

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



Date: 3 Feb. 2024

Important News Articles

1. Mesolithic rock paintings, Satavahana inscription discovered in Telangana's Pedapalli - The New Indian Express
2. Mamata denies allegations in CAG report, writes to PM- The Hindu
3. Centre likely to foot bill for PM rooftop solar scheme -The Hindu
4. Law panel suggests retaining criminal defamation provision -The Hindu
5. KYC, fund laundering concerns said to spur RBI's Paytm unit ban- the Hindu
6. Navy foils piracy attempt off east Somalia, rescues 11 Iranians, 8 Pakistanis- The Hindu
7. Financial institutions likely to run corpus to fund hi-tech companies - Indian Express

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

8. The future of water - Indian Express
9. Population priorities -The Hindu
10. Exposing India's financial markets to the vultures-The Hindu

Quick Look

1. Exercise Vayu Shakti
2. MagSafe
3. Global Multidimensional Poverty Index
4. Subika Paintings
5. Kendriya Grihmantri Dakshata Padak

Important News Articles

GS I

1. Mesolithic rock paintings, Satavahana inscription discovered in Telangana's Pedapalli - The New Indian Express

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

News:

- Recently, a team from the Kotha Telangana Charitra Brundham (KTCB) has unearthed **rock paintings and inscriptions** in **Seethamma Loddi**, located in Gattu Singaram village, Peddapalli district.

Discoveries

- One inscription mentions **Satavahana prince Hakusiri**, while another is believed to belong to the **Vishnukundins dynasty**.
 - The Vishnukundins dynasty ruled parts of present-day Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- The paintings, found on a hillock deep inside a forest, are **predominantly red**, with some **white and yellow colours** used as well.
- It showcases scenes of men and women dancing, individuals with bows and arrows, footprints, and a variety of animals like deer, antelope, tortoise, jungle cat, monkeys, and wild lizards.
- Intricate diamond-shaped designs** are also present.
- The rock paintings date back to the **Mesolithic period** (10,000 to 12,000 years ago) and the **Early Historic period** (1st BCE to 6th CE).

Archaeological Finds

- Microliths**, including a core flake, were discovered at the site.
- A protected wall made of weathered black stone and a demolished stone structure from the Early Historic period were also observed.
- A **fossilized stone containing shells** suggests the site's age to be an astonishing 65 million years old.

Prelims Takeaway

- Mesolithic Period
- Vishnukundins Dynasty
- Microliths

GS II

2. Mamata denies allegations in CAG report, writes to PM- The Hindu

Relevance: Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional Bodies.

News:

- After the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) released a report **alleging fraud and siphoning of funds by the West Bengal government**,
- Chief Minister wrote to the Prime Minister, stating that the allegations were false and her government had provided all utilisation certificates.

Comptroller and Auditor General of India

- It is a **constitutional authority** which heads the Indian Audit and Accounts Department (IA&AD).
- The two entities are known as the Supreme Audit Institution of India (SAI).
- Article 148 provides for an independent office of the CAG.

Role of Audits in a Democracy like India

- Transparency and Accountability
- Preventing Financial Mismanagement
- Improving Efficiency and Effectiveness
- Global Standards and Collaborations

Prelims Takeaway

- Supreme Audit Institution of India
- CAG

Way forward

- Streamlining Audit Processes
- Efficient Workflow
- Digital Transformation
- Promoting Transparency and Accountability
- Timely Reporting

3. Centre likely to foot bill for PM rooftop solar scheme -The Hindu

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

News:

- As part of a renewed thrust to increase adoption of household rooftop solar systems (**h-RTS**) through the **Pradhan Mantri Suryoday Yojana**
- The **Centre is likely to bear the entire cost** of setting up such systems for households that consume less than 300 units of electricity a month.

Prelims Takeaway

- National Thermal Power Corporation
- Pradhan Mantri Suryoday Yojana

Key Highlights

- This could potentially cost at least ₹1 lakh crore, and in a departure from the existing approach to h-RTS
- It will see Union government companies — **as opposed to the current set-up of individual State-run power distribution companies** — taking up the responsibility of powering beneficiary households.

