



UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS MCQS 17-02-2024

Q1:

Consider the following statements regarding European Free Trade Association:

- 1. It is an intergovernmental organization established in 1960 by the Stockholm Convention.**
- 2. Its objective is to promote free trade and economic integration between its members within Europe and globally.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A:** 1 only
B: 2 only
C: Both 1 and 2
D: Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

India has rejected the demand of the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) for 'data exclusivity' provisions in the free trade agreement that both sides are negotiating. It is an intergovernmental organisation established in 1960 by the Stockholm Convention. Its objective is to promote free trade and economic integration between its members within Europe and globally. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland are its member countries. The members of this organization are all open, competitive economies committed to the progressive liberalisation of trade in the multinational arena as well as in free trade agreements. In contrast to the European Union (EU), it is not a customs union. Its highest governing body is the EFTA Council. It generally meets 8 times a year at the ambassadorial level and twice a year at the ministerial level. **Hence, both statements are correct.**

Q2:

With reference to Diphtheria, consider the following statements:

- 1. It is a serious contagious viral infection of the nose and throat.**



2. It can spread from person to person, usually through respiratory droplets, like from coughing or sneezing.

3. Although diphtheria can be treated with medications, in advanced stages, the bacterial infection can damage the heart, kidneys and nervous system.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

A: Only one

B: Only two

C: All three

D: None

Answer: (b)

Explanation:

Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday published the guidelines on the clinical management of diphtheria. Diphtheria is a serious contagious bacterial infection of the nose and throat. It is caused by strains of bacteria called *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* that make a toxin. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**

It can spread from person to person, usually through respiratory droplets, like from coughing or sneezing. People can also get sick from touching infected open sores or ulcers. The bacteria can also infect the skin, causing open sores or ulcers. However, diphtheria skin infections rarely result in severe disease. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

Although diphtheria can be treated with medications, in advanced stages, the bacterial infection can damage the heart, kidneys and nervous system. The current treatments include:

- neutralization of unbound toxin with Diphtheria Antitoxin (DAT)
- antibiotics to prevent further bacterial growth;
- monitoring and supportive care to prevent and treat complications, e.g. airway obstruction, myocarditis.

Hence, statement 3 is correct.

Q3:

Consider the following statements regarding Golden-backed Frog:

- 1. It is endemic to the Western Ghats of Karnataka and Kerala, specifically above the Palghat Gap, where it is known to thrive in relative abundance.**
- 2. The Golden backed frog is predominantly found in evergreen and semi-evergreen forests in the Western Ghats of India.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A: 1 only

B: 2 only

C: Both 1 and 2

D: Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (c)

Explanation:

Scientists made a surprising discovery in the foothills of the Western Ghats in India — a Bonnet mushroom growing out of the side of the Golden-backed Frog (*Hylarana inter-media*) frog. Golden-backed Frog is endemic to the Western Ghats of Karnataka and Kerala, specifically above the Palghat Gap, where it is known to thrive in relative abundance. It is about the size of a human thumb. The Golden backed frog is predominantly found in evergreen and semi-evergreen forests in the Western Ghats of India. The major threats to the survival of these frogs are habitat loss and fragmentation, pollution of water bodies, and the introduction of non-native species. Bonnet mushroom is commonly found as a saprotroph (an organism that feeds on non-living organic matter) on rotting wood. **Hence, statements 1 and 2 both are correct.**

Q4:

Consider the following passage:

It is the largest national park of Madhya Pradesh. It is located in the Mandla and Balaghat districts of Madhya Pradesh. It is nestled in the Maikal range of Satpuras, the heart of India that forms the central Indian highlands. The forest depicted in the famous novel by Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*, is thought by some to be based on jungles, including this

reserve. It is also the first tiger reserve in India to officially introduce a mascot, "Bhoorsingh the Barasingha". The park has a significant population of Royal Bengal Tiger, leopard, sloth bear, and Indian wild dog.

The above passage is related to which of the following tiger reserve?

- A: Panna Tiger Reserve
- B: Pench Tiger Reserve
- C: Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve
- D: Kanha Tiger Reserve

Answer: (d)

Explanation:

Kanha Tiger Reserve, also called Kanha National Park, is the largest national park of Madhya Pradesh. It is located in the Mandla and Balaghat districts of Madhya Pradesh. It is nestled in the Maikal range of Satpuras, the heart of India that forms the central Indian highlands. Kanha National Park was created on June 1, 1955, and in 1973, was made the Kanha Tiger Reserve. The forest depicted in the famous novel by Rudyard Kipling, *The Jungle Book*, is thought by some to be based on jungles, including this reserve. It is also the first tiger reserve in India to officially introduce a mascot, "Bhoorsingh the Barasingha". It is primarily a moist Sal and moist mixed deciduous forest where Bamboo, Tendu, Sal, Jamun, Arjun, and Lendia flourish. The park has a significant population of Royal Bengal Tiger, leopard, sloth bear, and Indian wild dog. The Park is respected globally for saving the Barasingha (the state animal of Madhya Pradesh) from near extinction, and has the unique distinction of harbouring the last world population of this deer species. Hence, option (d) is correct.

Q5:

Consider the following statements regarding Young Scientist Programme (YUVIKA):

1. YUVIKA, is a learning and awareness creating programme of the ISRO to impart basic knowledge on Space Technology, Space Science, and Space Applications to younger students with a preference to urban areas.



2. Students who have finished class 10 and are currently studying in class 11 can apply for the programme.

3. Two students from each state/Union Territory will participate in this programme every year, covering CBSE, ICSE, and state-board syllabus.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

A: Only one

B: Only two

C: All three

D: None

Answer: D

Explanation:

"Young Scientist Programme", or "YUva VIgyani KAryakram" YUVIKA, is a learning and awareness creating programme of the ISRO to impart basic knowledge on Space Technology, Space Science, and Space Applications to younger students with a preference to rural areas. The programme is aimed at creating awareness about the emerging trends in science and technology amongst the youngsters, who are the future building blocks of our nation. ISRO has chalked out this programme to "Catch them young". The programme is also expected to encourage more students to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based research /career. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**

Students who have finished class 8 and are currently studying in class 9 can apply for the programme. The selection is based on 8th Standard academic performance and extracurricular activities. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**

Three students from each state/Union Territory will participate in this programme every year, covering CBSE, ICSE, and state-board syllabus. Students belonging to the rural area have been given special weightage in the selection criteria. In case there is a tie between the selected candidates, the younger candidates will be given priority. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**