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Important News Articles

GS I

1. Venur prepares for Lord Bahubali Mahamastakabhisheka after 12 years- Times of India

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

Prelims Takeaway

- Jainism
- Lord Bahubali

News:

- **Jalabhisheka has been performed to Lord Bahubali during 'Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsava'** (grand consecration) held once in 12 years, at Venur in Karnataka

Mahamastakabhisheka

- The word Mahamastakabhisheka is a combination of three words viz: Maha (great), Masthaka (head) and Abhisheka (anointing) which literally means 'the head anointing ceremony'.
- The ceremony is called **Mahamastakabhisheka (also referred as Grand Consecration) and not Mastakabhisheka because the ceremony is performed only once in 12 years.**
- The Mahamastakabhisheka Mahotsava is an anointing ceremony of the statue of Lord Bahubali.

Lord Bahubali

- Lord Bahubali was the **son of lord Rishabhanatha who was the first of the 24 Jain Tirthankaras.**
- Jain mythology holds up Bahubali as the one who succeeded in attaining liberty from worldly desires through a long period of sustained meditation.
- The sculpture of Lord Bahubali is **in an upright posture of meditation known as Kayotsarga** which stands for renunciation, self-control and subjugation of the ego as a reflection of his life.
- This is the **digambara form of Bahubali which represents complete victory over earthly desires and needs, which forms the edifice for spiritual ascent towards divinity.**

GS II

2. 12 re-elected MPs between 2004-19 have criminal cases'- The Hindu

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

News:

- A total of 12 out of 23 **Members of Parliament re-elected from 2004 to 2019 have criminal cases against them**, according to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch.

Prelims Takeaway

- Association for Democratic Reforms
- MP, MLA

Key Highlights

- Nine of the 12 face serious charges such as murder, attempt to murder and dacoity.
- The report was prepared after an analysis of the self-sworn affidavits of 23 re-elected MPs from 2004 to 2019.
- Of 17 BJP MPs who were re-elected, seven (41%) had criminal cases against them and all three Congress MPs re-elected faced criminal cases.
- The lone re-elected MP from the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) had a criminal case against him as did the MP from Shiv Sena.
- Four of the re-elected MPs had declared their educational qualifications to be between Class 10 and 12 while 18 have declared educational qualification of graduation or above and one re-elected MP is a diploma holder.

Judicial Measures against criminalisation of politics

- In 2002, Supreme Court gave a historic ruling in **Union of India (UOI) vs. Association for Democratic Reforms** that every candidate, contesting an election to the Parliament, State Legislatures or Municipal Corporation,
 - Has to declare their criminal records, financial records and educational qualifications.
- In 2005, the Supreme Court in **Ramesh Dalal vs. Union of India** held that a sitting t (MP) or (MLA) shall also be subject to disqualification from contesting elections
 - If he is convicted sentenced to not less than 2 years of imprisonment by a court of law.
- In 2013, in **Lily Thomas vs. Union of India**, the Supreme Court held that Section 8(4) of The Representation of the People Act, 1951 is unconstitutional
 - Which allows MPs and MLAs who are convicted to continue in office till an appeal against such conviction is disposed of.
- In 2013 in People's **Union for Civil Liberties vs. Union of India case Supreme Court**
 - Asked Election Commission to provide 'none of the above' choice to voters to exercise their right to express no confidence against all candidates in fray.
- In 2014 Supreme Court recommends to PM/CMs not to include persons, against whom charges have been framed in serious offences, in their council of Ministers.
- In 2016, Supreme Court refers to 5-judge Constitution bench whether framing of charge in heinous crimes against an MP or MLA would disqualify him.
- This also meant **whether a person against whom charges framed in serious offences be debarred from contesting elections**

3. Govt. unveils 4 web portals for news publishers - indian express

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

News:

- The Union Information & Broadcasting Minister **launched four online portals of the Central Bureau of Communication, the Registrar of Newspapers for India, the New Media Wing, and the Digital Addressable System of the Ministry.**

Key Highlights

- The Minister said the initiative was aimed at **ensuring ease of doing business** by fostering a more conducive business environment for newspaper publishers and TV channels
 - Enhance transparency and efficiency in government communication, provide easy access to authentic government videos
 - Create a comprehensive database of local cable operators for streamline regulatory processes in the sector in future.
- The four portals include **'Press Sewa' for registration of newspapers and periodicals and 'NaViGate Bharat' for videos on the entire gamut of the government' development-related and citizen welfare-oriented measures.**
- The other portals are for registration of local cable operators and a transparent empanelment, media planning and e-billing system.

