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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

- □□□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□□ HPAS
- Himachal News Editorial (□□□□□/Eng)
- Answer Writing (□□□□□ /Eng)
- Himachal Essay (□□□□□/Eng)
- Giriraj
    - Magazine
    - Giriraj Quiz
- □□□□□□□
    - □□□□□□□
    - □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□
- HP 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
    - □□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□
    - HCS Quiz
    - □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□
    - Haryana News Editorial (□□□□□/Eng)
    - Answer Writing (□□□□□ /Eng)
    - Haryana Essay (□□□□□/Eng)
    - HR Government Schemes
    - □□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□
    - Syllabus Mains Haryana HCS
    - Syllabus Prelims Haryana HCS
    - HCS Prelims Test Series

  - एचसीएस प्रीलिम्स टेस्ट सीरीज
- 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
  - सीसैट हिंदी
- Concept Mindmaps
  - Polity (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Geography (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Enviroment (हिंदी / Eng)
  - History (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Economics (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Science and Technology (हिंदी / Eng)
  - CSAT Concepts (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Maps (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Art and Culture (हिंदी / Eng)
  - International Affairs (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Punjab PCS Concepts
  - Himachal HPAS Concepts (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Haryana HCS Concepts (हिंदी / Eng)
  - Rajasthan RAS Concepts (हिंदी / 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
        - एचपीएएस के लिए ई-पत्रिका
        - E-Magazine for Punjab PCS
- UPCOMING EXAMS
    - National Exams
    - Himachal Pradesh Exams
    - Punjab Exams
    - Test Series Planner
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- youtube

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Click on Drop Down for Current Affairs

January 17, 2020

Topic:- Health

News:-

- About 7,000 leprosy cases reported in the last decade in Punjab.
- In 2018, the state’s average child leprosy rate was more than the national average of 9 per cent.

Challenge:-

- Even after four decades of the launch of the National Leprosy Eradication Programme, the disease has refused to die down in the state. About 7,000 cases were reported in the state in the past 10 years.
- On the national level, Punjab falls in the category of a “low endemic” state in terms of the prevalence of leprosy. Nevertheless, the disease has not been eradicated. In all, 6,897 cases were reported between 2009 and 2019 in the state. Out of these, 1,054 were of Punjabi population.

STATE OF AFFAIRS

YEAR	NEW CASES
2009-10	933
2010-11	824
2011-12	764
2012-13	582
2013-14	586
2014-15	648
2015-16	641
2016-17	626
2017-18	409
2018-19	495
2019-20	389*

*Till December

(Source:- The Tribune)

Stats as per reports:-

- In the district-wise breakup, Ludhiana tops the chart. Around one-third of the total cases in the state come from the district alone. Of the 389 cases reported in the state from April to December 2019, 121 are from Ludhiana district alone. One of the main reasons is Ludhiana's large migrant population.
- Jalandhar comes second on the list with 54 cases followed by Amritsar (37) and Mohali (34). Fazilka is the only district from where no new case was reported in the past nine months.
- There are about 30 leper colonies in different parts of the state; close to 2,000 people live there.

About Leprosy:-

- As per WHO, Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium leprae. The disease mainly affects the skin, the peripheral nerves, mucosal surfaces of the upper

respiratory tract and the eyes. Leprosy is curable and early treatment averts most disabilities.

Parent disease: Infection

How it spreads?

- The infection spreads from person to person by nasal secretions or droplets.
- Causes: Mycobacterium leprae

(Source:- The Tribune and WHO)

Topic:- Road Traffic and safety

News:-FASTag still in the slow lane

Context:-FASTag is yet to find favour with commuters as around 50 per cent vehicle owners continue to use cash lanes at Lehra Bega toll plaza on the Bathinda-Chandigarh NH and Jeeda toll plaza on the Bathinda-Amritsar NH.

- Meanwhile, many people continue to face difficulty in acquiring FASTag stickers.

About FASTags:-

What is FASTag?

- The FASTag is like a sticker with a magnetic strip that will be at the top left corner of the vehicle's windscreen that uses Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). This will help the passenger and commercial vehicles to pass through the toll booths without halting for paying the toll tax.
- Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has made it mandatory for all vehicles from December 1, 2019.

Benefits of using FASTag:-

- The main objective of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is to evolve the current National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) ecosystem into four parties scalable model (Issuer, Acquirer, NPCI & Plaza Operator) from the existing single-party model (Issuer & Acquirer combined) being operated currently.

These are some following objectives of NETC:-

- FASTag will help to reduce the waiting time at the plaza
- Accommodating the increasing traffic without additional lanes.
- Eliminating the acceleration and idling, harmful vehicular emissions and air using FASTag.
- Reducing congestion around plazas.
- Pollution reduction.
- To save fuel for the future which will also help to reduce the operating cost of the vehicles.
- To provide customers with the flexibility of paying their plaza bills with RFID Tag.
- Reduce cash handling which aids in enhanced audit control by centralising user accounts.

- Enhancing data collection, information such as vehicle count of the day.

(Source:- India Today Magazine & The Tribune)

Please visit Regular Quiz Section for Current affairs questions.

Punjab PCS ——> See Last (Regular Quiz)

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Test Series Qustion:-

QUESTION

Punjab government had recently rolled out a **Dual System of Training initiative for enhancing skill development in the state**. This scheme has been introduced in the .....?

A Industrial Training Institutes

B Universities

C Information Technology Parks

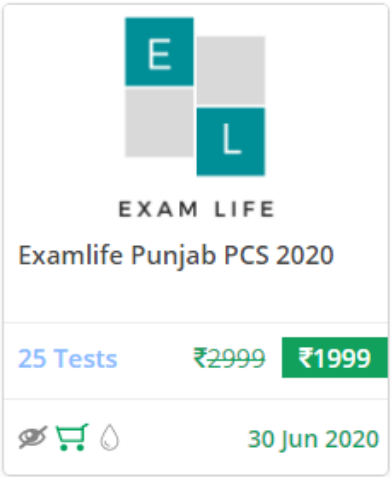
D Skills University

EXPLANATION

Answer is A

Explanation:-

Punjab rolls out Dual System of Training(DST) in 35 ITI to improve the training curriculum and employability of the trainees.
In this scheme, 53 trades have been started to enable industry linkages.



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- Punjab Current Affairs
- PPSC Quiz
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- HCS Quiz
- HCS Editorials
- HCS Mindmaps
- HCS E-Magazine
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- □□□□□□□□□
- Himachal HPAS
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