

# Useful News Articles

08-08-2016

## A.GS1 Related

## B. GS2 Related

1.Focus on pulses production can help overcome malnutrition: Swaminathan

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/mssrf-malnutrition/article8956034.ece?homepage=true?w=alstates>

*Topic: Health*

*Category: Governance*

### Key points:

- A combination of scientific skill, political will and farmer's participation in pulses production can help achieve Zero Hunger, said agriculture scientist M. S. Swaminathan at the inauguration of the consultation on Pulses for Addressing Food and Nutrition Security at the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF)
- The Zero Hunger challenge was launched by the United Nations in 2012
- Addressing experts during the inauguration of the consultation, he said there were three kinds of hunger that needed to be dealt with – calorie inadequacy, protein deficiency and micronutrient deficiency. There was a need for India to look at enlarging the food basket and include millets in the public distribution system, Mr. Swaminathan said(Cling on to every word he said)
- India currently depends on exports to fill the gap of around seven million tonnes in pulses annually
- A Genetic Garden for biofortified plants/crops will soon be established by MSSRF and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. It will contain the germplasm of naturally biofortified crops as well as through plant breeding
- The garden, to come up initially on one acre of land provided by the University at Thirurkuppam near Avadi, will also serve as a centre for conservation and education
- It would have plants and crops that help supplement micronutrient deficiencies, including iron, iodine, vitamin A, folate, zinc and selenium. The garden would be a place where the public can visit and learn about the advantages of the plants in bringing down nutritional deficiencies

## 2. All eyes on Irom Sharmila

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/all-eyes-on-irom-sharmila/article8956704.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Federal Relations*

*Category: Polity*

### **Key points:**

- On July 26, Ms. Sharmila had announced that she planned to end her 16-year-fast for the repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in Manipur on August 9 and contest Assembly elections as an Independent candidate
- While fringe groups think the time is not ripe for the decision, mainstream parties welcomed it

## 3. China's robotics rush shows how its debt can get out of control

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/chinas-robotics-rush-shows-how-its-debt-can-get-out-of-control/article8955900.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: China*

*Category: India's Neighbourhood*

### **Key points:**

- The ease with which municipalities can use off balance companies like Local Government Finance vehicle (LGFVs) to finance infrastructure — some needed, some not - is rapidly boosting China's already high debt burden
- Beijing's drive to make the nation a leader in robotics through its "Made in China 2025" initiative launched last year has set off a rush as municipalities up and down the country vie to become China's robotics centre
- LGFVs first gained popularity in China in the 1990s as a way to fund municipal projects without running afoul of new restrictions on cities' official borrowing (For a command economy, China has a decentralized fiscal system with local governments responsible for about 85 per cent of fiscal spending but receiving only 50 per cent of tax revenues. Officials turn to debt to fill the gap)

## C.GS3 Related

### 1. IBM's Supercomputer helps doctors to fight cancer

<http://www.thehindu.com/data/india-relies-mainly-on-buses-for-transportation-but-they-are-being-marginalised/article8916992.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Health*

*Category: S & T*

#### **Key points:**

- IBM's Watson Supercomputer can throw up several treatment options and gathered evidence specific to a health need by combining Artificial Intelligence and analytical software to perform as a question answering machine (*Watson Supercomputer gets hidden insights from 15 million pages of medical content, including more than 200 medical textbooks*)
- It is being used at the Oncology department at the Manipal Comprehensive Cancer Center in Bengaluru
- Rob Merkel, vice president, oncology and genomics for IBM Watson Health said that around the world on average a physician has 15 minutes with the patient to understand three smartphone worth of data and 15 million pages of medical literature. IBM wants to bridge the gap through Watson
- 'CANScript' is another technology that allows doctors to predict the effect of drugs on a cancer patient, based on patient's own tumour microenvironment in vitro. It also measures multiple functional parameters to determine whether a tumour is responding. It was developed at Mitra Biotech, a Bengaluru-based start-up founded by a team of Harvard and MIT researchers  
(Cancers of all type claim approximately 6,80,000 lives each year in India, making it the leading cause of death in the country after heart diseases, according to the World Health Organization)

### 2. Raghuram Rajan to flag last independent monetary policy update by RBI governor Tuesday

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/raghuram-rajan-to-flag-last-independent-monetary-policy-update-by-rbi-governor-on-august-9/article8955519.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Monetary Policy*

*Category: Economy*

#### **Key points:**

- The RBI Governor will on Tuesday conduct what will be his last monetary policy update for the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and also, perhaps, the last that a central bank governor can henceforth undertake independently
- The policy update comes against the backdrop of the government fixing on Friday the inflation target for the next five years at plus or minus four per cent — a task which will be entrusted with the soon-to-be-constituted Monetary Policy Committee (MCP) to realise by mandating it to fix policy rates
- Finance Ministry officials said the committee — which will fashion the contours of the monetary policy once it is in place — would be finalised before the next bi-monthly policy review, due in October
- Given this backdrop and the fact that India's retail inflation in June stood at 5.77 per cent — and as high as 6.20 per cent in rural India — the possibility of a rate cut has been virtually ruled out, as the current price-line is precariously close to the upper tolerance level of six per cent
- Under the RBI Act, the Central Government, in consultation with the RBI, determines the inflation target in terms of the Consumer Price Index (CPI), once in every five years. This target would be notified in the Official Gazette. The amended law requires the Reserve Bank to also state the reasons if it fails to meet the inflation target, along with the remedial actions the estimate time-period by which it hoped to achieve the same

### **3.Coal India to hold e-auction for power plants this month**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/coal-india-to-hold-eauction-for-power-plants-this-month/article8955502.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Power sector*

*Category: Economy*

#### **Key points:**

- Coal India (CIL) will this month hold special forward e-auction for power producers(phase III), amid government's plans to provide round-the-clock electricity to all
- The Coal Ministry had earlier said power producers being supplied coal through the MoU route by CIL will now have to take it via special e-auction being conducted for the power sector as the government has decided not to extend the pact beyond June 30

### **4.Karnataka emerges as investors' favourite**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/karnataka-emerges-as-investors-favourite/article8953460.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Investment*

*Category: Economy*

**Key points:**

- Gujarat, which was ranked first among all States in 2015 for attracting maximum ‘investment intentions’ in value terms, has lost its position to Karnataka halfway through this calendar year
- Gujarat received investment intentions worth only Rs.21,309 crore during January-June 2016, while Karnataka — which topped the list — received over thrice that amount, or Rs.67,757 crore, during the same period, government data showed
- Other leading States in terms of ‘investment intentions’ during January-June 2016 were Maharashtra (Rs.15,688 crore), Telengana (Rs.13,600 crore) and Chhattisgarh (Rs.8,514 crore)
- Even in the latest ‘**Business Reforms Action Plan**’ index (or measures taken by states to improve ease of doing business), Gujarat was sixth with a score of 53.98 per cent. Uttarakhand topped that dynamic ‘implementation scorecard’ with 63.72 per cent, followed by Rajasthan, Telengana, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh

**5.U.S. tax hunt overseas causes global headaches**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/us-tax-hunt-overseas-causes-global-headaches/article8955904.ece?w=alauto>


*Topic: World Economy*

*Category: Economy*

**Key points:**

- The United States **Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act or FATCA** has caused a lot of anxiety for banks, funds and individuals in India
- Signed into law in the U.S. in 2010, FATCA affects not just financial institutions in the U.S. and ‘U.S. persons’, i.e., citizens and residents of the U.S. and companies, trusts and other entities controlled by them, but also what the U.S. defines as ‘Foreign Financial Institutions’ or FFIs (‘foreign’ is with regard to the U.S.)
- These institutions, which include banks, mutual funds, PE and hedge funds, among others, are required to collect information on U.S. persons who are depositors or investors. Failure to do so would entail a 30 per cent withholding tax on the FFI’s U.S. source income

- To overcome any country specific hindrances to sharing information on investors and depositors, the U.S. has entered into Inter Governmental Agreements (IGAs) with partner countries. An IGA was signed with India in 2015
- The U.S. is the only developed country in the world that imposes citizenship based taxes — so American entities everywhere are normally required to file U.S. tax returns regardless of their residence or the source country of income. Until the U.S. changes its tax laws and moves to residence and source-based taxation, FATCA-type situations are unlikely to go away
- The Common Reporting System (CRS) on the Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) was developed by the OECD and G20 together and, “requires the financial institutions of the ‘source’ jurisdiction to collect and report information to their tax authorities about account holders ‘resident’ in other countries
- Some 98 countries, including India, have signed up for this and reporting starts in phases from 2017 onwards

<b>FATCA AND CRS</b>		
<p>FATCA is part of the U.S.'s answer to tracking money hidden in off shore accounts so it can be brought into the tax net. The Common Reporting System (CRS) on the Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) was developed by the OECD and G20 together</p>		
<p><b>June 30, 2014:</b> Cut-off date prior to which accounts are treated as pre-existing under FATCA</p> <p><b>July 1, 2014:</b> Date for considering New Account under FATCA</p> <p><b>Aug. 31, 2015:</b> FATCA came into force in India</p> <p><b>Sept. 10, 2015:</b> First reporting (for calendar</p>	<p>year 2014) under FATCA</p> <p><b>Dec. 31, 2015:</b> Cut-off date prior to which accounts are treated as Pre-existing under CRS</p> <p><b>Jan. 1, 2016:</b> Date for considering New Account under CRS</p> <p><b>May 31, 2017:</b> First reporting (for calendar year 2016) under CRS</p>	

Source: Ministry of Finance, Government of India Guidelines

## D.GS4 Related

## E. Important Editorials:

The Hindu

1. Remedying India's healthcare colossus

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-remedying-indias-healthcare-colossus/article8956304.ece?homepage=true>)Topic:

*Health*

*Category: Governance*

**Key points:**

- The 71st survey round of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) shows that India's poor patients would rather opt for paid private health service rather than public health care
- **It is well known that the entire public healthcare system, from tertiary care hospitals in large cities to Primary Health Centres (PHCs) in rural areas, is riddled with manpower shortages and inadequate supply of critical drugs and blood**
- One option would be to pump in more money. Between **1995 and 2014 India's public expenditure on healthcare rose only from 1.1 per cent of GDP to 1.4 per cent**
- It is also a "design problem," because in some cases nearly 70-80 per cent of the people in tertiary care do not have to be there
- India's public healthcare policy has performed remarkably well in specific areas that it has chosen to focus upon, **principally in bringing down maternal and infant mortality, and ensuring that an overwhelming proportion of births are from institutional deliveries**
- The broader issue facing policymakers, however, is how to get patients to use PHCs and other primary treatment options optimally, and avoid rushing to tertiary care units which are overwhelmed and struggle to treat priority cases
- Systemic reforms could help. Medical graduates spend vast sums acquiring degrees and opt to recoup costs in the private sector through specialisation, even if it is the public system and general practice areas that need them more.
- Legislation akin to the Affordable Care Act of the U.S. could curb runaway costs in the private sector, which seems geared towards providing expensive diagnostics and treatment
- India could learn from the experience of Thailand, where health outcomes such as life expectancy have far outperformed India's based on a universal healthcare coverage scheme that, since 2002, was built on a successful social insurance model
- A state that seems to be doing well in terms of providing public healthcare to many at minimum costs is Tamil Nadu

Note: Looks incomplete because the article is the first one of a series

## 2. "A single rate GST unlikely for now" (Revenue Secretary- Interview: Edited Excerpts)

(<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/revenue-secretary-hasmukh-adhia-a-single-rate-gst-unlikely-for-now/article8953461.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: Taxation*

*Category: Economy*

### **Key points:**

From what we have heard so far, the GST doesn't really seem like a "one nation, one tax." Isn't it true that there won't be a single national tax across states and goods and services and instead a central tax plus 29 state taxes? Plus, in all probability, cesses by States and the Centre approved by the GST council?

- It is not correct to say that GST is not "one nation one tax." The taxes which are already slated to be subsumed in GST are more than 10 in number. These taxes include - excise duty, VAT, service tax, additional excise duty, Countervailing Duty - a special additional duty of customs, entertainment tax, luxury tax, octroi, entry tax, purchase tax, taxes on lottery, betting and gambling etc. Also, it is not true to say that there will be one tax of the Government of India and 29 different taxes of different States
- A person has to pay only one GST Tax — a portion of which will automatically go to the State concerned and a portion will go to the Central Government. In the case of inter-state movement of goods, the share of SGST will automatically transfer to the consuming State even if the transaction has taken place in more than three-four States. Regarding the cesses, it is yet to be decided by the GST Council and so it may be too premature to predict which all cesses will still remain. On the whole, it is going to be a huge simplification in taxation regime

**What will stop the States or Centre from imposing cesses? Will they have to seek the GST Council's approval? Will the GST Council's decision be binding?**

- The powers of the State and Centre to levy taxes are clearly defined in the Constitution. These powers are rearranged in the Constitutional Amendment Bill. The State or the Centre cannot impose taxes other than for which specific powers are available. For example, **other than GST the powers of taxation which now remain with States are excise as well as VAT on potable alcohol, VAT on petroleum products i.e. crude oil, natural gas, LNG, petrol and diesel, stamp duty on property transactions.** Even though GST Council's decision is recommendatory in nature no State will be able to arbitrarily levy any cess or taxes because that might attract the ire of GST Council which can take that State to Dispute Resolution Mechanism



**Will it be possible for GST to be collected also on Indian Railways tickets that currently attract a service tax of about 15 per cent, and other user charges that are currently tax-exempt?**

- Railways currently attract a service tax of 4.5 per cent (after abatement of 70 per cent). What rate it will attract in GST regime is to be decided by GST Council. Toll charges are at present in negative list(not taxed) for service tax. For GST, a decision will have to be taken.

**How much lower is the 2013-14 tax base (on the basis of which the CEA had given his Revenue Neutral Rate (RNR) and standard GST rate recommendations) from the current one?**

- We will have to recalculate the taxes base of State and Centre as per the latest figures available. I would not be able to give any estimate how much will be the difference between 2013-14 figures and the latest figures

Revenue Neutral Rate (RNR):Taxing procedure that allows the government to still receive the same amount of money despite changes in tax laws. The government may lower taxes for one particular group of people, but raise taxes for another group. This allows the revenue that they receive to remain unchanged (neutral)

**Has the CEA been asked to revise his recommendations?**

- The Committee chaired by CEA has already given their recommendations. Now it is for the Government and GST Council to take further decisions based on the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) Report and report of Committee chaired by CEA
- If states don't agree to 2-4 per cent GST on gold, as recommended by the CEA, won't the burden of higher standard GST rates fall on poor people, who don't consume gold as much?
- The decision on the rate of taxation for gold jewellery will have to be taken by the GST Council. Apart from the desirability of putting a higher tax on jewellery, which is an item of consumption for the rich, it is also an item which is prone to tax evasion, being a very high-value item. The incentive to not report the transactions in order to avoid higher taxation will be higher if the tax rate on jewellery is very high

**Can GST be a game-changer unless applied to a comprehensive base at moderate rates?**

- The full benefit of GST can only come when there are minimum exemptions and minimum slabs of taxation. However, in a country like India where there are different items of consumption for the poor, the middle class, and the rich, a single rate GST may

not be a possibility now. However, the gains from the proposed GST are enormous. It will have ease of compliance

**The NIPFP's calculations had shown that there is no way the rate can be below 24 per cent. Why didn't the Centre take the suggestions on record earlier?**

- Government has on its record both the recommendations – NIPFP's as well as the CEA's report. Both the reports would be discussed in the meeting of GST Council and a final decision would be taken

### **3.Keeping the vigil in Kokrajhar**

*Topic: Insurgency*

*Category: Security*

#### **Key points:**

- Militants have struck again in Assam after a lull. On Friday, 14 people were killed and over 20 injured in firing by three gunmen in a rural weekly market in Kokrajhar district. All indications are that the I.K. Songbijit faction of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, or NDFB(S), is behind the attack
- Known hitherto for targeting mostly Muslims and Adivasis in the Bodo areas, including in the December 2014 attacks on Santhals in which 76 people were killed, the group took to indiscriminate firing on a crowd this time, which meant the casualties included six Bodos
- The killings are being seen as the group's attempt to retaliate in the face of a sustained crackdown by security forces since 2014, as also to open a new front and divert attention from an ongoing operation against it along the Assam-Bhutan border. This it attempted to do with a three-man team ostensibly operating independently of each other and reportedly covering their faces to give it the semblance of a jihadist attack in an area which has witnessed numerous arrests of people suspected of links with the terrorist outfit Jamat-ulMujahideen Bangladesh. But one of the trio engaged and felled by the Army has been identified as being an NDFB(S) commander
- The objective is apparently two-fold. Carrying out an attack in the run-up to Independence Day has been a time-tested method employed by insurgent groups to signal that they aren't a spent force
- More insidious is the attempt to shift the blame on to jihadist elements which, had it not been called out swiftly, could have vitiated the atmosphere in **the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts** where wounds of the recent past are yet to fully heal —

notably the Bodo-Muslim violence of July 2012, that claimed 77 lives. The May 2014 killings of 32 Muslims were, in fact, alleged to have been the handiwork of the NDFB(S)

- The challenge for the BJP-led government of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, as also the Bodoland Territorial Council controlled by its ally Hagrama Mohilary, is to remain alert to such potential attempts to deepen the schism
- At another level, the attack also proves that the project of securing peace in Assam — and the Northeast at large — is still a work in progress. Groups such as the NDFB(S), the anti-talks faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom, and the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Khaplang) remain outliers even as others have arrived or are in the process of arriving at an amicable understanding with the Central government. Having chosen to deal with these holdouts with force, there must be no let-up on the part of the Indian state

**4. 'A higher rate will be inflationary' (Interview excerpts – P Chidambaram, former Finance Minister, discusses why the Congress dropped its demand of a constitutional cap of 18 per cent on the standard GST rate, and how the provision on the dispute resolution mechanism may not pass the constitutional test)**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/interview/p-chidambaram-explains-why-the-gst-rate-should-not-exceed-18-per-cent/article8955843.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Insurgency*

*Category: Security*

**Key points:**

**Are you suggesting that the provision for the GST Council to set up a dispute resolution mechanism could be challenged in courts? What's the constitutional provision on disputes and how is the proposed provision in conflict with it?**

- I am saying that the provision may not pass the constitutional test. Even if it passes, you cannot avoid a judicial review of the decision by a higher court. Articles 131, 226 and 227 — the Bill does not amend these articles. It cannot amend these articles. Therefore, when judicial review is inevitable, what kind of dispute resolution authority should you set up? In my opinion, the only dispute resolution authority that will pass muster is one that has the trappings of a judicial authority. It must have legally trained people. **Which is why Mr. [Pranab] Mukherjee's Bill suggested a dispute resolution authority chaired by a retired judge; they have not accepted that either.** I believe they will set up a purely executive body. I think it is constitutionally suspect. I can't say whether the provision will be struck down unless I see the final provision

- The provision may pass constitutional muster. Nevertheless, the power of judicial review will still be there with the High Court and the Supreme Court. States think, or they have been persuaded to think, that they can resolve these disputes among themselves. It is only when an actual dispute arises between State A and State B, and one of them is dissatisfied with the verdict, they will begin to put on their thinking caps. The dissatisfied State will go to the High Court or the Supreme Court

**Dr. Subramanian's report assumes higher tax rates on gold to 2-4 per cent and uses the 2013-14 tax base which did not include the cesses imposed in the last two years, the government says.**

- No, the tax on gold is 2 per cent now — 1 per cent for the Centre and 1 per cent for the States. The cesses imposed after 2013-14 add up to no more than 1 per cent to the tax rate. He has already provided a cushion. With RNR [revenue neutral rate] at 15 to 15.5 per cent, if the standard rate is 18 per cent, there is still a cushion of 2-2.5 per cent

**Will you accept a higher rate, if he suggests a higher rate now?**

- All I can say is that a higher rate will be inflationary. And the CEA has — even after he said, “I may update my report” — reiterated that anything more than 18 per cent will be inflationary. I am all for progressively reducing indirect taxes, which is what I did in 1997, which is what we did between 2004 and 2014. I would never support an increasing rate of an indirect tax. That is a policy approach. Indirect taxes, which are regressive, must be progressively lowered. Direct taxes, which are progressive taxes, must be gradually increased

**It seems that the Central legislations for the GST will most probably come as money bills now. The Rajya Sabha may not get to have a say on this cap.**

- If we are making a law that will occupy the field for at least the next 50 years, if I were in government, I would offer a debate in both Houses. I would offer a vote in both Houses. They have a majority in the Lok Sabha, they can pass it. I presume they have a simple majority in the Rajya Sabha. If they bring it as a money bill, then that indicates that they do not think they have even a simple majority in the Rajya Sabha. If a government is [implying] that it does not have a simple majority in the Rajya Sabha, I think the government no longer represents the people!

