



**UPSC
Mentorship**
A Unit of Mentorship India

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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SOURCES



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GS I

1. Tizu River

Source:

Context: The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways recently announced that the ministry has decided to carry out feasibility studies to use the National Waterways-101 on the Tizu Zunki River for the transportation of cargo and passengers.

Tizu River:

- Nagaland has four main rivers, namely, Doyang, Dhansiri, Dhiku and Tizu.
- The first three flow towards the west through the Assam plains to join River Brahmaputra, while the Tizu River system flows towards the east and southeast and pours into the Irrawaddy in Myanmar.
- The Tizu River forms an important drainage system in the eastern part of Nagaland.
- It originates from the central part of Nagaland state and runs through a northeast direction, flows through Kiphire and Phek districts and confluences in the Chindwin River of Myanmar.
- The Chindwin River further enters into Irrawaddy River, the largest river of Myanmar.
- The River Irrawaddy further drains into the Andaman Sea via the Irrawaddy Delta after travelling through river ports like Mandalay.
- The main tributaries of the River Tizu are river Zungki, Lanye, and Likimro.
- The Zungki River, which is the biggest tributary of Tizu, starts from the north-eastern part of Changdong forest in the south of Teku, and flows in a southern direction towards Noklak, Shamator, and Kiphire, and finally joins Tizu below Kiphire.



National Waterways 101:

- The proposed Tizu-Zungki waterway, or NW 101, will link Nagaland with the Chindwin River, Myanmar, and beyond.
- On the Nagaland side, it is set to run approximately 42 km, starting from Longmatra in Kiphire to Avangkhu in Phek's Meluri sub-division.
- From Avangkhu, it will link up with the Chindwin and on to the Tamanthi port, Myanmar, traversing some 117 km.



GS II

2. With two new judges, Supreme Court back to its full judicial strength

Source: The Hindu, Page 11

Context: Justice N. Kotiswar Singh is the first judge in the top court from Manipur; Justice R. Mahadevan, who belongs to a backward community from T.N., will bring diversity to Bench, collegium says.

Appointment of Judges in Supreme Court:

- Originally, the Supreme Court had eight judges (one chief justice and seven others).
- The Parliament has increased the number of judges over time.
- The current strength of the Supreme Court is 34 judges (one chief justice and 33 others).

Qualifications for Appointment as a Judge:

- According to Article 124(3) of the Constitution, a person can be appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court if he or she:
- A person must be a citizen of India.
- Must have served as a judge of a High Court for at least five years or two such courts in succession.
- Alternatively, must have been an advocate of a High Court for at least ten years or two or more such courts in succession.
- Must be a distinguished jurist in the opinion of the president.

Appointment:

- The Judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President under clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution.
- The President consults with judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts to make informed appointments.

Oath of Office:

- Every appointed judge must make and subscribe to an oath before the President or an appointed person.
- The oath includes commitments to uphold the Constitution, sovereignty and integrity of India, and perform duties without fear or favour.

Tenure and Resignation:

- There is no prescribed minimum age limit for a judge's appointment.
- A judge of the Supreme Court serves until they reach the age of 65 years.
- However, a judge may resign before reaching the age of 65 years by tendering their resignation to the President.



Salaries and Allowances:

- Salaries, allowances, privileges, leave, and pension of Supreme Court judges are determined by Parliament.
- The Salaries, Pension, and Allowances of the Supreme Court Judges are charged upon the Consolidated Fund of India.

Post-retirement Restrictions:

- After retirement, a judge of the Supreme Court is prohibited from practising law in any court in India or pleading before any government authority.
- As per Article 128 of Indian Constitution, any retired judge of the Supreme Court of India can be called back to sit and act as a Supreme Court judge by the Chief Justice of India with the prior permission of the President of India.

Removal:

- A judge of the Supreme Court can only be removed from office by an order of the President.
- The removal process requires an address by each House of Parliament, supported by a special majority i.e., a majority of the total membership of that House and a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting.
- The grounds for removal are proven misbehaviour or incapacity.
- Parliament has the authority to regulate the procedure for presenting the address and investigating and proving the misbehaviour or incapacity of a judge.
- Once appointed, judges can serve until the age of 65 and cannot be removed during their tenure except for proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

Collegium System for Judicial Appointments:

- Judges of the higher judiciary are appointed through the collegium system.
- The collegium, consisting of the Chief Justice of India and the four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court, decides on appointments, elevations, and transfers of Judges.
- The term "collegium" is not mentioned in the Indian Constitution but has been established through judicial pronouncements.

3. What is the ASMITA Project?

Context: The Ministry of Education and the University Grants Commission (UGC) recently unveiled the ASMITA Project, aimed at bolstering the availability of educational resources in Indian languages.

ASMITA Project:

- ASMITA (Augmenting Study Materials in Indian Languages through Translation and Academic Writing) is an initiative to develop 22,000 books in Indian languages in the next five years.



- It is a collaborative effort of the UGC and the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, a high-powered committee under the Ministry of Education.
- The primary objective of this initiative is to promote and integrate Indian languages more deeply into the education system, thereby enriching the learning experience and making it more inclusive.
- This project is seen as part of a broader strategy to enhance the accessibility and quality of educational materials across various Indian languages.
- Thirteen nodal universities have been identified to lead the project, along with member universities from various regions.
- The UGC has also created a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the book-writing process in each assigned language.
- The SOP includes the identification of nodal officers and authors, allocation of title, subject, and programme, writing and editing, submission of the manuscript, review and plagiarism check, finalisation, designing, proofreading and e-publication.

Other Initiatives Launched:

- The Ministry of Education also launched the "Bahubhasha Shabdakosh", a single-point reference for all the words in all Indian languages and their meanings.
- This initiative will be developed by the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) in collaboration with the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti.
- This Shabdakosh will help in using Bharatiya words, phrases, and sentences for various new-age domains like IT, industry, research, and education.

4. World Bank Group Guarantee Platform

Context: Recently, the World Bank Group (WBG) guarantee platform was opened for business.

World Bank Group Guarantee Platform:

- It is housed at the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and brings together products and experts from the World Bank, International Finance Corporation (IFC), and MIGA for simplicity, efficiency and speed.
- It aims to boost WBG annual guarantee issuance to \$20 billion by 2030.
- WBG Guarantees will serve as a one-stop shop for all WBG guarantee businesses, providing the best guarantee solutions for clients to meet project needs and development priorities.
- WBG clients can now choose from a simplified market-friendly menu of guarantee options.
- The platform will provide three types of coverages:
 - Credit guarantees for loans to the public or private sector;
 - Trade finance guarantees for trade finance projects involving public entities;
 - Political risk insurance against non-commercial risks for private sector projects or public-private partnerships.



Significance:

- Initiated in 2024, World Bank Group Guarantees consolidates all guarantee products and experts from across the World Bank Group institutions at MIGA.
- It provides a simplified and comprehensive menu of guarantee solutions, enabling clients to select the instrument that best suits their needs.
- The platform streamlines processes, removes redundancies and provides greater accessibility by de-risking investments in developing countries.

GS III

5. 1,151-cr. investment can help India in battery tech. race

Source: The Hindu, Page 12

Context: The Ministry of Mines, Government of India through the state-owned Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL), has entered into a draft exploration and development agreement with Argentinian miner CAMYEN for possible acquisition and development of five-odd lithium blocks.

The company has also entered into a non-disclosure agreement with Chilean miner ENAMI for “possible exploration, extraction, processing and commercialisation” of the mineral.



Lithium:

- Lithium is an alkali mineral, also called ‘white gold’. It is soft, silvery-white metal, the lightest metal of the periodic table.

Major Properties:

- High Reactivity
- Low Density
- Excellent Electrochemical Properties

Occurrence and Top Producers:

- Lithium is found naturally in various minerals, including spodumene, petalite, and lepidolite.
- It is extracted from these minerals and refined into lithium metal or its compounds.
- The top producers of lithium are Australia, Chile, China, and Argentina.



- In 2022, Australia was the world leader in terms of lithium mine production. Chile and China ranked second and third.

Note:

- Lithium triangle made up of Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia—contains roughly half the world's known lithium.

Applications:

- **Batteries:** Lithium is a crucial component of rechargeable batteries used in smartphones, laptops, electric vehicles, and other electronics.
- **Glass and Ceramics:** Lithium compounds are used to strengthen glass and ceramics, making them more durable and heat-resistant.
- **Medicine:** Lithium is used as a mood stabiliser in the treatment of bipolar disorder.
- **Lubricants:** Lithium greases are used in high-pressure and high-temperature applications.

Lithium in India:

2023 saw a surge in lithium discoveries:

- Massive reserves unearthed in Salal-Haimna areas of Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir (estimated 5.9 million tonnes).
- Additional reserves identified in Koderma and Giridih regions of Jharkhand.
- However, India has put up lithium blocks for auction: one in J&K and another in Chhattisgarh, with most of its domestic requirements, across categories like EVs, lithium-ion battery making, and other energy storage solutions, being met completely through imports. Import bill is pegged at around ₹24,000 crore.

