



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 17-08-2021

1. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently unveiled the National Automobile Scrappage Policy.

About the Vehicle Scrappage Policy:

Old vehicles will have to pass a fitness test before re-registration and as per the policy government commercial vehicles more than 15 years old and private vehicles which are over 20 years old will be scrapped. As a disincentive, increased re-registration fees would be applicable for vehicles 15 years or older from the initial date registration. The state governments may be advised to offer a road-tax rebate of up to 25% for personal vehicles and up to 15% for commercial vehicles to provide incentive to owners of old vehicles to scrap old and unfit vehicles.

Significance:

The vehicle scrapping policy is aimed at creating an eco-system for phasing out unfit and polluting vehicles in an environmentally friendly and safe manner. The initiative will promote a circular economy and make the process of economic development more sustainable and environment friendly.

The policy will also bring in investments of around Rs 10,000 crore and create 35,000 job opportunities.

2. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), the Union government's health insurance scheme, approximately 20.32 lakh COVID-19 tests and 7.08 lakh treatments were authorised from April 2020 to July 2021. The total value of the tests and treatment stood at Rs. 2,794 crore.

Key Features of PM-JAY:

The world's largest health insurance/ assurance scheme fully financed by the government. It provides cover of 5 lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization across public and private empaneled hospitals in India.

Coverage: Over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable entitled families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries) are eligible for these benefits.

Provides cashless access to health care services for the beneficiary at the point of service. The National Health Authority (NHA) is the nodal agency responsible for the nationwide roll-out and implementation of the AB-PMJAY scheme.

This scheme is a Centrally sponsored scheme with some Central sector components.

Eligibility:

No restrictions on family size, age or gender. All pre-existing conditions are covered from day one. Covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization expenses such as diagnostics and medicines. Benefits of the scheme are portable across the country. Services include approximately 1,393 procedures covering all the costs related to treatment, including but not limited to drugs, supplies, diagnostic services, physician's fees, room charges, surgeon charges, OT and ICU charges etc. Public hospitals are reimbursed for the healthcare services at par with the private hospitals.

3. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment has launched an online portal named TAPAS (Training for Augmenting Productivity and Services) to provide filmed lectures/courses and e-study material in the field of social defence.

4. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has launched 'SonChiraiya', a brand and logo for marketing of the urban Self-Help Group (SHG) products.

5. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Dr Jitendra Singh today released 'IndiGau' chip. It is India's first Cattle Genomic Chip for the conservation of pure varieties of indigenous cattle breeds like, Gir, Kankrej, Sahiwal, Ongole etc.

6. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar flagged off a pioneering world record expedition named 'Operation Blue Freedom' from Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi on the occasion of 75th Independence Day on August 15, 2021. The Operation Blue Freedom expedition comprise of a team of people with disabilities from across the country to reach Siachen Glacier, to create a new World Record, for the largest team of people with disabilities reaching the world's highest battlefield.

7. Ans) (d)

8. Ans) (c)

Explanation

Union government has decided to allow the import of crushed genetically modified (GM) soybean, which is a major ingredient of poultry feed. A GM or transgenic crop is a plant that has a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology.

Need for the decision

The poultry industry has been crushed by multiple disasters over the last year and a half. In January 2020, a false rumour that COVID-19 could be spread by eating chicken meat led to a crash in demand. A year later, avian flu cases led to another crash, followed by a crippling rise in the prices of poultry feed. Rise in soybean prices in domestic Indian market had led to the skyrocketing of input costs which led to increase in prices of chicken products in the retail market. Therefore, the demand for import of GM Soya seeds.

About Soy meal and its GM variant Soy meal is left over after oil is extracted from the bean. It is the main protein ingredient in the feed, especially for broilers (any chicken that is bred and raised specifically for meat production). It constitutes 25% of poultry feed and maize constitutes 60%. Roundup Ready Soybeans (RR soybeans) are genetically engineered soybeans that have had their DNA altered to allow them to withstand the herbicide glyphosate (the active ingredient in Monsanto's herbicide Roundup). They are also known as "glyphosate tolerant" soybeans.

What is the Status of GM Soyseeds in India?

India allows the import of GM soybean and canola oil. Import of GM soya bean seeds has not been approved in India. The only GM crop approved for cultivation in India is BT cotton. Talks are on to allow Htbt Cotton. Bt Cotton has alien genes from the soil bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) that allows the crop to develop a protein toxic to the common pest pink bollworm. In India, the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), under Environment Ministry, is the apex body that allows for commercial release of GM crops. Use of the unapproved GM variant can attract a jail term of 5 years and fine of Rs. 1 lakh under the Environment Protection Act, 1986. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is the authorised body to regulate the imported crops in India.

9. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Wadhvana Wetland from Gujarat is internationally important for its birdlife as it provides wintering ground to migratory waterbirds, including over 80 species that migrate on the Central Asian Flyway.

They include some threatened or near-threatened species such as the endangered Pallas's fish-eagle, the vulnerable Common Pochard, and the near-threatened Dalmatian Pelican, Grey-headed Fish-eagle and Ferruginous Duck. This site has recently received recognition as Ramsar site.

10. `Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Recently, the Government of India introduced The Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in the Lok Sabha which seeks to withdraw tax demands made using a 2012 retrospective legislation to tax the indirect transfer of Indian assets. The government has stressed the need to establish its sovereign right to taxation.

What is Sovereignty? Sovereignty, in political theory, means the ultimate overseer, or authority, in the decision-making process of the state and in the maintenance of order. The term was originally understood to mean the equivalent of supreme power. Constitutional Sovereignty implies that the constitution is sovereign and supreme. Sovereign Right to Taxation in India In India, the Constitution gives the government the right to levy taxes on individuals and organisations, but makes it clear that no one has the right to levy or charge taxes except by the authority of law. Any tax being charged has to be backed by a law passed by the legislature or Parliament (Article 265).

Taxation in India

Tax is a pecuniary burden laid upon individuals or property owners to support the government, a payment exacted by legislative Authority. A tax is not a voluntary payment or donation, but an enforced contribution. Taxes in India come under a three-tier system based on the Central, State and local governments. The Seventh Schedule of the Constitution puts separate heads of taxation under the Union and State list. There is no separate head under the Concurrent list, meaning Union and the States have no concurrent power of taxation