

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



Date: 8-9 Oct. 2023

Important News Articles

1. Afghanistan: Two 6.3-magnitude tremors kill over 100, injure 500 - Indian Express
2. Israel 'at war' as Hamas attack leaves 200 dead - The Hindu/ At war, says Israel, after worst Hamas attack in years, 300 killed & counting - Indian Express/ Israeli air strikes pound Gaza as death toll climbs - The Hindu
3. SC flags need for a dependable code of police investigation - The Hindu
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6. Territorial Army inducts five Chinese language interpreters for border talks - The Hindu/ Army looking at converting logistics units into TA units - Indian Express
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Quick Look

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Important News Articles

GS I

1. Afghanistan: Two 6.3-magnitude tremors kill over 100, injure 500 - Indian Express

Relevance: Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclones. etc., geographical features and their location-changes in critical geographical features (including water-bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes.

News:

- Recently, **Powerful earthquakes in Afghanistan** have killed more than 2,000 people in the **deadliest tremors in years in the quake-prone mountainous country.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Earthquake
- Volcano

Basics of Earthquake

- It is the **shaking of the earth.**
- It is caused due to **release of energy**, which generates waves that travel in all directions.
- The vibrations called **seismic waves are generated from earthquakes** that travel through the Earth and are recorded on **instruments called seismographs.**
- The **location below the earth's surface** where the earthquake starts is called the **hypocenter**, and the location **directly above it on the surface** of the earth is called the **epicentre.**

Type of earthquake

1. Tectonic earthquake

- Tectonic plates (Lithospheric plates) are constantly shifting** as they drift around on the viscous, or slowly flowing, mantle layer below.
- This **non-stop movement causes stress on Earth's crust.**
- When the **stresses get too large**, it leads to cracks called faults.
- When tectonic plates **move, it also causes movements at the faults.**
- Thus, the **slipping of land along the faultline along convergent, divergent and transform boundaries** causes earthquakes.

2. Volcanic Earthquake

- Earthquakes **produced by stress changes in solid rock due to the injection or withdrawal of magma** (molten rock) are called **volcano earthquakes.**
- These **earthquakes can cause land to subside** and can produce large ground cracks.
- These earthquakes **can occur as rock is moving to fill in spaces where magma is no longer present.**

GS II

2. Israel 'at war' as Hamas attack leaves 200 dead - The Hindu/ At war, says Israel, after worst Hamas attack in years, 300 killed & counting - Indian Express/ Israeli air strikes pound Gaza as death toll climbs - The Hindu

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

News:

- Recently, **Palestinian Islamist group Hamas** launched the biggest attack on Israel in years, killing at least 200 people
- It claimed **it had taken dozens of hostages** in a surprise assault combining gunmen crossing into Israel and a barrage of rockets fired from Gaza.

