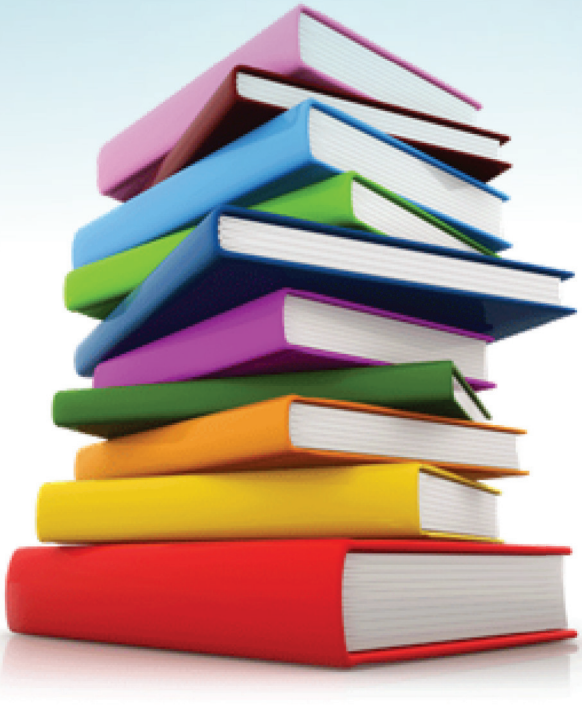
PLUTUS IAS

Weekly CURRENT AFFAIRS



PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 12-12-2022 to 18-12-2022

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CURRENT AFFAIRS
DECEMBER 2022

SCHEDULE TRIBES LIST

This topic is based on the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Indian Constitution. The article also talks about how the schedule tribes list impacts Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution.

Relevance for Prelims: Inclusion of tribes in ST List, Scheduled Tribes in India

Relevance for Mains: National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, Relevance of Fifth and Sixth Schedule of Indian Constitution

Context: Recently, 4 Bills in Lok Sabha have been introduced to modify ST lists In 4 states- Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu.

ABOUT PROPOSED CHANGES IN SCHEDULE TRIBES LIST

- On the basis of the recommendation of the Lokur Committee (1965), Narikoravan and Kuruvikkaran hill tribes will be included in the ST list of Tamil Nadu.
- Betta-Kuruba is a synonym for already categorized Kadu Karuba in the ST list of Karnataka.
- Synonyms of Deva-Nagari script for already categorized Bhariya Bhumia tribe of Chhatisgarh in ST List.
- Hattee community of Sirmaur district in Himachal Pradesh.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has noted they all belong to the same tribe but were excluded due to inconsistencies in the name.

PROCESS OF INCLUSION IN THE SCHEDULED TRIBES LIST:

The process of inclusion of Scheduled Tribes begins with a recommendation from concerned state governments, which is sent to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs which reviews the proposal and sends it to the Registrar General of India.

After verification by the Registrar General of India, the proposal is followed by National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) before the list is sent to Cabinet for final decision.

The inclusion process is finally done with President's assent to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950.

From time to time, the government brings such bills to give effect to modifications proposed by various states in relation to the ST list.

Government initiatives to promote the welfare of Scheduled Tribes:

1. **Eklavya Model Residential Schools:** The objective of EMRS is to provide quality middle and high-level education to Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in remote areas, not only to enable them to avail of reservation in high and professional education courses and as jobs in government and public and private sectors but also to have access to the best opportunities in education at par with the non-ST population.
2. **Janjatiya Gaurav Divas:** The government of India has declared 15th November as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas dedicated to the memory of brave tribal freedom fighters. The declaration was done in 2021.
3. **The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes:** The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) was established by amending Article 338 and inserting a new Article 338A in the Constitution through the Constitution (89th Amendment) Act, 2003. By this amendment, the erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was replaced by two separate Commissions namely- (i) the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), and (ii) the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) w.e.f. 19 February 2004.
4. **Van Dhan Scheme:** The Van Dhan Scheme is an initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and TRIFED. It was launched on 14th April 2018 and seeks to improve tribal incomes through the value addition of tribal products.

Reference:

- Vikaspedia
- Business Standard

END TO END ENCRYPTION

Nowadays, Maximum IT Companies focus on End-to-End Encryption

The topic talks about how End to End Encryption impacts the Science and Technology of India. The new and latest technology has come to the market and maximum IT companies adopt this technology.

Relevance for Prelims: Latest technologies

Relevance for Mains: Data Protection, Significance.

Context: Many IT companies have adopted this encryption technology to ensure data protection and conform to the latest data protection regulations.