Hassle-free installation

- For implementation, public sector units of the **Power Ministry such as the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)** will be charged with identifying households that consume less than 300 units a month in States.
- This won't be challenging as about 85% of Indian households, on average, use 100 to 120 units a month.
- This done, **they will install RTS with eligible householders** having to pay effectively nothing.

4. Law panel suggests retaining criminal defamation provision -The Hindu

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

News:

- The **22nd Law Commission has recommended that criminal defamation should be retained** within the scheme of criminal laws in India,

Key Highlights

- The panel submitted its report to the Ministry
- In its report, the Law Commission argued that the right to reputation is derived from Article 21 of the Constitution
 - That guarantees the right to life and personal liberty and that is why it has to be protected.
- "Reputation is something which can't be seen and can only be earned.
- It's an asset which is built in a lifetime and destroyed in seconds.
- The whole jurisprudence around the law on criminal defamation has the essence of protecting one's reputation and its facets
- Referring to the issue of punishment, it said the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita has added a provision of **community service as an additional punishment.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Law Commission
- Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

- This law gives a balancing approach, **wherein it has safeguarded the interest of the victim and has also neutralised the scope of misuse by giving an alternate punishment of community service**

Law Commission

- Law Commission of India is **neither a constitutional body nor a statutory body**, it is an executive body established by an order of the Government of India.
- Its major function is to work for legal reforms.
- The Commission is established for a fixed tenure and works as an **advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice**.
- Its membership primarily comprises legal experts.

GS III

5. KYC, fund laundering concerns said to spur RBI's Paytm unit ban- the Hindu

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

News:

- The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) **action directing Paytm Payments Bank Ltd. (PPBL)** to cease all new business transactions by February 29

Key Highlights

- Rbi asked bank to settling all pipeline transactions by March 15, **was triggered by major irregularities in the bank's compliance with Know Your Customer (KYC) norms**,
 - Thus exposing customers, depositors and wallet holders to grave risk, said people aware of the developments.
- RBI supervisors and external auditors are learnt to have found:
 - KYC details missing for a very large number of customers (running into lakhs)
 - PAN validation failures in lakhs of accounts
 - A single PAN used for multiple customers
 - In thousands of cases the same PAN was linked to more than 100 customers and in some cases to more than 1,000 customers

Prelims Takeaway

- Paytm bank
- Reserve Bank of India

Money laundering concern

- The bank was also found to be involved in facilitating transactions running into crores of rupees
 - Well beyond regulatory limits in prepaid instruments with minimal KYC requirements, raising money laundering concerns
- An **unusually high number of dormant accounts were found** to have been used as 'mule accounts' to facilitate transactions.
- The recent direction from RBI is a part of the ongoing supervisory engagement and compliance process
- The payments **bank is accused of not adhering to the 'arm's length policy'** while dealing with the Promoter Group Entities.
- Its **financial and non-financial business were co-mingled** with its promoter group companies in violation of licensing conditions

Multiple issues

RBI action against Paytm Payments Bank said to have been triggered by irregularities in its compliance with KYC norms

- **Auditors found PAN validation failures in lakhs of accounts, with a single PAN used by thousands of customers**
- **Bank seen to have enabled transactions worth crores in prepaid instruments, raising money laundering concerns**
- **An unusually high number of dormant accounts were found to have been used as 'mule accounts' to facilitate transactions**



6. Navy foils piracy attempt off east Somalia, rescues 11 Iranians, 8 Pakistanis- The Hindu

Relevance: Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

News:

- The **Indian Navy foiled a piracy attempt on an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel** off the east coast of Somalia

Key Highlights

- “Information regarding piracy attempt on fishing vessel FV Omaril was monitored The
- **Indian naval remotely piloted aircraft (RPA), undertaking surveillance** in the area
 - INS Sharda, deployed for anti-piracy mission in the region, was diverted to intercept the boat
- Seven incidents of hijacking of vessels on high seas by pirates have been reported during the last three years
- The Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with the regional and extra-regional navies and maritime forces

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

- **Article 101 of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** determines that Piracy consists of any of the following acts:
 - any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:
 - on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or persons or property on board such ship or aircraft
 - against a ship, aircraft, persons, or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State;
 - **any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or** of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft;
 - **any act of inciting or of intentionally** facilitating an act described in subparagraph (a) or (b).