Prelims Takeaway

- Map bases question

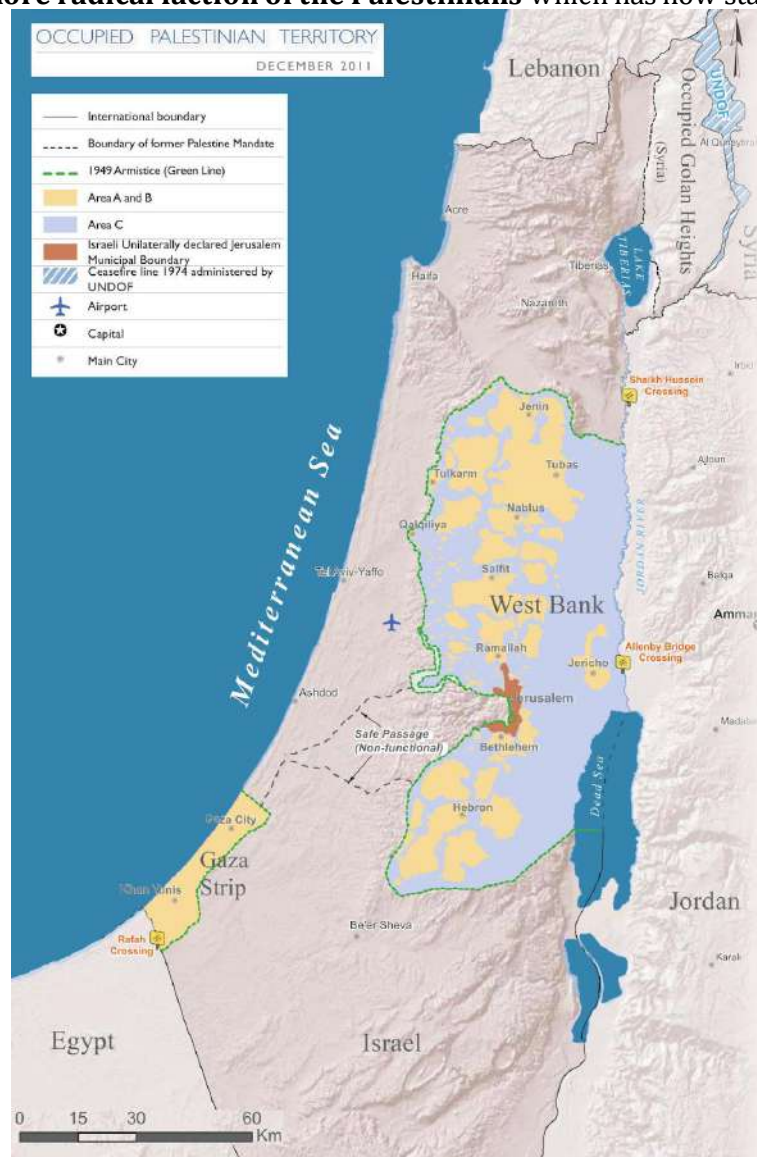
The Conflict

- It is linked to the **age-old tussle over identity** and land starting with Jerusalem.

- In the **first Arab Israeli war of 1948**, the **Israelis captured the western half of the city, and Jordan took the eastern part** which Israel later captured and annexed.
- Since then, **Israel has expanded settlements in East Jerusalem.**
- The Palestinians want to make **East Jerusalem the capital of their yet to be formed state.**
- The **Palestinians are facing the threat of eviction from Sheikh Jarrah**, a neighbourhood in east Jerusalem.
 - Their land is to be given to the Jewish settlers.
- Moreover, **the Israeli armed forces have recently attacked the Al-Aqsa Mosque** ahead of a march by Zionist nationalists.
- The **Al Aqsa Mosque is the third holiest shrine** for Islam after Mecca and Medina.
- It created a fear for the followers, **all over the region and the radicals began to call for defending the Al Aqsa Mosque.**

Hamas in Rule in Palestine

- Hamas, founded in 1987, is a **violent offshoot of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood seeking "to raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine"** through violent jihad.
- **Hamas is the more radical faction of the Palestinians** which has now started retaliating.



3. SC flags need for a dependable code of police investigation - The Hindu

Relevance: Structure, organisation 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:

- The Supreme Court (SC), in a recent judgement, **has highlighted the need for a “consistent and dependable code of investigation**
- Objective is to **prevent lapses in police probes** leading to the guilty getting acquitted on technical grounds.

Prelims Takeaway

- Malimath Committee

Criminal Justice System

- It is the **set of laws, processes, and institutions that aim to prevent, detect, prosecute, and punish crimes**, while ensuring the rights and safety of all people.
- It includes **institutions like police forces, judicial institutions, legislative bodies, and other supportive organizations** like forensic and investigation agencies.

Committees to Reform the Criminal Justice System of India

- Vohra Committee, 1993
- Malimath Committee, 2003
- Madhav Menon Committee, 2007

Malimath Committee, 2003

- Some of the key recommendations were:
- Introducing a **new category of offences called ‘social welfare offences’** for minor violations that can be dealt with by imposing fines or community service.
- Replacing the **adversarial system with a ‘mixed system’** that incorporates some elements of the inquisitorial system such as allowing judges to play an active role in collecting evidence and examining witnesses.
- **Reducing the standard of proof required for conviction** from ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ to ‘clear and convincing evidence’.
- **Making confessions made before a senior police officer admissible as evidence.**

GS III

4. Loans from the Centre keep state govts' capex strong - Indian Express

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

News:

- Aided by the front-ending of **capex loans by the Centre**, the state governments' **capital expenditure seem to have grown** at a much higher pace than last year

Prelims Takeaway

- Capital expenditure
- Revenue expenditure

Key points

- **States have achieved just 23% of their budgeted annual capex** of around Rs 7.3 trillion in April-August
- The borrowings of **17 states rose 47% on year to Rs 2.14 trillion** in April-August FY24
 - It is largely due to a low base of last year as they had reported a 37% decline in loans and liabilities during the corresponding period.
- The **Centre has raised the capital expenditure target by 37%** on year to a whopping Rs 10 trillion for FY24 to continue the public investment-led economic recovery post-pandemic.
- The **Centre has achieved around 37.4% of its capex goal** in April-August FY24.

