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*C – Chennai; B – Bengaluru; D – Delhi; H – Hyderabad; T – Thiruvananthapuram
Persian Gulf

- A shallow marginal sea that lies between the Arabian Peninsula and southwestern Iran.
- Borders with – Iran, Oman, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq.
- Connects with the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea through the Strait of Hormuz.
- World's largest single source of crude oil.
- Regional Imbalances in the Persian Gulf
  - 1990 Persian Gulf war – Iraq invaded Kuwait.
  - 2003 warfare – when U.S. and British forces invade Iraq.
Regional tensions paved the way for External powers interventions in the region.

- The U.S. – through military actions.

Need for a framework which includes:

- Ensuring peace and stability in individual littoral states.
- Freedom to all the littoral states to exploit their hydrocarbons and other natural resources and export them.
- Freedom of commercial shipping in the international waters of the Persian Gulf.
- Freedom of access to and outlet from Gulf waters through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Prevention of conflict that negatively impact the freedom of trade and shipping in the region.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

- A political and economic alliance of six Middle Eastern countries.
  - Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman.
- Established in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in May, 1981.
- Objective: To achieve unity among its members based on their common objectives and their similar political and cultural identities, which are rooted in Arab and Islamic cultures.
- Presidency of the council rotates annually.
- Iraq and Iran are not the members.
Author's views

- There is a fundamental transformation in the Persian Gulf region.
  - Saudi Arabia – losing its power in the region.
  - UAE, Qatar and Iran – emerging as the new regional leaders.
  - Oman and Iraq will have to struggle to retain their sovereign identities.
- Ending of GCC as a strategic alliance – OPEC and Arab League are irrelevance.

Suggestions

- Resort to co-operative security arrangements rather than competitive security arrangements.
- The six countries of the GCC are left to individual devices to explore the working arrangements with Iran and Iraq.
  - To benefit as well as to achieve the security and stability in the region.

India – GCC relationship

- India’s top trading partners.
- Governments are India-friendly and Indian-friendly.
- Bilateral trade is around $121 billion.
- Indian migrant workers in the region stands at more than 9 million.
- Remittances is around $49 billion.
- Accounts for 34% of India’s crude imports.
Practice Question – Prelims
Q1. Which of the following countries are members of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and also the littoral states of Persian Gulf?
1. Kuwait
2. Iran
3. Iraq
4. Saudi Arabia
5. Oman
6. Yemen
Select the correct answer from the code given below.
(a) 1, 5 and 6 only
(b) 1, 4 and 5 only
(c) 2, 3 and 4 only
(d) 2, 4, 5 and 6 only

Practice Question – Mains
GS – II
Q. How do you justify the view that Persian Gulf region is undergoing a fundamental transformation in the recent decades? Analyse its impacts on India’s strategic interests in the region. (250 words, 15 marks)
News

• A fuel tank of a power plant in Norilsk, Russia has collapsed – resulted in leak of 20000 tonnes of diesel into the Ambarnaya river.

Oil Spill

• It is the leakage of petroleum onto the surface of a large body of water, mainly oceans and large rivers.

• A major environmental problem since 1960s.
  ✓ Intensified petroleum exploration and production on continental shelves.
  ✓ Use of super-tankers capable of transporting lakhs of tons of oil.

• Major reasons for oil spill
  ✓ Accidents involving tankers, pipelines, refineries and storage facilities.
  ✓ Negligence of people involved.
  ✓ Breakdown of equipment.
  ✓ Natural disasters such as cyclones.
  ✓ Deliberate acts by terrorists and countries at war.

Economical and Ecological impacts of oil spill

✓ Prevents sufficient amounts of sunlight from penetrating the surface.
✓ Reduces the level of dissolved oxygen, thus threatens the aquatic life.
✓ Oil destroys the insulating ability of fur-bearing mammals and the water-repelling abilities of a bird’s feathers, thus exposing these creatures to the harsh elements.
✓ Many birds and animals swallow oil, which can poison them.
✓ Oil spills can damage the habitats of animals and affects their rate of reproduction.
✓ Significant damage to the plant life especially saltwater marshes and mangroves.
✓ Impact on tourism and commerce as beaches and populated shorelines are damaged.
✓ Impact on fishing industry.

