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INDIA

Date: **17-18 September 2023**

Important News Articles

1. Santiniketan finds its place on UNESCO's World Heritage List - The Hindu/ Santiniketan on UNESCO's World Heritage List - Indian Express
2. India-Middle East-EU corridor to have multiple routes, but hurdles remain - The Hindu
3. Committed to helping artisans, says PM; unveils ₹13,000-crore scheme - The Hindu/ PM launches scheme to support traditional artisans: Training, guarantee-free loans - Indian Express
4. Evasive nutritional support for TB patients - The Hindu
5. Cheetah project on the right path of success: govt. report - The Hindu
6. Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics launched - Indian Express
7. NASA's Juno spacecraft captures spectacular portrait of Jupiter and its moon Io - Indian Express
8. Cybercrime Investigation Tool developed can track cyberattacks targeting human – DST

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. A time for South-South learning - Indian Express
2. Assessing outcomes of G-20 summit - The Hindu

Quick Look

1. BrahMos Missile
2. Unique Disability Identification (UDID) Portal
3. Dhanush
4. H1B Visa
5. Meitei Community
6. Assam Rifles
7. TrailGuard AI camera
8. Tuberculosis (TB)
9. Yashobhoomi

Important News Articles

GS I

1. Santiniketan finds its place on UNESCO's World Heritage List - The Hindu/ Santiniketan on UNESCO's World Heritage List - Indian Express

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

News:

- **Santiniketan,** a town located in **West Bengal's Birbhum district,** set up by Nobel laureate **Rabindranath Tagore** recently made it to the **UNESCO's World Heritage List.**

Santiniketan

- It is a **renowned cultural and educational institution** located in the Birbhum District of West Bengal, India.
- Santiniketan literally means **"abode of peace" in Bengali.**
- It was the **home of Rabindranath Tagore,** where he lived and **composed many of his literary works,** including songs, poems, and novels.
- Initially, it started as an **ashram (hermitage) founded by Rabindra Nath Tagore's father, Debendranath Tagore.**
- But, eventually it developed into a **centre of art, culture, and learning.**

Key Features

- It is known for its **unique educational philosophy,** which emphasizes the **integration of nature, creativity, and holistic learning.**
- It follows the concept of an **open-air classroom** where students are encouraged to learn in close connection with nature.
- Santiniketan is also adorned with **splendid sculptures, frescoes, murals, and paintings** created by renowned artists such as **Rabindranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose** and **Ramkinkar Baij** among others.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites

- Landmarks or areas selected by UNESCO for their **cultural, historical, scientific or other significant value, legally protected by international treaties.**
- They represent **collective and preservative interests of humanity,** signifying remarkable accomplishments and intellectual history.
- World Heritage Sites require **practical conservation to protect them from risks** like trespassing, uncontrolled access, or administrative negligence.
- **Selection Criteria:** The sites must be
  o already-classified landmarks
  o unique and significant culturally or physically, such as ancient ruins, historical structures, cities, monuments, etc.
- **World Heritage Committee**
  o selects and monitors World Heritage Sites
  o manages the World Heritage Fund
  o provides financial assistance
  o India is not a member of the World Heritage Committee

GS II

2. India-Middle East-EU corridor to have multiple routes, but hurdles remain - The Hindu

Relevance: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

News:

	Prelims Takeaway
	• Belt and Road Initiative
	• Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)

- Days after India, **U.S, Saudi Arabia, UAE and other countries launched the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC),** officials said many of the details are still being ironed out.
- **Multiple route options are being considered** that will include ports like Haifa in Israel and Piraeus in Greece.
- The **IMEC MoU was signed by India, the U.S., Saudi Arabia, UAE, European Union, Italy, France and Germany**, in the presence of all their leaders.

Key Highlights

- Among the ports that could be connected on the west coast of India are **Mundra (Gujarat), Kandla (Gujarat), and Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Navi Mumbai).**
- In the Middle East, at least **five ports have been shortlisted to be connected to the Indian ports** which include Fujairah, Jebel Ali, and Abu Dhabi in the UAE as well as Dammam and Ras Al Khair ports in Saudi Arabia.
- It is to be noted that apart from government-owned ports, both **Mundra port in India and Haifa port in Israel are privately** controlled by the Adani Group, and have been **highlighted in proposal documents.**
- While IMEC has been proposed **to counter the Belt and Road Initiative** proposed by China, **Chinese presence cannot be wished away** along the IMEC route,
- This is because **Piraeus port is controlled by China Ocean Shipping** (Group) Company which is a Chinese state-owned company.
- Currently, all trade between I**ndia and Europe happens via the sea route, that passes through Suez Canal,** controlled by Egypt.

