

## G.S.PAPER-1

### Topic: History

1. **Farmers were being exploited and oppressed in different ways under Khurki and Teenkathiya systems, says Shri Radha Mohan Singh .**

<http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx>

#### What's in news?

- Farmers were being exploited and oppressed in different ways by Neeley Britishers under Khurki and Teenkathiya systems. Neeley word which symbolizes indigo.
- Under **Khurki system**, the British planters used to pay some money to the farmers (Raiyyat) by mortgaging their lands and houses and compelling them to sow indigo. The Neeley Britishers had confiscated more than one lakh crore fertile lands and set up their kothis(houses )there.
- **“Teen Kahitya” system-** established by Britishers and the Jamindaaras, under which teen katha land out of one bigha was reserved for indigo (Neel) farming. The farmers had to bear the cost of indigo farming and the British planters used to keep the yields without compensating the farmers.
- **Farmers exploitation:** Not only this, they were even exploited through the various taxes levied on them. Thousands of landless labourers and poor farmers were forced to sow indigo instead of other crops. The farmers were forced to pay several taxes while delivering indigo into the factories such as Bapahi-Putahi, Marvah and Sagaura. Despite taxes, the factories used to play very low prices for the indigo and the farmers were never paid their dues in time.
- Gandhiji made farmers exploitation a part of freedom movement and inspired the farmers to revolt against British. Gandhiji's Satyagraha moment helped in abolishing indigo farming and after that farmers started growing sugarcane and paddy in their fields.

### Topic: Women Issues

2. **IITs earmark 14% special quota for girls from 2018**

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/entrance-exams/iits-earmark-14-special-quota-for-girls-from-2018/articleshow/58201268.cms>

#### What's in news?

- The Indian Institutes of Technology have decided to admit more women from the 2018 academic session.
- The decision was taken at the Joint Admission Board (JAB) of the IITs. The board approved a quota of supernumerary (over and above the

actual intake) seats for women in a phased manner, reaching up to 20% by 2026.

- The committee has also recommended long-term measures to be taken at the school level so that more girls take JEE (Advanced). There has been a two percentage point dip in the number of girls who cleared JEE (Advanced) in 2016 as compared to 2015.
- **The 20% supernumerary seats**
  - ✓ Will be filled by women candidates who have qualified Joint Engineering Entrance (Advanced)
  - ✓ And also they should be in the top 20 percentile in their respective board exams
- **Why?**
  - ✓ To address the decline of women candidates at the premier engineering institutions of the country.
  - ✓ **Key fact:**
    - Around 8.8% women were admitted to IITs in 2014, and the figure went up to 9% in 2015, but in 2016 it came down to 8%.
    - At present only 8% of IIT students are women. The IIMs too witnessed a three-year low of gender diversity in 2016 despite ongoing efforts

## G.S.PAPER-2

### Topic: Health Issues

#### 1. Pneumonia vaccine for kids to be launched by April-end

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/pneumonia-vaccine-for-kids-to-be-launched-by-april-end/articleshow/58201753.cms>

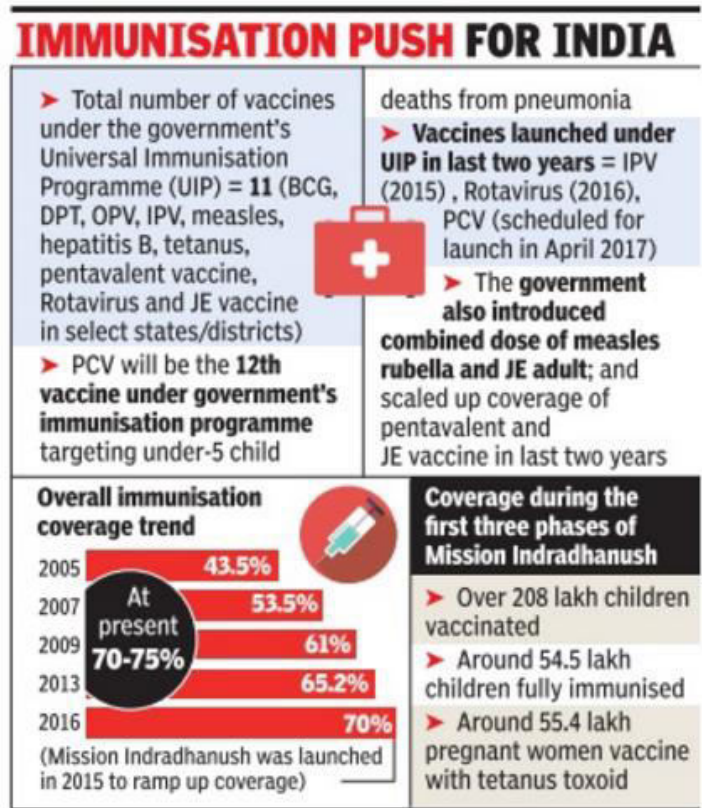
#### What's in news?

- **Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine** (PCV), a new vaccine under the **universal immunisation programme** (UIP) is being launched by Health ministry by the end of April.
- **Main aim**- major push to immunization efforts of government and to bring down child deaths caused by pneumonia.

- In first phase we will introduce it in Himachal Pradesh and parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

- **Key Facts:**

- ✓ Pneumonia along with diarrhoea are among the major killers of children under-5 years of age.
- ✓ India accounting for the highest number of deaths from these illnesses in the world.
- ✓ In 2016, nearly 3 lakh children died from pneumonia and diarrhoea.
- ✓ Pneumonia



alone accounts for 18-19% of deaths of children under-5 years of age. While 25% of these deaths are caused by **Hib pneumonia**—addressed by **pentavalent vaccine** already under UIP—50% of the pneumonia related deaths are from **pneumococcal pneumonia**. PCV vaccine is going to target pneumococcal pneumonia.

- ✓ In 2016, the health ministry had introduced the **rotavirus vaccine** targeting **diarrhoea** under the UIP in four states — Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. The reach of the vaccine was expanded to cover five more states — Assam, Tripura, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ PCV will be the **third major vaccine introduced** by the government in last two years to bring down **India's infant mortality rate (IMR)** currently pegged at 41 deaths per 1,000
- ✓ Apart from rotavirus in 2016, it also introduced **injectable polio vaccine (IPV)** in 2015.
- ✓ The government has also significantly ramped up consolidated coverage through **Mission Indradhanush**, launched in 2015, to fully vaccinate 90 lakh children under its immunisation programme.
- ✓ Following Mission Indradhanush, the coverage of UIP has jumped.

- 75% of children below 12 months of age are fully immunised as of now, as compared to around 65% in 2013.

### **Basic Information:**

- **What is pneumococcal disease?**

Pneumococcal disease is an infection caused by a type of bacteria called **Streptococcus pneumoniae**. When these bacteria invade the lungs, they can cause pneumonia. They can also invade the bloodstream, causing bacteremia, and/or invade the tissues and fluids surrounding the brain and spinal cord, causing meningitis. Pneumococcal disease can also cause middle ear infection and sinus infections.

- **Hib pneumonia**— Disease caused by **Haemophilus influenzae** can affect many organ systems. The most common types of disease caused by **H. influenzae type b (Hib)** include **pneumonia**, bacteremia, meningitis, epiglottitis, septic arthritis, cellulitis, otitis media, purulent pericarditis, and other less common infections such as endocarditis and osteomyelitis.

- **Pentavalent vaccine-**

The pentavalent vaccine is a combination of DPT (diphtheria, Pertussis/whooping cough and tetanus), Hepatitis B and Hib vaccines. DPT and Hepatitis B vaccines are already a part of the immunisation programme. They are being replaced by pentavalent vaccine in a phased manner in the country.

- **Rotavirus vaccine** : vaccine used to protect against rotavirus infections. These viruses are the leading cause of severe diarrhea among young children

## **2. Centre to promote use of technical textiles**

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-business/centre-to-promote-use-of-technical-textiles/article18069890.ece>

### **What is a technical textile?**

- A technical textile is a textile product manufactured for non-aesthetic purposes, where function is the primary criterion.
- Technical textiles or a functional textile, considered a sunrise sector in the country, is all set for demand taking off for products such as geo and agro textiles.

- **Applications:**

- ✓ Technical textiles can be used in infrastructure projects, including ports, roads, and railways, and in sectors such as agriculture.
- ✓ Geo textiles, for example, are permeable fabrics that are used in association with soil and which have the ability to separate and filter, while agro-textiles are used in shading and in weed and insect control.
- ✓ Functional textiles can be woven or non-woven. Automobile, geo, medical, industrial, and agro textiles are among the range of products that are made in the country.

- **Present scenario of Technical textile industry in India:**

- ✓ The technical textiles sector had a compounded annual growth rate of 12% for the last three years. It is expected to grow by 20 % the next five years.
- ✓ China is a generation ahead in production of technical textiles. But, their costs are going up and this is an opportunity for India
- **Challenges:**
  - ✓ Awareness among consumers
  - ✓ Need for technology and knowledge about it among entrepreneurs.
  - ✓ Investments and time needed to be innovative and develop applications, and raw material availability.

