

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAY-JUNE 2023

for Competitive Exams

The Complete Coverage of All Important
Events from MAY-JUNE 2023
























HIGHLIGHTS

- G-7
- PARAKH
- DELHI AIR QUALITY
- SAGAR PARIKRAMA YATRA
- RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES



OUR TOP RANKERS

AIR-27  Suryabhan Achchhelai	AIR-56  Arnav Mishra	AIR-57  Aditi Varshney	AIR-87  Ayan Jain	AIR-175  Natasha Goyal	AIR-185  Anunay Anand	AIR-216  Shivam Kumar
AIR-304  Bhumi Shrivastava	AIR-347  Digvijay Singh	AIR-931  Hare Krishna	AIR-44  Anjali Shrotiya	AIR-80  Nikhil Mahajan	AIR-388  Umesh Goyal	
AIR-476  Neha Goyal	AIR-43  Shubham Shukla	AIR-28  Divya Mishra	AIR-30  Divyanshu Choudhary	AIR-268  Nitish Rajora		
AIR-488  Suryabhan Achhelai Yadav	AIR-612  Mahima Madan	AIR-706  Rijul				

Many many congratulations to our Top Rankers and Successfull Candidates for UPSC CSE 2022

Foreword

Dear Aspirants,

This magazine by **Plutus IAS team** is designed in such a fashion that it holistically covers all the relevant and important topics for civil services exam or IAS exam to make aspirants battle or exam ready. **Plutus IAS Current Affairs Magazine** is a secondary source of information, the newspaper will always remain the first source for preparation of current affairs.

Now, current affairs no longer remain the current, it is contemporary affairs. Questions asked in prelims as well as mains test the conceptual clarity of an aspirant. This magazine prepared with an aim to help you understand the interlinkage of both statics and current and internalize those concepts required to crack this examination.

Plutus IAS team wishes you all the best. Prepare for UPSC Civil Services Examination with calm, composed and serene mind with some patience to crack this examination in one go.

Team
Plutus IAS

Sources:

The Hindu | The Indian Express | The Economic Times | Press Information Bureau (keep checking the Features section for imp articles and our weekly PIB Gist) | PRS (only for recent Bills and articles related to them) | IDSA: Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis (keep checking every 2-3 days for in-depth IR articles) | Yojana and Kurukshetra (no need to read all articles – read selectively) | Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Debates | NCERTs All standard reference books.

Plutus IAS Current Affairs Magazine covers a wide range of topics that overlaps with the CORE subjects.



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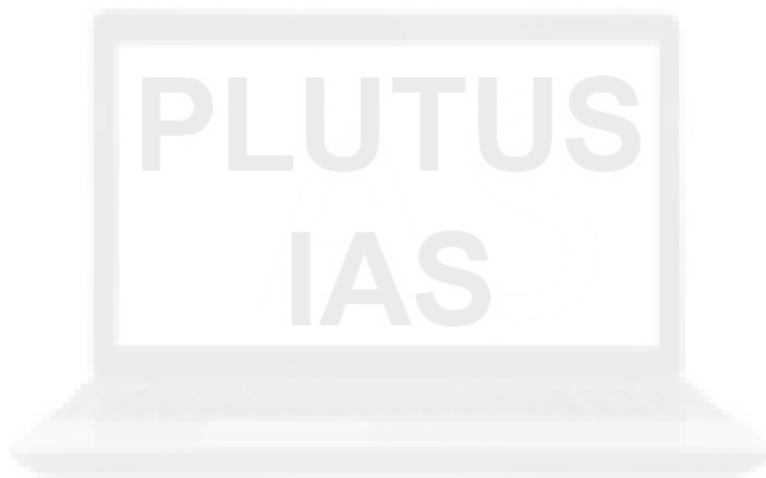
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General Studies - 2

(Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice & International Relations)

RESERVATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Reservation In Private Sector”. The topic “Reservation In Private Sector” has relevance in the Polity and Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Reservation In Private Sector”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is Reservation In the Private Sector?

What are the features of the Reservation In the Private Sector?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: Polity and Governance

What are the arguments in favour of Reservation In Private Sector?

What are the arguments against Reservation In the Private Sector?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Recently, it has been reported that the local reservations in the private sector could have been a reason behind the fall in investments in Haryana. A law was passed in Haryana that provided 75 percent reservation in the private sector to job seekers from the state.

Though the law has been kept in abeyance after being challenged judicially, the suspense over its implementation remains a worry for investors.

WHAT IS THE HARYANA STATE EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL CANDIDATES BILL?

The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020 was passed on November 6, 2021, and became effective on January 15, 2022.

The Act is aimed at increasing job opportunities for local residents in Haryana and requires private-sector employers to reserve 75% of job positions for individuals who have been domiciled in the state for at least 5 years.

In addition to Haryana, other states such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Telangana have also recently implemented similar policies aimed at promoting employment opportunities for local candidates in both public and private sectors.

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF THE HARYANA STATE EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL CANDIDATES BILL?

Key Features:

1. The Bill seeks to reserve 75% of new jobs for local candidates in private establishments.
2. Private establishments may claim exemptions if candidates of desired skill are not available.
3. Establishments must mandatorily register all employees earning less than 50 thousand rupees on a designated portal.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW?

The purpose of the Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020 is:

1. To promote employment opportunities for local residents in the private sector within the state of Haryana.
2. To prevent the outflow of employment opportunities to individuals from other states.
3. To encourage economic growth within the state by promoting the hiring of local talent.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES WITH THE LAW?

1. **Violation of the Constitutional Rights:** A state law providing for reservation in private establishments on the basis of residence may not be constitutional.
 - **Article 16(2)** of the Constitution specifically prohibits any discrimination based on place of birth or residence in matters of public employment.
 - **Article 19(1)(g)** of the Indian Constitution guarantees all citizens the fundamental right to practise any profession or engage in any occupation, trade, or business. However, mandating private institutions to hire a specific group of candidates could be seen as infringing on an institution's right to freely carry out its occupation or business.
 - **In 2002, the Supreme Court** held that unaided private educational institutions must have autonomy in their administration and management.
 - **Reservation to the extent of 75% may violate the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court.**
 - In 1992, the Supreme Court of India established guidelines that placed limits on the

extent of reservation provided through Article 16(4) for backwardness. The court ruled that the reservation provided under Article 16(4) (which includes a reservation for backward classes in public services) cannot exceed 50% to ensure that the efficiency of the administration is not compromised.

- **Constraints on private establishments in hiring may be detrimental to their efficiency.**
- It has been noted that any kind of restriction in the employment of people by companies may lead to skill mismatch and loss of productivity and efficiency.

WHAT ARE THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF RESERVATION IN PRIVATE SECTOR?

There are several arguments in favour of reservation in the private sector, including:

- **Social Justice:** The aim is to uplift and empower the local people with job opportunities.
- **Discourages Migration:** The aim of such a law is to reduce the trend of migration where people go to distant areas for employment. Such an outflow puts pressure on the resources of the area.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility:** Private companies have a responsibility towards society and the community of the area they are operating in.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Such a law can give individuals a job opportunity who were previously excluded from the job market. This, in turn, can increase their purchasing power and contribute to overall economic development.
- **Equitable development:** It has been seen that the jobs are occupied by a section of people from developed areas leading to the marginalisation of the local population which works only as supporting roles.
- **Address the agrarian distress:** Agriculture has not been a profitable mode of income pertaining to the vagaries of monsoons and high input costs. Such a law aims to employ people from the farming community to get a job in nearby areas.

WHAT ARE THE ARGUMENTS AGAINST RESERVATION IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR?

There are several arguments against reservation in the private sector, including:

- **Violation of Freedom of business and employment:** It has been argued that reservation policies infringe on the freedom of employers to choose the best candidates for the job based on merit.
- **Loss of productivity and efficiency:** They argue that reservations may force

companies to hire less qualified candidates simply because they belong to the region where the reservation is given, which may lead to inefficiency and loss of productivity.

- **Reverse Discrimination:** Reservation policies may also lead to reverse discrimination, where qualified candidates from non-reserved categories may be denied opportunities simply because they do not belong to a reserved category.
- **Economic Impact:** This may have negative economic consequences, as companies may face higher costs due to having to hire less qualified candidates or having to provide additional training to bring them up to speed.
- **Competitiveness:** Reservation policies may also lead to decreased competitiveness in the private sector as companies may be forced to hire candidates who may not have the necessary skills or experience to compete in the market.

WAY FORWARD

The issue of unemployment is genuine but there are other ways to deal with the issue. Some of the workable plans can be to achieve the required outcomes are as follows:

1. There is a need for skilling and training the local youth to become competitive in the labour force.
2. There can be an incentive system for companies to hire a certain percentage of the workforce from the state.
3. The State can also direct the companies for a need-based reservation and not a blanket reservation scheme.
4. There is also a need for continued review of the scheme.

Sources:

<https://prsindia.org/bills/states/the-haryana-state-employment-of-local-candidates-bill-2020>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-haryanas-private-sector-reservation-law-and-the-skepticism-around-it/article65059946.ece#:~:text=The%20law%20makes%20it%20mandatory,a%20month%2C%20for%20local%20residents.>

LAUNDROMAT COUNTRIES

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Laundromat Countries”. The topic “Laundromat Countries” has relevance in the International Relations section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Laundromat Countries”

FOR PRELIMS:

What are Laundromat Countries?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: International Relations

What is the background of buying oil from Russia?

What is the role of India in facilitating the purchase of Russian oil and selling it to the European countries?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

According to a recent report released by Helsinki-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), India leads ‘Laundromat’ countries in buying Russian crude and selling oil products to Europe.

WHAT ARE LAUNDROMAT COUNTRIES?

Laundromat countries are a group of countries that purchase Russian oil and ‘launder’ the products to countries that have sanctioned Russian.

The ‘laundromat countries’ are China, India, Turkey, the UAE, and Singapore.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE OF LAUNDERING OIL?

The report suggests that Russia is selling oil at discounted prices to attract buyers and that certain countries involved in the money laundering scheme are importing Russian crude oil and refining it into larger volumes of refined products.

These refined products are then exported to countries that have imposed sanctions on Russia, resulting in a 26% increase in refined oil products exported to these countries in the year following the invasion, compared to the previous 12 months.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH AN EXERCISE?

The undermining of the sanctions: Although this method of exporting oil products may be legal, it enables Russia to generate revenue for Putin's war chest. By changing the origin of the product through the refining process, the laundering countries are able to circumvent sanctions and provide financial support to Russia's activities.

WHAT IS INDIA'S INTEREST IN THE PROCESS?

- **Cheap oil source to fulfill its energy needs:** India is buying cheap oil compared to the high prices raised by OPEC+ countries.
- **Diversification of oil needs:** India can diversify its sources of oil and reduce its dependence on oil from other countries such as the Middle East.
- **Revenue for the Oil refineries:** India is exporting crude from Russia and exporting the processed oil to European countries. This is a revenue generating for the oil refineries providing employment and contributing to the economy.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF SUCH AN EXERCISE ON INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS?

- **Assertion of Indian strategic autonomy:** It signals a willingness by India to maintain an independent foreign policy and not be overly reliant on any one country for its energy needs.
- **Relations with the US:** If India continues to buy oil from Russia despite these sanctions, it could strain its relations with the US, which is a key strategic partner for India.

WAY FORWARD

- **Working with Russia:** To maximize the economic benefits of buying oil from Russia, India can negotiate favorable terms for oil purchases and explore opportunities for investment and collaboration in the oil and gas sector with Russia. This can help create a win-win situation for both countries.
- **Deft diplomacy:** India can adopt a balanced and pragmatic approach in its foreign policy, maintaining friendly relations with both Russia and USA allies.
- **Self-sufficiency:** India can diversify its energy mix by investing in renewable energy and exploring other sources of oil and gas. This can help reduce its dependence on fossil fuels and provide a more sustainable and secure energy supply.

In conclusion, the way forward requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that considers all relevant factors and stakeholders. By adopting a strategic and proactive approach, India can maximize the benefits of buying oil from Russia while minimizing

its negative implications.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX 2023

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “World Press Freedom Index 2023”. The topic “World Press Freedom Index 2023” has relevance in the International Relations section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “World Press Freedom Index 2023”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is the World Press Freedom Index 2023?

Who releases the World Press Freedom Index?

What is Reporters sans Borders?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2:International Relations

What is the significance of the ranking in World Press Freedom Index 2023?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

India’s ranking in the 2023 World Press Freedom Index has slipped to 161 out of 180 countries, according to the latest report released by the global media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF).

WHAT IS THE WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX?

The World Press Freedom Index is an annual report published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) that evaluates the level of press freedom in countries around the world.

The report measures the level of freedom that journalists, media outlets, and netizens have in each country to gather and disseminate news and information, without fear of censorship, retaliation, or violence.

The World Press Freedom Index ranks 180 countries based on a variety of factors, including media independence, pluralism, legal framework, transparency, and the safety of journalists. The report aims to raise awareness about the importance of press freedom and to hold governments accountable for any violations of this fundamental right.

The World Press Freedom Index has been published annually since 2002 and has become an important tool for researchers, journalists, and policymakers to monitor the state of press freedom around the world.

WHAT IS THE RANKING OF INDIA IN THE WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX?

According to the latest report released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), India's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index has dropped to 161 out of 180 countries, down from its previous rank of 150 in 2022. This suggests that press freedom in India has faced significant challenges and restrictions, as journalists and media outlets are increasingly facing censorship, legal harassment, and violence.

In contrast, Pakistan has improved its ranking, moving up to 150 from last year's 157th rank, indicating a relatively better situation for media freedom in the country. Similarly, Sri Lanka has made significant progress, moving up to 135th position this year from 146th in 2022.

It is worth noting that Norway, Ireland, and Denmark hold the top three positions in the press freedom ranking, indicating a favorable environment for press freedom in these countries. In contrast, Vietnam, China, and North Korea occupy the bottom three positions, reflecting severe restrictions on media freedom and human rights abuses in these countries.

WHO RELEASES THE WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX?

It is published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) that evaluates the level of press freedom in countries around the world.

Reporters Without Borders (RSF), or in French, Reporters Sans Frontières, is an international non-profit organisation that advocates for press freedom, the safety of journalists, and the protection of human rights.

The organisation was founded in 1985 in Montpellier, France and it has since grown to become a global network of journalists, media professionals, and activists who work to defend and promote free speech, independent journalism, and the right to information.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RANKING IN THE WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX 2023?

The ranking in the World Press Freedom Index is significant because:

- 1. Status of the press in the country:** Comprehensive overview of the state of press freedom in each country, as well as how that country's press freedom situation compares to others around the world.

2. **Evaluation of laws and policies related to the press:** It evaluates the legal framework for media freedom, the level of censorship and self-censorship, the safety of journalists, and the level of pluralism and media independence.
3. **Reference for the policy makers:** It serves as a reference for policymakers, international organisations, and the media industry to identify areas for improvement and to take action to protect and promote press freedom.

WAY FORWARD

India's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index has been relatively low in recent years, and there are several factors that contribute to this. Here are some of the main reasons:

- **Violence against journalists:** India has a poor record when it comes to the safety of journalists. Journalists in India have faced physical attacks, harassment, and even murder in some cases. This creates a climate of fear and self-censorship, which can stifle freedom of the press.

The case of Siddiqui Kappan incarcerated for years is an example.

- **Government restrictions:** The Indian government has placed restrictions on media coverage in some cases, such as during periods of civil unrest or in areas affected by insurgency or terrorism. These restrictions can limit the ability of journalists to report on important events.

After the abrogation of Article 370, there were restrictions imposed by the government in the valley.

- **Internet shutdowns:** India has one of the highest rates of internet shutdowns in the world. These shutdowns often occur during times of civil unrest or protests and can make it difficult for journalists to access information and report on events.
- **Legal harassment:** Journalists in India are often subjected to legal harassment, including defamation lawsuits and sedition charges. These legal actions can be used as a way to silence critical reporting.
- **Political pressure:** There is often political pressure on media organizations in India to report in a certain way or to avoid certain topics. This pressure can also lead to self-censorship and a reluctance to report on sensitive issues.

