

PERFECT 7

**Weekly
Current Affairs**

An Initiative of Dhyeya IAS



1 | Privatisation of Indian Railways

Challenges & Prospects

2 | Criminalisation in Politics and Its Consequences

3 | The Conundrum of Internet Freedom and National Security

4 | Business Ethics in Post Covid World

5 | India's Economic Integration with Neighbour Countries

6 | Fiscal Councils for Enforcing Fiscal Discipline

7 | Cities of India; Needs Inclusiveness

DHYEYA IAS : AN INTRODUCTION



Vinay Kumar Singh
Founder & CEO

The guiding philosophy of the institute, throughout, has been creation of knowledge base. Dhyeya IAS inculcates human values and professional ethics in the students, which help them make decisions and create path that are good not only for them, but also for the society, for the nation, and for the world as whole. To fulfill its mission in new and powerful ways, each student is motivated to strive towards achieving excellence in every endeavor. It is done by making continuous improvements in curricula and pedagogical tools. The rigorous syllabi not only instills in them, a passion for knowledge but also attempts to teach them how to apply that knowledge in real-life situations. The programmes lay emphasis on well-rounded personality development of the students and also in inculcating the values of honesty and integrity in them.



Q.H. Khan
Managing Director

Dhyeya IAS is an institution that aims at the complete development of the student. Our faculty are hand-picked and highly qualified to ensure that the students are given every possible support in all their academic endeavors. It is a multi-disciplinary institution which ensures that the students have ready access to a wide range of academic material. Our brand of education has broad horizons as we believe in exposure. Our students are encouraged to widen their knowledge base and study beyond the confinements of the syllabus. We aim to lend a gentle guiding hand to make our students recognize their inner potential and grow on their own accord into stalwarts of tomorrow's society.

PERFECT 7 : AN INTRODUCTION



Kurban Ali
Chief Editor

With immense pleasure I would like to inform you that the new version of 'Perfect 7', from the Dhyeya IAS, is coming with more information in a very attractive manner. Heartily congratulations to the editorial team. The 'Perfect 7' invites a wider readership in the Institute. The name and fame of an institute depends on the caliber and achievements of the students and teachers. The role of the teacher is to nurture the skills and talents of the students as a facilitator. This magazine is going to showcase the strength of our Institute. Let this be a forum to exhibit the potential of faculties, eminent writers, authors and students with their literary skills and innovative ideas.

Please do visit our website www.dhyeyaias.com and our youtube channel for regular and updated information on current affairs.



Ashutosh Singh
Managing Editor

We have not only given the name 'Perfect 7' to our magazine, but also left no stone unturned to keep it 'near to perfect'. We all know that beginning of a task is most vital and full of challenges. So we met the same fate.

Publishing 'Perfect 7' provided us various challenges because from the beginning itself we kept our bar too high to ensure the quality. Right from the very first issue we had a daunting task to save aspirants from the 'misinformation' or 'overdose of information'. Focussing on civil services examination 'Perfect 7' embodies in itself perfect friend and guide in your preparation. This weapon is built to be precise yet comprehensive. It is not about bombardment of mindless facts, rather an analysis of various facets of the issues, selected in a systematic manner. We adopted the 'Multi Filter' and 'Six Sigma' approach, in which a subject or an issue is selected after diligent discussion on various levels so that the questions in the examination could be covered with high probability.

Being a weekly magazine there is a constant challenge to provide qualitative study material in a time bound approach. It is our humble achievement that we feel proud to make delivered our promise of quality consistently without missing any issue since its inception.

Your suggestions and popular demands always motivate us and keep our morale high.

May this version of 'Perfect 7' instill a new energy and a new spirit in you. We wish that the bond of affection between you and Dhyeya IAS reaches at a new height.



Send us your suggestions, comment, views and feedback for guiding us on

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PREFACE



Dhyeya family has decided to bring a new colourful and vibrant version of **'Perfect 7'** – a panacea for current affairs, which will add positive and dynamic energy in your preparation.

'Perfect7' is an outstanding compilation of current affairs topics as per the new pattern of Civil Services Examination (CSE). It presents weekly analysis of information and issues (national and international) in the form of Articles, News Analysis, Brain Boosters, PIB Highlights and Graphical Information, which helps to understand and retain the information comprehensively. Hence, **'Perfect 7'** will build in-depth understanding of various issues in different facets.

'Perfect7' is our genuine effort to provide correct, concise and concrete information, which helps students to crack the CSE. This magazine is the result of the efforts of the eminent scholars and the experts from different fields. **'Perfect 7'** is surely a force multiplier in your effort and plugs the loopholes in the preparation.

We believe in environment of continuous improvement and learning. Your constructive suggestions and comments are always welcome, which could guide us in further revision of this magazine.

Omveer Singh Chaudhary

Editor
Dhyeya IAS

As a proud jewel of Dhyeya IAS, **'Perfect 7'** now comes in a new coloured avatar. **'Perfect 7'** is a quintessential part of your preparation strategy for Civil Services Examination. A regular and manageable dose of current affairs will now reach you in new format, making it more reader friendly. Our humble attempt to serve you is surely rewarded by your appreciations. It encourages us to innovate and provide the best as per our ability.

A dedicated team of experts at Dhyeya IAS toils night and day to make your dream of Civil Services come true. I heartily thank and express my gratitude to the esteemed readers and all the people involved in making this magazine a shining star in the galaxy of Dhyeya IAS.

Rajat Jhingan

Editor
Dhyeya IAS

PERFECT 7

Weekly Current Affairs

An Initiative of Dhyeya IAS

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OUR TEAM

Founder & CEO	➤ Vinay Kumar Singh
Managing Director	➤ Q. H. Khan
Chief Editor	➤ Qurban Ali
Managing Editor	➤ Ashutosh Singh
Editors	➤ Omveer Singh Chaudhary ➤ Rajat Jhingan ➤ Jeet Singh ➤ Avaneesh Pandey
Editorial Support	➤ Prof. R. Kumar
Lead Authors	➤ Swati Yadav ➤ Anshuman Tiwari ➤ Ajay Singh ➤ Ahamad Ali
Authors	➤ Ashraf Ali ➤ Girraj Singh ➤ Hariom Singh ➤ Sneha Tiwari
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Graphics	➤ Krishna Kumar ➤ Krishna Kant Mandal ➤ Mukund Patel
Office Assistants	➤ Hari Ram ➤ Raju Yadav

Content Office



DHYEYA IAS
most trusted since 2003

DHYEYA IAS
302, A-10/11, Bhandari House,
Near Chawla Restaurants,
Dr. Mukherjee Nagar,
Delhi-110009



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7 IMPORTANT ISSUES

01

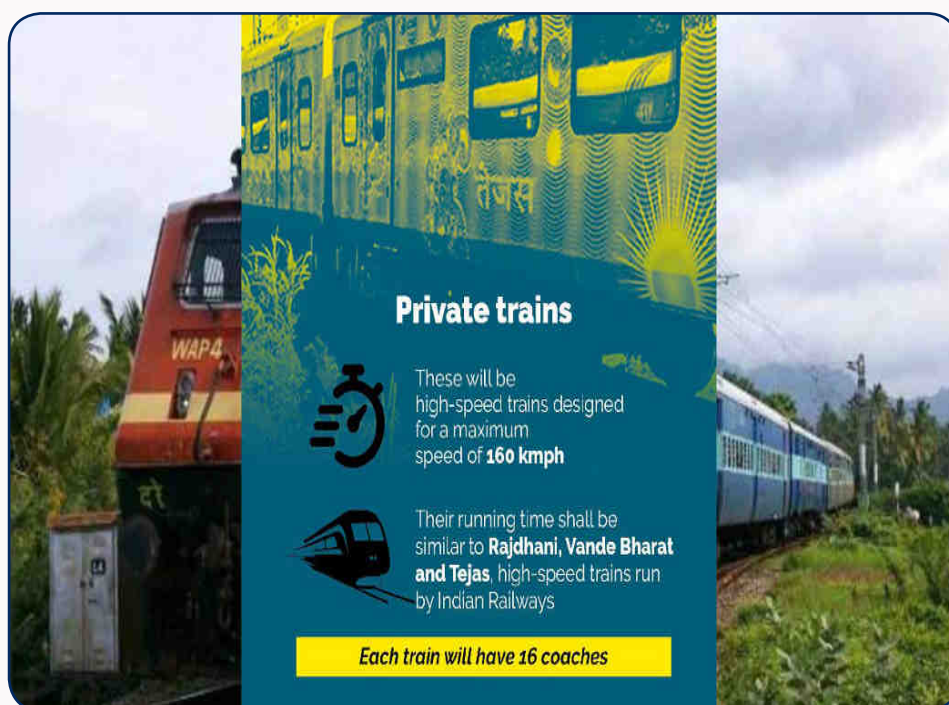
Privatisation of Indian Railways: Challenges & Prospects

Why in News?

- ◆ Indian Railways, in a bid to provide world-class travel experience to passengers, has been working closely with NITI Aayog to streamline the process of allowing private sector to run trains on the network.
- ◆ Ministry of Railways has invited Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for private participation for operation of passenger train services over 109 Origin Destination(OD) pairs of routes through introduction of 151 modern Trains (Rakes), a project that would entail private sector investment of about Rs 30,000 crore.

Background

- ◆ Indian Railways network is about 68,000 route kilometers. In the year 2018-19, the reserved passenger volume was 16% (0.59 billion) of the total originating non- suburban passengers (3.65 billion). Almost 8.85 crore of waitlisted passengers could not be accommodated.
- ◆ Ministry of Railways felt the requirement to introduce private participation in passenger train



operation which will allow introduction of next generation technology and provision of higher service quality, ensuring use of improved coach technology and reduced journey time. In this direction, RFQ has been already invited to permit private entities to undertake passenger trains operations.

- ◆ These train services would be operated on the Indian Railway Network where at present both passenger and freight trains are being operated on the common

track. The major trunk routes are saturated and operate at near full capacity. However, with planned commissioning of Dedicated Freight Corridors in 2021 and other infrastructural works, there would be availability of additional paths for operation of additional passenger services and it would therefore be possible to run additional services utilizing modern trains proposed in the current initiative.

- ◆ The private entities for undertaking the project would be selected through a two-stage competitive

- bidding process comprising of Request for Qualification (RFQ) and Request for Proposal (RFP). RFQ process will be for pre-qualification and shortlisting of the bidders will be based on their financial capacity, who will be required to offer share in the Gross Revenue at RFP stage (bid parameter) for undertaking the project.
- ◆ The initiative for private investment for running passenger trains began in a limited way last year with the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) - a Railways subsidiary - introducing the Lucknow-Delhi Tejas Express. Currently, IRCTC operates three trains - the Kashi Mahakal Express on the Varanasi-Indore route, the Lucknow-New Delhi Tejas and the Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas. These are the only ones not run by the Indian Railways itself, as has been the practice in its 167-year history.
 - ◆ At present, scheduled passenger train services remain paralysed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and various railways have been running only specials such as those for workers. Yet, the Railway Board has moved ahead with a long-pending plan, setting a tentative schedule for private train operations, expected to begin in 2023 and in 12 clusters.
- Terms of Conditions: Private Players**
- ◆ This is the first initiative of private investment for running passenger trains over Indian Railways network.
 - ◆ The 109 OD Pairs have been formed into 12 Clusters across the Indian Railway network. Each train shall have a minimum of 16 coaches.
 - ◆ Majority of trains to be manufactured in India (Make in India). The private entity shall be responsible for financing, procuring, operation and maintenance of the trains.
 - ◆ Trains shall be designed for a maximum speed of 160 kmph. There would be a substantial reduction in journey time. The running time taken by a train shall be comparable to or faster than the fastest train of Indian Railways operating in the respective route.
 - ◆ The concession period for the project shall be 35 years.
 - ◆ The private entity shall pay to Indian Railways fixed haulage charges, energy charges as per actual consumption and a share in Gross Revenue determined through a transparent bidding process.
 - ◆ The private entity shall have the freedom to decide on the fare to be charged from its passengers.
 - ◆ These trains shall be operated by the Driver and Guard of Indian Railways.
 - ◆ The operation of the trains by the private entity shall conform to the key performance indicators like punctuality, reliability, upkeep of trains etc.
 - ◆ Operation and maintenance of the passenger trains would be governed by standards & specifications and requirements specified by Indian Railways.
 - ◆ These trains are going to run on the routes where there the demand for trains are already higher than the existing capacity.
 - ◆ Railways shall provide a non-discriminatory access to the trains operated by the private entities with no new similar scheduled train departing between the same stations within 60 minutes of the scheduled departure of the private train.
 - ◆ It proposed the following routes for long distance travel: Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Lucknow, Delhi-Jammu/Katra, Delhi-Howrah, Secunderabad-Hyderabad, Secunderabad-Delhi, Delhi-Chennai, Mumbai-Chennai, Howrah-Chennai and Howrah-Mumbai.
- Significance**
- ◆ Several committees have gone into the expansion and the modernisation of Indian Railways. In 2015, the expert panel chaired by Bibek Debroy constituted by the Ministry of Railways a year earlier, recommended that the way forward for the railways was “liberalisation and not privatisation” in order to allow entry of new operators “to encourage growth and improve services.” It also made it clear that a regulatory mechanism was a prerequisite to promote healthy competition and protect the interests of all stakeholders.
 - ◆ An analysis of passenger and freight operations in the Railways, taken note of by the Economic Survey and the erstwhile Planning

Commission, showed that a steady shift to other modes of travel for both categories was affecting economic growth: by as much as 4.5% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) equivalent.

- ◆ It was estimated that a one rupee push in the railway sector would have a forward linkage effect of increasing output in other sectors by ₹2.50.
- ◆ The Debroy committee found this significant to take the 'Make in India' objective forward. The panel also noted that passengers were willing to pay more, if they had guaranteed and better quality of travel and ease of access. The move to augment capacity virtually overnight through private capital in train operations pursues this line of reasoning.
- ◆ The objective of this initiative is to introduce modern technology rolling stock with reduced maintenance, reduced transit time, boost job creation, provide enhanced safety, provide world class travel experience to passengers, and also reduce demand supply deficit in the passenger transportation sector.
- ◆ From a passenger perspective, there is a need for more train services, particularly between big cities. The Railway Board says five crore intending passengers could not be accommodated during 2019-20 for want of capacity, and there was 13.3% travel demand in excess of supply during summer and festival seasons. Without an expansion, and with growth of road

travel, the share of the Railways would steadily decline in coming years.