Methods to clean up the oil spill

✓ Use of containment boom, a floating barrier to contain the spread of spilled oil.
• Methods to clean up the oil spill (continued…)
  ✓ Use of skimmers to skim the spilled oil.
  ✓ Use of oil sorbents—oleophilic and hydrophobic.
  ✓ Use of chemical dispersants and biological agents to break down the oil into its chemical constituents.
  ✓ In situ burning if the oil is floating on water.
  ✓ Use of high-pressure hoses and vacuum pumps to wash oil off beaches.
• Oil leak at Norilsk in Russia could be due to climate change.
  ✓ Weakening of permafrost which caused the sinking of pillars that supported the plant’s fuel tank.
    ➢ Permafrost is the ground, soil or rock that remains at or below 0°C for at least two consecutive years.

Practice Question – Mains

GS – III

Q. “Oil spills are becoming a major cause of destruction of marine and several riverine ecosystems”. Discuss in detail about the major causes and environmental and economic impacts of oil spills. (250 words, 15 marks)
Swarm Intelligence

- The individuals that make up a colony of living creatures are singularly unintelligent, but their collective actions make their entire colony intelligent as an entity.

- Observed in insects, bees, ants, birds, fishes and locusts.

- Within a swarm, individuals are constantly communicating with each other through actions, in a binary manner.

- Leaderless – act collectively.

Swarms of Extremism

We need compassionate, thinking and inclusive leaders rather than swarms of political locusts.
Author’s View

• Swarm intelligence phenomenon – logic behind understanding brain function, design of artificial intelligence etc.
• Relation with effectiveness of extremist political movements.
  ✓ Political movements combine swarm intelligence with conventional leadership models – leader directs the swarm of followers.
  ➢ Creating fake news, sloganeering and hate.
  ➢ Individuals at bottom cut off from individual capabilities for critical thinking – share fake messages, amplify them and hashtags trend.

• Liberals are unsuited for being a part of swarm. They
  ✓ Reject binary communications.
  ✓ Immediate supporters seen as competitors.
• Leaderless movements – Examples of Hong Kong and Arab Spring – pro-freedom movements.

Conclusion

• Author – eliminating political locusts is neither practical nor desirable.
• Need – compassionate, thinking and inclusive locusts.

Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Consider the following with reference to ‘COVID-BEEP’, recently seen in news:

1. It is an indigenous biomedical device developed for monitoring the coronavirus patients.
2. It will greatly reduce the risk of transmission of virus.
3. It is developed by Indian Council of Medical Research.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

• ‘Continuous Oxygenation and Vital Information Device Biomed’

• The ESIC Medical College Hyderabad has come up with the innovation in collaboration with eminent institutes like IIT Hyderabad, ECIL, Hyderabad, Department of Atomic Energy and Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Hyderabad.

![Image of COVID BEEP machine]

• COVID-BEEP can check patient’s
  ✓ body temperature
  ✓ blood oxygen saturation
  ✓ heart rate
  ✓ respiratory rate
  ✓ electrocardiogram (ECG)
  ✓ blood pressure

  ✓ Patient’s location on a mobile phone, laptop/desktop computer for monitoring by doctor from any place for giving timely treatment

• Reduces the risk of transmission of virus
• Saves resources like PPE kits

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kit

• Garments usually consist of gloves, masks, gown, face protection and also goggles, headcover and rubber boots
  ✓ to prevent infections from blood or airborne diseases

• India now produces 4.5 lakh Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) suits daily

• Over 600 companies in India are certified to manufacture PPEs

• India is now the second-largest producer of PPE kits after China

Practice Question – Prelims

Q2. Consider the following with reference to ‘COVID-BEEP’, recently seen in news:

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(b) 2 only
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(d) 1, 2 and 3
Practice Question – Prelims

Q3. Which of the following is/are recognised as Globally Important Agriculture Heritage Systems (GIAHS)?