**From what we have heard so far, the GST being readied doesn't really seem like a 'one nation, one tax'. Isn't it true that there won't be a single national tax across States, and goods and services? It will actually be a Central tax plus 29 State taxes. There could be 3-4 bands for these taxes for different types of goods and services, plus, in all probability, GST Council-approved cesses by States and the Centre.**

- Bands are not inconsistent with the concept of one tax. As long as there are wage goods and demerit goods, it is perfectly right to have a standard rate and a standard minus rate and a standard plus rate. That doesn't take away from the fact that there is a standard rate. The standard rate will fall on, say, 70-75 per cent of the goods and services, which doesn't derogate from the principle that there is 'one nation, one tax'. But if each State begins to depart wildly from the standard rate and the GST Council allows that, that will be a great setback, a great pity. The GST Council must enforce the rule that there can only be three rates: a standard rate, a standard minus rate, and a standard plus rate. **Yes, the GST Council can take a second look at the standard minus or a second look at the standard plus, but, if there are 29 standard minuses and 29 standard pluses, I am afraid the GST Council would have lost control over the subject**

**How can States be convinced that the GST won't lead to loss of their financial autonomy?**

- Because, by definition, RNR means that they are not going to lose money. Add to that the efficiency gains that the GST will bring, the reduction in tax evasion, the fact that GST will promote growth and trade — all that should give the confidence that, in the medium to long term, the GST will actually bring them more revenues than the current multiplicity of rates brings them. This is exactly the kind of fears they had with the VAT, but those fears were disproved in a matter of 3-4 years. If you believe in GST, then you must also believe that the GST is a more efficient tax. You must also believe that it will promote growth and trade. I believe that. If the finance ministers of States don't, then that means they don't believe in the concept of the GST.

**Will the GST translate into an altered federal relationship between the Centre and the States?**

- I don't think it changes anything. It only means that instead of every State imposing a tax, they will sit together and decide what that tax rate should be. I don't think it is a great loss of sovereignty.

**Quick Bits and News from States**

## **1.Tehran hangs nuclear scientist who ‘spied’ for US**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/iran-confirms-execution-of-nuclear-scientist-shahram-amiri/article8955699.ece?homepage=true>)

Iran has executed a nuclear scientist convicted of handing over “confidential and vital” information to the United States, a judicial spokesman said on Sunday. The scientist, Mr. Amiri had disappeared in Saudi Arabia in June 2009 and resurfaced a year later in the United States. He then walked into the Iranian interests section at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington and demanded to be sent home. He returned to Iran in July 2010.

## **2.SC ruling on Lodha panel unconstitutional, says Katju**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sc-may-have-good-intentions-but-cannot-throw-law-into-the-winds-justice-katju/article8955730.ece?homepage=true>)

“The Supreme Court could have no doubt forwarded the Lodha Committee’s recommendations to Parliament with their own recommendation that they be enacted as a law by Parliament, but to direct itself that the recommendations be implemented is clearly a legislative act not within the court’s domain.” The judgment has not only violated the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act but also the Constitution,” Justice Katju said. Justice Katju said the Supreme Court plainly ignored the law that any change in the rules of the BCCI should have been made through a special resolution initiated under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act. Complaints against the BCCI should have been filed before the Registrar of Societies, the competent authority under the Act. (Note: A possible case of judicial outreach)

## **2.GST Bill to be taken up in Lok Sabha today**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/gst-bill-in-lok-sabha/article8956702.ece?homepage=true>)

The Goods and Services (GST) Bill will be taken up by Lok Sabha on Monday. The GST Bill will replace a raft of different state and local taxes with a single unified value added tax system. This will in effect turn the country into the world’s biggest single market. The GST Bill will replace a raft of different state and local taxes with a single unified value added tax system. This will in effect turn the country into the world’s biggest single market. The Bill was passed by Lok Sabha last year. It now has to go back to the Lower House to incorporate amendments approved by the Rajya Sabha. The GST Bill has to be ratified by at least 16 states in 30 days after it is passed by the Parliament. (Note: GST is historic. Also note the procedure for amending the constitution in this case)

### **3.After Rajnath, will it be Jaitley's turn in Pak?**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/after-rajnath-will-it-be-jaitleys-turn-in-pak/article8956699.ece?w=alauto>)

The government is considering whether to send the Union for the next SAARC ministerial meeting later this month. After the Home/Interior Ministers' meet, the Finance Ministers will meet to set the economic agenda for the SAARC summit in November which the Prime Minister is expected to attend.

### **4.New weave: skilling through correspondence**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/new-weave-skilling-through-correspondence/article8956821.ece?w=alauto>)

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) under the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Union Ministry of Textiles have tied up to provide education to weavers and their children through a specially designed curriculum. The initiative will focus on identified weavers' clusters such as Varanasi, Sivasagar, Murshidabad, Tiruchi, Prakasam and Guntur. The MoU signed on Sunday between NIOS, which focuses on education in open and distance mode, and the Textile Ministry requires them to collaborate to "offer secondary and senior secondary level education with specialised subjects on design, marketing, business development, etc., for handloom weavers and their families through knowledge sharing, resource optimisation, and synergy of institutions" through open schooling, an NIOS note said.

The number of people engaged in hand weaving and allied activities in India is 43 lakh. A census conducted in 2009-10 revealed that "the level of education of 83.3 per cent among adult handloom workers is below high school/secondary," the official note said.

### **5.Thai junta's Constitution wins people's approval**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/thais-vote-on-new-constitution-that-could-dilute-democracy/article8955520.ece?w=alauto>)

Thailand voted on Sunday to approve a new Constitution drawn up by the ruling junta, preliminary results showed, in a major victory for the army and a blow to the stuttering pro-democracy movement. Sunday's referendum was the first time Thais have been able to go to the polls since Army chief-turned-Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha toppled the elected government of Yingluck Shinawatra in 2014. The kingdom is split after a decade of political turmoil that has damaged growth, seen democracy shunted aside and left scores dead in rival street protests. Thai military has successfully seized power 12 times since the end of absolute monarchy in 1932 and this Constitution will be the kingdom's 20th.

## 6. IS claims responsibility for Belgium attack

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/is-claims-responsibility-for-belgium-attack/article8956830.ece?w=alauto>)

Islamic State claimed responsibility on Sunday for an attack by a machete-wielding man in Belgium that left two women police officers seriously injured, the group's Amaq news agency said

## 7. US declassifies its 'playbook' for drone attacks

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-declassifies-its-playbook-for-drone-attacks/article8956835.ece?w=alauto>)

The Obama administration has disclosed its rules and procedures for targeting individuals for killing outside conventional war zones — including with drones — further lifting the secrecy surrounding one of its most disputed tactics for fighting terrorism.

The newly declassified document shows that if the top lawyers and leaders of the departments and agencies on the National Security Council agree that a proposed strike would be lawful and appropriate, the Pentagon or the CIA can proceed.

If they disagree, or if the person to be targeted is an American citizen, the matter must go to the President for a decision.

## **F. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act or FATCA

GST

Zero Hunger Challenge

AFSPA

Supercomputer Watson Health

Monetary Policy Committee

Common Reporting System

Automatic Exchange of Information



NDFB(S)

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SAARC

**Tags**

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act or FATCA

GST

Zero Hunger Challenge

Genetic Garden for Biofortified Plants

AFSPA

Supercomputer Watson Health

Monetary Policy Committee

Business Reforms Action Plan Index

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**Practice Questions:**

## Useful News Articles

09-08-2016

### A.GS1 Related

#### 1. River-linking to cost Rs. 5-lakh crore

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/riverlinking-to-cost-rs-5lakh-crore/article8961340.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: River Linking*

*Category: Geography*

#### Key points:

- The government expects to spend a massive Rs 5,60,000 crore on various river interlinking (ILR) projects, according to a statement by Minister of State, Water Resources(4% of India's economy)
- The **National Water Development Agency** — the central agency that plans and prepares cost estimates for such projects — has so far identified 16 peninsular rivers and 14 Himalayan rivers that could potentially be linked to transfer water.
- ILR projects at the most advanced state of planning are those involving building canals and storage connecting the Ken and Betwa rivers in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh; the Damanganga and Pinjal rivers involving water from Gujarat and Maharashtra. Pre-feasibility reports of 36 Intra-State link proposals out of 46 proposals of Intra-State links had also been completed, the Minister added
- The controversial Ken-Betwa link that will partially submerge the Panna Tiger sanctuary, is yet to be cleared by the National Wild Life Board and discussions are on between the Water Resources Ministry and the Ministry of Environment and Forests to mitigate the potential loss of forests. The Government is planning to begin implementing this as a model ILR project, which will benefit the drought prone areas of Bundelkhand region
- The peninsular component of the project could likely cost Rs 1,85,000 crore and the Himalayan Rs 3,75,000 crore.

### B. GS2 Related

#### 1.Amended GST Bill gets Parliament green signal

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/amended-gst-bill-gets-parliament-green-signal/article8960657.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Taxation*

*Category: Governance*

**Key points:**

- Eleven years after the GST was first proposed in 2005, Parliament on Monday passed the Bill. Now the amendment will have to be ratified by at least 16 States
- The Prime Minister said the new indirect taxation regime, which will subsume 7-13 taxes, will free the nation from tax terrorism and help end corruption as traders will be compelled to give proper bills. “The consumer will be king”, he said

**2.India seeks US help to crack Pakistan terror fund trail**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-seeks-us-help-to-crack-pakistan-terror-fund-trail/article8961156.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Pakistan*

*Category: India's Neighbourhood*

**Key points:**

- India has approached select European countries and the U.S., who are part of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to seek the bank transaction details of the Al Rehmat Trust, which operates a dozen offices in Pakistan. Indian agencies suspect that the Trust, founded by Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief, Maulana Masood Azhar, has over Rs. 100 crore in its kitty and the money is used for funding and training terrorist modules
- It is Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) which carried out the attack at the Pathankot airbase in January this year
- The National Investigation Agency had sent a letter rogatory (judicial request) to Pakistan in April this year, seeking the donation and bank details of the trust. But there has been no reply as of yet

Note: The FATF is a policy-making body and its objectives are to set standards and promote effective implementation of legal, regulatory and operational measures for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system

**3.RS passes Bill decriminalising suicide**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rs-passes-bill-decriminalising-suicide/article8961341.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Legislation*

*Category: Polity*

**Key points:**

- The Mental Health Care Bill, 2013, which was passed in Rajya Sabha on Monday says that any person who attempts suicide shall be presumed, unless proved otherwise, to have mental illness and shall not be liable to punishment under Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code
- “This is a historic and progressive Bill. It has been a long standing effort. It is patient-centric and focusses on how more facilities and support could be provided to the patients,” the health minister said
- He said 6-7 per cent of the country’s population had some kind of mental illnesses, while 1-2 per cent had acute mental disease. The Bill focusses on community-based treatment. Special provisions for women’s health have also been provided for in the Bill. The Bill also provides for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with mental illness during the delivery of healthcare in institutions and in the community

**4. Suicide strike at Pakistan hospital kills 70, injures 100**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/pak-hospital-blastquetta/article8959074.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Pakistan*

*Category: India’s Neighbourhood*

**Key points:**

- Explosives packed with ball-bearings carried by a suicide bomber tore through a Pakistani hospital on Monday, killing at least 70 people
- The bomber struck a crowd of 200 people who had gathered at the Civil Hospital in the Balochistan provincial capital Quetta after the fatal shooting of a senior local lawyer earlier in the day

## **C.GS3 Related**

**1. Ponzi schemes not under our purview: SEBI**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ponzi-schemes-not-under-our-purview-sebi/article8961345.ece?w=alauto> )

*Topic: Regulation*

*Category: Economy*

**Key points:**

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Monday denied any regulatory purview over ponzi schemes, squarely placing the responsibility of protecting investors on State governments
- “Ponzi schemes do not fall under the regulatory purview of SEBI. The same is banned under the Prize Chit and Money Circulation (Banning) Act, 1978 and the State government concerned is the enforcement agency. Though it is a Central Act, the respective State governments are the enforcement agency of this law,” SEBI submitted in an affidavit perused by the Bench on Monday
- SEBI expressed its helplessness in regulating “banned activities” unless made aware of their existence. If informed, the regulator would stop these activities. Besides, it said, the Collective Investment Scheme (CIS) was not a banned activity. A CIS was authorised if it was registered with SEBI or got prior permission from the regulator

**2.ONGC overstated crude oil output, says CAG report**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/ongc-overstated-crude-oil-output-says-cag-report/article8960275.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Regulation*

*Category: Economy*

**Key points:**

- State run ONGC had to bear a larger share of subsidy (Rs 18,626 crore paid in addition) due to overstatement of reported crude oil production by inclusion of condensate and off-gas (7.06 per cent of condensate and 1 per cent of off-gas),” according to a CAG report tabled in Parliament on Monday
- Upstream national oil companies such as ONGC and OIL shared the under-recoveries of oil marketing companies that arose from their having to sell petroleum products at subsidised rates. Under the subsidy sharing system in place since 2012, an upstream company’s subsidy burden was to be calculated on the basis of its total crude oil production
- “If the actual crude oil production was reported, the company would not have met its crude oil production targets in any of the years (2010-11 to 2014-15)”

- Further, the report found that the over-reporting of production in Ankleshwar and Assam assets — by inflating closing stock — had resulted in an additional subsidy burden of Rs.160.69 crore.

## **D.GS4 Related**

### **E. Important Editorials:**

The Hindu

#### **1.Not all are equal: Where health coverage lags behind**

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-rural-healthcare-not-all-are-equal-where-health-coverage-lags-behind/article8961062.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Health*

*Category: Governance*

#### **Key points:**

- Healthcare services vary in India in many ways: **access and affordability across different States, and vivid differences between private and public healthcare and rural and urban health systems**
- India faces daunting healthcare challenges. Despite gradual progress in improving access to health systems, including a meticulously planned National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), the problems of access and affordability remain
- **The bulk of the historically unreached populations are in rural areas and in remote locations, where the lack of access to healthcare is clearly demonstrated in poor human development indicators, which lag behind the State average**
- Poor maternal mortality rates, higher infant mortality rate, poor morbidity and higher mortality rates, high rates of infectious diseases, with high expenditure on healthcare are the discernible factors in these areas, served only by the Primary Health Centres (PHC)
- As the last mile in healthcare delivery, **PHCs have seldom received the kind of attention or fund allocation due to them, even in States with better outcomes.** It was to set right this historical wrong that the Union government launched, in 2005, the **NRHM to expand access to primary healthcare among rural**

**populations.** Towards this goal it ploughed in the necessary funds and diverted a fair bit of the attention to rural healthcare, especially in 18 high focus districts.

- A January 2014 paper, by Health Policy Project researchers, noted that **in 2011 the NRHM accounted for 54 per cent of the central government's total health budget.** From 2005 to 2011, the Centre released Rs. 52,832 crore for the NRHM, of which Rs. 38,420 crore was spent. Between 2011 and 2015, a total of over Rs. 55,000 crore have been used as the Centre's allocation for the project (as per the Health Ministry) and additionally, there has been the States' contribution
- But the key to achieving the desired health outcomes, the Health Policy Project paper says, is to ensure **the funds are targeted, allocated, and used effectively by the different States**
- Additionally, rational appointment of medical and nursing staff in the PHCs is vital. It is hoped that **the Centre's Universal Health Care project, launched in 2010,** will be able to serve the goal of providing easily accessible and affordable healthcare to all Indians irrespective of caste, location or income

Facts from case study:

[http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-labour-pain-maternity-racket-of-sitapur-in-uttar-pradesh/article8961122.ece?utm\\_source=InternalRef&utm\\_medium=relatedNews&utm\\_campaign=RelatedNews](http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-labour-pain-maternity-racket-of-sitapur-in-uttar-pradesh/article8961122.ece?utm_source=InternalRef&utm_medium=relatedNews&utm_campaign=RelatedNews))

- Well into the post Millennium Development Goals (MDG) era, Uttar Pradesh's Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) stands at 392 maternal deaths per 1,00,000 live births. **India's national average is 178, which by itself is far from the MDG target of 109.** Similarly for infants, 50 babies die per 1000 live births before they complete the first year. **The national figure is 40, once again missing the MDG target of 29**
- U.P. is one of the worst States for women — they are least likely to be educated, most likely to die during pregnancy, most likely to bear sickly new-borns, and these new-borns are most likely to be under-nourished at the age of five years, if they reach that age at all
- The government introduced **the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY),** a conditional cash transfer scheme (under the National Rural Health Mission) to benefit expecting mothers. **Under the scheme pregnant women are entitled to free**

**medicines, hospitalisation, and free food during hospital stay, free transport (after the delivery) and a incentive of Rs. 1400 for choosing to deliver the baby at a government or private hospital**

## **2. Grand larceny in Kuala Lumpur**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-grand-larceny-in-kuala-lumpur/article8960474.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Look East Policy*

*Category: International Relations*

### **Key points:**

- Turmoil has gripped Malaysia ever since the U.S. Department of Justice announced on July 20 that the senior-most political leadership in Kuala Lumpur was under suspicion for money laundering and multi-billion dollar theft from **1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), a corporation tasked expressly with financing Malaysia's development**. The revelation that this former sovereign wealth fund had been pillaged to the tune of at least \$3 billion has ignited Malaysian pro-democracy groups, and led to calls for the resignation of Prime Minister Najib Razak, who until recently chaired the advisory council of 1MDB
- From a global perspective, the ongoing fallout of 1MDB yet again highlights lack of regulation of dark pools of finance held by the ultra-wealthy. Despite the shockwaves of this year's Panama Papers scandal, clearly much remains to be done in terms of tightening the laws around how this money gets moved in and out of offshore tax havens, particularly disclosure requirements and information-sharing agreements between authorities across disparate jurisdictions
- The implications of this scandal for Malaysia are far-reaching and fundamental. Along with Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand, the country is known as a "tiger cub economy" for following in the growth-model footsteps of the tiger economies of Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan
- A critical element of the economic strategy promoted by former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad in the early 1990s and successive leaders in Kuala Lumpur was the development of the **export sector as an engine of growth**. In Malaysia's case, **oil wealth** and its evolution as a **major centre for Islamic finance** added an edge that came from closer ties to West Asian powers, particularly Saudi Arabia
- Somewhere along the journey, a sense of elite impunity crept in and transformed these inherent advantages into rapacious tools for self-enrichment. It is the common person of Malaysia who will now be left to pick up the pieces of a crumbling governance model, set aside ethnic rivalries and demand transparent and accountable institutions

## **3. History of cow politics**



<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/cow-protection-dalits-and-narendra-modi/article8960478.ece?homepage=true>)

Topic: Indian Political History

Category: Polity

**Key points:**

- The agenda of cow protection has been, since the 1880s, embedded in communal imaginaries, positioning of non-Hindus as the other, and communal rioting between Hindus and Muslims
- The history of movements for the protection of cows in India is a sordid one. It has nothing to do with religion
- This history recounts two overlapping tales of cynical politics
- The first tale is that of **unifying** a deeply divided and hierarchically ordered Hindu community under the banner of cow protection. Whether the so-called lower castes, who not only consume beef but are also fated to skin dead cows, bought into this upper-caste agenda is still a matter of debate among historians. But the project, fashioned by cultural entrepreneurs and innovators in late 19th century north India, succeeded in achieving the second objective, that of identifying and metaphorically crucifying Muslims as beef-eaters, and as killers of cattle particularly during the festival of Bakr-i-Id. The cow protection movement told us one tale of unifying a caste-ridden society, and of expanding the constituency of right-wing politics to the countryside
- The second tale relates to the different ways in which the constituency of Indians was **divided** and fragmented by the symbolic body of the holy cow. Expectedly, both tales constructed Muslims as the other. The process treaded a well-worn path: the collective self is invariably defined in opposition to a manufactured 'enemy' with whom there can be neither truck nor transaction.
- The cow protection movement in the 1880s followed three sorts of strategies to achieve its twin objectives
- One, a number of cow protection associations were set up throughout India. Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, travelled across the northern part of the country to establish *gaurakshak* societies
- Two, he and his followers mobilised public opinion on the issue through distribution of pamphlets and speeches
- Three, Arya Samajists collected thousands of signatures and attached them to petitions addressed to the colonial government. These petitions implored the Government of India to ban cow slaughter
- The outcome of these efforts could be foretold. Leaders of the Muslim community reacted indignantly, and in 1893 a number of riots between Hindus and Muslims broke out in Bombay, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal and other parts of north India right up to Rangoon, and right up to the middle of the 20th century
- Because cow protection had become a politically significant issue, it was taken up in the Constituent Assembly. A provision for the protection of cattle was

incorporated in the Directive Principles of State Policy. In the 1960s, a major movement for banning of cow slaughter was conceptualised and authored by then RashtriyaSwayamsevakSangh chief M.S. Golwalkar

- It is a pity that the horrific incidents connected with cows are waved away as an aberration, and as an appropriation by the wrong people. It has to be recognised that the issue itself is embedded in communal imaginaries and electoral calculations, or that it destroys bonds of citizenship through cynical deployment of divisive agendas signifying who belongs and who does not. The entire history of riots since the last decades of the 19th century shows the link between the issue of protecting cows and that of identifying non-Hindus as people who do not belong

#### 4. Legacy quest for a safer world

(<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/cow-protection-dalits-and-narendra-modi/article8960478.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: U.S*

*Category: International Affairs*

#### **Key points:**

- Prominent goals Obama could be targeting in his remaining months are reported to include introducing a **no-first use (NFU) policy on nuclear weapons; bringing the U.S. strategic forces to a state of de-alert; reaffirming the international norms against nuclear testing despite the Senate's refusal to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; extending the term of the New START arms reduction treaty by another five years; and cutting back long-term plans for modernising the nation's nuclear arsenal**
- Each of these measures would be a significant step in reducing nuclear dangers, especially de-alerting the U.S. strategic forces from their current fully alert, launch-on-warning status. Nuclear folklore contains numerous instances, confirmed by reliable sources, of when the world was just a few minutes away from a holocaust either because of false alarms of enemy attack or excessive nuclear brinksmanship. De-alerting of nuclear weapons by any country, especially a major power like the U.S., would be a big step forward in lowering the risk of a nuclear catastrophe
- The value of adopting a policy of NFU, apart from lowering tensions at times of crisis, would be more on the diplomatic side. **Recall that India's own declaration of NFU soon after the Pokhran-II explosions, in 1998, did much to assuage the world community's concerns over our having gone manifestly nuclear.** Similarly, U.S. attempts to control nuclear weapon proliferation around the world cannot carry much credibility if it

continues to retain its own option of a first strike with a trigger-alert arsenal. The same argument holds for weapon modernisation programmes

- Furthermore, in objective terms he has already made important strides in reducing nuclear dangers. **His successful negotiation of the New START treaty with Russia and the four Nuclear Security Summits devoted to securing nuclear materials are major examples**
- Clearly, at this stage Mr. Obama can make further progress on his arms control agenda only through executive action, given the shortage of time and the mood and composition of the current U.S. Congress. Technically speaking, all the actions listed earlier can be taken by invoking executive authority
- But even if prior or immediate approval by the elected legislators may not be strictly needed for adopting these measures, the prospects of them being effective and continuing to survive the transition to the next presidential regime after six months will depend on their acceptability to the Congress and the public
- Extending the New START by five more years would take it into 2025 — covering the next two presidential terms and tying his successor's hands on this important matter.
- There has also been support from **NGOs committed to arms reduction, such as the Arms Control Association, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, and even from countries under the U.S. nuclear umbrella such as Japan**
- One does not know which, if any, of these arms control steps the President will decide to take. Presumably when the White House put out word of these proposed changes, it was not done merely to test the waters but with the serious intent of going ahead with at least some of them. That is worth doing even if the measures end up not surviving beyond the Obama presidency. Let the onus of repealing them lie with the incoming leadership. Meanwhile, even their brief existence will set a precedent, making it easier to introduce similar measures in the future

5. Casual Read: **The mirror at the Olympics**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-mirror-at-the-olympics/article8960436.ece?homepage=true>

Note: Look into the number of new entrants in Rio Olympics- countries and events and issues like Zika outbreak and Gaunabara Bay pollution

**Quick Bits and News from States**

### **1. Irom Sharmila to end fast today**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/irom-sharmila-fast/article8960552.ece?homepage=true>)

After being on fast for nearly 16 years in protest against the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, Irom Sharmila will end her hunger strike on August 9, 2016.

