



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 24-03-2021

EXPLANATION

1. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Indian Coast Guard (ICG) Ship 'Vajra' was commissioned on March 24, 2021 at Chennai by General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Defence Staff. India Coast Guard DG K Natarajan and IG S Paramesh COMCG (East) were also present on the occasion. The vessel, indigenously designed and built by Larsen and Toubro Shipbuilding Ltd in Chennai, is the sixth in series of seven Offshore Patrol Vessels. It will help enhance coastal security through its high-tech features and highly sophisticated navigation and communication systems.

2. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The military force of India stands at number four place in the world, according to a study titled “ultimate military strength index” released by defence website Military Direct.

3. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

The USA shall cut off exports of helium from 2021. Due to this, the Indian industry stands to lose out heavily since India imports helium. Helium is colorless, odourless, tasteless, inert, and a noble gas. Applications: Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans, in rockets and nuclear reactors. Dutch physicist Kamerlingh Onnes liquefied Helium by cooling the gas to -270 degrees Celsius. India's Rajmahal volcanic basin in Jharkhand is the storehouse of helium trapped for billions of years. At present, India is mapping the Rajmahal basin extensively for future exploration and harnessing of helium.

4. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

The Election Commission has decided to use Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) along with Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) at all the Polling Stations in the upcoming assembly elections in four states and Union territory. What is VVPAT? Voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) is a method of providing feedback to voters using EVMs. A VVPAT is intended as an independent verification system for voting machines designed to allow voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly, and to provide a

means to audit the stored electronic results. It contains the name of the candidate for whom vote has been cast and symbol of the party/individual candidate.

Significance and the need for VVPATs: The VVPAT helps to detect potential election fraud or malfunction in the Electronic Voting Machine. It provides a means to audit the stored electronic results. It serves as an additional barrier to change or destroy votes. The EVMs with VVPAT system ensure the accuracy of the voting system with fullest transparency and restores the confidence of the voters. EVMs and VVPATs also speed up the election process as counting votes on EVMs takes much lesser time than counting paper ballots.

5. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Saudi Arabia presented a new peace initiative to end the war in Yemen. The initiative includes: A nationwide ceasefire under UN supervision and the reopening of air and sea links. Reopening of Sana'a airport, and allowing fuel and food imports through Hodeidah port, both of which are controlled by Riyadh's enemies, the Iran-aligned Houthi movement. Restarting of political negotiations between the Saudi-backed government and the Houthis. The war in Yemen: Background:

The conflict has its roots in the Arab Spring of 2011, when an uprising forced the country's long-time authoritarian president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, to hand over power to his deputy, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi. The political transition was supposed to bring stability to Yemen, one of the Middle East's poorest nations, but President Hadi struggled to deal with various problems including militant attacks, corruption, food insecurity, and continuing loyalty of many military officers to Saleh. Fighting began in 2014 when the Houthi Shia Muslim rebel movement took advantage of the new president's weakness and seized control of northern Saada province and neighbouring areas. The Houthis is a group of Zaidi Shia Muslims who ruled a kingdom there for nearly 1,000 years. Why is Saudi Arabia in Yemen? Saudi Arabia interfered in Yemen after the Shia Houthi rebels captured Sana'a, the capital city, and the internationally recognised government of President Hadi moved to the country's south. How bad is Yemen's humanitarian situation? Since the Saudi intervention in 2015, at least 10,000 people have been killed in Yemen, according to the WHO. The widespread damage caused to infrastructure by the coalition airstrikes and lack of supplies of food and medicines due to the blockade have pushed Yemen into a humanitarian catastrophe. About 12 million people are at the risk of starvation if aid doesn't reach them fast. The country has also seen a massive cholera outbreak. A child dies every 10 minutes in Yemen from preventable causes, says UNICEF.

6. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced the creation of a Standing External Advisory Committee

under the chairmanship of Shyamala Gopinath for evaluating applications for Universal Banks and Small Finance Banks. What is Universal banking? It is a system of banking where banks undertake a blanket of financial services like investment banking, commercial banking, development banking, insurance and other financial services including functions of merchant banking, mutual funds, factoring, housing finance, insurance etc. RBI's universal bank licensing guidelines: Individuals/professionals who are 'residents' and have minimum 10 years of experience in banking and finance at a senior level. The initial minimum paid-up voting equity capital for a bank shall be ₹ five billion. Thereafter, the bank shall have a minimum net worth of ₹ five billion at all times. The requirement of Non-Operative Financial Holding Company (NOFHC) is not mandatory for individual promoters or standalone promoting/converting entities who/which do not have other group entities. Not less than 51% of the total paid-up equity capital of the NOFHC shall be owned by the Promoter/Promoter Group. No shareholder, other than the promoters/promoter group, shall have significant influence and control in the NOFHC. The bank shall get its shares listed on the stock exchanges within six years of the commencement of business by the bank. The bank is precluded from having any exposure to its promoters, major shareholders who have shareholding of 10 per cent or more of paid-up equity shares in the bank, the relatives of the promoters as also the entities in which they have significant influence or control. The bank has to open at least 25 per cent of its branches in unbanked rural centres. The bank shall comply with the priority sector lending targets and sub-targets as applicable to the existing domestic scheduled commercial banks. The board of the bank should have a majority of independent directors. The validity of the in-principle approval issued by the Reserve Bank will be 18 months from the date of granting in-principle approval and would thereafter lapse automatically.

7. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Under the new excise policy, the Delhi government has taken a decision to reduce the minimum age for liquor consumption in the city to 21 from 25. Also, there would be no government liquor stores in Delhi, and no new liquor shops will not be opened in the national capital.

8. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

The father of the nation of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the former Sultan of Oman, the late Qaboos bin Said Al Said, will be awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2020 and 2019, respectively. They were selected by the jury, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and comprising the Chief Justice of India, the leader of the single largest Opposition party in the Lok Sabha, Lok Sabha Speaker and founder of Sulabh International. About the Gandhi Peace Prize: Instituted in the year 1995 on the occasion of the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. This annual award is given to individuals and institutions for

their contributions towards social, economic and political transformation through non-violence and other Gandhian methods. The award carries a cash prize of Rs 1 crore, a citation and a Plaque as well as an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item. It is open to all persons regardless of nationality, creed, race or sex.

9. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) entered into a partnership with the Government of Denmark to support the India's flagship programme, Jal Jeevan Mission in Uttar Pradesh.

Key takeaways

Aim: To provide strategic technical support to Jal Jeevan Mission (Water program). UNOPS shall be focussing on instituting scalable delivery models in focused 11 water-scarce districts of Uttar Pradesh in Bundelkhand and Vindhya regions. Aim of Jal Jeevan Mission: To provide functional household tap connection to every rural household by 2024. This coincides with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal-6. United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) UNOPS is an operational arm of the United Nations It is dedicated to implementing projects for the United Nations System, international financial institutions, governments, and other partners around the world. Headquarters: UN City campus in Copenhagen, Denmark Established in: 1973 as part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It became an independent, self-financing organization in 1995.

10. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Minister for Jal Shakti informed Rajya Sabha about the 'Buldhana Pattern' for water conservation. NITI Aayog has prepared draft guidelines for convergence of the activities of (i) sourcing earth for improvement/construction of national highways, state roads, and railways and (ii) water conservation works through desiltation/ deepening of water bodies. This two-fold activity has already been successfully implemented as a pilot project in the Buldhana district of Maharashtra state.