



**UPSC
Mentorship**
A Unit of Mentorship India

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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SOURCES



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GS I

1. Assam's 700-yr-old Moidams to be considered for World Heritage List

Source: Indian Express

Context: The nomination dossier for the Moidams was sent more than a decade ago and is presently on the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Site, which is the first step towards the monument becoming a part of the final list.

What is Charaideo Maidams?

- The Charaideo Maidams, represents the late medieval (13th-19th century CE) mound burial tradition of the Tai Ahom community in Assam.
- It enshrines the mortal remains of the members of the Ahom royalty, who used to be buried with their paraphernalia.
- After the 18th century, the Ahom rulers adopted the Hindu method of cremation and began entombing the cremated bones and ashes in a Maidam at Charaideo.
- Out of 386 Maidams or Moidams explored so far, 90 royal burials at Charaideo are the best preserved, representative of and the most complete examples of mound burial tradition of the Ahoms.

What are the Key Facts About Ahom Kingdom?

- Established in 1228 in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam, the Ahom kingdom retained its sovereignty for 600 years.
- The kingdom was founded by Chaolung Sukapha, a 13th century ruler.
- The Ahoms ruled the land till the province was annexed to British India in 1826 with the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo.

Political Setup:

- Ahoms created a new state by suppressing the older political system of the bhuiyans (landlords).
- The Ahom state depended upon forced labour. Those forced to work for the state were called paiks.

Society:

- Ahom society was divided into clans or khels.
- A khel often controlled several villages.
- Ahoms worshipped their own tribal gods, yet they accepted the Hindu religion and the Assamese language.
- However, the Ahom kings did not completely give up their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism.

Military Strategy:



- The full contingent of the Ahom Army consisted of infantry, navy, artillery, elephantry, cavalry and spies.
- The main war weapons consisted of bows and arrows, swords, javelins, discus, guns, match-locks and cannons.
- The Ahom soldiers were experts in guerilla fighting. They also learnt the technique of constructing boat bridges in the Brahmaputra.

Who was Lachit Borphukan?

- Born on 24th November, 1622, Borphukan was known for his leadership in the Battle of Saraighat, 1671 in which an attempt by Mughal forces to capture Assam was thwarted.
- The battle of Saraighat was fought on the banks of the Brahmaputra in Guwahati in 1671.
- It is considered as one of the greatest naval battles on a river which resulted in the victory of Ahoms over the Mughals.
- He was the inspiration behind strengthening India's naval force and revitalising inland water transport and creating infrastructure associated with it due to his great naval strategies.
- The Lachit Borphukan gold medal is awarded to the best cadet from the National Defence Academy.
- The medal was instituted in 1999 to inspire defence personnel to emulate Borphukan's heroism and sacrifices.

GS II

2. UPSC Chairperson Manoj Soni quits 5 years before completion of tenure

Source: The Hindu, Page 12

Context: Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Chairperson Manoj Soni has resigned due to "personal reasons", almost five years before his tenure ends in 2029.

What are Public Service Commissions?

- **Article 312** - the Parliament is entitled to create one or more **All India services** (including an All India Judicial Service) common to the Union and the States.
- The recruitment to all these services is made by the **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)**.
- For administrative services at the **state level**, the recruitment is made by the **State Public Service Commission (SPSC)**.

Union Public Service Commission (UPSC):

- **Central recruiting agency** in India.
- **Independent constitutional body**.



- Provisions regarding the **composition, appointment and removal** of its members and the powers and functions of UPSC are provided in **Part XIV** of the Indian Constitution under **Article 315 to Article 323**.

What is the Composition of the Union Public Service Commission?

