

## Weekly Quiz Answers (14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Aug)

Ans1. B

**Explanation:**

**About White-Bellied Sea Eagle**

- The white-bellied sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) is a resident raptor.
- It belongs to the family Accipitridae.
- It has a wide distribution range on the sea coast of India from Mumbai to the eastern coast of Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka in southern Asia, through all coastal south-eastern Asia, southern China to Australia.
- The raptor is a diurnal monogamous bird of prey.
- It is categorised as being of 'least concern' on the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
- Feeding mainly on sea snakes and fish, the bird is occasionally seen in inland waters along tidal rivers and in freshwater lakes.
- It occupies the same localities for years and generally builds nests in tall trees near the seacoast, tidal creeks, and estuaries.

Ans2. A

**Explanation:**

The government launched the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U) in 2015.

- The PMAY-U is a flagship mission of the government which is implemented by the Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry.
- The mission aims to address the urban housing shortage among the economically backward sections, including the slum dwellers by ensuring a pucca house to all eligible urban households by 2022.
- The scheme period though now has been extended up to December 2024 to complete all the houses sanctioned without changing the funding pattern and implementation methodology.
- Uttar Pradesh had the largest number of houses completed at 12,87,307. Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh were other high-performing States with 8,80,209 and 8,08,278 houses completed. The number for Tamil Nadu was 5,30,350.

Ans3. B

**Explanation:**

A large number of megalithic hat stones were found from a single site during a recent salvage excavation conducted by the Kerala State Archaeology Department at Nagaparamba in Kuttippuram village, near Tirunavaya, in Malappuram district.

- It all began when a unique rock cut laterite burial chamber was found during the laying of water supply pipelines.
- Hat stones, popularly called Thoppikkallu in Malayalam, are hemispherical laterite stones used as lids on burial urns during the megalithic period.
- It could be the largest number of hat stones in an unprotected site in the State.

Ans4. D

**Explanation:**

Western Disturbances (WD) are tropical storms that originate in the Mediterranean region and normally bring winter rainfall to north India.

- Western disturbances are extratropical weather systems that primarily affect the Indian subcontinent, particularly the northern and northwestern regions.
- They are associated with the movement of weather systems from the western regions towards the Indian subcontinent.
- Western disturbances originate in the mid-latitude westerly jet stream, a high-altitude wind pattern located at around 30°-60° latitude in the northern hemisphere.
- This jet stream acts as a conveyor belt for weather systems, transporting them from west to east.
- Atmospheric Circulation Patterns:
- Western disturbances result from disturbances in the atmospheric circulation pattern, known as Rossby waves.
- Rossby waves are large-scale meanders or undulations in the westerly flow, which can develop into weather systems.

Ans5. C

**Explanation:**

**Context:** Being an El Niño year, the expectation was that north India would see a sparse monsoon. However, the pendulum has swung the other way.

- July saw record rainfall in many parts of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand and the rare sight of the Yamuna nearly spilling into the Red Fort in Delhi.
- Multiple floods in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand that have claimed many lives. A series of landslides has crumbled buildings and blocked highways.

**What Is The Reason?**

**Western Disturbances**

- The immediate explanation for the landslides is the unexpectedly copious rainfall that these States have received and that these in turn are due to a surfeit of Western Disturbances (WD).
  - These are tropical storms that originate in the Mediterranean region and normally bring winter rainfall to north India.
- Right from the beginning of this year, the WD have been erratic. There were too few of them in December and January and their absence was cause for the hottest February recorded in India in at least a century.
- The WD appear to be overcompensating for their absence, with several of them incident over north India in the last two months — a time when they normally should not be around.
- While a combination of WD and monsoon can be dismissed as ‘freak’ weather, climate scientists have been warning of the increasing probability of such high-risk events.
- The awry WD are in part due to a warming Arctic that causes the polar jet stream, which carries moisture, to deviate from its regular path and bring the disturbances to north India during the monsoon.

## Constructions

- It is in the context of these altered weather patterns that warnings by scientists and environmentalists of the perils of wanton construction in the Himalayas must be factored in.
- The ongoing Char Dham road building project has led to large-scale altering of the mountains with significant chunks carved away, rendering them vulnerable to upheaval.
- As recent fears of land subsidence in Joshimath, Uttarakhand demonstrated, ill-thought construction and haphazard building practices have magnified the risk to residents who live in these regions.

While State governments tend to search for short-term solutions such as demanding compensation from the Centre for 'disaster relief', it is time that more serious thought is given to the nature of infrastructure development and, if need be, restrictions imposed in the larger interest of minimising hazards and maintaining stability.

Ans6. B

### Explanation:

Science Minister unveiled a variety of lotus called 'Namoh 108'.

