

05 Dec 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. [GS 1 Related](#)

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [SC to hear woman's plea for protection to visit Sabarimala](#)

B. [GS 2 Related](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [After Cabinet nod, Citizenship Bill ready for tabling in House](#)
2. [Centre likely to challenge Uttarakhand forest notice](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [India, China have perceptual differences over LAC: Rajnath](#)
2. [U.S. House passes Bill seeking action over Uighur crackdown](#)

C. [GS 3 Related](#)

SECURITY

1. [Nod for Data Protection Bill](#)

ECONOMY

1. [Cabinet okays bond ETFs](#)
2. [Govt. procured only 3% of pulses, oilseeds proposed for this season](#)

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. [98.19% of water samples fit for drinking in Delhi: DJB](#)

D. [GS 4 Related](#)

E. [Editorials](#)

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Rape, impunity and state of denial](#)
2. [The neglected foot soldiers of a liberalised economy](#)

EDUCATION

1. [The many structural flaws in India's higher education system](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Another quota question](#)

SECURITY

1. [The evolution of Britain's terror timeline](#)
2. [Close encounters: On faking anti-Naxal fight](#)

F. Tidbits

1. [Punjab government to set up water regulation authority](#)
2. [Rapid rescue teams to be formed for rescuing strayed wild animals](#)
3. [End of reservation for Anglo-Indians?](#)
4. [Climate-related disasters on the uptick](#)

G. Prelims Facts

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. SC to hear woman's plea for protection to visit Sabarimala

Context:

The Supreme Court has decided to hear a plea by a woman in her thirties for police protection during her intended pilgrimage to the Sabarimala temple this year.

To understand the Sabarimala Case, watch [Explained: Sabarimala Case and the Review Petition](#).

B. GS 2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. After Cabinet nod, Citizenship Bill ready for tabling in House

Context:

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister has cleared the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 paving the way for its introduction in the Parliament.

The topic has been covered in **28th September 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis**. [Click here](#) to read.

2. Centre likely to challenge Uttarakhand forest notice

Context:

The Union Environment Ministry is likely to challenge a recent notification by the Uttarakhand Forest Department on its definition of a “deemed forest”.

What are “deemed forests”?

- Deemed forests, are a controversial subject as they refer to land tracts that appear to be a “forest”, but have not been notified so by the government or in historical records.
- They comprise about 1% of India’s forest land.
- The SC, in 1996 judgement, had broadened the definition of forest to include not just land classified as forest under forest or revenue departments, but also those that are forests according to the definition of a forest. It had then also asked states to form committees to identify forests, irrespective of the nature of land ownership or whether they are notified, recognised or classified in a time-bound manner.
- There are forests that are notified either with the forest department or revenue department. Then there are those areas that are like forests but are neither recorded, nor notified. The Supreme Court had ordered that the states identify and classify these as deemed forests.

Details:

- In a recent notification, the Uttarakhand government said that in areas recorded as “deemed forest” only tracts 10 hectares and above and having a canopy density of greater than 60%, would be considered forest.
- The freedom to define which tracts of forest qualify as forest has been the prerogative of States since 1996.

- However, this only applies to forest land that has not already been historically classified as “forest” in revenue records, or categorised so by the government as “protected” or “reserve forest”.
- The issue that the notification appears to extend this definition even to tracts already recorded as forest in revenue records.

Category:INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India, China have perceptual differences over LAC: Rajnath

Context:

Defence Minister asserted that there are “perceptual differences” between India and China on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) but the two countries have a mechanism that prevents any escalation of conflict. He also added that India’s armed forces are vigilant and the borders are fully secured.

Line of Actual Control (LAC):

- The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is a demarcation line that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory in the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, formed after the 1962 war.
- It acts as the effective military border which separates Indian controlled areas of Jammu and Kashmir from Aksai Chin.
- This border is not a legally recognized international boundary, but rather, is the practical boundary.

India- China border dispute has been covered in 23rd October Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

2. U.S. House passes Bill seeking action over Uighur crackdown

Context:

The U.S. House of Representatives have overwhelmingly approved a Bill that would require the Trump administration to toughen its response to China’s crackdown on its Muslim minority, drawing swift condemnation from Beijing.

Details:

- The Uighur Act of 2019 is a stronger version of a Bill that angered Beijing when it

passed the Senate in September 2019.