India Middle East Europe Corridor

- it is a network of **transport corridors comprising railway lines and sea lanes** to promote economic integration between Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and Europe.
- The proposed corridor will comprise two separate corridors- **the Eastern corridor and the Northern corridor.**
  - o The Eastern Corridor will connect India to the Arabian Gulf
  - o The Northern Corridor will connect the Arabian Gulf to Europe.
- It will involve transit by ship between India and Saudi Arabia, followed by a rail link to the UAE and likely to Jordan from where the shipment will move by sea to Turkey and further by rail.
- Along with the railway track, **cables for energy and digital connectivity as well as a pipeline** for clean hydrogen export will be laid.
- India, US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, European Union (EU), Italy, France and Germany are Member nations.
- It is **part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)**
  - o It is a collaborative effort by G7 nations to fund infrastructure projects in developing nations.
- PGII is the **G7 bloc's counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative.**
- PGII is part o**f G7's vision of Build-Back-Better framework.**

Corridor trajectory

The map shows the multiple routes being considered for the India-Middle East-EU Corridor. Indian ports on the west coast of India could be connected to five shortlisted ports in West Asia

Legend:
- Existing line
- Under construction line
- Missing line
- Place name
- Ports
- Sea links

3. Committed to helping artisans, says PM; unveils ₹13,000-crore scheme - The Hindu/ PM launches scheme to support traditional artisans: Training, guarantee-free loans - Indian Express

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

News:

- Recently, **Prime Minister launched the PM Vishwakarma Scheme** for providing collateral-free loans
- It will also provide **skills training to 18 categories of traditional artisans and craftspersons.**
- He also **inaugurated Yashobhoomi, or the India International Convention Centre at Delhi's Dwarka**.
- He also said that India is on its way to becoming a **major destination for conference tourism**
  - The new centre, along with the 'Bharat Mandapam', will be a medium for showcasing India of the future.

Prelims Takeaway
• Yashobhoomi and Bharat Mandapam
• PM Vishwakarma Scheme

Key Points

- India's current global share of conference tourism is only 1 per cent, **international exhibition centres like Yashobhoomi and Bharat Mandapam will increase that share.**
- The PM Vishwakarma Scheme will allow artisans to:
  - attend a five-day skilling workshop
  - a voucher to buy toolkits,
  - the provision for guarantee-free loans of up to Rs 3 lakh.
- Under the **financial assistance component of the scheme:**
  - beneficiaries would first be eligible for an interest-free loan of Rs 1 lakh, which they would have to repay within 18 months.
  - Upon repayment, they would qualify for a second tranche of loan worth Rs 2 lakh at an interest rate of 5 per cent.
  - beneficiaries would also get a subsidy of up to 8 per cent of the interest amount.
- the **verification of beneficiaries would be done at three levels,** which are the gram panchayat, district collector, and state levels.
- There will be **committees identifying these people** and making the final list of beneficiaries.

- Furthermore, the financial assistance component of the PM Vishwakarma scheme is **guarantee-free.**
- The **credit guarantee fees will be borne by the Centre.**
- The scheme is expected to **benefit about 30 lakh families** of traditional artisans and craftsmen, including weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, laundry workers, and barbers.
- PM also launched **postal stamps inspired by the scheme and a toolkit** booklet for artisans written in various languages.
- Under PM Vishwakarma scheme, the artisans and craftspeople will be provided r**ecognition through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card**
- The scheme will **further provide skill upgradation, toolkit incentives, digital transactions and marketing support.**

GS III

4. Evasive nutritional support for TB patients - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Nikshay Poshan Yojana
• Tuberculosis

- In 2019, Secretary in the Health Ministry noted in a letter that **undernutrition at the population level contributes to 55% of annual TB incidence i**n India.
- A 2022 study noted that **45% of people in India are undernourishe**d, accounting for nearly 1.2 million TB cases each year.

