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November 1st week Current Affairs MCQ

1. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently (Nov 2023) permitted SBI Mutual Fund to purchase up to what percentage of IndusInd Bank?

- (a) 99%
- (b) 92%
- (c) 85%
- (d) 76%
- (e) 69%

Answer: A

SBI Mutual Fund has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to acquire a stake of up to **99% in IndusInd Bank**, a private sector lender.

The approval is conditional on compliance with RBI regulations, as well as foreign exchange and capital market regulations.

As per RBI guidance, SBI MF will acquire the shareholding in IndusInd Bank within one year, i.e., by **10, 2024**.

SBI MF must ensure that the aggregate holding in the bank does not exceed 9.99% of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the bank at all times.

Recent News :

In September 2023 SBI Mutual Fund acquired an approximately **8% stake** in the online gaming company Nazara Technologies Ltd. for Rs 410 crore.

In May 2023 the RBI allowed SBI Funds Management Ltd. to acquire a **9.99% stake** in

HDFC Bank Ltd. and had recommended the company do so within six months.

About SBI Mutual Fund :

Founded : 1987

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

MD & CEO : Shamsheer Singh

SBIFMPL is a joint venture between the **State Bank of India (SBI)**, an Indian public sector bank, and **Amundi**, a European asset management company.

SBI currently holds a **63% stake** in SBIFMPL and the **37% stake** is held by AMUNDI Asset Management through a wholly-owned subsidiary, Amundi India Holding.

About IndusInd Bank :

Founded : April 1994

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

MD & CEO : Sumant Kathpalia.

Tagline : We Make You Feel Richer

2. Recently (Nov 2023), Which city-based payment aggregator, Paysharp Private Limited, an RBI-approved entity in principle, obtained ISO / IEC 27001: 2022 certification, an internationally accepted standard for information security management systems?

- (a) Bangalore
- (b) Chennai
- (c) Kolkata
- (d) Pune
- (e) Jaipur

Answer: B

Paysharp Private Limited, an RBI in-principle approved payment aggregator based in Chennai, has achieved **ISO / IEC 27001: 2022 certification**, an internationally recognised standard for **information security management systems**.

Paysharp primarily facilitates **non-card-based payments**, such as UPI (Unified Payments Interface) payments.

Paysharp is an existing payment aggregator that has received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to onboard merchants onto its platform.

About ISO/IEC 27001: 2022 Certification :

ISO/IEC 27001: 2022 is an **international standard** that outlines the requirements for managing information security.

Originally published jointly by the **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)** and the **International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)** in 2005, it was subsequently revised in 2013 and 2022.

The framework specifies the requirements for establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continually improving an **(ISMS) information security management system** within the context of the organisation.

It also includes requirements for the assessment and treatment of information security risks associated with people, processes, and technology aspects to create business value and protect business image and reputation.

About Paysharp :

Paysharp is a **4-year-old Company** that closed two rounds of funding.

The last funding was in **March 2023** with a 200 crore valuation.

The company provides various UPI collection solutions for business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) businesses.

3. How many members did the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) form specifically to streamline the wording of insurance policies under L Viswanathan?

- (a) 8
- (b) 10
- (c) 12
- (d) 6
- (e) 4

Answer: C

The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has established a **12-member committee** with the specific purpose of simplifying insurance policy wording.

The committee will be chaired by **L Viswanathan**, who is a member of the **Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC)**.

The committee's composition includes the Secretary Generals of the Life Insurance and General Insurance Council, the president of the **Insurance Brokers Association of India**

(IBAI), and the Principal Officer of the **State Bank of India (Corporate Agent)**.

Additionally, it comprises other senior members from the insurance industry. The committee also has the flexibility to include external experts if deemed necessary.

The decision to create this committee arises from IRDAI's recognition that insurance policyholders often struggle to comprehend the complex language and terms in insurance policy contracts.

This complexity hinders their ability to make informed decisions when purchasing insurance policies.

About IRDAI :

Established : 1999

Headquarters : Hyderabad, Telangana

Chairperson : Debasish Panda

The IRDAI is a **statutory body** under the jurisdiction of the **Ministry of Finance (MoF)**, Government of India (GoI) and is tasked with regulating and licensing the insurance and reinsurance industries in India.

4. Who was named the 37th National Games' official sponsor, held in Goa 2023?

- (a) Yono
- (b) PhonePe
- (c) Paytm
- (d) Mobikwik
- (e) GPay

Answer: C

Paytm has been designated as the **official sponsor** for the **37th National Games** held in **Goa**.

The 37th National Games were inaugurated by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** at the **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium** in **Fatorda**.

This marks the **first time** that the National Games are being organized in the state of **Goa**.

The event is scheduled to take place from **October 26 to November 9, 2023**.

More than 10,000 athletes will be participating in over 43 sports disciplines, and the games will be hosted across 28 venues.

This event, styled after the Olympics, sees the participation of 28 states and 8 union territories, making it a significant sporting spectacle in India.

Recent News :

In July 2023, the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** announced fantasy gaming unicorn **Dream11** as the **Indian cricket team's new lead sponsor**.

About Paytm :

Headquarters: Noida

Founder and CEO: Vijay Shekhar Sharma.

Paytm Parent organization: **One97 Communications**

5. Recent (Nov 2023) Frequent term SASF, Which year did the Government of India create the Stressed Asset Stabilisation Fund (SASF) as a trust?

- (a) 2016
- (b) 2012
- (c) 2010
- (d) 2008
- (e) 2004

Answer: E

India's first bad bank, the stressed asset stabilisation fund (SASF), a special purpose vehicle for housing bad loans that was created two decades ago is being wound down as it approaches the end of its life cycle.

About SASF :

The Stressed Asset Stabilization Fund (SASF) was established as a trust by the Government of India in **September 2004**.

Its **primary purpose** was to isolate the bad loans of IDBI Bank and create a separate entity to help the bank achieve a cleaner balance sheet.

SASF was set up with a defined life cycle of **20 years**.

A process has been initiated to evaluate about **400 non-performing loans** that were transferred to the trust, and these loans have continued to remain non-performing.

Approximately **9,000 crore** of non-performing loans from IDBI Bank were transferred to the SASF when it was established.

The trust has successfully recovered around Rs. 6,000 crore from the stressed accounts, which amounts to about two-thirds of the non-performing loans.

SASF served as a precursor to the **National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL)**, which was announced by the Indian government in **2021**.

NARCL's purpose is to segregate and manage bad loans from multiple banks.

6. For NPS subscribers, the Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority (PFRDA) permits a Systematic Lumpsum Withdrawal (SLW) provision. How much percentage of money can pensioners withdraw regularly?

- (a) 60%
- (b) 50%
- (c) 40%
- (d) 30%
- (e) 20%

Answer: A

The Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority (PFRDA) allows a **Systematic Lumpsum Withdrawal (SLW)** facility for NPS subscribers; pensioners can withdraw up to **60%** of funds periodically.

Subscribers to the NPS now have the option to use the **Systematic Lumpsum Withdrawal (SLW)** facility to automatically take **60%** of their pension corpus.

National Pension System (NPS) subscribers can use the **SLW facility periodically (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or annually)** for a period till **75 years of age**.

Earlier, the lump sum amount could be withdrawn in a single tranche or could be withdrawn annually.

In the case of annual withdrawal, the NPS subscriber was required to start the withdrawal each time and authorised.

NPS subscribers can now choose for a one-time request to opt for an automated periodic withdrawal.