- **Appointment of Members:** The Chairman and other members of the UPSC are appointed by the President of India.
- **Term of Office:** Any member of the UPSC shall hold office for a term of six years or till the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
- **Reappointment:** Any person who has once held the office as a member of a Public Service Commission is ineligible for reappointment to that office.
- **Resignation:** A member of the Union Public Service Commission may resign from his/her office by submitting the written resignation to the President of India.
- **Removal/Suspension of Members:** The Chairman or any other member of UPSC shall only be removed from his/her office by order of the President of India. The President can suspend the Chairman or any other member from his/her office in respect of whom a reference has been made to the Supreme Court.
- **Conditions for Removal:** The Chairman or any other member of UPSC may be removed if he/she:
 - is judged an insolvent.
 - engages during his/her term of office in any paid employment outside the duties of his/her office.
 - is, in the opinion of the President, unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body.
- **Expenses of UPSC:** The expenses of the UPSC including **salaries, allowances and pensions** of the members or staff of the Commission are **charged on the Consolidated Fund of India**.
- **Submission of Reports:** The UPSC shall present an annual report to the **President of India** containing the work done by the Commission.



3. SC to Examine Article 361 Granting Immunity to Governors

Context: The Supreme Court of India has agreed to examine a plea filed by a woman staff member of the West Bengal Raj Bhawan, who has accused Governor (CV Ananda Bose) of sexual harassment. The plea challenges the immunity granted to the governor of a state under Article 361 of the Indian Constitution.

What is the Role of a Governor in India?

- Some important constitutional provisions:
 - Everything related to the office of Governor (appointment, powers, etc) have been discussed under Part VI (Article 153 to Article 162) of the Indian Constitution.
 - Article 153: There shall be a Governor for each State and the same person can be the Governor for two/more States.
 - Article 154: The executive power of the State shall be vested in the governor and shall be exercised by him/her in accordance with the Constitution of India.
 - Article 155: Governor of a State shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.
 - Article 156: The Governor shall hold office during the pleasure of the President, but his normal term of office will be five
- Role: It is stated that the Governor has a dual role - s/he is the constitutional head of state (bound by the advice of his/her council of ministers) and s/he functions as a vital link between the Union and the State govt.
- Functioning of the office over the years:
 - The Governor enjoys certain discretionary powers under the Constitution (Article 163), such as giving or withholding assent to a Bill passed by the state legislature, etc.
 - These powers enable governors to make critical decisions, particularly during times of political or administrative uncertainty.
 - However, these discretionary powers have resulted in friction with the state government as the Governors have been seen by opposition as an agent of the Centre acting on the behest of the central government.
- Can governors' powers be reviewed? Although these powers are constitutionally granted, they are subject to judicial review to ensure they are exercised within legal and proper bounds.

What is Article 361 of the Indian Constitution?

- About Article 361:
 - It grants the President of India and governors of state immunity from legal proceedings over the duration of their term in office.
 - The article is an exception to Article 14 (right to equality) of the Constitution.
- Description of Article 361:



- Criminal proceedings: No criminal cases can be initiated or continued against them, and no arrest or imprisonment orders can be issued by any court.
- Civil proceedings: The Article mandates a two-month notice for any civil proceedings related to personal acts.
- No arrest or imprisonment: The Article restricts any arrest or imprisonment orders during their term.
- The aim of the Article: To ensure that they are not answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of their official powers and duties, nor for any acts done in the course of these duties.

What is the Woman Petitioner Seeking?

- Call for immediate investigation:
 - An investigation is essential and cannot be deferred until the governor leaves office.
 - Hence, the immunity under Article 361 should not bar the investigation, especially given the time-sensitive nature of such probes.
- Framing specific guidelines: The plea asks for directions to frame specific guidelines under which governors enjoy immunity from criminal prosecution.
- Questioning absolute immunity:
 - The plea contends that the immunity under Article 361 should not be absolute, allowing illegal acts or acts that violate fundamental rights under Part III of the Constitution.
 - It argues that this immunity should not impair police powers to investigate the offence or name the perpetrator in a complaint or FIR.

Significance of the SC's Decision to Examine Immunity Granted under Article 361:

- It could have significant implications for -
 - The interpretation of constitutional protections for high office holders, and
 - The accountability mechanisms in place for addressing misconduct.



4. India, Japan Plan Joint Carbon Crediting Mechanism

Context: India and Japan plan to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation for setting up a Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) with emission reduction credits being shared.