Overall, these factors contribute to a challenging environment for journalists in India, which can limit the freedom of the press and lead to a lower ranking in the World Press Freedom Index. There is a need for a free environment for the journalists to work. They are a reflection of the country's polity and society.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-slips-in-world-press-freedom-index-ranks-161-out-of-180-countries/article66806608.ece>

JAN SURAKSHA SCHEMES

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Jan Suraksha Schemes”. The topic “Jan Suraksha Schemes” has relevance in the Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Jan Suraksha Schemes”

FOR PRELIMS:

Details of Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY)

FOR MAINS:

GS 2:Governance

What is the significance of Jan Suraksha Schemes?

What are the issues in Jan Suraksha Schemes?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMSBY), and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) complete 8 years of providing social security cover.

Details of Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY):

- **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)**
- **About the scheme:** The Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) is a government-backed one-year life insurance scheme that offers coverage for death due to any reason.
- **Eligibility:** Individuals between the ages of 18 and 50 who have an individual bank

or post office account are eligible to enroll in the scheme. Those who join the scheme before turning 50 can continue to have their lives covered up to the age of 55 by paying regular premiums.

- **Benefits:** The scheme provides a life cover of Rs. 2 lakhs against an annual premium of Rs. 436.
- **Status of the scheme:** The scheme has had more than 16.19 crore cumulative enrollments as of 26.04.2023 and has paid out Rs. 13,290.40 crores for 6,64,520 claims.

PRADHAN MANTRI SURAKSHA BIMA YOJANA (PMJJBY)

- **About the scheme:** The Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) is a renewable one-year accidental insurance scheme that offers coverage for death or disability due to accidents.
- **Eligibility:** Individuals between the ages of 18 and 70 who have an individual bank or post office account are eligible to enroll in the scheme.
- **Benefits:** The scheme provides an accidental death cum disability cover of Rs. 2 lakh (Rs. 1 lakh in case of partial disability) for death or disability due to an accident against an annual premium of Rs. 20.
- **Status of the scheme:** The scheme has had more than 34.18 crore cumulative enrollments as of 26.04.2023 and has paid out Rs. 2,302.26 crores for 1,15,951 claims.

ATAL PENSION YOJANA (APY)

- **About the scheme:** The Atal Pension Yojana (APY) is a social security scheme initiated by the Government to ensure financial stability for all, especially those in the unorganized sector. It is administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) under the National Pension System (NPS).
- **Eligibility:** The scheme is available to all non-income tax-paying bank account holders between 18 to 40 years of age, with contributions varying based on the pension amount chosen.
- **Benefits:** Upon reaching 60 years of age, subscribers will receive a minimum monthly pension of Rs. 1000 or Rs. 2000 or Rs. 3000 or Rs. 4000 or Rs. 5000 based on their contributions.
- **Disbursement of Scheme Benefits:** Subscribers, their spouse, or nominee will receive the pension corpus upon the subscriber's death. If the subscriber dies before

turning 60, their spouse can continue contributions until the subscriber would have attained 60 years of age.

- **Contribution by Central Government:** The Government guarantees the minimum pension, funding any shortfall in the corpus. If returns on investment exceed expectations, subscribers receive enhanced benefits.
- **Payment Frequency:** Contributions can be made monthly, quarterly or half-yearly.
- **Withdrawal:** Subscribers can exit the scheme under certain conditions, with deductions for government co-contribution and interest.
- **Achievements:** As of 27.04.2023, over 5 crore individuals have subscribed to APY.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JAN SURAKSHA SCHEMES?

1. These schemes are especially relevant for low-income earners, casual workers, and those engaged in the informal sector who may not have access to traditional insurance products due to high costs or lack of awareness.
2. These schemes provide affordable insurance and pension products that offer protection against financial contingencies such as accidental death, disability, and natural death.
3. They also encourage savings and help in building a culture of savings and investment among people who would otherwise not have access to these products.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES WITH JAN SURAKSHA SCHEMES?

- **Lack of Awareness:** Many people who are eligible for these schemes are not aware of their existence or how to enroll in them.
- **Limited Coverage:** The coverage provided by the schemes is limited, and there are still many people who are not covered under any social security scheme.

For example, the PMSBY covers only accidental death or disability, while the PMJJBY covers only death due to any reason. This leaves many other risks uncovered, such as illness, disability due to non-accidental reasons, and so on.

- **Low Insurance Coverage:** The insurance coverage provided by these schemes is also relatively low, which may not be sufficient to cover the actual costs of medical treatment or other expenses in case of an eventuality.

For example, the life insurance cover under the PMJJBY is only Rs. 2 lacks, which may not be enough for many families.

- **Delay in Claims Processing:** There have been reports of delays in claims processing and disbursal, which can be a major issue for people who are in urgent need of funds.
- **Operational Issues:** The implementation of the schemes has also faced operational issues, such as difficulties in enrolling people due to a lack of infrastructure, inadequate staff, and technical glitches in the enrollment process.

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1922622>

ODF+ Village

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “ODF Village”. The topic “ODF+ Village” has relevance in the Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “ODF+ Village”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is ODF+ Village?

What is Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan 2.0?

For Mains:

GS 2:Governance

What is the significance of Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan 2.0 ?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

India achieves another major sanitation milestone – 50% of Villages Are Now ODF Plus under Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin Phase II

WHAT IS AN ODF+ VILLAGE?

An ODF+ Village village is one which has sustained its Open Defecation Free (ODF) status along with implementing either solid or liquid waste management systems.

As of date, more than 2.96 lakh villages have declared themselves ODF Plus, which is a significant step towards achieving the SBM-G phase II goals by 2024-25.

ODF Plus Model village is one which is:

1. Sustaining its ODF status and has arrangements for both Solid Waste Management and Liquid Waste Management
2. Observes visual cleanliness, i.e., minimal litter, minimal stagnant wastewater, and no plastic waste dumped in public places;
3. Displays ODF Plus Information, Education & Communication (IEC) messages.

So far, 1,65,048 villages have arrangements for solid waste management, 2,39,063 villages have arrangements for liquid waste management, 4,57,060 villages have minimal stagnant water and 4,67,384 villages have minimal litter.

WHAT IS SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAAN 2.0?

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, also known as the Clean India Mission, was a significant cleanliness campaign launched by the Government of India on October 2, 2014. It aimed to make India clean and open defecation-free by October 2, 2019, in commemoration of Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary.

In order to sustain the achievements of SBM 1.0 the government launched the Phase-II of SBM (G):

The major components of the Phase-II of SBM (G) are:

1. Sustaining Open Defecation Free Status (ODF-S),
2. Solid (Biodegradable) Waste Management,
3. Plastic Waste Management (PWM),
4. Liquid Waste Management (LWM),
5. Faecal Sludge Management (FSM),
6. GOBARdhan, Information Education and
7. Communication/Behavior Change

The SBM-G program has been instrumental in improving the health and well-being of millions of people across the country. Several reports in the past few years have exhibited the ground impact of the SBM-G programme.

SBM(G) is a shining example of what can be achieved when there is a concerted effort to improve sanitation and hygiene. Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti congratulates and applauds the contribution of all villages, Gram Panchayats, Districts, States/UT on this proud achievement.

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan 2.0 holds significance on the following aspects:

1. **Sustaining the Achievements:** SBM 2.0 aims at maintaining the cleanliness of public spaces, ensuring the usage and maintenance of constructed toilets, and promoting long-term behaviour change towards sanitation and hygiene practices.
2. **Strengthening Sanitation Infrastructure:** This could involve the construction of additional toilets, waste management systems, and promoting innovative and sustainable sanitation technologies.
3. **Behavioral Change and Awareness:** Swachh Bharat Abhiyan 2.0 further emphasises the importance of behavioural change in promoting cleanliness and hygiene practices.
4. **Waste Management and Environmental Sustainability:** SBM 2.0 aims to strengthen waste management systems, promote recycling initiatives, and create awareness about the environmental impact of improper waste disposal.
5. **Urban Sanitation:** SBM 2.0 aims at urban planning, investment in sanitation facilities, and the adoption of smart technologies for efficient waste management.
6. **Inclusivity and Equity:** SBM 2.0 aims at targeted interventions, policies, and programs to address the specific needs and challenges faced by these groups.

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1923036>

WORLD HERITAGE LIST

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “World Heritage List”. The topic “World Heritage List” has relevance in the Art and Culture section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “World Heritage List”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is a World Heritage List?

What is Shantiniketan?

What are Indian sites included in the World Heritage List?

FOR MAINS:

GS 1 : Art and Culture

What is the significance of the World Heritage List?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Santiniketan, associated with Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, has been recommended for inclusion on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

WHAT IS A WORLD HERITAGE LIST?

The World Heritage List, also known as the UNESCO World Heritage List, is a collection of cultural and natural sites around the world that are considered to have outstanding universal value. It is maintained by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and was established in 1978.

The purpose of the World Heritage List is to identify and protect sites that are considered to be of exceptional importance to humanity. These sites can include natural wonders, such as national parks, forests, or geological formations, as well as cultural sites, such as ancient cities, archaeological sites, or religious buildings.

WHAT IS SHANTINIKETAN?

Shantiniketan, meaning "Abode of Peace," is a small town located in the Birbhum district of the state of West Bengal, India. It is renowned as the home and educational institution established by the Nobel laureate poet, writer, philosopher, and artist, Rabindranath Tagore.

In 1901, Rabindranath Tagore founded an experimental school in Shantiniketan, which later grew into Visva Bharati University in 1921. The institution follows Tagore's philosophy of education, emphasizing a holistic approach that integrates intellectual, artistic, and cultural pursuits. It seeks to foster a harmonious relationship between nature, humanity, and the arts.

Shantiniketan and Visva Bharati University became centres of education, literature, music, and arts, attracting scholars, artists, and students from around the world. The town itself is characterised by its serene and tranquil environment, surrounded by lush greenery, gardens, and open spaces.

The university campus features distinct architectural styles, blending traditional elements with influences from different cultures, reflecting Tagore's vision of a global centre of learning. The Tagore family's ancestral home, "Udayan," is also located within the campus and has been preserved as a museum.

Shantiniketan is not only a place of learning but also a vibrant cultural hub. It hosts various festivals, including the Poush Mela and Basanta Utsav (Holi), which attract a large number of visitors and showcase traditional music, dance, and arts.

The town and its educational institutions, Shantiniketan and Visva Bharati University, hold a significant place in Indian history and continue to inspire generations with Tagore's philosophy and contribution to literature and education.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST ?

- **Prestige and Recognition:** Being included on the World Heritage List is prestigious and brings international recognition and support for the preservation and conservation of the site.
- **Tourism:** It also often leads to increased tourism and economic benefits for the local communities.
- **Preservation:** The sites are repositories of past information and culture. Such protection makes them important for governments to pay attention to.

WHAT ARE INDIAN SITES INCLUDED IN THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST?

There are a total of 40 sites inscribed in the World Heritage List.

Cultural 32

1. Agra Fort (1983)
2. Ajanta Caves (1983)
3. Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar (2016)
4. Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi (1989)
5. Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park (2004)
6. Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) (2004)
7. Churches and Convents of Goa (1986)
8. Dholavira: a Harappan City (2021)

9. Elephanta Caves (1987)
10. Ellora Caves (1983)
11. Fatehpur Sikri (1986)
12. Great Living Chola Temples (1987, 2004)
13. Group of Monuments at Hampi (1986)
14. Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram (1984)
15. Group of Monuments at Pattadakal (1987)
16. Hill Forts of Rajasthan (2013)
17. Historic City of Ahmedabad (2017)
18. Humayun's Tomb, Delhi (1993)
19. Jaipur City, Rajasthan (2019)
20. Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana (2021)
21. Khajuraho Group of Monuments (1986)
22. Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya (2002)
23. Mountain Railways of India (1999, 2005, 2008)
24. Qutb Minar and its Monuments, Delhi (1993)
25. Rani-ki-Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat (2014)
26. Red Fort Complex (2007)
27. Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)
28. Sun Temple, Konârak (1984)
29. Taj Mahal (1983)
30. The Architectural Work of Le Corbusier, an Outstanding Contribution to the Modern Movement (2016)
31. The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur (2010)
32. Victorian Gothic and Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai (2018)

Natural 7

1. Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (2014)
2. Kaziranga National Park (1985)
3. Keoladeo National Park (1985)
4. Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)
5. Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988, 2005)
6. Sundarbans National Park (1987)
7. Western Ghats (2012)

Mixed 1

1. Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1923036>

NEW START

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “New START”. The topic “New START” has relevance in the International Relations and nuclear non proliferation section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “New START”

FOR PRELIMS:

WHAT IS NEW START?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2:International Relations

What is the role of New START in Nuclear non proliferation?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The United States of America has announced that it has 1,419 deployed nuclear war-

heads , as it also requested Russia to release its warhead data under the New START.

The USA said it was releasing the data in public domain as part of its commitments under the New START Treaty, reversing its earlier decision of not sharing the data.

The step comes after in February, amid a sharp deterioration in relations since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin said he was suspending Russia's participation in the agreement.

WHAT IS NEW START?

The New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a bilateral nuclear arms control treaty between the United States and Russia. It was signed on April 8, 2010, and entered into force on February 5, 2011. The treaty was envisaged to limit and reduce the number of strategic nuclear weapons in possession of both the superpowers.

OBJECTIVE OF NEW START?

The main goal of the New START treaty is to enhance strategic stability between the United States and Russia by reducing and limiting their deployed strategic nuclear weapons.

ROLE OF NEW START IN NUCLEAR NON PROLIFERATION?

- **Limitation on Nuclear Warheads:** Under the treaty, both countries agreed to a limit of 1,550 deployed strategic nuclear warheads each. These warheads are deployed on intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and heavy bombers.
- **Limitation on Delivery Vehicles:** The treaty also imposes limits on the number of deployed and non-deployed ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear weapons. These limits are aimed at ensuring that the overall nuclear arsenal of each country remains within the agreed-upon parameters
- **Transparency and Verification:** The New START treaty includes robust verification measures, such as on-site inspections, data exchanges, and notifications. These measures allow both countries to monitor and verify each other's compliance with the treaty's provisions.
- **Duration of the Treaty:** The treaty has a duration of ten years but can be extended by mutual agreement for up to five years. In 2021, the United States and Russia agreed to extend the treaty until February 5, 2026.

The New START treaty is an important arms control agreement between the two largest nuclear powers, aimed at reducing the risk of nuclear conflict and promoting stra-

tegic stability. It provides a framework for ongoing dialogue and cooperation between the United States and Russia regarding their nuclear arsenals.

Source:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/16/us-releases-nuclear-warhead-data-in-bid-to-pressure-russia>

Q.1 The NEW START treaty, which was signed on April 8, 2010, is an agreement primarily focused on the reduction of what type of weapons?

- (a) Chemical weapons
- (b) Biological weapons
- (c) Conventional weapons
- (d) Strategic nuclear weapons

Answer: (d)

Q.2 Which agreement was signed in 2010 between the United States and Russia, aiming to limit the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads and delivery systems?

- (a) START I
- (b) INF Treaty
- (c) CTBT
- (d) NEW START

Answer: (d)

Q.3 Discuss the significance of the New START treaty in the context of nuclear non-proliferation efforts.

(10 marks)

G-7

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “G-7”. The topic “G-7” has relevance in the International Relations section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of G-7

FOR PRELIMS:

What is the composition of the G-7?

What is G-7?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: International Relations

What is the significance of G-7?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a bilateral meeting with H.E Mr. Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan, on 20 May 2023 on the sidelines of the G-7 Summit in Hiroshima.

WHAT IS THE COMPOSITION OF G-7?

It was initially established in 1975 as an annual meeting of finance ministers from the **United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, and Japan**. Over time, it expanded to include summits with the participation of heads of state or government.

WHAT IS G-7?

