



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 25-03-2021

1. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has informed the Lok Sabha that “presently, there is no proposal to implement panchayat system in Sixth Schedule areas of Assam”. Efforts in this regard- Constitution (125th Amendment) Bill, 2019: Introduced in the Rajya Sabha on February 6, 2019, the Bill provides for elected village municipal councils. The Bill that is still active proposes that the State Election Commissions would hold elections to the autonomous councils, village and municipal councils.

About the Sixth Schedule:

It protects tribal populations and provides autonomy to the communities through creation of autonomous development councils that can frame laws on land, public health, agriculture and others. As of now, 10 autonomous councils exist in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. This special provision is provided under Article 244(2) and Article 275(1) of the Constitution.

Key provisions:

The governor is empowered to organise and re-organise the autonomous districts. If there are different tribes in an autonomous district, the governor can divide the district into several autonomous regions.

Composition: Each autonomous district has a district council consisting of 30 members, of whom four are nominated by the governor and the remaining 26 are elected on the basis of adult franchise. Term: The elected members hold office for a term of five years (unless the council is dissolved earlier) and nominated members hold office during the pleasure of the governor. Each autonomous region also has a separate regional council. Powers of councils: The district and regional councils administer the areas under their jurisdiction. They can make laws on certain specified matters like land, forests, canal water, shifting cultivation, village administration, inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs and so on. But all such laws require the assent of the governor. Village councils: The district and regional councils within their territorial jurisdictions can constitute village councils or courts for trial of suits and cases between the tribes. They hear appeals from them. The jurisdiction of high court over these suits and cases is specified by the governor.

2. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The state government of the Andhra Pradesh has decided to set up “India’s first government-run ambulance network” for animals. This decision was taken in order to further boost the animal husbandry and veterinary sector in the state.

3. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

The member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), including India, Pakistan and China, will hold a joint anti-terrorism exercise named “Pabbi-Anti-Terror 2021” in later 2021. The exercise will be hosted by Pakistan at its premier anti-terrorism centre in Pabbi in Nowshera district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

4. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The Norwegian Coastal Administration has received the green signal to start working on the construction of world’s first tunnel, being built exclusively for ships. The tunnel is dubbed as “Stad Ship Tunnel” and would be built under the mountainous Stadlandet peninsula in northwestern Norway.

5. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

The government has been granted time till April 9 by Lok Sabha and July 9 by Rajya Sabha to frame rules under the citizenship law. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA) was notified on December 12, 2019 and came into force from January 10, 2020. (Note: Rules are mandatory for the implementation of any new or amended law and normally framed within six months of its enactment.)

Background:

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 seeks to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955. The Citizenship Act, 1955 provides various ways in which citizenship may be acquired. It provides for citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalisation and by incorporation of the territory into India. About CAA: The objective of the CAA is to grant Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities — Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, Parsi and Christian — from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Those from these communities who had come to India till December 31, 2014, facing religious persecution in their respective countries, will not be treated as illegal immigrants but given Indian citizenship. The Act provides that the central government may cancel the registration of OCIs on certain grounds. Exceptions: The Act does not apply to tribal areas of Tripura, Mizoram, Assam and Meghalaya because of being included in the 6th Schedule of the Constitution. Also areas that fall under the Inner Line notified under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873, will also be outside the Act’s purview. Issues surrounding the law: It violates the basic tenets of the Constitution. Illegal immigrants are distinguished on the basis of religion. It is perceived to be a demographic threat to indigenous communities. It makes illegal migrants eligible for citizenship on the basis of religion. This may violate Article 14 of the Constitution which guarantees the right to equality. It attempts to naturalise the citizenship of illegal immigrants in the

region. It allows cancellation of OCI registration for violation of any law. This is a wide ground that may cover a range of violations, including minor offences.

6. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

The Centre will release ₹30,000 crore as GST compensation to States this month, from the compensation cess collections during the year. The pending compensation dues to States for 2020-21 are expected to be more than ₹77,000 crore. Why should the Centre pay states for GST loss? The GST Compensation Act, 2017 guaranteed States that they would be compensated for any loss of revenue in the first five years of GST implementation, until 2022, using a cess levied on sin and luxury goods. However, the economic slowdown has pushed both GST and cess collections down over the last year, resulting in a 40% gap last year between the compensation paid and cess collected. States are likely to face a GST revenue gap of ₹3 lakh crore this year, as the economy may contract due to COVID-19, which Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman termed an unforeseen “act of God”. What is compensation cess? The modalities of the compensation cess were specified by the GST (Compensation to States) Act, 2017. This Act assumed that the GST revenue of each State would grow at 14% every year, from the amount collected in 2015-16, through all taxes subsumed by the GST. A State that had collected tax less than this amount in any year would be compensated for the shortfall. The amount would be paid every two months based on provisional accounts, and adjusted every year after the State’s accounts were audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General. This scheme is valid for five years, i.e., till June 2022. Compensation cess fund: A compensation cess fund was created from which States would be paid for any shortfall. An additional cess would be imposed on certain items and this cess would be used to pay compensation. The items are pan masala, cigarettes and tobacco products, aerated water, caffeinated beverages, coal and certain passenger motor vehicles. The GST Act states that the cess collected and “such other amounts as may be recommended by the [GST] Council” would be credited to the fund.

7. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The Delhi High Court has asked the Centre to finalise and notify the National Health Policy for Rare Diseases by March 31. What is a rare disease? A rare disease, also referred to as an orphan disease, is any disease that affects a small percentage of the population. Most rare diseases are genetic, and are present throughout a person’s entire life, even if symptoms do not immediately appear. Efforts by India towards this: The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has published a national policy for the treatment of 450 ‘rare diseases’. The policy intends to kickstart a registry of rare diseases, which will be maintained by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). Under the policy, there are three categories of rare diseases — requiring one-time curative treatment, diseases that require long-term treatment but where the

cost is low, and those needing long-term treatments with high cost. Some of the diseases in the first category include osteopetrosis and immune deficiency disorders, among others. Financial assistance: As per the policy, the assistance of Rs 15 lakh will be provided to patients suffering from rare diseases that require a one-time curative treatment under the Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi scheme. The treatment will be limited to the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. Justification for state's intervention: State has responsibility for providing affordable, accessible and reliable health-care services to every citizen. Constitution also mentions importance of health-care services under articles like 21, 38 and 47 and thus state cannot evade this responsibility under the pretext of non-justifiability of articles. Even if pharmaceutical companies are incentivized to develop drugs to treat rare diseases, pharmaceutical companies remain beholden to the laws of economics and, given the low demand for orphan drugs, price these drugs as high as they choose to. Hence there has to be regulation of the government in restricting the exorbitant prices of the drugs.

8. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

After a gap of more than two and half years Indian and Pakistani delegations have begun the 116th Meeting of the Permanent Indus Commission. The meeting is being viewed as part of the broader process of normalisation of bilateral ties between the two neighbours.

About the Indus Water Treaty:

It is a Water-Distribution Treaty, signed in Karachi on 1960, between India (Pm Jawaharlal Nehru) and Pakistan (President Ayub Khan), brokered by the World Bank. Under the treaty, India has control over water flowing in the eastern rivers– Beas, Ravi and Sutlej. Pakistan has control over the western rivers– Indus, Chenab and Jhelum. As per the treaty, the water commissioners of Pakistan and India are required to meet twice a year and arrange technical visits to projects' sites and critical river head works. Both the sides share details of the water flow and the quantum of water being used under the treaty.

9. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

India has abstained from a crucial vote on Sri Lanka's rights record at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva. The resolution on 'Promoting reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka' was, however, adopted after 22 states of the 47-member Council voted in its favour. About UNHRC: UNHRC was reconstituted from its predecessor organisation, the UN Commission on Human Rights to help overcome the "credibility deficit" of the previous organisation. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. Composition: The UNHRC has 47 members serving at any time with elections held to fill up seats every year, based on allocations to regions across the world to ensure geographical representation. Each elected member serves for a term of three years. Countries are disallowed from

occupying a seat for more than two consecutive terms.

Functions:

The UNHRC passes non-binding resolutions on human rights issues through a periodic review of all 193 UN member states called the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). It oversees expert investigation of violations in specific countries (Special Procedures).

10. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

On 23 March 1931, freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Shivaram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar were hanged to death by the British government for their revolutionary activities. This day is observed as Shaheedi Diwas or Martyrs' Day in India. The day is also known as 'Sarvodaya Day'.