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GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations

1. India, Japan space agencies review ties

Context:

- Bilateral meeting between the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** and the **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).**

Background:

India-Japan space collaboration:

- India and Japan are working on a **joint lunar polar exploration (LUPEX) mission**.
  - The Lunar Polar Exploration mission is a robotic lunar mission concept by the Indian Space Research Organisation and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency that would send a **lunar rover and lander to explore the South Pole region of the Moon in 2024.**

Details:

- Indian and Japanese space agencies have reviewed cooperation in earth observation, lunar cooperation and satellite navigation, and also agreed to explore opportunities for cooperation in "**space situational awareness and professional exchange programme**".
- With respect to earth observation collaboration, ISRO and JAXA have signed an Implementing Arrangement for collaborative activities on rice crop area and air quality monitoring using satellite data.

Additional information:

Space diplomacy:

Italy:

- India and Italy have decided to explore opportunities in earth observation, space science and robotic and human exploration.

Australia:

- India and Australia are in discussions for Australia to host vital **tracking infrastructure to support India's planned Gaganyaan manned space flight mission**.
- Such space diplomacy will only help further **consolidate the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between India and Australia.**

2. EC files FIR over fake news on hacking of EVMs

Context:

- The Election Commission has lodged an FIR over **"fake news" about the hacking of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs)** being spread on some social media platforms/internet.

Details:

- The FIR has been lodged by the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer under **Section 500 of the IPC,** which pertains to punishment for defamation, and Sections 128 and 134 of the **Representation of the People Act, 1951.**
  - Section 500 of the IPC deals with punishment for defamation. In India, **defamation is both a civil and a criminal offence**. Section 500 reads: "Whoever defames another shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both."
  - The Representation of the People Act, 1951 is an act of Parliament of India to provide for the conduct of elections to the Houses of Parliament and to the House or Houses of the Legislature of each State, the qualifications and disqualifications for membership of those Houses, the corrupt practices and other offences at or in connection with such elections and the decision of doubts and disputes arising out of or in connection with such elections.

3. Licensing Conditions for Telecom Companies Amended

Why in News

The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** has amended **licensing conditions for telecom companies.** The new norms will be implemented from **15th June 2021.**

- In March 2021, the Union Cabinet approved **the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the telecom sector** to **reduce imports** and move towards **self-reliance.**

Key Points

- **New Licensing Conditions:**
  - **Aim:**
    - To **include defence and national security as parameters** when purchasing **'trusted telecom products'** and sourcing equipment from **'trusted telecom equipment sources'.**
  - **Provisions:**
    - Telecom companies can use **telecom products only from trusted sources** in its network and **must take permission** from the designated authority **(National Cyber Security Coordinator)** if they plan to upgrade their existing network **using telecom equipment that has not been designated as a trusted product.**
    - The new norms **will not impact the annual maintenance contracts or upgrades to existing equipment** already being used by the telcos in their networks.
- **Trusted Telecom Products/Trusted Telecom Equipment Source:**
  - **About:**
    - It is simply **a product, a company, or a technology that has been deemed safe by the government** of a nation for use in its crucial and critical infrastructure.
  - **Classification:**
    - In December 2020, India's Cabinet Committee on Security had approved the setting up of a new **National Security Directive** on the telecommunication sector with an intent **to classify telecom products** and their sources under the **'trusted'** and **'non-trusted'** categories.
    - **National Cyber Security Coordinator** has been made the **designated authority for deciding on the list of trusted and non-trusted telecom** equipment sources and products.
      - Its decisions will be made based on approval of a committee headed by the deputy **National Security Advisor (NSA).**
      - Apart from the deputy NSA, **the expert committee will have members from other departments and ministries, and independent experts as well** as two members from the industry.
- **Impact:**

- o The new policy could potentially make it more **difficult for Chinese telecom equipment vendors** like Huawei and ZTE to supply equipment to Indian telecom players in the future.
    - Both Huawei and ZTE **have been under global scrutiny for allegedly installing 'backdoor' or 'trapdoor' vulnerabilities** and **spying for the Chinese government** and have been banned by several countries.
- ▪ **Significance:**
    - o Telecom equipment plays a vital role in telecom connectivity and data transfer, which has a direct impact on the national security of India therefore this change will **help in strengthening national security of India.**
    - o Demand for local equipment will rise which will further promote the vision of **Make-in-India** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat**.