The Group of Seven (G-7) is an informal forum consisting of seven major advanced economies in the world.

The G-7 countries represent a significant share of the global economy, international trade, and political influence. The primary objective of the G-7 is to promote economic growth, financial stability, and global governance cooperation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF G-7

The significance of the G7 lies in several aspects:

- 1. Economic Power:** The G7 countries collectively represent a substantial portion of the global GDP and trade. Their economies are highly developed, technologically advanced, and major contributors to international trade and investment. Decisions made within G7 can have a significant impact on the global economic landscape.
- 2. Political Influence:** The G7 nations are influential in shaping global political dynamics. They have historically played a central role in addressing major international crises, conflicts, and challenges. The G7's discussions and joint statements can set the tone for global policy debates and initiatives.
- 3. Norm Setting:** The G7 countries, as leading democracies, often strive to promote and uphold common values, such as human rights, freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. They aim to set standards and norms that align with their shared principles and advance global stability and prosperity.
- 4. Engagement with Other Nations:** Although the G7 is composed of a select group of countries, it seeks to engage with other nations and international organizations. The G7 frequently invites guest countries and organizations to its summits, enabling broader participation and perspectives.

The G7's significance has evolved over time, but its influence has been subject to criticism. Critics argue that the G7's composition does not adequately represent the global distribution of power and wealth and that emerging economies should have a greater role in global governance. Efforts to include other countries, such as the G20 (which includes both advanced and emerging economies), reflect a recognition of the need for broader representation in global decision-making forums.

Source:

PIB

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1925683>

<https://www.cfr.org/background/what-does-g7-do>

Q.1 Which of the following countries is not a member of the Group of Seven (G7)?

- (a) France
- (b) China
- (c) United States
- (d) Germany

Answer: (b)

Q.2 Which of the following statements regarding the Group of Seven (G7) is/are correct?

1. The G7 is an intergovernmental organization comprising the world's seven largest economies.
2. The G7 mandate is to address economic and financial issues only.
3. The G7 includes the European Union as a non-enumerated member.
4. The G7 holds annual summits where leaders of member countries discuss global challenges and coordinate their positions.

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 4 only

(c) 1,3 and 4 only

(d) 1,2,3 and 4

Answer: (c)

Q.3 Discuss the significance of the G7 in shaping global governance, addressing key challenges, and fostering international cooperation. Also, highlight the limitations and criticisms associated with the G7's composition and role.

(15 marks)

PARAKH

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "PARAKH". The topic "PARAKH" has relevance in the Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic "PARAKH"

FOR PRELIMS:

What is PARAKH?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: Governance (Education)

What is the objective of PARAKH?

What is the significance of PARAKH?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with PARAKH (The National Assessment Centre), has taken the initiative to organize the inaugural National Level Workshop on Assessment.

WHAT IS PARAKH?

PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) was established as an organization under the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). It has been tasked with the important role of fostering collaboration and standardisation among school boards across various States and Union Territories (UTs) in India.

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF PARAKH?

The objectives of PARAKH are as follows:

- It aims to create a common platform to work diligently to bring together the diverse school boards operating throughout the country.
- It will facilitate dialogue and cooperation among the educational bodies responsible for conducting assessments at the school level.
- It will serve as a catalyst for sharing best practices, exchanging insights, and fostering collaboration among the school boards.
- It will aid in harmonizing the assessment procedures across States and UTs.
- It will enable the school boards to collectively address challenges, explore innovative assessment methods, and develop standardized frameworks that align with national educational objectives.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PARAKH?

1. Enhance the quality and credibility of assessments.

2. Ensure fairness, transparency, and reliability in the evaluation of students' learning outcomes.
3. Promote uniformity and consistency in the assessment processes and practices followed by these boards.

WAY FORWARD

In summary, PARAKH, functioning under NCERT, is pivotal in unifying school boards nationwide. By fostering collaboration and standardization, it aims to promote a consistent and equitable assessment system that benefits students, teachers, and the overall education ecosystem in India.

Source:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1926438>

QUESTION FOR PRELIMS

Q.1 PARAKH recently seen in the news is a:

1. Initiative to assess the learning outcomes.
2. New nuclear-powered submarine.
3. An initiative of FSSAI to check adulterated milk.
4. Health insurance scheme related to Non Communicable diseases.

Answer : (a)

Q.2 Consider the following statements about PARAKH an initiative launched for improvement in education outcomes:

1. It is an organization under AICTE.
2. It aims to foster collaboration and standardisation among school boards in India.
3. It will facilitate dialogue and cooperation among the educational bodies responsible for conducting assessments at the school level.

Answer : (b and c)

QUESTION FOR MAINS EXAMINATION

Q.1 There has been a proliferation of schools in the country but the quality of education is an issue. What are the issues in assessing the quality of education

at the school level? Examine the significance of PARAKH for a consistent and equitable assessment system.

FORUM FOR INDIA PACIFIC ISLANDS COOPERATION (FIPIC)

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “FIPIC”. The topic “FIPIC” has relevance in the International Relations section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “FIPIC”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is FIPIC and its Composition?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: International Relations

Significance of FIPIC?

What is the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” Concept?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

PM Modi underlines the importance of “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” in the FIPIC Summit in **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**.

WHAT IS FIPIC AND ITS COMPOSITION?

FIPIC (Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation) is a diplomatic forum established by India to enhance cooperation and strengthen relations with the Pacific Island countries. The forum was launched in **2014** during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to **Fiji**. FIPIC holds periodic summits where leaders from India and the Pacific Island countries meet to discuss issues of mutual interest and explore avenues for cooperation.

The 14 Pacific island countries that agreed to be a part of FIPIC were **The Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu**.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FIPIC?

- **Expanding influence in the region:** The Pacific Island countries hold strategic im-

portance due to their location in the Indo-Pacific region. By actively engaging with these nations through FIPIC, India aims to expand its influence and presence in the region. It helps India to counterbalance the growing influence of other regional powers(CHINA) and establish itself as a key player in the Indo-Pacific.

- **Economic cooperation and development:** FIPIC provides a framework for enhancing economic cooperation between India and the Pacific Island countries. It facilitates discussions on trade, investment, and development cooperation. India has offered lines of credit and assistance in sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, healthcare, and capacity building to support the development goals of these countries.
- **Addressing climate change and environmental challenges:** The Pacific Island countries are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels and extreme weather events. FIPIC serves as a platform for India to collaborate with these nations in addressing climate change and environmental challenges. India has emphasized the need for climate justice and has pledged support to the Pacific Island countries in their efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- **People-to-people exchanges and cultural ties:** FIPIC promotes people-to-people exchanges and cultural cooperation between India and the Pacific Island countries. It facilitates interactions among government officials, business leaders, scholars, artists, and civil society representatives. These exchanges help foster mutual understanding, cultural appreciation, and friendship between the peoples of India and the Pacific Island countries.

Overall, FIPIC holds significance for India in terms of expanding diplomatic ties, promoting economic cooperation, addressing global challenges, and strengthening its presence in the Indo-Pacific region. It enables India to engage with the Pacific Island countries in a comprehensive manner and work towards shared goals of development, stability, and cooperation.

WHAT IS THE “FREE AND OPEN INDO-PACIFIC” CONCEPT?

The Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) is a strategic concept that promotes a vision of an inclusive and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific region. It emphasizes the principles of freedom, openness, transparency, respect for the rule of law, and the peaceful resolution of disputes. The concept originated from discussions among countries, primarily the **United States, Japan, Australia, and India**, who share common interests in safeguarding regional stability, security, and economic prosperity from undue influence of Regional Powers(CHINA).

Key elements of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific include:

- **Rule of law:** Upholding and promoting the international rules-based order, which includes respecting the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and freedom of navigation and overflight of all nations in the region.
- **Economic Connectivity:** Encouraging open and transparent trade, investment, and economic cooperation among countries in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Maritime Security:** Ensuring the safety and security of the maritime domain, including the protection of sea lines of communication and maritime trade routes.
- **Freedom and Openness:** Promoting democratic values, human rights, and the free flow of goods, services, and ideas. It supports an inclusive and diverse region that respects the rights and freedoms of all individuals.
- **Cooperation and Partnership:** Encouraging collaboration among countries to address common challenges, such as natural disasters, terrorism, climate change, and non-proliferation.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pm-modi-underlines-importance-of-free-and-open-indo-pacific-at-fipic-summit-in-papua-new-guinea/article66879690.ece>

Q.1 Consider the following Statements:

1. FIPIC is an economic forum initiated by India in the Pacific.
2. FIPIC has Indonesia and Sri Lanka as its members.
3. FIPIC aims for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

(a) 1 only

(b) 1 and 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 3 only

Answer:(d)

Q.2 Which of the following best describes the concept of the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific”?

- (a) A military alliance formed by countries bordering the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

- (b) An strategic initiative aimed at promoting trade, connectivity and establishing Rule Based Order in the Indo-Pacific region.
- (c) A security agreement focused on countering terrorism and extremism in the Indo-Pacific region.
- (d) A political framework designed to establish a single governing body for countries in the Indo-Pacific region.

Answer: (b)

Q.3"Discuss the significance of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) in the context of India's engagement with the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategy." (15 marks)

KHELO INDIA

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Khelo India". The topic "Khelo India" has relevance in the Sports and Youth Development section for the UPSC CSE exam.

FOR PRELIMS:

What is Khelo India?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: Youth Development.

What is the significance of Khelo India?

Measures to make Khelo India more effective?

WHY IN THE NEWS

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will declare open Khelo India University Games 2022. The state capital Lucknow, is all set for a spectacular opening ceremony to usher in the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) 2022 Uttar Pradesh (UP), the third edition of what is now India's biggest multi-sport competition at the higher education level.

WHAT IS THE KHELO INDIA INITIATIVE?

The Khelo India initiative is a flagship program of the Government of India's Ministry

of Youth Affairs and Sports. It was launched in 2018 with the aim of promoting sports and creating a sports culture at the grassroots level in India. The initiative encompasses multiple components and programs to foster the development of sports in the country.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KHELO INDIA?

- **Grassroots Development:** The Khelo India initiative focuses on nurturing talent at the grassroots level by providing a platform for young athletes to showcase their skills. It aims to identify and support talented individuals from a young age, helping them develop into competitive athletes.
- **Inclusivity and Equality:** Khelo India aims to provide equal opportunities for participation in sports, irrespective of gender, region, or background. It emphasizes inclusivity and encourages the participation of underprivileged and marginalized sections of society, promoting a more equitable sporting ecosystem.
- **Talent Identification:** The initiative plays a vital role in talent identification across the country. Through various competitions, including Khelo India Youth Games, it helps identify promising athletes who can represent India at national and international events.
- **Sports Infrastructure Development:** Khelo India focuses on the development of sports infrastructure at the grassroots level. It aims to bridge the gap in sporting facilities by providing financial support for the construction and upgradation of sports infrastructure in schools, colleges, and universities.

Scholarships and Support: The initiative offers financial assistance, scholarships, and other support mechanisms to talented athletes. This helps them pursue their sporting careers without compromising their education and encourages them to excel in their respective sports.

MEASURES TO MAKE KHELO INDIA MORE EFFECTIVE:

- **Grassroots Programs:** Expanding the reach of grassroots programs to remote areas and underserved communities is crucial. Efforts should be made to identify talent from a young age and provide them with training and infrastructure support.
- **Coaching and Training:** Enhancing the quality of coaching and training facilities across the country is essential. Establishing coaching academies, providing specialized training programs, and engaging experienced coaches can significantly contribute to the development of athletes.
- **Sports Science and Research:** Investing in sports science research and infrastructure can aid in the development of athletes and improve performance. Implementing sports science techniques, including nutrition, sports psychology, and injury prevention, can enhance the overall sporting ecosystem.
- **International Exposure:** Providing exposure to international competitions, training camps, and exchange programs for talented athletes can help them gain valuable

experience and compete at the global level. Collaborations with international sports organizations can facilitate such opportunities.

- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Encouraging partnerships with private entities, corporate organizations, and non-profit organizations can bolster the Khelo India initiative. These collaborations can provide additional resources, expertise, and financial support for the development of sports infrastructure and talent.
- **Awareness and Promotion:** Continuous awareness campaigns and promotional activities can help generate interest in sports among the youth and encourage participation. Engaging media, social influencers, and sports personalities can play a vital role in spreading the message of Khelo India.

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1927094>

Q.1 The Khelo India initiative, launched by the Government of India, focuses on which of the following aspects of sports development in the country?

- (a) Grassroots development and talent identification
- (b) Infrastructure development for professional sports leagues
- (c) Promotion of traditional Indian sports only
- (d) Providing financial assistance for international athletes

Answer: (a)

Q.2 Which of the following statements best describes the significance of the Khelo India initiative?

- (a) Promoting inclusivity and encouraging the participation of underprivileged sections of society
- (b) Encouraging international athletes to participate in Indian sporting events
- (c) Establishing professional sports leagues across the country
- (d) Focusing solely on elite-level athletes and high-performance training centers

Answer: (a)

Q.3 The Khelo India initiative has played a significant role in promoting sports and nurturing talent in India. Discuss the key objectives and impact of the Khelo India initiative. Also, examine the challenges faced and suggest measures to further strengthen the initiative's effectiveness in fostering a sporting culture in the country.

(15 marks)

CENTRE'S ORDINANCE ON DELHI SERVICES

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Centre's Ordinance on Delhi Services". The topic "Centre's Ordinance on Delhi Services" has relevance in the Polity section for the UPSC CSE exam.

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC "E-VIDHAN"

FOR PRELIMS:

About Article 239AA

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: Polity and Governance

What is the background of the issue?

What did the Supreme Court say in its verdict?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Central government has issued an ordinance to modify the Supreme Court's recent verdict, which granted the Delhi government authority over administrative services in the national capital.

WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE?

The President of India has promulgated an ordinance to amend the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991.

- **Powers to LG:** The ordinance grants additional powers to the Delhi lieutenant governor (LG) regarding administrative services in the national capital.
- **Creation of a new body:** The ordinance has created a new entity called the National Capital Civil Service Authority (NCCSA).

- The Chief Minister of Delhi will head the authority, and the Chief Secretary and Principal Home Secretary of Delhi will serve as its other two members.
- The NCCSA will make decisions regarding the transfer, posting, and vigilance matters of all Group A officers and DANICS officers stationed in Delhi, based on majority votes.
- Role of LG: The LG is empowered to issue orders to implement the recommendations put forth by the NCCSA. However, upon disagreement the LG can send the recommendations back for reconsideration. The final authority in the case will be LG.

WHAT DID THE SUPREME COURT SAY IN ITS VERDICT?

The five-judge constitutional bench of the Supreme Court has determined that the Delhi Government will possess legislative and executive control over administrative services in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD), with the exception of public order, police, and land.

Here are the key highlights of the verdict:

- Role of LG: The Supreme Court ruled in favour of the democratically elected Delhi government, stating that the Lieutenant Governor (LG) must abide by the decisions made by the Delhi government regarding services, except in matters relating to public order, police, and land.
- Control of an elected government over the governance: Article 239AA establishes a legislative assembly for the NCT of Delhi and denying a democratically elected government the power to control officers would render the principle of accountability redundant.
- Accountability of officers to the elected leaders: The officers are required to report to ministers. If officers fail to report to ministers or disregard their directions, the entire principle of accountability is undermined.
- Federalism in UTs: The central government has argued that the Constitution has a federal structure with a strong unitary bias when it comes to Union Territories (UTs). Contrary to this argument, the Supreme Court emphasised that Indian federalism is not unitary, and any further expansion of the Union's power would contradict the constitutional scheme.

WHAT DOES ARTICLE 239AA SAY ABOUT THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE IN DELHI?

