved. If an online activity does not require skill, it will be considered gambling rather than gaming. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

Ans. 7 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released Climate Services Report 2023. Hence, option B is correct
- It reveals a lack of preparedness in the health sector for climate-related health risks.

- It predicts, by 2030, an anticipated surge in medium- to large-scale disaster events poses a threat, with 560 events per year.
- Extreme weather events due to climate change, including heatwaves, droughts, floods, and wildfires, will adversely affect vulnerable countries and populations.
- Only 23% of health ministries have health surveillance systems utilizing meteorological information for monitoring climate-sensitive health risks.
- Heat is identified as the deadliest extreme weather event, claiming 489,000 lives annually between 2000 and 2019.

Ans. 8 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Despite over three-quarters of a century post-Independence, India has only recently approached the formulation of a menstrual hygiene policy.
- Over the years, advancements and urbanisation have improved access to menstrual hygiene products.
- NFHS-5 indicates progress with 78% of women aged 15-24 using hygienic protection during menstruation, up from 58% in NFHS-4.
- Rural women (73%) and urban women (90%) still face barriers to using hygienic protection.
- It also highlights a direct correlation between education and hygiene, emphasising that women with 12 or more years of schooling are twice as likely to use hygienic methods. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- A link has also been established between menstruation and school dropouts due to stigma and inadequate access to sanitation. Hence, statement 2 is correct.

Ans. 9 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Deepfakes, present since 2017, refer to manipulated videos, audios or images

created using a form of artificial intelligence called deep learning.

- Initially popularised through a Reddit incident, deepfake technology has evolved, enabling even unskilled individuals to produce fake content.
- The technology involves modifying or creating images and videos using a machine learning technique called generative adversarial network (GAN). **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- The AI-driven software detects and learns the subjects' movements and facial expressions from the source material and then duplicates these in another video or image.
- To ensure that the deepfake created is as close to real as possible, creators use a large database of source images. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- India's IT Rules 2021 mandate the removal of reported fake or deepfake content by intermediary platforms within 36 hours. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- Section 66D of the Information Technology Act of 2000 deems online impersonation illegal.

Ans. 10 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Gwalior gharana played a significant role in the evolution of khayal singing from dhrupad, incorporating elements of qawwali. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Ustad Naththan Pir Baksh was one of the early masters to create khayal.
- Persian words were included in the music. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The gharana also contributed to the concepts of bandish ki thumri (a more structured style of thumri or love song).



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+91 9999 057869
www.mentorshipindia.com

A-92, Third Floor, Hari Nagar
Delhi - 110064

 @mentorship.india