

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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2. Centre notifies appointment of 17 judges across 8 HCs- The Hindu
3. Committee on marriage Bill gets another extension-The Hindu
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5. Centre raises MSP for Rabi crops, farmers unhappy- The Hindu
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1. OBCs and subcategories: Why this has been a hot-button issue for long - Indian Express
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Important News Articles

GS II

1. Can refer aspects of PMLA verdict to Constitution Bench, if need be: SC- The Hindu

Relevance: Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

News:

Prelims Takeaway

- Enforcement Directorate

• A **three-judge Bench** headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul indicated that it may refer any aspect of the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**, upheld by a Supreme Court judgment in July 2022, to a Constitution Bench.

Prevention of Money Laundering Act

- The PMLA was enacted in response to **India's global commitment (Vienna Convention)** to combat the menace of money laundering.
- It is a criminal law **enacted to prevent money laundering**
 - To provide for confiscation of property derived from, or involved in, money-laundering and related matters.
- The provisions of this act are **applicable to all financial institutions**, banks (Including RBI), mutual funds, insurance companies, and their financial intermediaries.
- The **ED is responsible** for enforcing the provisions of the PMLA and investigating money laundering cases.

Amendment in Prevention of Money Laundering Act

- It gives the **government and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) virtually unbridled powers** of summons, arrest, and raids, and makes bail nearly impossible
- It **shifts the burden of proof of innocence on to the accused** rather than the prosecution.
- More **disclosures for non-governmental organizations** by reporting entities like financial institutions, banking companies or intermediaries.
- Defining "**politically exposed persons (PEPs)**" as individuals who have been entrusted with prominent public functions by a foreign country
- Bringing in **practicing chartered accountants, company secretaries, and cost and works accountants** carrying out financial transactions on behalf of their clients into the ambit of the money laundering law.

2. Centre notifies appointment of 17 judges across 8 HCs- The Hindu

Relevance: Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

Prelims Takeaway

- Article 217

News:

- **The Centre today notified the transfer of 16 judges** including Manipur HC Acting CJ MV Muralidaran who has been shifted to the Calcutta HC for "better administration of justice".
- Union Minister for Law and Justice took to X to announce the transfers, as also **appointment of 11 judicial officers and six advocates as judges in eight HCs.**

Appointment of High Court Judges

- The **Government has, in consultation with the Chief Justice of India**, decided as a matter of policy to appoint the Chief Justice of all High Courts from outside.
- In case of initial appointment of a Chief Justice of a High Court, **the provisions of Article 217 will have to be followed**
- The proposal for appointment of a Judge of a High Court shall be **initiated by the Chief Justice of the High Court.**

- However, if the Chief Minister desires to recommend the name of any person he should **forward the same to the Chief Justice for his consideration.**
- Since the **Governor** is bound by the advice of the Chief Minister heading the Council of Ministers, a **copy of the Chief Justice's proposal, be sent to the Governor**
- The **Governor** as advised by the Chief Minister should forward his **recommendation along with the Union Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs** as early as possible
 - but not later than six weeks from the date of receipt of the proposal from the Chief Justice of the High Court.
- The **Chief Justice of India** would, in consultation with the **two seniormost Judges of the Supreme Court**, form his opinion in regard to a person to be recommended for appointment to the High Court.
- The **Chief Justice of India and the collegium of two Judges of the Supreme Court** would take into account the views of the **Chief Justice of the High Court and Judges of the High Court, Judges in the Supreme Court.**
- It is of no consequence whether that High Court is their parent High Court or they have functioned in that High Court on transfer.
- After their consultations, the **Chief Justice of India** will in the course of 4 weeks send his **recommendation to the Union Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs.**
- the recommendation or **the Chief Justice of India to the Prime Minister** who will advise the President in the matter of **appointment.**
- the appointment is **approved by the President**

3. Committee on marriage Bill gets another extension-The Hindu

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

News:

- A **parliamentary committee examining a Bill** which seeks to **increase the age of marriage of women** from the present 18 to 21 has been **granted a fresh three-month extension to table its report.**

