

Q.1) Consider the following statements:

The nation-wide 'Soil Health Card Scheme' aims at

1. expanding the cultivable area under irrigation
2. enabling the banks to assess the quantum of loans to be granted to farmers on the basis of soil quality
3. checking the overuse of fertilizers in farmlands

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Q.1) Solution (b)

Soil Health Card (SHC) is a Government of India's scheme promoted by the Department of Agriculture & Co-operation under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare. It is being implemented through the Department of Agriculture of all the State and Union Territory Governments. A SHC is meant to give each farmer soil nutrient status of his/her holding and advice him/her on the dosage of fertilizers and also the needed soil amendments, that s/he should apply to maintain soil health in the long run.

SHC is a printed report that a farmer will be handed over for each of his holdings. It will contain the status of his soil with respect to 12 parameters, namely N,P,K (Macro-nutrients); S (Secondary- nutrient); Zn, Fe, Cu, Mn, Bo (Micro - nutrients); and pH, EC, OC (Physical parameters). Based on this, the SHC will also indicate fertilizer recommendations and soil amendment required for the farm.

Read More - <http://vikaspedia.in/agriculture/policies-and-schemes/crops-related/krishi-unnati-yojana/scheme-on-soil-health>

Source: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/govt-to-review-e-nam-soil-health-card-schemes-tomorrow/1/994205.html>

Q.2) The office of the 'Whip' is mentioned in:

- a) Constitution of India
- b) Rules of the House
- c) In a separate Parliamentary Statute

- d) None

Q.2) Solution (d)

WHIP is that mechanism and instrument by which political parties in Indian Parliament practically exercise their influence by consolidating their numbers in the Parliament. It is not impossible that each and every member elected to Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha possesses a different view from that of the leadership of that political party and in that case at the time of voting or while supporting a particular bill he may deviate from his party's stand. So this tool of WHIP ensures that any member of a political party does not contravenes the stand taken by his political party on the floor of the house.

Though the offices of the leader of the House and the leader of the Opposition are not mentioned in the Constitution of India, they are mentioned in the rules of the House and Parliamentary Statute respectively. The office of 'WHIP', on the other hand, is mentioned neither in the Constitution of India nor in the Rules of the House nor in a Parliamentary Statute. It is based on the conventions of the parliamentary government.

Every Political Party, whether ruling or opposition has its own WHIP in the Parliament. He is appointed by the political party to serve as an assistant floor leader. He is charged with the responsibility of ensuring the attendance of his party members in large numbers and securing their support in favour of or against a particular issue. He regulates and monitors their behaviour in Parliament. The members are supposed to follow the directives given by the WHIP otherwise against them disciplinary action can be initiated.

Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2017/07/26/is-it-time-to-let-indias-mps-and-mlas-vote-freely_a_23046452/

Q.3) 'Sagar Vani' was launched recently. It is concerned with

- a) Missing and vulnerable children
- b) Rural electrification
- c) Postal Technology
- d) None of the above

Q.3) Solution (d)

The 'Sagar Vani' is a software platform where various dissemination modes are integrated on a single central server. The App has provisions of multi-lingual SMS, Voice Call, Audio

Advisory, Social Media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and Digital Display Boards for dissemination of information.

The system also has facility to provide access to various stakeholders (NGOs, State Fishery Departments and Disaster Management Authorities) so that they too will be able to further disseminate these ocean-related information and alerts to the user community - residents of coastal areas and fishermen.

Source: <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=169162>

Q.4) Consider the following statements about Poland

1. It is a land-locked country
2. It is bordered by Germany and Czech Republic

Select the correct statement(s)

- a) Only 1
- b) Only 2
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Q.4) Solution (b)



Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/international-business/liberal-foes-ahead-of-polands-ruling-eurosceptics-poll/articleshow/59810779.cms>

Q.5) Which one of the following is the most fundamental difference between Mahayana Buddhism and Hinayana Buddhism?

- a) Emphasis on ahimsa
- b) Casteless society
- c) Worship of gods and goddesses
- d) Worship of stupa

Q.5) Solution (c)

Buddhism the most fostered religion of the world is further divided into two major schools of thoughts: Hinayana or the lesser vehicle and Mahayana or the greater vehicle. The division originated in Prajnaparamita Sutras (the formulations on achieving the ultimate awareness). Both the sects have a profusion of differences between them.

Hinayana

It is an ancient version of Buddhism, without any noticeable change in it. It contains preachings as Buddha himself had instructed. Bodhisattvas are the compassionate human beings who aspire to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of sentient beings. No such concept exists in Hinayana. Hinayana includes eighteen schools and the most important of them are Sarvastivada and Theravada. Sarvastivada were widespread in Northern India when the Tibetans started to travel over the region while Theravada was dominant in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.

They don't believe in idol worship and believe in salvation through self-discipline and meditation. In Hinayana, Buddha is portrayed in human form. Asoka was the patron of Hinayana and Pali was the language used by Hinayana scholars. There are only symbols related to Buddha- circle, animals related to Buddha's life like lion- symbol of Mahabhinishkraman (Sanskrit term for "the great departure"), elephant- symbol of birth, et al. The stories of Hinayana tend to believe that when Buddha's mother was conceiving him, she dreamt of a white elephant entering her womb. The aim of a Hinayana devotee is to get Nirvana which can be achieved with life. When the person becomes free of all sanyas and asangyas (all worldly attractions and distractions), the person is said to have achieved Nirvana.

Mahayana

It originated in first century A.D. after it split from Theravada. It is a modified version of Buddhism in which some liberties are awarded to the devotees. Mahayana Buddhism is prevalent in India, China, Japan, Vietnam, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Nepal, Bhutan, and Mongolia. Mahayana doctrine was based on the possibility of universal liberation from

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suffering for all being and hence named as the greater vehicle. It affirms the existence of Bodhisattvas and their language is Sanskrit.

Buddha is presumed in divine form, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and they started to profess idol worship. It allows salvation to be alternatively obtained through the grace of Buddha by having faith and devoting oneself to mindfulness of Buddha. They believe in mantras (chanting). After getting Nirvana, the person has to help other people to attain nirvana.

Source: <http://www.dnaindia.com/lifestyle/report-celebrating-buddha-s-teachings-on-vesak-across-the-world-2429732>

