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Daily MCQs: 18-01-2025

1. Gulf of Aden, often seen in news, shares its borders with which of the following countries?

1. Ethiopia
2. Djibouti
3. Somalia
4. Yemen

Choose the correct answer from the code given below.

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

2. Consider the following statements about rat-hole mining:

1. It is a method of extracting coal.
2. This practice is widely supported by environmental regulations in India.
3. It is an advanced and highly safe method to extract coal

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- A) Only one
- B) Only two
- C) All the three
- D) None of the above

3. Consider the following statements about the Minimum Support Price (MSP)

- 1) It is a form of market intervention by the Government to insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices.
- 2) It is announced at the beginning of the sowing season by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

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

4. Consider the following statements about the Goods & Services Tax (GST) Council.

1. It is a constitutional body to make recommendations to the Union and the States on important issues related to GST.

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2. It is chaired by the Prime Minister of India.
3. Every decision of the Council is taken by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the weighted votes of the members present and voting.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

5. Consider the following statements.

1. Sowa-Rigpa is an ancient Indian medical system conceived and propounded by Lord Buddha in India.
2. It has been propagated and transmitted through teacher-student-lineage prevalent in the Western ghats region of India.
3. Sowa-Rigpa is acknowledged as a traditional medical system by the governments of India, Bhutan, Mongolia and Tibet.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

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

Solutions:

1. Answer: B

Explanation:

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- From the map, Ethiopia does not have access to the Gulf of Aden. Hence, B is the correct answer.

2. Answer: A

Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Rat hole mining is a **method of extracting coal from narrow, horizontal seams**. This practice is prevalent in **Assam and Meghalaya**.
- The term “**rat hole**” refers to the **narrow pits dug into the ground**, typically just large enough for one person to descend and extract coal.
- Once the pits are dug, miners descend using ropes or bamboo ladders to reach the **coal seams**.
- The coal is then **manually extracted** using **primitive tools** such as pickaxes, shovels, and baskets.

Concerns

- Rat hole mining poses significant **safety and environmental hazards**. The mines are **typically unregulated**, lacking safety measures such as proper ventilation, structural support, or safety gear for the workers.
- The mining process can cause **land degradation, deforestation, and water pollution**.
- This method of mining has faced severe criticism due to its **hazardous working conditions**, and **numerous accidents** leading to injuries and fatalities.
- **Statements 2 and 3 are incorrect:** The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** banned the practice in **2015**, but it continues to persist due to the absence of viable alternative livelihoods for the local population.

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3. Answer: C

Explanation

Both the statements are correct.

- Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a form of **market intervention** by the Government to **insure agricultural producers against any sharp fall in farm prices**.
- MSP is the price at which the government procures certain crops from farmers to ensure support price to farmers and affordable prices to the consumer.
- The minimum support prices are announced by the Government at the **beginning of the sowing season** for certain crops on the basis of the recommendations of the **Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP)**.

About CACP

- The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices is an attached office of the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**. It came into existence in 1965.
- It is **mandated to recommend MSPs** to incentivize the cultivators to adopt modern technology and raise productivity and overall grain production in line with the emerging demand patterns in the country.

How many crops does the minimum support price cover?

- As of now, CACP recommends MSPs of **23 commodities**, which comprise **7 cereals** (paddy, wheat, maize, sorghum, pearl millet, barley and ragi), **5 pulses** (gram, tur, moong, urad, lentil), **7 oilseeds** (groundnut, rapeseed-mustard, soyabean, seasmum, sunflower, safflower, niger seed), and **4 commercial crops** (copra, sugarcane, cotton and raw jute).
- CACP submits its recommendations to the government. The **Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)** chaired by the **Prime Minister** takes a **final decision** on the level of MSPs and other recommendations made by CACP.

Why in News?

- The Union Cabinet has approved MSP hikes for all kharif season crops, in alignment with the government's policy of keeping MSPs **at least 1.5 times above the cost of production**, aiming at reasonably fair remuneration for the farmers.

How is the production cost arrived at?