4. Challenges Faced by Nomadic Tribes

Why in News

In a written reply in Rajya Sabha, the **Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment** stated that a **Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs)** was constituted for development and welfare of **Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities in 2019.**

- ▪ The welfare board was constituted for a period of **three years extendable upto 5 years.**

Key Points

- ▪ **Challenges Faced by Nomadic Tribes:**
    - o There are nearly 1,500 nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes and 198 denotified tribes, comprising 15 crore Indians, according to the **Renke Commission, 2008.**
        - These tribes remain **socially and economically marginalised** even now, **depriving** many of them of **basic human rights.**
    - o The most pressing issue is of their **identity.**
    - o **Lack of Basic Infrastructure Facilities:** Like drinking water, shelter, and sanitation facilities are not available to the communities. Healthcare and education facilities are also not available.

- o **Bad Treatment by Local Administration:** Due to the stigma of Criminals bestowed upon them in the past, they are still treated criminals and tortured by the local administration and police.
- o **Lack of Social Security Cover:** Since they are on move frequently, they do not have a permanent settlement. As a result, they lack social security cover and are **not issued Ration Card, Aadhar Card**, etc. and hence they are not getting benefits under the government welfare schemes.
- o The **caste categorization is not very clear** for these communities, in some states some of the communities are included under the SC category, in some other states they are included under OBCs.
  - However, most of the groups from these communities do not have caste certificates and hence are not able to avail the benefits of government welfare programs.

- ▪ **DWBDNCs Responsibilities:**
  - o To **formulate and implement Welfare and Development programmes,** as required, for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DNCs).
  - o To **identify the locations/areas** where these communities are densely populated.
  - o To **assess and identify gaps** in accessing existing programmes and entitlements and to collaborate with Ministries/implementing agencies to ensure that ongoing programmes meet the special requirements of DNCs.
  - o To **monitor and evaluate the progress of the schemes** of the Government of India and the States/UTs with reference to DNCs.
- ▪ **Schemes for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities:**
  - o **Dr. Ambedkar Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship for DNTs:**
    - This **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** was launched in 2014-15 for the **welfare of those DNT** (Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes) **students** who are not covered under SC, ST or OBC.
    - The income ceiling for eligibility is Rs. 2.00 lakh per annum.
    - The scheme is implemented through State Governments/UT Administrations. The **expenditure is shared** between the **Centre and the States** in the ratio of **75:25.**
    - The scheme of Pre-matric Scholarship for DNT students is helpful in spreading education amongst DNT children especially the girl child.
  - o **Nanaji Deshmukh Scheme of Construction of Hostels for DNT Boys and Girls:**

- This Centrally Sponsored Scheme, launched in 2014-15, is implemented through State Governments/UT Administrations/Central Universities.
- The aim of the scheme is to provide **hostel facilities to those DNT students;** who are not covered under SC, ST or OBC; to enable them to pursue higher education.
- The income ceiling for eligibility is Rs. 2.00 lakh per annum.
- The Central Government provides a maximum of 500 seats per annum throughout the country.
- The expenditure is shared between the Centre and the States in the ratio of 75:25.

Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities

- Denotified tribes are those that were notified under the **Criminal Tribes Acts** enforced during British Rule, whereby entire **populations were branded criminals by birth.**
  - In 1952, the Act was repealed and the communities were de-notified.
- The **Nomadic tribes maintain constant geographical mobility** while **semi-nomads are those who are on the move but return to fixed habitations once a year,** mainly for occupational reasons.
  - The distinction between nomadic and semi-nomadic do not involve distinguishable ethnic categories or social groups, it rather describes the degree of mobility practiced by them.

