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Winmeen Current Affairs

1. The Internet of Things (IoT) India Congress 2019 is scheduled to be held in which of the following cities?

- [A] Dehradun
- [B] Indore
- [C] Bengaluru
- [D] New Delhi

- ✓ The 4th edition of the Internet of Things (IoT) India Congress 2019 will be held in Bengaluru on August 22-23, 2019. The event will see digital technology leaders converge to discuss and explore business opportunities in mainstreaming IoT.
- ✓ It will include tracks on segments such as healthcare, manufacturing, telecom, smart cities, energy, retail, cyber security, skills and development, IoT Standards, legal and regulatory, and agriculture. The two-day Congress will host live zones and hackathons where people can touch, feel and experience IoT and solve sector-specific challenges.

2. Erode turmeric, which recently got GI tag, is associated to which of the following states?

- [A] Karnataka
- [B] Tamil Nadu
- [C] Andhra Pradesh
- [D] Maharashtra

- ✓ Erode turmeric (of Tamil Nadu) has finally got a Geographical Indication (GI) tag on 6th March 2019, which will help the farmers and traders from the region to claim sole rights over the famed 'Erode Manjal'.
- ✓ The Geographical Indication Registry of India granted the coveted status based on the application filed by 'Erode Manjal Vanigarkal Matrum Kidangu Urimaiyalargal Sangam'. The GI tag is granted to products that are special for a particular geographical area and prevents misuse of the popularity of the products by others.
- ✓ 'Erode Manjal' is famous across the globe. The cultivar is called Erode local, i.e., Chinnanadan. Erode turmeric is a rhizome, both finger and bulb obtained from the Erode local cultivar. The crop is

grown in hot moist conditions prevalent in the area with temperature ranging from 20 degrees to 37.9 degrees Celsius with an average of 600 to 800 mm rainfall in a year.

- ✓ The turmeric thrives best on the loamy or alluvial soils. Quality parameters of the turmeric included 2.5 to 4.5% of curcumin content, a golden yellow colour and resistance to pests after boiling.

3. Who heads the high-level committee of the Delhi government to reform higher education?

- [A] Ranjana Desai
- [B] Amit Sagar
- [C] Injeti Srinivas
- [D] Jasmine Shah

- ✓ The Dialogue and Development Commission (DDC) of the Delhi government has constituted a 17-member high-level committee to reform higher education in the capital.
- ✓ The committee, chaired by DDC vice-chairperson Jasmine Shah, will recommend goals, metrics, policies, and actionable plans for reforming Delhi's higher education system within a year. The DDC is the premier think-tank which advises the state government on key policy issues.
- ✓ Nalanda 2.0, a non-profit policy think tank with a "mission to making India's higher education system world class", is collaborating with the DDC as the knowledge partner in the initiative.

4. Upamanyu Dutta, who is in news recently, is associated to which of the following sports?

- [A] Wrestling
- [B] Carrom
- [C] Judo
- [D] Sailing

- ✓ Young Mumbai sailor Upamanyu Dutta bagged the bronze in the Laser Standard race for men in the Asian Open Laser Sailing Championship in Singapore.
- ✓ It is the India's first ever medal in the competitive single handed Laser Standard Category. Nethra Kumanan of Chennai achieved a creditable 4th position in the Laser Radial event for women.

5. Who has been appointed the new Chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)?

[A] L S Prasad

[B] M R Kumar

[C] Vipin Anand

[D] Suseel Kumar

- ✓ M R Kumar has been appointed the new Chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) and will hold the post for a period of five years.
- ✓ Prior to this post, he was Zonal Manager (in-charge) of North Zone. LIC is the largest insurance company in India headquartered in Mumbai.
- ✓ It was founded in 1956 when the Parliament of India passed the Life Insurance of India Act that nationalised the private insurance industry in India.
- ✓ Over 245 insurance companies and provident societies were merged to create the state owned Life Insurance Corporation.

6. Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains, sometimes seen in news, is located in which of the following countries?

[A] Oman

[B] Iran

[C] Saudi Arabia

[D] Afghanistan

- ✓ Indo-Oman joint military exercise titled "Al Nagah III 2019" has started at Jabel regiment headquarters, Nizwa, in the Arab country.
- ✓ The exercise is scheduled to end on March 25 at Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains. The Omani contingent was represented by Jabel Regiment of the Royal Army of Oman (RAO) while the Indian side was represented by troops of the Garhwal Rifles Regiment.
- ✓ The Indian Army contingent is represented by four officers, nine junior commissioned officers and 47 other ranks. The aim of this exercise is to enhance interoperability in counter terrorist operations in semi urban mountainous terrain.

7. Which Asian country is hosting the Special Olympics World Summer Games 2019?

[A] Vietnam

[B] UAE

[C] India

[D] Indonesia

- ✓ The Special Olympics World Summer Games 2019 has started at Abu Dhabi in UAE on March 14. It is a multi-sport event for athletes with intellectual disabilities in the tradition of the Special Olympics movement. The event has already made history by welcoming a record-breaking 200 nations at the Games.
- ✓ Of the 200 nations, 195 will compete in the Games and five will observe. Held in the West Asia for the first time, 7,500 athletes will take part in 24 Olympic-style sports over seven days.
- ✓ With the highest number of women taking part and the largest number of Unified teammates on board, the World Games will capture the attention of the globe.
- ✓ More than 2,500 women will fly the flag for their nation, with almost half of them performing in athletics competitions. Saudi Arabia will send female athletes for the first time, with 14 women participating.

