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24 Oct 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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A. GS1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Centre to set up peritoneal dialysis services under PMNDP

Context:

The Health Ministry has released guidelines for establishing peritoneal dialysis services under the Pradhan

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Mantri National Dialysis Program (PMNDP).

Details:

- The guidelines were formulated after an extensive consultative process coordinated by the National Health Systems Resource Centre and an expert committee.
- The guidelines are aimed at achieving equity in patient access to home-based peritoneal dialysis, reducing the overall cost of care, and bringing in consistency of practice, pricing and a full range of product availability.
- The guidelines also envisage providing training to community health workers to provide support to persons for peritoneal dialysis at home or in primary healthcare settings.
- The Ministry has requested all States to include proposals for establishing peritoneal dialysis under their respective programme implementation plans.

There are two main types of dialysis, which are hemodialysis and peritoneal dialysis.

1. **Hemodialysis (HD, commonly known as blood dialysis):**

- In HD, the blood is filtered through a machine that acts like an artificial kidney and is returned back into the body.
- HD needs to be performed in a designated dialysis centre.
- It is usually needed about 3 times per week, with each episode taking about 3-4 hours.

2. **Peritoneal dialysis (PD, commonly known as water dialysis):**

- In PD, the blood is cleaned without being removed from the body.
- The abdomen sac (lining) acts as a natural filter.
- A solution (mainly made up of salts and sugars) is injected into the abdomen that encourages filtration such that the waste is transferred from the blood to the solution.
- There are 2 types of PD - continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD) and automated peritoneal dialysis (APD).
- CAPD needs to be done 3 to 5 times every day but does not require a machine. APD uses an automated cycler machine to perform 3 to 5 exchanges during the night while the patient is asleep.

Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Program (PMNDP):

- The Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme was rolled out in 2016 as part of the National Health Mission(NHM) for provision of free dialysis services to the poor.
- The Guidelines for Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme envisage provision of dialysis services under NHM in PPP (Public Private Partnership) mode.
- Currently, under NHM 100 % of the service procedure fees for patients from below poverty line (BPL) economic group is covered.

2. Do public functionaries need a gag, asks SC

Context:

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court has begun examining whether "greater restrictions" should be imposed on the right to free speech and expression of high public functionaries, including Ministers, to protect the citizen's fundamental right to lead a dignified life.

Background:

- The reference to a Constitution Bench was made in April 2017.
- It sprouted from a petition filed by the family members of the Bulandshahr rape victim who were enraged by Uttar Pradesh Minister Azam Khan's public statements that the rape case was part of a political conspiracy against the then Akhilesh Yadav government.
- Khan subsequently apologised unconditionally in the Supreme Court, but it decided to examine the question of imposing curbs on the free speech of public functionaries in sensitive matters.
- The Supreme Court in 2017 found that the matter required to be referred for consideration to a larger Bench as important questions of interpretation of Article 19 (freedom of speech and expression) and Article 21 (protection of life and personal liberty) of Constitution was involved in it.

Details:

- The freedom of speech is subject to "reasonable restrictions" to maintain public order under Article 19(2) of the Constitution.
- The question is "whether reasonable restrictions under Article19(2) should be expanded or not. Should there be a greater restriction on Ministers in position of power, especially if there is a possibility that the Minister's statement could be misunderstood to be a collective statement of the government by the public."
- Another question is whether it is permissible or desirable to have code of conduct for Ministers at the Centre and States following the practice in some other democracies.
- So far, only the State can be held liable for the violation of the fundamental rights, including Article 21.
- The bench is further examining whether private persons and corporations can be held liable for violating Article 21.

Way forward:

- Article 19(2) introducing reasonable restrictions is proof that free speech is not absolute in this country.
- The exceptions to free speech given in Article 19(2) are defined and exact.
- It is opined that instead of bringing new restrictions, focus should be on remedies like filing pleas under Article 226 — a constitutional provision through which citizens can approach the High Courts against the State for violation of their fundamental rights — to injunct embarrassing statements from especially Ministers.
- The question is if further restrictions can be introduced without backing it up with any statutory law.
- The question that needs to be addressed is about how greater restrictions, if imposed on free speech, can possibly be enforced without a definite statutory law defining the dos and dont's.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Hong Kong officially kills extradition Bill

Context:

Hong Kong's legislature has formally withdrawn the planned legislation that would have allowed extraditions to mainland China.