Capital expenditure

- It is the **money spent by the government on the development of machinery, equipment, building, health facilities, education, etc.**

- It also **includes the expenditure incurred on acquiring fixed assets** like land and investment by the government that gives profits or dividends in future.
- Along with the **creation of assets, repayment of loan is also capital expenditure, as it reduces liability.**
- **Capital spending is associated with investment or development spending**, where expenditure has benefits extending years into the future.
- Unlike capital expenditure, which creates assets for the future, **revenue expenditure is one that neither creates assets nor reduces** any liability of the government.
- **Salaries of employees, interest payment on past debt**, subsidies, pension, etc, fall under the category of revenue expenditure.
- It is **recurring in nature.**

5. ISRO plans Gaganyaan unmanned flight tests, gears for abort mission - The Hindu

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

News:

Prelims Takeaway

- The Indian Space Research Organisation, is planning **to commence unmanned flight tests for the Gaganyaan mission**
- It has started to **make preparations for the Flight Test Vehicle Abort Mission-1 (TV-D1).**

Key Points

- **Astronauts** would remain in a **pressurised earth-like atmospheric condition in the crew module** during the Gaganyaan mission.
- **Test vehicle: single-stage liquid rocket** developed for this abort mission.
- The **payloads consist of:**
 - The **CM and crew escape systems (CES)** with their fast-acting solid motors
 - **CM fairing (CMF)**
 - **Interface adapters.**
- This flight will simulate the **abort condition during the ascent trajectory corresponding to a Mach number of 1.2** encountered in the Gaganyaan mission.
- **CES with CM will be separated from the test vehicle** at an altitude of about 17 km.
- Subsequently, **the abort sequence will be executed autonomously**
- Commencing with the separation of CES and deployment of the series of parachutes, **finally culminating in the safe touchdown of CM in the sea**
- The CM, **after integration, underwent various electrical testing at ISRO's facility**, including an acoustic test and was dispatched to the SDSC on August 13.
- It will **undergo vibration tests and pre-integration with the CES**, before final integration to the test vehicle at the launch pad.
- This mission **with this CM is a significant milestone for the overall Gaganyaan** programmes as a near-complete system is integrated for a flight test.
- The **success of this test flight will set the stage** for the remaining qualification tests and unmanned missions, leading to **the first Gaganyaan**
- For the Gaganyaan mission, **four pilots are undergoing training at the Astronaut Training Facility in Bengaluru.**

6. Territorial Army inducts five Chinese language interpreters for border talks - The Hindu/ Army looking at converting logistics units into TA units - Indian Express

Relevance: Defence

News:

- Recently, the **Territorial Army (TA)** inducted its first batch of Mandarin-trained officers.
- This is to support the regular Army's efforts to **enhance expertise in the Chinese language**.

Prelims Takeaway

- Territorial Army
- Line of Actual control (LAC)

The Indian Territorial Army (TA)

- It is the **second line of defence** after the regular Indian Army.
- It is only meant for those people who are **already in mainstay civilian professions**.
- In fact, **gainful employment or self-employment in a civil profession** is a **prerequisite** for joining the TA.
- Serving members of the Regular Army/ Navy/ Air Force/ Police/ GREF/ Para Military and like forces are **not eligible**.

Role and Responsibilities

- Relieving the regular army from **static duties**.
- Providing **assistance to civil authorities** in times of natural calamities and tragedies.
- Help civil administration with **providing essential services** in areas where state machinery is stretched or there are security threats.
- Volunteers of the TA usually **serve in uniform for a few days every year**.
 - This is because they can bear arms for national defence in times of dire need or national emergencies.

History

- It was **raised by the Britishers in 1920** through **Indian Territorial Act of 1920**.
- It was **organised into two wings** namely
 - The Auxiliary Force for Europeans & Anglo-Indians
 - The Indian Territorial Force for Indian Volunteers
- After Independence, the **Territorial Army Act was passed in 1948** and the **Territorial Army was formally inaugurated**.