After setting up an SLW, an NPS subscriber can also cancel it anytime to claim the balance of the 60% corpus.

Once an SLW is created, new contributions to the account are prohibited.

In the starting, a periodic withdrawal facility under SLW is being implemented only for Tier-I accounts. Later, it will be available for Tier II accounts also.

About NPS:

The National Pension System (NPS) is a pension scheme launched by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) in India in 2004.

It is mandatory for government servants who joined the service on or after January 1, 2004.

For others, it is a voluntary scheme. It allows subscribers to contribute towards their retirement savings during their working life.

It is open to all Indian citizens between the ages of 18 and 70 years.

7. Which of the following states is not removed from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)'s grey list?

- (a) Jordan
- (b) Albania
- (c) Cayman Islands
- (d) Bulgaria
- (e) Panama

Answer: D

The **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** has removed the **Cayman Islands** from its grey list.

It has added **Bulgaria** to the grey list in its review published on **27 October 2023**.

FATF has also removed **Panama, Jordan and Albania** from the grey list.

FATF has added Bulgaria to the grey list.

The Cayman Islands was added to the grey list in 2021.

It was in the news during the investigation into charges made by Hindenburg Research against the Adani Group.

As per the National Securities Depository (NSDL) website, 385 foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) registered in India are based in the Cayman Islands.

The Cayman Islands is seen as an important jurisdiction for both FPI and FDI flows into India.

The jurisdictions included in the grey list are placed under increased monitoring.

About FATF

Founded: 1989

Headquarters: Paris, France

President: T Raja Kumar

8. As per the recent news on November 2023, Which state will commemorate Mera Houchongba, the yearly festival?

- (a) Assam
- (b) Chattisgarh
- (c) Bihar
- (d) Manipur
- (e) Odisha

Answer: D

In Manipur, the annual festival – Mera Houchongba will be celebrated at Kangla in Imphal.

The festival is held to foster and consolidate relations among hill tribes and valley people of Manipur.

Manipur Chief Minister **Biren Singh** along with the titular king of Manipur and Member of Rajya Sabha **Leishemba Sanajaoba** will inaugurate the festival at Kangla, the erstwhile royal palace of Manipur.

The festival is traditionally observed and celebrated during the month of 'Mera,' which typically falls in either **September or October**.

The term 'Houchongba' itself translates to 'intermingling' or 'amalgamation.'

The festival is designed to symbolize and promote the concept of bringing people together and fostering unity among different communities in Manipur.

About Manipur :

Governor : Anusuiya Uikey

Chief Minister : N. Biren Singh

Capital : Imphal

9. On November 2023, Which state's Forest Department introduced the Hostile Activity Watch Kernel (HAWK) system in partnership with the Wildlife Trust of India?

- (a) Punjab
- (b) Andhra Pradesh
- (c) Rajasthan
- (d) Karnataka
- (e) Gujarat

Answer: D

The **Karnataka Forest Department**, in collaboration with the **Wildlife Trust of India**, introduced the **Hostile Activity Watch Kernel (HAWK) system**.

About HAWK System :

Hostile Activity Watch Kernel (HAWK) system is a **Cloud-based Information Management System** designed to manage interlinked databases of wildlife crime, wildlife criminals, and wildlife mortality.

Aim: To enable officials to analyze information and generate actionable intelligence for preventing wildlife crimes and **combating the Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT)**.

The system connects the entire state forest department in real-time and provides restricted access through access levels.

HAWK is a large ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) model cloud-based system that

uses both mobile and desktop interfaces for data management.

The entire HAWK system is divided into various modules that are interconnected with individual stand-alone functions.

The development of HAWK began in 2017 in the state of Kerala, initiated by a joint team of the Kerala Forest Department and the Wildlife Trust of India.

The system was officially launched in Kerala in 2019 and has since become the official system of the state forest department.

In 2022, the Karnataka Forest Department initiated the implementation of a customized version of HAWK in partnership with the ICT cell of the Karnataka Forest Department, and the system is currently being implemented across the state.

About Karnataka :

Governor : Thawar Chand Gehlot

Chief Minister : Siddaramaiah

Capital : Bangalore

National Park : Bandipur National Park, Anshi National Park

Wildlife Sanctuary : Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary.

10. Who was chosen by the State Bank of India (SBI) to be its official brand ambassador recently (Nov 2023)?

- (a) Hardik Pandya
- (b) Mahendra Singh Dhoni
- (c) Rohit Sharma
- (d) Shubman Gill

(e) Virat Kohli

Answer: B

The **State Bank of India (SBI)**, the country's largest lender, has appointed cricketing legend **Mahendra Singh Dhoni** as its **official Brand Ambassador**.

Aim of the Appointment: To strengthen SBI's connection, particularly with the younger population.

Role: As the brand ambassador of SBI, Dhoni will play a pivotal role in various marketing and promotional campaigns for the bank.

Among public sector banks, other notable sports figures serving as brand ambassadors include badminton players **PV Sindhu** and **K Srikanth**, as well as cricketer **Shafali Verma**, who are brand ambassadors for Bank of Baroda.

About Mahendra Singh Dhoni :

Dhoni was born in Ranchi, Bihar (now in Jharkhand).

He served as the **captain** of the Indian national cricket team in limited-overs formats from 2007 to 2017 and in Test cricket from 2008 to 2014.

He is recognized as the **only cricket captain** in the world to win all three of the major ICC trophies: the 2011 ICC World Cup, the 2007 T20I World Cup, and the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy.

Awards & Honors :

Dhoni has received several prestigious awards and honours, including India's highest

sports award, the **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award** in 2008.

The Government of India honoured him with the **Padma Shri** in 2009, the country's fourth-highest civilian award.

Dhoni was also awarded the **Padma Bhushan** in 2018, India's third-highest civilian award, in recognition of his contributions to cricket at the international level.

About SBI :

Established : 1955

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra

Chairman : Dinesh Kumar Khara

MD : Ashwini Kumar Tewari

Tagline : The Banker to Every Indian

November 2nd week Current Affairs MCQ

1. When will the Reserve Bank of India's guidelines on Information Technology Governance, Risk, Controls, and Assurance Practices become effective?

- (a) March 31, 2024
- (b) April 1, 2024
- (c) May 1, 2024
- (d) June 1, 2024
- (e) July 1, 2024

Answer: B

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued comprehensive guidelines on information technology (IT) governance and controls for banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

Strategic alignment: Ensuring that IT strategies align with the business goals.

Risk management: Managing IT-related risks, including cybersecurity risks.

Resource management: Efficient allocation and management of IT resources.

Performance management: Monitoring and improving IT system performance.

Business continuity/disaster recovery management: Ensuring the resilience of IT systems and infrastructure.

These guidelines are outlined in the final document titled "**Reserve Bank of India (Information Technology Governance, Risk, Controls, and Assurance Practices) Directions, 2023.**"

The directions will become effective from **April 1, 2024.**

IT Service Management Framework : Regulated entities (REs) are required to establish a robust IT Service Management Framework to support their information systems and infrastructure, ensuring operational resilience of their IT environment.

Data Migration Policy: REs must have a documented data migration policy to ensure

data integrity, completeness, and consistency during data migration.

The policy shall, inter alia, contain provisions pertaining to sign offs from business users and application owners at each stage of migration, maintenance of audit trails, etc.

Risk Management : According to the directions, the risk management policy of the RE should include IT related risks, including the cyber security related risks, and the risk management committee of the board (RMCB) should periodically review and update the same at least on a yearly basis.

