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Daily Current Affairs

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Important News Articles

1. Indonesian delegation visits India to learn best practices in mid-day meal scheme & digital inclusion THE HINDU
2. U.S., Britain, Australia mulling expansion of AUKUS security pact' THE HINDU
3. K Kavitha's bail plea: Does PMLA's bail concession for women also apply to 'women with agency'? INDIAN EXPRESS
4. Lok Sabha polls: Suvidha portal gets over 73,000 applications for campaign-related activities- TIMES OF INDIA
5. Right against adverse effects of climate change part of rights to life, equality: SC INDIAN EXPRESS
6. Unnecessarily complex' GST needs urgent reform: Kelkar THE HINDU
7. Bets from big global VC firms fall 80% in India in 2023 amid funding winter THE HINDU
8. Onion traders cry foul over underpriced exports to UAE- THE HINDU

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

9. Implementing universal health coverage THE HINDU
10. Private healthcare needs reform in public interest- THE HINDU

Quick Look

1. Lab-grown minibrains
2. Mangal Pandey:
3. Satpula dam:
4. Oceanic Niño Index:

Important News Articles

GS II

1. Indonesian delegation visits India to learn best practices in mid-day meal scheme & digital inclusion THE HINDU

Relevance: Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

Prelims Takeaway

- Mid day meal

News :

- Indonesia, following its recently concluded elections, wants to usher in new socio-economic initiatives under President and has approached India to adopt best practices in mid-day meal scheme and digital inclusion.

Mid day meal scheme

- **India's massive school lunch program:** This program, now called the Pradhan Mantri POSHAN Scheme, is the world's biggest of its kind.
- It provides hot meals every day to millions of children from grades 1 to 8, regardless of their background.
- **A long history of helping children:** The program started in 1925 with a focus on underprivileged kids.
- It became a national program in 1995 and has been through a few name changes.
- **Goals for a healthier future:** The program aims to get more children, especially those from disadvantaged families, enrolled and staying in school.
- It also works to fight hunger, improve children's nutrition, and promote social interaction among different castes.
- **Working together to make it happen:** Each state sets up committees to manage the program at different levels.
- The federal government shares the cost with the states, with a higher contribution going to some regions.

2. U.S., Britain, Australia mulling expansion of AUKUS security pact'THE HINDU

Relevance: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora.

News:

- The U.S., Britain and Australia are set to begin talks on bringing new members into their AUKUS security pact as Washington pushes for Japan to be involved as a deterrent against China

Prelims Takeaway

- AUKUS
- Map Based questions

Key highlights

- They are not considering expanding the first pillar, which is designed to deliver nuclear-powered attack submarines to Australia,
- AUKUS, formed by the three countries in 2021, is part of their efforts to push back against China's growing power in the Indo-Pacific region.
- China has called the AUKUS pact dangerous and warned it could spur a regional arms race.

AUKUS Grouping

- It is a trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific, between Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS) which was signed in 2021.
- The major highlight of this arrangement is the sharing of US nuclear submarine technology to Australia.

- Its Indo-pacific orientation makes it an alliance against China's assertive actions in the South China Sea.
- It involves a new architecture of meetings and engagements between the three countries, as well as cooperation across emerging technologies (applied AI, quantum technologies and undersea capabilities).

3. K Kavitha's bail plea: Does PMLA's bail concession for women also apply to 'women with agency'? INDIAN EXPRESS

Relevance: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

News:

- the stringent **bail provisions in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)** contain an **exception for women**
- A Delhi court is set to decide Bharat Rashtra Samithi leader's plea for bail on this ground in the Delhi excise scam case.

What is the bail provision in PMLA?

- The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to prevent money laundering and provide for the confiscation of property derived from money laundering.
- Section 45 provides for bail on money laundering charges.
- This provision in the law, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
- However, there is a crucial exception to the bail standard.
- "Provided that a person, who is under the age of sixteen years or is a woman or is sick or infirm, may be released on bail, if the Special Court so directs," the law says.
- This exception is similar to exemptions under the Indian Penal Code for women and minors.