The Central Bureau of Communication

- It is the **nodal agency of the Government of India for advertising** by various Ministries and organizations of Government of India
 - Including public sector undertakings and autonomous bodies.
- It works under the administrative control of the Information and broadcasting ministry.
- **HQ: New Delhi.**
- It was set up on 8th December, 2017 by **integration of three erstwhile media units of Ministry of I&B,**
 - Namely Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) and Song & Drama Division(S&DD), all involved in interpersonal communication.

Prelims Takeaway

- The Central Bureau of Communication
- Ease of doing business

- It undertakes campaigns to inform and educate rural and urban people about the Government's policies and programmes through available vehicles of communication
 - Print, Audio Visual, Outdoor, Digital and New Media.

4. Russia used up most of its rupee balance in Indian banks: Indian officials- The Hindu

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

News:

- **Russia has used up most of its rupee balance**, that had piled up in special vostro accounts of Indian banks on account of payments made largely for Russian defense purchases

Key Highlights

- The rupee balance has been **used up by Russia through multiple avenues including payments for Indian imports**
 - Which increased about 39% to \$4.05 billion in CY23
 - Investments in infrastructure projects
 - Investments in the equity market
 - Purchase of government securities

Exploring projects

- "The two countries are exploring projects where **Moscow can invest, which could be on the lines of the India-Russia joint venture Vande Bharat deal**
 - To manufacture and maintain 120 trains for the Indian Railways.
 - The area of heavy engineering holds a lot of scope,
- The Russian media has also written about a deal per which the Goa shipyards in India will build 24 cargo ships for operation in the Caspian Sea with the participation of the Russian Export Center by 2027.
- Such deals between **Russia and India could ensure continued usage of rupee balances by Russia**
- India and Russia put in place a rupee payment system to circumvent the sanctions.
- Under the mechanism, **a number of Russian banks, opened their rupee vostro accounts with authorized dealer banks in India**
 - Such as UCO, HDFC and ICICI, for enabling rupee trade between the two countries.
- As India's exports were **insignificant compared to the imports, the piling up of unused rupee payments in the banks became a problem.**
- Russia even considered suspending some of its defense sales to India at one point of time

Prelims Takeaway

- Map based question
- Vostro account

GS III

5. Payments banks may seek RBI nod for small-value fixed deposits - The Hindu

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

News:

- Payments banks (PBs) **may approach the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to allow them to take small-value fixed as well as recurring deposits**

Key Highlights

- garnering low-cost savings bank (SB) deposits is proving an uphill task given the high-interest rates being offered by commercial banks on term deposits

Prelims Takeaway

- Current account and savings bank account
- Payments banks

- Now, only six PBs — **Airtel Payments Bank, Fino Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank, Jio Payments Bank, NSDL Payments Bank, and Paytm PB** — are operational.

FD/RD needed to stop deposit outflow

- “Commercial banks’ low-cost **CASA (current account, savings account) deposits have come down over the last few quarters**
 - As customers prefer investment in fixed deposits, non-convertible debentures, mutual funds, equities, etc.,
 - Which offer better returns. Given this situation, there is no way PBs can stop the decline in their savings bank (SB) deposits.
- So, the only way to stop deposit outflow is **to allow to offer FDs and recurring deposits (RDs)**

Up the cap

- These banks can only **accept demand deposits (current account and savings bank account/CASA) with a maximum balance of ₹2 lakh** per individual customer.
- They **cannot undertake lending activities** but distribute financial products like mutual fund units and insurance products, etc
 - And act as business correspondents of another bank.

6. Cabinet approves Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP) for the period 2021-26- PIB

Relevance: Disaster and disaster management.

News:

- ‘Recently, the Union Cabinet has given the nod for the extension of the “**Flood Management and Border Areas Programme (FMBAP)**”
- The total budget of Rs. 4,100 crores over a span of 5 years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

Prelims Takeaway

- Flood Management and Border Areas Programme
- River Management and Border Areas

Key Points about the Flood Management and Border Areas Programme:

- This initiative operates as a **centrally sponsored scheme**.