## G.S.PAPER-3

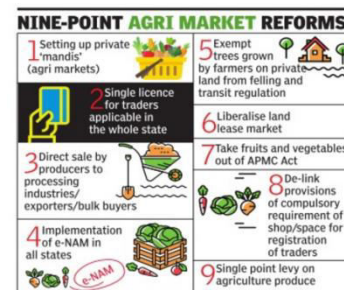
### Topic: Economics

#### 1. Agri reforms soon to augment farm income

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/agri-reforms-soon-to-augment-farm-income/articleshow/58201770.cms>

#### What's in news?

- The agriculture ministry in consultation with the Niti Aayog has identified a set of nine marketing reforms .
- These reforms are intended to ensure remunerative prices to farmers for their produce by reducing intervention of middlemen.
- The measures are considered to be one of the key steps in doubling farmers' income by 2022.
- **Areas of focus:**
  - ✓ Integration of market to e-NAM (national agriculture market) within the shortest possible time,
  - ✓ Exempting trees grown by farmers private land from felling and transit regulation
  - ✓ Unified trading license and
  - ✓ A single point levy of market fee
  - ✓ Setting up of agriculture markets in the private sector.
- States are expected to incorporate these reform measures in their respective Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Acts.



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## SCHEMES IN NEWS

### Mission Indradhanush:-

- ✓ **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW)** has launched Mission Indradhanush on 25th December 2014.

✓ **Salient Features:-**

- Aim of expanding immunization coverage to all children under the age of 2 years, as well as all pregnant women across India by year 2020. All vaccines that are being administered under this programme are already available free of cost under universal immunisation programme in India
- The Mission Indradhanush, depicting seven colours of the rainbow, targets to immunize all children against **seven vaccine preventable diseases** namely Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Childhood Tuberculosis, Polio, Hepatitis B and Measles. In addition to this, vaccines for JE (Japanese Encephalitis) and Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type B) are also being provided in selected states. Immunization is the key to protect children from life threatening conditions that are preventable.



**PRELIMS RELATED FACTUAL INFORMATION:**

1. **Egyptian vultures (Neophron percnopterus)** are also called **white scavenger vulture or pharaoh's chicken** and are **the smallest among all vultures**. They are a globally **endangered species** on the IUCN Red List.

**PRACTICE QUESTIONS**

1. Identify the correct statement with reference to Khurki system.
  - A. It is a irrigation system adopted in South Asia
  - B. It is a system of land revenue adopted by Mughals
  - C. It is a system used by the British planters to compel the farmers to sow indigo.
  - D. None of the above

Correct Answer: C

Type: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

Explanation: Under **Khurki system**, the British planters used to pay some money to the farmers (Raiyyat) by mortgaging their lands and houses and compelling them to sow indigo. The Neeley Britishers had confiscated more than one lakh crore fertile lands and set up their kothis(houses )there.

2. Recently Health Ministry of Government of India, introduced new vaccine - Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine. This particular vaccine is used to treat
- Hib pneumonia
  - Pneumococcal pneumonia
  - Diarrhoea
  - Polio

Correct Answer: B

Type: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

Explanation: Pneumonia alone accounts for 18-19% of deaths of children under-5 years of age. While 25% of these deaths are caused by **Hib pneumonia**— addressed by **pentavalent vaccine** already under UIP—50% of the pneumonia related deaths are from **pneumococcal pneumonia**. PCV - **Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine** vaccine is going to target pneumococcal pneumonia.

3. Which among the following vaccines come under Pentavalent vaccine
- Diphtheria, Pertussis or whooping cough, tetanus, Hepatitis B and Hib vaccines.
  - diphtheria, Pertussis/whooping cough ,polio), Hepatitis B and Hib vaccines.
  - diphtheria, Pertussis/whooping cough and tetanus), Hepatitis C and Hib vaccines.
  - diphtheria, Pertussis/whooping cough and tetanus), Hepatitis A and Hib vaccines.

Correct Answer: A

Type: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

**Pentavalent vaccine-** The pentavalent vaccine is a combination of DPT (diphtheria, Pertussis/whooping cough and tetanus), Hepatitis B and Hib vaccines. DPT and Hepatitis B vaccines are already a part of the immunisation programme. They are being replaced by pentavalent vaccine in a phased manner in the country.

4. Consider the following statement with reference to Egyptian vultures, which was in news recently.
- It is the largest among all the vultures.
  - It is an endangered species as per IUCN's Red data book.
  - It is also called as white scavengers

Choose the correct answer

- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. All are correct

Correct Answer: C

Type: Environmental Science and Ecology

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

**Egyptian vultures (Neophron percnopterus)** are also called **white scavenger vulture or pharaoh's chicken** and are **the smallest among all vultures**. They are a globally **endangered species** on the IUCN Red List.



GS 1

Topic : Social Issues

1. 'Triple talaq misuse will lead to social boycott' Muslim Personal Law Board sends out warning

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/boycott-those-who-misuse-triple-talaq/article18073564.ece>

Key Points :

- The All India Muslim Personal Law Board cautioned that muslim men who abuse triple talaq and utilize it self-assertively without substantial reason will be subjected to social blacklist.
- Discharging an eight-point set of accepted rules for separation, the Board urged Muslim couples to determine contrasts all alone, and if that comes up short, embrace the "compromise and mediation" technique however contribution of family older folks, before settling for a separation. On the off chance that after the holding up period (iddat), compromise happens, the two can, through common assent, reestablish the association with a crisp marriage, say the rules.

2. Muslim sisters should get justice: PM

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/triple-talaq-unjust-says-pm/article18073568.ece>

Key Points :

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address on the closing day of the BJP's national official in Bhubaneswar on Sunday was not only an admonishment to his partymen to get ready for what he named a "long hop" to financial flourishing additionally turned into an event for a vital proclamation on the triple talaq issue.
- PM said that he is not scrutinizing the legitimacy of triple talaq, but rather need to end misuse of ladies.
- The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has raised feelings of dread that the administration's sympathy toward sex equity is only a reason to interfere with individual laws of the group.
- Mr. Modi's announcement in this manner accept noteworthiness despite such feelings of trepidation.

GS 2

Topic : Indian Polity

## 1. Election Commission seeks funds for paper trail units

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/election-commission-seeks-funds-for-paper-trail-units/article18073000.ece>

What's in news ?

- Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Nasim Zaidi has requested the Union Law Ministry for urgent release of funds, given the “prevailing environment,” to facilitate procurement of VVPAT (voter verifiable paper audit trail) machines for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

VVPAT :

- Voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) or verifiable paper record (VPR) is a method of providing feedback to voters using a ballotless voting system.
- A VVPAT is intended as an independent verification system for voting machines designed to allow voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly, to detect possible election fraud or malfunction, and to provide a means to audit the stored electronic results. It contains name of the candidate (for whom vote has been casted) and symbol of the party/ individual candidate.

## 2. Justice Karnan's outrageous defiance

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/justice-karnan-outrageous-defiance/article18072087.ece>

Key Points :

- He has brought the legal into unsavoriness, spurned all standards of legal lead and tossed an open test to the Supreme Court. His continuation as a judge makes a joke of popular government and the judiciary.
- The instance of Justice C.S. Karnan is no longer recently abnormal or inquisitive; it is disreputable and grievous. The Calcutta High Court judge's "order" summoning the Chief Justice of India and six judges of the Supreme Court to his 'private court' to face discipline under the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, is yet another unsatisfactory attack against the apex court's power.
- Justice Karnan's case strikingly uncovered the deficiencies of the collegium arrangement of arrangements. Nothing presents a superior defense for the implantation of more noteworthy straightforwardness in the choice of judges than his present nearness in the High Court.

Topic : International Relations

## 1. China-Nepal exercises don't worry us: India

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/china-nepal-exercises-dont-worry-us-india/article18072748.ece>

Key Points :

- The relationship between Kathmandu and New Delhi has its “own logic”, India said on Sunday. The enduring ties between the two sides are not concerned with the ongoing military exercises between China and Nepal, the External Affairs Ministry said.
- The China-Nepal exercise, “**Sagarmatha Friendship – 2017**” began on Sunday in Nepal Army’s paratraining school in Maharajganj and will continue for 10 days.

GS 3

Topic : Economy

1. GNFC to facilitate digital transition of residential townships

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/gnfc-to-facilitate-digital-transition-of-residential-townships/article18073034.ece>

Key Points :

- The NITI Aayog has designated the State-possessed Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (GNFC) as the nodal office to encourage computerized move of private townships the nation over.
- After demonetisation, GNFC's township in Bharuch was the principal private settlement to receive advanced methods of installments.
- The townships cover a populace of around 2 lakh and are by and large doing around 2.5 lakh exchanges ordinary — right around 9 crore exchanges in a year.
- After the demonetisation, the GNFC had propelled a drive to guarantee that composts and different items in its outlets were reserved and sold utilizing computerized installment choices, similar to credit or charge cards, e-wallets, and net managing an account channels.

2. CBI goes after shell companies Starts filing cases of financial fraud

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/cbi-goes-after-shell-companies/article18072777.ece>

Key Points :

- After the Enforcement Directorate cracked down on shell companies nationwide, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has started filing cases for

financial frauds involving such firms, especially for exchange of demonetised notes.

- A **shell corporation** is a company which serves as a vehicle for business transactions without itself having any significant assets or operations.

### 3. Indian Railways draft policy aims at boosting tourism

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/indian-railways-draft-policy-aims-at-boosting-tourism/article18072189.ece>

Key Points :

- It will work to improve open private organization in running trains.
- The Indian Railways (IR) arrangements to present committed prepare administrations for household and worldwide voyagers, obliging clients at all salary levels.
- The proposition is a piece of the draft tourism arrangement which IR is bringing out without precedent for an offer to expand private association in running visitor trains.
- For advancing religious tourism, the IR proposed presenting Astha Circuit Trains and State Tirth Trains. While the previous will be worked by the IR at its own particular cost, the last will be keep running on demand from state governments at their cost.