What is the legal precedent?

- The HC said that the PMLA or the Constitution does not make a distinction between a household lady, a businesswoman, or a political figure.

Prelims Takeaway

- PMLA
- UAPA

4. Lok Sabha polls: Suvidha portal gets over 73,000 applications for campaign-related activities- TIMES OF INDIA

Relevance: Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

News:

- The Election Commission on Sunday said its Suvidha portal has received over 73,000 applications since the Lok Sabha polls were announced, seeking permission for various campaigning activities.

Suvidha Portal

- It is **developed by the Election Commission of India (ECI)** to ensure a level playing field upholding the democratic principles of free, fair and transparent elections.
- It streamlined the process of obtaining and acting upon requests for permissions and facilities from political parties and candidates during the election period.
- It caters to a diverse range of permission requests transparently on the **First in First Out principle**.
- Political parties and candidates can seamlessly submit permission requests online from anywhere, at any time.
- Offline submission options are available.

Prelims Takeaway

- Suvidha Portal
- ECI

- It caters to permissions for organising rallies, opening temporary party offices, door-to-door canvassing, video vans, helicopters, obtaining vehicle permits, distributing pamphlets.
- It is supported by a robust IT platform, managed by nodal officers across various state departments.
- It also has a companion app that enables applicants to track the status of their requests in real time.
- Furthermore, the permission data available on the portal serves as a valuable resource for scrutinising election expenditures, contributing to greater accountability and integrity in the electoral process.

GS III

5. Right against adverse effects of climate change part of rights to life, equality: SC INDIAN EXPRESS

Relevance: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

Prelims Takeaway

- Article 21
- Article 14

News:

- IN A significant ruling, the Supreme Court has expanded the scope of Articles 14 and 21 to include the “right against the adverse effects of climate change”.

Key highlights

- “**Article 48A** of the Constitution provides that the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.
- **Clause (g) of Article 51A** stipulates that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures.
- **Article 21** recognises the right to life and personal liberty while Article 14 indicates that all persons shall have equality before law and the equal protection of laws.
- These Articles are important sources of the right to a clean environment and the right against the adverse effects of climate change

Government policy

- Despite governmental policy and rules and regulations recognising the adverse effects of climate change and seeking to combat it
- The right to health (which is a part of the right to life under Article 21) is impacted due to factors such as air pollution, shifts in vector-borne diseases, rising temperatures, droughts, shortages in food supplies due to crop failure, storms and flooding.
- The court pointed out that India aimed to achieve an installed renewable energy capacity (excluding large hydro) of 175 GW (Gigawatts) by 2022, a goal that signified the country’s commitment to clean energy adoption, and the future goal is 450 GW installed capacity by 2030.
- “Investing in renewable energy not only addresses these urgent environmental concerns but also yields a plethora of socio-economic benefits,

6. Unnecessarily complex’ GST needs urgent reform: Kelkar THE HINDU

Relevance: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

Prelims Takeaway

- GST
- GST council

News :

- A key architect of India’s tax reforms and the chairman of the Thirteenth Finance Commission Vijay Kelkar has called upon the country’s next government to undertake urgent reforms in the “unnecessarily complex” Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime,
- such as switching to a single tax rate of 12% and sharing revenues with local governments and municipal corporations.

Thirteenth Finance Commission Vijay Kelkar recommendation

- mooted the creation of an independent secretariat for the GST Council, the apex-decision making body for the indirect tax rolled out in July 2017 was also mooted,
- as the current arrangement of the Union Government driving the secretariat may be considered problematic by States.
- Setting the tax rates “largely with the objective to maintain revenue neutrality”, as done by India, is “counter-productive

