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**UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)**

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**India's Maritime Security**GS-II | 01 August, 2020

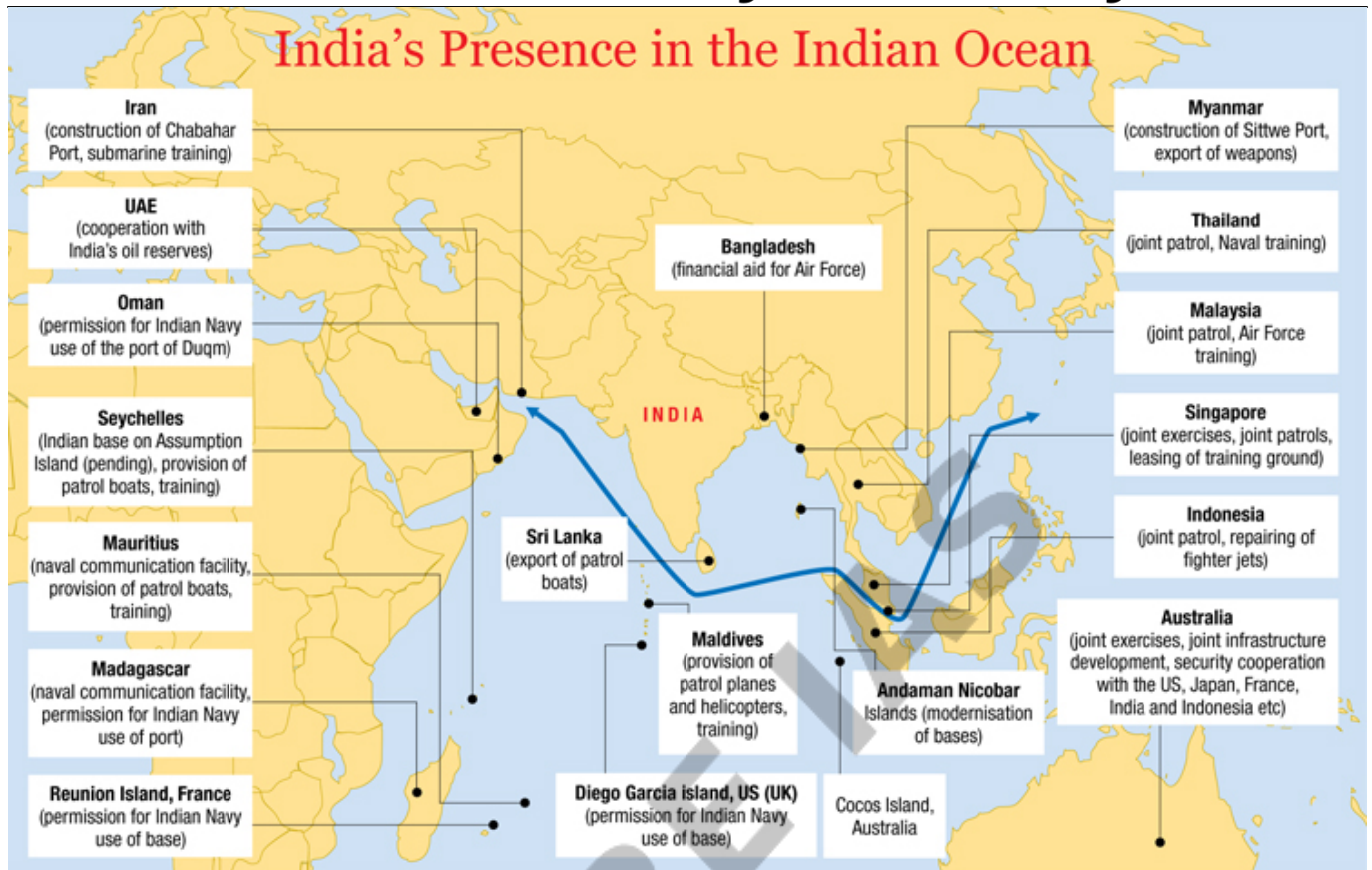
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**India's Maritime Security****GS-paper-2 International affairs – Indian Ocean**

Amid recent clashes between India and China over **Galwan valley**, Indian Prime Minister, while addressing the armed forces, held that the **"era of expansionism is over"**. This signalled India's stance that it will not abide by the Chinese Aggressive posture at the **LAC**.

ASPIRE IAS

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In this context, it is argued by many foreign policy experts that India should counter China not only in land frontiers but also in the maritime domain. Thus, there is a need for a comprehensive maritime doctrine for India.

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### India's Stakes in Maritime Domain

**Security Imperative:** Apart from China's aggressive posture around land borders, its military presence is growing in the Indian Ocean too. This can be depicted by the strategy of **String of pearls**.

\*\*\*Further, **China is modernising its military base at Djibouti, an artificial island in the Maldives and there are similar reports regarding Gwadar port in Pakistan.**

**Geo-Economics of Indian Oceans:** Geopolitics is entwined with geoeconomics and its focus on matters of control and access to economic resources.

- India's exports and imports remained mostly across the shipping lanes of the Indian Ocean. Consequently, secure Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) have been a key security issue for India in the twenty-first century.
- In addition, the **Central Indian Ocean Basin** became the scene for deep sea exploration and licences for scarce mineral resources.

**India's Geo-strategic Location:** India is centrally located between the eastern and western stretches of the Indian Ocean, thereby able to deploy naval forces in both directions more easily than other littoral states in the Indian Ocean.

- This maritime can be reflected by **Milan naval exercises**.
- Milan essentially became a political statement and networking exercise, showing India's ability to take an active and leading role towards other Indo-Pacific states, unaffected by the presence of larger outside powers like the United States or China

### PT SHOT

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### Conclusion

**Establishing Sagar Panchayat:** India can collaborate with Indian Ocean Rim countries to establish the common good order at sea. Given India's geostrategic

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location, it could sherpa a cluster of Indo-Pacific nations into a “sagar panchayat” and uphold the rule of law at sea.

**Strategic Alignment:** In order to secure Sea Lanes of Communication, enhancing interoperability at sea, intelligence- sharing and maintaining freedom of navigation, India should work together with like-minded nations.

In this context, the four-nation **Quad** (United States, Japan, Australia and India) is a work in progress. This grouping can be expanded by including **ASEAN nations**.

**Developing Blue-water Naval Capabilities:** Given India's stakes in Indian ocean, it is very significant for India to develop blue-water naval capabilities. Apart from developing indigenous naval capacity, there is a need to push for development of three aircraft carrier groups, one for each Command, and set to operate in western, southern, and eastern quadrants of the Indian Ocean.

**Exploiting China's Maritime Vulnerability:** Though China has shown aggressive posture in the **South China Sea** and as well as Indian ocean, it has been anxious about its vulnerability at sea — or what is referred to as the Malacca dilemma. Taking this in cognizance, India should develop sea-denial capability mainly at choke points in Indian ocean such as Strait of Hormuz, Bab-el-Mandeb, Strait of Malacca.

### Sea-Denial Capability

Sea denial is a military term describing attempts to deny the enemy's ability to use the sea without necessarily attempting to control the sea for its own use.

The simultaneous rise of India and China is an important paradigm shift in the international system. This new paradigm shift will require India to focus on not only land boundaries but also maritime security.

**FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
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Source: WEB

## SAGAR: Indian Ocean

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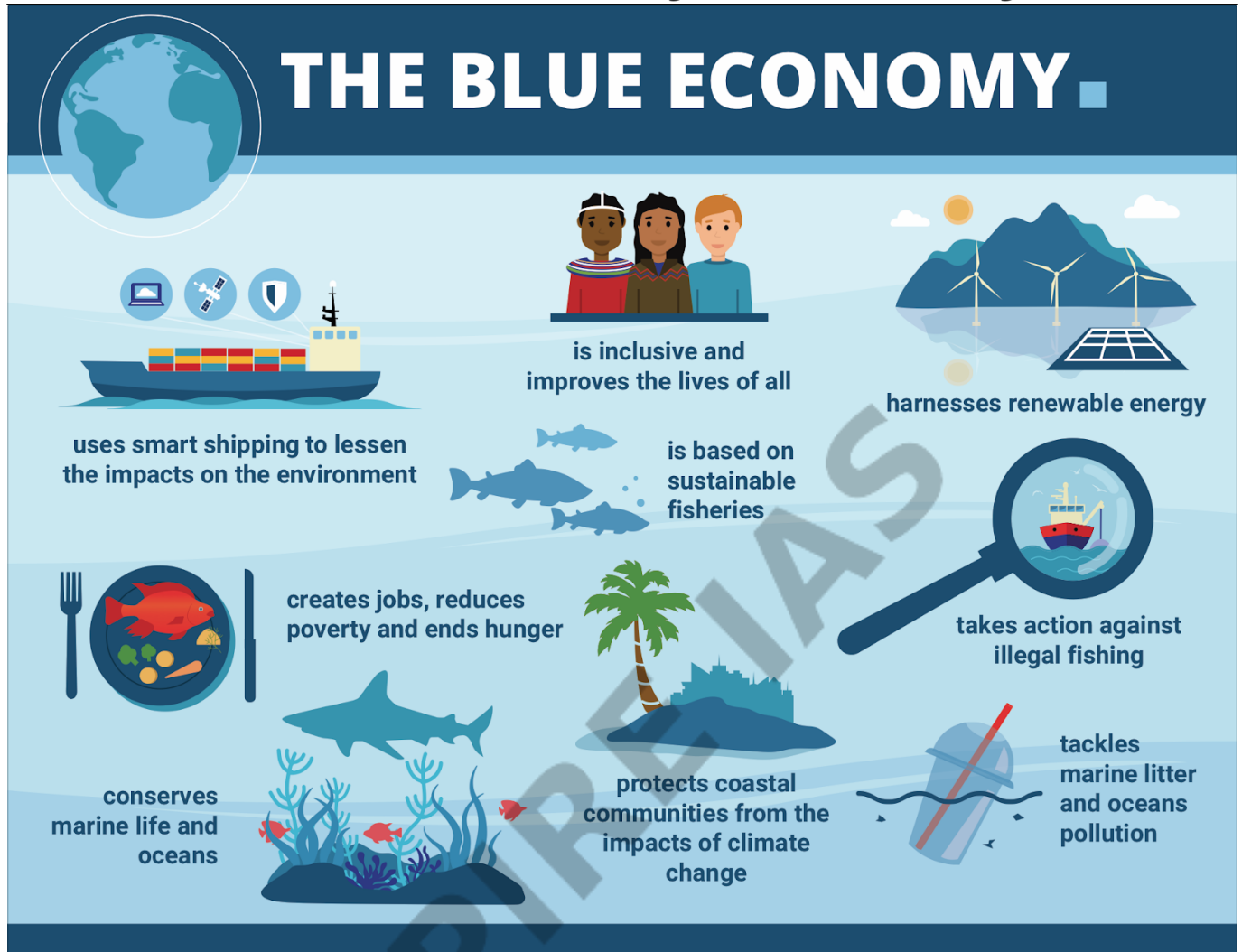
### SAGAR: Indian Ocean

#### GS-PAPER-2 India Ocean security

Recently, India was admitted to Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) as an observer member. This development is one of the steps in India's strategic vision (SAGAR) for the Indian Ocean.

In 2015, India unveiled its strategic vision for the Indian Ocean i.e. **Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)**. It is an increasing recognition of the increasing importance of **maritime security, maritime commons and cooperation**.

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Through SAGAR, India seeks to deepen **economic and security cooperation** with its maritime neighbours and assist in building their maritime security capabilities. For this, India would cooperate on the **exchange of**

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information, coastal surveillance, building of infrastructure and strengthening their capabilities.

Further, India seeks to safeguard its national interests and ensure Indian Ocean region to become **inclusive, collaborative and respect international law**.

### Need: Blue Economy

**Blue economy** presents India with an unprecedented opportunity to meet its national socio-economic objectives (livelihood generation, achieving energy security, building ecological resilience etc.) as well as strengthening connectivity with neighbors.

**Apart from it, blue economy provides many opportunities:**

- Oceans provide a substantial portion of the global population with food and livelihood, as well as transportation for 80% of global trade.
- The seabed currently provides 32% of the global supply of hydrocarbons, with exploration expanding. The sea also offers vast potential for renewable **blue energy** production from wind, wave, tidal, thermal and biomass sources.
- New technologies are opening frontiers of **marine resource development from bio-prospecting to mining of seabed mineral resources (poly-metallic nodules)**.

### Tackling Regional Issues

- There is a need to strengthen efforts to provide **humanitarian assistance** in wake of natural disasters and counter non-state actors engaged in **piracy and terrorism**.
- Further, India seeks an integrated approach and cooperative future, which will result in **sustainable development for all** in the region.

### Checking Chinese Influence

- China through its **maritime silk route (part of BRI initiative)** has been increasing its influence in Indian ocean region (IOR).
- Moreover, Chinese investments in India's neighboring countries are of **dual nature i.e commercial with military underpinnings**. The **string of pearls** has caused strategic concerns for India.
- In this context, SAGAR vision assumes much importance in countering such

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issues.

### Significance of SAGAR Vision

- SAGAR provides a mechanism for India to expand strategic partnerships with other IOR littorals in Asia and Africa.
- SAGAR indicates the leadership role and responsibilities India is ready to play in the region on a long-term basis in a transparent manner through its capacity building and capability enhancement programs.
- The key relevance of SAGAR emerges when seen in conjunction with India's other policies impacting the maritime domain like **Act East Policy, Project Sagarmala, Project Mausam, India as 'net security provider', focus on Blue Economy** etc. This symbolises India's maritime resurgence, as maritime issues are now centre of India's foreign policy.
- With effective implementation of all these policies, India can **act as an enabler to create a positive environment in the IOR.**

### Associated Challenges

- The '**Global Commons**' approach (everyone's property is no one's responsibility) to using marine resources, especially in areas beyond national jurisdiction, with no oversight on issues of governance, access and benefit sharing. It poses a risk for overexploitation of marine resources.
- SAGAR Vision has created engagement of **multiple players, the duplication of actions, and regional dependence on international navies.**

### Way Forward

#### Formulating a Governance Framework

- A regional legally-binding instrument concerning marine genetic resource governance including issues of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing (ABS), is to be concluded within the framework of the **UN Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS)**. Further, there is a need to identify options and areas for designating as special ecologically and biologically sensitive areas to ensure such areas receive additional protection and sustainable management provisions.

#### Focusing on Regional Organisation

- India must focus on the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**. IORA's

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mandate is to promote sustainable growth and balanced development in the region. IORA needs to consider a special regional cooperation programme on Blue Economy.

- Recently, India has been granted the observer status in **Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)**. India can learn from **IOC Bottom-up regionalism**.

### Conclusion

India's consultative, democratic and equitable leadership can help achieve the Security and sustainable growth to all in the region. Apart from it, India must also lead in ensuring **Sustainability and Growth for All in the Region**.

### Indian Ocean Commission

- The IOC is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1982 comprises **five small-island states** in the Western Indian Ocean: the Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion (a French department), and Seychelles.
- The IOC has its own regional agenda, and has made impressive headway in the design and implementation of a regional maritime security architecture in the Western Indian Ocean.
- Over the years, the IOC has emerged as an active and trusted regional actor, working in and for the Western Indian Ocean and implementing a range of projects.
  - For example, in 2012, the IOC was one of the four regional organisations to launch the MASE Programme.
    - MASE programme is the European Union-funded programme to promote Maritime Security in Eastern and Southern Africa and Indian Ocean.
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Economic Zones (EEZs).

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- There is a need to make a tangible impact through **Project Sagarmala**, with a focus on port **development, connectivity, port-led industrialisation, and coastal community development**, in a timely and effective manner.
- The role of the **Coast Guard Agencies** in all the Indian Ocean littorals becomes critical. Therefore; SAGAR vision should now be expanded to include the coast guard agencies of the IOR littorals countries.
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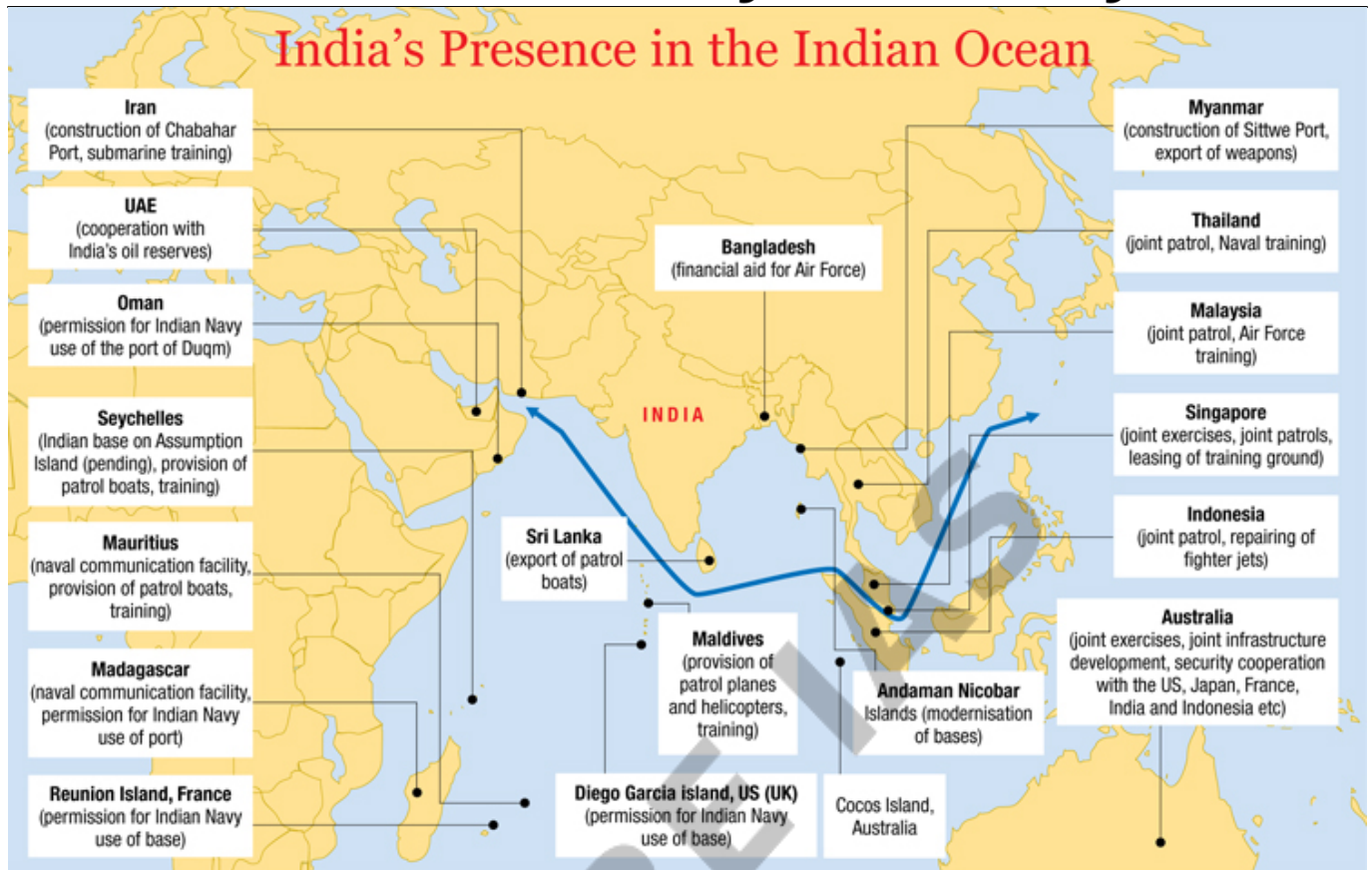
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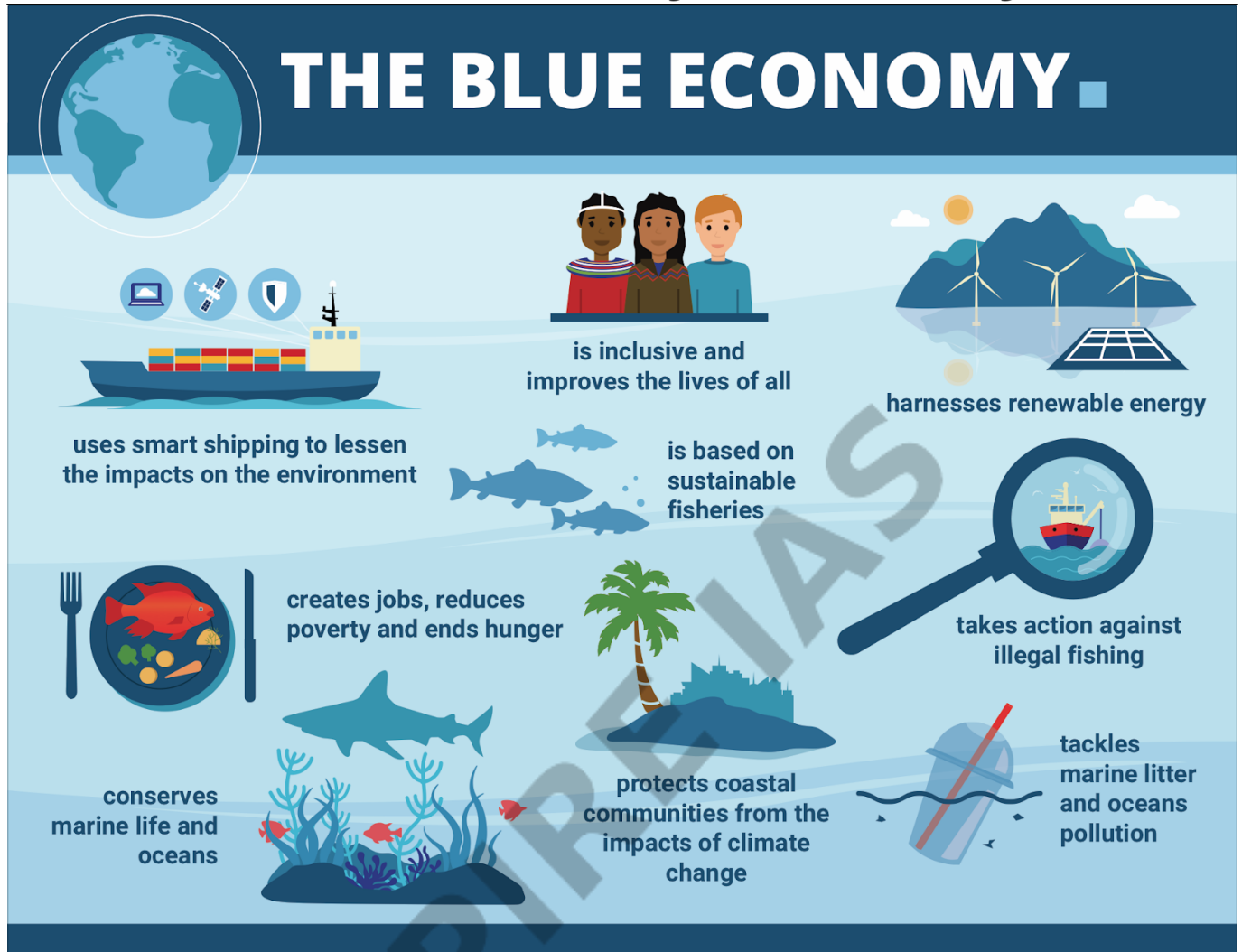
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Source: IE

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### Schemes for Electronic Manufacturing in India

GS-III | 02 August, 2020

## Schemes for Electronic Manufacturing in India

### Context:

- The government has said that a total of 22 companies, have filed applications under **the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI)** scheme that aims to boost local manufacturing of mobile phones and components.
- This is expected to bring in additional investment of about ₹11,000 crore in electronics manufacturing, while leading to total production worth ₹11.5 lakh crore over the next five years

### Schemes for Electronic Manufacturing

Recently, the government **notified three schemes** involving total incentives of around **Rs 48,000 crore** for electronics manufacturing,

1. The **Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI)** for large scale electronics manufacturing.
2. The **Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECES)**.
3. The **Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme**.

### The schemes are expected to

- Attract **Rs 1 lakh crore investment** in the sector.
- **Boost local electronics manufacturing** and generate manufacturing revenue potential of **Rs 10 lakh crore by 2025**.
- **Create 20 lakh direct and indirect jobs by 2025**.

### Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing

- The scheme proposes a **financial incentive to boost domestic manufacturing** and **attract large investments** in the electronics value chain including electronic components and semiconductor packaging.
- Under the scheme, **electronic manufacturing companies** will get an **incentive of 4 to 6%** on incremental sales (over base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments, to eligible companies over a **period of next 5 years**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The scheme shall **only be applicable for target segments** namely **mobile phones and specified electronic components**.
- The government estimates that with the PLI scheme, **domestic value addition** for mobile phones is expected to **rise to 35-40% by 2025** from the current level of 20-25% and generate additional **8 lakh jobs, both direct and indirect**.
- The production of mobile phones in the country has surged eight-times in the last four years from around Rs 18,900 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 1.7 lakh crore in 2018-19 .

### Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors

- Under the scheme, a **financial incentive of 25% of capital expenditure** has been approved by the Union Cabinet for the manufacturing of goods that **constitute the supply chain** of an electronic product.
- The SPECS notified for manufacturing of **electronics components and semiconductors** has a budget outlay of Rs 3,285 crore spread over a period of eight years.
- The government estimates that push for manufacturing of electronics components and electronic chips will create around 6 lakh direct and indirect jobs.

### Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters Scheme

- The EMC 2.0 has a total incentive outlay of Rs 3,762.25 crore spread over a period of 8 years with an objective to create 10 lakh direct and indirect jobs under the scheme.
- The EMC 2.0 scheme will provide financial assistance up to 50% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs 70 crore per 100 acres of land for setting up of Electronics Manufacturing Cluster projects.
- Electronic manufacturing clusters to be set up under the scheme will be spread in an area of 200 acres across India and 100 acres in North East part of the country.

Source: TH/WEB

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Credit guarantee extended to larger firms, self-employed

GS-III | 02 August, 2020

### Credit guarantee extended to larger firms, self-employed

#### Context:

- The Centre has expanded its credit guarantee scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to cover loans given to larger firms, as well as to self-employed people and professionals who have taken loans for business purposes.

#### News

- The Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme was rolled out as part of the Centre's **Aatmanirbhar package** in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- It has a corpus of **₹41,600 crore** and **provides fully guaranteed additional funding of up to ₹3 lakh crore**.
- Eligible MSMEs must have an **annual turnover up to ₹100 crore**, with outstanding **loans of up to ₹25 crore** as on February 29, 2020.

Source: TH

Plea unilaterally listed by SC official

GS-II | 02 August, 2020

### Plea unilaterally listed by SC official

#### Context:

- Noted civil rights lawyer Prashant Bhushan has approached the Supreme Court for a declaration that a defective contempt petition against him was unilaterally listed by the court's Secretary General for judicial hearing before a Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra.

#### News:

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

The contempt petition was filed by Mahek Maheshwari against Mr. Bhushan's tweet on a photograph of Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde on a motorbike.

- This tweet and another one by him about the Supreme Court led to Justice Mishra Bench initiating suo motu contempt proceedings against him.
- Two days later, the same Bench resumed hearings in a 2009 contempt case.
- This case concerned Mr. Bhushan's remarks about the judiciary in an interview with Tehelka magazine.

### Issue

- Mr. Bhushan wants both these orders to be recalled, or, in the alternative, be heard as and when physical court hearings resume.
- In his petition, Mr. Bhushan contended that the **Supreme Court Rules, 2013**, required the defective contempt petition to be returned to Maheshwari. Instead, the Secretary General placed the case before a Bench of Justices Mishra, B.R. Gavai and Krishna Murari for hearing.
- He said the plea filed by Maheshwari was defective as it did not have the prior consent of the Attorney General or the Solicitor General. And that the Secretary General's action was "unconstitutional, illegal, void and non-est".
- Bhushan has said that the **action of the Secretary General** was illegal and amounted to **usurpation of the role of the Chief Justice of India as the 'Master of the Roster'**.

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- Under the scheme, **electronic manufacturing companies** will get an **incentive of 4 to 6%** on incremental sales (over base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments, to eligible companies over a **period of next 5 years**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The scheme shall **only be applicable for target segments** namely **mobile phones and specified electronic components**.
- The government estimates that with the PLI scheme, **domestic value addition** for mobile phones is expected to **rise to 35-40% by 2025** from the current level of 20-25% and generate additional **8 lakh jobs, both direct and indirect**.
- The production of mobile phones in the country has surged eight-times in the last four years from around Rs 18,900 crore in 2014-15 to Rs 1.7 lakh crore in 2018-19 .

### Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors

- Under the scheme, a **financial incentive of 25% of capital expenditure** has been approved by the Union Cabinet for the manufacturing of goods that **constitute the supply chain** of an electronic product.
- The SPECS notified for manufacturing of **electronics components and semiconductors** has a budget outlay of Rs 3,285 crore spread over a period of eight years.
- The government estimates that push for manufacturing of electronics components and electronic chips will create around 6 lakh direct and indirect jobs.

### Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters Scheme

- The EMC 2.0 has a total incentive outlay of Rs 3,762.25 crore spread over a period of 8 years with an objective to create 10 lakh direct and indirect jobs under the scheme.
- The EMC 2.0 scheme will provide financial assistance up to 50% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs 70 crore per 100 acres of land for setting up of Electronics Manufacturing Cluster projects.
- Electronic manufacturing clusters to be set up under the scheme will be spread in an area of 200 acres across India and 100 acres in North East part of the country.

Source: TH/WEB

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Credit guarantee extended to larger firms, self-employed

GS-III | 02 August, 2020

### Credit guarantee extended to larger firms, self-employed

#### Context:

- The Centre has expanded its credit guarantee scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to cover loans given to larger firms, as well as to self-employed people and professionals who have taken loans for business purposes.

#### News

- The Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme was rolled out as part of the Centre's **Aatmanirbhar package** in response to the COVID-19 crisis.
- It has a corpus of **₹41,600 crore** and **provides fully guaranteed additional funding of up to ₹3 lakh crore**.
- Eligible MSMEs must have an **annual turnover up to ₹100 crore**, with outstanding **loans of up to ₹25 crore** as on February 29, 2020.

Source: TH

Plea unilaterally listed by SC official

GS-II | 02 August, 2020

### Plea unilaterally listed by SC official

#### Context:

- Noted civil rights lawyer Prashant Bhushan has approached the Supreme Court for a declaration that a defective contempt petition against him was unilaterally listed by the court's Secretary General for judicial hearing before a Bench led by Justice Arun Mishra.

#### News:

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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The contempt petition was filed by Mahesh Maheshwari against Mr. Bhushan's tweet on a photograph of Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde on a motorbike.

- This tweet and another one by him about the Supreme Court led to Justice Mishra Bench initiating suo motu contempt proceedings against him.
- Two days later, the same Bench resumed hearings in a 2009 contempt case.
- This case concerned Mr. Bhushan's remarks about the judiciary in an interview with Tehelka magazine.

### Issue

- Mr. Bhushan wants both these orders to be recalled, or, in the alternative, be heard as and when physical court hearings resume.
- In his petition, Mr. Bhushan contended that the **Supreme Court Rules, 2013**, required the defective contempt petition to be returned to Maheshwari. Instead, the Secretary General placed the case before a Bench of Justices Mishra, B.R. Gavai and Krishna Murari for hearing.
- He said the plea filed by Maheshwari was defective as it did not have the prior consent of the Attorney General or the Solicitor General. And that the Secretary General's action was "unconstitutional, illegal, void and non-est".
- Bhushan has said that the **action of the Secretary General** was illegal and amounted to **usurpation of the role of the Chief Justice of India as the 'Master of the Roster'**.

Source: TH

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**UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)**

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**Inclusive urbanisation**GS-I | 03 August, 2020

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**Inclusive urbanisation****GS-PAPER-1 Geography – Urbanization**

The **Covid-19 pandemic** has proved that the Indian cities are overburdened and underprepared to provide guaranteed social protection to millions of migrant workers. Due to denial of access to adequate food and nutrition, livelihood, housing and basic amenities like water and sanitation facilities, there has been an exodus of migrant labourers from urban to rural areas.

Further, with over 90% of the population working in the informal economy, **the International Labour Organization (ILO)** has predicted that as a result of the crisis and subsequent lockdown, about 400 million workers will fall deeper into poverty.

Given the significance of these labourers to urban development, there is a need to address the stark inequalities and make urban spaces in India more socially and financially inclusive.

**Issues Faced by Migrant Workers in Urban Areas**

**Lack of Basic Amenities:** According to the recent **"Drinking Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Housing Condition"** survey by the government, there continue to be glaring gaps in water access in urban and rural India.

- Also, migrant labourers are likely to have relied more on public amenities such as hand pumps and public taps or standpipes which are connected to a municipal connection. These sources are generally unreliable — hand pumps and municipal pipes, for example, do not always supply water of potable quality.
- Given the importance of washing hands in combating the infection, the lack of **WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)** makes migrant labourers subject to work in an unsafe work environment

**Huge Gap in Data About Migrants:** Though the **Unorganised Workers Social Security Act 2008** has specified the role of urban local bodies in registering numbers of migrant worker and disseminating information regarding welfare

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

schemes to them, these provisions are not obligatory.

- Due to this, there is lack of any credible data on how many migrants enter and leave our states and cities.

**Challenge of Informalisation:** According to the Economic Survey of India 2019, about 90% of India's total workforce of about 500 million workers is engaged in the informal sector. This made them more vulnerable to the economic crisis induced by Covid-19.

- Some of the major challenges due to the informalisation of the workforce include lack of job security, limited or no access to banking and insurance channels, a generally under-developed public health system.



## Steps For Making Urban Spaces More Inclusive

**Creation of a Database of Migrant Workers:** Recognition and identification of migrants is the first step towards a more enhanced framework to provide basic amenities. To begin with, an effort to create a database of migrant workers is most necessary.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- This could be a game-changer by creating a digital Pan-India database to ensure coordination with their home districts and respective states.
- Eventually, convergence around this could create a framework of health, banking, microfinance and insurance networks centred around workers and migrants in urban areas.

**Labour Migration Governance System:** A fair and effective labour migration governance system for workers within the country is an urgent need of the hour.

- This is necessary for the realisation of decent work opportunities for all migrant workers while respecting fundamental human rights.
- Also, there is a need to ensure the protection of the labour rights of workers while taking into account the views of the employers to foster innovation in business and enterprises.

**Formalisation of Economy:** The central and state governments need to continue their efforts to address the informality of the Indian economy, the rural-urban divide, the uneven growth within states and between regions in the country, and the social and economic inequalities associated with the poorest and vulnerable.

- In this context, the migrants need to be supported with relevant information and counselling for job search and employment opportunities based on their skills and previous experience through their local governance and panchayat structures.
- Also, recently proposed **Unorganised Worker Index Number Card** by the Labour Ministry would also help in formalisation of the workforce.

**Focusing on Public Health Infrastructure:** Smart cities project does well by focusing on creation of hard infrastructure for urban renewal.

- However, there is a need to strengthen the public health emergency infrastructure also. This social and financial inclusion would make the **Smart Cities Mission** truly holistic.

**Supporting Financially:** There is a need to expedite the proposed Social Security Fund under the **Code on Social Security, 2019**.

- This could go a long way to provide a sense of financial security and act as a tool to monitor this segment of the population better.

### Conclusion

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

The global experience shows that migration will continue as long as there is hope, aspiration, and an alternative livelihood option better than those available at home. In this context, the government has the task to build back better urban spaces in India, with a human-centred approach at its core.

Source: TH

### Disinformation Campaign by Pakistan media

GS-II | 03 August, 2020

## Pakistanis behind 'Chinese' info war on border stand-off

### Context

- Several of the Chinese accounts that shot up on social media and spread false information about the border clash with India have been traced to Pakistan.
- Many of the Pakistani accounts posed as China-based, in what is believed to be a **coordinated disinformation campaign** aimed at India.
- Some of these accounts even had user bios that were earlier in Urdu, before morphing overnight into Mandarin.
- These accounts shared false information about casualties from the clash. **Tweeting in Mandarin** and using Chinese names gave the posts a sense of credibility.
- **Pakistani accounts have also recently adopted Nepali and Sri Lankan avatars** with the same motivation of posting information aimed at creating an unfavourable narrative about India.

Source: TH

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### Inclusive urbanisation

GS-I | 03 August, 2020

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## Inclusive urbanisation

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Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Sea Level Rise: Its impact

GS-I | 04 August, 2020

## Sea Level Rise: Its impact

### GS-PAPER-1 Geography: Oceanography (PT-MAINS)

Recently, a study in journal Scientific reports made predictions that a large population and assets will be globally affected as a consequence of **Sea Level Rise (SLR)**.

- SLR is a consequence of climate change, which is predicted to **increase coastal flooding by 2100**.
- The global population potentially exposed to episodic coastal flooding will increase **from 128-171 million to 176-287 million by 2100**. **0.5-0.7%** of the **world's land area** is at a risk of **episodic coastal flooding** by 2100, impacting 2.5-4.1% of the population.
- The value of **global assets exposed** to coastal flooding is projected to be between 6,000-\$9,000 billion USD, or **12-20% of the global GDP**.
- Globally, of the 68% area that is prone to coastal flooding, over **32%** can be attributed to **regional SLR**.
- For most of the world, **flooding** incidents that are typically associated with a 1 in a 100-year event could occur **as frequently as 1 in 10 years**, primarily as a result of SLR.

### Sea Level Rise

SLR is an increase in the level of the world's oceans due to the effects of climate change, especially **global warming**, induced by **three primary factors**:

1. **Thermal Expansion:** When water heats up, it expands. About half of the sea-level rise over the past 25 years is attributable to **warmer oceans** simply occupying more space.
2. **Melting Glaciers:** Higher temperatures caused by global warming have led to greater-than-average summer melting of large ice formations like mountain glaciers as well as diminished snowfall due to later winters and earlier springs. That creates an imbalance between runoff and ocean evaporation, causing sea levels to rise.
3. **Loss of Greenland and Antarctica's ice sheets:** As with mountain glaciers, increased heat is causing the massive ice sheets that cover Greenland and Antarctica to melt more quickly, and also move more quickly into the sea.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Global sea level has been **rising over the past century**, and the rate has accelerated in recent decades. The average global sea level has risen 8.9 inches **between 1880 and 2015**. That's **much faster than in the previous 2,700 years**.

- **Regional SLR:** SLR is not uniform across the world. Regional SLR may be higher or lower than Global SLR due to **subsidence, upstream flood control, erosion, regional ocean currents, variations in land height, and compressive weight of Ice Age glaciers**.
- Sea level is primarily measured using **tide stations** and **satellite laser altimeters**.
- Earlier, IPCC released 'The Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate' which underlined the dire **changes taking place in oceans, glaciers, and ice-deposits on land and sea**. The report expects **oceans to rise between 10 and 30 inches by 2100** with temperatures warming **1.5 °C**.

### Impacts of SLR

- **Coastal Flooding:** Globally, eight of the world's 10 largest cities are near a coast, which are threatened by coastal flooding. Jakarta (Indonesia) is being known as the world's **fastest-sinking city**, by about 25 cm into the ground every year. Other cities that regularly feature in the lists endangered by climate change include Guangzhou, Jakarta, Miami, **Mumbai** and Manila.
- **Destruction of Coastal Biodiversity:** SLR can cause destructive **erosion, wetland flooding, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination with salt, and lost habitat for biodiversity**.
- **Dangerous Storm Surges:** Higher sea levels are coinciding with more dangerous **hurricanes** and typhoons leading to loss of life and property.
- **Lateral and Inland Migration:** Flooding in low-lying coastal areas is forcing people to migrate to higher ground causing **displacement** and **dispossession** and in turn a **refugee crisis worldwide**.
- **Effect on Communications Infrastructure:** The prospect of higher coastal water levels threatens basic services such as internet access.
- **Threat to Inland Life:** Rising seas can contaminate soil and groundwater with salt threatening life farther away from coasts.
- **Tourism and Military Preparedness:** Tourism to coastal areas and military preparedness will also be negatively affected with increase in SLR.

### Adaptation Strategies:

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- **Relocation:** Many coastal cities have planned to adopt relocation as mitigation strategy. For example, Kiribati Island has planned to shift to Fiji, while the **Capital of Indonesia is being relocated from Jakarta to Borneo.**
- **Building Sea wall:** Indonesia's government launched a coastal development project called a **Giant Sea Wall** or "**Giant Garuda**" in 2014 meant to protect the city from floods.
- **Building Enclosures:** Researchers have proposed **Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED)**, enclosing all of the North Sea to protect 15 Northern European countries from rising seas. The **Persian Gulf**, the **Mediterranean Sea**, the **Baltic Sea**, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea were also identified as areas that could benefit from similar mega enclosures.
- **Architecture to Steer Flow of Water:** Dutch City Rotterdam built barriers, drainage, and innovative architectural features such as a "**water square**" with temporary ponds.

### Way Forward

Reducing future greenhouse gas emissions is the long-term goal we should all focus on to keep SLR in check. The **Paris Agreement** provides a clear vision on limiting global warming and thus, SLR. Some of the steps in this direction would include:

Switching from fossil fuels to **clean alternatives** like solar and wind energy.

- Instituting **carbon taxes** on industries and subsidies for reducing carbon footprint.
- **Carbon sequestration** by geoengineering and natural methods like restoring peatland and wetland areas to capture existing greenhouses gases.
- **Afforestation** and reducing deforestation.
- Subsidizing research on climate change.

Source: NG

## China's Presence in South America

GS-II | 04 August, 2020

### China's Presence in South America



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### GS-PAPER-2 CHINA-OBOR (Mains)

Recently, **Ecuador** has expressed an **official discomfort** over the sighting of a flotilla of 260 mostly **Chinese fishing** vessels near the Galapagos archipelago (a part of Ecuador). The flotilla also consisted of **some Liberia and Panama-flagged vessels** which was detected in an international water corridor situated between two areas of Ecuadorian jurisdiction— 200 miles away from both the **Galapagos Islands and mainland Ecuador**.

#### Galapagos Archipelago

The Galapagos Islands, spread over almost **60,000 sq km**, are a part of **Ecuador**. These are located in the **Pacific Ocean** around 1,000 km away from the South American continent.

**Protection Status:** Ecuador made a part of the Galapagos a **wildlife sanctuary in 1935**, and the sanctuary became the **Galapagos National Park in 1959**. In 1978, the islands became **UNESCO's first World Heritage Site**.



**Wildlife:** It contains aquatic species such as **manta rays and sharks** which have been endangered by commercial fishing. It also hosts a wide array of aquatic wildlife, including marine iguanas, fur seals, and waved albatrosses. Also, the giant tortoises found here – '**Galápagos**' in old Spanish – give the islands its name.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

**Significance:** The British naturalist **Charles Darwin** made key observations in 1835 that shaped his theory of evolution. Darwin described the islands as a "world in itself".

### Past Occurrences:

- Ecuador has stated that the situation is **repeated every year** and such vessels reach the **outer limit of the archipelago**, outside the country's exclusive zone.
- In 2019, 245 Chinese fishing vessels were sighted in the area where Ecuador's writ does not extend.
- In 2017, a Chinese ship had entered Ecuador's waters and its authorities seized the ship.
- That time Ecuador had discovered **300 tonnes of wildlife** on board, mostly the critically endangered scalloped hammerhead sharks.
- It has been observed that the two-thirds of hammerhead shark fins found in Hong Kong markets come from the Galapagos area.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### The Humboldt Current



#### Reasons:

Chinese ships are **frequent** in Ecuador's waters during august month of the year as the **cold Humboldt Current** brings in **nutrients** that lead to a **high congregation** of marine species.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The Humboldt Current, also called the **Peru Current**, is a **cold, low-salinity ocean current** that flows north along the western coast of South America.
- The Humboldt Current is a **highly productive** ecosystem. It is the most productive eastern boundary current system. It accounts for roughly **18-20%** of the total worldwide marine fish catch.
- **Conflicts with Other Countries:**
- Chinese vessels have also run into trouble with other countries in the region.
- In 2016, **Argentina's** coast guard chased and sank a vessel that it claimed had been illegally fishing in the South Atlantic Ocean.

### Diplomatic Consequences:

- The matter has been escalated to a diplomatic level and Ecuador has officially expressed its "discomfort" to China.
- Ecuador has also stated that it will discuss the threat with Peru, Chile, Colombia, and Panama – coastal countries of the region that have also been affected in the past.
- The USA, which is already opposing China on multiple fronts, expressed its support for Ecuador. The USA has also expressed that it is against any aggression directed towards economic and environmental sovereignty.

### China's Stand:

- China maintains that it is a "responsible fishing nation" with a "zero tolerance" policy toward illegal fishing.
- It also stated that China respects Ecuador's measures to protect the environment and preserve marine resources.

### Conclusion

All the nations including China need to be extra cautionary regarding environmental issues considering the looming threat of climate change. The warming of oceans due to climate change is expected to further increase fishing pressure around these islands. Thus, effective global collaboration is the only way forward to resolve such issues.

Source: IE



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

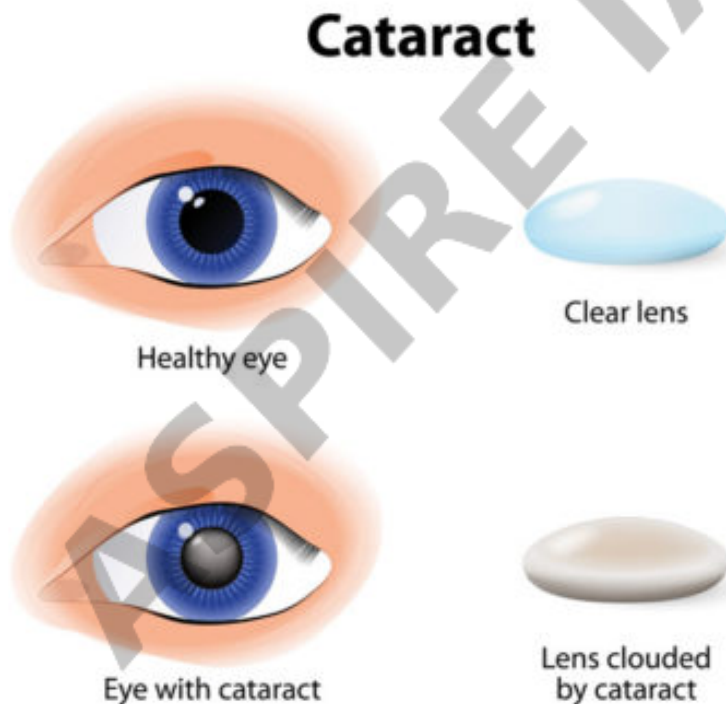
### Aspirin to Prevent Cataract

GS-III | 04 August, 2020

#### Aspirin to Prevent Cataract

Recently, scientists from the **Institute of Nano Science & Technology (INST)** have developed **nanorods** from the **Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID) Aspirin** to prevent cataracts in an economical and less complicated way.

- **Aspirin** is a popular medication used to **reduce pain, fever, or inflammation** and now it has been found to be an effective non-invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract.
- INST is an **autonomous institute** under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India.



#### Cataract:

- It is a major **form of blindness** that occurs when the **structure of crystallin proteins that make up the lens** in human eyes **deteriorates**.
- Such deterioration causes damaged or disorganised proteins to aggregate and form a milky blue or brown layer, which ultimately **affects lens transparency**.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- As with **aging and under various conditions**, the lens protein crystallin aggregates to form opaque structures in the eye lens, which **impairs vision and causes cataract**.
- Thus, **prevention of the formation of these aggregates as well as their destruction** in the early stage of disease progression is a major treatment strategy for cataracts.

### Usage of Aspirin:

- The scientists have used the **anti-aggregation ability of self-build aspirin nanorods** as an effective non –invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract.
- It **prevents the protein aggregation** through biomolecular interactions, which convert it into coils and helices and consequently fail to aggregate.

### Significance:

Aspirin nanorods due to their **nano-size** are expected to enhance bioavailability, improve drug loading, lower toxicity, etc. Hence, **the delivery of the aspirin nanorods as eye drops** is going to serve as an **effective and viable option** to treat cataract non-invasively. It is **easy to use and a low-cost alternative nonsurgical treatment** method and will benefit patients in developing countries who cannot access expensive cataract treatments and surgeries.

Source: PIB

**Bharat Air Fibre**

GS-II | 04 August, 2020

## Bharat Air Fibre

### GS-Paper-2 Governance (PT-MAINS)

Recently, **Bharat Air Fibre Services** have been inaugurated at **Akola in Maharashtra** providing the residents **wireless internet connections** on demand. The Bharat Air Fibre services are being **introduced by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)** as a part of the **Digital India** initiative by the Government of

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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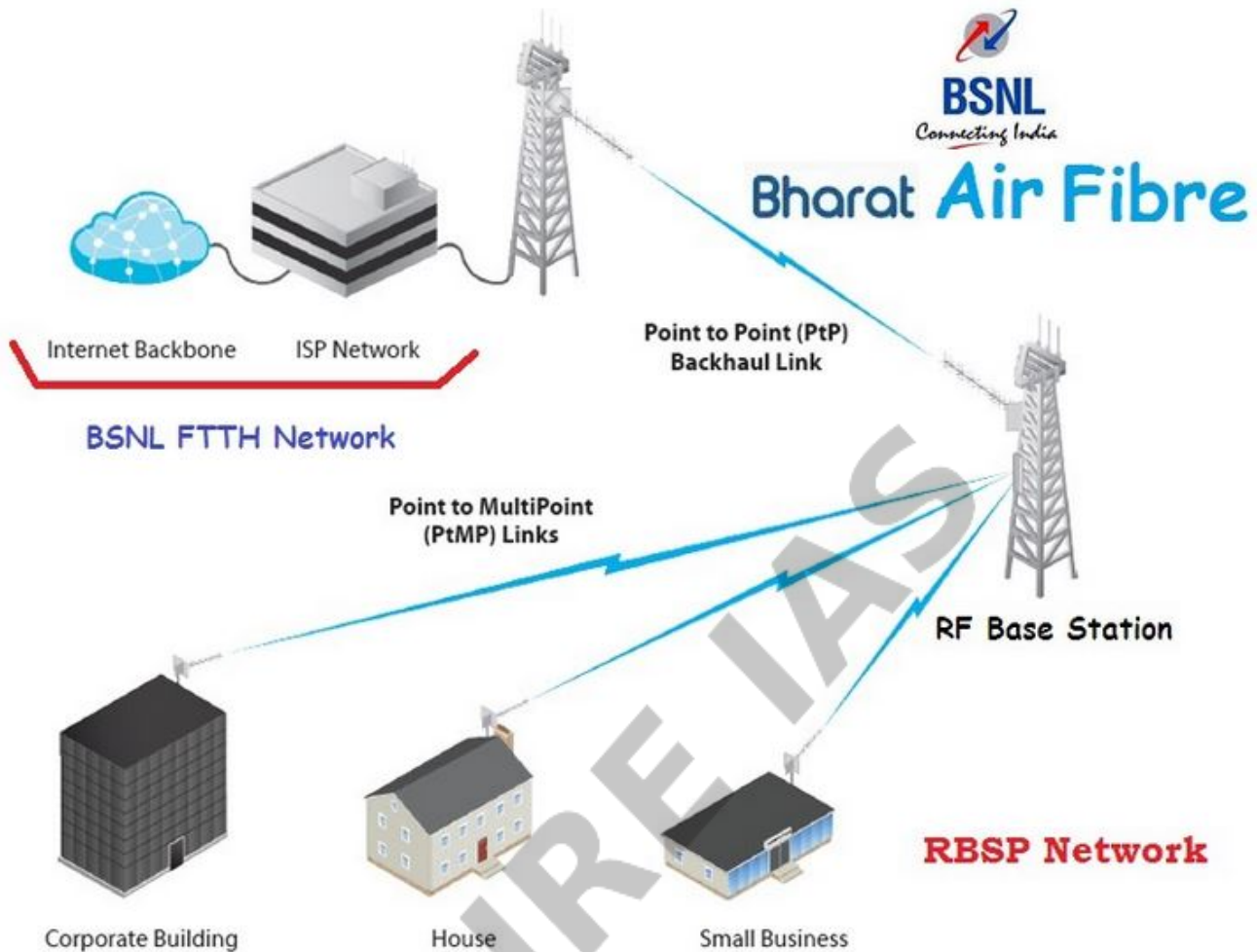
India. It is **being scaled pan-India**.

**Aim:** To provide BSNL fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) wireless connectivity up to a range of 20 km from the BSNL points of presence.

**Features:**

- The **connectivity speed is 100 Mbps** and BSNL is offering **various broadband plans in wireline and wireless segments**.
- There is a huge demand for high-speed broadband service in the present situation as there is the **migration** of people from metro cities to rural areas due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
- The service is becoming popular due to **Work from Home (WFH), e-learning, online shopping, gaming and entertainment**, etc. amidst **lockdowns**. BSNL is also providing **unlimited free voice calling**.
- **Mechanism:** It provides high-speed broadband to subscribers of remote areas by **bridging the gap of last-mile connectivity through radio waves**. A vast network of **Optical Fibre** has been laid by BSNL up to nearest Telephone Exchange or Mobile Tower and from there the connectivity is provided to subscribers over wireless.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)



- **Benefits:**  
Customers at remote locations will be benefitted as BSNL comes with the **cheapest services** with the support of **Telecom Infrastructure Partners (TIPs)**.
- These services are **wireless** and there are **very low chances of interruption** in services locally.
- BSNL is **tying up with local entrepreneurs/unemployed youth** on revenue sharing basis thereby **generating employment** in rural areas.
- They will earn a regular monthly income of about one lakh per month thereby **becoming self-reliant** under the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** initiative.
- This service could be a game-changer for rural areas as with a little **integration of Internet of Things (IoT) and sensors**, the **moisture content of soil can be known** on a real-time basis, so that **irrigation can be planned**, resulting in **saving of water** and thereby **increasing productivity**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- Sensors can be tied to the neck of dairy cattle, enabling continuous recording of body temperature so as to know the exact time when milk output is best.

### Bharat Net project

BharatNet is a **flagship mission** implemented by **Bharat Broadband Network Ltd. (BBNL)**. It is a **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** set up by the Government of India under the **Companies Act, 1956** with an authorized capital of Rs 1000 crore.

Initially, it was under the **Ministry of Communications and Information Technology**, which was bifurcated into the **Ministry of Communications** and the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** in July 2016. Currently, it is being implemented by the **Department of Telecommunication** under the Ministry of Communications.

**National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)** was launched in **October 2011** and was renamed as **Bharat Net Project** in 2015.

### National Optical Fibre Network:

It was envisaged as an information superhighway through the creation of a robust middle-mile infrastructure for reaching **broadband connectivity to Gram Panchayats**.

The Ministry of Communications has launched the **National Broadband Mission** that will facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services across the country, especially in rural and remote areas.

### Aim:

- To facilitate the delivery of **e-governance**, e-health, e-education, e-banking, Internet and other services to rural India.
- To **connect all the 2,50,000 Gram panchayats in the country** and provide **100 Mbps connectivity** to all gram panchayats.
- To achieve this, the existing unused fibres (**dark fibre**) of public sector undertakings (PSUs) (BSNL, Railtel and Power Grid) were utilised and incremental fibre was laid to connect to Gram Panchayats wherever necessary.
- **Non-discriminatory access** to the NOFN was provided to all the service

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

providers like Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), Cable TV operators and content providers to launch various services in rural areas.

- The entire project is being **funded by the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)**, which was set up for improving telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country.

### Implementation:

- The project is a **Centre-State collaborative project**, with the states contributing **free Rights of Way for establishing the Optical Fibre Network**.
- The **three-phase implementation** of the BharatNet project is as follows:
  - **First Phase:** Provide one lakh gram panchayats with broadband connectivity by laying underground **optic fibre cable (OFC)** lines by December 2017.
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### Dark fibre

- It is an **unused optical fibre** that has been laid but is not currently being used in fibre-optic communications. Since fibre-optic cable transmits information in the form of light pulses, a 'dark' cable refers to one through which light pulses are not being transmitted.
- Companies lay **extra optical fibres in order to avoid cost repetition** when more bandwidth is needed.
- It is also known as **unlit fibre**.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Source: PIB

### China, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan: New grouping

GS-II | 04 August, 2020

## China, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan: New grouping

### Gs-Paper-2 China: OBOR (Mains)

Recently, China convened a **quadrilateral dialogue** with the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan.

#### Four-point Plan:

China proposed a **four-point plan** to **contain the Covid-19 pandemic**, **boost economic recovery** and resumption of the **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** infrastructure projects. The **four-point plan** included:

- To **share consensus** in fighting the pandemic as good neighbours.
- To **learn from China and Pakistan's joint prevention and control model** of the pandemic.
- To look at opening up **green channels** as soon as possible by the four countries.
- **Green channel is the route** followed in passing through customs in an airport, etc by passengers claiming to have no dutiable goods to declare.
- **China's expertise to the three countries in fighting Covid-19.** It also included the vaccines that are being developed, to be shared with the three countries. Pakistan, Nepal and Afghanistan **actively supported** the four-point cooperation initiative proposed by China.