Prelims Takeaway

- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
- Maritime piracy

7. Financial institutions likely to run corpus to fund hi-tech companies - Indian Express

Relevance: Economy

News:

- The Indian government is set to collaborate with financial institutions such as NaBFID, NIIF, and SIDBI to implement its Budget announcement.
- It announced an allocation of **Rs 1 lakh crore corpus for research and innovation in sunrise sectors**.
- The funds are intended for **financing or refinancing private sector projects** dedicated to developing innovative technologies.

Prelims Takeaway

- National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)
- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)

Commercial Funding for Innovation

- The government aims to **support ventures** in specific areas where India can become **globally competitive** and **reduce dependence on importing cutting-edge technologies**.
- It will provide **cheap financing for innovative projects** in sunrise sectors with significant potential.
- The allocated funds are meant for **commercial, for-profit ventures** focusing on innovative technologies.

Long-Duration Loans and Zero Interest

- The government is considering offering **long-duration loans of up to 50 years with zero interest** to the financial institutions involved.
 - This financial support model is similar to capex for states.
- Financial institutions, in turn, may provide **credit at concessional rates** to other institutions or directly finance commercial ventures.

Future Prospects

- Discussions are ongoing among various ministries to **identify the sectors eligible** for funding.
- The success of indigenously developed technologies is **expected to create jobs** and contribute to making **India a world-class economy by 2047**.

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

8. The future of water - Indian Express

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

Context:

- The conventional understanding of stock trading takes an unexpected turn with the **emergence of water futures trading** on Wall Street.

Water Futures Contract

- The CME Group launched the **world's first water futures contract in December 2020**.
- **Objective:** To manage water-related risks in the face of increasing uncertainties due to droughts and flooding.
- The new futures contract allows buyers and sellers to **barter a fixed price** for the delivery of a **fixed quantity of water at a future date**.

<p>UN Special Rapporteur's Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, expressed concern over treating water as a commodity on Wall Street. He fears that hedge funds and large players could marginalise vulnerable sectors, such as small-scale farmers, leading to potential economic disparities. <p>Water Scarcity Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water scarcity, caused by overuse of groundwater, climate change, and rapid urbanisation, is a global challenge. The UN 2023 World Water Development Report highlights that 26% of the world's population lacks access to safe drinking water. <p>Water Scarcity in India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The World Bank identifies India as one of the most water-stressed countries globally. India, with 18% of the world's population but only 4% of its water resources, faces severe water stress. 	<p>Constitutional Framework for Water Disputes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution emphasize the distribution of material resources for the common good. The Indian Constitution addresses water disputes through Article 262, allowing Parliament to legislate on disputes related to inter-state rivers or river valleys. Hence, Parliament enacted the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956, establishing Water Disputes Tribunals to resolve such conflicts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Such disputes may arise out of the use, distribution, or control of water that flows between states. <p>Judicial Perspective on Water Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Supreme Court of India has played a crucial role in water-related issues. In <i>Narmada Bachao Andolan v Union of India</i> (2000), the Court recognized water as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution. In <i>A.P. Pollution Control Board II v Prof. M.V. Nayudu</i> (2001), it declared that it is the duty of the state under Article 21 to provide clean drinking water to its citizens. <p>Challenges to Water Access and Distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water pricing in India is determined by states, lacking a centralised authority. Privatization efforts, known as "water sector reforms," raise concerns about affordability and equitable access.
---	---

Conclusion

- As water faces the risk of becoming a tradable commodity, treating **water as a constitutionally protected natural resource** is important.
- Ensuring **equitable access and distribution** is crucial to prevent water scarcity from becoming a norm, making it unaffordable for many.

9. Population priorities -The Hindu

Relevance: Polity

Context:

- Recently, the Finance Minister announced the formation of a **high-powered committee** to address challenges arising from **rapid population growth and demographic changes**.
- However, the **delay in conducting the decennial Census** raises concerns about the lack of direct evidence supporting this statement.