- The lotus has 108 petals and was discovered several years ago in Manipur and kept at the institute as part of its collection of flowers and plants, on which the institute conducts research.
- However, it was not until four years ago that one of the scientists discovered that it had 108 petals.
- This is the only lotus variety in India to have had its genome sequenced.
- It was only after the number of petals was discovered that the National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) cloned and worked on improving its germplasm and modifying its characteristics.
- The name of the variety was given by an internal committee of the NBRI.
- CSIR-NBRI would be initiating a 'Lotus Mission' as part of a larger ongoing horticultural mission to have more of the 108 Namo flowers grow in other parts of India.

Ans7. D

### Explanation:

White-Bellied Sea Eagle is categorised as being of 'least concern' on the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Ans8. B

### Explanation:

President Murmu launches warship Vindhyagiri.

- Vindhyagiri is the last in the series of three Project 17A (Alpha) frigates built by the Indian Navy at the Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).
- Describing the development as a move forward in enhancing India's maritime capabilities, the President said that the launch was also a step towards achieving the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat through indigenous shipbuilding.
- Project 17A, under which Vindhyagiri was developed, reflects the country's commitment to self-reliance and technological advancement.

## About INS Vindhyagiri

- INS Vindhyagiri is the sixth ship of the Project 17A Frigates series. After INS Nilgiri, Udaygiri, Himgiri, Taragiri, and Dunagiri, INS Vindhyagiri derives its name from a mountain range in Karnataka.
- These frigates are a follow-on class of the Project 17 (Shivalik Class) Frigates, integrating improved stealth, advanced weapons, and cutting-edge sensors.
- It employs a cutting-edge propulsion system enabling speeds of over 28 knots, ensuring rapid response and agility in various operational scenarios.
- Equipped with state-of-the-art stealth features, enhancing its ability to operate discreetly and minimize detection.
- Over 75% of the equipment and systems used are sourced from indigenous firms, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Ans9. C

**Explanation:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a new scheme to help the urban poor build houses in cities.

- Under this programme, they will receive relief in interest rates and loans taken from banks to construct their houses.
- The initiative will benefit families that live in unauthorised colonies, slums or rented houses in various cities, says Modi; he adds that weaker sections living in cities faced a plethora of problems.

Ans10. A

**Explanation:**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day address announced a scheme for artisans — Vishwakarma Yojana — with an allocation of up to ₹13,000 crore to help skill development among the youth.

- “Families of weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, laundry workers, barbers, and others will be empowered through the ‘Vishwakarma Yojana’,” he said.
- The scheme, will be available for traditional craftspeople and artisans from 2023-24 to 2027-28.
- The Centre said in a release that the scheme aims to strengthen and nurture the “Guru-Shishya parampara” (teacher student tradition) or the family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools.
- The scheme also aims at improving the quality, as well as the reach of products and services of artisans and craftspeople and to ensure that the Vishwakarmas are integrated with the domestic and global value chains.
- Artisans and craftspeople will get PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card, credit support up to ₹1 lakh (first tranche) and ₹2 lakh (second tranche) at a concessional interest rate of 5%.
- There will be two types of skilling programmes — basic and advanced under the scheme and a stipend of ₹500 per day will also be provided to beneficiaries while undergoing skill training.
- 30 lakh families will be covered over five years of the scheme.

Ans11. D

**Explanation:**

To reduce cyber frauds performed through fraudulently acquired SIM cards, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) will now mandate registration and “indisputable verification” of SIM dealers.

- Recent efforts to curb fraudulent mobile connections have led to the blacklisting of 67,000 SIM dealers, 52 lakh connections, and the registration of over 300 First Information Reports (FIR).
- The data and evidence... showed us that there is complicity of dealers in cyberfrauds, where attackers buy [mobile] numbers in bulk, use them to call and defraud people, and quickly move on to another number.
- SIM dealers who are found complicit in such schemes will be fined ₹10 lakh.

### About New System

- The facility to provide SIM connections in bulk to companies is being discontinued, and instead a “business” system is being put in place, where they have to undertake KYC (Know Your Customer) when a SIM is being issued to them.
  - The existing bulk system requires companies to preserve records of individual subscribers.
- A transition period will be provided for bulk subscribers to get themselves verified under the new regime.
- Government, defense and law enforcement bulk subscribers will continue to be exempt from additional verification requirements.

The enforcement move follows the launch of the Sanchar Saathi portal in May this year.

Ans12. C

### Explanation:

#### Sanchar Saathi portal

The portal introduces three reforms:

- CEIR for blocking stolen/lost mobiles
- Know Your Mobile Connections for checking registered connections
- ASTR (Artificial Intelligence and Facial Recognition powered Solution for Telecom SIM Subscriber Verification) for identifying fraudulent subscribers.

**Aim:** The initiative is designed to prevent frauds such as identity theft and banking fraud by misusing mobile phones.