6. Jerdon's Courser

Context: Jerdon's Courser, a critically endangered species, has not been visually spotted in over a decade.

Jerdon's Courser:

- It is a nocturnal cursorial (adapted for walking and running) bird endemic to the Eastern Ghats of India.
- **Scientific Name:** *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus*
- It was considered to be extinct from the beginning of the 20th century until its rediscovery in 1986.
- **Habitat:** It inhabits open patches within scrub forests.



of

- **Distribution:** It is found only in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Features:

- It is a delicate lapwing-like bird with a large eye and a short, bicolored bill.
- Its upper plumage is grey-brown, chin and throat are whitish, fore-neck is rufous and separated from its brown breast by a white band.
- A second white band runs across the lower portion of its breast (hence it was earlier called a double-banded courser).
- The belly is whitish, while its tail is black-and-white (visible in flight). The legs are pale yellow.
- The call is a short series of two-noted whistles “tuick-tuoo.”
- They are insectivorous, hunting invertebrates by sight.

Conservation Status:

IUCN Red List: Critically Endangered

7. What is Late Blight Disease?

Context: The Central Potato Research Institute (CPRI) recently issued an advisory for potato farmers across the country, warning of a high risk of late blight disease in the crop due to changes in weather conditions.

Late Blight Disease:

- Late blight (*Phytophthora infestans*) is one of the most serious fungal diseases that can affect tomatoes and potatoes.
- **Transmission:**
- It is spread from infected transplants, volunteer potato or tomato plants, and certain weeds botanically related to tomatoes.
- Spores of this fungus can be airborne and travel great distances in storms. Rain deposits spores on plants, causing infection.
- Late blight is favored by cool, wet weather and will cycle repeatedly if weather conditions are favorable.

Symptoms:

- When plants have become infected, lesions (round or irregularly shaped areas that range in color from dark green to purplish black and resemble frost injury) appear on the leaves, petioles and stems.
- A whitish growth of spore-producing structures may appear at the margin of the lesions on the under-leaf surfaces.
- Potato tubers develop rot up to 15 mm (0.6 inch) deep.
- Secondary fungi and bacteria (particularly *Erwinia* species) often invade potato tubers and produce rotting that results in great losses during storage, transit, and marketing.

The disease can be managed with a timely application of fungicide, though epidemics can occur rapidly once crops are infected.



Editorial, Ideas and Opinions

8. Centralised examinations have not aced the test

Source: The Hindu, Page 6

Context: Recently, exam paper leaks in the Hindi heartland become one of the top poll issues in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections. Exam paper leaks and scams in states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar, have been a key concern for young voters in the age group of 18-25.

What are the recent cases of exam paper leaks in India?

- There have been 41 paper leaks over the last five years in 15 states, which has affected 1.4 crore job seekers who had applied for over one lakh vacancies. This has translated into angst and disappointment among the young voters. Some of the recent paper leaks are mentioned below-
- UP Constable Recruitment and Promotion Exam Paper Leak (2023)- The UP Constable recruitment and promotion examination paper was leaked, leading to the cancellation of the exam and the arrest of three individuals suspected of being involved in the scam.
- REET 2023 Paper Leak- The Rajasthan Eligibility for Elementary Teachers (REET) exam paper leak which was conducted by the Rajasthan Subordinate and Ministerial Services Selection Board (RSMSSB).
- TSPSC Assistant Engineer Exam Paper Leak (2023)- The Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) Assistant Engineer recruitment exam was cancelled due to paper leak.
- NEET UG 2024- The National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) for undergraduate medical courses witnessed multiple paper leak incidents.
- Assam Class 10 Board Exam 2024- In Assam, a paper leak in the Class 10 state board exams prompted significant political controversy and public outcry.



What are the negative impacts of frequent Paper leaks in India?

- Disproportionate impact on rural and marginalised community students- The students from remote rural backgrounds and marginalised castes, are disproportionately impacted as they come with the pressure of debts undertaken to pay fees of applications, coaching centres and computer training centres and rent.
- Emotional, Mental and Physical Fatigue- With the cancellation of exams, there is an increase in the fatigue of students and the fear of a new generation of aspirants joining the queue.
- Exacerbation of Job Crisis- The cancellation of recruitment procedures has added to spiralling crises in the already scarce job market.



