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- 
- 
- Home
- UPSC
 - Current Affairs IAS
 -   
 - Quiz IAS
 -   
 - UPSC News Editorial (/Eng)
 - Answer Writing ( /Eng)
 - UPSC Essay (/Eng)
 - UPSC GS (/Eng)
 - UPSC GS 1 ( /Eng)
 - UPSC GS-2 ( /Eng)
 - UPSC GS-3 ( /Eng)
 - UPSC GS-4 ( /Eng)
 - Kurukshetra ( /Eng)
 - Yojana ( /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
 -   
 - Daily Himachal GK Quiz

- Himachal News Editorial (Hindi/Eng)
- Answer Writing (Hindi /Eng)
- Himachal Essay (Hindi/Eng)
- Giriraj
 - Magazine
 - Giriraj Quiz
- Himachal Pradesh
 - Himachal Pradesh
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
- HP Government Schemes
- Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
- 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
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
 - HCS Quiz
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
 - Haryana News Editorial (Hindi/Eng)
 - Answer Writing (Hindi /Eng)
 - Haryana Essay (Hindi/Eng)
 - HR Government Schemes
 - Himachal Pradesh Government Schemes
 - 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](#)
 - [Punjab PCS CSAT](#)
- [Concept Mindmaps](#)
 - [Polity \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Geography \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Environment \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [History \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Economics \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Science and Technology \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [CSAT Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Maps \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Art and Culture \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [International Affairs \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Punjab PCS Concepts](#)
 - [Himachal HPAS Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Haryana HCS Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
 - [Rajasthan RAS Concepts \(Hindi / Eng\)](#)
- [Concept Quiz](#)
 - [Polity Quiz \(Hindi/Eng\)](#)

- Geography Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Environment Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- History Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Economics Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Science and Technology Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- CSAT Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Maps Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Art and Culture Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Punjab PCS Concepts Quiz
- Himachal HPAS Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Haryana HCS Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Rajasthan RAS Concepts Quiz (हिंदी/Eng)
- Mains
 - UPSC Answer Writing (हिंदी/Eng)
 - HPPSC Answer Writing (हिंदी/Eng)
 - Haryana HCS Answer Writing (हिंदी/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
 - हिंदी/English में हिंदी-हिंदी
 - E-Magazine for Punjab PCS
- UPCOMING EXAMS
 - National Exams
 - Himachal Pradesh Exams
 - Punjab Exams
 - Test Series Planner
- About US
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Click on Drop Down for Current Affairs

November 14, 2019.

(Both in English & □□□□□□ Language)

***Topic: Agricultural
Technology***

News :-

- A private firm offers a sustainable solution to paddy burning issue.
- A Pune based firm has offered a solution to manage the paddy straw.

Background: -

- Huge increase in cases of paddy straw burning in Punjab.
- The firm has come up with a product named " Speed kompost" to manage the straw.

How does it work:-

- The product is needed to be mixed with Urea first.
- Then it should be spread over the watered field.
- Then the stubble would decompose in about 15 days.
- Besides, speed kompost has certain advantages also:
- It increases the organic content of the soil.
- It increases the water-holding capacity of the soil.
- The product also increases the efficiency of fertilizers uptake in the soil.

(Source:- The Tribune news)

Topic: Agriculture

News:-Straw to fuel generation in the state is facing neglect.

Background: -

- Lack of incentives to the straw to biofuel units in the

state.

- Punjab had earlier tied up with a Chennai based firm to manage around 20 million tonnes of Paddy stubble.
- The state also wished to boost the biofuels industry in Punjab by converting paddy straw into biofuel.
- It was decided that around 400 processing centres would be set up across the state
- But apparently, the state government has not shown much interest in helping the biofuels industry.
- Even the captive power generation plants didn't receive any government support.
- It has been alleged that the government is only interested in the management of Stubble rather than promoting biofuels.
- Around 1100 crore rupees help received from the union has been used only for the promotion of happy seeder machines.
- The farmers have rejected the machinery due to its costliness.
- The biofuels industry using paddy straw can not only manage the straw but also give the farmers around rupees 2000 per acre income.
- It has also been suggested that the government can provide tax rebates such as on state GST to the biofuels industry.

(Source:- The Tribune news)

Topic: Agriculture.

News:-

- Punjab cotton farmers are facing the prospect of low incomes.
- The prices for the cotton are trending below the MSP rate of Rupees 5450 per quintal.
- The cotton prices had gone even below 5100 at one stage.

Why cotton farmers are facing such troubles?

- It has been said that the moisture content of the cotton grown in Punjab is very high, due to which procurement is not possible.
- The cotton trade has suffered due to lack of funds.
- The private traders are also exploiting the farmers and not giving them their due.
- The farmers are also resenting the direct sale to Cotton Corporation of India as they do not want to sever links with the informal moneylenders (arhtiyas).

(Source:- The Tribune news)

Topic: Agriculture

News:- Basmati crop farmers in the state are also facing the phenomenon of reduced profits.

Background: -

- Basmati crop is fetching only around 2400 to 2600 rupees per quintal.
- Whereas the remuneration was about 3300 rupees per quintal last year.

The issues related to this are:-

- There is no MSP for Basmati rice.
- The yields of the crop are declining due to climate change.
- Much of Basmati rice is exported to foreign countries.
- So, volatility in the Basmati rice market is huge.
- Also, due to increased production, the prices are likely to come down.

(Source:- The Tribune news)

Topic: Punjab infrastructure

News:-GT road in Punjab has claimed 880 lives in 3 years.

Background: -

- The report " Road Safety Assessment of NH -44 " has

highlighted the faulty design of the road and other shortcomings.

- The report has been prepared by Traffic adviser to the state government.
- The report has analysed the trend of accidents from Shambhu Barrier to Jalandhar
- The death rate on this stretch of road has been calculated as 1.6 per kilometre.
- This is three times the state average.
- The state has lost around rupees 933 crores in the past three years.
- 92 black spots have been identified in this road stretch (Black spots are the accident-prone areas).

A black spot is a stretch of about 500 metres on which either 5 accidents have taken place in last three calendar years or 10 fatalities have occurred during this time.

Serious Geometric and other faults in road design have come to light

The report has also stressed that the concessionaire in the road building process also has some obligations towards the safety of the commuters.

Traffic cap or reduction in toll should also be introduced if the actual traffic exceeds targeted traffic.

Also, many appointments such as Safety Consultant post are supposed to be made

So, road infrastructure and its weaknesses should be dealt with thoroughly.

(Source:- The Tribune news)

Please visit Regular Quiz for current affairs questions.

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- UPSC Quiz
- Editorials
- Mindmaps
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- HPAS Quiz
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- HPAS Quiz
- HP Editorials
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- HPAS Free Mock Test
- HPAS Prelims Test Series

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- Punjab Current Affairs
- PPSC Quiz
- Punjab Mindmaps
- Punjab Editorial
- Punjab E-Magazine
- PPSC Free Mock Test
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- Haryana Current Affairs
- HCS Quiz
- HCS Editorials
- HCS Mindmaps
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- HCS Free Mock Test
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