Current Demographic Landscape

- According to the Sample Registration System statistical report in 2020 and the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21), India, now the most populous country, has **experienced a decline in the total fertility rate (TFR)**.
- While the **TFR has fallen to 2 overall**, specific states such as Bihar, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Manipur still exhibit higher TFRs above 2.1.
- The high population growth of the 20th century has been significantly curtailed, with TFR dropping from 5.7 in 1950 to 2 in 2020.
- The population share of the southern States, reduced to 21% in 2011 from 26% in 1951.
 - Reason: Rapid reduction in TFR due to better socio-economic outcomes and education, and despite higher migration to these States.
- While the surveys are robust and necessary, they are **no substitute for the comprehensive Census**.

Demographic Shifts and Opportunities

- India's demographic shift and increased life expectancy present both challenges and opportunities.

- The demographic dividend, characterised by a **high proportion of the working-age population**, holds meaning only with **sufficient job opportunities and social security**.
- **High unemployment** and the **slow creation of non-farm jobs** pose a risk of squandering this demographic dividend.

Role of the High-Powered Committee

- The high-powered committee is expected to **play a crucial role in addressing challenges** related to
 - Jobs, social security, issues arising from rapid urbanization and mechanization of work etc.
- Its effectiveness hinges on whether it focuses on these critical concerns or gets distracted by issues related to religion and immigration.
- A meaningful engagement in addressing societal challenges is essential for the committee to make a positive impact.

10. Exposing India's financial markets to the vultures-The Hindu

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

Context:

- In September 2023, J.P. Morgan announced the **inclusion of Indian local currency government bonds (LCGBs)** in its **Government Bond Index-Emerging Markets**
- The development was followed by Bloomberg's proposal in January 2024 for India's "**fully accessible route (FAR)**" bonds.

<p>Significance of the Decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTSE Russell keeps India on its watchlist for a potential upgrade, underscoring the need for reforms in the government bond market. • India began the process of integrating its government bonds into global indices in 2019 • This makes a segment officially accessible to foreign investors by 2020 through the FAR. <p>Benefits and Risks of Integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2022 RBI report outlines benefits, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ reduced dependence on domestic institutions, ◦ increased stability ◦ potential financing for deficits. ◦ Opening local bond markets to foreign investors could <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ lower borrowing costs ▪ relieve local financial institution ▪ mitigate the "original sin" problem of borrowing in foreign currencies. 	<p>Challenges and Risks of Internationalization: A Concept to Understand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internationalization entails a loss of autonomy in controlling long-term rates It exposes emerging economies to greater interest rate risks. • Foreign portfolio inflows into local currency bond markets may not provide stable and long-term funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investors can quickly withdraw during market distress. <p>Malaysia and Turkiye Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malaysia's 1997 Asian crisis and Türkiye's 2022 offshore lira market experiences serve as cautionary tales of speculative activities • There is the need for regulatory measures. <p>Current Indian Efforts and Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is always a gradual, evolutionary process for currency internationalisation. • The RBI's efforts include allowing banking services in the Indian rupee outside the country. • This is creating an offshore INR market with potential implications for speculation and instability. • Y.V. Reddy emphasizes that the Indian rupee's internationalization requires <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ sustained development of the financial system ◦ improved economic performance.
--	--

Conclusion

- There are possibilities of **underestimated risks, potential exchange rate instability** and **boom-bust cycles** in capital flows.
- Past episodes of crises in emerging economies highlight the importance of cautious policies to **manage financial integration effectively**.

Quick Look

1. Exercise Vayu Shakti

- It is a triennial exercise taking place once every three years.
- Objective: Showcasing the capability of the IAF to conduct full spectrum operations (Day and Night), and to see the participation of aircraft and helicopters, transport aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles.
- The frontline aircraft in the IAF inventory includes
 - Russian SU-30MKI and MiG-29UPG fighters,
 - French Rafale and Mirage 2000,
 - American C-130 and C-17 transport aircraft, AH-64E Apache attack helicopters and CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopters,
 - Indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (Tejas), Advanced Light Helicopter (Dhruv) and the Light Combat Helicopter.

2. Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

- UCC provides for one law for the entire country across all religious communities in their personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption etc.
- UCC is defined in Article 44 as part of the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP), in part of Part IV of the Constitution.
- Article 44 - It states that 'The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territory of India'.
- UCC aims to enforce a uniform legal framework to all citizens, irrespective of their religion.