8. Which of the following organizations has decided to inject liquidity via forex swaps?

[A] IRDA

[B] NABARD

[C] RBI

[D] SEBI

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to inject rupee liquidity into the system through long-term foreign exchange buy/sell swap — a first-of-its-kind instrument used for liquidity management.
- ✓ The RBI would conduct dollar-rupee buy/sell swap auction of \$5 billion for tenor of 3 years on March 26 to inject rupee liquidity for longer duration. Under the buy/sell foreign exchange swap, a bank will sell US dollars to the RBI and simultaneously agree to buy the same amount of US dollars at the end of the swap period.
- ✓ The liquidity generated due to the buy/sell USD/INR swap auction could support credit growth and soften bond yields. The move is seen to lower the dependence on open market operations which have been a significant amount of the overall borrowing.
- ✓ According to RBI, the market participants would be required to place their bids in terms of the premium

that they are willing to pay to the Reserve Bank for the tenor of the swap, expressed in paisa terms up to two decimal places.

- ✓ The auction cut-off would be based on the premium. The auction would be a multiple-price based auction -- successful bids will get accepted at their respective quoted premium.

9. What is the India's rank in terms of highest number of impacted species in hotspots, as per recent study "Hotspots of human impact on threatened terrestrial vertebrates"?

[A] 16th

[B] 9th

[C] 11th

[D] 20th

- ✓ Recently, a study titled "Hotspots of human impact on threatened terrestrial vertebrates" published in the journal PLOS Biology has reported that human impacts on species occur across 84% of the earth's surface.
- ✓ A team of scientists led by James Allan (University of Queensland) found this when they mapped the distribution of 8 human activities — including hunting and conversion of natural habitats for agriculture — in areas occupied by 5,457 threatened birds, mammals and amphibians worldwide.
- ✓ Malaysia has been ranked first among the countries with the highest number of impacted species (125), followed by Brunei and Singapore. India ranks 16th in such human impacts, with 35 threatened species impacted on average.
- ✓ The Southeast Asian tropical forests including those in India's Western Ghats, Himalaya and north-east — are among the 'hotspots' of threatened species.
- ✓ These affected areas are also 'cool-spots' (the world's last refuges where high numbers of threatened species still persist). They could be result of protection or because of intact habitat.

10. United Kingdom has issued new 'black hole' coin in honour of which of the following renowned personalities?

[A] Isaac Newton

[B] Charles Darwin

[C] Stephen Hawking

[D] Tim Berners-Lee

- ✓ The UK's Royal Mint has recently issued a new commemorative 50 pence coin inspired by the late legendary British physicist Stephen Hawking's seminal work on black holes.
- ✓ The coin was designed by British engraver and printmaker Edwina Ellis. The purpose of the commemorative coin is to celebrate the life and "ground-breaking" achievements of Hawking, who passed away in 2018.
- ✓ Hence, Hawking joined an elite group of scientists having appeared on coins—including Sir Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin.

Winmeen Current Affairs

1. Sirsi Supari, which recently got GI tag, is associated to which of the following states?

[A] Himchal Pradesh

[B] Karnataka

[C] Jammu & Kashmir

[D] Andhra Pradesh

- ✓ Arecanut (also known as supari or betel nut) is the latest entrant in the list of agricultural produce with a Geographic Indication (GI) tag.
- ✓ The Registrar of Geographical Indications, under the Union government, accorded a GI tag to 'Sirsi Supari' grown in Sirsi, Siddpaur and Yellapur taluks of Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka. The Totagars' Cooperative Sale Society (TSS) Ltd, a Sirsi-based agri cooperative, is the registered proprietor of the GI 'Sirsi Supari'.
- ✓ The GI tag will guarantee the authenticity of arecanut grown in these taluks, and ensure a better market for 'Sirsi Supari'.
- ✓ The arecanut has unique features like a round and flattened coin shape, particular texture, taste. The total carbohydrates in 'Sirsi Supari' are 23% to 26%, total arecoline is 0.11% to 0.13%, total tannin content is 14.5% to 17.5%.
- ✓ 'Sirsi Supari' is used both as 'chali' (white arecanut) and red arecanut. The 'chali' variety is made by peeling the ripened nuts and sun drying them later.
- ✓ The red arecanut is produced by harvesting the tender nuts, then boiling and colouring them, then making them into different grades and finally sun drying them.

2. What is the theme of 2019 World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD)?

[A] Building a digital world consumers can trust

[B] Consumer Justice Now!

[C] Trusted Smart Products

[D] Making Digital Marketplaces Fairer

- ✓ The World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is observed every year on March 15 to promote the basic rights of all consumers and empower them. It also gives

people a chance to protest against the market abuses and social injustices.

- ✓ The day was inspired by former US President John F Kennedy, who was the first leader in the world to address the issue of consumer rights in a special message sent to the US Congress on 15th March 1962.
- ✓ The 2019 theme is 'Trusted Smart Products' has been chosen in view of the increased popularity of smart gadgets like smart phones to wearable fitness trackers, to voice-activated assistants and smart TVs.
- ✓ In India, we observe the National Consumer Day (NCD) on 24th of December every year.

3. Which of the following banks has launched doorstep banking service for senior citizens over 70 years of age and differently-abled customers?

[A] BoI

[B] PNB

[C] SBI

[D] BoB

- ✓ The State Bank of India (SBI) has launched doorstep banking service for senior citizens over 70 years of age, differently-abled customers and infirm customers, including visually-impaired customers.
- ✓ Eligible customers can avail this service at a nominal fee of Rs. 100 per transaction for financial transactions and Rs. 60 for non-financial transactions.
- ✓ The doorstep banking services are available to KYC-compliant account holders, with a valid mobile number registered with the bank and residing within 5km radius from their home branch. This service will not be available for accounts operated jointly, minor accounts, and accounts of non-personal nature.
- ✓ The list of specific services will include - Cash pickup & delivery, Cheque pickup, Cheque book requisition slip pickup, Delivery of drafts & Term deposit advice, Life certificate pick-up and Pickup of Form 15H for Income Tax purposes.