Article 239AA of the Constitution of India is a specific provision that deals with the special status and governance of the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD). Here are the key points covered by Article 239AA:

1. **Legislative Assembly:** Article 239AA provides for the establishment of a legislative assembly for the NCTD. Members of this assembly are elected by the residents of Delhi.
2. **Council of Ministers:** The article also allows for the formation of a council of ministers in the NCTD. The Chief Minister is appointed by the President of India and other ministers are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor (LG) on the advice of the Chief Minister.
3. **Legislative Powers:** The legislative assembly of Delhi has the power to make laws on all matters within the State List and Concurrent List, except for certain specified subjects like public order, police, and land.
4. **Executive Powers:** The executive power of the NCTD is vested in the LG, who exercises these powers with the aid and advice of the council of ministers, except in matters in which the LG is required to act in his/her discretion.
5. **Conflict Resolution:** In case of any difference of opinion between the LG and the council of ministers, the matter is referred to the President of India for a decision. The President's decision on such matters is final.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES IN THE DELHI GOVERNANCE MODEL?

1. **Distribution of Powers:** One of the primary issues revolves around the distribution of powers between the elected government of Delhi and the central government represented by the Lieutenant Governor (LG). There have been disagreements and conflicts over the interpretation of Article 239AA of the Constitution, which defines the powers and responsibilities of the Delhi government and the LG.
2. **Administrative Control:** The control over administrative services, such as the transfer and appointment of bureaucrats, has been a contentious matter.
3. **Public Order and Police:** While the elected government of Delhi desires more authority in these areas, the central government maintains that the LG should have a significant say in matters of public order and police.
4. **Land Acquisition:** The Central government controls certain land-related issues, leading to conflicts with the Delhi government over decision-making and implementation of land policies.
5. **Financial Autonomy:** The Delhi government has sought more control over finances and the ability to make independent financial decisions, while the central government has retained significant control in this regard.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/explained-how->

QUESTION FOR PRELIMS

Q.1 Under Article 123 the President is empowered to:

1. Exercise her emergency powers
2. Promulgate ordinances during the recess of the Parliament
3. Appoint a Judge of the Supreme Court
4. Exercise discretionary powers

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

1. Option 1
2. Option 2
3. Option 3
4. Option 4

Answer: (b)

Q.2 When can the President issue an ordinance?

1. Whenever there is a need to bypass the order of the Supreme Court.
2. When the Union Government asks her to do so.
3. Whenever the Judiciary advises her to do so.
4. Whenever the Parliament is not in session and the President is satisfied that immediate action is needed.

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

1. Option 1
2. Option 2
3. Option 3
4. Option 4

Answer: (d)

QUESTION FOR MAINS EXAMINATION

Q. The recent Ordinance issued by the Central Government is seen as an attempt to bypass the verdict of the Supreme Court. In light of this statement highlight the Indian concept of Separation of Powers.

UNIVERSAL CIVIL CODE (UCC)

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Universal Civil Code”. The topic “Universal Civil Code” has relevance in the Polity and Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

FOR PRELIMS:

What is UCC?

UCC vis-a-vis Indian Constitution?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: Polity and Governance.

Why is UCC needed?

Challenges in Framing and Implementation of UCC?

Measures to tackle the challenges?

Way forward?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

There is an ongoing exercise by the Uttarakhand Government to implement the Uniform Civil Code in the State.

WHAT IS UCC?

A universal civil code refers to a set of laws that govern personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption, which are applicable to all citizens regardless of their religious or cultural backgrounds. The need for a universal civil code arises from the goal of ensuring equality, justice, and social harmony in a diverse society.

UCC VIS-A-VIS INDIAN CONSTITUTION?

Article 44 of the Constitution of India, commonly known as the Directive Principle of State Policy, pertains to the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the country. It states, “The State shall endeavor to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil

Code throughout the territory of India.”

The inclusion of Article 44 in the Directive Principles reflects the framers’ vision of achieving a progressive and uniform legal framework for personal laws in India. The objective of a Uniform Civil Code is to bring about uniformity and consistency in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and adoption, regardless of an individual’s religion.

WHY IS UCC NEEDED?

- **Equality:** A universal civil code promotes equality by treating all citizens equally, irrespective of their religious or cultural affiliations.
- **Uniformity:** It establishes a common legal framework, eliminating discrepancies and contradictions that may exist in personal laws based on religious practices.
- **Gender Justice:** It addresses gender disparities by ensuring equal rights and opportunities for men and women in matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance.
- **Social Cohesion:** A universal civil code fosters social cohesion by promoting a shared understanding of rights and responsibilities among diverse communities.

CHALLENGES IN FRAMING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF UCC?

- **Religious Sensitivities:** Implementing a universal civil code may face resistance from religious groups who consider personal laws integral to their faith and traditions.
- **Political Opposition:** Political parties may exploit religious sentiments for electoral gains, hindering the implementation of a universal civil code.
- **Socio-cultural Diversity:** India’s cultural and religious diversity presents challenges in formulating a code that is acceptable to all communities.
- **Legal Complexities:** Harmonizing diverse personal laws can be legally complex and may require extensive amendments and consultations.

MEASURES TO TACKLE THE CHALLENGES?

- **Public Awareness and Dialogue:** Conducting public awareness campaigns and fostering open dialogues to educate citizens about the benefits and importance of a universal civil code can help alleviate religious sensitivities.
- **Legal Reforms:** Engaging with legal experts and stakeholders to study and propose comprehensive legal reforms that address the complexities of personal laws.
- **Consensus Building:** Encouraging constructive discussions and consensus-building among political parties, religious leaders, and community representatives to foster a broader agreement on the need for a universal civil code.
- **Gradual Implementation:** Phased implementation of a universal civil code can

allow for adjustments and give communities time to adapt to the changes while ensuring progressive transformation.

WAY FORWARD?

- **Judicial Intervention:** The judiciary can play a crucial role in interpreting constitutional principles of equality and justice to advance the cause of a universal civil code.
- **Social Empowerment:** Promoting gender equality and empowering marginalized sections of society through education, awareness, and economic opportunities can help create an environment conducive to the acceptance of a universal civil code.

Implementing a universal civil code requires a balanced approach that respects cultural sensitivities while upholding fundamental rights and principles of equality. It demands consistent efforts towards education, awareness, and dialogue to create a society that values unity, justice, and social harmony.

Source:

The Hindu

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/congress-will-welcome-uniform-civil-code-in-uttarakhand-if-it-promotes-social-harmony-congress-leader-navprabhat/article66895482.ece>

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding the Uniform Civil Code (UCC):

- The Uniform Civil Code is a directive principle laid down in Article 42 of the Indian Constitution, which aims to replace personal laws based on religious customs and traditions with a common set of laws for all citizens.
- The implementation of the Uniform Civil Code would ensure gender equality and protect the fundamental rights of individuals, irrespective of their religious affiliations.

Select the correct statement(s) using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of the above

Answer: (b)

Q.2 Consider the following statements regarding the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and select the correct option using the codes given below:

- The Uniform Civil Code is a constitutional provision mandated by Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which aims to ensure freedom of religion and protect the cultural diversity of the country.
- The Uniform Civil Code has been implemented in Goa, which has a common civil code that governs personal laws irrespective of religious affiliations.
- The debate surrounding the Uniform Civil Code primarily revolves around the challenges of balancing individual rights, cultural diversity, and religious sentiments.

Select the correct option using the codes given below:

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

Answer: (c)

Q.3 Discuss the significance, challenges, and potential implications of implementing a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in India. Examine the constitutional provisions and societal considerations associated with the UCC. (15 marks)

SEDITION LAW IN INDIA

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Sedition Law in India”. The topic “Sedition Law in India” has relevance in the Polity and Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

RELEVANCE OF SEDITION LAW IN INDIA

FOR PRELIMS:

What is Section 124A of Indian Penal Code (IPC)?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: Polity and Governance?

Why is there a Sedition Law in India?

Criticism of Sedition Law in India?

Important judgements related to Sedition Law in India?

Way Forward?

WHY IN NEWS:

Recently, the Central Government told the Supreme Court that consultations for “re-examining” IPC Section 124A, which deals with sedition are at a “substantially advanced stage”.

WHAT IS SECTION 124A OF INDIAN PENAL CODE (IPC)?

Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is the provision that defines the offense of sedition in India. It says:

“Whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government established by law in India shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine.”

The law was introduced during British colonial rule in 1870 and was intended to suppress dissent against the colonial administration.

WHY IS THERE A SEDITION LAW IN INDIA?

According to the government it requires Section 124A of IPC for the following:

- **Safeguarding National Security:** The provision plays a significant role in safeguarding national security by addressing acts that aim to incite violence, create public disorder, or pose a threat to the sovereignty and integrity of India.
- **Protecting Constitutional Order:** Sedition law helps in protecting the constitutional order and the functioning of the democratic system. It provides a legal framework to deter actions that seek to destabilize the government established by law, ensuring the smooth functioning of the state.
- **Preserving Social Harmony:** By criminalizing acts that promote hatred or contempt towards the government, sedition law contributes to maintaining social harmony.
- **Maintaining Law and Order:** Section 124A acts as a deterrent against activities that could lead to public disorder or violence. It enables law enforcement agencies to take preventive and corrective measures to maintain law and order, especially in situations where anti-national sentiments or incitement to violence are prevalent.

- **Upholding Sovereignty:** Sedition law upholds the sovereignty and independence of the nation by addressing actions that aim to subvert or undermine the authority of the government. It ensures that individuals or groups do not engage in activities that challenge the state's authority or promote secessionist tendencies.

CRITICISM OF SEDITION LAW IN INDIA:

- **Ambiguity and Vagueness:** The sedition law is criticized for its ambiguous and vague language, which allows for broad interpretation and arbitrary application.
- **Chilling Effect on Freedom of Expression:** The existence of the sedition law creates a chilling effect on freedom of expression. Individuals and groups may self-censor their views or opinions due to the fear of being charged with sedition, even if their expressions do not pose a real threat to public order or national security.
- **Suppression of Dissent:** Critics argue that sedition charges are often used as a tool to suppress dissent, criticism of the government, or unpopular opinions. Activists, journalists, and individuals expressing critical views have been charged with sedition, undermining the democratic principles of open dialogue and robust debate.
- **Incompatibility with International Human Rights Standards:** The sedition law has been deemed inconsistent with international human rights standards, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Organizations like the United Nations Human Rights Committee have called for its repeal or amendment, considering it to be overly restrictive and disproportionate.
- **Deterrent to Democratic Participation:** The sedition law can discourage citizens from actively participating in democratic processes, such as peaceful protests or voicing their concerns about government policies.
- **Disproportionate Punishment:** Sedition is a non-bailable offense in India, and upon conviction, it can lead to imprisonment for up to life. Critics argue that such severe punishment for an offense that may involve mere expression of dissent is disproportionate and goes against the principle of proportionality in criminal law.
- **Inconsistent Enforcement:** There have been instances where sedition charges are selectively applied, raising concerns about political bias and unequal treatment.

IMPORTANT JUDGEMENTS RELATED TO SEDITION LAW IN INDIA:

- **Kedar Nath Singh v. State of Bihar (1962):** The Supreme Court of India upheld the constitutionality of the sedition law but imposed certain restrictions to ensure that it only applies to acts involving violence or incitement to violence.
- **Balwant Singh v. State of Punjab (1995):** The court ruled that raising slogans demanding the secession of a part of the country does not amount to sedition unless there is a call for violence.

- **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015):** The Supreme Court struck down Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, which criminalized online speech, including political dissent. Although not directly related to sedition, this judgment emphasized the importance of protecting freedom of speech in the digital age.

WAY FORWARD:

- **Repeal or Amendment:** There have been calls to either repeal the sedition law or amend it to introduce safeguards to prevent its misuse and align it with constitutional principles.
- **Judicial Scrutiny:** The judiciary plays a crucial role in interpreting and defining the scope of sedition law. It can provide more exhaustive guidelines to ensure that the law is applied judiciously, keeping in mind the principles of freedom of speech and expression.
- **Public Awareness and Advocacy:** Creating public awareness about the implications of the sedition law and advocating for its reform or repeal is essential to bring about change.

Source:

Indian Express

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/govt-consultation-reexamining-colonial-era-sedition-law-centre-supreme-court-8585595/>

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding the sedition law in India:

- 1: Sedition is defined under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and criminalizes acts that involve incitement to violence or public disorder against the government of India.
- 2: The sedition law in India was enacted during the colonial era and has its roots in British colonial rule.

Select the correct answer from the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) None of the above

Answer: (c)

Q.2 Which of the following statements about the sedition law in India is/are correct?

- 1:** The sedition law in India is a non-bailable offense, meaning the accused cannot be released on bail before trial.
- 2:** The sedition law applies only to acts committed by individuals and does not extend to organizations or groups.
- 3:** The Supreme Court of India has laid down guidelines for the application of the sedition law to prevent its misuse.

Select the correct answer using the codes below:

- (a)** 1 only
- (b)** 2 only
- (c)** 1 and 3 only
- (d)** 2 and 3 only

Answer: (c)

Q.3 The sedition law in India has been a subject of considerable debate and controversy. In light of this, discuss the various arguments for and against the sedition law, highlighting its impact on freedom of speech and its role in maintaining national security. Provide your analysis and suggest possible reforms, if any, to strike a balance between safeguarding national interests and upholding democratic values.

(15 marks)

UN PEACEKEEPERS

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “UN Peacekeepers”. The topic “UN Peacekeepers” has relevance in the International Relations section for the UPSC CSE exam.

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC “UN PEACEKEEPERS”

FOR PRELIMS:

What are UN Peacekeepers?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: International Relations

What is the significance of UN Peacekeepers?

What are the issues with UN Peacekeepers?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Indian Army celebrated the 75th International Day of UN Peacekeepers.

WHAT ARE UN PEACEKEEPERS?

UN Peacekeepers are a dedicated group of international personnel deployed by the United Nations to maintain peace and security in areas affected by conflicts. Comprising military, police, and civilian individuals from diverse member countries, they play a vital role in promoting stability and resolving disputes.

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF UN PEACEKEEPERS?

The primary objective of UN Peacekeepers is to monitor ceasefires and peace agreements, ensuring that parties involved adhere to their commitments. By diligently observing and reporting on the situation, they help prevent the escalation of violence and contribute to the restoration of calm.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF UN PEACEKEEPERS?

- **Conflict resolution and prevention:** UN Peacekeepers play a crucial role in resolving conflicts and preventing their escalation. By monitoring ceasefires, facilitating peace negotiations, and promoting dialogue, they help create an environment conducive to lasting peace.
- **Protection of civilians:** Peacekeepers provide a sense of security to vulnerable populations affected by conflict.
- **Peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction:** UN Peacekeepers actively engage in peacebuilding efforts and rebuild trust among communities and facilitate the transition from conflict to stability.
- **International cooperation and diplomacy:** UN Peacekeepers provide a platform for countries to work together in pursuit of a common goal, fostering international unity and diplomacy.
- **Support for political processes:** Peacekeepers often support electoral processes, ensuring free and fair elections.
- **Humanitarian assistance:** In many conflict-affected areas, UN Peacekeepers coordinate and deliver humanitarian aid, including food, medical supplies, and shelter.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES WITH UN PEACEKEEPERS?

- Lack of resources: Peacekeeping operations often face resource constraints, including inadequate funding, shortages of personnel, and logistical challenges.
- Mandate complexity: Mandates may require peacekeepers to engage in a wide range of tasks, from protecting civilians to enforcing peace agreements. Ambiguous mandates can pose challenges in implementation and decision-making on the ground.
- Safety and security risks: Peacekeepers often operate in volatile and high-risk environments, exposing them to security threats.

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1928025>

<https://peacekeeping.un.org/en>

QUESTION FOR PRELIMS

Q.1. Consider the following statements about India's contribution to UN peacekeeping:

1. India has contributed the most significant number of personnel to the UN peace-keeping missions.
2. In 2007, India became the first country to deploy an all-women contingent to a UN Peacekeeping Mission.
3. India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping began with its participation in the UN operation in Korea in the 1950s.
4. Currently, there are over 1 lakh troops and police from India who have been deployed to UN Peacekeeping missions.

