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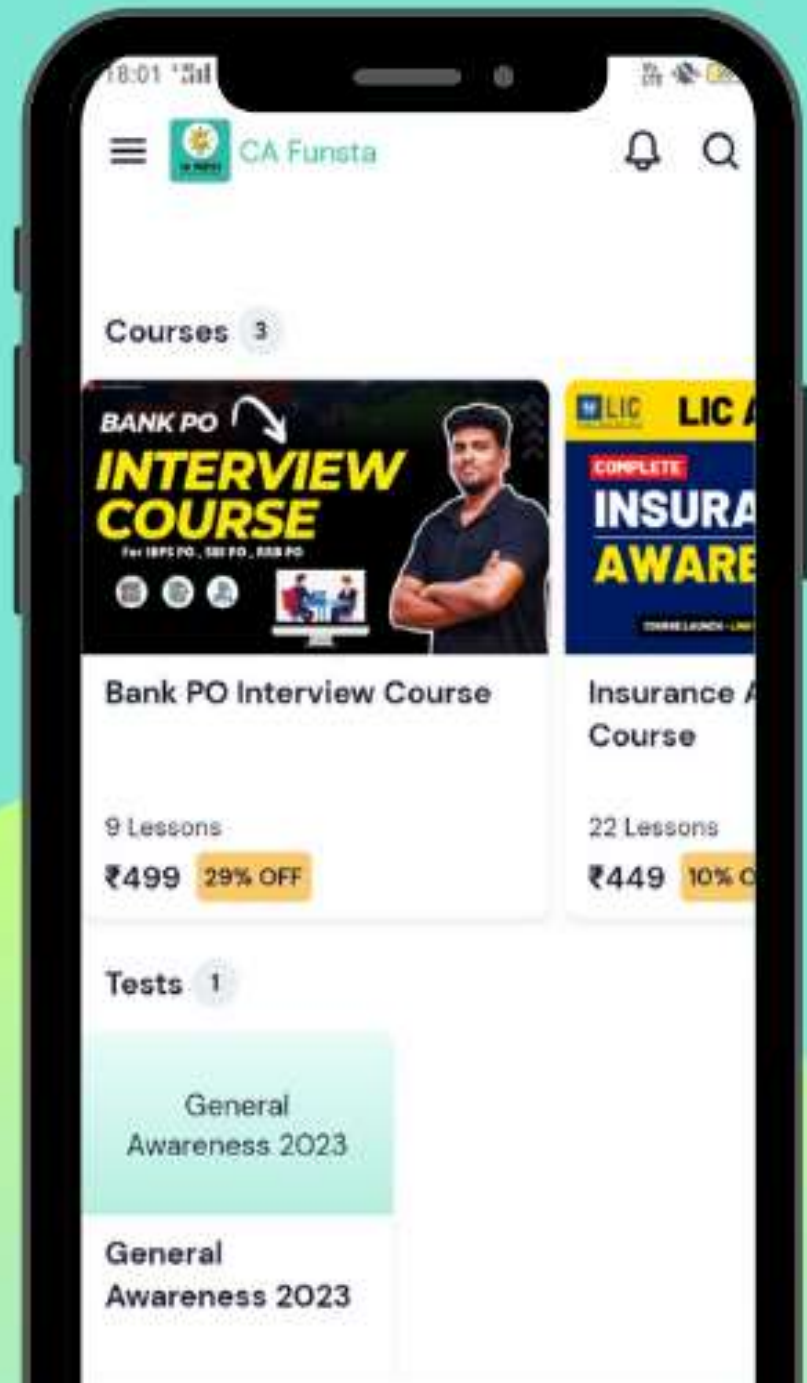
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➤ **What is the proposed amount ESAF Small Finance Bank aims to raise through the issuance of tier-II bonds?**

- A) Rs 50 crores
- B) Rs 75 crores
- C) Rs 100 crores
- D) Rs 125 crores
- E) Rs 135 crores