The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021

- **Increasing the age of marriage for females:** The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 provides that the minimum age of marriage is 21 years in case of males, and 18 years in case of females.
- The Bill **increases the minimum age** for females to **21 years.**
- Under the 2006 Act, a person who is married before the minimum specified age may **apply to annul the marriage.**
- The petition **must be filed within two years of attaining majority** (i.e., 20 years of age).
- The Bill increases **this to five years** (i.e., 23 years).
- The minimum **age of marriage at 21 years** is higher than the minimum age of majority (18 years).
- The Supreme Court has **ruled that marriage between adults is a fundamental right.**
- The question is whether prohibiting marriage for persons between 18 and 21 years is a **reasonable restriction on their right to marry.**

Prelims Takeaway

- The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021

GS III

4. India will explore building large language models' - The Hindu

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

News:

- India will set up a **"high-powered committee"** to explore the development of **large language models, or LLMs**
- **This tools harness artificial intelligence** to create applications that can understand and process human language

Prelims Takeaway

- Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade

Key Points

- LLMs are a cornerstone technology underlying several pieces of ‘intelligent’ software and help make possible applications such as ChatGPT.
- The office of the Principal Scientific Adviser had put out a **draft National Deep Tech Start-up Policy** for public comment on July 31.
- The purpose of the policy is to “ensure India’s position in the global deep tech value chain”, in areas such as semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and Space technology.

U.S.-India collaboration

- **India and the U.S.** were at the best point in their relationship in many years, making it an ideal time for both countries to **collaborate on deep tech**.
- ‘**Deep tech**’ is a buzzword in tech and **start-up circles**.
- India’s draft policy document **on deep tech cites Startup India’s database**,
- it claims that **there are 10,298 start-ups recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**
 - These are classified across various sub-sectors within the larger deep tech space as of May 2023.

5. Centre raises MSP for Rabi crops, farmers unhappy- The Hindu

Relevance: Major crops-cropping patterns in various parts of the country, – different types of irrigation and irrigation systems storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints; e-technology in the aid of farmers.

Prelims Takeaway

- The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices

News:

- The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has increased** the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for all Rabi crops for the financial year 2024-25.

Minimum Support Prices (MSP)

- MSP is a form of government intervention **to insure the farmers against a steep decline in the prices** of their goods and to help them prevent losses.
- The government of India **sets the MSP twice a year for 24 commodities**.
- This is done by the **government to protect the farmers against a fall in prices** in a year of bumper production.
- When the **market price falls below the declared MSP**, the government would purchase the entire quantity from the farmers at MSP.

Objective:

- Support farmers from distress sales
- To procure food grains for public distribution
- **The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) decides the minimum support price**

Pros of MSP

- It considers various factors when fixing the price and **does not leave the farmer at the mercy of the market**.
- It has a heavy influence on market prices and also **helps the farmer grow production and match up with other sectors in terms of income**.

Cons of MSP

- Hiking the MSP without investing in infrastructure is **just a short-term play**.
- MSP covers **numerous costs such as the cost of sowing (A2) and labor (FL)**.
 - These considerations are controversial with suggestions that it should be based on comprehensive costs (C2), which also include land rent costs.
- Too much of a hike on MSP either paves way for **inflationary effects on the economy**, with a rise in prices of foodgrains and vegetables

- MSP is notified for 23 crops, **but effectively ensured only for two-three crops.**

Seeking more

Farmers' organisations have criticised the increase as 'meagre'; they point to a mismatch between the support prices and costs

- They highlight the increase in diesel and fertilizer prices that spur input costs

- Farmer representatives also lament lack of govt participation in actual procurement after MSP is announced



- Highest increase in MSP compared with last year is for lentils (masur) at ₹425 per quintal

6. Ayodhya Ram temple trust receives FCRA licence to accept foreign donations- The Hindu

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

News:

- The **Ayodhya Ram temple** trust recently received a **license to accept foreign donations** under the **Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)**.

Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

- Enacted during the **1976 emergency** amid apprehensions that **foreign powers were interfering in India's affairs**.
- It sought to **regulate foreign donations to individuals and associations** so that they functioned "in a manner consistent with the **values of a sovereign democratic republic**".

FCRA Registration

- NGOs that want to receive foreign funds **must apply online in a prescribed format** with the required documentation.
- The registrations are granted to individuals or associations that have **definite cultural, economic, educational, religious and social programs**.
- Following the application, the MHA makes **inquiries through the Intelligence Bureau** into the antecedents of the applicant and accordingly processes the application.

FCRA Requirements

- Broadly, it **requires every person or NGO** seeking to receive foreign donations to be **registered under the Act** to
 - Open a bank account for the receipt of the foreign funds in **State Bank of India, Delhi**
 - Utilize those funds only for the **purpose for which they have been received and as stipulated in the Act**.
- They are also **required to file annual returns**, and they **must not transfer the funds to another NGO**.

Prelims Takeaway

- Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
- Ayodhya Ram Temple
- NGOs

Validity of FCRA Approval

- Once granted, FCRA registration is **valid for five years**.
- NGOs are expected to apply for **renewal within six months** of the date of expiry of registration.
- Once expired, the NGO is **no longer entitled to receive foreign funds or utilize its existing funds without permission** from the ministry.

7. India likely to sign deal with U.S. for 31 MQ-9B drones by February 2024 - The Hindu**Relevance:** Defence**News:**

- According to defense sources, the deal for **31 MQ-9B Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)** with the US is expected to be **concluded by February 2024**.

Prelims Takeaway

- MQ-9B Armed Drones
- Make in India
- QUAD

MQ-9B Armed Drones

- It is a variant of the **MQ-9 "Reaper"** which was used to launch a **modified version of the Hellfire missile**.
 - The missile eliminated al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in Kabul.
- The MQ-9B has **two variants** viz. **SkyGuardian and SeaGuardian**.
- The drone can operate at **over 40,000 feet**, giving the **Indian military surveillance capacity in the high-altitude Himalayan border areas**.
- The Predator also has the **maximum endurance of 40 hours**, making it **useful for long-hour surveillance**.
- **Equipped with advanced features** such as automatic take-off and landing, detect and avoid system, anti-spoofing GPS and encrypted communication links.

Significance for India

- Provide India with a **strategic edge over its adversaries**.
 - India will be able to **conduct long-range surveillance and precision strikes without risking its manned aircraft or pilots**.
- **Boost India's defence cooperation with the US**, which has emerged as a key partner for India in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Strengthen India's role in the Quad grouping** of democracies along with the US, Japan and Australia.
- **Create opportunities for India's defence industry**, as it will involve **technology transfer and joint production** under the Make in India initiative.

8. Lao PDR becomes second country in 2023 after Bangladesh to eliminate lymphatic filariasis - Down to Earth**Relevance:** Health**News:**

- According to the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**, **Lao People's Democratic Republic** became the second country in 2023 after Bangladesh to **eliminate lymphatic filariasis**.
- This is the **country's second neglected tropical disease (NTD) to be eliminated**, following the **elimination of trachoma as a public health hazard in 2017**.

Prelims Takeaway

- Lymphatic Filariasis
- Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD)
- World Health Organisation (WHO)

Lymphatic Filariasis

- Commonly known as **elephantiasis**, it is considered as a **Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD)**.
- It **impairs the lymphatic system** and can lead to the **abnormal enlargement of body parts**, causing pain, severe disability and social stigma.
- It is the **second most disabling disease** after mental health.

Cause

- It is a **vector-borne disease**, caused by **infection with parasites** classified as **nematodes (roundworms)** of the family Filarioidea.

- There are **3 types of thread-like filarial worms** which causes lymphatic filariasis
 - Wuchereria Bancrofti is responsible for 90% of the cases.
 - Brugia Malayi causes most of the remainder of the cases.
 - Brugia Timori also causes the disease.

