



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 29-05-2021

EXPLANATION

1. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

According to recent research, high concentrations of mercury were found in the water bodies fed by the Greenland Ice Sheet.

Mercury level found:

Typical dissolved mercury content in rivers is about 1 – 10 ng L⁻¹ (the equivalent of a salt grain-sized amount of mercury in an Olympic swimming pool of water).

In the water bodies fed by the Greenland Ice Sheet, scientists found dissolved mercury levels in excess of 150 ng L⁻¹, far higher than an average river.

Significance of the latest discovery:

We now understand that even glaciers carry potential toxins. This will force researchers to study how these toxins influence water quality and downstream communities, which may alter in a warming world.

Also, it shall help us understand its influence on the Earth's geochemical and biological processes.

Basics- about Mercury(Hg, Atomic No 80):

Sources: Mercury is a naturally occurring element that is found in air, water and soil. Released into the atmosphere through natural processes such as weathering of rocks, volcanic eruptions, geothermal activities, forest fires, etc. Mercury is also released through human activities.

Mercury may have toxic effects on the nervous, digestive and immune systems, and on lungs, kidneys, skin and eyes.

Chemical of major public health concern- Mercury is considered by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as one of the top ten chemicals or groups of chemicals of major public health concern.

Minamata Disease: A disorder caused by methylmercury poisoning that was first described in the inhabitants of Minamata Bay, Japan and resulted from their eating fish contaminated with mercury industrial waste.

About the Minamata Convention:

The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a global treaty to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury and its compounds. It was agreed at the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in Geneva, Switzerland 2013. It entered into force in 2017. Controlling the anthropogenic releases of mercury throughout its lifecycle is one of the key obligations under the Convention. It is a UN treaty. The Convention also addresses interim storage of mercury and its disposal once it becomes waste, sites contaminated by mercury as well as health issues.

India has ratified the Convention.

2. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The Buddha was found among debris removed from an abandoned well at Alembi in Udupi district in Karnataka.

Description:

It is nine centimetres high, five centimetres wide and two centimetres thick.

The Buddha is seated on a lotus pedestal in Dharma Chakra Pravarthana Mudra.

Below the seat, six disciples are seated on either side of the Dharma Chakra.

The Lord wears clothes and ear-rings.

A small Ushnisha is shown on the top of the head.

In the back of the head, a beautifully carved round lobe is seen.

On the top corners, two Yakshas and, on either side of his back, two winged horses have been carved out.

The sculpture is in the Gupta style.

Significance of the discovery:

Traditionally, the ancient Tulu Nadu was said to be ruled by the Kadambas of Banavasi. The Guptas and the Kadambas of Banavasi had matrimonial relations. Hence, the discovery of the Buddha sculpture is not an uncommon thing.

3. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

'Services e-Health Assistance & Tele-consultation (SeHAT) OPD portal was launched recently. Ministry: Ministry of Defence. The portal provides tele-medicine services to the serving Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families. This is the final version of the SeHAT OPD portal with advanced safety features. The trial version was made functional in August 2020. Developed by: Department of Military Affairs (DMA), Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) and Centre for Development of Artificial Computing (C-DAC) Mohali The portal will help reduce the load on hospitals and patients will be able to get contactless consultations in an easy and effective manner.

4. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Jackfruit was in news recently. A shipment of fresh jackfruit was exported from Tripura to London.

It is a major step towards harnessing exports potential of agricultural and processed food products from north-eastern region. Jackfruit is a species of tree in the fig, mulberry, and breadfruit family (Moraceae).

It is a multiple fruit, composed of hundreds to thousands of individual flowers, and the fleshy petals.

Scientific Name: *Artocarpus heterophyllus*. Major producers in world: India, Thailand, Indonesia and Nepal. Major Production States of India: Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Assam. Kerala is the largest producer of jackfruit in the world. It is the state fruit of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Recently, the first consignment of 'red rice' was sent to the USA from Assam. Iron rich 'red rice' is grown in Brahmaputra valley of Assam, without the use of any chemical fertilizer. The rice variety is referred to as 'Bao-dhaan', which is an integral part of Assamese food.

5. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

Aurovillian Christoph Pohl's documentary EverSlowGreen has been officially selected for screening at the prestigious ChangeNow summit in Paris.

It tells the story of Auroville's unique afforestation project that took root on an eroded desert plateau at Villupuram district in Tamil Nadu.

Auroville is an experimental township in Viluppuram district.

It was founded in 1968 by Mirra Alfassa (known as "the Mother") a French spiritual guru and a collaborator of Sri Aurobindo, who considered her to be of equal yogic stature to him and called her by the name "The Mother".

6. Ans:(a)

Explanation:

The Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) will be renamed the Indian Broadcasting and Digital Foundation (IBDF). IBF is the apex body of broadcasters. It is now expanding its purview to cover digital streaming platforms. The move would bring broadcasters and OTT (over-the-top) platforms under one roof. OTT have seen a substantial jump in their viewership base after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The IBDF would also form a self-regulatory body, the Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC), for digital OTT platforms.

Do you know?

The Indian Broadcasting Foundation (IBF) was founded in 1999. It is the parent organisation of the Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) which was set up in 2011. The BCCC examines content-related complaints relating to all non-news general entertainment channels in India. An over-the-top (OTT) media service is a media service offered directly to viewers via the Internet. OTT bypasses cable, broadcast, and satellite television platforms. Such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hotstar etc.

7. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Indian Armed forces may soon receive the advanced Israeli drones, Heron TP and deploy them at LAC. India is expected to acquire four Heron long-endurance drones from Israel on lease in the next few months to primarily crank up its surveillance capabilities along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China.

8. Ans:C

Explanation:

On Buddha Jayanti (May 26), India's largest statue of the Reclining Buddha was to have been installed at the Buddha International Welfare Mission temple in Bodh Gaya. The ceremony has been put off due to Covid-19 restrictions.

But, what does the statue of Reclining Buddha represent?

A reclining Buddha statue or image represents the Buddha during his last illness, about to enter Parinirvana.

Parinirvana is the stage of great salvation after death that can only be attained by enlightened souls. The Buddha's death came when he was 80 years old, in a state of meditation, in Kushinagar in eastern Uttar Pradesh, close to the state's border with Bihar.

Iconographic representation:

The Reclining Buddha was first depicted in Gandhara art, which began in the period between 50 BC and 75 AD, and peaked during the Kushana period from the first to the fifth centuries AD.

Statues and images of the Reclining Buddha show him lying on his right side, his head resting on a cushion or on his right elbow.

It is meant to show that all beings have the potential to be awakened and be released from the cycle of death and rebirth.

Please note that the Buddha was against idol worship.

Statues of Reclining Buddha outside India:

Reclining postures are more prevalent in Thailand and other parts of South East Asia.

The largest Reclining Buddha in the world is the 600-foot Winsein Tawya Buddha built in 1992 in Mawlamyine,

The Bhamala Buddha Parinirvana in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which dates back to the 2nd century AD, is considered the oldest statue of its kind in the world.

Reclining Buddha in India:

Cave No. 26 of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ajanta contains a 24-foot-long and nine-foot-tall

sculpture of the Reclining Buddha, believed to have been carved in the 5th century AD.

Kushinagar, where the Buddha actually attained parinirvana, has a 6-metre-long red sandstone monolith statue of the Reclining Buddha inside the Parinirvana Stupa.

Other depictions of the Buddha in India:

At the Mahabodhi temple, the Buddha is sitting in the bhoomi-sparsha mudra, where his hand is pointing towards the ground. It symbolises earth as being witness to his enlightenment.

At Sarnath, where the Buddha gave his first sermon, the stone statue has a hand gesture called the dharma-chakra mudra, which signifies preaching. This is also the most popular depiction in India, along with the Bodhi tree depiction.

The Walking Buddha is either beginning his journey toward enlightenment or returning after giving a sermon. This is the least common of the Buddha postures, and is seen mostly in Thailand.

9. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Climate scientists say the Bay of Bengal, where Cyclone 'Yaas' has formed, is at least two degrees warmer than what is normal for this time of the year.

Background:

Generally, cyclones in the Bay of Bengal are ferocious and cause significant devastation. This year, the north Bay of Bengal is exceptionally warm with temperatures up to 32 degrees Celsius. Why Bay of Bengal has more cyclonic storms?

The vast low pressure created by the warm water of the ocean. The Bay of Bengal shaped like a trough that makes it more hospitable for storms to gain force. The high sea surface temperature makes matters more worse in the Bay triggering the intensity of the storms. The Bay of Bengal also gets more rainfall with sluggish winds and warm air currents around it that keep temperatures relatively high all year.

The constant inflow of fresh warm water from the perineal rivers like Bramhaputra, Ganga makes it further impossible to mix with the cooler water below. Lack of landmass between the Pacific Ocean and the Bay of Bengal tend cyclonic winds to move into the coastal areas causing heavy rainfall. The absence of air movements from north-western India towards the Bay in the post-monsoon phase is also another reason for the chances of cyclones in the Bay of Bengal. What geographical advantage the Arabian sea has? It is much calm as the stronger winds help dissipate the heat. Lack of constant fresh water helps the warm water to mix with the cool water underneath, reducing the surface temperature. The Arabian Sea enjoys the locational advantage as the winds from the Pacific Ocean encounter the Western Ghats and the Himalayas cutting down on its intensity and sometimes never reaching the Arabian Sea.

10. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The Centre has appointed Maharashtra cadre IPS officer of 1985 batch, Subodh Kumar Jaiswal, currently Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force, as CBI Director for two years.

The government has picked him from a panel of three officers who were shortlisted by the Prime Minister-led Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) consisting of CJI as well as leader of the largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha.

What is the 'statement of law' made by the CJI?

In the PM led panel, Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana opined to avoid officers with less than six months left to retire for appointment as CBI Director. This is being termed as a simple "statement of law". Because, as per the CJI, the panel's selection of officers should be able to withstand the "scrutiny of law in the future".

Supreme Court's views and judgements in this regard:

Prakash Singh case: The six-month minimum residual tenure rule was introduced by the Supreme Court in a March 13, 2019 order in the Prakash Singh case pertaining to the appointment of DGPs. It was extended to the CBI Director too. Union of India versus C. Dinakar, 2004: "Ordinarily IPS officers of the senior most four batches in service on the date of retirement of CBI Director, irrespective of their empanelment, shall be eligible for consideration for appointment to the post of CBI Director". The Vineet Narain judgment of 1998: The Director is to hold the post for not less than two years. He/she may not be transferred except with the previous consent of the high-level committee.