



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 17-12-2020

EXPLANATION

1. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The Union Cabinet has approved the Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) of North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project (NERPSIP) at an estimated cost of Rs. 6,700 crore. The scheme is being implemented through POWERGRID, a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) under Ministry of Power in association with six beneficiary North Eastern States namely, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. The scheme is targeted to be commissioned by December 2021. After commissioning, the project will be owned and maintained by the respective North Eastern State Utilities. The main objective of the project is economic development of North Eastern Region through strengthening of Intra - State Transmission and Distribution systems. The Scheme was initially approved in 2014 as a Central Sector Plan Scheme of Ministry of Power. It is being funded with the assistance of World Bank fund and by the Government of India (GoI) through the Budget support of Ministry of Power on 50:50 basis (World Bank: GoI) except for the capacity building component for Rs 89 crore, which will be entirely funded by the GoI.

2. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Review of the National Hydrology Project (World Bank supported initiative of Ministry of Jal Shakti) was carried out by Minister of Jal Shakti. National Hydrology Project (NHP) was started in the year 2016 as a Central Sector Scheme with 100% grant to Implementing agencies on pan India basis with a budget outlay of Rs 3680 Crore to be spent over a period of 8 years. The project aims at improving the extent, reliability and accessibility of water resources information and to strengthen the capacity of targeted water resource management institutions in India. Under the NHP, a nationwide repository of water resources data - NWIC has been established.

3. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) has issued consultation paper on proposed Aircraft Leasing Regulations. India is poised to become the 3rd largest aviation market in the world by 2022. In January 2019, India's Ministry of Civil Aviation published a report, 'Project Rupee Raftar', that provided roadmap to developing an aircraft financing and leasing industry in India. The report identified

International Financial Services Centre (GIFT city) for developing aircraft leasing and financing ecosystem in the country. Recent developments: In October, 2020, Government of India, on the recommendation of IFSCA, had notified 'Aircraft lease which shall include operating and financial lease of aircraft or helicopter and their engines' as a financial product under International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. Considering, Aircraft leasing is a relatively new industry in India and Aircraft Leasing related regulations are different across various financial centres, IFSCA has prepared draft regulations for Aircraft Leasing and in order to get inputs from stakeholders as well as public comments.

4. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

The Government of India and the World Bank signed a \$400 million project to support India's efforts at providing social assistance to the poor and vulnerable households, severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is the second operation in a programmatic series of two. The first operation of \$750 million was approved in May 2020. The programme will strengthen the capability of state and national governments in India to provide coordinated and adequate social protection to the poor and vulnerable from the shocks triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. This programme will help further expand and deepen the coverage of India's social protection systems by helping these vulnerable groups in urban and peri-urban areas across the country. The \$400 million credit is from the International Development Association (IDA) – the World Bank's concessionary lending arm.

5. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Extending support to J&K and Ladakh students, AICTE has decided to release the instalment of Rs. 20,000/- as maintenance allowance under Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS). An Expert Group was constituted by the Prime Minister for enhancing employment opportunity among youths of J&K and Ladakh and formulate job opportunities in public and private sectors. Subsequently, Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS) is being implemented by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi. The Scheme aims to build the capacities of the youths of J&K and Ladakh by Educating, Enabling and Empowering them to compete in the normal course. Under the Scheme, the youths of J&K and Ladakh are supported by way of scholarship in two parts namely the academic fee and maintenance allowance.

6. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

India ranked 131 among 189 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019, slipping two places from the previous year, according to the Human Development Report (HDR) 2020 released by

the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). However, if the Index were adjusted to assess the planetary pressures caused by each nation's development, India would move up eight places in the ranking, according to the report. Norway topped the index, followed by Ireland and Switzerland. Hong Kong and Iceland complete the top five. India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, Cambodia, Kenya, and Pakistan were ranked under countries with medium human development with a rank in between 120 and 156 among the 189-countries. In the BRICS grouping, Russia was 52 in the human development index, Brazil 84, and China 85. India's gross national income (GNI) per capita on the basis of purchasing power parity (PPP), too, fell from \$6,829 in 2018 to \$6,681 in 2019, it said. India's HDI value for 2019 is 0.645, which put the country in the medium human development category, positioning it at 131 out of 189 countries and territories. Between 1990 and 2019, India's HDI value increased from 0.429 to 0.645, an increase of 50.3%. Between 1990 and 2019, India's life expectancy at birth increased by 11.8 years, mean years of schooling increased by 3.5 years, and expected years of schooling increased by 4.5 years. India's GNI per capita increased by about 273.9% between 1990 and 2019.

7. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Keoladeo National Park formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary in Bharatpur, Rajasthan, is a famous avifauna sanctuary that hosts thousands of birds, especially during the winter season. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is a man-made and man-managed wetland. Due to its strategic location in the middle of Central Asian migratory flyway and presence of water, large congregations of ducks, geese, coots, pelicans and waders arrive in the winter. The park was the only known wintering site of the central population of the Siberian Crane, and also serves as a wintering area for other globally threatened species such as the Greater Spotted Eagle and Imperial Eagle.

8. Ans c)

Explanation:

The Arabian Desert scarcely seems like an ideal place to source drinking water. But an Arizona-based technology firm is doing just that, in what may be the first operation of its kind. Instead of drilling wells or purifying seawater, it will wring moisture from the air to create bottled water at a plant 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Dubai. The company, Zero Mass Water, will use renewable energy instead of the fossil fuels that power the many desalination facilities in Dubai and the rest of the United Arab Emirates. The project could offer a model for other parched nations to produce drinking water in a more sustainable way and even spur agricultural breakthroughs to improve food security. While water-from-air technology is used elsewhere, Zero Mass's operation stands out for its size and intention to bottle the water.

9. Ans) (d)

Explanation|:

Published annually since 2005, the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) tracks countries' efforts to combat climate change. As an independent monitoring tool it aims to enhance transparency in international climate politics and enables comparison of climate protection efforts and progress made by individual countries. Germanwatch, the NewClimate Institute and the Climate Action Network publish the index annually. If a country fails to meet its NDCs, there is no penalty.

10. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Pratyush and Mihir are the supercomputers established at Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecast (NCMRWF), Noida respectively. Being a High-Performance Computing (HPC) facility, Pratyush and Mihir consists of several computers that can deliver a peak power of 6.8 PetaFlops. It is the first multi-PetaFlops supercomputer ever built in India. Pratyush and Mihir are used in the fields of weather forecasting and climate monitoring in India. It helps the country to make better forecasts in terms of Monsoon, fishing, air quality, extreme events like Tsunami, cyclones, earthquakes, lightning and other natural calamities such as floods, droughts etc. India is the fourth country in the world to have a High-Performance Computing facility dedicated for weather and climate research after Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom.