



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 25-07-2020

EXPLANATION

1. Ans) (c)

Explanation :

Union Home Minister launched the Tree Plantation Campaign “Vriksharopan Abhiyan” of the Ministry of Coal in the presence of Union Minister of Coal in Delhi. Vriksharopan Abhiyan is being organized by the Ministry of Coal involving all Coal and Lignite PSUs during which large scale plantations would be carried out in mines, colonies, offices and other suitable areas of Coal and Lignite PSUs. The tree plantation campaign was conducted at more than 130 locations spread in 38 Districts of 10 coal/lignite bearing States through Video Conferencing. The coal and lignite PSUs have planned to plant 40 lakh saplings over 1,789 Hectares of land at a cost of Rs. 70 crores in the current fiscal. During the launch event, the Union Home Minister inaugurated and laid the Foundation stone of 6 Eco parks/ Tourism sites. These are being developed by PSUs under Coal Ministry keeping in mind the well-being of people of those areas.

2. Ans) (b)

Explanation :

China launched its most ambitious Mars mission yet in a bold attempt to join the United States in successfully landing a spacecraft on the red planet. Tianwen-1 (TW-1) is an interplanetary mission to Mars by the China National Space Administration (CNSA) to send a robotic spacecraft, which consists of an orbiter, a lander and a rover. Its stated objectives are to search for evidence of underground water, if it's present, as well as evidence of possible ancient life. It will also assess the planet's environment. The mission was successfully launched from the Wenchang Spacecraft Launch Site on Hainan Island on 23 July 2020 with a Long March 5 heavy-lift rocket, and is currently en route to Mars. Tianwen-1 would slip into orbit around Mars in February 2021 and look for a landing site on Utopia Planitia - a plain where NASA has detected possible evidence of underground ice. The landing would then be attempted in April or May 2021. If all goes well, the solar-powered rover is expected to operate for about three months, and the orbiter for two years.

3. Ans) (d)

Explanation :

Defence Ministry has issued the formal Government Sanction Letter for grant of Permanent Commission (PC) to Women Officers in the Indian Army. This will pave the way for empowering Women Officers to shoulder larger roles in the organisation. The order specifies grant of PC to Short Service Commissioned (SSC) Women Officers in all 10 streams of the Indian Army namely:

Army Air Defence (AAD),

Signals,

Engineers,

Army Aviation,

Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME),

Army Service Corps (ASC),

Army Ordnance Corps (AOC),

Intelligence Corps,

Judge and Advocate General (JAG) and

Army Educational Corps (AEC).

Supreme Court verdict

The order follows a Supreme Court verdict in February 2020 that directed the government that women officers be granted PC and command postings in all services other than combat.

It rejected the Centre's view on physiological limitations of women as being based on "sex stereotypes" and "gender discrimination against women".

4. Ans) (c)

Explanation :

The Department of Expenditure amended the General Financial Rules 2017 to enable imposition of restrictions on bidders from countries which share a land border with India on grounds of national security.

Any bidder from such countries sharing a land border with India will be eligible to bid in any procurement whether of goods, services or works only if the bidder is registered with the Competent Authority.

The Competent Authority for registration will be the Registration Committee constituted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

Political and security clearance from the Ministries of External and Home Affairs respectively will be mandatory.

The Order takes into its ambit public sector banks, Autonomous Bodies, Central PSUs and PPP projects receiving financial support from the Government or its undertakings.

State Chief Secretaries have been asked to implement this Order in procurement by State Governments and state undertakings etc.

The Order will also apply to other forms of public procurement. It does not apply to procurement by the private sector.

Relaxation has been provided in certain limited cases, including for procurement of medical supplies for containment of COVID-19 global pandemic till 31st December 2020.

5. Ans) (d)

Explanation :

Turkmenistan has been granted Observer status in World Trade Organization (WTO) by the WTO General Council. With this, Turkmenistan has become the last former Soviet republic to establish formal ties with WTO. The Central Asian country filed a request for Observer status in May and expressed willingness to trigger the talks on accession to the WTO within five years. Neighbouring Central Asian countries -- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Afghanistan -- have acceded to the WTO, while Uzbekistan has been in on-and-off negotiations on WTO accession since 1994.

6. Ans) (b)

Explanation :

Political parties are increasingly voicing concerns over holding elections in Bihar amid a pandemic. The Election Commission (EC) is mandated under law to hold elections at any time within six months before the five-year term of the Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly expires. Under Section 153 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the Election Commission can “extend the time” for completing an election, but such extension should not go beyond the date of the normal dissolution of the Lok Sabha or the Assembly. But, Powers under Section 153 can be exercised only after an election schedule has been notified. If the election schedule is not notified then EC can postpone elections through its extraordinary powers under Article 324. The Commission will have to inform the government of its inability to hold polls on time. The government and the President will then decide the future course — to impose President’s Rule or allow the incumbent Chief Minister to continue for six months.

7. Ans) (c)

Explanation :

Union HRD Ministry conducted the first ever Indian Scholastic Assessment (Ind-SAT) Test 2020 under its Study in India programme. Ind-SAT is an exam for grant of scholarships and admissions to foreign students for studying in select Indian universities for under graduate as well as post graduate programmes under Study in India programme. Nearly 5,000 candidates from various African and South Asian countries appeared for this first-ever exam which was conducted in the proctored Internet mode by the National Testing Agency (NTA).

8. Ans) (c)

Explanation :

DRDO has established a COVID-19 testing facility at the Leh based laboratory Defence Institute of High Altitude Research (DIHAR) to enhance the rate of testing to identify the Corona cases in the Union Territory of Ladakh. DIHAR is one of the life sciences laboratories of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) working on cold arid agro-animal technologies. The laboratory is screening and identifying the medicinal and aromatic plants to exploit them for use for defence purposes and also on greenhouse technologies for high altitude and cold desert areas.

9. Ans) (a)

Explanation :

Sex workers, LGBT community members and people living with AIDS from various countries have sought assistance from the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) after being ignored by government and multilateral agencies in COVID-19-related emergency relief efforts. It is an international financing and partnership organization that aims to "attract and invest additional resources to end the epidemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria". It maintains its secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland. This multi-stakeholder international organization began operations in 2002. The Global Fund is a financing mechanism rather than an implementing agency. Programs are implemented by in-country partners such as ministries of health, while the Global Fund secretariat, whose staff only have an office in Geneva, monitor the programs.

10. Ans (a)

Explanation :

The third unit of the Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP-3) in Gujarat achieved its 'first criticality' — a term that signifies the initiation of a controlled but sustained nuclear fission reaction. The reactor was indigenously designed and built by Indian scientists and engineers.

This is a landmark event in India's domestic civilian nuclear programme given that KAPP-3 is the country's first 700 MWe (megawatt electric) nuclear reactor unit.

It is also the biggest indigenously developed variant of the Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR). Until now, the biggest reactor size of indigenous design was the 540 MWe PHWR, two of which have been deployed in Tarapur, Maharashtra.

The new 700MWe unit also addresses the issue of excess thermal margins. 'Thermal margin' refers to the extent to which the operating temperature of the reactor is below its maximum operating temperature.

Four units of the 700MWe reactor are currently being built at Kakrapar (KAPP-3 and 4) and Rawatbhata (RAPS-7 and 8). The 700MWe reactors will be the backbone of a new fleet of 12 reactors to which the government accorded approval in 2017.