Which of the following statements is/are *not* correct?

1. 1 only
2. 4 only
3. 1, 2, and 3 only
4. All of the above

ANSWER: (b)

2. The Indian Army has recently deployed the largest contingent of women peacekeepers in a UN mission in *Abyei*. *Abyei* is located in which of the following countries:

1. Tanzania
2. Kenya
3. Sudan
4. Democratic Republic of Congo

Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. 1 only
2. 1 and 3 only
3. 3 only
4. 1, 2, and 3 only

ANSWER: (c)

QUESTION FOR MAINS EXAMINATION

1. India has the largest contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations. In light of this statement, discuss the need for UNSC reform to give India more say in the deployment of the forces.

INDIA-SINGAPORE RELATIONS

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “India-Singapore Relations”. The topic “India-Singapore Relations” has relevance in the International relations section for the UPSC CSE exam

RELEVANCE OF INDIA-SINGAPORE RELATIONS.

FOR PRELIMS:

Location of Singapore?

FOR MAINS:

GS 2: International relations

Importance of India-Singapore Relations?

Challenges in India-Singapore Relations?

Measures to be taken to address Challenges?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Union Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan will proceed on a three-day visit to Singapore today to strengthen existing ties and to explore the possibility for widening the scope of bilateral engagement in education and skill development.

LOCATION OF SINGAPORE?

Singapore is a city-state located at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia. It lies just 137 kilometers north of the equator, bordered by Malaysia to the north and Indonesia to the south. With a strategic location in the heart of the ASEAN region, Singapore serves as a vital gateway to Southeast Asia and beyond. The country comprises the main island of Singapore and numerous smaller islands, forming a total land area of approximately 721.5 square kilometers.

IMPORTANCE OF INDIA-SINGAPORE RELATIONS?

- **Economic Cooperation:** Singapore is one of India's major trading partners and a vital investment destination. Bilateral trade between the two countries has been consistently growing, with Singapore being India's largest trading partner in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). Singapore's expertise in edutech, finance, technology, and logistics complements India's growth aspirations and provides avenues for collaboration in various sectors, contributing to India's economic development.
- **Strategic Location:** Singapore's strategic location at the heart of Southeast Asia makes it a crucial gateway for India to access the ASEAN region and beyond. It offers India opportunities for enhanced connectivity, trade, and investment in Southeast Asia, East Asia, and the Pacific. India's "Act East" policy aligns well with Singapore's "Global-Asia" strategy, fostering synergies and deeper engagement between the two countries.
- **Connectivity and Infrastructure Development:** India and Singapore have collaborated in various infrastructure projects, including the development of industrial parks, smart cities, and logistics hubs. Singapore's expertise in urban planning, sustainable development, and connectivity solutions can help India address its infrastructure gaps and achieve its development goals.
- **Defense and Security Cooperation:** India and Singapore have a robust defense relationship, engaging in joint military exercises, defense dialogues, and maritime security cooperation. Singapore is a valuable partner for India's efforts to ensure maritime security and maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. The defense collaboration contributes to India's security interests and strengthens its

defense capabilities.

- **Innovation and Technology:** Singapore is renowned for its innovation ecosystem and advanced technological capabilities. Collaboration between India and Singapore in areas such as research and development, digital economy, startups, and technology transfer can foster innovation, knowledge exchange, and technological advancements in India.
- **Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges:** India and Singapore share historical, cultural, and people-to-people ties. Large Indian diaspora in Singapore contributes to the strong bond between the two nations benefiting India's soft power and global influence.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-SINGAPORE RELATIONS?

- **Economic Imbalance:** The trade balance between India and Singapore is skewed in favor of Singapore, with India importing more than it exports to Singapore.
- **Regulatory Barriers:** India and Singapore need to work towards reducing regulatory barriers and improving ease of doing business for companies from both countries. Streamlining bureaucratic processes, addressing regulatory uncertainties, and ensuring a transparent and predictable business environment would encourage greater investment and bilateral trade.
- **Connectivity and Infrastructure:** While there have been collaborative efforts in infrastructure development, enhancing physical and digital connectivity remains a challenge.
- **Geopolitical Considerations:** India-Singapore relations are influenced by broader geopolitical dynamics in the region. As India seeks to balance its relationships with other major powers, including China and the United States, managing these dynamics and aligning interests with Singapore's strategic position can pose challenges.
- **Defense Cooperation:** While defense cooperation between India and Singapore is robust, there is room for further deepening and expanding collaboration.
- **Cultural Differences:** Despite historical and cultural ties, cultural differences and diverse societal norms can present challenges in deepening people-to-people exchanges and fostering mutual understanding.
- **Regional Competition:** India and Singapore are both major players in the ASEAN region, and there is a level of competition for influence and economic engagement in Southeast Asia. Navigating this competition while pursuing shared objectives and cooperation is essential for maintaining a strong India-Singapore relationship.

MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES?

- **Trade Balance:** Both countries can explore measures to promote balanced trade. This can include diversifying the range of goods and services traded, identifying

new export sectors for India, and facilitating market access for Indian businesses in Singapore.

- **Regulatory Reforms:** India can continue its efforts to improve the ease of doing business by streamlining regulations, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, and enhancing transparency. Establishing dedicated channels for addressing regulatory concerns and engaging in regular dialogues between regulatory bodies of both countries can help address regulatory barriers and improve the business environment.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** Both countries can collaborate on infrastructure development, focusing on improving connectivity through transportation networks, ports, and digital infrastructure. This can be achieved through joint projects, public-private partnerships, and leveraging Singapore's expertise in infrastructure planning and execution.
- **Geopolitical Engagement:** Regular high-level dialogues, strategic consultations, and joint initiatives can help align India's and Singapore's interests in the evolving geopolitical landscape. Strengthening multilateral frameworks, such as ASEAN and the East Asia Summit, can provide platforms for deeper engagement and coordination on regional issues.
- **Defense Cooperation:** Both countries can enhance defense cooperation by expanding joint military exercises, sharing best practices, and collaborating on defense technology development. Regular dialogues, information sharing, and joint capacity-building initiatives can strengthen defense ties and ensure effective maritime security cooperation.
- **Cultural Exchanges:** Encouraging greater people-to-people exchanges, cultural events, and educational collaborations can promote mutual understanding and bridge cultural differences.
- **Regional Engagement:** India and Singapore can explore avenues for cooperation in the ASEAN region, such as joint infrastructure projects, investment initiatives, and capacity-building programs. By aligning their regional strategies and seeking areas of complementarity, both countries can avoid unnecessary competition and work together to promote regional development and stability.

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1927874>

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding the strategic location of Singapore:

1. Singapore is situated at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula in Southeast Asia.
2. Its location provides a vital gateway for India to access the ASEAN region and beyond.
3. Singapore's geographical positioning as a maritime hub influences its role in facilitating

global trade and shaping the Indo-Pacific region.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer:(d)

Q.2 India-Singapore relations have emerged as a significant partnership in recent years. Consider the following statements:

- 1.Singapore is India's largest trading partner in the ASEAN region.
- 2.Both countries share a common interest in promoting maritime security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.
- 3.India and Singapore have collaborated on various infrastructure projects, including the development of industrial parks and smart cities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer:(d)

Q.3 The strategic importance of Singapore in India's foreign policy and regional engagement cannot be understated. Discuss the significance of Singapore as a key partner for India in the Indo-Pacific region. Examine the key dimensions of India-Singapore strategic cooperation of

(15 marks)

General Studies - 3

(Technology, Economic Development, Biodiversity,
Security & Disaster Management)

CODE ON SOCIAL SECURITY, 2020

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Code on Social Security, 2020”. The topic “Code on Social Security, 2020” has relevance in the International Relations section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Code on Social Security, 2020”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is Code on Social Security, 2020?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Indian Economy

What is the significance of Code on Social Security, 2020?

What are the issues with Code on Social Security, 2020?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The recent strike by the employees of the grocery e-commerce website Blinkit has brought into focus the Code on Social Security, 2020.

The employees of Blinkit are gig workers and on strike because of the change in the payment structure. Earlier they were paid a sum of Rs 25 for one ride which is slashed down to Rs. 15 per ride. This has caused uproar in the community leading them to go on strike.

WHAT CODE ON SOCIAL SECURITY, 2020?

The Code on Social Security, 2020, introduced by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, marks a significant milestone in the recognition of gig workers under labour laws.

The salient features of the Code on Social Security 2020 are as follows:

- **Definition of Gig Worker:** According to section 2(35) of the Code, a gig worker refers to an individual who performs work or participates in a work arrangement and earns from such activities outside of a traditional employer-employee relationship.
- **Distinction between the platform and non-platform worker:** Moreover, the Code defines platform work as a work arrangement outside of a conventional employer-employee relationship in which organizations or individuals use an online

platform to access other organizations or individuals to solve specific problems or provide specific services in exchange for payment. On the other hand, non-platform workers include construction workers and non-technology-based temporary workers.

- **Enhanced coverage of Social Security benefits:** The Code has expanded the social security provisions given to regular employees by encompassing the unorganized sector, fixed-term employees, gig workers, platform workers, inter-state migrant workers, and more.
- **Registration of workers:** The Code mandates the compulsory registration of all gig workers and platform workers to avail of the benefits under these schemes.
- **Social Security Fund:** The Code establishes a Social Security Fund to implement social security schemes and provides uniform definitions to determine wages for social security benefits.
- **Penalties:** The Code imposes stringent penalties for non-compliance.

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES WITH CODE ON SOCIAL SECURITY, 2020?

While the code made provisions for social security benefits for gig workers it may not be enough. The reasons are as follows:

- The code mandates the Central and State governments to frame suitable social security schemes for gig workers rather than providing specific benefits. As a result, the extent and quality of the benefits received by gig workers may vary depending on the schemes framed by the respective governments.
- The code has defined the various types of new workers types but there is a lack of specific distinction which can lead to overlap and confusion.
- The Code mandates the registration of all unorganised sector workers, it does not provide for any mechanism to ensure that employers comply with this requirement. This may result in some employers not registering their workers, depriving them of social security benefits.
- The Code mandated the creation of a national database of unorganised sector workers has raised concerns about data privacy and security, as such databases can be prone to misuse and breach of sensitive personal information.
- The code has stringent penalties for non-compliance that may disproportionately affect small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and discourage them from hiring workers. This may hamper job creation and economic growth.

WAY FORWARD

The Code on Social Security 2020 is an initiative in the right direction that aims to safeguard the rights of the new category of workers which are not part of the present statutes. There is a need for a collaborative approach by the center and states to bring clarity in the provisions.

Source:

<https://prsindia.org/billtrack/the-code-on-social-security-2020>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/explained-blinkit-protests-and-the-legal-remedies-available-to-gig-workers/article66784224.ece>

MANIPUR CRISIS

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Manipur crisis”. The topic “Manipur crisis” has relevance in the Security section for the UPSC CSE exam

Relevance of the topic “Manipur crisis”

FOR PRELIMS:

What are the boundary countries of the states in the northeast?

Also, make a note of the capitals of the northeastern states.

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Security issues

What is the Manipur crisis?

What are the reasons?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Army has been called in the state of Manipur which is on fire for a few days. The governor of Manipur also issued the shoot-at-sight order.

WHAT IS THE MANIPUR CRISIS?

- On May 3rd, the All Tribal Students' Union of Manipur (ATSUM) organised a 'Tribal Solidarity March', which led to violent clashes in various parts of Manipur. In response, the Army and Assam Rifles conducted flag marches in the affected areas.
- The march was held to protest against the inclusion of the Meitei community in the state's Scheduled Tribes (ST) list, which was recently supported by an order from the Manipur High Court.
- This long-standing demand has sparked controversy and opposition among certain tribal groups in the state, leading to the clashes during the march.

WHY DOES THE MEITEI COMMUNITY WANT ST STATUS?

1. The petitioners argued that the Meitei community was recognized as a tribe before the merger of the princely state of Manipur with the Union of India in 1949, but lost its status as a tribe after the merger.
2. They contended that granting ST status was necessary to "preserve" the community and protect their ancestral land, culture, and language.

The court acknowledged that the Meitei/Meitei community, along with other unions, has been advocating for their inclusion in the tribe list of Manipur for several years. The court directed the government to review the case of the petitioners and submit a recommendation within four weeks of receiving the order.

WHY ARE TRIBAL GROUPS OPPOSING THIS ORDER?

1. **The dominance of the Meitei community:** Opposition to the demand for ST status for the Meitei community has been strong among the state's tribal groups, who cite the dominance of the Meiteis in population and political representation. With 40 out of 60 Assembly constituencies located in the valley, the Meiteis hold significant sway in state politics.
2. **Economic losses for other communities:** The loss of job opportunities as a result of affirmative actions granted to STs by the Constitution of India.
3. **Language and caste dominance:** Opponents of the demand have also argued that the Manipuri language of the Meiteis is already included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and that sections of the Meitei community, predominantly Hindu, are already classified under Scheduled Castes or Other Backward Classes, granting them access to opportunities associated with that status.
4. **Eviction notices:** The state government's notices since August 2022 declaring 38 villages in the Churachandpur-Khoupum Protected Forest area (in Churachandpur and Noney districts) as "illegal settlements" and their residents as "encroachers"

have been a significant cause of dissatisfaction.

WHAT IS THE WAY FORWARD?

The situation in Manipur is complex, and any way forward would require a multi-faceted approach. Here are some possible steps that could be taken to address the violence in Manipur:

1. **Dialogue:** The government of Manipur, along with representatives from different tribal communities, should initiate a dialogue to address the issues related to the demand for ST status by the Meitei community.
2. **Re-evaluate the demand for ST status:** The demand for ST status by the Meitei community needs to be re-evaluated, taking into account the concerns of the tribal communities.
3. **Land rights:** Land rights have been a contentious issue in Manipur, with many tribal communities claiming that their lands have been taken away from them. The government should address these concerns by formulating policies that protect the land rights of all communities, especially the tribal communities.
4. **Employment opportunities:** The fear of losing job opportunities and other affirmative actions granted to STs by the Constitution of India has been cited as one of the reasons for opposition to the demand for ST status by the Meitei community. The government should formulate policies to ensure that all communities have equal access to employment opportunities.
5. **Addressing the issue of illegal settlements:** The recent notices issued by the state government declaring 38 villages as “illegal settlements” and their residents as “encroachers” have added to the already volatile situation in Manipur. The government should work towards addressing the issue of illegal settlements in a humane and equitable manner.
6. **Promotion of cultural diversity:** The Meitei community, as well as the various tribal communities in Manipur, have a rich cultural heritage. The government should take steps to promote cultural diversity and encourage the preservation of the unique cultural identities of all communities.
7. **Education:** Education is crucial in addressing the issues of discrimination and marginalisation. The government should focus on providing quality education to all communities, especially those living in remote areas.

Overall, a long-term solution to the violence in Manipur would require sustained efforts toward building trust, addressing the concerns of all communities, and promoting social harmony and cultural diversity.

Source:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/manipur-clash-es-meitei-scheduled-tribe-explained-8591158/>

CARBON BORDER ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM (CBAM)

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)”. The topic “Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)” has relevance in the Environment section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)?

What is the impact of this move on Indian exports?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Environmental issues

What is Carbon Tax?

What is the significance of the Carbon tax?

What are the challenges in the implementation of Carbon Tax?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

According to a senior trade official, the Commerce Ministry is considering multiple strategies to address the European Union’s proposed Carbon Tax. These strategies include implementing retaliatory tariffs, lodging a challenge at the World Trade Organisation, and providing assistance to smaller Indian exporters.

WHAT IS CARBON BORDER ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM (CBAM)?

- The Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is a proposed policy by the European Union (EU) that aims to place a carbon price on imported goods from countries outside the EU, which have weaker carbon pricing or climate policies.