No Privatisation

- ◆ There is no proposal to privatise the operations of Railways. However, there is a proposal to outsource the commercial and on-board services of a few trains and to permit private players to induct modern rakes to run trains on select routes with an objective to provide improved service delivery to passengers.
- ◆ The responsibility of train operations and safety certification rests with Indian Railways. Outsourcing of certain services like station cleaning, pay and use toilets, retiring rooms, parking and platforms maintenance etc. is being done on need based manner to improve cleanliness and other services.

Way Forward

- ◆ The 2019-20 budget had pegged the national transporter's requirement of infrastructure investment at Rs 50 lakh crore over 12 years, thereby necessitating the involvement of private players in the sector.
- ◆ Train services operated by Indian Railways cover several classes of passengers, meeting the social service obligation to connect remote locations, and adopting the philosophy of cross-subsidy for passengers in low-cost trains through higher freight tariffs. But, private operators are not expected to shoulder the burden of universal service norms, and will focus on revenue.

- ◆ So private operators would have to raise the level of their offering even higher, to justify higher fares, and attract a segment of the population that is ready to pay for this difference. The government would have to explain that it has monetised its expensive fixed assets such as track, signalling and stations adequately for the taxpayer, who has paid for them.
- ◆ Therefore, the key piece in the scheme is the independent regulator, recommended by expert committees. Before the pandemic struck, the Government of India said in the Lok Sabha that it had notified the resolution to set up a Rail Development Authority as a "recommendatory / advisory" body, advising government on, among other things, promoting competition, efficiency and economy, and protecting consumer interests.
- ◆ Private rail operations can thus be seen as a government-led pilot plan, not a full programme for unbundling of the monolithic Indian Railways, although the more attractive parts are being opened for private exploitation. <<<>>>

General Studies Paper- III

Topic:

- Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Q. Inviting private players to operate on its routes, Indian Railways is taking major reform steps to a more efficient organisation, while not surrendering its control. Discuss

02

Criminalisation in Politics and Its Consequences

Why in News?

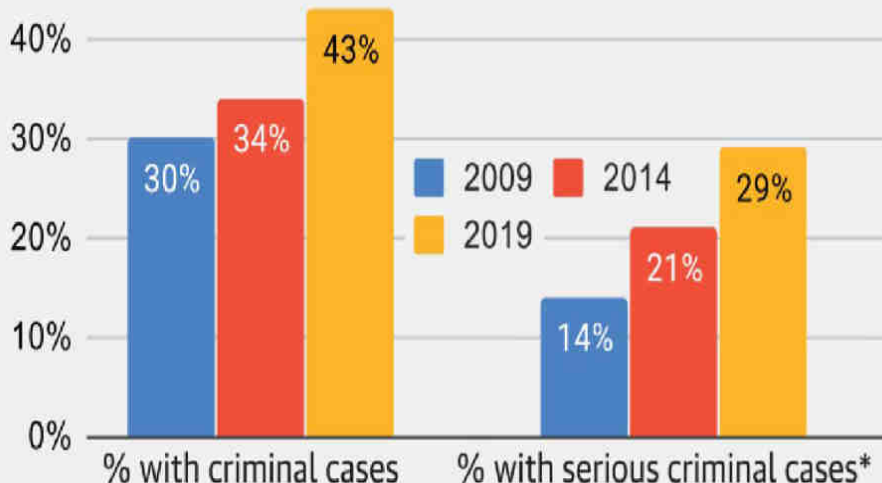
- A February 2020 Supreme Court judgment on criminalisation in politics may have far-reaching consequences for Indian democracy. It will first be implemented in the coming Bihar elections in October 2020. The Court has asked the political parties to state “the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected as candidates.”

Introduction

- We are in the midst of more immediate crises — the COVID-19 outbreak, the economic recession due to the lockdown, the migrant workers crisis, small businesses shutting down in many sectors, massive unemployment, a highly stressed banking and financial sector, and now the conflict with China. Added to this is an ever-present silent crisis: the steady deterioration in politics over decades, with the decline accelerating in the past 16 years. As politics dominates the bureaucracy, and reins in business, civil society and the media, we need governance that is free of the “criminal” virus. Capability is not sufficient. The intent to do public service is also required.
- The Vohra Committee on “Criminalisation of Politics” was constituted with an objective to

Under the scanner

Close to **43% winners** of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls have criminal cases against them, according to the Association for Democratic Reforms



* rape, murder, kidnapping, crimes against women, etc

identify the extent of the political-criminal nexus and to recommend ways in which the criminalisation of politics can be effectively dealt with. Official agencies in the report made several observations on the criminal network which had virtually been running a parallel government. The Report of the Vohra Committee also discussed how the criminal gangs enjoyed the support of politicians and protection they were being provided from the government functionaries. The report revealed how political leaders have become gang leaders. Over the years criminals have been elected to Parliament, State Assemblies, and local bodies.

an alarming rate. In 2004, 24% of the Members of Parliament had criminal cases pending against them; in 2009, that went up to 30%; in 2014 to 34%; and in 2019, as many as 43% of MPs had criminal cases pending against them.

Supreme Court Judgement

- The Supreme Court bench of justices R.F. Nariman and S. Ravindra Bhat on 13th February 2020 ordered the political parties to publish criminal antecedents of their candidates for the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha elections.
- The order said that a detailed reason within 48 hours of the selection of the candidates should be published by the parties as to what made them choose the candidates having criminal records over other candidates.

- ◆ Information to be disclosed
 - ◆ The crime that the candidate is accused of;
 - ◆ How many cases and what kind of cases are charged against the candidate?
 - ◆ Details of the case, case number and name of Court;
 - ◆ At which stage the criminal case has reached – FIR or investigation or charge-sheet or trial;
 - ◆ Why can not the other individuals without any criminal antecedents cannot be selected as candidates?
 - ◆ “Winnability” cannot be the only reason for the selection of the candidate.
- ◆ The information must be uploaded on-
 - ◆ social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter;
 - ◆ one national newspaper’
 - ◆ website of the party;
 - ◆ one local vernacular newspaper; and
 - ◆ As of today, the political parties do not offer any explanation as to why the people with pending criminal cases are selected as candidates for contesting elections when they have a choice.
- ◆ Contempt of Court
 - ◆ A report of compliance shall be submitted by the concerned political party in compliance with the directions to the election commission within 72hrs of the said candidate.

- ◆ If there is a failure on the part of the political party to submit this compliance report, then the Election Commission shall report such non-compliance by the concerned political party to the Supreme Court as being Contempt of the Court order.
- ◆ Enforcement of decrees and orders and Contempt of Supreme Court is dealt under Article 129 and Article 142 of the Constitution of India.
- ◆ The case of Court contempt will be filed against the party president.

Concerns for the Judgement

- ◆ The most recent directive of the Supreme Court assumes relevance in light of the report that more than half the new elected legislators of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Delhi have serious criminal cases pending against them. What is likely to be the impact of the latest court directions? Four linked factors would need to be considered in this context.
- ◆ First, who defines the threshold on what constitutes a serious criminal charge? The law is clear on debarring someone convicted in a criminal case from continuing as an elected representative or from contesting for such positions. How serious should a charge be to be considered serious when it comes to a case filed against someone who is seeking to contest elections? Political parties and leaders would argue that it is not difficult for a potential opponent or rival to file

a case against a likely candidate. Should the seriousness of the case be defined in terms of prima facie evidence?

- ◆ Second, does the solution lie in ensuring greater visibility to the criminal cases against a candidate contesting an election? Every candidate contesting an assembly or Lok Sabha election is required to file an affidavit listing the cases pending against them. The contents of this affidavit are often highlighted by civil society groups through the media and during the election campaigns. While this exposure has to a certain extent embarrassed political parties and candidates, there is little empirical proof that it has reduced their chances of winning an election. Once again, if one were to go by experience, there is little proof of this. The Delhi results are the most recent evidence of this.
- ◆ Third, is the crucial question of winnability versus credibility and merit. The court directives seek to alert political parties to the fact that winnability cannot trump factors such as the integrity and public standing of candidates who contest elections. Surveys have often found that there is considerable support for candidates who may not be honest but can get your job done as compared to those who are honest but cannot get your job done.
- ◆ Finally, is judicial activism the permanent answer to executive

inertia? Should the judiciary be constantly directing the executive to take action, which it anyway should as part of its routine functions? We clearly need a strong legislation to regulate the functioning of political parties and an unbiased and independent authority to implement it. We seem to be taking recourse to judicial activism far too often and making it more the exception than the rule.

Laws Related to Criminalisation of Politics

It is stated in the Section 4A of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 that an affidavit must be filed by each candidate. The affidavit should consist of:

- ♦ If in any case the candidate has been accused of an offence that is punishable with two or more imprisonment, in any pending case in which the charges have been framed by the court.
- ♦ The cases where a conviction for an offence is involved other than an offence that has been mentioned under Section 8, Representation of the People Act, 1951, (RP Act, 1951) and

sentenced with imprisonment for one year or more.

- ♦ Pursuant to the order of the Supreme Court, in addition to this, on 27 March 2003, the Election Commission issued an order that an additional affidavit must be filed by the candidates stating that Section 125A of the RP Act which prescribes penalties for providing incorrect or withholding information on Form 26, this amounts to a maximum of six months imprisonment, or fine, or both.
- ♦ The Election Commission of India in the report entitled Proposed Electoral Reforms, 2004 noted that “in few cases, the candidates leave some of the columns blanks, there have been cases where the candidates are contended to have given grossly undervalued information.”

Way Forward

- ♦ The order of the Supreme Court should be taken in the right spirit and the government must consider steps for reducing criminalisation in politics. It is in the interest of purity of elections which forms the bedrock of our participatory democracy. A change must also come from the

general public where they should boycott candidates with serious criminal antecedents. To this extent, awareness in public about the potential benefits which could accrue from choosing candidates without criminal antecedents vis-à-vis harm which they incur when they choose candidates with criminal antecedents would go a long way in ensuring the sanctity of our elections. 

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary; Ministries and Departments of the Government: pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

Q. Criminalisation of politics can be combatted by electoral processes and legislations and not by judicial activism alone. Discuss the given statement in light of recent Supreme Court Judgement on disclosure of candidates' criminal records.

03 The Conundrum of Internet Freedom and National Security

Why in News?

- ♦ The government's decision to block 59 Chinese apps has once again spotlighted the vulnerability of Internet freedom at a time of national security.
- ♦ Banning of the Chinese Apps is seen as India's Digital Strike against Chinese border mis-adventure in the Galwan valley. But this article is restricted to the discussion related to internet rights of citizens vis-à-vis national security of India.

Background

- ♦ The order of blocking the Chinese Apps was communicated via a Press Information Bureau notification, which will be enforced under section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000 read with the Blocking Rules, 2009. This interim order was probably taken under the emergency powers of the Blocking Rules which permit the government to do away with any notice or hearing requirements for a period of 48 hours. During this 48 hour period, the government has to convene a committee to seek their recommendations. After the 48 hour period is over, the IT secretary then has to pass a final order revoking the interim measure and unblock access, or finalise the blocking order.
- ♦ The PIB notification characterises these apps as 'malicious', citing several complaints against these Apps for reportedly enabling

Deterring democracy



The Freedom House report said that India showed a deteriorating trend when it came to personal autonomy

Year	Political rights	Civil Liberties	Total Score
2017	35/40	42/60	77/100
2018	35/40	42/60	77/100
2019	35/40	40/60	75/100
2020	34/40	37/60	71/100

Top five countries in the free category:

Finland, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, Luxembourg

Bottom five countries in the free category:

Botswana, Peru, India, Timor-Leste, Tunisia

Leaders – including the chief executives of the United States and India, the world's two largest democracies – are increasingly willing to break down institutional safeguards – SARAH REPUGGI, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL PUBLICATIONS, FREEDOM HOUSE

unauthorised transmission of user data to servers situated 'outside India'. The reasons stated in the notification are that these apps are engaged in activities which are prejudicial to user privacy and the sovereignty of India.

- ♦ The statement from the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) said it had received complaints from various sources, including several reports about the misuse of some mobile apps for stealing and surreptitiously transmitting users' data in an unauthorised manner to servers outside India.
- ♦ Even though the app is still available on the phones of existing users, new users are unable to access it. Further, the Ministry of Information and Technology is in talks with the Department of Telecommunications to operationalise the geoblock.
 - ♦ Geoblocking is the system used to limit your access to

the internet, based on your geographic location.

- ♦ When we talk about rights then, of course the rights of (these) Chinese companies have been affected. If it is the rights of Indian individuals who use platforms like TikTok either to run their business or to just become popular, then there is no rights violation in opinion of some experts as, only a platform is banned, not the activity. Similar activities can be shifted to other platforms.

Balancing the Rights

- ♦ Section 69A (of the Information Technology Act), which has been used, is not a new power that the government is commandeering during a time of national security emergency. It must be a genuine national security risk, and the necessity of blocking the app must be very clearly made out by the government. And that is the way

we try and resolve this question of where do we draw the line between this trade-off between national security, which is important, and rights, which are equally important. (69A Power to issue directions for blocking for public access of any information through any computer resource)

- ◆ In a constitutional democracy like India which is also a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there is a certain basic understanding that regulation of the Internet or Internet-based services by governments has to respect basic human rights standards.
- ◆ For a government to block service or to block any access to content or take other coercive steps that may intrude upon people's fundamental rights and freedoms, it has to follow what in international law is often called the three-part test. That requires:
 - ◆ action that is very clear;
 - ◆ that could not have been done by a less intrusive means; and
 - ◆ That follows standards of necessity and proportionality.
- ◆ As per Supreme Court of India, it is very clear that our fundamental right to free speech and expression applies to online content too.