Topic : Environment

### 1. Carpool for cleaner air

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/carpool-for-cleaner-air/article18072106.ece>

- Air contamination in India causes no less than a million passings every year.
- In Delhi alone, more than 30,000 individuals kick the bucket each year because of air contamination, the fundamental driver of which are expanding street activity and processing plant toxins, and product and waste consuming.
- The odd-even (permit number) conspire embraced by the administration amid the principal half of 2016 was a standout amongst the most yearning.

A case for HOT lanes

- One such arrangement is the formation of high-inhabitation toll paths, or HOT paths. This alludes to saving at least one paths on chose streets and thruways for autos conveying more than a solitary tenant.
- This guarantees single-inhabitation vehicles are confined to the rest of the paths, along these lines making the HOT paths moderately quicker (likewise through unwinding of speed points of confinement for these paths).

Practice Questions :

1. Recently Indian Railways(IR) proposed Astha Circuit Trains and State Tirth Trains. Which of the below statements is/are incorrect regarding this ?

1. Astha Circuit Trains will be worked by the IR at its own particular cost.
2. State Tirth Trains will be keep running on demand from state governments at their cost.

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) None

Answer : D

Topic : Tourism

Type : Factual

Level : Medium

Explanation :

Both the statements are correct.

For advancing religious tourism, the IR proposed presenting Astha Circuit Trains and State Tirth Trains. While the previous will be worked by the IR at its own particular cost, the last will be keep running on demand from state governments at their cost.

2. Between which of the following countries, “**Sagarmatha Friendship – 2017**” held recently ?

- a) India Nepal
- b) India Bangladesh
- c) Nepal China
- d) China Srilanka

Answer: C

Topic : International Relations

Type : Factual

Level : Medium

Explanation :

The China-Nepal exercise, “Sagarmatha Friendship – 2017” began on Sunday in Nepal Army’s paratraining school in Maharajganj and will continue for 10 days.

3. Election Commission of India(ECI) conducts elections to which of the following ?

1. Lok Sabha,
  2. Panchayat Raj elections
  3. Rajya Sabha,
  4. the offices of the President and Vice President in the country
- a) 1,2 and 4 only
  - b) 1, 3 and 4 only
  - c) 1 and 3 only
  - d) All of the above

Answer : B

Topic : Indian Polity

Type : Factual

Level : Medium

Explanation :

The ECI administers elections to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, state legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice President in the country. State election commission conducts election to Panchayat Raj bodies.

4. Consider the following statements about Chief Election Commissioner :

1. The President of India (based on a recommendation from incumbent Govt of India) appoints the Chief Election Commissioner.
2. He has tenure of five years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only

c) Both 1 and 2

d) None

Answer : A

Topic : Indian Polity

Type : Factual

Level : Easy

Explanation :

The President of India (based on a recommendation from incumbent Govt of India) appoints the Chief Election Commissioner. Conventionally, senior-most Election Commissioner is appointed as CEC.

He has tenure of **six** years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

5. Which of the following pollutants is/are considered for Air Quality Index launched by the Environment Ministry ?

1) Ammonia

2) Ozone

3) Carbon monoxide

4) Carbon dioxide

a) 1, 3 and 4 only

b) 1, 2 and 4 only

c) 1, 2 and 3 only

d) All of the above

Answer : C

Topic : Environment

Type : Factual

Level : Difficult

Explanation :

There are six AQI categories, namely Good, Satisfactory, Moderately polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe. The proposed AQI will consider eight pollutants (PM10, PM2.5, NO2, SO2, CO, O3, NH3, and Pb) for which short-term (up to 24-hourly averaging period) National Ambient Air Quality Standards are prescribed.



## **G.S.PAPER-1**

### **Topic: History**

#### **1. A walk down the battlefields of history**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/a-walk-down-the-battlefields-of-history/article18074961.ece>

#### **What's in news?**

- A group of NCC cadets re-enacted the **Battle of Adyar**, which took place on the banks of the Adyar Estuary in October 1746
- The enactment and heritage walk was organised by the Colours of Glory Foundation in association with the directorate of NCC (Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar)
- About the battle: In the battle, the forces of the Nawab of Arcot took on the French Army, which consisted of 700 sepoys or Indian soldiers trained in modern warfare by the French and 300 Europeans
- The French force of 1,000 men landed in Tiruvanmiyur beach from Puducherry and was commanded by a Swiss engineer officer Captain Louis Pardis and had to face off against the strong force of nearly 10,000 men of the Nawab of Arcot which was camping on the banks of the Adyar estuary
- Historians have described it as a milestone as organised warfare made an entry here
- The battle was the first of its kind here and this form of warfare laid a lot of emphasis on discipline and training which is what enabled the French side to win
- The forces of the Nawab had most probably set up a camp at the location which presently houses the Quibble island cemetery and that the French forces crossed the water in the estuary, braving the firing and confronting them with bayonets
- The sepoy levy system, which the French used in this battle, was emulated much later by the British and led to the creation of the Indian Army as it stands today

## **G.S.PAPER-2**

### **Topic: International Affairs**

#### **1. Canberra keen on joining naval games**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/canberra-keen-on-joining-naval-games/article18062371.ece>

#### **What's in news?**

- Australia is keen on joining the Malabar trilateral naval exercises among India, Japan and the U.S., and has requested observer status at the upcoming edition, scheduled for July
- Australia had been a part of the exercises in 2007

- But a sharp response from China, which saw the joint exercises as a coalition against it, put an end to the quadrilateral format
- The Malabar drills, which began in 1992 as a bilateral naval exercise between India and the U.S., has since grown in scope and complexity, acquiring considerable heft in recent times
- In 2015, it was expanded into a trilateral format with the inclusion of Japan

**Topic: Polity**

**2. SC raps States on massive police vacancies**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sc-raps-states-on-massive-police-vacancies/article18084464.ece>

- **Context:** SC was hearing the 2013 petition which claimed that law and order situation in the country was deteriorating due to a large number of vacancies in police services at all levels across States
- **Supreme Court:** Sought the personal appearance of home secretaries or authorised joint secretaries of six States together with a definite roadmap to fill up the long-pending vacancies in the States' police forces.
- The court found that Uttar Pradesh has 1.51 lakh vacancies, West Bengal with 37,325, Karnataka has 24,899, Jharkhand 26,303, Bihar 34,500 and Tamil Nadu has 19,803 posts vacant

**3. Plea against pre-censorship of films**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/plea-against-pre-censorship-of-films/article18082879.ece>

- **Petition:** Filed by cine veteran Amol Palekar that pre-censorship of films is a violation of the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression of both film-makers and the public
- **Supreme Court:** Asked the Centre and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to respond on the petition
- Also asked govt to act on a recommendation of Shyam Benegal Panel that the Censor Board's role should be confined to film certification alone
- Criticism of the present framework (petitioner): It is challenging the provisions of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 1983 which in turn imposes pre-censorship on the freedom of speech and expression of the artistes as well as the audience
- Aggrieved by the provisions granting the power of ordering cuts, deletions, alterations in a film along with the abuse of power while exercising the powers given by the said Act and Rules while certifying and/or denying certification to any applicant film
- **Times changed:** The social fabric and means of communication have undergone a sea change since the Supreme Court passed an order in 1970,

apparently validating censorship in films on the ground that cinema was the most influential media of mass communication

- **Internet era:** Rules have to change for the present day when Internet and social media dominate
- When content on television and Internet is free of censorship, the same content being altered, cut or deleted before being shown in a cinema hall is an attack on our right to equality
- Today modern technology makes dissemination of information available in real time through a variety of media, many of which are either not regulated or if regulated, not subjected to pre-censorship
- **CBFC:** Absence of a member with a legal background in the CBFC often leads the board to repeatedly violate film-makers' fundamental right to speech and expression

#### 4. **Telangana Cabinet clears bill to increase quotas for STs, Muslims**

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/telangana-assembly-passes-bill-to-increase-muslim-quota/articleshow/58207491.cms>

##### **What's in news?**

- A bill which seeks to increase the reservations for Scheduled Tribes and backward sections among the Muslim community in government jobs and educational institutions- Both the houses of Telangana Legislature have cleared it.
- The Telangana Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Bill, 2017 was cleared amid opposition from many MLAs.

##### **Key facts:**

- Under the bill, quota for STs will be increased to 10% from the existing 6%, while that for BC-E category (the backward sections among the Muslim community) will go up to 12% from the existing 4%.
- The total reservations in the state, consequently, will go up to 62% from the existing 50%.

##### **What necessitated this move?**

- The state defends its move by saying that “after the bifurcation of the combined Andhra Pradesh state, the percentage of Muslims in Telangana has gone up and 90% of them are poor and socially backward.”

**Background:**

- The Sudhir Commission which was set up to take stock of the socio-economic and educational status of Muslims observed in its report that in Telangana, following the general trend across India, the proportion of Muslim employees had fallen. The commission's report observed that Muslim employees were just 7.36 per cent of the total workforce in the state.

**Way ahead:**

- The reservation exceeds the Supreme Court's 50% ceiling for such benefits. Now, the Centre has to include the bill in the 9th schedule of Constitution to grant it immunity from a judicial review.