The issue has been covered in the 5th September 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click Here](#) to read.

C. GS3 Related

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Quantum leap in computing as Google claims breakthrough

Context:

Scientists claimed to have achieved a near-mythical state of computing in which a new generation of machine vastly outperforms the world's fastest super-computer, known as "quantum supremacy".

Details:

- A team of experts working on Google's Sycamore machine said their quantum system had executed a calculation in 200 seconds that would have taken a classic computer 10,000 years to complete.
- If verified and harnessed, the Google device could make even the world's most powerful supercomputers — capable of performing thousands of trillions of calculations per second.

How does it work?

- Standard computers and quantum computers are radically different.
- While standard computers perform calculations with "bits", which must be either 0 or 1, quantum computers have "qubits" that can take any value between 0 and 1.
- Fragments of data on a quantum computer, known as qubits, can be both 1 and 0 at the same time.
- This property, known as superposition, means a quantum computer, made up of several qubits, can crunch an enormous number of potential outcomes simultaneously.
- The computer harnesses some of the most mind-boggling aspects of quantum mechanics, including a phenomenon known as "entanglement" — in which two members of a pair of bits can exist in a single state, even if far apart.
- Adding extra qubits, therefore, leads to an exponential boost in processing power.
- The international team designed the Sycamore quantum processer, made up of 54 qubits interconnected in a lattice pattern.
- They used the machine to perform a task related to random-number generation, identifying patterns amid seemingly random spools of figures.
- The Sycamore, just a few millimetres across, solved the task within 200 seconds, a process that on a regular machine would take 10,000 years.

What are Quantum computers used for?

- In the search for new medicines, pharmaceutical companies call on computers to trawl through the structures of scores of molecules to see which might bind to biological molecules and have some useful action in the body. Quantum computers run these searches much faster by analysing whole libraries of molecules at a time and identifying the most promising drug candidates.
- Several startups see quantum computers as a means to design radically new materials, including better batteries, by modelling the quantum behaviour of the subatomic particles inside them.
- Another area where the processing capability of quantum computers could prove itself is weather forecasting.

Conclusion:

- Computer scientists have some formidable hurdles to overcome to make quantum computers useful and commonplace.
- Google's experiment is an excellent demonstration of the progress in superconducting-based

quantum computing.

2. Next three PSLV missions will carry 14 small foreign satellites

Context:

The PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has bagged new rides for 14 small spacecraft of four international customers.

Details:

- The customer satellites will be sent to their respective orbits on the PSLV-C47 (where ISRO's own Cartosat-3 is the main payload), C48 & C-49.
- The ISRO will have one of its earth observation satellites as the larger primary payload on each of the three PSLV flights.
- The spacecrafts are being accommodated as minor secondary passengers on the next three PSLV flights.

Sky is the limit ISRO's workhorse launch vehicle PSLV has many international customers for its future missions

3 UPCOMING MISSIONS
PSLV-C47, PSLV-C48 and PSLV-C49

3 NEW FOREIGN CUSTOMERS
Analytical Space, iQPS and Kleos Space

- Spire Global, an existing customer, is sending four nanosatellites to add to its constellation

- PSLV-C47 will have ISRO's Cartosat-3 as its main payload
- PSLV will lend its platform to test a new antenna technology & small SAR satellite by the iQPS
- A third of PSLV's 300 foreign customers so far have been arranged by Spaceflight, a U.S. company

Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV):

- Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) is the third generation launch vehicle of India.
- PSLV was developed to launch Low Earth Orbit satellites into Polar and Sun Synchronous Orbits.
- It is the first Indian launch vehicle to be equipped with liquid stages.
- After its first successful launch in October 1994, PSLV emerged as the reliable and versatile workhorse launch vehicle of India with 39 consecutively successful missions by June 2017.
- During 1994-2017 period, the vehicle has launched 48 Indian satellites and 209 satellites for customers from abroad.
- Besides, the vehicle successfully launched two spacecraft – Chandrayaan-1 in 2008 and Mars Orbiter Spacecraft in 2013 – that later traveled to Moon and Mars respectively
- In all, the PSLV has launched around 300 mostly small (1kg-100kg) satellites to low-earth orbits for many foreign customers.

3. Massive galaxy found hidden amid cosmic dust

Context:

Astronomers have found a massive galaxy, dating back to the early universe, lurking in cosmic dust clouds.

