

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



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Important News Articles

1. Brazil will give continuity to India's Presidency of G-20, says Ambassador - The Hindu
2. Maiden INDUS-X investors meeting held ahead of 2+2 India-US ministerial dialogue - Indian Express
3. With 148 varsities in QS Asia Rankings, India has 'most representation', surpasses China - Indian Express
4. Kerala forms Organic Farming Mission to boost agriculture - The Hindu
5. World will overshoot 2030 fossil fuel limit by twice over: report - The Hindu
6. 'RBI may cut rates in 2024-25 if food inflation is tamed' - The Hindu
7. Krishi 24/7, the first-ever AI-powered solution for automated agricultural news monitoring and analysis - PIB

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

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2. Trouble with India's guidelines on genetically modified insects - The Hindu
3. Importance of 'loss and damage' funds - The Hindu

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Important News Articles

GS II

1. Brazil will give continuity to India's Presidency of G-20, says Ambassador - The Hindu

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

News:

- India prepares to **end its G-20 presidency** in November, 2023 with two separate **virtual summits**
 - the Second Voice of Global South Summit
 - G-20 Virtual Summit
- The **next President** of G-20 Brazil hopes to give "continuity" to New Delhi's priorities.
- G-20 is becoming a hope to take forward the **focus on** the global south and developing world.

Prelims Takeaway

- Leaders Declaration
- G-4 Grouping

Expectations from Brazil in G-20

- The Brazilian G-20 presidency will **seek its own special emphasis** on
 - fighting **hunger** and **poverty**
 - bringing the idea of **sustainable development** centre stage to the climate change debate,
 - to push for the reform of the **multilateral system**
 - to push forward the **aims** of the partners in groupings like
 - BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa)
 - IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa),
 - the G-4 grouping (Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan) that support each other for UN Security Council membership.
- Brazil is **hosting**
 - IBSA in 2023
 - G-20 in 2024,
 - the COP30 Climate Change Summit in 2025,
- Brazil is **expected to work closely** with partners like India, South Africa and Indonesia
 - All of them are developing countries that are part of the "extended troika" or group that is hosting successive summits of the G-20.

India-Indonesia-Brazil- South Africa

- During the **G-20 Summit in Delhi** in September, 2023 India-Indonesia-Brazil- South Africa **showed solidarity** on their stand on the Ukrainian War.
- The proposal dropped **critical references** to Russia, but retained language against the war in Ukraine.
- This grouping is **not expected to make** any joint statement on the Israel-Hamas conflict.
- The group is **expected to extend its support** to the **Leaders' Declaration** adopted at the G-20 Summit in New Delhi.

2. Maiden INDUS-X investors meeting held ahead of 2+2 India-US ministerial dialogue - Indian Express

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

News:

- The **Innovations for Defence Excellence** (iDEX) under India's Ministry of Defence and the US Department of Defense organised the first-ever INDUS-X investors' meet.
- The **INDUS-X Educational Series** (Gurukul) was also launched during the event.

Prelims Takeaway

- INDUS - X
- 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

Upcoming 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue

- The Defence Minister of India and the Minister of External Affairs of India will meet their US counterparts for the fifth India-US 2+2 ministerial dialogue.
- The dialogue will **involve** a high-level review of progress in
 - **defence** and **security** cooperation
 - **technology** collaborations
 - people-to-people ties.

Advancements in Defense Innovation

- INDUS-X introduced two **defence innovation challenges** focusing on underwater communications and oil spill detection.
- **Review of applications** from startups of both countries is underway.
- 297 start-ups have registered through iDEX, with 30 **Acceptance of Necessity (AoN)** granted and 10 contracts signed.

INDUS-X Investors' Meet:

- The event **brought together stakeholders** from India and the US, including
 - Startups
 - MSMEs
 - Investors
 - Incubators
 - Industry representatives.

Opportunities for Startups

- **Startups and innovators** were encouraged to apply for
 - Joint **IMPACT** challenges
 - Participate in the **Gurukul** Educational Series.