Legality behind the Curb

- ◆ The Kerala High Court in *Faheema Shirin v. State of Kerala* recognised that interfering with someone's access to the internet violates inter

alia their fundamental right to privacy.

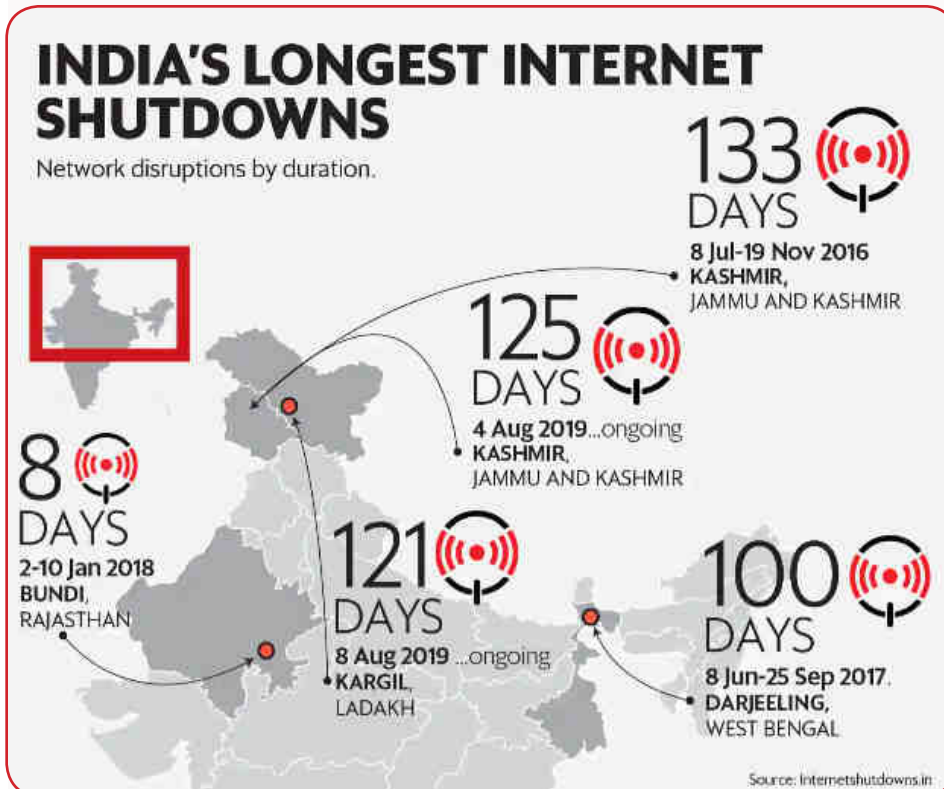
- ◆ Subsequently, the Supreme Court in *Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India* observed that an indefinite suspension of the internet could amount to an abuse of power. However, it fell short of reaffirming the position laid down by the Kerala High Court.
- ◆ In *Justice Puttaswamy (Retd.) v Union of India* as well as the decision concerning *Modern Dental College* the Supreme Court has reaffirmed that rights cannot be viewed as distinct compartments. They must be viewed as a network of interconnected freedoms that complement each other. The most obvious right to get implicated by a geoblock is the fundamental right to access the internet.
- ◆ Admittedly, the basis of imposing such a restriction has to be one of the numerated conditions mentioned under Article 19(2) (i.e. public order, national security, etc). At the same time, however, due to the interconnected nature of constitutional freedoms, it would also have to be fair, just and reasonable under Article 14. This means that the manner in which the geoblock is imposed should not be arbitrary.
- ◆ In *Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India & Ors.*, the Indian Supreme Court admitted that Section 69A read with the Information Technology (Procedures and Safeguards for Blocking for Access of Information by Public) Rules, 2009 permit the Indian Government to impose narrowly tailored restrictions

on access to content. The Court further acknowledged that in *Shreya Singhal v. Union of India & Ors.*, the Supreme Court had acknowledged the constitutionality of section 69A. The Court (in para 111) recognised that the rules are not unconstitutional.

- ◆ Thus restriction must be on access to specific platforms on the internet and not access to the internet as a whole.
- ◆ The meaning of emergency in the context of an order under section 69A of the IT Act, however, is not clear. In *People's Union of Civil Liberties v. Union of India*, in the context of a challenge to the constitutionality of section 5 of the Telegraph Act, 1885 (i.e. the provision enabling wire-tapping), the SC clarified that the threshold of public emergency is even higher than the grounds stated in Article 19(2) of the Constitution. The Court defined public emergency to mean "the prevailing of a sudden condition or state of affairs affecting the people at large calling for immediate action". The nature of concern that the public emergency raises has to draw its colours from the restrictions enumerated under Article 19(2) (e.g. national security).

Diplomacy via Internet

- ◆ In order to know whether the diplomatic and security interests sought to be achieved through the geoblock outweigh civil liberties affected by the move, a careful examination of the procedural and the substantive safeguards relied upon to curtail the right is crucial.



- ♦ The adequacy of existing safeguards help in understanding whether the geoblock in the manner in which it has been imposed excessively curtails civil liberties when compared to the interest sought to be achieved.
 - ♦ The general procedural safeguard against blocking access to the internet that such orders must be backed by a certified copy of a court order. Judicial scrutiny ensures that there are some checks and balances against executive indiscretion. However, there is an exception to this rule.
 - ♦ Rule 9 of the Blocking Rules 2009, empowers the Government to impose a geoblock (such as in this case) without providing a prior opportunity to be heard to an online intermediary (i.e. an entity providing an online service, e.g. a Chinese app).
- ### Way Forward
- ♦ Government of India issues blocking orders under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, it asserts secrecy and confidentiality in those orders. The Supreme Court in the issue of Internet shutdowns in the Anuradha Bhasin judgment said very clearly that any order blocking people's rights to liberty, especially in relation to the Internet, requires to be

published.

- ♦ Banning of apps is a part of a larger dispute with an aggressive neighbour. Also data collection by Chinese apps and their intrusion is well documented. But the current ban has led India vulnerable to World Trade Organisation (WTO). Also there are questions raised for lack of data security and privacy laws in India and lack of critical cyber security architecture 🌐🔒🛡️

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic:

- Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security; money-laundering and its prevention.

Q. When the world is inter-connected, so are the threats, vulnerabilities and diplomacies. At these times, individual rights over internet must be balanced with government powers to regulate it, specially on part of national security. Discuss.

04

Business Ethics in Post Covid World

Context

- ◆ The COVID-19 pandemic struck the business ecosystem to its core, propelling management to deal with operational distress and business continuity with urgency. As tough decisions are being taken amid the crisis, the risk of unethical behaviour and compliance infractions has increased and can weigh heavily on organisations. Turbulent times like these can have corporate integrity becoming a true differentiator as organisations concentrate on encouraging ethical conduct, building trust in third-party partnerships, protecting data and circumnavigating the risks present now, next and beyond.
- ◆ Ethics, not capitalism, will yield profits in the long run. People will remember and will reciprocate. Businesses that are not shying away from making money out of the suffering are eroding their consumer base in the long run and risking their existence too.

Introduction

- ◆ COVID-19 has revealed the deep fissures in economics, between the school of economics that has dominated public policy across the world since the 1980s — the “free market” school — and another school which said that the needs of human beings must trump the needs of business in economic policy, and not the other way around.

- ◆ The profession of economics must be reoriented. Societal (and environmental) well-being must be the goal of economic policies, not the size of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Citizens’ “ease of living” must become more important than “ease of doing business”.
- ◆ No doubt, the health of businesses and the economy is good for the health of a society. However, the growth of businesses and the economy must not be allowed to harm societal and environmental well-being.
- ◆ Business ethics is a concept that makes eminent economic sense. According to the Professor Amartya Sen, businesses and ethics are not binary opposites but in fact, business ethics have economic benefits. Businesses behaving ethically is particularly crucial in a developing country so that trust (which is central to all economic activity) may be engendered — in all stakeholders—consumers, partners, governments, regulators, employees present and prospective, suppliers and the wider community.

Profiteering out of Crisis

- ◆ Even though the Centre rightly banned the export of masks by mid-February, the country ran into a shortage of masks as the corona scare started peaking.

- ◆ There were reports that a few companies withdrew hand sanitizers from the market citing quality issues to create supply shortage and a spike in demand.
- ◆ The demand for hand sanitizers saw a 10-fold jump during April-May, and prices increased almost three-fold. The rise in rates forced authorities to declare masks and sanitizers essential commodities for the next 100 days and invoke the Disaster Management Act to ensure price regulation and availability.
- ◆ Skyrocketing prices of hand-sanitizers on its website forced Amazon India to take a tough stand against predatory sellers. It sent a notice to sellers, citing its fair pricing policy: “Sell the largest section at the lowest price”.
- ◆ When some private airport operators wanted to levy an additional fee on the flyers to make up for the loss during the outbreak, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) had to intervene to keep them at check. The stand by Amazon and IATA highlights the importance of having high moral and ethical business standards during a crisis.

Helping at the Time of Crises

- ◆ Significant monetary contribution to the extent of 2000 Crores has come from Indian Companies and more is expected. Highest being

that from Tata group to the extent of 1500 crores, Adani- 100 Crores, Jindal South West (JSW) Group 100 Crores just to name a few.

- ◆ Reliance Industry Limited (RIL) decided to provide free fuel for all emergency vehicles plying. Parle-G decided to provide 3 Crores biscuits packets to the people in need. Several companies are offering their resorts and hotels to be used for Quarantine purposes or for accommodating doctors and other support staff i.e. TATA, Mahindra and Mahindra.
- ◆ All Tata group companies have committed to pay their daily wagers and temporary workers all across India, full payments for the month of March and April irrespective of their availability for work due to various reasons.
- ◆ RIL also decided to continue payments to its temporary and contract workers. Vedanta Group has set up a 100 Crores fund to help daily wagers and their contractual workers and to other needy communities across their various plant locations. Company is also increasing its manufacturing capabilities to produce 100,000 face masks per day and other protective equipment for health workers to well equip them in this fight against deadly corona virus.
- ◆ Hero Group also set up 100 Crores fund to help their employees, vendors and dealers.

Most Vulnerable – Gig Workers

- ◆ It is not the migrant labourers who are most vulnerable, it is the gig-

economy workers. Labourers are still protected by labour laws and unions, but gig economy has no such safety net. The gig economy has taken a big hit during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- ◆ Gig workers — food delivery personnel, etc. — enjoy no safety nets. Given that these workers work very close to the line, without sick leaves, earning low-wages and interacting with strangers at greater levels, they are more vulnerable to COVID-19. Most of these 'delivery partners' of multinational gig giants do not get medical coverage or health insurance. So, it is imperative for these companies to step up efforts to ensure the safety and health of their 'partners'. The corporates must come forward now and be seen responsible.

Covid Crisis and Unethical Behaviour

- ◆ The economic crisis accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic will pose a significant risk of unethical conduct among corporate India, according to EY's Global Integrity Survey 2020.
- ◆ 98% of respondents believed that the disruption caused by the pandemic will impact ethical conduct among businesses.
- ◆ 69% of the respondents believed that their organisation had managers who would sacrifice their integrity for short-term financial gain.
- ◆ 57% of such employees would be prepared to act unethically for

their own career progression or remuneration package.

- ◆ Unethical behaviour included falsifying customer records (32%), ignoring unethical conduct by third parties (31%), and providing false information to management (29%).
- ◆ According to 64% of respondents, unethical behaviour is often tolerated when involving seniors or high performers. Senior employees are more likely to justify unethical behaviour such as ignoring misconduct in their team, misleading external parties or offering/accepting a bribe to boost their own career progression or remuneration.
- ◆ As for the organisation, 76% of respondents found that maintaining integrity standards for organisations in such a period of rapid change and difficult market conditions challenging.
- ◆ Many believed that the integrity standards of their organisations had improved prior to the crisis, but were wary of public scrutiny. While 77% of the respondents stated improved integrity standards, 92% were concerned about management decisions undergoing public scrutiny.
- ◆ Declining financial performance (37%), disruption to traditional working patterns (36%), reduced focus on ethical behaviour from senior management (34%) and weakening compliance processes and controls (20%) are some of the greatest risks to ethical business conduct because of the pandemic.

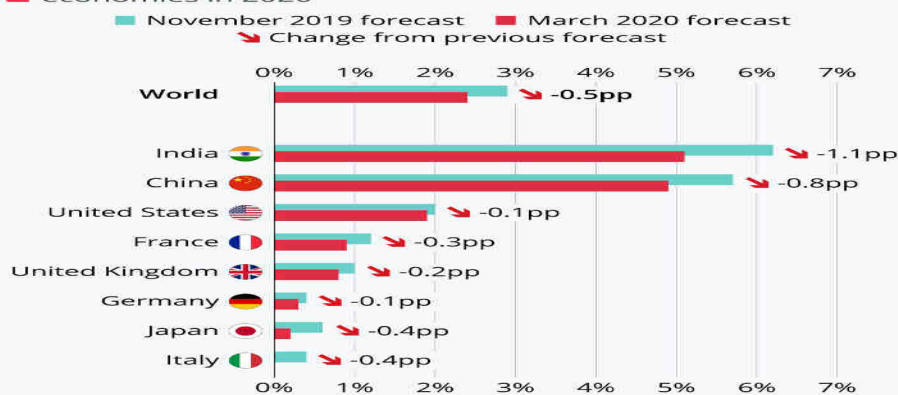
- ♦ Cyber-attacks and ransomware (36%) are perceived as the greatest risks to the long-term success of organisations, followed by bribery and corruption (24%) and fraud (21%).

New Fundamentals

- ♦ Purpose, values and ethics need to be built into institutional design. Although these are existential considerations, they are also enduring ones, businesses must embed an inspiring meaning and purpose for the organisation.
- ♦ CEOs were starting to engage deeply in corporate purpose, multi-stakeholder capitalism, and sustainability prior to this crisis—the urgency of which has only been underscored by pandemic.
- ♦ As we traverse and emerge from the crisis, we will increasingly rely on technology, which also bring with it multiple ethical trade-offs. The use of technology can also compound existing inequalities—ensuring affordable and ubiquitous technology is a threshold ethical condition.
- ♦ To build a lasting and resilient organisation, the starting point is to instill an inspiring purpose that captures the broader ambition of the business beyond profit and gives employees meaning in their daily work.