- It calls on President Donald Trump to impose sanctions for the first time on a member of China's powerful politburo (executive committee for communist parties).
- The Uighur Bill, requires the U.S. President to condemn abuses against Muslims and call for the closure of mass detention camps in the northwestern region of Xinjiang.
- It calls for sanctions against senior Chinese officials who, it says, are responsible.
- The revised Bill still has to be approved by the Republican-controlled Senate before being sent to Mr. Trump for approval.

China's response:

- China's Foreign Ministry called the Bill a malicious attack against China.
- "We urge the U.S. to immediately correct its mistake, to stop the above Bill on Xinjiang from becoming law, to stop using Xinjiang as a way to interfere in China's domestic affairs," said the statement, attributed to the Ministry's spokeswoman.
- Commenting on the repercussions the bill would have on the trade negotiations between the two countries, the spokeswoman hinted a strong counter reaction to the move.

Who are Uighurs?

- The Uighurs live in Xinjiang, the largest and most western of China's administrative regions, which is surrounded by Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.
- They are Muslim, speak a language close to Turkish, and are culturally and ethnically closer to Central Asia than the rest of China.
- Till recently, they were the majority in Xinjiang, but massive registered and unregistered settlements of Han Chinese and heavy troop deployments have likely changed that situation.
- International concern has been growing about what China is doing to its Uighur population, a Muslim minority community concentrated in the country's northwestern Xinjiang province. Reports have emerged of China 'homogenising' the Uighurs, who claim closer ethnic ties to Turkey and other central Asian countries than to China, by brute — and brutal — force.
- Around a million Uighurs, Kazakhs and other Muslims have been bundled into internment camps, where they are allegedly being schooled into giving up their identity, and assimilate better in the communist country dominated by the Han

C. GS 3 Related

Category:SECURITY

1. Nod for Data Protection Bill

Context:

The Union cabinet gave its approval to the Personal Data Protection Bill that seeks to lay down a legal framework to preserve the sanctity of “consent” in data sharing and penalize those breaching privacy norms.

Background:

The draft bill, the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018, was prepared by a high-level expert committee headed by former Supreme Court judge B.N. Srikrishna.

Provisions of the bill:

- The Bill deals with the broad guidelines on the collection, storage, and processing of personal data, the consent of individuals, penalties and compensation, and a code of conduct.
- The draft Bill classifies ‘sensitive personal data’ as including passwords, financial data, health data, sex life, sexual orientation, biometric data, genetic data, transgender status, intersex status, caste or tribe, and religious or political belief or affiliation.
- The draft Bill says that such sensitive personal data can be processed only with the explicit consent of the person, and this consent needs to be informed, clear, and specific, as defined by the Bill itself.
- The draft bill also has a provision for the right to be forgotten, where the person “shall have the right to restrict or prevent continuing disclosure of personal data”.
- There is also a provision for the central government to notify categories of personal data as critical personal data, which will then be only processed in a server or data centre located in India.
- Personal data is to be stored in India, but can be processed outside with the consent of the person.
- The draft Bill also specifies penalties for not following its provisions, including a penalty of 5 crore or 2% of turnover, whichever is higher, if no action is taken on a

data leak.

The topic has been covered in detail in 9th March 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Category: ECONOMY

1. Cabinet okays bond ETFs

Context:

The Union Cabinet approved the government's plan to create and launch India's first corporate bond exchange traded fund (ETF) — Bharat Bond ETF.

Details:

- Bharat Bond ETF would be the first corporate bond ETF in the country.
- The ETF will comprise a basket of bonds issued by the CPSEs, CPSUs, CPFIs, and other government organisations and all will be initially AAA-rated bonds.
- Bharat Bond Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) has been launched to create an additional source of funding for Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs), Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), Central Public Financial Institutions (CPFIs), and other government organisations.
- On the issuer side, the bond ETFs are expected to offer CPSEs, CPSUs, CPFIs and other government organisations an additional source of meeting their borrowing requirements, apart from bank financing.
- It will expand their investor base through retail and HNI [high net worth individual] participation, which can increase demand for their bonds.
- The unit size of the bond has been kept at just 1,000 so that retail investors can invest.
- Each ETF will have a fixed maturity date and initially they will be issued in two series, of three years and 10 years.

2. Govt. procured only 3% of pulses, oilseeds proposed for this season

Context:

Agriculture Ministry data show that less than 3% of this season's sanctioned amount of pulses and oilseeds have actually been procured so far under the Pradhan Mantri Annadata

Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) scheme.