- Disruption of academic calendars- The postponement and cancellation of Exams due to paper leaks, throw the academic schedules into disarray and cause uncertainty for students.
- Loss of trust and confidence- The frequent paper leaks lead to students losing their faith in the fairness and meritocracy of exams, and questions the value of their efforts and education.

What steps have been taken to address the exam paper leaks in India?

To address the issue of exam paper leaks in India, the following steps have been undertaken:

- Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act- The act aims to prevent unfair means in the public examinations. This act aims to bring greater transparency, fairness and credibility in the public examinations system.
- Formation of the National Testing Agency (NTA)- The NTA was formed as a professional exam-conducting body to make the examination system more scientific, reliable, and professional.
- Transition to Online Exams- Moving exams online was thought to be a solution to paper-based exams, as it reduces the risks associated with printing and distribution.

What are the lacunae with the exam system in India?

- Loopholes in the Examination Process- Question paper setting, printing, and distribution are often vulnerable to leaks due to inadequate security measures.
- Inadequate IT Systems- Online exams are vulnerable due to inadequate testing and deployment of IT systems. This further makes them susceptible to hacking.
- Inadequate Penalties and Enforcement- The existing laws which criminalise cheating have not led to convictions. This demonstrates lack of effective enforcement and penalties.
- Lack of Special Investigation Agency- India lacks a dedicated agency to investigate all types of examination offences and bring culprits to justice quickly.
- Discretion of the state governments in adopting the Public Examinations Bill- The Public Examination Bill leaves it to the discretion of the state governments to draft their own acts by serving as a model bill. However, state governments have displayed partisan interests in drafting model bills in the past, like the Model APLM Act.

What should be the Way Forward?

- Compensation in case of exam cancellation- There must be adequate compensation for years of labour, exorbitant financial cost, and the emotional toll incurred by lakhs of candidates who pin all their hopes on the public exam.
- Establishment of fast-track courts- Fast track courts must be established for the trial and convictions for people involved in paper leaks.
- Strengthening of Examination Processes- We must enhance security measures in question paper setting, printing, and distribution to plug loopholes. We must leverage blockchain technology to securely store and manage exam-related data.
- Enhancement of Penalties and Enforcement- We must impose stringent penalties on persons resorting to unfair means, as per the Public Examinations Prevention of Unfair Means Act.



In Brief

9. CSIR chief N. Kalaiselvi gets two-year extension

Source: The Hindu, Page 12

Context: Nallathamby Kalaiselvi, the first woman Director-General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), on Tuesday was granted a two-year extension in service.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research:

Key points :

- Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is the largest research and development (R&D) organisation in India. CSIR has a pan-India presence and has a dynamic network of 37 national laboratories, 39 outreach centres, 3 Innovation Complexes and 5 units.
- Established: September 1942
- Headquarters: New Delhi
- CSIR is funded by the Ministry of Science and Technology and it operates as an autonomous body through the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- CSIR covers a wide spectrum of streams – from radio and space physics, oceanography, geophysics, chemicals, drugs, genomics, biotechnology and nanotechnology to mining, aeronautics, instrumentation, environmental engineering and information technology.
- It provides significant technological intervention in many areas with regard to societal efforts which include the environment, health, drinking water, food, housing, energy, farm and non-farm sectors.

Structure of the Organisation:

- President: Prime Minister of India (Ex-officio)
- Vice President: Union Minister of Science and Technology (Ex-officio)
- Governing Body: The Director-General is the head of the governing body.
- The other ex-officio member is the finance secretary (expenditures).
- Other members' terms are of three years.
- CSIR Advisory Board: 15-member body composed of prominent members from respective fields of science and technology.
- Its function is to provide science and technology inputs to the governing body.
- Member terms are of three years.

Objectives: The objectives of the Council are scientific and industrial/applied research of national importance.



10. What is the Halwa Ceremony?

Source: The Hindu, Page 1

Context: The Union Finance Minister participated in the 'Halwa Ceremony' recently, a tradition observed before the annual budget presentation.

Halwa Ceremony:

- It is a tradition performed every year ahead of the budget and signifies the official initiation of the printing process of various documents related to the budget.
- It involves the preparation of the traditional dessert 'halwa' in a massive kadhai (wok), which is then served to all those who are directly associated with the budget-making process.
- The finance minister gives the go-ahead by stirring the kadhai and serving the sweet to officials.
- It takes place in the basement of the Finance Ministry's North Block in Central Delhi, where a special printing press is located.
- It serves as a formal 'send-off' for the ministry officials and staff engaged in preparing the Union government's annual financial statement.
- Subsequently, the top officials involved with the budget enter a designated 'lock-in' period, isolating themselves within the ministry premises and cutting off from their families to preserve the confidentiality surrounding the final budget document.
- The officials are required to stay in the Finance Ministry till the finance minister finally presents the budget.