Coronavirus: OECD Slashes Forecast for World Economy

GDP growth forecast for the world's largest economies in 2020*



Source: OECD

- ♦ Adam Grant, the Wharton psychologist reminds us that layoffs hurt productivity and innovation as businesses lose valuable skills and synergies. “Those who remain are distracted by survivor’s guilt, anxiety and searching for more secure jobs.” Companies that slash jobs tend to perform worse than those that find alternatives such as pay cuts – they also erode trust in the long run. To maintain long-term trust and productivity, in any decision regarding redundancy and paycut, must be deliberative and participative to the extent possible and factor in fairness of process, transparency and compassion.

challenges to the entire nation. Though ethical business decisions are always important but ethics becomes even more significant when dealing with a crisis. 🔄🔄🔄

Way Forward

- ♦ It is during the adversaries that mettle of an individual is tested and the same applies to companies. COVID 19 has presented enormous

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance-applications, models, successes, limitations and potential; citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures.

General Studies Paper- III

Topic:

- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.

Q. “COVID-19 has not just changed the way to conduct a business, but has also changed the way business should think and behave. A whole new dimension of business ethics has been re-defined by the pandemic.” Discuss.

05

India's Economic Integration with Neighbour Countries

Why in News?

- At a time when it is increasingly worried about growing Chinese economic and strategic relationships in the region, India is missing a “costless” trick. As the numbers show, it can trade a lot more within the region, both in terms of exports and imports. With concerns over Chinese strategic relations in South Asia, India should reach out to its neighbours, have better terms of trade with them.

Background

- Despite geographical proximity and the existence of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements (FTAs), South Asia is one of the least economically integrated regions in the world. Owing to protectionist policies, high logistics cost, lack of political will and a broader trust deficit, intra-regional trade in South Asia remains well below its potential at 5% of the region's global trade. This makes South Asia one of the most disconnected regions in the world, especially when compared with other regions such as East Asia and the Pacific, where intra-regional trade accounts for approximately 50% of total trade, and Sub-Saharan Africa, where intra-regional trade has improved over the years to 22% due to the steps taken by governments to create transparent mechanisms for trade facilitation. Intra-regional trade in the South



- Asian region (including Myanmar) amounts to only 5.6% (2017).
- India's trade with its neighbourhood has ranged between 1.7% and 3.8% of its global trade. India's exports account for the bulk of its trade with its neighbours. The country's regional trade growth from 1991 until 1999 was minimal. In 2008, India's trade with the neighbours (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) reached a decadal high of US\$13.45 billion. Following a dip in 2009, due to the global financial crisis, India's trade with its neighbours doubled in the next five years, reaching US\$24.69 billion in 2014. The slowdown in India's exports to South Asia in 2015 and 2016 coincided with the 13% decline in India's global trade from US\$19 trillion in 2014 to US\$16.5 trillion in 2015. Intra-regional trade revived in 2017, reaching its peak at US\$24.75 billion, picking up further in 2018 when it rose to US\$36 billion.
- India's largest export market in the region is Bangladesh, followed by Sri Lanka and Nepal, whereas the largest imports by value come from Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. All countries in the neighbourhood have a trade deficit with India, the highest being Bangladesh with a deficit of US\$7.6 billion, followed by Nepal at US\$6.8 billion (2018). The trade deficit has been increasing.
- India needs to balance its exports with the imports from the neighbours in order to lessen their trade deficit and increase their trust.

China Overtaking India

- India's trade regime, like that of many other countries in South Asia, discriminates against fellow South Asian countries, as pointed out in the World Bank report — 'A Glass Half Full: The Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia'.
- Defying the logic of proximity, most of India's neighbours are now

largely reliant on China for their imports. For instance, the share of India's trade with Maldives was 3.4 times that of China's in 2008. But by 2018, China's total trade with Maldives slightly exceeded that of India. China's trade with Bangladesh is now about twice that of India. China's trade with Nepal and Sri Lanka still lags India's trade with those countries but the gap has shrunk.

- ◆ A more significant way in which China exerts its influence in the region is through investment, loans, and grants. According to the American Enterprise Institute's China Global Investment Tracker, China has committed around \$100 billion in the economies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka. China is now the largest overseas investor in the Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- ◆ Their database shows that Chinese investment is concentrated in hard infrastructure – power, roads, railways, bridges, ports and airports. Nearly 80 percent of Chinese investments in South Asia have been in the energy and transport sectors, according to the tracker.
- ◆ Beyond hard infrastructure, China has also invested in the financial systems of these countries. For instance, Beijing has taken stakes in the Dhaka and Karachi stock exchanges and cultivated trade in yuan between China and Pakistan.

Beyond Economics

- ◆ The Government of India, for instance, provides lines of credit to

partner countries – \$ 10 billion for Africa, \$ 4.5 billion in Bangladesh, \$ 0.5 billion for Vietnam. A corpus of Rs. 500 crores has been allocated for creating manufacturing hubs in CLMV countries, namely, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

- ◆ Data from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) shows that over the past decade, Chinese arms sales across South and Southeast Asia grew from \$386 million in 2008 to \$1.3 billion in 2016 before falling to \$759 million in 2018. China is the biggest arms supplier to Pakistan and Bangladesh today.
- ◆ Experts have argued that Beijing is helping strengthen the navies of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka to enhance its footprint in the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. Some strategic experts see this as part of an encirclement or 'string of pearls' strategy to contain India by building a network of military and commercial facilities in India's neighbourhood.
- ◆ In 2014, the Modi government made an impressive start with its neighbourhood-first policy but six years on it is battling resentment in the region. While India's understaffed diplomatic cadre and slower economic growth have been limiting factors, the inability to handle the sensitivities of its neighbours may have also contributed to the turbulence in the neighbourhood.

Suggestions to Encourage Import from South Asia

- ◆ Encourage the Indian private sector to invest more in the

neighbourhood. Trade and investment are intimately linked, especially in the form of cross-border value chains. By investing in neighbouring countries, Indian firms can help accelerate regional value chains, which will increase regional trade in parts and components. Firms from neighbouring countries can invest in India, to create the same positive impact on regional trade and value chains.

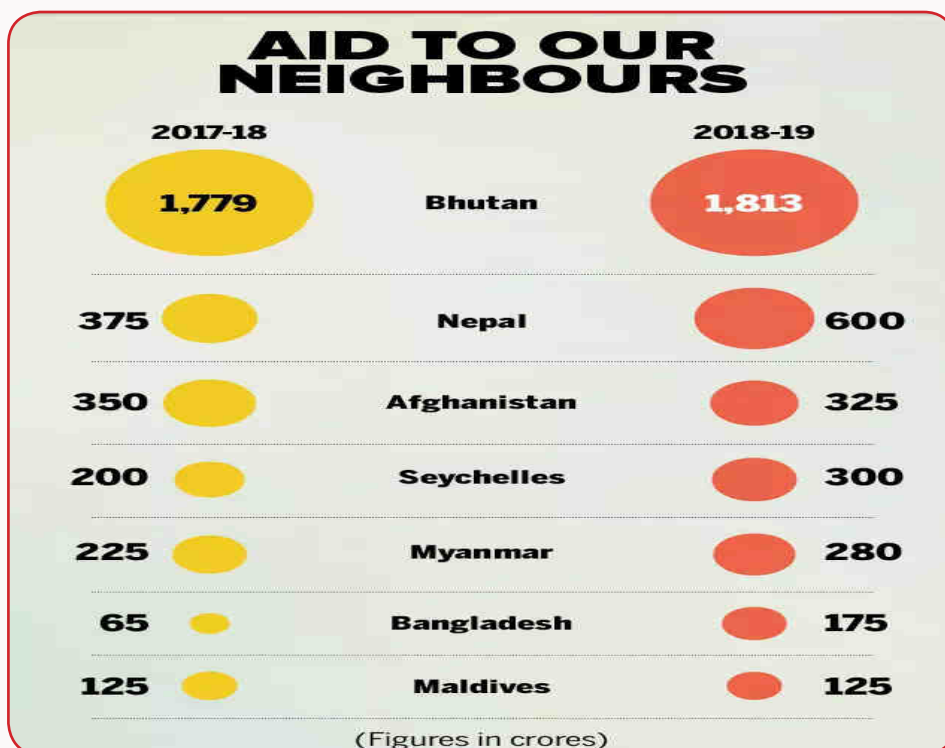
- ◆ Keep improving the hard and soft infrastructure that enables trade and investment. Trade costs between countries in South Asia are disproportionately high. The average trading cost between country pairs in South Asia is 20 per cent higher than among country pairs in Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and it is cheaper for India to trade with Brazil than with Pakistan. To address this, India could accelerate its border post upgrading programme, but the soft measures are as important. These include introducing electronic data interchange, risk management systems and single windows at more locations along India's borders. The eventual goal should be to have seamless clearance of imports at the borders, with only random (say 2-3 per cent) checking of consignments.
- ◆ Take pro-active steps to help neighbours address India's non-tariff measures (NTMs). NTMs are policy measures other than tariffs that affect trade, and include

quotas, sanitary regulations, and licensing. Even though NTMs are legitimate and are imposed by all trading nations, border authorities can create burdens for traders in their implementation; even if implemented efficiently, NTMs can be more difficult to tackle in poor capacity environments. India could undertake campaigns and workshops in exporting countries to disseminate information about its NTMs, and also listen to concerns about its NTMs from exporters. While such sessions have been done on a somewhat ad-hoc basis, as in Sri Lanka, they could be made more systematic and regular.

- ◆ Help with capacity building for standards and testing, so that exporters from neighbouring countries can more easily certify their products as conforming to Indian standards. For instance, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has been providing technical support to the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution to help in standardisation and conformity assessment. The BIS has similarly worked with its counterparts in Nepal and Afghanistan. Such capacity building support could be made more systematic and intensive.

Way Forward

- ◆ Enhancing trade in the South Asian region is not only economically



beneficial, it is also strategically important in order to integrate India with the global economy. Regional integration in South Asia requires addressing several NTBs and further reduction of the “sensitive lists” maintained by countries to ensure the effectiveness of trade agreements.

- ◆ Furthermore, good practices from other regions must be tailored to the South Asian context to facilitate the resolution of reported barriers to trade. For instance, Sub-Saharan Africa has addressed NTBs by way of an online mechanism that consists of national monitoring committees in each country to facilitate the resolution of reported trade barriers.

- ◆ For India and her neighbours, stronger political will is required to combat barriers to trade in the region, especially after the COVID-19 crisis which may result in unleashing a new wave of protectionist measures. <<<

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- India and its neighborhood-relations.

Topic:

- Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Q. Diplomacy of a nation should be backed by well-integrated economic neighbourhood. Comment on the given statement with reference to India's engagement with its neighbours and economic inroads made by China.

06

Fiscal Councils for Enforcing Fiscal Discipline

Why in News?

- Many economists have faulted the Indian government's fiscal stance, arguing that this is no time for restraint; the government should spend more to stimulate the economy by borrowing as may be necessary, but at the same time come out with a credible plan for fiscal consolidation post-COVID-19 in order to retain market confidence.
- However, the government can signal its virtue by establishing some new institutional mechanism for enforcing fiscal discipline, such as for example a fiscal council.

Background

- According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), about 50 countries around the world have established fiscal councils with varying degrees of success. Abstracting from country-level differences, a fiscal council, at its core, is a permanent agency with a mandate to independently assess the government's fiscal plans and projections against parameters of macroeconomic sustainability, and put out its findings in the public domain. The expectation is that such an open scrutiny will keep the government on the straight and narrow path of fiscal virtue and hold it to account for any default.
- International experience suggests that a fiscal council improves the quality of debate on public finance,

Fresh Outlook

Deficit to be in double-digit | Debt over **85%**

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

- Re-evaluate Budget, FRBM and FC terms of reference
- Do not rely enough on GST, Indirect tax

TRADE MEASURES

- Broader and stable policy regime
- Reverse protectionist measures

FINANCIAL MEASURES

- Quick resolution mechanism for SMEs
- Bad bank for certain sectors like power
- Tweaking IBC to focus on maximising recovery
- Govt to pick up stake in some big cos

Arvind Subramanian
Former CEA

- and that, in turn, helps build public opinion favourable to fiscal discipline. In a globalised world of enormous capital flows, market volatility across the world and especially in emerging markets, in response to monetary policy changes in major economies, and geopolitical tensions that ebb and flow, causing currencies and commodity prices to swing, countries like India need macroeconomic management as an active function round the year.
- Independent institutions with the latter fiscal watchdog function have existed for a long time in some countries. They include the Central Planning Bureau in the Netherlands, the Economic Council in Denmark,

the Congressional Budget Office in the US and the High Council of Finance in Belgium. Recently, similar institutions have been created in Sweden, Hungary, Canada, Slovenia and the UK. They are often labelled fiscal councils. New fiscal councils are being considered in a number of countries, including Ireland, Portugal and Slovakia.

Recommendations

- In 2018, the D.K. Srivastava committee on fiscal statistics established by the National Statistical Commission (NSC) has suggested the establishment of a fiscal council that could co-ordinate with all levels of government to provide

harmonized fiscal statistics across governmental levels and provide an annual assessment of overall public sector borrowing requirements.

- ◆ In India, two expert committees have advocated the institution of such a council in recent years. In 2017, the N.K. Singh committee on the review of fiscal rules set up by the finance ministry suggested the creation of an independent fiscal council that would provide forecasts and advise the government on whether conditions exist for deviation from the mandated fiscal rules.
- ◆ These recommendations follow similar recommendations from the 13th and 14th finance commissions, which also advocated the establishment of independent fiscal agencies to review the government's adherence to fiscal rules, and to provide independent assessments of budget proposals.
- ◆ As per the model suggested by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Review Committee, the fiscal council's mandate will include, but not be restricted to, making multi-year fiscal projections, preparing fiscal sustainability analysis, providing an independent assessment of the Central government's fiscal performance and compliance with fiscal rules, recommending suitable changes to fiscal strategy to ensure consistency of the annual financial statement and taking steps to improve quality of

fiscal data, producing an annual fiscal strategy report which will be released publicly.