It comprises two main components:

- **Flood Management Programme (FMP):**
 - This involves central assistance to State Governments for crucial projects related to flood control, anti-erosion measures, drainage development, and anti-sea erosion efforts.
- **River Management and Border Areas (RMBA):**
 - This facet focuses on flood control and anti-erosion initiatives along common border rivers with neighboring countries.
 - It includes hydrological observations, flood forecasting, and activities related to the investigation and pre-construction phases of joint water resources projects with neighboring countries.
 - The central government provides 100% assistance for this component.

Funding Structure:

- The funding pattern differs based on the state category.
- Special Category States receive funding in the ratio of 90% (Centre) to 10% (State),
- General/Non-Special Category States follow a 60% (Centre) to 40% (State) funding pattern.
- **The RMBA component not only addresses flood and erosion issues** but also safeguards critical installations of security agencies and border outposts along the border rivers.
- **The scheme includes provisions for incentivizing states** that implement flood plain zoning, recognized as an effective non-structural measure for flood management.

Significance:

- The approval of this program is crucial, for escalating frequency and intensity of extreme weather events in recent years due to the anticipated impact of climate change.

- The situation is expected to worsen, leading to increased challenges in managing floods in terms of their extent, intensity, and frequency."

7. New protocol can reduce breeding cycle of pigeonpea by 3-5 years, important for nutritional security in drylands- Down to earth

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

- Yellow revolution
- Pigeon pea

News:

- A new fast-breeding protocol is likely to make it easier for scientists to develop better quality varieties of the crop at a faster rate

Pigeon pea

- Pigeon pea, **known as arhar and tur in India, stands out as a significant legume crop** and a protein-rich dietary staple commonly consumed as dal.
- Cultivated predominantly in **semi-arid regions of India, it thrives in tropical climates** and exhibits specific requirements for rainfall, temperature, and soil conditions.
- In terms of climatic conditions, **pigeon pea necessitates an annual rainfall of 600-650 mm**
 - Coupled with moist conditions during the initial eight weeks and dry conditions during flowering and pod development.
- Temperature-wise, it can thrive within a range of 26°C to 30°C during the rainy season and 17°C to 22°C in the post-rainy season (November to March).
- While adaptable to various soil types, sandy loam or loam soil is deemed most suitable for cultivation.
- Pigeon pea is notably sensitive to low radiation during pod development, resulting in suboptimal pod formation during monsoons and cloudy weather.
- Frequently **intercropped with a variety of crops**, it is estimated that 80-90% of pigeon pea cultivation in India involves intercropping.
- Despite its agricultural significance, **pigeon pea faces challenges such as diseases** like Wilt, Sterility Mosaic Disease, Phytophthora Blight, Alternaria Blight, and Powdery Mildew.
- Notably, its extended growth cycle and sensitivity to day length have hampered breeding efforts, leading to the release of only about 250 varieties globally over six decades.
- On a positive note, pigeon pea offers numerous health benefits, boasting a low glycemic index
- being rich in thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B-6, folate, vitamin A, calcium, zinc, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus.
- Key pigeon pea-producing states in India include Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, and Jharkhand.

8. China 2023 coal power approvals rose, putting climate targets at risk- The Hindu

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

Prelims Takeaway

- IPCC
- Non-fossil fuels

News:

- **China approved 114 gigawatts (GW) of coal power capacity in 2023, up 10% from a year earlier**, with the world's top carbon polluter now at risk of falling short on climate targets after sanctioning dozens of new plants

Key Highlights

- China has vowed to "strictly control" new coal-fired generation capacity, and has also connected record numbers of new wind and solar plants to its grid.
- **But after a wave of electricity shortages in 2021**, China also embarked on a coal power permitting boom that could slow its energy transition
 - According to analysis by U.S. think tank Global Energy Monitor (GEM) and the Helsinki-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

- "Drastic action" is now required to meet 2025 carbon and energy intensity goals, and **China could also struggle to meet a target to raise the share of non-fossil fuels in its total energy mix to 20% by 2025**
- China's CO₂ emissions rose by an estimated 5.2% in 2023, and are up 12% since 2020, CREA lead analyst Lauri Myllyvirta wrote in a separate note published by Carbon Brief

Background of 1.5 Degrees Celsius Warming Target?

