



EXCEL CIVILS ACADEMY

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Date: 18-08-2021

EXPLANATION

1. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

The Environment Ministry has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, which prohibit specific single-use plastic items which have “low utility and high littering potential” by 2022.

The New Rules:

What is banned? The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of the identified single-use plastic will be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022.

The ban will not apply to commodities made of compostable plastic. For banning other plastic commodities in the future, other than those that have been listed in this notification, the government has given industry ten years from the date of notification for compliance. The permitted thickness of the plastic bags, currently 50 microns, will be increased to 75 microns from 30th September, 2021, and to 120 microns from the 31st December, 2022. The Central Pollution Control Board, along with state pollution bodies, will monitor the ban, identify violations, and impose penalties already prescribed under the Environmental Protection Act, 1986. The plastic packaging waste, which is not covered under the phase out of identified single use plastic items, shall be collected and managed in an environmentally sustainable way through the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) of the Producer, importer and Brand owner (PIBO), as per Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.

2. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced the fortification of rice distributed under various government schemes, including the Public Distribution System (PDS) and mid-day meals in schools, by 2024.

Significance of the announcement:

The announcement is significant as the country has high levels of malnutrition among women and children. According to the Food Ministry, every second woman in the country is anaemic and every third child is stunted. India ranks 94 out of 107 countries and is in the ‘serious hunger’ category on the Global Hunger Index (GHI). Malnutrition and lack of essential nutrients in poor women and poor children poses major obstacles in their development.

What is food fortification?

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), that sets standards for food items in the country, defines fortification as “deliberately increasing the content of essential micronutrients in a food so as to improve the nutritional quality of food and to provide public health benefit with minimal risk to health”.

Fortified rice:

According to the Food Ministry, fortification of rice is a cost-effective and complementary strategy to increase vitamin and mineral content in diets. According to FSSAI norms, 1 kg fortified rice will contain iron (28 mg-42.5 mg), folic acid (75-125 microgram) and Vitamin B-12 (0.75-1.25 microgram). In addition, rice may also be fortified with micronutrients, singly or in combination, with zinc(10 mg-15 mg), Vitamin A (500-750 microgram RE), Vitamin B1 (1 mg-1.5 mg), Vitamin B2 (1.25 mg-1.75 mg), Vitamin B3 (12.5 mg-20 mg) and Vitamin B6 (1.5 mg-2.5 mg) per kg.

3. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The launch of the National Hydrogen Mission was announced by PM Modi. The aim is to make India a global hub for the production and export of green hydrogen.

Background:

The proposal for the National Hydrogen Mission was made in the Budget 2021 to launch NHM that would enable the generation of hydrogen “from green power sources”.

What is Hydrogen fuel?

Hydrogen is the lightest and first element on the periodic table. Since the weight of hydrogen is less than air, it rises in the atmosphere and is therefore rarely found in its pure form, H₂. At standard temperature and pressure, hydrogen is a nontoxic, nonmetallic, odorless, tasteless, colorless, and highly combustible diatomic gas. Hydrogen fuel is a zero-emission fuel burned with oxygen. It can be used in fuel cells or internal combustion engines. It is also used as a fuel for spacecraft propulsion.

Occurrence of Hydrogen:

It is the most abundant element in the universe. The sun and other stars are composed largely of hydrogen. Astronomers estimate that 90% of the atoms in the universe are hydrogen atoms. Hydrogen is a component of more compounds than any other element. Water is the most abundant compound of hydrogen found on earth. Molecular hydrogen is not available on Earth in convenient natural reservoirs. Most hydrogen on Earth is bonded to oxygen in water and to carbon in live or dead and/or fossilized biomass. It can be created by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen.

4. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The Union Home Ministry has released data on fatalities caused due to hydro-meteorological

calamities.

Highlights:

Nearly 6,800 people lost their lives in the country over the past three years due to hydro-meteorological calamities. West Bengal has recorded the highest deaths among all States. The causes for these calamities include extreme rainfall events or cloudbursts. These types of fatal landslip events are common almost every year, mainly in the Himalayan States, in the Western Ghats, and Konkan areas. In terms of funds released by the Centre under State Disaster Response Funds, highest funds were allocated to Maharashtra. Over the past three years, West Bengal had braved four tropical cyclones — Fani (May 2019), Bulbul (November 2019), Amphan (May 2020) and Yaas (May 2021).