GS 3 : Economy, Science and Technology,Environment

5. Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) Mission

India and Japan are working together on a joint lunar polar exploration (LUPEX) mission that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's the South Pole around 2024.

LUPEX Mission

- The LUPEX is a robotic lunar mission concept by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA).
- It would send a lunar rover and lander to explore the South Pole region of the Moon in 2024.

- JAXA is likely to provide the under-development H3 launch vehicle and the rover, while ISRO would be responsible for the lander.
- The mission concept has not yet been formally proposed for funding and planning.
- The Lunar Polar Exploration mission would demonstrate new surface exploration technologies related to vehicular transport and lunar night survival for sustainable lunar exploration in Polar Regions.

6. 'Govt. owning bad bank is more capital efficient'

Context:

- In the Union Budget 2021, Finance Minister announced the creation of a bad bank.

Background:

Non Performing Assets issue in India:

- According to the figures released by the RBI, the total size of bad loans in the balance sheets of Indian banks at a gross level was around Rs. 9 lakh crore as of March 31, 2020.
- The **proportion of banks' gross non-performing assets is expected to rise sharply from 7.5% of gross advances in September 2020 to at least 13.5% of gross advances in September 2021** given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bad bank:

- The proposed bad bank will be based on an **asset management company- asset reconstruction company** model to absorb the stressed assets in the banking system.
- The bad bank will purchase Non-performing assets (NPAs) from banks at a discount. The entity will then attempt to achieve resolution in such accounts through a professional approach.

Details:

- Amid confusing reports about the control of the proposed bad bank, a report from the Bank of America has argued for a government ownership model given the following benefits.

- o State-funding of bad banks would be **more capital efficient**. Government ownership **would not impact the fiscal numbers**; as otherwise, the government will have to keep on recapitalising the state-owned lenders which would strain the already fragile fiscal position of the country. The public sector banks would be the biggest beneficiaries of the proposed bad bank.
- o State ownership would help **speed up the implementation of the proposed bad bank** as there would not be the need to incentivize the private sector and wait.
- o Also, the state backed bad bank is expected to **lower the credit costs for the banks**. As per the Bank of America report, a state backed bad bank could lower the credit charge on banks to a fifth in the worst-case scenario from the 100% now.

7. Petition in HC seeks expansion of ambit of electric vehicles scheme

Context:

- A petition filed before the Delhi High Court has sought a direction to expand the ambit of the **FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) India Phase-II scheme** to the hydrogen energy infrastructure.

Details:

- The petition seeks to ask the government to allocate a part of the unutilised funds from the FAME India Phase-II Scheme for promoting and **incentivising demand for hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles and construction and operation of hydrogen refuelling stations**.
  - o There has been inadequate utilization of budget allocation made towards the FAME scheme. Out of a total budget of Rs. 700 crore for setting up charging infrastructure, only Rs.20 crore has been disbursed until now.

Significance of hydrogen energy:

- The adoption of hydrogen as a fuel will **help reduce the dependence of India's transport sector on imported oil and gas.**
- The hydrogen energy system can be **conceived as a circular process**. Hydrogen can be manufactured by the hydrolysis of water using renewable energy. This would make hydrogen a **truly sustainable fuel source**.
- The emission or by-product of hydrogen gas is water vapour. This would **help decarbonize the energy mix**. This augurs well for mitigating the GHG emissions.

National Hydrogen Energy Mission:

- The government has announced a National Hydrogen Energy Mission [NHEM] during the budget speech in February 2021.
- The National Hydrogen Energy Mission (NHM) will draw up a road map for using hydrogen as an energy source. NHEM initiative will capitalise on one of the most abundant elements on earth (Hydrogen) for a cleaner alternative fuel option.
- The National Hydrogen Energy Mission will **focus on the generation of hydrogen from green power resources** and will aim to link India's growing renewable capacity with the hydrogen economy.