#### Other Discussed Issues:

- China also proposed extending the **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** to Afghanistan, as well as taking forward an economic corridor plan with Nepal, called the **Trans-Himalayan Multi-dimensional Connectivity Network**.
- All the four countries **supported the maintenance of multilateralism**, strengthened the role of the **World Health Organisation (WHO)**, backed the **realisation of a ceasefire in Afghanistan** during the

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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epidemic, and the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan.

### Concerns for India:

- China asked the three countries at the quadrilateral meet to **take advantage of their geography, strengthen exchanges and connectivity** between the four countries and central Asian countries, and **safeguard regional peace and stability**.
- The remarks assume significance as it came amid the **border tensions between India and China**.
- The quadrilateral meeting also came at a time of **deepening concerns over the India-Nepal relationship** due to border disputes at **Kalapani region**.
- Nepal's Prime Minister K.P. Oli also accused India of trying to destabilize his government.

### Way Forward

China is making concrete strategic inroads in South Asia which will necessarily impact India's interests. Experts are of the opinion that attempting to rope in three members of the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)** grouping, without including India, is a provocative move by China and should be seen as a message.

Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Sea Level Rise: Its impact

GS-I | 04 August, 2020

## Sea Level Rise: Its impact

### GS-PAPER-1 Geography: Oceanography (PT-MAINS)

Recently, a study in journal Scientific reports made predictions that a large population and assets will be globally affected as a consequence of **Sea Level Rise (SLR)**.

- SLR is a consequence of climate change, which is predicted to **increase coastal flooding by 2100**.
- The global population potentially exposed to episodic coastal flooding will increase from **128-171 million to 176-287 million by 2100**. **0.5-0.7%** of the **world's land area** is at a risk of **episodic coastal flooding** by 2100, impacting 2.5-4.1% of the population.
- The value of **global assets exposed** to coastal flooding is projected to be between 6,000-\$9,000 billion USD, or **12-20% of the global GDP**.
- Globally, of the 68% area that is prone to coastal flooding, over **32%** can be attributed to **regional SLR**.
- For most of the world, **flooding** incidents that are typically associated with a 1 in a 100-year event could occur **as frequently as 1 in 10 years**, primarily as a result of SLR.

### Sea Level Rise

SLR is an increase in the level of the world's oceans due to the effects of climate change, especially **global warming**, induced by **three primary factors**:

1. **Thermal Expansion:** When water heats up, it expands. About half of the sea-level rise over the past 25 years is attributable to **warmer oceans** simply occupying more space.
2. **Melting Glaciers:** Higher temperatures caused by global warming have led to greater-than-average summer melting of large ice formations like mountain glaciers as well as diminished snowfall due to later winters and earlier springs. That creates an imbalance between runoff and ocean evaporation, causing sea levels to rise.
3. **Loss of Greenland and Antarctica's ice sheets:** As with mountain glaciers, increased heat is causing the massive ice sheets that cover Greenland and Antarctica to melt more quickly, and also move more quickly into the sea.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Global sea level has been **rising over the past century**, and the rate has accelerated in recent decades. The average global sea level has risen 8.9 inches **between 1880 and 2015**. That's **much faster than in the previous 2,700 years**.

- **Regional SLR:** SLR is not uniform across the world. Regional SLR may be higher or lower than Global SLR due to **subsidence, upstream flood control, erosion, regional ocean currents, variations in land height, and compressive weight of Ice Age glaciers**.
- Sea level is primarily measured using **tide stations** and **satellite laser altimeters**.
- Earlier, IPCC released 'The Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate' which underlined the dire **changes taking place in oceans, glaciers, and ice-deposits on land and sea**. The report expects **oceans to rise between 10 and 30 inches by 2100** with temperatures warming **1.5 °C**.

### Impacts of SLR

- **Coastal Flooding:** Globally, eight of the world's 10 largest cities are near a coast, which are threatened by coastal flooding. Jakarta (Indonesia) is being known as the world's **fastest-sinking city**, by about 25 cm into the ground every year. Other cities that regularly feature in the lists endangered by climate change include Guangzhou, Jakarta, Miami, **Mumbai** and Manila.
- **Destruction of Coastal Biodiversity:** SLR can cause destructive **erosion, wetland flooding, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination with salt, and lost habitat for biodiversity**.
- **Dangerous Storm Surges:** Higher sea levels are coinciding with more dangerous **hurricanes** and typhoons leading to loss of life and property.
- **Lateral and Inland Migration:** Flooding in low-lying coastal areas is forcing people to migrate to higher ground causing **displacement** and **dispossession** and in turn a **refugee crisis worldwide**.
- **Effect on Communications Infrastructure:** The prospect of higher coastal water levels threatens basic services such as internet access.
- **Threat to Inland Life:** Rising seas can contaminate soil and groundwater with salt threatening life farther away from coasts.
- **Tourism and Military Preparedness:** Tourism to coastal areas and military preparedness will also be negatively affected with increase in SLR.

### Adaptation Strategies:

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- **Relocation:** Many coastal cities have planned to adopt relocation as mitigation strategy. For example, Kiribati Island has planned to shift to Fiji, while the **Capital of Indonesia is being relocated from Jakarta to Borneo.**
- **Building Sea wall:** Indonesia's government launched a coastal development project called a **Giant Sea Wall** or "**Giant Garuda**" in 2014 meant to protect the city from floods.
- **Building Enclosures:** Researchers have proposed **Northern European Enclosure Dam (NEED)**, enclosing all of the North Sea to protect 15 Northern European countries from rising seas. The **Persian Gulf**, the **Mediterranean Sea**, the **Baltic Sea**, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea were also identified as areas that could benefit from similar mega enclosures.
- **Architecture to Steer Flow of Water:** Dutch City Rotterdam built barriers, drainage, and innovative architectural features such as a "**water square**" with temporary ponds.

### Way Forward

Reducing future greenhouse gas emissions is the long-term goal we should all focus on to keep SLR in check. The **Paris Agreement** provides a clear vision on limiting global warming and thus, SLR. Some of the steps in this direction would include:

Switching from fossil fuels to **clean alternatives** like solar and wind energy.

- Instituting **carbon taxes** on industries and subsidies for reducing carbon footprint.
- **Carbon sequestration** by geoengineering and natural methods like restoring peatland and wetland areas to capture existing greenhouses gases.
- **Afforestation** and reducing deforestation.
- Subsidizing research on climate change.

Source: NG

## China's Presence in South America

GS-II | 04 August, 2020

### China's Presence in South America



## GS-PAPER-2 CHINA-OBOR (Mains)

Recently, **Ecuador** has expressed an **official discomfort** over the sighting of a flotilla of 260 mostly **Chinese fishing** vessels near the Galapagos archipelago (a part of Ecuador). The flotilla also consisted of **some Liberia and Panama-flagged vessels** which was detected in an international water corridor situated between two areas of Ecuadorian jurisdiction— 200 miles away from both the **Galapagos Islands and mainland Ecuador**.

# Galapagos Archipelago

The Galapagos Islands, spread over almost **60,000 sq km**, are a part of **Ecuador**. These are located in the **Pacific Ocean** around 1,000 km away from the South American continent.

**Protection Status:** Ecuador made a part of the Galapagos a **wildlife sanctuary in 1935**, and the sanctuary became the **Galapagos National Park in 1959**. In 1978, the islands became **UNESCO's first World Heritage Site**.



**Wildlife:** It contains aquatic species such as **manta rays and sharks** which have been endangered by commercial fishing. It also hosts a wide array of aquatic wildlife, including marine iguanas, fur seals, and waved albatrosses. Also, the giant tortoises found here – '**Galápagos**' in old Spanish – give the islands its name.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

**Significance:** The British naturalist **Charles Darwin** made key observations in 1835 that shaped his theory of evolution. Darwin described the islands as a "world in itself".

### Past Occurrences:

- Ecuador has stated that the situation is **repeated every year** and such vessels reach the **outer limit of the archipelago**, outside the country's exclusive zone.
- In 2019, 245 Chinese fishing vessels were sighted in the area where Ecuador's writ does not extend.
- In 2017, a Chinese ship had entered Ecuador's waters and its authorities seized the ship.
- That time Ecuador had discovered **300 tonnes of wildlife** on board, mostly the critically endangered scalloped hammerhead sharks.
- It has been observed that the two-thirds of hammerhead shark fins found in Hong Kong markets come from the Galapagos area.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### The Humboldt Current



#### Reasons:

Chinese ships are **frequent** in Ecuador's waters during august month of the year as the **cold Humboldt Current** brings in **nutrients** that lead to a **high congregation** of marine species.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The Humboldt Current, also called the **Peru Current**, is a **cold, low-salinity ocean current** that flows north along the western coast of South America.
- The Humboldt Current is a **highly productive** ecosystem. It is the most productive eastern boundary current system. It accounts for roughly **18-20%** of the total worldwide marine fish catch.
- **Conflicts with Other Countries:**
- Chinese vessels have also run into trouble with other countries in the region.
- In 2016, **Argentina's** coast guard chased and sank a vessel that it claimed had been illegally fishing in the South Atlantic Ocean.

### Diplomatic Consequences:

- The matter has been escalated to a diplomatic level and Ecuador has officially expressed its "discomfort" to China.
- Ecuador has also stated that it will discuss the threat with Peru, Chile, Colombia, and Panama – coastal countries of the region that have also been affected in the past.
- The USA, which is already opposing China on multiple fronts, expressed its support for Ecuador. The USA has also expressed that it is against any aggression directed towards economic and environmental sovereignty.

### China's Stand:

- China maintains that it is a "responsible fishing nation" with a "zero tolerance" policy toward illegal fishing.
- It also stated that China respects Ecuador's measures to protect the environment and preserve marine resources.

### Conclusion

All the nations including China need to be extra cautionary regarding environmental issues considering the looming threat of climate change. The warming of oceans due to climate change is expected to further increase fishing pressure around these islands. Thus, effective global collaboration is the only way forward to resolve such issues.

Source: IE



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

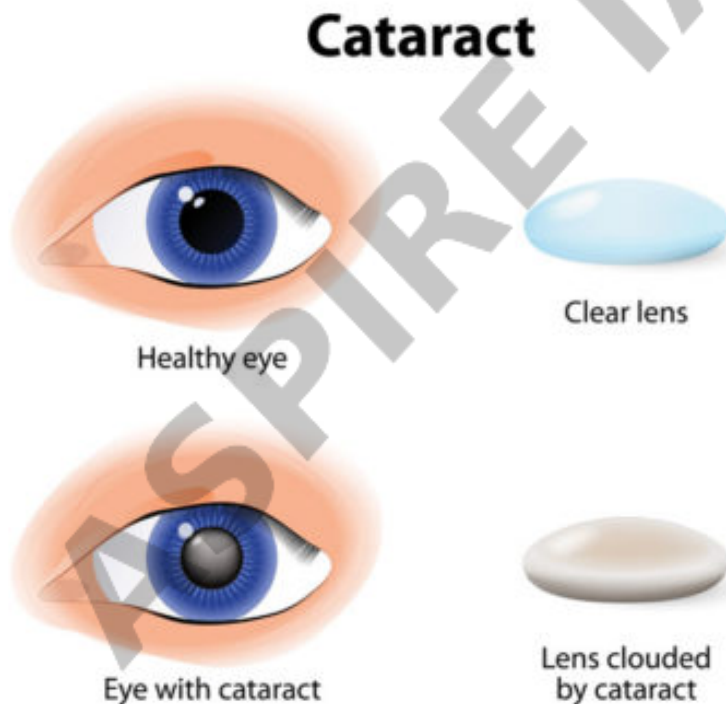
### Aspirin to Prevent Cataract

GS-III | 04 August, 2020

#### Aspirin to Prevent Cataract

Recently, scientists from the **Institute of Nano Science & Technology (INST)** have developed **nanorods** from the **Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID) Aspirin** to prevent cataracts in an economical and less complicated way.

- **Aspirin** is a popular medication used to **reduce pain, fever, or inflammation** and now it has been found to be an effective non-invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract.
- INST is an **autonomous institute** under the Department of Science & Technology, Government of India.



#### Cataract:

- It is a major **form of blindness** that occurs when the **structure of crystallin proteins that make up the lens** in human eyes **deteriorates**.
- Such deterioration causes damaged or disorganised proteins to aggregate and form a milky blue or brown layer, which ultimately **affects lens transparency**.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- As with **aging and under various conditions**, the lens protein crystallin aggregates to form opaque structures in the eye lens, which **impairs vision and causes cataract**.
- Thus, **prevention of the formation of these aggregates as well as their destruction** in the early stage of disease progression is a major treatment strategy for cataracts.

### Usage of Aspirin:

- The scientists have used the **anti-aggregation ability of self-build aspirin nanorods** as an effective non –invasive small molecule-based nanotherapeutics against cataract.
- It **prevents the protein aggregation** through biomolecular interactions, which convert it into coils and helices and consequently fail to aggregate.

### Significance:

Aspirin nanorods due to their **nano-size** are expected to enhance bioavailability, improve drug loading, lower toxicity, etc. Hence, **the delivery of the aspirin nanorods as eye drops** is going to serve as an **effective and viable option** to treat cataract non-invasively. It is **easy to use and a low-cost alternative nonsurgical treatment** method and will benefit patients in developing countries who cannot access expensive cataract treatments and surgeries.

Source: PIB

**Bharat Air Fibre**

GS-II | 04 August, 2020

## Bharat Air Fibre

### GS-Paper-2 Governance (PT-MAINS)

Recently, **Bharat Air Fibre Services** have been inaugurated at **Akola in Maharashtra** providing the residents **wireless internet connections** on demand. The Bharat Air Fibre services are being **introduced by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)** as a part of the **Digital India** initiative by the Government of

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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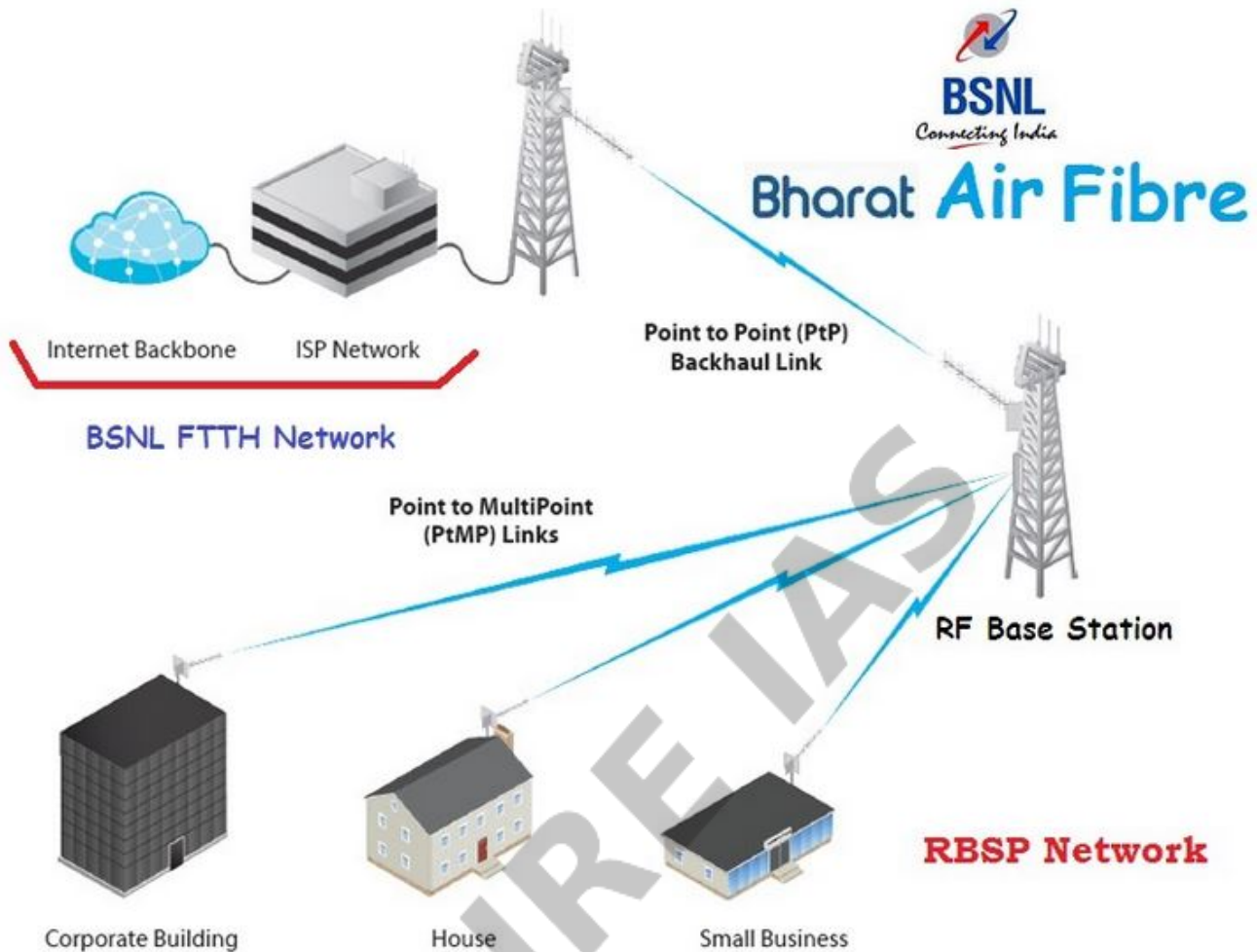
India. It is **being scaled pan-India**.

**Aim:** To provide BSNL fibre-to-the-home (FTTH) wireless connectivity up to a range of 20 km from the BSNL points of presence.

**Features:**

- The **connectivity speed is 100 Mbps** and BSNL is offering **various broadband plans in wireline and wireless segments**.
- There is a huge demand for high-speed broadband service in the present situation as there is the **migration** of people from metro cities to rural areas due to the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
- The service is becoming popular due to **Work from Home (WFH), e-learning, online shopping, gaming and entertainment**, etc. amidst **lockdowns**. BSNL is also providing **unlimited free voice calling**.
- **Mechanism:** It provides high-speed broadband to subscribers of remote areas by **bridging the gap of last-mile connectivity through radio waves**. A vast network of **Optical Fibre** has been laid by BSNL up to nearest Telephone Exchange or Mobile Tower and from there the connectivity is provided to subscribers over wireless.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)



- **Benefits:**  
Customers at remote locations will be benefitted as BSNL comes with the **cheapest services** with the support of **Telecom Infrastructure Partners (TIPs)**.
- These services are **wireless** and there are **very low chances of interruption** in services locally.
- BSNL is **tying up with local entrepreneurs/unemployed youth** on revenue sharing basis thereby **generating employment** in rural areas.
- They will earn a regular monthly income of about one lakh per month thereby **becoming self-reliant** under the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** initiative.
- This service could be a game-changer for rural areas as with a little **integration of Internet of Things (IoT) and sensors**, the **moisture content of soil can be known** on a real-time basis, so that **irrigation can be planned**, resulting in **saving of water** and thereby **increasing productivity**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- Sensors can be tied to the neck of dairy cattle, enabling continuous recording of body temperature so as to know the exact time when milk output is best.

### Bharat Net project

BharatNet is a **flagship mission** implemented by **Bharat Broadband Network Ltd. (BBNL)**. It is a **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)** set up by the Government of India under the **Companies Act, 1956** with an authorized capital of Rs 1000 crore.

Initially, it was under the **Ministry of Communications and Information Technology**, which was bifurcated into the **Ministry of Communications** and the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** in July 2016. Currently, it is being implemented by the **Department of Telecommunication** under the Ministry of Communications.

**National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)** was launched in **October 2011** and was renamed as **Bharat Net Project** in 2015.

### National Optical Fibre Network:

It was envisaged as an information superhighway through the creation of a robust middle-mile infrastructure for reaching **broadband connectivity to Gram Panchayats**.

The Ministry of Communications has launched the **National Broadband Mission** that will facilitate universal and equitable access to broadband services across the country, especially in rural and remote areas.

### Aim:

- To facilitate the delivery of **e-governance**, e-health, e-education, e-banking, Internet and other services to rural India.
- To **connect all the 2,50,000 Gram panchayats in the country** and provide **100 Mbps connectivity** to all gram panchayats.
- To achieve this, the existing unused fibres (**dark fibre**) of public sector undertakings (PSUs) (BSNL, Railtel and Power Grid) were utilised and incremental fibre was laid to connect to Gram Panchayats wherever necessary.
- **Non-discriminatory access** to the NOFN was provided to all the service

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

providers like Telecom Service Providers (TSPs), Cable TV operators and content providers to launch various services in rural areas.

- The entire project is being **funded by the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)**, which was set up for improving telecom services in rural and remote areas of the country.

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Source: PIB

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GS-II | 04 August, 2020

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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Source: TH

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**UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)**

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**Contempt of Court**GS-II | 05 August, 2020

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**Contempt of Court****GS-PAPER-2 Governance (Mains-I.V)**

Recently, the **Supreme Court of India** initiated the proceedings for **criminal contempt of court against lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan**. The contempt charges were lodged in the context of the comment made on social media, targeting the current Chief Justice of India.

The contempt power is needed to punish wilful disobedience to court orders (civil contempt), as well as interference in the administration of justice and overt threats to judges.

The reason why the concept of contempt exists is to insulate the institution from unfair criticism and prevent a fall in the judiciary's reputation in the public eye.

However, this raises the dilemma between the part of contempt law that criminalises anything that **"scandalises or tends to scandalise"** the judiciary and freedom of speech and expression (under the article 19), especially in the era of social media.

Thus, the current issue has once again brought under focus on the need for reviewing the law on Contempt of Courts.

**Note:**

- Contempt of Court refers to the offence of showing disrespect to the dignity or authority of a court.
- The objective for contempt is stated to be to safeguard the interests of the public if the authority of the Court is denigrated and public confidence in the administration of justice is weakened or eroded.
- The Supreme Court and High Courts derive their contempt powers from the Constitution.
- The Contempt of Court Act, 1971, outlines the procedure in relation to investigation and punishment for contempt.
- The Act divides contempt into civil and criminal contempt. Civil contempt refers to the willful disobedience of an order of any court. Criminal contempt includes any act or publication which:

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- Scandalises the court,
  - Prejudices any judicial proceeding
  - Interferes with the administration of justice in any other manner.
- 'Scandalising the Court' broadly refers to statements or publications which have the effect of undermining public confidence in the judiciary.

### Arguments Against

- **Against Civil Liberties:** A law for criminal contempt gets in conflict with India's democratic system which recognises freedom of speech and expression as a fundamental right.
- In this manner, the judiciary draws resemblance with the executive, in using laws for a chilling effect on freedom of speech. Former Justice of Supreme Court, V.R. Krishna Iyer, famously termed the law of contempt as "having a vague and wandering jurisdiction, with uncertain boundaries; contempt law, regardless of the public good, may unwittingly trample upon civil liberties".
- **Wide Scope of Contempt:** The definition of criminal contempt in India is extremely wide, and can be easily invoked. Also, suo motu powers of the Court to initiate such proceedings only serve to complicate matters. Further, the Contempt of Courts Act was amended in 2006, to add truth and good faith as valid defences for contempt, but they are seldom entertained by the judiciary.
- **International Disuse of Contempt Doctrine:** Already, contempt has practically become obsolete in foreign democracies, with jurisdictions recognising that it is an archaic law. For example: England abolished the offence of "scandalising the court" in 2013. Canada ties its test for contempt to real, substantial and immediate dangers to the administration. American courts also no longer use the law of contempt in response to comments on judges or legal matters.

### Arguments in Favour

- **High Number of Contempt Cases:** There still exists a high number of civil and criminal contempt cases pending in various High Courts and the Supreme Court. The high number of cases justify the continuing relevance of the contempt of court law.
  - **Affecting Judiciary's Reputation:** Amendment in the definition of contempt may reduce the overall impact of the law and lessen the respect that people have for courts and their authority and functioning. Also by abolishing the offence in India would leave a legislative gap.
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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- **Constitutional Source of Contempt Power:** Supreme Court and High Courts derive their contempt powers from the Constitution. The Contempt of Court Act, 1971, Act only outlines the procedure in relation to investigation and punishment for contempt.
- Therefore, deletion of the offence from the Act will not impact the inherent constitutional powers of the superior courts to punish anyone for its contempt. These powers will continue to remain, independent of the 1971 Act.
- **Impact on Subordinate Courts:** The Constitution allows superior courts to punish for their contempt. The Contempt of Court Act additionally allows the High Court to punish for contempt of subordinate courts. Thus, if the definition of contempt is removed, subordinate courts will suffer as there will be no remedy to address cases of their contempt.
- **Adequate Safeguards:** The Commission noted that there are several safeguards built into the Act to protect against its misuse. For instance, the Act contains provisions which lay down cases that do not amount to contempt and cases where contempt is not punishable. These provisions suggest that the courts will not prosecute all cases of contempt.

### Conclusion

The **Law Commission of India** held that there is a need to retain the provision regarding the contempt of courts. However, it also recommended the definition of contempt in the Contempt of Court Act should be restricted to civil contempt, i.e., willful disobedience of judgments of the court.

Further, in the era of social media, besides the need to revisit the law on criminal contempt, even the test for contempt needs to be evaluated.

Source: IE

## Militarising Andaman and Nicobar Islands

GS-III | 05 August, 2020

## Militarising Andaman and Nicobar Islands

GS-PAPER-2 IR (Mains)

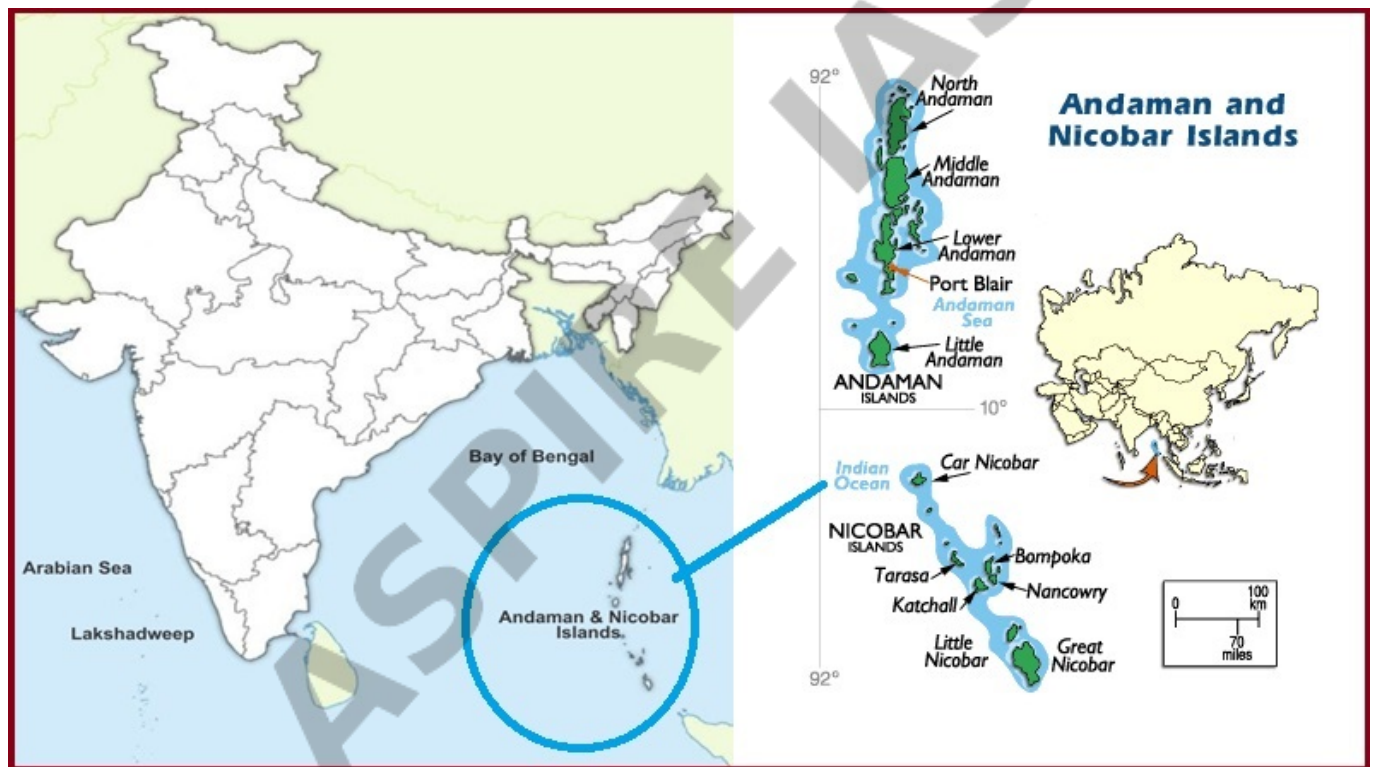


## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

The **Galwan valley face-off** with China has rendered many Indian security experts mooted the idea of balancing China in the maritime domain. In this context, strengthening military presence at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (ANI) remains very critical for India.