Key Highlights

- **nutrition support became a part of the national TB programme** only in April 2018
- In September 2022, India launched another nutrition support programme called **Ni-kshay Mitra t**o consented TB patients.
- in 2022**, Tamil Nadu became the first and only State to launch the Differentiated TB Care programme** to reduce the mortality rate among TB patients.
- **Severe undernutrition** is one of the three parameters used for triaging TB patients at the time of diagnosis.
- **undernutrition** among TB patients is so **high even in Tamil Nadu**
- The situation might be **far worse in many northern States** which have higher levels of undernutrition in the general population.
- All the **three initiatives provide nutrition support only to TB patients** to reduce mortality and not to the family members also to prevent TB disease.
- The RATIONS trial in Jharkhand has underscored the importance of providing nutrition support to family members to prevent TB disease.
- In the trial, **TB disease among household contacts was prevented in 39% (**all forms of TB) to 48% (pulmonary TB) through nutritional support.

Issues with Nikshay Poshan Yojana

- As per the India TB report 2023, of the **2.4 million notified TB cases, only 1.6 million (66%) received at least one month's payment in 2022** under the Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana programme.
- There has been **very little increase in the number of beneficiaries** in the last three years.
- For instance, in 2021, **only 62.1% of the 2.1 million notified cases** in India received at least one payment.
- In 2020 too, **only 62% of notified TB cases received at least one month payment.**
- In 2022, in Delhi, which has the highest rate of TB burden at nearly 546 cases per 100,000 people, only 44% of beneficiaries received at least one payment.
- Among the large States, **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat** had high case notification rates of 218, 214 and nearly 213, respectively.
- But only 64%, 82%, and 63% of beneficiaries in **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat,** respectively received at least one payment.

- TB patients perceived the assistance provided under the Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana programme was "**insufficient to buy nutritious food throughout the course of treatment".**

Nikshay Poshan Yojana

- A **direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme for nutritional support to TB patients** — was launched.
- Under this programme, **Rs.500 per month is credited into the account** of a person with TB for the duration of treatment.

5. Cheetah project on the right path of success: govt. report - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.
News:

Prelims Takeaway
• The Cheetah Action Plan
• Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park.

- Recently, a government report said **four of the six criteria established for assessing the short-term success of India's cheetah reintroduction programm**e have already been met.
- The project is on the right path to becoming a **successful large carnivore conservation translocation** and population establishment endeavour, it stated.
- **The Cheetah Action Plan,** published last year, **lists six short-term success criteria:**
  - o 50% survival of the introduced cheetahs for the first year
  - o establishment of home ranges in Kuno National Park
  - o successful cheetah reproduction in the wild
  - o survival of wild-born cheetah cubs past one year
  - o successful F1 generation breeding,
  - o cheetah-based revenues contributing to community livelihoods.
- **F1 stands for the first generation of offspring**.
- The report noted that the **project has achieved four of these criteria:**
  - o 50% survival of the introduced cheetahs
  - o establishment of home ranges, birth of cubs in Kuno National Park
  - o direct revenue contributions to local communities through the engagement of cheetah trackers and indirect appreciation of land value in surrounding areas.
- India's ambitious **initiative to reintroduce cheetahs** after their extinction in the country marked its first anniversary recently.
- The project began on September 17 last year when the Prime Minister released a group of **cheetahs from Namibia into an enclosure at Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park.**
- Conservationists and experts worldwide have **closely monitored the project since its inception.**
- Twenty cheetahs were **imported from Namibia and South Africa to Kuno in two batches.**
- A few mortalities of **cheetah occurred from bacterial infection, maggots, renal failure, injuries and heat.**
- The report noted that **no unnatural deaths took place in free-ranging conditions** despite some cheetahs traversing long distances in human-dominated areas.

6. Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics launched - Indian Express

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.
News:

Prelims Takeaway
• Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics (UPAg)
• NITI Aayog

- Recently, **The Centre launched the Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics (UPAg**), an online platform for management of agricultural data.
- The **UPAg, developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare (DA & FW),** was launched by NITI Aayog.
- The **platform is designed to generate crop estimates** and integrate with other s**ystems generating agriculture statistics** such as price, trade, procurement, stock, said an official.
- **UPAg portal will address various challenges** including lack of standardised data, **lack of verified data, dispersed data etc.**

- "It aims to **provide real-time, standardised, and verified dat**a on
  o agricultural commodities
  o facilitating data-driven decision-making for policymakers
  o researchers, and stakeholders.
- This initiative aligns with th**e principles of e-governance**, bringing smartness, transparency, and agility to India's agriculture sector.

Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics (UPAg).
- It is an **advanced agricultural data management platform** designed to generate crop estimates and integrate with other systems generating Agriculture Statistics.
- The portal **serves as a centralized hub for near real time information** on crop production, market trends, pricing, and other vital agricultural data.
- It was developed by the Department **of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.**

7. NASA's Juno spacecraft captures spectacular portrait of Jupiter and its moon Io - Indian Express

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway
• JUNO Mission
• Jupiter
• NASA

- Recently **NASA's Juno mission** completed its **53rd close flyby of Jupiter,** sped past the gas giant's **volcanic Moon Io,** and captured a stunning frame of both of them together.

Moon Lo
- Lo is the **most volcanically active world in the solar system.**
- It has hundreds of volcanoes that **often erupt with molten lava and sulphurous gases.**
- It is **slightly larger than the Earth's Moon** and has a **diameter** that is about **one-quarter that of our planet.**
- It is **tidally locked to Jupiter**, meaning that **one side of the Moon** always faces the planet.
- It takes around **1.8 Earth days to both rotate on its axis and revolve once around Jupiter.**
- It has a **very thin atmosphere** that is primarily made of **sulphur** dioxide.

JUNO Mission
- JUNO is an acronym for **Jupiter's Near-Polar Orbiter, a NASA spacecraft orbiting the planet Jupiter.**
- **Objective**
  o Understand the **origin and evolution of Jupiter**
  o Look for a **solid planetary core**
  o Map the **magnetic field**
  o Measure **water and ammonia** in the deep atmosphere
  o Observe **auroras**
- **Launched in 2011,** it initially embarked on a **5-year journey** to the largest planet in our solar system.
- Towards the end of its primary mission, the spacecraft's objectives evolved, and it transitioned into a **full Jupiter system explorer with flybys of Jovian moons.**

Unique Features
- Usually, **radioisotope thermoelectric generators** are commonly used for missions to the **outer solar system and beyond.**
- And **solar panels are commonly used by satellites** orbiting Earth and working in the inner Solar System.
- But unlike all earlier spacecraft sent to the outer planets, **Juno is powered by solar panels.**
- The **three largest solar panel wings** ever deployed on a planetary probe play an integral role in **stabilising the spacecraft as well as generating power.**

8. Cybercrime Investigation Tool developed can track cyberattacks targeting human - DST

Relevance: Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

News:

- **I-hub NTIHAC foundation (c3ihub) at IIT Kanpur** recently developed a **TTPs-based cybercrime investigation framework.**
- It would soon be able to **track cyberattacks targeting humans,** like insurance fraud, online matrimonial fraud and so on.

TTPs based Cybercrime Investigation Framework

> **TTPs**
> - TTPs stands for Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures.
> - It is the term used by cybersecurity professionals to describe the behaviours, processes, actions, and strategies used by a threat actor to develop threats and engage in cyberattacks.

- It is a tool for **apprehending cybercriminals' modes of operations** in a crime execution lifecycle.
- It was developed by the **I-hub NTIHAC foundation (c3ihub) at IIT Kanpur** with support from the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)** under the **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS).**
- The **framework can help in**
  o Tracking and classifying cyber crimes
  o Identifying the chain of evidence required to solve the case
  o Mapping evidence onto the framework to convict criminals
- It can create an **approximate crime execution path** and suggest a crime path based on a **user-derived set of keywords.**
- It can also **compare modus operandi used in different crimes** and **manage user roles and track activity for crime paths.**
- It could be highly effective as it **restricts the number of forms and methods the investigation can be conducted** and primarily relies on criminals' TTPs.
- This leads to **precise and rapid conviction of cybercriminals.**

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. A time for South-South learning - Indian Express

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

Context:
- Recently, India successfully concluded the **G20 Summit 2023** with a consensus on the **New Delhi Leaders' Declaration.**
- India's G20 presidency will be remembered as a **catalyst in reshaping the mindset of developed nations** and **integrating the aspirations of the Global South,** particularly Africa, into the mainstream.

Inclusion of the African Union in G20
- It acknowledges the **significance and potential of Africa** as a **vital partner in global development and stability.**
- The new **G21 will now comprise 84% of the world's population,** up from about 66% earlier.
- **India and Africa,** constituting **36% of the global population,** unfortunately, are home to **nearly 69.4% of the world's undernourished people in 2020-22.**
- These regions together account for **67% and 75.8% of the world's children under five** afflicted with the malnutrition problems of **stunting and wasting.**

Global south to push for Food and Nutritional security in the face of Climate Change