Cyber Incident Analysis : The central bank further stated that REs should analyse cyber incidents for their severity, impact and root cause. They should take measures, corrective and preventive, to mitigate the adverse impact of incidents on business operations.

Established : 1 April 1935

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Governor : Shaktikanta Das

Deputy Governors : Swaminathan Janakiraman, Michael Patra, M. Rajeshwar Rao, T Rabi Sankar

2. Which entity collaborated with IndusInd Bank to introduce the "IndusInd Bank Platinum RuPay Credit Card"?

- (a) Mastercard
- (b) American Express
- (c) Visa
- (d) Discover Financial Services

(e) National Payments Corporation of India

Answer: E

IndusInd Bank has introduced the "IndusInd Bank Platinum RuPay Credit Card" in partnership with the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**.

This credit card enables customers to make **online and offline transactions** through the RuPay network.

UPI Integration: A distinctive feature of this credit card is its integration with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

Customers can link their credit cards to UPI-enabled apps, simplifying payment processes.

UPI Rewards: The integration with UPI allows users to earn rewards on their UPI transactions, adding an incentive for customers.

Rewards Flexibility: Users of this credit card have the flexibility to redeem their reward points in various ways, including converting them into statement credit, airmiles, or choosing from a range of voucher options through 'IndusMoments.'

Expanding the Offer: IndusInd Bank joins other banks, including Punjab National Bank, Union Bank, Indian Bank, HDFC Bank, Canara Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and BFSL, in offering the RuPay Credit Card on the UPI platform.

With this IndusInd Bank became the **16th bank** to enable UPI linkage.

UPI Credit Card Management: RuPay Credit Cards on the UPI platform allow users to link their credit card accounts using their registered mobile number and engage in payment transactions. Payments can be made by scanning a UPI QR code, with transaction authentication through a UPI PIN.

In Aug 2023, IndusInd Bank and Tiger Fintech Private Limited, a Bajaj Capital Group company, announced the launch of the **IndusInd Bank Tiger Credit Card**, a co-branded credit card powered by Visa.

Founded : April 1994

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

MD & CEO : Sumant Kathpalia.

Tagline : We Make You Feel Richer

Founded : 2008

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

MD & CEO : Dilip Asbe

The NPCI is an umbrella organization for **operating retail payments and settlement systems** in India.

It is an initiative of the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and **Indian Banks' Association (IBA)** under the provisions of the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**, for creating a robust Payment & Settlement Infrastructure in India.

3. Which institution partnered with the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) to foster

innovation and entrepreneurship in the food processing sector?

- (a) State Bank of India (SBI)
- (b) ICICI Bank
- (c) Axis Bank
- (d) HDFC Bank
- (e) Punjab National Bank (PNB)

Answer: D

The **National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM)**, Kundli, and **HDFC Bank** have signed a statement of intent to nurture innovation and entrepreneurship in **food processing and allied sectors**.

NIFTEM Kundli will launch a special programme calling innovators and start-ups across the country, who have novel ideas in food processing technology and related areas, under this initiative.

The selected start-ups will be offered incubation support at NIFTEM wherein HDFC Bank under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative will provide seed funding grants for launching or scaling up their enterprise.

The program will be executed by **NIFTEM Technology Innovation and Business Incubation Foundation (NTIBIF)**, a section 8 company technology business incubator (TBI) established by NIFTEM to foster entrepreneurship in the food processing sector.

Founded : 1st July 2023 (via the merger between HDFC-HDFC bank)

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

MD & CEO : Sashidhar Jagdishan

Tagline : We Understand Your World

Director : Harinder Singh Oberoi

4. Which bank attained the leading position among Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) lenders for both loan growth and deposit growth during the second quarter of the current financial year?

- (a) Punjab National Bank (PNB)
- (b) Canara Bank
- (c) Bank of Baroda (BoB)
- (d) Bank of Maharashtra (BoM)
- (e) Union Bank of India

Answer: D

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) secured the **top position among Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) lenders** in terms of loan growth in percentage terms during Q2 of the current financial year.

BoM also achieved the **top position among PSU lenders** in deposit growth in percentage terms for the same quarter.

BoM maintained its top position in obtaining **low-cost Current Account and Savings Account (CASA) deposits**.

The bank recorded remarkable growth, with over **20% increases** in both deposits and advances during this period.

This growth rate is the highest among all public sector banks for the **July-September period**.

The gross domestic advances of Bank of Maharashtra grew to **1,83,122 crore** by the end of September 2023, with a growth rate of **23.55%**.

Indian Overseas Bank, Central Bank of India, and UCO Bank followed Bank of Maharashtra with growth rates of **20.29%, 17.26%, and 16.53%**, respectively.

India's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI), achieved the **7th position** in domestic advances with a growth rate of **13.21%**, even though it had significantly higher total loans compared to Bank of Maharashtra.

SBI's total loans were nearly **16 times higher than** Bank of Maharashtra's in absolute terms, with **28,84,007 crore** for SBI and **1,75,676 crore** for Bank of Maharashtra.

In terms of deposit growth, Bank of Maharashtra witnessed **22.18% growth**.

It mobilized **2,39,298 crore** at the end of September 2023.

Established : 16 September 1935

Headquarters : Pune, Maharashtra

MD & CEO : A. S. Rajeev

Tagline : One Family One Bank

5. Which institution served as the 'knowledge partner' for the Women for Water, Water for Women Campaign, a 3-day initiative launched

by the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry in celebration of Jal Diwali?

- (a) Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee
- (b) Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)
- (c) Odisha Urban Academy
- (d) National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)
- (e) Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT)

Answer: C

3-day Women for Water, Water for Women Campaign launched by the **Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry**.

The Ministry has launched this campaign to celebrate Jal Diwali.

The Ministry has launched this progressive initiative under its flagship scheme – **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)**.

The **National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM)** of the Ministry is also participating in this scheme.

Odisha Urban Academy is its 'knowledge partner'.

The celebration of this "Jal Diwali" campaign will continue till **November 9, 2023**.

Under this three-day campaign, women self-help groups will visit more than five hundred and fifty water treatment plants.

Its objective is to involve women in water management.

They will be provided first-hand information about water treatment processes through

visits to Water Treatment Plants (WTP) in their respective cities.

There are more than 3,000 water treatment plants in India, with a constructed water treatment capacity of more than 65,000 MLD and an operational capacity of more than 55,000 MLD.

During this campaign, women self-help groups (SHGs) will visit more than 550 water treatment plants, whose combined operational capacity is more than 20,000 MLD (more than 35% of the total capacity of the country).

The first phase of the campaign "Jal Diwali" will see participation from all States/UTs (except 5 States under the Model Code of Conduct) with the expected participation of more than 15,000 Self-Help Group women nationwide.

6. What is the numerical position of Chile as a member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)?

- (a) 80th
- (b) 110th
- (c) 95th
- (d) 75th
- (e) 120th

Answer: C

Chile has become the **95th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.

It handed over the instrument of ISA ratification during the meeting of **Ambassador Juan Angulo of Chile** with the Joint Secretary



(Economic Diplomacy) in the Ministry of External Affairs.

The meeting was held in New Delhi.

International Solar Alliance (ISA) was co-founded by India and France.

India and France jointly launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 30 November 2015 at COP21 in Paris, France.

Presently, 116 countries are signatories to the ISA Framework Agreement.

Out of these, 95 countries have submitted the necessary instruments of ratification to become full members of the ISA.