Background of INDUS-X

- INDUS-X was **launched in** June 2023 to strengthen strategic, technology partnerships and defence industrial cooperation between India and the US,
 - **involving** governments, businesses, and academic institutions
- **Ahead of the 2+2 Indo-US ministerial dialogue** the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) organised the first ever INDUS-X investors' meet
- where the **INDUS-X Educational Series** (Gurukul) was also launched.

3. With 148 varsities in QS Asia Rankings, India has 'most representation', surpasses China - Indian Express

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

News:

- **IIT Bombay maintains top rank in India** with China retaining its top-most position.
- India has surpassed China in **QS World University Rankings: Asia 2024 in the number of ranked universities.**

India's Dominance in Rankings

- With 148 featured universities, "India is now the **most represented higher education system**"
- There is a **significant increase of 37 new entries** for India compared to China's seven.

Key Findings

- **Seven Indian institutions in top 100**, including five IITs, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and Delhi University.
- Over **half of Indian universities improve or maintain positions**, with 37 new entries.

Top Indian Institutes in 2024

- IIT Bombay, IIT Delhi, and IIT Madras maintain top three positions.
- IITs Kharagpur and Kanpur show improvements in Asia ranks.

Prelims Takeaway

- QS World University Rankings
- University Grants Commission

Non-IIT Institutions in Top 100

- Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and Delhi University are the two non-IIT institutions in the top 100.
- Both experience slight drops in Asia ranks, with IISc Bangalore at 58 and Delhi University at 94.

Factors Considered in Rankings

- QS ranks institutions **based on 10 indicators**, including academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty-student ratio, international relations, and citations per paper.

India's Performance

- India excels in metrics like **papers per faculty and staff with PhD**, indicating strong research output and highly qualified faculty.
- India's **research output has surged**, outpacing the global average, closing the growth gap with China.

GS III**4. Kerala forms Organic Farming Mission to boost agriculture - The Hindu**

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

News:

- The Kerala Government has created an **Organic Farming Mission** to encourage the adoption of **sustainable organic and climate-smart farming practices** in the State.
- The mission aims at **expanding organic farming to 5,000 hectares in Kerala** in the next five years through an annual target of 1,000 hectares.

Prelims Takeaway

- Organic farming

Key Highlights

- In farms run by the State Agriculture department, **at least 10% of the area will be set aside for organic farming practices.**
- Another mandate of the mission is to make sure that **selected beneficiaries/farms of organic farming schemes pursue the system at least for five years.**
- In 2010, the Kerala Government had announced the Organic Farming Policy.

Organic farming protocol

- The mission will take steps to expand the system **for certification, branding and marketing of organic agricultural products** from Kerala.
- An organic farming protocol, which is in sync with protocols prevalent at **the national and international levels**, will be implemented as part of the activities for improving the marketing potential.
- The mission will also **focus on value addition of organic products.**
- Another important task of the mission is **ensuring that farmers have access to good-quality seeds and production equipment/materials.**
- The mission will also take the initiative to formulate **organic farming schemes in every Assembly constituency in Kerala in collaboration with the Krishikootam collectives** and farmer producer organisations (FPO).
- In September 2023, **the Kerala Government had issued orders creating the Poshaka Samriddhi Mission** to step up production of millets and vegetables.

5. World will overshoot 2030 fossil fuel limit by twice over: report - The Hindu

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

News:

- Notwithstanding the global consensus among countries that fossil fuel emissions must be eliminated, a new report says that the governments plan to produce twice as much fossil fuels in 2030

Prelims Takeaway

- Fossil Fuel

Key Highlights

- **151 governments commit to achieving net-zero** emissions between 2050-2070.
- Annual Conference of Parties in Dubai **to address fossil fuel emission timelines.**

Production Gap Report:

- **Produced by** SEI, Climate Analytics, E3G, IISD, and UNEP.
- **Assesses governments' planned production** against Paris Agreement's temperature goal.
- **Analyzes emissions trends for 20** major fossil-fuel-producing **countries.**

Global Analysis:

- **Major countries**, including Australia, China, India, and the US, contribute to the production gap.
- Governments provide substantial policy and **financial support for fossil fuel production.**

Concerns Raised:

- Fossil gas promoted as a '**transition**' fuel **without clear plans for transition.**
- Urgent need **to reduce global coal, oil, and gas production**, as per scientific recommendations.
- Emphasis on scaling up clean energy and **reducing methane emissions to achieve the 1.5°C goal.**

Conclusion:

- It **highlights the contradiction between government actions and the imperative** to reduce fossil fuel production for climate goals.