1. Keeping international borders open for agricultural trade is the need of the hour.
- In the last three years, India exported 85 million tonnes of cereals to the world, contributing to global food security.
- Against this backdrop, India's recent restrictions on exports of rice and wheat will not go very well with G21 as it hurts the African countries the most.
2. Developed countries must commit to provide $100 billion for the loss and damage caused by climate change.
- This commitment will pave the way for large-scale climate mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing economies.
- The World Bank could play a catalytic role in mobilising funds even from the private sector to address the global challenges.
  o Like poverty reduction, ensuring food and nutritional security and combating climate change through adaptation and mitigation policies.
- The World Bank President emphasised that private capital investments are essential to complement the current sources of financing.
- The G20 estimates that an additional investment of $3 trillion will be required annually through 2030 to address these issues.
	3. Address rapid population growth, persistent poverty, and widespread undernourishment
	- Initiating a comparative analysis between India and Africa could foster South-South learning and collaboration in the pursuit of sustainable agriculture and food systems.
	- Further, addressing the abnormally high nutritional insecurity in the regions requires agriculture policies to be more nutrition-sensitive.
	- Scaling up bio-fortification of staple crops can ensure availability of nutritious diets in areas affected by chronic malnutrition in India and Africa.
	4. Multi-pronged Strategies to accelerate Nutritional security
	- Access to nutritious food alone cannot address the multi-dimensional problem of undernutrition in these regions.
	- They require targeted and multi-pronged strategies to accelerate nutritional security.
	- According to a study, mothers' education, particularly higher education and mothers with normal BMI index have a strong association with reducing undernutrition among children.
	- Educated women are more informed about nutrition and healthcare, tend to delay marriage, and have fewer children and healthier babies.
	- Therefore, investment in women's higher education is necessary to
	  o ensure a significant increase in the female labour force participation
	  o foster long-term economic growth.
	- These findings need to be shared widely with African nations for cross-learnings in Global South collaboration.

5. Investments in WASH Initiative - The investments in WASH initiatives could bring about a multiplier effect on nutritional outcomes. - India, under the aegis of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, has significantly increased the coverage of households with improved sanitation facilities. - The scheme which aimed to eliminate open defecation and eradicate manual scavenging has multiplier effects. - This could be another area of learning between India and Africa to tackle the high levels of malnutrition.

Conclusion
- The **inclusion of the African Union** in the G20 is the **hallmark of India's G20 presidency.**
- But it will have meaning only if **India and Africa can collaborate effectively** to deal with their **food and nutrition security** in the face of climate.

2. Assessing outcomes of G-20 summit - The Hindu

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

Context:
- The recently concluded **G20 Summit 2023** produced the **'New Delhi Leaders' Declaration'.**
- Now it is time to **evaluate the declaration and assess its value** on the three-fold yardstick of **consensus, additionality and implementability (CAI).**

Driving Philosophy
- Six paragraphs of the 'Preamble' and the last paragraph of the 'Conclusion' reveal the goals and driving motivations of the G-20 leaders.
  - "We are One Earth, One Family, and we share One Future"
- The notion of unity and a shared destiny was aptly stressed to convey the gravity of the multiple challenges to humankind today.

Harmonising Development with Environment
- The way out for the world is to be driven by the "the philosophy of living in harmony with our surrounding ecosystem."
- It stated "no country should have to choose between fighting poverty and fighting for our planet."

Wide range of Focus Areas
- Paragraph 5 lists 12 goals to which the members are fully committed which include
  - securing inclusive growth
  - accelerating full implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda
  - addressing debt vulnerability
  - reform of Multilateral Development Banks
  - integrating the perspectives of the Global South into the future G-20 agenda etc.
- Document's last paragraph reiterates the determination "to steer the world out of its current challenges" and build a bright future.

View on Geopolitical Issues
- Eight paragraphs were devoted to defining the grouping's view on "geopolitical issues."
- A fine balance was struck between the Russian red line and the insistence by G7 on ensuring respect for "territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence."
- This middle path, crafted by Indian negotiators, with the valuable help from other countries' diplomats, was seen as the only way to save the summit.

Inclusion Of African Union
- The first-ever expansion of G-20 membership was imbued with much significance.
- The document depicts the AU as "a permanent member" even though G-20 only has members and guests.

Restoring Multilateralism
- Paragraph 47: Global challenges of the 21st century can "only be addressed through reinvigorated multilateralism, reforms and international cooperation."
- It wants the UN institutions to be "more responsive" to the entire membership.
- The need to make global governance "more representative, effective, transparent and accountable" has been stated clearly.