The alliance is particularly concerned with enabling countries, especially those identified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to pursue low-carbon growth paths.

The ISA's ambitious goal is to facilitate \$1 trillion in investments for solar energy by 2030 while working on reducing the costs associated with technology and financing.

Founded: 30 November 2015

President: R. K. Singh

Founders: Narendra Modi, François Hollande

ISA is an intergovernmental organization whose headquarters is located in Gurugram, Haryana.

7. Which edition of Ganga Utsav was recently (Nov 2023) organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga in New Delhi?

(a) 7th

(b) 5th

(c) 3rd

(d) 9th

(e) 11th

Answer: A

The 7th edition of Ganga Utsav was organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga in New Delhi and was inaugurated by the Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ms Debashree Mukherjee, in the presence of Special Secretary and Director General, NMCG, Shri G. Asok Kumar.

The event also marked the release of the 33rd edition of Namami Gange Magazine, the new Chacha Chaudhary series and the Voyage of Ganga Booklet, based on Ganga Pustak Parikrama in collaboration with NBT.

The 2nd edition of Ganga Pustak Parikrama was also flagged off by Ms. Debashree Mukherjee, and Mr. G. Asok Kumar.

Ganga Pustak Parikrama will commence its 3-month long journey from Gangotri and pass through all cities and towns on the banks of River Ganga – Uttarkashi, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Bijnor, Meerut, Aligarh, Farrukhabad, Kanpur, Prayagraj, Mirzapur, Varanasi, Chhapra, Patna, Begusarai, Sultanganj, Bhagalpur, Sahibganj, Baharampur, Kolkata, and Haldia – before ending its journey at Gangasagar on 11 January 2024.

Ganga was declared as the National River of India in 2008, which led to the establishment of the National Ganga Day.

Last year a recognition by the United Nations to Namami Gange as one of the top 10 World Restoration Flagships dedicated to the rejuvenation of the natural world during the **15th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) in Montreal, Canada on 14th December 2022**.

8. Which prominent shrine in Kerala will be the focus of a multilingual microsite launched by the Kerala government as part of its initiative to promote religious tourism?

- (a) Guruvayur Temple
- (b) Sabarimala
- (c) Padmanabhaswamy Temple
- (d) Attukal Bhagavathy Temple
- (e) Chottanikkara Devi Temple

Answer: B

The **Kerala government** has undertaken an initiative to launch **multilingual microsites** to promote religious tourism in the state.

These microsites are **aimed** at promoting and boosting pilgrimage tourism in Kerala.

The microsites are designed to showcase the rich cultural and religious heritage of the state.

It will provide information about the significance and importance of key religious sites in Kerala.

One of the microsites will specifically focus on the **renowned Sabarimala shrine**, catering to

audiences in various languages, including Hindi, English, Kannada, Tamil, and Telugu.

The **main objective** is to enhance the pilgrimage experience and provide assistance to visitors.

The **Kerala Tourism Department** has allocated **Rs 61.36 lakh** for the development and maintenance of the **Sabarimala microsite**.

In addition to the Sabarimala microsite, another microsite will focus on Islamic traditions, festivals, art forms, and places of worship in the state.

9. What percentage did Fitch upgrade India's mid-term GDP growth forecast to from its previous estimate?

- (a) 5.8%
- (b) 6.0%
- (c) 6.8%
- (d) 6.5%
- (e) 6.2%

Answer: E

India's **mid-term GDP growth forecast** upgraded by Fitch to **6.2% from 5.5%**.

Rating agency Fitch raised India's gross domestic product (GDP) **medium-term growth forecast by 70 basis points to 6.2%, from 5.5% earlier**.

This cut is mainly due to a large reduction in the estimate of China's supply-side growth potential by 0.7 percentage points.

The agency said in its report that the potential growth of the emerging market has weakened due to China's slow pace.

China's medium-term growth forecast has been reduced from 5.3% to 4.6%.

Fitch has said that India's growth rate for 2023-24 is expected to be 6.3%.

The forecast for Russia has been reduced from 1.6% to 0.8%, for Korea from 2.3% to 2.1% and for South Africa from 1.2% to 1%.

10. Which television show launched by COLORS aims to address the issue of girl child abandonment as part of its collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' initiative?

- (a) Pragati
- (b) Udaan
- (c) Doree
- (d) Sanskar
- (e) Naya Raasta

Answer: C

COLORS, India's leading Hindi GEC, announced its **collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development's 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' initiative**, to address the issue of girl child abandonment, through the launch of its new fiction show **Doree**.

Television as a medium has played a huge role in holding a mirror to society and led to many women becoming agents of change.

With an aim to bring societal change and address the gender bias against girl child, through this association **COLORS** aims to raise awareness about the social evil of girl child abandonment.

In addition to launching a primetime show on the subject, as part of this association, **COLORS will promote the 24-hour emergency toll-free Child helpline number (1098) for those seeking assistance for any abandoned girl child across the nation.**

BBBP is one of the flagship schemes under Mission Shakti that aims towards protection and empowerment of the girl child.

The **Scheme was launched by Prime Minister on January 22, 2015 to addresses the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) and related issues of women's empowerment over a life-cycle continuum.**

It is a Tri-ministerial effort of the Ministries of Women and Child Development (MW&CD), Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MH&FW), and Ministry of Education.

'**COLORS**' is Viacom18's flagship brand in the entertainment space in India. A combination of 'emotions' and 'variety', **COLORS**, launched on 21st July 2008, offers an entire spectrum of emotions to its viewers.

November 3rd week Current Affairs MCQ

1. Which day is set specifically for International Students Day in 2023 every year?

- (a) November 11
- (b) November 13
- (c) November 15
- (d) November 17
- (e) November 19

Answer: D

International Students Day 2023 is observed on the **17th of November 2023**.

When Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933, the Third Reich started aggressive claims over territories outside Germany's borders.

The Nazis first captured Austria in 1938, Hitler's home country.

Next, they forced Czechoslovakia to surrender half of its territories. Germany occupied the Czech regions, forcing Slovakia to split into a satellite state.

In 1939, students of the Medical Faculty at Charles University in Prague held a meeting to commemorate the formation of an independent Czechoslovak Republic.

The Nazis brutally suppressed the gathering, resulting in a student Jan Opletal's death. As a result, the students formed Anti Nazis demonstration.

On **17th November 1939**, the Nazis rounded up nine protesters, executing them without trial.

They arrested over 1,200 students and sent them to concentration camps. Only a few survived in the camp.

International Students' Day, is celebrated on November 17th to remember the courage of student activists during the 1939 Nazi attack at the University of Prague.

The **first observance took place in 1941** at the International Students' Council in London.

It was there that students decided to introduce International Students' Day, to be observed every November 17.

2. Recently (Nov 2023), New names have been added to the Cricket Hall of Fame by the International Cricket Council (ICC). How many cricketers will be on the ICC Hall of Fame list after these additional additions?

- (a) 101
- (b) 112
- (c) 125
- (d) 136
- (e) 143

Answer: B

The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has announced new names to be included in its **Cricket Hall of Fame**.

The new names announced by the ICC are India's legendary opener **Virender Sehwag**, former Indian Women Test skipper **Diana Edulji** and Sri Lanka's iconic star **Aravinda de Silva**.

With these 3 more additions, there will now be **112 cricketers** to be on the ICC Hall of Fame list.

Currently, eight Indian cricketers hold the prestigious honour for their stellar achievements.