Policies/initiatives:

India is a signatory to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. India is one of the participating countries and works closely with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) defines the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders including Central Ministries/ Departments, State Governments, UT Administrations, District Authorities and local self Governments. National Disaster Management Services (NDMS) was conceived by NDMA during 2015-16 for setting up of Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) Network connecting MHA, NDMA, NDRF etc. to provide the failsafe communication infrastructure and technical support for Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) operations across the country. Landslide Risk Mitigation Scheme (LRMS) envisages financial support for site specific Landslide Mitigation Projects.

5. Ans) (d)

Explanation:

The Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNP &TR) of Assam, globally feted for being a sanctuary to the one-horned rhino, has become the first national park in the country to equip its forest guards with satellite phones as an anti-poaching measure. BSNL will be the service provider and the park authorities will bear the monthly expenses.

6. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

The Chhattisgarh government has become the first state to recognise the Community Forest Resource Rights (CFRR) in an urban area and in core area of a tiger reserve.

7. Ans) (a)

Explanation:

The total installed renewable energy capacity in India, excluding large hydro, has crossed the milestone of 100 GW recently. Currently, India stands at 4th position in the world in terms of installed RE

capacity, 5th in solar and 4th in wind in terms of installed capacity. While 100 GW has been installed, 50 GW is under installation and 27 GW is under tendering. India has also enhanced its ambition to install 450 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030. If large hydro is included the installed RE capacity increases to 146 GW. India has set the target of meeting 175 GW of renewable energy by 2022 and to achieve 450 gigawatts by 2030.

8. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Karez, being one of the types of water management and irrigation systems in Afghanistan, is under threat under the resurgent Taliban rule.

What is a Qanat / Karez?

This system of underground vertical shafts in a gently sloping tunnel is built from an upland aquifer to ground level. They are energy efficient and green since they use the force of gravity rather than any machines running on fuel. It has its origins in Persia and later spread to Arab and Turkic lands.

The entire system is a planning and execution of the forces of a watershed.

The wastewater is never mixed with drinking water.

Water in them does not evaporate and is also filtered till it comes to the surface. There is no depletion of the aquifer since excessive use is impossible. Its maintenance is also low-cost. The first Karez system in India was built in the city of Bidar of Karnataka during the reign of Bahamani Sultan Ahmad Shah Wali (1422-1436), who shifted the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar.

9. Ans) (b)

Explanation:

Announced by PM Modi on the eve of Independence day. Highlights the scheme:

Gati Shakti will be a National Infrastructure Master Plan for our country which will lay the foundation of holistic Infrastructure. This scheme of more than 100 lakh crores rupees will result in new employment opportunities for lakhs of youth. The plan will help raise the global profile of local manufacturers and help them compete with their counterparts worldwide. It also raises possibilities of new future economic zones.

About the National Infrastructure Pipeline:

In the budget speech of 2019-2020, Finance Minister announced an outlay of Rs 100 lakh Crore for infrastructure projects over the next 5 years.

What is it?

NIP is a first-of-its-kind initiative to provide world-class infrastructure across the country and improve the quality of life for all citizens. It will improve project preparation, attract investments (both domestic & foreign) into infrastructure, and will be crucial for attaining the target of becoming a \$5

trillion economy by FY 2025. Covers both economic and social infrastructure projects.

10. Ans) (c)

Explanation:

Team CLAW, a team of people with disabilities, has embarked upon a journey to trek the Siachen Glacier on Independence Day. They will attempt a world record for the largest group of people with disabilities to scale the highest battlefield in the world. This is the land world record expedition part of 'Operation Blue Freedom Triple World Records' being undertaken. 'Team CLAW' includes a group of armed forces veterans working towards empowering people with disabilities.

The Siachen Glacier:

It is located in the Eastern Karakoram range in the Himalayas. It is the Second-Longest glacier in the World's Non-Polar areas. The Siachen Glacier lies immediately south of the great drainage divide that separates the Eurasian Plate from the Indian subcontinent.