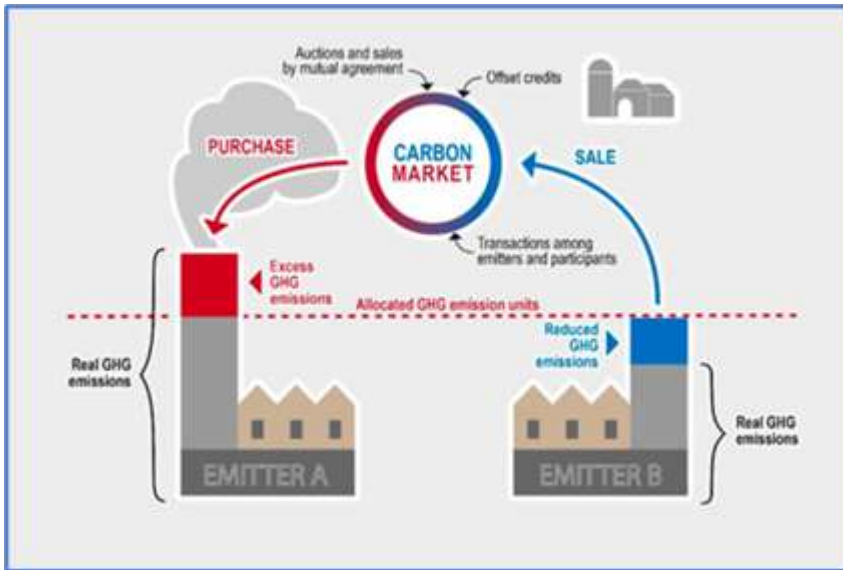
- In order to keep global warming within 2°C, ideally no more than 1.5°C, global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions need to be reduced by 25 to 50% over this decade.
- Nearly 170 countries have submitted their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) so far as part of the 2015 Paris Agreement, which they have agreed to update every five years.
 - NDCs are climate commitments by countries setting targets to achieve net-zero emissions.
 - India, for instance, is working on a long-term roadmap to achieve its target of net zero emissions by 2070.
- In order to meet their NDCs, one mitigation strategy is becoming popular with several countries i.e. carbon markets.
- Article 6 of the Paris Agreement provides for the use of international carbon markets by countries to fulfil their NDCs.

What are Carbon Markets?

- Carbon markets are essentially a tool for putting a price on carbon emissions— they establish trading systems where carbon credits or allowances can be bought and sold.
- A carbon credit is a kind of tradable permit that, per United Nations standards, equals one tonne of carbon dioxide removed, reduced, or sequestered from the atmosphere.
- Carbon allowances or caps, meanwhile, are determined by countries or governments according to their emission reduction targets.
- A United Nations Development Program release this year noted that interest in carbon markets is growing globally, i.e., 83% of NDCs submitted by countries mention their intent to make use of international market mechanisms to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Two types of Carbon Markets:





- **Compliance Market:**
 - These are set up by policies at the national, regional, and/or international level— are officially regulated.
 - Entities in this sector are issued annual allowances or permits by governments equal to the emissions they can generate.
 - If companies produce emissions beyond the capped amount, they have to purchase additional permit, either through official auctions or from companies which kept their emissions below the limit, leaving them with surplus allowances.
 - The market price of carbon gets determined by market forces when purchasers and sellers trade in emissions allowances.
- **Voluntary Market:**
 - These are markets in which emitters— corporations, private individuals, and others— buy carbon credits to offset the emission of one tonne of CO₂ or equivalent greenhouse gases.
 - Such carbon credits are created by activities which reduce CO₂ from the air, such as afforestation.
 - In a voluntary market, a corporation looking to compensate for its unavoidable GHG emissions purchases carbon credits from an entity engaged in projects that reduce, remove, capture, or avoid emissions.

Carbon Market in India:

- In the past, India has made investments in producing carbon credits and exporting them to international enterprises.
- Between 2010 and June 2022, India issued 35.94 million carbon credits or nearly 17% of all voluntary carbon market credits issued globally.
- However, the government now intends to forbid its exports, guarantee the expansion of a local domestic market for carbon credits, and increase its internal trade.