Transmission

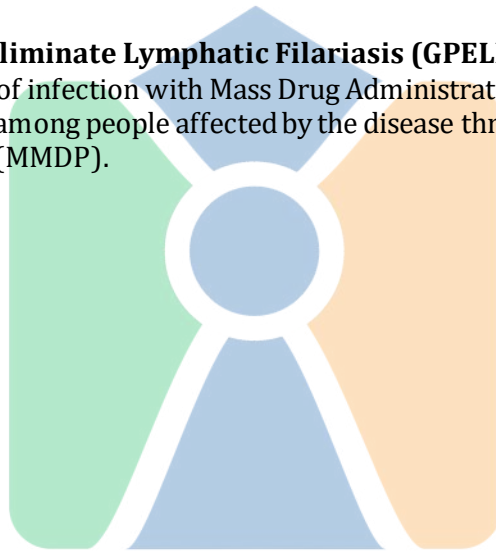
- **Mosquitoes** are infected with microfilariae by **ingesting blood when biting an infected host**.
- When infected mosquitoes bite people, **mature parasite larvae are deposited** on the skin, from where **they can enter the body**.

Treatment

- The WHO recommends **three drug treatments** to accelerate the global elimination of lymphatic filariasis.
- The treatment, known as **IDA**, involves a combination of **ivermectin, diethylcarbamazine citrate and albendazole**.

Global Initiatives

- **WHO's New Roadmap for 2021–2030**
 - To prevent, control, eliminate and eradicate a set of 20 diseases, termed neglected tropical diseases, by 2030.
- **Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF) by WHO**
 - To stop transmission of **infection** with Mass Drug Administration (MDA).
 - To alleviate suffering among people affected by the disease through morbidity management and disability prevention (MMDP).

**Mentorship**
India

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. OBCs and subcategories: Why this has been a hot-button issue for long - Indian Express

Relevance: Constitution of India —historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

Context:

- The **recent publication of Bihar's caste survey results** has raised the **possibility of similar exercises in other states** as India enters a new electoral cycle.
- The **enumeration of castes and the sub-categorisation of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs)** for equitable reservation distribution have long been **contentious issues**.

Who are the Other Backward Classes (OBCs)?

- OBCs represent backward or marginalised communities and castes apart from Scheduled Castes (SCs) or Scheduled Tribes (STs).
- The Indian Constitution mandates affirmative action for OBCs through Articles 15(4) and 16(4), enabling special provisions and reservations.

Categories among OBCs

- OBCs have been generally identified on the basis of their occupation like agriculture labour, cattle-rearing, carpentry, pottery, stone-cutting, etc.
- Two broad categories within the OBCs are
 - Those who own land (such as the Yadavs and Kurmis in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh)
 - Those who do not i.e. non-landowners
- The demand for reservation for the "backwards among OBCs" has emerged as few "upper" OBCs have grabbed most of the benefits of reservation.
 - The 27% reservation came with the implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations more than 30 years ago.

EBCs: The Case of Bihar

- The Bihar caste survey identified
 - 27% of the population as "pichhda" (backward)
 - 36% as "atyant pichhda" (Extremely Backward Classes, or EBCs).
- The state had previously categorized castes as "more backward".
- The Karpooori Thakur Formula, implemented in the 1970s, offered reservation benefits to various groups.
 - These groups include OBCs, economically backward OBCs, women and the economically disadvantaged from "upper castes."

Two OBC Commissions

1. Kaka Kalelkar Commission (1953)
 - Established in 1953, it recommended identifying socially and educationally backward classes and 25-40% reservation in government jobs.
2. Mandal Commission (1979)
 - Appointed in 1979 but implemented in 1990, it identified 3,743 OBC castes.
 - It suggested 27% reservation for OBCs in government jobs and educational institutions, and proposed no sub-categorization.

Sub-categorization of OBCs

1. At the State Level
 - Various states have implemented subcategorization within their OBC quotas based on different criterias.
 - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have subgroups within their OBC reservations.
2. At the National Level
 - In 2015, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment tasked the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) with examining the subcategorization of OBCs in the central list.
 - The NCBC proposed OBCs subcategorization into
 - Extremely Backward Classes
 - More Backward Classes
 - Backward Classes
 - In October 2017, a new commission for sub-categorisation of OBCs was constituted under Justice G Rohini.
 - The Rohini Commission submitted its report this year, but its contents are not public.