They include Sunil Gavaskar, Bishan Singh Bedi, Kapil Dev, Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Vinoo Mankad, Diana Edulji, and Virendra Sehwag.

Sehwag dynamism a destructive opener of the modern era holds a record that is still hard to match.

He is the first Indian with a Triple century and has scored two Triple Hundreds.

Edulji has become the 1st Indian female inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame. As per ICC's statement, Edulji participated in three ICC Women's Cricket World Cups, leading India as captain in 1978 and 1993, when she claimed 14 wickets.

The third inductee of the ICC Hall of Fame was a winner of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup with Sri Lanka in 1996.

The Sri Lankan batter was known for his consistency, scoring 20 Test centuries during an 18-year international career which is the third most by any Sri Lanka men's player.

3. Chandigarh Smart City Limited (CSCL) introduced '_____', an interactive chatbot powered by artificial intelligence (AI) to improve citizen-centric services.

- (a) AKBAR
- (b) ASHOKA
- (c) BIRBAL

(d) AURANGZEB

(e) SHAJAHAN

Answer: C

Chandigarh Smart City Limited (CSCL) has launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven interactive chatbot named 'BIRBAL' to enhance citizen-centric services.

The objective of the Chatbot :

To provide efficient and user-friendly citizen services within the local civic body.

About the Chatbot :

'BIRBAL' is equipped to address a wide range of issues, including complaint management, citizen services, public transport services, online payment services, certificates/forms, health-related queries, MC budget inquiries, property details, and fire safety certificate requests.

With the new chatbot, citizens can interact with 'BIRBAL' using keywords, predefined questions, and voice commands.

The AI chatbot incorporates various features such as voice assistance, live agent support, and AI-based response updates to ensure a seamless user experience.

'BIRBAL,' the AI virtual assistant, is developed using ai, a generative AI-powered conversational AI platform.

The development of 'BIRBAL' aligns with the government's commitment towards 'ease of living' by leveraging innovative technology solutions.

4. How much policy-based loan agreement did India sign with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to support effective governance systems, enhance service delivery, and build high-quality urban infrastructure?

- (a) \$100 million
- (b) \$200 million
- (c) \$400 million
- (d) \$900 million
- (e) \$800 million

Answer: C

India signed a \$400 million policy-based loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to create high-quality urban infrastructure, improve service delivery, and promote efficient governance systems.

The program also envisages integrated planning reforms to control urban sprawl and foster systemic and planned urbanisation through enhancing the entire ecosystem of legal, regulatory, and institutional reforms.

Key Highlights :

Sub-Programme Structure :

Sub-programme 1, approved in 2021 with \$350 million financing, focused on establishing national-level policies and guidelines to improve urban services.

Sub-programme 2 supports investment planning and reform actions at the state and urban local body (ULB) levels.

Loan Agreement Details :

The loan agreement for sub-program 2 was signed between Juhi Mukherjee, joint secretary,

department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and Takeo Konishi, country director of ADB's India resident mission.

Support for AMRUT 2.0 :

Sub-program 2 supports the reforms initiated by the states and the ULBs in operationalising the national flagship program of Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 targeted for universal access to water supply and sanitation.

Innovative Financing and Urban Infrastructure Investments :

The initiative aims to help cities mobilize innovative financing methods, including commercial borrowings, municipal bonds, sub-sovereign debts, and public-private partnerships.

This approach is intended to bridge significant deficits in urban infrastructure investments.

About ADB :

Established : 1966

Headquarters : Manila, Philippines

President : Masatsugu Asakawa

Membership : 68 members, including 49 regional members (countries in Asia and the Pacific) and 19 non-regional members (countries outside the region)

About Ministry of Finance :

Cabinet Minister : Nirmala Sitharaman

Minister of State : Bhagwat Karad, Pankaj Choudhar

5. In November 2023, How much has been committed by the US International Building Finance Corporation (DFC) to the Adani Group's building of a deepwater shipping container terminal at the Port of Colombo, Sri Lanka?

- (a) \$993 million
- (b) \$333 million
- (c) \$773 million
- (d) \$223 million
- (e) \$553 million

Answer: E

The United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) has committed \$553 million (around Rs 4,600 crore) for the development of the Adani Group's deepwater shipping container terminal in the Port of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The West Container Terminal in the Port of Colombo is being developed by a consortium comprising Adani Ports and SEZ, John Keells Holdings, and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority.

Key Highlights :

Stakeholders and Ownership :

Adani Ports holds a 51% stake in the container terminal of the port, which also has a terminal run by China Merchants Port Holdings Co Ltd.

China Merchants Holdings Co Ltd and Sri Lanka Ports Authority are jointly developing Colombo's South Container Terminal, the first terminal under expansion in the Colombo port.

The Port of Colombo is the largest and busiest trans-shipment port in the Indian Ocean and

has been operating at over 90% utilisation since 2021, signalling its need for capacity expansion.

Adani Ports and SEZ holds majority equity in the West Container Terminal project, John Keells Holdings owns 34% and the rest is held by the state-run Sri Lanka Ports Authority. Dredging for the terminal commenced in November 2022 and the entire project is slated to be ready by the end of 2025.

The consortium will develop Colombo West International Terminal (CWIT) on a build, operate and transfer (BOT) basis for 35 years.

When commissioned, CWIT will be the largest and deepest container terminal in Sri Lanka.

About United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) :

Established : December 20, 2019

Headquarters : Washington, D.C, United States

CEO : Scott A. Nathan

The United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) is a development finance institution and agency of the United States federal government.

DFC invests in development projects primarily in lower and middle-income countries.

6. Whom did the Ministry of Rural Development's Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) sign an MOU with, which represents a major turning point in the development of women-led businesses in India?

- (a) SIDBI

- (b) RBI
- (c) NABARD
- (d) NHB
- (e) NPCI

Answer: A

DeendayalAntyodayaYojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) under the Ministry of Rural Development and the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that marks a significant milestone in the journey of women-led enterprises in India.

The MOU is set to span **2 years**.

The MOU was inked by DAY-NRLM and SIDBI in the presence of Secretary of Rural Development Shri Shailesh Kumar Singh and Chairman & Managing Director SIDBI Shri Sivasubramanian Ramann.

This strategic partnership brings together the expertise of DAY-NRLM and SIDBI to create a transformative initiative aimed at promoting women-led enterprises among experienced members of **Self Help Groups (SHGs)**.

The primary focus of this collaboration is to demonstrate on-the-ground activities that establish a reliable and sensitive support structure for the capacity enhancement of women entrepreneurs (WEs).

DAY-NRLM Background :

The National Rural Livelihood Mission was launched in **June 2011** and is now known as the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural

Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) in honour of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, a noted philosopher and politician.

The objective of NRLM :

To reduce poverty by promoting diversified and gainful self-employment and wage employment opportunities for rural households, especially women.

The program aims to enhance financial inclusion by promoting community-based institutions and linking them with the formal banking sector.

The Mission consists of **4 components**,, social mobilization, community institution, and capacity building;
financial inclusion;
livelihood promotion;
convergence

About Small Industries Development Bank of India :

Established : 2 April 1990

Headquarters : Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

Chairman & MD : Sivasubramanian Ramann

The SIDBI is the **apex regulatory body** for the overall licensing and regulation of micro, small and medium enterprise finance companies in India.

It is under the jurisdiction of the **Ministry of Finance**, Government of India (GoI).

