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January 1, 2020

Topic: Agricultural Technology.

News:-Hand held devices to be made available for cotton picking in 3 districts of Punjab.

- The agricultural department has rolled out battery-operated handheld machines for picking up the cotton.

The machinery would be rolled out in:-

- Muktsar
- Bathinda and
- Mansa districts.

The benefits of the machine:-

- The machine would cut labour costs and human drudgery.
- The input costs incurred on cotton picking would also

get cut.

- The speed of cotton picking increases.
- The quantity of trash generated during cotton harvesting also reduced from 3 to 5 per cent to only 1 per cent.
- The machine costs ₹ 7000, which can be made available to the prospective farmers through the Cooperative system.
- Renting of machinery could also be done.
- Businesses through corporate social responsibility can also contribute in this regard.

(Source:- The Tribune)

Topic: Urban governance.

News:-Urban Local Bodies would impose cow cess on a few items.

- 52 out of 167 ULBs in Punjab are in the process of imposing cow cess on different items.
- Cow cess is used for the welfare of the stray cattle in cattle pounds.
- Out of ₹ 34 crores collected by the Local Bodies since 2016, only ₹ 30 crores have been used.
- The 510 privately run Gaushalas in the state are having 3.84 lakhs cattle.
- Whereas the state ones have slightly less than 10000.

Some of the charges are:-

₹ 10 – Indian made foreign liquor bottle.

₹5 – Punjab made liquor and beer.

₹ 1000 per function at AC marriage palace.

₹ 500 for non AC marriage palace.

₹ 100 on oil tanker per round.

₹ 1 per cement bag.

₹ 1000 and ₹ 200 on sale of 4 – wheeler and 2 – wheelers, respectively.

2 paise per unit of Electricity.

- Further, as per article 48 of Indian Constitution, the state shall endeavour to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving improving the breed, and prohibiting the slaughter, of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle.

(Source:- The Tribune)

Topic: welfare schemes for the vulnerable sections.

News:-Aadhaar verification to be introduced for the purpose of disbursement of the post-matric scholarship.

- Now, Aadhaar authentication would be required on Dr Ambedkar Scholarship Portal.

- This step has been taken to do the speedy disbursement of a fee to the 3 lakh beneficiaries under the Scheduled Caste Post Matric Scholarship scheme.
- The scholarship is to be directly transferred to the Aadhaar linked bank accounts of the beneficiaries.
- Under the Aadhaar Act, the authentication of Aadhaar is required for the purpose of availing any benefit regarding the scholarships.
- The move is aimed at improving the attendance of the eligible candidates and remove fake applications.

Under this Centrally Sponsored Scheme, the beneficiaries are provided with the financial help in post-matric classes such as:-

- 10+1,
- 10+2,
- Degree course,
- Master's degree,
- Medical and technical professional courses.
- The scheme is valid for those whose parents' annual income does not exceed ₹ 1.50 lakh per annum.

(Source:- The Tribune)

Please visit Regular Quiz Section for Current affairs questions.

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