The Concept

- ◆ Abstracting from country-level differences, a fiscal council, at its core, is a permanent agency with a mandate to independently assess the government's fiscal plans and projections against parameters of macroeconomic sustainability, and put out its findings in the public domain. The expectation is that such an open scrutiny will keep the government on the straight and narrow path of fiscal virtue and hold it to account for any default.
- ◆ Just as the presence of a partner at the restaurant reminding us how we resolved to eat less can be effective in changing our decision, so a fiscal council may be useful in helping the electorate resist the short-term temptations of tax cuts or additional spending.

Fiscal Council Vs Electoral Politics

- ◆ A key point about representative democracy is that the electorate normally delegates decision-making to representatives, whose job it is to take 'good decisions' that the individual has neither the time nor the competence to make. In this sense, representative democracy presumes a lack of information on the part of the electorate, and this lack can be exploited. Voters may be unaware of what the true fiscal position is. A government may argue that particular spending increases

or tax decreases are affordable within existing fiscal plans, and it may be very difficult to verify this. This ignorance may allow the government to increase its chances of re-election, creating a political business cycle. As there is no similar incentive to raise taxes or cut spending, this will lead to deficit bias.

- ◆ If lack of information is a cause of deficit bias, a clear role a fiscal council could play is to provide better (i.e. unbiased) information. This would increase the probability that any rules to counter deficit bias are respected.
- ◆ The electorate may not be able to discipline politicians effectively, because elections are fought over a multitude of issues. Fiscal councils could provide an alternative source of political pressure in this case.
- ◆ A similar story concerns competition between two political parties, but here government preferences are perfectly aligned with those of a section of the electorate. Parties can follow the electorate in having different preferences either over types of public goods or over the size of government.
- ◆ Governments do not fully internalise the cost of debt, because those costs may be borne by an opposing party if the government is not re-elected. In addition, accumulating debt now has the strategic advantage from the point of the current government that it becomes more difficult for other future

governments to pursue the interests of their constituencies, as the room for fiscal manoeuvre is reduced. In this framework, each party would show no undue impatience if it could be certain to be in power forever. Here, the apparent impatience entirely reflects the wishes of the section of the electorate that the party in government represents. It is conceivable that parties under a veil of ignorance of who will govern in the future (or simply realising that they are likely to alternate in government) could agree on a fiscal rule to counter deficit bias arising from electoral competition. However, once in power a party has an incentive to violate the rule. Hence will accumulate more debt.

- ♦ A fiscal council, with the task of acting as a guardian of the rule, might act as a countervailing force by raising the reputation cost for politicians of reneging on the rule.
- ♦ There is a tendency for more fragmented government coalitions to run larger budget deficits. There are public spending pressures associated with political fragmentation

Counter Point

- ♦ In its role as a watchdog, fiscal council will prevent the government from gaming the

fiscal rules through creative accounting. But there is already an institutional mechanism by way of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) audit to check that. If that mechanism has lost its teeth, then fix that rather than create another costly bureaucratic structure.

- ♦ The fiscal council will give macroeconomic forecasts which the Finance Ministry is expected to use for the budget, and if the Ministry decides to differ from those estimates, it is required to explain why it has differed. As of now, both the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) give forecasts of growth and other macroeconomic variables, as do a host of public, private and international agencies.
- ♦ In 2003, when FRBM was enshrined into law, it was thought of that as the magic cure for our fiscal ills. The FRBM enjoins the government to conform to pre-set fiscal targets, and in the event of failure to do so, to explain the reasons for deviation. The government is also required to submit to Parliament a 'Fiscal Policy Strategy Statement' (FPSS) to demonstrate the credibility of its fiscal stance. Yet, seldom have we heard an in-depth discussion in Parliament on the

government's fiscal stance; in fact the submission of the FPSS often passes off without even much notice. If the problem clearly is lack of demand for accountability, how will another instrumentality such as a fiscal council for supply of accountability be a solution?

Way Forward

- ♦ With a complex polity and manifold development challenges, India need institutional mechanisms for prudent fiscal practices. An independent fiscal council can bring about much needed transparency and accountability in fiscal processes across the federal polity.
- ♦ The only condition for fiscal council to be a success is to make it a constitutional body which has all the protection like CAG and can work as a statutory but autonomous organisation which cannot be politically manipulated. 

General Studies Paper- III

Topic:

- Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.

Q. There has been rising discussions being related to fiscal councils and their advantages for Indian democratic system. Do we need another organisation for India's finances and if yes, how it can be beneficial?

07

Cities of India : Needs Inclusiveness

Context

- Urban areas are victim of its own population density, its inhabitants facing increased risks from compact housing and crowded public transport. High density has been regarded as problematic in other badly affected cities such as Delhi, Chennai and Mumbai. The pandemic has generated a whole set of anxieties about the post-coronavirus risks of living in dense urban areas.
- It is a huge oversimplification to blame population density alone for the transmission of the virus. We need only look at the many examples of densely populated cities where authorities have been successful in managing the virus, such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei and Seoul. But it's certainly true that, in cities as different as New York, Milwaukee, Birmingham, Mumbai and Nairobi, a pattern has emerged.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has unravelled deep inequalities in how basic services are accessed in urban India. Preventive methods in combating the infection, at an individual level, have highlighted these disparities even more sharply.

Introduction

- The coronavirus' origin and diffusion emerged from rapid globalization and urban growth, which facilitated transmission from animals to humans, person to person, and country to country. While this provides ample fodder for xenophobia and renewed critiques of densely concentrated living, the connectivity of people and places may matter now more than ever.

- Local responses to the pandemic are revealing that in the midst of mandated distancing, the economic, physical, social, and civic structures of communities significantly influence places' ability to cope with the immediate crisis—and may be a strong predictor of their resilience and recovery in the months to come.
- Is it safer to be in a rural area to avoid the seemingly perilous density of a metropolis? Or in a city where health care and other resources are close at hand? As the pandemic expands nationally—upending life in dense urban areas and remote hamlets alike—there are few satisfying answers.

Failing Urban Areas

- With basic amenities lacking and means of livelihood shrinking, migrant labourers were forced to exit from cities. Thousands of them walked on foot to their villages — some as far as 500 kilometres away — at times, with tragic consequences.
- The institutional failings to provide access to basic infrastructure can be seen more clearly in hindsight. In the case of access to water, the recent "Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Housing Condition" (2018) survey by the government found that there continue to be glaring gaps in water access in urban and rural India. In such situations, expecting migrants who are living in squalid settlements in urban areas to wash hands regularly is impractical.
- Surveys assess access mostly at a household level to provide more "reliable" estimates. The 2018 survey, for example, said that in-house piped water supply is the most used form of access in

urban India, thereby ignoring how thousands of people get their water supply. It offered no clues as to how migrants accessed water. There seems to be some possible options on how migrants may have got their water supply. First, migrant labourers are likely to have relied more on public amenities such as hand pumps and public taps or standpipes which are connected to a municipal connection. These sources are generally unreliable — hand pumps and municipal pipes, for example, do not always supply water of potable quality. Second, contractors employing migrant workers may provide them with water access. However, this is purely a voluntary practise. Urban water boards do have a role in providing water to migrants. However, their responsibility towards providing a minimum per capita daily amount is, by and large, geared towards people who are connected to piped water supplies.

Unreliable Migrant Records

- There is a huge gap in data about migrants. We do not know how many migrants enter and leave our states and cities.
- Though the Unorganised Workers Social Security Act, 2008 laid down the process of registration — it specified the role of urban local bodies in cities to register migrants and disseminate information regarding schemes and benefits and asked these bodies to disburse "smart cards" for identification — it is apparent that these measures were not obligatory.
- This was evident from the gap in the data provided by the union labour ministry and various state governments, in the wake of the pandemic, to the Supreme Court on the number of migrants.

- ◆ Offline and online modes have equally failed in gathering this data.

Problem Identifiers

- ◆ The problem is not with high population density per se, but with the imbalance between good quality urban provisions – including housing, services and infrastructure – and the population density of an area. This imbalance is not the natural order of things, but the product of active political choices and historical class, racial and gender inequalities that increase rates of poverty and poor health.
- ◆ Before the outbreak, building high-density cities was seen to bring many benefits. Want to tackle the climate emergency? Build compact low-carbon cities with amenities and jobs within walking distance. Trying to re-ignite your economy? Create clusters of talented people to enable “collision density” that will foster creativity and innovation. Aiming to build socially mixed communities? Develop dense housing ranging from low to mid and high-rise structures that cater to people with different incomes. Building dense towns and cities was viewed as a solution to all kinds of challenges.
- ◆ But outside these premium areas of high-density luxury lie expansive areas where poorer groups live, in under-provided neighbourhoods with often ill-maintained and sub-standard housing.
- ◆ This exclusionary approach should be challenged and replaced by a new vision and politics of cities that is more inclusive and caring. The effects of COVID-19 have at

once caused immense harm to those living in poorer areas, while also prompting those living in high-density luxury to reconsider city living. People now question whether they want to live cheek-by-jowl with others.

New Beginnings

- ◆ The crisis presents an opportunity to re-examine how our cities are developed on the backs of migrant labour.
- ◆ Along with the responsibility of the state, businesses and contractors employing labourers can be involved in providing access to basic services. The deployment of such measures could be made a requirement for building permits and clearances –violations could attract penalties.
- ◆ The Unorganised Workers Social Security Act hardly puts any responsibility on the contractors and businesses to provide any services. It came as no surprise when most of them neglected the migrant workers during the crisis.
- ◆ A greater role for businesses is not being idealistic. Rather, such roles are recognised as crucial by the International Labour Organisation.
- ◆ Such measures give central importance to the dignity of labour, they also affirm the dignity of an individual “before” their labour.

Way Forward

- ◆ We need to ensure greater attention, investment and care towards areas of high population density where there are also high rates of poverty, where the inhabitants have been badly

affected by the virus even as they provide essential labour for the rest of the city. We must also intervene through policy to prevent the creation of high-density areas that become exclusive enclaves of wealth.

- ◆ It means, in short, that we should collectively think again about how to support and develop high-density neighbourhoods that are liveable and enjoyable for the majority in cities, and not just a few. That is no easy prospect. How we design and build our cities is a messy, politicised, and soul-searching process. Today our urban future is more uncertain than it has been in generations. 

General Studies Paper- I

Topic:

- Role of women and women's organizations, Population and associated issues, Poverty and developmental issues, Urbanization, their problems and their remedies.

General Studies Paper- II

Topic:

- Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Q. Pandemic crisis has exposed the lacunae of the urban setup of India. It has crumbled on its own faulty design and structure. Urban inequality has raised the need to make our cities more sustainable and inclusive. Discuss.

7

IMPORTANT BRAIN BOOSTERS

01

ASEEM Portal

1. Why in News?

- In an endeavour to improve the information flow and bridge the demand-supply gap in the skilled workforce market, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched 'Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM)' portal to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.



2. About Portal

- ASEEM is developed and managed by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with Bengaluru-based company Betterplace, specialising in blue collar employee management. It aims at supporting decision and policymaking via trends and analytics generated by the system for programmatic purposes.
- The initiative also aims to accelerate India's journey towards recovery by mapping skilled workforce and connecting them with relevant livelihood opportunities in their local communities especially in the post COVID era.
- It shall help in providing real-time data analytics to NSDC and its Sector Skill Councils about the demand and supply patterns including - industry requirements, skill gap analysis, demand per district/ state/cluster, key workforce suppliers, key consumers, migration patterns and multiple potential career prospects for candidates.
- The portal consists of three IT based interfaces -
 - Employer Portal – Employer on boarding, Demand Aggregation, candidate selection.
 - Dashboard – Reports, Trends, analytics, and highlight gaps.
 - Candidate Application – Create & Track candidate profile, share job suggestion.
- The portal and App will have provision for registration and data upload for workers across job roles, sectors and geographies.

3. Significance of ASEEM

- ASEEM is a Skill Management Information System. ASEEM will be used as a match-making engine to map skilled workers with the jobs available.
- The skilled workforce can register their profiles on the app and can search for employment opportunities in their neighbourhood. Through ASEEM, employers, agencies and job aggregators looking for skilled workforce in specific sectors will also have the required details at their fingertips. It will also enable policymakers take more objective view of various sectors.
- Besides identifying major skills gap in the sectors and providing review of global best practices, ASEEM will provide employers a platform to assess the availability of skilled workforce and formulate their hiring plans.
- ASEEM refers to all the data, trends and analytics which describe the workforce market and map demand of skilled workforce to supply.

4. Benefits for Stakeholders

- Skilled Candidates
 - Optical Character (OCR) based automated profile building, It helps to find jobs best matched with skillset & interests
 - Linking jobs essentials like bank a/c, vehicle & other benefits while finding work etc.
- Employers, Agencies & Aggregators
 - Helps to assess demand creation based on role, location, skills etc
 - Data Sorting: access, search, filter & save curated candidates, Campaign management to hire select candidates
 - End to end fulfilment at scale at disruptive pricing.
- Training Partners
 - Provides assured placements for their skilled candidates, Clear demand visibility to train candidates right
 - Training centres becoming mini-experience centres, A significantly higher potential to earn and grow.

02

Moon is more Metallic than Thought Before

1. Why in News?

- Using the Miniature Radio Frequency (Mini-RF) instrument on Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) spacecraft, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has revealed that the Moon's subsurface may contain vast amounts of iron and titanium than researchers thought before.



2. Hypothesis of Moon's Origin

- Substantial evidence points to the Moon as the product of a collision between a Mars-sized protoplanet and young Earth, forming from the gravitational collapse of the remaining cloud of debris. The hypothesis is also backed by substantial evidence, such as the close resemblance between the Moon's bulk chemical compositions with that of Earth.
- However, it is also known that Earth's crust has lesser amounts of iron oxide than the Moon—a finding that scientists have been trying to explain. Now, the new discovery of even greater quantities of metal on the Moon makes their job even more difficult.

