

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Noble Prizes 2018

Two immunologists who discovered how to harness the body's immune system to fight cancer have won the 2018 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine. They are American James P. Allison and Japanese Tasuku Honjo, win annual award for work on a new approach to cancer treatment.

It is the first time the development of a cancer therapy has been recognised. The winners announced by the Nobel assembly at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm.

Noble Peace Award 2018 jointly declared to Nadia Murad, 25, who became the voice and face of women who survived sexual violence by the Islamic State and to Dr. Denis Mukwege, 63, who has treated thousands of women in a country once called the rape capital of the world. Nadia Murad is Yazidi activist and Denis Mukwege belongs to Democratic Republic of Congo.

They have worked through grave risks to their own lives to help survivors and to bring their stories to the world.

Frances Arnold of USA was awarded with Noble prize in Chemistry 2018 for conducting the first directed evolution of enzymes, leading to more environmentally friendly manufacturing of chemicals, including drugs, and in the production of renewable fuels. She shared this prize with George Smith of USA and Gregory Winter of UK for phage display of peptides and antibodies.

Nobel Prize in Physics 2018 was awarded for "groundbreaking inventions in the field of laser physics" with one half to Arthur Ashkin "for the optical tweezers and their application to biological systems". Arthur Ashkin belongs to USA. The other half jointly to Gerard Mourou of France and Donna Strickland of Canada for their method of "generating high-intensity, ultra-short optical pulses."

Nobel Prize in literature 2018 cancelled amid sexual abuse scandal.

Asian Development Bank funding in India

To promote social and economic development in Asia, Asian Development Bank (ADB) was established in 1966 headquartered in Manila, the capital of Philippines. ADB offers "hard" loans on commercial terms primarily to middle income countries in Asia and "soft" loans with lower interest rates to poorer countries in the region.

ADB funded the design and implementation of the Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (FFEWS) through a \$1 million technical assistance to Kolkata Municipal Corporation recently. ADB approved a financing package totalling \$245 million to provide safe, sustainable and inclusive drinking water service to about 1.65 million people in three districts of West Bengal.

ADB approved a \$150 million loan to establish the first multi-skills park in India. This will be equipped with international training facilities to enhance the quality of Madhya Pradesh's technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system.

ADB approved financing of up to \$500 million for a Multitranches Financing Facility (MFF) that will develop climate-resilient water supply, sewerage, and drainage infrastructure in at least 10 cities in Tamil Nadu.

Government of India and ADB also signed a \$346 million loan to finance improvement of over 400 kilometres of state highways in Karnataka.

ADB also approved \$150 million loan to establish the first multi-skills park in Madhya Pradesh to boost employment in the state.

Five-Year Sustainable Development Framework

India and UNO signed the Five-Year Sustainable Development Framework (2018-2022) at New Delhi on 29th September 2018. It was signed between CEO NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant and United Nations Resident Coordinator in India, Yuri Afanasiev.

Members of NITI Aayog and Heads of UN agencies in India were present on this occasion. NITI Aayog is the national counterpart for the UN in India for the operationalization of the UNSDF.

Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairperson of the NITI Aayog, emphasised that 2018-2022 will be a crucial phase in India's development story since the year 2022 marks the 75 years of India's independence. The total planned budget outlay for the implementation of the UNSDF 2018-2022 is approximately Rs.11000 crore, of which 47% is planned to be mobilised through the course of implementation from multiple sources, including the private sector and the government.

Five-Year Sustainable Development Framework comprises of 7 priority areas that outline the work that UN agencies will undertake jointly or individually, fully aligned with the priorities of the Government of India.

They are:

- ◆ Poverty and Urbanisation
- ◆ Health, Water, and Sanitation
- ◆ Education and Employability
- ◆ Nutrition and Food Security
- ◆ Climate Change, Clean Energy, and Disaster Resilience
- ◆ Skilling, Entrepreneurship, and Job Creation
- ◆ Gender Equality and Youth Development

Conference on Academic Leadership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a Conference on Academic Leadership on Education for Resurgence, in New Delhi on 29th September 2018. The Conference deliberates the challenges facing the Indian education system.