Details:

- The researchers used the Atacama Large Millimeter Array, or ALMA — a collection of 66 radio telescopes located in the high mountains of Chile.
- The galaxy is a massive monster galaxy, with as many stars as the Milky Way.
- However, it is found that the newly discovered galaxy is brimming with activity and forming new stars at 100 times the rate of the Milkyway galaxy.

Significance of the discovery:

- The discovery provides new insights into the first steps of some of the biggest galaxies in the universe.
- The advancement may open the doors for discovering a new galaxy population type.
- The researchers estimate that the signal took 12.5 billion years to reach Earth, which gives them a glimpse into the Universe in its infancy.

Way forward:

- The scientists are eager for the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) to take a look at these cosmic entities once the revolutionary telescope is launched in 2021.
- JWST will be able to look through the dust veil so we can learn how big these galaxies really are and how fast they are growing, to better understand why models fail in explaining them.

To know more about James Webb Space Telescope, [Click Here](#).

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Call of the wild: India plans first-ever snow leopard survey

Context:

India will commission its first-ever survey to estimate the population and geographical range of the snow leopard.

Details:

- The survey was announced at a meeting of the Global Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection (GSLEP) programme being organised by the Union Environment Ministry.
- The meeting had officials from Nepal, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and China.
- It is for the first time that technology such as camera traps and scientific surveys would be used to estimate the numbers. This is critical to its conservation.
- National Tiger Conservation Authority, a part of the Union Environment Ministry, will play a crucial role in coordinating the survey.

Snow Leopard:

- The snow leopard is found along the upper reaches of the Himalayan range.
- In India, it is reported to have a presence in Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.
- The snow leopard is found in 12 countries — India, Nepal, Bhutan, China, Mongolia, Russia,

Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- It is the state animal of Himachal Pradesh.

Conservation status of Snow Leopards:

- It is classified as "Vulnerable" in the IUCN Red List.
- In addition, the snow leopard, like all big cats, is listed on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), which makes trading of animal body parts (i.e., fur, bones and meat) illegal in signatory countries.
- It is also protected by several national laws in its range countries.

Issue:

- The inhospitable terrain and the reclusive nature of the animal have so far made a scientific estimation impossible.

Way forward:

- According to Prakash Javadekar, Union Environment Minister, there will be collective efforts to double the snow leopard population in the world in the coming decade.
- For this, there is a need to start thinking about capacity building, livelihood, green economy, and green pathway even in the snow leopard areas of the Himalayan range and cross-country cooperation. It forms the basis for all Snow Leopard range countries.

Category: ECONOMY

1. Rs. 70,000-crore BSNL, MTNL package cleared

Context:

In an effort to revive the troubled state-owned telecom firms BSNL and MTNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.), the Union Cabinet has approved a package worth nearly Rs.70,000 crore. The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has also given an in-principle nod for the merger of the two entities.

Details:

- Under the package, 4G spectrum worth 20,000 crore will be administratively allotted to the two firms.
- Their debt will be restructured by raising bonds with sovereign guarantee worth Rs. 15,000 crore.
- A voluntary retirement scheme, on an outlay of Rs. 30,000 crore, will be offered to the employees.
- The government also plans to monetise the assets of the two firms worth Rs. 38,000 crore.

Significance of the move:

- Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited is an Indian state-owned telecommunications company headquartered in New Delhi.
- Public sector presence will maintain a semblance of competition, now fast receding, in the telecom space. National security considerations demand a PSU presence.
- The entire Army network is managed by BSNL.
- Even for banks most of the network is managed by BSNL.
- In times of natural calamity and manmade disasters, BSNL has often emerged as the only operator

which has been able to quickly revive communication networks in the affected areas.

- When it comes to national security, communication network is a key element. BSNL plays an important role in connecting strategic establishments across the country. This function cannot be given to any private operator.

Way forward:

- It is believed that, with these steps, BSNL and MTNL are expected to turn EBITDA (Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization) positive in the next two years.
- Since an immediate merger is not feasible, given that MTNL is a listed entity, till the time the process is completed, MTNL will work as a subsidiary of BSNL.
- The administrative allotment of spectrum for 4G services to BSNL and MTNL will enable the PSUs to provide broadband and other data services. The spectrum would be funded by the government via capital infusion of Rs.20,140 crore.