7. In November 2023, Who presented the India International Trade Fair's Khadi Theme Pavilion

at its grand opening at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi?

- (a) Jegan Kaira
- (b) Karthik Krishna
- (c) Manoj Kumar
- (d) Narayan Rane
- (e) Uthav Jaiyan

Answer: D

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister, Narayan Rane inaugurated the Khadi Theme Pavillion at the India International Trade Fair at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.

The minister visited the pavilion that features 214 stalls showcasing the diverse and traditional craftsmanship from across the country.

Some of the key attractions of the pavilion include spinning wheel charkha, khadi garments, handicrafts, wooden toys, and ayurvedic cosmetics.

The Chairman of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Manoj Kumar said the pavilion has been designed to promote Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and the Vocal for Local initiative.

The stalls embody the prosperity of India's rich heritage, artistry, and craftsmanship.

This time more than 85% of stalls were allocated to first-time participants.

64 MSEs represented aspirational districts of the country.

66 % of stalls were allocated to women entrepreneurs and 55% to enterprises from SC/ST categories free of cost.

The pavilion had representation from 29 States/UTs.

8. Which country benefited greatly from the first experimental shipment of fresh bananas exported via sea route with the assistance of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)?

- (a) Uzbekistan
- (b) North Korea
- (c) Libya
- (d) Netherlands
- (e) Japan

Answer: D

In a significant boost to the prospects of fresh fruit exports, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has facilitated the export of the first trial shipment of fresh bananas to the Netherlands via a sea route.

The trial shipment of bananas to Europe was carried out by the APEDA-registered 'INI Farms – a top exporter of fruits and vegetables from India.

India's Banana Production and Export Scenario :

Despite being the world's largest banana producer, India's export share is currently only one percent in the global market.

India accounts for **26.45%** of the world's banana production at 35.36 million metric tonnes (MMT).

Export Statistics :

In the fiscal year 2022-23, India exported bananas worth **\$176 million**, equivalent to 0.36 MMT.

Top Banana-Producing States :

Andhra Pradesh is the largest banana-producing state in India, followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.

These five states collectively contribute around 67% to India's banana production in the fiscal year 2022-23.

About APEDA :

Headquarters : New Delhi, Delhi

Chairman : Dr.Abhisek Dev

APEDA was established by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry under the **Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, passed by Parliament in December 1985.**

The Act came into effect on February 13, 1986.

APEDA replaced the **Processed Food Export Promotion Council (PFEPIC).**

Responsibilities and Functions :

Monitoring the import of sugar.

Serving as the Secretariat to the National Accreditation Board (NAB) for the accreditation of Certification Bodies under the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) for organic exports.

Functions:-

Providing financial assistance for the development of industries related to scheduled products.

Registration of exporters of scheduled products.

Fixing standards and specifications for scheduled products for export.

Inspection of meat and meat products.

Improving packaging and marketing of scheduled products.

Promoting export-oriented production and development of scheduled products

APEDA is mandated with the responsibility of export promotion and development of the following scheduled products:

Fruits, Vegetables and their Products.

Meat and Meat Products.

Poultry and Poultry Products.

Dairy Products.

Confectionery, Biscuits, and Bakery Products.

Honey, Jaggery, and Sugar Products.

Cocoa and its products, chocolates of all kinds.

Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages.

Cereal and Cereal Products.

Groundnuts, Peanuts, and Walnuts.

Pickles, Papads, and Chutneys.

Guar Gum.

Floriculture and Floriculture Products.

Herbal and Medicinal Plants. De-oiled rice bran.

Green pepper in brine.

Cashew Nuts and Its Products.

Basmati Rice (included in the Second Schedule of the APEDA Act).

About the Netherlands :

Capital : Amsterdam

Currency : euro

9. Which country, renowned for its volcanic eruptions and large number of islands, has recently (Nov 2023) experienced the formation of a new island close to the Ogasawara island chain?

- (a) Canada
- (b) Japan
- (c) Indonesia
- (d) China
- (e) Australia

Answer: B

Japan, known for its volcanic activity and numerous islands, has witnessed the emergence of a new island near the Ogasawara island chain.

A new island has now emerged within the vicinity of Japan's Ogasawara island chain, after the eruption of an underwater volcano in late October 2023.

A **phreatomagmatic eruption** built a new island near Japan's Ogasawara Island group.

Phreatomagmatic Eruption Details :

Phreatomagmatic eruptions involve the interaction of **magma with salt water**, leading to explosive bursts of steam and ash.

These eruptions are primarily responsible for the formation of islands in volcanic regions.

This latest island is not the first instance of volcanic activity giving birth to a new island in the vicinity.

The Ogasawara island chain, also known as the **Bonin Islands**, constitutes a volcanic arc comprising over 30 islands and islets, some of which remain volcanically active.

The Ogasawara Islands are located in the Pacific Ocean's northwestern hemisphere.

The Ogasawara Islands are recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage site in Japan**.

About Japan :

Prime Minister: Fumio Kishida

Capital: Tokyo

Currency: Japanese yen

10. Recently (Nov 2023), Which state is going to be the first to adopt the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) into effect?

- (a) Himachal Pradesh
- (b) Uttarakhand
- (c) Uttar Pradesh
- (d) Chattisgarh
- (e) Haryana

Answer: B

Uttarakhand is set to become the first state to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

The state government is likely to convene a special session of the legislative assembly for this purpose.

The Uniform Civil Code bill is expected to pass during the special session, granting it legal status.

The drafting of the UCC for Uttarakhand has been completed and will be submitted to the state government soon.

Key Highlights :**Committee Formation and Report :**

The Uttarakhand government had on **May 27, 2022**, set up the expert committee for the implementation of the UCC and to check all relevant laws that control personal citizen matters for people living in the state.

The **five-member committee**, led by former Supreme Court judge, **Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai**, is expected to hand over its report to the government soon.

Constitutional Basis :

The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is mentioned in **Article 44 of the Constitution**.

Scope of UCC :

The Uniform Civil Code is a set of laws that deals with marriage, divorce, inheritance, and

adoption, among other personal matters which apply to all citizens equally regardless of their religion.

In the Shah Bano case in 1985, the Supreme Court ruled that “Parliament should outline the contours of a common civil code as it is an instrument that facilitates national harmony and equality before the law.”

Gujarat is also planning to implement the Uniform Civil Code before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

About Uttarakhand:

Capital: Dehradun

Chief Minister: Pushkar Singh Dhami

Governor: Gurmit Singh

National Parks: Govind National Park, Nanda Devi National Park, Gangotri National Park, Rajaji National Park, Jim Corbett National Park

November 4th week Current Affairs MCQ

1. Who among the following has been approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to serve as director on Reliance Capital's board as part of the Hinduja Group's resolution plan?

- (a) Amar Chintopanth
- (b) Shardchandra V Zaregaonkar
- (c) Moses Newling Harding John
- (d) Bhumika Batra

(e) All the above

Answer: E

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) grants approval for Hinduja Group's resolution plan for Reliance Capital (RCap), paving the way for the group's takeover of RCap.

RBI approves Hinduja Group to appoint **5 directors** on the board of RCap, contingent



upon the **National Company Law Tribunal's (NCLT) approval** of the resolution plan.

The **5 directors** approved by RBI from the Hinduja Group are **Amar Chintopanth, Shardchandra V Zaregaonkar, Moses Newling Harding John, Bhumika Batra, and Arun Tiwari.**

Any change in the shareholding of the resolution applicant (Hinduja Group) post-implementation of the resolution plan requires prior approval from the RBI.