- The Paris Agreement aims to limit the **temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius by the end of this century**.
- This target is considered significant, but **there are a couple of important things to remember**.
- The 2 degrees Celsius target was not determined based on strict scientific evidence.
- Instead, it was initially proposed by an economist named William Nordhaus in the 1970s.
- The **Alliance of Small Island States pushed for the target to be lowered to 1.5 degrees Celsius**, leading to further retrofitting of future scenarios to meet this goal.
- According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), **the leading scientific body on climate change**, if current trends continue, the world is likely to reach 1.5°C of warming by 2030-2052.
- Also, the IPCC Special Report on the difference in impacts between 1.5°C versus 2°C warming suggests that tropical countries
 - such as India are projected to experience the largest impacts on economic growth because of climate change.

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

9. The next frontier- The Hindu

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

Context:

- Space used to be the final frontier but **its increasing exploration has changed that, replacing a romantic notion with narratives with financial, socio-economic, and geopolitical implications**.

Key Points

- Space technologies and space flight are expensive, risky endeavors that only national agencies were suited to engage in for decades.
- This is no longer true as private sector players are increasingly expected to complement, augment, and/or lead the way by identifying market opportunities and innovating rapidly.
- India started on this path in 2020 with state-led reforms that opened its space sector to private companies,
 - Then releasing the 'Geospatial Guidelines' and later the 'Indian Space Policy', creating the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe),
 - Passing the Telecommunications Act 2023 that, among other departures from the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885, provided for satellite broadband services.
- On February 21, the government opened the door to 100% foreign direct investments (FDI) in the "manufacturing of components and systems/sub-systems for satellites, ground segment and user segment"
 - Up to 74% in satellite-manufacturing, operations, and data products; and up to 49% in launch vehicles, space ports, and their corresponding systems.
- As such, by stepping out of the way and allowing substantial FDI via the automatic route,
 - The government has taken the logical next step in spurring the contributions of private space flight operators, technology-developers,
 - Application designers to the national space economy, in line with ambitions outlined in the Space Policy.

- The decision gives India the ability to take advantage of its less vitiated foreign ties to catch up with China's more advanced position as a space power.
- While the Chinese programme benefits from not-inconsiderable private sector participation
 - Its ability to attract foreign investments is hamstrung by its belligerent foreign policies
 - The Xi Jinping administration's plan to modernize the military by, among other things, adapting civilian technologies for military use
 - Though other countries, including the U.S., have similar policies.
- According to IN-SPACE chairman a "significant" slice of the \$37.1 billion that the space sector raised worldwide in 2021-23 went to space start-ups.
- Against this extended backdrop, new investments can add to India's space economy by improving start-ups' access to talent and capital
 - Effecting a better balance between upstream and downstream opportunities, versus the current skew in favour of the former
 - Boosting local manufacturing
 - Improving investor confidence.

Conclusion

- Finally, to sustain these winds of change, **the government must keep the regulatory environment clear, reduce red tape, increase public support,**
 - Ease Indian companies' ability to access foreign markets.

10. World's race to eradicate Guinea worm disease nears the finish line- The Hindu

Relevance: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Context:

- The world is on the **brink of a public health triumph as it closes in on eradicating Guinea worm disease.**

Key Highlights

- There were more than 3.5 million cases of this disease in the 1980s
 - But according to the World Health Organization's (WHO) weekly epidemiological report, they dwindled to 14 cases in 2021, 13 in 2022, and just six in 2023.
- Rewind to the 1960s, a period marked by two monumental achievements: humankind's first steps on the moon and the eradication of smallpox.