1. Saffron Heritage of Kashmir
2. Koraput Traditional Agriculture
3. Kuttanad Below Sea Level Farming System
4. Traditional Agriculture in deltas of River Godavari

Select the correct answer from the code given below.

(a) 2 only
(b) 1 and 3 only
(c) 2, 3 and 4 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Globally Important Agriculture Heritage System (GIAHS)

- A living, evolving system of human communities in an intricate relationship with their territory, cultural or agricultural landscape or biophysical and wider social environment.
- Outstanding landscapes of aesthetic beauty that combine agricultural biodiversity, resilient ecosystems and a valuable cultural heritage.
- Sustainably provides multiple goods and services, food and livelihood security for millions of small-scale farmers.
- Resilience of many GIAHS sites has been developed and adapted to cope with climatic variability and change.

- Started in 2002 by FAO.
- Promotes public understanding, awareness, national and international recognition of Agricultural Heritage systems.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>GIAHS (India)</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Saffron Heritage of Kashmir</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Koraput Traditional Agriculture (Odisha)</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kuttanad Below Sea Level Farming System (Kerala)</td>
<td>2013</td>
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Nod for ₹460-cr. package for Upper Kuttanad

The Union Ministry of Agriculture has given go-ahead to a ₹460-crore project at Kuttanad to develop tourist destinations.

The project includes establishment of a 400-bed luxury tourism project at Mavelikara, tourism infrastructure around Padmanabhapuram palace, development of a high-end tourism project in Annappuram and the creation of a tourist village at Kallarakalpuram.

The project is estimated to create 3,200 direct and indirect jobs.

The high-end tourist resort is expected to generate Rs 30 to 40 lakh per day, earning a turnover of Rs 100 to 150 crore per year.

The project is expected to be completed by December 2021.
Kuttanad Wetland Agriculture System

• Unique, as it is the only system in India that favours rice cultivation below sea level in the land.
• Created by draining delta swamps in brackish waters.
• A complex mosaic of fragmented agricultural landscapes divided in three structures:
  ✓ wetlands used for paddy activities and fish catching,
  ✓ garden lands used for coconut, tubers and
  ✓ food crops plantation and water areas used as inland fishing and shells.

Practice Question – Prelims

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Practice Question – Prelims
Q4. Consider the following statements with reference to Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

1. It is a pre-independence body, which is now the premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.

2. It is attached under the Ministry of Culture and involves in archaeological expeditions outside India.

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

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)
- It was established in 1861; headquarters in New Delhi.
- Attached office under Ministry of Culture.
- Premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation.
- Regulates all archaeological activities in the country as per
  - Acts ensures better preservation and maintenance of monuments.
  - Prevents illegal trafficking of antiquities and art treasures.

Functions of ASI
- Maintenance, conservation and preservation of protected monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance.
- Conduct archaeological explorations and excavations.
- Ensure the chemical preservation of monuments and antiquarian remains.
- Conduct the architectural survey of monuments and lead the epigraphical and numismatic studies.
- Provide training in Archaeology.
- Archaeological expeditions outside India.
- Setting up and re-organization of Site Museums.
- Horticulture operation in and around ancient monuments and sites.
Practice Question – Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

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Practice Question – Prelims

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2. Iran
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(b) 1, 4 and 5 only
(c) 2, 3 and 4 only
(d) 2, 4, 5 and 6 only

Practice Question – Mains

GS – III

Q. “Oil spills are becoming a major cause of destruction of marine and several riverine ecosystems”. Discuss in detail about the major causes and environmental and economic impacts of oil spills. (250 words, 15 marks)
Practice Question – Mains

GS – II

Q. How do you justify the view that Persian Gulf region is undergoing a fundamental transformation in the recent decades? Analyse its impacts on India’s strategic interests in the region. (250 words, 15 marks)

Practice Question – Prelims

Answers

08-06-2020

Q1. Option – b – 1, 4, and 5 only
Q2. Option – a – 1 and 2 only
Q3. Option – d – 1, 2 and 3
Q4. Option – c – Both 1 and 2.