On Tuesday, she will inform the court about her decision and the court is likely to release her from judicial custody.

### **2. Close Gulen's institutions in India, demands Turkey**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/close-gulens-institutions-in-india-demands-turkey/article8961344.ece?w=alauto>)

Turkey has officially asked India to act against the institutions affiliated to the network of Fethullah Gulen, the exiled Sufi leader it blames for the July 16 coup attempt. "Turkey has approached the Union Home Ministry and we are currently looking into the matter," a senior diplomatic source confirmed. The official complaint against the Gulenist organisations in India is significant as it comes a week after Turkey's Foreign Minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu, visited Pakistan and spoke in support of Pakistan's position on Kashmir.

### **2. Sushma misled nation on 39 abducted Indians: Cong.**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sushma-misled-nation-on-39-abducted-indians-congress/article8961339.ece?w=alauto>)

The External Affairs Minister faced sharp criticism in the Rajya Sabha on Monday, with Congress MPs demanding to know the fate of 39 Indians kidnapped by the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq in 2014. Most of them were from Punjab. Others were from West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh. She had said the government had six major sources who had informed that they are alive. Two years have passed without any information about them.

### **3. Lodha Committee Recommendations**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/lodha-panel-declines-request-of-bcci/article8961336.ece?w=alauto>)

Age cap of 70 on BCCI office-bearers, cooling off period, one State-one vote and ban on ministers and bureaucrats in BCCI.

#### 4.15-day I-Day fete begins today

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/15day-iday-fete/article8961343.ece?w=alauto>)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will start a 15-day programme to promote peace and social harmony in the country and celebrate 70 years of Independence. The programme, named *Azadi 70, YaadKaroQurbani* (Freedom 70, remember the sacrifices), will continue till August 23. August 9 has been chosen to mark the 75th anniversary of the Quit India movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi in the then Bombay in 1942.

#### 5. Panagariya blames industry for employment crisis

(<http://www.thehindu.com/business/panagariya-blames-industry-for-employment-crisis/article8960401.ece?w=alauto>)

Indian entrepreneurs' tendency to invest only in capital-intensive businesses or those requiring high-level skills is to blame for the employment crisis in the country, according to the Vice-Chairman, NitiAayog. While Indian firms have succeeded in sectors such as automobiles, software, telecom, finance and engineering, investments in clothing, light manufacturing or food processing, where jobs could be aplenty for people with less or no skills, had been abysmal, he said.

#### 6 .Malaysia revokes 68 passports over 'IS links'

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/malaysia-revokes-68-passports-over-is-links/article8961331.ece?w=alauto>)

Malaysian authorities have revoked the passports of 68 citizens over their involvement in Islamic State (IS)'s activities abroad, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said, warning the threat from the dreaded terror outfit is real. The 68 Malaysians included two families which had travelled to Syria with the intention to fight for the IS, he said.

## **F. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

New START

Arya Samaj

DPSP

ILR Project

## Tags

New START

Arya Samaj

DPSP

ILR Project

GST Bill

The Mental Health Care Bill

## Practice Questions:

**Question1: Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

- 1.AryaSamaj was founded by Swami Dayananda
  - 2.He established "Vedic Schools" or "Gurukuls" which put an emphasis on Vedic values and culture
- a) 1 only      b)2 only      c)Both 1 and 2      d)Neither 1 nor 2

Ans c

**Question 2: Which of the following is/are included in Directive Principles of State Policy?**

- 1.Equal justice and Free Legal Aid
  - 2.Raising level of nutrition, standard of living and improvement of health
  3. Implementation of Uniform Civil code
  - 4.Protection and improvement of environment
- a) 1 and 2 only      b)2 and 3 only      c) 2,3 and 4      d) All the above

Ans d

**Question 3: Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Mental Health Care Bill recently passed in Rajya Sabha?**

1. There is a provision for Advance Directive available to patients in the bill
- 2.The bill decriminalizes suicide

3.The bill provides for the establishment of central and state mental health authorities

a) 1 only      b)2 only      c)1 and 2 only      d) All the above

Ans d

**Question 4: Which of the following is/are focus areas of the Millennium Development Goals?**

1.Poverty Elimination

2.promoting gender equality

3. promoting education

4. promoting environmental sustainability

a) 1 and 2 only      b)2 and 3 only      c) 2,3 and 4      d) All the above

Ans d

**Question 5: Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct about New START which came into force in 2011?**

1. New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation
2. Under terms of the treaty, the number of strategic nuclear missile launchers will be reduced by half and a new inspection and verification regime will be established
3. It does not limit the number of operationally inactive stockpiled nuclear warheads

a) 1 and 2 only b)2 and 3 only c) 1 and 3 only d)All the above

Ans d





## Useful News Articles

10-08-2016

### A.GS1 Related

### B. GS2 Related

#### **1. We'll take Vajpayee's path on Kashmir, says Modi**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/narendra-modi-appeals-for-peace-harmony-in-kashmir/article8964143.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Federal Relations*

*Category: Polity*

#### **Key points:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday expressed concerns about “forces that want to foster disunity in the country” and reached out to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, seeking dialogue with them on the basis of “insaniyat (humanity), jamhuriyat (democracy) and Kashmiriyat.”
- He was speaking at a public meeting in Bhabhra in Madhya Pradesh, the birthplace of freedom fighter Chandrashekhar Azad, as part of the government’s fortnight-long Independence Day celebrations
- We will pay the price required for your (J & K’s ) development, and if it so happens that we run out of funds for roads, that shortage will not be allowed to touch you, the rest of the country will bear it instead,” the Prime Minister said in an impassioned speech

#### **2. India protests to Pakistan against infiltration**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-protests-to-pakistan-against-infiltration/article8965396.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Pakistan*

*Category: India’s Neighbourhood*

#### **Key points:**

- India on Tuesday issued a strong diplomatic note of protest, holding Pakistan responsible for cross-border terrorism
- The protest was based on the revelations of a militant Bahadur Ali, who allegedly confessed that he was trained by the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and was ordered to attack security facilities in India. Ali revealed that he was trained over the past three years in various camps near the Indian border

### 3. Irom Sharmila ends 16-year fast

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/irom-sharmila-ends-fast-wants-to-be-chief-minister-of-manipur/article8964760.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Federal Relations*

*Category: Polity*

#### **Key points:**

- Irom Sharmila ended her 16-year fast on Tuesday when she took a few drops of honey
- Ms. Sharmila ended her fast exactly a month after the Supreme Court judgment questioned the immunity enjoyed by the security personnel under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958 (AFSPA) against criminal action for acts committed in disturbed areas. The apex court had said last month that there was no concept of “absolute immunity” from trial by a criminal court if an Army man had committed an offence
- She gave a clear message to Prime Minister Narendra Modi “to connect to people without the draconian laws.” She also underlined the Kashmiris’ right to self-determination in the press conference held after the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s court granted her bail

### 5. Foreign funds pour in; 3,000 NGOs get over Rs. 22,000 cr.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/foreign-funds-pour-in-3000-ngos-get-over-rs-22000-cr/article8934272.ece?homepage=true>

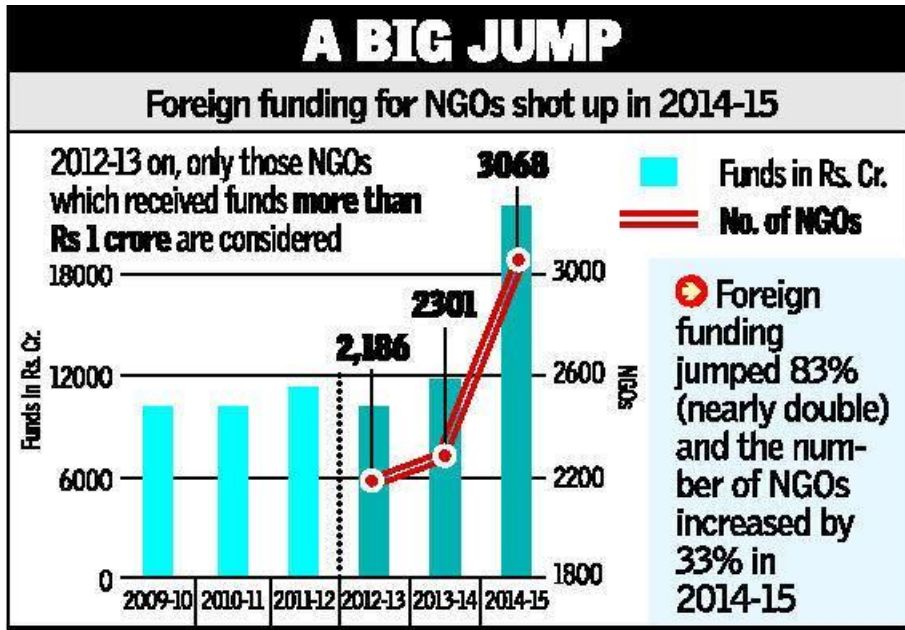
*Topic: Foreign Funding*

*Category: NGOs*

#### **Key points:**

- A total of 3,068 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) received foreign funding above Rs. 22,000 crore in 2014-15, according to government data presented in response to a question in Parliament
- As of July 2016, 33,091 NGOs were registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, which regulates foreign funding to these bodies
- Delhi has always been the top recipient as many international charities are registered in the capital and funds are then passed on to other States. Similarly, Maharashtra figures

high on the list as many organisations register in Bombay. Southern States get more foreign money due to the presence of Christian organisations



#### 6.Strikes barely holding off Taliban in Helmand

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/strikes-barely-holding-off-taliban-in-helmand/article8965717.ece?w=alauto>)

Topic: Afghanistan

Category: India' Neighbourhood

#### Key points:

- The Afghan security forces are struggling to head off an intensified Taliban offensive in Helmand Province in recent weeks, heavily relying on U.S. air strikes as the insurgents have again tightened the noose around Lashkar Gah, the provincial capital, according to officials and residents
- Most of the NATO air strikes were directed at Islamic State affiliates in eastern Afghanistan

#### C.GS3 Related

##### 1.RBI keeps policy rate unchanged

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/rbi-keeps-policy-rate-unchanged/article8963529.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: Monetary Policy*

*Category: Economy*

**Key points:**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor left the benchmark repo rate unchanged citing “upside” risks to inflation, which accelerated to a 22-month high in June. The RBI kept the repo rate, the key rate at which the central bank lends money to commercial banks, at 6.5 per cent. Retail inflation in June was 5.77 per cent, well above the 5 per cent target set by the central bank for March 2017
- The RBI Governor’s successor faces the challenges of integrating decision making with the Monetary Policy Committee, and completing the cleanup of banks’ balance sheets

**D.GS4 Related**

**E. Important Editorials:**

**The Hindu**

**1. Antimicrobial resistance: clear and present danger**

**<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/antimicrobial-resistance-clear-and-present-danger/article8965401.ece?homepage=true>**

*Topic: Health*

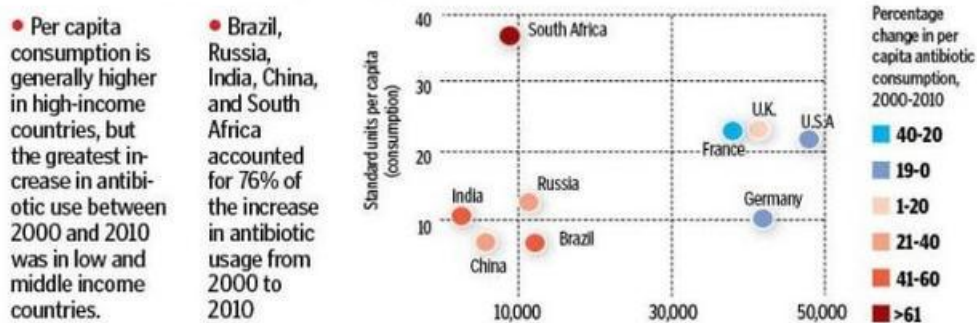
*Category: Governance*

**Key points:**

- The New Delhi Metallo-beta-lactamase-1 was an enzyme that rendered bacteria resistant to a broad spectrum of antibiotics. A strain of the NDM1 had crossed the shores and spread resistance in the U.K. as well in 2008
- Despite its outrage over New Delhi being associated with a resistant bug the nation sat up to the danger of anti-microbial resistance within its boundaries, and is beginning to understand the disastrous societal consequences of rendering certain life-saving drugs impotent
- **India was the largest consumer of anti-biotics for human health in 2010**
- It was in 2011 that the Union government came up with a **National Policy for Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance in India**, seeking to reverse what seemed to be spiralling healthcare concern

- The policy makes no bones about recognising the real threat: “Antimicrobial resistance in pathogens causing important communicable diseases has become a matter of great public health concern globally including our country. Resistance has emerged even to newer, more potent antimicrobial agents like carbapenems.”
- **The crude infectious disease mortality rate in India today is 416.75 per 100,000 persons**
- Among the key factors responsible are **the widespread use and availability of practically all the antimicrobials across the counter, increasing and wanton use of antibiotics in livestock production, inappropriate doses, and irrational use of antibiotics in hospitals**
- Attempts have begun to regulate at least the human consumption of antibiotics: **there are now guidelines for appropriate antibiotics usage which have revised Schedule H drugs to make over-the-counter availability of certain antibiotics nearly impossible**
- Stringent enforcement of drugs control, making the dispensing of some antibiotics over the counter punishable, is the need of the hour
- Resistance leads to a complicated treatment pattern, adds to patients’ stay in the hospital, and also the cost of treatment
- there are no new antibiotics on the horizon and the stronger antibiotics being used have toxic side effects
- And just when India started putting **a red line on antibiotic packages** to check their OTC sale, another problem has surfaced: antifungal drugs and creams are losing their punch
- The sanitation connection, though overlooked, is elementary: cleaner surroundings both in the community as well in hospitals can check the incidence of infectious diseases and bring down drug use. And the fewer the drugs used, the lesser the resistance to them

**Antibiotics use per capita by income in selected countries, 2010**



Facts from case study

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/losing-ground-in-the-war-on-superbugs/article8965534.ece>)

Carbapenem (anti-biotic) works on most resistant infections – while colistin is the last antibiotic in the medical armoury to treat resistant infections

## 2.Focus on price stability

(<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/reserve-bank-of-india-governor-raghuram-rajan-and-focus-on-price-stability/article8964961.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Monetary Policy*

*Category: Economy*

### Key points:

- The central bank's unwavering focus on inflation was kept intact by the RBI governor leaving interest rates unchanged for the second successive time this fiscal
- The Centre last week notified **the Statutory and Institutionalised Framework for Monetary Policy**, under which **the maintenance of price stability** has been unequivocally laid down as the primary remit of monetary policy. The Consumer Price Index-based inflation reading edged up in June to 5.77 per cent, well above the RBI's March 2017 target of 5 per cent and nearing the 6 per cent upper bound set by the government's monetary framework, largely on account of food prices
- While acknowledging that the outlook for the global economy and international trade remain clouded and sluggish, the RBI has posited that the risks to India achieving 7.6 per cent Gross Value Added economic growth in the current financial year remain evenly balanced as of now. With clear signs emerging of **"green shoots in manufacturing", including those of a pick-up in new domestic and overseas orders, renewed business confidence, and an increasingly broad-based improvement in services activity**, the central bank has opted for an accommodative stance that allows it elbow room to take more growth-supportive steps if the environment warrants
- The rationale proffered for sitting pat on rates is the sharper-than-anticipated increase in **food costs, particularly the rising prices of pulses and cereals; at the same time, services inflation has remained somewhat sticky**
- And of course there is a lot riding on the outcome of the monsoon: the steady progress of the rains so far has translated into a strong improvement in sowing, with its potential for a salutary impact on food inflation
- The full impact that the implementation of the Seventh Pay Commission's recommendations will have on house rents and, as a result, the CPI, could have influenced the RBI's price stability calculus

- It is these risks to the inflation target that prompted the governor to stay the course, even as the RBI continues to ensure that liquidity remains adequate
- Expressing broad confidence in the RBI's ability to stay on the "glide path" to achieving 5 per cent inflation by March 2017, he has flagged the fact that his successor will, in all likelihood, have the advantage of being joined by five other members of the Monetary Policy Committee when they meet to decide interest rates in October. It will no longer be lonely at the top at the RBI

### 3. Dumbing down a pliable workforce

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/cow-protection-dalits-and-narendra-modi/article8960478.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Education*

*Category: Governance*

#### **Key points:**

- "Public policy," according to Douglas Gomery, "is the making of governmental rules and regulations to benefit not one individual but society as a whole. It asks, what is the best way to conceive and evaluate policies aimed at the public as a whole and its various subgroups?" We are in the last leg of such a government-led exercise in education policy making. Therefore, it is pertinent to think about what basic assumptions our proposed National Education Policy (NEP) 2016 uses
- When he advised the Turkish government on its education reform agenda a century ago, John Dewey said working out the particular actions and steps to be taken in the reform process is possible only if the government is clear about what **social purposes education is supposed to serve, and what educational aims it wants to achieve**
- C. Winch echoes Dewey when he argues that if a public education system does not have clearly debated and articulated educational aims, it operates on covert aims. And that gives opportunity to the powerful sections of society to direct the system for their own benefit. The marginalised sections, thus, lose faith in the system
- Lack of clarity in articulating aims could also be an evasion exercise, as R.F. Dearden argues, so that while everyone is involved in the particular reforms, the direction is left to the chosen few
- Therefore, a proper analysis of the aims of education in the draft NEP 2016 becomes imperative. Only then can we fully understand particular recommendations and proposed initiatives in it. The claim here is not that stated aims always determine education. It is rather that understanding covert aims is necessary to get a full grasp on action that the policy recommends. I have made an attempt to understand the aims of education in the current draft in the light

of the earlier (and two) National Policies on Education — NPE 1968 and NPE 1986

- **A quick analysis of the NPE 1968 and NPE 1986 reveals that the social purpose of education in both documents is closely connected with the national goals, or nation-building as some like to call it.** The national goals are those of an economically prosperous nation that is democratic in character, culturally rooted but aware of shortcomings of its own culture, well-integrated internally and secure from outside aggression. They envision a pluralistic society in which equality, justice, liberty and dignity of all citizens are guaranteed. Social cohesion and fraternity among citizens is seen as an important social goal. The policy and social ethos are based on secularism and scientific temper
- **The NPE 1968 emphasises human resource development, or economic aims of education, but keeps in mind the potential of education in creating a democratic society. The NPE 1986 lays relatively more emphasis on individual independence**
- Both the earlier policies though list the social purposes as mentioned above under the “role of education”. They are also very clear that to achieve these social purposes, **education has to develop certain qualities and capabilities in learners. Only citizens with those capabilities can achieve the defined social purposes**
- These capabilities of individuals, or proper aims of education, include **democratic values, open-mindedness, an appreciation of Indian culture, critical thinking and a sound base of knowledge that help them become active and contributing citizens. The aims or capabilities to develop in learners are connected with the social goals or vision of society**
- The new draft NEP 2016 is substantially different in its vision of society, social purposes, understanding of aims of education and their articulation. It is neither overtly undemocratic nor overtly sectarian, but a close reading between the lines gives a very debatable picture
- The first striking difference is in the vision of society. The draft NEP 2016 is almost obsessed with the **“fast-changing, ever-globalising, knowledge-based economy and society” (KBES)**. It sees these changes as god-given and no critique of them in terms of impact on human life and well-being is attempted. For the policy, it is a fact that the forces that bring these changes are unseen and unchallengeable; therefore, all that is left for India is to go with the flow and ‘cope’ with it
- The document does mention social concerns, disparities, issues of social justice and democracy, etc.; but its eyes are fixed on what it calls “knowledge economy” and a cohesive society with a certain cultural hue. That culture is not to reinterpret or challenge or search for alternatives to the KBES, but only to wave a flag of a different colour to say, “look, we are here too”
- The authors of this document are conceptually confused about national **goals** (for example, in the creation of a just and equitable society), an education



department's or system's **targets** (for example, to bring all children to school) and **educational aims** (for example, to inculcate values of justice and equality in the learners). They all are put in the same category of 'Educational Objectives'