He recalled Swami Vivekananda's emphasis on self-reliance, character building, and human values, as elements of education. The Prime Minister said innovation is another vital element of education today.

He addressed a conference attended by Vice Chancellors and Directors of over 350 higher education institutions on this occasion. He said that our ancient universities such as Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramshila gave importance to innovation, besides knowledge. This event is being organised jointly by UGC, AICTE, ICSSR, IGNC, IGNOU, JNU and SGT University.

He mentioned the importance of thinking in terms of 'global citizen' or 'global village.' He said our Universities and Colleges should be leveraged to find solutions to the challenges facing us. We should "Interlink Institutions to Innovate and Incubate", he added. He also mentioned Atal Tinkering Labs have been set up to encourage children to innovate.

The Prime Minister said that the youth has given "Brand India" a global identity. He emphasised the importance of preparing good teachers for society.

MODEL QUESTIONS

1. Who is the union minister for Human Resources Development?
 - 1) Sushma Swaraj
 - 2) Piyush Goyal
 - 3) Prakash Javadekar
 - 4) Nirmala Sitharaman
 - 5) Rajyavardhan Rathore
2. Government is promoting quality education in identified aspirational districts through RUSA. RUSA stands for....?
 - 1) Rang Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan
 - 2) Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan
 - 3) Rashtriya Uchchatar Sramik Abhiyan
 - 4) Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Aadesh
 - 5) Rajya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan
3. Present Chairman of UGC?
 - 1) Prof. Dhirendra Pal Singh
 - 2) Dr. Patwardhan
 - 3) Prof. Rajnish Jain
 - 4) P.K. Thakur
 - 5) Dr. Pankaj Mittal
4. UNO told that India is an "important partner" of the UNO in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism. Who is present Secretary General of UNO?
 - 1) Antonio Guterres
 - 2) Audrey Azoulay
 - 3) Henrietta Holsman Fore
 - 4) Tedros Adhanom
 - 5) Yukiya Amano
5. United Nations Organisation (UNO) is an intergovernmental organisation tasked to promote international co-operation and to create and maintain international order. UNO was established on.....?
 - 1) 24th October 1945
 - 2) 24th October 1946
 - 3) 24th October 1947
 - 4) 24th October 1948
 - 5) 24th October 1949
6. Where is the head quarters of UNO?
 - 1) Washington DC
 - 2) Tokyo
 - 3) New York
 - 4) New Delhi
 - 5) Geneva
7. NITI Aayog stands for.....?
 - 1) Norms Institution for Transforming India
 - 2) National Integrity for Transforming India
 - 3) National Institution for Technology of India
 - 4) National Institution for Transforming India
 - 5) National Institution for Transforming Integrity

8. On 5th October 2018, India and ADB on signedloan agreement to upgrade all-weather rural roads in Madhya Pradesh under the Prime Minister's Rural Roads Programme.
- 1) \$30 million 2) \$300 million 3) \$220 million 4) \$100 million
5) \$110 million
9. On 29th August 2018, ADB and Government of India signedloan agreement to contribute to double farming incomes in Madhya Pradesh by expanding irrigation networks and system efficiency.
- 1) \$100 million 2) \$800 million 3) \$200 Million 4) \$175 million
5) \$375 million
10. Indian-born American biochemist, Har Gobind Khorana was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in which year along with Marshall W. Nirenberg and Robert W. Holley “for their interpretation of the genetic code and its function in protein synthesis”?
- 1) 1972 2) 1958 3) 1901 4) 1968
5) 1979
11. Who was awarded with Noble Peace prize in 1979 as "Founder of Missionaries of Charity" for her work for poorest of poor.
- 1) Sister Nirmala 2) Sister Alphonsa
3) Mother Teresa 4) Mary Alphonso
5) Sister Mariamma

KEY

1-3; 2-2; 3-1; 4-1; 5-1; 6-3; 7-3; 8-5; 9-5; 10-4; 11-3.

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