**Topic: Issue related to health****5. Narendra Modi hints at rules for doctors to prescribe generic drugs**

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/narendra-modi-hints-at-rules-for-doctors-to-prescribe-generic-drugs/article18076794.ece>

- **Prime Minister:** Indicated that the govt may bring in a legal framework under which doctors will have to prescribe generic medicines, which are cheaper than equivalent branded drugs, to patients
- **Issue:** Doctors write prescriptions in such a way that poor people do not understand the handwriting, and he has to buy that medicine from private stores at high prices
- In our country doctors are less, hospitals are less and medicines are expensive
- If one person falls ill in a middle class family, then the financial health of the family gets wrecked
- He cannot buy a house, cannot conduct the marriage of daughter
- It is the government's responsibility that everybody should get health services at minimal price
- Steps taken: National Health Policy 2017
- The prices of 700 medicines were capped so that poor people get medicines at reasonable rates when they face grave diseases
- Also capped the prices of stents used in heart ailments
- **Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi Pariyojna**– where people get generic medicines from stores at reasonable rates.

## G.S.PAPER-3

### Topic: Science and Technology

#### 1. 'Smart glasses' that mimic eye's lens

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/technology/smart-glasses-that-mimic-eyes-lens/article18072199.ece>

#### What's in news?

- Scientists have developed 'smart glasses' with liquid-based lenses that flex to refocus on whatever the wearer is viewing
- The glasses are developed by researchers at the University of Utah
- These are designed to mimic the behaviour of the eye's natural lens — flexing to focus on wherever an individual is looking: near, far or in-between
- The central technology are lenses made of glycerin, a clear thick liquid sandwiched between flexible membranes
- The lenses are mounted into frames that have an electromechanical system that causes the membranes to bend to adjust their focus
- The ability of the lens to flex and bend allows the single lens to act like multiple lenses

#### 2. Indian firm's Zika virus vaccine 100% efficient in animal trials

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/indian-firms-zika-virus-vaccine-100-efficient-in-animal-trials/article18081782.ece>

#### What's in news?

- The Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech's 'killed Zika virus vaccine' using an African strain has shown 100% efficacy against mortality and disease in animal studies
- A 'killed virus vaccine' or 'inactivated vaccine' contains virus that has been grown in culture and then killed using physical or chemical processes
- The vaccine was found to confer 100% protection against infection caused by an Asian Zika virus strain as well as by the African Zika virus strain

### Topic: Economy

#### 3. Protect IP to find new cures

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/protect-ip-to-find-new-cures/article18072245.ece>

- **Progress in pharma industry:** The research-based pharmaceutical industry continues to lead the development of innovative treatments and cures
- Globally, this industry invested \$58.8 billion in R&D in 2015
- Through such significant investments, researchers and scientists have gained a better understanding of diseases and a greater ability to harness new scientific advances

- This has led to tremendous progress in the development of new treatments for some of the most debilitating diseases
- More than 7,000 medicines are in development around the world
- The value of a medicine is directly related to value it brings to patients
- Globally, patients are living longer, healthier and more productive lives
- **Cancer:** New therapies have contributed to significant declines in cancer mortality rates since its peak in 1991
- Global Health Estimates 2015 for South Asia (compiled by World Bank for the WHO): Of the almost 12.4 million who died from all causes, more than 7.5 million people died from non-communicable diseases, compared with just over 3.5 million from communicable diseases. Cancer accounted for more than a million
- A 2008 study revealed that approximately 83% of survival gains in cancer are attributable to new treatments
- Hepatitis C virus: It is now curable in more than 90% of patients with only 8-12 weeks of treatment. In the '80s, the cure rate was about 5%
- In the 1990s, patients were treated with Interferon to destroy the hepatitis C virus-containing liver cells; combining it with Ribavirin raised the cure rates to more than 50%
- The investment in R&D for treatments in Hepatitis B and C continue to strengthen the WHO vision to eliminate these diseases by 2030.
- **World Economic Forum:** Unless current trends reverse, common 'lifestyle' diseases — cancer, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease and mental ailments — will cost \$47 trillion in treatment and lost wages
- However, innovation in science has led to a decline in death rates for non-communicable diseases by almost 20% in the EU5, Australia, Canada and Japan from 2000 to 2012
- India's National Health Policy aims to reduce premature mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases by 25% by 2025
- Innovations coming up: Innovative bio-pharmaceutical firms are currently developing 190 medicines to treat heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases
- A study by the Alzheimer's Association in the U.S. showed \$376 billion in costs can be avoided by 2050 from the development of a new medicine that delays the onset of the disease by just five years
- Need for IP protection: From drug discovery to regulatory approval, developing a new medicine takes 10-15 years and costs \$2.6 billion
- Intellectual Property is the bedrock on which new drug development is built
- It is critical to improve patient care and spur economic growth
- Without strong IP protection, researchers may not have the motivation to innovate, leading to the treatments of tomorrow

- **Way forward:** As we approach World IP Day on April 26, it is imperative for India to build an ecosystem conducive to innovation and creativity not only in terms of IP awareness and creation but also, more importantly, to recognise the importance of intellectual property in pharmaceutical development which has the ability to change the lives of millions of patients

## **Topic: Infrastructure**

### **4. Energy: going where the wind blows**

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/why-is-wind-power-industry-been-in-the-news/article18072270.ece>

- For the first time, wind power installations (windmills) in the country have crossed the 5 Gigawatt mark, to reach 5,400 MW in 2016-17. The earlier record was 3,472 MW of 2015-16. The current year might see installations of 6 GW

### **Significance of this expansion:**

- The Centre wants to buy electricity from wind power producers and sell it to electricity supply companies in other states, which are bound by law to buy a portion of their needs from wind and solar sources.

### **Background:**

- India, with 32,280 MW, has the fourth biggest capacity in the world, after China, the U.S. and Germany. The national target is 60 GW by 2022. Wind accounts for 10% of India's total power capacity of 3.2 lakh MW; and 4% in terms of electricity produced.
- The Indian wind industry has been around since the late 1980s. For many years, it existed only in T.N., the windiest State. In the last decade, it spread to eight other States that have any wind potential — four other southern states, M.P., Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

## **Prelims worthy factual information**

### **What is RUSA?**

- **Context:** Union Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar launched the unique portal and mobile app of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)
- RUSA is a body under the aegis of the Ministry of Human Resource Development
- **Aim:** to improve quality of education

- Under the concept of RUSA the quality of education can go up by improving the research labs infrastructure and creating smart class rooms and various other programmes by which the quality enhancement and value addition to the students happen
- The portal is a one-stop for States' Higher Education Plans, decision of the States' Higher Education Councils and details of the resources under this scheme
- RUSA is the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)** of the **Department of Higher Education, MHRD** which **aims to provide strategic central funding to State Higher Education Departments and Institutions and achieve the broad objectives of access, equity and excellence**
- The State Higher Education Departments and Institutions undertake certain governance, academic and administrative reforms as a pre-requisite to be entitled for RUSA grants

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. The Sri Rama Sagar Project, which is described as lifeline for a large part of Telangana, is constructed across which of the following rivers?
  - A. River Krishna
  - B. River Godavari
  - C. River Musi
  - D. River Manira

Correct Answer:B

Type: Geography

Level: Easy

Explanation:

### **14 gates of Babli project lifted**

In the wake of torrential rains in Maharashtra, the Babli project gates were lifted letting 90,000 cusecs of water flow into the Sri Ram Sagar Project on Friday.

As many as 14 gates of the project built across the Godavari in Dharmabad taluk of Nanded district were raised following the orders of the Central Water Commission.

Water reached Kandakurthi, the entry point of Godavari in Telangana by 3 pm after the gates were lifted. People expressed happiness with water flowing in the river Godavari after several months. The river had gone completely dry in summer as there were no rains in the last two years. The authorities said that as of now there was 0.31 tmcft water in the Babli project.



2. Iran is said to have a unique geopolitical location and has historically been an important arena of great power jostling for influence. Which of the following countries border Iran?

1. Tajikistan
2. Turkey
3. Azerbaijan
4. Pakistan

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: B

Type: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

“The basic point is that Iran has always potentially been the most important power in the region. It has a unique geopolitical location owing to its reach in Central Asia and Caucasus as well as in West Asia and the Persian Gulf. Because of its geography, Iran was historically an important arena of great power jostling for influence. From the last decades of the 19th century to the mid-20th century, the British and Russian empires vied for influence in Iran and eventually settled for a condominium.”

3. China’s claims in waters of East Asia are enclosed by what it refers to and has come to be known as the ‘Nine-Dash Line’. This line encompasses which all seas?

1. South China Sea
2. Sulu Sea
3. Celebes Sea

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: C

Type: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

“The word Talamaddale is derived from the word ‘tala’ (Cymbal) and Maddale (the drum).” “Though Tala Maddale normally focusses on episodes from the epics, Bhagavata and puranas, episodes have also been created on other issues, including the Second World War, Tashkent Agreement, and even one against computerisation about a couple of decades ago called Ganakasura Kalaga.”

“A variation of yakshagana theatre, Talamaddale is not a well known art-form outside coastal karnataka. It is called Koota (gathering) as against the costumed performance ata (play). It is also called Baithak (sitting), prasanga (episode), odike (reading ) and Jagara (keep awake). To put it simply, Talamaddale is a Yakshagana minus dance,,costume and stage conventions. It has features which are a combination of puranapravachana (discourse), harikatha and Yakshagana. While the Yakshagana ata has speech, dance and costume and the ballet has dance and costume, talamaddale has only the spoken word. Music is common to all forms.”