- That in national policy gives a feeling of being directed by incompetent people, if nothing else. What the policy draft lists under 'Educational Objectives' are mostly targets of the education system. Educational aims are scattered all over the document, and one has to collect them together in order to understand them
- The collected aims fall under four broad categories: **employable skills, cultural heritage, values and knowledge**
- **The thrust of the policy is clearly about employable skills. Recommendations concerning skills dominate every section.** It is understandable that if society is seen as KBES, then the most important task for education is only to prepare people who can be employed in it. **The aims also make it amply clear that the skills are to cope in this system, not to challenge or modify or even to lead it**
- Cultural heritage is seen as the culture of ancient India. Though there is mention of cultural pluralism, diversity and tolerance, etc., what is described at one place is only ancient India's contribution to the world of knowledge. There are no overt statements that might bring the charge of sectarianism, but no indication of any other culture is given; the characteristics that are listed are ones claimed for ancient Indian culture
- Almost everything is mentioned in values, from justice and equality to punctuality (a KBES value, perhaps). However, a close reading of the passages where these values occur, leads one to notice qualifications where citizenship and freedom are mentioned
- The education under this policy will endeavour to "produce" "responsible citizens" who use "freedom responsibly". If one reads this in the light of an overwhelming emphasis on employable skills, knowledge for KBES and a complete absence of critical thinking (mentioned twice in passing), then the **citizen who seems to be desired is one who is largely amenable to the state and political power, who has full faith in the state's goodness, and accepts the social structure**
- There is no place for a citizen who feels responsible if the state and society perpetrate injustice on large sections of society. No place for a citizen who makes a noise, agitates, and opposes government actions and policies. It is a citizen who is more concerned with social cohesion, peace, and is tolerant towards the state
- The knowledge as envisaged in the policy draft is almost completely the one required for KBES. That is the knowledge to be imparted to deal with a changing skill environment and life-long learning of skills, to prepare for the workforce and to be productive. The knowledge which is to be generated is that which is applicable in employable skills. Indian traditional knowledge seems to be the only exception as it is needed for an awareness of cultural heritage

- The knowledge which is required to understand the world, natural and social, to understand human life, to appreciate human achievements in aesthetic fields, for sheer intellectual delight, etc. is not indicated at all, as every single mention of knowledge is also associated with the knowledge-economy or knowledge for skills
- **Knowledge to gain insight into human existence, to enter the complex ethical world, to make independent judgment and to decide what is worth living and dying for has no place. The knowledge to decide when to support and appreciate a state and the government, and when to resist and oppose it, is not required. In short, the knowledge to become a rationally autonomous being and still be completely embedded in the whole of humanity is conspicuous in its absence**
- In conclusion, one can say that it is a policy to gear education to producing pliable citizens who work as the government says, believe it, obey it, produce but do not think and do not question
- It is a policy to craft an education system that is to dumb down the citizenry. It is time for India again to remember that a just and functioning democracy squarely depends on citizens who can think clearly and critically, and who can act on their convictions in the face of risks. Democracies are not sustained by obedient productive units in so-called knowledge-based economies. However, that is precisely what our new NEP 2016 envisages

#### 4.A fleeting opportunity

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/national-defence-university-and-a-fleeting-opportunity/article8964938.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Defence*

*Category: Governance*

#### **Key points:**

- The draft bill for the proposed Indian National Defence University (INDU) has been recently placed in the public domain
- The INDU proposal was not only meant to augment existing military training capacities, but to provide the intellectual underpinnings for “jointness” among the different services
- Unfortunately, the INDU as currently constituted does not appear to meet this test.
- 
- First, there has been little public debate over how this institution should be built. To a significant degree this has been because the government has left the conceptualisation

and implementation of the INDU almost entirely to the military and the Defence Ministry

- Second, by handing over the project to an ill-equipped public sector undertaking (EdCIL-INDIA), which prepared the DPR, any prospect of conceptual creativity was dashed from the very beginning
- The stilted thinking is evident in the third DNA defect of the INDU. While this university is expected to incorporate the existing tri-services institutions, it does not have any plans to address an existing anomaly, the absence of civilian faculty
- If the INDU is to live to its potential, the complexity of India's national security challenges needs to be recognised. This means that while the armed forces should have the largest representation, the INDU should not be a monopoly of the armed forces. The INDU will only succeed if all relevant organs of the Indian state are sensitised to the intricacies of national security and thereby foster a 'whole of government' approach. While the plans envisage participant vacancies for police, paramilitary and other civilian bureaucracies, this requires conscious partnering with institutions like the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy for Administration and Sardar Patel National Police Academy, as well as the intelligence agencies. Only then can the INDU emerge as an institution that fosters greater cooperation and understanding between different arms of the Indian state
- The government should move to appoint an academic council, with broader representation than simply bureaucrats and military officers, and house it in a government-sponsored think tank like the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis
- It needs to make conscious efforts to learn about best practices in professional military education from other countries
- This is not just for the benefit of India's national security but for the armed forces themselves whose senior officers need wider and better exposure to prepare themselves — and for them to prepare India's civilians — for the challenges ahead

## **Quick Bits and News from States**

### **1. Former Arunachal CM KalikhoPul found hanging**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/former-arunachal-cm-kalikhopul-found-dead/article8963512.ece?w=alauto>

Former Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister KalikhoPul allegedly committed suicide on Tuesday, less than a month after the Supreme Court unseated him and reinstated his rival NabamTuki.

### **2. SC orders probe into youth's death in J&K**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/sc-orders-probe-into-youths-death-in-jk/article8965711.ece?w=alauto>

Despite the Jammu and Kashmir government's claim for immunity from criminal prosecution to police officers compelled to use fire power to fatal ends in the line of duty, the Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the State to investigate the death of a 26-year-old man allegedly at the hands of the police in the tensed Valley State.

The S.C Bench ordered the State authorities to complete the probe on the basis of a complaint made by the victim's father that his son was killed by the police inside his house and not during protests.

The apex court asked the State to submit its investigation report in a sealed cover by August 12.

### **3. Progressive move on transgenders**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/progressive-move-on-transgenders/article8965703.ece?w=alauto>

The Transgender Bill was first cleared as a private members Bill in the Rajya Sabha, and now the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is to pilot it in the Lok Sabha as a government bill.

### **4. Centre to permit fixed term for textile workers**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/centre-to-permit-fixed-term-for-textile-workers/article8964959.ece?w=alauto>

The Centre has proposed an amendment to the labour rules to allow the textiles industry to hire workers on a fixed-term contract. The textile industry will not be required to give the fixed-term worker any notice period for terminating the contract or any compensation in the case of retrenchment. The move will help us hire workers for a fixed term directly without going through the contractor.

### **5 .Ahead of Foreign Minister Wang's India visit, China stresses on 'consensus'**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/china-states-its-bottomline-ahead-of-wang-yis-visit-to-india/article8964261.ece?w=alauto>

India-China ties should focus on amplifying their economic agenda, which requires urgent attention. "India's exports to China have dropped 16.7 percent year-on-year in the first seven months of the year, Chinese customs data showed on Monday, suggesting that a large number of Indian enterprises are having a hard time exploring the Chinese market amid simmering

tensions between the two countries. It was stressed that “geo-economics rather than geopolitics,” should rule India-China ties.

#### **6. Putin, Erdogan pledge 'reset' of ties**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/putin-tells-erdogan-he-hopes-ankara-can-restore-order-after-failed-coup/article8964588.ece?w=alauto>

Russian President Vladimir Putin told his visiting Turkish counterpart Tayyip Erdogan he hoped Ankara could fully restore order after a failed military coup last month, saying on Tuesday that Moscow always opposed unconstitutional actions. Mr. Putin said the two men would discuss how to restore trade and economic ties and cooperation against terrorism.

Russia imposed trade sanctions on Turkey in the wake of the shooting down of its jet and the number of Russian tourists visiting the country fell by 87 percent in the first half of 2016.

Mr. Erdogan's trip to Russia comes as Turkey's relations with Europe and the United States are strained by what Ankara sees as Western concern about how it handled the abortive coup, in which more than 240 people were killed.

#### **F. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

Draft National Education Policy- 2016

AFSPA, 1958

Monetary Policy Committee

The Transgender Bill

#### **Tags**

Draft National Education Policy- 2016

AFSPA, 1958

Monetary Policy Committee

The Transgender Bill

Carbapenem

Indian National Defence University

## **Practice Questions:**

**1. Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act(s) (AFSPA) is/are operational in which of the following states**

- I. Jammu and Kashmir
  - II. Nagaland
  - III. Manipur
  - IV. Tripura
- a) 1 and 2 only  
b) 2 and 3 only  
c) 2,3 and 4  
d) All the above

Ans D

**2. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2016 approved by the Union Cabinet recently?**

- I. The draft Bill says that transgenders who by birth do not belong to Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes may be declared members of the Backward Classes, and would be entitled to reservation under the existing ceiling for OBCs
  - II. The new law proposes to create a National Council of Transgender Persons and start schemes to provide them scholarships, textbooks and hostel accommodation
  - III. It calls for necessary amendments in the Indian Penal Code to cover cases of sexual offence against transgender persons.
- a) 1 and 2 only  
b) 2 and 3 only  
c) 1 and 3 only  
d) All the above

Ans. D

**3. Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

- I. Carbapenems are antibiotics used for the treatment of infections known or suspected to be caused by multidrug-resistant (MDR) bacteria
  - II. Antibiotics are not effective against viruses
  - III. Antibiotics can be isolated from living organisms and can also be synthesized chemically
- a) 1 only  
b) 1 and 2 only

- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All the above

Ans. D

**4. Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

- I. **China is India's largest trading partner**
  - II. **Electronic equipment is the major commodity imported from China by India**
- a) 1 only
  - b) 2 only
  - c) Both 1 and 2
  - d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. C

**5. Which of the following statement(s) is/are correct about the Monetary Policy Committee to be constituted by the Indian government?**

- I. **It would have equal number of members from the RBI and those selected by the government**
  - II. **It would make monetary policy decisions based on the multiple indicator approach**
- a) 1 only
  - b) 2 only
  - c) Both 1 and 2
  - d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. A

# Useful News Articles

11-8-2016

## A.GS1 Related

## B. GS2 Related

1.Three months' leave for victims of sexual harassment;Paid maternity leave increased to 6 months

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/paid-maternity-leave-increased-to-6-months/article8970558.ece?w=alauto>)

Topic: Gender Issues

Category: Society

### Key points:

- Women employees who have complained of sexual harassment can get three months' leave during the pendency of inquiry, Union Minister Jitendra Singh told the Lok Sabha
- The Union Cabinet on Wednesday **approved amendments to the Maternity Benefit Act of 1961** to increase paid leave for expectant mothers from three months **to six and a half months**
- In a first, women adopting a newborn and those having babies through surrogacy will also be entitled for maternity leave for three months
- The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill of 2016 will be introduced in the Rajya Sabha
- The government says these amendments, which are applicable to factories with at least 10 workers, will help around 18 lakh women workers in the organised sector
- The proposed amendment also “facilitates work from home” and “mandatory provision for crèche” for factories with at least 50 workers

1.Can filing of routine appeals not stop, SC asks law panel

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/can-filing-of-routine-appeals-not-stop-sc-asks-law-panel/article8970011.ece?homepage=true>)

Topic: Judiciary

Category: Polity

### Key points:



- The Supreme Court directed the Law Commission of India to file a report within a year on whether it is permissible to stop the filing of all appeals which are not of national and public importance
- It also wanted the Commission to consider the “desirability” of laws that allow parties, including the government, to file appeals against tribunal orders in the Supreme Court bypassing the High Courts
- It ordered the Centre to file an Action Taken Report on the Law Commission’s recommendations and said a three-judge Bench would hear the Centre in November 2017
- The court observed that the apex court was being prevented from fulfilling its constitutional objectives
- A certificate of the High Court is required to appeal to the Supreme Court. Only in exceptional circumstances would the Supreme Court admit a case without the High Court’s certificate. The exception has become the rule now. The result is more and more unsuccessful people are encouraged to have another go at it by approaching the Supreme Court

## 2. Kudankulam unit dedicated to nation

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/modi-putin-jayalalithaa-dedicate-knpp1-to-the-nation/article8968903.ece?homepage=true>)

Topic: Nuclear Power

Category: Governance

### Key points:

- Nearly 28 years after Russia and India signed the agreement to set up the nuclear plant at Kudankulam, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Wednesday did the dedicated it to the nation through a video conference organised from Moscow, Delhi, Chennai, and Kudankulam
- The 1,000-MWe KNPP-1 is **the largest single unit of electrical power in India**. “At Kudankulam alone, five more units of 1,000 MWe each are planned,” Mr. Modi said
- Mr. Putin said the two countries hoped to sign the General Framework Agreement for setting up units 5 and 6 by year-end. Work commenced on units 3 and 4 in February this year

## 4. ‘Biased’ citizenship bill draws flak from MPs

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/biased-citizenship-bill-draws-flak-from-mps/article8969974.ece?w=alauto>)

Topic: Citizenship

Category: Polity

**Key points:**

- The Opposition parties want the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, which was introduced in the Lok Sabha by the Union Home Minister in July, sent to a Standing Committee of Parliament. They say the amendments seek to give the granting of citizenship a religious twist
- The original Act, passed in 1955, lists the ways to acquire citizenship, denying it to undocumented migrants. The amendments now seek to allow citizenship to undocumented migrants of all faiths barring Islam from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh
- Now members of every major religious community barring Islam coming into India without legal passports or staying on without valid papers will be entitled to Indian citizenship after six years of residence in India
- However, defending the amendments, a senior Minister said, “The principle is victimhood. How can a Muslim claim he has been victimised in these countries?” But what if a Muslim is victimised? The answer is, “He can always seek asylum in India.”

## **C.GS3 Related**

### **1.Lashkar-e-Taiba fuelling Kashmir unrest, says NIA**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/nia-blames-let-for-unrest-in-kashmir/article8969082.ece?w=alauto>)

Topic: Indo-Pak Border

Category: Security

**Key points:**

- A day after India handed over a strong demarche to Pakistan over its continued support to cross-border terrorism, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday said it has evidence to prove that Lashkar-e-Taiba is sending its

cadres, **with the help of Pakistani security forces**, to fuel large-scale agitation in Kashmir

- The NIA probe has revealed that a high-power radio communications centre codenamed Alpha-3 has been set up in PoK, in coordination with Pakistani forces, to remain in contact with the LeT cadres operating in Kashmir

## 2. Cabinet nod for changes to FDI regulations in NBFCs

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/cabinet-nod-for-changes-to-fdi-regulations-in-nbfc/article8969847.ece?w=alauto>

Topic: Finance Institutions

Category: Economy

### Key points:

- The Cabinet approved a proposal to amend rules for foreign investment in non-banking finance companies (NBFCs)
- “The amendment in the existing Foreign Exchange Management regulations on non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) will enable inflow of foreign investment in ‘other financial services’ **on automatic route provided such services are regulated by any financial sector regulators (RBI, SEBI, PFRDA etc.)/government agencies**,” according to an official statement
- Foreign investment in ‘other financial services’ that are not regulated by any regulators or by a government agency can be made via the approval route, according to the statement
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved a one-time grant of Rs.900 crores spread over three years for an R&D project for **the development of Advanced Ultra Super Critical (AUSC) technology for thermal power plants**. The estimated cost of the project is Rs.1,554 crore, according to the government
- The Rs.900 crore, commencing from 2017-18, is to be provided as plan gross budgetary support to Bharat Heavy Electricals (BHEL) for the implementation of the R&D project
- The other decisions taken by the Cabinet include approval for the signing and ratification of an agreement between India and Croatia on economic cooperation.
- India and Croatia had earlier signed an agreement on trade and economic cooperation in September 1994 with an aim to promote and develop bilateral trade and economic relations. “Signing of the new agreement between India and Croatia would be a step in continuity as the existing agreement expired in November 2009,” the government said

## D.GS4 Related

### E. Important Editorials:

The Hindu

#### 1. Regulating India's regressive health insurance

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-regulating-indias-regressive-health-insurance/article8970327.ece?homepage=true>)

Topic: Health

Category: Governance

#### Key points:

- The Union Health Minister said in May 2016, that **only about 24 per cent of the population has some form of medical insurance**. That includes private and public sector insurance, and the Central scheme for weaker sections, the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana
- India primarily relies on **commercial health insurance** now.
- Rather than pool financial resources across social groupings for risk protection, and move towards tax-funded health care, government policy has created fragments with low insurance. Can the base of these pools be widened and merged to mitigate classic insurance failures?
- Commercial health insurance in India is seriously deficient. It almost entirely **covers only catastrophic expenditure**, such as the cost of highly restricted hospital treatments, which are offered without cost and quality regulation and external audits. **Outpatient treatment and prescription medicines are not covered**
- The WHO estimates out-of-pocket spending as a percentage of total health spending to be 62.42 per cent in India in 2014
- Commercial health insurance has traditionally experienced two problems. First, adverse selection: Only those who currently need care are more likely to insure themselves, rather than everyone. This reduces the risk pool size. The insurer responds by screening beneficiaries to reduce exposure and protect returns, defeating the insurance objective. Second, moral hazard: patients and care providers like hospitals build up claims without cost concerns. If there is any attempt to regulate providers, they respond with cost-cutting measures that harm patients

From case study:

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-medical-insurance-gaping-holes-in-the-safety-net/article8970330.ece>)

- Many insurance policies do not cover genetic disorders such as Thalassemia and Haemophilia. People with disabilities, especially intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, also generally fall through the gaps of mainstream insurance coverage
- Insurance does not usually cover the costs of travel from a village, the loss of wages of the patient and attendants, costs of staying in the city, food and other expenses
- **The biggest issue when it comes to insurance however remains awareness**

## 2. Responding to Irom Sharmila

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/responding-to-irom-sharmila/article8969824.ece?homepage=true>

Topic: political consciousness

Category: polity

### Key points:

- The fresh turns in Ms. Sharmila's story — the ending of the fast, her desire to join the political process and her peculiar isolation — set a mirror to the state and society
- As long as she was on fast, she was in a comfortable zone for both. For the state, the Gandhian non-violence implicit in her method allowed a comparison with the violence of others, positioning her as the good protester, as it were
- And in fact it was the unflinching protest by Manipuri women at Imphal's Kangla fort in 2004 that forced New Delhi to withdraw AFSPA from parts of the State
- For others, Ms. Sharmila became the representative of a popular desire to hold the highest moral ground, even as they went on with their lives, though all in the face of the kind of government apathy in Manipur that must shame this country
- The breaking of the fast is a highly political act. It demands that we respond to the cause she has given her adult life to. For herself, she has chosen to place faith in the electoral process for reform, a far more messy and risky option than the high pedestal of unyielding non-cooperation she had secured

### 2. Read: **The carnage in Quetta**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/suicide-bombing-at-pakistan-hospital-the-carnage-in-quetta/article8969825.ece?homepage=true>

## 3. Deja vu of a new beginning

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/nepals-new-prime-minister-deja-vu-of-a-new-beginning/article8969830.ece?homepage=true>

Topic: Nepal

Category: India's Neighbourhood

**Key points:**

- On August 4, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', leader of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist-Centre), was sworn in for the second time as Prime Minister of Nepal, becoming the ninth Prime Minister in the country's eight-year-long history as a republic and the only communist leader to have managed to stage a political comeback  
Challenges before him:]
- He would like to get the Madhesi groups and Janajatis on board but the SanghiyaGathabandhan want to first see what kind of pronouncements are made about making the new Constitution truly federal and inclusive
- To strengthen his leadership within his party, Mr. Prachanda would like to bring the pending legal cases against the Maoist cadre going back to the decade-long insurgency (1996-2005) to a closure, which could lead to strains with the Nepali Congress(NC)
- Easier perhaps are simple steps to get the post-earthquake reconstruction efforts going. The international community had generously pledged \$4.4 billion for the reconstruction effort at an international conference held in Kathmandu last year
- On the foreign policy front, Mr. Prachanda needs to repair the damage done by his predecessor Mr. Oli to relations with India

**4.The postcolonial blind spot**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/islamic-hegemonies-brahminised-hindu-hegemonies-the-postcolonial-blind-spot/article8969844.ece?homepage=true>

Topic: Post colonial era

Category: Society

**Key points:**

- The war on colonial hegemonies and injustices by the best anti-colonial and postcolonial minds often left other hegemonies largely unscathed. Though the colonial Western hegemony was the dominant one, it was by no means the only. There were various others: some global, like the various versions of **patriarchy cutting across societies, and some regional, like the Brahminised-Hindu hegemonies of India, and the Islamic hegemonies of Muslim societies**. There were local ones too
- The problem was that all these hegemonies operated in order to maintain structurally unequal and institutionally unfair societies, and hence what was good from the

perspective of some was also exploitative for many others. The White man's burden was mostly borne by the Yellow, Brown and, most heavily of all, the Black man (and woman)