Single GST rate needed

- The genesis of the current GST frauds lies in the very structure of the GST rates, as high rates of GST make it lucrative for the fraudsters to evade taxes
- A single GST rate of 12%, with revenues shared equally with all the tiers of the government and Union Territories, be introduced at the earliest.
- The countries having a single rate and simple GST or VAT laws have been successful in optimising tax revenue and minimising tax disputes
- Of countries with GST or VAT systems, 80% have opted for a single tax rate, including Singapore, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, and Japan.
- Stating that a single GST rate is “an unmet goal” in India, he recalled that a single rate of 12% had been recommended by the 13th Finance Commission “very early on in the GST debate”.
- The revolutionary reform of introduction of a single GST rate, with additional non-VAT-able taxes such as carbon taxes on a few demerit goods like hydrocarbons, is now essential

Share GST with local bodies'

- The veteran economist also pleaded for GST revenues to be shared with the third tier of the government created by the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution.
- Equitable sharing of the GST with the third tier will go a long way in strengthening the fiscal base of our urban governments and also to deepen democracy and governance at the grass root level
- To enable this, we will require a Constitutional amendment, firstly to create the consolidated fund for the third tier of government;

7. Bets from big global VC firms fall 80% in India in 2023 amid funding winter THE HINDU

Relevance: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

News:

- Investments from large foreign investors, like Accel, Peak XV Partners, Tiger Global, and Softbank, fell by as much as 80 per cent on average in 2023, amid the Indian startup ecosystem's **so-called funding winter**.

Key highlights

- Regardless, many of them say they are very bullish on the Indian market and are looking to ramp up their investments this year.
- Over the past two years, these **large global venture capital (VC)** firms have seemingly been pulling out of the Indian market.
- This is especially alarming given that foreign investments make up a sizable chunk of overall funding in India.

Effects:

- **With the funding winter in place**, start-ups resort to measures which help them save their working capital, as the expectations of funding from investors are minimal.

Prelims Takeaway

- Venture capital
- Funding winter

- The advertisement expenses, capital expenditures and expansion plans are put to a halt in order to increase the sustainability of the firm.
- Only the expenditure essential to the survival of the firm is undertaken and all possible steps are put in place to ensure unnecessary expenses.

8. Onion traders cry foul over underpriced exports to UAE- THE HINDU

Relevance: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

Prelims Takeaway

- Windfall profit

News:

- Amid an extended ban on onion exports, farmers and traders are miffed that some shipments allowed by the government to markets like the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have been sold at a pittance, even as global prices have soared, yielding windfall profits for selected importers.

UAE importers benefit

- These exports are being channelled exclusively through the National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL) a government-owned body under the Ministry of Cooperation.
- Exporters were told that exports were being done on a government-to-government basis, with the importing country allocating quotas to nominated importers.
- Procurements for such exports is being done through an e-tendering process on the Agribazaar portal.

'Importer-exporter nexus'

- because of this nexus indian farmers are not getting actual price of their food crop

Windfall Profit

- It refers to a sudden increase in profits, typically caused by an unexpected event or circumstance.
- Such profits are generally well above historical norms and may occur due to factors such as a price spike or supply shortage that are either temporary in nature or longer-lasting.
- Windfall profits are generally reaped by an entire industry sector but can also find their way to an individual company or individual.
- Among the reasons that windfall profits can arise are a sudden change in market structure, an executive order from the government, a court ruling, or a dramatic shift in trade policy.

Editorials, Gists and Explainers

9. Implementing universal health coverage THE HINDU

Relevance: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

News:

- Universal health coverage (UHC) signifies universal accessibility to comprehensive, high-quality health services, without financial hardship.
- UHC ensures that people receive care whenever and where ever they need it.
- It covers the full continuum of essential health services, from health promotion to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care.