Countdown begins: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman (centre) distributing halwa at North Block on Tuesday. The halwa ceremony marks the final stage of Budget preparation. The Minister is scheduled to present the Union Budget on July 23. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Daily Quiz

1. How are judges appointed to the Supreme Court of India?

- A) By the President on the advice of the Prime Minister
- B) By a collegium consisting of senior judges of the Supreme Court
- C) By the Chief Justice of India
- D) By a national referendum

2. Which of the following is typically NOT included in a budget ceremony?

- A) Presentation of economic forecasts
- B) Announcement of tax proposals
- C) Speech by the Prime Minister
- D) Discussion and voting by the public

3. Which of the following statements about the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is true?

Statements:

- 1. CSIR is the largest research and development organisation in India.
- 2. CSIR operates under the Ministry of Science and Technology in India.
- 3. CSIR is primarily involved in industrial research and development.

Reason:

CSIR plays a crucial role in promoting scientific research and technological development aimed at supporting various industries in India.

Options:

- A) Statement 1 and Reason are correct.
- B) Statement 2 and Reason are correct.
- C) Statement 3 and Reason are correct.
- D) All statements and Reasons are correct.

4. Which of the following statements about lithium is correct?

Statements:

- 1. Lithium is the lightest metal and the lightest solid element.
- 2. Lithium is primarily used in nuclear power plants for energy production.

Options:

- A) Statement 1 is correct.
- B) Statement 2 is correct.
- C) Both statements are correct.
- D) Neither statement is correct.



5. Which of the following statements about the collegium system for judicial appointments in India is correct?

Options:

- A) The collegium system consists of the President of India and the Chief Justice of India.
- B) Under the collegium system, judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Parliament.
- C) The collegium system was established by an amendment to the Indian Constitution.
- D) The collegium system has faced criticism for lack of transparency in judicial appointments.

6. Which of the following states does the Tizu River flow through?

- A) Assam and Manipur
- B) Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh
- C) Nagaland and Manipur
- D) Nagaland and Mizoram

7. The ASMITA (Assessment of Swachhata Mission's Impact To gauge and nurture Aspiring Talent) Project, launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, primarily focuses on:

- A) Empowering women through digital literacy initiatives
- B) Monitoring the nutritional status of children in Anganwadi centers
- C) Enhancing the quality of early childhood education in rural areas
- D) Evaluating the impact of the Swachh Bharat Mission on women's health and hygiene

8- The World Bank Group Guarantee Platform primarily aims to:

- A) Provide insurance against political risks for private investors
- B) Offer financial guarantees to reduce the risk for private sector investments in emerging markets
- C) Fund infrastructure projects in developing countries
- D) Support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

9. Assertion (A): Jerdon's Courser is listed as a critically endangered species.

Reason (R): Jerdon's Courser is primarily threatened by habitat destruction due to agricultural expansion and infrastructure development.

- A) Both (A) and (R) are true, and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).
- B) Both (A) and (R) are true, but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).
- C) (A) is true, but (R) is false.
- D) (A) is false, but (R) is true.

10. Late blight, a serious disease affecting crops like potatoes and tomatoes, is caused by which of the following pathogens?

- A) *Fusarium oxysporum*
- B) *Puccinia graminis*
- C) *Phytophthora infestans*
- D) *Alternaria solani*



Solutions

1. Answer: B) By a collegium consisting of senior judges of the Supreme Court

Explanation: In India, judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by a collegium system, which consists of the Chief Justice of India and a group of senior judges of the Supreme Court.

2. Answer: D) Discussion and voting by the public

Explanation: A budget ceremony usually involves the Finance Minister presenting economic forecasts, tax proposals, and other fiscal policies to the legislature or parliament. Public discussion and voting on the budget typically occur later in the legislative process and are not part of the initial budget ceremony.

3. Answer: D) All statements and Reasons are correct.

Explanation:

- **Statement 1:** CSIR is indeed the largest research and development organisation in India, comprising 37 laboratories and units spread across the country.
- **Statement 2:** CSIR operates under the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. It was established with the objective of conducting scientific and industrial research.
- **Statement 3:** CSIR is primarily focused on industrial research and development, although it also engages in fundamental research across various scientific disciplines.
- **Reason:** CSIR's mission includes promoting scientific research and technological development to support industries in India, aligning with its mandate to contribute significantly to the nation's economic growth and development through innovation.