7. REC launches 'SUGAM REC', a mobile app for 54EC Bonds Investors - PIB

Relevance: Economy

News:

- Recently, **REC Limited** launched a mobile application '**SUGAM REC**'.
- REC Limited is a '**Maharatna**' company under the **administrative control of the Ministry of Power**, Government of India.

Prelims Takeaway

- SUGAM REC App
- Section 54EC Bonds
- Bonds

SUGAM REC App

- It is exclusively for current and future investors in **REC's 54EC Capital Gain Tax Exemption Bonds**.
- The mobile app will **offer investors complete details of their investment** in REC 54EC Bonds.
- **Investors will be able to**
 - download their e-bond certificates
 - apply for fresh investment
 - download important forms related to updating of KYC
 - connect with REC's Investor Cell via call / email / WhatsApp

Section 54EC Bonds

- They are a type of **fixed income financial instruments** which provide **tax exemption under capital gains** to investors, under Section 54EC of the Income Tax Act.
- These bonds allow an investor to save income tax on long-term capital gain **by investing the gains**.
- The investment into these bonds has to be made **within 6 months from the date of long-term capital gain**.

- They have a **fixed lock-in period of 5 years** and can be either held in **physical or demat form**.
- They are issued by **various institutions managed by the Government of India** to finance specific capital projects.

8. Now a more efficacious, inexpensive malaria vaccine - The Hindu

Relevance: Health

News:

- Recently, the **R21/MatrixM malaria vaccine** has been **recommended** (but yet to be prequalified) **by the WHO**.
- This vaccine is **developed by the University of Oxford** and manufactured by the Serum Institute of India.

Prelims Takeaway

- R21/MatrixM Malaria Vaccine
- Malaria

War against malaria gets a shot in the arm

Three countries — Nigeria, Ghana, and Burkina Faso — have already approved the vaccine for children aged less than 36 months

■ A phase-3 trial in 4,800 children was conducted at five sites in four countries with different malaria transmission intensities and seasonality

■ The participants received three vaccine doses four weeks apart, and a booster shot at the end of 12 months after the last dose

■ Primary vaccination was carried out prior to malaria season where it is seasonal or at any time of year in countries where malaria is perennial

■ Vaccine efficacy at the end of one year in children aged 5-36 months was 75% where

malaria is seasonal and 68% when malaria is perennial

■ In children aged 5-17 months, who are more likely to die due to severe malaria, the vaccine efficacy was higher — 79% where malaria is seasonal and 75% where malaria is perennial

■ In children aged 18-36 months, vaccine efficacy was 73% where malaria is seasonal and 63% when malaria is perennial

■ The vaccine efficacy was well maintained to 18 months with a single booster dose given 12 months after the primary series



Humongous:

In 2021, there were 247 million malaria cases worldwide and 6,19,000 deaths

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. How the Digital India Act will shape the future of the country's cyber landscape - The Hindu

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

Context:

- Nations worldwide are grappling with the need to **update their legal frameworks to adapt to the evolving digital landscape.**
- India, with its ambitious '**Digital India**' initiative, is no exception.

Digital India Act 2023 (DIA)

- The Digital India Act 2023 (DIA) represents a significant step towards establishing a futureready legal framework for the country's burgeoning digital ecosystem.
- This move by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) signals a proactive approach to regulating and shaping the digital future of the nation.
- The DIA is designed to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the dramatic growth of the internet and emerging technologies.
- It is poised to replace the two decades old Information Technology Act of 2000 (IT Act).

Addresses Digital Evolution

- The primary motivation behind the DIA is to bring India's regulatory landscape in sync with the digital revolution of the 21st century.
- The IT Act of 2000 has struggled to keep pace with the rapid changes in technology and user behaviour.
- Since its inception, India's internet user base has exploded from a mere 5.5 million to a staggering 850 million.
- The nature of internet usage has also evolved, with the emergence of various intermediaries and the proliferation of new forms of user harm, such as cyberstalking, trolling, and doxing.
- The DIA recognises these changes and aims to provide a comprehensive legal framework to address them.