End-to-End Encryption

ABOUT END-TO-END ENCRYPTION

Mechanism:

The process of encryption is ensured by the use of cryptographic keys which are used to encrypt and decrypt the messages stored on the endpoints. This can be unscrambled by and read by those with decryption keys which are only stored on endpoints and not with 3rd parties.

Significance:

- It secures passwords, protects stored data, and safeguards data on cloud storage.
- It can be used to control user authorization when accessing stored data.
- End-to-End encryption has been used to transfer financial documents and personal conversations which keeps them safe and secure.

Advantages :

- Tamper-proof: Even if a message encrypted with a public key gets altered or tampered with in transit, the recipient will not be able to decrypt it.
- Safe and Secure: E-E-E ensures that data is protected from unwarranted parties including service providers and companies that handle encrypted data.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN INDIA REGARDING THE ENCRYPTION

- As of now, India does not have any specific encryption law.
- The Information Technology Act, of 2000 regulates the wireless and electronic modes of communication which is devoid of any substantive provision or policy of encryption.
- Users are not authorized to employ encryption standards larger than 40 bits using symmetric key algorithms without prior clearance and deposition of decryption keys.

Source:

- The Hindu

PLUTUS IAS

CURB INDIVIDUALISM IN PUBLIC HEALTH

The topic is based on how to curb individualism in Public Health

Significance for Prelims: Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) scheme.

Significance for Mains: Necessity to Curb individualism in public health.

News: To safeguard public health's original principles of practice like population, prevention, and social justice all forms of individualistic approaches need to be resisted.

ISSUES WITH PUBLIC HEALTH

- Ineffective and unsustainable solutions to complex problems: The problems are not examined and interpreted from a population perspective.
- Individualist solutions like micronutrient supplementation and food fortification for problems such as undernutrition.
- In the case of chronic disease control, the focus is not on modifying health behaviors through organized community action but early diagnosis and treatment is the most popular solution.

CASE STUDY: PRADHAN MANTRI JAN AROGYA YOJANA (PMJAY) SCHEME

- It is a nationwide publicly-funded largest health insurance scheme that falls under Ayushman Bharat.
- It covers hospitalization expenses for a family for ₹5 lakh a year.
- The goal of the PMJAY scheme is to ensure no financial burden to the beneficiary through 'free' curative care services for all kinds of hospitalization services.
- Issues with the scheme: The entire scheme is silent on the need for hospitalization services per year for any population and there is an individualistic response to the hospitalization expenditure problem faced by populations.

APPROACH TO COVID-19 VACCINATION:

- The approach to the pandemic or focus of the vaccination program is on every individual instead of the entire population. Like if you get COVID-19, you will not need hospitalization and not die.
- During the course of the entire crisis, not much is talked about the grossly inadequate healthcare infrastructure. Inadequate primary, secondary, and tertiary care services for COVID-19 patients lead to many casualties.

REASONS FOR THE DOMINANCE OF INDIVIDUALISM IN PUBLIC HEALTH:

- Defects in the Policy due to the dominance of biomedical knowledge and philosophy in the field of public health.
- **'visibility' of health impacts among the general public:** At the individual level, improvements in health effects are more visible and appear, wherein improvements at the population level will be clear only after population-level analysis.
- **Consumerism in this practice:** The market plays an important role in the practice. Consumerist society propagates individualism as every individual can be a potential 'customer' in the face of risk and susceptibility.

WAY FORWARD:

- Strengthening sustainable approaches like Public Distribution Systems, supplementary nutrition programs, and health services.
- Individualism: There is a strong tendency in the issue to prioritize individual-oriented interventions over societal-oriented population-based approaches.
- Population-level planning: Policymakers should consider the population as a single unit.

MAINS(2015):

The public health system has limitations in providing universal health coverage. Do you think that the private sector could help in bridging the gap? What other viable alternatives would you suggest?

Source:

The Hindu

NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION DAY

The topic is based on the significance of National Energy Conservation Day. The article also tells how Energy conservation impacts Environment and climate change.