- Currently, India's carbon market is a voluntary carbon market where private parties voluntarily exchange certified reductions of GHGs from the atmosphere for carbon credits.

Legislative Push:

- The Parliament passed the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Act, 2022 aimed at putting in place provisions to make the use of clean energy mandatory and paving the way for the setting of carbon markets in the country.
 - Through the amendment of the Energy Conservation Act, the Central government aims to develop India's Carbon market and boost the adoption of clean technology.
- The Act empowers the central government to specify a carbon credit trading scheme.
- The central government or any authorized agency may issue carbon credit certificates to entities registered under and compliant with the scheme.
- The entities will be entitled to purchase or sell the certificate.

Challenges of Domestic Carbon Trading Mechanism:

- The most significant challenge is monitoring carbon credits and maintaining oversight.
 - Carbon credit projects are often widespread and located in remote areas, making it difficult for the governing body to oversee without relying on potentially biased information from project developers or third-party verification agencies that may not always be trustworthy.
- Another major issue is additionality, which international markets also struggle with.
 - Ideally, carbon credits should be issued for emission reductions that wouldn't have happened otherwise.
 - However, this is hard to determine.
 - For instance, if solar power is cheaper than coal in India, should a company switching from coal to solar be awarded carbon credits for emissions avoidance if the switch was motivated by commercial benefits rather than environmental reasons?

India, Japan Plan Joint Carbon Crediting Mechanism:

- India is looking to enter into a carbon trading and carbon credit adjustment mechanism with Japan.
- The two countries plan to sign a Memorandum of Cooperation for setting up a Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) with emission reduction credits being shared
- The JCM will be formed under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement.

Key Features of the JCM:

- A joint committee will be established to develop rules and guidelines for the JCM, covering project cycle procedures, methodologies, project design documents, monitoring, and designation of third-party entities.
- Decisions on project registration, crediting periods, credit sharing, and issuance will be made with prior confirmation from both the Japanese and Indian governments.
- The governments recognize that JCM credits from emission reductions and removals will contribute to the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) of both countries, ensuring no double counting occurs.
- Part of the JCM credits can also be authorized for international mitigation purposes.



- The two countries will confirm project registration before the joint committee makes a decision, and they will determine the percentage of credit allocation.
- Additionally, Japan will support technology transfer, finance, and capacity building for the JCM.



GS III

5. Israel's missile defence shield

Source: The Hindu, Page 14

Context: Israel used a multi-layered defence shield to block Iran's mass drone and missile attack on Israeli territory.

Iron Dome Air Defence System: Israel

- Short-range, ground-to-air, air defence system.
- Includes a radar and Tamir interceptor missiles that track and neutralise any rockets or missiles aimed at Israeli targets.
- Used for countering rockets, artillery & mortars as well as aircraft, helicopters and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV).
- Capable of being used in all weather conditions, including during the day and night.
- Developed by the state-run Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries and was deployed in 2011.
- Protect deployed and manoeuvring forces, as well as the Forward Operating Base (FOB) and urban areas, against a wide range of indirect and aerial threats.

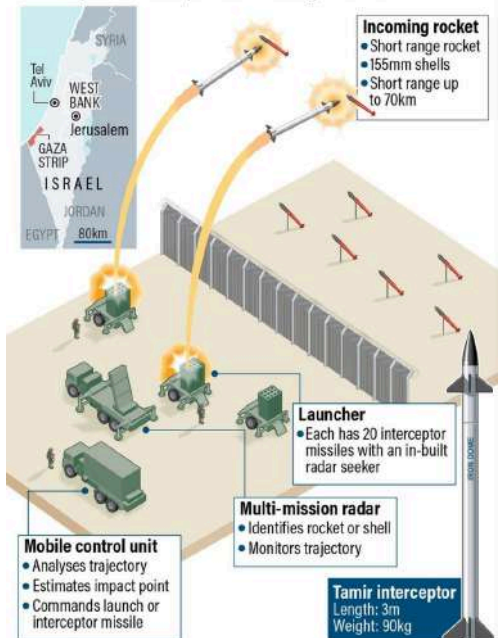
Components:

The Iron Dome has three main systems that work together to provide a shield over the area where it is deployed which are:

- **Radar:** It has a detection and tracking radar to spot any incoming threats.
- **Weapon Control:** It has a battle management and weapon control system (BMC),
- **Missile Fire:** It also has a missile firing unit. The BMC basically liaises between the radar and the interceptor missile.