Infection cycle

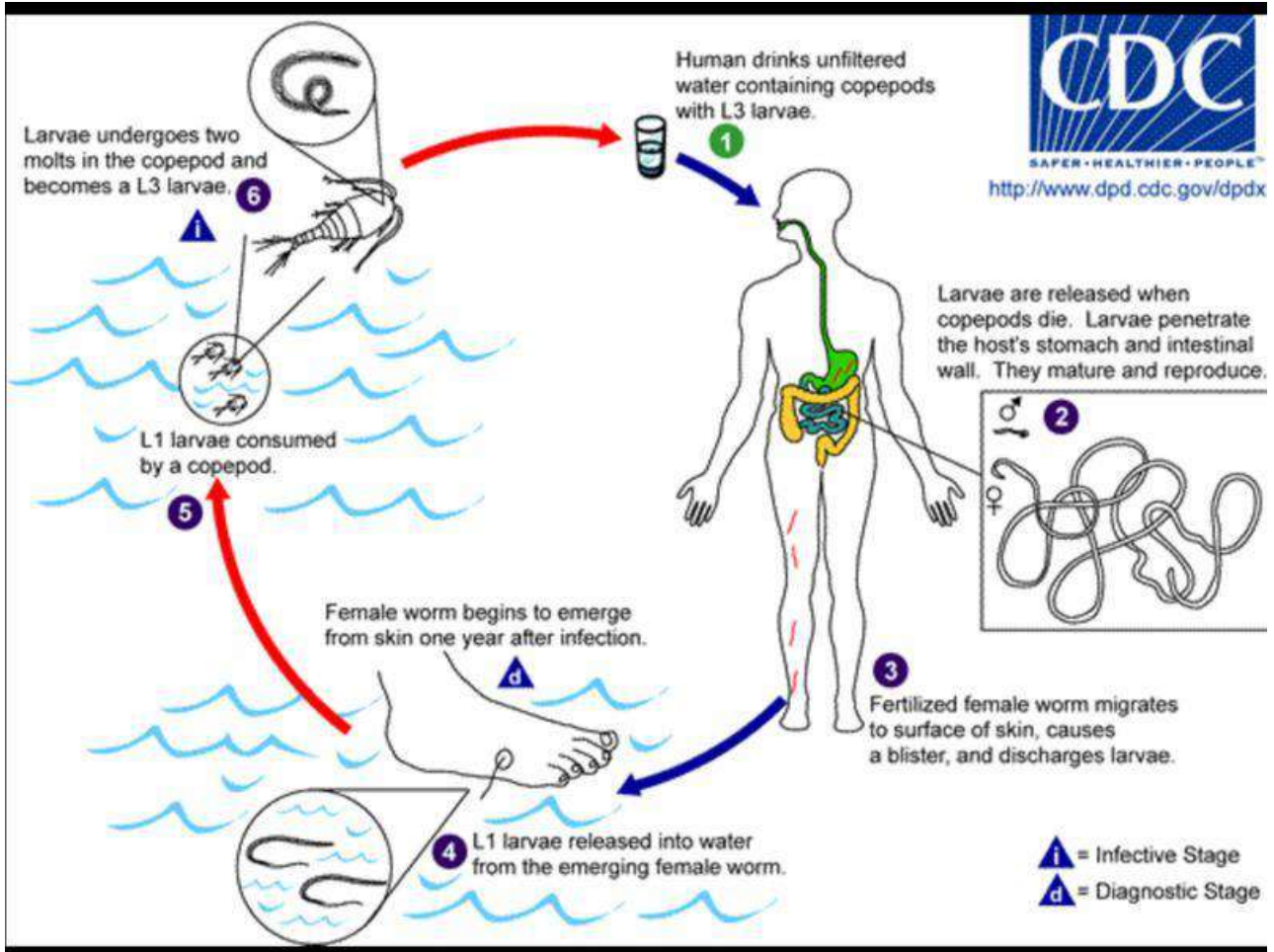
- Guinea worm disease, also called dracunculiasis, is the work of the Guinea worm, whose infamy dates back to biblical times
 - When it was called the "fiery serpent" and whose presence researchers have confirmed in Egyptian mummies.
- When seeking relief, they may immerse the affected area in water, which prompts the worm to emerge and release hundreds of thousands of larvae, potentially contaminating communal water sources and perpetuating the infection cycle.
- While a worm by itself is not lethal, it debilitates those whom it infects and prevents them from earning their livelihoods.
- India eliminated Guinea worm disease in the 1990s, concluding a commendable chapter in the country's public health history through a rigorous campaign of surveillance, water safety interventions, and education.
- The government of India received Guinea worm disease-free certification from the WHO in 2000.
- This accomplishment was the result of a collaboration between the Indian government, local health workers, and international partners.
- The strategy that brought us to the brink of eradication was straightforward:
 - Intersectoral coordination, community participation, and a sustained focus on prevention through health education.
 - The WHO recorded only six cases of Guinea worm disease in 2023.
- Nations like South Sudan and Mali, where the disease was once more common, have made commendable progress, although the fight continues in Chad and the Central African Republic.