6. 'RBI may cut rates in 2024-25 if food inflation is tamed' - The Hindu

Relevance: Indian Economy

News

- S&P Global Ratings predicts a potential **interest rate cut** by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2024-25, contingent on **favorable food inflation and monsoon conditions.**
- India's economic growth is noteworthy among its peers in the Asia-Pacific region, with a **GDP growth projection of 6%** this year and **6.9%** in the **next two years.**

Prelims Takeaway

- Fiscal Policy
- Inflation
- Monetary Policy
- MPC
- Rating Agencies

Economic Growth and Fiscal Challenges:

- Despite robust economic growth, **higher interest rates** pose a fiscal **challenge** for India.
- Government **bond yields**, historically higher than peers, add **pressure to funding** the country's large **debt stock.**
- S&P emphasizes the significance of interest rate dynamics in determining India's debt trajectory.

Monetary Policy and Interest Rates:

- It **highlights the key theme** of monetary policy in 2024, influenced by the global context of '**higher for longer**' interest rates in the U.S.
- S&P anticipates **controlled inflationary pressures**, providing room for the RBI to consider **normalizing monetary policy.**
- The **expectation** is for **lower interest rates** in the next fiscal year, contingent on stable food inflation and monsoons.

Free Foodgrains Scheme and Fiscal Health:

- The **extension** of the **free foodgrains scheme** for 5 more years prompts discussions on potential fiscal impacts.
- S&P, believes that while more expenditure **initiatives** are **possible**, they may **not significantly impact** medium-term finances.
- Wood expects the government to adhere to **fiscal deficit targets** and its glide path through fiscal year 2026, citing **flexibility in adjusting expenditure categories.**

Conclusion:

- Overall, S&P Global Ratings remains **optimistic about India's economic outlook**, anticipating **lower interest rates** in the next fiscal year, provided that **food inflation** and **monsoons** remain **favorable**.
- Concerns about the **extension** of the **free foodgrains scheme** are tempered by **expectations** of **fiscal discipline** and **flexibility** in budget adjustments.

7. Krishi 24/7, the first-ever AI-powered solution for automated agricultural news monitoring and analysis - PIB

Relevance: e-technology in the aid of farmers

News:

- Recently, the **Agriculture Ministry**, in collaboration with the Wadhvani Institute for Artificial Intelligence (Wadhvani AI), developed **Krishi 24/7**.

Prelims Takeaway

- Krishi 24/7
- Artificial Intelligence

Krishi 24/7

- It is the **first-ever AI-powered solution** aiming to **automate agricultural news monitoring and analysis** with support from Google.org.
- **Significance**
 - It **assists Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW)** in
 - identifying relevant agricultural news
 - generating timely alerts
 - taking prompt action to safeguard farmers' interests
 - It **scans news articles in multiple languages and translates them to English**, extracting crucial information for **improved decision-making**.
 - Extracted details include headline, crop name, event type, date, location, severity, summary, and source link, ensuring comprehensive updates for the ministry.
 - It addresses the need for an **efficient mechanism to identify and manage agricultural news articles of interest** to aid timely decision-making.

Artificial Intelligence or AI

- AI is the **ability of a computer, or a robot** controlled by a computer to **do tasks that are usually done by humans** because they require human intelligence and discernment.
- Although there is no AI that can perform the wide variety of tasks an ordinary human can do, **some AI can match humans in specific tasks**.
- The ideal characteristic of artificial intelligence is its **ability to rationalize and take actions** that have the best chance of **achieving a specific goal**.
- In India, **NITI Aayog**, has issued few **guiding documents on AI** issues such as the **National Strategy for AI** and the **Responsible AI for All** report.

