



# EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 16-12-2023

### KEYS

1. Answer: D

The UK has been witnessing a steady increase in the number of norovirus cases in recent weeks.  
About Norovirus:

- It is a very contagious virus that causes nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- It is also sometimes referred to as the 'stomach flu' or the 'winter vomiting bug'.
- However, norovirus illness is not related to the flu, which is caused by the influenza virus.
- People of all ages can get infected and sick with norovirus.
- People can get the norovirus illness many times in their lives because there are many different types of noroviruses. Infection with one type of norovirus may not give protection against other types.
- Transmission: People can catch Norovirus from close contact with someone with Norovirus touching surfaces or objects that have the virus on them, then touching the mouth eating food that's been prepared or handled by someone with Norovirus

Is norovirus seasonal?

- Norovirus outbreaks usually happen seasonally in the colder months.
- It occurs most often between November and April in countries above the equator and between April and September in countries below the equator.
- There's usually no specific season for outbreaks in areas on the equator.

Symptoms:

- The initial symptoms of norovirus are vomiting and/or diarrhea, which show up one or two days after exposure to the virus.
- Patients also feel nauseous and suffer from abdominal pain, fever, headaches, and body aches.
- In extreme cases, the loss of fluids could lead to dehydration.

Treatment:

- No vaccines are currently available to prevent norovirus.
- Treatment for the infection focuses on relieving the symptoms.
- It is important to maintain hydration in the acute phase. In extreme cases, patients have to be administered rehydration fluids intravenously.

2. Answer: C

In Japan, a fossil of the extinct and apex predator Mosasaur, a massive marine reptile from the Late Cretaceous period, was recently discovered.

#### About Mosasaur:

- Mosasaurs (family Mosasauridae) were a group of large predatory marine reptiles that inhabited all of the world's oceans during the Late Cretaceous epoch, between 90 and 66 million years ago.
- They are related to snakes and monitor lizards and were some of the largest marine organisms of the time and some of the largest predatory reptiles, period.
- These creatures were contemporaries of Tyrannosaurus rex and other Cretaceous dinosaurs that ruled the Earth.
- They lived near the surface of the water since it breathed air, much as whales do.
- They died out, along with dinosaurs and many other animals, during the mass extinction at the end of the Cretaceous Period, 66 million years ago.

#### Features:

- Although Mosasaur species varied in length, some grew to be more than 50 feet long.
- They had a snakelike body with a large skull, a long snout, and sharp teeth.
- The structure of the skull was very similar to that of the modern monitor lizards, to which mosasaurs are related.
- They had flipper-like paddles for arms and legs and a tail fin.
- They propelled themselves by mainly moving the large fin on their tail in a side-to-side motion.
- They were also covered in smooth scales, which were very dark in color.
- They were carnivores.

#### 3. Answer: B

##### International Energy Agency (IEA):

- IEA is an international intergovernmental organization based in Paris that was established in 1974.
- Its stated mandate is to maintain the stability of the international oil supply.
- IEA's mandate has expanded over time to include tracking and analyzing global key energy trends, promoting sound energy policy, and fostering multinational energy technology cooperation.
- It was created in response to the 1973-1974 oil crisis, when an oil embargo by major producers pushed prices to historic levels and exposed the vulnerability of industrialized countries to dependency on oil imports.
- The IEA operates within the broader framework of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD).
- Members: It consists of 31 member countries and eleven association countries.
- Criteria for membership: A candidate country for the IEA must be a member country of the OECD. In addition, it must demonstrate several requirements. These are:

- Crude oil and/or product reserves are equivalent to 90 days of the previous year's net imports, to which the government has immediate access (even if it does not own them directly) and could be used to address disruptions to global oil supply.
- A demand restraint programme to reduce national oil consumption by up to 10%.
- Legislation and organisation to operate the Coordinated Emergency Response Measures (CERM) on a national basis.
- Legislation and measures to ensure that all oil companies under its jurisdiction report information upon request.
- Measures are in place to ensure the capability of contributing its share of an IEA collective action.
- India joined this organization in 2017 as an Associate member.
- Report published by IEA: World Energy Outlook.

4. Answer: C

Channapatna toys have now become part of children's academic activities in Afghanistan.