**The idea of militarizing the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is not new. Since the 1980s, Indian defense experts have advocated building strong strategic infrastructure at the ANI.**

However, the strategic development of the ANI is not a straightforward choice for India's defence and foreign policy establishments. Therefore, India must conduct a cost-benefit analysis before going for militarization of ANI.



### Significance of Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are located at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea.
- It is a group of 572 islands, which straddles some of the busiest trade routes in the world.
- ANI spans 450 nautical miles in a roughly north-south configuration adjacent

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

to the western entrance to the Malacca Strait, which is itself a major Indian Ocean chokepoint.

- Geopolitically, the ANI connects South Asia with South-East Asia. While the northernmost point of the archipelago is only 22 nautical miles from Myanmar, the southernmost point, Indira Point, is a mere 90 nautical miles from Indonesia.
- The islands dominate the Bay of Bengal, the Six Degree and the Ten Degree Channels that more than sixty thousand commercial vessels traverse each year.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands constitute just 0.2% of India's landmass but provide near 30% of its Exclusive Economic Zone.

### Opportunities in Militarising ANI

- **Crucial for a Robust Indo-Pacific Strategy:** As the geopolitical importance of the **Indo-Pacific** has been increasing, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, located in the Bay of Bengal, have attained increased strategic significance. ANI could also become an important element of **India's "Act East Policy"** of engaging with countries in the region east of India.
- Further, the Andaman and Nicobar chain of islands could be used as a basis for Indian maritime power projection into the Indo-Pacific and even beyond into the south-west Pacific.
- **Strategic and Commercial Advantages:** The ANI could be used for India's Third Fleet and the trans-shipment hub at Car Nicobar, could potentially be a strategic game-changer, rivalling the ports of Singapore or Colombo.
- **Strengthening Tri-Service Command:** Changing nature of warfare in the 21st century has led to the expansion of scope of a Tri-Command Service. As Andaman and Nicobar is the only Tri-Command structure in India, development of military infrastructure at ANI is a key requirement in India's security strategy.

### Challenges in Militarising ANI

- **May Portray the Image of Big Brother:** When India first began developing the ANI in the mid-1980s, countries like Malaysia and Indonesia feared that India would use its military facilities in the ANI to dominate its region, and project power east of Malacca.
- Hence, it is not uncommon for India to be vilified as the 'Big Brother' by many of its neighbours in South Asia and South-East Asia
- Therefore, a section of India's diplomatic community has opposed

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

militarising the ANI, arguing that turning ANI into a strategic-military garrison would militarise the littoral states and disrupt Indian ocean as a zone of peace.

- **Ecological And Anthropogenic Aspect:** Military infrastructure projects could devastate the fragile ecology of the ANI. Already many islands are facing significant damage from the climate crisis. Also, to establish a credible Aerial and Naval presence in an ethnographically extremely sensitive region presents complex challenges.
- **Antagonising China:** While China's presence in the Indian Ocean is growing, it hasn't so far militarised key **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** outposts in the Bay of Bengal (Hambantota, Chittagong and Kyaukpyu). If India pushes for greater military presence in the ANI, China could well seek military access in its friendly countries in Indian ocean .

### Way Forward

- **Bandwagoning with QUAD:** In order to counter China's expanding footprint in India's sphere of maritime interest, India must permit friendly foreign navies (QUAD members, France etc.) access to the ANI's military bases. The plan to integrate India's undersea sensor chain with the existing US-Japan "Fish Hook" SOSUS network which seeks to monitor submarine activity in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean Rim, is a step in the right direction.
- **Balanced Development:** Militarising ANI will aid India's strategic capabilities, but such development should not come at the cost the ruthless exploitation of Biodiversity hotspot i.e ANI.

### Conclusion

Militarising ANI is not a bad idea, but India must also take into account the downsides of such a move and the final decision should be based on a dispassionate weighing of costs and benefits.

Source: TH

## National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

## National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

### GS-PAPER-3 Education reforms (Mains)

Recently, the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** was announced by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (soon to be called the Ministry of Education). The policy is aimed at transforming the Indian education system to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The new policy seeks rectification of poor literacy and numeracy outcomes associated with primary schools, reduction in dropout levels in middle and secondary schools and adoption of the multi-disciplinary approach in the higher education system.

Apart from this, the policy also focuses on early childhood care, restructuring curriculum and pedagogy; reforming assessments and exams, and investing in teacher training and broad-basing their appraisal.

Though the NEP 2020 seeks to bring a holistic change in the education system of India, its success depends on the will and way in which it will be implemented.



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### MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES IS NOW **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

#### FOR SCHOOLS

**From 10+2 to 5+3+3+4:** Current 10+2 structure in which policy covered schooling from Class 1 to 10 (age 6-16) and then Class 11-12 (age 16-18) gives way to 5 years of foundational education, 3 of preparatory, 3 of middle & 4 years of secondary schooling



**Multi-Stream:** Flexibility to choose subjects across streams; all subjects to be offered at two levels of proficiency

**Diluted Board:** Board exams to test only core competencies; could become modular (object and subjective) and will be offered twice a year

**Multilingual:** 3-language policy to continue with preference for local language medium of instruction till class 8



**Bag-Less Days:** School students to have 10 bag-less days in a year during which they are exposed to a vocation of choice (i.e. informal internship)



#### FOR COLLEGES

**SAT-Like College Test:** National Testing Agency to conduct common college entrance exam twice a year



**4-Year Bachelor:** 4-year multi-disciplinary bachelor's programme to be preferred; mid-term dropouts to be given credit with option to complete degree after a break



**No Affiliation:** Over next 15 years colleges will be given graded autonomy to give degrees, affiliation with universities to end, so would be deemed university status

**Fee Cap:** Proposal to cap fee charged by private institutions of higher learning



**Going Glocal:** Top-rated global universities to be facilitated to come to India, top Indian institutions to be encouraged to go global



### Significance of National Education Policy 2020

- **Recognising Importance of Formative years:** In adopting a **5+3+3+4** model for school education starting at age 3, the policy recognises the primacy of the formative years from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.
- **Departure from Silos Mentality:** Another key aspect of school education in the new policy is the breaking of the strict division of arts, commerce and science streams in high school. This can lay the foundation for a multi-disciplinary approach in high education.
- **The Confluence of Education and Skills:** Another laudable aspect of the scheme is the introduction of vocational courses with an internship. This may nudge the vulnerable sections of society to send their children to school.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Also, it would help in realisation of the goal of **Skill India Mission**.

- **Making Education More Inclusive:** The NEP proposes the extension of the Right to Education (RTE) to all children up to the age of 18. Further, the policy seeks to leverage the huge potential of online pedagogy and learning methodologies for increasing gross enrolment in higher education.
- **Light But Tight Oversight:** According to the policy, in spite of periodic inspection, transparency, maintaining quality standards and a favourable public perception will become a 24X7 pursuit for the institutions, leading to all-round improvement in their standard. The policy also seeks to establish a super-regulator for education which will be responsible for standards-setting, funding, accreditation and regulation of higher education India.
- **Allowing Foreign Universities:** The document states universities from among the top 100 in the world will be able to set up campuses in India. This will lead to an infusion of international perspective and innovation, which will make the Indian education system more efficient and competitive.
- **Ending Hindi vs English Debate:** Most crucially, NEP, once and for all, buries the strident Hindi versus English language debate; instead, it emphasises on making mother tongue, local language or the regional language the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, which is considered the best medium of teaching.

### Issues Related to NEP 2020

- **Knowledge-Jobs Mismatch:** There is a persistent mismatch between the knowledge & skills imparted and the jobs available. This has been one of the main challenges that have affected the Indian education system since Independence. NEP 2020 failed to check this, as it is silent on education related to emerging technological fields like artificial intelligence, cyberspace, nanotech, etc.
- **The Requirement of Enormous Resources.** An ambitious target of public spending at 6% of GDP has been set. Mobilising financial resources will be a big challenge, given the low tax-to-GDP ratio and competing claims on the national exchequer of healthcare, national security and other key sectors.

### Way Forward

- **Need For Cooperative Federalism:** Since education is a concurrent subject (both the Centre and the state governments can make laws on it), the reforms proposed can only be implemented collaboratively by the Centre and the states. Thus, the Centre has the giant task of building a consensus on the

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

many ambitious plans.

- **Strive Towards Universalisation of Education:** There is a need for the creation of 'inclusion funds' to help socially and educationally disadvantaged children pursue education. Also, there is a need to set up a regulatory process that can check profiteering from education in the form of unaccounted donations.
- **Bridging Digital Divide:** If technology is a force-multiplier, with unequal access it can also expand the gap between the haves and have not. Thus, the state needs to address the striking disparities in access to digital tools for universalization of education.
- **Interministerial Coordination:** There is an emphasis on vocational training, but to make it effective, there has to be close coordination between the education, skills and labour ministry.

### Conclusion

The new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is a good policy as it aims at making the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the **2030 Sustainable Development Goals**. The intent of policy seems to be ideal in many ways but it is the implementation where lies the key to success.

Source: PIB

Time Capsule-Kaal Patra

GS-I | 05 August, 2020

### Time Capsule-Kaal Patra

The **Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust** has denied reports about placing of a time capsule under the ground at Ram Temple construction site in Ayodhya. The Time Capsule, also known as **Kaal Patra**, was supposed to contain the history of Ayodhya and Rama Janma Bhoomi Movement.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- Time Capsule is a **container** of any size or shape, which **accommodates documents**, photos and artefacts typical **of the current era** and is **buried underground**, for **future generations to unearth**.
- To ensure that the capsules do not decay they are **built using special engineering techniques** like **steel or aluminium encasing**, **vacuuming**, **use of acid-free paper**, etc.
- The time capsules mostly **have a scheduled time for reopening**, and are supposed to be buried again after opening, with people of the future adding their own contributions to the time capsule.
- The **International Time Capsule Society (ITCS)**, based in the USA and formed in 1990, is **now defunct** but continues estimating the number of time capsules in the world. As per its database, there are **10,000-15,000 times capsules worldwide**.

### Famous Time Capsules in the World

- **Samuel Adams and Paul Revere Time Capsule**: It is the **oldest known time capsule** from 1795 (USA).
- **The "Century Safe"**: The **world's first planned time capsule** was established at Philadelphia Centennial Exposition (USA) in 1876. It was opened and resealed in 1976.
- **The Crypt of Civilization in Georgia**: It was built around 1940 at Oglethorpe University in Brookhaven, Georgia and is scheduled for opening in the year 8113 AD. It is a project to preserve all human knowledge and was the brainchild of **Thornwell Jacobs**, also known as **father of time capsules**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- **The Voyager and Voyager II Spacecraft:** They are currently circling on the **edge of our solar system**. These capsules were created by NASA to be seen by future generations.

### Time Capsules in India

- **Outside the Red Fort:** This was placed underground in 1972 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was dug out by the subsequent government in 1977. It raised a **controversy** as it was said to glorify Gandhi Nehru family in Indian History.
- **At IIT Kanpur Campus:** This time capsule was buried on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2010 containing details on IIT Kanpur in the form of documents, photographs, and films.
- **At The Alexandra Girls' English Institution, Mumbai:** It was set up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is scheduled to be opened in 2062. It contains information on the school.
- **At Jalandhar's Lovely Public University:** It was buried in January 2019 and contains 100 items that represent modern-day technology in India.

### Significance

- Time Capsules are intended as a **method of communication with future** people.
- They are also supposed to help future **archaeologists, anthropologists, or historians** in knowing about the past human civilisation.

### Criticism

- Most intentional time capsules are filled with a lopsided view of history. They are often politically motivated and glorify the people who planted them.
- They can not be regarded as facts and are not very reliable. The information in time capsules has to be verified with other sources of information.
- Many time capsules which have been unearthed were filled with junk telling little about the people of the time.

Source: TH

Purchasing Managersâ€™™ Index (PMI)



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)

#### GS-Paper-3 Data (PT-Facts)

According to the recent **IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)**, India's manufacturing sector activity contracted at a faster pace in July 2020 than in June 2020.

#### Manufacturing PMI:

- It stood at 46 in July 2020, down from 47.2 in June 2020. In PMI parlance, a score above 50 means **growth**, while a score below that denotes **contraction**.
- This is the **fourth straight month of contraction** for the Indian manufacturing sector. In April, the PMI had slipped into contraction mode, after remaining in growth territory for 32 consecutive months.
- The manufacturing PMI showed some recovery in May, and further in June 2020, but it once again slipped in July 2020.

**Reason for Contraction:** The demand conditions remained subdued with some businesses still closed amid lockdown extensions due to emergence of new epicentres of **Covid-19 pandemic**. Export orders have also witnessed a decline.

**Effect:** The re-acceleration of declines in the manufacturing sector is undermining the trend towards economic stabilisation seen over the past two months. The firms have reduced both staff numbers as well as purchasing activity.

#### Purchasing Managers' Index

- PMI is an index of the **prevailing direction of economic trends** in the **manufacturing and service sectors**.
- It consists of a diffusion index that summarizes whether market conditions, as viewed by purchasing managers, are expanding, staying the same, or contracting.
- The purpose of the PMI is to provide information about **current and future business conditions** to company decision makers, analysts, and investors.
- It is **different from the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**, which also gauges the level of activity in the economy. IIP covers the **broader industrial sector** compared to PMI.
- However, PMI is **more dynamic** compared to a standard industrial



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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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production index.

### Conclusion

In India the positive impact from unlock is not as strong as the negative impact of the lockdown. Therefore the government needs to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic on a priority to make economic recovery sustainable.

Source: IE

### Jammu & Kashmir & Habeas Corpus

GS-II | 05 August, 2020

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## Jammu & Kashmir & Habeas Corpus

### GS-Paper-2 Governance (Mains)

After the abrogation of the **special status (under Article 370 of the Constitution)** of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir in August 2019, the Jammu & Kashmir High Court was confronted with an unprecedented number (250 plus) of habeas corpus petitions. The habeas corpus petitions were filed to challenge the detentions under the **J&K Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978**.

**Background:** After the abrogation of the special status, thousands of people were detained from across the Kashmir valley under the **preventive detention law**. Of these, several hundred were detained under the PSA. The other preventive detention laws under which people were booked are **National Security Act (NSA) 1980** and **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967**.

### Status of Habeas Corpus Petitions Against PSA:

The records of cases dealt by the High Court show that 61% of the cases under the habeas corpus were dragged on over 3-4 hearings, which were later either dismissed or settled. However, in 17 cases, the court quashed the detention orders, due to lack of procedure followed by the government while invoking the PSA.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### J&K Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978

**Definition:** It is a kind of **preventive detention law**, under which a person is taken into custody to prevent him or her from acting in any manner that is prejudicial to the security of the state or the maintenance of public order.

**Period of Detention:** Up to 2 years.

**Enforcement:** Detention order is passed either by Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate.

**Challenging the Detention:** The only way the administrative preventive detention order can be challenged is **through a habeas corpus petition** filed by relatives of the detained person.

The High Court and the Supreme Court have jurisdiction to hear such petitions and pass a final order seeking quashing of the PSA. However, if the order is quashed, there is no bar on the government passing another detention order under the PSA and detaining the person again.

There can be no prosecution or any legal proceeding against the official who has passed the order.

### Habeas Corpus

It is a Latin term which literally means **'to have the body of'**. Under this the court issues an order to a person who has detained another person, to produce the body of the latter before it. The court then examines the cause and legality of detention.

This writ is a **bulwark of individual liberty** against arbitrary detention. The writ of habeas corpus **can be issued against both public authorities as well as private individuals**.

The writ, on the other hand, is not issued where the:

- detention is lawful,
- the proceeding is for contempt of a legislature or a court,
- detention is by a competent court, and
- detention is outside the jurisdiction of the court.

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Source: TH

### Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (2020)

GS-II | 05 August, 2020

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## Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (2020)

### GS-PAPER-2 Defence procurement policy (Mains)

Recently, the Ministry of Defence has formulated a **draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020)**. The DPEPP 2020 is envisaged as an overarching guiding document to provide a **focused, structured** and significant thrust to **defence production capabilities** of the country for **self-reliance and exports**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Indian Defence Sector At a Glance



**2nd  
Largest**

armed force in  
the world



**2nd  
Largest**

importer of equipment  
globally (2014-2018)



**INR 4,71,378  
Crore**

defence budget  
2020-2021



**9.37  
Per cent**

increase in  
Defence Budget



**INR 1.7  
Trillion**

turnover target  
by 2025



**INR 350  
Billion**

export target in  
defence goods &  
services by 2025

Overall defence production in India has  
increased from **USD 6.4 billion** in 2013-2014  
to **USD 11.4 billion** in 2018-2019

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### Goals and Objectives:

- To achieve a turnover of **Rs. 1,75,000 crore including export of Rs. 35,000 crore in Aerospace and Defence goods and services by 2025.**
- To develop a dynamic, robust and competitive Defence industry, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products.
- To reduce dependence on imports and take forward "Make in India" initiatives through domestic design and development.
- To promote the export of defence products and become part of the global defence value chains.
- To create an environment that encourages research and development (R&D), rewards innovation, create Indian Intellectual Property (IP) ownership and promotes a robust and self-reliant defence industry.

### Outlined Strategies

**Procurement Reforms:** A **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be set up for the development and production of technologies involved, life cycle costs and maintenance requirements of platforms, equipment and weapon systems.

It also aims to **move away from licensed production to design, develop and produce indigenously.** It also aims to own the design rights and IP of the systems projected in the **Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP)** and a **Technology Assessment Cell (TAC)** would be created.

The TAC would also assess the industrial capability for design, development and production, including re-engineering for production of major systems such as armoured vehicles, submarines, fighter aircraft, helicopters and radars with the major industries in the country.

**Indigenisation And Support to MSMEs/Startups:** The **indigenisation policy** aims to create an industry ecosystem to indigenise the imported components (including alloys and special materials) and sub-assemblies for defence equipment and platforms manufactured in India. 5,000 such items are proposed to be indigenised by 2025. More than 50 startups are currently developing new **'fit-for-military-use'** technologies/products.

**Optimise Resource Allocation:** The share of domestic procurement in overall Defence procurement is about **60%**. To enhance procurement from domestic

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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industry, the procurement needs to be **doubled from the current Rs. 70,000 crore to Rs. 1,40,000 crore by 2025.**

**Investment Promotion and Ease of Doing Business:** India is already a **large aerospace market** with rising passenger traffic and increasing military expenditure, as a result of which the demand for aircraft (fixed and rotary wings) is rising.

The opportunities in the aerospace industry have been identified in the following segments - aircraft build work, aircraft Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO), helicopters, engine manufacturing and MRO work, line replaceable units, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and upgrades and retrofits.

The **improvement in market size, demographic dividend and availability of diverse skill sets** are evident from **India's ranking in the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' (EoDB) report.** The **investments in the defence sector** need to regularly sustain the steady supply of orders.

**Innovation and R&D: Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)** has been operationalised to provide necessary incubation and infrastructure support to the startups in the defence area. iDEX would be further scaled up to engage with **300 more startups** and develop 60 new technologies/products during the **next five years.**

**Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti** was launched to promote a greater culture of innovation and technology development and file a higher number of patents in Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), Ordnance Factory Board (OFB). It would be scaled up for promoting the creation of Intellectual Property in the sector and its commercial utilisation.

### Conclusion

Self-reliance in defence manufacturing is a crucial component of effective defence capability and to maintain national sovereignty and achieve military superiority. The attainment of this will ensure strategic independence, cost-effective defence equipment and may lead to saving on defence import bill, which can subsequently finance the physical and social infrastructure.

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Source: TH

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**UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)**

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**Contempt of Court**GS-II | 05 August, 2020

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**Contempt of Court****GS-PAPER-2 Governance (Mains-I.V)**

Recently, the **Supreme Court of India** initiated the proceedings for **criminal contempt of court against lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan**. The contempt charges were lodged in the context of the comment made on social media, targeting the current Chief Justice of India.

The contempt power is needed to punish wilful disobedience to court orders (civil contempt), as well as interference in the administration of justice and overt threats to judges.

The reason why the concept of contempt exists is to insulate the institution from unfair criticism and prevent a fall in the judiciary's reputation in the public eye.

However, this raises the dilemma between the part of contempt law that criminalises anything that **"scandalises or tends to scandalise"** the judiciary and freedom of speech and expression (under the article 19), especially in the era of social media.

Thus, the current issue has once again brought under focus on the need for reviewing the law on Contempt of Courts.

**Note:**

- Contempt of Court refers to the offence of showing disrespect to the dignity or authority of a court.
- The objective for contempt is stated to be to safeguard the interests of the public if the authority of the Court is denigrated and public confidence in the administration of justice is weakened or eroded.
- The Supreme Court and High Courts derive their contempt powers from the Constitution.
- The Contempt of Court Act, 1971, outlines the procedure in relation to investigation and punishment for contempt.
- The Act divides contempt into civil and criminal contempt. Civil contempt refers to the wilful disobedience of an order of any court. Criminal contempt includes any act or publication which:

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- Scandalises the court,
  - Prejudices any judicial proceeding
  - Interferes with the administration of justice in any other manner.
- 'Scandalising the Court' broadly refers to statements or publications which have the effect of undermining public confidence in the judiciary.

### Arguments Against

- **Against Civil Liberties:** A law for criminal contempt gets in conflict with India's democratic system which recognises freedom of speech and expression as a fundamental right.
- In this manner, the judiciary draws resemblance with the executive, in using laws for a chilling effect on freedom of speech. Former Justice of Supreme Court, V.R. Krishna Iyer, famously termed the law of contempt as "having a vague and wandering jurisdiction, with uncertain boundaries; contempt law, regardless of the public good, may unwittingly trample upon civil liberties".
- **Wide Scope of Contempt:** The definition of criminal contempt in India is extremely wide, and can be easily invoked. Also, suo motu powers of the Court to initiate such proceedings only serve to complicate matters. Further, the Contempt of Courts Act was amended in 2006, to add truth and good faith as valid defences for contempt, but they are seldom entertained by the judiciary.
- **International Disuse of Contempt Doctrine:** Already, contempt has practically become obsolete in foreign democracies, with jurisdictions recognising that it is an archaic law. For example: England abolished the offence of "scandalising the court" in 2013. Canada ties its test for contempt to real, substantial and immediate dangers to the administration. American courts also no longer use the law of contempt in response to comments on judges or legal matters.

### Arguments in Favour

- **High Number of Contempt Cases:** There still exists a high number of civil and criminal contempt cases pending in various High Courts and the Supreme Court. The high number of cases justify the continuing relevance of the contempt of court law.
  - **Affecting Judiciary's Reputation:** Amendment in the definition of contempt may reduce the overall impact of the law and lessen the respect that people have for courts and their authority and functioning. Also by abolishing the offence in India would leave a legislative gap.
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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- **Constitutional Source of Contempt Power:** Supreme Court and High Courts derive their contempt powers from the Constitution. The Contempt of Court Act, 1971, Act only outlines the procedure in relation to investigation and punishment for contempt.
- Therefore, deletion of the offence from the Act will not impact the inherent constitutional powers of the superior courts to punish anyone for its contempt. These powers will continue to remain, independent of the 1971 Act.
- **Impact on Subordinate Courts:** The Constitution allows superior courts to punish for their contempt. The Contempt of Court Act additionally allows the High Court to punish for contempt of subordinate courts. Thus, if the definition of contempt is removed, subordinate courts will suffer as there will be no remedy to address cases of their contempt.
- **Adequate Safeguards:** The Commission noted that there are several safeguards built into the Act to protect against its misuse. For instance, the Act contains provisions which lay down cases that do not amount to contempt and cases where contempt is not punishable. These provisions suggest that the courts will not prosecute all cases of contempt.

### Conclusion

The **Law Commission of India** held that there is a need to retain the provision regarding the contempt of courts. However, it also recommended the definition of contempt in the Contempt of Court Act should be restricted to civil contempt, i.e., willful disobedience of judgments of the court.

Further, in the era of social media, besides the need to revisit the law on criminal contempt, even the test for contempt needs to be evaluated.

Source: IE

## Militarising Andaman and Nicobar Islands

GS-III | 05 August, 2020

## Militarising Andaman and Nicobar Islands

GS-PAPER-2 IR (Mains)

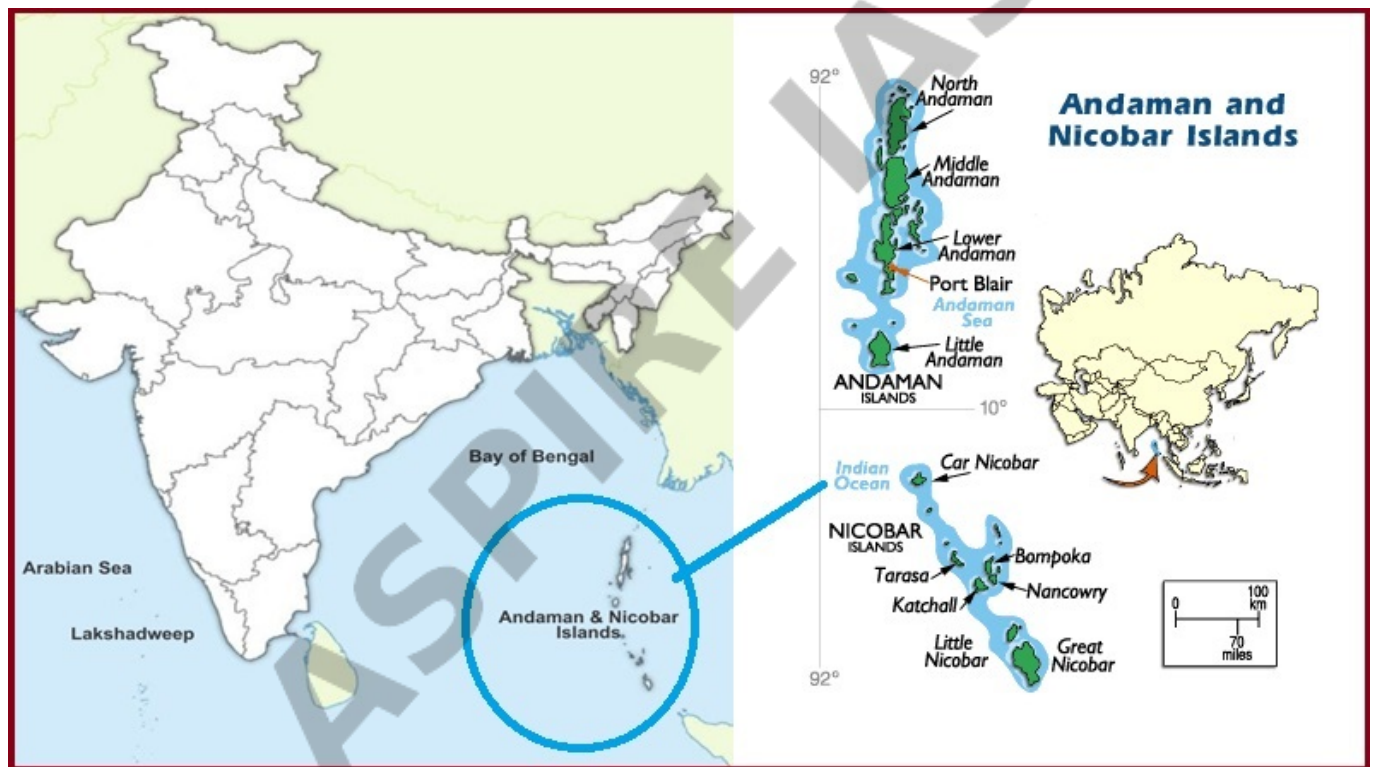


## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

The **Galwan valley face-off** with China has rendered many Indian security experts mooted the idea of balancing China in the maritime domain. In this context, strengthening military presence at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (ANI) remains very critical for India.

**The idea of militarizing the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is not new. Since the 1980s, Indian defense experts have advocated building strong strategic infrastructure at the ANI.**

However, the strategic development of the ANI is not a straightforward choice for India's defence and foreign policy establishments. Therefore, India must conduct a cost-benefit analysis before going for militarization of ANI.



### Significance of Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are located at the juncture of the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea.
- It is a group of 572 islands, which straddles some of the busiest trade routes in the world.
- ANI spans 450 nautical miles in a roughly north-south configuration adjacent

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

to the western entrance to the Malacca Strait, which is itself a major Indian Ocean chokepoint.