4. Consider the following statements:

1. The Montreal Protocol deals only with phasing down of substances that deplete the ozone layer.
2. Unlike the Montreal Protocol, in which each of the signatories is equally responsible for eliminating the banned chemicals, the Kyoto Protocol puts “differentiated responsibilities” on developed and developing countries.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Correct Answer: D

Type: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

- One hundred and seven countries came to an agreement (adoption of an amendment to the 1989 Montreal Protocol) in Kigali, Rwanda, on Saturday, to substantially phase out a potent greenhouse gas (HFCs – which have a zero ozone depleting

potential) by 2045 and move to prevent a potential 0.5 C rise in global temperature by 2050.

- Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a family of gases that are largely used in refrigerants in home and car airconditioners. They, however, substantially worsen global warming. On late Friday, India, China, the United States and Europe agreed on a timeline to reduce the use of HFC by 85% by 2045.
- The details of the agreement are yet to be made public and India's Environment Ministry is yet to detail India's road map for achieving this goal.
- "The CBDR....was retroactively incorporated into the Vienna Convention and Montreal Protocol on substances that destroy the ozone layer. Practically, it entails the deferral of developing countries' compliance with the objectives of these environmental conventions." Additionally, according to the Ozone Secretariat under the UNEP, "The Montreal Protocol embodies key guiding principles which are now recognized to be the cornerstones of sustainable development including: (i) the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities".

## G.S.PAPER-2

### Topic: International Affairs

#### 1. Australia visa cut to hit Indian IT workers

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/australia-visa-cut-to-hit-indian-it-workers/article18121653.ece>

##### What's in news?

- Recently Australian government decided to scrap **Australian “457” visa** programme that allowed Australian companies to hire Indians in a number of skilled jobs.
- Australian government decided to replace the programme with a more stringent system, making it difficult to hire non-Australian citizens.
- Impact:
  - ✓ The new visa programme will cut more than 200 eligible jobs for skilled migrants — from 651 to 435
  - ✓ Visa fees are set to increase
  - ✓ Visas will be restricted to filling “critical skills shortages”.
- Indian government response to this move-Indian government warned that such a move could have an impact on negotiations on the free trade agreement — Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreements (CECA) — between both countries.

##### Key facts:

- India provides the highest number of temporary skilled workers to Australia - eight out of the top 10 occupations for Indian 457 visa holders were IT professionals.
- According to the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Indians constituted 76% of the total ‘457’ visas issued in the three IT streams, and 57% of permanent migrant visas issued in the skilled stream of workers last year.

#### 2. Modi, McMaster discuss security

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/us-national-security-adviser-meets-pm-modi/article18102334.ece>

##### What's in news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held talks peninsula with the visiting U.S. National Security Adviser, Lt. General H.R. McMaster

##### Area of focus:

- ✓ Security situation in the extended region, including in Afghanistan, West Asia and the DPRK [Democratic People's Republic of Korea].

- ✓ Exchanged views on how both countries can work together to effectively address the **challenge of terrorism** and to advance regional peace, security and stability.

### 3. CPEC unrelated to Kashmir issue: China

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/cpec-unrelated-to-kashmir-issue-china/article18113773.ece>

#### What's in news?

- China reinforced its call for India's participation in the Belt and Road connectivity initiative, telling that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), on which India has its reservations, was not linked to the Kashmir issue.
- India has objected to the CPEC as it passes through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.
- **Beijing's high profile Belt and Road Forum on May 14-**
  - ✓ 28 heads of state or government had affirmed their participation at the summit, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, Indonesian President Joko Widodo and State Councilor Myanmar Aung San Suu Kyi.
  - ✓ India has been served an open invitation to attend this forum.

## Topic: Polity

### 4. Respecting national anthem non-negotiable: Government in Supreme Court.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/respect-for-national-flag-anthem-non-negotiable-centre-to-supreme-court/articleshow/58244980.cms>

#### What's in news?

- Supreme Court orders timeline:
  - ✓ **October 2016 Case:** A petition filed by **Shyam Narayan Chouksey**.
    - It wants Parliament to apply its mind and define 'respect' for the national anthem and flag under **Article 51A (a)** of the Constitution.
    - If not, it alternatively wants the Supreme Court to issue a **mandamus** to the government to frame guidelines.
  - ✓ **November 30, 2016 order-** it is compulsory for all to stand up in cinema halls when the national anthem is played.
  - ✓ **Later in December 2016,** the court had exempted physically challenged persons from standing up for the anthem.

- ✓ **April-18-2017** (i.e., yesterday), the court exempted persons -who are wheel chair users, those with autism, persons suffering from cerebral palsy, multiple disabilities, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, leprosy cured, muscular dystrophy and deaf and blind from the ambit of its November orders.
- **Centre response:** respect for the national anthem, flag is “a matter of national pride and non-negotiable”
- **Supreme Court response:** It questioned the need to expressively define ‘respect’ for the two national symbols when such a feeling of reverence is already inherent in the Constitution.
- **Another petition :** SC issued a notice to the Centre on a petition filed by advocate **Ashwini Upadhyay** to make singing or rendering of national anthem and song compulsory in Parliament, Assemblies, public offices and all schools.

#### 5. Hindi may be made compulsory till Class 10 in CBSE schools, Kendriya Vidyalayas

<http://www.livemint.com/Education/06hwD4fVMirJMI6DSLRSCL/Hindi-may-be-made-compulsory-till-Class-10-in-CBSE-schools.html>

##### What's in news?

- **Presidential order on promoting Hindi**
  - ✓ The language- Hindi should be made a compulsory subject up to Class 10 in all CBSE (schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education) schools and Kendriya Vidyalayas.
  - ✓ The human resource and development (HRD) ministry to form a policy in consultation with the state governments to make the language compulsory.
  - ✓ The Centre should form a policy in consultation with state governments.
  - ✓ These recommendations were made in the ninth report of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language.
- CBSE had last year recommended a three-language formula—English and any two Indian languages—to be expanded to classes 9 and 10. However, the HRD ministry is yet to take a call on the suggestion.

#### 6. Leaders to speak more in Hindi

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/leaders-to-speak-more-in-hindi/article18117888.ece>

##### What's in news?

- All dignitaries, including the President and Union Ministers, may soon start giving speeches in Hindi if a parliamentary panel's

recommendations accepted by President Pranab Mukherjee are implemented.

- The recommendation that all dignitaries, especially those who can read and speak Hindi, may be requested to give their speech/statement in Hindi only, has been accepted.
- The President has accepted many other recommendations, including announcements on Indian aeroplanes being made in Hindi before in English.
- On flights, half of the reading material should consist of Hindi newspapers and magazines as “Hindi is grossly neglected by airlines”, as per the panel’s recommendation, accepted by the President.
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has been asked to ensure implementation of the recommendations.
- Mukherjee has accepted another recommendation of the Committee that maximum usage of Hindi should be ensured on all tickets of Air India and Pawan Hans helicopters.
- A recommendation favouring full cent percent availability of bilingual training material in bilingual at the Mussoorie-based Lal Bahadur Shastri National Administrative Academy, where the premier institute to train civil servants are trained including those in Indian Administrative Service (IAS), has also been accepted.

## **Topic: Health Issues**

### **7. Phase I clinical trial of Zika vaccine to begin next month**

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/phase-i-clinical-trial-of-zika-vaccine-to-begin-next-month/article18114244.ece>

#### **What’s in news?**

- Bharat Biotech International Ltd in Hyderabad will start the Phase I clinical trial of Zika virus vaccine in India.
- The Phase I is being initiated based on the promising results in animals trials. In the animal trials, two doses of the vaccine made using an African Zika virus strain conferred 100% protection against mortality and disease in mice.
- The protection was the same when the mice were infected with an Asian and an African Zika strains.

## G.S.PAPER-3

### Topic: Infrastructure

#### 1. 'Improve punctuality of trains or face action'

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/improve-punctuality-of-trains-or-face-action/article18121712.ece>

##### What's in news?

- Recent years has seen a rise in the number of complaints about late running of trains. The punctuality rate has fallen to 79% during April 1-16 period, as compared to 84% in the corresponding period last year.
- Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu has cracked the whip, asking officials concerned to improve punctuality or "face action".
- Action taken: Zonal heads have been asked to deploy a senior-level officer between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. immediately to monitor the situation and address the problems to prevent delays.

#### 2. Common duct policy' soon

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-business/common-duct-policy-soon/article18121570.ece>

##### What's in news?

- The Centre is likely to soon come out with a new policy under which a common duct will be laid across a city and service providers such as telcos and digital TV players can lease these ducts to pass their fibre through it to offer services to consumers.
- **Advantages:**
  - ✓ Reduce operational cost of firms
  - ✓ Remove right of way challenges
  - ✓ Eliminate the need for frequent digging up of roads.
  - ✓ Additional revenue resource for the municipalities.

## ARTICLE IN NEWS

### Article 51A. Fundamental duties It shall be the duty of every citizen of India

(a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the national Flag and the National Anthem;

(b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;

(c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;

(d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;



(e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;

(f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;

(g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life, and to have compassion for living creatures;

(h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;

(i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;

(j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement .

## TOPICS IN NEWS

1. **Mandamus:** Mandamus ("We command") is a judicial remedy in the form of an order from a superior court, to any government subordinate court, corporation, or public authority—to do some specific act which that body is obliged under law to do and which is in the nature of public duty, and in certain cases one of a statutory duty. It cannot be issued to compel an authority to do something against statutory provision.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. With reference to Departmental Standing Committees, which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. The main objective of such committees is to secure more accountability of the Executive to the Parliament, particularly financial accountability.
  2. Each such committee consists of members only from the Lok Sabha.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Correct Answer: A

Type: Polity

Level: moderate

Explanation:

As of March 2016, there are 24 Department-related Standing Committees (DRSCs). All of these have 31 members - 21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha.

2. The Governor has certain special responsibilities to discharge according to the directions issued by the President. In this regard, the governor, though has to consult the council of ministers led by the chief minister, acts finally on his discretion. Consider the following pairs:
1. State – Special Responsibility of Governor
  2. Manipur – Law and Order in the state
  3. Arunachal Pradesh – Regarding administration of the hill areas in the state
  4. Maharashtra – Establishment of separate development boards for Vidarbha and Marathwada

Which of the pairs above is/are correctly matched?

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

Correct Answer: C

Type: Polity

Level: moderate

Explanation:

“Inter-community tensions, simmering for some time now, are boiling over in Manipur after the state government decided to increase the number of districts from nine to 16 on December 9...Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh may well have been looking to make a move that would make an immediate, visible impact before the assembly elections scheduled for early next year. However, the government did not make the process or the decision on the new administrative divisions a consultative one. The Hill Area Committees, meant to represent and safeguard tribal interests, have claimed they were not part of the decision.”

“...the government did not consult the Hill Area Committees before taking the decision. The Hill Area Committees are formed to protect the rights of hill people, and under Article 371(C) of Constitution, must be consulted on matters relating to tribal people.”

3. The Supreme Court's power to hear Inter-State Water Disputes can be classified under its

- a) Original Jurisdiction
- b) Appellate Jurisdiction
- c) Writ Jurisdiction
- d) Advisory Jurisdiction

Correct Answer: B

Type: Polity

Level: moderate

Explanation:

- ✓ "This month, in a landmark verdict, the Supreme Court said it had unfettered power to hear an appeal arising from a river water dispute tribunal under Article 136 of the Constitution."
- ✓ "It has interpreted the ouster clause in the Inter-State Water Disputes Act as one that merely bars the court from entertaining an original complaint or suit on its own (no original jurisdiction), but not its power to hear appeals against a tribunal's decisions."

**Appeal by Special Leave, Article 136:**

- ✓ Notwithstanding anything in this Chapter, the Supreme Court may, in its discretion, grant special leave to appeal from any judgment, decree, determination, sentence or order in any cause or matter passed or made by any court or tribunal in the territory of India
- ✓ Nothing in clause (1) shall apply to any judgment, determination, sentence or order passed or made by any court or tribunal constituted by or under any law relating to the Armed Forces.

4. 'UDAN', recently seen in the news, is a scheme launched by the Government of India. This scheme is

- a) A scholarship instituted to award meritorious students belonging to Economically Weaker Sections among the upper castes in the state of Gujarat.
- b) The Railway Ministry's efforts to increase the average train speed along the existing tracks.

- c) The Civil Aviation Ministry's Regional Connectivity Scheme.
- d) A collaboration of the Railways Ministry and the Environment Ministry aimed at reducing road transport's share in freight traffic and its concomitant increase in railway's share.

Correct Answer: C

Type: Schemes

Level: moderate

Explanation:

The Ministry of Civil Aviation took a major step today towards making flying a reality for the small town common man. The Civil Aviation Minister Shri P Ashok Gajapathi Raju launched the Ministry's much awaited Regional Connectivity Scheme "UDAN" ("Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik") in New Delhi today. UDAN is an innovative scheme to develop the regional aviation market. It is a market-based mechanism in which airlines bid for seat subsidies. This first-of-its-kind scheme globally will create affordable yet economically viable and profitable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns."

## G.S.PAPER-1

### Topic: Social Issues

#### 1. Indian society is now more intolerant, says Justice J. Chelameswar

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/indian-society-is-now-more-intolerant-says-justice-j-chelameswar/article18149639.ece>

##### What's in news?

Justice J. Chelameswar chaired the M.N. Roy Memorial Lecture on "Free Speech, Nationalism and Sedition," organised by the Indian Renaissance Institute, hinted at the growing level of intolerance in Indian Society-highlights of his speech.

- ✓ English- knowing gentlemen of the country had become progressively intolerant, if they were unable to convince a common man about what is wrong and what is right, the core issues of Indian society could not be resolved.
- ✓ Indian society had become more intolerant and less rational, and there was a huge disconnect between urban and rural India with respect to the perception of rights and liberties.
- ✓ Referring to the recent Jallikattu agitation in Tamil Nadu, Supreme Court judge Justice said the intention of the judgment to prevent cruelty against animals had not reached the masses. Instead of understanding the spirit of the verdict, people agitated and the issue snowballed into widespread protests in which voices were heard against the Supreme Court itself.

## G.S.PAPER-2

### Topic: Polity

#### 1. Modi shows red light to beacons of VIP privilege

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/no-more-red-beacons-for-ministers-and-dignitaries/article18137295.ece>

##### What's in news?

- **Big blow to India's privileged VIP culture-** Prime Minister Narendra Modi has decided to scrap a rule that allowed the Central and State governments to nominate dignitaries who could use such lights.
- Flashing of red beacon lights on top of vehicles was a sign of India's privileged VIP Culture and have no place in a democratic country.

##### What are the changes made?

- Amendments to the **Central Motor Vehicles Rules of 1989-**
  - ✓ Rule 108 of the 1989 regulations- empowers the Centre and the States to designate some dignitaries as entitled to red lights on top of their vehicles.

- ✓ This rule 108 is being abolished now. States are also being stripped of their power to specify persons whose vehicles can use blue flashing lights.
- ✓ Red lights will not be permitted on any vehicle.
- ✓ **Complete ban**- Private vehicles will not be allowed to use either red or blue lights.

**Exemptions:**

- Only emergency services vehicles such as ambulances.
- Fire engine trucks.
- Police vehicles will be allowed to use blue lights.

**Inference:** abolition would mean that neither the Centre nor the States would have any dignitary that governments can nominate for the usage of red beacons.

**Topic: Development Industries –the role of NGO’s.**

**2. PHFI loses FCRA licence for lobbying**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/phfi-loses-fcra-licence-for-lobbying/article18149292.ece>

**What’s in news?**

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has cancelled the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) licence of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), the country’s largest public health advocacy group.
- **Why FCRA removed?**
  - ✓ PHFI used foreign contributions to lobby parliamentarians, the media and the government on tobacco control issues, which “is prohibited under the FCRA.
  - ✓ other alleged violations such as remittances to foreign countries from its FCRA account
  - ✓ Failure to declare all its bank accounts to the government
- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is a major donor of funds to the PHFI, having transferred ₹183 crore to it between 2010 and 2015.

- **Basic Information:**

**The Foreign Contribution (regulation) Act, 2010 :**

Focus: It is a consolidating act whose scope is to regulate the acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality (free airplane tickets and hotel lodging during videsh-yaatra) by certain individuals or associations or companies and to prohibit acceptance and utilisation of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality for any activities detrimental to

the national interest and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

#### **Who can accept Foreign Contribution?**

- Organizations working for definite cultural, social, economic, educational or religious programs.
- But first, they've to get permission from the Ministry of Home Affairs and
- Second, they have to maintain separate account book listing the donation received from foreigners and get it audited by a Chartered Accountant and submit it to Home Ministry every year.

#### **Who cannot accept Foreign Contribution?**

- Election candidate.
- MP and MLAs.
- Newspaper: Correspondent, columnist, cartoonist, editor, owner, printer or publishers of a registered Newspaper.
- Public Servants: Judge, government servant or employee of any Corporation or any other body controlled or owned by the Government.

#### **Topic: Implementation of Schemes**

##### **3. 'Govt. trying to finish off rural employment scheme'**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/govt-trying-to-finish-off-rural-employment-scheme/article18147345.ece>

##### **Allegations against Government by civil society activists in Delhi :**

- Illegal deletion of 1 crore job cards.
- Manipulations of the Management Information System- workers registered with MGNREGS are entitled to compensation for delay in payment of wages. But the government is tweaking the MIS so that the delays are either hidden or not captured
- Willful delays in payment of wages, wage suppression, and under-funding of the programme- The Central government's MGNREGA wage rates continue to be below the State's minimum wage rate for several States.
- Under allocation of funds- while the required budget for financial year 2017-18 was ₹79,898 crore, the government allocated only ₹48,000 crore, which is barely 53% of what is required to meet the States' projection of demand for work under MGNREGA.

##### **What does the Act say?**

- According to the MGNREGA, no job card can be cancelled for reasons such as 'unwilling to work'.
- Yet the records at gram panchayats show that the most frequently cited reason for deletion of job cards was 'unwilling to work'.