Conclusion
- On the **CAI yardstick**, it is obvious that the **declaration is backed by "100%" consensus.**
- Also, it **breaks new grounds and records progress** in terms of concepts, goals and objectives as compared to the Bali Declaration.
- There should be no hesitation in recognising that the summit has been a major political and diplomatic success for G-20 and India.

Quick Look

1. BrahMos Missile

- The BrahMos missile, an Indo-Russian joint venture, has a range of 290 km and is the fastest cruise missile in the world with a top speed of Mach 2.8 (nearly three times the speed of sound).
- BrahMos is named for the rivers Brahmaputra and Moskva.
- It is a two-stage missile with solid propellant engine in the first stage and liquid ramjet in second .
- It is a multiplatform missile i.e., it can be launched from land, air, and sea and multi capability missile with pinpoint accuracy that works in both day and night irrespective of the weather conditions.
- It operates on the "Fire and Forgets" principle i.e it does not require further guidance after launch.

2. Unique Disability Identification (UDID) Portal

- Objective: To create a National Database for persons with disabilities (PwDs), and to issue a Unique Disability Identity Card to each PwDs.
- The project will not only encourage transparency, efficiency and ease of delivering the government benefits to the person with disabilities, but also ensure uniformity.
- The project will also help in stream-lining the tracking of physical and financial progress of beneficiaries at all levels of hierarchy of implementation – from village level, block level, District level, State level and National level.

3. Dhanush

- It is the indigenously upgraded gun of the Swedish Bofors gun procured in the 1980s.
- Dhanush is the first ever indigenous 155 mm, 45-calibre towed artillery gun with a range of 36 km and has demonstrated a range of 38 km with specialised ammunition.
- It is compatible with all North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) 155 mm ammunition systems.
- The gun is equipped with an inertial navigation-based sighting system, auto-laying facility, on-board ballistic computation and an advanced day and night direct firing system.
- The guns can travel in all terrains viz desert and high altitude.
- The self-propulsion unit allows the gun to negotiate and deploy itself in mountainous terrains with ease.
- 'Dhanush' is the product of joint efforts by the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) and the Indian Army with contributions from DRDO, DGQA, DPSUs such as BEL, PSUs such as SAIL and several private enterprises.
- The weapon is the first long range artillery gun to be produced in India and it is a major success story of the 'Make in India' initiative.

4. H1B Visa

- It is a multiple entry non-immigrant visa which allows foreign workers employed by US companies to work in the United States.
- The workers under H1B visas should be engaged in specialised occupations such as science, medicine, engineering and mathematics.
- H1B applicants must have at least a US bachelor's degree or equivalent.
- Generally this visa is granted for a period of three years and can be extended for an additional three years for special circumstances.
- H-1B visa requires the employer to apply on the person's behalf.
- Holders of H1B visas can sell or buy property and invest in the stock market in the United States.

5. Meitei Community

- The Meitei people, also known as the Manipuri people, are the predominant ethnic group of Manipur State.
- They speak the Meitei language (officially called Manipuri), one of the 22 official languages of India and the sole official language of Manipur State.
- The Meiteis primarily settled in the Imphal Valley region in modern-day Manipur, though a sizable population has settled in the other Indian states of Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram.
- There is also a notable presence of Meitei in the neighbouring countries of Myanmar and Bangladesh.
- Clans: They are divided into clans, the members of which do not intermarry.
- Economy: Rice cultivation on irrigated fields is the basis of their economy.
- Religion: A majority follow Hinduism, while more than 8% are Muslims.

6. Assam Rifles

- It is one of the six central armed police forces (CAPFs) under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- It is tasked with the maintenance of law and order in the North East along with the Indian Army and also guards the Indo-Myanmar border in the region.
- It came into being in 1835, as a militia called the 'Cachar Levy', to primarily protect British Tea estates and their settlements against tribal raids.
- It is the only paramilitary force with a dual control structure
  - While the administrative control of the force is with the MHA, its operational control is with the Indian Army, which is under the Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- Major role post-Independence
  - Conventional combat role during the Sino-India War 1962.
  - Operations in a foreign land as part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force to Sri Lanka in 1987 (Operation Pawan).
  - Peacekeeping role in the North-Eastern areas of India.