New reservoir

- In 2020, researchers also discovered Guinea worms in animal reservoirs, particularly dogs, in Chad, casting a shadow of complexity over the final stages of eradication.
- This development is a crucial reminder of the disease's tenacity and, importantly, signals to countries where the disease was previously endemic, including India, to not let their guard down.
- If the worm persists in this way, governments must stay vigilant and maintain adaptable public health strategies to ensure they don't lose the upper hand.

Conclusion

- Finally eradicating Guinea worm disease wouldn't just represent a victory over a single parasitic but a triumph of humankind at large.
- It will underscore a collective moral responsibility towards the most vulnerable, and demonstrate the profound impact addressing health disparities can have on communities.



Mentorship India

Quick Look

1. Badami Chalukyas

- Pulakesi I established the Chalukya dynasty in 550.
- Pulakesi I took Vatapi (Badami in Bagalkot district, Karnataka) under his control and made it his capital.
- Historians refer to Pulakesi I and his descendants as the Chalukyas of Badami.
- They ruled over an empire that comprised the entire state of Karnataka and most of Andhra Pradesh in the Deccan.
- Pulakesi II had been perhaps the greatest emperor of the Badami Chalukyas.

2. Anti-hydrogen Experiment: Gravity, Interferometry, Spectroscopy (AEgIS)

- It is an experiment approved by CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) with the goal of studying antihydrogen physics.
- The primary goal of AEgIS is the direct measurement of the Earth's gravitational acceleration, g , on antihydrogen.
- Once performed this could be the first direct test of the gravitational interaction between matter and antimatter.
- AEgIS is a collaboration of physicists from a number of countries in Europe and from India.

3. Antimatter

- Antimatter is the same as ordinary matter except that it has the opposite electric charge.
- It is also known as “mirror” matter.
- For instance, an electron, which has a negative charge, has an antimatter partner known as a positron which is a particle with the same mass as an electron but a positive charge.
- The antimatter particles corresponding to electrons, protons, and neutrons are called positrons, antiprotons, and antineutrons; collectively they are referred to as antiparticles.
- These anti-particles can combine to form anti-atoms and, in principle, could even form antimatter regions of our universe.
- Matter and antimatter cannot coexist at close range for more than a small fraction of a second because they collide with and annihilate each other, releasing large quantities of energy in the form of gamma rays or elementary particles.

4. Tupolev Tu-160M

- The Tu-160M, is a modernised version of a Cold War-era bomber that the former Soviet Union would have deployed in the event of nuclear war to deliver weapons at long distances.
- It is a Russian supersonic variable-sweep wing strategic missile-carrying bomber.
- It is called “White Swan” in Russia and is code-named “Blackjacks” by NATO.
- Russia claims it is the world’s fastest-flying supersonic and heaviest payload-carrying bomber.
- It is designed to hit targets in remote areas with nuclear and conventional weapons.

5. Cabinet Committees

- Cabinet Committees are extra-constitutional, meaning, they are not mentioned in the Indian Constitution.
- They are partly designed to reduce the burden on the Union Cabinet by allowing smaller groups of ministers to make decisions on specific policy areas.
- They are constituted or reconstituted when a new government takes over or the Cabinet undergoes a reshuffle.
- The Prime Minister constitutes the Standing Committees of the Cabinet and sets out the specific functions assigned to them.
- The composition of cabinet committees in India can range from three to eight members, which typically consist of only Cabinet Ministers.
- However, non-cabinet ministers may also be appointed as members.



Mentorship
India

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Mahamastakabhisheka:

1. Mahamastakabhisheka is a religious ceremony associated with the Jain tradition and involves the anointment of a colossal statue of Lord Bahubali with various sacred substances.
2. The ceremony is held every twelve years in Shravanabelagola, Karnataka, and attracts pilgrims from across the world.
3. Lord Bahubali, also known as Gommateshwara, is revered for his renunciation of worldly pleasures and is a significant figure in Jainism.

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

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

Q.2 Consider the following statements regarding the criminalisation of politics in India:

1. Criminalisation of politics refers to the increasing involvement of individuals with criminal backgrounds in political activities, including contesting elections and holding public office.
2. The Representation of the People Act, 1951, prohibits individuals convicted of certain offenses from contesting elections for a specific period.
3. The term 'disqualification on conviction' is a legal provision that automatically disqualifies a person from holding public office upon being convicted in a criminal case.