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ECONOMY

1. Minding the gaps in India's data infrastructure

The editorial talks about the importance of high quality data collection, data infrastructure in the country and how India must avoid the danger of being hijacked by the poor quality of data.

Concerns:

- In the past, there have been discussions on data qualities when politically sensitive results around topics such as GDP growth rate or poverty rates have been released.
- The once praised Indian statistical infrastructure is crumbling and is not able to fulfil even its traditional tasks, let alone meet these new demands.
- A presentation on contraceptive use has highlighted the difficulties in obtaining reliable, high quality data.
    - Between 2005-06 and 2015-16, the total fertility rate (TFR) declined from 2.68 to 2.18 births. However, instead of being accompanied by increased contraceptive use, as would happen during normal circumstances, contraceptive use also declined from 56.3% to 53.5%.
    - Using different approaches, researchers came to the same conclusion — that this aberration must be attributed at least partially to **declining quality of contraceptive use data** in NFHS-4.
- The major concern is if India's existing data infrastructure can support high quality data collection or is the country staring at a disastrous situation where deteriorating data quality will lead the evidence-based policy development off track.

Importance of High quality data:

- In India, there is an amazing greed for data in modern India. This greed ranges from wanting to evaluate success of Poshan Abhiyaan to measuring changes in the aspirational districts.
- National Family Health Surveys (NFHS) recently celebrated 25 years of survey and achievements of

four rounds of the NFHS since 1992-93.

- NFHS has provided data on Indian families and allowed for development and evaluation of public policies regarding population, health, education and the empowerment of women.
- A retrospective look at the way in which an outstanding programme of research such as the NFHS has changed over time and emerging challenges facing the NFHS and other data collection efforts provide an opportunity to look at overall challenges facing our data infrastructure in a constructive manner.

Developing a more robust data infrastructure:

- Setting realistic goals and use creative strategies would be the first step in developing a robust data infrastructure.
- With a variety of small area estimation techniques available for pooling data from diverse sources to obtain robust estimates at district level, it may make sense to think of alternatives and to make sure that required local government directory identifiers in each aspect of government data can be obtained to ensure that these data can be pooled and leveraged.
- India must adapt to changing institutional and technological environment for data collection.
- Some of the initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation for developing training programmes for investigators offer a welcome improvement in data collection. However, it stops far short of the radical restructuring of data collection oversight.
- Concurrent monitoring using technologically-enabled procedures such as random voice recording of interviews, judicious back checks, and evaluation of agency and interviewer performance on parameters such as skipping sections, inconsistent data and consistent misreporting is needed to ensure quality.
- There is a need to establish research units exclusively focused on data collection and research design.

Conclusion:

While research on data collection methods has stagnated, research methodologies have changed phenomenally. Telephone surveys via random digit dialling or selection of respondents using voter lists are increasingly emerging as low-cost ways of collecting data. However, little is known about representativeness of such samples. It is the data that guides the policies affecting millions of Indians and must be faithfully collected. Unless systematic attention is paid to the data infrastructure, it is likely to have the national discourse hijacked by poor quality data.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. A case against judicial recusal

Context:

Supreme Court judge Arun Mishra has refused to withdraw from heading a Constitution Bench re-examining his own judgment on compensation under Section 24 of the land acquisition law of 2013.

Background:

- The Supreme Court of India has found itself increasingly entangled in criticism concerning the recusal of Justice Arun Mishra.
- At the heart of the fuss is Section 24 of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013.
- In 2014, three judges of the Court ruled on the construction of this provision in the Pune Municipal Corporation case.

- In 2018, another three-judge Bench of the Court departed from their interpretation, in the Indore Development Authority decision.
- To resolve the conflict between these two judgments and provide an authoritative understanding of Section 24, a five-judge Bench was constituted, led by Justice Mishra.
- Controversially, Justice Mishra also presided over the three-judge Bench in Indore Development Authority, penning an opinion that strongly disagreed with Pune Municipal Corporation.
- In a nutshell, the quarrel is this: having made his opinion on the legal issue abundantly clear in Indore Development Authority, should the judge still be allowed to sit on a bench established to reconsider the very same question?

Recusal:

Recusal is the act of abstaining from participation in an official action such as a legal proceeding due to a conflict of interest of the presiding court official or administrative officer. It is the withdrawal of a judge, prosecutor, or juror from a case on the grounds that they are unqualified to perform legal duties because of a possible conflict of interest or lack of impartiality.