3. New Research

- In the bright plains of the Moon's surface, called the lunar highlands, rocks contain smaller amounts of metal-bearing minerals relative to Earth. That finding might be explained if Earth had fully differentiated into a core, mantle and crust before the impact, leaving the Moon largely metal-poor. But turn to the Moon's Maria — the large, darker plains — and the metal abundance becomes richer than that of many rocks on Earth.
- Using Mini-RF, the researchers sought to measure an electrical property within lunar soil piled on crater floors in the Moon's northern hemisphere. This electrical property is known as the 'dielectric constant'.
 - 'Dielectric constant' is the ratio of the electric permeability of a material to the electric permeability of a vacuum. It could help locate ice lurking in the crater shadows. The team, however, noticed this property increasing with crater size.
- Discovery of this pattern opened a door to a new possibility. Because meteors that form larger craters also dig deeper into the Moon's subsurface, the team reasoned that the increasing dielectric constant of the dust in larger craters could be the result of meteors excavating iron and titanium oxides that lie below the surface. Dielectric properties are directly linked to the concentration of these metal minerals.
- If their hypothesis were true, it would mean only the first few hundred meters of the Moon's surface is scant in iron and titanium oxides, but below the surface, there's a steady increase to a rich and unexpected bonanza.

5. India on Moon

- Chandrayaan-1 was the first Indian lunar probe under Chandrayaan program. The mission included a lunar orbiter and an impactor
- Chandrayaan-2 is the second lunar exploration mission, it consists of a lunar orbiter, and also included the Vikram lander, and the Pragyan lunar rover, all of which were developed in India.
- India has announced plans for a third lunar mission in 2020 but that it "may spill over" to 2021.

4. About LRO Mission

- The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) is a NASA robotic spacecraft currently orbiting the Moon in an eccentric polar mapping orbit.
- Its detailed mapping program is identifying safe landing sites, locating potential resources on the Moon, characterizing the radiation environment, and demonstrating new technologies.
- The probe has made a 3-D map of the Moon's surface at 100-meter resolution and 98.2% coverage (excluding polar areas in deep shadow), including 0.5-meter resolution images of Apollo landing sites.

03

One Nation One Voter ID

1. Why in News?

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has made it possible for senior citizens above the age of 65 to vote by postal ballot, given that they are at greater risk from exposure to the novel coronavirus. Hitherto, this option was available only to disabled citizens and those above 80 years. There is a demand to extend this facility to migrant workers too.



2. Migrants and Voting Issues

- The novel coronavirus cataclysm and the subsequent national lockdown brought to centre stage the magnitude of internal migration and hardships that migrant workers endure in their quest for livelihoods.
- Internal migrant workers constitute about 13.9 crore as in the Economic Survey of 2017, that is nearly a third of India's labour force.
- Often they toil in exploitative low-wage jobs, lacking identity and proper living conditions, without access to welfare and unable to exercise their voting rights.
 - Internal migrant workers do not enrol as voters in their place of employment since they find proof of residence hard to provide.
- Migrant workers become quasi-disenfranchised, forgotten voters because they cannot afford to return home on election day to choose their representatives.
- Therefore, we must demonstrate the political will to usher in 'One Nation One Voter ID,' to ensure native ballot portability and empower the forgotten migrant voter.

3. Voter Portability Model

- Service voters (government employees) posted away from home can vote through the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS).
- Classified service voters (e.g., military personnel) can do so through their proxies.
- The ECI has said that it is testing an Aadhaar-linked voter-ID based solution to enable electors to cast their votes digitally from anywhere in the country.
- It will be some time in the future before this becomes a functional reality. While developing this solution, we must ensure that the linkage with Aadhaar does not result in the exclusion of eligible individuals.

4. Other Suggestions

- To facilitate voting by migrant workers, the ECI could undertake substantial outreach measures using the network of District Collectorates.
- Migrants should be able to physically vote in their city of work based on the address on their existing voter IDs and duration of their temporary stay.
- In an age where banking transactions have gone online seamlessly, it is technologically feasible to record and transfer votes to their respective constituencies without compromising on the credibility of the election process.

5. One ID Proposal

- If the census of 2021 takes place properly, and if we're able to make a proper digital format for it, then your Aadhaar card, electoral photo identity card, PAN card, passport can all become one card.
- Currently, the government is not working on any policy to make a single multipurpose ID, but said that the digital census of 2021 will act as a base for such a possibility.
- Election Commission is already pushing for the linkage of Aadhaar and voter ID. In a letter to the Law Ministry, the EC sought amendments to the Representation of the People Act, 1950 so that it has grounds to link voter ID with Aadhaar card.

04 UN Report on Zoonotic Diseases

1. Why in News?

- About 60 per cent of known infectious diseases in humans and 75 per cent of all emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic, according to a new report published recently by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).
- The report, 'Preventing the Next Pandemic: Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission' was released on July 6, 2020, celebrated as 'World Zoonoses Day'.
- The report discussed the context and nature of potential future zoonotic disease outbreaks, during the COVID-19 pandemic.



2. What is Zoonotic Diseases?

- Zoonosis is another name for a zoonotic disease. This type of disease passes from an animal or insect to a human.
- Zoonotic diseases are prevalent throughout the world; they can be caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites or fungi, and may cause mild or severe illness or death.
- Examples of zoonoses include HIV-AIDS, Ebola, Lyme Disease, malaria, rabies, West Nile fever, and the current novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) disease.
- Zoonoses can be transmitted in various ways:
 - through the air;
 - by eating contaminated meat or produce;
 - through close contact with an infected animal;
 - by touching an area or surface that an infected animal touched; and
 - through insect bites like mosquitos or ticks.

3. Key Messages

- It identified seven anthropogenic driving factors leading to the emergence of zoonotic diseases — increased demand for animal protein; rise in intense and unsustainable farming; the increased use and exploitation of wildlife; unsustainable utilisation of natural resources; travel and transportation, changes in food supply chains and the climate change crisis.
- About 60 per cent of human infections are estimated to have an animal origin. Of all new and emerging human infectious diseases, some 75 per cent “jump species” from other animals to people. Most described zoonoses happen indirectly, e.g. via the food system.
- The frequency of pathogenic microorganisms jumping from other animals to people is increasing due to unsustainable human activities.
- The greatest burden of zoonotic disease is borne by poor people, but emerging infectious diseases impact everyone, with monetary losses of emerging infectious disease much greater in high-income countries.
- Diseases are emerging more frequently from animals. Rapid action is necessary to fill the science gap and fast-track the development of knowledge and tools to help national governments, businesses, the health sector, local communities and other stakeholders — especially those with limited resources — to reduce the risk of future pandemics.

4. Recommendations

- The report made ten recommendations based on the 'One Health' approach that could aid a coordinated multi-sectoral response to future pandemics. These included:
 - Raising awareness of zoonotic diseases;
 - Investing in interdisciplinary approaches, including One Health;
 - Expanding scientific enquiry into zoonotic diseases;
 - Improving cost-benefit analyses of interventions to include full-cost accounting of societal impacts of disease;
 - Strengthening monitoring and regulation practices associated with zoonotic diseases, including food systems;
 - Incentivising sustainable land management practices and developing alternatives for food security and livelihoods that do not rely on the destruction of habitats and biodiversity;
 - Improving biosecurity and control, identifying key drivers of emerging diseases in animal husbandry and encouraging proven management and zoonotic disease control measures;
 - Supporting the sustainable management of landscapes and seascapes that enhance sustainable co-existence of agriculture and wildlife;
 - Strengthening capacities among health stakeholders in all countries; and
 - Operationalising the One Health approach in land-use and sustainable development planning, implementation and monitoring, among other fields.

05

India's First Plasma Bank

1. Why in News?

- Delhi government has inaugurated, India's first plasma bank at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) to ease access to plasma that is being used as a trial to treat COVID-19 patients.
- The bank will coordinate with patients who have recovered from COVID-19, and are eligible to donate plasma.
- Delhi was one of the first states to give the go-ahead for plasma therapy in April.



2. What is Plasma Therapy?

- Plasma therapy involves transfusion of plasma from a convalescent coronavirus patient (recovered Covid patient) to a critical patient.
- The blood of a convalescent patient is rich in antibodies that are expected to help the critical patient recover.
- Unlike blood donation, only the plasma is drawn from the blood.
- The trials are trying to find out if the antibodies can help patients recover.

3. Donners Profile

- Those who had the disease, but have recovered at least 14 days before the donation can be considered — although doctors prefer a time of three weeks between recovery and donation.
- Those aged between 18 and 60 years and weighing not less than 50 kg can also donate.
- A person, who has diabetes or insulin, or is a cancer survivor is not eligible to donate.
- If an individual's blood pressure is more than 140 and diastolic less than 60 or more than 90, he or she can't donate plasma.
- Women who have given birth are not eligible, as the antibodies they produce during pregnancy (after being exposed to the blood of the foetus) can interfere with lung function.
- 500 ml of plasma can be donated every two weeks, while blood can be donated once in three months.

4. Plasma Donation Differ From Blood Donation

- Blood contains several components, including red blood cells, platelets, white blood cells, and plasma.
- During a whole blood donation, donors typically donate a pint (about a half litre) of blood.
- In plasma donation, as opposed to blood donation, only plasma is extracted and the other components of blood are returned to the body.

5. Plasma and Apheresis

- It is a medical technology in which the blood of a person is passed through an apparatus that separates out one particular constituent and returns the remainder to the circulation.
- The apheresis machine was invented by American medical technologist Herb Cullis in 1972.
- Blood plasma is a 'yellowish liquid' component of blood that holds the blood cells of whole blood in suspension.
- Plasmapheresis is a medical therapy that involves blood plasma extraction, treatment, and reintegration.
- The main role of plasma is to take nutrients, hormones, and proteins to the parts of the body that need it. Cells also put their waste products into the plasma. The plasma then helps remove this waste from the body. Blood plasma also carries all parts of the blood through your circulatory system.
- The proteins and antibodies in plasma are also used in therapies for rare chronic conditions. These include autoimmune disorders and hemophilia.

06 Raman Spectroscopy

1. Why in News?

- One of the most challenging aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the lack of testing needed to detect and trace infections. Many tests use biochemicals that can be expensive and difficult to produce. These tests can require long turnaround times for test results and can produce a high number of false negative results.
- A Northern Arizona University (NAU) research team, led by professor Miguel José Yacamán, is developing a new test technology for SARS-CoV-2 using single-molecule surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SM-SERS).
- A team led by Amit Dutt from the Mumbai-based Tata Memorial Centre has turned to Raman Spectroscopy to detect RNA viruses present in saliva samples. It is a proof-of-concept study to analyse non-infectious RNA viruses using conventional Raman Spectroscopy without using any additional reagent to enhance the signal.



2. About Raman Spectroscopy

- Raman spectroscopy is a spectroscopic technique used to detect vibrational, rotational, and other states in a molecular system, capable of probing the chemical composition of materials.
- In this technique where scattered light is used to measure the vibrational energy modes of a sample.
- It is named after the Indian physicist C. V. Raman who, together with his research partner K. S. Krishnan, was the first to observe Raman scattering in 1928.
- Raman spectroscopy can provide both chemical and structural information, as well as the identification of substances through their characteristic Raman 'fingerprint'.
- Raman spectroscopy extracts this information through the detection of Raman scattering from the sample.
- Raman effect, according to which when incident light (wavelength 750–850 nm) excites molecules in a tissue, the molecules will reflect light in a different wavelength.
 - The reflectant light's wavelength is characteristic for various chemical components and allows detection of the atheromatous plaque chemical synthesis.
 - In particular, Raman spectroscopy can discriminate between the various plaque components, such as elastin, collagen, cholesterol, cholesterol esters, lipids, carotenoids, and calcium apatite deposits.

3. Key Messages

- It identified seven anthropogenic driving factors leading to the emergence of zoonotic diseases — increased demand for animal protein; rise in intense and unsustainable farming; the increased use and exploitation of wildlife; unsustainable utilisation of natural resources; travel and transportation, changes in food supply chains and the climate change crisis.
- About 60 per cent of human infections are estimated to have an animal origin. Of all new and emerging human infectious diseases, some 75 per cent “jump species” from other animals to people. Most described zoonoses happen indirectly, e.g. via the food system.
- The frequency of pathogenic microorganisms jumping from other animals to people is increasing due to unsustainable human activities.
- The greatest burden of zoonotic disease is borne by poor people, but emerging infectious diseases impact everyone, with monetary losses of emerging infectious disease much greater in high-income countries.
- Diseases are emerging more frequently from animals. Rapid action is necessary to fill the science gap and fast-track the development of knowledge and tools to help national governments, businesses, the health sector, local communities and other stakeholders — especially those with limited resources — to reduce the risk of future pandemics.

4. Significance

- The advantage is that the tool can be taken to the field and people who test positive for RNA virus can be quarantined while another sample may be sent for validation using Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR).
- This whole process of data acquisition and analysis can be performed within a minute.
- Since no additional reagent is needed there is no recurring cost.
- A portable (benchtop or handheld) Raman spectrophotometer installed at the port of entry such as airports or any point of care (in the field) can quickly screen passengers within minutes.

07

Delimitation of North East and J&K

1. Why in News?

- A former legal advisor to the Election Commission (EC) has red-flagged the Centre's order setting up a Delimitation Commission for Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam and Nagaland, calling it "unconstitutional" and "illegal".
- On March 6, the Law Ministry notified the Delimitation Commission for the four northeast states and Jammu and Kashmir, which was also left out in 2002-08. Former Supreme Court Judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai is its chairperson, and Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra is the EC's representative on the panel.



5. Legal Conundrum

- In 2008, after the President deferred delimitation in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland, the Parliament decided that instead of creating another Delimitation Commission in future for the limited purpose of redrawing seat boundaries in the four northeastern states, the exercise there would be carried out by the EC.
- The Representation of the People Act, 1950 (RP Act, 1950) was amended, and Section 8A was introduced for this purpose.
- Since the RP Act 1950 clearly states that delimitation in the four northeastern states, when held, would fall within the EC's remit, hence, any delimitation exercise in Arunachal, Manipur, Assam and Nagaland by the new Delimitation Commission would be "declared void by the courts" and, subsequently, result in "wastage of huge precious public funds".