ISRAEL'S IRON DOME DEFENCE SYSTEM

Mobile system to intercept rockets with range of 4-70km



6. International study observes smaller object in a black hole pair directly for the first time

Context: A new study carried out by the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) confirmed the theory that there are two black holes at the centre of the four billion light years distant galaxy OJ 287.

Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite:

- It is a **NASA mission** that's searching for planets orbiting the brightest stars in Earth's sky.
- It is designed to discover thousands of **exoplanets orbiting** around the brightest dwarf stars in the sky.
- It is finding planets ranging from small, rocky worlds to giant planets, showcasing the diversity of planets in our galaxy. It has so far found 410 confirmed exoplanets or “new worlds” circling stars other than the Sun.
- The satellite is a follow-up to **NASA's highly successful Kepler space telescope**, which found thousands of exoplanets during a decade of work after its launch in 2009.
- It was **launched on April 18, 2018**, aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket out of Cape Canaveral.
- It circles Earth in a unique high **Earth orbit of 12 to 15 days**, which is inclined in such a way that the telescope's sky view is largely free from obstructions by our bright planet and the Moon.
- The prime mission ended on July 4, 2020, and TESS is now on an extended mission.
- TESS is finding planets ranging from small, rocky worlds to giant planets, showcasing the diversity of planets in the galaxy.



Editorial, Ideas and Opinions

7. Wheelchair Tax: GST on Disability Aids is Unfair

Source: I.E

Context:

- For the last seven years, since its enactment, disabled individuals who rely upon prosthetic limbs, Braille and wheelchairs must compulsorily pay an additional five per cent GST on these essential mobility aids.
- The GST law was enacted in 2017 to simplify and consolidate India's tax regime but because of this law injustice being faced by millions of disabled Indians.
- Therefore, it is important to delve into the consequences of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime in India and its discriminatory impact on disabled individuals.

Impact of GST on Disabled Individuals and Broader Implications

Financial Burden on Essential Mobility Aids:

- Disabled individuals often rely on various mobility aids, such as prosthetic limbs, wheelchairs, and Braille, to navigate their daily lives.
- Under the current GST regime, these essential items are subject to a five percent tax.
- For individuals already facing numerous challenges, this additional financial burden can be overwhelming.
- For example, if a wheelchair user purchasing a motorised wheelchair for Rs 1 lakh, the five percent GST on this purchase amounts to an additional Rs 5,000.
- If the wheelchair is expected to last for 500 kilometres, the effective tax burden per kilometre of mobility is Rs 10.
- This calculation starkly shows the inequity: an able-bodied individual incurs no such tax for walking.
- Similarly, blind individuals who use Braille publications must absorb the additional cost of the GST imposed on these items, solely due to their disability.

Discriminatory Nature of the Tax :

- It effectively penalises individuals for their disability by imposing a financial burden on the very tools they need to achieve a semblance of normalcy and independence.
- Able-bodied individuals do not face similar taxes for engaging in everyday activities such as walking or reading.
- Thus, the GST regime creates a clear disparity between disabled and non-disabled individuals, exacerbating the challenges faced by the former.
- This discrimination is particularly egregious considering the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution.



Psychological and Social Implications :

- Beyond the financial strain, the GST on disability aids has profound psychological and social implications.
- By imposing an additional cost on essential mobility and learning tools, the tax sends a message of marginalisation and inferiority to disabled individuals.
- It undermines their sense of dignity and self-worth, perpetuating negative stereotypes and social stigma associated with disability.
- This discriminatory tax policy contradicts the spirit of empowerment and inclusion and hampers the efforts of disabled individuals to integrate fully into society, pursue education, and participate in economic activities.
- The message conveyed by such a tax is one of exclusion rather than inclusion, reinforcing barriers rather than breaking them down.