Conclusion:

- The government should support and incentivize alternate fuel technologies, such as **hydrogen-powered fuel cell electric vehicles**.

8. 'Economies to see pre-Covid activity only by '22'

Context:

- Moody's forecast for the global economy.

Background:

Impact of the pandemic on the global economy:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the global economy and triggered a **credit downturn** accompanied by a spike in bond defaults.

Details:

- Moody's in its latest assessment has said that the **current credit slump arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic would be short-lived** and fade away but has also warned that most economies would not return to pre-pandemic activity levels until 2022.
- Moody's expects a slow and bumpy global recovery and notes that the uncertainty around the macroeconomic outlook remains much higher than usual.
- This calls for policy actions to support economic activity for an extended period of time.

GS 2 : Polity, Governance, International Relations

1. The legacy and return of the Bamiyan Buddhas

Two decades later after its destruction, the Bamiyan Buddhas have been brought back to life in the form of 3D projections in an event called "A Night with Buddha".

Bamiyan Buddhas

- In their Roman draperies and with two different mudras, the Bamiyan Buddhas were great examples of a confluence of Gupta, Sassanian and Hellenistic artistic styles.
- They are said to date back to the 5th century AD and were once the tallest standing Buddhas in the world.
- Salsal and Shamama, as they were called by the locals, rose to heights of 55 and 38 metres respectively, and were said to be male and female.
- Salsal means "the light shines through the universe"; Shamama is "Queen Mother".
- The statues were set in niches on either end of a cliffside and hewn directly from the sandstone cliffs.

The significance of Bamiyan

- Bamiyan is situated in the high mountains of the Hindu Kush in the central highlands of Afghanistan.
- The valley, which is set along the line of the Bamiyan River, was once integral to the early days of the Silk Roads, providing passage for not just merchants, but also culture, religion and language.
- When the Buddhist Kushan Empire spread, acting as a crucible of sorts, Bamiyan became a major trade, cultural and religious centre.
- As China, India and Rome sought passage through Bamiyan, the Kushans were able to develop a syncretic (mix) culture.
- In the rapid spread of Buddhism between the 1st to 5th centuries AD, Bamiyan's landscape reflected the faith, especially its monastic qualities.

Taliban's destruction of the Buddhas

- The hardline Taliban movement, which emerged in the early 1990s, was in control of almost 90 per cent of Afghanistan by the end of the decade.

- The destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas was part of this extremist culture.
- In February 2001, the Taliban declared its intention to destroy the statues, despite condemnation and protest from governments and cultural ambassadors' world over.

The aftermath of the destruction

- The Taliban's destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas met with global criticism, many of whom saw it as a cultural crime not just against Afghanistan but also against the idea of global syncretism.
- Following the fall, UNESCO included the remains in its list of world heritage sites in 2003, with subsequent efforts made to restore and reconstruct.

2. 17 States implement One Nation One Ration Card System

Seventeen (17) States have successfully operationalised the "One Nation One Ration Card system" with Uttarakhand being the latest State to complete the reform.

One Nation One Ration Card

- This scheme aims to ensure all beneficiaries, especially migrants get ration (wheat, rice and other food grains) across the nation from any Public Distribution System (PDS) shop of their own choice.
- Under the existing system, a ration cardholder can buy food grains only from the fair price shop (FPS) in the locality where he or she lives.
- It was also launched with the purpose that no poor person should be deprived of getting subsidised food grains under the food security scheme when they shift from one place to another.
- It aims to reduce instances of corruption by middlemen and fraudulence in ration cards to avail benefits from different states.

Who is eligible under this scheme?

- Any citizen, who is declared under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, will be eligible to get the benefit of this scheme across the country.
- The beneficiaries will be identified on the basis of their Aadhar based identification through the electronic point of sale (PoS) device.
- All the PDS shops will have the facility of electronic PoS devices.