4. Through which telescope, astronomers have discovered 83 supermassive black holes 13 billion light-years away from Earth?

[A] Spektr-RG

[B] Astrosat

[C] Subaru

[D] Hitomi

- ✓ Astronomers from Japan, Taiwan, and Princeton University have discovered 83 quasars powered by supermassive black holes in the distant universe, which were formed when the universe was only 5% of its current age.
- ✓ These quasars are lying 13 billion light-years away from the Earth. The team used data taken with 'Hyper Suprime-Cam' (HSC) instrument, mounted on the Subaru Telescope of the National Astronomical Observatory of Japan, which is located on the summit of Maunakea in Hawaii.
- ✓ This finding, published in The Astrophysical Journal, increases the number of black holes known at that epoch considerably, and reveals, for the first time, how common they are early in the universe's history.
- ✓ It also provides new insight into the effect of black holes on the physical state of gas in the early universe in its first billion years. Supermassive black holes, found at the centers of galaxies, can be millions or even billions of times more massive than the Sun.
- ✓ While they are prevalent today, it is unclear when they first formed, and how many existed in the distant early universe. A supermassive black hole becomes visible when gas accretes onto it, causing it to shine as a quasar.

5. Which of the following cities has topped the Mercer's 2019 Quality of Living Index?

[A] Auckland

[B] Zurich

[C] Vienna

[D] Munich

- ✓ The Austrian capital Vienna has topped the Mercer's index of most liveable cities for the 10th year in a row, followed by Zurich in Switzerland. In joint third place are Auckland, Munich and Vancouver. Luxembourg was the safest city in the world.
- ✓ In 105th place, Chennai ranks as the Asia-Pacific region's safest city, while Karachi (226) is the least safe. According to Mercer's 21st annual Quality of

Living Rankings, Hyderabad and Pune have been named the most liveable city in India with rank 143rd.

- ✓ New Delhi featured at the 162nd position on the list, Mumbai at 154 and Bengaluru at 149. The 21st edition of the annual survey evaluated 231 cities across the globe between September and November last year based on 39 factors including political stability, healthcare, education, crime, recreation and transport.
- ✓ This year, Mercer provided separate rankings for personal safety, analysing the cities' internal stability, crime levels, law enforcement and limitations on personal freedom. The ranking influences cities' abilities to attract business.

6. Which Indian entrepreneur has been honored with the 2019 Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian region?

[A] Padmanaban Gopala

[B] Brahma Chellaney

[C] Ritesh Agarwal

[D] Sanjay Kumaran

- ✓ Padmanaban Gopala, a social entrepreneur from Tamil Nadu, has bestowed with the 2019 Commonwealth Youth Award for the Asian region at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London for his technology-based food rescue organisation.
- ✓ Gopalan, founder of No Food Waste, was named the winner of the award worth 3,000 pounds for his work towards achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of Zero Hunger with his innovative system of recovering excess food to distribute to those in need.
- ✓ Every year the Commonwealth Youth Awards for Excellence in Development Work celebrates the achievement of young people aged between 15 years and 29 years, whose projects serve the people and communities in their country and drive the progress to realize the different SDGs.

7. Greta Thunberg, who has been nominated for 2019 Nobel Peace Prize, is an environmental Activist of which country?

[A] Italy

[B] Sweden

[C] Germany

[D] France

- ✓ Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish environmental activist, has been nominated for 2019 Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts in climate activism and fighting global warming.
- ✓ Ms. Thunberg is the founder of the School Strike for Climate movement, which is a global, growing movement of students demanding more action from authorities regarding global warming and climate change.
- ✓ The movement began last year as a solo protest by Thunberg outside the Swedish Parliament building. She encouraged students to skip school to join protests demanding faster action on climate change.
- ✓ It has since grown, and on 15th March 2019, thousands of students from across continents skipped school and take part in protests. It is said to be the largest such protest.
- ✓ If she won, Thunberg would be the youngest person to become a Nobel peace prize laureate, a title Malala Yousafzai took as a 17-year-old in 2014 for her work on the right to education. The winner of the Nobel peace prize will be announced in October 2019.

8. Who won the men's singles title at the All England Open Badminton Championships 2019?

[A] Parupalli Kashyap

[B] Kento Momota

[C] Viktor Axelsen

[D] Srikanth Kidambi

- ✓ Kento Momota has become the first Japanese man to win the All England Open Badminton Championships when he beat Denmark's Viktor Axelsen 2-1 in the men's singles final at the Birmingham Arena.
- ✓ Beside this, Chen Yufei of China won the women's title by upsetting world No.1 Tai Tzu Ying of Taiwan in straight games, 21-17, 21-17.

9. The Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (FINE-2019) has started in which of the following cities?

[A] Gandhinagar

[B] New Delhi

[C] Hyderabad

[D] Bangaluru

- ✓ On 15th March, the Festival of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (FINE-2019) has been inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- ✓ The 4-day event would provide platform to the innovators for building the linkages with potential stakeholders whose support can improve their prospects in coming years for the larger social good.
- ✓ It will also help in promoting lateral learning and linkages among the innovators to enrich the ecosystem for new India. FINE is a unique initiative of the Office of the President of India to recognise, respect, showcase, reward innovations and to foster a supportive ecosystem for innovators.
- ✓ The festival is organised by the President's Secretariat in association with Department of Science and Technology (DST) and National Innovation Foundation (NIF).
- ✓ It is a celebration of country's innovation potential, particularly ideas stemming from grassroots and from creative communities in disadvantaged regions.