- Geopolitically, the ANI connects South Asia with South-East Asia. While the northernmost point of the archipelago is only 22 nautical miles from Myanmar, the southernmost point, Indira Point, is a mere 90 nautical miles from Indonesia.
- The islands dominate the Bay of Bengal, the Six Degree and the Ten Degree Channels that more than sixty thousand commercial vessels traverse each year.
- The Andaman and Nicobar Islands constitute just 0.2% of India's landmass but provide near 30% of its Exclusive Economic Zone.

### Opportunities in Militarising ANI

- **Crucial for a Robust Indo-Pacific Strategy:** As the geopolitical importance of the **Indo-Pacific** has been increasing, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, located in the Bay of Bengal, have attained increased strategic significance. ANI could also become an important element of **India's "Act East Policy"** of engaging with countries in the region east of India.
- Further, the Andaman and Nicobar chain of islands could be used as a basis for Indian maritime power projection into the Indo-Pacific and even beyond into the south-west Pacific.
- **Strategic and Commercial Advantages:** The ANI could be used for India's Third Fleet and the trans-shipment hub at Car Nicobar, could potentially be a strategic game-changer, rivalling the ports of Singapore or Colombo.
- **Strengthening Tri-Service Command:** Changing nature of warfare in the 21st century has led to the expansion of scope of a Tri-Command Service. As Andaman and Nicobar is the only Tri-Command structure in India, development of military infrastructure at ANI is a key requirement in India's security strategy.

### Challenges in Militarising ANI

- **May Portray the Image of Big Brother:** When India first began developing the ANI in the mid-1980s, countries like Malaysia and Indonesia feared that India would use its military facilities in the ANI to dominate its region, and project power east of Malacca.
- Hence, it is not uncommon for India to be vilified as the 'Big Brother' by many of its neighbours in South Asia and South-East Asia
- Therefore, a section of India's diplomatic community has opposed

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

militarising the ANI, arguing that turning ANI into a strategic-military garrison would militarise the littoral states and disrupt Indian ocean as a zone of peace.

- **Ecological And Anthropogenic Aspect:** Military infrastructure projects could devastate the fragile ecology of the ANI. Already many islands are facing significant damage from the climate crisis. Also, to establish a credible Aerial and Naval presence in an ethnographically extremely sensitive region presents complex challenges.
- **Antagonising China:** While China's presence in the Indian Ocean is growing, it hasn't so far militarised key **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** outposts in the Bay of Bengal (Hambantota, Chittagong and Kyaukpyu). If India pushes for greater military presence in the ANI, China could well seek military access in its friendly countries in Indian ocean .

### Way Forward

- **Bandwagoning with QUAD:** In order to counter China's expanding footprint in India's sphere of maritime interest, India must permit friendly foreign navies (QUAD members, France etc.) access to the ANI's military bases. The plan to integrate India's undersea sensor chain with the existing US-Japan "Fish Hook" SOSUS network which seeks to monitor submarine activity in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean Rim, is a step in the right direction.
- **Balanced Development:** Militarising ANI will aid India's strategic capabilities, but such development should not come at the cost the ruthless exploitation of Biodiversity hotspot i.e ANI.

### Conclusion

Militarising ANI is not a bad idea, but India must also take into account the downsides of such a move and the final decision should be based on a dispassionate weighing of costs and benefits.

Source: TH

## National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

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**UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)**

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GS-III | 05 August, 2020

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**National Education Policy (NEP) 2020****GS-PAPER-3 Education reforms (Mains)**

Recently, the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** was announced by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (soon to be called the Ministry of Education). The policy is aimed at transforming the Indian education system to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The new policy seeks rectification of poor literacy and numeracy outcomes associated with primary schools, reduction in dropout levels in middle and secondary schools and adoption of the multi-disciplinary approach in the higher education system.

Apart from this, the policy also focuses on early childhood care, restructuring curriculum and pedagogy; reforming assessments and exams, and investing in teacher training and broad-basing their appraisal.

Though the NEP 2020 seeks to bring a holistic change in the education system of India, its success depends on the will and way in which it will be implemented.



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### MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCES IS NOW **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

#### FOR SCHOOLS

**From 10+2 to 5+3+3+4:** Current 10+2 structure in which policy covered schooling from Class 1 to 10 (age 6-16) and then Class 11-12 (age 16-18) gives way to 5 years of foundational education, 3 of preparatory, 3 of middle & 4 years of secondary schooling



**Multi-Stream:** Flexibility to choose subjects across streams; all subjects to be offered at two levels of proficiency

**Diluted Board:** Board exams to test only core competencies; could become modular (object and subjective) and will be offered twice a year

**Multilingual:** 3-language policy to continue with preference for local language medium of instruction till class 8



**Bag-Less Days:** School students to have 10 bag-less days in a year during which they are exposed to a vocation of choice (i.e. informal internship)



#### FOR COLLEGES

**SAT-Like College Test:** National Testing Agency to conduct common college entrance exam twice a year



**4-Year Bachelor:** 4-year multi-disciplinary bachelor's programme to be preferred; mid-term dropouts to be given credit with option to complete degree after a break



**No Affiliation:** Over next 15 years colleges will be given graded autonomy to give degrees, affiliation with universities to end, so would be deemed university status

**Fee Cap:** Proposal to cap fee charged by private institutions of higher learning



**Going Glocal:** Top-rated global universities to be facilitated to come to India, top Indian institutions to be encouraged to go global



### Significance of National Education Policy 2020

- **Recognising Importance of Formative years:** In adopting a **5+3+3+4** model for school education starting at age 3, the policy recognises the primacy of the formative years from ages 3 to 8 in shaping the child's future.
- **Departure from Silos Mentality:** Another key aspect of school education in the new policy is the breaking of the strict division of arts, commerce and science streams in high school. This can lay the foundation for a multi-disciplinary approach in high education.
- **The Confluence of Education and Skills:** Another laudable aspect of the scheme is the introduction of vocational courses with an internship. This may nudge the vulnerable sections of society to send their children to school.



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Also, it would help in realisation of the goal of **Skill India Mission**.

- **Making Education More Inclusive:** The NEP proposes the extension of the Right to Education (RTE) to all children up to the age of 18. Further, the policy seeks to leverage the huge potential of online pedagogy and learning methodologies for increasing gross enrolment in higher education.
- **Light But Tight Oversight:** According to the policy, in spite of periodic inspection, transparency, maintaining quality standards and a favourable public perception will become a 24X7 pursuit for the institutions, leading to all-round improvement in their standard. The policy also seeks to establish a super-regulator for education which will be responsible for standards-setting, funding, accreditation and regulation of higher education India.
- **Allowing Foreign Universities:** The document states universities from among the top 100 in the world will be able to set up campuses in India. This will lead to an infusion of international perspective and innovation, which will make the Indian education system more efficient and competitive.
- **Ending Hindi vs English Debate:** Most crucially, NEP, once and for all, buries the strident Hindi versus English language debate; instead, it emphasises on making mother tongue, local language or the regional language the medium of instruction at least till Grade 5, which is considered the best medium of teaching.

### Issues Related to NEP 2020

- **Knowledge-Jobs Mismatch:** There is a persistent mismatch between the knowledge & skills imparted and the jobs available. This has been one of the main challenges that have affected the Indian education system since Independence. NEP 2020 failed to check this, as it is silent on education related to emerging technological fields like artificial intelligence, cyberspace, nanotech, etc.
- **The Requirement of Enormous Resources.** An ambitious target of public spending at 6% of GDP has been set. Mobilising financial resources will be a big challenge, given the low tax-to-GDP ratio and competing claims on the national exchequer of healthcare, national security and other key sectors.

### Way Forward

- **Need For Cooperative Federalism:** Since education is a concurrent subject (both the Centre and the state governments can make laws on it), the reforms proposed can only be implemented collaboratively by the Centre and the states. Thus, the Centre has the giant task of building a consensus on the

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many ambitious plans.

- **Strive Towards Universalisation of Education:** There is a need for the creation of 'inclusion funds' to help socially and educationally disadvantaged children pursue education. Also, there is a need to set up a regulatory process that can check profiteering from education in the form of unaccounted donations.
- **Bridging Digital Divide:** If technology is a force-multiplier, with unequal access it can also expand the gap between the haves and have not. Thus, the state needs to address the striking disparities in access to digital tools for universalization of education.
- **Interministerial Coordination:** There is an emphasis on vocational training, but to make it effective, there has to be close coordination between the education, skills and labour ministry.

### Conclusion

The new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is a good policy as it aims at making the education system holistic, flexible, multidisciplinary, aligned to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the **2030 Sustainable Development Goals**. The intent of policy seems to be ideal in many ways but it is the implementation where lies the key to success.

Source: PIB

Time Capsule-Kaal Patra

GS-I | 05 August, 2020

### Time Capsule-Kaal Patra

The **Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust** has denied reports about placing of a time capsule under the ground at Ram Temple construction site in Ayodhya. The Time Capsule, also known as **Kaal Patra**, was supposed to contain the history of Ayodhya and Rama Janma Bhoomi Movement.

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- Time Capsule is a **container** of any size or shape, which **accommodates documents**, photos and artefacts typical **of the current era** and is **buried underground**, for **future generations to unearth**.
- To ensure that the capsules do not decay they are **built using special engineering techniques** like **steel or aluminium encasing**, **vacuuming**, **use of acid-free paper**, etc.
- The time capsules mostly **have a scheduled time for reopening**, and are supposed to be buried again after opening, with people of the future adding their own contributions to the time capsule.
- The **International Time Capsule Society (ITCS)**, based in the USA and formed in 1990, is **now defunct** but continues estimating the number of time capsules in the world. As per its database, there are **10,000-15,000 times capsules worldwide**.

### Famous Time Capsules in the World

- **Samuel Adams and Paul Revere Time Capsule**: It is the **oldest known time capsule** from 1795 (USA).
- **The "Century Safe"**: The **world's first planned time capsule** was established at Philadelphia Centennial Exposition (USA) in 1876. It was opened and resealed in 1976.
- **The Crypt of Civilization in Georgia**: It was built around 1940 at Oglethorpe University in Brookhaven, Georgia and is scheduled for opening in the year 8113 AD. It is a project to preserve all human knowledge and was the brainchild of **Thornwell Jacobs**, also known as **father of time capsules**.

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- **The Voyager and Voyager II Spacecraft:** They are currently circling on the **edge of our solar system**. These capsules were created by NASA to be seen by future generations.

### Time Capsules in India

- **Outside the Red Fort:** This was placed underground in 1972 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was dug out by the subsequent government in 1977. It raised a **controversy** as it was said to glorify Gandhi Nehru family in Indian History.
- **At IIT Kanpur Campus:** This time capsule was buried on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2010 containing details on IIT Kanpur in the form of documents, photographs, and films.
- **At The Alexandra Girls' English Institution, Mumbai:** It was set up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and is scheduled to be opened in 2062. It contains information on the school.
- **At Jalandhar's Lovely Public University:** It was buried in January 2019 and contains 100 items that represent modern-day technology in India.

### Significance

- Time Capsules are intended as a **method of communication with future** people.
- They are also supposed to help future **archaeologists, anthropologists, or historians** in knowing about the past human civilisation.

### Criticism

- Most intentional time capsules are filled with a lopsided view of history. They are often politically motivated and glorify the people who planted them.
- They can not be regarded as facts and are not very reliable. The information in time capsules has to be verified with other sources of information.
- Many time capsules which have been unearthed were filled with junk telling little about the people of the time.

Source: TH

Purchasing Managersâ€™™ Index (PMI)



## Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)

### GS-Paper-3 Data (PT-Facts)

According to the recent **IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)**, India's manufacturing sector activity contracted at a faster pace in July 2020 than in June 2020.

### Manufacturing PMI:

- It stood at 46 in July 2020, down from 47.2 in June 2020. In PMI parlance, a score above 50 means **growth**, while a score below that denotes **contraction**.
- This is the **fourth straight month of contraction** for the Indian manufacturing sector. In April, the PMI had slipped into contraction mode, after remaining in growth territory for 32 consecutive months.
- The manufacturing PMI showed some recovery in May, and further in June 2020, but it once again slipped in July 2020.

**Reason for Contraction:** The demand conditions remained subdued with some businesses still closed amid lockdown extensions due to emergence of new epicentres of **Covid-19 pandemic**. Export orders have also witnessed a decline.

**Effect:** The re-acceleration of declines in the manufacturing sector is undermining the trend towards economic stabilisation seen over the past two months. The firms have reduced both staff numbers as well as purchasing activity.

### Purchasing Managers' Index

- PMI is an index of the **prevailing direction of economic trends** in the **manufacturing and service sectors**.
- It consists of a diffusion index that summarizes whether market conditions, as viewed by purchasing managers, are expanding, staying the same, or contracting.
- The purpose of the PMI is to provide information about **current and future business conditions** to company decision makers, analysts, and investors.
- It is **different from the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**, which also gauges the level of activity in the economy. IIP covers the **broader industrial sector** compared to PMI.
- However, PMI is **more dynamic** compared to a standard industrial



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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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production index.

### Conclusion

In India the positive impact from unlock is not as strong as the negative impact of the lockdown. Therefore the government needs to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic on a priority to make economic recovery sustainable.

Source: IE

### Jammu & Kashmir & Habeas Corpus

GS-II | 05 August, 2020

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## Jammu & Kashmir & Habeas Corpus

### GS-Paper-2 Governance (Mains)

After the abrogation of the **special status (under Article 370 of the Constitution)** of the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir in August 2019, the Jammu & Kashmir High Court was confronted with an unprecedented number (250 plus) of habeas corpus petitions. The habeas corpus petitions were filed to challenge the detentions under the **J&K Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978**.

**Background:** After the abrogation of the special status, thousands of people were detained from across the Kashmir valley under the **preventive detention law**. Of these, several hundred were detained under the PSA. The other preventive detention laws under which people were booked are **National Security Act (NSA) 1980** and **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967**.

### Status of Habeas Corpus Petitions Against PSA:

The records of cases dealt by the High Court show that 61% of the cases under the habeas corpus were dragged on over 3-4 hearings, which were later either dismissed or settled. However, in 17 cases, the court quashed the detention orders, due to lack of procedure followed by the government while invoking the PSA.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### J&K Public Safety Act (PSA), 1978

**Definition:** It is a kind of **preventive detention law**, under which a person is taken into custody to prevent him or her from acting in any manner that is prejudicial to the security of the state or the maintenance of public order.

**Period of Detention:** Up to 2 years.

**Enforcement:** Detention order is passed either by Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate.

**Challenging the Detention:** The only way the administrative preventive detention order can be challenged is **through a habeas corpus petition** filed by relatives of the detained person.

The High Court and the Supreme Court have jurisdiction to hear such petitions and pass a final order seeking quashing of the PSA. However, if the order is quashed, there is no bar on the government passing another detention order under the PSA and detaining the person again.

There can be no prosecution or any legal proceeding against the official who has passed the order.

### Habeas Corpus

It is a Latin term which literally means '**to have the body of**'. Under this the court issues an order to a person who has detained another person, to produce the body of the latter before it. The court then examines the cause and legality of detention.

This writ is a **bulwark of individual liberty** against arbitrary detention. The writ of habeas corpus **can be issued against both public authorities as well as private individuals**.

The writ, on the other hand, is not issued where the:

- detention is lawful,
- the proceeding is for contempt of a legislature or a court,
- detention is by a competent court, and
- detention is outside the jurisdiction of the court.

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Source: TH

## Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (2020)

GS-II | 05 August, 2020

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### Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy (2020)

#### GS-PAPER-2 Defence procurement policy (Mains)

Recently, the Ministry of Defence has formulated a **draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020 (DPEPP 2020)**. The DPEPP 2020 is envisaged as an overarching guiding document to provide a **focused, structured** and significant thrust to **defence production capabilities** of the country for **self-reliance and exports**.

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### Indian Defence Sector At a Glance



**2nd  
Largest**

armed force in  
the world



**2nd  
Largest**

importer of equipment  
globally (2014-2018)



**INR 4,71,378  
Crore**

defence budget  
2020-2021



**9.37  
Per cent**

increase in  
Defence Budget



**INR 1.7  
Trillion**

turnover target  
by 2025



**INR 350  
Billion**

export target in  
defence goods &  
services by 2025

Overall defence production in India has  
increased from **USD 6.4 billion** in 2013-2014  
to **USD 11.4 billion** in 2018-2019

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Goals and Objectives:

- To achieve a turnover of **Rs. 1,75,000 crore including export of Rs. 35,000 crore in Aerospace and Defence goods and services by 2025.**
- To develop a dynamic, robust and competitive Defence industry, including Aerospace and Naval Shipbuilding industry to cater to the needs of Armed forces with quality products.
- To reduce dependence on imports and take forward "Make in India" initiatives through domestic design and development.
- To promote the export of defence products and become part of the global defence value chains.
- To create an environment that encourages research and development (R&D), rewards innovation, create Indian Intellectual Property (IP) ownership and promotes a robust and self-reliant defence industry.

### Outlined Strategies

**Procurement Reforms:** A **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be set up for the development and production of technologies involved, life cycle costs and maintenance requirements of platforms, equipment and weapon systems.

It also aims to **move away from licensed production to design, develop and produce indigenously.** It also aims to own the design rights and IP of the systems projected in the **Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP)** and a **Technology Assessment Cell (TAC)** would be created.

The TAC would also assess the industrial capability for design, development and production, including re-engineering for production of major systems such as armoured vehicles, submarines, fighter aircraft, helicopters and radars with the major industries in the country.

**Indigenisation And Support to MSMEs/Startups:** The **indigenisation policy** aims to create an industry ecosystem to indigenise the imported components (including alloys and special materials) and sub-assemblies for defence equipment and platforms manufactured in India. 5,000 such items are proposed to be indigenised by 2025. More than 50 startups are currently developing new **'fit-for-military-use'** technologies/products.

**Optimise Resource Allocation:** The share of domestic procurement in overall Defence procurement is about **60%**. To enhance procurement from domestic



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industry, the procurement needs to be **doubled from the current Rs. 70,000 crore to Rs. 1,40,000 crore by 2025.**

**Investment Promotion and Ease of Doing Business:** India is already a **large aerospace market** with rising passenger traffic and increasing military expenditure, as a result of which the demand for aircraft (fixed and rotary wings) is rising.

The opportunities in the aerospace industry have been identified in the following segments - aircraft build work, aircraft Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO), helicopters, engine manufacturing and MRO work, line replaceable units, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and upgrades and retrofits.

The **improvement in market size, demographic dividend and availability of diverse skill sets** are evident from **India's ranking in the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' (EoDB) report.** The **investments in the defence sector** need to regularly sustain the steady supply of orders.

**Innovation and R&D: Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX)** has been operationalised to provide necessary incubation and infrastructure support to the startups in the defence area. iDEX would be further scaled up to engage with **300 more startups** and develop 60 new technologies/products during the **next five years.**

**Mission Raksha Gyan Shakti** was launched to promote a greater culture of innovation and technology development and file a higher number of patents in Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), Ordnance Factory Board (OFB). It would be scaled up for promoting the creation of Intellectual Property in the sector and its commercial utilisation.

### Conclusion

Self-reliance in defence manufacturing is a crucial component of effective defence capability and to maintain national sovereignty and achieve military superiority. The attainment of this will ensure strategic independence, cost-effective defence equipment and may lead to saving on defence import bill, which can subsequently finance the physical and social infrastructure.

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Source: TH

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Gratuity amendment bill

GS-II | 06 August, 2020

#### Gratuity amendment bill

#### Gs-Paper-2 Labour and Laws (PT-MAINS)

The Union Cabinet has given approval to the introduction of the Payment of Gratuity (Amendment) Bill, 2017 in the Parliament.

**Gratuity is a sum of money paid to an employee at the end of a period of employment.** The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 applies to establishments employing 10 or more persons.

**It considers the inflation and wage increase even in case of employees engaged in private sector.** With implementation of 7th Central Pay Commission, in case of Government servants, the ceiling now is **Rs. 20 Lakh, where the present upper ceiling on gratuity amount under the Act is Rs. 10 Lakh.**

There will also be an additional 1 per cent dearness allowance that is from, 4 per cent to 5 per cent applicable from July 1, 2017, to all central government employees and pensioners. And it also seeks to double tax-free gratuity for private sector. The **gratuity will be completely tax free** if the bill approved by the cabinet gets passed in the parliament.

#### How this bill benefits workers?

Gratuity is not just paid to the employee on his retirement as commonly perceived. The gratuity rules are lenient, it can be paid at any of these cases if claimed

- If employee has tendered his resignation after serving the organisation for continuous service five years,
- On his death, even if the employee hasn't served the organization for five years.
- If employee becomes disabled due to accident or disease.

The main purpose for enacting this act is to provide social security to workmen after retirement. The amendment will increase the maximum limit of gratuity of employees, in the private sector and in Public Sector Undertakings/ Autonomous Organizations under Government who are not covered under CCS (Pension) Rules, at par with Central Government employees.

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### What will be the financial impacts?

- The combined impact on the exchequer on this account would be Rs.3,068.26 crore a year and Rs.2,045.50 crore in 2017-18.
- Earlier, employers could limit their liability to the statutory cap of Rs.10 lakh even if the calculation of gratuity for an eligible employee resulted in a higher figure but the limitation has been expanded.
- Many industries would be impacted if this proposal becomes the law, due to extra financial burden.

### In News:

**Parliamentary Committee on Labour** has, in its latest report, recommended that the eligibility period for gratuity payable to an employee on termination of his employment should be **reduced to one year from the present provision of five years**.

- The Committee made this recommendation in its **report on Social Security Code**, which has been evolved subsuming nine Central Labour laws.
- This comes in the wake of extensive retrenchment in all sectors in COVID-19 pandemic-induced economic slowdown.

\*\* The committee, which is headed by Biju Janta Dal MP Bharatruhari Mahtab, submitted the report to Speaker Om Birla.

"Keeping in view the nature of India's Labour Market where **most employees are employed for a short duration period only, making them ineligible for gratuity as per extant norms**, the Committee desires that the time limit of five years as provided for in the Code for payment of gratuity be reduced to continuous service of one year," the report says.

- It has further recommended that this facility be extended to **all kinds of employees, including contract labourers, seasonal workers, piece rate workers and fixed term employees and daily/monthly wage workers**.
- The committee has stressed that there should be a robust redressal mechanism in case an employer does not pay up the dues.
- The Labour Ministry had informed the committee that the employee can then approach the Competent Authority. "The Committee is of the considered opinion that such a provision is against the interest of the affected employees/workers who may have to run from pillar to post to get their legitimate dues," the report notes.

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- Instead, the panel has recommended that the Social Security Code should have provisions to hold the employer liable for payment of gratuity to the employees within a stipulated time frame.

"There should not be any leniency, as strong deterrent provisions would reduce wilful default and delinquent negligence on the part of employers in timely payment of gratuity to the needy and deserving employees," the report stated.

On similar lines, the Committee also flagged the concern that the threshold limit of 20 or more employees for EPFO registration can be used by the employers to exclude themselves from EPFO coverage. "The Committee desires that possibilities be explored to make the EPF Act applicable to all the workers, including self-employed," the report has said.

The panel has recommended that the social security code should empower the Central government to reduce the employee's contribution to EPF in exceptional circumstances like disasters in terms of the Disaster Management Act, including pandemics, because this would enable the Government to provide relief to the affected persons in COVID-19 like pandemics.

Source: PIB

### New Code on Wages

GS-II | 06 August, 2020

## New Code on Wages

### GS-PAPER-2 Labour and Labour Code (PT-MAINS)

The Centre will soon notify the rules that will create the mechanisms to fix **a floor wage** that would then undergird the minimum wages for different categories of workers — **unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled** — **that the States and Central government would have to set and enforce**.

This is in accordance with **the Code on Wages, 2019**.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Constitutional Provisions

- The **Article 43 of the Constitution of India** states that the state shall endeavor to secure by suitable legislation or economic organization or in any other way to all **workers a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life** and full enjoyment of pleasure and social and cultural opportunities.
- Under the Constitution of India, **Labour is a subject in the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule** where both the Central & State Governments are competent to enact legislation.

### Overview of the new code:

The new code will **amalgamate the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, and the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.**

- **Coverage:** The Code will apply to all employees. The central government will make wage-related decisions for employments such as railways, mines, and oil fields, among others. State governments will make decisions for all other employments.
- **Wages include** salary, allowance, or any other component expressed in monetary terms. This does not include bonus payable to employees or any travelling allowance, among others.
- **Floor wage:** According to the Code, the central government will fix a floor wage, taking into account living standards of workers. Further, it may set different floor wages for different geographical areas. Before fixing the floor wage, the central government may obtain the advice of the Central Advisory Board and may consult with state governments.
- **The minimum wages decided by the central or state governments must be higher than the floor wage.** In case the existing minimum wages fixed by the central or state governments are higher than the floor wage, they cannot reduce the minimum wages.
- **Payment of wages:** Wages will be paid in (i) coins, (ii) currency notes, (iii) by cheque, (iv) by crediting to the bank account, or (v) through electronic mode. The wage period will be fixed by the employer as either: (i) daily, (ii) weekly, (iii) fortnightly, or (iv) monthly.
- **Deductions:** Under the Code, an employee's wages may be deducted on certain grounds including: (i) fines, (ii) absence from duty, (iii) accommodation given by the employer, or (iv) recovery of advances given to

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

the employee, among others. These deductions should not exceed 50% of the employee's total wage.

- **Gender discrimination:** The Code prohibits gender discrimination in matters related to wages and recruitment of employees for the same work or work of similar nature.
- **Advisory boards:** The central and state governments will constitute advisory boards. The Central Advisory Board will consist of: (i) employers, (ii) employees (in equal number as employers), (iii) independent persons, and (iv) five representatives of state governments. State Advisory Boards will consist of employers, employees, and independent persons. Further, one-third of the total members on both the central and state Boards will be women. The Boards will advise the respective governments on various issues including: (i) fixation of minimum wages, and (ii) increasing employment opportunities for women.

### Wages

- According to the bill, **wages** include salary, allowance, or any other component expressed in monetary terms. This does not include bonus payable to employees or any traveling allowance, among others.
- **Minimum Wage:** **International Labour Organisation** defines it as "the minimum amount of remuneration that an employer is required to pay wage earners for the work performed during a given period, which cannot be reduced by collective agreement or an individual contract". Or, the minimum wage includes the **bare needs of life like food, shelter, and clothing**.
- **Living Wage:** It is the wage needed to provide the **minimum income necessary** to pay for basic needs based on the cost of living in a specific community. In addition to bare needs, a 'living wage' **includes education, health, insurance, etc.**
- **Fair Wage:** A 'fair wage' is a **mean** between 'living wage' and 'minimum wage'.

### Significance:

1. This is expected to effectively reduce the number of minimum wage rates across the country to 300 from about 2,500 minimum wage rates at present.
2. Codification of labour laws will remove the multiplicity of definitions and authorities, leading to ease of compliance without compromising wage security and social security to workers.

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3. It is expected to provide for an appellate authority between the claim authority and the judicial forum which will lead to speedy, cheaper and efficient redressal of grievances and settlement of claims as that of earlier.

### ***Need for a national minimum wage:***

One argument for a national minimum wage is to ensure a uniform standard of living across the country. At present, there are differences in minimum wages across states and regions. Such differences are attributed to the fact that both the central and state governments set, revise and enforce minimum wages for the employments covered by them. The introduction of a national minimum wage may help reduce these differences and provide a basic standard of living for all employees across the country.

Source: TH

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**UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)**

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**Data Security Council of India**GS-III | 07 August, 2020

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**Data Security Council of India**

- Data Security Council of India (DSCI), is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India, setup by NASSCOM®, committed to making the cyberspace safe, secure and trusted by establishing best practices, standards and initiatives in cyber security and privacy.
- To further its objectives, DSCI engages with governments and their agencies, regulators, industry sectors, industry associations and think tanks for policy advocacy, thought leadership, capacity building and outreach activities.

**Objectives of DSCI:**

1. Standards and Best Practices
2. Thought Leadership
3. Capacity Building
4. Cyber Security Industry Development
5. Policies for Cyber Security
6. Transborder Data Flow

Source: TH

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**Data Security Council of India**

- Data Security Council of India (DSCI), is a not-for-profit, industry body on data protection in India, setup by NASSCOM®, committed to making the cyberspace safe, secure and trusted by establishing best practices, standards and initiatives in cyber security and privacy.
- To further its objectives, DSCI engages with governments and their agencies, regulators, industry sectors, industry associations and think tanks for policy advocacy, thought leadership, capacity building and outreach activities.