- Just as many Western colonisers and imperialists remained wilfully blind to the disastrous effects of their hegemony on the colonised and their societies, a similar wilful blindness operated within other hegemonies. Hence, for instance, the repeated attempt to deny or justify caste-based oppression in Hindutva circles, or the attempt to blame the “bad reports” of jihad on the media and not on fellow Muslims.
- Much has been done to expose the lies and atrocities of European colonisation in the past, especially by scholars in or from postcolonial societies.
- But because our attention has been focussed on Western hegemonies, we have often failed to engage with equivalent rigour with our own regional and local hegemonies, unless it was to trace their imbrication with European colonisation or American imperialism. The rise of both Hindutva and Islamism is a consequence of that
- That Hindutva is less virulent in India than Islamism is in many Muslim nations might have much to do with the fact that, at least in India, some of our leading anti-colonial leaders also aimed their criticism inwards at Hindu society: **Gandhiji did so from a caste-based reformist position, Jawaharlal Nehru from a universalist-socialist one, B.R. Ambedkar from a more located and hence angrier anti-caste Dalit perspective**
- Their anti-colonialism did not totally blind them to the hegemonies within, though again all of them were more careful in criticising religious Muslim sentiments as they were not Muslim
- **The self-analysis of such Indian leaders and intellectuals was seldom the case in most Muslim countries, and when it half-happened, it did so, as in Turkey, from a position of authoritarian elitism, or, as in Iran, from that of an undemocratic monarchy**
- Today we are reaping the harvest of this partial blindness — perhaps inevitable historically, but not so any more. It is time to turn the searchlight inwards more often than we tend to do
- If greed is the cardinal sin of the aberrant power of colonialism, resentment is that of the lagging self-assertion of postcolonialism. To blame the coloniser (or the media or the other) and not to blame oneself is often just an expression of resentment. It offers no solution

##### 5. Read: **A question of human rights**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/abortion-womens-rights-and-human-rights/article8969843.ece?homepage=true>

##### 6. Read: **The story of Kudankulam: From 1988 to 2016**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/the-story-of-kudankulam-from-1988-to-2016/article8969290.ece?homepage=true>

The Indian Express

### 1. After the celebrations

<http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/gst-bill-pass-implemented-problems-vat-import-taxation-2966637/>

Topic: Taxation

Category: Economy

#### **Key points:**

- Without question, the coming together of all parties was a commendable effort and the Indian GST will be the largest tax reform to be implemented anywhere in the world
- But the constitutional amendment is just the first step and does nothing more than enable the Centre and the states to implement a new method of taxation — GST. The herculean task that lies ahead is the implementation of this gigantic tax reform which will require the successful tackling of several issues
- **We will have 31 GST enactments (for 29 states and the union territories of Puducherry and Delhi). Therefore, “one nation, one tax” will really be “one state-one GST”. This is apart from separate enactments of Central GST (CGST) and Intra-State GST (IGST). Besides GST, the states will continue to have the power to levy sales tax/VAT on petrol, diesel, aviation fuel and potable alcohol. The Centre can continue to levy excise duty on all these products as well as on tobacco and tobacco products. Whatever the merits of the Indian GST, simplicity is not one of them**
- **It is critical that all states follow one model enactment; the greater the deviation, the greater the headache for industry. The present constitutional amendment gives only recommendatory powers to the GST council. Nothing curbs a state that decides to strike a deviant path**
- The heart of any GST system is a single rate of tax applicable to all commodities and services. It is better to have one lower rate for all commodities than to have multiple rates for different products. We have opted for the latter and multiple rates are expected: zero rate for essential commodities, 2-4 per cent for gold jewellery, 12 per cent for “merit items”, 18 per cent or more as the standard rate and 40 percent for luxury products. Under Article 279A(4), the GST council can also recommend limits for granting exemptions, “floor rates with bands of GST”, special rate for specified periods



to meet natural calamities/disasters, and special provisions for the north-eastern states, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand

- These multiple rates will get further complicated if different states start granting different exemptions. And with each state having plenary power under Article 246A, what happens if some states begin to levy an additional tax or a surcharge? Indeed, even if the GST council recommends a rate of 18 per cent, there is nothing to prevent a state from increasing it to 22 per cent or even reducing it to 12 per cent. If other states are affected by such an increase or decrease, do they approach the GST council? Is any state's right to approach the supreme court under Article 131 taken away? To what extent is the decision of the GST council binding? These are just some of the questions that require serious contemplation
- Another dangerous consequence of the GST regime is that imports will be cheaper as the IGST on imports will be entitled to a set-off against the final selling price. This is not permissible under the existing regime, as the table indicates. Thus, imported goods will now be cheaper because the IGST at Rs 22 can be off-set by the importer when he sells the goods in the domestic market. The net cost to him will be Rs110 as against Rs128.85 in the earlier regime. Undoubtedly, the GST regime will bring down manufacturing costs by reducing the cascading effect of indirect taxes and through improvement of supply-chain efficiencies. But these benefits must be mathematically greater than the benefit that will accrue to direct imports. With highly cumbersome labour, tax and regulatory laws in most states, manufacturing is hardly a happy activity. If imports become even cheaper, the Make in India campaign will be adversely affected
- There is considerable uncertainty over the actual manner of implementation of the GST regime. With the overlapping of taxes, how will the multiple laws be administered? Since the GST is a separate concurrent levy by the Centre and the states, how will the disputes be resolved? Will each state have its own GST tribunal?
- The model law is unduly harsh in several respects. For example, GST credit will be available only if the buyer of goods furnishes proof that the vendor has paid GST to the government account. Therefore, a lawyer or businessman cannot claim GST credit on the GST paid on his laptop unless he can prove that the seller has paid GST to the government
- Extremely serious issues need to be resolved on e-commerce transactions, dual taxation and restricted credit
- Each State will not only have its own GST but each act will have multiple rules. With CGST and IGST, there are bound to be separate credit pools for SGST, CGST and IGST. Preliminary studies show that there will be a substantial increase in paperwork and compliance costs

- With these multiple problems likely to arise in the immediate future, it is best that the GST is implemented in stages. It is best to implement GST on a trial basis in a few manufacturing, trading and service sectors. This will reveal possible hurdles that require attention and will also help in perfecting the IT infrastructure that is so critical to a successful GST. Above all, GST will require states to eschew short-term thinking. With several states indulging in disastrous populist schemes, this will require statesmanship of a very high order. As Henry Ford put it: “Coming together is a beginning; Keeping together is progress.”

**To Read: RBI to banks and back: The journey of currency under cover, protection**

[\(http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/chennai-train-robbery-rbi-currency-notes-stolen-2966824/\)](http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/chennai-train-robbery-rbi-currency-notes-stolen-2966824/)

**PIB**

### **1. Setting up of Technology Acquisition and Development Fund**

Government has notified the Scheme for Technology Acquisition and Development Fund (TADF) under the National Manufacturing Policy (NMP) to provide funding support to SMEs for the acquisition and development of clean and green technology. The Scheme is applicable to all existing and new Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) including those in the National Investment and Manufacturing Zones (NIMZs) in respect of their investments made after notification of the Scheme.

The fund provides subsidy of upto 10% of capital expenditure incurred on new plant and machinery (on procuring plant and machinery) for manufacturing units for controlling pollution, reducing energy consumption and for water conservation, subject to a maximum of Rs. 50 lakhs.

### **2. Setting up of NICDA**

Government of India proposes to form a National Industrial Corridor Development Authority (NICDA). The proposed NICDA would facilitate integrated development of Industrial Corridors across the country. It will channelize central as well as institutional funds while ensuring that the various corridors are properly planned and implemented keeping in view the broad national perspectives regarding industrial and city development.

### **3. FTAS with Israel, Austria, Eurasian and Gulf Countries**

The Department of Commerce is negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Israel. The eighth round was held in Israel from 24-26 November, 2013 wherein discussions took place

on market access in goods, rules of origin, custom procedures and trade in services. In the subsequent inter-sessional consultations, the focus has been on a balanced outcome in both goods and services. Although India is negotiating the India-European Union Broad-based Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (India-EU BTIA) which includes Austria, there are no bilateral negotiations. The EU BTIA negotiations began in 2007 with sixteen rounds of negotiations concluded. Moreover, three rounds of stocktaking meetings have been held recently on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2016, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2016 and 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2016. A Joint Study Group (JSG) has been set up for considering the feasibility of entering into an FTA between India and Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU) comprising of 5 countries namely Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. The first meeting of the JSG with EaEU was held on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015. A Free Trade Agreement is also being negotiated with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which comprises Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. The second round of negotiations was held on 9-10 September, 2008 in Riyadh, with the GCC now reviewing all their economic engagements

#### **4.25 cities prepare Comprehensive Mobility Plans**

##### **14 such cities in Karnataka; 5 in Punjab**

25 cities have prepared Comprehensive Mobility Plans (CMP) based on origin and destination flow of traffic , identifying major traffic corridors and feeder corridors, land use etc which in turn would assist in proper urban planning. CMPs are subsequently made part of City Master Plans.

#### **5. India's Ranking in Tourism and Travel Competitiveness**

As per **the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) 2015**, of **the World Economic Forum**, India ranks 35th in Air Transport Infrastructure and 50th in Ground & Port Infrastructure from 141 countries of the world. India ranks 136th in terms of airport density and 76th in terms of quality of roads according to TTCI Report 2015, while according to the 2013 Report, India ranked 136th in terms of airport density and 85th in terms of quality of roads.

The overall TTCI ranking of India has improved to 52nd in 2015 as compared to 65th in 2013.

#### **The BusinessLine:**

##### **1.How we cooked our goose at WTO**

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/how-we-cooked-our-geese-at-wto/article8969705.ece>

Topic: India and WTO

Category: Economy

**Key points:**

- India lost two high-profile trade disputes at the World Trade Organisation recently — both to the US. These could be good case studies on how not to handle such matters
- In both the **poultry dispute and the fight over domestic sourcing clause in the country's solar power programme**, it was a case of too many cooks spoiling the broth
- The bigger of the two botch-ups is, without doubt, the handling of the solar dispute. Two years ago in September, India gave up the opportunity of imposing anti-dumping duties on cheap solar panels imported from the US and China, despite the Directorate General of Anti-Dumping (DGAD) recommending such duties
- The finance ministry refused to notify the duties as the ministries of new and renewable energy (MNRE) and road transport and highways rallied against the move, arguing there wasn't enough domestic manufacturing capability
- One might have imagined the US would, in turn, drop its case at the WTO against India's domestic content norms in its national solar power generation programme (that it lodged in 2013 and again the next year) — but that did not happen
- It is difficult to understand as to why did India not use the proposed anti-dumping duties to strike a deal with the US on domestic sourcing?
- Levying anti-dumping duties following processes laid down by the WTO and after duly establishing dumping and injury to domestic industry is considered legitimate by the multilateral trade body. Therefore, deciding not to impose the anti-dumping duties without making the US give anything in return seems to defy common sense
- Arguments that the mandatory local sourcing of components was limited in scope, was part of government procurement and a small move to encourage the nascent domestic solar industry fell flat both with the US and the WTO
- India decided to file a number of cases against the US' domestic sourcing policy
- While retaliatory cases would have certainly helped in sending the US the message that it should not play dirty with India, unfortunately, New Delhi is again dragging its feet. It is yet to make its move
- **It is quite obvious, though, that India will not be able to continue with its domestic sourcing clause in the present form in the third phase of the ambitious Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (which seeks to generate 100 gigawatts of electricity annually from solar power by 2022)**
- The WTO's verdict on India's appeal is unlikely to be favourable in the absence of any fresh arguments. New Delhi has none but itself to blame for its predicament

- The second case that India lost recently at the WTO is the one related to the ban on import of US poultry
- The WTO ruled last year that India's ban based on the risk of low-pathogenic (low intensity) avian influenza was unscientific and went against global norms. It was obvious to the commerce ministry that more genuine and convincing reasons would have to be found to continue with the ban
- New Delhi had one year to come up with newer justifications, as the WTO gave it a year's time to weed out the older restrictions considered as unscientific
- Since the Department of Animal Husbandry officially notifies import restrictions on animal products, it became the nodal ministry to examine the validity of alternative reasons to stop imports, such as use of genetically modified feed by US farmers or the practice of deep freezing meat for months
- Unable to come up with anything new, the Animal Husbandry Department decided to lie low and continue with the ban even after the WTO deadline had lapsed
- The US, however, was not sleeping, and threatened India with economic sanctions after waiting for a few weeks. Just a day later, New Delhi, came up with a new notification removing the older restrictions, and not surprisingly it was not ready with any new barriers

### **Quick Bits and News from States**

#### **1. Trade group accuses e-tailers of flouting FDI norms on discounts**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/trade-group-accuses-etailers-of-flouting-fdi-norms-on-discounts/article8969684.ece?homepage=true>

The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), the apex body of traders in the country, said it has filed a complaint with the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) against some leading e-commerce players alleging that they are flouting the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) norms. FDI guidelines on e-commerce state that 'e-commerce entities providing marketplace will not directly or indirectly influence the sale prices of goods or services and shall maintain a level playing field. The complaint comes in the backdrop of the government's decision to set up a panel headed by NITI Aayog CEO to study all e-commerce-related issues and suggest measures to boost the sector.

#### **2. Gadkari to lay foundation stone of multi-modal terminal at Varanasi**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/gadkari-to-lay-foundation-stone-of-multimodal-terminal-at-varanasi/article8969808.ece?w=alauto>

The Union Shipping Minister will lay the foundation stone for a multi-modal terminal at Varanasi and flag off the trial run of two vessels as a part of **National Waterway-1 development**. The terminal will have road and rail connectivity with proposed links on NH-7 and Jeonathpur railway station respectively. The cargo handling capacity of the multi-modal terminal is estimated to be 1.2 million metric tonnes per annum and it will handle cement and food grains among others.

### **3. US wants India to step up aid to Kabul**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-wants-india-to-step-up-aid-to-kabul/article8970688.ece?w=alauto>)

The U.S. is in favour of India providing greater security assistance to Afghanistan, General John William Nicholson, Commander of the U.S. Forces in Afghanistan, said on Wednesday. "The tremendous cooperation India has made in the human capital of Afghan security forces is the one contribution that is going to be enduring," he said referring to the training provided by India to Afghan forces.

### **4. 45,000 Islamic State fighters killed in 2 years: US**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/45000-islamic-state-fighters-killed-in-2-years-us/article8970850.ece?w=alauto>)

### **5. Libyan forces retake key centre in Sirte from Islamic State**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/libyan-forces-retake-key-centre-in-sirte-from-islamic-state/article8970851.ece?w=alauto>)

Pro-government forces in Libya said they seized control of the Islamic State group's headquarters in Sirte on Wednesday as they push to oust the jihadists from the coastal city

### **6. US approves sale of arms worth \$1.15 billion to Saudi Arabia**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-approves-sale-of-arms-worth-115-billion-to-saudi-arabia/article8970845.ece?w=alauto>)

The United States has approved the possible sale to Saudi Arabia of up to 153 tanks, hundreds of machine guns and other military gear in a deal worth \$1.15 billion, the Pentagon said on Tuesday.

The announcement coincided with news that Saudi-led coalition warplanes had resumed air strikes on Yemen's capital for the first time in three months, killing 14 people and shutting the airport after UN-brokered talks were suspended.

## **7.South Australia eyes nuclear waste storage projects**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/business/south-australia-eyes-nuclear-waste-storage-projects/article8969683.ece?homepage=true>)

Even as obstacles have been lifted for Australia's export of uranium to fuel India's nuclear power plants, South Australia has said a huge business opportunity awaits Indian firms that can help it set up nuclear waste disposal facilities. South Australia, a state in south central Australia, houses over a quarter of the world's uranium resources and about 70 per cent of Australia's reserves of the heavy metal.

## **8.ISRO sets the ball rolling for Mars Mission-2**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/isro-sets-the-ball-rolling-for-mars-mission2/article8968388.ece?homepage=true>)

Nearly three years after it launched a world record making MOM (Mars Orbiter Mission) the Indian Space Research Organisation has invited Indian planetary scientists from the academia and research bodies to suggest which aspects of Mars should now be studied, along with the instruments they can provide for MOM-2.

Although a second Martian venture has been in the air, the latest 'Announcement of opportunity' or AO is the first formal whiff of it.

Why a second Martian mission? Scientists believe that the atmosphere, land and minerals on Mars, which has similarities with Earth, may answer questions on how planets evolved, whether there is life elsewhere in the solar system and perhaps suggest the future of Earth itself. Methane study [that MOM carries] still is important, and also a study of the Martian dust and its ionosphere.

The MOM-2 spacecraft should ideally have an orbit of 200 km x 2,000 km. It should take better experiments with sharper instruments along and use the bigger GSLV rocket to propel it. Last time, ISRO used the light-lift PSLV.

## **9.NASA selects six firms to develop space habitats for Mars mission**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/nasa-selects-six-firms-to-develop-habitats-for-mars-mission/article8968157.ece?homepage=true>)

NASA has selected six US companies to help develop prototypes and concepts of deep space habitats for manned missions to Mars.

"Habitation systems provide a safe place for humans to live as we move beyond Earth on our journey to Mars," NASA said.

## **F. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

GST

**NIMZ**

**Eurasian Economic Union**

MOM-2

KNPP-1

**Tags**

GST

**NIMZ**

**Eurasian Economic Union**

MOM-2

KNPP-1

## **Practice Questions:**

**1. Which of the following statements is/are correct about Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant?**

- I. The second unit of the nuclear power plant has reached full capacity generation of 1000 MW
  - II. Kudankulam is the highest capacity generating nuclear power plant in India
- a) 1 only  
b) 2 only  
c) Both 1 and 2  
d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. B



**2. Which of the following countries are members of the Eurasian Economic Union?**

- I. Russia
  - II. Armenia
  - III. Belarus
  - IV. Kazakhstan
- a) 1 and 2 only
  - b) 2 and 3 only
  - c) 1, 2 and 3
  - d) All the Above

Ans. D

**3. Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

- I. The Travel and Tourism Competitive Index (TTCI) is brought out by the World Economic Forum
  - II. India ranked 52 of 141 in the TTCI in 2015
- a) 1 only
  - b) 2 only
  - c) Both 1 and 2
  - d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. C

**4. Which of the following is/are advantages of Advanced Ultra Super Critical Technology for thermal power plants?**

- I. Emissions will be reduced
  - II. More electricity will be produced
  - III. Costs will be lowered
- a) 1 only
  - b) 2 and 3 only
  - c) 1 and 3 only
  - d) All the Above

Ans. D

**5. Which of the following statements is/are correct about Rashtriya Swasthya Bhimayojana?**

- I. Under RSMY the beneficiary will be covered with medical care of up to ₹30,000 for the beneficiary per annum
  - II. Occupational groups in the unorganized sector including construction workers are covered under the scheme
- a) 1 only
  - b) 2 only
  - c) Both 1 and 2
  - d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. C

# Useful News Articles

12-8-2016

## A.GS1 Related

## B. GS2 Related

### 1.Women MPs pitch for paternity leave

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rajya-sabha-passes-maternity-benefits-amendments/article8974141.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Gender Issues*

*Category: Governance*

#### Key points:

- Women lawmakers on Thursday sought paternity leave norms to enable fathers to be active in childcare as the Rajya Sabha passed a Bill doubling the maternity leave for women
- The Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill allows 26 weeks maternity leave as against 12 weeks now
- What the Bill gives you:

12 weeks Maternity Benefit to a 'Commissioning mother' and 'Adopting mother'

Increase Maternity Benefit from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for two surviving children and 12 weeks for more than two children

Facilitate 'Work from home' if such a provision is provided by the Employer

Mandatory provision of Creche in respect of establishment having 50 or more employees

The amendments are believed to help approximately 1.8 million women workforce in

organised sector

### **1.Union Territories have their identity, says SC**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/union-territories-have-their-identity-says-sc/article8975337.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: UTs*

*Category: Polity*

#### **Key points:**

- the Supreme Court has observed that Union Territories, though Centrally administered, enjoy an independent identity
- “The administration of Union Territories is by the Central government but that does not mean the Union Territories become merged with the Central government. They are centrally administered but retain their independent entity,” the court observed
- The apex court was interpreting Section 119 of the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, which exempts properties of the Union from taxation

### **2.Digital projects to get Rs.10,000cr from USOF**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/business/digital-projects-to-get-rs10000-cr-from-usof/article8975135.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: Digital India*

*Category: Governance*

#### **Key points:**

- About Rs.10,000 crore will be spent in the current financial year from the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to execute various digital infrastructure projects to boost connectivity in rural areas, a senior telecom ministry official said
- The USO Fund is maintained by the government. Under the New Telecom Policy, a provision was made to raise money for this fund through a ‘Universal Access Levy’, charged from operators as a percentage of various licenses fees being paid by them

### **4.‘Biased’ citizenship bill draws flak from MPs**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/biased-citizenship-bill-draws-flak-from-mps/article8969974.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: Citizenship*

*Category: Polity*

**Key points:**

- The Opposition parties want the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016, which was introduced in the Lok Sabha by the Union Home Minister in July, sent to a Standing Committee of Parliament. They say the amendments seek to give the granting of citizenship a religious twist
- The original Act, passed in 1955, lists the ways to acquire citizenship, denying it to undocumented migrants. The amendments now seek to allow citizenship to undocumented migrants of all faiths barring Islam from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh
- Now members of every major religious community barring Islam coming into India without legal passports or staying on without valid papers will be entitled to Indian citizenship after six years of residence in India
- However, defending the amendments, a senior Minister said, “The principle is victimhood. How can a Muslim claim he has been victimised in these countries?” But what if a Muslim is victimised? The answer is, “He can always seek asylum in India.”