10. Africa-India Joint Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-19) is being conducted in which of the following cities?

[A] Kochi

[B] Udaipur

[C] Dehradun

[D] Pune

- ✓ In Maharashtra, the 10-day long Africa-India Joint Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX-19) between the Indian Army and 16 African nations will be conducted in Pune from March 18 to 27.
- ✓ The purpose of the exercise is to train the participating contingents in Humanitarian Mine Assistance (HMA) and Peace Keeping Operations (PKO) under the United Nations Charter.
- ✓ In addition to the participating nations from the African continent, officers from Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Madagascar would attend the exercise as Observers. The joint exercise will cover the dynamics of raising a Mission headquarters, nuances of establishing military observer team sites in disturbed areas.

- ✓ **The nuances of HMA being covered will include establishment and functioning of Mine Action Teams (MAC), identification and survey of contaminated areas and mechanical / manual demining techniques.**
- ✓ **The exercise is expected to greatly facilitate sharing of Indian Armed Forces experiences in United Nations Peace Keeping operations with countries in Africa and shall significantly enhance relations with the African continent.**

Winmeen Current Affairs

1. Maate Mahadevi, who passed away recently, was the spiritual head of which of the following communities?

- [A] Shaktism
- [B] Vaishnavism
- [C] Lingayat
- [D] Smartism

- ✓ Maate Mahadevi (74), Head of Basava Dharma Peetha at Kudalasangama and a prominent Lingayat leader, has passed away in Bangalore, Karnataka on March 21, 2019.
- ✓ Installed as 'Jagadguru' in the 1970s, Maate Mahadevi launched several educational and religious institutions and published several books.
- ✓ She holds the 12th century woman poet Akka Mahadevi, who also wrote vachanas, as her role model. Beside this, she was at the forefront of the movement demanding separate religion status for the Lingayat community that erupted in the state in 2017-18 and had angered Veerashaiva seers and leaders.

2. Who has been appointed as mediator to resolve disputes of cricket administration in BCCI?

- [A] P S Narasimha
- [B] A M Spare
- [C] S A Bobde
- [D] D K Jain

- ✓ The Supreme Court of India (SCI) has appointed senior advocate P.S. Narasimha as mediator for resolving various disputes related to cricket administration in the country. Narsimha is also assisting the apex court as amicus curiae in the BCCI matter.
- ✓ A bench of Justices S.A. Bobde and A.M. Spare also asked Mr. Narasimha to look into the dispute relating to release of funds by the court appointed committee of administrators to various cricket associations.
- ✓ In addition, the Supreme Court has also directed that no Court or Tribunal in India shall entertain or proceed with any matter pertaining to BCCI or any State Cricket Association(s) till Narsimha submits

his report. Earlier, the apex court had appointed its former judge Justice (ret'd) D K Jain, as the first court-appointed ombudsman for Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

3. Which of the following cricket teams has won the 2019 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy?

- [A] Odisha
- [B] Maharashtra
- [C] Uttar Pradesh
- [D] Karnataka

- ✓ Karnataka has won the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy for the first time. In the final, they defeated Maharashtra by 8 wickets at the Holkar Cricket Stadium in Indore.
- ✓ With the win, Karnataka set a record of most number of wins in a row by an Indian domestic team as they won 14 T20 matches to lift the coveted T20 trophy.
- ✓ Karnataka also equaled Indian Premier League outfit Kolkata Knight Riders' record of 14 consecutive wins.

4. Irfan KT, who recently qualified for 2020 Tokyo Olympics, is associated with which sports?

- [A] Weightlifting
- [B] Racing
- [C] Wrestling
- [D] Boxing

- ✓ National record holder Irfan Kolothum Thodi has become the first Indian from athletics to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics while finishing fourth in the 20 km event of the Asian Race Walking Championships at Nomi in Japan.
- ✓ Irfan clocked 1 hour 20 minutes and 57 seconds in the 20-kilometre walk to attain the standard qualifying mark for the Olympics.
- ✓ The fourth-place finishes also ensured a berth in the upcoming International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) World Championship in Doha that begins in September 2019.
- ✓ Two other Indian race walkers, who qualified for the World Championship are Devinder and Ganapati. Having qualified for Tokyo 2020, this will be Irfan's second Olympics having represented the country in 2012 London Games.

- ✓ The Olympics qualification period for race walk events and marathon race has begun from January 1 this year and will run till May 31, 2020.

5. Which IIT has signed a pact with C-DAC to build India's first state-of-the-art 1.3 PetaFlop High-Performance Computing facility?

- [A] IIT Kanpur
- [B] IIT Kharagpur
- [C] IIT Indore
- [D] IIT Madras

- ✓ The IIT Kharagpur has signed a MoU with Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) to set up India's first state-of-the-art 1.3 PetaFlop high performance computing facility and data center funded under the National Supercomputing Mission.
- ✓ PetaFlop is the measurement of computing power based on the frequency of mathematical calculations that can be done per second. This computing facility will provide large-scale computational support to the researchers, who are engaged in research activities in diverse areas of national importance.
- ✓ It will be used for specific challenge domains like cryptography, molecular dynamics, chemistry, drug discovery, artificial intelligence (AI) and data sciences.
- ✓ The facility is expected to come up in the next 3-4 months with the work to be carried in three phases of - 'assembling, assembling and manufacturing and design and manufacturing. C-DAC is a premier R&D organisation of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

6. Coorg Arabica Coffee, which recently got GI tag, is grown specifically in which district of Karnataka?

- [A] Belgaum
- [B] Chikmagalur
- [C] Kodagu
- [D] Bagalkot

- ✓ The Geographical Indications Registry has recently granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag to Coorg Arabica Coffee, Wayanad Robusta Coffee, Chikmagalur Arabica Coffee, Araku Valley Arabica Coffee and Bababudangiris Arabica Coffee.