An Analysis of the GST Based on the Constitutional Principles

Fundamental Right to Equality (Article 14) :

- Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
- The GST on disability aids creates an unreasonable classification, placing disabled individuals at a disadvantage solely because of their condition.
- This tax fails the test of reasonableness and equality as it imposes an undue burden on a vulnerable section of society.

Fundamental Right to Non-Discrimination (Article 15) :

- Article 15 prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including place of birth, which can be interpreted to include conditions of disability.
- The tax on disability aids directly contravenes this provision by discriminating against individuals based on their physical abilities.
- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, further reinforces this principle by prohibiting discrimination against disabled individuals.

Indirect Discrimination and Judicial Interpretation :

- Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, in a landmark judgment in 2021 (Lt. Col. Nitisha v. Union of India), emphasised the need to recognize indirect discrimination.
- This principle is highly relevant to the GST on disability aids and even if the tax is not discriminatory on its face, its impact disproportionately burdens disabled individuals, constituting indirect discrimination.



The Judiciary's Stance on Similar Issues and their Implications for the Current GST Regime on Disability Aids

Sakal Papers Case (1961):

- In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court of India struck down government-imposed restrictions on newspaper advertising.
- The government had introduced a regulation that limited the number of advertisements a newspaper could carry, ostensibly to promote smaller newspapers.
- However, the SC ruled that this regulation violated the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.
- The Court noted that by restricting advertising revenue, the regulation indirectly impacted the circulation of newspapers and thereby curtailed the dissemination of information, a core component of the freedom of speech and expression.
- This judgment established the principle that any government action indirectly impacting fundamental rights must be scrutinized and can be struck down if found unreasonable.

Indian Express Case (1984) :

- In *Indian Express Newspapers v. Union of India* (1984), the SC addressed the issue of customs duty imposed on newsprint.
- The government argued that the duty was a revenue measure, but the Court saw it differently.
- It recognised that imposing such a duty would increase the cost of newsprint, thereby increasing the cost of newspapers.
- This, in turn, would affect the public's access to information and infringe upon the right to freedom of speech and expression.
- The Court struck down the duty, emphasising that any tax or financial burden that indirectly affects the circulation of newspapers and the dissemination of information is unconstitutional.
- The ruling reinforced the idea that policies with indirect consequences on fundamental rights require stringent scrutiny and justification.

Aashirwad Films Case (2007):

- It involved a discriminatory tax levied on non-Telugu movies screened in Andhra Pradesh.
- The SC found this tax to be unconstitutional, terming it "socially divisive" and a violation of the right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution.
- The Court held that the tax was discriminatory as it imposed an unfair burden on non-Telugu films and, by extension, on the audience who wished to view them.
- The judgment highlighted that any form of taxation or regulation that creates an unreasonable distinction between different classes of people or entities must be invalidated.

Way Forward: Reform for Dignity and Empowerment

- Even though the GST revenue from disability aids is minimal compared to the total, the issue is one of dignity.



- Taxing disabled individuals for basic activities like movement and reading sends a message of inferiority rather than empowerment.
- In a 2021 landmark judgment on Article 15 (Lt. Col. Nitisha), the SC emphasised the need for recognising indirect discrimination, further supporting the argument against this discriminatory tax.

Conclusion

- The current GST regime in India, which imposes a five percent tax on essential disability aids, is a manifest injustice that penalises disabled individuals for their condition.
- This policy not only violates constitutional principles of equality and non-discrimination but also perpetuates negative stereotypes and undermines the dignity of disabled individuals.
- It is imperative that this tax regime be reformed to ensure that disabled individuals are not unfairly burdened and are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.



In Brief

8. Council of Scientific and Industrial Research

Source: PIB

Context: Council of Scientific and Industrial Research -National Physical Laboratory organized one day workshop on Quality Assurance of Water and Dissemination of Bharatiya Nirdeshak Dravyas BNDs under One week One Theme- Chemicals and Petrochemicals.

Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR):

- **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.

What is the 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.

9. Four-year-old child dies of suspected H1N1 in Kochi

Source: The Hindu, Page 6

Context: A four-year-old child is suspected to have died of H1N1 (swine flu) at a private hospital in the city.