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

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

Q3. Consider the following statements about The Central Bureau of Communication

1. It is the nodal agency of the Government of India for advertising by various Ministries and organizations of Government of India including public sector undertakings and autonomous bodies.

2. It works under the administrative control of the communication.
3. It undertakes campaigns to inform and educate rural and urban people about the Government's policies and programmes through available vehicles of communication

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 regarding Vostro Accounts:

1. Vostro Accounts are accounts held by a foreign bank in India in the local currency.
2. These accounts are primarily used for facilitating trade and transactions between the foreign bank's clients and local businesses.

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

Q.5 Consider the following statements about payment bank

1. There are six PBs in operation namely Airtel Payments Bank, Fino Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank, Jio Payments Bank, NSDL Payments Bank, and Paytm PB
2. These banks can only accept demand deposits with a maximum balance of ₹2 lakh per individual customer.
3. They cannot undertake lending activities but distribute financial products like mutual fund units and insurance products
4. These banks act as business correspondents of another bank.

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

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

Q.6 Consider the following statements about Flood Management and Border Areas Programme

1. Flood Management Programme (FMP) and River Management and Border Areas (RMBA) are its two component
2. It includes hydrological observations, flood forecasting, and activities related to the investigation and pre-construction phases of joint water resources projects with neighboring countries.
3. Special Category States receive funding in the ratio of 90% (Centre) to 10% (State)
4. The RMBA component not only addresses flood and erosion issues but also safeguards critical installations of security agencies and border outposts along the border rivers.

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

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

Q.7 Consider the following statements about yellow revolution

1. The revolution launched in 1986-1987 to increase the production of edible oil, especially mustard and sesame seeds to achieve self-reliance
2. Sam Pitroda is Known as the father of the Yellow Revolution in India.
3. Yellow Revolution targets nine oilseeds that are groundnut, mustard, soybean, safflower, sesame, sunflower, niger, linseed, and castor.

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

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

Q.8 Consider the following statements regarding the IPCC 1.5 Degrees Celsius Warming Target:

1. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) aims to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
2. Achieving the 1.5 degrees Celsius target requires significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to a low-carbon economy.

3. The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, does not mention explicitly about the goal of limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

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

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

Q.9 Consider the following statements about InSPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre)

1. It will be a single window clearance and authorisation agency for space launches, establishing launch pads, buying and selling satellites, and disseminating high-resolution data among other things.
2. It will also share technologies, products, processes and best practices with non-government entities and this will include private companies and government companies.
3. IN-SPACE will create a stable and predictable regulatory framework

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

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

Q.10 Consider the following statements about Guinea worm disease

1. It is a lethal disease and debilitates those whom it infects and prevents them from earning their livelihoods.
2. India eliminated Guinea worm disease and have received Guinea worm disease-free certification from the WHO
3. The disease is spread through contaminated water

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

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

Prelims Track Answer

Answer 1 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Mahamastakabhisheka is indeed a Jain festival celebrated by the anointing of the 57-foot tall monolithic statue of Lord Bahubali, also known as Gommateshwara. The ceremony involves the pouring of sacred substances like milk, saffron, and water over the statue. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- Mahamastakabhisheka is a grand event that occurs once every twelve years in Shravanabelagola, a town in Karnataka, India. Pilgrims and visitors from various parts of the world gather to witness and participate in the sacred ceremony. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Lord Bahubali is a revered figure in Jainism known for his profound renunciation of worldly pleasures. He is often depicted in a standing posture without any clothing as a symbol of his complete detachment from material possessions. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 2 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Criminalisation of politics is a phenomenon where individuals with criminal backgrounds participate in political activities, such as standing for elections or holding public office. This trend raises concerns about the impact on the democratic process and governance. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The Representation of the People Act, 1951, lays down certain disqualifications for individuals convicted of specific offenses. The duration of disqualification depends on the nature and severity of the offense. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- 'Disqualification on conviction' is a legal provision that automatically disqualifies an individual from holding public office if they are convicted in a criminal case. The disqualification is intended to ensure that individuals with criminal backgrounds are barred from occupying positions of power. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 3 Option A is correct