Key highlights	Right to health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On December, 12, 2012, the UN General Assembly unanimously endorsed a resolution urging countries to accelerate progress towards UHC. In India, the high level expert group report, submitted to the Planning Commission in 2011, outlined a government intent to increase public financing for health to 2.5% of India's GDP during the 12th Plan (2012-17). The economic growth of the country makes this increase feasible. The National Health Policy, 2017 articulates "the attainment of the highest possible level of good health and well-being, as its goal, which aligns with the UHC target. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India lacks a constitutional provision for the fundamental right to basic health. However, the Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV of the Constitution provides a basis for the right to health. Article 39 (e) of the Constitution directs the state to secure the health of workers; Article 42 emphasises just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief; and Article 47 casts a duty on the state to raise the nutrition levels and standard of living, and to improve public health. The Constitution not only mandates the state to enhance public health but also endows the panchayats and municipalities to strengthen public health under Article 243G. Given that health is a state subject and the UHC policy is envisaged at the national level, there is a need for discourses on implementation. India has a large migrant population: the total number of inter-State migrant workers was about 41 million (Census 2011), and the total migration rate was 28.9% (Periodic Labour Force Survey, 2020-21). With 49% of the population living in urban slums, according to UN-Habitat/World Bank, the focus should be on ensuring the availability and accessibility of primary health services. The two critical components of the UHC policy — strengthening primary healthcare and reducing out-of-pocket expenditure — demand focused attention. To align electoral mandates with UHC implementation, political leaders should consider the following suggestions.

suggestions

- To simplify the reimbursement processes for reducing out-of-pocket expenditure.
- The design of cash transfers and reimbursement in India's public healthcare system needs adaptation for migrant and marginalised communities.
- We need to integrate health management information system dashboards with both public and private systems and ensure better information systems considering language barriers and diversity in the urban context.
- To implement community-based primary healthcare in urban and peri-urban areas with seamless referral systems.
- We need to foster integration of services at the primary healthcare level, ensuring follow-up and adherence to healthcare.

10. Private healthcare needs reform in public interest- THE HINDU

Relevance: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

News:

- Millions of Indians underwent traumatic experiences while seeking treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This strongly underlined the urgent need for two complementary streams of change in our healthcare system: strengthening public health services and regulating private healthcare providers.

- In the Indian context, no initiative for reforming the health sector will be complete without touching upon private healthcare, which accounts for around 70% of healthcare utilisation in the country.

Key highlights

- The 2024 Forbes list of billionaires includes 200 Indians.
- Following manufacturing, the industry that contributes the second largest number of billionaires in India today (36), is healthcare, including pharmaceuticals.
- Private healthcare in India is allowed to make high profits, because it is inadequately regulated and often charges patients exorbitant rates.
- This setting underscores the relevance of policy recommendations contained in the recently published Jan Swasthya Abhiyan's 18-point People's Health Manifesto.

Transparency, standardization of rates

- Private healthcare providers are perhaps unique among all the commercial services in India, since the rates of their services are generally not transparently available in the public domain.
- The Clinical Establishments (Central Government) Rules, 2012 specify that all healthcare providers must display their rates and should charge standard rates as determined by the government from time to time.
- However, 12 years after these legal provisions were enacted, surprisingly they are yet to be implemented.
- It is also necessary to implement standard protocols to check irrational healthcare interventions, which are currently promoted on a wide scale due to commercial considerations.
- Rationalising treatment practices and curbing excessive medical procedures will not just bring down excessive bills charged by many private hospitals, but also significantly improve healthcare outcomes for patients.

Implement patients' rights

- These include the right of every patient to receive basic information about their condition and treatment, and the expected costs of care and itemised bills;
- In the Indian context, the National Human Rights Commission formulated a set of patients' rights and responsibilities in 2018.
- Further, given the failure of existing mechanisms like Medical Councils to ensure justice for patients with serious complaints related to private hospitals

Control commercialisation of colleges

- There is an urgent need to control commercialised private medical colleges, especially mandating that their fees must not be higher than government medical colleges.
- Further, expansion of medical education must be focused on public colleges rather than commercialised private institutions.

Conclusion

- The National Medical Commission needs independent, multi-stakeholder review and reform, keeping in view criticisms that this body lacks representation of diverse stakeholders, has excessively centralised decision-making, and tends towards further commercialisation of medical education.
- Today, all political parties should commit themselves to implementing these transformations, while as citizens we must strongly demand them. This would be a fitting manner to celebrate World Health Day in India in 2024.