H1N1 Virus:

- Swine flu is a **highly contagious respiratory disease** in pigs caused by one of several swine influenza A viruses.
- **Transmission of swine influenza viruses to humans is uncommon.**
- However, the swine influenza virus can be transmitted to humans via contact with infected pigs or environments contaminated with swine influenza viruses.
- **Symptoms are cough, fever, soar throat , stuffy or runny nose, headache, body ache etc.**
- The sub-types are based on: The host of the origin, Geographical origin, Strain in number, Year of isolation etc.

Spreading of Seasonal Influenza (H1N1):

- Seasonal influenza viruses circulate and cause disease in humans every year.
- In tropical climates, disease tends to occur seasonally as well as regular virus spreading from person-to-person through sneezing, coughing, or touching contaminated surfaces.
- **Seasonal influenza viruses evolve continuously**, which means that people can get infected multiple times throughout their lives.

Diagnosis and treatment:

- The **Centres for Disease Control and Prevention** recommend **real-time polymerase chain reaction** as the method of choice for diagnosing H1N1.
- **Antiviral drugs** are the mainstay of clinical treatment of swine influenza and can make the illness milder and enable the patient to feel better faster.
- **Prevention of swine influenza has 3 components:** prevention in swine, prevention of transmission to humans, and prevention of its spread among humans.

10. Bhusanket Web Portal

Source: PIB

Context: Recently, the Union Minister of Coal and Mines inaugurated the National Landslide Forecasting Centre at Geological Survey of India (GSI) Kolkata and also launched the Bhusanket Web Portal and Bhooskhalan Mobile App.

Bhusanket Web Portal:

- This web portal will facilitate the dissemination of relevant data and information on landslide hazards, initiating short-range and medium-range landslide forecasting in the country.



- Integrated with the Bhusanket Web Portal, the user-friendly Bhooskhalan Mobile App will enable quick dissemination of daily landslide forecasts and allow stakeholders to share and update spatial and temporal information on landslide occurrences.
- The app is available on Bhusanket web portal and will soon be available on Google Play Store.

Key facts about Geological Survey of India

- It was set up in 1851 primarily to find coal deposits for the Railways.
- It is an attached office to the Ministry of Mines.
- Its main functions relate to creating and updating of national geoscientific information and mineral resource assessment.
- These objectives are achieved through ground surveys, air-borne and marine surveys, mineral prospecting and investigations, multi-disciplinary geoscientific, geo-technical, geo-environmental and natural hazards studies, glaciology, seismo-tectonic study and carrying out fundamental research.
- GSI also emphasizes on systematic documentation of all geological processes both surface and subsurface, of the country and its offshore areas.
- It functions as a 'Repository' for the purpose and uses the latest computer-based technologies for dissemination of geoscientific information and spatial data, through cooperation and collaboration with other stakeholders in the Geo-informatics sector.
- **Headquarter:** Kolkata and it has six regional offices located in Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Shillong.



Daily Quiz

Q1. Which of the following statements about the Charaideo Maidams and the Ahom Kingdom is incorrect?

- A) The Charaideo Maidams enshrine the mortal remains of the members of the Ahom royalty.
- B) The Ahom kingdom was established by Chaolung Sukapha in the 13th century.
- C) Ahom rulers completely abandoned their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism.
- D) Lachit Borphukan was known for his leadership in the Battle of Saraighat in 1671.

Q2. Under which article of the Indian Constitution are the provisions regarding the composition, appointment, and removal of members of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) found?

- A) Article 312
- B) Article 315 to Article 323
- C) Article 324 to Article 329
- D) Article 330 to Article 342

Q.3 Assertion (A): The Governor of a state in India enjoys immunity from criminal proceedings during their term in office under Article 361 of the Indian Constitution.

Reason (R): Article 361 ensures that the Governor is not answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of their official powers and

duties, nor for any acts done in the course of these duties.

- 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.

Q.5 Assertion (A): The Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) between India and Japan will help both countries meet their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) without the risk of double counting.