Explanation

- It is the nodal agency of the Government of India for advertising by various Ministries and organizations of Government of India including public sector undertakings and autonomous bodies. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- It works under the administrative control of the Information and broadcasting ministry.
- HQ: New Delhi. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect**
- It was set up on 8th December, 2017 by integration of three erstwhile media units of Ministry of I&B, namely Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP) and Song & Drama Division(S&DD), all involved in interpersonal communication.
- It undertakes campaigns to inform and educate rural and urban people about the Government's policies and programmes through available vehicles of communication **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 4 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Vostro Accounts are accounts held by Indian banks in foreign countries in the local currency of that country. These accounts are maintained by foreign banks to handle transactions on behalf of their Indian clients. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect**
- Vostro Accounts are established to facilitate trade and transactions between the foreign bank's clients and local businesses. The accounts streamline financial interactions, making it more convenient for businesses engaged in international trade. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

Answer 5 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Now, only six PBs — Airtel Payments Bank, Fino Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank, Jio Payments Bank, NSDL Payments Bank, and Paytm PB — are operational. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- These banks can only accept demand deposits (current account and savings bank account/CASA) with a maximum balance of ₹2 lakh per individual customer. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**

- They cannot undertake lending activities but distribute financial products like mutual fund units and insurance products, etc
Hence, statement 3 is correct
- act as business correspondents of another bank. **Hence, statement 4 is correct**

Answer 6 Option B is correct

Explanation

- It comprises two main components:
- Flood Management Programme (FMP):
- This involves central assistance to State Governments for crucial projects related to flood control, anti-erosion measures, drainage development, and anti-sea erosion efforts.
- River Management and Border Areas (RMBA):
- This facet focuses on flood control and anti-erosion initiatives along common border rivers with neighboring countries. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- It includes hydrological observations, flood forecasting, and activities related to the investigation and pre-construction phases of joint water resources projects with neighboring countries. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The central government provides 100% assistance for this component.
- Funding Structure:
- The funding pattern differs based on the state category.
- Special Category States receive funding in the ratio of 90% (Centre) to 10% (State),
- General/Non-Special Category States follow a 60% (Centre) to 40% (State) funding pattern. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**
- The RMBA component not only addresses flood and erosion issues but also safeguards critical installations of security agencies and border outposts along the border rivers. **Hence, statement 4 is correct**

- The scheme includes provisions for incentivizing states that implement flood plain zoning, recognized as an effective non-structural measure for flood management.

Answer 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The revolution launched in 1986- 1987 to increase the production of edible oil, especially mustard and sesame seeds to achieve self-reliance is known as the Yellow Revolution. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- Sam Pitroda is Known as the father of the Yellow Revolution in India. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Yellow Revolution targets nine oilseeds that are groundnut, mustard, soybean, safflower, sesame, sunflower, niger, linseed, and castor. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 8 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The IPCC, in its special report, emphasizes the importance of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels to minimize the adverse effects of climate change. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- Achieving the 1.5 degrees Celsius target necessitates substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, including the transition to a low-carbon economy. This involves adopting renewable energy sources, enhancing energy efficiency, and implementing sustainable practices **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- The Paris Agreement, a global accord adopted in 2015, explicitly includes the objective of limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius. Additionally, it recognizes the importance of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, acknowledging the heightened risks associated with a 2-degree Celsius increase. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect**

Answer 9 Option C is correct**Explanation**

- InSPACE (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre): It will be a single window clearance and authorisation agency for space launches, establishing launch pads, buying and selling satellites, and disseminating high-resolution data among other things. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- It will also share technologies, products, processes and best practices with NGEs (non-government entities and this will include private companies) and government companies. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- IN-SPACE will create a “stable and predictable regulatory framework” that will ensure a level playing field for the NGEs. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 10 Option B is correct**Explanation**

- While a worm by itself is not lethal, it debilitates those whom it infects and prevents them from earning their livelihoods. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect**
- India eliminated Guinea worm disease in the 1990s, concluding a commendable chapter in the country’s public health history through a rigorous campaign of surveillance, water safety interventions, and education. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The government of India received Guinea worm disease-free certification from the WHO in 2000. People develop painful blisters, and when they come into contact with water, adult worms emerge, contaminating water sources and continuing the cycle of infection. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**



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