Issues:

- A total of 37.59 lakh metric tonnes of procurement had been sanctioned under the Centrally-funded scheme.
- However, only 1.08 lakh tonnes have been procured so far.
- Of the eleven States that opted for the scheme this season, procurement has not even started in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.

Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) scheme:

- The PM-AASHA, was announced with great fanfare in 2018, as an effort to ensure that farmers growing pulses, oilseeds and copra actually get the minimum support prices they are promised for their crops each year.
- Apart from initiatives to allow cash payment to farmers or procurement by private traders, PM-AASHA's main feature was a price support scheme whereby Central agencies would procure pulses and oilseeds directly from farmers.
- The main crops covered under the scheme this season are moong, urad, arhar, groundnut and soyabean.

PM-AASHA has been covered in 12th September PIB Summary and Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Category:ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. 98.19% of water samples fit for drinking in Delhi: DJB

Context:

Weeks after the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) said that water in Delhi was the most unsafe among 21 State capitals in India; the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has said that 98.19% of the 4,204 samples collected from across the city were found to be fit for drinking.

The issue has been covered in the 20th November 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click Here](#) to read. For more in depth analysis of the issue, read [Drinking Water: Quality & Challenges](#): RSTV – Big Picture.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Rape, impunity and state of denial

The issue has been covered in 4th December 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis under the editorials segment. [Click here](#) to read.

2. The neglected foot soldiers of a liberalised economy

Context:

- In the backdrop of the merger of BSNL and MTNL, permanent employees of the two telecommunication companies are planning to opt for lucrative voluntary retirement schemes and a generous package also awaits the senior employees.
- Questions are being raised about thousands of contract labourers, contractual and temporary workers — who have served the two organisations for several years for far less wages and without any substantial social security benefits. After doing unpaid work for many months, many of the desperate employees are committing suicide.

Issues:

There are thousands of employees in the informal sector, a majority of them engaged through contractors, working in precarious service conditions.

Skill deficiency:

- Rehabilitation of victims of an emerging market economy where most graduates are not employable due to skill deficiency and in a scenario where there is an acute shortage of job opportunities is the challenge

Non-compliance:

- The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Inter State Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979 have been in place for long; but non-compliance is the order of the day.
- Similarly, manual scavengers, most of them employed as contract labourers, are still forced to do cleaning jobs under the most inhumane conditions, despite this barbaric practice having been outlawed through successive pieces of legislation.
- The Supreme Court, in judgment after judgment, has ruled that contract workers should be paid the same wages as permanent employees for similar jobs, but these

orders seem to exist only to be taught in law classes, not for compliance by employers.

- Similarly, Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, has largely been a cosmetic exercise.
- The second National Commission on labour, in the year 2002, had strongly recommended abolition of the exploitative contract labour system in course of time and, in the meantime, suggested implementation of a comprehensive social security scheme. It had very rightly recommended that after two years of working for an organisation, a contract worker should be treated as a permanent worker.
 - However, the apex court in SAIL vs. National Union of Water front Workers and others (2001) overruled some of its earlier judgments and decided that the law does not provide for automatic absorption of contract labourers upon its abolition and that the principal employer has no liability to regularise them.

Hire and fire norm:

- It is true that our labour laws are stringent and protective, but this statement applies only to the fortunate permanent employees, who constitute roughly 10% of the total workforce.
- Hire and fire is the rule for the contract labourers.
- Paradoxically, a rigid labour law system has also contributed to greater contractualisation of the workforce.
- Engaged in substantial numbers as contract labourers are people from vulnerable caste groups.
- The Contract Labour Act, 1970, is applicable only to organisations and contractors who are employing 20 or more workers. Hence, the number of such workers could be much more than what the numbers suggest.
- In the liberalised Indian economy of the 21st century, contract labourers are treated as sacrificial goats. Pay Commissions are always very gracious to upgrade the salary structure of permanent employees on a periodical basis, but the genuine needs of contract workers are repeatedly ignored by the state.

Way forward:

Unless our policymakers ensure strong enforcement of policies linked to such workers, suicides, as in the BSNL-MTNL case, will continue. Parliament has already enacted the Code on Wages, 2019. Reforms are needed in our labour laws to enhance globalisation. But, at

the same time, there is also need for a comprehensive umbrella of social security for these foot soldiers of growth and development.

Category: EDUCATION

1. The many structural flaws in India's higher education system

Context:

The furore surrounding fee hikes at the Jawaharlal Nehru University has spurred deeper questions about the quality of university education.