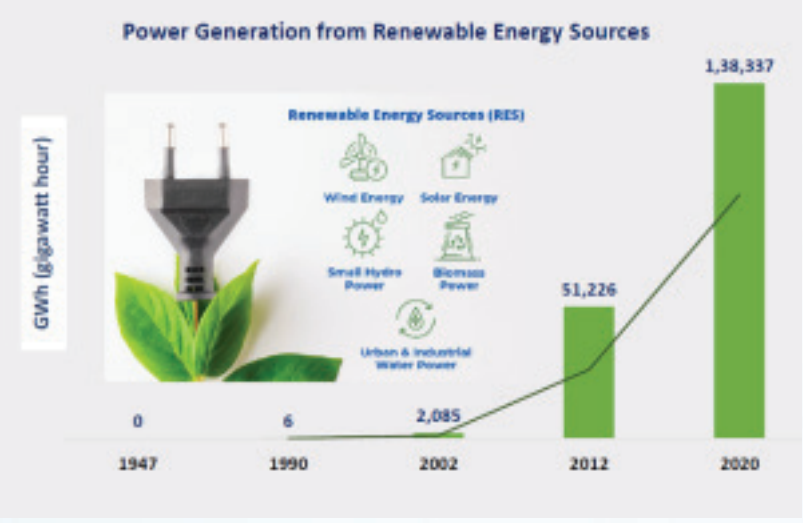
Relevance for Prelims: Energy conservation in India

Relevance for Mains: Steps taken by India to conserve energy

Context: National Energy Conservation is celebrated every year on 14th December.

REASON FOR THE CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION DAY

- It was Ministry of Power, Government of India launched the National Energy Conservation Awards in 1991 to recognize the contribution of industries and establishments in reducing energy consumption while maintaining production.
- National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency.
- It was 1991 when the first awards were given.
- The major objective of declaring the day on making people aware of global warming and climate change.



Renewable Energy Sources

THE SCENARIO OF INDIA'S POWER SECTOR:

- India is considered as third largest consumer and producer of electricity worldwide, with an installed power capacity of more than 400 GW (as of October 2022).

- India stands in the top 5 positions in many renewable sector verticals. For example, Wind energy installation capacity in India (4th rank) and (5th rank) in terms of solar energy installation.
- The government announced in COP26 that the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is working towards 500GW of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil sources by 2030.

STEPS WERE TAKEN BY INDIA FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION:

- **PAT Scheme:** Perform Achieve and Trade Scheme is a market base mechanism to enhance the cost-effectiveness in improving energy efficiency in energy-intensive industries.
- **Energy Conservation Building Code:** It was developed in 2007 for commercial buildings to ensure energy efficiency.

India has progressively decoupled economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions. For example, the Net Zero Emissions target by 2030 by Indian Railways alone will reduce emissions by 60 million tonnes annually. Similarly, India's massive UJALA LED bulb campaign is reducing emissions by 40 million tonnes annually. To further complement these ongoing efforts, India launched the National Hydrogen Mission in 2013 to make India the world's largest hydrogen hub.

Even though it supports the second-largest population in the world, India's sustained efforts have ensured that its per capita CO2 emissions are much lower than the global average. The US emits 14.7 tonnes per capita, China emits 7.6 tonnes per capita, and India's CO2 emissions amount to 1.8 tonnes per capita.

The global power sector is undergoing an accelerated transformation due to technological innovations and response to climate change protocols. At COP-21 in Paris in 2015, India committed to a 40% share of power generation from non-fossil fuel sources. We have achieved this target a decade ahead of the 2030 timeline.

India has always shown its willingness in leadership to fight climate change. The country's vision is to achieve Net Zero Emissions by 2070, in addition to attaining the short-term targets which include:

- Increasing renewables capacity to 500 GW by 2030,
- Meeting 50% of energy requirements from renewables,
- Reducing cumulative emissions by one billion tonnes by 2030, and
- Reducing emissions intensity of India's gross domestic product (GDP) by 45% by 2030.
- India's experience will be valuable to other developing nations as they translate

their climate pledges into actions and undertake energy transitions toward a more sustainable energy future.

Previous Year Questions:

Q1- On which of the following can you find the Bureau of Energy Efficiency Star Label? (2016)

1. Ceiling fans
2. Electric geysers
3. Tubular fluorescent lamps

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 3 only

(c) 2 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)

UPSC Previous Year Questions Mains

Describe the major outcomes of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). What are the commitments made by India at this conference?

Source:

Vikaspedia

ARCTIC ICE MELTING

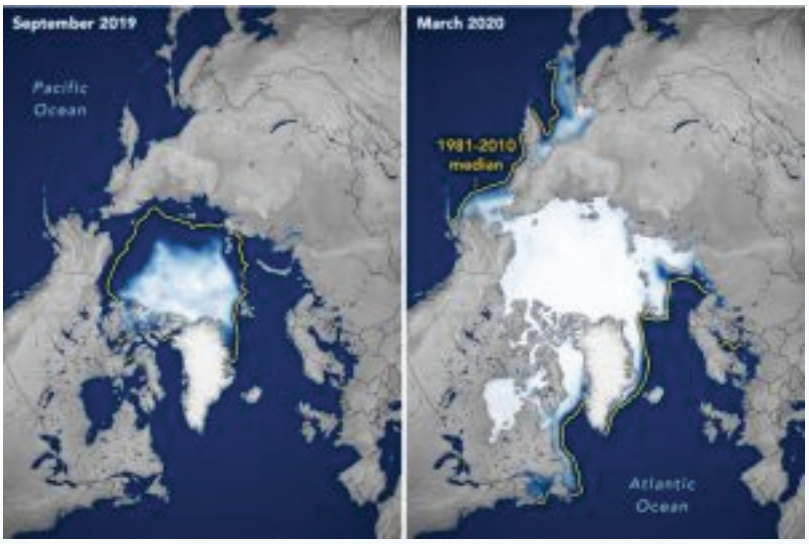
The polar ice caps are melting due to climate change caused by global warming. According to NASA, Artic ice is melting at a rate of 13% per decade, and the oldest thickest in Arctic ice has declined by 90% in the last 30 years.

As per the IPCC report, Artic is likely to become ice-free by 2050.

Arctic Melting

REASONS FOR THE FAST RATE OF MELTING IN THE ARCTIC:

- Albedo Feedback Loop: As global ice has decreased, the reflectivity of Earth has decreased, more incoming solar radiation is absorbed by the surface, and the surface warms.
- Darker Ocean Surface: Dark ice replaces the bright ice of the Arctic in the Ocean Surface which reflects less incoming solar radiation, fuelling additional heat and ice loss.
- Weather events: A freak heat wave, wind, and ocean currents break up and spread the ice which makes it prone to melt at a faster rate.
- Counter-clockwise circulation: Cyclones entering Siberia generate counter-clockwise winds and drifts ice. This pattern reduces the amount of ice moving through the Farm Strait, East of Greenland.



Pic: Arctic Ice Melting

IMPACT ON WEATHER PATTERNS OF THE PLANET:

- Permafrost Thawing: Permafrost in the Arctic stores huge amounts of methane. When the ice melts, it releases a copious amount of gas which increases the rate of global warming and induces climate change.
- Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Communities: Artic which is considered Earth's refrigerator has lost ice in substantial numbers which have released a significant volume of water into the sea and oceans resulting in Sea Level Rise and endangering coastal communities.
- Biodiversity Threat: Rapid melting of ice makes diversity more vulnerable to extinction as their habitat is under threat and loss of ecological niche. The global community should be cognizant take Arctic Melting and should initiate targeted measures. Given the vital role of the Arctic in influencing global climate, it is in humanity's interest to mitigate ice retreat in the Arctic.

Source:

Indian Express

LORD NATARAJA IDOL

In News: The intended auctioning of a bronze statue of Lord Nataraja was successfully prevented on Thursday by the Idol Wing CID of the Tamil Nadu Police.

Relevance for Prelims: Indian Art forms

Relevance for mains: GS -1: Art and Culture

Lord Nataraja

Pic: Statue of Lord Nataraja

ABOUT LORD NATARAJA

- In many Shaivite temples, especially in South India, Nataraja (Lord of the Dance), the Hindu god Shiva in his incarnation as the cosmic dancer, is depicted in metal or stone.
- It represents a significant work of Chola sculpture.
- Shiva is portrayed as the origin of all motion in the cosmos and as the deity whose apocalypse dance, symbolized by the arch of flames, occurs with the universe's eventual destruction at the end of an eon.

- Shiva's tangled and wavy hair symbolizes the Ganges River's current.
- Shiva is adorned with male and female earring studs on opposite ears. This is frequently referred to as Ardhanarishwar and symbolizes the union of man and female.
- Shiva has a snake wrapped around his arm. The kundalini power, which lies in the latent stage in the human spine, is symbolized as a snake. One can achieve true consciousness if they are awakened.
- A nimbus of glowing lights surrounds the Nataraja, representing the endless expanses of time.
- The drum, which represents the sound of creation, is held in the upper right hand. The powerful sound of the damru is the source of all creation.
- The eternal fire, which stands in for the devastation, is located in the upper left-hand. Creation's inevitable opponent and prelude is destruction.
- In the Abhay mudra gesture, the lower right hand is lifted, bestowing blessings and telling the devotee not to be fearful.
- The route to redemption is shown by the lower left hand, which points in the direction of the lifted foot.
- Shiva is dancing around a miniature dwarf. The dwarf represents someone's ignorance and ego.

