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Daily MCQs: 24/06/2022

1. With reference to millets, consider the following statements:

1. There has been an increase in the total area under millet cultivation since Independence.
2. Millets can survive in much higher temperatures and with much less water than most crops.

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

2. Consider the following statements about the Commonwealth grouping.

1. The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of independent and equal countries including India.
2. Only countries which were under the British Empire can join the Commonwealth.

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

3. Government of India has recently launched the NIRYAT portal with the main objective of

- A. Achieving the target of child labour free society
- B. Creating an integrated platform for offering online courses and covering school to Postgraduate Level
- C. One stop digital platform for providing information needed on India's foreign trade
- D. Assisting Indian MSMEs by solving their grievances, encouraging, supporting, helping and handholding.

4. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is a statutory body functioning under

- A. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare
- B. Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- C. Ministry of Rural Development
- D. NABARD

5. Consider the following statements about the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

1. It is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
2. It is responsible for the direction and coordination of the economic, social, humanitarian, and cultural activities carried out by the UN.

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

Solutions:

1. Answer: **B**

Sol:

- Millets are a group of small seeded grasses used as cereals. The Indian sub-continent has had a rich heritage of growing them and until very recently millets formed a very large part of our food basket.
- Sadly, the production of millets has not been given much attention over the years and our agricultural policies have systematically encouraged production of wheat & rice at the cost of millets and coarse cereals.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** There is a **reduction in the total area under millet cultivation**. While in 1965-66 it stood at almost 37 million hectares, it was down to 14.72 million hectares in 2016-17.

Socio-Economic Context of Millets

- Millets were considered the **food of the poor** due to their **ability to grow even in the most marginalised of lands**, compared to other crops like paddy or wheat which needed more fertile lands and more focus on irrigation and crop management.
- Millets were also **ideal for rain-fed conditions and saline soils**.

Renewed focus

- A **declining diversity in diet** which was traditionally a part of our food culture had many significant impacts in terms of the **nutrition status amongst women and children**.
- The recent trends show a **renewed interest in millets**. The government policies are also starting to reflect this renewal. Millets have been included in the **public distribution system in Odisha** and the government is also promoting millets under the **National Food Security Act**.
- At the behest of the Indian government, the **UN Food and Agricultural Organisation** has approved its proposal to declare the **year 2023 as the International Year of Millets**.

Millets -- Good for Health, Farmers, & Environment

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- According to a recent study, in the coming years there will be a **reduction in production rates** of various cereal crops **due to climate change**. The only crops that could withstand these climate vagaries and not see a negative impact on yield are millets.
- Millets have a **double value in tackling climate change** because they **contribute to both adaptation and mitigation**.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** Millets can survive in much higher temperatures and with much less water than most crops. Their overall resilience makes them **climate smart** and a good adaptation strategy for farmers.
- Millets also are farmed with **minimal fertilizers and pesticides**, so they have a **lower carbon footprint**. Millets compared to rice **reduces Greenhouse gases (GHGs) by 2% to 13%**.
- Millets are also **highly nutritious** and have the potential to be a solution to the nutrition crisis facing the country.
- A study by **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)** found that children grew up to 50% more in weight and height parameters on a millet based diet.
- Millets are also being hailed as the **solution for many lifestyle diseases** like diabetes, high blood pressure, digestive disorders, gluten allergies and much more.

2. Answer: A

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of **54 independent and equal countries** (including **India**) in Africa, Asia, the Americas, Europe and the Pacific.
- It is home to 2.5 billion people, and includes both advanced economies and developing countries. 32 of the members are small states, including many island nations.
- The member governments have agreed to **shared goals like development, democracy and peace**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Commonwealth's roots go back to the British Empire. But today **any country can join the modern Commonwealth**. The last country to join the Commonwealth was Rwanda in 2009.
- Leaders of the Commonwealth countries meet **every two years** at the **Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)**.

3. Answer: C

Sol:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a new portal **NIRYAT (National Import-Export Record for Yearly Analysis of Trade)** - a **one-stop place for all info needed on India's foreign trade**.
- The NIRYAT portal will help provide real time data to all stakeholders. From this portal, important information related to more than 30 commodity groups exported to more than 200 countries of the world will be available. In the coming time, information related to

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district-wise exports will also be available on this. This will also strengthen the efforts to develop the districts as important centers of exports.

- During the last fiscal year, the Prime Minister said despite the historic global disruptions, India's **exports stood at a total (goods and services) of USD 670 billion (Rs 50 lakh crore).**
- He added that **India's merchandise exports in 2021-22 crossed USD 418 billion (Rs 31 lakh crore), as against the target of USD 400 billion (Rs 30 lakh crore).**

4. Answer: **B**

Sol:

- The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) was established by the Government of India under the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act, 1985.
- The Authority replaced the Processed Food Export Promotion Council (PFEPCC).
- It is a **statutory body functioning under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.**
- The Authority has its headquarters in **New Delhi.**

Functions of APEDA

- **Development of industries** relating to the scheduled products for export by way of providing financial assistance or otherwise for undertaking surveys and feasibility studies, participation in enquiry capital through joint ventures and other reliefs and subsidy schemes;
- **Registration of persons as exporters** of the scheduled products on payment of such fees as may be prescribed;
- **Fixing of standards and specifications** for the scheduled products for the purpose of exports;
- **Carrying out inspection** of meat and meat products in slaughterhouses, processing plants, storage premises, conveyances or other places where such products are kept or handled for the purpose of ensuring the quality of such products;
- **Improving of packaging** of the Scheduled products;
- **Improving of marketing** of the Scheduled products outside India;
- **Promotion of export oriented production and development** of the Scheduled products;

Products monitored

- 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.

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- 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.
- In addition to this, APEDA has been entrusted with the responsibility to monitor **import of sugar**.

5. Answer: C

Sol:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It is responsible for the direction and coordination of the economic, social, humanitarian, and cultural activities carried out by the UN.
- ECOSOC was established by the UN Charter (1945), which was amended in 1965 and 1974 to increase the number of members from 18 to 54. ECOSOC **membership is based on geographic representation**.
- ECOSOC is responsible for promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress; identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems; facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.