It also directed RCap that a copy of the NCLT approval, once accorded, be submitted to the RBI.

Hinduja Group's company IHL emerged as the highest bidder with an offer of **Rs 9,650 crore** in the second round of the auction held in April to take over debt-ridden Reliance Capital.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on **November 29, 2021**, superseded the board of Reliance Capital in view of payment defaults and serious governance issues.

The RBI appointed Nageswara Rao Y as the administrator in relation to the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) of the firm.

Reliance Capital is the **third large non-banking financial company (NBFC)** against which the central bank has initiated bankruptcy proceedings under the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).**

The other two were **Srei Group NBFC and Dewan Housing Finance Corporation (DHFL).**

Established : 1 April 1935

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Governor : Shaktikanta Das

Deputy Governors : Swaminathan Janakiraman, Michael Patra, M. Rajeshwar Rao, T Rabi Sankar

2. Which financial institution has recently (Nov 2023) engaged in a strategic corporate tie-up with HDFC Life to extend life insurance products to its clientele?

- (a) Karnataka Bank
- (b) HDFC Bank
- (c) ICICI Bank
- (d) Axis Bank
- (e) Yes Bank

Answer: A

Karnataka Bank has entered into a strategic corporate tie-up with **HDFC Life** to offer **life insurance products** to its customers.

The partnership is a testament to the stated commitment to offer customers a range of innovative and customer-centric financial solutions.

Founded : 14 August 2000

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra

HDFC Life Insurance Company Limited is a **long-term life insurance provider offering individual and group insurance services.**

Established : 18 February 1924

Headquarters : Mangalore, Karnataka, India

MD & CEO : Srikrishnan Hari Hara Sarma

3. What is the redemption price per unit announced by the RBI for the sovereign gold bonds (SGBs) for premature redemption, reflecting substantial price appreciation?

- (a) ₹5,684
- (b) ₹6,079
- (c) ₹4,952
- (d) ₹7,205
- (e) ₹8,116

Answer: B

Investors in the inaugural tranche of **sovereign gold bonds (SGBs)**, who have held onto their investments until maturity, are poised to receive significant returns as gold prices have more than doubled in the **last 8 years**.

Issuance and Redemption Price : The first tranche of SGB was issued by the RBI in **November 2015 at ₹2,684 per gram**.

The redemption price for these bonds, to be announced by the RBI soon, is expected to reflect the substantial appreciation in gold prices.

In Oct 2023, the RBI declared a redemption price of **₹6,079 per unit** for premature redemption of SGBs, showcasing the significant price appreciation.

Interest Rate and Earnings : In addition to price appreciation, SGB investors receive an annual interest payment at the rate of 2.75%.

An investment of ₹1 lakh made in the first tranche of SGB would now fetch about ₹2.26

lakh at the last announced redemption price set by RBI.

Investors would have earned an interest of about ₹22,000.

Maturity and Early Redemption : The maiden tranche of SGB will finally mature on **November 30, 2023**.

Though the tenor of SGB is 8 years, investors can opt for early redemption of gold bonds after the fifth year from the date of issuance, coinciding with the interest payment date.

RBI's Redemption Price Calculation : RBI determines the SGB redemption price by taking the simple average of the closing gold prices with 999 purity over the three preceding business days from the redemption date, as reported by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA).

Issuance Details and Subscriptions : RBI issued only two SGBs this fiscal at the prices of **₹5,923 and ₹5,926 per gram**.

A total of 62,169 applications had been accepted for a total subscription of **915.953 kg** in the first tranche of SGB.

While the bonds issued in 2015 bear an interest rate of **2.75% per annum**, it was brought down subsequently to 2.5% per annum.

Issuance - Issued by the Reserve Bank of India on behalf of the Government of India.

Eligibility - SGBs will be restricted for sale to resident individuals, HUFs (Hindu Undivided

Family), Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.

Tenor- The tenor of the SGB will be for a period of eight years with an option of premature redemption after 5th year.

Minimum size- Minimum permissible investment will be One gram of gold.

Maximum limit- The maximum limit of subscription shall be 4 Kg for individuals, 4 Kg for HUF and 20 Kg for trusts and similar entities per fiscal year (April-March) notified by the Government from time to time.

Joint holder - In case of joint holding, the investment limit of 4 Kg will be applied to the first applicant only.

SGBs will be sold through Scheduled Commercial banks (except Small Finance Banks, Payment Banks and Regional Rural Banks), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited, Clearing Corporation of India Limited, designated post offices and National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange Limited, either directly or through agents.

4. Which of the following summit is focused on the theme 'Development vis-à-vis Land, Water and Rivers,' was inaugurated by Shri Nitin Gadkari, the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India, held at the Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi?

- (a) India Water Impact Summit
- (b) National Water Resources Summit

(c) Water Conservation and Management Conference

(d) River Basin Management Convention

(e) Clean Water and Sustainable Development Forum

Answer: A

Shri Nitin Gadkari, the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India, inaugurated the 8th Edition of the India Water Impact Summit (IWIS) at the Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi.

The summit, organized by the **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the Center for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (Ganga)**, spans three days from November 22 to 24, 2023.

The **theme of IWIS 2023 is 'Development vis-à-vis Land, Water and Rivers,' aimed at uniting scientific experts, stakeholders, and government representatives** to address dynamic challenges and opportunities in India's water sector.

Among the distinguished speakers were Ms Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary, DoWR, RD & GR, Shri G. Asok Kumar, DG-NMCG, Shri Igor Papič, Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation from the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Vinod Tare, Founding head of cGanga and Professor at IIT Kanpur, and Shri Sanmit Ahuja (cGanga).

International Water Innovation Summit 2023 (IWIS) and the 1st CITIS Summit, a special session titled "River Cities Alliance - A Global

Step Forward (GRCA) was also held and was attended by delegates from **Ethiopia, Denmark, Mexico, the Federal Republic of Germany, Bhutan, United Kingdom, Nepal and Japan.**

Addressing the session, Shri G. Asok Kumar, DG-NMCG, announced the upcoming launch of the Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA) in COP28 on December 10, 2023, in Dubai.

5. When did the Uttar Pradesh government pass legislation aimed at ensuring product quality, leading to the recent ban on halal-branded food items by the State Food Commissioner's office?

- (a) 2004
- (b) 2006
- (c) 2008
- (d) 2010
- (e) 2012

Answer: B

The **Uttar Pradesh government** has imposed a **ban on halal-branded food items.**

The State Food Commissioner's office has banned halal-labelled food items such as **dairy products, sugar, bakery items, peppermint oil, savouries and edible oil.**

The State Food Commissioner's office issued an order, citing that halal labelling contradicts legislation passed in **2006** aimed at ensuring product quality.

Reasons for Ban : Halal labelling is considered to create confusion among

consumers and is deemed contrary to the principles of the state government's law on the quality of edible products.

As per the law, creating confusion is a punishable offence.

The halal certification is operating as a parallel system.

Only export products have been exempted from this ban.

All acts related to the certification of food products were scrapped and the **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** is now the sole authority for the certification.

Halal certification serves as a **guarantee** that the product is prepared in accordance with Islamic law and is free from adulteration.

It is typically issued by a **third-party body.**

Governor : Anandiben Patel

Chief Minister : Yogi Adityanath

Capital : Lucknow

National Park : Dudhwa National Park
Wildlife Sanctuary : Bakhira Wildlife Sanctuary, Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary, National Chambal Wildlife Sanctuary

6. Which Indian state recently (Nov 2023) obtained the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for over 15 products, including Berinag tea and Bichhubuti fabrics, known for their unique qualities derived from the Himalayan region?