Impact on states

- The reform enables the States to better targeting of beneficiaries, elimination bogus/ duplicate/ineligible cardholders resulting in enhanced welfare and reduced leakage.
- An additional borrowing limit of 0.25 per cent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is allowed to the States only on completion of both of the following actions:

1. Aadhar Seeding of all the ration cards and beneficiaries in the State
2. Automation of all the FPSs in the State.

3. Indonesia's Mt. Sinabung

Why in News

Recently, Mt. **Sinabung**, an active volcano on Indonesia's Sumatra island has erupted.

- Earlier, other volcanoes of Indonesia- **Merapi volcano** and **Semeru volcano**- had erupted.

Key Points

- **Mt. Sinabung:**
  - Mt. Sinabung **(2,600-metre)** is **located in Karo regency,** North Sumatra.
  - Sinabung is among more than **120 active volcanoes** in Indonesia, which is prone to seismic upheaval due to its location on the **Pacific Ring of Fire.**
  - The volcano was dormant for 400 years before exploding in **2010.**
    - It exploded again in **2014 ,2016** and **2020**.
- **Ring of Fire:**
  - The Ring of Fire, also referred to as the **Circum-Pacific Belt,** is a path along the Pacific Ocean characterized by **active volcanoes and frequent earthquakes.**
  - It traces boundaries between several **tectonic plates** — including the Pacific, Cocos, Indian-Australian, Nazca, North American, and Philippine Plates.
  - The abundance of volcanoes and earthquakes along the Ring of Fire is caused by the amount of movement of tectonic plates in the area.
    - **75% of Earth's volcanoes** i.e. **more than 450 volcanoes** are located along the Ring of Fire. 90% of Earth's earthquakes occur along its path.

GS 3 :Economy, Science and Technology,Environment

4. Genome Mapping of the Indian Ocean

A team of scientists and researchers from the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) onboard its research vessel Sindhu Sadhana will work on a research project to reveal the internal working of the body of the ocean at a cellular level.

Genome Mapping of the Indian Ocean

- The first-of-its-kind research project in the country is aimed at understanding the biochemistry and the response of the ocean to climate change, nutrient stress and increasing pollution.
- The researchers will collect samples from various stretches of the ocean at an average depth of about 5 km.
- Just like gene mapping is carried out on blood samples collected from humans, the scientists will map these in the bacteria, microbes found in the ocean.
- The mapping of the Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) and Ribonucleic acid (RNA) will show the nutrients present in them, and also those lacking in different parts of the ocean.

Objectives of the mission

- This project will help scientists understand the internal working of the ecosystem of the Indian Ocean.
- The research will enable scientists to identify the factors controlling the changes in RNA, DNA in the oceans, and various stressors impacting them.
- The ocean has several micronutrients like nitrates, sulphates and silicates, minerals like iron ore and zinc, and trace metals like cadmium or copper.
- The genome mapping will show the presence of which these microbes have adapted to, in addition to their reaction to atmospheric carbon dioxide.
- This will help in identifying which part of the ocean has a greater concentration of which mineral or element.
- Scientists will then use these as tracers to tackle the causative factors for excess or lack of a certain mineral or element and suggest possible solutions for their mitigation.
- In addition, the large pool of RNA, DNA library of the oceans will be utilized for using the Indian Ocean for human benefit in the future.

Studying the interactions of trace metals

- Trace metals are the metals subset of trace elements; that is, metals normally present in small but measurable amounts in animal and plant cells.
- Trace metals like cadmium or copper are supplied to oceans via continental run-offs, atmospheric deposition, hydrothermal activities and continental shelf interaction.
- They are essential for ocean productivity for having a holistic understanding of nutrient cycling and productivity of the oceans.
- Isotopic forms of trace metals can be utilized to track the movement of water masses responsible for ocean circulation and as tools to study the biological, geochemical and ecosystem processes and food web analyses.

5. France's First Space Military Exercise: AsterX

Why in News

Amid the growing competition among the world powers in the field of space, France has begun its **first space military exercises** to test its ability to defend its satellites.