Details:

- As noted by the Supreme Court in the NJAC judgment, a judge may be required to step down in one of two scenarios:
  - Cases of presumed bias, where the judge has a pecuniary interest in the outcome of a case (extended, through the Pinochet judgment to other similar non-pecuniary interests); or
  - Cases of apparent bias, where a reasonable, fair-minded observer would believe there is a real possibility that the judge is biased.
- It is this latter test of apparent bias which has been invoked in the ongoing proceedings.
- Emerging out of the principles of natural justice, the justification for the apparent bias test is fairly straightforward: that 'justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done' to instil public confidence in the legal system.
- The purpose of this test is not to disqualify judges on the slightest whiff of suspicion; rather, the allegation of bias is only to succeed if it convinces a reasonable, fully-informed fair-minded observer.
- In this case, there is no evidence to indicate that Justice Mishra cannot be persuaded to change his mind on the interpretation of Section 24 through fresh arguments in the current proceedings.
- Some have argued that, because the current Bench will be indirectly ruling on the rectitude of the Indore Development Authority judgment, Justice Mishra is, in effect, sitting on appeal over his own judgment. While this may sound unintuitive, it is not in fact prohibited under the common law.
  - Judges have often been permitted to question the validity of their own prior decisions — see, for instance, the decisions in Sengupta v. Holmes and JSC BTA Bank v. Ablyazov.
  - The law recognises that judges can be, and often are, persuaded to change their opinions.
- The current proceedings are not formally an appeal but arise out of an entirely distinct case. As such, the situation is more akin to that of a judge being asked to decide a legal issue they have ruled on in a prior case: a matter that occurs fairly routinely in our legal system.

The author believes that a recusal in this case would set a dangerous precedent for future litigants to cherry-pick their benches and coerce judges they find unfavourable into stepping down. Such a position would severely undermine the administration of justice in the Indian legal system.

Category: SECURITY

1. Need for balance (On web content regulation)

Context:

- The Centre has informed the court that it intends to notify by January 2020, new guidelines for intermediaries (a term that covers the Internet and other online service providers and includes social media platforms).
- The government has voiced concern about the threat posed by social media content to the democratic polity through fake news and hate speech, to the country's security and sovereignty, as well as to society through undesirable online content such as child pornography and communal messaging.
- The Supreme Court has transferred to itself, related cases pending in different High Courts, and also has decided to hear them only after the Centre notifies its new guidelines for intermediaries.

Details:

- It is a unique opportunity to test the impact of the K.S. Puttaswamy verdict (2017) on the proposed legal framework.
    - The judgment had declared privacy as a fundamental right and laid down a proportionality standard to test the validity of restrictions on that right.
- The challenge before the government and the court is to find a balance between requiring access to the originators/ source of encrypted content and respecting individual privacy.
    - In particular, the provisions on the mandatory disclosure of "originators" of offending messages are a source of worry to social media platforms that use end-to-end encryption.
    - Other requirements such as proactive removal of offending content through automated tools may also come close to infringing free speech and expression.
    - The line between public interest and individual rights should be thick and clear.

The Issue has been covered in 22nd October 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click Here](#) to read.

F. Tidbits

1. A pilot's dream is set to take wing

- A former Jet Airways and now a Spicejet pilot has developed a 6-seater aircraft after first setting out to build one in 1998.
- Named VT-NMD (Narendra Modi Devendra), it would be India's first experimental aircraft.
- It would be certified as airworthy after getting a go-ahead from the civil aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).
- The aircraft was first displayed at the Make in India week in 2016.

Read more about Make In India [here](#).

G. Prelims Facts

1. SAFAR

SAFAR – the state of art Air Quality and Weather Forecast system was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). It is operationalized by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).

To know more about SAFAR System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting, [Click here](#)

2. Thotlakonda Buddhist monastery

- Thotlakonda Buddhist Complex is situated in Vishakapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. It is a dwelling of various Stupas, Viharas and Chaityas.
- The name Toṭlakoṇḍa is derived from the presence of a number of rock-cut cisterns hewn into the bedrock of the hillock.
- After its discovery, major excavations have been conducted by the Andhra Pradesh State Archaeology Department.
- The excavations established the existence of a Hinayana (Theravada) Buddhist complex which flourished 2000 years ago.
- The excavations reveal Satavahana dynasty lead and Roman silver coins indicating foreign trade; terracotta tiles, stucco decorative pieces, sculptured panels, miniature stupa models in stone, and Buddha footprints were also found.
- The excavations also yielded twelve inscriptions in the Brahmi script.
- Thotlakonda was well within the influence of ancient Kalinga, which was an important source of dissemination of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and various parts of Southeast Asia.
- It provides an insight into the process of transoceanic diffusion of Indic culture, especially Buddhism.