AI vs ML vs DL

- The term **AI** refers to the **simulation of human intelligence by machines**.
- **ML** or **Machine Learning** is a **subset of AI** that involves the **development of algorithms** that allow computers to **learn from data without being explicitly programmed**.
 - ML algorithms can analyze data, identify patterns, and make predictions based on the patterns they find.
- **DL** or **Deep Learning** is a **subset of ML** that **uses artificial neural networks** to learn from data in a way that is **similar to how the human brain learns**.

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

1. A matter of integrity - Indian Express

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

Context:

- India's Independence in 1947 marked **India's liberation from foreign domination**.
- The Constitution of India came into effect on January 26, 1950, laying the **foundation for a democratic journey**.
- Key democratic principles include **individual rights, equality, rule of law and public participation**.

CAG's Crucial Role

- The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) plays a vital role in ensuring transparency, accountability, and financial integrity in the government.
- It maintains the separation of powers by aligning financial activities with legislative intentions.
- CAG's audit findings promote good governance, streamline operations, reduce inefficiencies and uphold financial discipline.
- As India's democracy matures, the CAG's role becomes even more vital in promoting good governance and safeguarding the people's interests.

Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- CAG integrates auditing of achievements in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its work.
- As a member of the UN Board of Auditors, CAG conducts SDG audits as a cross-cutting theme.

Citizen Engagement in Auditing

- CAG places Indian citizens at the centre, assessing preparedness, planning, and recommending corrective actions for economic, social, and environmental aspirations.
- Citizen engagement is crucial in identifying high-risk areas and improving governance.
- In India's federal democracy, engaging with stakeholders becomes imperative, especially with the shift to Direct Benefit Transfers.
- Use of technology and digital solutions enhance citizen engagement, making audit processes more efficient.
- Social audit facilitates citizen oversight, with examples like the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

Social Audit and Local Governance

- The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments empowered local self-governance in India.
- CAG supports local governance through capacity building, audit certifications and the creation of a pool of competent accountants.

International Centre for Local Governance

- Recognizing local self-governance's importance, an international centre for local governance is envisaged.
- This will serve as a centre of excellence for capacity building of local government auditors, both nationally and internationally.
- It will serve as a knowledge centre and think-tank, addressing capacity building for stakeholders at grass-roots level across the nation.

Conclusion

- Democracy thrives on the **synergy of accountability and citizen engagement**.
- **CAG's role in catalysing good governance and citizens' responsibility** to nurture democratic principles contribute to a **mature democracy of the people, by the people, for the people**.

2. Trouble with India's guidelines on genetically modified insects - The Hindu

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

Context:

- According to the '**Bioeconomy Report 2022**', India's bioeconomy currently contributes **2.6% to the GDP**, with plans to increase it to 5% by 2030.
- However, achieving this goal requires **significant investment and policy support**.

Funding Concerns

- Despite a slight uptick during COVID-19, biotechnology funding in India remains below pre-pandemic levels.
- The current allocation is only **0.0001%** of India's GDP, hindering the sector's potential economic impact.
- Reduced funding poses risks to national interests, particularly in pandemic preparedness efforts.
- Efforts are also needed to attract private funding in biotechnology research and development

Policy Misalignment with Economic Goals

- Biotechnology policies need realignment with economic goals.
- The recent guidelines on genetically engineered (GE) insects lack clarity on the economic benefits and purposes for approval, hindering the sector's growth.

Guidelines for GE Insects: Three Key Issues

- 1. Uncertainty of Purpose**
 - Guidelines emphasise beneficial applications of GE insects but lack a clear vision for their economic impact.
 - Policy focuses on disease reduction, food security and environmental conservation, but no alignment with broader bioeconomy goals.
- 2. Uncertainty for Researchers**
 - Guidelines apply only to research, not confined trials or deployment, creating uncertainty for researchers.
 - Lack of clarity on government approval for deployment and criteria for considering proposals.
- 3. Uncertainty of Ambit**
 - Guidelines provide procedures for GE mosquitoes, crop pests and beneficial insects but lack clarity on what is deemed 'beneficial.'
 - Ambiguity hampers research progress, funding, and the identification of research priorities.