Issues in higher education system in India:

- India's higher education system is structurally flawed and underfunded. This crisis will affect innovation and human capital, the two pillars of labour productivity and GDP growth, while cheating India's largest demography of its potential.
- The mammoth system deserves better than the superficial data that is being bandied about.
 - For example, a surge in women's enrolment has been much-talked about but this does not necessarily imply better outcomes. The latest 'India Skills Report' suggests that only 47% of Indian graduates are employable — a problem exacerbated by startlingly low faculty figures.
- Faculty vacancies at government institutions are at 50% on average. The problem lies in increased demand, and stagnant supply.
- The number of institutions has surged in India since the 2000s, while the number of students doing PhD has remained constant. Meanwhile, there are over a 1,00,000 India-born PhDs in universities around the world, kept away by paltry salaries and poor funding.
 - China solved this problem by attracting Chinese-origin PhDs back home with dollar salaries and monetary incentives for published research.
 - The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, at rank 155, was our highest in the Scimago Institutions Rankings (SIR) for research while six Chinese institutes figured in the top 50.
 - Indian universities persist in separating research and teaching activities, depriving students of exposure to cutting-edge ideas.
 - It is not surprising that Indian universities rank low in both research and teaching. Monetary incentives for academia are practically non-existent, and

Indian R&D expenditure at 0.62% of GDP is one of the lowest in emerging economies.

Macroeconomic impact:

- Such flaws could affect macroeconomic indicators such as labour productivity, which is determined by innovation and human capital, among other things.
- The workers of tomorrow need to transition to the formal, non-agricultural sector, armed with higher education credentials.
- In addition, an increase in research could lead to more innovation in the economy, which might in turn drive up labour productivity.

Initiatives taken by the government:

Higher education has a potential twofold effect on productivity.

- The government released a Draft National Education Policy (DNEP) in June 2019, which proposed ambitious reforms.
 - The DNEP aims to double education spending to 6% of GDP, and close the research-teaching divide in higher education.
- 'Institutions of Eminence' programme started in 2018 gave increased funding to some research universities.

Way forward:

- The government needs to recognise the systemic anger at play, and ensure that higher education's role in innovation and human capital is not ignored.
- Given the scale of India's higher education sector, an effective policy would require that the ongoing debates and experiences of various models of higher education functioning are critically examined.
- The DNEP is a great first-step, but the reforms must be pushed through and must lead to legislation that will fund research-based universities. Only this can bring a culture of discovery and accountability to India's higher education institutions.

Category:POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Another quota question

Context:

- A plea sought substantive equality among the SC and ST communities under Articles 14 and 16 of the Constitution, to enable proper distribution of benefits of affirmative actions to the genuinely needy SC/ST candidates after removing those who no longer

remain identified with the term “backward classes”, specifically to SCs/STs.

- The Union government has called upon the Supreme Court to form a seven-judge Bench to reconsider the formulation in *M. Nagaraj vs Union of India* (2006) that it should be applied to the SC and ST communities.

This topic has been covered in 3rd December 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Issues:

- While the Centre has accepted that the ‘creamy layer’ norm is needed to ensure that only those genuinely backward get reservation benefits, it is justifiably upset that this principle has been extended to Dalits, who have been acknowledged to be the most backward among the backward sections.
- Another problem is the question whether the exclusion of the advanced sections among SC/ST candidates can be disallowed only for promotions. Most of them may not fall under the ‘creamy layer’ category at the entry level, but after some years of service and promotions, they may reach an income level at which they fall under the ‘creamy layer’. This may result in the defeat of the object of the Constitution amendments that the court itself had upheld to protect reservation in promotions as well as consequential seniority.

Another landmark verdict in the history of affirmative action jurisprudence may be needed to settle these questions.

Category: SECURITY

1. The evolution of Britain’s terror timeline

Context:

The recent knife attack in London reaffirms the belief that if one country unwittingly ‘breeds terrorism’ it is the U.K. which has become a fertile ground for the growth of extremism on account of the interplay of several factors. The country is perhaps paying the price for its earlier excessively liberal and indiscriminate immigration policy. Despite a tightening of immigration and asylum rules, the impact has still to be felt on the ground.

How will this play out when Brexit becomes a reality?

- With fewer numbers now of ‘doubtful cases’ of attempted infiltration, there is hope that the mischief-makers among applicants (example, Pakistan), will be kept away. This is however no guarantee that there will be no future terrorist attacks from among those already entrenched in the land.