2. Severe drought grips the Amazon rainforest: The impact, cause and grim future - Indian Express

Relevance: Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc., Disaster and disaster management.

Context:

- The **Amazon rainforest is reeling from an intense drought**.
- Numerous **rivers vital for travel have dried up**.
- As a result, there is **no water, food, or medicine** in villages of Indigenous communities living in the area.

Impact of the long spell of drought in the region

- **Disturbing ecological balance:** Severe drop in water levels has resulted in high numbers of fish and river dolphins (boto) dying, forcing the locals to use contaminated water for cooking, bathing, and drinking.
- **Energy Crisis:** Lack of water has stalled the operations of a major hydropower dam in the region
- **Food Crisis:** People in remote jungle villages are left with limited access to food, and other supplies due to closer of dam.
- **Vulnerable to Wildfires:** Extreme dry conditions have made the rainforest more vulnerable to wildfires too.
 - o In October itself, the Amazonas state has witnessed 2,700 blazes, according to Brazil's National Institute for Space Research.
 - o Smoke from wildfires has plummeted air quality to hazardous levels.

Reason for such severe drought in Amazon

- Two simultaneous natural events have hindered cloud formation, further reducing the already low rainfall levels in the region.
 1. **Onset of El Nino:** Breaking temperature records and triggered more extreme heat in many parts of the world and in the Pacific ocean.
 2. **Unusually high Sea Surface Temperature in northern Atlantic Ocean:** Heated air rises into the atmosphere and reached the Amazon rainforest, inhibiting the formation of clouds

Way Ahead

- Several studies have indicated that with rising global temperatures, the Amazon will experience longer and more frequent droughts.
 - o A 2022 study, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), said if humans continue burning fossil fuels at the current rate, the rainforest would experience major drought nine out of every 10 years by the year 2060.
 - o A 2022 study, published in the journal Nature, revealed that the Amazon is nearing its tipping point. Beyond the tipping point, it would transform from forest to savanna, releasing a large amount of stored carbon, which would, in turn, exacerbate global warming.
 - o Therefore, there is an urgent need to curb deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions to protect the Amazon.



Quick Look

1. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- The SDGs/Global Goals were adopted by the United Nations in 2015
- Objective: it is a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
- The SDGs framework sets targets for 231 unique indicators across 17 SDG goals
- It is related to economic development, social welfare, and environmental sustainability, to be met by 2030.
- Countries have committed to prioritise progress for those who are the farthest behind.
- The creativity, technology, and financial resources from all of society are necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context.

2. Rafah Crossing

- The crossing is at the south end of the Gaza Strip, a narrow slither of land that is home to 2.3 million people.
- It is wedged between Israel, Egypt, and the Mediterranean Sea.
- The crossing is controlled by Egypt.
- It is the only likely route for humanitarian aid to enter Gaza via Rafah from Egypt's Sinai Peninsula region.
- There are only two other border crossings: Erez, a border crossing with Israel in north Gaza, and Kerem Shalom, a commercial crossing between Israel and Southern Gaza.

3. RISC-V technology

- It is an open-source technology that is pronounced "risk five".
- It is an open-source instruction set architecture (ISA) used for the development of custom processors targeting a variety of end applications.
- It is considered the fifth generation of processors built on the concept of the reduced instruction set computer (RISC).
- It was begun as a project at UC Berkeley to create an open-source computer system based on RISC principles.
- It was initially designed for academic use. The standard has evolved and is now managed by RISC-V International.

4. Muthuvan tribe

- These people live in the border hill forests of Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- They speak slightly different dialects and call each other Malayalam Muthuvan and Pandi Muthuvan.
- They are animists and spirit worshippers and also worship the forest gods.
- They believe that the spirits of their ancestors were the first migrants to the hill forests.
- They are known for coexisting with wildlife with their traditional knowledge.
- These tribal people follow a unique system of governance called the 'Kani System'.
- Under this system, each village is headed by a 'Kani', who is responsible for the administration of the village.
- They are experts in traditional medicines, which are extremely effective, and the medicine is kept confidentially and passed down through generations.