**Topic: Bilateral relationship**

**4. China renames six areas in Arunachal**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/china-renames-six-areas-in-arunachal/article18149761.ece>

**What's in news?**

- Days after the visit to Arunachal Pradesh by Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama, China has reinforced its claims on the State by naming six places in Arunachal Pradesh in standardised Chinese characters, Tibetan and Roman alphabets.
- Naming the places is a step to reaffirm China's territorial sovereignty over South Tibet
- China's Ministry of Civil Affairs announced on its website that the State Council, China's Cabinet, had issued the new regulations.
- The six places in South Tibet (the name ascribed by Beijing to Arunachal Pradesh ) were named Wo'gyainling, Mila Ri, Qoidêngarbo Ri, Mainquka, Bûmo La and Namkapub Ri.
- **China's claim:**
  - ✓ Standardisation of names is a legitimate action by the Chinese government.
  - ✓ China's position on the eastern section of our boundary was consistent and clear.
  - ✓ China was firmly against the Indian government's indulgence of Dalai Lama activities in the disputed eastern section of the India-China boundary and also about his anti-China activities.

**Topic: International Affairs**

**5. Trump administration orders review of Iran deal**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/trump-administration-orders-review-of-iran-deal/article18148947.ece>

**What's in news?**

- The Trump administration is launching an National Security Council-led interagency review of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action that will evaluate whether suspension of sanctions related to Iran pursuant to the JCPOA is vital to the national security interests of the United States



- Iran remained compliant with the 2015 deal, but there were concerns about its role as a state sponsor of terrorism.
- Under the deal, the State Department must notify Congress every 90 days on Iran's compliance under the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

### **What is Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)?**

- The historic deal between Iran and six major powers – JCPOA restricts Tehran's nuclear programme in exchange for the lifting of international oil and financial sanctions against the Islamic Republic.
- Iran denies ever having considered developing atomic weapons although nuclear experts have warned that any U.S. violation of the nuclear deal would allow Iran also to pull back from its commitments to curb nuclear development.
- Commitments include reducing the number of its centrifuges by two-thirds, capping its level of uranium enrichment well below the level needed for bomb-grade material, reducing its enriched uranium stockpile from around 10,000 kg to 300 kg for 15 years, and submitting to international inspections to verify its compliance.

### **Apprehensions about Iran:**

- The United States has long accused Iran of being the world's biggest state sponsor of terrorism, saying that Tehran supported conflicts in countries like Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and backed groups such as Hezbollah, its Lebanon-based ally.

## **G.S.PAPER-3**

### **Topic: Economics**

#### **1. State entities can seek loans overseas**

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-business/state-entities-can-see-loans-overseas/article18150067.ece>

#### **What's in news?**

- **New arrangements** are made for the large infrastructure projects being executed by State government entities to tap international funds from bilateral ODA (Official Development Assistance) partners, on the basis of a central government guarantee while keeping such **loans off States' books**.
- Only sound (meeting certain requirements in terms of revenues and investment criteria) State entities can use this route.
- All repayments of loans and interests to the funding agencies will be directly remitted by the concerned borrower. The concerned State

Government will furnish guarantee for the Loan. The Government of India will provide counter guarantee for the loan.

- **Present Scenario:** If any State entity needs funding for its projects, it has to approach the State government and any such funding would be included under the State's borrowing limits set by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM law).
- **Advantages of New arrangement:**
- ✓ State Budgets also have pressure to spend on welfare schemes. If international funding is coming in, if that gets included in the FRBM calculations, then infrastructure projects will suffer.

Example:

Mumbai Trans-Harbour Link project

Investment required- Rs. 18,000 crore.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is expected to lend more than Rs. 15,100 crore.

As per old arrangements, Maharashtra's development expenditure would go down to that extent as its quota for borrowing under the FRBM targets would be used up.

- **Proper checks:**
  - ✓ But it must be used prudently for select projects in a State as taking such financing out of the FRBM framework could tempt States to borrow too much for all sorts of projects
  - ✓ There need to be some checks in place to ensure that future governments aren't saddled with too much long-term debt on terms that appear to be soft now, but could become costlier over the years if you factor in the forex risk on top of the inherent risks in long-gestation infrastructure projects.

## Topic: Science and technology

### 2. A frog's mucus could treat flu

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/health/a-frogs-mucus-could-treat-flu/article18147134.ece>

#### What's in news?

- According to a new study, skin mucus secreted by a colourful, tennis ball-sized frog species (*Hydrophylax bahuvistara*) found in Kerala can be used to develop an **anti-viral drug** that can treat various strains of flu.
- Frog mucus is loaded with molecules that kill bacteria and viruses - a potential source for new anti-microbial drugs.
- The mucus secretion contained a peptide, or chain of amino acids, that appears to fight off the H1 strain of flu virus.
- Out of the 32 frog defence peptides (mucus molecules) against an influenza strain and only **four** of them had flu-busting abilities.

- ✓ When the researchers exposed isolated human red blood cells in a dish to the flu-buster peptides, three out of the four proved toxic.
- ✓ However, the fourth seemed harmless to human cells but lethal to a wide range of flu viruses. The researchers named the newly identified peptide “urumin” after the urumi, a sword with a flexible blade that snaps and bends like a whip. Electron microscope images of the virus after exposure to urumin reveal a virus that has been completely dismantled.
- ✓ Urumin is not toxic to mammals, but “appears to only disrupt the integrity of flu virus”.
- **Task ahead:**
  - ✓ More research is needed to determine if urumin could become a preventive treatment against the flu in humans, and to see if other frog-derived peptides could protect against viruses like dengue and Zika.

### 3. First detailed global Internet atlas developed

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/first-detailed-global-internet-atlas-developed-117041900685\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/first-detailed-global-internet-atlas-developed-117041900685_1.html)

#### What’s in news?

- Scientists have developed the **first global Internet Atlas** - including a detailed map of the **internet's physical structure** in India - an advance that could help guard the **infrastructure from terrorism or extreme weather events**.
- Developed by researchers from University of Wisconsin-Madison in the US and their collaborators.
- There are over 1,200 maps worldwide including India. All the data are connected using web search.
- The project has helped direct attention to the **problem of shared risk**.
  - ✓ Physical infrastructure is commonly shared by multiple networking entities, so damage to any particular piece of infrastructure can impact more than one entity.
  - ✓ Many service providers in order to save deployment costs signs leasing agreement with other service providers. This infrastructure sharing leads to a problem called '**shared risk**': physical conduits shared by many service providers are at an inherently risky situation since damage to those conduits will affect many several providers.
- Data centres in buildings all over the world are packed with servers storing many types of data. Traffic exchange occurs between different service providers at internet exchange points.



## Miscellaneous

### 1. 2022 Asian Games to open up arena for e-sports enthusiasts

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/2022-asian-games-to-open-up-arena-for-e-sports-enthusiasts/article18150206.ece>

### What's in news?

- The Olympic Council of Asia says it will introduce e-sports to the official programme of the Asian Games at Hangzhou, China.
- It will also be a demonstration sport at the 2018 Asian Games in Palembang, Indonesia.
- Video gaming will be featured as a full sport at the 2022 Asian Games, with competitors in electronic sports set to receive medals for their digital prowess.
- **Why such a move?**  
The OCA said the decision is a reflection of the rapid development and popularity of this new form of sports participation among the youth.
- **Key Fact:** The Asian Games are billed as the world's second largest multi-sport event after the Olympics.
- **Background Information:**

#### **The Asian Games:**

- ✓ The Asian Games, also known as Asiad, is a Pancontinental multi-sport event held every **four years among** athletes from all over Asia.
- ✓ The Games were regulated by the Asian Games Federation (AGF) from the first Games in New Delhi, India, until the 1978 Games.
- ✓ Since the 1982 Games they have been organized by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), after the breakup of the Asian Games Federation.
- ✓ The Games are recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and are described as the second largest multi-sport event after the Olympic Game

### ARTICLE IN NEWS

- **Article 137 {Review of judgments or orders by the Supreme Court}**  
Subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament or any rules made under article 145, the Supreme Court shall have power to review any judgment pronounced or order made by it.

### Prelims worthy factual information:

1. **Sepak takraw** or kick volleyball, is a sport native to Southeast Asia. Sepak takraw differs from the similar sport of Footvolley in its use of a rattan ball and only allowing players to use their feet, knee, chest and head to touch the ball. It is a popular sport in Philippines.
2. "**Vesak**"- the Day of the Full Moon in the month of May, is the most sacred day to millions of Buddhists around the world. It was on the Day of Vesak two and a

half millennia ago, in the year 623 B.C., that the Buddha was born. It was also on the Day of Vesak that the Buddha attained enlightenment, and it was on the Day of Vesak that the Buddha in his eightieth year passed away.

### 3. Curative petition

- ✓ The concept of Curative petition was evolved by the Supreme Court of India in the matter of **Rupa Ashok Hurra vs. Ashok Hurra and Anr. (2002)** where the question was whether an aggrieved person is entitled to any relief against the final judgement/order of the Supreme Court, after dismissal of a review petition.
- ✓ The Supreme Court in the said case held that in order to prevent abuse of its process and to cure gross miscarriage of justice, it may reconsider its judgements in exercise of its inherent powers. For this purpose the Court has devised what has been termed as a "curative" petition.
- ✓ In the Curative petition, the petitioner is required to aver specifically that the grounds mentioned therein had been taken in the review petition filed earlier and that it was dismissed by circulation. This has to be certified by a senior advocate. The Curative petition is then circulated to the three senior most judges and the judges who delivered the impugned judgement, if available. **No time limit is given for filing Curative petition.**
- ✓ **Specific Guidelines to Curative petition:**
  - a) The petitioner will have to establish that there was a genuine violation of principles of natural justice and fear of the bias of the judge and judgement that adversely affected him.
  - b) The petition shall state specifically that the grounds mentioned had been taken in the review petition and that it was dismissed by circulation.
  - c) The curative petition must accompany certification by a senior lawyer relating to the fulfillment of the above requirements.
  - d) The petition is to be sent to the three senior most judges and judges of the bench who passed the judgement affecting the petition, if available.
  - e) If the majority of the judges on the above bench agree that the matter needs hearing, then it would be sent to the same bench (as far as possible).
  - f) The court could impose "exemplary costs" to the petitioner if his plea lacks merit.