## **C.GS3 Related**

### **1.NIA alerts Army to LeT terrorists’ infiltration route**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/nia-alerts-army-to-let-terrorists-infiltration-route/article8975970.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Indo-Pak Border*

*Category: Security*

**Key points:**

- The National Investigation Agency has alerted the Army after alleged Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist Bahadur Ali revealed that his handlers showed him a video of a pre-decided infiltration route, highlighting the landmarks on the Indian side

- Before they were to cross the barbed-wire fencing, Ali said, their guide assured them that Pakistani Army men were keeping a close watch on the activities of Indian forces and that the route was “clean.” Ali and the other two crossed two fences that were damaged in the heavy snowfall last winter, on June 11 and 12

## 2.Flooded canyons found on Saturn’s moon Titan: NASA

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/flooded-canyons-found-on-saturns-moon-titan-nasa/article8973561.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Space*

*Category: Science and Technology*

### Key points:

- NASA’s Cassini spacecraft has discovered steep-sided canyons, hundreds of meters deep, on Saturn’s moon Titan that are flooded with liquid hydrocarbons
- The finding represents the first direct evidence of the presence of liquid-filled channels on Titan, as well as the first observation of the deep canyons, NASA said
- The branching channels appear dark in radar images, much like Titan’s methane-rich seas. This suggested that the channels might also be filled with liquid, but a direct detection had not been made until now

## D.GS4 Related

## E. Important Editorials:

The Hindu

### 1.When policy attention is the best remedy

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-neglected-diseases-when-policy-attention-is-the-best-remedy/article8975660.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Health*

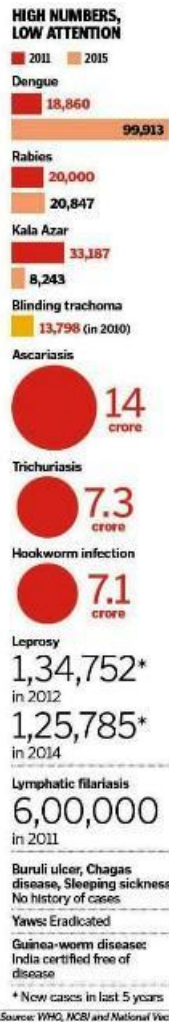
*Category: Governance*

### Key points:

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) categorises certain parasitic and bacterial diseases as **Neglected Tropical Diseases, or NTDs**, that cause substantial illness but

affect only the world's poorest populations, affecting over a billion people, primarily poor populations living in tropical and subtropical climates

- “Diseases affecting poor get proportionately less funding. Except for communicable diseases like HIV or Ebola that are scary to people because they cross boundaries,” says Dr.SoumyaSwaminathan, Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).patients



From case study:

[http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-neglected-diseases-battling-the-poverty-parasite-menace/article8975804.ece?utm\\_source=InternalRef&utm\\_medium=relatedNews&utm\\_campaign=RelatedNews](http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-neglected-diseases-battling-the-poverty-parasite-menace/article8975804.ece?utm_source=InternalRef&utm_medium=relatedNews&utm_campaign=RelatedNews)

- Kala-azar belongs to the Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) family of diseases which affect the poorest populations, persist under conditions of poverty and are

concentrated almost exclusively in the developing world. The hallmark of an NTD is the lack of reliable statistics

- Kala-azar, also known as **Visceral Leishmaniasis (VL)**, is a parasitic disease transmitted by the sand fly and characterised by irregular bouts of high fever, substantial weight loss, and enlargement of the spleen and liver
- Families living in close proximity to livestock and the humid conditions along the southern banks of the Ganga make Bihar a perfect hunting ground for the sand fly, and indeed the state is the global epicentre of kala-azar
- Humanitarian aid organisation Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), which is known for its work in conflict zones, has been on a war footing collecting data, standardising treatment protocol and, most significantly, diagnosing patients with kala-azar and HIV coinfection
- **The situation is so dire that the government pays Rs. 7,100 for every kala-azar patient who completes treatment**
- MSF is initiating a study on HIV and kala-azar coinfection along with the Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences (RMRIMS)
- **The government of India has a kala-azar elimination target of 2017**
- According to MSF, there are between 2,00,000 and 4,00,000 new cases a year, about 50 per cent of which are in India. And 70 per cent of the cases in India come from Bihar alone. Of the 38 districts of Bihar, 33 are affected. The population at risk is 34.65 million, in approximately 12,000 villages spread over 426 blocks

## 2. Read: **The Supreme Court's mundane burden**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-the-supreme-courts-mundane-burden/article8975107.ece?homepage=true>

## 3. Read: **Turkey talks tough with the EU**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-turkey-talks-tough-with-the-eu/article8975106.ece?homepage=true>

## 3. **Seeing the new normal in Kashmir**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/curfew-in-kashmir-mehbooba-mufti-seeing-the-new-normal-in-kashmir/article8975100.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Federal Relations*

*Category: Polity*



## **Key points:**

- Right now the Kashmir situation is less about Pakistan and more about Kashmiris; more than 3,000 people injured and still counting after more than a month
- More people have immersed themselves in the ferment as opposed to merely being caught up in it. Not only individuals who can be called militants or misguided youth or some similar convenient label name. Entire villages are participating wholeheartedly in it. Worse, it does not seem to have leaders. From all assessments, the uprising looks **frighteningly spontaneous**
- Whenever there is an encounter underway, Kashmiris rush towards the occurrence instead of away from it. Where Ms. Mufti sees a situation “improving fast”, many see a sort of do-or-die slideback to the early '90s
- The truth is the status quo as it obtains in Jammu and Kashmir suits Pakistan more than it suits India. It always has. And will continue to remain so as long as New Delhi doesn't move to alter the status quo the way Vajpayee had begun to in 2003-04
- He opened a window that both India and Pakistan could see Kashmir through, one through which one day in the future they wouldn't see the multitude of stereotypes that block the twisting, narrow mountainous path forward
- Former Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram was only holding up a mirror when he repeated that Kashmir is a unique problem that requires a unique solution. We will have to see if he or Karan Singh, who said in Parliament on Wednesday that “to say that Kashmir is an internal issue is an oversimplification”, are finally able to bring heft to bear at least now
- The Home Minister has made partial amends for threatening to talk to Kashmiris only when “things return to normal”. If it is going to take two months to merely come up with a finding on the use of pellet guns, it is going to take a lot longer for things to come to any kind of normal. The bigger problem is New Delhi still isn't seeing the new normal in Kashmir
- You can probably bet that once the intensity of the stone throwing comes down, it will be time for New Delhi, the real somnambulist, to go back to sleep all over again

## **The Indian Express**

### **1.Chinese Foreign Minister's Delhi visit is an occasion to start a conversation with Beijing**

[\(http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-china-relations-nsg-episode-foreign-minister-wang-yi-delhi-visit-2969091/\)](http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-china-relations-nsg-episode-foreign-minister-wang-yi-delhi-visit-2969091/)

*Topic: Taxation*

*Category: Economy*

**Key points:**

- As China's foreign minister, Wang Yi, arrives in Delhi this week to renew high-level political engagement, the two sides should try and limit the negative fall out from Beijing's decision to block India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in June
- China's GDP is nearly five times bigger than that of India and its defence spending is four times larger. This power differential, according to the realists, means Beijing has no reason to be sensitive to India's vital interests
- The proposition that big powers get their way, however, has an important corollary to it. While the weak endure what they must in deep resentment, they don't necessarily accept their condition as irredeemable. The weak look for alliances against the strong. They also develop asymmetric security strategies to counter the hostility of the powerful. We don't have to look far to understand that rider to the realist theorem. Just look at Pakistan's India strategy
- The great Partition of the subcontinent put Pakistan at multiple disadvantages vis a vis India. That imbalance got worse after the separation of Bangladesh in 1971. It has increased a lot faster in the era of economic reform. The Indian economy today is eight times larger than that of Pakistan; Delhi outspends Rawalpindi by six times on defence. Yet, India can't bend Pakistan to its will. Nor can it stop Islamabad from mobilising other great powers like China to balance India. Delhi has also found it quite hard to cope with Pakistan's asymmetric strategy of using terrorism to destabilise India
- If Delhi convinces itself that Beijing is unlikely to accommodate India's core concerns it will have no option but to find ways to **balance Chinese power. It will also be compelled adopt asymmetric strategies towards Beijing. Any such decision would mark a major discontinuity in India's approach towards China**
- **The last time India restructured its China policy was in 1988, when Rajiv Gandhi travelled on a historic mission to end India's Cold War with China that followed a hot border conflict in 1962**
- In the three decades that followed Rajiv's visit, Delhi delinked the normalisation of bilateral relations from a resolution of the boundary dispute. **It learnt to limit military tensions on the long and contested border, expanded bilateral economic engagement, supported China's entry into the world trading system, enhanced political cooperation on international issues, and developed joint forums like the BRICS in the name of multipolarity**

- **But a number of recent developments, including China's reluctance to support India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council, active opposition to India's entry into the NSG, undermining India's efforts to get the UN target anti-India terror groups based in Pakistan have left Indian policymakers wonder if their policy assumptions about China are right any more**
- Conversations with the Chinese leadership over the next few weeks should help resolve at least three questions that animate Delhi's internal debate on relations with Beijing
- **First, is the logic behind Beijing's hard line against India on two issues of primary interest to Delhi — membership of the NSG and putting Pak terror groups in the dock — but quite peripheral to China? Beijing seems to have had no interest in negotiating and splitting whatever differences there might have been. The question here is whether Beijing has decided to put the strategic partnership with Rawalpindi above its relations with India**
- **Second, is the argument in Beijing that India's warming relationship with America is the real source of the problem? This is rather strange since Delhi never hears Beijing complain about Washington's relationship with Pakistan, which is a major non-NATO military ally of the US**
- Equally intriguing is the fact that China, which has deep commercial ties with the US, "demands a new type of great power relationship" with Washington and cuts bilateral deals on climate change, cyber security and Afghanistan, wants to exercise a veto over India's US policy. Can India live with the proposition that Beijing is free to develop its ties with Washington and Delhi is not?
- The third question is about China's treatment of the Indian prime minister. Unlike most of his recent predecessors, Narendra Modi came into office very well disposed towards China. His travels to China as the chief minister of Gujarat had made him a strong votary of pragmatic economic engagement with Beijing. When Xi Jinping was in Delhi in September 2014 in the middle of border crisis, **Modi insisted on finalising the award of two special economic zones to China. The PM pushed hard at a very reluctant security bureaucracy in Delhi to liberalise the visa regime for the Chinese.** That China was not willing to take into account Modi's direct appeal to Xi to resolve the differences on the NSG issue reinforces all questions about the growing power asymmetry between the two Asian giants
- As India debates its China choices, the visit of foreign minister Wang offers a moment to pause and reflect. The talks with Wang, to be followed by Modi's visit to China next month and Xi's trip to India in October, could help arrest the downward slide in bilateral ties and restore some positive energy
- But if Delhi is compelled to conclude that China is determined to block India's rise, we might well be at the cusp of a new and troubling phase in India's relations China

## **PIB**

### **1.Funds for LIGO-India Project**

The Government has given 'in-principle' approval for setting up Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) in India. The LIGO-India project will establish a state-of-the-art gravitational wave observatory on the Indian soil in collaboration with the LIGO Laboratory in the U.S. run by Caltech and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The project will bring unprecedented opportunities for our scientists and engineers to dig deeper into the realm of gravitational wave and take global leadership in this new astronomical frontier. LIGO-India will also bring considerable opportunities in cutting edge technology for the Indian industry which will be engaged in the construction of eight kilometre long beam tube at ultra-high vacuum on a levelled terrain. The LIGO-India project will be jointly coordinated and executed by three premier Indian lead institutions viz., the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, the Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), Gandhinagar and the Raja Ramanna Centre for Advanced Technology (RRCAT), Indore. Some of the Universities in the country will also participate in the project.

Under the Mega Science Projects, an amount of Rupees 105 crore has been made in XII Plan outlay by Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)-Department of Science & Technology (DST) towards LIGO-India. Out of which, the share of contribution of DST will be Rupees 55 crore including 50% of seed-funding amount of Rupees 9.70 crore and DAE's share would be Rupees 50 crore. No financial sanction has been issued so far for the project.

### **2.Allocation Under Regional Connectivity Scheme**

The Government of India has recently released National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016 which envisages Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS). The Scheme will inter-alia be implemented by way of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for operators under RCS. VGF will be shared between Ministry of Civil Aviation and the State Government in the ratio of 80:20 and for the North-Eastern States the ratio will be 90:10. The payment of the full amount of the VGF will be made to the airline operator from the Regional Connectivity Fund (RCF) and the State Governments will be subsequently asked reimbursement.

### **3.Increase in Frequency of Severe Heat Waves from 2010 to 2016**

Many areas of the country viz., north, northwest, central and northeast Peninsula have experienced 8 or more Heat Wave (HW) days on an average per season. Compared to previous four decades, there was noticeable increase in the Severe Heat Wave (SHW) days over the country during the past fifteen years. The past decade is the warmest decade for the country as well as for the globe.

#### **4. Increase in Frequency of Severe Heat Waves from 2010 to 2016**

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The increase is due to a number of citizen friendly measures taken by the Government particularly integration of Prime Minister Office Public Grievances Redress Mechanism with CPGRAMS, periodic review of grievances through **Pro-active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) platform** by the Prime Minister, regular review meetings for monitoring pendency of grievances by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) and also higher expectations of the citizens from the Government.

#### **5. Hanle - a potential site for the Thirty Meter Telescope**

Hanle in Ladakh has been identified as one of the potential alternate sites for the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT). The original site for TMT was Mauna Kea in Hawaii in the United States of America. The construction work for TMT at Mauna Kea was started but had to be stalled due to revocation of Permit by orders of the Supreme Court of Hawaii.

#### **6. Corrective Measures to Prevent Reduction in Cotton Production**

For the cotton season 2015-16, Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) has revised the cotton production estimate at 338 lakh bales as against its earlier estimates of 352 lakh bales. The reasons for the downwards cotton production estimates are:

- (i) The acreage under cotton has decreased by around 7% as against previous year due to switching over to other crops in Northern & Central Regions.
- (ii) White fly attack in Northern zone and pink boll-worm attack in Gujarat region.
- (iii) Delayed rains in Central & Southern region and deficit rains across all cotton growing areas.

#### **7.115 cities become Open Defecation Free**

##### **Gujarat and Chandigarh exceeds Mission target in construction of household toilets**

Under Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban), 115 cities have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) till date. 22.60 lakh individual household toilets and 93,985 seats of Community/ Public toilets have been constructed against the Mission period target of 1.04 crore and 5.07 lakh

respectively. Out of total 82,609 no. of wards, 39,376 no. of wards have been covered with 100% door-to-door collection of municipal solid waste.

## **8.Video Surveillance to be installed at 1000 Railway Stations under Nirbhaya Fund**

The proposal of Ministry of Railway namely Integrated Emergency Response Management System has been appraised by the Ministry of Women and Child Development under Nirbhaya Fund which includes installation of video surveillance at 1000 railway stations.

### **The BusinessLine:**

#### **1.TPP threat looms over Indian textiles**

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/tpp-threat-looms-over-indian-textiles/article8974989.ece>

*Topic: TPP-Impact on India*

*Category: Economy*

#### **Key points:**

- Textile and clothing sector accounts for roughly 5 per cent of India's GDP, 15 per cent of its industrial output and export earnings and provides livelihood support to 55-60 million people directly or indirectly
- India is not a party to the Transpacific Partnership Pact (TPP) comprising **Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the US**
- However, it has serious implications for India's textile and clothing sector as the US is a key export destination. Post-Brexit turmoil in Europe will further increase India's dependency on US markets
- When it comes to export of readymade garments and made-ups, the US alone accounts for over 30 per cent of India's total exports  
TPP will affect textile and clothing sector of India (and of all non-TPP member countries such as Brazil or China) in two ways:
- **First, exporters from TPP member countries will get preferential access in the US market vis-à-vis the exporters from non-TPP member countries like India**
- Secondly, a key feature of the TPP, '**yarn forward rule**', makes it mandatory to source **yarn and fabrics used in making clothes from any or a combination of TPP countries to avail duty preference**. This is likely to disrupt regional and global supply chain in textile and clothing

- Thus, YFR will induce garment manufacturers in the TPP countries to source their inputs from TPP countries at the cost of non-TPP countries such as India or China even if the suppliers in TPP regions are not the least cost. **This will be a clear case of trade diversion i.e. moving trade away from more efficient producers to less efficient producers**
- Already India's textile and clothing sector is under severe pressure from slowing demand in key export markets, and **backdoor entry of Chinese goods via Bangladesh under SAFTA and from other LDCs under DFQF (Duty Free Quota Free) schemes that allow duty free import of garments from Bangladesh and other least developed countries such as Myanmar into India**
- Exclusion of India's clothing products from US GSP (Generalized System of **Preferences**) benefits is yet another source of comparative disadvantage for the sector
- If this was not enough, to comply with its commitments to WTO, India will soon have to phase out its export incentives — latest by 2018. India has already achieved a per capita GNP of \$1000 at 1990 prices. India's global export share in textile and clothing has already crossed 3.25 per cent threshold required by WTO to be termed as export competitive with obligation to phase out export subsidies
- Only 17 per cent of textile and clothing exports under NAFTA and Central American Free Trade (CAFTA) have gone through yarn forward rule even then the US trade negotiators have incorporated it in the TPP. Clearly, the move seems to be protectionist aimed at reviving American indigenous textile industry at the cost of foreigners
- **However, insistence on YFR will limit the freedom of clothing retailers to choose their suppliers and minimise their sourcing cost**
- That explains the strong opposition of clothing retailers (e.g. JC Penny, Levis or Gap) and their associations (e.g. TPP Apparel Coalition) to the yarn forward rule. To deal with this, the US trade negotiators have come up with the idea of 'short supply list' — that will give some flexibility to clothing retailers in sourcing their inputs (which are not available in TPP region) from non-TPP countries either temporarily or on a long term basis. However, that relaxation is not sufficient enough
- India can't ignore the most lucrative US market that accounts for roughly one-fourth of its apparel exports i.e. \$3.5-4 billion, especially when India's merchandise exports have been declining for the last 18 months in a row though exports picked up but only 1.27 per cent
- Given the prevalence of textile exports in India's total merchandise exports, reviving exports will require reviving textile and clothing exports. **That calls for devising suitable trade strategy to deal with adverse impact of TPP**
- **India's best bet can be multilateral trade liberalisation of heavily protected textile and clothing sector.** Unfortunately, that's not moving given the American disinterest in WTO

and current sentiments in most developed countries are against further trade liberalisation

- **Joining TPP can help India's textile & clothing sector, but accepting WTO plus proposals on intellectual property, investment protection, services and state owned enterprises (SOE) as envisaged under TPP will not find favours among either policy makers or India Inc.**
- **Another option would be to relocate part of India's textile production facilities to countries like Vietnam which is a party to TPP or in a least developed African country such as Ethiopia which has duty free market access to the US. However, exercising this option would also mean relocation of jobs to Vietnam or Ethiopia in addition to other risks associated with investing abroad. However, that would be against the spirit of Make-in-India**
- Moreover, likely loss in export of textile items to TPP countries will have to be compensated by gains in other markets. **Here, tweaking the rules of origin to stipulate utilisation of yarns and fabrics of Indian origin as a pre-condition for allowing duty free import of garments from Bangladesh and other LDCs will help India's fabrics export**
- It will also check backdoor entry of Chinese fabrics into India via countries like Bangladesh
- Textile and clothing sector is heavily protected in Mercosur countries and maintain import duties of as high as 35per cent on many textile items. Inclusion of textiles under **India-Mercosur PTA** will improve access to Latin American markets and somewhat compensate for loss of existing export market because of TPP
- India also needs to push for reduction Chinese import duties on apparel under RCEP as going forward China can be a high potential export destination for India's apparel items given the rising wages and per capita income in the country despite growth slowdown. **RCEP platform** can also be used to improve access to Australian apparel import markets
- **Some kind of product differentiation** (e.g. voluntary carbon labelling) will protect our textile and clothing exports in the US despite the impeding post TPP comparative cost disadvantage vis-à-vis TPP partner countries like Vietnam

Read:**Make in India, Finance in the UK**

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/make-in-india-finance-in-the-uk/article8974992.ece>)

## Quick Bits and News from States

### 1.ISRO ex-chief Madhavan Nair named in Antrix charge sheet



<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/cbi-files-charge-sheet-in-antrixdevas-case/article8974857.ece?homepage=true>

The Central Bureau of Investigation on Thursday filed a charge sheet against former ISRO Chairman G. Madhavan Nair and other senior officials in the Antrix-Devas deal case for allegedly facilitating a wrongful gain of Rs.578 crore to Devas Multimedia Private Limited. It is alleged that the government officials abused their position to favour Devas by giving them rights for delivery of videos, multimedia content and information services to mobile phones using S-Band through GSAT-6 and GSAT-6A satellites and terrestrial systems in India. They, thus, caused a wrongful gain of Rs.578 crore to the private firm and its owners. The CBI probe revealed that when a proposal for budgetary support of Rs.269 crore for approving design, manufacture and launch of GSAT-6/INSAT-4E (PS1) was placed at the 104th meeting of the Space Commission on May 26, 2005, it was allegedly not informed that an agreement for leasing out the S-Band had already been struck with Devas

<b>IN THE DOCK</b>	
A month after India lost its arbitration case in an international tribunal over Antrix scrapping a deal with Devas, the CBI filed an FIR against top brass of Antrix and ISRO	
<b>THOSE NAMED:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>G. Madhavan Nair</b> (ex-ISRO chairman)</li><li>• <b>K.R.Sridhara Murthi</b> (former executive director of Antrix)</li><li>• <b>Ramachandra Vishwanathan</b> (CEO of Devas), and others</li></ul>	<b>THE CHARGE:</b> They have been accused of facilitating 'wrongful' gain of Rs. 578 crore to Devas by Antrix, the commercial arm of ISRO
	<b>SECRET DEALINGS:</b> The FIR says information regarding the agreement between Antrix and Devas was suppressed from the Cabinet and wrong information regarding utilisation of satellite capacity was provided

2.ED to seek Mallya's 'transfer' from UK

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ed-to-see-vijay-mallyas-transfer-from-uk/article8975652.ece?homepage=true>

The Enforcement Directorate has readied a formal request to be sent to the United Kingdom under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) for the “transfer” of Kingfisher Airlines promoter Vijay Mallya to India in the Rs. 900 crore IDBI Bank loan default case.