Key Points

- **About the Exercise:**
    - The exercise drills are codenamed **"AsterX"** to commemorate the first French satellite **Asterix** from 1965.
    - The exercises are part of France's strategy to become the world's **third-largest space power,** after the USA and China.
    - These space military exercises are the first ever attempt not only for the French army but also for Europe.
    - Moreover, France has planned to develop **anti-satellite laser weapons** and to strengthen surveillance capabilities to close the gap with rivals; China and Russia.
    - **Aim of the Exercise:**
        - To monitor a potentially dangerous space object as well as threats to its own satellite from another foreign power possessing a considerable space force.
    - **Participants:**
        - Along with France, the new **US Space Force and German space agencies** are taking part in the exercises.
- **Background:**
    - In 2018, **Olymp-K,** a Russian satellite attempted to intercept transmissions from the **Athena-Fidus satellite** which is used by both

Italian and French armies for secure communications. This was **termed as an act of 'espionage'.**

- In 2020, the United States also **accused Russia** of having "conducted a non-destructive test" of an anti-satellite weapon from space.

o In 2019, France announced its **Commandement de l'Espace (CdE)** (French Space Command).
  - It is set to have 500 personnel by 2025.
- **Similar Initiatives of India:**
  o **IndSpaceEx:** India's first ever simulated space warfare exercise.
  o **Mission Shakti:** An Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Missile Test.

6. Project Information System & Management: SERB

Why in News

The **Science and Engineering Board (SERB)** has set up a **portal called PRoject Information System & Management (PRISM)** that offers real time information on the various research projects supported by it.

Key Points

- **About PRoject Information System & Management (PRISM):**
  o It is called **'SERB – PRoject Information System & Management (SERB – PRISM)'.**
  o The **e-platform will provide a whole range of information** regarding all projects sanctioned by SERB from 2011 onwards, including funding details, status, research summary and project output details such as publications and patents.
- **Significance of PRISM:**
  o The portal is expected to work as a **comprehensive tool** to help forge **stronger scientist-scientist, and science-society connections.**
  o It may be linked with important sectors such as water, energy, and climate and with the new concept of **Scientific Social Responsibility (SSR).**
  o It helps in the **democratisation of Research & Development funding trends.**
- **Science and Engineering Board (SERB):**
  o It is a **statutory body** under the **Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology** established by an Act of the Parliament of India in 2009.

- o It is **chaired by the Secretary to the Government of India** in the Department of Science and Technology and has other senior government officials and eminent scientists as members.
- o It was set up for **promoting basic research in science and engineering** and to provide financial assistance to scientists, academic institutions, Research and Development laboratories, industrial concerns and other agencies for such research.
- o It has a mandate to plan, promote and fund **internationally competitive research in emerging areas.**
- o Some important schemes of SERB:
  - **SERB-POWER Scheme**
  - **Accelerate Vigyan Scheme: SERB**
  - **National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems**

Prelims Practice Questions

1. Consider the following statements about Cess:

1. A cess is an additional tax imposed with a purpose of raising funds for a specific task.
2. Article 250 of the Indian Constitution prohibits the sharing of cess with the State Governments.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

A 1 only
B 2 only
C Both 1 and 2
D Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

Explanation

- ▪ Different from the usual taxes and duties like excise and personal income tax, a **Cess is imposed as an additional tax** besides the existing tax (tax on tax) with a purpose of **raising funds for a specific task. Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

- The Union government is empowered to raise revenue through a gamut of levies, including taxes (both direct and indirect), surcharges, fees and cess.
  - A cess, generally paid by everyday public, is added to their basic tax liability paid as part of total tax paid.
  - **Article 270** of the Constitution allows cess to be excluded from the purview of the divisible pool of taxes that the Union government must share with the States. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
    - Article 250 mentions the power of Parliament to legislate with respect to any matter in the State List in case of emergency.
- Cess should be kept as a separate fund after allocating to Consolidated Fund of India and can be spent only for a specific purpose.
- A cess is meant to raise revenue and is therefore temporary in nature.
  - A particular cess continues to be levied till the time the government collects enough funds for the purpose that it was introduced for.