3. MagSafe

- MagSafe charger is a wireless charger/power bank that connects to the back of your wireless-compatible mobile phone to charge your phone in the easiest of ways.
- It is equipped with either a 5,000 or a 10,000 mAh battery pack on the inside, which can be used as a power backup.
- This type of charger uses the magnetic current present at the back of your mobile phone and the magnets on the MagSafe charger.
- A good MagSafe charger is just like any other wireless power bank that attaches to your mobile phone and works as a power bank.
- As with any other power bank, a MagSafe charger also needs to be charged.

4. Global Multidimensional Poverty Index

- The index is a key international resource that measures acute multidimensional poverty across more than 100 developing countries.
- It was first launched in 2010 by the OPHI and the Human Development Report Office of the UNDP.
- The MPI monitors deprivations in 10 indicators spanning health, education and standard of living.
- It includes both incidence as well as intensity of poverty.
- A person is multidimensionally poor if she/he is deprived in one third or more (means 33% or more) of the weighted indicators (out of the ten indicators).
- Those who are deprived in one half or more of the weighted indicators are considered living in extreme multidimensional poverty.

5. Subika Paintings

- It is a style of painting which is intricately linked to the Meitei community's cultural history.
- It is surviving through its six manuscripts viz. Subika, Subika Achouba, Subika Laishaba, Subika Choudit, Subika Cheithil and Thengrakhel Subika.
- Although the royal chronicle, Cheitharol Kumbaba, doesn't mention a specific founder, there is a possibility that this art form existed when the writing tradition was introduced in the state.
- Experts estimate the use of Subika paintings since the 18th or 19th century.

6. Kendriya Grihmantri Dakshata Padak

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has recently launched a new medal, the Kendriya Grihmantri Dakshata Padak, amalgamating four existing medals.
- Aims: To recognize and honour outstanding contributions in various areas related to national security and public service.
- The award is open to members of police forces, security organizations, intelligence wings, central and state police forces, and forensic science units.
- Personnel of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) may also be considered, particularly in the area of preventing narcotics smuggling.
- This new medal will be conferred on individuals from various security and intelligence organizations for excellence in operations, including counter-terrorism, border actions, arms control, Left Wing Extremism, prevention of narcotics smuggling, and rescue operations.
- Design and Symbolism of the Medal
 - The Kendriya Grihmantri Dakshata Padak will be a circular silver gold gilt medal.
 - The obverse will feature the symbol of 'face of Sardar Patel' at the centre with the words 'Jai Bharat' below.
 - The upper edge will have 'Rashtra Prahari' (in Hindi), while the lower edge will have 'Sentinel of the Nation' (in English).
 - The reverse will include the Ashoka Chakra at the center with the words 'Satya Seva Suraksha' below.

Mentorship
India

Prelims Track Question

Q1. With reference to the Mesolithic Period, consider the following statements

1. It is a cultural stage which existed between the Paleolithic and the Neolithic periods.
2. People transitioned from using smaller chipped stone tools to polished stone tools.
3. People began growing crops and practising animal husbandry, towards the end of the Mesolithic Age.

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 regarding the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India

1. The CAG is appointed by the President of India
2. The CAG audits the accounts of the Central and State Governments, as well as public sector undertakings.
3. The CAG is eligible for reappointment for a second term.

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 regarding the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana

1. It aims to provide electricity to all rural households across the country.
2. The scheme focuses on harnessing solar power for rural electrification.
3. The implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana is the responsibility of the Ministry of Power.
4. The scheme offers 100% financial assistance to households for the installation of solar-powered equipment.

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

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

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding criminal defamation in India

1. Criminal defamation is a non-cognizable offense.
2. The punishment for criminal defamation includes imprisonment and a fine.
3. Only individuals can be charged with criminal defamation, not organizations or corporations.

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 regarding Paytm Payments Bank Ltd.

1. It is a fully-owned subsidiary of One97 Communications Limited.
2. It can issue debit cards, but it cannot offer credit cards.
3. It offers interest on savings accounts and operates under the guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

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 regarding the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

1. UNCLOS was adopted in 1982 and came into force in 1994.
2. UNCLOS defines the rights and responsibilities of nations regarding the use of the world's oceans and establishes guidelines for marine resource management.
3. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) is one of the dispute settlement mechanisms under UNCLOS.

