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- ☀
  ☾
- Home
- UPSC
  - Current Affairs IAS
  - करंट अफेयर्स फॉर आईएएस
  - Quiz IAS
  - आईएएस के लिए प्रश्नोत्तरी
  - UPSC News Editorial (हिंदी /Eng)
  - Answer Writing (हिंदी /Eng)
  - UPSC Essay (हिंदी /Eng)
  - UPSC GS (हिंदी /Eng)
    - UPSC GS 1 (हिंदी /Eng)
    - UPSC GS-2 (हिंदी /Eng)
    - UPSC GS-3 (हिंदी /Eng)
    - UPSC GS-4 (हिंदी /Eng)
  - Kurukshetra (हिंदी /Eng)
  - Yojana (हिंदी /Eng)
  - IAS Strategy for Prelims
    - General Studies
    - CSAT
  - IAS Strategy for Mains
    - IAS GS 1
    - IAS GS 2
    - IAS GS 3
    - IAS GS 4
  - IAS Test Series
- Himachal HPAS
  - Himachal Daily Current Affairs
  - हिमाचल नियमित समाचार
  - Daily Himachal GK Quiz

    - दैनिक क्विज़ हिमाचल HPAS
    - Himachal News Editorial (हिंदी /Eng)
    - Answer Writing (हिंदी /Eng)
    - Himachal Essay (हिंदी /Eng)
    - Giriraj
        - Magazine
        - Giriraj Quiz
    - गिरिराज
        - पत्रिका
        - गिरिराज प्रश्नोत्तरी
    - HP Government Schemes
    - हिमाचल प्रदेश सरकार की योजनाएं
    - Syllabus Prelims Himachal HPAS
        - GENERAL STUDIES
        - CSAT
            - English
            - Hindi
    - Syllabus Mains Himachal HPAS
        - English,Hindi,Essay & One Optional
        - HPAS GS 3
        - HPAS GS 2
        - HPAS GS 1
    - Himachal HPAS Test Series
    - All You need to Know about Himachal HPAS
- HARYANA HCS
    - Haryana Current Affairs
    - हरियाणा करेंट अफेयर्स
    - HCS Quiz
    - एचसीएस प्रश्नोत्तरी
    - Haryana News Editorial (हिंदी /Eng)
    - Answer Writing (हिंदी /Eng)
    - Haryana Essay (हिंदी /Eng)
    - HR Government Schemes
    - हरियाणा सरकार की योजनाएं
    - Syllabus Mains Haryana HCS
    - Syllabus Prelims Haryana HCS
    - HCS Prelims Test Series

    - □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□
- Punjab PCS
    - Punjab PCS Current Affairs
    - Daily Quiz Punjab PCS
    - Punjab News Editorial (Eng)
    - Answer Writing (Eng)
    - Punjab Essay (Eng)
    - All you need to know about Punjab PCS Exam 2021
    - Syllabus Prelims Punjab PCS
        - General Studies
        - Prelims GS 1
    - Syllabus Mains Punjab PCS
        - PCS GS 1
        - PCS GS 2
        - PCS GS 3
        - PCS GS 4
        - Online PUNJAB PCS TEST SERIES 2020
- CSAT
    - CSAT English
    - □□□□□ □□□□□
- Concept Mindmaps
    - Polity (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Geography (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Enviroment (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - History (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Economics (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Science and Technology (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - CSAT Concepts (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Maps (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Art and Culture (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - International Affairs (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Punjab PCS Concepts
    - Himachal HPAS Concepts (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Haryana HCS Concepts (□□□□□ / Eng)
    - Rajasthan RAS Concepts (□□□□□ / Eng)
- Concept Quiz
    - Polity Quiz (□□□□□/Eng)

    - Geography Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Enviroment Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - History Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Economics Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Science and Technology Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - CSAT Concepts Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Maps Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Art and Culture Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Punjab PCS Concepts Quiz
    - Himachal HPAS Concepts Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Haryana HCS Concepts Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Rajasthan RAS Concepts Quiz (□□□□□□/Eng)
- Mains
    - UPSC Answer Writing (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - HPPSC Answer Writing (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Haryana HCS Answer Writing (□□□□□□/Eng)
    - Punjab PCS Answer Writing
- Exam Blogs
    - UPSC Exam Blogs
    - Himachal Exam Blogs
    - Punjab exam Blogs
    - Haryana Exam Blogs
    - Rajasthan Exam Blogs
    - E-Magazine
        - E-Magazine for HPAS
        - □□□□□□□ □□ □□□ □-□□□□□□□
        - E-Magazine for Punjab PCS
- UPCOMING EXAMS
    - National Exams
    - Himachal Pradesh Exams
    - Punjab Exams
    - Test Series Planner
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4th January 2021

Topic:- Education

What is the news?

- School education has been among the highest performing in Punjab in meeting the challenges of the COVID-19 outbreak this year.

Important:

- For the first time, it all had to be done online. In addition to internet on regular computers, exercises have been designed for smartphones.
- The Punjab School Education Board (PSEB), which targets more than 60 lakh students in approximately 25,000 schools, has faced unprecedented challenges in enrollment, teacher training, teaching and interaction between teachers and students.

Actions Taken & Challenges:

- The first obstacle was the preparation of teachers to teach computer science.
- The department featured “Ghar Baithe Sikhiya” for digital education through television and radio channels and YouTube.
- Teachers have learned to use the Punjab Educare application and training sessions have been held at the Indian School of Business.
- The second barrier was the unavailability of smart phones, especially for poor students. A small section had none in its family.
- To date, about 1.3 lakh students in class XII have received smartphones in two phases by Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh.
- A big number of students in the junior classes have been left out.

Some Findings:

- The department reported a 2.1 lakh increase in student enrollment this year. A study, ‘Making Quality Education Accessible to All: Policy Perspective on School Education in Punjab’ by Punjab University Rural Centre, Kauni (Muktsar), indicated that the closure of schools could lead to “huge dropouts” from schools.

  Most of the students who turned to public schools were from private schools that had closed.
- A section of teachers stated that the table was not as rosy as the department claims. The Democratic Teachers’ Front has stated that public schools have a shortage of at least 30,000 teachers.

  It added that going by the ideal teacher-taught ratio of 1:30, Punjab needed at least one lakh more teachers. The department stated that almost 35,000 recruits had been made in the past year and that the process was ongoing.

(Source: The Tribune)

Topic: – Forest Cover

What is the news?

- Forest cover in the state has grown steadily by 11.63 square km this year, in addition to planting 60 lakh of young trees under various schemes.

Recent Report:

- State of India Latest Forest Cover report (released in 2020 by the Government of India), the total forest vegetation cover in the state had gone up by 11.63 sq km, suggesting the programs implemented by the government were yielding results.

सिद्धान्त दास
सी.के. मिश्रा
प्रकाश जावडेकर
के.एस. धतवालिया

Initiatives:-

- To commemorate Guru Tegh Bahadur’s 400th Parkash Purab, 60 lakh plants were planted under various schemes in more than 6,986 villages throughout the state this year.
- More than 19.5 lakh of high-quality clone plants were

planted by farmers under submission on agro-forestry on their fields.

According to a report by The Times of India, in Phillaur and Chak Sarkar forests, the department introduced 'rosewood' – a high-value tree crop and planted nearly five lakh Sheesham plants and other trees along Beas and Satluj rivers.

- Plant survival was nearly 71 percent.

Forests in Punjab:

- The forests of Punjab belong to three groups – tropical spruce(thorn) forests, dry tropical deciduous forests and subtropical pine forests which are classified into seven different types.
- With a large portion of the state's land under agriculture, there is little opportunity to expand the area.
- That is why, in addition to bringing wastelands and degraded land under forest cover, the Forestry Department also encourages farmers to start Agroforestry in agricultural fields.

(Source:-Timesnow)

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- Editorials
- Mindmaps
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- राष्ट्रीय करेंट अफेयर्स
- यूपीएससी प्रश्नोत्तरी
- संपादकीय
- माइंडस्मैप्स
- ई-पत्रिका
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- प्रीलिम्स टेस्ट सीरीज

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- एचपी करेंट अफेयर्स
- एचपीएएस प्रश्नोत्तरी
- एचपी माइंडमैप्स
- हिमाचल संपादकीय

- एचपी ई -पत्रिका
- एचपीएएस फ्री मॉक टेस्ट
- एचपीएएस प्रीलिम्स टेस्ट सीरीज

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- Punjab Current Affairs
- PPSC Quiz
- Punjab Mindmaps
- Punjab Editorial
- Punjab E-Magazine
- PPSC Free Mock Test
- PPSC Prelims Test Series

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- Haryana Current Affairs
- HCS Quiz
- HCS Editorials
- HCS Mindmaps
- HCS E-Magazine
- HCS Free Mock Test
- HCS Prelims Test Series

हरियाणा एचसीएस

- हरियाणा करेंट अफेयर्स
- एचसीएस प्रश्नोत्तरी
- एचसीएस संपादकीय
- एचसीएस माइंडमैप्स
- एचसीएस ई -पत्रिका
- एचसीएस फ्री मॉक टेस्ट
- एचसीएस प्रीलिम्स टेस्ट सीरीज

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