Answer

E) Rs 135 crores



Explanation

- **The Board of Directors of ESAF Small Finance Bank approved a proposal to raise funds by way of issuance of Basel-II compliant lower tier-II subordinated bonds in the form of non-convertible debentures (tier-II bonds) aggregating up to Rs 135 crores on a private placement basis.**
- In the third quarter ended December 31, 2023, the bank's deposits were up 40.6 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) to Rs 18,860 crore.
- Advances under management (comprising 72.2 per cent micro loans and balance 'retail & other loans') rose 35.9 per cent to Rs 18,149 crore.
- Net profit almost tripled to Rs 112.1 crore against Rs 37.4 crore in the year ago quarter



Titbits

ESAF Small Finance Bank:

HQ: Thrissur

Chairperson: P R Ravi Mohan

MD and CEO: K Paul Thomas



➤ **What is the name of Infibeam Avenues' payment gateway brand?**

- A) RBI Gateway
- B) AI Payments
- C) CCAvenue
- D) Infibeam Pay
- E) CD Gateway



Answer
C) CCAvenue



Explanation

- **India's first listed AI-powered fintech company, Infibeam Avenues, received the final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a payment aggregator for its payment gateway brand, CCAvenue.**



Keyperson:

- Vishal Mehta, chairman and managing director of Infibeam Avenues



➤ **What was the previous all-time high for India's forex reserves, reached in October 2021?**

- A) USD 635 billion
- B) USD 640 billion
- C) USD 645 billion
- D) USD 650 billion
- E) USD 655 billion

Answer

C) USD 645 billion



Explanation

- **India's forex reserves jumped USD 6.55 billion to USD 625.626 billion for the week ended March 1, reported by the Reserve Bank of India.**
- **In October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion.**
- Gold reserves increased by USD 569 million to USD 48.417 billion during the week.
- The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by USD 17 million to USD 18.18 billion.
- India's reserve position with the IMF was also down by USD 41 million to USD 4.798 billion in the reporting week.



AWARDS



➤ **Who were among the winners of the annual India-UK Achievers Honours?**

- A) Zoya Akhtar
- B) Asma Khan
- C) Both A and B
- D) None of the above
- E) Not mentioned



Answer

**C) Both A and B
(Zoya Akhtar and Asma Khan)**



AWARDS



Explanation

- **Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar and British Indian chef Asma Khan were among the winners of the annual India-UK Achievers Honours in London, which recognizes the achievements of Indian students and alumni who have pursued an international programme of study.**
- The initiative, by the National Indian Students and Alumni Union (NISAU) UK, in partnership with the British Council in India and the UK government's Department for Business and Trade, was launched last year with the aim of celebrating bilateral educational ties.



➤ How many member nations does Panama become a part of after ratifying the ISA?

- A) 96
- B) 97
- C) 98
- D) 99
- E) 100

Answer
B) 97



Explanation

- **Panama has officially ratified the International Solar Alliance (ISA), marking its entry as the 97th member nation.**
- Panama handed over the Instrument of @isolaralliance Ratification, during the meeting of Ambassador Yasiel Burillo of Panama to India, with Joint Secretary (Economic Diplomacy) @Abhishekifs in New Delhi.



Note:

- **ISA was conceived as a joint effort by India and France.**
- **Currently, 116 countries are signatories to the ISA Framework Agreement.**
- **Malta became the 119th country to join the International Solar Alliance.**



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



Titbits

Panama:

Capital: Panama City

Currency: Panamanian Balboa, US Dollar

President: Laurentino Cortizo



➤ **What number does Sweden become upon joining NATO?**

- A) 28th
- B) 29th
- C) 30th
- D) 31st
- E) 32nd

Answer
E) 32nd



Explanation

- **Sweden formally joined NATO as the 32nd member of the transatlantic military alliance, ending decades of post-World War II neutrality as concerns about Russian aggression in Europe have spiked following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.**
- **Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson and Secretary of State Antony Blinken presided at a ceremony in which Sweden's “instrument of accession” to the alliance was officially deposited at the State Department.**



Titbits

Sweden:

Capital: Stockholm

Currency: Swedish Krona

Prime Minister: Ulf Kristersson



➤ **What is the primary focus of the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Gujarat Gas Limited (GGL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL)?**