**Objectives of DSCI:**

1. Standards and Best Practices
2. Thought Leadership
3. Capacity Building
4. Cyber Security Industry Development
5. Policies for Cyber Security
6. Transborder Data Flow

Source: TH



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Defence Ministry to impose import embargo on 101 items

GS-III | 09 August, 2020

#### Defence Ministry to impose import embargo on 101 items

- The Defence Minister has stated that the Defence Ministry will introduce import embargo on 101 items beyond the given timeline.
- The policy change comes in the wake of Chinese transgressions and the build-up along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

#### News:

- The government intends to **boost indigenisation** of defence production.
- It aims to reach a turnover of **\$25 billion** through indigenously manufactured defence products.
- It also expects to **export products worth \$5 billion**.
- In any government **contract over ₹200 crore, no foreign company can participate in the tendering process**.
- A list of 101 items has been prepared by the Ministry for which there would be an embargo on the import beyond the timeline indicated against them.
- Current and future capabilities of the Indian industry for manufacturing various ammunition & equipment within India have been assessed.
- The embargo on imports is planned to be progressively implemented between 2020 to 2024.
- The items comprise of not just simple parts but also some high technology weapon systems like artillery guns, assault rifles, corvettes, sonar systems, transport aircraft, LCHs, radars.
- The list also includes wheeled Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs) with indicative import embargo date of December 2021.
- The Army is expected to contract almost 200 AFVs at an approximate cost of over ₹5,000 crore.
- In another relevant step, MoD has bifurcated the capital procurement budget for 2020-21 **between domestic and foreign capital procurement routes**.

#### Significance:

- These measures are considered a big step towards **self-reliance** in defence.
- It offers a great opportunity to the Indian defence industry to manufacture the items in the negative list by using their own design and development capabilities or adopting the technologies designed and developed by the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) to meet the requirements of the Armed Forces.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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Source: TH

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ASPIRE IAS

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### India & Pak. spar over Indus water talks

GS-II | 10 August, 2020

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### Context:

- India has refused a request by Pakistan to hold a meeting on issues around the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) at the Attari checkpoint near the India-Pakistan border.
- The last such meeting between the two countries was in October 2019 in Islamabad.
- As per the agreement in IWT, a meeting was to be scheduled in India before March 31, 2020.
- The practice at the IWT meetings is that they are led by Indus Water Commissioners from both countries.
- A range of issues on the **construction of dams and hydropower** projects concerning the Indus river system are discussed.

### Important points:

- Evolving a procedure to solve differences on technical aspects governing the construction of the **Ratle run-of-the-river (RoR)** project on the Chenab in the Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- A consensus is yet to be reached upon a final resolution on the design parameters of this hydropower project.
- India has called for the **appointment of a 'neutral' party**.
- Pakistan favours a **Court of Arbitration** to agree upon a final resolution.

### Issue:

- According to the terms of the IWT, India has the **right to build RoR** projects on the three 'western' rivers — the **Chenab, Jhelum and Indus** — provided it **does so without substantially impeding water flow in Pakistan downstream**.
- Pakistan believes that the **project's current design** does pose a serious impediment and has **told the World Bank** that it wants a **Court of Arbitration (CoA)** set up to decide on the issue.
- India says this is **only a technical issue and mutually solvable**. It has agreed to a **'neutral party'** since a CoA potentially could stall any **construction on all Indus projects**.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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Source: TH

### Loya jirga approves prisoner release

GS-II | 10 August, 2020

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#### Loya jirga approves prisoner release

- The Afghan government and the Taliban are on the verge of peace talks after thousands of prominent Afghans approved the release of about 400 contentious militant prisoners.
- The resolution was passed at the end of a three-day loya jirga.

#### Significance:

- The prisoners' fate has been a crucial hurdle in launching peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban, which had committed to completing a prisoner exchange before negotiations can start.
- "The decision of the loya jirga has removed the last excuse and obstacles on the way to peace talks. We are on the verge of peace talks," said Abdullah Abdullah, who is leading the government's peace process and was appointed head of the loya jirga.
- Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said he would sign a decree to release the prisoners.
- The decision has raised hopes for talks between the two warring sides.
- The Afghan government has demanded the Taliban to agree to serious, immediate and lasting ceasefire.

#### What is Loya Jirga?

- A loya jirga is a special type of **jirga, or legal assembly**, in **Pashtunwali**, the **traditional code of laws of the Pashtun people**.
- It is mainly organized for choosing a **new head of state in case of sudden death**, **adopting a new constitution**, or to settle national or regional issues such as war.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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Source: TH

### Andaman and Nicobar will be a maritime hub

GS-III | 10 August, 2020

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#### Andaman and Nicobar will be a maritime hub

- Prime Minister has said that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands region, owing to its strategic importance, is going to be **developed as a maritime and startup hub**.
- 12 islands of the archipelago have been selected for high-impact projects with an emphasis on boosting trade of **sea-based, organic and coconut-based products of the region**.

#### Government initiatives:

- Proposed **transshipment hub in the Andaman** will help the group of islands become an **important centre of blue economy** and a **maritime and startup hub**.
- Over 300 km of national highway is expected to be completed in record time.
- The government is working to improve air connectivity within these islands and between them and the rest of the country.
- A submarine optical fibre cable between Chennai and the islands has been installed.

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Alexander Lukashenko wins Belarus election

GS-II | 11 August, 2020

#### Alexander Lukashenko wins Belarus election

- Long-serving Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko has won a sixth term, the central electoral commission said, after elections marred by violence as police cracked down on opposition protesters.
- The country's central election commission announced on Monday that all the ballots had been counted and Lukashenko took 80.23 percent of the votes, while his main **opposition challenger Svetlana Tikhanovskaya had 9.9 percent.**
- Tikhanovskaya, a 37-year-old stay-at-home mother and political novice, galvanised the opposition during the election campaign, attracting tens of thousands of supporters to the ex-Soviet country's biggest demonstrations in years.
- **A former Soviet collective farm manager**, Lukashenko has ruled **the country since 1994**, but faces the biggest challenge in years to keep his grip on power with some voters believing strongly that it is time he stood down.
- He has cast himself as a guarantor of stability, but is battling a wave of anger over his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy, and his human rights record.
- Tikhanovskaya entered the race after her husband, an anti-government blogger who intended to run, was jailed. Her rallies have drawn some of the biggest crowds since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.
- **Foreign observers have not judged an election to be free and fair in Belarus since 1995.**
- Human rights groups say more than 1,300 people were detained in the crackdown ahead of the election, including independent election observers and members of Tikhanovskaya's campaign team.

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Forest loss threatens hornbills

GS-III | 13 August, 2020

#### Forest loss threatens hornbills

- A study based on satellite data has flagged a high rate of deforestation in a major hornbill habitat in Arunachal Pradesh.

#### Issues:

- Using fine-scale satellite imagery, changes in forest cover of **Papum Reserve Forest (RF) adjoining the Pakke Tiger Reserve** as well as a part of Assam affected by illegal felling and ethnic conflict was assessed.
- Papum RF is a nesting habitat of three species of the large, colourful fruit-eating hornbills:
  - Great Hornbill
  - Wreathed Hornbill
  - Oriental Pied Hornbill
- Results show the loss and degradation of critical hornbill habitat in the biologically rich forests of the Indian Eastern Himalaya.
- The data pointed to alarming deforestation rates in Papum RF with the forest cover having declined to 76% of the total RF area.
- The ecologists assessed the habitat loss due to illegal logging. Illegal logging, has led to fewer tall trees where the birds nest.
- Also, forests are often under pressure due to **agricultural expansion, conversion to plantations mainly after the Forest Rights Act, 2006.**
- According to the Global Forest Watch 2020 report, the State lost 1,110 sq.km. of primary forest from 2002-2019.

#### Note:

- Hornbills used to be hunted for their casques – upper beak and feathers for headgear despite being cultural symbols of some ethnic communities in the northeast, specifically the **Nyishi of Arunachal Pradesh.**

Source: TH

### Research on Absciscic acid

## IISER Bhopal scientists' study on seed germination

### Introduction:

- A team of researchers at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Bhopal, has conducted a study on seed germination that could have a major impact on agriculture in the long run by helping determine the optimum timing of seed germination and thus ensure high plant yields.
- The study focused on the interplay between plant hormones like **Abscisic acid (ABA)** which inhibit the sprouting of the seed, environmental cues like light which promotes the sprouting process and

### Darkness

- The mechanisms underlying germination inhibition by ABA protein have been the subject of intensive research.
- There is scant knowledge about the mechanisms controlled by ABA for arresting the post-germination growth in response to environmental cues.

### Abscisic acid (ABA)

- Abscisic acid is a plant hormone. It modulates plant growth and development.
- ABA functions in many plant developmental processes, including seed and bud dormancy, the control of organ size and stomatal closure.
- It acts as a master regulator of the seed's growth by controlling several aspects of plant development, including seed dormancy and germination, as well as controlling growth under adverse conditions such as drought or salinity.
- ABA signals the seed not to germinate until there are favourable conditions for growth.
- If the stress comes after the germination of a seed, ABA suppresses further growth of the seedling. This inhibition leads the seedling to invest its energies less in its growth and more in defence mechanisms designed to ensure its survival.

### Significance of the research:

- The research has proved that the inhibition of seedling growth by ABA is much stronger in darkness as compared to light conditions.
  - Understanding the complex factors that modulate ABA sensitivity is vital to
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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

developing economically important plant varieties that have better tolerance to stress conditions.

Source: TH

### Poor access to abortion drugs

GS-III | 13 August, 2020

## Poor access to abortion drugs

### Context:

- Findings of the study carried out by the **Foundation for Reproductive Health Services India (FRHSI)** indicated a severe shortage of medical abortion (MA) drugs in five out of the six states surveyed.

### Medical Abortion Drugs

- Abortion pills are different from emergency contraceptive pills.
- Abortion pills or MA drugs are abortifacients which terminate a pregnancy by expelling an embryo or foetus.
- Abortion pills are approved for use only up to nine weeks, whereas an ultrasound can detect a foetus only at around 13-14 weeks.

### Study

- The study found an overwhelming shortage of abortion pills or medical abortion drugs.
- The study conducted among 1,500 chemists in six States found abysmal stocking in Madhya Pradesh (6.5%), Punjab (1%), Tamil Nadu (2%), Haryana (2%) and Delhi (34%).
- The only State that seemed to be better was Assam (69.6%).

### Reasons for shortage:

- Over-regulation of drugs to curb gender-biased sex selection such as through government programmes like 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

has **hindered access to safe, legal and cost-effective abortion.**

- Medical abortion drugs are over-regulated as compared to other prescription drugs.
- Regulatory hurdles are due to a misunderstanding that easy availability of **medical abortion drugs will be misused for sex selection.**
- State-wise regulatory and legal barriers are the key reasons why 79% of the chemists surveyed refrained from stocking these drugs.

### Issues:

- The regulatory crackdown has resulted in abortion services becoming inaccessible, especially those during the second trimester.
- The shortage forces many women to **seek a surgical abortion** from a facility, reducing her choice.
- It will also reduce access to safe abortion and force them to seek services from unsafe providers.
- There are only 16,296 approved abortion facilities in the private sector in the country.
- Whereas, MA drugs can be provided by an obstetrician or a gynaecologist, who are estimated to number about 60,000-70,000.
- The cost of first trimester surgical abortion is much higher than the cost of abortion pills plus the consultation fee.

### Way forward

- Abortions are allowed under the Medical Termination Act.
- MA drugs are also cost-effective.

Source: TH

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Amend Official languages Act, 1963

GS-II | 14 August, 2020

## Amend Official languages Act, 1963

### Context:

Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde suggested that the government should consider amending the **Official Languages Act of 1963** to:

- Include more vernacular languages in governance.
- Not just confine it to Hindi and English.

### Background:

- The court was hearing an appeal filed by the Union of India challenging the legality of a Delhi High Court judgment to translate the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification of 2020 into all 22 vernacular languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- The high court had allowed the plea holding that EIA notification should be translated and published in all the scheduled languages.

### Scheduled languages:

- Scheduled languages are those languages that are listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution and are given **official recognition** and **encouragement by the Central Government**.
- However, all official communication and publication of rules and notifications by the Central Government are in Hindi and English.
- As per **Article 343 of the Constitution**, the official language of the **Union is Hindi along with English**.
- Further, **section 3 of the Official Languages Act** states that Hindi and English shall be used for resolutions, general orders, rules, notifications, administrative or other reports made by the Central Government or any of its ministries or departments.

### 8th Schedule of the Constitution:

- The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution consists of 22 languages.
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.
- The Sindhi language was added in 1967 by 21<sup>st</sup> Constitutional Amendment act.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Thereafter, three more languages viz., Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included in 1992 by 71<sup>st</sup> Constitutional Amendment act.

- Subsequently, Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added in 2004 by 92<sup>st</sup> Constitutional Amendment act.

Source: TH

### Transparent Taxation – Honouring the Honest

GS-III | 14 August, 2020

## Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest

### Context:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a “**Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest**” platform that provides **faceless assessment, faceless appeal and a taxpayers’ charter**.

### Reforms:

- Reduction in **corporate tax from 30% to 22%** for existing companies and from **25% to 15%** for **new manufacturing companies**.
- **Abolition of the dividend distribution tax**.
- Steps have been taken to **bring in efficiency and transparency** in the functioning of the **Income Tax Department**, including **Document Identification Number (DIN)** and pre-filling of income tax returns to make compliance more convenient.

### How does it work?

- With the help of technology, the cases of scrutiny will now be allocated randomly to any official in any part of the country.
- The document identification numbers will be issued from the central database.
- A review of orders will also be done by another team at some other place, chosen randomly using data analytics and artificial intelligence.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The officials in the Directorate General of Income Tax (Investigation) and the Principal Commissioner of I-T/Chief Commissioner of I-T (TDS) will be the only competent authorities for approving survey actions to gather information for scrutiny and assessment.

### Advantages:

- In the new system, the department would escape unnecessary litigation and the officials would get reprieve from the energy otherwise spent on transfers and postings.
- It seeks to **eliminate corrupt practices** by doing away with the territorial jurisdiction of income-tax offices.
- The platform would instil a **sense of fairness and fearlessness** in the taxpayers.
- The efforts are directed at making the tax system seamless, painless and faceless.
- The new facilities are in consonance with the government's motto of '**minimum government, maximum governance**'.

Source: TH

## India and Australia on Cybersecurity

GS-II | 14 August, 2020

### India and Australia on Cybersecurity

#### News:

- There is a huge increase in cybersecurity cooperation between India and Australia.
- The countries are sharing experiences on protecting critical infrastructure, including 5G networks.
- In June 2020 both countries had signed a **Cyber and cyber-enabled critical technology framework agreement along with the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP)**.
- The Cyber security agreement sets out practical actions to enhance **digital**

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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trade, harness critical technology opportunities and address cybersecurity challenges.

- As part of this, the two countries have been increasing information sharing and stepping up cooperation.
- Another area which the two countries were exploring was of **regulatory space**, including Australia's encryption legislation, and how that could be used to prevent cyber-enabled crime.
- The categories of threats that the two countries are looking at are criminal groups, financial gain, sophisticated state-based actors and so on.

Source: TH

ASPIRE IAS

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Amend Official languages Act, 1963

GS-II | 14 August, 2020

## Amend Official languages Act, 1963

### Context:

Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde suggested that the government should consider amending the **Official Languages Act of 1963** to:

- Include more vernacular languages in governance.
- Not just confine it to Hindi and English.

### Background:

- The court was hearing an appeal filed by the Union of India challenging the legality of a Delhi High Court judgment to translate the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification of 2020 into all 22 vernacular languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- The high court had allowed the plea holding that EIA notification should be translated and published in all the scheduled languages.

### Scheduled languages:

- Scheduled languages are those languages that are listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution and are given **official recognition** and **encouragement by the Central Government**.
- However, all official communication and publication of rules and notifications by the Central Government are in Hindi and English.
- As per **Article 343 of the Constitution**, the official language of the **Union is Hindi along with English**.
- Further, **section 3 of the Official Languages Act** states that Hindi and English shall be used for resolutions, general orders, rules, notifications, administrative or other reports made by the Central Government or any of its ministries or departments.

### 8th Schedule of the Constitution:

- The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution consists of 22 languages.
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.
- The Sindhi language was added in 1967 by 21<sup>st</sup> Constitutional Amendment act.



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Thereafter, three more languages viz., Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included in 1992 by 71<sup>st</sup> Constitutional Amendment act.

- Subsequently, Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added in 2004 by 92<sup>st</sup> Constitutional Amendment act.

Source: TH

### Transparent Taxation – Honouring the Honest

GS-III | 14 August, 2020

## Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest

### Context:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a “**Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest**” platform that provides **faceless assessment, faceless appeal and a taxpayers’ charter**.

### Reforms:

- Reduction in **corporate tax from 30% to 22%** for existing companies and from **25% to 15%** for **new manufacturing companies**.
- **Abolition of the dividend distribution tax**.
- Steps have been taken to **bring in efficiency and transparency** in the functioning of the **Income Tax Department**, including **Document Identification Number (DIN)** and pre-filling of income tax returns to make compliance more convenient.

### How does it work?

- With the help of technology, the cases of scrutiny will now be allocated randomly to any official in any part of the country.
- The document identification numbers will be issued from the central database.
- A review of orders will also be done by another team at some other place, chosen randomly using data analytics and artificial intelligence.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The officials in the Directorate General of Income Tax (Investigation) and the Principal Commissioner of I-T/Chief Commissioner of I-T (TDS) will be the only competent authorities for approving survey actions to gather information for scrutiny and assessment.

### Advantages:

- In the new system, the department would escape unnecessary litigation and the officials would get reprieve from the energy otherwise spent on transfers and postings.
- It seeks to **eliminate corrupt practices** by doing away with the territorial jurisdiction of income-tax offices.
- The platform would instil a **sense of fairness and fearlessness** in the taxpayers.
- The efforts are directed at making the tax system seamless, painless and faceless.
- The new facilities are in consonance with the government's motto of '**minimum government, maximum governance**'.

Source: TH

## India and Australia on Cybersecurity

GS-II | 14 August, 2020

### India and Australia on Cybersecurity

#### News:

- There is a huge increase in cybersecurity cooperation between India and Australia.
- The countries are sharing experiences on protecting critical infrastructure, including 5G networks.
- In June 2020 both countries had signed a **Cyber and cyber-enabled critical technology framework agreement along with the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP)**.
- The Cyber security agreement sets out practical actions to enhance **digital**

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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trade, harness critical technology opportunities and address cybersecurity challenges.

- As part of this, the two countries have been increasing information sharing and stepping up cooperation.
- Another area which the two countries were exploring was of **regulatory space**, including Australia's encryption legislation, and how that could be used to prevent cyber-enabled crime.
- The categories of threats that the two countries are looking at are criminal groups, financial gain, sophisticated state-based actors and so on.

Source: TH

ASPIRE IAS

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) initiative

GS-II | 15 August, 2020

## Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) initiative

- The **Pune Rural Administration** has been able to implement the Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) initiative amid Covid-19 pandemic.

### About PURA:

- PURA was mooted by the former President Dr. Abdul Kalam in **January 2003** as a way of empowering and accelerating rural development.
- The **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** implemented the **PURA scheme on a pilot basis** in seven clusters for a period of **three years (2004-05 to 2006-07)**.
- **PURA 2.0 as a central sector scheme** was launched in **2012** focussing on the **development of potential growth centres** such as **census towns**.

### Objective of PURA:

- Provision of livelihood opportunities and urban amenities in rural areas to bridge the **rural – urban divide**.

### Mission:

- Holistic and accelerated development of compact areas around a potential growth centre in a Gram Panchayat (or a group of Gram Panchayats) through **Public Private Partnership (PPP)** framework for providing **livelihood opportunities and urban amenities to improve the quality of life in rural areas**.
- Amenities and economic activities provided under PURA include **Water and Sewerage, Construction and maintenance of Village streets, Drainage, Solid Waste Management, Skill Development, village street lighting, telecom, electricity generation, village linked tourism, etc.**

### RURBAN mission

- In 2014-15, the government made no allocation to the PURA scheme and instead introduced the Rurban Mission with an initial allocation of Rs. 100

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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crore.

- The aim of the Rurban Mission is to create 300 rural growth clusters across the country.

Source: TH

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### SARS-CoV-2-specific T cell immunity prevents recurrent severe COVID-19 disease

GS-III | 16 August, 2020

## SARS-CoV-2-specific T cell immunity prevents recurrent severe COVID-19 disease

### Context

- **Natural exposure or infection with the novel coronavirus** may “**prevent recurrent episodes of severe COVID-19**”, a paper published in Cell says.
- This is because, once infected with SARS-CoV-2, the immune system elicits “**robust, broad and highly functional memory T cell responses**”.

### Study:

- The study found SARS-CoV-2-specific T cells even in family members who have been exposed to the virus but have tested negative on antibody blood tests.
- SARS-CoV-2-specific T cells were also seen in **convalescent individuals** with a history of asymptomatic infection and mild COVID-19 disease.

### Robust responses

- All categories of people — recovered from moderate or severe COVID-19 disease, or in the convalescent phase after mild or severe disease or exposed family members or healthy people — exhibited “**robust memory T cell responses months after infection**, even in the absence of detectable circulating antibodies specific for SARS-CoV-2”, they write.
- They were able to detect similar **memory T cell responses** directed against the **internal and surface proteins** (membrane and/or spike) of the virus in some people in whom SARS-CoV-2-specific antibodies could not be detected.
- This indicates a “previously unanticipated degree of **population-level immunity against COVID-19**”, they note.
- This implies that **seroprevalence** as an indicator may underestimate the extent of immunity in the population, they note.
- The phenotype of the memory T cells during the acute phase of infection was different from the convalescent phase SARS-CoV-2-specific T cells, which

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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were “polyfunctional and displayed a stem-like memory”.

### No reinfection

- Studies undertaken in rhesus macaques had found that once infected, the animals were fully protected from reinfection. Till date, no documented case of reinfection has been found in people anywhere in the world, whether they had recovered from mild or severe COVID-19 disease or even been asymptotically infected.

### Clear segregation

- They found a “**clear segregation**” between **memory T cells** from patients who have recovered from moderate or severe disease, and **convalescent individuals and healthy blood donors**.
- The SARS-CoV-2-specific T cells also acquired an early differentiated memory phenotype in the convalescent phase, which gives the T cells stem-like properties characterised by extensive proliferation and polyfunctionality.

### Limitations of the Study

- The study has some limitations, though. Since it is a small study with limited clinical follow-up, it is not known if robust memory T cell responses, when circulating antibodies can be detected, can indeed lead to protection against severe COVID-19 disease.
- However, both 2002 SARS and MERS have been able to induce potent memory T cell responses that persist even when antibody responses wane.

### Adaptive immunity

- Even as antibodies wane with time, robust T cell memory formed after SARS-CoV-2 infection suggests that “potent adaptive immunity is maintained to provide protection against severe re-infection”.
- The pre-existing cross-reactive memory T cells are from previous exposures to common cold coronaviruses, and the biological relevance remains unclear.

Source: TH

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### What was the 2005 amendment to Hindu Succession Act, 1956?

GS-II | 16 August, 2020

#### Decoding the SC verdict on right of daughters

#### What was the 2005 amendment to Hindu Succession Act, 1956?

- The amendment was passed in 2005 to confer equal status to both sons and daughters of coparceners. Prior to the amendment, coparcenary rights were granted only to sons of a coparcener.

#### Who is a coparcener?

- A coparcener is one who acquires rights to their father's property upon birth and can claim a partition of the coparcenary at any time.

#### What was the confusion and what has been clarified now?

- Whilst the amendment sought to grant equal rights to both sons and daughters, the wording used left scope for various lacunae, which lead to contradictory views being taken by the Supreme Court on this issue.
- Until the judgment, equal status was only granted on those daughters whose father (coparcener) was alive when the amendment came into force on September 9, 2005.
- The judgement has now clarified that the equal rights being given to daughters of coparceners would be granted at their birth, irrespective of the date of death of their father.
- The SC clarified that the amendment would be applicable retrospectively, and not only to cases where the father is alive on the date of the amendment.

#### What are the conditions for applicability of the verdict?

- This would be applicable subject to the condition that the coparcenary property should not have been partitioned by the father prior to December 20, 2004. As long as the property remained coparcenary property and was not partitioned as of this date, a daughter can now claim interest in the same.

#### What are different categories of persons in Hindu Undivided



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Family (HUF)?

- One is the coparcener, to whom alone the verdict impacts. The second category is a member (wife), who is only entitled to maintenance and would not be granted any inheritance rights or right to seek partition in the coparcenary.

### What can daughters do now?

- Daughters will now be treated at par with sons of coparceners, and will be granted equal coparcenary rights in their father's property upon birth itself.
- Even their marital status would not affect the rights being conferred by them by way of the amendment – hence, they continue to be part of their father's HUF post marriage and they can seek a share and can bequeath their HUF share under their Will to any beneficiary they choose.

### What about impact of the verdict on family businesses and others?

- To be clear, this judgement only applies to HUF property, and does not affect personal or self-acquired assets held individually.
- In reality, most personal wealth, including ownership in valuable family businesses, are either held in personal names of the patriarch / promoters, or in private trusts or holding companies /limited liability partnerships (LLP).
- The 'older' business families may continue to hold some ancestral wealth in HUFs, but the scale and materiality of such holdings is usually limited. Almost no business family is setting up new HUFs, and actually most existing HUFs are being dissolved.

Source: TH

## Madras High Court on Criminalisation of Politics

GS-II | 16 August, 2020

### Enact a law to bar criminals in elections, asks Madras HC

#### Context:

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The Madras High Court has directed the Centre to explain in two weeks as to why it should not enact a law **prohibiting people with criminal background from contesting in parliamentary, Assembly and local body elections.**
- The observations were made while dealing with the **HCP(Habeas Corpus Petition)** to quash a preventive detention order passed against Jana alias A. Janarthanan, who is facing as many as 19 criminal cases including charges of murder, attempt to murder, and dacoity in Puducherry.

### News:

- Justices N. Kirubakaran and V.M. Velumani issued the direction after taking note of media reports of "persons with criminal background becoming policy makers in many parts of the country." They said such practice "has to be prevented and the system has to be cleansed."
- Passing an interim order on a habeas corpus petition (HCP), the judges said: "This is possible only if the top leaders of our political parties are firm in not admitting criminals in their parties. The leaders should have a **vision for decriminalisation of politics.**"
- The Bench pointed out that an **analysis of the 2019 Lok Sabha election winners by Association for Democratic Reforms**, a non-governmental organisation, **revealed that 43% (233 out of 539 Members of Parliament) had declared criminal cases pending against them.**
- Further, 29% (159 MPs) of the legislators were facing serious criminal cases.
- "Therefore, the Central Government has to come out with a comprehensive legislation to prohibit persons with criminal background from contesting elections," the Bench said.
- Authoring the order, Justice Kirubakaran observed: "Indian democracy should not be tainted by criminals. It is seen that some of the criminal elements are also floating political parties on their own with the support of their religion or communities and the same is required to be prohibited."
- After impleading the Director General of Police as one of the respondents to the HCP suo motu, the judges directed him to submit in two weeks, the details of rowdy gangs active in Puducherry. The judges also wanted to know similar countrywide data from the Centre.

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Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Minimum Age of Marriage for Girls

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

## Minimum Age of Marriage for Girls

### Context

- The Prime Minister, during his address to the nation on the 74th Independence Day, announced that the central government has set up a committee to reconsider the minimum age of marriage for women, which is currently 18.

### About the Committee (Jaya Jaitley Committee):

- On 2nd June 2020, the Union Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a committee to examine matters pertaining to age of motherhood, imperatives of lowering Maternal Mortality Ratio and the improvement of nutritional levels among women. The Committee is headed by Jaya Jaitley.
- The Committee was proposed in the Union Budget 2020-21.
- It will examine the correlation of age of marriage and motherhood with health, medical well-being, and nutritional status of the mother and neonate, infant or child, during pregnancy, birth and thereafter.
- It will also look at key parameters like Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), Total Fertility Rate (TFR), Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) and Child Sex Ratio (CSR), and will examine the possibility of increasing the age of marriage for women from the present 18 years to 21 years.

### International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) study

- A study conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which was published in 2019, showed that children born to adolescent mothers (10-19 years) were 5 percentage points more likely to be stunted (shorter for their age) than those born to young adults (20-24 years), and 11 percentage points more stunted than children born to adult mothers (25 years or older).
- Children born to adolescent mothers also had 10 percentage points higher prevalence of low weight as adult mothers.
- It also highlighted other factors, such as lower education among teenage mothers and their poor economic status, which had the strongest links with a child's height and weight measurements.
- It recommended that increasing age at first marriage, age at first birth, and

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

girl's education are a promising approach to improve maternal and child nutrition.