Quick Look

1. Lab-grown minibrains

- These are scientifically known as brain organoids, but often called "minibrains" and serve as miniature, simplified models of full-size human brains.
- Scientists typically grow brain organoids from stem cells, a type of immature cell that can give rise to any cell type, whether blood, skin, bowel or brain.
- The stem cells used to grow organoids can either come from adult human cells or more rarely, human embryonic tissue.
- Scientists collect adult cells and then expose them to chemicals in order to revert them into a stem cell-like state. The resulting stem cells are called "induced pluripotent stem cells" (iPSC), which can be made to grow into any kind of tissue.
- To give rise to a minibrain, scientists embed these stem cells in a protein-rich matrix, a substance that supports the cells as they divide and form a 3D shape. Alternatively, the cells may be grown atop a physical, 3D scaffold.

2. Mangal Pandey

- He is considered the hero of the first war of Independence, also known as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857.
- He was born on July 19, 1827 near Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh.
- In 1849, Pandey joined the army of the British East India Company and served as a sepoy in the 6th Company of the 34th Bengal Native Infantry in Barrackpore.
- Rebellion against East India Company:
- He revolted against the East India Company for introducing cartridges that were greased with animal fat as it hurt the religious sentiments of the soldiers.
- This movement of rebels reached other parts of India and led to a mass revolt against the colonial rulers

3. Satpula dam

- Satpula ('sat' means seven and 'pull' means openings of a bridge) was constructed during the reign of Sultan Muhammad Shah Tughlaq (1325-1351).
- It was built using Delhi quartz — a stone found in the Aravallis.
- It was developed as an integral component of defence wall of the fourth city of Delhi, Jahanpanah. The dam served two purposes: Providing a reliable source of water for irrigation, and acting as a defence against possible intruders.
- It was developed by identifying appropriate topography, i.e., a large open plain where water can be stored for irrigating large flat lands. Hence, this structure with sluice gates and a reservoir was developed.
- Since Sufi saint Nasiruddin Mahmud (popularly known as Chirag Dehlavi) used to live nearby, people used to believe that the canal water had healing properties.

4. Oceanic Niño Index

- It is the primary indicator for monitoring the ocean part of the seasonal climate pattern called the El Niño-Southern Oscillation, or "ENSO".
- It tracks the running 3-month average sea surface temperatures in the east-central tropical Pacific between 120°-170°W, near the International Dateline, and whether they are warmer or cooler than average.
- Index values of +0.5 or higher indicate El Niño and values of -0.5 or lower indicate La Niña

Prelims Track Question

Q1. Consider the following pair

1. POSHAN yojna: mid day meal provided to school
2. PM Matsya Sampada Yojana: for farmers in the fisheries sector
3. Svamitva Yojana : mapping of properties in villages with the help of drones

How many of the Pairs given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q2. Consider the following statements about AUKUS Grouping

1. It is a trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific, between Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS) which was signed in 2021.
2. India and Japan are its observing member
3. Its Indo-pacific orientation makes it an alliance against China's assertive actions in the South China Sea.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q3. Consider the following statements about

1. For prevention of money laundering, there is separate provision in constitution
2. stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
3. If anyone under the age of sixteen years or is a woman or is sick or infirm, may be released on bail, if the Special Court so directs

How many of the statements given above is/are INcorrect?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q4. Consider the following statements about

1. Suvidha Portal developed by CERT-In to ensure a level playing field upholding the democratic principles of free, fair and transparent elections.
2. It caters to a diverse range of permission requests transparently on the First in First Out principle.
3. Political parties and candidates can seamlessly submit permission requests online from anywhere, at any time.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q5. Consider the following statements

1. "Article 51A of the Constitution provides that the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.
2. Clause (g) of Article 48A stipulates that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures.
3. Article 21 recognises the right to life and personal liberty

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q.6 Consider the following statements

1. Indian currently have single rate of 12% GST
2. GST revenues to be shared with the third tier of the government created by the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution.
3. taxes such as carbon taxes on a few demerit goods like hydrocarbons, is now applicable

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q7. Consider the following statements