- That youth of particular community and impressionable age are being shown up repeatedly as being the perpetrators of violence cannot be ignored.
 - A majority are aggrieved that they have not been accepted by mainstream white citizens.
 - Most of them come from very low income groups living in colonies — a euphemism for ghettos.
 - They are also concentrated in the north of England.
 - Unfortunately, despite the availability of easy access to education, they have chosen to stay away from schools.
 - To compound the situation they are exposed to the insidious propaganda, either online or in person.
- The many efforts by the U.K police to deradicalise Muslim youth do not seem to have succeeded.

This topic has been covered in 3rd December Comprehensive News Analysis under the Editorial Analysis “Terror in London”. [Click here](#) to read.

Way forward:

- K., like many nations, cannot depend solely on fortuitous circumstances.
- It needs a dedicated police force with large resources and a free hand to deal with lawbreakers.
- It also needs a strategy that pays greater attention to the grievances of the large Muslim segment of the population.
- Successive governments have been guilty of effecting many cuts in the police budget, in turn leading to an appreciable depletion of manpower. The U.K. police is still very understaffed if one takes into account widening fissures in society.

2. Close encounters: On faking anti-Naxal fight

Context:

In a damning indictment of the security forces, a one-member judicial commission set up to probe an alleged encounter in which 17 people, including six minors, were killed in Sarkeguda, in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh, in 2012, has noted the following findings:

- There was no firing by the villagers.

- There is no evidence to suggest they were Maoists.
- The villagers were assaulted and killed from close quarters.
- Security forces may have fired “in panic”.
- One of the victims was shot in the morning, several hours after the encounter at night.

The commission chaired by Justice V K Agarwal, a retired Judge of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, submitted its report.

Issues:

- There were signs of manipulation in the timing of injury and post-mortem reports in at least one case.
- The findings are a chilling and sordid catalogue of how truth can be subverted and buried by the very officers who are supposed to enforce the law.
- Though the commission puts it down to a disproportionate reaction from the anti-naxal formation, the findings make it clear that the entire operation was botched from the start by poor intelligence, inadequate training, lack of communication, and hasty reaction.

Conclusion:

- In the last part of the report, on his recommendations for the future, Justice Agarwal has said: “Security forces should be better trained and modern gadgets and means of communication should be made available to the forces for swifter command and more balance and guarded action in critical situations.”
- He has also called for “training to improve the mental fabric of the security forces, with a view to make them more balanced, so that they act with equanimity and do not succumb to panic reaction even in a critical situation.”
- He says the forces should invest in bulletproof jackets, night vision, stronger intelligence, more communication with locals and better communication networks.
- Some of the recommendations are unexceptional, given the frequency of such incidents.
- Most remarkable however, is the recommendation that training be imparted “to improve mental fabric of security forces” with a view “to make them more balanced so that they act with equanimity and do not succumb to panic reaction even in a critical situation”.
- Ways must be found to initiate action against the officers involved in this unfortunate

operation and its heinous cover up.

F. Tidbits

1. Punjab government to set up water regulation authority

- The Punjab Cabinet has approved the creation of the Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority in a bid to check the depletion of groundwater in the State.
- It will be empowered to issue directions on water extraction but cannot impose any restrictions or tariff on extraction of water for drinking, domestic and agriculture purposes.
- The authority would be empowered to issue general directions related to extraction and use of groundwater, besides ensuring optimal and efficient utilisation of all water resources in the State, including canal irrigation.
- It will also issue guidelines on recycling and reuse of water and its conservation.
- For drinking, domestic and agriculture purposes, the authority would be guided by the policy of the State government.
- It would, however, be required to issue tariff orders for use of water for industrial and commercial use.

2. Rapid rescue teams to be formed for rescuing strayed wild animals

- In light of the recent leopard sighting in a residential area in Aurangabad, the forest department has plans to set up a well-equipped team to rescue wild animals that stray into the city.
- Such teams have already been formed in Nashik, Junnar, Amravati and Chandrapur, and they are trained to rescue wild animals that enter residential areas.

3. End of reservation for Anglo-Indians?

The Union Cabinet has approved a proposal to extend reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies for 10 years.

- But doubts prevail over whether it has extended reservation for two seats in the Lok Sabha for the Anglo-Indian community.
- Provisions for reservation for SCs/STs and Anglo- Indians are extended under Article

334 (a) and (b) of the Constitution.