- ✓ According to the GI application, Coorg Arabica Coffee is grown specifically in Kodagu district in Karnataka.
- ✓ As per the application petitions, Chikmagalur Arabica Coffee and Bababudangiris Arabica Coffee are both grown in Chikmagalur district, Karnataka which is also known as the birthplace of coffee in the country.
- ✓ Araku Valley Arabica Coffee, grown around Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh and Koraput district in Odisha, is light to medium in strength, has a pleasant acidity with a citrus note of grape fruit and a mild jaggery-like sweetness.
- ✓ As per the GI application for Wayanad Robusta Coffee, the flora of Wayanad is characteristic of the Western Ghats and the plantation crops grown in the cool climate.
- ✓ A GI tag is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation by virtue of their geographical association.
- ✓ The tag conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness which is essentially attributable to the geographical origin of the product. The owner of the GI tag has exclusive rights over the product.

7. Which country is host to the U-17 Women's World Cup in 2020?

- [A] France
- [B] South Korea
- [C] Spain
- [D] India

- ✓ International Football Federation (FIFA) President Gianni Infantino has recently announced that India will host the 7th edition of U-17 Women's World Cup in 2020.
- ✓ This will be the 2nd FIFA tournament India will be hosting, after the U-17 Men's World Cup in 2017.
- ✓ The Spain under-17 women's team is the defending champion, while North Korea has had most success in the competition with two titles.
- ✓ Japan in 2014, France in 2012 and South Korea in 2010 have been the other winners.

8. Who led the Indian delegation at the first BRICS Sherpa meeting under the Presidency of Brazil?

[A] T S Tirumurti

[B] Rajeev Topno

[C] Arvind Mayaram

[D] Rajive Kumar

- ✓ On March 15, the first-ever BRICS Sherpa meeting under the Presidency of Brazil concluded at Curitiba in Brazil.
- ✓ T S Tirumurti, Secretary (Economic Relations) in the MEA, led the Indian delegation at the 2-day meeting. During the meeting, India conveyed its support for the priority areas set out by Brazil, particularly to take forward BRICS cooperation on counter terrorism in a meaningful and concrete manner with BRICS member countries.
- ✓ New Delhi also underlined the need to take forward people-to-people cooperation and cooperation in science and technology and innovation and in health and traditional medicine.

9. West Nile fever, sometimes seen in news, is spread by _____?

[A] Bats

[B] Water

[C] Rats

[D] Mosquito

- ✓ The West Nile Virus (WNV) fever is a mosquito-borne viral infection, which is rare in India. It is a single-stranded RNA virus that causes West Nile fever.
- ✓ It is a member of the family Flaviviridae, specifically from the genus Flavivirus, which also contains the Zika virus, dengue virus, and yellow fever virus. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has stated that the WNV is transmitted to humans through bites from Culex mosquitoes which get infected when they feed on infected birds.
- ✓ The infection could be confirmed only if the second samples test positive. Hence, birds are the natural hosts of WNV.
- ✓ Symptoms include fever, headache, tiredness, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, occasionally with a skin rash on the trunk of the body, and swollen lymph glands. It is in news because a 7-year-old boy

from Kerala was recently diagnosed with the WNV fever.

- ✓ For this issue, the Union has dispatched a multi-disciplinary Central team from the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) to assess the spread of WNV in Kerala.

10. Darryl D'Monte, who passed away recently, was the veteran personality in which field?

[A] Journalism

[B] Sports

[C] Science

[D] Law

- ✓ Darryl D'Monte (74), the senior journalist and environmental activist, has passed away in Mumbai on March 16, 2019. During his long career, D'Monte worked as the resident editor with leading media organisations such as 'The Times of India' and 'Indian Express' in Mumbai.
- ✓ He also wrote for websites and penned the book 'Ripping the Fabric' on the decline of cotton mills in Mumbai and the resulting challenges. He had also served as the chairperson of the Forum of Environmental Journalists of India (FEJI) and was the founder-president of the International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ) in Dresden, Germany, in 1993.

Winmeen Current Affairs

1. Who has been named as India's first anti-corruption ombudsman?

[A] Rachit Seth

[B] Aradhana Rathore

[C] P C Ghose

[D] Ashwini M Sripad

- ✓ Former Supreme Court judge and current member of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Pinaki Chandra Ghose has been named as the India's first Lokpal (anti-corruption ombudsman).
- ✓ The Lokpal Act, which was passed in 2013 after a nationwide anti-corruption movement, provides for setting up of Lokpal at the centre and Lokayuktas in the States to probe corruption complaints against top functionaries and public servants, including the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers.
- ✓ Mr. Ghose was appointed as judge of the Calcutta High Court in 1997 and went on to become Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh before his elevation to the Supreme Court in 2013.