4. All countries are parties to UNCLOS, and non-members do not have access to its benefits.

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

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

Q7. Consider the following statements about the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)

1. It is a specialized Development Finance Institution in India aimed at supporting the country's infrastructure sector.
2. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will regulate and supervise NBFID as an All-India Financial Institution (AIFI).

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. Consider the following statements with reference to Atal Bhujal Yojana

1. It is a scheme to facilitate sustainable groundwater management implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
2. It is funded by the Centre and the states on a 50:50 basis.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q9. With reference to Census, consider the following statements

1. Population census is listed in the concurrent list of Seventh Schedule in Indian Constitution.
2. The responsibility of conducting the census rests with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. The Census of India Act of 1948 mandated that census needs to be conducted decennially.

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

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

Q10. Consider the following statements with reference to Internationalisation of Rupee

1. It is a process that involves increasing use of the local currency in cross-border transactions.
2. In the 1950s, the Indian rupee was widely used as legal tender in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.
3. The internationalisation of Rupee leads to reduced Exchange Rate Volatility.

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

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

Prelims Track Answer

Answer 1 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Mesolithic, also called the Middle Stone Age, is an ancient cultural stage which existed between the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) and the Neolithic (New Stone Age). **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- This period is generally considered to have occurred between approximately 12,000-10,000 years ago.
- People transitioned from using large chipped stone tools to using smaller chipped stone tools (microliths). **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- People transitioned from hunting large herds of animals in groups to a more hunter-gatherer lifestyle.
- Towards the end of the Mesolithic Age, people began growing crops and practising animal husbandry. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- It was during the Mesolithic Age that the dog was domesticated.
- The permanent settlements in the Mesolithic Age varied from villages of huts to walled cities.
- During the Mesolithic Age, the climate was warming after the last ice age, which occurred at the end of the Palaeolithic period.
- During the Mesolithic period, humans developed cave paintings, engravings, and ceramics to reflect their daily lives.
- In certain areas of the world, a range of pottery was made during the Mesolithic Age.
- Mesolithic Sites in India: Bagor in Rajasthan, Sarai Nahar Rai in Allahabad and Chhota Nagpur plateau.

Answer 2 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The CAG is appointed by the President of India under Article 148 of the Constitution of India. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The primary function of the CAG is to audit the accounts related to the revenue and expenditure of the Union and State Governments, including public sector undertakings. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The CAG is eligible for reappointment only for a second term. The term of the CAG is six years or until the person reaches the age of

65 years, whichever is earlier. However, there is no provision for a second term.

Hence, statement 3 is INcorrect

Answer 3 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana aims to provide round-the-clock electricity supply to rural households, thereby ensuring access to electricity for all. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- The primary focus of the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana is to harness solar power for providing electricity to rural areas. It involves the installation of solar power plants and standalone solar systems. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- The implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana falls under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), not the Ministry of Power. **Hence, statement 3 is INcorrect**
- While the scheme provides financial assistance, it may not cover the entire cost. The level of financial assistance varies, and beneficiaries may be required to contribute a certain amount. **Hence, statement 4 is INcorrect**

Answer 4 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Criminal defamation is a cognizable offense, meaning that a police officer can make an arrest without a warrant. The complainant does not need to seek a court's permission before filing a case. **Hence, statement 1 is INcorrect**
- Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code provides for the punishment for criminal defamation, which may include imprisonment for a term that may extend to two years or with a fine or both. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Both individuals and organizations can be charged with criminal defamation in India. The concept extends to any person, which includes both natural and legal persons. **Hence, statement 3 is INcorrect**

Answer 5 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Paytm Payments Bank Ltd. is a subsidiary of One97 Communications Limited, the parent company of Paytm. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**

- As of my last knowledge update in January 2022, Paytm Payments Bank is not authorized to issue credit cards. It operates as a payments bank, which means it can issue debit cards and provide other banking services but cannot engage in lending activities like traditional banks. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Paytm Payments Bank accepts deposits and offers interest on savings accounts. It operates under the guidelines and regulations set by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for payments banks. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**