The Need for Comprehensive Policy Reforms

- A **clear and comprehensive policy framework** is crucial for the growth of India's bioeconomy.
- **Aligning guidelines with the broader economic goals** outlined in the Bioeconomy Report is imperative for sustainable progress.
- **Greater public discourse and awareness** are needed to drive policy changes and foster a thriving biotechnology sector in India.

3. Importance of 'loss and damage' funds - The Hindu

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

Context:

- As the climate crisis intensifies, the **focus shifts to adaptation and 'loss and damage' (L&D)**.
- While adaptation involves **proactive responses** to climate change, L&D represents **irreversible consequences**.
- L&D encompasses **economic losses, human casualties and environmental degradation** affecting human rights and well-being.

Loss and Damage Fund

- Established at **COP 19 in 2013** to provide **financial and technical assistance to developing nations** facing L&D due to climate change.
- However, despite subsequent dialogues and negotiations, the **operationalization of the fund faces challenges**.
 - TC4 concluded with no clear consensus on operationalizing the L&D fund, deepening rifts between developed and developing nations.
 - TC5, results in recommendations forwarded to COP 28, revealing a lack of trust and commitment.

Key Points of Contention

- **Hosting the Fund:** The debate over hosting the fund at the World Bank.
- **Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR):** Differences in principles related to CBDR, climate reparations, and eligibility for funds.

- **TC5 Compromises:** Reveals a profound lack of trust between affluent and emerging economies regarding historical responsibilities.
- **Undermined Commitments:** Wealthy nations' unwillingness to commit to fund size, CBDR, and liability undermines global climate negotiations.
- **Climate Justice Threatened:** The watering down of the L&D fund poses a threat to climate justice.
 - This exacerbates the suffering of vulnerable communities in developing nations.

Wider Implications

- **Economic Consequences:** The absence of L&D funds has economic consequences for both developing and developed nations.
 - This is due to interconnectedness in the global economy.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Limited capacity to address environmental degradation and hence, loss of vital ecosystems.
- **Security Implications:** Climate-induced instability can lead to security implications as conflicts and tensions emerge in vulnerable nations.

Ensuring Climate Justice

- **Balancing Adaptation and L&D:** Emphasizes the need to balance proactive measures of adaptation with addressing the irreversible consequences of climate change.
- **Rich Countries' Obligations:** Calls for rich countries to meet their obligations, reduce emissions, and deliver fair finance to uphold principles of equity, justice, and solidarity in global climate action.

Conclusion

- The challenges facing the **operationalization of the L&D fund pose threats** to climate justice, global cooperation, and the **ability to address the irreversible impacts of climate change**.
- The outcome of TC5 reflects a breakdown in diplomatic efforts, potentially derailing COP 28 talks and intensifying pressures on climate action.

Quick Look

1. Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC)

- The ECBC, established in 2007 and updated in 2017, plays a crucial role in setting minimum energy standards for commercial buildings, with the aim of achieving energy savings of 25 to 50 percent.
- Buildings in India currently account for 30 percent of total electricity consumption, a figure expected to reach 50 percent by 2042.
- ECBC addresses six components of building design, including envelope, lighting systems, HVAC systems, and electrical power systems.
- Compliance with ECBC is applicable to new buildings and retrofitting existing ones.
- While 23 states have notified ECBC rules, only 15 have adopted the latest ECBC, 2017, indicating variations in implementation across the country.

2. e-FIR

- An e-FIR is the electronic version of a First Information Report.
 - FIR serves as the initial report that activates the criminal justice system.
- Significance
 - Addresses Delays in FIR Registration
 - They enable real-time crime reporting for citizens, ensuring a faster response from law enforcement agencies.
 - The adoption of e-FIRs aligns with key government initiatives, including the Digital India mission and the National e-Governance Plan.

3. PUSA-44

- It is a paddy variety which was developed in 1993 by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- By the end of 2010s, it had gained widespread popularity among farmers across the Punjab, covering approximately 70 to 80% of the area under paddy cultivation.
- Farmers claim that PUSA-44 yields nearly 85 to 100 mann (34 to 40 quintals) per acre, while other varieties' yield average is 28 to 30 quintals per acre.
- Concerns
 - It is a long-duration variety, taking around 160 days to mature and requiring 5-6 extra cycles of irrigation.
 - With Punjab facing severe groundwater depletion and the availability of short-duration paddy varieties, the government aims to conserve one month of irrigation water by banning the variety.
 - Moreover, this variety is also known to exacerbate the long-running issue of stubble burning in the state.
 - This variety generates around 2 per cent more stubble than short varieties, which becomes a significant concern when cultivated on a large scale.