7. TrailGuard AI camera

- These are slim devices that can be inconspicuously set up within the foliage of trees.
- It is Shaped like a pen, 13.8 cm long and 1.4 cm wide wired to another 'communications' unit, the size of a notepad.
- The system has embedded software that can be instructed to take pictures of specific species of interest.
- It is incredibly small – the head of the camera, along with the passive infrared sensor, is only about the size of a person's index finger.
- It can be set to specifically capture humans or species of interest — lions, tigers, cheetahs.
- If the camera is located in a place within the range of cellphone towers, it can send pictures within 30 seconds.
- If it is out of this range, it can rely on a longer protocol that can take from 3-10 minutes.
- The 'AI' element, or 'embedded AI' as it is technically known, in this system is that instead of transmitting every image captured, the camera only sends pictures of interest to forest officials.
- The product was developed by RESOLVE, an international non-profit, in which the operative AI processor is Intel's Myriad chip.

8. Tuberculosis (TB)

- TB is caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium tuberculosis, belonging to the Mycobacteriaceae family.
- Some of Mycobacteria cause diseases like TB and Leprosy in humans and others infect a wide range of animals.
- In humans, TB most commonly affects the lungs (pulmonary TB), but it can also affect other organs (extra-pulmonary TB).
- TB is a very ancient disease and has been documented to have existed in Egypt as early as 3000 BC.

- TB spreads from person to person through the air.
- When people with lung TB cough, sneeze or spit, they propel the TB germs into the air.
- Common symptoms of active lung TB are cough with sputum and blood at times, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever and night sweats.
- TB is a treatable and curable disease.

9. Yashobhoomi

- The convention center boasts of having one of the world's largest MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) facilities and the largest LED media facade in the country.
- The Convention Center Comprises 15 convention rooms including the Main auditorium, the Grand ballroom and 13 meeting rooms with a total capacity of holding 11,000 delegates.
- It is the second convention center with world class infrastructure for exhibitions and conferences, after the Bharat Mandapam.
- Consisting of materials and objects inspired from Indian culture, the center incorporates terrazzo floors and brass inlay representing rangolis patterns.
- Yashobhoomi is equipped with a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment system with 100% wastewater reuse and provisions of rainwater harvesting.
- Also its campus has received Platinum certification from CII's Indian Green Building Council (IGBC).
- YashoBhoomi also offers one of the largest exhibition halls in the world, which could be utilized for hosting exhibitions, trade fairs, and business events.

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following pairs of UNESCO World Heritage Sites and their Locations
1. Dholavira : Gujarat
2. Elephanta Caves : Madhya Pradesh
3. Jantar Mantar : Delhi
4. Shantiniketan : West Bengal

How many of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. Only three
D. All four

Q2. Consider the following statements about The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor
1. India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Germany, Italy, USA, EU are the member nation.
2. Its main objective is to seeks to boost trade, clean energy, and economic growth
3. This project is a part of the Partnership for Rail and Shipping Corridors Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q3. Consider the following statements about The Vishwakarma scheme
1. It is a new government initiative fully funded by the central government.
2. the scheme is designed to address the challenges faced by professionals engaged in traditional crafts and skills.
3. Workers engaged in traditional crafts and skills are eligible.

How many of the statements given above is/are incorrect?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q4. Consider the following statements about Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana
1. The scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme under National Health Mission (NHM).
2. All notified TB patients are beneficiaries of the scheme.
3. The scheme is registered under Direct Benefit Transfer.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?
A. Only one
B. Only two
C. All three
D. None

Q5. Consider the following statements about National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.'
2. It was constituted under enabling provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

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 Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics (UPAg)
1. It is an advanced agricultural data management platform designed to generate crop estimates and integrate with other systems generating Agriculture Statistics.
2. it was developed by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

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. Consider the following statements with reference to JUNO Mission
1. JUNO is a NASA spacecraft orbiting the planet Jupiter.
2. Like all earlier spacecraft to the outer solar system, Juno also uses radioisotope thermoelectric generators.

3. One of its objectives include observing auroras

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

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

Q8. Consider the following statements

1. Phishing refers to any kind of software that is designed to cause damage to a single computer, server, or computer network.
2. Malware is the method of trying to gather personal information using deceptive e-mails and websites.
3. Social engineering is an attack that relies on human interaction to trick users into breaking security procedures in order to gain sensitive information.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

Q9. Which of the following statements best describes the Brandt Line?

A. It is a geographical boundary separating North and South America.

B. It is a historic trade route connecting Europe and Asia.
C. It delineates the equator and the prime meridian on a world map.
D. It represents the division between developed and developing countries based on income disparities.