2. Which former ISRO scientist is the recipient of the 2019 Padma Bhushan?

[A] K. Radhakrishnan

[B] Nambi Narayanan

[C] Tapan Misra

[D] Nandini Harinath

- ✓ Former ISRO scientist, Nambi Narayanan has been conferred the 2019 Padma Bhushan by President Ram Nath Kovind.
- ✓ It is the third-highest civilian award in the Republic of India. He is best known for his role in developing the Vikas Engine which was used for the first PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle) launched by India.
- ✓ The engine was used in the most historic missions of ISRO, such as the Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan.
- ✓ Narayanan, who was heading the cryogenic project at the ISRO, was falsely implicated in the ISRO spy scandal of 1994. He was accused of selling state secrets comprising confidential test data from rocket and satellite launches.

- ✓ He was arrested in December 1994 and charged with espionage. The Supreme Court later cleared him of all charges in 1998 and awarded him compensation in 2018.
- ✓ He had also played a critical role in the development of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and in the initial phase of making cryogenic engines.

3. Soyuz spacecraft, sometimes seen in news, is associated with which country?

[A] Japan

[B] United States

[C] France

[D] Russia

- ✓ The Soyuz spacecraft carrying NASA astronauts Nick Hague and Christina Koch, and cosmonaut Alexey Ovchinin of Roscosmos has successfully docked to the International Space Station (ISS) from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.
- ✓ The crew members will spend more than six months conducting about 250 science investigations in fields such as biology, Earth science, human research, physical sciences, and technology development.
- ✓ The Soyuz (SAW-yooz) is a Russian spacecraft. It transports crews to the ISS and returns them to Earth after their missions. The crew rides in the part of the spacecraft called a capsule. Up to three astronauts or cosmonauts can ride in a Soyuz capsule.
- ✓ The Soyuz is like a lifeboat for the space station. At least one Soyuz is always docked at the space station. If there is an emergency, the station crew can use the Soyuz to return to Earth.

4. Which of the following international organizations has recently adopted resolutions on single-use plastics and sustainable nitrogen management?

[A] WHO

[B] UNEA

[C] UNICEF

[D] UNCTAD

- ✓ The 4th session of United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) was held in Nairobi from 11th to 15th March 2019. In it, UNEA adopted two resolutions

piloted by India on single-use plastics and sustainable nitrogen management.

- ✓ The 2019 theme of the UNEA was Innovative Solutions for environmental challenges and sustainable production and consumption.
- ✓ In a significant first, the global nitrogen use efficiency is low, resulting in pollution by reactive nitrogen which threatens human health, eco system services, contributes to climate change and stratospheric ozone depletion.
- ✓ Only a small proportion of the plastics produced globally are recycled with most of it damaging the environment and aquatic bio-diversity.

5. The registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of which Section of the Representation of the People Act of 1951?

[A] Section 34A

[B] Section 29A

[C] Section 26A

[D] Section 30A

- ✓ The registration of political parties is governed by the provisions of Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act of 1951.
- ✓ A party seeking registration under the said Section with the Commission has to submit an application to the Commission within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation as per guidelines prescribed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in exercise of the powers conferred by Article 324 of the ECI and Section 29A of the RPA Act of 1951.
- ✓ As per existing guidelines, the applicant association is inter-alia asked to publish proposed Name of the party in two national daily news papers and two local daily newspapers, on two days in same news papers, for inviting objections, if any, with regard to the proposed registration of the party before the Commission within a 30 days from such publication.

6. Chinmoy Roy, who passed away recently, was the veteran actor of which regional cinema?

[A] Odia

[B] Tamil

[C] Bengali

[D] Telugu

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- ✓ Chinmoy Roy (79), the veteran Bengali actor, has passed away in Kolkata on March 18, 2019.
- ✓ Born in Kumilla district in present day Bangladesh in 1940, Roy had started his career in Bengali films in the 60s and became indispensable to the film makers for his portrayal of comic characters retaining the very essence of Bengaliness.
- ✓ He was equally noticed along with big names such as Soumitra Chatterjee and Rabi Ghosh in films like 'Basanta Bilap' and 'Dhonn Meye'. Roy was cast by Satyajit Ray in a small role in children's fantasy 'Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne'.
- ✓ He had immortalised the character of Tenyda in the film 'Charmurti' which became a major hit in the 1980s.

7. Which of the following banks have been designated as the RBI's list of D-SIBs?

[A] SBI, ICICI Bank and HDFC

[B] BoB, PNB and Axis Bank

[C] SBI, BoB and ICICI Bank

[D] PNB, Dena Bank and Axis Bank

- ✓ The State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank would have to comply with additional capital requirement norms by 1st April 2019 as the banks continue to be in the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s list of Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) for 2018.
- ✓ D-SIBs are required to maintain higher capital as compared to other banks. It means that these banks are too big to fail and failure of any of these banks will have cascading effect on Indian financial system.
- ✓ The D-SIB framework requires the RBI to disclose the names of banks designated as D-SIBs starting from 2015 and place these banks in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs).
- ✓ SIBs are subjected to higher levels of supervision so as to prevent disruption in financial services in the event of any failure.

8. Where is the headquarters of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)?

[A] Bhopal

[B] Dehradun

[C] Shimla

[D] **New Delhi**

- ✓ The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to prepare a noise pollution map and remedial action plan to solve the issue across the country.
- ✓ A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed the CPCB to identify noise pollution hotspots and categorise cities with specified hotspots and propose a remedial action plan within 3 months.
- ✓ It also directed state pollution control boards to undertake noise level monitoring in conjunction with police administration and take remedial action.
- ✓ The NGT further stated that the absence of implementation of noise pollution norms affects health of citizens, especially infants and senior citizens.
- ✓ It also affects sleep, comfort, studies and other legitimate activities. Additionally, the green panel suggested manufacturing of public address systems with equipment that can monitor the noise pollution parameters and alert authorities once the prescribed limits are crossed.
- ✓ The CPCB is a statutory organisation under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF). Its head office is located in New Delhi.

