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Daily MCQs: 09-09-2024

1. Which of the following was a significant change that the 2020 commercial coal mining reforms introduced compared to the previous system?

- A. Maintained the captive mining regime
- B. Allowed private players to mine coal with end-use restrictions
- C. Introduced a revenue-sharing mechanism instead of a fixed price per tonne
- D. Increased the import of coal

2. Which of the following countries participates in the "Yudh Abhyas" military exercise with India?

- A. Russia
- B. United States
- C. Japan
- D. France

3. The PRANA Portal launched by the Government of India is most closely associated with

- A. Promoting renewable energy sources in urban areas
- B. Tracking progress of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)
- C. Monitoring water quality in major rivers
- D. Disseminating information on sustainable agriculture practices

4. With reference to 'palm oil', consider the following statements:

- 1) The palm oil tree is native to West Africa.
- 2) Palm oil consists of more than 90 per cent share in total edible oil imports in India.
- 3) National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm is aimed at boosting domestic oilseed production.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

5. With reference to the Agni class of missiles, consider the following statements.

- 1. Agni series was one of the components under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Program.
- 2. The longest of the Agni series, Agni-V is an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile with a range of over 5,000 km.
- 3. All missiles of Agni series have a range of 2000 kms and above.

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Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Solutions:

1. Answer: C

Explanation

- In 2020, the **Government of India opened the coal sector for commercial mining by private players** more than 45 years after the **nationalization of coal mines in the country**.
 - Before that, coal blocks were allocated through **auctions**.
- Commercial mining **allows the private sector to mine coal commercially** on a **revenue-sharing model without placing any end-use restrictions**.
- Removing end-use restrictions marked the **end of the captive mining regime**.
 - *Captive mining is the coal mined for a specific end-use by the mine owner, but not for open sale in the market.*
 - *A revenue sharing mechanism instead of the earlier fixed price per tonne will introduce competition, transparency and private sector participation in the market.*
- The private firms now have the option of either gasification of the coal or exporting it. They can also use it in their own end-use plants or **sell them in the markets**.
- Further, with **100 per cent foreign direct investment** allowed in the coal sector, global companies can also participate in the auctions.
- The complete freedom to decide on sale, pricing, and captive utilization aims to attract many private sector firms to participate in the auction process.
- The government expects these steps will **generate employment and reduce India's import bill**.

2. Answer: B

Explanation

- "Yudh Abhyas" is a bilateral military exercise conducted between the armies of **India and the United States**.
- This annual exercise is one of the largest running joint military training and defense cooperation endeavors between the two nations.
- It aims to enhance interoperability, cooperation, and coordination between the armies of India and the United States, focusing on counter-terrorism, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and peacekeeping operations.

3. Answer: B

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Explanation

- **PRANA (Portal for Regulation of Air-pollution in Non-Attainment Cities)**, is a portal for monitoring the implementation of the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

About NCAP

- The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was launched in **2019** by the **Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** as a **time-bound, national level strategy to tackle the air pollution crisis** in the country in a comprehensive manner.
- The national level target of **20 per cent to 30 per cent reduction of PM2.5 and PM10 concentration by 2024** was proposed under the NCAP, taking **2017 as the base year** for the comparison of concentration.
- To begin with, city specific action plans were formulated for **102 non-attainment cities**, which exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for **5 consecutive years**.
- Gradually, the number of cities identified for implementing mitigation actions under NCAP was increased to **131**.
- In **2022**, the NCAP target was **revised to a 40 per cent reduction** in particulate matter concentration in cities and the deadline was extended till 2025-26.

4. Answer: C

Explanation

- The oil palm tree is **native to West Africa**, specifically to the region that includes countries like **Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Liberia. Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- In recent decades, the cultivation of oil palm has expanded well beyond West Africa and is now grown in various tropical regions around the world, including Southeast Asia and parts of South America. It is a major global commodity, with applications in food products, cosmetics, and industrial processes.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the **National Edible Oil Mission-Oil Palm (NMEO-OP)**, with an investment of over Rs 11,000 crore to boost domestic oilseed production and make the country self-sufficient in cooking oils. **Hence statement 3 is correct.**
- With **palm oil having 55 per cent share (not 90 percent) in total edible oil imports**, NMEO-OP would ensure that farmers get all facilities, from quality seeds to technology to promote cultivation of palm and other oil seeds. Hence **statement 2 is incorrect.**

Significance

- The Prime Minister said while India has become self-sufficient or Atma Nirbhar in the production of rice, wheat and sugar, it was not enough as the country is dependent on huge imports of edible oils.
- India is the **world's biggest vegetable oil importer**. India **produces less than half of the roughly 2.5 million tonnes of edible oil that it consumes annually**. It imports the rest, buying **palm oil from Indonesia and Malaysia, soyoil from Brazil and Argentina, and sunflower oil, mainly from Russia and Ukraine**, with the import bill hovering around Rs 75,000 crore per year.

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- The increase in cultivation of oil palm will not only benefit farmers but also consumers who would get quality cooking oils at a cheaper rate.
- Besides, it would benefit processors and the entire value chain, thereby creating job opportunities.

5. Answer: A

Explanation

Agni Class of Missiles

- **Agni class** of missiles are the **mainstay of India's nuclear launch capability** which also includes the Prithvi short range ballistic missiles, submarine launched ballistic missiles and fighter aircraft.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The **longest** of the Agni series, **Agni-V**, an Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a range of over 5,000 km.

Evolution of Agni

- Agni I: Range of 700-800 km. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- Agni II: Range more than 2000 km.
- Agni III: Range of more than 2,500 Km
- Agni IV: Range is more than 3,500 km and can fire from a road mobile launcher.
- Agni-V: The longest of the Agni series, an **Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)** with a range of over 5,000 to 8000 km. An intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) is a missile with a minimum range of 5,500 kilometres primarily designed for nuclear weapons delivery

IGMDP (Integrated Guided Missile Development Program)

- It was conceived by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam to enable India attain self-sufficiency in the field of missile technology.
- The 5 missiles developed under this program are:
 - **Agni:** Ballistic missiles with different ranges, i.e. Agni (1,2,3,4,5) **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
 - **Akash:** Medium range surface to air missile.
 - **Prithvi:** Short range surface to surface ballistic missile.
 - **Trishul:** Short-range low-level surface to air missile.
 - **Nag:** 3rd generation anti-tank missile.