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following statements about Prevention of Money Laundering Act

1. The PMLA was enacted in response to India's global commitment to the Vienna Convention to combat the menace of money laundering.
2. The provisions of this act are applicable to all financial institutions, banks, mutual funds, insurance companies, and their financial intermediaries.
3. The ED is responsible for enforcing the provisions of the PMLA and investigating money laundering cases.

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

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

Q2. Consider the following statements about appointment to High Court

1. The Chief Justice of India and the collegium of two Judges of the Supreme Court would take into account the views of the Chief Justice of the High Court and Judges of the High Court, Judges in the Supreme Court.
2. The appointment is subject to final approval by the President

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

Q3. Consider the following statements

1. The Special Marriage Act, 1954 prescribes 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men respectively.
2. Sexual intercourse with a minor with or without consent is rape,

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

Q4. With reference to Deep tech, consider the following statements

1. The technology refers to a class of startup businesses that develop new offerings based on tangible engineering innovation or scientific discoveries and advances.
2. Talent and market access, research guidance, investors' understanding of deep-tech, are the major challenges faced by them.

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

Q5. Consider the following statements about Minimum Support Prices (MSP)

1. It is a legal right in India
2. The government of India sets the MSP twice a year for 24 commodities.
3. The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) decides the minimum support price taking into account the following factors

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

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

Q6. Consider the following statements with reference to Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

1. It was enacted during the 1962 Sino-Indian War amid apprehensions that foreign powers were interfering in India's affairs.
2. The registrations are granted to individuals or associations that have definite cultural, economic, educational, religious and social programs.
3. The NGOs can utilize the funds received for any purpose.
4. Once granted, FCRA registration is valid for a year.

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

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

Q7. With reference to MQ-9B Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), consider the following statements

- 1. The MQ-9B has two variants viz. SkyGuardian and SeaGuardian.
- 2. The drone provides India with military surveillance capacity in the high-altitude Himalayan border areas.

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

Q8. With reference to the Lymphatic filariasis, consider the following statements

- 1. It is one of the neglected tropical diseases.
- 2. It is a vector-borne disease, caused by infection with parasites.
- 3. India is one of the countries which has eliminated this disease.

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

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

Q9. The Rohini Commission, seen in the news recently, is associated with

- A. Recommending the reforms in recognising the rights of LGBTQ communities.
- B. Reviewing the working of the Government Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).
- C. Recommending necessary reforms for women empowerment in government jobs
- D. Examining the sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes.

Q10. Consider the following countries

- 1. Colombia
- 2. Brazil
- 3. Suriname
- 4. Bolivia

How many of the countries given above is/are part of the drainage basin of Amazon River?

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

Prelims Track Answer

Ans.1 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The PMLA was enacted in response to India's global commitment (Vienna Convention) to combat the menace of money laundering.
- It is a criminal law enacted to prevent money laundering
- to provide for confiscation of property derived from, or involved in, money-laundering and related matters.
- The provisions of this act are applicable to all financial institutions, banks (Including RBI), mutual funds, insurance companies, and their financial intermediaries.
- The ED is responsible for enforcing the provisions of the PMLA and investigating money laundering cases.

Ans.2 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Chief Justice of India and the collegium of two Judges of the Supreme Court would take into account the views of the Chief Justice of the High Court and Judges of the High Court, Judges in the Supreme Court.
- It is of no consequence whether that High Court is their parent High Court or they have functioned in that High Court on transfer.
- After their consultations, the Chief Justice of India will in the course of 4 weeks send his recommendation to the Union Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs.
- the recommendation of the Chief Justice of India to the Prime Minister who will advise the President in the matter of appointment.
- the appointment is approved by the President

Ans. 3 Option D is correct

Explanation

- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act,
- 2006 prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men respectively.
- An individual attains the age of majority at 18 as per the Indian Majority Act, 1875.
- Additionally, sexual intercourse with a minor is rape, and the 'consent' of a minor is regarded as invalid since she is deemed incapable of giving consent at that age.