Key Provisions

- Online Safety**
 - It places a strong emphasis on online safety and trust, with a commitment to safeguarding citizen's rights in the digital realm.
 - Additionally, it remains adaptable to shifting market dynamics and international legal principles.
- New-age Technologies**
 - Recognising the growing importance of new age technologies such as AI and blockchain, the DIA provides guidelines for their responsible utilisation.
 - It actively engages in shaping their development and use within a regulatory framework.
 - It promotes ethical AI practices, data privacy in blockchain applications, and mechanisms for accountability in the use of these technologies.
 - This forward looking stance is beneficial for citizens and businesses.
 - It also positions India as a responsible player in the global technology landscape, ready to harness the full potential of new age technologies while mitigating associated risks.
- Open Internet**
 - It upholds the concept of an open internet, striking a balance between accessibility and necessary regulations to maintain order and protect users.
 - It mandates stringent Know Your Customer (KYC) requirements for wearable devices, accompanied by criminal law sanctions.
- "Safe Harbour" Principle**
 - It contemplates a review of the "safe harbour" principle indicating a potential shift in online accountability standards.
 - The principle presently shields online platforms from liability related to user generated content.

The Challenges

- One key concern is the potential impact on innovation and the ease of doing business.
- Stricter regulations, particularly in emerging technologies, could inadvertently stifle entrepreneurial initiatives and deter foreign investments.
- The review of the "safe harbour" principle could lead to a more cautious approach among these platforms, possibly impinging on freedom of expression.
- The DIA's success hinges on effective enforcement, which will require substantial resources, expertise, and infrastructure.
- Balancing the interests of various stakeholders, including tech giants, while ensuring the protection of citizen rights, poses a significant challenge.

Conclusion

- The DIA is a **crucial step** towards ensuring a **secure, accountable, and innovative digital future for India.**
- However, its **implementation and potential repercussions warrant vigilant monitoring and adaptability** to avoid unintended consequences.

2. Arc of India's tie with Israel - Indian Express

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

Context:

- **Recently, Hamas**, the militant group ruling the Gaza Strip, **mounted one of the most audacious attacks on Israel**.
- Many have called it the **worst inside the Jewish state's territory since its creation in 1948**.
- The Indian Prime Minister **expressed shock at the "terrorist attacks"** and conveyed **"solidarity with Israel"**.

India-Israel relations: Post Independence

- India's political attitude towards Israel was set quite firmly shortly after independence in 1947.
- Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi vowed to support the Palestinian cause as they rejected the idea of two nations on the basis of religion.
- While they had sympathy for the Jews, they viewed that any State based on religious exclusivity could not sustain on moral and political grounds.
- India's position with regard to Palestine was also guided by the general consensus in the Arab world, the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations.
- When the partition of Palestine plan was put to vote at the UN, India voted against it, along with the Arab countries.
- When Israel applied for admission to the UN, India again voted against it.
- India, however, recognised Israel on September 17, 1950, after two Muslim-majority countries, Turkey and Iran, did so.
- In 1953, Israel was allowed to open a consulate in Mumbai, but no diplomatic presence was granted in New Delhi.
- On January 10, 1975, India recognised PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
- It permitted it an independent office at New Delhi.
- While India was one of the last non-Muslim states to recognise Israel, it became the first non-Arab state to recognise the PLO.

Under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi

- In 1980, during Indira Gandhi's regime, India upgraded the PLO office to that of an embassy endowed with all diplomatic immunities and privileges.
- In March 1983, when the NAM summit took place in India, it came up with a strong statement of solidarity for Palestine.
- In April 1984, PM Indira Gandhi visited Arafat's headquarters in Tunis after a state visit to Libya.
- The PM Rajiv Gandhi continued with India's approach towards Palestine.
- Throughout the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada (uprising) in December 1987 in Gaza and West Bank due to the 'iron fist' policies of Israel, India maintained its steadfast support.

Shifts in India-Israel Relations

- However, by this time, there were critics of New Delhi's Palestine policy and its outright support to the Arab world within India.
- The Arab countries' neutral position during the 1962 India-China war and their support to Pakistan during the 1965 and 1971 wars did not go down well.
- On the other hand, Israel helped India with arms and ammunition in the 1962 and 1965 wars.
- Things changed in West Asia when Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.
- The PLO lost its political leverage on account of its support to Saddam Hussain.
- Around that time, the Soviet Union disintegrated, and this prompted India to make drastic changes in its policy towards West Asia.
- It established full diplomatic relations with Israel in January 1992, days after the Chinese established diplomatic relations with Tel Aviv.