- Two members of the Anglo Indian community have been nominated in the Lok Sabha since the adoption of the Constitution, under article 334(b).
- It is said that the reservation for members of the Anglo-Indian community had been done away with for the time being.

4. Climate-related disasters on the uptick

What's in News?

The Global Climate Risk Index has been published by environmental think-tank Germanwatch.

Findings:

- Worsening heatwaves are taking a heavier toll on rich as well as poor countries, according to the annual ranking that measures the damage done by extreme weather to human life and economies.
- It has rated Japan as the most-affected country in 2018, while Germany was in third position.
- Both of the industrialised nations were hit hard by heatwaves and drought that year, as was India — in fifth position — which suffered water shortages, crop failures and worst flooding,.
- Across Europe, extreme heat spells are now up to 100 times more likely than a century ago, says the report.
- It noted that the impact of heatwaves on African countries may be under-represented due to a lack of data.
- Powerful storms also left a trail of destruction in 2018, with the Philippines second in the climate risk index due to large losses when it was battered by top-strength Typhoon Mangkhut.
- Madagascar was the fourth most weather-affected country as two cyclones killed about 70 people and forced 70,000 to seek refuge.

G. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements with respect to System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR):

1. SAFAR is an initiative introduced by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) to measure the air quality of a metropolitan city.
2. SAFAR was indigenously developed and is operationalized by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).
3. In addition to regular air quality it will measure Black carbon, Mercury, sun's UV-Index (UVI).

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

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) is an initiative introduced by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) to measure the air quality of a metropolitan city, by measuring the overall pollution level and the location-specific air quality of the city. SAFAR was indigenously developed and is operationalized by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD). In addition to regular air quality and weather parameters like Carbon Monoxide, Particulate Matter -PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, Nitrogen Oxides, Sulfur Dioxide and Ozone, it will measure Black carbon, Mercury, sun's UV-Index (UVI) and PM₁ in real time. It can also provide the measurement of online automatic ultrafine particles Mercury and PM₁, both of which have direct relevance to human health. It will also monitor the existence of harmful pollutants like Xylene, Toluene and Benzene. It was indigenously developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology.

[/su_spoiler]

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan

Abhiyan (PM-AASHA):

1. PM-AASHA aims at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers and has three sub-schemes.
2. The expenditure and losses due to procurement under PM-AASHA will be borne by the respective state governments.

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

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

Answer: b**Explanation:**

Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) is an umbrella scheme aimed at ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers for their produce. The Umbrella Scheme includes the mechanism of ensuring remunerative prices to the farmers and is comprised of Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS), Pilot of Private Procurement & Stockist Scheme (PPPS). In Price Support Scheme (PSS), physical procurement of pulses, oilseeds, and Copra will be done by Central Nodal Agencies with a proactive role of State governments. The expenditure and losses due to procurement will be borne by the Centre.

Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to Cyber Swachhta Kendra:

1. Cyber Swachhta Kendra is a part of the Government of India's Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan.
2. It was set up to create a secure cyber space by detecting botnet infections in India and to notify, enable cleaning and securing systems of end users.
3. It is being operated by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In).

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 1 and 2 only

d. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: b

Explanation:

The "Cyber Swachhta Kendra " (Botnet Cleaning and Malware Analysis Centre) is a part of the Government of India's Digital India initiative under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to create a secure cyber space by detecting botnet infections in India and to notify, enable cleaning and securing systems of end users so as to prevent further infections. The Cyber Swachhta Kendra is set up in accordance with the objectives of the "National Cyber Security Policy", which envisages creating a secure cyber eco system in the country. This centre is being operated by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) under provisions of Section 70B of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

Q4. Consider the following statements:

1. Money laundering is the process of concealing the origins of money obtained illegally by passing it through a complex sequence of commercial transactions.
2. Three stages involved in Money laundering are placement, refining and integration.
3. Establishment of shell companies is a form of money laundering.

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

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

Answer: a

Explanation:

Money laundering is the illegal process of concealing the origins of money obtained illegally by passing it through a complex sequence of banking transfers or commercial transactions. It involves three stages i.e, placement, layering and integration. Establishment of shell companies is a form of money laundering.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. In order to surpass the stringent labour regulations, the industry sector in India is largely

resorting to contract labourers. Despite legislations to safeguard contract labourer, non-compliance has become the order of the day. Comment and discuss the way forward. (15 Marks, 250 Words).

2. What are the structural flaws in the higher education system in India? Also discuss the reforms needed. (15 Marks, 250 Words).