Answer 6 Option C is correct

Explanation

- UNCLOS was adopted in 1982, and it entered into force on November 16, 1994. **Hence, statement 1 is correct**
- UNCLOS is a comprehensive international treaty that defines the rights and responsibilities of nations concerning the use of the world's oceans. It covers various aspects, including navigational rights, territorial sea limits, and guidelines for the conservation and management of marine resources. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- ITLOS is indeed one of the dispute settlement mechanisms established by UNCLOS to deal with disputes related to the interpretation and application of the convention. **Hence, statement 3 is correct**
- While a large majority of countries are parties to UNCLOS, not all countries have ratified it. However, even non-parties can benefit from certain customary international law principles established by UNCLOS. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect**

Answer 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure & Development (NaBFID) was established in 2021 through the enactment of The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Act, 2021.
- It serves as a specialised Development Finance Institution (DFI) in India. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Its primary objectives include addressing the gaps in long-term non-recourse finance for infrastructure development,

strengthening the development of bonds and derivatives markets in India, and fostering sustainable economic growth.

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will regulate and supervise NBFID as an All-India Financial Institution (AIFI). **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Answer 8 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Atal Bhujal Yojana is a Central Sector Scheme for facilitating sustainable groundwater management with an outlay of Rs. 6000 crore.
- It is being implemented by the Ministry of Jal Shakti. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- The scheme is being funded by the Government of India and the World Bank on a 50:50 basis. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The entire World Bank's loan component and central assistance will be passed on to the States as grants.
- Objective: To improve the management of groundwater resources in select water stressed areas in identified states viz. Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
- It promotes panchayat led groundwater management and behavioural change with a primary focus on demand-side management.

Answer 9 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Population Census is the total process of collecting, compiling, analyzing and disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specific time, of all persons in a country or a well-defined part of a country.
- The first synchronous census was taken in 1881, by W.C. Plowden, Census Commissioner of India.
- Since then, censuses have been undertaken uninterruptedly once every ten years.
- The Census of India Act of 1948 provides the legal framework for carrying out the Census; however, it does not mention its timing or periodicity.
 - Hence, there is no Constitutional or legal requirement that it needs to be conducted decennially. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**

- The Census is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Census is conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948.
- The population census is a Union subject under Article 246 of India Constitution. It is listed at serial number 69 of the seventh schedule of the constitution. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**

Answer 10 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Internationalisation of rupees is a process that involves increasing use of the local currency in cross-border transactions. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It involves promoting the rupee for import and export trade and then other current account transactions followed by its use in capital account transactions.
- In the 1950s, the Indian rupee was widely used as legal tender in the United Arab

Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and Qatar.

Hence, statement 2 is correct.

- However, the devaluation of India's currency by 1966 led to the introduction of sovereign currencies in these countries to reduce reliance on the Indian rupee.
- Benefits of Internationalisation of Rupee
 - It will improve the demand for the rupee in international trade. This can lead to increased convenience and reduced transaction costs for businesses and individuals dealing with India.
 - When a currency is internationalized, its exchange rate tends to stabilize. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
 - Internationalizing the Rupee can enhance India's geopolitical influence. It can strengthen economic ties with other countries, facilitate bilateral trade agreements, and promote diplomatic relations.
- In March 2023, the RBI put in place the mechanism for rupee trade settlement with as many as 18 countries.



Mentorship
India

Mentorship India

Our mission is crystal clear – to provide the finest UPSC mentorship and guidance available in India. We recognize that the path to success in the UPSC examination is both demanding and multifaceted. This is precisely why we have developed a comprehensive approach that goes beyond conventional coaching. Our commitment lies in fostering excellence by equipping aspirants with the necessary tools, knowledge, and unwavering support to not only excel in the examination but also in life itself.

Mentorship India represents more than just an organization; it is a community of ambitious individuals bound together by the shared objective of conquering the UPSC examination. We warmly invite you to embark on this transformative journey alongside us. Whether you are a novice taking your initial steps or a seasoned aspirant aiming for the pinnacle, Mentorship India is your dependable companion in the relentless pursuit of excellence.

+91 9999 057869
www.mentorshipindia.com

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

 @mentorship.india