### **3. MSME databank**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/business/gst-to-improve-ease-of-doing-business-jaitley/article8975123.ece?w=alauto>)

Starting this year, the census of MSME units in the country will be done online instead of relying on physical surveys with the intention of creating a comprehensive database with real-time information on different enterprises. This database will eventually be used for public procurement purposes and would also be used by public sector enterprises to scale up their purchases from small enterprises.

The MSME databank could become a “one-stop source of information on small enterprises, including their credit and technology requirements as well as raw material and marketing needs.” The minister added that no grant or subsidy will be given to any MSMEs unless their data is captured on the new MSME databank.

Separately, an online finance facilitation web portal was unveiled by the National Small Industries Corporation that provides credit support to MSME units for raw material purchases.

The portal will allow the MSMEs to apply for loans from the various banks.

### **4. Maldives President Abdulla Yameen approves defamation law**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/maldives-president-abdulla-yameen-approves-defamation-law/article8976110.ece?w=alauto>)

Maldives President Abdulla Yameen on Thursday gave his seal of approval to the controversial defamation Bill. On Tuesday, Parliament of Maldives had adopted the Bill on Defamation and Freedom of Speech with 47 Members voting in favour and 31 against it.

Under the law, defamation is a criminal offence. In November 2009 when Mohamed Nasheed was President, it was made a civil infraction. Dismissing criticism that it would criminalise free speech, the government said it would provide “a layer of protection” for those who may fall victim to “scurrilous and defamatory” articles.

## **F. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

The Child Labour(Amendment) Law

CASSINI

**Thirty Metre Telescope**

**Trans-Pacific Partnership**

MSME Database

### **Tags**

The Child Labour(Amendment) Law

CASSINI

**Thirty Metre Telescope**

**Trans-Pacific Partnership**

MSME Database

## **Practice Questions:**

**Question1: Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

- 1. *Cassini* is the first space probe to enter the orbit of Saturn**
- 2. The landing of lander Huygens on Titan, Saturn's moon was the first landing ever accomplished in the outerSolar System.**

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

**Ans c**

**Question 2: Which of the following countries are members of the Trans Pacific Partnership?**

1. Vietnam
2. Singapore
3. Malaysia
4. China

a) 1 and 2 only    b) 2 and 3 only    c) 1,2 and 3    d) All the Above

Ans c

**Question 3: Which of the following is/are Neglected Tropical Disease(s)?**

1. Leprosy
2. Kala Asar
3. Malaria
4. Cholera

a) 1 and 2 only    b) 2 and 3 only    c) 1,2 and 3    d) All the Above

Ans a

**Question 4: Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Thirty Metre Telescope?**

1. The **Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT)** is a proposed astronomical observatory with an extremely large telescope (ELT)
2. It is now proposed to be located in Hanle Ladakh

a) 1 only    b) 2 and 3 only    c) 1 and 3 only    d) All the Above

Ans d

**Question 5: Which of the following statements is/are correct about The Universal Service Obligation (USO) Fund ?**

**1.The Universal Service Obligation (USO) is raised through a 'Universal Access Levy (UAL)', which would be a percentage of the revenue earned by the operators under various licenses**

**2.The Fund is to be utilized to bring connectivity to rural areas**

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

Ans: c

# Useful News Articles

13-8-2016

## A.GS1 Related

## B. GS2 Related

1. Supreme Court pulls up Centre for sitting on Collegium list

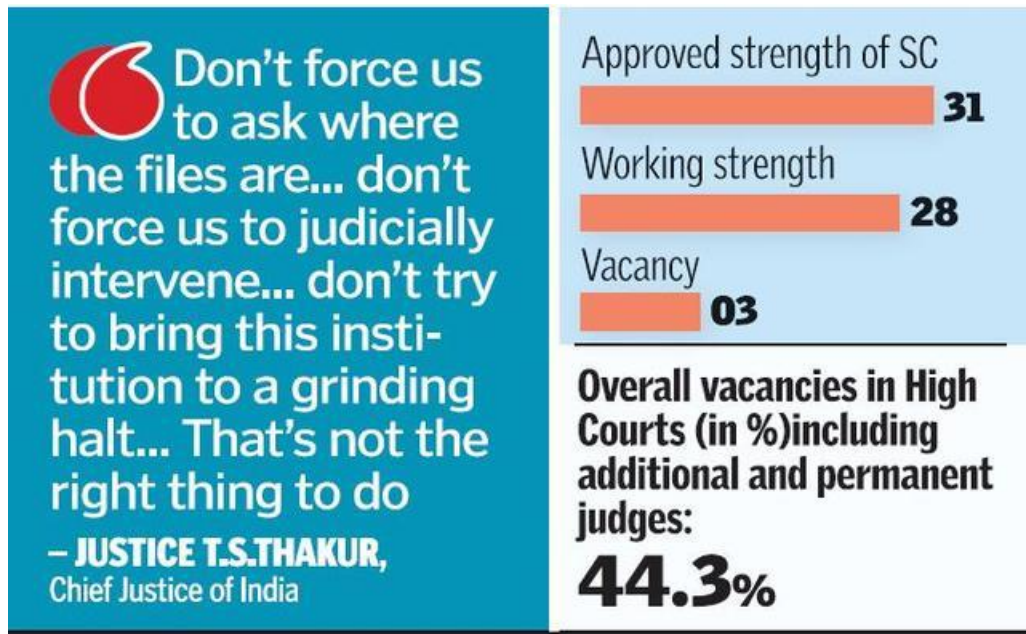
<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/cji-slams-centre-over-recommendations-of-collegium-on-judges/article8979565.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Judiciary*

*Category: Polity*

### Key points:

- the Supreme Court on Friday asked whether the Centre intends to bring the entire judiciary to a “grinding halt” by sitting on recommendations of the Collegium for appointment and transfer of judges to High Courts across the country
- The total pendency is 2.24 crore cases in various courts as of August 12, 2016. There are 478 judicial posts to be filled up in various High Courts. The Supreme Court itself has three vacancies
- “most High Courts are working with only 40 percent of their sanctioned judicial strength and people are languishing in jails for 13 years without a hearing.” “Will you wait till they complete a life sentence?” the Chief Justice of India asked the government
- He said the government might be working on the draft Memorandum of Procedure (MoP) for appointment of judges, but the task did not give them the excuse to paralyse the judiciary by simply sitting on appointments and transfers



### 1. Centre, NSCN-IM issue joint statement on Naga talks

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-nscnim-issue-joint-statement-on-naga-talks/article8982798.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: Federal Relations*

*Category: Polity*

#### Key points:

- Almost a year after the framework agreement on Naga peace talks was finalised, the Centre and the NSCN-IM on Friday issued a joint statement saying they were “closer than ever before to the final settlement and hope to conclude it sooner than later.”
- The signing of the framework agreement came after over 80 rounds of negotiations that spanned 18 years with first breakthrough in 1997 when the ceasefire agreement was sealed

### 2. Ready for nuclear test ban, Pakistan tells India

(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ready-for-nuclear-test-ban-pakistan-tells-india/article8982806.ece?w=alauto>)

*Topic: Defence*

*Category: India's Neighbourhood*

### **Key points:**

- Pakistan is ready for an agreement with India on a bilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, the country's top diplomat said on Friday
- "We have declared a unilateral moratorium on further testing. Pakistan is prepared to consider translating its unilateral moratorium into a bilateral arrangement on non-testing with India," the Prime Minister's Adviser on Foreign Affairs said

#### **4. Pakistani agency warns of Taliban attack on border**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/pakistani-agency-warns-of-taliban-attack-on-border/article8982805.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Pakistan*

*Category: India's Neighbourhood*

### **Key points:**

- Pakistan's top counter-terrorism agency has issued two alerts, warning about possible terror attacks by two Taliban suicide bombers at the Wagah and Ganda Singh borders with India around the Independence Day
- The National Counter-Terrorism Authority has asked the Punjab Director-General of Pakistan Rangers, the Home Department and the Punjab police chief to take preventive measures for the safety of the public

#### **6. Sri Lanka's missing persons bill hailed by West**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/sri-lankas-missing-persons-bill-hailed-by-west/article8982816.ece?w=alauto>

*Topic: Sri Lanka*

*Category: India's Neighbourhood*

### **Key points:**

- Western countries have welcomed the adoption by Sri Lanka's Parliament of the bill on the **Office on Missing Persons**
- This fulfilled one of the important commitments made by the Sri Lanka government to the UN Human Rights Council through a resolution adopted in October last year



## **C.GS3 Related**

### **1.Greenland shark now oldest living animal with backbone**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/greenland-shark-now-oldest-living-animal-with-backbone/article8978610.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Biodiversity*

*Category: Environment*

#### **Key points:**

- Scientists calculated that a female Greenland shark that lived in the Arctic Ocean was the Earth's oldest living animal with a backbone
- They estimated that the gray shark, part of the species named after Greenland, was born in the icy waters roughly 400 years ago, and died only recently. That conclusion puts the entire species at the top of the longevity list
- Until now, that record holder was a bowhead whale that hit 211 years old
- Some animals without backbones live longer. An ocean quahog, a clam, lived 507 years and two different types of sponges are said to survive for 15,000 and 1,500 years

## **D.GS4 Related**

### **E. Important Editorials:**

**The Hindu**

#### **1.Personal and public choices eroding health**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-lifestyle-diseases-personal-and-public-choices-eroding-health/article8981992.ece?homepage=true>)

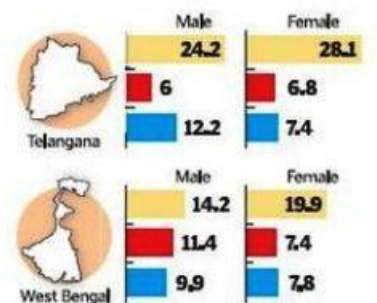
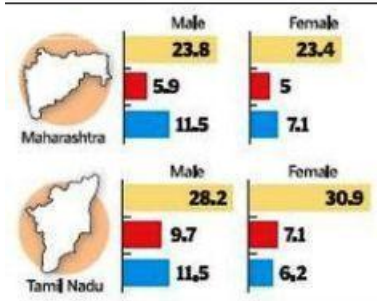
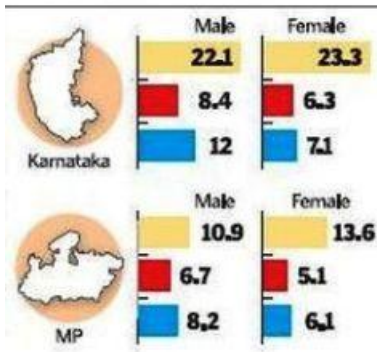
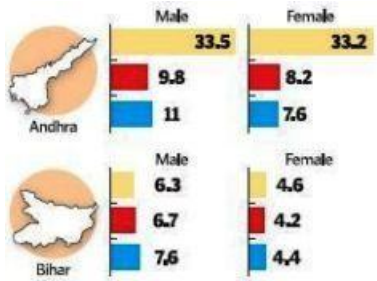
*Topic: Health*

*Category: Governance*

#### **Key points:**

- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) linked to lifestyles have surpassed communicable diseases as the leading cause of lost productivity and premature deaths

- According to a report in the Lancet journal, NCDs contribute to 52 per cent of all disease burden and more than 60 per cent of deaths in the country
- Cardiovascular diseases, cancer, tuberculosis and other causes linked to tobacco consumption result in over a million deaths every year
- Tobacco-related deaths are expected to double by 2030, nearly 65 million Indians have been diagnosed with diabetes, and research suggests the “average age of a person having their first heart attack is 50 years, at least ten years earlier than in developed countries.”
- Responding to this escalating situation the Central Government has come up with a **National Action Plan and Monitoring Framework for Prevention and Control of NCDs**. Given the rising toll of “lifestyle” diseases, the Ministry of Health has issued “operational guidelines” this year for **population-level screening to detect diabetes, hypertension and common cancers**
- The guidelines focus on triggers for these diseases found in the choices that people make, but it is not clear how such an ambitious scheme would actually work at the level of the entire population, since the lead would have to be taken by State governments
- Lifestyle risk factors are **everyday choices in some cases, but they are also the outcome of poorly conceived official policies**
- Smoking or chewing tobacco, excessive consumption of alcohol, and a preference for highly processed foods are voluntary choices with a direct, harmful impact on health
- But what choice do citizens have, if cities expand at the cost of walking, exercising and cycling? If city governments are more sensitive to petrol and diesel prices, and road building than **to pedestrian facilities and public transport?**
- Such cities end up curbing healthy physical activity and promoting car use, adding to the burden of air pollution caused by burning of biomass and unchecked construction dust
- Bad urban planning thus produces a cocktail of risk factors for NCDs, affecting millions
- Cities have not read the warning yet. Public spaces lack green cover, and low-cost access to roads and parking for a large number vehicles is given priority. Policymakers must alter course through progressive steps. The cost of inaction will certainly be high



- Overweight or obese (%) (BMI  $\geq$  25.0 kg/m<sup>2</sup>)
- High blood sugar level (%) - (>140 mg/dl)
- Hypertension slightly above normal among adults (age 15-49 years) (%) (Systolic 140-159 mm of Hg and/or Diastolic 90-99 mm of Hg)

Source: National Family Health Survey 2015-16  
Data for select States out of 18 released

Read case study:

(<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/policy-and-issues/malady-nation-lifestyle-diseases-when-a-sedentary-lifestyle-turns-deadly/article8982268.ece>)

2.Read:**A new deal for mental health**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/mental-health-care-bill-2016-and-raiya-sabha/article8981801.ece?homepage=true>)

3.**Finding a boundary**

(<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/lodha-panel-bcci-and-markandey-katju/article8981805.ece?homepage=true>)

*Topic: Federal Relations*

*Category: Polity*

**Gist:**

- The Lodha Committee is to be adhered to by the BCCI. BCCI is not a private society as such. Cricket is a public good, the access to which is critical to the fulfilment of a good life
- When the SC appointed the Lodha Committee, its intention, therefore, was to create a structure through which the sport can be **made more accessible and more equal**
- The committee's report, which was released on January 4, 2016, seeks to do just this
- It recommends, among other things, that each Indian State would only be entitled to a single vote within the BCCI, a mandate that is likely to damage a coterie of power held by Maharashtra and Gujarat that have three associations each
- What's more, it directs the establishment of an apex council of nine members, overseen by a reputable chief executive officer, comprising three independent persons, with two from a newly constituted "players' association", and at least one woman, to conduct the day-to-day administration of the sport in the country; the institution of lucid norms within the BCCI's constitution to regulate conflicts of interest, including the reduction in involvement from politicians; and, most critically, a more reasonable division, if not a complete separation, between the BCCI and the IPL.

- In bringing about a change in the board's structure through the Lodha Committee's recommendations, the Supreme Court isn't making law. It is merely making accountable a body that enjoys a virtually state-sanctioned monopoly, which allows it to alter the fundamental nature of a property that it holds in trust for the public. It is astounding that the board would object to these recommendations, for all they do is establish a basic framework for good governance
- In the final analysis, we must ask ourselves this: do we want to see cricket as constituting an end by itself, as a sport that is both ethically and morally significant? If the answer to this question is yes, we must not only cause the BCCI to embrace the Lodha Committee's recommendations but also push towards an even more revolutionary process of reform; one through which the game can eventually be brought closer to the common Indian public, where the sport's ownership is reclaimed from those who have tarnished it beyond recognition

### 3. How productive was this Monsoon Session?

<http://www.thehindu.com/data/how-productive-was-this-monsoon-session/article8981424.ece?homepage=true>

*Topic: Legislative*

*Category: Polity*

#### **Key points:**

- Seven of the 14 bills that were introduced were passed in this session itself. This includes Lokpal and Lokayuktas (Amendment) Bill which was passed in less than half an hour in each House, the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill and the Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill were introduced and passed by one House on the same day. Overall, 14 bills were passed in this session
- During this session, the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee for detailed examination

Read:**The crisis over Crimea**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/editorial-putin-and-ukraike-the-crisis-over-crimea/article8981802.ece?homepage=true>

## The Indian Express

### 1. Advantage at the bank

[\(http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-advantage-at-the-asian-infrastructure-investment-bank-2971524/\)](http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-advantage-at-the-asian-infrastructure-investment-bank-2971524/)

*Topic: Investment*

*Category: Economy*

#### **Key points:**

- Lack of infrastructure, poor intra-regional and regional connectivity and almost negligible amenities in urban spaces are some of the major challenges afflicting several countries of Asia. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has been projected as an “Asian tool” to deal with such challenges that have stunted the growth prospects of several Asian economies
- Member countries have made some progress to expedite the funding of programmes. During the first-ever annual meeting of the board of governors of AIIB, held in late June this year in Beijing, representatives from 57 prospective founding member countries, including the Indian Finance Minister attended the inaugural meeting and approved first four AIIB-funded projects
- These projects are: Bangladesh’s Power Distribution System Upgrade and Expansion Project; Indonesia’s National Slum Upgrading Project (co-financed with the World Bank); Pakistan’s National Motorway M-4 (Shorkot-Khanewal Section) Project (co-financed with the ADB) and; Tajikistan’s Dushanbe-Uzbekistan Border Road Improvement Project (co-financed with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development). Together, these projects are worth US\$ 509 million
- It may be noted that AIIB will solely fund and monitor the Bangladesh project. It will fund a new energy grid providing electricity to about 12.5 million Bangladeshis. By approving the Bangladesh project, AIIB leadership has demonstrated its willingness to assume a pan-Asian approach that is not driven solely by the Chinese agenda. China does not seem to indicate that AIIB is entirely linked to its One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative and that China would only push for projects linking it to other countries as in the case of Pakistan and Tajik projects
- India is expected to gain directly if its investment proposals get approved. Focus on enhancing connectivity and infrastructure within the country and with countries in the neighbourhood is critical. **Sub-regional projects such as Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) corridor and inter-regional projects such as India-ASEAN rail and road connectivity projects need huge funding.** AIIB may prove instrumental in developing

infrastructure in that context. **India is seeking US\$ 2-3 billion from AIIB for urban development, railways, and energy sectors**

- India is striving to develop its north-eastern region, a goal which can be swiftly achieved through greater regional cooperation and the support of multilateral funding agencies. For this purpose, India may consider pushing BBIN and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral, Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) corridors under its AIIB proposals. BIMSTEC countries are way below the global connectivity and infrastructure standards and are in need of huge and speedy investments. Linking India's eastern ports with south-east Asia has been long overdue. This can plug gaps in India's comprehensive maritime engagement with the east and south-east Asian countries under the Act East policy
- The chances that AIIB will approve projects put forth by India are high. China wants India to be a part of the OBOR. Though India is a member of AIIB, it has not shown a willingness to be a part of the OBOR. **Apprehensions vis-à-vis the transparency of the OBOR agenda, challenges related to equitable benefits for all, the proposed China-Pakistan economic corridor which would pass through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and China's repeated incursions into Indian territory are major factors shaping India's stand on OBOR**
- It is vital for China to prove to the other members that it will not attempt to dominate the AIIB and that AIIB will not follow China's "no strings attached" approach in funding projects. Given that China is the largest shareholder with 26.06 per cent voting shares, members' apprehensions are not baseless. India and Russia are the second and third largest shareholders with 7.5 and 5.92 percent voting shares respectively. The gap between the first and second shareholder might tempt China to use its veto power on a particular project. Clearly, the member countries have to adhere to the rigorous project selection criteria following international best practices and show caution in approving territorially sensitive projects
- India is likely to gain by being an active member of the AIIB. Its presence is not only crucial in making the bank a success but is also vital in improving infrastructure in the Indian subcontinent and beyond. In order to make full use of the opportunities provided by the AIIB, New Delhi needs to come up with realistic and economically viable projects

## **PIB**

### **1.TKDL to Protect Traditional Knowledge of Indian Medicinal System**

The Ministry of AYUSH had established Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) in collaboration with Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR). As per the information provided by the CSIR, TKDL consisting of more than 2.90 lakh medicinal formulations of

Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha which are available in the public domain, in five international languages namely English, Japanese, French, German and Spanish.