- The CBAM is designed to prevent carbon leakage, which occurs when companies move their production to countries with weaker climate policies to avoid paying higher costs for carbon emissions.
- Under the CBAM, importers would be required to purchase carbon credits or pay a carbon tax to compensate for the carbon emissions generated in the production of imported goods.
- The CBAM is intended to ensure a level playing field for companies that have invested in clean technologies and reduced their carbon footprint. The policy is currently under discussion and is expected to be implemented in the EU in 2026.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THIS MOVE ON INDIAN EXPORTS?

- The proposed Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) by the European Union (EU) is expected to impact Indian metal and engineering products' exports to the EU.
- As the CBAM would impose a carbon price on imported goods from countries outside the EU, including India, it could increase the costs of production for Indian exporters and make their products less competitive in the EU market.
- This, in turn, could lead to a decline in exports of Indian metal and engineering products to the EU, affecting the overall trade relationship between India and the EU.
- The Indian government is currently exploring various options, including retaliatory measures and support for smaller exporters, to mitigate the potential impact of the CBAM on Indian exports.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CARBON TAX?

The Carbon tax is significant for the reduction of GHG emissions and also raises revenue for investments in clean technologies.

- **Reduce the GHG emissions:** The tax encourages individuals, businesses, and industries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and shift to cleaner and more sustainable practices.
- **Financial Incentives for Energy Transition:** The carbon tax provides a financial incentive for individuals and businesses to reduce their carbon footprint by using energy-efficient technologies, adopting renewable energy sources, or improving their production processes.
- **Investments for clean technology:** The revenue generated from a carbon tax can also be used to fund initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as

investment in clean energy, public transportation, and climate adaptation measures.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CARBON TAX?

The implementation of a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which is a type of carbon tax on imports, can also face several challenges, including:

- **Complexity:** Implementing a CBAM requires accurate measurement and verification of emissions for each imported product. This can be a complex process, particularly for industries with complex supply chains and diverse production methods.
- **Trade disputes:** The implementation of a CBAM may lead to trade disputes and tensions, particularly if it is seen as protectionist or discriminatory against certain countries or industries.
- **Administrative costs:** The administrative costs of implementing a CBAM can be high, particularly for smaller businesses, which may struggle to comply with the new regulations.
- **Competitiveness concerns:** A CBAM can increase the cost of imported goods, making them less competitive in the domestic market.
- **Unequal distribution of costs:** A CBAM can have differential impacts on different countries and industries, with some being more heavily impacted than others. This can lead to concerns about fairness and the potential for negative impacts on developing countries.

WAY FORWARD

Overall, the implementation of a CBAM requires careful consideration of the various challenges and trade-offs involved, including the potential for trade disputes, administrative costs, and competitiveness concerns. It is important to design and implement the policy in a way that is equitable and takes into account the potential impacts on different countries and industries.

Source:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/02/what-a-carbon-tax-can-do-and-why-it-cannot-do-it-all>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/explained-why-is-the-eus-carbon-border-tax-worrying-other-countries-including-india/article66804351.ece>

NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY DAY

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “National Technology Day”. The topic “National Technology Day” has relevance in the Science and Technology section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “National Technology Day”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is National Technology Day?

When is it celebrated?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Science and Technology

What is the significance of National Technology Day?

What are the achievements made by India in the field of Science and technology?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh led a high-level joint meeting of various Science Ministries and departments to discuss plans for jointly observing National Technology Day on May 11th.

WHAT IS NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY DAY?

National Technology Day is an annual observance in India that commemorates the country's technological achievements and highlights the importance of science and technology in India's growth and development.

The day is celebrated on May 11th every year to mark India's successful nuclear tests in Pokhran on May 11th, 1998, which demonstrated the country's capability to become a nuclear power.

The theme of National Technology Day this year will be “Atal Tinkering Labs”.

WHEN IS IT CELEBRATED?

It is celebrated on May 11th to create a cohesive and unified approach to celebrating the day and highlighting the importance of technology in India's development.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY DAY?

1. **Celebrate the role of technology in our lives:** The day serves as a reminder of the critical role that technology plays in the progress of a nation and encourages the development of new technologies in various fields such as agriculture, health, energy, and defence.
2. **Honour the works of scientists:** The day is also an occasion to honour Indian scientists and engineers who have made significant contributions to the country's technological advancements.

WHAT ARE THE ACHIEVEMENTS MADE BY INDIA IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY?

India has made significant achievements in the field of science and technology in various domains. Here are some notable examples:

1. **Space Technology:** India's space agency, ISRO, has successfully launched numerous satellites and conducted various space missions. Some of the most significant achievements include the Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM), Chandrayaan-1 and 2 missions, and the successful launch of the GSLV MK III, India's heaviest rocket. The Gaganyaan to be launched soon will place Indians in space.
2. **Information Technology:** India's IT sector has grown rapidly in the past few decades and has become a major contributor to the country's economy. The service sector is a major part of the economy. Indian IT companies are globally recognized for their expertise in software development, IT services, and business process outsourcing.
3. **Defence Sector:** India has developed advanced weapon systems making use of the latest technology. The establishment of DRDO has produced a variety of indigenous aircrafts, missile systems etc.
 1. A-SAT mission known as Mission Shakti "killed" a missile in space.
 2. Indians have developed missiles like Prithvi, Agni which are one of the kind in the world.
4. **Nuclear Technology:** India is one of the few countries in the world that has developed nuclear technology indigenously. The country has developed nuclear reactors, nuclear power plants, and nuclear weapons.
5. **Agriculture:** India is one of the world's largest producers of food grains, fruits, and vegetables.
 1. The Green Revolution in the 1960s and 70s saw India become self-sufficient in food production, thanks to the adoption of new agricultural practices and tech-

nologies. It consequently led to India becoming the leading exporter of food grains as well.

6. Healthcare: India has made significant progress in the field of healthcare, particularly in the development of affordable and accessible medical technologies. Some of the notable achievements include

1. Low low-cost medical devices
2. Telemedicine
3. Eradication of polio
4. India holds the title of “the pharmacy of the world” today.
5. Web-based Ayushman Bharat insurance scheme

WAY FORWARD

India continues to invest in research and development in these fields to drive growth and development in the country. India has also launched a series of missions to develop and exploit scientific temper among science enthusiasts. Some of the schemes are as follows:

1. ATAL tinkering labs
2. INSPIRE mission
3. VAJRA scheme
4. Technology-Based Entrepreneurship Development Programme (TEDP)
5. IMPacting Research INnovation and Technology (IMPRINT-2)
6. Aatmanirbhar Bharat ARISE
7. Abdul Kalam Technology Innovation National Fellowship
8. Accelerate Vigyan
9. Access to Knowledge for Technology Development and Dissemination (A2K+)
10. Advanced Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Programme (AHFC)

Source:

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1922495>

SEMICONINDIA FUTUREDESIGN ROADSHOW

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “SemiconIndia FutureDESIGN Roadshow”. The topic “SemiconIndia FutureDESIGN Roadshow” has relevance in the Science and Technology section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “SemiconIndia FutureDESIGN Roadshow”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is SemiconIndia FutureDESIGN Roadshow?

What are semiconductors?

Types of semiconductors

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Science and Technology

What is the role of semiconductors in the electronics industry?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, the Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, will inaugurate the highly anticipated 3rd SemiconIndia futureDESIGN Roadshow at IIT Delhi. This event marks a significant milestone in the ongoing efforts of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) to foster innovation and skill development in the field of semiconductor design.

Under the banner of MeitY, a series of roadshows are being organized across the country with the primary objective of nurturing the next generation of semiconductor designers. These roadshows seek to cultivate a vibrant ecosystem that promotes collaborative development and joint ownership of intellectual properties (IPs), with active participation from industry leaders.

WHAT ARE SEMICONDUCTORS?

Semiconductors are materials that have electrical conductivity between that of a conductor and an insulator. They are used in a wide range of electronic devices and are essential components of modern electronics.

Semiconductors can be pure elements like silicon or germanium, or they can be compounds like gallium arsenide or cadmium selenide. These materials are carefully chosen for their specific properties to perform various functions in electronic devices.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SEMICONDUCTORS IN THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY?

Semiconductors play a critical role in the electronic industry. They are a foundational element in the electronics industry:

- **Fabrication of electronic devices:** They are used to create electronic components such as transistors, diodes, and integrated circuits, which are essential building blocks for electronic devices like computers, smartphones, televisions, and many other consumer electronics.
- **Control the flow of current:** They are used to control the flow of electrical current, which makes them ideal for switching and amplifying electronic signals.
- **Use as sensors:** They can also be used as sensors to detect light, temperature, pressure, and other physical properties.
- **Use in solar cells:** They are used in solar cells to convert sunlight into electrical energy, and in LEDs (light-emitting diodes) to produce light.

WHY IS THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT FOCUSING ON SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING?

- **Promote domestic manufacturing of electronics:** The Indian government is focusing on semiconductor manufacturing as a part of its broader strategy to promote domestic manufacturing as major electronic devices use semiconductors.
- **Reduce the country's dependence on imports:** China is an important semiconductor manufacturing country. India sources its requirements for semiconductors from China. In order to lower the trade deficit and reduce dependence, the Indian government is making a push.
- **Reduce supply chain disruptions:** India being an importing nation is vulnerable to supply chain disruptions caused as a result of trade tensions or geopolitical conflicts.
- **Create self-sufficiency and self-reliance:** This is an effort towards AtmaNirbhar Bharat to attain self-sufficiency in products and processes.
- **Create Employment opportunities:** It is a high-tech and capital-intensive industry that offers high-value job opportunities and generates significant economic benefits.
- **Augment Exports:** India can become a leader in semiconductor manufacturing that can be exported to other countries. This not only earns foreign exchange but also

creates a durable market.

- **Create a thriving ecosystem:** The Indian government hopes to attract investments, boost innovation and R&D, and create a thriving semiconductor industry in the country.
- **Drive economic growth:** All the above processes of growth, employment, and exports can drive higher economic growth.

WHAT ARE GOVERNMENT SCHEMES TO PROMOTE SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING?

The Indian government has launched several schemes and initiatives to promote semiconductor manufacturing in the country. Here are some of the notable ones:

- **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the electronics industry:** It offers incentives to eligible companies that manufacture electronic components and semiconductors in India. The scheme aims to promote domestic manufacturing, reduce import dependence, and increase exports. Under this scheme, the government has allocated a budget of INR 41,000 crore over five years, starting from 2020-21.
- **National Policy on Electronics (NPE):** The NPE is a comprehensive policy framework that aims to make India a global hub for electronics manufacturing. The policy was first introduced in 2012 and was revised in 2019. The policy outlines a roadmap for the development of the electronics industry in the country, with a focus on semiconductor manufacturing.
- **Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme (M-SIPS):** The M-SIPS was launched in 2012 and offers financial incentives to eligible companies that invest in the electronics industry in India. The scheme provides subsidies for capital expenditure, interest on loans, and reimbursement of certain taxes and duties. The M-SIPS scheme has been extended until 2023.
- **Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC) scheme:** The EMC scheme was launched in 2012 and aims to create world-class infrastructure for electronics manufacturing in the country. The scheme provides financial assistance for the establishment of greenfield EMCs and the upgradation of existing industrial estates.

Sources:

[https://www.semiconductors.org/semiconductors-101/
what-is-a-semiconductor/](https://www.semiconductors.org/semiconductors-101/what-is-a-semiconductor/)

SELF-EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Self employment of women”. The topic “Self-employment of women” has relevance in the Economy section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “ODF+ Village”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is the Self-employment of women?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Economy

What is the significance of Self-employment for women?

What are the challenges faced by women in getting employment opportunities?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has praised the efforts towards self employment of women.

WHAT IS THE SELF-EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN?

Self-employment of women refers to the situation where women work for themselves or operate their own businesses rather than being employed by someone else. It involves women taking on the role of entrepreneurs, freelancers, or independent contractors, and being responsible for their own business decisions, income generation, and financial well-being.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN?

The significance of women in labor market increases their contribution and allows their empowerment. It also allows the expansion of the economy when half of the workforce contributes in the economic processes.

1. **Economic Empowerment:** Self-employment allows women to generate their own income and become financially independent.
2. **Flexibility and Work-Life Balance:** Self-employment offers women the flexibility to set their own working hours, which can be beneficial for those juggling multiple responsibilities such as caregiving, parenting, or pursuing further education.
3. **Career Advancement:** Self-employment provides a platform for women to advance their careers on their own terms. They have the freedom to explore their passions, develop their skills, and pursue entrepreneurial ventures.
4. **Overcoming Gender Barriers:** Women often face gender biases and barriers in the traditional job market, including limited opportunities for leadership positions and unequal treatment.
5. **Job Creation and Economic Growth:** Women's self-employment has a positive impact on the broader economy. Women entrepreneurs create jobs, contribute to innovation, and stimulate economic growth.
6. **Empowerment and Confidence:** Self-employment can boost women's self-esteem, confidence, and sense of empowerment. By successfully running their own businesses, women gain a sense of accomplishment, autonomy, and control over their professional lives.
7. **Role Modeling and Inspiration:** Women in self-employment serve as role models and sources of inspiration for other women and girls. Their success stories encourage others to pursue entrepreneurship, challenge societal norms, and believe in their own capabilities.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN IN GETTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES?

Women often face various challenges in accessing employment opportunities, including:

1. **Gender Bias and Discrimination:** Women may encounter bias and discrimination in the hiring process, promotions, and career advancement. Stereotypes and societal expectations can lead to unequal treatment and limited opportunities for women in certain industries or leadership positions.
2. **Pay Gap and Wage Disparity:** Gender pay gaps persist, with women earning less than men for performing the same work. Wage disparities can limit women's financial independence and perpetuate economic inequality.
3. **Lack of Access to Education and Skills Training:** Limited access to quality education

and skills training can hinder women's ability to acquire the necessary qualifications for employment opportunities. Gender-based barriers, such as early marriage or cultural norms, may restrict girls' access to education.

4. **Work-Life Balance Challenges:** Balancing work and family responsibilities, including caregiving and household tasks, can be a significant challenge for women. Limited availability of flexible work arrangements or supportive policies, such as parental leave or affordable childcare, can make it difficult for women to pursue employment opportunities.
5. **Occupational Segregation:** Certain industries and professions are traditionally dominated by one gender, leading to occupational segregation. This can limit women's options and restrict their access to higher-paying or leadership roles.
6. **Lack of Role Models and Mentorship:** Limited visibility of women in leadership positions and a lack of mentors can make it harder for women to navigate career paths and access guidance or support.
7. **Bias in Entrepreneurial Funding:** Women entrepreneurs often face challenges in accessing funding and investment opportunities for their businesses. Gender biases and stereotypes can influence investment decisions, leading to disparities in access to capital.
8. **Workplace Harassment and Hostile Environments:** Women may encounter workplace harassment, including sexual harassment, which creates hostile environments and negatively impacts their well-being and career progression.
9. **Limited Representation in Decision-Making Roles:** Women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles and positions of power can result in policies and practices that do not adequately address women's needs and perspectives.

WHAT ARE THE INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO AID WOMEN IN SELF-EMPLOYMENT?

1. Mudra Loan for Women
2. Annapurna Scheme
3. Stree Shakti Yojana
4. Dena Shakti Scheme
5. Bhartiya Mahila Bank Business Loan
6. Mahila Udyam Nidhi Yojana

7. Orient Mahila Vikas Yojana Scheme

WAY FORWARD

Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive efforts, including promoting gender equality, eliminating bias and discrimination, providing equal access to education and skills training, implementing supportive work policies, and fostering inclusive work environments. Organizations and societies must actively work towards creating equal opportunities for women to thrive in the workforce.

Source:

<https://www.bajajfinservmarkets.in/loans/business-loan/government-schemes-for-women-entrepreneur.html#:~:text=Women%20Empowerment%20Schemes&text=Stree%20Shakti%20Yojana,Mahila%20Udyam%20Nidhi%20Yojana>

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1924357>

1. What is the significance of Self-employment for women? What are the challenges faced by women in gaining employment opportunities?