1. Periods of economic slowdown can lead to a decrease in venture capital (VC) funding for startups.
2. During these periods, startups may struggle to raise capital, hindering their growth potential.
3. The government can implement policies to mitigate the impact of economic slowdowns on startups, such as loan guarantees or tax breaks.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q8. Consider the following statements about Windfall Profit

1. Windfall profits arise when companies experience a sudden and significant increase in profits due to external factors beyond their control.
2. Windfall profits are often associated with unexpected events like a surge in commodity prices, government policy changes, or natural disasters.
3. The government may impose a windfall profit tax to capture a share of these unexpected gains, aiming to redistribute wealth or discourage profiteering during such situations.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q9. The Clinical Establishments (Central Government) Rules, 2012

1. The Rules, 2012 were enacted to regulate the functioning of medical facilities in India.
2. These rules establish a system for registration and classification of clinical establishments based on the type of services offered and bed capacity.
3. The rules mandate adherence to Standard Treatment Guidelines and maintenance of Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) for patients.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

Q10. Consider the following statements

Statement I: Health falls under union list under seventh schedule but states are responsible for implementing health policies

Statement II: The Constitution not only mandates the state to enhance public health but also endows the panchayats and municipalities to strengthen public health under Article 243G.

Which one of the following statements is correct?

- A. Statement I is correct but statement II is incorrect
- B. Statement I is incorrect but Statement II is correct
- C. Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II is the correct explanation for Statement I
- D. Both Statement I and Statement II are incorrect and Statement II is not the correct explanation for Statement I

Prelims Track Answer

Answer 1 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Pradhan Mantri POSHAN Scheme -PM POSHAN is a centrally sponsored scheme by the Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education. Under this scheme, one hot cooked meal will be provided to the children studying in Government and Government - aided schools.
- PM Matsya Sampada Yojana- Nationwide welfare measures for farmers in the fisheries sector. For the period 2020-2024 estimated allocation of ₹20,050 crore (equivalent to ₹220 billion or US\$2.8 billion in 2023) for implementation.
- Svamitva Yojana- To help in mapping of properties in villages with the help of drones. Aims in helping to reduce disputes over property. The portal will help in making it easier for villagers to avail bank loans. **Hence all OPTIONS are correct**

Answer 2 Option B is correct

Explanation

- It is a trilateral security partnership for the Indo-Pacific, between Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS) which was signed in 2021.
- The major highlight of this arrangement is the sharing of US nuclear submarine technology to Australia.
- Its Indo-pacific orientation makes it an alliance against China's assertive actions in the South China Sea.
- It involves a new architecture of meetings and engagements between the three countries, as well as cooperation across emerging technologies (applied AI, quantum technologies and undersea capabilities).

Hence statements 1&3 ARE correct

Answer 3 Option A is correct

Explanation

- The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA) is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted to prevent money laundering and provide for the confiscation of property derived from money laundering. **Hence statements 1 IS INCORRECT**
- Section 45 provides for bail on money laundering charges.

- This provision in the law, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
- However, there is a crucial exception to the bail standard.
- "Provided that a person, who is under the age of sixteen years or is a woman or is sick or infirm, may be released on bail, if the Special Court so directs," the law says.
- This exception is similar to exemptions under the Indian Penal Code for women and minors. **Hence statement 2& 3 are correct**

Answer 4 Option B is correct

Explanation

- It is developed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure a level playing field upholding the democratic principles of free, fair and transparent elections. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It streamlined the process of obtaining and acting upon requests for permissions and facilities from political parties and candidates during the election period.
- It caters to a diverse range of permission requests transparently on the First in First Out principle. **Hence, statement 2 AND 3 correct.**
- Political parties and candidates can seamlessly submit permission requests online from anywhere, at any time.