Reason (R): The JCM will be established under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement, ensuring a framework for the transparent and accurate allocation of emission reduction credits.

- 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.

Q.6 Consider the following statements about the Bhusanket Web Portal:

1. The Bhusanket Web Portal facilitates the dissemination of relevant data and information on landslide hazards.
2. It initiates short-range and medium-range landslide forecasting in the country.
3. The Bhooskhalan Mobile App, integrated with the Bhusanket Web Portal, is currently available on Google Play Store.



Which of the above statements are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3

Q.7 Which of the following statements about Israel's Iron Dome Air Defence System is correct?

- A) The Iron Dome system is primarily designed for long-range ballistic missile interception.
- B) The Iron Dome system cannot operate in adverse weather conditions, limiting its effectiveness.
- C) The Iron Dome system was developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries and has been operational since 2011.
- D) The Iron Dome system lacks a radar component, relying solely on visual tracking for incoming threats.

Which of the following best describes the transmission of the swine influenza virus to humans?

1. It occurs through direct contact with infected pigs.
2. It can be transmitted through contaminated environments.
3. It can spread easily through person-to-person contact.

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3



Solutions

Answer: C) Ahom rulers completely abandoned their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism.

Explanation:

The Charaideo Maidams enshrine the mortal remains of Ahom royalty and are representative of the mound burial tradition of the Tai Ahom community. The Ahom kingdom was indeed established by Chaolung Sukapha in the 13th century, and Lachit Borphukan is well-known for his leadership in the Battle of Saraighat in 1671. However, the statement that Ahom rulers completely abandoned their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism is incorrect. Although the Ahoms accepted Hinduism and the Assamese language, the Ahom kings did not completely give up their traditional beliefs after adopting Hinduism.

Answer: B) Article 315 to Article 323

Explanation:

The provisions regarding the composition, appointment, and removal of members of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) are provided in Part XIV of the Indian Constitution under Article 315 to Article 323. Article 312 pertains to the creation of All India Services, while Articles 324 to 329 cover the Election Commission and Articles 330 to 342 address provisions related to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes.

Answer: A) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

Explanation:

Article 361 of the Indian Constitution provides immunity to the Governor from criminal proceedings during their term in office, as stated in the assertion (A). The reason (R) correctly explains that this immunity ensures the Governor is not answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of their official powers and duties, nor for any acts done in the course of these duties. This rationale is the basis for the immunity granted, making R the correct explanation for A.

Answer: A) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.

Explanation:

The Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) between India and Japan aims to allow both countries to share emission reduction credits, contributing to their NDCs. Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement provides a robust framework for international cooperation through carbon markets, ensuring that emission reduction efforts are transparent, accurately recorded, and prevent double counting. Therefore, the reason (R) correctly explains the assertion (A), making option A the correct answer.

Answer: A

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct. The Bhusanket Web Portal facilitates the dissemination of relevant data and information on landslide hazards.



- Statement 2 is correct. It initiates short-range and medium-range landslide forecasting in the country.
- Statement 3 is incorrect. The Bhooskhalan Mobile App is available on the Bhusanket Web Portal and will soon be available on Google Play Store, but it is not currently available there.

Answer: C) The Iron Dome system was developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries and has been operational since 2011.

Explanation:

Statement A is incorrect because the Iron Dome is primarily designed for short-range, not long-range, interception.

Statement B is incorrect because the Iron Dome can operate in all weather conditions.

Statement C is correct. The Iron Dome was developed by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries and was deployed in 2011.

Statement D is incorrect because the Iron Dome includes a detection and tracking radar component as part of its three main systems.

Answer: B

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct. The swine influenza virus can be transmitted to humans via contact with infected pigs.
- Statement 2 is correct. It can also be transmitted through environments contaminated with swine influenza viruses.
- Statement 3 is incorrect. While seasonal influenza spreads easily from person to person, swine influenza primarily transmits through contact with infected pigs or contaminated environments.





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GET IN TOUCH

+919999057869

www.upsmentorship.com

@mentorship.india

C - 103, Second Floor, Sector-2
Noida - 201301

contact@mentorshipindia.com