What's in News?

- The 2 B.C. main stupa at the Thotlakonda Buddhist monastery site in Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam has crumbled partially due to heavy rain.
- The heritage site, which is about 420 feet above sea level, is a major tourist attraction.

3. National Commission for Women

- The National Commission for Women was set up in 1992 under the National commission Act, 1990.
- It is an apex national level organisation of India established to review the constitutional and legal safeguards for women.
- The commission consists of a chairperson, a member secretary, and other five members.

To read more about the National Commission for Women, [Click Here](#).

4. Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit

What's in News?

- The NAM Summit 2019 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan.
- Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu will represent India at the 18th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit in Baku, Azerbaijan.

This topic has been covered in 23rd October PIB Summary and Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

5. Madagascar lemur

- Lemurs are strepsirrhine primates, all species of which are endemic to Madagascar.
- All lemur species are native to the island nation of Madagascar, where they are threatened by habitat loss, deforestation, hunting for meat, the illegal pet trade and other factors.
- Out of 111 known lemur species and subspecies, at least 105 i.e—are now considered to be threatened with extinction.

What's in News?

- Scientists have discovered that Madagascar's little lemur also called an aye-aye, has an anatomical structure that serves as an extra thumb to go along with its five spindly fingers.
- It is found to be an evolutionary innovation helpful for grasping objects.
- The giant panda also possesses a pseudothumb — with strikingly similar anatomy — that helps the bear with grasping bamboo.

H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Which of the following is NOT an Ozone layer depleting substance?

a. Chlorofluorocarbons
b. Carbon Tetrachloride
c. Carbon Dioxide
d. Methyl Chloroform

Answer: c

Explanation:

Carbon dioxide (CO_2), a naturally occurring greenhouse gas, has an ozone-depleting potential of 0. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), Hydrobromofluorocarbons (HBFCs), Halons, Methyl bromide, Carbon tetrachloride and Methyl chloroform are ozone-depleting substances. Carbon dioxide has no direct effect on ozone, unlike CFCs and HFCs.

Q2. Which of the following is/are NOT included in the UNESCO's list of Intangible cultural heritage (ICH):

1. Buddhist chanting of Ladakh
2. Ramman
3. Ayodhya Deepotsav
4. Ramlila

Choose the correct option:

a. 1 and 3 only
b. 2 and 4 only
c. 3 only
d. 4 only

Answer: c

Explanation:

The Uttar Pradesh government has granted the status of State fair to the Deepotsav Mela to be held in Ayodhya during Deepavali. It is not included in UNESCO's list of Intangible cultural heritage. Read more about **UNESCO's list of Intangible cultural heritage (ICH), [click here](#).**

Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to McMahon Line:

1. The McMahon Line is the demarcation line between the Tibetan region of China and the North-east region of India.

2. It runs from the eastern limit of Bhutan to a point near the Talu Pass at the trijunction of Tibet, India and Myanmar.
3. The demarcation was proposed by Henry McMahon at the Shimla Convention.

Which of the given statement/s is/are correct?

a. 1 only
b. 1 and 3 only
c. 1 and 2 only
d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: d

Explanation:

The McMahon Line is the demarcation line between the Tibetan region of China and the North-east region of India. It runs from the eastern limit of Bhutan to a point near the Talu Pass at the trijunction of Tibet, India and Myanmar. The demarcation was proposed by Henry McMahon at the Shimla Convention.

Q4. Arrange the following from North to South:

1. Cho la Pass
2. Doklam
3. Nathu La Pass

Choose the correct option:

a. 2, 1, 3
b. 1, 2, 3
c. 1, 3, 2
d. 2, 3, 1

Answer: c

Explanation:

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Should reasonable restrictions under Article19(2) be expanded to impose greater restrictions on Ministers in position of power? Critically comment. (15 Marks, 250 Words)
2. PSLV has emerged as the reliable and versatile workhorse launch vehicle of India. Elucidate. (10 Marks, 150 Words)