



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 14-10-2020

EXPLANATION

1. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has recently launched WhatsApp based helpline-cum-grievance redressal mechanism, under its series of Nirbadh initiatives aimed at ensuring seamless and uninterrupted service delivery to subscribers during COVID-19 pandemic. This new grievance redressal mechanism using Whatsapp has gained immense popularity amongst EPFO's stakeholders. So far, EPFO has redressed more than 1,64,040 grievances and queries through WhatsApp. This has led to decline in registration of grievances/queries on social media like Facebook /Twitter by 30% and on EPFiGMS (EPFO's online grievance resolution portal) by 16% since the launch of WhatsApp helpline numbers.

This facility has been given in addition to the various other means of grievance redressal forums of EPFO which include web-based EPFiGMS portal, CPGRAMS, social media pages (Facebook & Twitter) and a dedicated 24x7 call centre.

2. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Germany criticized Turkey for unilateral steps in the eastern Mediterranean that are undercutting efforts to de-escalate tensions with Greece and Cyprus over sea boundaries and drilling rights. Kastellorizo or Castellorizo, officially Megisti, is a Greek island and municipality of the Dodecanese in the Eastern Mediterranean. Germany said that any attempt by a Turkish survey ship to begin prospecting for hydrocarbons in disputed waters around the Greek island of Kastellorizo would strike a serious blow to efforts at easing tensions and improving ties between the European Union and Turkey. Turkey's redeployment of the Oruc Reis survey vessel for new energy exploration around Kastellorizo has reignited tensions over sea boundaries between Greek islands, Cyprus and Turkey's southern coast.

3. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Two American economists Paul R Milgrom and Robert B Wilson jointly won this year's Nobel Prize in Economics. Both economists are based at Stanford University in California. Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson were chosen for the Nobel Prize in Economics for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats. The new auction formats are a beautiful example of how basic research can subsequently generate inventions that benefit society. The unusual feature of this example is that the same

people developed the theory and the practical applications. Technically known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, the award was established in 1969 and is now widely considered one of the Nobel prizes.

4. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari thanked the Ministry of Food Processing and Ministry of Railways for directly providing subsidised rate of 50 per cent in freight for transportation of perishable surplus agriculture produce like Oranges and Vegetables by Railway. Operation Green is being implemented as part of Atmanirbhar Abhiyan under the aegis of Union Ministry of Food Processing. Under this scheme, 50 per cent subsidy is given to the farmers for transporting the surplus produce of agricultural commodities like oranges and vegetables to the markets by rail. 50 per cent subsidy is also given for cold chain storage of agricultural commodities. However, in order to get this subsidy, farmers have to attach self-certified documents online on 'Sampada' portal of the Ministry of Food Processing.

5. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Swedish-British drug giant AstraZeneca recently said it was moving an antibody combination developed for Covid-19 treatment into late-stage human trials. AZD7442, a similar class of the drug cocktail used to treat US President Donald Trump recently, is a combination of two long-acting monoclonal antibodies (LAAB). AstraZeneca developed it using its proprietary technology with the aim of preventing Covid-19 infection for a long duration. LAABs mimic natural antibodies, and a combination of LAABs could be "complementary" to vaccines as a prophylactic agent, according to AstraZeneca. This means it could either be used on people for whom a vaccine may not be appropriate or it could be given as added protection for those at high-risk

6. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Due to an event referred to as "opposition", which takes place every two years and two months, Mars will outshine Jupiter, becoming the third brightest object (moon and Venus are first and second, respectively) in the night sky during the month of October. This year, while Mars' closest approach to Earth was on October 6, the opposition happened on October 13, which will give the planet its "biggest, apparent size of the 2020s", according to NASA. Opposition is the event when the sun, Earth and an outer planet (Mars in this case) are lined up, with the Earth in the middle. The time of opposition is the point when the outer planet is typically also at its closest distance to the Earth for a given year, and because it is close, the planet appears brighter in the sky. An opposition can occur anywhere along Mars' orbit, but when it

happens when the planet is also closest to the sun, it is also particularly close to the Earth. Earth and Mars orbit the sun at different distances (Mars is farther apart from the sun than Earth and therefore takes longer to complete one lap around the sun). In fact, opposition can happen only for planets that are farther away from the sun than the Earth. In case of Mars, roughly every two years, the Earth passes between sun and Mars, this is when the three are arranged in a straight line.

7. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

During Bihar Assembly Election 2020, Voters can expect to see a myriad of symbols like chapatti roller, dolli, bangles, capsicum on the ballots as they go out to vote on October 28, November 3 and November 7. Symbols have become a crucial part of the electoral process ever since India held its first national polls in 1951-52. Since nearly 85 per cent of the electorate were illiterate at that point, visual symbols were allotted to parties and candidates to help them identify the party of their choice. As per the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) (Amendment) Order, 2017, party symbols are either “reserved” or “free”. Eight national parties and 64 state parties across the country have “reserved” symbols. The Election Commission also has a pool of nearly 200 “free” symbols that are allotted to the thousands of unrecognised regional parties that pop up before elections. Procedure: As per the guidelines, to get a symbol allotted, a party/candidate has to provide a list of three symbols from the EC’s free symbols list at the time of filing nomination papers. Among them, one symbol is allotted to the party/candidate on a first-come-first-serve basis. When a recognised political party splits, the Election Commission takes the decision on assigning the symbol. For example, when the Samajwadi Party split, the EC allotted the ‘bicycle’ to the Akhilesh Yadav faction.

8. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

Global output is projected to shrink 4.4% in 2020, the IMF said in its World Economic Outlook October 2020 report titled, “A Long and Difficult Ascent”. For the world as a whole, the 2020 growth projection has been revised upwards by 0.8 percentage points relative to June. After 2021, global growth is expected to ease off at 3.5% in the medium term. India’s economy is expected to contract 10.3% in the current fiscal year as the country and the world reel from the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The projection for India is a downgrade of 5.8 percentage points from its June forecast. India is expected to rebound in the fiscal year beginning in April 2021 with 8.8% growth — an upgrade of 2.8 percentage points relative to the June update. Consumer prices in India are expected to grow at 4.9% this year and by 3.7% in the next fiscal. The current account balance is projected to grow by 0.3% this year and -0.9% next year.

9. Ans) (a)

Explanation

The Kerala State government is carrying out a unique programme called “Namath Basai” of teaching tribal children in their mother tongue. The programme is being implemented by the Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK). SSK is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12. It aims at improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes. Kerala has become the first state in the country to have high-tech classrooms or high-tech labs in all government-run and aided schools. The Kerala government has also started digital classrooms known as ‘First bell’ to impart education to 41 lakh students in the state after schools shut due to the lockdown.

10. Ans) (a)

Explanation

In a new report “The Human Cost of Disasters 2000-2019”, the United Nations pointed out that climate change is largely to blame for a near doubling of natural disasters in the past 20 years. The report is published by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). The report did not touch on biological hazards and disease-related disasters like the coronavirus pandemic. Report was released on 13th October 2020, the day observed as International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.