4. Green crackers

- Green crackers are so named because they do not contain harmful chemicals that would cause air pollution.
- Components in firecrackers are replaced with others that are less dangerous and less harmful to the atmosphere.

- These crackers emit less-harmful chemicals, and also release water vapour, which acts as dust suppressant.

5. Stable Auroral Arc

- It is a rare atmospheric phenomenon which was observed during a strong G3-class geomagnetic storm.
- Unlike auroras, which occur when charged particles from space hit the atmosphere causing it to glow, SAR arcs form differently.
- They are an indication of heat energy leaking into the upper atmosphere from Earth's ring current system, a donut-shaped circuit carrying millions of amps around our planet.
- During the recent geomagnetic storm, the ring current was energised by hours of intense geomagnetic activity, with energy dissipating into these SAR arcs.
- This global event was registered in many parts of the world.



Mentorship
India

Prelims Track Question

Q1. With reference to G-20 Summit in India in 2023, consider the following statements

1. It was first that the G20 Leaders' Summit was hosted by India.
2. The theme of the summit was "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam".
3. The Global Biofuel Alliance was the outcome of the summit.
4. A consensus on the India-Middle East Economic Corridor was made at the summit.
5. G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion Document was adopted at the summit.

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

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

Q2. With reference to INDUS-X, which has remained in news recently, consider the following statements

1. It is a joint initiative between India and the US.
2. It primarily focuses upon cultural development.
3. An Educational Series 'Gurukul' was launched under the initiative.

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

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

Q3. With reference to World University Rankings: Asia 2024, consider the following statements

1. India has the maximum number of the Universities in therankings.
2. Among the Indian Institutions, Indian Institute of Science has topped the rankings.
3. Delhi University has featured among the top 100 institutions in the rankings.
4. The rankings are based upon five indicators.

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 about Organic farming

1. It prohibits the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers.
2. It is characterized by crop rotation and mixed cropping systems.

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. India's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions include:

1. Reducing the emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels
2. Generating 50% of electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030
3. Creating additional carbon sink
4. Achieving net zero emissions by 2070

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

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

Q6. Which of the following are effect of a budgetary deficit.

1. Interest rates rise as a result.
2. It raises the rate of inflation.
3. The government's burden of increasing interest payments grows.

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 Krishi 24/7:

1. It is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered solution for automated agricultural news monitoring and analysis.
2. It scans news articles in English only, extracting crucial information for improved decision-making.

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 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)

1. CAG of India has the power of both Comptroller as well as Auditor General.
2. It ensures that public funds are used efficiently and for their intended purpose.
3. Reports of CAG on the execution of projects or programmes by the Ministries are discussed by the Public Accounts Committee.
4. CAG is not a member of the parliament.

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

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

Q9. Consider the following statements with reference to Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)

1. It is a statutory committee constituted under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
2. It is authorised to review, monitor and approve all activities with respect to GMO.

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

Q10. The Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), is associated with which of the following?

- A. It is a mechanism aimed at reducing nuclear weapons in nuclear-powered countries.
- B. It is a mechanism to provide compensation to developing countries affected by climate disasters.
- C. It is a new mechanism for the resolution of maritime disputes.
- D. It is a global mechanism designed to combat organised crime.