### Arguments Against Increasing the Minimum Age of Marriage of Women:

- The **National Coalition Advocating for Adolescent Concerns** asserts that increasing the legal age of marriage for girls will only "artificially expand the numbers of married persons deemed underage and criminalise them and render underage married girls without legal protection".
- Instead, transformative, well resourced measures that increase girls' access to education and health, create enabling opportunities and place girl's empowerment at the centre will not just delay marriage but lead to long term, positive health and education outcomes.
- It recommended bringing education for three-to-five year-olds and **15-to-18 years under the Right to Education**, instead of confining the law to children between 6 years to 14 years.

### Present Age for Marriage

- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men respectively.
- It needs to be noted that the minimum age of marriage is distinct from the **age of majority** which is gender-neutral. An individual attains the **age of majority at 18 as per the Indian Majority Act, 1875**.
- The laws prescribe a minimum age of marriage to essentially outlaw child marriages and prevent the abuse of minors. Personal laws of various religions that deal with marriage have their own standards, often reflecting custom.
- For **Hindus, Section 5(iii) of The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, sets 18 years** as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom.
- However, child marriages are not illegal — even though they can be declared void at the request of the minor in the marriage.
- In **Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid**.
- Additionally, sexual intercourse with a minor is rape, and the 'consent' of a minor is regarded as invalid since she is deemed incapable of giving consent at that age.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Background:

- The Indian Penal Code enacted in 1860 criminalised sexual intercourse with a girl below the age of 10.
- The provision of rape was amended in 1927 through the Age of Consent Bill, 1927, which declared that marriage with a girl under 12 would be invalid.
- In 1929, the Child Marriage Restraint Act set 16 and 18 years as the minimum age of marriage for girls and boys respectively.
- This law, popularly known as the **Sarda Act** after its sponsor **Harbilas Sarda**, a judge and a member of **Arya Samaj**, was eventually amended in 1978 to prescribe 18 and 21 years as the age of marriage for a woman and a man respectively.

### Different Legal Age of Marriage for Men and Women

- There is no reasoning in the law for having different legal standards of age for men and women to marry. The laws are a codification of custom and religious practices.
- However, the law has been challenged on the grounds of discrimination.
- Such a law **violates Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution**, which guarantee the **right to equality and the right to live with dignity**.

### Against the Supreme Courts' Following Judgements:

- In 2014, in the 'National Legal Services Authority of India v Union of India' case, the Supreme Court, while recognising **transgenders as the third gender**, said that justice is delivered with the "assumption that humans have equal value and should, therefore, be **treated as equal, as well as by equal laws**".
- In 2019, in 'Joseph Shine v Union of India', the Supreme Court **decriminalised adultery**, and said that "a law that treats women differently based on gender stereotypes is an affront to women's dignity".
- **Further India is a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979.**
- The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which monitors the implementation of the Convention, calls for the **abolition of laws that assume women have a different physical or intellectual rate of growth than men.**
- It needs to be noted that despite laws mandating minimum age and criminalising sexual intercourse with a minor, child marriages are very



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

prevalent in the country.

- **UNICEF estimates** suggest that each year, **at least 1.5 million girls under the age of 18 are married in India**, which makes the country home to the largest number of child brides in the world — accounting for a third of the global total.

### Way Forward

- Early pregnancy is associated with increased child mortality rates and affects the health of the mother. Thus, there is a need to focus on a mother's health and readiness to carry a child.
- The government needs to emphasize upon economic and social empowerment of women and girls, as well as targeted **social and behaviour change communication (SBCC)** campaigns. Increasing the minimum age of marriage of women will also lead to gender-neutrality.

Source: TH

## National Health Policy 2017

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

### National Health Policy 2017

- Aiming to provide healthcare in an "assured manner" to all, the NHP 2017 strives to address current and emerging challenges arising from the ever-changing socio-economic, technological and epidemiological scenarios.

### Features

- The policy advocates a **progressively incremental assurance-based approach**.
- It denotes an important change towards a comprehensive primary health care package which includes care for major NCDs (non-communicable diseases), **mental health, geriatric health care, palliative care and rehabilitative care services**.
- It envisages providing **larger package of assured comprehensive** primary health care through the 'Health and Wellness Centres'

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The policy proposes **free drugs, free diagnostics and free emergency and essential health care services** in **all public hospitals** in a bid to provide access and financial protection.
- It also envisages a **three-dimensional integration of AYUSH** systems encompassing cross referrals, co-location and integrative practices across systems of medicines.
- It also seeks an effective **grievance redressal mechanism**.
- Health Expenditure: The policy proposes raising public health expenditure to **2.5% of the GDP by 2025**.

### Targets:

- To increase life expectancy at birth from **67.5 to 70 by 2025** and reduce **infant mortality rate to 28 by 2019**.
- To reduce mortality of children **under-five years of age to 23 by the year 2025**.
- To allocate a major proportion of resources to primary care and intends to ensure availability of **two beds per 1,000 population** distributed in a manner to enable access within **golden hour** (the first hour after traumatic injury, when the victim is most likely to benefit from emergency treatment).
- To achieve the global 2020 HIV target **under 90-90-90 UNAIDS Target according to which by 2020**,
  - 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status.
  - 90% of all people with diagnosed HIV infection will receive sustained antiretroviral therapy.
  - 90% of all people receiving antiretroviral therapy will have viral suppression.

Source: TH

## RTI on PM-CARES Fund

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

### RTI on PM-CARES Fund

#### Context

- The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has denied a Right to Information request

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

related to the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM-CARES Fund).

### News:

- The PMO denied information on the number of applications and appeals related to PM-CARES and the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.
- The information was denied by the PMO on the grounds that providing it would "disproportionately divert the resources of the office" under **Section 7(9) of the Right to Information Act, 2005**.
- According to the Section 7 (9) of the RTI Act, "an information shall ordinarily be provided in the form in which it is sought unless it would **disproportionately divert the resources of the public authority** or would be detrimental to the safety or preservation of the record in question."

### Criticism:

- The move has been criticized by the Central Information Commission (CIC) as misuse of Section 7(9) by the PMO.
- Kerala HC Judgement: According to the judgment by the Kerala High Court in 2010, **Section 7(9) does not exempt any public authority from disclosing information**.
- It only gives discretion to the public authority to provide the information in a form other than the form in which the information is sought for.
- **Section 8 (1) lists the various valid reasons for exemption** against furnishing information under the Act and not Section 7(9).

### Issues in PM CARES Fund:

- Concerns have been raised around the **opaqueness of PM CARES Fund's** trust deed against public scrutiny of the expenditure of the fund.
- The need for a new PM CARES Fund, given that a PM National Relief Fund (PMNRF) with similar objectives exists.
- The decision to allow **uncapped corporate donations to the fund to count as CSR expenditure**, a facility not provided to PMNRF or the CM's Relief Funds, goes against previous guidelines **stating that CSR should not be used to fund government schemes**.
- A government panel had previously advised against allowing CSR contributions to the PMNRF on the grounds that the **double benefit of tax exemption would be a "regressive incentive"**.
- Donations to PM CARES have been made tax-exempt, and can be counted

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

against a company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) obligations. It is also exempt from the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, 2010, and **accepts foreign contributions.**

### Background:

- Earlier, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had said that the PM-Cares Fund is not a public authority under the ambit of Section 2(h) of the RTI Act, 2005.
- A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition has been moved before the Delhi High Court asking to bring PM-CARES Fund under the ambit of the Right to Information (RTI) Act.
- A Petition seeking transfer of contributions made to PM-CARES Fund To the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) has also been made in the Supreme Court of India.
- The government maintained that statutory funds like **NDRF, formed under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act of 2005**, are provided for by central and State budgets. These statutory funds do not take private contributions, unlike PM-CARES Fund.

### Section 2(h) of the RTI Act, 2005

- Under section 2(h) of the RTI Act "Public authority" means any authority or body or institution of self government established or constituted—
  - by or under the Constitution;
  - by any other law made by Parliament/State Legislature.
  - by notification issued or order made by the appropriate Government, and includes any—
  - body owned, controlled or substantially financed;
  - non-Government organisation substantially financed, directly or indirectly by funds provided by the appropriate Government.
- Recently, The Supreme Court has ruled that the office of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) is a public authority under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005.

### Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005

This provides for exemption from disclosure of information such as-

- Which would affect the **sovereignty and integrity of India**, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State;
- Which has been **expressly forbidden to be published by any court of law or tribunal**;
- Which would cause a **breach of privilege of Parliament** or the State

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

Legislature;

- Information including **commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property**;
- Information received in **confidence from foreign government**;
- Information which would **endanger the life or physical safety of any person**; etc.

Source: TH

### Anti-Drug Working Group BRICS

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

#### Anti-Drug Working Group BRICS

- Recently, the 4th Session of the BRICS Anti-Drug Working Group was held through a video conference.
- The session was chaired by Russia this year.
- India raised the **misuse of darknet and modern technology** used for **drug trafficking** by the international criminals in the meeting.
- It also called for nodal points to enable real-time information sharing among BRICS nations.
- The BRICS grouping discussed international and regional trends of illegal trafficking in **narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances** among others.
- It also discussed steps to curb increased instances of drug trafficking through the maritime route.

#### A Global Menace:

- According to the report released in May 2020 by the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Report (UNODC)**, Covid-19 induced lockdowns and movement restrictions may lead to an initial **statistical reduction in drug seizures**, but is unlikely to have any effect on illicit drug supply.
- According to UNODC, India is **one of the major hubs of illicit drug trade ranging from age-old cannabis** to newer prescription drugs like **tramadol**, and designer drugs like **methamphetamine**.
- India is in the middle of two major illicit opium production regions in the world, the **Golden Crescent (Iran-Afghanistan-Pakistan)** in the west and the



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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Golden Triangle (South-East Asia) in the east.

### Anti-Drug Action Plan:

- India has also launched the **Anti-Drug Action Plan for 2020-21** which includes:
  - **De-addiction** Facilities,
  - **Drop-in-Centres** for Addicts,
  - **Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts (IRCAs),**
  - **Drug-Free India Campaign.**

Source: TH

ASPIRE IAS

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Minimum Age of Marriage for Girls

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

## Minimum Age of Marriage for Girls

### Context

- The Prime Minister, during his address to the nation on the 74th Independence Day, announced that the central government has set up a committee to reconsider the minimum age of marriage for women, which is currently 18.

### About the Committee (Jaya Jaitley Committee):

- On 2nd June 2020, the Union Ministry for Women and Child Development set up a committee to examine matters pertaining to age of motherhood, imperatives of lowering Maternal Mortality Ratio and the improvement of nutritional levels among women. The Committee is headed by Jaya Jaitley.
- The Committee was proposed in the Union Budget 2020-21.
- It will examine the correlation of age of marriage and motherhood with health, medical well-being, and nutritional status of the mother and neonate, infant or child, during pregnancy, birth and thereafter.
- It will also look at key parameters like Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), Total Fertility Rate (TFR), Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB) and Child Sex Ratio (CSR), and will examine the possibility of increasing the age of marriage for women from the present 18 years to 21 years.

### International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) study

- A study conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which was published in 2019, showed that children born to adolescent mothers (10-19 years) were 5 percentage points more likely to be stunted (shorter for their age) than those born to young adults (20-24 years), and 11 percentage points more stunted than children born to adult mothers (25 years or older).
- Children born to adolescent mothers also had 10 percentage points higher prevalence of low weight as adult mothers.
- It also highlighted other factors, such as lower education among teenage mothers and their poor economic status, which had the strongest links with a child's height and weight measurements.
- It recommended that increasing age at first marriage, age at first birth, and

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

girl's education are a promising approach to improve maternal and child nutrition.

### Arguments Against Increasing the Minimum Age of Marriage of Women:

- The **National Coalition Advocating for Adolescent Concerns** asserts that increasing the legal age of marriage for girls will only "artificially expand the numbers of married persons deemed underage and criminalise them and render underage married girls without legal protection".
- Instead, transformative, well resourced measures that increase girls' access to education and health, create enabling opportunities and place girl's empowerment at the centre will not just delay marriage but lead to long term, positive health and education outcomes.
- It recommended bringing education for three-to-five year-olds and **15-to-18 years under the Right to Education**, instead of confining the law to children between 6 years to 14 years.

### Present Age for Marriage

- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 prescribe 18 and 21 years as the minimum age of consent for marriage for women and men respectively.
- It needs to be noted that the minimum age of marriage is distinct from the **age of majority** which is gender-neutral. An individual attains the **age of majority at 18 as per the Indian Majority Act, 1875**.
- The laws prescribe a minimum age of marriage to essentially outlaw child marriages and prevent the abuse of minors. Personal laws of various religions that deal with marriage have their own standards, often reflecting custom.
- For **Hindus, Section 5(iii) of The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, sets 18 years** as the minimum age for the bride and 21 years as the minimum age for the groom.
- However, child marriages are not illegal — even though they can be declared void at the request of the minor in the marriage.
- In **Islam, the marriage of a minor who has attained puberty is considered valid**.
- Additionally, sexual intercourse with a minor is rape, and the 'consent' of a minor is regarded as invalid since she is deemed incapable of giving consent at that age.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Background:

- The Indian Penal Code enacted in 1860 criminalised sexual intercourse with a girl below the age of 10.
- The provision of rape was amended in 1927 through the Age of Consent Bill, 1927, which declared that marriage with a girl under 12 would be invalid.
- In 1929, the Child Marriage Restraint Act set 16 and 18 years as the minimum age of marriage for girls and boys respectively.
- This law, popularly known as the Sarda Act after its sponsor Harbilas Sarda, a judge and a member of Arya Samaj, was eventually amended in 1978 to prescribe 18 and 21 years as the age of marriage for a woman and a man respectively.

### Different Legal Age of Marriage for Men and Women

- There is no reasoning in the law for having different legal standards of age for men and women to marry. The laws are a codification of custom and religious practices.
- However, the law has been challenged on the grounds of discrimination.
- Such a law violates Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution, which guarantee the right to equality and the right to live with dignity.

### Against the Supreme Courts' Following Judgements:

- In 2014, in the 'National Legal Services Authority of India v Union of India' case, the Supreme Court, while recognising transgenders as the third gender, said that justice is delivered with the "assumption that humans have equal value and should, therefore, be treated as equal, as well as by equal laws".
- In 2019, in 'Joseph Shine v Union of India', the Supreme Court decriminalised adultery, and said that "a law that treats women differently based on gender stereotypes is an affront to women's dignity".
- Further India is a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979.
- The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which monitors the implementation of the Convention, calls for the abolition of laws that assume women have a different physical or intellectual rate of growth than men.
- It needs to be noted that despite laws mandating minimum age and criminalising sexual intercourse with a minor, child marriages are very

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prevalent in the country.

- **UNICEF estimates** suggest that each year, **at least 1.5 million girls under the age of 18 are married in India**, which makes the country home to the largest number of child brides in the world — accounting for a third of the global total.

### Way Forward

- Early pregnancy is associated with increased child mortality rates and affects the health of the mother. Thus, there is a need to focus on a mother's health and readiness to carry a child.
- The government needs to emphasize upon economic and social empowerment of women and girls, as well as targeted **social and behaviour change communication (SBCC)** campaigns. Increasing the minimum age of marriage of women will also lead to gender-neutrality.

Source: TH

## National Health Policy 2017

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

### National Health Policy 2017

- Aiming to provide healthcare in an "assured manner" to all, the NHP 2017 strives to address current and emerging challenges arising from the ever-changing socio-economic, technological and epidemiological scenarios.

### Features

- The policy advocates a **progressively incremental assurance-based approach**.
- It denotes an important change towards a comprehensive primary health care package which includes care for major NCDs (non-communicable diseases), **mental health, geriatric health care, palliative care and rehabilitative care services**.
- It envisages providing **larger package of assured comprehensive** primary health care through the 'Health and Wellness Centres'



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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GS-II | 17 August, 2020

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Legislature;

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### Anti-Drug Working Group BRICS

GS-II | 17 August, 2020

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### Anti-Drug Action Plan:

- India has also launched the **Anti-Drug Action Plan for 2020-21** which includes:
  - **De-addiction** Facilities,
  - **Drop-in-Centres** for Addicts,
  - **Integrated Rehabilitation Centre for Addicts (IRCAs),**
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Source: TH

ASPIRE IAS



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Clause 6 of Assam Accord

GS-II | 19 August, 2020

## Clause 6 of Assam Accord

### Context

- In February, a government-appointed committee had submitted its recommendations for implementation of **Clause 6 of the Assam Accord**, a key provision that has been contentious for decades. Since then, the government has not made the report public.

### What is Clause 6?

- Part of the **Assam Accord** that came at the **culmination of a movement against immigration from Bangladesh**, Clause 6 reads: **"Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards, as may be appropriate, shall be provided to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people."**
- For recognition as citizens, the Accord sets **March 24, 1971** as the **cutoff**.

### What has happened since?

- Headed by retired High Court judge Biplab Kumar Sarma and including members of the legal fraternity, retired civil servants, scholars, journalists and AASU office-bearers, the committee was asked to fast-track its report.
- It submitted its report in February but the government did not make its contents public. Nilay Dutta and three AASU members independently made the contents public on Tuesday.

### What has it recommended?

- Its brief was to define the "Assamese people" and suggest measures for the safeguard of their rights.
- The definition of "Assamese people" has been a subject of discussion for decades. The committee has proposed that the following be considered Assamese people for the purpose of Clause 6: All citizens of India who are part of:
  - \* Assamese community, residing in the Territory of Assam on or **before January 1, 1951**; or
  - \* **Any indigenous tribal community of Assam** residing in the territory

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- of Assam on or before January 1, 1951; or
- \* Any other indigenous community of Assam residing in the territory of Assam on or before January 1, 1951; or
- \* All other citizens of India residing in the territory of Assam on or before January 1, 1951; and
- \* Descendants of the above categories

### Why 1951?

- During the **Assam agitation**, the demand was for **detection and deportation of migrants** who had **illegally entered Assam after 1951**.
- The **Assam Accord**, however, set the **cutoff at March 24, 1971**. The **National Register of Citizens (NRC)** was updated based on this cutoff.
- Clause 6 is meant to give the Assamese people certain safeguards, **which would not be available to migrants between 1951 and 1971**.
- If the recommendation is accepted, those who migrated between 1951 and 1971 would be Indian citizens under the Assam Accord and NRC, but they would not be eligible for safeguards meant for "Assamese people".

### What are these safeguards?

- Among various recommendations, key are **reservation of seats in Parliament, Assembly and local bodies; reservation in jobs; and land rights**. The panel recommends the Assamese people be given:
  - \* 80 to 100% reservation in the parliamentary seats of Assam, Assembly seats and local body seats be reserved for the "Assamese people".
  - \* 80 to 100% of Group C and D level posts (in Assam) in central government/semi-central government/central PSUs/private sector
  - \* 80 to 100% of jobs under Government of Assam and state government undertakings; and 70 to 100% of vacancies arising in private partnerships
  - \* Land rights, with restrictions imposed on transferring land by any means to persons other than "Assamese people".
- Several other recommendations deal with language, and cultural and social rights. On language, it recommends:
  - \* Assamese language shall continue to be official language throughout the state with provisions for use of local languages in Barak Valley, Hill Districts and the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts.
  - \* Mandatory provision of an Assamese language paper for recruitment in state government services with alternatives for Barak Valley districts, BTAD and Hills Districts.
  - \* To set up Academies for all-round development of each of the

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

indigenous tribal languages including, **Bodo, Mishing, Karbi, Dimasa, Koch-Rajbongshi, Rabha, Deuri, Tiwa, Tai** and other indigenous languages.

Source: TH

### National Cancer Grid

GS-III | 19 August, 2020

#### National Cancer Grid

- National Cancer Grid (NCG) is a network of major **cancer centers, research institutes, patient groups and charitable institutions** across India with the mandate of establishing uniform standards of patient care for **prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer**, providing specialized training and education in oncology and facilitating collaborative basic, translational and clinical research in cancer.
- It was formed in **August 2012**.

#### International Agency for Research on Cancer

- The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) was created in **1965 by a resolution of the World Health Assembly**, as the **specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization**.
- The objective of the IARC is to promote international collaboration in **cancer research**.
- It comprises of **27 member countries**. India is a member of it.
- Headquarters: **Lyon, France**.

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- It comprises of **27 member countries**. India is a member of it.
- Headquarters: **Lyon, France**.

Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Staff Selection Commission

GS-II | 20 August, 2020

#### Staff Selection Commission

- The Staff Selection Commission is an attached office of the Department of Personnel and Training under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
- The Government of India, in the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, vide its resolution dated the 4th November 1975 constituted a Commission called the Subordinate Services Commission. The same was re-designated as Staff Selection Commission effective from 26th September 1977.
- It makes recruitment to various Group "B" and Group "C" posts in the various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India and in Subordinate Offices.
- It has its headquarters in New Delhi.

Source: TH

### Institute of Banking Personnel Selection

GS-III | 20 August, 2020

#### Institute of Banking Personnel Selection

- IBPS is an autonomous body formed in 1984.
- It is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and also a Public Trust under the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950.
- It was created to render assistance to organisations in the areas of personnel such as recruitment, selection, placement, etc.
- It has its headquarters in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### World Bank may forecast steeper India contraction

GS-III | 20 August, 2020

#### World Bank may forecast steeper India contraction

- The World Bank on Wednesday indicated that it may further lower its GDP projections for India and said critical reforms in key areas such as **health, labour, land, skills and finance** were needed to come out stronger from the COVID-19 crisis.
- The World Bank, had in May, projected that the **Indian economy would contract by 3.2% in FY 2020-21** and rebound slowly in the next financial year.

#### 'Further challenges'

- "Further challenges have emerged in recent weeks which are likely to weigh on the prospects in the near term. These risks include the **virus continuing to spread**; further **deterioration in the global outlook**; and **additional strains projected** on the financial sector," the bank said in its India Development Update.
- "Keeping these factors in mind, a steeper contraction may be projected in the revised outlook that will be available in October 2020," it added.
- It projected India's fiscal deficit to rise to **6.6% of GDP in FY21** and remain elevated at 5.5% in the following year.

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

**Shekatkar Committee**

GS-III | 21 August, 2020

### Shekatkar Committee

- The Ministry of Defence under the chairmanship of Lt. Gen (Retd) DB Shekatkar had constituted a committee to recommend measures to enhance combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure of the armed forces which submitted its report in December 2016.

### Recommendations:

- Closure of Military Farms and Army Postal Establishments in peace locations.
- Enhancement in **standards for recruitment of clerical staff and drivers in the Army.**
- Improving the **efficiency of the National Cadet Corps.**
- Recommended a roll-on defence budget to have enough capital expenditure available for modernisation as against the present practice of surrendering unspent capital budget at the end of each financial year.

Source: TH

### Organic Farming in India

GS-III | 21 August, 2020

### Organic Farming in India

#### Context

- India ranks **1st in number of organic farmers and 9th in terms of area under organic farming.**

#### Indian Scenario Regarding Organic Farming

- Sikkim became the first State in the world to become fully organic in 2016.**
- North East India** has traditionally been organic and the consumption of

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

chemicals is far less than the rest of the country.

- Similarly the **tribal and island territories** have been traditionally practicing organic farming.
- The **major organic exports** from India have been **flax seeds, sesame, soybean, tea, medicinal plants, rice and pulses**.
- There was an increase of **nearly 50% in organic exports in 2018-19, touching Rs. 5151 crore**.
- Commencement of exports from **Assam, Mizoram, Manipur** and Nagaland to UK, USA and Italy have proved the potential by increasing volumes and expanding to new destinations as the demand for health foods increases.

### Government Initiatives:

#### Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER)

- Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North East Region (MOVCD-NER) is a **Central Sector Scheme, a sub-mission under National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**
- It was launched by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in **2015** for implementation in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.
- The scheme aims to **develop certified organic production** in a value chain mode to **link growers with consumers** and to support the development of the entire value chain.

#### Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

- Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, launched in **2015** is an **elaborated component of Soil Health Management (SHM)** of major project **National Mission of Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)**.
- Under PKVY, Organic farming is promoted through adoption of **organic villages** by cluster approach and **Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) certification**.

### Certification Schemes

- Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is the food regulator in the country and is also responsible for regulating organic food in the domestic market and imports.
- **Participatory Guarantee System (PGS):** PGS is a process of **certifying**

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

**organic products**, which ensures that their production takes place in accordance with laid-down quality standards. PGS Green is given to **chemical free produce** under transition to '**organic**' which takes 3 years. It is mainly for domestic purpose.

- **National Program for Organic Production (NPOP)**: NPOP grants **organic farming certification** through a **process of third party certification for export purposes**.
- **Soil Health Card Scheme** has led to a decline of **8-10%** in the use of chemical fertilizers and **also raised productivity by 5-6%**.

### Zero Budget Natural Farming

- Zero budget natural farming is a method of chemical-free agriculture drawing from traditional Indian practices.

### What is Organic Farming?

- According to FSSAI, 'organic farming' is a system of farm design and management to create an ecosystem of **agriculture production without the use of synthetic external inputs** such as chemical fertilisers, pesticides and synthetic hormones or genetically modified organisms.
- Organic farm produce means the produce obtained from organic agriculture, while organic food means food products that have been produced in accordance with specified standards for organic production.

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Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### National Strategy for Financial Education

GS-III | 22 August, 2020

## National Strategy for Financial Education

### Context

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the **National Strategy for Financial Education (NSFE): 2020-2025** document for creating a financially aware and empowered India.
- It is the second NSFE, the first one being released in 2013.

### NSFE:

- This NSFE for the period 2020-2025 has been prepared by the **National Centre for Financial Education (NCFE)** in consultation with all the Financial Sector Regulators viz. RBI, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), etc. under the aegis of the **Technical Group on Financial Inclusion and Financial Literacy (TGFIFL)**.
- NCFE is a **Section 8 (Not for Profit) Company** under the **Companies Act, 2013** promoted by **RBI, SEBI, IRDAI and PFRDA**.
- It emphasizes a **multi-stakeholder-led approach** for empowering various sections of the population to develop adequate **knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour** which are needed to manage their money better and to plan for the future i.e. ensuring their financial well-being.

### 5C approach:

- It has recommended a '5 C' approach for dissemination of financial education in the country:
  - **Content:** Financial Literacy content for various sections of population.
  - **Capacity:** Develop the capacity and '**Code of Conduct**' for financial education providers.
  - **Community:** Evolve **community led approaches** for disseminating financial literacy in a sustainable manner.
  - **Communication :** Use **technology, media and innovative** ways of communication for dissemination of financial education messages.
  - **Collaboration :** Streamline efforts of other stakeholders for financial literacy.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### Objectives:

- **Inculcate financial literacy** concepts among the various sections of the population through financial education to make it an important life skill.
- Encourage **active savings behaviour**.
- **Encourage participation in financial markets** to meet financial goals and objectives.
- Develop **credit discipline and encourage availing credit** from formal financial institutions as per requirement.
- Improve usage of **digital financial services** in a safe and secure manner.
- Manage risk at various life stages through relevant and suitable insurance cover.
- **Plan for old age** and retirement through coverage of suitable pension products.
- **Knowledge about rights, duties and avenues** for grievance redressal.
- Improve **research and evaluation** methods to assess progress in financial education.
- The Strategy also suggests adoption of a **robust 'Monitoring and Evaluation Framework** to assess the progress made.

### About TGFIFL:

- **TGFIFL** would be responsible for **periodic monitoring** and implementation of **NSFE** under the oversight of **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)**.
- TGFIFL was set up in November 2011 by the **FSDC**.
- Recently, RBI also released the **National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) for the period 2019-2024**.
- It is an ambitious strategy which aims to strengthen the ecosystem for various modes of digital financial services in **all Tier-II to Tier VI centres** to create the necessary infrastructure to move towards a **less-cash society by March 2022**.

Source: TH

India's Male Package

GS-II | 22 August, 2020

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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### India's Male Package

#### Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP)

- A financial package consisting of a grant of 100 million USD and new line of credit of 400 million USD.
- This will be the largest civilian infrastructure project in Maldives, connecting Malé (the capital) with three neighbouring islands — **Villingili, Gulhifalhu** (where a port is being built under Indian line of credit) and **Thilafushi (new industrial zone)** – by construction of a **bridge-and-causeway link**.
- This will boost economic activity, generate employment and promote holistic urban development in the Malé region.

#### Direct Cargo Ferry Service

- It will be run between India and Maldives.
- The service is expected to enhance sea connectivity and provide predictability in supplies for importers in Maldives and exporters in India.

#### Air Travel Bubble Between India and Maldives

- This will facilitate movement of people for employment, tourism and medical emergencies.
- Maldives is the first neighbouring country of India with which an air bubble is being operationalised.

#### Quotas for Supply of Essential Commodities

- This was renewed for 2020-21. The commodities include food items as well as river sand and stone aggregates to assure food security, and supply of essential construction items.