- As per CACP, there are three definitions of production cost which includes **A2, A2+FL and C2**.
 - A2 covers **all paid-out expenses**, including cash and in kind. It includes costs on seeds, chemicals, hired labour, irrigation, fertilisers and fuel.
 - A2+FL covers **actual paid cost and also unpaid family labour**.
 - C2 cost method is more comprehensive and makes the calculation by including a wider range of inputs. It includes **actual paid out costs, imputed value of family**

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labour, interest on the value of owned capital assets, rent paid for leased-in land and the rental value of owned land.

- CACP considers **both A2+FL and C2 costs** while recommending MSP.
- It should be noted that there is currently **no statutory backing** for these prices, **nor any law mandating their enforcement**.

4. Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Goods & Services Tax Council is a **constitutional body** under Article 279A of the amended Constitution, for making recommendations to the Union and State Government on issues related to Goods and Service Tax.
- The Council was introduced by the **Constitution (One Hundred and First Amendment) Act, 2016**.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** The GST Council is chaired by the **Union Finance Minister** and other members are the Union State Minister of Revenue or Finance and Ministers in-charge of Finance or Taxation of all the States.

Mandate of GST Council

- The Goods and Services Tax Council shall make recommendations to the Union and the States on—
 - the **taxes, cesses and surcharges** levied by the Union, the States and the local bodies which may be subsumed in the goods and services tax;
 - the goods and services that may be **subjected to, or exempted** from the goods and services tax;
 - the **threshold limit of turnover** below which goods and services may be exempted from goods and services tax;
 - the **rates including floor rates with bands** of goods and services tax;
 - the date on which the goods and services tax be levied on **petroleum crude, high speed diesel, motor spirit (commonly known as petrol), natural gas and aviation turbine fuel**.
- **Quorum:** **One-half** of the total number of Members of the Goods and Services Tax Council shall constitute the quorum at its meetings.
- **Voting share:** Every decision of the Goods and Services Tax Council shall be taken at a meeting, by a majority of **not less than three-fourths** of the weighted votes of the members present and voting, in accordance with the following principles, namely: —
 - the vote of the **Central Government** shall have a weightage of **one-third** of the total votes cast, and
 - the votes of all the **State Governments** taken together shall have a weightage of **two-thirds** of the total votes cast, in that meeting. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**

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- No act or proceedings of the Goods and Services Tax Council shall be invalid merely by reason of—
 - any vacancy in, or any defect in, the constitution of the Council; or
 - any defect in the appointment of a person as a Member of the Council; or
 - any procedural irregularity of the Council not affecting the merits of the case.
- **Dispute adjudication:** The Goods and Services Tax Council shall establish a mechanism to adjudicate any dispute
 - between the Government of India and one or more States; or
 - between the Government of India and any State or States on one side and one or more other States on the other side; or
 - between two or more States, arising out of the recommendations of the Council or implementation thereof.

5. Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Sowa-Rigpa is an ancient Indian medical system conceived and propounded by Lord Buddha in India and later was enriched in the entire Trans-Himalayan region.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Sowa-Rigpa originated in India 2500 years ago and was introduced in the **TransHimalayan region** around the 8th Century CE. Since then, it has been propagated and transmitted through teacher-student-lineage (including family lineage) prevalent in the secular and monastic contexts of the **Trans Himalayan region of India**.
- Sowa-Rigpa is a traditional medical system of Ladakh, Sikkim, Darjeeling and Kalingpong (West Bengal); Lahaul-Spiti, Kinnour, Dharamsala regions of Himachal Pradesh; Mon-Tawang and west Kameng regions of Arunachal Pradesh; and Tibetan settlements in various parts of India. Sowa-Rigpa is also traditionally practiced in Bhutan, Mongolia, Tibet, China, Nepal and some parts of Central Asia.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Today, Sowa-Rigpa is acknowledged as a traditional medical system by the governments of **India, Bhutan, Mongolia and Tibet**.
- Sowa-Rigpa has been recognized and promoted by the Government of India as a traditional medical system.

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