9. Which of the following states has started census of Otters?

[A] Andhra Pradesh

[B] **Uttar Pradesh**

[C] Rajasthan

[D] Madhya Pradesh

- ✓ For the first time, Uttar Pradesh has undertaken census of otters in its protected areas. The exercise that began in the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR) will be completed by the end of March 2019.
- ✓ Otters are an important part of the forest ecosystem. A thriving population of otters means a healthy river ecosystem. These mammals, listed in schedule II of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, are rarely seen due to their extremely shy nature.

- ✓ They feed on fish, bird eggs and small creatures like frogs. The den of an otter is known as holt and it is close to water bodies.
- ✓ The PTR is in the foothills of the Himalayas, south of Nepal. Covering an area of approximately 800 square kilometres, the reserve sprawls across parts of Pilibhit, Lakhimpur Kheri and Bahraich districts. With the Sharda and Ghaghara rivers encircling a considerable part of the reserve, it is rich in water bodies.
- ✓ The forests of PTR are home to tigers, leopards, elephants, different species of deer and monkeys and reptiles like snakes, mugger crocodiles and gharials.

10. Which Indian psychologist is the recipient of the 2019 Hans Kilian Award?

[A] Girishwar Misra

[B] Sudhir Kakar

[C] **Ashis Nandy**

[D] Kishor Phadke

- ✓ Indian psychologist, psychoanalyst and co-founder of the postcolonial theory, Prof. Ashis Nandy has been chosen for the prestigious 2019 Hans Kilian award for his efforts to adapt western traditions of thought such as psychoanalysis to non-western context.
- ✓ With this, he will become the first Asian to receive the prestigious award on May 9 at the Ruhr-University Bochum in Germany.
- ✓ The award is given to researchers whose outstanding scientific achievements provide insight into the historical and cultural existence of humankind and the constantly evolving human psyche.
- ✓ It was instituted by the Kohler Foundation in Germany and named after social psychologist and psychoanalyst Hans Kilian. It is awarded every two years and was first awarded in 2011. The prize includes 80,000 euros.

Winmeen Current Affairs

1. Which of the following ships has become the first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit Indonesia?

- [A] INS Mhadei
- [B] INS Sumitra
- [C] **INS Vijit**
- [D] INS Tarini

- ✓ Indian Coast Guard Ship 'INS Vijit' has become the first-ever Coast Guard ship to visit Indonesian port of Sabang on March 17, 2019. The ship is commanded by Comdt T Ashish (0532-J), who is a long Navigation Direction officer.
- ✓ The 4-day visit of INS Vijit highlighted the close proximity between the two countries and the strengthening cooperation in maritime security and safety. During its maiden voyage officers and crew of Vijit will hold interaction with officials of Bakamla (Indonesian Coast Guard), Indonesian Armed Forces and the civil administration at Sabang.
- ✓ It is the another step forward in implementation of "Shared Vision of Maritime Cooperation in the Indo Pacific". 'Vijit' meaning "Winner or Victorious" is the testimony of India's shipbuilding capabilities and the resolve of Govt of India to safeguard country's maritime interests.
- ✓ Earlier, in July 2018, Indian naval ship INS Sumitra visited Sabang and highlighted the maritime proximity between India and Indonesia.

2. Which IIT has tied up with ISRO for Space Technology Cell?

- [A] IIT Kanpur
- [B] IIT Madras
- [C] **IIT Roorkee**
- [D] IIT Bombay

- ✓ IIT Roorkee has signed a pact with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to set up an ISRO-IITR Space Technology Cell (STC).
- ✓ The ISRO – IITR Cell shall pursue advanced research in the areas of relevance to the future technological and programmatic needs of the Indian Space Programme and shall devote its resources including human resources to this effect.

- ✓ The activities of STC shall be directed to maximise the use of the research potential, infrastructure, expertise and experience that already exist in ISRO and IIT Roorkee.
- ✓ Its research facility will consist of faculty members, visiting scientists and experts, research personnel, technical, administrative and support staff.
- ✓ IIT Roorkee will be responsible for overall management of STC by providing required infrastructure, administrative and other support.

3. The 3rd edition of Namaste Thailand Festival (NTF-2019) was held in which of the following cities?

- [A] Gangtok
- [B] **New Delhi**
- [C] Imphal
- [D] Agartala

- ✓ The 3rd edition of Namaste Thailand Festival (NTF-2019) was held at Select Citywalk in New Delhi on March 15, 2019. The 3-day fest was organised by the Royal Thai Embassy with an aim to strengthen bilateral ties and increase cultural exchange between India and Thailand.
- ✓ The festival featured stage performances by Thai artistes including the much popular Thai folk-jazz band Asia-7.
- ✓ Along with the traditional Thai cuisines, the Namaste Thailand festival will feature a series of Thai craft activities including mulberry paper mini umbrella making, fan painting, body paint, and button badge making.

4. Who has become the youngest Indian woman to win on Ladies European Tour (LET)?

- [A] Sharmila Nicollet
- [B] Gursimar Badwal
- [C] Tvesa Malik
- [D] **Diksha Dagar**

- ✓ Diksha Dagar, an Indian female professional deaf golfer, has created history by becoming the youngest Indian woman to win on the Ladies European Tour (LET) at the age of 18 as she won the 2019 Investec South African Women's Open in Cape Town on 16th March.

- ✓ She also became the 2nd Indian woman golfer to win a title after Aditi Ashok.