**Achievement of the Portal:** Over 40 lakh fraudulent connections have been identified and 36 lakhs disconnected through the portal. Disconnected numbers have been shared with financial institutions and social media platforms for further action.

**Sanchar Saathi initiative:** It includes modules for IMEI registration, fraud detection, and facial recognition-based verification.

**Portal developed by:** Department of Telecom

Ans13. C

### Explanation:

Air laden with unhealthy amounts of PM2.5 can become a highway for antibiotic-resistant bacteria and genes.

### Key Highlights

- More than 7.3 billion people worldwide – and 93% of India’s population – are exposed to unsafe average levels of PM2.5. These particles can spread on fast winds, evaporated water, and dust.
- Tiny, invisible particles, 30-times smaller than the breadth of a human hair, wreak havoc on more than 7.5 billion people worldwide.
- This particulate matter, called PM2.5, could drive the world’s next public health threat – antimicrobial resistance (AMR), when disease-causing bacteria become immune to the drugs that could once destroy them, according to a new analysis published in The Lancet Planetary Journal.
- The authors – a group of experts – found that every 10% rise in air pollution was correlated with an AMR increase of 1.1% across countries and continents.
- Researchers have been sounding the alarm over AMR, a scourge that has already killed more people worldwide than malaria or HIV/AIDS, a 2019 survey found.
- It’s been directly responsible for 1.27 million deaths and associated with an estimated 4.95 million deaths around the world.
- Data show that India leads the world in antibiotic use. The indiscriminate use of antibiotics among people and animals, poor hygiene and sanitation, and lack of awareness have fueled this rise, experts note.

Ans14. D

### Explanation:

India, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), will launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health as part of the ongoing G-20 summit.

The first such global initiative is aimed at



### Key Highlights

The summit is working on bringing in the crucial interim medical countermeasure (MCM), “which is a ‘network of networks approach’ before the next health emergency hits us, and India, in collaboration with WHO, is leading the advocacy.”

- The global digital platform would include
  - An investment tracker,
  - An ask tracker (to understand who needs what kind of products and services) and
  - A library of existing digital health platforms.
- The GIDH is a WHO-managed network that will promote equitable access to digital health by addressing challenges such as duplication of efforts and “products-focused” digital health transformation.
- It will ultimately aim to
  - Align efforts to support the Global Strategy on Digital Health, 2020-2025,
  - Support quality-assured technical assistance to develop and strengthen standards-based and interoperable systems aligned to global best practices, norms, and standards, and

- Facilitate the deliberate use of quality-assured digital transformation tools that enable governments to manage their digital health transformation journey.
- The global platform for data sharing will offer no data about its users but will share analyses and work on interoperability of data.

The digital health innovations and solutions would aid universal health convergence and improve healthcare service delivery. The initiative had found funding from global partners.

The GIDH is an integrative step that fosters equity in healthcare by converging efforts and best practices. It will amplify our efforts with the incorporation of tools such as AI while giving due importance to ethics, policy, and governance”.

Ans15. B

### **Explanation:**

August 13 was International Left-handers' Day.

- Handedness is a tendency to prefer the use of one hand over the other. August 13 was International Left-handers' Day, observed to appreciate left-handedness in a world numerically dominated by righties.
- Our planet itself is a lefty, rotating from west to east. So is the solar system. According to a 2011 study, there are more left-handed spiral galaxies than their right-handed counterparts.
- There is left-handedness within ourselves as well. Amino acids, the basic building blocks of life, are left-handed.
- Subatomic particles known as neutrinos are left-handed. This means a neutrino's spin is aligned parallel to but in the opposite direction of its momentum.
  - Neutrinos are the second most abundant particle in the universe (after photons) and they could just as well have been right-handed – yet they aren't.
- There are three fundamental forces in nature other than gravitation. Of these, the strong force operates between protons and neutrons and the electromagnetic force, between charged particles.
  - They are both left-right symmetric: they obey the law of parity conservation.
  - But there is a fourth force, known as the weak nuclear force (responsible for radioactive decay), and it breaks left-right symmetry.

### **About The Day**

- The day, which honours 'sinistrality' or left-handedness, was first observed in 1976 by Dean R. Campbell, the founder of Left-Handers International Inc., and has been celebrated every year since.
- Studies show that around 10 per cent of the world's population is left-handed, with men more likely being so.
- According to the Indian Left Hander Club, the country's famous left-handers include Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, actors Amitabh Bachchan and Rajinikanth, cricketer Sachin Tendulkar and industrialist Ratan Tata.

### **International Lefthanders Day Significance**

- The day aims to raise awareness about being left-handed in a predominantly right-handed world.

- It celebrates left-handed people's uniqueness and differences, a subset of humanity comprising seven to ten per cent of the world's population.

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