#### Financial Aid

- In addition a financial aid of 250 million USD will be provided to Maldives by India.

Source: TH

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GS-III | 22 August, 2020

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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### Namath Basai: Kerala

GS-I | 23 August, 2020

#### Namath Basai: Kerala

- The Kerala State government is carrying out a unique programme called "Namath Basai" of teaching tribal children in their mother tongue.

#### News:

- The programme is being implemented by the Samagra Shiksha Kerala (SSK).
  - SSK is an overarching programme for the school education sector extending from pre-school to class 12.
  - It aims at improving school effectiveness measured in terms of equal opportunities for schooling and equitable learning outcomes.
  - It has succeeded in retaining hundreds of tribal children in their online classes using their mother tongue as language of instruction.
  - Teaching in the tribal language has to a good extent stopped students from dropping out, which is quite usual in hamlets
  - It offers **pre-recorded classes through a YouTube channel** in three tribal languages in **Attappady valley in Palakkad District Kerala**.
  - These languages belong to the **Irula, Muduka and Kurumba tribes**.
  - It is being introduced in the tribal belts of Wayanad and Idukki as well.
- Classes are offered in the Oorali, Muthuvan and Paniya languages in Idukki.
- Wayanad has the highest number of tribals in Kerala followed by Idukki.

Source: TH

### Participatory Notes

GS-III | 23 August, 2020

#### Participatory Notes

- P-notes are **Offshore Derivative Instruments (ODIs)** issued by **registered Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs)** to overseas investors who wish to be a part of the Indian stock markets without registering themselves directly.
- P-notes have **Indian stocks as their underlying assets**.

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- Though P-note holders have **less stringent registration** requirements, they have to go through a proper due diligence process of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

### SEBI:

- **SEBI was established in 1992** in accordance with the provisions of the **SEBI Act, 1992**.
- Its functions **include protecting the interests of investors** in securities and to promote the development of, and to regulate the securities market and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

### About Foreign Portfolio Investors

- FPIs are **non-residents** who invest in Indian securities like shares, government bonds, corporate bonds, etc.
- **SEBI (Foreign Portfolio Investors) Regulations, 2019 are related to FPIs.**
- Foreign Portfolio investment is different from the Foreign Direct investment (FDI) as it does not give investors direct ownership of a company's assets.

### Capital Market

- Financial markets are classified on the basis of the maturity of financial instruments traded in them.
- Instruments with a maturity of less than one year are traded in the money market. E.g. Treasury Bills, Commercial Papers, etc.
- Instruments with longer maturity are traded in the capital market. E.g. shares, debentures, etc.

Source: TH

## Sri Lanka to Draft a New Constitution

GS-II | 23 August, 2020

### Sri Lanka to Draft a New Constitution

#### Context

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

- The **Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa** (elected in 2019), while addressing the inaugural session of the Parliament, said that Sri Lanka will draft a new Constitution and **abolish the 19th Amendment** that curtailed the powers of the President and strengthened the role of Parliament.
- Sri Lanka's new Cabinet includes members from the Rajapaksa family.
- **Mahinda Rajapaksha is the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.**
- The Rajapaksa led **Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP)** won a landslide victory in the recently held parliamentary elections (August 2020), allowing the influential family to consolidate power for the next five years.

### 19th Amendment:

- It was passed in 2015 during the former President Maithripala Sirisena-Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's term (2015-19).
- It sought not only to clip the President's executive powers, but also to strengthen independence of **key pillars such as the judiciary, public service and elections.**
- **It brought back the two-term limit on Presidency.**
- It was hailed by many, including members of civil society, as a progressive legislation in contemporary Sri Lankan history, even as its critics found it falling short in some respects.
- However, the Rajapaksa camp viewed its clauses as primarily intended to prevent its leaders' return to power.
- **It prevented dual citizens from contesting elections.** At the time, **two of the Rajapaksa family members** including the current president were **dual citizens of the USA and Sri Lanka.**
- Its abolishment will strengthen Rajapaksa's grip on power because the country will return to its previous constitutional status, in which the President could appoint officials for the police, judiciary and public service and dissolve Parliament anytime after one year.

### New Constitution:

- The President said that the new Constitution would prioritise the concept of **"one country, one law for all the people."**
- Sri Lanka's constitution has been changed **19 times from 1978**, creating a lot of uncertainties and confusion.
- Changes will be made to ensure the stability of Parliament and people's direct representation, while retaining the salutary aspects of the proportional representation system.
- Rights activists see the planned changes to the Constitution as an attempt to further empower the SLPP and the Rajapaksha brothers' mainly Buddhist - Sinhalese speaking electorate.
- The Rajapaksa family, which dominated the government from 2005 to 2015,



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- witnessed the climax of the country's long civil war (1983-2009).
- The war divided Sri Lanka along ethnic lines - pitting the majority Buddhist Sinhalese-dominated government against Tamil rebels who wanted a separate state.
  - The rebels were defeated by government forces in 2009.

Source: TH

ASPIRE IAS

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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GS-I | 23 August, 2020

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- However, the Rajapaksa camp viewed its clauses as primarily intended to prevent its leaders' return to power.
- **It prevented dual citizens from contesting elections.** At the time, **two of the Rajapaksa family members** including the current president were **dual citizens of the USA and Sri Lanka.**
- Its abolishment will strengthen Rajapaksa's grip on power because the country will return to its previous constitutional status, in which the President could appoint officials for the police, judiciary and public service and dissolve Parliament anytime after one year.

### New Constitution:

- The President said that the new Constitution would prioritise the concept of "**one country, one law for all the people.**"
- Sri Lanka's constitution has been changed **19 times from 1978**, creating a lot of uncertainties and confusion.
- Changes will be made to ensure the stability of Parliament and people's direct representation, while retaining the salutary aspects of the proportional representation system.
- Rights activists see the planned changes to the Constitution as an attempt to further empower the SLPP and the Rajapaksha brothers' mainly Buddhist - Sinhalese speaking electorate.
- The Rajapaksa family, which dominated the government from 2005 to 2015,

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- witnessed the climax of the country's long civil war (1983-2009).
- The war divided Sri Lanka along ethnic lines - pitting the majority Buddhist Sinhalese-dominated government against Tamil rebels who wanted a separate state.
  - The rebels were defeated by government forces in 2009.

Source: TH

ASPIRE IAS



## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### BIS Draft Standard for Drinking Water

GS-II | 24 August, 2020

#### BIS Draft Standard for Drinking Water

Recently, the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** has prepared a draft **standard for the supply system of piped drinking water**.

The draft has been titled as '**Drinking water supply quality management system — requirements for piped drinking water supply service**'.

#### Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

1. **BIS Act, 2016** established BIS as a **statutory** and National Standards Body. It replaces **Indian Standards Institution** set up in **1947**.
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3. It has also made **hallmarking** of precious metals **mandatory**.
4. The new Act, also allows multiple type of simplified conformity assessment schemes like self declaration of conformity against a standard which will give simplified options to manufacturers to adhere to the rules.
5. **Center can appoint any authority in addition to BIS** to verify the conformity of products and services to a standard and issue certificate.

#### **Features of the Draft BIS Standards**

- It has been prepared by the **BIS's Public Drinking Water Supply Services Sectional Committee**.
- The draft has been developed keeping in view the **Centre's Jal Jeevan Mission** which aims for providing safe and adequate drinking water to **all rural households by 2024** through tap connections.
- The draft outlines the **process of water supply**, from raw water sources to household

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- The draft standard is expected to make the process of **pipel water supply more uniform, especially in rural and underdeveloped areas** of the country where the system runs on various government orders and circulars.
- It outlines the **requirements for a water supplier or a water utility** on how they should establish, operate, maintain and improve their piped drinking water supply service.
- **Guidelines for top management of the water supplier/utility** which includes:
  - Accountability and customer focus.
  - Establishing a quality policy for their service.
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- It sets the **Indian Standard (IS) 10500 for the treated water for drinking (PT)**. The IS 10500 outlines the **acceptable limit of heavy metals** such as arsenic, **pH value** of water, **turbidity**, the **total dissolved solids** in it, and the **colour and odour**.
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1. It envisages supply of **55 litres water per person per day** to every **rural household** through Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) **by 2024**.
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GS-I | 24 August, 2020

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California (USA) is facing **sprawling wildfires** destroying more than 400,000 acres of forests in Northern and Central California.

#### Reasons for California's Wildfires:

- **Climate:** California, like much of the West, gets most of its moisture in the fall and winter. Its vegetation then stays dry throughout the summer because of a **lack of rainfall and warmer temperatures**, which ultimately serves as ignition for fires.
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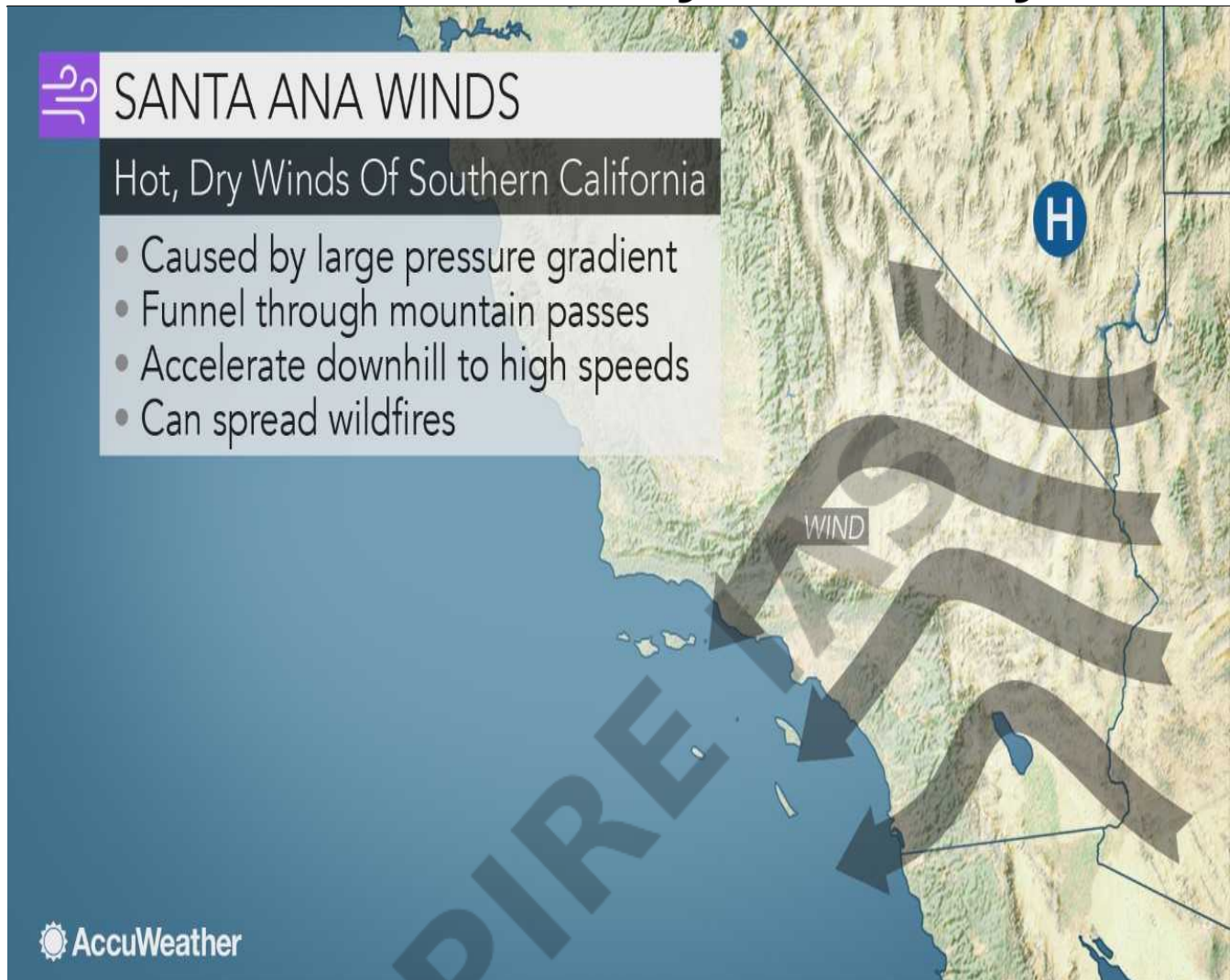
## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- The United States Forest Service is now trying to rectify the previous practice through the use of prescribed or "**controlled**" or **cool burning**.
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- **Santa Ana Winds:** Santa Ana winds **dry out vegetation** and also move **embers** around, spreading fires.



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### Impact:

- **Economic loss** from destruction of life and property.
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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- Some immediate solutions to wildfires include **not planting easily flammable tree species** such as eucalyptus and pine in forest fire regions, **not allowing human development** near forest zones, and **promoting policies that conserve water** like waste-water recycling, desert landscaping, and low-water consumption appliances.
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### National Council for Transgender Persons

GS-I | 24 August, 2020

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Recently, the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has constituted the **National Council for Transgender Persons**, under the **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019**.

#### Background

- Indian Census never recognized third gender i.e. Transgender while collecting census data. But in 2011, data of Transgender was collected with details related to their employment, literacy and caste.
- As per 2011 Census, the total population of Transgender is 4.88 lakhs, highest being in Uttar Pradesh followed by Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar.
- In **National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India case (2014)**, Supreme Court of India declared **transgender people to be a 'third gender'**. It also affirmed that the fundamental rights granted under the Constitution of India will be equally applicable to transgender people, and gave **them the right to self identification of their gender as male, female or third-gender**.

#### Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019

- The Bill **defines a transgender person** as one whose gender does not match the gender assigned at birth. It includes transmen and trans-women, persons with

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

intersex variations, gender-queers, and persons with socio-cultural identities, such as kinnar and hijra.

- A transgender person may make **an application to the District Magistrate** for a certificate of identity, indicating the gender as 'transgender'.
- It calls for establishing a **National Council for Transgender persons (NCT)**.
- The **Bill prohibits discrimination** against a transgender person, including denial of service or unfair treatment in relation to Education, Employment, Healthcare, Movement, Reside, Rent, public or private office, access a Govt or private establishment.
- The Act has a provision that provides transgender the **right of residence** with parents and immediate family members.
- It states the **offences** against Transgender persons **will attract jail of 6 months to 2 years + fine**.
- Bill also seeks to provide **rights of health facilities to transgender** persons including separate HIV surveillance centres, and sex reassignment surgeries. **Govt shall review medical curriculum and provide medical insurance.**

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- **Advising the Central government** on the formulation of policies, programmes, legislation and projects with respect to transgender persons.
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- **Reviewing and coordinating** the activities of all the departments.
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### Composition of the Council:

- Its **chairperson** will be the Union **Minister of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.
- It will also consists of:
- **Representatives from 5 states or UTs** (one each from the north, south, east, west and northeast regions), on a rotational basis.
- **Five members of the transgender community** (one each from the north, south, east, west and northeast regions).
- The tenure of the community members shall be **three years**.

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- **Representatives from 10 central departments.**
- The council will have joint secretary-level members from the **Ministries of Health, Home, Minority Affairs, Education, Rural Development, Labour and Law.**
- In addition, there will be a member from the **Department of Pensions (Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions), NITI Aayog, National Human Rights Commission and National Commission for Women.**

### Way Forward

- The establishment of National Council for Transgender Persons which seeks to increase awareness and inculcate sense of respect and acceptance for transgender community, is a welcome step. However, its upto the effective functioning of the council whether it will able to identify the issues faced by the transgender community and accordingly advice the government.
- Apart from policies and regulations, there is also a need for an inclusive approach, sensitising legal and law enforcement systems in particular towards the issues of transgender community.

Source: TH

Source: TH

### Open API Service in Aarogya Setu

GS-II | 24 August, 2020

#### Open API Service in Aarogya Setu

The government has announced a new feature 'Open API Service' for its contact tracing app Aarogya Setu.

#### Aarogya Setu (under MEITY)

- Aarogya Setu was launched in April 2020. It was developed by the **National Informatics Centre** under the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.**

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- The motto of Aarogya Setu is 'Main Surakshit, Hum Surakshit, Bharat Surakshit'. It is a **contact tracing application**.
- Aarogya Setu has emerged as the most downloaded contact tracing App in the world, with more than 15 crore users.
- It will help people identify risk of getting affected by Corona using bluetooth, algorithms and AI.
- It Detects other nearby decides with same app.
- Aarogya Setu app mandatory for returning NRIs, migrants.

### Aarogya Setu data protocol norms issued

- Empowered Group on Technology and Data Management issued an order notifying the Aarogya Setu Data Access and Knowledge Sharing Protocol, 2020 that lays down guidelines for **collection, processing, storage and sharing of "anonymised" data**.
- **Encrypted data** of all users, stored in their devices, got **deleted automatically in 30 days**.
- Data of the users who undergo tests were kept for 45 days and for those who had tested positive, it was stored in server till 60 days from the day they recovered from the illness.

### Aarogya Setu data includes

- **Demographic data:** Name, Mobile number, Age, Travel history, Gender
- **Contact data:** Close proximity.
- **Location data:** Geographical location.
- **Self assessment data:** Self assessment.
- Health Ministry only assesses the data.

### Issues of using Aarogya Setu App

- Government has issued guidelines to the employers to ensure that all their employees install this app. **K S Puttaswamy case of 2017** holds this as the violation of Right to Privacy.
- Govt has no power to make app's use compulsory **without legislative authorisation**.
- There is no law for app's purpose, functioning and nature.
- The data-sharing and knowledge-sharing protocol for the Aarogya Setu is **prone to**



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**misuse**, considering that India still **doesn't have data protection laws**.

- There is no clarity about what data will be collected, for how long and for what use.
- There is no specification on how Govt will use data.
- There are less smartphone users in the country especially in the vulnerable sections of the society.
- Hacker sees security flaws in Aarogya Setu.

The Open API Service of Aarogya Setu addresses the fear/risk of **Covid-19** infections and will help the people, businesses and the **economy to return to normalcy**.

- Here, organizations can take informed decisions regarding the presence of employees in office and the need to explore work from home. Thus, risk of contracting is reduced without much compromising on activities of the entity.
- The Open API Service of Aarogya Setu, can be **availed by organizations and business entities**.
- **Conditions:**
  - Entities who are **registered in India**.
  - Entities with **more than 50 employees**.
- **Benefits to Organizations and Business Entities:**
  - They can use the Open API Service to query the Aarogya Setu Application in realtime.
  - They can get the health status of their employees or any other Aarogya Setu User.
- The Open API Service enables organizations to check the status of Aarogya Setu and integrate it into its various Work from Home features.
- **Privacy Issue Addressed:**
  - The Open API shall only provide the Aarogya Setu status and name of the Aarogya Setu User (strictly, **with User's consent only**).
  - No other personal data shall be provided through the API.

### API

- The term 'API' stands for '**Application Programming Interface**'.
- An API is an interface that can be used to program software that interacts with an existing application.
- In practice, an API is "a set of functions and procedures" that allow one to access and build upon the data and functionality of an existing application.

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### Open Source API

- An open source API, also called **public API**, is an application programming interface made publicly available to software developers.
- Open APIs are published on the internet and shared freely, allowing the owner of a network-accessible service to give universal access to consumers.
- These are to support businesses with limited capital to invest in digital applications.
- An overlapping term **web service** is a resource that's made available over the **internet**.
- A Web service is a software system designed to support interoperable machine-to-machine interaction over a network.

### APIs vs Web Services

- APIs and web services are not mutually exclusive.
- In fact, one is a subset of the other: **every web service is an API** — since it exposes an application's data and/or functionality — **but not every API is a web service**. This is because the definition of a web service is quite restrictive:
- **Web services require a network**. While APIs can be online or offline, web services must use a network.
- **APIs are protocol agnostic**. While APIs can use any protocols or design styles, web services usually use specific protocols.
- **Web services are not open source generally**: Instead, they tend to offer specific data and/or functionality to specific partners. Thus they are less prone to hacking than API.

Source: TH

## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

### BIS Draft Standard for Drinking Water

GS-II | 24 August, 2020

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GS-I | 24 August, 2020

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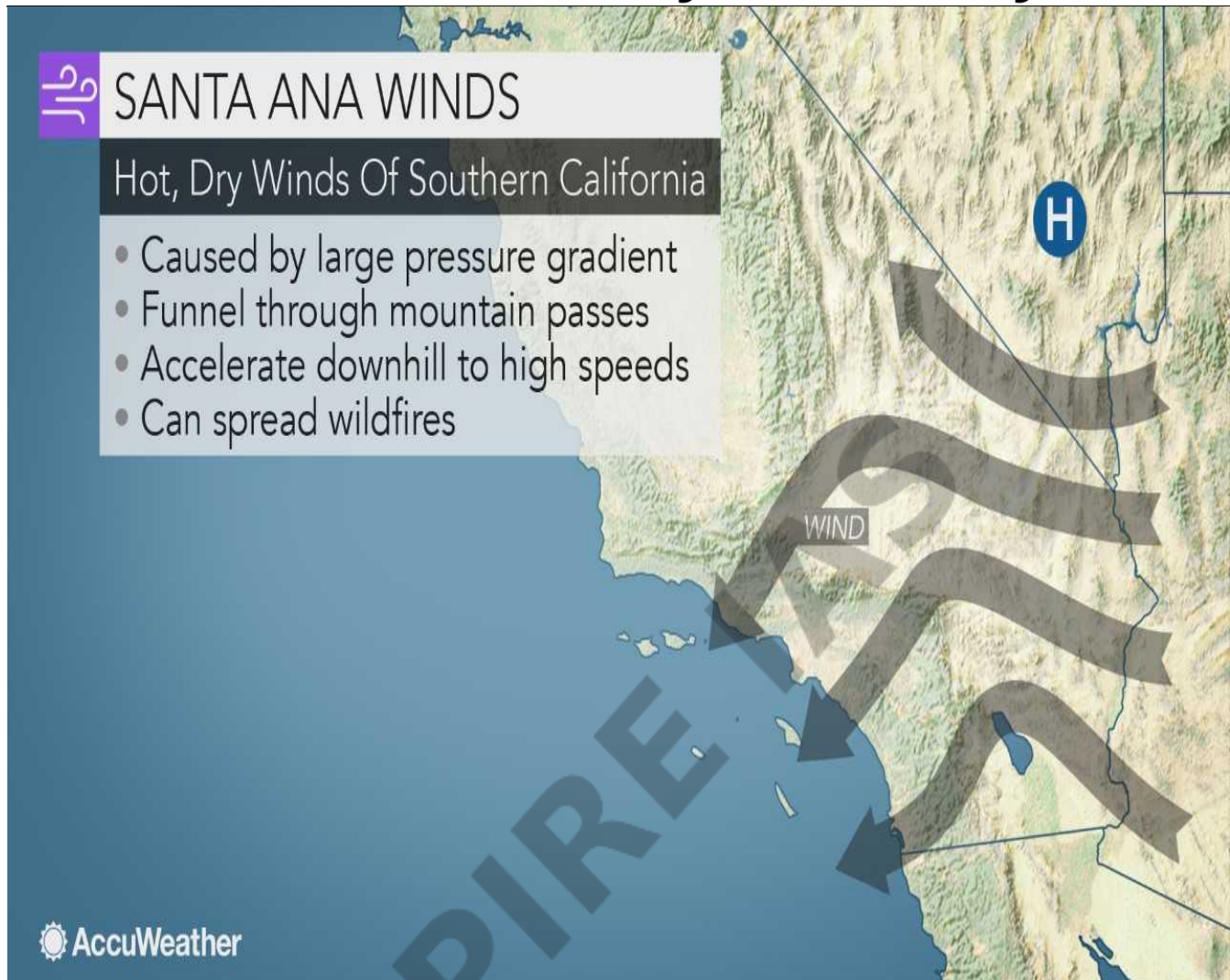


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## UPSC "PT" DNA (Daily News Analysis)

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- In addition, there will be a member from the **Department of Pensions (Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions), NITI Aayog, National Human Rights Commission and National Commission for Women.**

### Way Forward

- The establishment of National Council for Transgender Persons which seeks to increase awareness and inculcate sense of respect and acceptance for transgender community, is a welcome step. However, its upto the effective functioning of the council whether it will able to identify the issues faced by the transgender community and accordingly advice the government.
- Apart from policies and regulations, there is also a need for an inclusive approach, sensitising legal and law enforcement systems in particular towards the issues of transgender community.

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### Open API Service in Aarogya Setu

GS-II | 24 August, 2020

#### Open API Service in Aarogya Setu

The government has announced a new feature 'Open API Service' for its contact tracing app Aarogya Setu.

#### Aarogya Setu (under MEITY)

- Aarogya Setu was launched in April 2020. It was developed by the **National Informatics Centre** under the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology.**

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- The motto of Aarogya Setu is 'Main Surakshit, Hum Surakshit, Bharat Surakshit'. It is a **contact tracing application**.
- Aarogya Setu has emerged as the most downloaded contact tracing App in the world, with more than 15 crore users.
- It will help people identify risk of getting affected by Corona using bluetooth, algorithms and AI.
- It Detects other nearby decides with same app.
- Aarogya Setu app mandatory for returning NRIs, migrants.

### Aarogya Setu data protocol norms issued

- Empowered Group on Technology and Data Management issued an order notifying the Aarogya Setu Data Access and Knowledge Sharing Protocol, 2020 that lays down guidelines for **collection, processing, storage and sharing of "anonymised" data**.
- **Encrypted data** of all users, stored in their devices, got **deleted automatically in 30 days**.
- Data of the users who undergo tests were kept for 45 days and for those who had tested positive, it was stored in server till 60 days from the day they recovered from the illness.

### Aarogya Setu data includes

- **Demographic data:** Name, Mobile number, Age, Travel history, Gender
- **Contact data:** Close proximity.
- **Location data:** Geographical location.
- **Self assessment data:** Self assessment.
- Health Ministry only assesses the data.

### Issues of using Aarogya Setu App

- Government has issued guidelines to the employers to ensure that all their employees install this app. **K S Puttaswamy case of 2017** holds this as the violation of Right to Privacy.
- Govt has no power to make app's use compulsory **without legislative authorisation**.
- There is no law for app's purpose, functioning and nature.
- The data-sharing and knowledge-sharing protocol for the Aarogya Setu is **prone to**

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**misuse**, considering that India still **doesn't have data protection laws**.

- There is no clarity about what data will be collected, for how long and for what use.
- There is no specification on how Govt will use data.
- There are less smartphone users in the country especially in the vulnerable sections of the society.
- Hacker sees security flaws in Aarogya Setu.

The Open API Service of Aarogya Setu addresses the fear/risk of **Covid-19** infections and will help the people, businesses and the **economy to return to normalcy**.

- Here, organizations can take informed decisions regarding the presence of employees in office and the need to explore work from home. Thus, risk of contracting is reduced without much compromising on activities of the entity.
- The Open API Service of Aarogya Setu, can be **availed by organizations and business entities**.
- **Conditions:**
  - Entities who are **registered in India**.
  - Entities with **more than 50 employees**.
- **Benefits to Organizations and Business Entities:**
  - They can use the Open API Service to query the Aarogya Setu Application in realtime.
  - They can get the health status of their employees or any other Aarogya Setu User.
- The Open API Service enables organizations to check the status of Aarogya Setu and integrate it into its various Work from Home features.
- **Privacy Issue Addressed:**
  - The Open API shall only provide the Aarogya Setu status and name of the Aarogya Setu User (strictly, **with User's consent only**).
  - No other personal data shall be provided through the API.

### API

- The term 'API' stands for '**Application Programming Interface**'.
- An API is an interface that can be used to program software that interacts with an existing application.
- In practice, an API is "a set of functions and procedures" that allow one to access and build upon the data and functionality of an existing application.

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### Open Source API

- An open source API, also called **public API**, is an application programming interface made publicly available to software developers.
- Open APIs are published on the internet and shared freely, allowing the owner of a network-accessible service to give universal access to consumers.
- These are to support businesses with limited capital to invest in digital applications.
- An overlapping term **web service** is a resource that's made available over the **internet**.
- A Web service is a software system designed to support interoperable machine-to-machine interaction over a network.

### APIs vs Web Services

- APIs and web services are not mutually exclusive.
- In fact, one is a subset of the other: **every web service is an API** — since it exposes an application's data and/or functionality — **but not every API is a web service**. This is because the definition of a web service is quite restrictive:
- **Web services require a network**. While APIs can be online or offline, web services must use a network.
- **APIs are protocol agnostic**. While APIs can use any protocols or design styles, web services usually use specific protocols.
- **Web services are not open source generally**: Instead, they tend to offer specific data and/or functionality to specific partners. Thus they are less prone to hacking than API.

Source: TH