5. Pramod Sawant, who took charge as new Goa CM, represents which constituency in the Goa Legislative Assembly?

[A] Sankhelim

[B] Panaji

[C] Fatorda

[D] Valpoi

- ✓ Pramod Sawant, the former Speaker of the Goa legislative Assembly and BJP MLA from Sankhelim in north Goa, has been sworn-in as the 11th Chief Minister of Goa.
- ✓ He was administered the oath of office and secrecy at the Raj Bhavan by Governor Mridula Sinha. He succeeded Manohar Parrikar, who died on March 17 after a prolonged battle with advanced pancreatic cancer.
- ✓ A six-time MLA and former Defence Minister, Mr Parrikar was born on 13th December 1955. He graduated from IIT Mumbai with a B.Tech degree in metallurgical engineering. Mr Parrikar was first elected to the Goa assembly in 1994.
- ✓ He served as Chief Minister of the state during October 2000 to February 2005; and March 2012 to November 2014.
- ✓ From November 2014 till March 2017, he served as the Union Defence Minister. Mr Parrikar returned to Goa in March 2017 as the State Chief Minister.
- ✓ The popular leader would be remembered for his efforts in infrastructure and education development in the state and bringing the International Film Festival of India to Goa in 2004.

6. Who is the author of the book "The Great Disappointment: How Narendra Modi Squandered a Unique Opportunity to Transform the Indian Economy"?

[A] Raghuram Rajan

[B] Amartya Sen

[C] Jayati Ghosh

[D] Salman Anees Soz

- ✓ The book titled "The Great Disappointment: How Narendra Modi Squandered a Unique Opportunity to Transform the Indian Economy" has been authored

by economic and political commentator Salman Anees Soz.

- ✓ The book claims that Demonetisation was a terrible idea and the government's own economic surveys have indicated that this move contributed to a slowdown in the economy.
- ✓ According to author, demonetisation was a self-goal by the Modi government. The book attempts to answer the overarching question of whether or not the Modi government transformed India's economy and what the next government's agenda should look like.
- ✓ The book is also a critical assessment of five years of the brand of economics Modi has championed, often referred to as 'Modinomics'.

7. Which of the following teams has won the Indian Super League (ISL) title?

[A] Mumbai City FC

[B] FC Goa

[C] Bengaluru FC

[D] Kerala Blasters

- ✓ Bengaluru FC won the 5th edition of the Indian Super League (ISL-2019) by defeating FC Goa 1-0 in the final at the Mumbai Football arena on 17th March 2019.
- ✓ It's their first-ever ISL title. The two teams were locked 0-0 after 90 minutes. Even the first extra time saw no goals but Bengaluru got better of a 10-men Goan team 1-0, 4 minutes from the end of the second extra half.
- ✓ In it, Bengaluru FC defender Rahul Bheke became the match winner for the team in the dying minutes of the final.

8. Which Indian author has won the 2019 Windham Campbell Prize?

[A] Rohinton Mistry

[B] Jerry Pinto

[C] Raghu Karnad

[D] Upamanyu Chatterjee

- ✓ Delhi-based Journalist and author, Raghu Karnad has won the 2019 Windham-Campbell Prize under non-fiction category for his debut book 'The Farthest Field: An Indian Story of the Second World War' in London.

- ✓ Hence, Karnad has become the 2nd Indian to receive the prestigious prize, since Jerry Pinto won it for his novel 'Em And The Big Hoom' in 2016.
- ✓ Karnad is one of the 8 winners chosen across four categories—fiction, non-fiction, drama and poetry— this year. Each of the eight winners won \$165,000 as prize money to support their writing.
- ✓ In terms of the award money, Windham-Campbell Prize is one of the richest literary awards worldwide. The Windham-Campbell Prize was established in 2013 by writer Donald Windham to honour his late partner Sandy Campbell.
- ✓ It is now co-presented by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University.

9. The joint military exercise "Sary Arka Antiterror 2019" is scheduled to be held in which of the following countries?

[A] Kazakhstan

[B] Uzbekistan

[C] Kyrgyzstan

[D] Tajikistan

- ✓ The first-ever joint military exercise of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) titled "Sary Arka Antiterror 2019" is scheduled to be held in grasslands of Kazakhstan in the Sary Arka region.
- ✓ The decision to hold the joint exercise 'Sary-Arka-Antiterror 2019' was announced during the 34th meeting of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) council held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The SCO, in which China plays an influential role, is also comprised of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan were admitted into the bloc in 2017.
- ✓ Delegations of the competent authorities of India, Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the RATS Executive Committee attended the meeting. RATS is a permanent organ of the SCO which serves to promote cooperation of member states against the three evils of terrorism, separatism and extremism.
- ✓ It is headquartered in Tashkent. The next meeting of the Council of the RATS SCO is scheduled to be held in Russia in September 2019.

10. Which state election department has launched an initiative 'i-help' to promote digital electoral literacy?

[A] Assam

[B] Maharashtra

[C] Tamil Nadu

[D] Karnataka

- ✓ Assam Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Mukesh Sahu has launched an initiative 'i-help' to promote digital electoral literacy in view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha poll.
- ✓ The 'i-help' is a joint initiative of the office of the Assam CEO and Common Service Centres (CSC). This particular initiative will fill the digital divide and fulfill the objective of turning the General Election more inclusive and participatory.
- ✓ The CSCs are internet-enabled access points spread throughout the country delivering various government and non-government digital services to the citizens and is uniquely positioned in rural areas to significantly extend the awareness and outreach activities of CEO, Assam.
- ✓ The entire programme is being launched under the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) in the state and it is geared to ensure that no voter is left behind.
- ✓ The voting in Assam will take place at 28,143 polling stations in three phases on April 11, 18 and 23.