Military Ties and the Kargil War

- Establishing full diplomatic ties with Israel came in especially handy during the Kargil conflict in 1999.
- The Indian Air Force desperately needed precision target bombs as Pakistani intruders were hiding in caves and bunkers atop mountains in Kargil.
- The IAF reached out to their Israeli counterparts, who wasted no time.
- They are known to have accessed their emergency stockpiles and shipped the weapons to India, which proved to be decisive in the hour of need.
- After this, the Vajpayee government sent Foreign minister Jaswant Singh for the first bilateral visit in 2000.
- Home minister L K Advani visited Israel in the summer of 2000, followed by more high-profile visits.
- During PM Modi's visit to Israel in 2017 (the first Prime Ministerial visit), he skipped the customary stop at Palestine, which was the norm with previous ministerial visits.
- Later the Prime Minister visited Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar, UAE - all regional rivals of Israel - between 2014 and 2017, before the trip to Israel.
- India hosted Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in May 2017.
- In all public pronouncements, South Block officials-maintained India's position on its support towards the Palestinian cause.
- PM Modi later visited Palestine in February 2018, but didn't visit Israel, achieving a complete dehyphenation of the ties.

In the Past Decade

- In the last decade, ties have deepened in security, defence, and connectivity with Israel, but also with partners in West Asia namely Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar and Iran.
- The Indian strategic approach to engage with all sides in the complex West Asian region is born out of necessity
 - 90 lakh-strong Indian community in the region.
 - Connectivity to West Asia and Europe.
 - More than 50% of India's energy imports are sourced from West Asia.

Conclusion

- The spate of horrifying **surprise attacks** over the weekend puts India in a **diplomatic tight spot**.
- This is because the current hostility **tests the Abraham Accords**.
- It also tests the **efforts towards rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Israel**.
- India was hoping to reap the dividends of the newfound peace in the region.

Quick Look

1. Watermeal

- An aquatic plant in the Araceae family, it is the smallest flowering plant in the world and appears as small green seeds.
- It is often referred to as "duckweed" because it is a favourite food of ducks.
- It flourishes in temperate, subtropical, and tropical locations and grows on the surface of lakes, ponds, and marshes.
- Features
- It is a very tiny (less than 1 millimeter) light green, free-floating, rootless plant.
- It is branchless and also has no leaves.
- It consists of a single, oval, or spherical frond that floats on the surface of still or slow-moving water bodies.
- It also produces the world's smallest fruit, called a utricle.
- It is a complete protein, meaning that it contains all nine essential amino acids.
- In some cases, watermeal can become invasive and form dense mats that cover the entire surface of a water body.

2. Epithemis wayanadensis

- Recently, a new dragonfly species has been discovered in the verdant landscapes of Wayanad and it has been given the scientific nomenclature Epithemis wayanadensis.
- It is also known as Red-rumped Hawklet.
- It starts flying exclusively during the month of October.
- This newfound species is distinguished by its darker pigmentation, a restricted red coloration on the abdomen, and the absence of the yellow antehumeral stripe.
- This is the first instance of an Indian dragonfly being documented with genetic evidence substantiating morphological distinctions.

3. Bekal Fort

- Built in the 17th century, it is the largest and best preserved Fort in the whole of Kerala.
- It is exquisitely designed and built with dark maroon laterite stones.
- Originally constructed by the rulers of the ancient Kadampa Dynasty, the Fort changed hands over the years to the Kolathiri Rajas, the Vijayanagara Empire, Tipu Sultan and finally, the British East India Company.
- The most prominent structure inside the fort is the observation tower built by Tipu Sultan.
- The fort is endowed with impressive walls and ramparts which are again interrupted by massive bastions.
- A unique and eye-catching feature is a lone bastion, projecting out into the sea.
- It offers a superb view of the Arabian Sea from its tall observation towers, which were occupied by gigantic cannons till a few centuries ago.

4. Halo Orbit

- NASA says a spacecraft can "orbit" about an unstable Lagrange point with a minimum use of thrusters for stationkeeping.
- Such an orbit is known as a halo orbit as "it appears as an ellipse floating over the planet".
- A halo orbit, however, isn't the usual orbit because the unstable Lagrange point doesn't exert any attractive force on its own.

5. The Alpide Belt

- It spans over 15,000 km, roughly following the boundary of the Eurasian and African tectonic plates.
- It spans from the Middle East to the Himalayas and Indonesia.

- It extends from the Himalayas in the east, through the Mediterranean region and across to the Azores in the Atlantic Ocean.
- Tectonic plates are formations of the Earth's crust that move slowly, often creating pressure and friction between each other.