Therefore, option D is correct as all the statements about CSIR are accurate, and the reason correctly explains its role and objectives.

4. Answer: A) Statement 1 is correct.

Explanation:

- **Statement 1:** Lithium is indeed the lightest metal and the lightest solid element. It has an atomic number of 3 and is classified as an alkali metal.
- **Statement 2:** Lithium is not primarily used in nuclear power plants for energy production. It is mainly used in rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, which are widely used in electronic devices, electric vehicles, and energy storage systems.

Therefore, option A is correct as statement 1 accurately describes lithium's physical properties.



5. Correct Answer is: D) The collegium system has faced criticism for lack of transparency in judicial appointments.

Explanation:

- **Option A:** The collegium system in India typically consists of the Chief Justice of India and a group of senior judges of the Supreme Court, rather than including the President of India directly in the process.
- **Option B:** Judges of the Supreme Court are not appointed by the Parliament under the collegium system. Instead, they are appointed through recommendations made by the collegium and finalised by the President of India.
- **Option C:** The collegium system evolved through judicial interpretation rather than by a specific amendment to the Indian Constitution.
- **Option D:** The collegium system has indeed faced criticism for lack of transparency in judicial appointments, with concerns about the process being opaque and not sufficiently accountable.

Therefore, option D accurately reflects a significant aspect of the debate surrounding the collegium system in India.

6. Explanation:

Answer - C) Nagaland and Manipur.

The Tizu River originates in Nagaland and flows into Manipur. It is one of the major rivers in Nagaland, contributing significantly to the geography and hydrology of the region. Understanding the course and states through which rivers flow is important for UPSC exams as it covers aspects of geography, resource distribution, and regional significance.

7. Explanation:

Answer- B) Monitoring the nutritional status of children in Anganwadi centers.

The ASMITA Project was initiated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development to monitor and improve the nutritional status of children enrolled in Anganwadi centers across India. This project is part of the broader efforts to enhance child health and nutrition, which are critical components of early childhood development and welfare programs. It utilizes various tools and methodologies to assess and track the nutritional outcomes, ensuring that children receive adequate nutrition and support in their formative years. Understanding such initiatives is crucial for UPSC aspirants as they reflect the government's strategies and measures in the social sector.



8. Explanation:

Answer- B) Offer financial guarantees to reduce the risk for private sector investments in emerging markets.

The World Bank Group Guarantee Platform is designed to encourage private sector investment in emerging markets by offering financial guarantees. These guarantees mitigate risks associated with investments, such as political instability, regulatory changes, and other factors that could affect the profitability and feasibility of projects. By reducing these risks, the platform helps mobilize private capital for development projects, thus contributing to economic growth and development in these regions. Understanding the mechanisms and objectives of such international financial instruments is important for UPSC aspirants, as it highlights the roles and strategies of global financial institutions in supporting development.

9. Explanation:

Correct- A) Both (A) and (R) are true, and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).

Jerdon's Courser (*Rhinoptilus bitorquatus*) is indeed listed as a critically endangered species, primarily found in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, India. Its population is extremely small and declining. The main threat to this bird is habitat destruction caused by human activities such as agricultural expansion, construction of roads, and other infrastructure developments. These activities lead to the fragmentation and degradation of its natural habitat, making it difficult for the species to survive and reproduce. This explains why the assertion and the reason are both true and the reason correctly explains the assertion. Understanding the conservation status and threats to specific species is crucial for UPSC aspirants, as it reflects on biodiversity and environmental protection efforts.

10. Explanation:

Answer-C) Phytophthora infestans.

Late blight is caused by the pathogen *Phytophthora infestans*, a type of oomycete (water mold). This disease is infamous for its role in the Irish Potato Famine in the mid-19th century. It affects potatoes and tomatoes, causing significant damage to crops. The symptoms include dark lesions on leaves and stems, which can rapidly destroy the entire plant. Understanding plant pathogens and diseases is essential for UPSC aspirants, as it relates to agriculture, food security, and economic impacts, which are key components of the exam syllabus.

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

1. Critically analyse the evolution, functioning, and challenges of the collegium system in judicial appointments in India. Discuss the constitutional and judicial perspectives on its legitimacy and effectiveness. What reforms, if any, are needed to address the criticisms and improve transparency in the appointment of judges?





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