Ans.4 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Deep tech or deep technology refers to a class of startup businesses that develop new offerings based on tangible engineering innovation or scientific discoveries and advances.
- Usually, such startups operate on, but are not limited to, agriculture, life sciences, chemistry, aerospace and green energy.
- Talent and market access, research guidance, investors' understanding of deep-tech, customer acquisition and cost for talent are the major challenges faced by them.

Ans. 5 Option B is correct

Explanation

- MSP is a form of government intervention to insure the farmers against a steep decline in the prices of their goods and to help them prevent losses.
- The government of India sets the MSP twice a year for 24 commodities.
- This is done by the government to protect the farmers against a fall in prices in a year of bumper production.
- It is not a legal right in India
- When the market price falls below the declared MSP, the government would purchase the entire quantity from the farmers at MSP.
- The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACPC) decides the minimum support price taking into account the following factors

Ans. 6 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) was enacted during the 1976 emergency amid apprehensions that foreign powers were interfering in India's affairs. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It sought to regulate foreign donations to individuals and associations so that they functioned "in a manner consistent with the values of a sovereign democratic republic".
- The registrations are granted to individuals or associations that have definite cultural, economic, educational, religious and social programs. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- Broadly, it requires every person or NGO seeking to receive foreign donations to be registered under the Act.
- They should also utilize those funds only for the purpose for which they have been received and as stipulated in the Act. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- They are also required to file annual returns, and they must not transfer the funds to another NGO.
- Once granted, FCRA registration is valid for five years. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**
- Once expired, the NGO is no longer entitled to receive foreign funds or utilize its existing funds without permission from the ministry.

Ans. 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- MQ-9B Armed Drones is a variant of the MQ-9 "Reaper" which was used to launch a modified version of the Hellfire missile.
- The MQ-9B has two variants viz. SkyGuardian and SeaGuardian. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The drone can operate at over 40,000 feet, giving the Indian military surveillance capacity in the high-altitude Himalayan border areas. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The Predator also has the maximum endurance of 40 hours, making it useful for long-hour surveillance.
- Equipped with advanced features such as automatic take-off and landing, detect and avoid system, anti-spoofing GPS and encrypted communication links.

Ans. 8 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Lymphatic Filariasis, commonly known as elephantiasis, is considered as a Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It impairs the lymphatic system and can lead to the abnormal enlargement of body parts, causing pain, severe disability and social stigma.
- It is a vector-borne disease, caused by infection with parasites classified as

nematodes (roundworms) of the family Filarioidea. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

- India is committed to eliminating Lymphatic Filariasis by 2027, three years ahead of the global target. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- The WHO recommends three drug treatments to accelerate the global elimination of lymphatic filariasis.
- The treatment, known as IDA, involves a combination of ivermectin, diethylcarbamazine citrate and albendazole.

Ans. 9 Option D is correct

Explanation

- The Justice G. Rohini Commission is associated with the sub-categorising Other Backward Classes (OBC) caste groups. **Hence, option D is correct.**
- Formed in 2017, the commission aimed to examine the concentration of reservation and benefits among dominant OBC caste groups.
- Based on its findings, the commission was to suggest a breakdown of the over 2,600 caste groups on the Central OBC list to ensure a more equitable redistribution of benefits.

Ans. 10 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Amazon River is the world's largest river by water volume and width.
- It is the second-longest river in the world after the Nile.
- It accounts for one-fifth of the total volume of freshwater entering the oceans globally.
- It is sometimes referred to as the "lungs of the Earth" due to its role in regulating the planet's oxygen and carbon cycles.
- Its journey begins high in the Andes Mountains.
- It empties into the Atlantic Ocean on the northeastern coast of Brazil.
- It has the largest drainage area of any river system.
- Its watershed spans the countries of Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia. **Hence, option C is correct.**
- Tributaries: The Rio Negro, the Madeira River, the Xingu River etc.

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