Answer 5 Option A is correct

Explanation

- "Article 48A of the Constitution provides that the State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country.
- Clause (g) of Article 51A stipulates that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures. **Hence, statement 1 and 2 are incorrect.**
- Article 21 recognises the right to life and personal liberty while Article 14 indicates that all persons shall have equality before law and the equal protection of laws. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**

Answer 6 Option D is correct

Explanation

- A single GST rate of 12%, with revenues shared equally with all the tiers of the government and Union Territories, be introduced at the earliest.
- The countries having a single rate and simple GST or VAT laws have been successful in optimising tax revenue and minimising tax disputes
- Of countries with GST or VAT systems, 80% have opted for a single tax rate, including Singapore, New Zealand, the United Arab Emirates, and Japan.
- Stating that a single GST rate is “an unmet goal” in India, he recalled that a single rate of 12% had been recommended by the 13th Finance Commission “very early on in the GST debate”.
- The revolutionary reform of introduction of a single GST rate, with additional non-VAT-able taxes such as carbon taxes on a few demerit goods like hydrocarbons, is now essential
- Share GST with local bodies’
- The veteran economist also pleaded for GST revenues to be shared with the third tier of the government created by the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution.

Hence all statements are INcorrect

Answer 7 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Economic slowdown refers to a period of decreased economic activity, often characterized by slower growth or even contraction in GDP. This can lead to:
- Reduced investor confidence: Investors become more cautious during slowdowns, leading them to be less willing to invest in risky ventures like startups.
- Tighter credit conditions: Banks may become stricter in lending, making it harder for startups to access loans.
- Impact on startups: Startups often rely heavily on VC funding for growth. A decrease in funding can lead to:
- Hindered growth: Startups may be forced to slow down expansion plans or even lay off employees.

- Innovation slowdown: Reduced funding can limit investment in research and development, hindering innovation.
- Government intervention: Governments can play a role in mitigating the impact of slowdowns on startups through:
- Loan guarantees: The government can provide guarantees for loans taken by startups, reducing risk for banks and encouraging them to lend.
- Tax breaks: Tax breaks can provide financial relief for startups during difficult periods, allowing them to conserve resources and focus on core operations. **All three statements are correct.**

Answer 8 Option C is correct

Explanation

- Windfall profits are unexpected and often temporary surges in profits that companies experience due to external factors. These factors are typically outside the company's control and not a result of its core business strategies.
- Common causes of windfall profits include:
- Commodity price fluctuations: A sudden increase in the price of oil, minerals, or other commodities can significantly boost the profits of companies that produce or trade those resources.
- Government policies: Changes in government policies, such as tax cuts or subsidies, can create windfall gains for specific industries.
- Natural disasters: Disruptions caused by natural disasters can create temporary shortages, leading to higher prices for companies that can still deliver essential goods or services.
- Windfall profit tax is a one-time or temporary tax levied by the government on these unexpected profits. The purpose of this tax can be:
- Revenue generation: The government can use the tax revenue to fund social programs or public investments.
- **Hence all statements are correct**

Answer 9 Option C is correct

Explanation

- The Clinical Establishments (Central Government) Rules, 2012, are a set of regulations formulated under the Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010. These rules aim to:
- Improve healthcare quality: By establishing minimum standards for infrastructure, staffing, and services offered by medical facilities.
- Ensure patient safety: Through regulations on infection control, bio-medical waste management, and proper record-keeping.
- Promote transparency and accountability: By mandating registration and classification of facilities, allowing for easier monitoring and grievance redressal.
- Registration and Classification: Clinical establishments are categorized based on factors like bed capacity, specialties offered, and diagnostic procedures performed. This determines the level of registration required (provisional or permanent) and the specific regulations applicable.

- Standard Treatment Guidelines: The rules require adherence to treatment guidelines issued by the Central or State governments. These guidelines aim to standardize medical practices and ensure evidence-based care.
- Electronic Medical Records (EMRs): The rules encourage or mandate (depending on the government directive) the maintenance of EMRs for patients. This facilitates better record-keeping, improves care coordination, and enhances transparency.

Hence all statements are correct

Answer 10 Option B is correct

Explanation

- The Constitution not only mandates the state to enhance public health but also endows the panchayats and municipalities to strengthen public health under Article 243G. **Hence, statement 2 is correct**
- Given that health is a state subject and the UHC policy is envisaged at the national level, there is a need for discourses on implementation. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect**



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