6. Gangetic River Dolphin

- It is a freshwater species and one of the few river dolphins found in the world.
- It inhabits the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.
- It has been recognized as India's National Aquatic Animal.
- Features
 - It has a long thin snout, rounded belly, stocky body and large flippers.
 - It feeds majorly on fishes and is usually found in counter-current systems of the main river channel.
 - Its eyes lack lens, and as a result, this species is also referred to as the "blind dolphin".
 - They have a highly developed bio-sonar system that facilitates them to hunt for fish even in murky waters.
 - Being a mammal, the Ganges River dolphin cannot breathe in the water and must surface every 30-120 seconds.
 - Because of the sound it produces when breathing, the animal is popularly referred to as the 'Susu'.
- Conservation status
 - IUCN: Endangered
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act: Schedule I
 - CITES: Appendix I

7. Indo-Tibetan Border Police

- Indo-Tibetan Border Police is one of the Central Armed Police Forces of India.
- It is a specialized mountain force and most of the officers and men are professionally trained mountaineers and skiers.
- It was raised in 1962, in the wake of the Sino-Indian War of 1962 for deployment along India's border with China's Tibet Autonomous Region.
- ITBP was initially raised under the CRPF Act, however, in 1992, the Parliament enacted the ITBPF Act and the rules there under were framed in 1994.
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs.

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following statements with reference to earthquake

1. Non-stop movement in Tectonic plates resulting in stress on Earth's crust causing earthquakes.
2. The location below the earth's surface where the earthquake starts is called the epicentre
3. The location directly above it on the surface of the earth is called the hypocentre.

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

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

Q2. The dead sea is bordered by which countries?

- A. Israel and Egypt
- B. Israel and Lebanon
- C. Israel and Jordan
- D. Jordan and Lebanon

Q3. Consider the following statements about National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)

1. It is statutory body set-up under the Ministry of Home Affairs
2. It has been entrusted to maintain the National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO) and share it with the States/UTs on a regular basis.
3. It has also been designated as the Central Nodal Agency to manage technical and operational functions of the 'Online Cyber-Crime Reporting Portal

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

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

Q4. Consider the following statements:

1. The creation of assets, repayment of loan and reducing liability is a major function of capital expenditure.
2. revenue expenditure is one that neither creates assets nor reduces any liability of the government.

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

Q5. Consider the following statements about Gaganyaan

1. It is also called the Orbital Module and will have three Indian astronauts, including a woman.
2. It will circle Earth at a low-earth-orbit at an altitude of 300-400 km from earth
3. GSLV Mk III, also called the LVM-3 (Launch Vehicle Mark-3,) the three-stage heavy lift launch vehicle, will be used to launch it

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 Territorial Army (TA)

1. It is a professional army which acts as the first line of defence in Indian border areas.
2. It provides assistance to civil authorities in times of natural calamities and tragedies.
3. Only the existing members of the Indian defence forces can enroll into it.

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

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

Q7. Consider the following statements regarding the 54EC bonds

1. They are fixed income instruments which provide capital gains tax exemption to investors.
2. They are issued by various institutions managed by the Government of India to finance specific capital projects.

3. They have a fixed lock-in period of 5 years.
4. They can only be held in demat form.

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

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

2. The “safe harbour” principle shields online platforms from liability related to user generated content.

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. Which of the following statements describe the primary function of an adjuvant in the context of vaccines?

- A. To extend the shelf life of the vaccine.
- B. To stimulate and strengthen the body's immune response to the vaccine.
- C. To dilute the vaccine for ease of administration.
- D. To reduce the cost of vaccine production

Q9. Consider the following statements

1. The Digital India Act 2023 provides guidelines for Artificial Intelligence (AI), Blockchain etc.

Q10. Consider the following countries

1. Lebanon
2. Saudi Arabia
3. Egypt
4. Syria

How many of the countries mentioned above do not border the country Israel?

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

Prelims Track Answer

Ans. 1 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The location below the earth's surface where the earthquake starts is called the hypocenter, and the location directly above it on the surface of the earth is called the epicentre. **Hence, statements 1 and 2 are incorrect.**
- Tectonic earthquake
- Tectonic plates (Lithospheric plates) are constantly shifting as they drift around on the viscous, or slowly flowing, mantle layer below.
- This non-stop movement causes stress on Earth's crust.
- When the stresses get too large, it leads to cracks called faults.
- When tectonic plates move, it also causes movements at the faults.
- Thus, the slipping of land along the faultline along convergent, divergent and transform boundaries causes earthquakes. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 2 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Dead Sea is a salt lake bordered by Jordan to the east and Palestine's West Bank and Israel to the west. **Hence, option C is correct.**
- It lies in the Jordan Rift Valley, and its main tributary is the Jordan River.