- A) Offering cooking gas cylinders to households
- B) Expanding electric vehicle infrastructure
- C) Providing liquid fuels and automotive lubricants
- D) Establishing solar power plants
- E) Developing wind energy projects



Answer

C) Providing liquid fuels and automotive lubricants



Explanation

- **Gujarat Gas Limited (GGL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for offering liquid fuels, automotive lubricants and expanding CNG infrastructure.**
- **BPCL will supply automotive lubricants, greases, and specialties for sale at GGL and its franchise outlets.**
- **In addition, the companies will also set up CNG Facility at BPCL outlets**



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Titbits

BPCL:

HQ: Mumbai

Chairman and MD: G Krishna Kumar



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



➤ How many districts does Arunachal Pradesh now have with the creation of Bichom?

- A) 26
- B) 27
- C) 28
- D) 29
- E) 30

Answer
B) 27



Explanation

- **Bichom, carved out of West and East Kameng, became the 27th district of Arunachal Pradesh.**
- **Chief Minister Pema Khandu inaugurated the district and laid the foundation of its headquarters at Napangphung.**
- **In February this year, the state assembly passed the Arunachal Pradesh (Re-Organisation of Districts) (Amendment) Bill, 2024 for the creation of Bichom and Keyi Panyor districts.**
- **A total of 27 villages from West Kameng and 28 from East Kameng were made part of Bichom district.**



Explanation

- The Chief Minister also flagged off vehicles distributed to self-help groups under the Arunachal Grameen Express Yojana, besides laying the foundation of 18 projects and inaugurating an equal number of projects.
- A testing centre and administrative building of Central Agricultural University (Imphal) were also inaugurated and houses distributed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.



Titbits

Arunachal Pradesh:

Capital: Itanagar

Chief Minister: Pema Khandu

Governor: Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik



➤ **Who nominated Sudha Murty to the Rajya Sabha?**

- A) Prime Minister
- B) President of India
- C) Lok Sabha Speaker
- D) Chief Justice of India
- E) None of the above



Answer
B) President of India



Explanation

- **Philanthropist and author Sudha Murty was nominated to the Rajya Sabha.**
- **Sudha Murty, wife of Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy, is also the chairperson of the Murty Trust and has authored several books.**
- **She was awarded the Padma Shri in 2006 and the Padma Bhushan in 2023.**



➤ **Who inaugurated Synopsys' Chip Design Centre at DLF Tech Park in Noida?**

- A) Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar
- B) Shri Narendra Modi
- C) Shri Amit Shah
- D) Shri Arvind Kejriwal
- E) Not mentioned



Answer

A) Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar



Explanation

- **Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Jal Shakti, inaugurated Synopsys' Chip Design Centre at DLF Tech Park in Noida.**



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Keyperson:

- **Dr Aart de Geus, founder of Synopsys**



➤ **What is the interest rate offered on Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme effective from January 1, 2024?**

- A) 7.1% per annum
- B) 7.5% per annum
- C) 8.0% per annum
- D) 8.2% per annum
- E) 8.3% per annum

Answer

D) 8.2% per annum



Explanation

- **The government left the interest rates unchanged on various small savings schemes for the first quarter of the next fiscal, beginning April 1, 2024.**
- **With this, the interest rates will remain unchanged till June 30, 2024.**



Sukanya Samriddhi Account Scheme:

- One can open this account by investing a minimum of Rs 250 and maximum Rs 1.50 lakh in a financial year.
- The rate of interest is 8.2 percent per annum with effect from Jan 1, 2024, while the rate on a three-year term deposit remains at 7.1 per cent.



PPF:

- One can invest a minimum of Rs 500 while maximum is Rs 1.5 lakh in a financial year.
- The rate of interest is 7.1 per cent per annum compounded yearly.
- The interest rates for savings deposits too have been retained at four per cent.



Kisan Vikas Patra:

- One can invest a minimum of Rs 1,000 and in multiples of Rs 100 while there is no maximum limit.
- Rate of interest offered is 7.5 per cent compounded annually, and the investments will mature in 115 months

Senior Citizen Savings Scheme:

- One can open this account by depositing Rs 1,000 while the maximum limit is Rs 30 lakh.
- Currently, the rate of interest offered is 8.2 per cent.