Q10. With reference to African Union (AU), consider the following statements

1. It is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent.
2. Its primary objective is to promote unity, cooperation, and development among African nations while advancing the continent's interests on the global stage.
3. The Executive Council is its highest decision-making body, consisting of the heads of state and government of member countries.

How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?

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

Prelims Track Answer

Ans. 1 Option B is correct
Explanation
- Dholavira : Gujarat
- Elephanta Caves : Maharashtra
- Jantar Mantar : Rajasthan
- Shantiniketan : West Bengal

Ans. 2 Option C is correct
Explanation
The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor
- India, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France, Germany, Italy, USA, EU are the member nation. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Objectives- IMEC seeks to boost trade, clean energy, and economic growth while providing an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It is part of the Partnership for Rail and Shipping Corridors Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII) and focuses on enhancing global trade and cooperation through critical infrastructure development. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 3 Option D is correct
Explanation
- The Vishwakarma scheme is a new government initiative fully funded by the central government and has a budgetary allocation of Rs 13,000 crore. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The scheme is designed to address the challenges faced by professionals engaged in traditional crafts and skills, often passed down through generations within their families. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- This includes artisans such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, laundry workers, barbers, and others engaged in traditional crafts and skills.
- Workers engaged in traditional crafts and skills are eligible. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 4 Option C is correct
Explanation
- The scheme is a centrally sponsored scheme under National Health Mission (NHM). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

- All notified TB patients are beneficiaries of the scheme. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Financial incentive:
  o Scheme provides for the financial incentive of Rs.500/- per month for each notified TB patient for the duration for which the patient is on anti-TB treatment.
- DBT component:
- The scheme is registered under Direct Benefit Transfer. The incentives can be distributedin Cash (only via DBT preferably through Aadhaar enabled bank accounts) or in-kind. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 5 Option C is correct
Explanation
- It was established in 2005 following the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force.
- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.' **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It was constituted under enabling provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2006, for strengthening tiger conservation, as per powers and functions assigned to it. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Ans. 6 Option D is correct
Explanation
Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics (UPAg).
- It is an advanced agricultural data management platform designed to generate crop estimates and integrate with other systems generating Agriculture Statistics. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The portal serves as a centralized hub for near real time information on crop production, market trends, pricing, and other vital agricultural data.
- It was developed by the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Ans. 7 Option B is correct
Explanation
- JUNO is a NASA spacecraft orbiting the planet Jupiter. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

- Objectives: Understand the origin and evolution of Jupiter, Look for a solid planetary core, Map the magnetic field, Measure water and ammonia in the deep atmosphere and Observe auroras. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- Launched in 2011, it initially embarked on a 5-year journey to the largest planet in our solar system.
- Towards the end of its primary mission, the spacecraft's objectives evolved, and it transitioned into a full Jupiter system explorer with flybys of Jovian moons.
- Usually, radioisotope thermoelectric generators are commonly used for missions to the outer solar system and beyond.
- But unlike all earlier spacecraft sent to the outer planets, Juno is powered by solar panels. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**

Ans. 8 Option B is correct
Explanation
- Cyber Attack is a malicious and deliberate attempt by an individual or organisation to breach the information system of another individual or organisation.
- Malware, short for malicious software, refers to any kind of software that is designed to cause damage to a single computer, server, or computer network. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- Ransomware, Spy ware, Worms, viruses, and Trojans are all varieties of malware.
- Phishing is the method of trying to gather personal information using deceptive e-mails and websites. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Social engineering is an attack that relies on human interaction to trick users into breaking security procedures in order to gain sensitive information that is typically protected. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 9 Option D is correct
Explanation
- The Brandt Line is a visual representation of the division between the Global North and the Global South based on economic disparities. **Hence, Option D is correct.**
- It was proposed by the German statesman Willy Brandt in the 1980s and gained significant attention.

Ans. 10 Option A is correct
Explanation
- The African Union (AU) is a continental body consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It was officially launched in 2002 and replaced its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was founded in 1963.
- Primary Objective: To promote unity, cooperation, and development among African nations while advancing the continent's interests on the global stage. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Assembly: It is the highest decision-making body, consisting of the heads of state and government of member countries. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- Executive Council: Made up of foreign affairs ministers, handles policy matters and makes recommendations to the Assembly.
- AU Commission: Headquartered in Addis Ababa, is the administrative arm responsible for implementing the decisions of the Assembly and the Executive Council.

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+91 9999 057869
www.mentorshipindia.com

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

@mentorship.india