- (a) Uttarakhand
- (b) Himachal Pradesh
- (c) Jammu and Kashmir

- (d) Sikkim
(e) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: A

From a local brick tea to textiles made from a **Himalayan plant**, over **15 products from Uttarakhand** have been given the **coveted GI tag** by the Geographical Indications Registry.

Uttarakhand's **Bering tea**, highly sought-after by London tea houses and tea blenders, is made from the leaves of a plant that grows wild in the Himalayas, which are then compressed into a solid mass.

Bichhubuti fabrics, made from Himalayan nettle fibres, was also on the list of products that bagged the GI tag. As the plant's fibres are hollow, they have the unique ability to accumulate air inside, thus creating a natural insulation and making an ideal clothing material for both winters and summers.

The **Uttarakhand mandua**, a finger millet grown in Garhwal and Kumaon that is part of the staple diet in many parts of the State, was among the products granted GI tags.

Similarly, **jhangora**, a home grown millet commonly cultivated in the rain-fed areas of the Himalayas in Uttarakhand, got a tag.

Gahat is one of the most important pulses growing in the dry regions of the State, whose medicinal uses have been known to Ayurveda and traditional physicians for centuries.

Uttarakhand lal chawal, a red rice organically grown in the Purola region, was also on the list.

A GI, a kind of **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)**, is primarily an agricultural, natural or manufactured product (handicraft and industrial goods) originating from a definite geographical territory.

A GI is a label that is applied to products that have a specific geographical origin and that have characteristics related to a particular location.

The tag is valid for a period of **10 years** after which it is renewed.

The **Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999** seeks to provide for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India

7. Which city in India ranks second in terms of the number of women-led startups, following Bengaluru, as per data provided by the startup data platform Tracxn?

- (a) Bengaluru
(b) Mumbai
(c) Delhi
(d) Noida
(e) Kolkata

Answer: B

According to data from startup data platform Tracxn, **Bengaluru (Karnataka)** has the **highest number (1,783) of women-led startups** in India.

It is followed by **Mumbai** and **Delhi** with 1,480 and 1,195 women-led startups respectively.

Noida, Kolkata, and Ahmedabad are ranked at the 8th, 9th, and 10th places with 324, 184, and 181 women-led startups respectively.

Karnataka is the **first state in India** to provide a grant-in-aid of Rs 50 lakh to encourage innovators.

According to Tracxn, Zomato, Byju's, Ofbusiness, Upstox, Lenskart, and Open are among the top 10 women-led startups in India. The funding for women-led startups has decreased from 183 startups in 2014 to 7 in 2023.

As per the data, the number of women-led unicorns from 2008 to 2018 was 14.

Bengaluru-based neobank Open, with two women co-founders, became the **100th unicorn**.

Other Indian unicorns with at least one women co-founder are Nykaa, Mamaearth, Hasura, Pristyn Care, OfBusiness, Mobikwik, The Good Glamm Group, and Livspace.

There are currently **14 women-led unicorns** in India.

With more than 61,400 startups, India's startup ecosystem has added more firepower to become the **third-largest hub** globally after the US and China.

8. Who has recently (Nov 2023) assumed the role of Prime Minister in Luxembourg, leading a government coalition primarily consisting of his Christian Social People's Party and the

liberal party of former Prime Minister Xavier Bettel?

- (a) Luc Frieden
- (b) Xavier Melerw
- (c) Gilles Roth
- (d) Gilles Krieger
- (e) Alain Bley

Answer: A

Luc Frieden, the former finance minister of **Luxembourg**, has assumed the position of the **new Prime Minister** of the country.

Luc Frieden leads a government coalition that includes his Christian Social People's Party and the liberal party of former Prime Minister **Xavier Bettel**.

Luc Frieden's Christian Social People's Party secured victory in the recent election.

On November 16, 2023, a coalition agreement was signed between the Christian Social People's Party and Xavier Bettel's Democratic Party after approximately six weeks of negotiations.

The coalition holds a majority of 35 seats in the 60-seat Luxembourg parliament.

Xavier Bettel, the former Prime Minister, assumes the role of **Foreign Affairs Minister** in the new government.

Gilles Roth is appointed as the **new Finance Minister**.

In 1998, he became **Minister of Justice** in the Government led by Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker.

He also served as **Minister for the Treasury and Budget** from 1998 to 2009, as Minister of Defence from 2004 to 2006 and Minister of Finance from 2009 to 2013.

For 15 years (1998 to 2013), he served as **Governor of the World Bank** and acted as chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in 2013.

He joined Deutsche Bank as Vice Chairman in September 2014.

He was **president of the Luxembourgish Chamber of Commerce and Eurochambres**, the business federation of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Capital : Luxembourg

Currency : Euro

Luxembourg is a landlocked country in Western Europe.

It borders Belgium to the west and north, Germany to the east, and France to the south.

9. Who emerged victorious in Argentina's recent presidential election, securing 55.8% of the votes, and is known for his background as an economist, author, and libertarian political ideology?

- (a) Mauricio Macri
- (b) Sergio Massa
- (c) Alberto Fernández
- (d) Javier Milei
- (e) Cristina Fernández de Kirchner

Answer: D

Right-wing libertarian Javier Milei emerged victorious in **Argentina's presidential election**.

In the election, Javier Milei got **55.8% votes** and Economy Minister Sergio Massa got **44.2% votes**.

In his first address as President-elect, Javier Milei acknowledged the challenging situation in Argentina.

He pledged to implement significant changes to address the country's dire circumstances after assuming the presidency.

Milei was born in Palermo, Buenos Aires, on **22 October, 1970**.

He is an Argentine politician, economist, and author who is the president-elect of Argentina. Before entering politics, Milei gained notability as an economist, as the author of multiple books on economics and politics, and for his distinct political philosophy.

In 2021, Milei entered politics and was elected as a national deputy representing the **City of Buenos Aires for La Libertad Avanza**.

Capital : Buenos Aires

Currency : Argentina peso

Argentina is the **3rd largest economy** in Latin America and is struggling with the problems of inflation, increasing recession, and increasing poverty.

10. How many members constitute the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) at the United

Nations, who are elected by the General Assembly for a term of three years based on broad geographical representation?

- (a) 15
- (b) 18
- (c) 21
- (d) 24
- (e) 27

Answer: C

Senior Indian diplomat **Surendra Adhana** has been re-elected to serve on the **Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)** at the UN for the term **2024-26**.

The Advisory Committee is an expert Committee of **21 Members** elected by the General Assembly for a period of **3 years**, on the basis of a broad geographical representation.

Members serve in a personal capacity and not as representatives of member states.

The major functions of the Advisory Committee, which is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, are to examine and report on the budget submitted by the Secretary-

General to the General Assembly; to advise the General Assembly concerning any administrative and budgetary matters referred to it; to examine on behalf of the General Assembly the administrative budgets of the specialised agencies and proposals for financial arrangements with such agencies; and to consider and report to the General Assembly on the auditors' reports on the accounts of the United Nations and of the specialised agencies.

Established : 24 October 1945

Headquarters: New York, United States

President : Dennis Francis

Secretary general: António Guterres.

The United Nations (UN) is an **intergovernmental organization** whose stated purposes are to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation, and serve as a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.