

2019



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CURRENT AFFAIRS

WEEKLY PRACTICE QUESTIONS

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1. With reference to National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), consider the following statements:
1. It operates under the direction of Ministry of Rural Development.
 2. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is the implementation agency for the NPOP.
 3. Sikkim is India's first fully organic state.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- (a) 1 and 2 only
 - (b) 2 and 3 only
 - (c) 3 only
 - (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- The National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) is being implemented by the **Ministry of Industries and Commerce** since 2001. **Hence, Statement 1 is not correct.**
- APEDA is the implementation agency for the NPOP. **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**
- During 2016, Sikkim had achieved a remarkable distinction of converting its entire cultivable land (more than 76,000 hectare) under organic certification. **Hence, Statement 3 is correct.**

2. Regarding Atal Pension Yojana (APY), which of the following statements is **not correct**?

- (a) It is administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- (b) It is open to all citizens in the unorganised sector, who join the National Pension System (NPS) and who are not members of any statutory social security scheme.
- (c) Under the APY, guaranteed minimum pension of Rs. 1,000, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 and 5,000 per month will be given at the age of 60 years depending on the contributions by the subscribers.
- (d) The age of the subscriber should be between 24-60 years.

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- The Atal Pension Yojana (APY) is a flagship pension scheme of the government to cover the workers mainly in the unorganised sector.
- The age of the subscriber should be between 18 - 40 years. **Hence, Option (d) is not correct.**
- All other statements are correct.

3. With reference to National Health Stack (NHS), consider the following statements:

1. NHS is a digital infrastructure built with the aim of making the health insurance system more transparent and robust.
2. It is an initiative by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a)

Explanation:

- NHS is a digital infrastructure built with the aim of making the health insurance system more transparent and robust. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- It was unveiled by the **NITI Aayog** to provide a common digital language for the operationalisation and interoperability of various health schemes including Ayushman Bharat and several schemes running in the states. **Hence, Statement 2 is not correct.**

4. Regarding Shaala Darpan Portal, which of the following statements is correct?

- (e) It is a system aimed at providing strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions.
- (f) It is an end to end e-Governance school automation and management system.
- (g) It provides a single window access to scholarships to encourage students to take up research careers in the areas of basic sciences, engineering and medicine.
- (h) The portal is for showcasing and disseminating all educational e-resources including textbooks, audio, video, periodicals and a variety of other print and non-print materials.

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- **Shaala Darpan portal** is an initiative by Minister of State for Human Resource Development for Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) in New Delhi.
- It is an end to end e-Governance school automation and management system.

- It links Industry and Academia by way of Alumni portal.
- It improvises information sharing and knowledge dissemination for employees and students across schools and offices of NVS. **Hence, Option (b) is correct.**

5. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the recently launched **ICEDASH initiative**?

1. It is an Ease of Doing Business monitoring dashboard of the Indian Customs.
2. It will provide an effective tool that helps businesses compare clearance times across ports and plan their logistics accordingly.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

- ICEDASH initiative was unveiled by Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs. It is **developed** by **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs** in collaboration with National Information Centre.
- It is an Ease of Doing Business monitoring dashboard of the Indian Customs. **Hence, Statement 1 is correct.**
- It will help the public to see the daily Customs clearance times of import cargo at various ports and airports.
- It will provide an effective tool that helps businesses compare clearance times across ports and plan their logistics accordingly. **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**

6. With reference to 'Wastelands Atlas 2019', consider the following statements:

1. It is a mapping exercise, carried out by NASA to implement Agenda-21.
2. It studies the wasteland of Europe and Asia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- It is a mapping exercise, carried out by National Remote Sensing Centre using the Indian Remote Sensing Satellite data. **Hence, Statement 1 is not correct.**
- Wastelands Atlas provides **district and state wise distribution** of different categories of wastelands area in India. **Hence, Statement 2 is not correct.**
- During the period 2008-09 to 2015-16, 1.45 Mha of wastelands have converted into non wastelands categories.
- The wastelands have undergone positive change in the states of Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh.

7. Which of the following is/are favourable conditions for the formation of Tropical Cyclone?

1. Large sea surface with temperature higher than 27 degrees.
2. Absence of the Coriolis force.
3. Large difference in the vertical wind speed.
4. Upper divergence above the sea level system.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- Tropical cyclones are violent storms that originate over oceans in tropical areas and move over to the coastal areas bringing about large scale destruction caused by violent winds, very heavy rainfall and storm surges.
- Tropical cyclones usually develop in summer season in the vicinity of Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) over warm ocean surface.
- Generally, tropical cyclones are formed due to low pressure of thermal origin.
- The favourable conditions for the formation and intensification of tropical cyclone storms are:
 - Large sea surface with temperature higher than 27 degrees.
 - **Presence** of the Coriolis force.
 - **Small difference** in the vertical wind speed.
 - A pre-existing weak-low-pressure area or low-level-cyclonic circulation.
 - Upper divergence above the sea level system.

Hence, Option (b) is correct.

8. Which of the following is/are members of Bengal Initiatives for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation(BIMSTEC)?

1. Bangladesh
2. India
3. Sri Lanka
4. Vietnam
5. Myanmar

Select the correct answer using code given below-

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 4 only
- (c) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 5 only

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- BIMSTEC is a sub-regional organisation that came into being in **1997** through the **Bangkok Declaration**.
- BIMSTEC is a 7-member organisation:
 - **Bangladesh**
 - **India**
 - **Sri Lanka**
 - **Bhutan**
 - **Nepal**
 - **Myanmar**
 - **Thailand**

Hence, Option (d) is correct.

- BIMSTEC not only connects South and South-East Asia, but also the ecology of the Great Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal.
- BIMSTEC region brings 22% of world population and a combined GDP of US \$3.71 Trillion.

9. World Investment Report is published by?

- (a) World Bank
- (b) International Monetary Fund
- (c) World Bank
- (d) UNCTAD

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

- **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** is a permanent intergovernmental body established in **1964**.
- It is a part of the UN secretariat and the UN Development Group.
- It promotes development friendly integration of developing countries into the world economy.

- It is **Headquartered** at **Geneva** in Switzerland.
- **UNCTAD publishes the following reports:**
 - Trade and Development Report
 - **World Investment Report. Hence, Option (d) is correct.**
 - The Least Developed Countries Report
 - Information and Economy Report
 - Technology and Innovation Report
 - Commodities and Development Report

10. With reference 'Base Erosion and Profit Shifting Project (BEPS)', consider the following statements:

1. It is an OECD initiative, approved by the G7, to identify ways of providing more standardised tax rules globally.
2. Using it, the companies shift their profits to lower tax jurisdictions to erode the tax base in a higher tax levy country.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

- Base Erosion and Profit Shifting means the phenomenon where the companies shift their profits to lower tax jurisdictions to erode the tax base in India. **Hence, Statement 2 is correct.**
- It is an OECD initiative, **approved by the G20**, to identify ways of providing more standardised tax rules globally. **Hence, Statement 1 is not correct.**
- It is used to describe tax planning strategies that exploit mismatches and gaps that exist between the tax rules of different jurisdictions.
- It is of major significance for developing countries due to their heavy reliance on corporate income tax, particularly from multinational enterprises (MNEs).

MAINS QUESTIONS

Q. Throw light on the significance of the thoughts of Guru Nanak Dev Ji in present times. (150 words)

Q. Analyse the factors behind India's exit from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Also discuss the implications of this decision. (250 words)



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