DELHI AIR QUALITY

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Delhi Air Quality”. The topic “Delhi Air Quality” has relevance in the Environment section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Delhi Air Quality”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is the status of Delhi Air Quality?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Environment

What is Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)?

What are the reasons for the bad air quality in the Delhi region?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The air quality in the Delhi region is expected to improve in the coming days. In the past few days, the region has faced dusty storms coming from Haryana and Rajasthan

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF DELHI AIR QUALITY?

According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), the dust-raising strong winds flowing across Haryana and Delhi have increased particulate matter concentration significantly.

WHAT IS GRADED RESPONSE ACTION PLAN (GRAP)?

The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is an environmental action plan implemented by the Government of India to combat air pollution in the National Capital Region (NCR), which includes Delhi and its neighboring areas.

GRAP was first introduced in 2017 and has since been revised and updated to address the severity of the air pollution problem in the region.

GRAP is designed to take into account the Air Quality Index (AQI) and trigger specific actions based on different levels of air pollution. It consists of a set of measures that are implemented in a graded manner, depending on the severity of pollution levels.

The plan categorizes the AQI into different levels, such as moderate, poor, very poor, severe, and emergency. Each level triggers a specific set of actions to be taken by various government agencies and departments. These actions include:

1. Closure of brick kilns and hot mix plants.
2. Prohibition of garbage burning and strict enforcement of dust control measures at construction sites.
3. Water sprinkling and mechanized road sweeping to reduce dust pollution.
4. Strict enforcement of pollution control measures for industries and power plants.
5. Intensification of public transport services, with a focus on electric vehicles and improving their frequency and capacity.
6. Introduction of odd-even vehicle rationing schemes to reduce vehicular pollution.
7. Implementation of measures to control open burning of agricultural waste and stubble.

8. Introduction of emergency measures, such as banning the entry of trucks into Delhi, closing schools, and enforcing strict action against visibly polluting vehicles.

GRAP is implemented by a task force comprising representatives from various government agencies, including the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), and other concerned departments. The task force regularly monitors the air quality and recommends appropriate actions based on the pollution levels.

WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THE BAD AIR QUALITY IN THE DELHI REGION?

There are several reasons for the poor air quality in the Delhi region. These factors contribute to the high levels of air pollution and the formation of a thick layer of smog during certain times of the year. Some of the main reasons for the bad air quality in Delhi include:

1. **Vehicular Emissions:** The rapid increase in the number of vehicles on the roads of Delhi has led to a significant rise in vehicular emissions.
2. **Industrial Pollution:** The industrial activities in and around Delhi contribute to air pollution.
3. **Construction and Dust Pollution:** Construction activities generate a significant amount of dust, contributing to air pollution.
4. **Agricultural Activities and Stubble Burning:** In the neighboring states of Delhi, such as Punjab and Haryana, agricultural activities like stubble burning after harvest season contribute to air pollution in the region.
5. **Waste Burning:** Open burning of garbage, waste, and biomass releases pollutants into the air. Waste burning is a common practice in some areas, and the resulting emissions worsen air quality.
6. **Geography and Weather Conditions:** Delhi's geographical location and weather conditions exacerbate the problem of air pollution.
7. **Cooking and Biomass Fuel:** In many households, especially in rural areas and slums, traditional cooking methods that use biomass fuels such as wood, crop residues, and cow dung emit smoke and pollutants indoors. The resulting indoor air pollution can also have an impact on outdoor air quality when doors and windows are opened.

Source:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1924559>

SAGAR PARIKRAMA YATRA

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Sagar Parikrama Yatra”. The topic “Sagar Parikrama Yatra” has relevance in the Economy section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Sagar Parikrama Yatra”

FOR PRELIMS:

What is Sagar Parikrama Yatra?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Economy

What is the significance of the fisheries sector in India?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala launches Sagar Parikrama Yatra Phase-V.

WHAT IS SAGAR PARIKRAMA YATRA?

The program entails a navigational expedition that will traverse across all coastal states and union territories, following a predetermined sea route. Its primary objective is to showcase solidarity with fisherfolk, fish farmers, and other stakeholders associated with the fisheries sector.

Sagar Parikrama Yatra aims to resolve the issues of the fishermen and stakeholders and for their economic upliftment

The main objectives of the program are to disseminate information about various fisheries-related schemes and programs, promote responsible fisheries with a focus on sustainable balance, and protection of marine ecosystems.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FISHERIES SECTOR IN INDIA?

The fisheries sector holds significant importance in India for several reasons:

1. **Food Security:** Fisheries contribute significantly to the country's food security by providing a substantial portion of the animal protein in the diet of many Indians. It

serves as a vital source of affordable and nutritious food, especially for coastal communities.

2. **Livelihood and Employment:** The fisheries sector is a major source of livelihood and employment, particularly for coastal communities and those residing near inland water bodies. It supports the livelihoods of millions of fishers, fish farmers, and individuals engaged in ancillary activities such as processing, trading, and transportation.
3. **Economic Contribution:** Fisheries contribute to India's economy by generating revenue through export of seafood products. India is one of the world's largest exporters of seafood, and the sector plays a crucial role in earning foreign exchange.
4. **Rural Development:** The fisheries sector plays a key role in rural development by fostering economic growth and reducing poverty in coastal and rural areas. It helps in the upliftment of communities by providing income-generating opportunities and supporting local economic activities.
5. **Ecological Balance:** The fisheries sector contributes to maintaining the ecological balance of aquatic ecosystems. Sustainable fishing practices, conservation efforts, and protection of marine habitats are essential to preserve biodiversity and ensure the long-term viability of fishery resources.
6. **Blue Economy Potential:** India has a vast coastline, numerous rivers, lakes, and reservoirs, offering significant potential for the development of a robust blue economy. The fisheries sector, along with related activities like aquaculture, mariculture, and seafood processing, contributes to the growth of the blue economy, promoting sustainable economic development and innovation.

Given these factors, the fisheries sector in India plays a crucial role in ensuring food security, livelihoods, economic growth, rural development, and ecological sustainability.

Source:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1925072>

NAXALISM

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "NAXALISM". The topic "NAXALISM" has relevance in the Internal Security, Social Justice section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of NAXALISM

FOR PRELIMS:

Where did the attack occur?

What is NAXALISM?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: internal security

Challenges of NAXALISM?

Government efforts?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Recently, there was one of the biggest attacks by Maoists in **Dantewada, Chhattisgarh** in two years. Officials say they lack proper technology to detect IEDs while Naxals have been avoiding direct combat.

WHAT IS NAXALISM?

Naxalism, also known as **Maoism or Left-wing extremism**, is an ideology and movement that originated in the **late 1960s in the Naxalbari village of West Bengal, India**. It takes its name from the Naxalbari uprising, which was led by radical communist groups. Naxalism is characterized by armed struggle, radical land reforms, and the establishment of a communist society through a so-called protracted people's war. **Central and eastern regions of India**, including states like **Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, and parts of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Telangana**, are the areas most affected by Naxalism.

CHALLENGES OF NAXALISM:

Social and Economic Inequality: Naxalism thrives in areas where there is widespread socio-economic disparity and the absence of basic amenities. Issues such as land redistribution, resource exploitation, and lack of development contribute to the grievances that fuel Naxalite ideology and attract support from marginalized communities.

Persistent Insurgency: Naxalism continues to thrive in certain regions of India. The

movement's ability to recruit cadres and carry out armed attacks poses a significant challenge to law and order and disrupts development activities.

Security Forces' Capacity: The armed nature of the Naxalite movement demands a well-trained and well-equipped security apparatus capable of dealing with guerrilla warfare tactics. The security forces face challenges such as inadequate intelligence, difficult terrain, and asymmetric warfare strategies employed by the Naxalites.

Infrastructural Development: Naxalism often impedes infrastructure development in affected areas, including roads, railways, and power projects.

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS:

Security Operations: The government has launched several joint operations by central and state security forces to combat Naxalism.

Development Initiatives: The government has implemented development programs and welfare schemes targeting Naxal-affected regions.

Community Engagement: Engaging with local communities is vital to win their trust, address their grievances, and prevent their alienation from mainstream society.

Legal and Judicial Reforms: The government has enacted special laws and provisions to tackle Naxalism effectively. Expedited trials, witness protection, and rehabilitation programs for surrendered Naxalites are some of the measures adopted to ensure the rule of law and promote the reintegration of former insurgents.

Source:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/foiling-ied-attacks-in-south-bastar-region-of-chhattisgarh-last-major-challenge-for-anti-naxal-ops-officials/article66782549.ece>

Q.1 Which of the following statements regarding Naxalism in India is/are correct? Select the correct option(s).

1. Naxalism is an armed movement that originated in Naxalbari village of West Bengal.
2. Naxalism primarily thrives in socio-economically marginalized areas with grievances related to land distribution and social inequality.
3. The Indian government views Naxalism as a significant internal security threat and has taken various measures to counter it.
4. Naxalism is a right-wing extremist ideology inspired by religious fundamentalism.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1, 2, and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2, and 4 only

Answer: (b)

Q.2 Which of the following statements regarding Naxalism in India is/are correct? Select the correct option(s).

- 1:** Naxalism emerged as a political ideology in the early 20th century with its roots in the nationalist movement against British colonial rule.
- 2:** Naxalism is primarily concentrated in urban areas and metropolitan cities in India.
- 3:** Naxalism aims to address socio-economic disparities and grievances through armed struggle and radical land reforms.
- 4:** Naxalism is a religious extremist movement influenced by radical Islamist ideology.

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 3, and 4 only

Answer (b)

Q.3 “Discuss the socio-economic and political factors contributing to the rise and persistence of Naxalism in India. Analyze the implications of the Naxalite movement on internal security, development, and governance. Suggest effective strategies to address the root causes of Naxalism and restore peace and stability in affected regions.” (15 marks).

RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Renewable Energy Schemes”. The topic “Renewable Energy Schemes” has relevance in the Economy section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic “Renewable Energy Schemes”

FOR PRELIMS:

What are the Renewable Energy Schemes?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Environment

What is the status of Renewable Energy installation in India?

What is the significance of Renewable Energy?

Way Forward

WHY IN THE NEWS?

MNRE holds Review Meetings with States/ UTs on the Progress of Renewable Energy Schemes/ Capacities

WHAT ARE THE RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES?

- **Solar Parks Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) Scheme**
- The PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan) Scheme is designed to provide energy security to farmers in India while also fulfilling the country’s commitment to increase the proportion of electricity generated from non-fossil fuel sources.
- By 2030, the scheme aims to achieve a 40% share of installed capacity from clean energy sources, aligning with India’s Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to combat climate change.
- This initiative promotes the use of solar power, including the installation of solar pumps, solar grid-connected power plants, and solarization of existing agricultural pumps, thereby reducing farmers’ reliance on traditional energy sources and enhancing their livelihoods.

COMPONENTS:

- Component-A: For Setting up of 10,000 MW of Decentralized Grid Connected Renewable Energy Power Plants on barren land.
- Component-B: For Installation of 17.50 Lakh stand-alone solar agriculture pumps.
- Component-C: For Solarisation of 10 Lakh Grid Connected Agriculture Pumps.

ROOFTOP SOLAR PROGRAMME

- It aims to promote the adoption of solar energy systems on rooftops of buildings. It encourages individuals, communities, and businesses to install solar panels on their rooftops to generate clean and renewable electricity.
- The Rooftop Solar Programme offers various incentives and support mechanisms to facilitate the installation of rooftop solar systems.

NATIONAL GREEN HYDROGEN MISSION

- It is aimed at promoting the production, deployment, and utilization of green hydrogen as an alternative energy source.
- Green hydrogen is produced by using renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, to electrolyze water and separate hydrogen from oxygen.

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY INSTALLATION IN INDIA?

- The Renewable Energy capacity of 172 GW has already been installed and close to 129 GW is either under implementation or has been tendered.
- Thus, the total installed capacity would be 301 GW, which leaves approximately 200 GW capacity to be added in order to achieve the target of 500 GW capacity from non-fossil fuels.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY?

1. **Climate Change Mitigation:** It has the ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Unlike fossil fuels, renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal do not release significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other pollutants during electricity generation.
2. **Energy Security and Independence:** Renewable energy diversifies the energy mix and reduces dependence on fossil fuel imports.
3. **Air Quality Improvement:** Renewable energy sources produce clean energy, which

helps improve air quality and reduces respiratory and other health-related issues associated with fossil fuel pollution.

4. Sustainable Economic Development: Investments in renewable energy projects, manufacturing, installation, and maintenance create employment across various skill levels.
5. Resource Efficiency: Renewable energy sources utilize naturally replenishing resources, such as sunlight, wind, and water, which are virtually inexhaustible.
6. Rural Electrification and Energy Access: Renewable energy technologies, such as off-grid solar systems and mini-grids, offer cost-effective solutions for electrifying remote and rural areas that are not connected to the centralized grid.

Source:

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1926777>

QUESTION FOR PRELIMS

Q.1 Which of the following is not a component of the PM KUSUM scheme:

1. Decentralized Grid-Connected Renewable Energy Power Plants
2. Solar agriculture pumps
3. Solarisation of Grid Connected Agriculture Pumps.
4. Green Energy Corridor.

Answer: (d)

Q.2 Consider the following pairs:

Types of Hydrogen	Process of formation
Green Hydrogen	It is produced from an electrochemical reaction that splits water into its components of hydrogen and oxygen, emitting zero-carbon dioxide in the process.
Grey Hydrogen	It is generated through electrolysis powered by nuclear energy.
Pink Hydrogen	It is created from natural gas, or methane, using steam methane reformation but without capturing the greenhouse gases made in the process.

Select the correct pair from the options given above:

Answer: (a)

QUESTION FOR MAINS EXAMINATION

Q.1 India has significantly increased its renewable energy generation capacity. What are the government initiatives being taken to enhance the renewable energy generation capacity of India? Discuss.

HEATWAVE

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Heatwave”. The topic “Heatwave” has relevance in the Environment and Disaster Management section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of Heatwave

FOR PRELIMS:

What is a heatwave?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Environment, Disaster Management.

Why heatwave frequency is increasing?

What are the Implications of Heatwaves?

Remedial Measures to be taken?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Heatwaves warning has been issued in parts of north and central India. With temperatures touching 45 degree Celsius in parts of northwest India on Sunday, the Indian Meteorological Department has issued fresh heatwave warnings over Delhi-NCR and the nearby areas.

WHAT IS A HEATWAVE?

- A Heatwave is a period of abnormally high temperatures, more than the normal maximum temperature that occurs during the summer season in the parts of India. Heat Waves typically occur between March and June.
- Heatwaves need not be considered till the maximum temperature of a station reaches at least 40°C for Plains and at least 30°C for Hilly regions.
- When the normal maximum temperature of a station is less than or equal to 40°C

Heat Wave Departure from normal is 5°C to 6°C, Severe Heat Wave Departure from normal is 7°C or more.

WHY HEATWAVE FREQUENCY IS INCREASING?

- **Climate Change:** One of the primary factors contributing to the more frequent occurrence of heatwaves is climate change. As greenhouse gas concentrations, such as carbon dioxide, continue to rise in the atmosphere, the Earth's average temperature increases.
- **Amplified Weather Patterns:** Climate change can also alter weather patterns, resulting in atmospheric conditions that favor the occurrence of heatwaves.
- **Urban Heat Island Effect:** Urban areas with dense buildings, concrete, and asphalt tend to absorb and retain more heat, creating localized heat islands. This effect exacerbates heatwave conditions in urban environments.
- **Land Use Changes:** Modifications to the land surface, such as deforestation or urbanization, can affect local climate conditions. These changes can alter surface albedo (reflectivity), disrupt natural cooling processes, and increase the retention of heat.
- **Natural Climate Variability:** Alongside long-term climate change, natural climate variability, such as El Niño and La Niña events, can influence the occurrence of heatwaves.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF HEATWAVES?