Source:

- Wikipedia

INDO-CHINA BORDER DISPUTE AT TORSA NALA YANGTSE

Relevance for Prelims: The news descibes how Indo-China Border Dispute at Torsa Nala Yangtse Impact on Indian **Polity and Governance.**

In News: Recently, Chinese forces attempted to unilaterally change the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. In the upper reaches of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector, in a place called Yangtse, soldiers from the two sides engaged in combat. China has erected a ropeway close to Torsa Nala on either side of the tri-junction between India, Bhutan, and China.

Pic: Indo-China Border Dispute

The Torsa River, which is sometimes spelled Torsha and goes by the names Kambu Maqu, Machu, and Amo Chhu, originates in Tibet, China, in the Chumbi Valley. It enters Bhutan, where it is referred to as the Amo Chu. It eventually flows into West Bengal, Bangladesh, and India, where it is known as Torsa.

UPSC Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Pic: Torsa Nala Yangtse

Prelims

Siachen Glacier is situated on the:

a) East of Aksai Chin

b) East of Leh

c) North of Gilgit

d) North of Nubra Valley

Ans: D

Source :

The Hindu

PLUTUS IAS

ON THE RETURN TO THE OLD PENSION SCHEME

In News: The Himachal Pradesh state government has pledged to reinstate the Old Pension Scheme. The fourth state to do so will be Himachal Pradesh.

Relevance for Prelims: New Pension Scheme, Old Pension Scheme, PFRDA.

Relevance for Mains: GS -2, Old Pension Scheme, National Pension Scheme.

OLD PENSION SCHEME (OPS)

- The scheme guarantees post-retirement a lifetime of income.
- Employees under the previous plan receive a pension based on a pre-established formula that is equal to 50% of the last wage received. Additionally, they benefit from the twice-yearly modification of the Dearness Relief (DR).
- There was no salary deduction and the compensation is predetermined. Additionally, the General Provident Fund was a provision of the OPS (GPF).
- Only Indian government employees have access to GPF. In essence, it permits all government workers to pay a portion of their salaries into the GPF. At the time of retirement, the employee receives the complete amount that has accumulated over the course of their employment.
- The cost of the pension is covered by the government. The scheme was discontinued in 2004.

NEW PENSION SCHEME (NPS)

- The National Pension System was formed by the Central Government with effect from January 2004. (except for armed forces).
- The New Pension Scheme, which was notified in December 2003, was developed using the OASIS report.
- The Union Cabinet approved changes to the NPS in 2018–19 for the benefit of central government employees who are covered by the scheme. These changes were made to streamline the NPS and make it more appealing.
- The government began the NPS as a measure to get rid of its pension responsibilities.
- The Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972 were amended in response to the establishment of NPS.
- After retirement, people can use a portion of their pension money as a lump sum

withdrawal and the remainder to buy an annuity for a regular income.

IMPLEMENTATION

- PFRDA (Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority) is the authority in charge of implementing and regulating NPS in the nation.
- All assets under the NPS are officially owned by the National Pension System Trust (NPST), which was established by PFRDA.

FEATURES

- All Indian nationals (including NRIs) between the ages of 18 and 70 are eligible to join the NPS under the All-Citizens Model.
- Employees contribute their salaries to their pension corpus as part of a participatory scheme, and the government matches their contributions. The funds are then invested through Pension Fund Managers in specified investment plans.
- Government employees who participate in this NPS contribute 10% of their base pay, and their employers may also contribute up to 14%.
- According to the Finance Ministry, Central government personnel has the choice of Investment Pattern and Pension Funds (PFs) as of 2019.
- 40% of the corpus is invested in annuities, which are taxed, and the remaining 60% can be withdrawn tax-free upon retirement.
- Even private individuals can opt for the scheme.

Concerns:

- The scheme's return-based nature and market linkage are its main drawbacks. Simply said, the payout is unpredictable.
- In contrast to OPS, the NPS mandates that employees deposit 10% of their basic pay as well as the dearness allowance.
- The pension amount is not fixed, and there is no GPF benefit.

Comparison between the old pension scheme and the new pension scheme

Criteria

Criteria	Old pension scheme	New pension scheme
Contribution	10% of special pay + basic pay + other allowances	All contributions are included along with dearness allowance

Regulations	No such body	PFRDA
Public coverage	Only central government employees	Anyone from age of 18 to 55
Fund management	Managed by provident fund	Six fund managers
Charges	No extra charges are applicable	Fixed as well as variables charges applicable

UPSC Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

Who among the following can join the National Pension System (NPS)? (2017)

(a) Resident Indian citizens only.

(b) Persons of age from 21 to 55 only.

(c) All State Government employees joining the services after the date of notification by the respective State Governments.

(d) All Central Government employees including those of Armed Forces joining the services on or after 1st April, 2004.

Ans: (c)

Source:

The Hindu