## **2. BARC and SreeChitraTirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology sign MoU for joint development of Deep Brain Stimulator**

Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and SreeChitraTirunal Institute for Medical Sciences & Technology (SCTIMST), Thiruvananthapuram (an institute of national importance under DST) have agreed to join hands to develop 'Deep Brain Stimulator' (DBS). DBS involves implanting electrodes within certain areas of brain and the regular electrical pulses generated by a pacemaker-like device placed under the skin in upper chest regulates the abnormal impulses of the brain. DBS is used in typical neurological conditions of Essential tremor, Parkinson's disease and Dystonia. The DBS consists of implanted pulse generator, electrodes and extension cables which interface with external Programmer module and wireless battery charger.

These devices are currently being imported, limiting its wider usage due to the high cost. The planned joint development is targeted to provide an affordable alternative.

## **3. Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare asked State Governments to Come up with Proposals to Upscale the Rural Backyard Poultry Development under NLM**

### **DADF to Focus More towards Entrepreneurial Activity in Poultry Sector**

The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has asked to the State Governments especially Andhra Pradesh and Bihar to come up with proposals wherein they may like to upscale the Rural Backyard Poultry Development program under NLM with 150 birds distribution to be done in a focussed manner in 5-6 contiguous villages/ cluster in one block of one district of the State. The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries will focus more towards entrepreneurial activity in poultry sector.

## **4. Appointment of Women Directors**

Section 149 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 3 of the Companies (Appointment and Qualification of Directors) Rules, 2014 prescribes for every listed company and every public company having paid-up share capital of not less than Rupees one hundred crore or turnover of Rupees three hundred crore or more to appoint at least one woman director. There is no prohibition for appointment of a female relative of a director on the board of a company. Further, there is no proposal to prescribe any such restriction.



## 5. Tejas Mark 1A

The first Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) – Tejas squadron has been formed on 1st July, 2016 with two LCA Initial Operational Configuration (IOC) Series Production Aircraft. Further, 18 more aircraft in IOC standard are planned for induction by 2018-19. This would be followed by 20 more aircraft in Final Operation Configuration (FOC) standard, which are planned for induction from year 2019.

## 6. National Committee on Trade Facilitation constituted under the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary to develop the pan-India road map for trade facilitation.

Consequent to India's ratification of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) in April 2016, the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) has been constituted. The establishment of the Committee is part of the mandatory, institutional arrangement of the TFA. This prime, inter-ministerial body on trade facilitation will be chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. Its Secretariat will be housed within the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), in the Directorate General of Export Promotion, New Delhi.

## 6. Diamond Quadrilateral Network in Indian Railway

Six corridors on Diamond Quadrilateral connecting metropolitan cities and growth centers of the country (Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai & Kolkata) have been identified for feasibility studies for high speed rail connectivity viz: (i) Delhi-Mumbai, (ii) Mumbai-Chennai, (iii) Chennai-Kolkata, (iv) Kolkata-Delhi and both diagonals i.e. (v) Delhi-Chennai and (vi) Mumbai-Kolkata routes.

Feasibility studies for Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Kolkata and Mumbai-Chennai have been awarded in September, 2015.

### The Business Line:

#### 1. Why not a right to primary healthcare?

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/why-not-a-right-to-primary-healthcare/article8981663.ece>

*Topic: Health*

*Category: Governance*

#### Key points:

- In 2012, as per an OECD study, India witnessed 253 deaths per 100,000 persons due to communicable diseases alone, much higher than the global average of 178

- The country still faces a higher disease burden than other emerging economies such as China, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico and Sri Lanka; even poorer neighbours such as Nepal and Bangladesh are better off. Life expectancy in India, currently at 68, is lower than China (76), Bangladesh (72), Nepal (70) and Sri Lanka (75)
- The poor health of an average Indian has been attributed to low public investments in preventive health facilities such as sanitation and waste management. The same holds true for PHCs (primary health clinics) and health professionals
- Apart from financial neglect, the quality of public health services is another serious problem. The average middle income Indian has shifted to private centres, thereby, increasing the average out-of-pocket health expenditures
- Owing to unreliable public health services and an unviable health insurance model, the poor are compelled to spend heavily on private medical care when faced with health shocks; this drives many people into the fold of poverty. Studies show that out of pocket expenditure on health in India accounts for a sixth of India's poverty burden
- **The New National Health Policy (2015)** was conceived in addressing some of the above challenges. It is yet to be debated in Parliament. The Policy in its vision aims to: a) ensure that public health spending touches 2.5 per cent of the gross domestic product by 2020, of which 70 per cent would be on primary healthcare alone; b) increase per capita public spending on healthcare to ₹3,800 at 2015 prices; c) Centre government shall contribute around 40 per cent of the resources instead of its present 20 per cent share and d) States would allocate at least 8 per cent of their total budget on health
- It seems that India's new planning think tank, the NITI Aayog has been against increasing public investments on health, suggesting an increase in private sector financing and insurance as a substitute to public health expenditure
- NITI Aayog in its own recommendations, suggests that States must step up their allocation in the public health sector vis- a-vis the Centre's outlay on health, but advocates that the primary source of funding must come from private financial sources
- Further, it suggests that measures like corporate social responsibility (CSR) and public private partnership (PPP) models can be used in addressing financial and operational challenges related to the health system. But can increasing outlays and creating scope for more private financing resolve the public health sector woes across States?
- To say that an atrophied primary healthcare system imposes huge, implicit economic costs is to emphasise the obvious
- It is, in a way, also pointless to always compute and cite the financial cost imposed at a national level by poor health. If free and compulsory education of all children in the age of six and 14 years can be constitutionally recognised as a right, under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act at a State level, surely the same

can be done with respect to primary health care for dependents (those below the age of fifteen and above the age of sixty)

- This can be a first step towards enhancing primary health facilities in both rural and urban areas
- An increase in public investments (complimented with support from the Centre) through more scholarships and higher wages for health professionals, and incentivising medical practice amongst medical students in rural areas, are measures that warrant the attention of the Centre and State governments
- Countries like Rwanda and Thailand have already demonstrated that State-wide health coverage is possible for primary healthcare facilities. Rwanda, classified as a low income country and with a lower GDP than India, has a system of universal health coverage covering 7.8 million of its 11.8 million population
- In China too, its government over the last five years has pushed for significant reforms in its aim to fully cover the primary health care service cost for all its people at a provincial level by 2020
- In its Immediate Health Care reform package, the Chinese government (in 2009-10) outlined five major programmes in its implementation plan. This includes establishing a national essential drug system and providing equal access to basic public healthcare services for all dependents
- Even within India, States such as **Tamil Nadu and Kerala** have shown it is possible to achieve superior health outcomes with a well-funded and well-designed public health system
- The basic issue is to implement such a right to healthcare at a State level. This holds true for the population of dependents. It will bring down the out of pocket expenditure for those lacking the means to increase their real income
- Preventive health services and access to quality, primary education are public goods that offer incalculable benefits. They are instruments for achieving both development and natural liberty

## **Quick Bits and News from States**

### **1. Two killed in Assam militant attack**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/militant-attack-in-assams-tinusikia-district/article8981903.ece?homepage=true>

At least two persons were killed and five persons were injured when militants opened fire in Assam's Tinsukia district. ULFA (Independent) may be behind the incident. The area where the incident occurred has high presence of Army and security forces.

## 2. Violence spreads to Jammu region

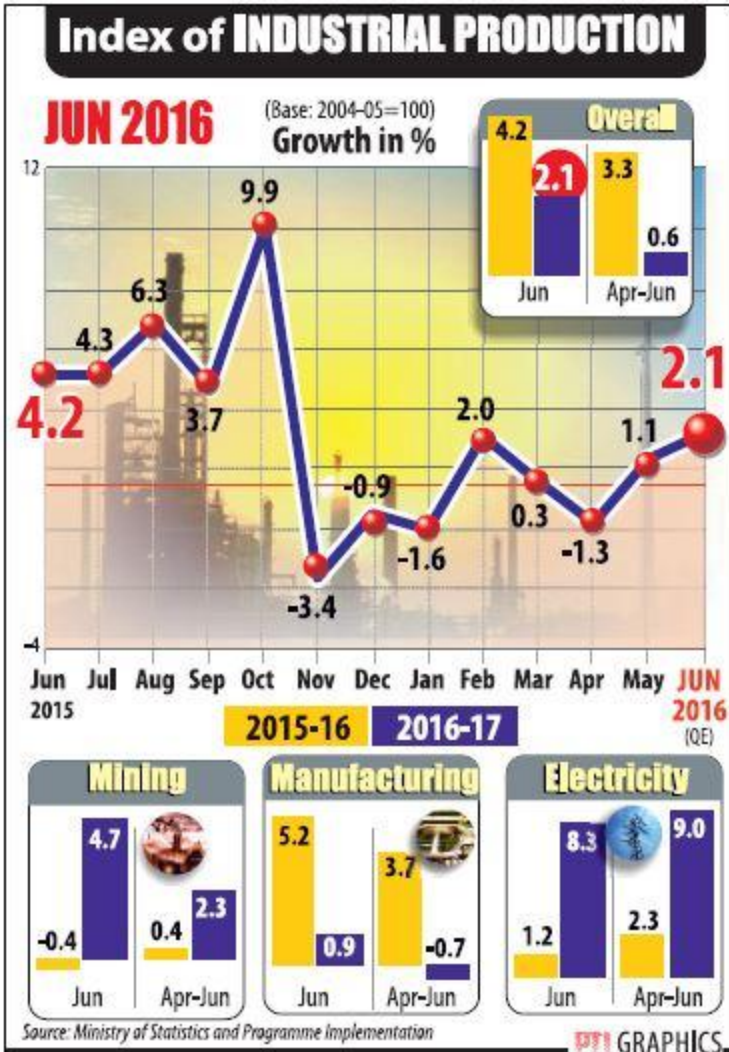
(<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/violence-spreads-to-jammu-region/article8982804.ece?w=alauto>)

Stone-pelting incidents spilled over from Kashmir to the Doda district of the Jammu region. Meanwhile, the authorities extended curfew to many areas of Kashmir and snapped mobile telephony as part of a bid to foil a march called by separatists

## 3. Retail inflation hits 2-year high in July

(<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/retail-inflation-hits-2year-high-in-july/article8981329.ece?w=alauto>)

Retail inflation accelerated to a two-year high of **6.07 per cent** in July due to higher food prices, official data showed. Inflation in the food category of the Consumer Price Index accelerated to 8 per cent in July from 7.5 per cent in June. Industrial output for the first quarter of 2016-17 has grown by just 0.6 per cent. While the index of industrial production (IIP) rose 2.1 per cent in June 2016, compared to June 2015, it reflected a **marginal uptick from the 1.1 per cent** growth recorded this May.



#### 4. Automakers welcome SC order on diesel vehicles

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/automakers-welcome-sc-order-on-diesel-vehicles/article8981850.ece?w=alauto>

The automobile industry and analysts have welcomed Supreme Court's (SC) decision to allow the sale of high powered diesel vehicles in the NCR, the biggest market for such vehicles, and said a one per cent green cess imposed by the apex court on such vehicles will not be a dampener.

#### 5. Exports shrink 6.8% in July

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/exports-shrink-68-in-july/article8982627.ece?w=alauto>

After rising for the first time in 18 months in June, exports shrank again in July, contracting 6.84 per cent due to decline in shipments of engineering goods and petroleum products. Declining exports as well as in imports narrowed the trade deficit in July to \$7.76 billion as against \$13.09 billion in the year-ago period. Exports have been falling since December 2014 due to weak global demand and slide in oil prices.

#### **6. Nuclear suppliers' insurance policy unveiled**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/nuclear-suppliers-insurance-policy-unveiled/article8981843.ece?w=alauto>

The country's first Nuclear Suppliers' insurance policy was unveiled by India Nuclear Insurance Pool (INIP).

New India Assurance Co and INIP will issue the policy and administer the claims on behalf of the pool. INIP is the 27th global nuclear insurance pool which was launched by General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re), in association with non-life insurance companies. "The pool provides capacity for insurance coverage to operators and suppliers for any nuclear liability towards third party," GIC said in a statement.

## **F. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal Corridor

BIMSTEC

**AIIB**

**Trans-Pacific Partnership**

Diamond Quadrilateral Network

**Tags**

Bangladesh Bhutan India Nepal Corridor

BIMSTEC

**AIIB**

**Trans-Pacific Partnership**

Diamond Quadrilateral Network

## **Practice Questions:**

### **1. Which of the following is/are included in National Health Policy- 2015?**

1. Enactment of a National Health Rights Act to make health a fundamental right
2. Raise public health expenditure to 2.5% of GDP
3. Ensure Universal Access to free drugs and diagnostics in government hospitals

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All the Above

Ans. C

### **2. Which of the following countries are members of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)?**

1. Thailand
2. Afghanistan
3. Pakistan
4. Myanmar

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 and 4 only
- c) 1, 2 and 3
- d) All the Above

Ans. B

### **3. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiative?**

1. It strives for cooperation in areas such as water resources management, connectivity of power, transport, and infrastructure
2. The Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement enables vehicles to enter any of the four nations without the need for trans-shipment of goods from one country's truck to another's at the border

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2

d) Neither 1 nor 2

**4. Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

1. The Diamond Quadrilateral is a project of the Indian railways to establish high speed rail network in India
2. High-speed train on Mumbai-Ahmedabad section will be the first bullet train corridor to be implemented in the country

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All the Above

Ans. D

**5. Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

1. National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) is being set up to meet the mandates of the WTO – TFA ratified by India this year
2. NCTF will be headed by the Cabinet Secretary

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

Ans. C



## Current News Analysis

14-08-2016

### A. GS1 Related

### B. GS2 Related

#### **1. 'HCs have just a few minutes to hear each case'**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/hcs-have-just-a-few-minutes-to-hear-each-case/article8986978.ece>

*Category: Polity and Governance*

*Topic: Judiciary*

#### **Key Points:**

- The "State of The Indian Judiciary" report is released by a Bangalore-based research organisation DAKSH.
- This report has pointed out that the average hearing time for listed cases on a particular day in an Indian high court could be as little as two minutes.

#### **How has this data been computed?**

- This data has been computed based on the working hours of judges and number of cases "listed" on a particular day.
- In the Patna High Court, a hearing lasts for around two minutes on an average, as judges hear around 150 cases every day.
- In the Tripura High Court, the average time per hearing is 15 minutes with judges hearing around 20 cases a day.

#### **Conclusion**

- Findings of the report are key to judicial reform as they are indicators of the stress faced by judges.

#### **2. India re-engages China on NSG entry**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-reengages-china-on-nsg-entry/article8986707.ece>

*Category: International Relations*

*Topic: Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests*



**Key Points:**

- The Government of India expressed concern to the visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi about the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).
- The Government of India also sought an end to China's opposition to blacklisting Lashkar-e-Taiba leader Hafiz Saeed.
- China had opposed India's candidature into the NSG saying that its application for membership lacked merit as India had not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
- In the recent meeting between the Governments of India and China, a proposed separate track for discussion on the Nuclear Suppliers Group assumes significance as it means that the issue will receive more immediate bilateral attention.
- So far, it must be noted that, the level of dialogue between India and China was at the level of Special Representatives (SR).
- Dialogue at the level of Special Representatives (SR), covers comprehensive diplomatic and strategic affairs.

### **3. Ties with India to improve now: U.K. Minister**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/ties-with-india-to-improve-now-uk-minister/article8986677.ece>

*Category: International Relations*

*Topic: Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests*

#### **Key Points:**

- U.K. Minister Priti Patel believes that India and the U.K. had been unable to grow bilateral trade because of the logjam between India and the European Union over free trade negotiations.
- Business surveys had predicted a downturn in the U.K. economy, which Ms. Patel rejected.
- Also, recently in the news, sarod maestro, Amjad Ali Khan's visa to the U.K. was rejected.
- Ms. Patel rejected concerns that the visa denial were connected to tightened regulations in the U.K. in the wake of the U.K.'s decision to leave the European Union.

## **C. GS3 Related**

### **1. Superlens, super-resolution**

*Category: Science and Technology*

*Topic: Developments in Science and Technology*

#### **Key Points:**

- Near-field imaging techniques have received a boost.
- A new technology has been developed that is made out of a titanium dioxide-based metamaterial.
- This new technology manipulates light to produce a sharp image with super-resolution and can find application in medicine, photonic and optoelectronic devices.

### **2. What is a Perseid meteor shower?**

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/perseid-meteor-shower-tonight/article564914.ece>

*Category: Science and Technology*

*Topic: Awareness*

#### **Key Points:**

- The Perseids are so called because the point from which they appear to come lies in the constellation Perseus.
- Perseid meteor showers happen when the earth passes through the streams of dust and debris left behind by the comet Swift-Tuttle.
- This comet whips past earth in its orbit around the sun every 133 years.
- The shower is visible from mid-July each year.
- Peak activity of this shower is between August 9-14.

### **3. Centre plans to dilute norms for commercial driving licence**

*<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-business/centre-plans-to-dilute-norms-for-commercial-driving-licence/article8987090.ece>*

*Category: Economy*

*Topic: Infrastructure: Roads, Transport*

#### **Keypoints:**

- The Centre has proposed to do away with the criterion of minimum educational qualification for public transport drivers.
- Presently, it is mandatory for drivers of all commercial vehicles to clear class VIII at the school-level before applying for a driving licence.
- These commercial vehicles include, buses, trucks and taxis.
- The Centre plans to introduce this change in the Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill of 2016.
- There is also another significant move being proposed, and that is taxi drivers may no longer need to have a year's driving experience in a private vehicle before being eligible for a commercial vehicle licence. This is provided that the driver concerned has undergone specialised training from any government accredited driving school.
- As per the proposals, the Central Government will empower a body to certify schools to impart training to drivers.
- A 'structured training programme' will be formulated by the Centre, with possibly the help from National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) so that transport licenses are issued faster.
- This training programme would likely be for around 2-3 months, and might focus on core driving skills, latest technology exposure, soft skills, maintenance of vehicles, discipline, hygiene and health of the drivers, etc.

### **4. Off-grid solar can meet India's power demand**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/offgrid-solar-can-meet-indias-power-demand/article8986503.ece>

Category: Economy

Topic: Energy



### **Key Points:**

- There has been a slow pace of capacity addition in the solar sector.
- This has created room for a variety of off-grid solar solutions to grow.
- These off-grid solar solutions provide electricity to those as yet not connected to the power grid.

### **Why is this development significant?**

- Off-grid solar is being viewed as the way to bring sustainable and cheap lighting to the vast regions of India which are yet to be connected to the electricity grid, especially in difficult terrain.
- There are over 300 million people in India who don't have access to the electricity grid.
- These people are living in complete darkness.
- These 300 million people live off kerosene lanterns.
- These kerosene lanterns are extremely harmful to health and often result in huge losses of life and property due to fires.

### **Factors supporting solar technology**

- Solar tariffs have become competitive.
- The efficiency of solar panels has improved greatly.
- Battery technology has improved.
- LED prices have come down.
- The price of plastic has come down due to the fall in oil prices.

A combination of all these factors have led to a surge in the industry over the last three years.

### **D. GS4 Related**

### **E. Important Editori**

### **F. Concepts--News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn:**

Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

Swift-Tuttle

Perseid meteor showers

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

“State of The Indian Judiciary” report

### **Tags**

Motor Vehicles Amendment Bill

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

Swift-Tuttle

Perseid meteor showers

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)

“State of The Indian Judiciary” report



## **Practice Questions**

Date: 14th August, 2016

Category: Economy

Topic: Energy

Source: The Hindu

Difficulty level: Moderate

Type: Factual

1] Consider the following statements:

1. Off-grid solar is being viewed as the way to bring sustainable and cheap lighting to the vast regions of India which are yet to be connected to the electricity grid, especially in difficult terrain.
2. There are over 300 million people in India who don't have access to the electricity grid.
3. Kerosene lanterns are extremely harmful to health and often result in huge losses of life and property due to fires.

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

Ans (d)

Date: 14th August, 2016

Category: Science and Technology

Topic: Awareness

Source: The Hindu

Difficulty level: Moderate

Type: Mix

2] Consider the following statements:

1. Perseid meteor showers happen when the earth passes through the streams of dust and debris left behind by the comet Swift-Tuttle.
2. The Perseids are so called because the point from which they appear to come lies in the constellation Perseus.





2. This report has pointed out that the average hearing time for listed cases on a particular day in an Indian high court could be as little as two minutes.

3. Findings of the report are key to judicial reform as they are indicators of the stress faced by judges.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 Only                      (b) 2 and 3 Only  
(c) All 1, 2 and 3                    (d) Neither 1 nor 2 nor 3

Ans) c)

Date: 14th August, 2016

Category: Science and Technology, Economy

Topic: Energy

Source: The Hindu

Difficulty level: Moderate

Type: Factual

5] Consider the following statements with reference to factors that are conducive for a variety of off-grid solar solutions to grow:

1. Solar tariffs have become competitive.
2. The efficiency of solar panels has improved greatly.
3. Battery technology has improved.
4. LED prices have come down.
5. The price of plastic has come down due to the fall in oil prices.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 Only                      (b) 3, 4 and 5 Only  
(c) All, 1,2,3,4 and 5                    (d) 4 and 5 Only

Ans) c)