- **Human Health Impact:** Heatwaves pose a severe risk to human health. Exposure to extreme heat can lead to heat-related illnesses, including heat exhaustion, heatstroke, and dehydration. Vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, children
- **Agricultural and Food Security:** Heatwaves can have detrimental effects on agriculture and food security. High temperatures can cause crop failure, reduced crop yields, and damage to livestock. Heat stress on plants can disrupt photosynthesis and lead to water shortages, affecting crop quality and quantity.
- **Water Resources and Drought:** Heatwaves exacerbate drought conditions by increasing evaporation rates, reducing water availability, and intensifying water scarcity.
- Higher temperatures contribute to the depletion of surface water bodies and groundwater resources, affecting agriculture, ecosystems, and human water supplies.
- **Ecosystem Disruption:** Heatwaves can disrupt ecosystems and biodiversity. In-

creased temperatures and water scarcity can lead to the loss of habitat, reduced biodiversity, and alterations in species distribution.

- **Social and Economic Impacts:** Heatwaves can have wide-ranging social and economic impacts. Decreased worker productivity, increased absenteeism, and reduced outdoor economic activities are some of the consequences of extreme heat on economies.

REMEDIAL MEASURES TO BE TAKEN?

Mitigating Climate Change:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Promote afforestation and reforestation
- Support to clean technologies

Adaptation Measures:

- Enhance urban planning
- Improve building design
- Implement early warning systems
- Provide heatwave relief and cooling centers
- Enhance public health measures

International Cooperation:

- Collaborate on climate change initiatives
- Share knowledge and best practices
- Provide support to developing nations

Source:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-heatwave-weather-update-may-22-8621988/>

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding heatwaves:

- 1: Heatwaves are prolonged periods of excessively hot weather, characterized by high temperatures and often accompanied by high humidity.

- 2: Heatwaves primarily occur due to natural climate variability and are not influenced by human activities.
- 3: Urban areas are more prone to the urban heat island effect, which exacerbates the intensity and duration of heatwaves.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 Only
- (b) 1 and 2 Only
- (c) 1 and 3 Only
- (d) 1, 2, and 3

Answer:(c)

Q.2 Which of the following statements regarding urban heat island (UHI) is/are correct?

- 1: UHI refers to the phenomenon where urban areas experience higher temperatures compared to surrounding rural areas due to human activities and urbanization.
- 2: High concentration of materials such as concrete and asphalt, reduced vegetation cover, and waste heat from buildings and vehicles does not have a significant contribution in UHI effect.
- 3: UHI can have various negative impacts, including increased energy consumption, heightened heat-related illnesses, reduced air quality, and altered precipitation patterns.

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

Answer:(b)

Q.3"Examine the role of mitigation and adaptation strategies in combating the increasing frequency and intensity of heatwaves, highlighting their importance in ensuring resilience and minimizing the socio-economic and environmental consequences."

(15 marks)

NEW PARLIAMENT

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “New Parliament”. The topic “New Parliament” has relevance in the Current Affairs section for the UPSC CSE exam.

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC “NEW PARLIAMENT”

FOR PRELIMS:

What are the features of the New Parliament?

FOR MAINS:

What was the need of the Indian Parliament?

What is the significance of the New Parliament?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Prime Minister of India recently inaugurated the new Parliament building.

WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT?

- **Marker of Indian Heritage:** The building is a manifestation of Indian Art and Culture. Various symbols and murals used in the building are symbolic of Indian heritage. Also, the houses are themed on national symbols. For example, the Lok Sabha is themed on the National bird Peacock and Rajya Sabha is themed on National Flower Lotus.
 - Large spacious building: The parliament is built in 63000 sq.km.
 - Spacious Legislative Chambers:
- Lok Sabha Capacity: 888 seats (can accommodate 1272 members for the Joint Session)
- Rajya Sabha Capacity: 384 seats.
- Divyang Friendly.
- Sophisticated Sound System.
- Platinum Green rating environmentally friendly building.

WHAT WAS THE NEED OF THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT?

- Increase in the parliamentary activities and the number of people working therein and visitors have increased manifold.
- New constructions and modifications have been done in an ad-hoc manner.
- Reduced the natural light in the halls of two houses of the Parliament.

- Lack of current requirements in terms of space, amenities, and technology.
- Narrow Seating Space for MPs.
- The seating arrangements are cramped and cumbersome, with no desks beyond the second row.
- Distressed Infrastructure.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PARLIAMENT IN DEMOCRACY?

Parliament plays a vital role in a democracy as it represents the voice of the people and serves as the central institution for making laws, ensuring accountability, and promoting public discourse. It serves as a platform for citizens to elect their representatives who will voice their concerns, opinions, and interests.

One of the key significances of Parliament is its legislative function. It is responsible for drafting, debating, and passing laws that govern the country. These laws cover various aspects of society, including social, economic, and political issues. The legislative process allows for diverse perspectives to be considered, ensuring that decisions are made collectively and in the best interest of the nation.

Parliament also serves as a check on the government's power. It provides a platform for opposition parties and members to question, challenge, and scrutinise the policies and actions of the ruling government. This oversight function ensures transparency, and accountability, and prevents any abuse or misuse of power by the executive branch.

Furthermore, Parliament acts as a forum for public debate and discussion. It allows different political ideologies, views, and interests to be represented and debated openly. This open discourse promotes inclusivity, pluralism, and encourages the exchange of ideas, leading to informed decision-making.

Another significant role of Parliament is representing the interests of the people. Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected by the citizens, and they are responsible for voicing the concerns, aspirations, and needs of their constituents. They act as a bridge between the government and the citizens, conveying their grievances and advocating for their rights.

Parliament also plays a crucial role in maintaining social harmony and resolving conflicts. It provides a platform for different groups, communities, and regions to express their grievances and seek redressal through democratic means. By addressing these concerns and providing a space for dialogue, Parliament helps in fostering unity, cooperation, and peaceful resolution of disputes.

In summary, Parliament is significant in a democracy as it ensures representation, accountability, and the rule of law. It serves as a legislative body, a check on government power, a forum for public debate, and a platform for addressing the concerns of the people. Its existence strengthens democratic principles and upholds the rights and interests of the citizens it represents.

QUESTION FOR PRELIMS

Q.1. Consider the following statements about New Indian Parliament:

1. The new Indian Parliament has a central hall for the joint sessions.
2. The Lok Sabha Chamber is themed on the Lotus flower and Rajya Sabha Chamber is themed on the Peacock bird.

Which of the following statements is/are *not* correct?

1. 1 only
2. 2 only
3. Both 1 and 2
4. Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: (c)

Q.2. Parliament plays a vital role in a democracy. In this context consider the following statements :

1. Parliament is a forum for the representatives of the public to voice their grievances and demand accountability from the government in power.
2. In a parliamentary setup, the legislators are accountable to the council of ministers.
3. The Prime Minister comes before the Speaker of Lok Sabha in the order of Precedence.
4. Under Article 79 of the Indian Constitution, the Parliament comprises both the houses i.e. Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha only.

Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. 1 only
2. 1 and 3 only
3. 3 only

4. 1, 3, and 4 only

ANSWER: (d)

QUESTION FOR MAINS EXAMINATION

1. Explain the reasons for the decline in the functioning of the Indian Parliament. What measures should be taken to improve the performance of the Parliament?

PRADHAN MANTRI MATSYA SAMPADA YOJNA (PMMSY)

This article covers “Daily Current Affairs” and the topic details “Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna”. The topic “Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna” has relevance in the Food Production and Food Processing for the UPSC CSE exam.

RELEVANCE:

FOR PRELIMS:

What is PMMSY?

FOR MAINS:

GS 3: Food production and processing

Significance of PMMSY?

Overview of the Fisheries sector in India.

Challenges in the Fisheries sector in India?

Efforts required to address the challenges?

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Under The Flagship Scheme PMMSY Seven Major Field Studies Are Being Carried Out By National Productivity Council.

WHAT IS PMMSY?

PMMSY, launched in 2020 by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, is a flagship scheme of the Government of India launched to boost the sustainable development of the fisheries sector. The scheme aims to enhance fish production and productivity, increase the incomes of fishers and fish farmers, create employment opportunities, and improve the resilience of the fisheries sector.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PMMSY?

- **Sustainable development of the fisheries sector:** The scheme focuses on promoting sustainable and responsible fishing practices, conservation of aquatic resources, and the protection of the environment.
- **Modernizing and strengthening the fisheries infrastructure:** PMMSY aims to upgrade and develop the fisheries infrastructure including fishing harbors, fish landing centers, fish markets, fish processing units, cold chains, and transportation facilities.
- **Increasing fish production and productivity:** The scheme aims to enhance fish production by promoting activities such as pisciculture, aquaculture, deep-sea fishing, and mariculture. It encourages the adoption of modern techniques and best practices for increased productivity.
- **Promoting entrepreneurship and livelihood opportunities:** PMMSY provides support for the establishment of fish farms, hatcheries, and other aquaculture ventures. It aims to create employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers in the fisheries sector.
- **Fisheries management and regulatory framework:** The scheme focuses on strengthening the fisheries management system by promoting effective governance, regulation, and enforcement of fishing laws. It also aims to promote research and development in the fisheries sector.
- **Social, economic, and gender inclusiveness:** PMMSY aims to ensure the inclusiveness and participation of marginalized and vulnerable sections of society, including women, in the fisheries value chain. It encourages the formation of self-help groups and cooperatives for better access to resources and markets.

OVERVIEW OF FISHERIES SECTOR IN INDIA:

Contribution to the economy:

- The fisheries sector contributes to India's GDP and provides livelihoods to millions of people.
- India is one of the largest producers of fish globally, both from inland and marine sources.
- In 2019-20, the total fish production in India was around 13.42 million metric tonnes.

Employment generation:

- The fisheries sector is a major source of employment, particularly for coastal communities and rural areas.
- It provides direct and indirect employment to over 16 million people, including fishers, fish farmers, processors, traders, and other related workers.

Export potential:

- India is a significant exporter of fish and fishery products, contributing to foreign exchange earnings.
- Major export products include frozen shrimp, fish fillets, fishmeal, and canned fish.
- India's seafood exports reached a record high of USD 7.08 billion in 2019-20.

Inland fisheries:

- Inland fisheries, including freshwater aquaculture and capture fisheries, contribute significantly to fish production.
- India has vast water resources, including rivers, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, and canals, which support inland fisheries.
- In 2019-20, inland fish production accounted for around 66% of the total fish production in India.

Marine fisheries:

- The Indian coastline spans about 8,118 kilometers and supports a vibrant marine fisheries sector.
- The marine fisheries sector includes both artisanal and mechanized fishing operations.
- Key marine fish species caught include mackerel, sardines, anchovies, tuna, and prawns.

CHALLENGES IN THE FISHERIES SECTOR IN INDIA?

- **Overfishing and unsustainable fishing practices:** Overfishing, particularly in coastal areas, has depleted fish stocks and disrupted the ecological balance. The use of destructive fishing techniques such as bottom trawling and dynamite fishing further exacerbates the problem.
- **Lack of modern infrastructure and technology:** The fisheries sector in India suffers from inadequate infrastructure, including fishing harbors, cold storage facilities, and processing units. The lack of modern technology and equipment hampers productivity and value addition.
- **Insufficient post-harvest and value addition infrastructure:** The absence of proper post-harvest and value addition infrastructure results in significant post-harvest losses. Inadequate cold chain facilities and processing units lead to spoilage and reduced quality of fish products.
- **Limited access to credit and insurance:** Small-scale fishers and fish farmers often face challenges in accessing formal credit and insurance services. This hinders their ability to invest in modern equipment, infrastructure, and sustainable practices.
- **Inadequate research and development:** The fisheries sector in India requires focused research and development to address issues such as breeding, disease

management, feed technology, and sustainable aquaculture practices. Insufficient investment in research and development limits progress in these areas.

- **Climate change and environmental degradation:** Climate change impacts, such as rising sea temperatures, ocean acidification, and coastal erosion, affect fish habitats and migration patterns. Environmental degradation, including pollution and habitat destruction, further diminishes fish populations and disrupts ecosystems.

EFFORTS REQUIRED TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES?

- **Sustainable fishing practices:** Promote and enforce sustainable fishing practices such as regulating fishing seasons, implementing catch limits, promoting responsible fishing techniques, and banning destructive practices like bottom trawling and dynamite fishing.
- **Modernization of infrastructure and technology:** Invest in the development and modernization of fishing harbors, landing centers, storage facilities, processing units, and cold chains. Upgrade fishing vessels with better technology and equipment.
- **Post-harvest and value addition infrastructure:** Improve post-harvest infrastructure, including cold storage facilities, ice plants, and processing units. Establish quality control measures and encourage value addition activities like fish processing, packaging, and product diversification to minimize post-harvest losses and enhance the value of fish products.
- **Access to credit and insurance:** Facilitate easy access to formal credit and insurance services for fishers and fish farmers. Promote financial literacy and capacity building to improve financial management skills.
- **Research and development:** Strengthen research and development activities in the fisheries sector. Invest in scientific research to improve breeding techniques, disease management, feed technology, and sustainable aquaculture practices.
- **Climate change resilience:** Develop strategies to enhance the resilience of the fisheries sector to climate change. This includes monitoring and addressing the impacts of climate change on fish habitats, promoting climate-smart practices, supporting climate-resilient infrastructure development, and facilitating adaptation measures for fishers and fish farmers.
- **Market linkages and price stability:** Establish transparent and efficient market linkages for fishers and fish farmers. Strengthen market infrastructure, encourage the formation of producer groups, cooperatives, and self-help groups to improve bargaining power.

Source:

<https://www.outlookindia.com/outlook-spotlight/under-the-flagship-scheme-pmmsy-seven-major-field-studies-are-being-carried-out-by-national-productivity-council-news-287094>

Q.1 Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY):

- 1: PMMSY is a flagship scheme launched by the Government of India to enhance fish production, promote modern fishing practices, and ensure sustainable development of the fisheries sector in the country.
- 2: The scheme aims to provide financial assistance to fish farmers, fishers, and fish entrepreneurs for the construction of fishing harbors, fish landing centers, cold storage facilities, and fish processing units.
- 3: PMMSY focuses solely on freshwater fisheries and does not include any provisions for the development of marine fisheries or coastal aquaculture.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer (a)

Q.2 Consider the following statements regarding the fisheries sector in India:

- 1: The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) is responsible for the regulation and promotion of the marine products export industry in India.
- 2: The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) is the nodal agency for fishery development in India, focusing primarily on the inland fisheries sector.
- 3: The Blue Revolution is an initiative launched by the Government of India to enhance the productivity and profitability of the fisheries sector in the country.

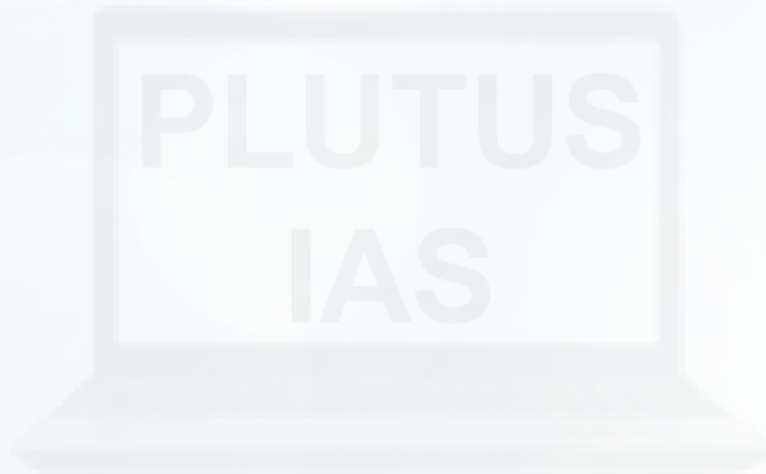
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b)

Q.3 “Discuss the challenges and potential of the fisheries sector in India, and examine the measures needed to promote sustainable development and enhance the socio-economic well-being of fishing communities. Support your answer with suitable examples and policy recommendations.”

(15 marks)





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