About Channapatna Toys:

- Channapatna toys are a particular form of wooden toys and dolls that are manufactured in the town of Channapatna in the Ramanagara district of Karnataka.
- Channapatna is also known as Gombegala Ooru (toy-town).

History:

- The history of Channapatna toys can be traced back to Tipu Sultan's reign as the former ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore in the 18th century.
- According to legend, Tipu Sultan was so impressed with the craftsmanship of Persian artisans that he invited them to train local craftsmen in toy-making.
- This marked the beginning of the Channapatna toy industry, which has ever since flourished.

Features:

- Most of these toys are handmade using traditional techniques passed down from generation to generation, ensuring that each piece is unique.
- Traditionally, they are mostly made of Ivory Wood sourced from nearby forests. However, nowadays, sandalwood and mango wood are also used.
- They are also painted in organic colours extracted from vegetables and plants and natural dyes, making the Channapatna Toys 100% chemical-free.
- Their shapes are mostly round and cubes with blunt edges, so they are completely safe for kids.
- They received the geographical indication (GI) tag in 2005.

5. Answer: D

The Insurance and Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI), recently released a crucial

consultation paper on increasing the surrender value for life insurance policies.

Surrender Value in Insurance:

- The surrender value of an insurance policy is the amount that the insurance company will pay the policyholder back when he or she decides to terminate the policy before maturity.
- It applies only to those term insurance policies with a surrender benefit.
- The surrender value is usually a percentage of the total premiums paid minus any applicable charges or fees.
- How is the surrender value calculated? The surrender value calculation in term insurance policies varies from one insurance company to another. Generally, the surrender value is calculated based on the following factors:
  - Policy term: The longer the policy term, the higher the surrender value.
  - Premium paid: The higher the premium paid, the higher the surrender value.
  - Policyholder's age: The younger the policyholder at the time of surrendering the policy, the higher the surrender value.

IRDIA rules for surrender value:

- The IRDAI rules say that anyone with a term plan can give up their insurance policy.
- However, only after the policy has been in effect for three years will the policyholder get the payout of the surrender value.
- The IRDA decides what the policy's surrender value is for the first seven years.
- From the third year on, the surrender value is up to 30% of the paid premium. It excludes the premium paid for the first year.
- Between the fourth and seventh years, the surrender value could fall to up to 50% of the paid premium.
- After seven years, the insurance company decides how much the premium should be.
- The general rule is that the closer you are to your date of maturity when you surrender, the more money and benefits you get.

6. Answer: B

- NASA is gearing up to enhance our understanding of Earth's atmosphere with the upcoming Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem (PACE) mission, scheduled for launch in early 2024.
- The mission will employ advanced polarimeters to study the interplay of light, aerosols, and clouds, contributing to a deeper comprehension of their impact on air quality and climate.
- The PACE mission will not only analyze aerosols but also delve into studying the color of the ocean.
- The primary science instrument for PACE is the Ocean Color Instrument (OCI) which is designed to measure the ocean's color across a spectrum from ultraviolet to short wave infrared.
- It will feature two polarimeters – the Spectro-polarimeter for Planetary Exploration (SPEXone) and the Hyper Angular Research Polarimeter (HARP2).

- These two working together will offer complementary spectral and angular sampling, polarimetric accuracy, and spatial coverage.
- This combination aims to provide improved atmospheric correction and a comprehensive range of aerosol and cloud science data beyond what the OCI alone could achieve.
- The synergistic payload of OCI, SPEXone and HARP2 is poised to make significant breakthroughs in aerosol-cloud-ocean research.

What are aerosols?

- These include tiny particles like smoke, dust, and pollutants may seem inconspicuous, but they play a crucial role in influencing our climate.
- Aerosols absorb and scatter sunlight, determining the amount of solar energy reaching Earth's surface.