2. India's largest floating solar power plant till date is being set up in which of the following states?

- a. Karnataka
- b. Rajasthan
- c. Gujarat
- d. Telangana

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The country's biggest floating solar power plant till date, by generation capacity, is being developed by the NTPC in the reservoir of its thermal plant at Ramagundam in Peddapalli district, Telangana.
- This plant has a generation capacity of about 100 megawatts.

3. Consider the following statements:

1. Feni river originates from Tripura and flows into Bangladesh.
2. Maitri Setu has been built over Padma river to symbolise friendly ties of India and Bangladesh.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A 1 only
B 2 only
C Both 1 and 2
D Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A

Explanation

- Recently, the Prime Minister inaugurated Bharat Bangla Maitri Bridge in Tripura's South district.
  - The construction was taken up by the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd at a project cost of Rs. 133 crore.
- The bridge **'Maitri Setu' has been built over the Feni river** which flows between Indian boundary in Tripura State and Bangladesh. **Hence, statement 2 is not correct.**
  - **Feni originates in the South Tripura district.** The river passes through Sabroom town on the Indian side, and meets the Bay of Bengal after it flows into Bangladesh. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
  - The 1.9 Km long bridge joins Sabroom (in Tripura) with Ramgarh (in Bangladesh).
  - The name 'Maitri Setu' symbolises growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh.

4. Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs) works under the aegis of?

- a. Ministry of Home Affairs
- b. Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- c. Ministry of Rural Development
- d. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Answer : d

- Ministry/Department of Social Justice and Empowerment has constituted the Development and Welfare Board for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DWBDNCs) in 2019.
- It aims for Development and Welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities for a period of three years extendable up to 5 years.

The responsibilities of the DWBDNC are:

1. To formulate and implement Welfare and Development programmes, as required, for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.
2. To identify the locations/areas where these communities are densely populated.
3. To assess and identify gaps in accessing existing programmes and entitlements and to collaborate with Ministries/implementing agencies to ensure that ongoing programmes meet the special requirements of De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.
4. To monitor and evaluate the progress of the schemes of Government of India and the States/UTs with reference to Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities.

5. Which of the following correctly describes the recently inducted INS Karanj?

   a. Scorpene class submarine
   b. Nuclear submarine
   c. Fast Patrol vehicle
   d. Corvette

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The Navy recently inducted the third Scorpene class conventional diesel-electric submarine, INS Karanj, into service.
- The Scorpene-class submarines are a class of diesel-electric attack submarines. It features diesel propulsion and an additional air-independent propulsion (AIP).

6. Exercise DUSTLIK is an annual bilateral joint military exercise between India and?

- a. Tajikistan
- b. Kazakhstan
- c. Uzbekistan
- d. Turkmenistan

Answer : c

- The India – Uzbekistan joint military exercise "DUSTLIK II" commenced recently in Foreign Training Node Chaubatia, Ranikhet (Uttarakhand).
- This is the second edition of annual bilateral joint exercise of both armies.
- The first edition of the exercise was held at Uzbekistan in Nov 2019.

Mains Practice Questions

1. Though ordinances making power of President is given under Article 123 of the Constitution, yet its frequent use goes against the spirit of constitution. Examine. (150 words)

Approach

- Give brief idea of ordinance making power of President, its need and limits of its use
- Discuss how its arbitrary use undermines constitution
- List the limits set by Supreme Court in its various judgements for its use.

2. Internal migration can be driven by push/ pull factors. Highlighting the issues related with internal migration in India, discuss the need for a national policy on internal migration. (150 words)

Approach

- Define Migration and give its types
- While enumerating the issues faced by migrants also list down the benefits of migration
- Discuss how a national migration policy will help tackle migration issues.