



# EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 09-12-2020

### EXPLANATION

1. Ans: (d)

Explanation: Recently China sold negative-yield debt for the first time, and this saw a high demand from investors across Europe. As yields in Europe are even lower, there was a huge demand for the 4-billion-euro bonds issued by China. China's 5-year bond was priced with a yield of  $-0.152\%$ , and the 10-year and 15-year securities with positive yields of  $0.318\%$  and  $0.664\%$ . What are negative-yield bonds? These are debt instruments that offer to pay the investor a maturity amount lower than the purchase price of the bond. These are generally issued by central banks or governments, and investors pay interest to the borrower to keep their money with them. Why do investors buy them? Negative-yield bonds attract investments during times of stress and uncertainty as investors look to protect their capital from significant erosion. At a time when the world is battling the Covid-19 pandemic and interest rates in developed markets across Europe are much lower, investors are looking for relatively better-yielding debt instruments to safeguard their interests.

2. Ans: (a)

Explanation: The Tharu community belongs to the Terai lowlands, amid the Shivaliks or lower Himalayas. The Tharus live in both India and Nepal. In the Indian terai, they live mostly in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. The word tharu is believed to be derived from sthavir, meaning followers of Theravada Buddhism. The Uttar Pradesh government has recently embarked upon a scheme to take the unique culture of its ethnic Tharu tribe across the world. The intention is to put Tharu villages on the tourism map, and to create jobs and bring economic independence to the tribal population.

3. Ans: (b)

Explanation: Nearly four years after a mysterious neurological illness, referred to as "Havana syndrome", started to afflict American diplomats and intelligence operatives in Cuba, China, and other countries, a report by the National Academies of Sciences (NAS) has found "directed" microwave radiation to be its "plausible" cause. In late 2016, US diplomats and other employees stationed in Havana reported feeling ill after hearing strange sounds and experiencing odd physical sensations in their hotel rooms or homes. The symptoms included nausea, severe headaches, fatigue, dizziness, sleep problems, and hearing loss, which have since come to be known as "Havana Syndrome".

4. Ans: (c)

Explanation: A 1907 ballad of defiance has made a quiet comeback over a century later to inspire protesting Punjab farmers. 'Pagri Sambhal Jatta', a song by Banke Dayal, was introduced at a peasants rally in Lyallpur that year. It soon became an anthem that defined the farmers' agitation against three British laws – the Doab Bari Act, Punjab Land Colonisation Act and the Punjab Land Alienation Act.

The tales of that unrest led by Bhagat Singh's uncle, Ajit Singh, continue to inspire the current protesters.

5. Ans: (b)

Explanation: Black carbon (BC) is a component of fine particulate matter. Black carbon consists of pure carbon in several linked forms. It is formed through the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biofuel, and biomass, and is emitted in both anthropogenic and naturally occurring soot. Black carbon causes human morbidity and premature mortality. In climatology, black carbon is a climate forcing agent. Black carbon warms the Earth by absorbing sunlight and heating the atmosphere and by reducing albedo when deposited on snow and ice. Black carbon stays in the atmosphere for only several days to weeks, whereas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) has an atmospheric lifetime of more than 100 years. The term black carbon is also used in soil sciences and geology. Especially in the tropics, black carbon in soils significantly contributes to fertility as it is able to absorb important plant nutrients.

6. Ans: (a)

Explanation: Indian-origin global health expert Anil Soni has been appointed as the first Chief Executive Officer of the newly launched The WHO Foundation. The Geneva-headquartered Foundation is an independent grant-making agency launched this May to complement the World Health Organization's efforts (WHO) in addressing urgent global health challenges. As a separate legal entity, the Foundation acts as a platform for new types of public-private engagement, while protecting the WHO's neutrality and independence as the world's leading international health authority. Mr Soni will assume his role as The WHO Foundation's inaugural Chief Executive Officer on January 1 next year. Soni's appointment adds to the list of Indian-origin health experts being recently named to top-jobs, including Vivek Murthy as the United States Surgeon General. The WHO itself has Soumya Swaminathan as its Chief Scientist; she had joined the WHO as Deputy Director General in 2017. Hence, option (a) is the correct answer.

7. Ans: (a)

Explanation: U.S. and Chinese companies dominated the global arms market in 2019, while West Asia made its first appearance among the 25 biggest weapons manufacturers, a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said. The U.S. arms industry accounted for 61% of sales by the world's "Top 25" manufacturers last year, ahead of China's 15.7%, according to the report. Total sales by the "Top 25" rose by 8.5% to \$361 billion, or 50 times the annual budget of the UN's peacekeeping

operations. Six U.S companies and three Chinese firms were in the top 10, rounded out by Britain's BAE Systems in seventh spot. U.S. companies Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and General Dynamics clinched the top five spots, while China's AVIC, CETC and Norinco held spots six, eight and nine. U.S. group L3Harris Technologies was in 10th place. For the first time, a company from the West Asia made it into the "Top 25": EDGE, of the United Arab Emirates, was formed by the consolidation of some 25 defense entities in 2019. India, however, continues to flounder in the domestic defense production arena. It remains stuck in the position of being the world's second-largest arms importer, just behind Saudi Arabia. No major proposed 'Make in India' project to manufacture fighter jets, diesel-electric submarines, light-utility helicopters, minesweepers or infantry combat vehicles has actually taken off in the last six years.

8. Ans: (d)

Explanation :India remains in the top 10 for the second year in a row in the latest global Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) released in Germany. The biggest current emitter of greenhouse gases (GHG) China figures at 33rd rank while the largest historical polluter, the USA, appears at the bottom of the list. Though India slid one position down from ninth in 2019 to 10th this year, the country's journey towards climate protection has been consistent with it improving its ranking from 31st in 2014. Globally none of the countries assessed for the annual CCPI report are, however, on the path to meet their Paris Agreement commitment of keeping global warming increase below 2 degree celsius by the end of the century and restrict it to 1.5 degree celsius rise. The CCPI 2021, covering the year 2020, shows that only two G20 countries - the UK and India - are among the high rankers while six others - the USA, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Australia, South Korea and Russia (52nd) - are at the bottom of the index. The CCPI is developed by not-for-profit organisations Germanwatch and NewClimate Institute (Germany) together with the Climate Action Network (CAN International). It is an important tool to enhance transparency in international climate politics and enables comparison of climate protection efforts and progress made by individual countries.

9. Ans: (a)

Gwalior and Orchha of Madhya Pradesh have been included in the list of World Heritage City by UNESCO. Orchha: Orchha located in the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh was the 16th century capital of the erstwhile Bundela dynasty. Orchha Raj Mahal, Jahangir Mahal, RamarajaMandir, Rai Praveen Mahal, LaxminarayanMandir and many other famous temples and palaces are famous for a unique confluence of Rajput and Mughal architectural influences. Gwalior: At the same time, Gwalior city has been the capital of GurjarPratihara, Tomar, BaghelKachhwaha and ScindiaRajvanshi. The ancient signs left by them will be found in the form of monuments, forts, palaces.

10. Ans: (b)

Explanation :Bala Devi created history by becoming the first Indian woman to score in a professional European football league, when she scored against Motherwell for Rangers FC. NgangomBala Devi is an Indian women's footballer who plays as a forward for Scottish Women's Premier League club Rangers and India women's national football team. She was born in Manipur in 1990. The forward joined the Scottish club in January 2020, and became the first Indian woman to sign a professional football contract overseas.