Mahila Samman Savings Certificate:

- One can deposit a minimum of Rs 1,000 and in multiples of Rs 100.
- The rate of interest will be 7.5 per cent per annum.



Post Office Time Deposit Account:

- These accounts can be opened by depositing a minimum of Rs 1,000 and in multiple of Rs 100.
- There is no maximum limit.
- **1-year time deposit:** These deposits offer interest at the rate of 6.9 per cent.
- **2-year time deposit:** Rate of interest is 7 per cent.
- **3-year time deposit:** Rate of interest is 7.1 per cent.
- **5-year time deposit:** Rate of interest which is offered is 7.5 per cent.



5-year recurring deposit scheme:

- It can be opened by depositing Rs 100 per month or any amount in multiples of Rs 10.
- The interest offered is 6.7 per cent per annum between Jan 1 to March 31, and is compounded quarterly.



➤ **What is the total allocated outlay for the widening and strengthening of National Highways in Tamil Nadu by the Union Government?**

- A) Rs 1376.10 crore
- B) Rs 2281 crore
- C) Rs 316.90 crore
- D) Rs 905 crore
- E) Rs 1056 crore

Answer

B) Rs 2281 crore



Explanation

- **The Union Government has allocated an outlay of Rs 2281 crore for the widening and strengthening of national highways in Tamil Nadu.**
- **A substantial allocation of Rs 1376.10 crore has been approved for the widening of the existing 2-lane paved shoulder from Tiruvallur to the Tamil Nadu/Andhra Pradesh border section of National Highway-716.**
- **This transformation to a 4-lane configuration with paved shoulders in the Thiruvallur district spans 43.95 km under Package-1.**



Explanation

- **The widening of this road is aimed at establishing a fully access-controlled corridor, integral to a significant route connecting the sacred cities of Tiruthani and Tirupathi.**
- **An allocation of Rs 905 crore has been approved for enhancing the alignment of the 6.6 km long Thoppur Ghat Section of the National Highway in Dharmapuri & Salem districts.**



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



Titbits

Tamilnadu:

Capital: Chennai

Chief Minister: M K Stalin

Governor: R N Ravi



NATIONAL AFFAIRS



- How many prototypes of the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) are planned to be manufactured in about five years?

- A) Five
- B) Ten
- C) Three
- D) Seven
- E) Eight

Answer
A) Five



Explanation

- **The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) gave nod to a Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) project for designing and developing Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) to fulfil Indian Air Force's (IAF's) requirement for a fifth generation stealth fighter jet.**
- **It has also cleared proposals for acquisition of 34 new Advanced Light Helicopters Dhruv for the Indian Army and Indian Coast Guard.**



Explanation

- Of these, the Army will get 25 of the copters while Coast Guard remaining nine of them.
- The **Dhruvs**, **manufactured by the navratna PSU Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**, are also **operated by the IAF, Indian Navy, Border Security Force (BSF) and state governments since 2002.**
- The **AMCA project, believed to cost around Rs 15,000 crore, would be developed by DRDO's Aeronautical Development Agency in collaboration with various private and public entities to manufacture five prototypes in about five years.**



QUICK RECALL



- **ESAF Small Finance Bank to raise Rs 135 crore via issuance of tier-II bonds**
- **Infibeam Avenues gets RBI's authorisation for payment aggregator licence**
- **India's forex reserves jump \$6.55 billion to \$625.63 billion: RBI Data**
- **Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar, British Indian chef Asma Khan win India-UK Achievers Honours**
- **Panama becomes 97th member of International Solar Alliance: MEA**
- **Gujarat Gas inks MoU with BPCL**
- **Bichom becomes 27th district of Arunachal Pradesh**
- **Sweden becomes 32nd NATO member, ending decades of neutrality**



QUICK RECALL



- **Sudha Murty nominated to Rajya Sabha**
- **Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar Inaugurates Synopsys' Chip Design Centre in Noida**
- **Govt keeps interest rates on small savings schemes unchanged for Q1 FY25**
- **Union Govt allots Rs 2281 cr for widening & strengthening of roads in TN**
- **CCS gives nod to 5th generation aircraft project worth Rs 15,000 crore**



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