Prelims Track Answer**Ans. 1 Option D is correct****Explanation**

- The 18th G20 Summit was held in New Delhi, India on September 9th and 10th, 2023.
- It was the first time that the G20 Leaders' Summit was hosted by India. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- The theme of the summit was "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", which means "The world is one family". **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**
- G20 Leaders' New Delhi Declaration achieved unanimous consensus, addressing diverse global issues, from Russia-Ukraine tensions to sustainable development, food security.
- The outcome of the summit was the launching of
 - the Global Biofuel Alliance. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**
 - Admittance of African Union
 - India Middle East Economic Corridor. **Hence, Statement 4 is correct.**
 - G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion Document. **Hence, Statement 5 is correct.**

Ans. 2 Option B is correct**Explanation**

- INDUS-X was launched in June 2023 between India and the US. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- It aims at strengthening strategic, technology partnerships and defence industrial cooperation. **Hence, Statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Indus-X Investors Summit was launched between India and US ahead 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue.
- The INDUS-X Educational Series (Gurukul) was also launched before the +2 Ministerial Dialogue., **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 3 Option B is correct**Explanation**

- India has surpassed China in QS World University Rankings: Asia 2024 in the number of ranked universities. With 148 featured universities, "India is now the most represented higher education system". **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- IIT Bombay maintains top rank in India with China retaining its top-most position. **Hence, Statement 2 is incorrect.**

- Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, and Delhi University are the two non-IIT institutions in the top 100. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**

- QS ranks institutions based on 10 indicators, including academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty-student ratio, international relations, and citations per paper. **Hence, Statement 4 is incorrect.**

Ans. 4 Option D is correct**Explanation**

- The prohibition of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers in organic farming has several environmental benefits. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- Crop rotation and mixed cropping are integral to organic farming and offer benefits for natural pest control and biodiversity.
- Mixed cropping diversifies plant species, attracting a variety of beneficial insects that prey on pests. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Ans. 5 Option D is correct**Explanation**

- India's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions include:
 - Reducing the emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - Generating 50% of electricity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030 **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
 - Creating additional carbon sink **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
 - Achieving net zero emissions by 2070. **Hence, statement 4 is correct.**
- A new report by the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) reveals that India, Indonesia, the UK, and Switzerland are the only major economies on track to meet their Paris Agreement goals by 2030.

Ans. 6 Option C is correct**Explanation**

- The Government's two major deficits are the Revenue Deficit and the Fiscal Deficit.
- The following are some of the negative consequences of a budgetary deficit.
 - Interest rates rise as a result.
 - It raises the rate of inflation.

- The government's burden of increasing interest payments grows. **Hence, all statements are correct.**

Ans. 7 Option A is correct

Explanation

- Krishi 24/7 is the first-ever AI-powered solution aiming to automate agricultural news monitoring and analysis with support from Google.org. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It assists Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) in
 - identifying relevant agricultural news
 - generating timely alerts
 - taking prompt action to safeguard farmers' interests
- It scans news articles in multiple languages and translates them to English, extracting crucial information for improved decision-making. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Extracted details include headline, crop name, event type, date, location, severity, summary, and source link, ensuring comprehensive updates for the ministry.
- It addresses the need for an efficient mechanism to identify and manage agricultural news articles of interest to aid timely decision-making.

Ans. 8 Option B is correct

Explanation

- CAG is an independent authority under the Constitution of India.
- He is the head of the Indian audit & account department and chief Guardian of Public purse.
- It ensures that public funds are used efficiently and for their intended purpose. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- CAG of India is only performing the role of an Auditor General and not of a Comptroller. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- In India, the CAG audits the accounts after the expenditure is committed i.e., ex post facto..
- In India, CAG is not a member of the parliament. **Hence, statement 4 is incorrect.**

- CAG also acts as a guide, friend and philosopher of the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament.
- Reports of CAG on the execution of projects or programmes by the Ministries are discussed by the Public Accounts Committee. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

Ans. 9 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is a statutory committee constituted under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- GEAC functions under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC).
- As per Rules, 1989, it is responsible for the appraisal of activities involving large scale use of hazardous microorganisms and recombinants in research and industrial production from the environmental angle.
- The committee is also responsible for appraisal of proposals relating to release of genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products into the environment, including experimental field trials. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- It keeps a check on the use, import, and export of genetically modified (GM) organisms and crops.
- GEAC also has the power to prohibit the manufacture and use of certain recombinants as they are hazardous for commercial use.

Ans. 10 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damages was set up in 2013.
- It was the first formal acknowledgment of the need to compensate developing countries struck by climate disasters. **Hence, option B is correct.**

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