7. Answer: C

- Recently, Mumps cases in children are on rise in the states of Maharashtra, Hyderabad and Telangana which has become a cause of concern for parents.
- It is a contagious disease caused by a paramyxovirus.
- It can cause the parotid glands, the ones on each side of the face to swell and they may also be tender or painful
- It is an acute disease which infects children and young adults.
- Humans are the only known host for mumps virus, which is spread via direct contact or by airborne droplets from the upper respiratory tract of infected individuals.
- Symptoms: After an incubation period of some 2 to 4 weeks mumps begins with non-specific symptoms such as myalgia, headache, malaise and low-grade fever.
- Within days, these symptoms are followed by unilateral or bilateral swelling of the parotid salivary glands, with other salivary glands affected in 10% of cases.
- Normally mumps is a mild, self-limiting disease and disappears without sequelae.
- However, complications may occur such as encephalitis or sensorineural deafness.
- Orchitis (a painful inflammation of the testes) occurs in 20% of young adult males who develop mumps.
- Treatment: There is no specific treatment for mumps. The various symptoms may be relieved with medicines.
- Prevention: The best way to protect kids is to make sure they're immunized against mumps.

8. Answer: C

- Recently, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Zonal Unit, Lucknow, seized 436 baby Indian Tent turtles from a person illegally transporting them interstate.
- The Indian tent turtle (*Pangshura tentoria*) is a species of turtle in the family Geoemydidae.

- It is an active swimmer and mainly herbivorous species.
- Habitat: Its habitats include still water pools on river side and slow running water near the river banks.
- Distribution: The species is native to India, Nepal and Bangladesh, with three subspecies recorded from the region viz., P. t. tentoria, P. t. circumdata and P. t. flaviventer.
- The size of the carapace ranges from 20 cm to 26.5 cm depending upon the subspecies.
- The colour of the turtles also varies according to each subspecies.
- Conservation status : Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule 1 , IUCN Status: Least Concern.
- CITES: Appendix II.
- Major Threats: Due to the attractive appearance of the species, they are illegally traded in the pet market.

9. Answer: D

- Recently, INS Tarnugli, a Fast Attack Craft has been commissioned into the Navy at a ceremony held at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam.
- It is the first Follow-on Water Jet Fast Attack Craft (WJFAC), is an improved version of WJFAC, earlier constructed by GRSE.
- It is built by M/s Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE).
- It is conceived, designed and built indigenously.
- It would be deployed for coastal patrol and surveillance operations along the East Coast of India.
- It is named after a picturesque island in the Andaman group.
- Capacity and speed: It has carrying capacity of 320-tonne measuring 48 meters in length, can achieve speeds in excess of 30 knots.

Features

- The ship is capable of operating in shallow waters at high speeds and is equipped with enhanced fire power.
- It is built for extended coastal and offshore surveillance and patrol the warship.
- It is fitted with advanced MTU engines, water jet propulsion and the latest communication equipment.

10. Answer: B

- Recently, the Unnati Foundation became the first entity to list on the social stock exchanges (SSE).
- It functions as a separate segment within the existing stock exchange and help social enterprises raise funds from the public through its mechanism.
- It would serve as a medium for enterprises to seek finance for their social initiatives, acquire visibility and provide increased transparency about fund mobilisation and utilisation.

- Retail investors can only invest in securities offered by for-profit social enterprises (SEs) under the main Board.
- In all other cases, only institutional investors and non-institutional investors can invest in securities issued by SEs.

Who is eligible?

- Any social enterprise, Non-Profit Organisation (NPOs) or For-Profit Social Enterprises (FPEs), that establishes its primacy of social intent can get registered or listed on the Social Stock Exchange segment.
- As per the SEBI's regulation, the enterprises must be serving to:
  - Eradicate either hunger,
  - Poverty, malnutrition and inequality;
  - Promoting education, employability, equality, empowerment of women and LGBTQIA+ communities;
  - Working towards environmental sustainability;
  - Protection of national heritage and art or bridging the digital divide, among other things.
- Different mechanism available for fund raising
  - For Non-Profit Organisation
    - It can raise money either through issuance of Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) Instruments from private placement or public issue, or donations from mutual funds.
    - The SEBI board recently approved halving the minimum issue size of ZCZPs by NPOs on SSEs to Rs 50 lakh from Rs 1 crore.
    - The minimum application size will be reduced to 10,000 from 2 lakh rupees to enable wider participation.
  - For-Profit Social Enterprises (FPEs)
    - It can raise money through issue of equity shares (on main board, SME platform or innovators growth platform of the stock exchange).
    - Issuing equity shares to an Alternative Investment Fund including Social Impact Fund or issue of debt instruments.
  - For-Profit Enterprises (FPEs) need not register with social stock exchanges before it raises funds through SSE.