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Daily MCQs: 23-04-2024

1. Consider the following statements about the Real Estate (regulation and development) Act, 2016.

1. The act establishes Real Estate Regulatory Authorities (RERAs) at state level for regulation and promotion of the real estate sector.
2. Appeals from RERAs shall lie with the National Company Law Tribunal.
3. A specific percentage of the amount collected from buyers for a project must be maintained in an escrow account and must only be used for construction of that project.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

2. The Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, which comprises the Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, is located in the state of?

- A. Uttarakhand
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Odisha
- D. Chhattisgarh

3. Which of the following countries are signatories to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)?

1. China
2. Australia
3. Myanmar
4. India
5. Maldives

Select the correct answer using the codes given below

- A. 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
- B. 1, 2 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2, 3 and 5 only

4. With reference to the European Organization for Nuclear Research, known as CERN, consider the following statements.

1. CERN operates the world's largest particle physics laboratory.
2. The Higgs boson was observed for the first time at CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC).

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3. India is a founding member of the CERN.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1 and 3 only

5. With reference to the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC), consider the following statements.

- 1. It was launched at the 27th Session of Conference of Parties (COP27) of UNFCCC.
- 2. It is an initiative led by China.
- 3. MAC seeks to educate and spread awareness worldwide on the role of mangroves in curbing global warming and its potential as a solution for climate change.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

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

Solutions:

1. Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The real estate (regulation and development) Act 2016 was enacted with the main purpose to establish the state level regulatory authorities called **Real Estate Regulatory Authority** for regulation and promotion of the real estate sector.
- The Act has the following objectives:
 - To protect the interest of the allottees and ensure their responsibility;
 - To maintain transparency and reduce the chances of fraud;
 - To implement Pan-India standardization and bring about professionalism;
 - To enhance the flow of correct information between the home buyers and the sellers;
 - To impose greater responsibilities on both the builders and the investors;
 - To enhance the reliability of the sector and thereby increase confidence amongst the investors.
- Residential real estate projects, with some exceptions, need to be **registered with RERAs**. Promoters cannot book or offer these projects for sale without registering them. Real estate agents dealing in these projects also need to register with RERAs.
- On registration, the promoter must upload details of the project on the website of the RERA. These include the site and layout plan, and schedule for completion of the real estate project.

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- **Statement 3 is correct: 70% of the amount** collected from buyers for a project must be maintained in a separate bank account (*escrow account*) and must only be used for construction of that project.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The Act establishes state level tribunals called **Real Estate Appellate Tribunals**. Decisions of RERAs can be appealed in these tribunals.

2. Answer: **B**

Explanation:

- The Dudhwa Tiger Reserve is a protected area in **Uttar Pradesh**. It shares the north-eastern **boundary with Nepal**, which is defined to a large extent by the **Mohana River**.
- It comprises the **Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary**. The three Protected Areas, being the last viable home of the **Royal Bengal Tiger** in the state, have been jointly constituted into Dudhwa Tiger Reserve under Project Tiger.

Vegetation

- **Moist Deciduous** type, containing some of the finest examples of Sal forests in India, as well as the most extensive tracts of **moist grasslands** that remain in this region.

Rivers flowing through

- The **Sharda River** flows by the Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary, the **Geruwa River** flows through the Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary and the **Suheli and Mohana** streams flow in the Dudhwa National Park, all of which are tributaries of the mighty **Ghagra River**.

Wildlife

- Tiger, Rhinoceros, Elephant, Swamp deer, Sambar, Cheetal, Hog deer, Kakar, Wild pig, Blue bull, Rhesus monkey, Langur, Sloth bear, Porcupine, Otter, Monitor lizard, Turtles, Python, Mugger, Gharial, etc.
- Of the nearly 1300 birds found in the Indian subcontinent, over 450 species can be seen in the Reserve. These include Hornbill, Red Jungle Fowl, Peafowl, Bengal Florican, Fishing eagle, Serpent eagle, Osprey, Woodpeckers, Shama, Indian Pitta, Paradise flycatcher, Orioles, Emerald dove etc.

3. Answer: **B**

Explanation:

About RCEP

- 15 Asia-Pacific nations have signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) which covers over 2.2 billion people and accounts for 30 per cent of the world's economy. It came into force on January 1 this year.

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- The signatory countries include **10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members — Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam** — and their five trade partners — **Australia, China, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand**.
- The purpose of RCEP was to make it easier for products and services of each of these countries to be available across this region. The agreement also includes rules on intellectual property, telecommunications, financial and professional services, and e-commerce.
- Described as the **largest regional trading agreement** to this day, RCEP was originally being **negotiated between 16 countries — ASEAN members** and six countries namely **Australia, China, Korea, Japan, New Zealand and India**.
- Negotiations to chart out this deal had been on since 2013, and India was expected to be a signatory.

India's Exit

- However, in 2019, **India announced its decision to not join RCEP**.
- This came amid concerns that elimination of tariffs would open India's markets to imports, which in turn could harm local producers.

Concerns of India

- **Imbalance in the negotiations between goods and services** was the main concern for India. Member countries pressured India to commit to **zero tariffs on more than 90 percent** of tradable goods with few exemptions.
- However, they were reluctant to India's proposal to allow **free movement of Indian skilled professionals** in the RCEP region.
- Indian industries were also worried that with RCEP allowing a wide range of goods to import at zero tariffs, **Chinese goods will flood India**. It will cause serious damage to the "Make in India" programme.
- India has **trade deficits with most of the RCEP countries**, and some experts feel that India has been unable to leverage its existing bilateral free trade agreements with several RCEP members to increase exports.

4. Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The European Organization for Nuclear Research, known as CERN, is a **European research organization** that operates the **largest particle physics laboratory in the world**.
- Established in **1954**, the organization is based in a northwest suburb of **Geneva** on the **Franco-Swiss border** and has **23 member states**. CERN works to uncover what the universe is made of and how it works.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** In **2017**, **India** became an **associate member of the CERN** and with this, CERN allows Indian companies to bid for engineering contracts and Indians can apply for staff positions at the organisation.

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What discoveries have been made at CERN?

- Highlights include the 1983 discovery of a pair of elementary particles called the **W and Z bosons**, which was later awarded the **Nobel Prize for Physics**.
- British computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee helped invent the **World Wide Web** at CERN in 1989 by developing a way for computers to talk to each other, called **hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP)**.
- In 1995, CERN scientists were the first to **create atoms of hydrogen's antimatter counterpart, antihydrogen**.
- In 2000, they discovered a **new state of matter**: a hot, dense, particle soup called **quark-gluon plasma**.
- **Statement 2 is correct**: And the **Higgs boson**, an elementary particle in the Standard Model of particle physics, was observed for the first time in 2012 at **CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC)**, scooping its discoverers a Nobel Prize.

What is the Large Hadron Collider and how does it work?

- The LHC is the **world's most powerful particle accelerator**: a giant machine that physicists use to smash tiny subatomic particles together at extremely high speeds to see what happens.
- The particle collisions recreate, for a fraction of a second, the conditions that existed moments after the **Big Bang**, when the Universe was born. By studying the debris of these collisions, physicists try to settle mysteries such as what matter is made of and how particles get their mass.
- The LHC, which was completed in 2008, was built primarily to put the **Standard Model of particle physics** to the test. This wildly successful theory from the 1970s describes the interactions between the 17 elementary particles and three of the four fundamental forces of the Universe: electromagnetism, the strong nuclear force and the weak nuclear force (gravity is the fourth).

5. Answer: **B**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct**: At the 27th Session of Conference of Parties (COP27), the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC) was launched with **India** as a partner.

About MAC

- **Statement 2 is incorrect**: An initiative **led by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Indonesia**, the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC) includes **India, Sri Lanka, Australia, Japan, and Spain**.
- **Statement 3 is correct**: It **seeks to educate and spread awareness worldwide on the role of mangroves** in curbing global warming and its potential as a solution for climate change.
- The intergovernmental alliance works on a **voluntary basis** which means that there are no real checks and balances to hold members accountable. Instead, the **parties will decide their own commitments and deadlines regarding planting and restoring mangroves**.
- The members will also **share expertise and support each other** in researching, managing and protecting coastal areas.

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Significance of mangroves

- Mangrove is a **tropical tree, essentially adapted to thrive near the coastline, in brackish water and loose and wet soil**. These trees **cannot survive in colder temperatures**.
- A characteristic feature of mangroves is their **tangled prop roots**. These roots allow the trees to survive the daily tides and also capture sediments while slowing waterflow.
- Mangroves serve a multitude of purposes in their ecosystem, including **coastal protection, filtration of water, and disaster risk reduction**.
- Mangrove forests **stabilize coastlines, reduce erosion, encourage biodiversity growth, and shield coastal communities from sea-level rise, and natural disasters** like hurricanes and cyclones.

Carbon sinks:

- Mangroves are one of the **most carbon-rich forests of the tropics, storing carbon from the atmosphere at up to four times the rate of terrestrial forests**. This makes mangrove forests an indispensable tool in achieving the goal of **net zero carbon emissions by 2050**.
- Part of this carbon is stored in living biomass, while part of it is sequestered in the soil. Dead mangroves decompose very slowly due to waterlogging in the soil, making the accumulation of carbon in the soil last hundreds of years. The **waterlogged soil** is also a reason why mangroves hold more carbon than other forests, such as temperate or boreal ones.

Ecosystems:

- Mangroves usually do not exist in isolation but **support interconnected terrestrial, freshwater, and marine habitats**.
- The roots of mangrove trees capture sediments, resulting in the formation of new, fertile lands. This process also ensures that offshore water is clearer, allowing marine life to thrive.

Disaster risk reduction:

- Not only do mangroves stabilise coastlines by holding sediments together but they also act as **safety nets against storms and surges**.
- In tropical coastal areas, mangroves are the **first line of defence against natural disasters** like cyclones and hurricanes that originate in seas and oceans and impact land.
- Mangrove trees act as a **buffer zone** and arrest winds, slowing them down and hence minimising impact on land.
- The **2022 State of World's Mangroves Report**, prepared by the **Global Mangrove Alliance**, finds that **mangroves prevent more than \$65 billion in property damages and reduce flood risk to some 15 million people every year**.

Socio-economic importance of mangroves:

- They also support a rich food web, with molluscs and algae-filled substrate acting as a breeding ground for small fish, mud crabs and shrimps, thus providing a livelihood to local artisanal fishers.
- Mangroves are also important resources for timber and fuelwood, when collected sustainably.

Current state of the mangroves

- **South Asia** houses some of the most extensive areas of mangroves globally, while **Indonesia** hosts one-fifth of the overall amount.

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- **India holds around 3 percent of South Asia's mangrove population. West Bengal** has the highest percentage of mangrove cover in India. It is followed by **Gujarat** and **Andaman, and Nicobar islands**. **Maharashtra, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Kerala** too have mangrove cover.

Threat to mangroves

- **Agriculture, overfishing, and rapid urbanisation** are some of the glaring threats to mangrove forests around the world.
- Indirect threats to mangroves include **change in sedimentation rates and patterns, rising sea levels, and increase in pollutants**, and these are **often exacerbated by human actions**.