2. What is Delimitation?

- Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to represent changes in population.
- In this process, the number of seats allocated to a state may also change.
- The objective is to provide equal representation for equal population segments, and a fair division of geographical areas, so that no political party has an advantage.
- The Delimitation Commission's orders cannot be questioned before any court.
- Delimitation is done on the basis of the preceding Census.
- The first such exercise in 1950-51 was carried out by the President, with the help of the Election Commission. Following the Delimitation Commission Act in 1952, all such exercises have been conducted by Delimitation Commissions — set up in 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002.
- Last delimitation exercise was held between July 2002 and March 31, 2008, based on the 2001 Census, only readjusted boundaries of existing Lok Sabha and Assembly seats and reworked the number of reserved seats.
- There was no delimitation after the 1981 and 1991 Censuses.

3. Why Four Northeast States had been Left Out?

- When delimitation last took place in the rest of the country in 2002-08, these four above mentioned states had been left out.
- In Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur and Nagaland, various organisations had moved the Guwahati High Court against the 2002-08 exercise, challenging the use of the 2001 Census for reference.
- One of the reasons given was that National Register of Citizens (NRC) was yet to be updated.
- The Delimitation Act was amended in 2008, and on February 8, 2008, Presidential orders were issued to defer delimitation in these four states.

4. Need for Delimitation

- There is a freeze until 2026 on the number of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats in any state. Delimitation will only redraw the boundaries of seats in each state, and can rework the number of reserved seats for Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes.
- On February 28 this year, President Ram Nath Kovind cleared the decks for the resumption of the delimitation exercise in the four states by cancelling the order of February 8, 2008.
- Legislative Department of the Law Ministry said "it appears that the circumstances that led to the deferring of the delimitation exercise" in Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland "have ceased to exist and that the delimitation of the constituencies as envisaged under the Delimitation Act, 2002 could be carried out now". It noted that there had been a reduction in insurgency incidents, making the situation conducive for carrying out delimitation.

7 MCQ's WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

(Based on Brain Boosters)

01 ASEEM Portal

Q. With reference to the 'ASEEM Portal', consider the following statements:

1. It has been launched by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.
2. It is developed and managed by National Skill Development Corporation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both statements are correct. In an endeavour to improve the information flow and bridge the demand-supply gap in the skilled workforce market, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched 'Aatamanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM)' portal to help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.

ASEEM is developed and managed by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with Bengaluru-based company Betterplace.



02 Moon is more Metallic than Thought Before

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. Moon as the product of a collision between a Mars-sized protoplanet and young Earth, forming from the gravitational collapse of the remaining cloud of debris.
2. This hypothesis is backed by substantial evidence, such as the close resemblance between the Moon's bulk chemical compositions with that of Earth.

3. Earth's crust has more amounts of iron oxide than the Moon.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are correct. Substantial evidence points to the Moon as the product of a collision between a Mars-sized protoplanet and young Earth, forming from the gravitational collapse of the remaining cloud of debris. The hypothesis is also backed by substantial evidence, such as the close resemblance between the Moon's bulk chemical compositions with that of Earth.

Statement 3 is incorrect. However, it is also known that Earth's crust has lesser amounts of iron oxide than the Moon. Most recent study of NASA has revealed that the Moon's subsurface may contain vast amounts of iron and titanium than researchers thought before.



03 One Nation One Voter ID

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. The government has given its approval for making a single multipurpose ID by 2021.
2. New ID will also serve as 'One Nation One Voter ID' to ensure native ballot portability and empower the forgotten migrant voter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation: Both statements are incorrect. Currently, the government is not working on any policy to make a single multipurpose ID, but said that the digital census of 2021 will act as a base for such a possibility.

The ECI has said that it is testing an Aadhaar-linked voter-ID based solution to enable electors to cast their votes digitally from anywhere in the country. It will be some time in the future before this becomes a functional reality. While developing this solution, we must ensure that the linkage with Aadhaar does not result in the exclusion of eligible individuals.



04 UN Report on Zoonotic Diseases

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the 'UN Report on Zoonotic Diseases':

1. It has been released by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organisation.
2. About 60 per cent of known infectious diseases in humans and 75 per cent of all emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic.
3. Most described zoonoses happen indirectly, e.g. via the food system.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 3 only
- d) None of the Above

Answer: (b)

Explanation: Statement 1 is incorrect. The report, 'Preventing the Next Pandemic: Zoonotic diseases and how to break the chain of transmission' has been released by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI).

Statement 2 and 3 are correct. About 60 per cent of human infections are estimated to have an animal origin. Of all new and emerging human infectious diseases, some 75 per cent "jump species" from other animals to people. Most described zoonoses happen indirectly, e.g. via the food system.



05 India's First Plasma Bank

Q. With reference to the 'plasma therapy', consider the following statements:

1. In plasma therapy, the antibody rich plasma from a recovered patient is extracted and administered to a patient.

2. Unlike blood donation, in plasma donation only plasma is extracted and the other components of blood are returned to the body.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (c)

Explanation: Both statements are correct. In plasma therapy, the antibody rich plasma from a recovered patient is extracted and administered to a patient. In case of corona patients, it involves transfusion of plasma from a convalescent coronavirus patient (recovered Covid patient) to a critical patient.

In plasma donation, as opposed to blood donation, only plasma is extracted and the other components of blood are returned to the body. Blood plasma is a 'yellowish liquid' component of blood that holds the blood cells of whole blood in suspension.



06 Raman Spectroscopy

Q. Consider the following statement with reference to the 'Raman Spectroscopy':

1. Raman spectroscopy can discriminate between the various plaque components, such as elastin, collagen, cholesterol, cholesterol esters, lipids, carotenoids, and calcium apatite deposits.
2. This conceptual framework to detect RNA viruses in saliva could form the basis for field application of Raman Spectroscopy in managing ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Since the tool can only identify RNA viruses and not identify the specific one, it can be used only for screening.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (d)

Explanation: All statements are correct. Raman spectroscopy can provide both chemical and structural information, as well as the identification of substances through their characteristic Raman 'fingerprint'. Raman spectroscopy can discriminate between the various plaque components,

such as elastin, collagen, cholesterol, cholesterol esters, lipids, carotenoids, and calcium apatite deposits.

This conceptual framework to detect RNA viruses in saliva could form the basis for field application of Raman Spectroscopy in managing viral outbreaks, such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Since the tool can only identify RNA viruses and not identify the specific one, it can be used only for screening. 

07 Delimitation of North East and J&K

Q. With reference to the 'delimitation', consider the following statements:

1. Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to represent changes in population.
2. The Delimitation Commission's orders cannot be questioned before any court.

3. Last delimitation exercise was held between July 2012 and March 31, 2018, based on the 2011 Census.

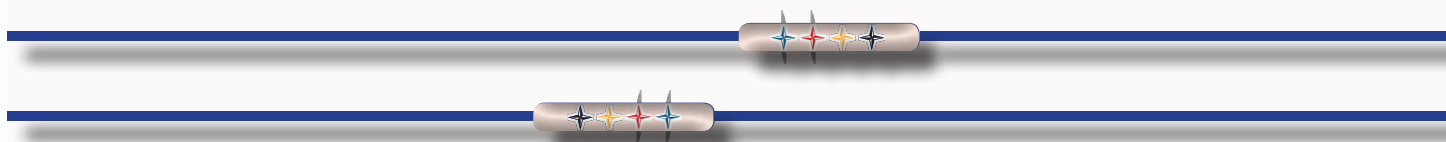
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 3 only
- d) None of the Above

Answer: (a)

Explanation: Statement 1 and 2 are correct. Delimitation is the act of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats to represent changes in population. The Delimitation Commission's orders cannot be questioned before any court.

Statement 3 is incorrect. Last delimitation exercise was held between July 2002 and March 31, 2008, based on the 2001 Census, only readjusted boundaries of existing Lok Sabha and Assembly seats and reworked the number of reserved seats. There was no delimitation after the 1981 and 1991 Censuses. 



7 IMPORTANT NEWS

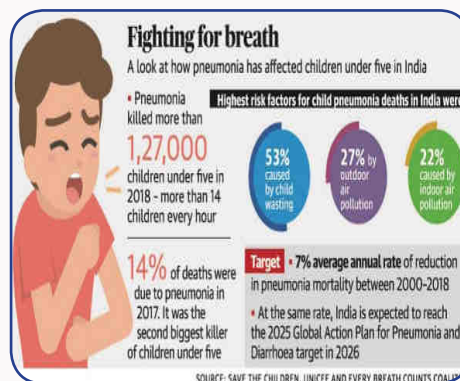
01

India's First Indigenous Vaccine for Infant Pneumonia

- ◆ The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved the first fully indigenously developed conjugate vaccine for pneumonia developed by the Serum Institute.

Key Facts

- ◆ The Serum Institute first obtained the DCGI approval to conduct Phase I, Phase II and Phase III clinical trials of Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Conjugate Vaccine in India. It has also conducted clinical trials in Gambia.
- ◆ According to information on the clinical trials registry, the first phase of the trial was conducted in 2013 in 34 young Indian adults, while the second phase in 114 toddlers of 12-15 months. The third phase of trials was conducted on 448 infants between the age of



six to eight weeks old, and this was completed in October last year, as per the registry.

- ◆ According to a report, around 2,250 infants were part of the trial in the Gambia and the vaccine has been pre-qualified by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in December 2019.
- ◆ This vaccine is used for active immunisation against invasive disease and pneumonia caused

by “streptococcus pneumonia” in infants. The vaccine is administered intramuscularly.

About Pneumonia

- ◆ Pneumonia is a form of acute respiratory infection that affects the lungs. The lungs are made up of small sacs called alveoli, which fill with air when a healthy person breathes. When an individual has pneumonia, the alveoli are filled with pus and fluid, which makes breathing painful and limits oxygen intake. Pneumonia is caused by a number of infectious agents, including viruses, bacteria and fungi.
- ◆ Pneumonia is the single largest infectious cause of death in children worldwide.

02

Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa Appointed ADB Vice-President

- ◆ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has announced that it had appointed Election Commissioner (EC) Ashok Lavasa, who was next in line to become the Chief Election Commissioner in 2021, as its vice-president (V-P) for private sector operations and public-private

partnerships. He will succeed Diwakar Gupta whose term will end on August 31.

Background

- ◆ Lavasa was next in line of succession to become the chief election commissioner of India

after incumbent Sunil Arora retires in April 2021. During his tenure at EC last year, Lavasa came under spotlight when he opposed clean chit given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Amit Shah, now union home minister,

on charges of violation of model code of conduct (MCC).

- ◆ Last year, Election Commission of India (ECI) had also rejected the demand made by Lavasa to include dissent notes and minority views in orders involving the model code of conduct (MCC). However, the Commission said status quo will be maintained and all dissent notes or minority views will remain part of the EC's records.
- ◆ Later, his family had come under the Income Tax Department's



scanner over property and cash deposits.

About ADB

- ◆ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development

bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in Manila, Philippines. It envisions a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty in the region.

- ◆ From 31 members at its establishment in 1966, ADB has grown to encompass 68 members—of which 49 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside.



03

Dolphin Census of Madhya Pradesh Forest Department

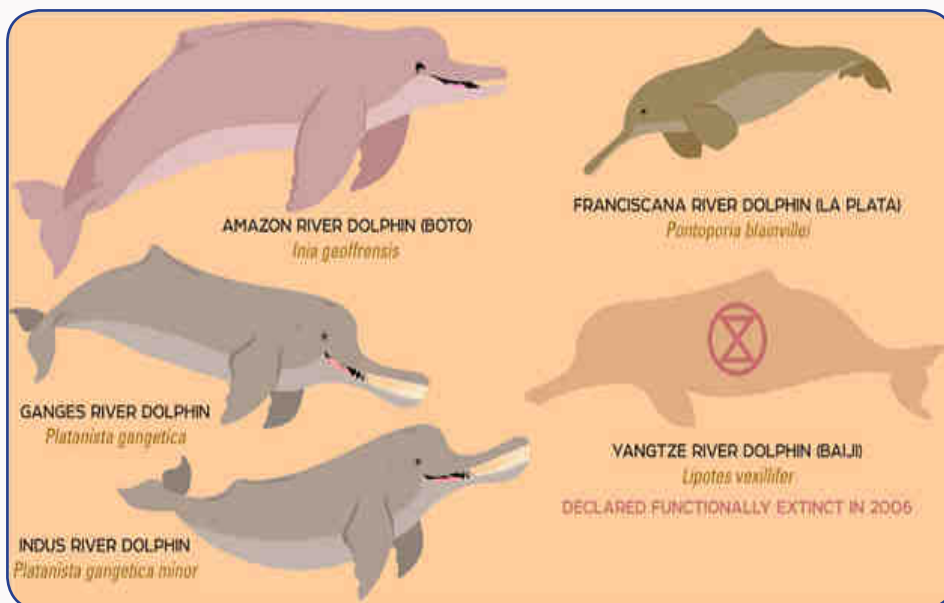
- ◆ Madhya Pradesh Forest Department has released the latest dolphin census report.

Key Highlights

- ◆ There are just 68 dolphins left in 435-kilometre-long Chambal river sanctuary which passes through three states (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan).
- ◆ Dolphins' number in Chambal river has been reduced by 13 per cent in four years. The decreasing trend is continuing from 2016 when there were 78 dolphins.

Threats

- ◆ Illegal sand mining is one of the main reasons behind the decline in number of dolphins. In 2006, the Supreme Court's Central Empowered Committee (CEC) ordered a ban on mining in the sanctuary area to save the flora and fauna of the river. But illegal sand mining and consumption of water is so rampant that it is



putting the whole ecosystem of the river in danger.

- ◆ The three states MP, UP and Rajasthan are withdrawing water unwisely, which disturbed the whole ecosystem of the river and decreasing the water level and flow. It needs to be addressed properly to save the dolphins as well as ghariyal.
- ◆ Poaching is also major threat to the population of dolphins.