Ans. 3 Option B is correct

Explanation

- NCRB is non statutory body headquartered in New Delhi, was set-up in 1986 under the Ministry of Home Affairs **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It is to function as a repository of information on crime and criminals so as to assist the investigators in linking crime to the perpetrators.
- It was set up based on the recommendations of the National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the MHA's Task Force (1985).
- Functions:
- The Bureau has been entrusted to maintain the National Database of Sexual Offenders (NDSO) and share it with the States/UTs on a regular basis. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- NCRB has also been designated as the Central Nodal Agency to manage technical

and operational functions of the 'Online Cyber-Crime Reporting Portal' **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

- through this any citizen can lodge a complaint or upload a video clip as an evidence of crime related to child pornography, rape/gang rape.

Ans. 4 Option D is correct

Explanation

- Capital spending is associated with investment or development spending, where expenditure has benefits extending years into the future. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Unlike capital expenditure, which creates assets for the future, revenue expenditure is one that neither creates assets nor reduces any liability of the government. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Salaries of employees, interest payment on past debt, subsidies, pension, etc, fall under the category of revenue expenditure.

Ans. 5 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Gaganyaan system module, called the Orbital Module will have three Indian astronauts, including a woman. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It will circle Earth at a low-earth-orbit at an altitude of 300-400 km from earth for 5-7 days. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- GSLV Mk III, also called the LVM-3 (Launch Vehicle Mark-3,) the three-stage heavy lift launch vehicle, will be used to launch Gaganyaan as it has the necessary payload capability. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 6 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The Indian Territorial Army (TA) is the second line of defence after the regular Indian Army. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It is only meant for those people who are already in mainstay civilian professions.
- In fact, gainful employment or self-employment in a civil profession is a prerequisite for joining the TA.
- Serving members of the Regular Army/ Navy/ Air Force/ Police/ GREF/ Para Military and like forces are not eligible. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- Role and Responsibilities

- Relieving the regular army from static duties.
- Providing assistance to civil authorities in times of natural calamities and tragedies. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- Help civil administration with providing essential services in areas where state machinery is stretched or there are security threats.

Ans. 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Section 54EC Bonds are a type of fixed income financial instruments which provide tax exemption under capital gains to investors, under Section 54EC of the Income Tax Act. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- These bonds allow an investor to save income tax on long-term capital gain by investing the gains.
- The investment into these bonds has to be made within 6 months from the date of long-term capital gain.
- They have a fixed lock-in period of 5 years. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- They can be either held in physical or demat form. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**
- They are issued by various institutions managed by the Government of India to finance specific capital projects. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Ans. 8 Option B is correct

Explanation

- Recently, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended the use of the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine.
- As of now, the vaccine has been licensed for use in Ghana, Nigeria and Burkina Faso.
- The Matrix-M component is a proprietary saponin-based adjuvant developed by Novavax and licensed to the Serum Institute for use in endemic countries.
- An adjuvant is an ingredient in a vaccine that enhances the immune system's response to that vaccine. **Hence, Option B is correct.**

- They help the immune system better recognize what's in a vaccine and remember it longer, increasing the amount of time that a vaccine may offer protection.

Ans. 9 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Digital India Act 2023 (DIA) is designed to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the dramatic growth of the internet and emerging technologies.
- It is poised to replace the two decades old Information Technology Act of 2000 (IT Act).
- It places a strong emphasis on online safety and trust, with a commitment to safeguarding citizen's rights in the digital realm.
- Additionally, it remains adaptable to shifting market dynamics and international legal principles.
- Recognising the growing importance of new age technologies such as AI and blockchain, the DIA provides guidelines for their responsible utilisation. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It upholds the concept of an open internet, striking a balance between accessibility and necessary regulations to maintain order and protect users.
- It contemplates a review of the "safe harbour" principle indicating a potential shift in online accountability standards.
- The principle presently shields online platforms from liability related to user generated content. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Ans. 10 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Israel is a country in the Middle East located at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea.
- Israel is bordered by Lebanon to the north, Syria and Jordan to the east, and Egypt to the south. **Hence, Option A is correct.**

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