About Dolphins

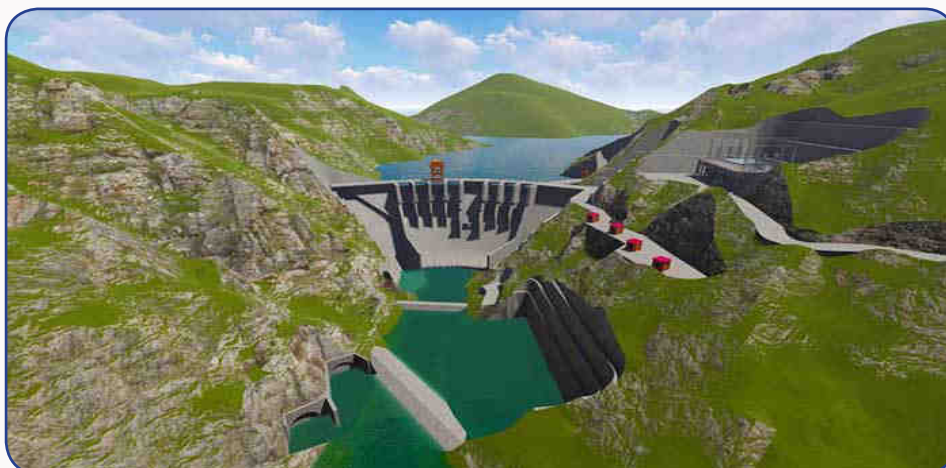
- ◆ Ganges river dolphin, known as 'Susu', is India's national aquatic animal. It's a rare species of dolphins - *Platanista gangetica* - and has been declared 'endangered' by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). It has rudimentary eyes. From preying to surfing, dolphins do it through ultrasonic sound.



04

Azad Pattan Hydel Power Project

- Recently, Pakistan and China has signed an agreement for the 700 MW Azad Pattan hydel power project on the Jhelum river in Sudhoti district of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK). The \$ 1.5-billion project is the second power project under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), for which an agreement has been signed in the last two months. The first agreement, for the 1,100 MW Kohala project, was signed on June 23. That project, worth \$ 2.3 billion, too will come up on the Jhelum near Muzaffarabad.



- The project will be built on the 'build, own, operate, transfer' (BOOT) model and will be transferred to the government of Pakistan after 30 years. It is expected to be completed by 2026.

and condemned Islamabad's continuous attempts to bring about material changes in Indian territories under its illegal occupation.

Key Highlights

- The project is one of five hydropower schemes on the Jhelum, the other four are Mahl, Kohala, Chakothi Hattian and Karot projects.
- The project is a run-of-the-river scheme with a reservoir located near Muslimabad village. It will comprise a 90-metre-high dam, with a 3.8 sq km reservoir.

India's Protest

- India has protested the construction of dams and other infrastructure in PoK and Gilgit Baltistan, which are territories claimed by it as part of Jammu & Kashmir.
- India has also strongly protested with Pakistan against the construction of the Diamer-Bhasha dam in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

- New Delhi has since long been opposing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which passes through the areas of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh under illegal occupation of Pakistan. The CPEC is one of the flagship projects of China's ambitious cross-continental Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). New Delhi opposed the BRI, primarily because the CPEC undermined the sovereignty of India.



05

Assam Floods

- Assam is in the grip of yet another flood, with more than 40 lakh people affected across 24 districts, and 87 people killed besides 85 per cent of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) remains submerged.

Floods Prone Assam

- Assam is traditionally flood prone, and the 1,055 sq km KNPTR — sandwiched between the

Brahmaputra river and the Karbi Anglong Hills — is no exception.

- Apart from incessant rainfall during the monsoon, there are many contributory factors, natural and man-made. At the crux is the very nature of the river Brahmaputra — dynamic and unstable. By the time the river enters Assam — a state comprising primarily floodplains surrounded by hills on all sides —

it deposits vast amounts of this silt, leading to erosion and floods. As the river comes from a high slope to a flat plain, its velocity decreases suddenly and this results in the river unloading the sediment. The river's channels prove inadequate amid this siltation, leading to floods.

- Again, because of the earthquake-prone nature of the region, the



river has not been able to acquire a stable character.

Role of Floods in Kaziranga Ecosystem

- Besides these natural factors are the man-made ones — habitation, deforestation, population growth in catchment areas (including in China) — which lead to higher sedimentation. For example, the sediment deposition itself creates temporary sandbars or river islands.
- Among experts there is a consensus that floods are necessary for Kaziranga by virtue of its ecosystem. The entire area of Kaziranga — formed by alluvial deposits from the Brahmaputra and its tributaries — is centred around the river.
- The regenerative nature of floods helps replenish Kaziranga's water bodies and maintain its landscape, a mix of wetlands, grasslands and semi-evergreen deciduous forests.
- The waters also help get rid of unwanted plants such as water hyacinth which collect in huge masses in the landscape.
- Many also believe that floods are a way of natural selection. A number of animals — especially the old, weak — cannot survive the floods. Only the ones with superior genes survive.
- Due to flood, animals that venture out of the park, die either under the wheels of speeding vehicles on the highway, or are killed by poachers who take advantage of their vulnerability.



06

Banned Human Growth Hormone in Indian Sports

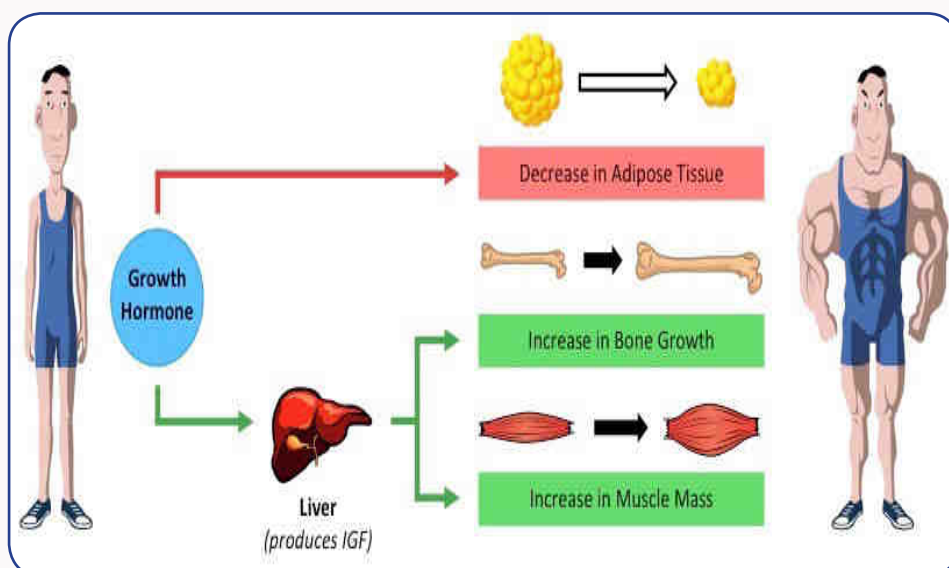
- In a first-of-its-kind case, a 2018 Commonwealth Games silver medallist and reigning national champion weightlifter has tested positive for human Growth Hormone (hGH). Pardeep Singh, who represents Railways on the domestic circuit, has been handed a provisional four-year suspension after his blood sample tested positive for hGH, which is prohibited in and out of competition by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

What is hGH?

- Human Growth Hormone (hGH) is produced in the body and secreted by the pituitary gland

near the base of the brain. hGH helps in bone, organ and cartilage growth and also helps in repairing damaged muscles. When the gland releases the growth hormone, it

results in the secretion of a protein called IGF-1 from the liver. The IGF-1 protein is what ultimately stimulates the growth of bones, muscle, and other tissues.



hGH and Sports

- ◆ hGH is known to increase muscle mass, strength as well as tissue-repairing effects, which according to the WADA website 'may explain the attraction for its use as a doping agent in power and endurance sports'. hGH is banned both in-competition as well as out-of-competition.

About WADA

- ◆ WADA was established in 1999 as an international independent agency composed and funded equally by the sport movement and governments of the world. It was initiated by the International Olympic Committee based in Canada to promote, coordinate

and monitor the fight against drugs in sports.

- ◆ The agency's key activities include scientific research, education, development of anti-doping capacities, and monitoring of the World Anti-Doping Code, whose provisions are enforced by the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport. 

07

MANODARPAN Initiative

- ◆ Union Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched the 'MANODARPAN initiative' to provide psychosocial support to students for their Mental Health and Well-being. As part of MANODARPAN initiative, ministry launched a National Toll-free Helpline, a special web page of MANODARPAN on the portal of HRD Ministry, and a Handbook on MANODARPAN.

Key Highlights

- ◆ The 'Manodarpn' initiative has been included in the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, as a part of strengthening human capital and increasing productivity and efficient reform and initiatives for the education sector
- ◆ It will provide psychosocial support to students for their mental health and well-being.

- ◆ The platform will act as a sustainable psychosocial support system for all students, teachers and families.

Components

- ◆ Advisory Guidelines for students, teachers and faculty of School systems and Universities along with families.
- ◆ Web page on the MHRD website, which will carry advisory, practical tips, posters, videos, do's and don'ts for psychosocial support, FAQs and online query system.
- ◆ National level database and directory of counsellors at School and University level whose services can be offered voluntarily for Tele-Counselling Service on the National Helpline.
- ◆ National Toll-free Helpline (8448440632) for a country wide outreach to students from school, universities and colleges. This unique helpline shall be manned by a pool of experienced c o u n s e l o r s / Psychologists and other mental health professionals and will continue beyond the COVID-19 situation.

- ◆ Interactive Online Chat Platform for contact, counselling and guidance by psychologists and other mental health professionals which will be available for students, teachers, and families during COVID-19 and beyond.

Need

- ◆ COVID -19 is understandably a challenging time for everyone around the world. This Global pandemic is not only a serious medical concern, but also brings mixed emotions and psycho-social stress for all. With specific focus on children and adolescents, there are emerging mental health concerns that are often reported in such situations. Children and adolescents may be more vulnerable and may experience heightened level of stress, anxiety and fearfulness, along with a range of other emotional and behavioural issues. Therefore, the initiative will cover a wide range of activities to provide psychosocial support to students for their mental health and well-being during the COVID outbreak and beyond. 



7

IMPORTANT PRACTICE QUESTIONS (For Mains)



- 01** In the current scenario, given Chinese intransigence and our misreading of their imperialist-expansionist intent, India must formally revive Quad. Do you agree? Give reasons.
- 02** What is 'Direct Seeding of Rice (DSR)' technique? Discuss the related pros and cons of the technique.
- 03** Explain the process of resolving ethical dilemmas in Public Administration.
- 04** What is a serological survey? How serological survey will help in comprehensively determining the spread of the COVID-19 disease. Discuss.
- 05** Why India should elevate ties with Arab world instead of romanticising relationship with Iran? Comment.
- 06** It is a time for India to make a step forward to 'nutritional self-reliance' from 'food security'. Do you agree? Give suitable examples.
- 07** Suppose the Government of India is thinking of constructing a dam in a mountain valley bond by forests and inhabited by ethnic communities. What rational policy should it resort to in dealing with unforeseen contingencies.

7

IMPORTANT FACTS (For Prelims)



- 01** Which state government has launched 'Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ghar Ration Yojana'?
Delhi
- 02** Who has been awarded with 'Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity'?
Greta Thunberg
- 03** Which state government has launched 'Godhan Nyay Yojana' to boost rural economy?
Chhattisgarh
- 04** Which north eastern state has got its first mega food park, 'Zoram Mega Food Park' ?
Mizoram
- 05** Which national highway passes through the 'Kaziranga National Park'?
NH-37
- 06** What is the IUCN Red List status of Himalayan Viagra (Ophiocordyceps sinensis)?
Vulnerable
- 07** Which naval exercise has been conducted recently between Indian Navy and US Navy?
Passage Exercise (PASSEX)

7

IMPORTANT QUOTES (For Essay and Answer Writing)



01



03



05

01

"On matters of style, swim with the current, on matters of principle stand like a rock."

Thomas Jefferson

02

"The mind once enlightened cannot again become dark."

Thomas Paine

03

"When you have exhausted all possibilities, remember this – you haven't."

Thomas A Edison

04

"Everything comes to us that belong to us if we create the capacity to receive it."

Rabindranath Tagore

05

"The beginning is the most important part of the work."

Plato

06

"It's the action and not the fruit of the action which is important."

Martin Luther King

07

"Wrong does not cease to be wrong because the majority share in it."

Leo Tolstoy

AN INTRODUCTION

Dhyeya IAS, a decade old Institution, was founded by Mr. Vinay Singh and Mr. Q.H. Khan. Ever since its emergence it has unparalleled track record of success. Today, it stands tall among the reputed institutes providing coaching for Civil Services Examination (CSE). The institute has been very successful in making potential realize their dreams which is evident from success stories of the previous years.

Quite a large number of students desirous of building a career for themselves are absolutely less equipped for the fairly tough competitive tests they have to appear in. Several others, who have a brilliant academic career, do not know that competitive exams are vastly different from academic examination and call for a systematic and scientifically planned guidance by a team of experts. Here one single move invariably put one ahead of many others who lag behind. Dhyeya IAS is manned with qualified & experienced faculties besides especially designed study material that helps the students in achieving the desired goal.

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Distance learning Programme, DSDL, primarily caters the need for those who are unable to come to metros for economic or family reason but have ardent desire to become a civil servant. Simultaneously, it also suits to the need of working professionals, who are unable to join regular classes due to increase in work load or places of their posting. The principal characteristic of our distance learning is that the student does not need to be present in a classroom in order to participate in the instruction. It aims to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance. Realizing the difficulties faced by aspirants of distant areas, especially working candidates, in making use of the institute's classroom guidance programme, distance learning system is being provided in General Studies. The distance learning material is comprehensive, concise and exam-oriented in nature. Its aim is to make available almost all the relevant material on a subject at one place. Materials on all topics of General Studies have been prepared in such a way that, not even a single point will be missing. In other words, you will get all points, which are otherwise to be taken from 6-10 books available in the market / library. That means, DSDL study material is undoubtedly the most comprehensive and that will definitely give you added advantage in your Preliminary as well as Main Examination. These materials are not available in any book store or library. These materials have been prepared exclusively for the use of our students. We believe in our quality and commitment towards making these notes indispensable for any student preparing for Civil Services Examination. We adhere all pillars of Distance education.

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