### 4. Review petition:

- In India, a binding decision of the Supreme Court/High Court can be reviewed in Review Petition.
- The parties aggrieved on any order of the Supreme Court on any apparent error can file a review petition.

- Article 137 of the Constitution provides that subject to provisions of any law and rule made under Article 145 the Supreme Court of India has the power to review any judgement pronounced (or order made) by it.
- Under Supreme Court Rules, 1966 such a petition needs to be filed within 30 days from the date of judgement or order.
- It is also recommended that the petition should be circulated without oral arguments to the same bench of judges that delivered the judgement (or order) sought to be reviewed.

## ACTS IN NEWS

### 1. **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005**

- Later renamed as the "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" (or, MGNREGA).
- It is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'.
- **Main Provisions of the act:**
  - ✓ It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing **at least 100** days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
  - ✓ Employment is to be provided within 5 km of an applicant's residence, and minimum wages are to be paid.
  - ✓ If work is not provided within 15 days of applying, applicants are entitled to an unemployment allowance.
  - ✓ MGNREGA is to be implemented mainly by **gram panchayats (GPs)**. The involvement of contractors is banned.
  - ✓ The law also lists permissible works: water conservation and water harvesting; drought proofing including afforestation; irrigation works; restoration of traditional water bodies; land development; flood control; rural connectivity; and works notified by the government.
  - ✓ Apart from providing economic security and creating rural assets, NREGA can help in protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural-urban migration and fostering social equity, among others.
  - ✓ The registration process involves an application to the Gram Panchayat and issue of job cards. The wage employment must be provided within 15 days of the date of application. The work entitlement of '120 days per household per year' may be shared between different adult members of the same household
  - ✓ The Act sets a minimum limit to the wage-material ratio as 60:40.
  - ✓ The Act sets a minimum limit to the wages, to be paid with gender equality, either on a time-rate basis or on a piece-rate basis. The states are required to evolve a set of norms for the measurement of works and

schedule of rates. unemployment allowance must be paid if the work is not provided within the statutory limit of 15 days.

▪ **Transparency and accountability:**

- ✓ The law stipulates Gram Panchayats to have a single bank account for NREGA works which shall be subjected to public scrutiny. To promote transparency and accountability, the act mandates 'monthly squaring of accounts'.
- ✓ To ensure public accountability through public vigilance, the NREGA designates 'social audits' as key to its implementation.
- ✓ For evaluation of outcomes, the law also requires management of data and maintenance of records, like registers related to employment, job cards, assets, muster rolls and complaints, by the implementing agencies at the village, block and state level.
- ✓ The legislation specifies the role of the state in ensuring transparency and accountability through upholding the right to information and disclosing information proactively, preparation of annual reports , undertaking mandatory financial audit by each district along with physical audit, taking action on audit reports, developing a Citizen's Charter, establishing vigilance and monitoring committees, and developing grievance redressal system.
- ✓ The Act recommends establishment of '**Technical Resource Support Groups**' at district, state and central level and active use of Information Technology, like creation of a 'Monitoring and Information System (MIS)' and a NREGA website, to assure quality in implementation of NREGA through technical support.

**Key Fact:**

- ✓ The statute is hailed by the government as "the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world".
- ✓ In its World Development Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a "stellar example of rural development".

2. **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958-**

- Armed Forces (Special Powers) Acts (AFSPA), are Acts of the Parliament of India that grant special powers to the Indian Armed Forces.
- AFSPA is confined to be enacted only when a state, or part of it, is declared a 'disturbed area'. Continued unrest, like in the cases of militancy and

insurgency, and especially when borders are threatened, are situations where AFSPA is resorted to.

- The power to declare areas as being disturbed was extended to the central government.
- According to the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), in an area that is proclaimed as "disturbed", an officer of the armed forces has powers to:
  - a) After giving such due warning, Fire upon or use other kinds of force even if it causes death, against the person who is acting against law or order in the disturbed area for the maintenance of public order,
  - b) Destroy any arms dump, hide-outs, prepared or fortified position or shelter or training camp from which armed attacks are made by the armed volunteers or armed gangs or absconders wanted for any offence.
  - c) To arrest without a warrant anyone who has committed cognizable offences or is reasonably suspected of having done so and may use force if needed for the arrest.
  - d) To enter and search any premise in order to make such arrests, or to recover any person wrongfully restrained or any arms, ammunition or explosive substances and seize it.
  - e) Stop and search any vehicle or vessel reasonably suspected to be carrying such person or weapons.
  - f) Any person arrested and taken into custody under this Act shall be made present over to the officer in charge of the nearest police station with least possible delay, together with a report of the circumstances occasioning the arrest.
  - g) Army officers have legal immunity for their actions. There can be no prosecution, suit or any other legal proceeding against anyone acting under that law. Nor is the government's judgment on why an area is found to be disturbed subject to judicial review.**
  - h) Protection of persons acting in good faith under this Act from prosecution, suit or other legal proceedings, except with the sanction of the Central Government, in exercise of the powers conferred by this Act.
- Land mark judgment ,ending the immunity:

On July 8, 2016, in a landmark ruling, The Supreme Court of India ended the immunity of the armed forces from prosecution under AFSPA, saying, "It does not matter whether the victim was a common person or a militant or a terrorist, nor does it matter whether the aggressor was a common person or the state. The law is the same for both and is equally applicable to both... This is the requirement of a democracy and the requirement of preservation of the rule of law and the preservation of individual liberties."

**Supreme Court said that any encounter carried out by armed forces in the garb of AFSPA should be subjected to thorough inquiry.**



## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. Finance Ministry is responsible for implementing Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)
  2. Kundankullam Power plant is located in Andhra Pradesh.
  3. A Lok Sabha election candidate can accept foreign donations for campaign after taking necessary approval from Chief Election Commissioner.

Choose the correct answer

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. 1 and 3
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: D

Type: Polity

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

- ✓ Home Ministry is responsible for implementing Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)
- ✓ Kundankullam Power plant is located in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ **Who cannot accept Foreign Contribution?**
  - Election candidate.
  - MP and MLAs.
  - Newspaper: Correspondent, columnist, cartoonist, editor, owner, printer or publishers of a registered Newspaper.
  - Public Servants: Judge, government servant or employee of any Corporation or any other body controlled on owned by the Government.

2. Which of the following statements is/are correct?
  1. The Olympic flag has a white background, with five interlaced rings in the centre: blue, yellow, orange, green and red.
  2. The color in Olympic flag appears on all the national flags of the world

Choose the correct answer

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: B

Type: G.K

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

The Olympic flag has a white background, with five interlaced rings in the centre: **blue, yellow, black, green and red**. This design is symbolic; it represents the five continents of the world, united by Olympism, while the **six colours are those that appear on all the national flags of the world at the present time**.

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

1. There is a time limit of 30 days to file a Curative petition.
2. The Curative petition is circulated among three senior most judges.

Choose the correct answer

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: B

Type: Polity

Level: Moderate

Explanation: In the Curative petition, the petitioner is required to aver specifically that the grounds mentioned therein had been taken in the review petition filed earlier and that it was dismissed by circulation. This has to be certified by a senior advocate. The Curative petition is then circulated to the three senior most judges and the judges who delivered the impugned judgement, if available. **No time limit is given for filing Curative petition.**

4. Which of the following statements are correct?

1. There is a time limit of 30 days to file a review petition.
2. The review petition should be circulated with oral arguments to the same bench of judges that delivered the judgement.

Choose the correct answer

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: A

Type: Polity

Level: Moderate

Explanation: Review petition

- ✓ Under Supreme Court Rules, 1966 a review petition needs to be filed within 30 days from the date of judgement or order.

- ✓ It is also recommended that the petition should be circulated without oral arguments to the same bench of judges that delivered the judgement (or order) sought to be reviewed.

## **G.S.PAPER-1**

### **Topic: Geography**

#### **1. IMD forecast: Clouds of prosperity**

<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/on-imd-forecast-clouds-of-prosperity/article18148962.ece>

#### **Context:**

- India Meteorological Department forecasts 'normal' monsoon
- It brings promise of a year of growth and good health for India's economy and ecology
- India will have a second consecutive year of normal rainfall, after two years of drought

#### **Benefits:**

- This boosts the prospects of enhanced agricultural output, healthy reservoir levels, more hydropower and reduced conflicts over water
- A normal monsoon will relieve water stress in cities if they prepare catchments and reservoirs to make the most of the season
- Good monsoons will test the efficacy of the expensive water management initiatives launched during 2014 and 2015 by the Centre and the State governments to harness rainfall and build resilience for future drought cycles

#### **Why will the monsoons be good?**

- IMD's experience shows, forecasting the all-India summer monsoon rainfall is fraught with uncertainties and has often gone off the mark
- The dynamic model that it is using this year to make a forecast that includes an assessment of two phenomena:
  - A possible late onset El Niño in the Pacific Ocean
  - Variations in sea surface temperatures that create the Indian Ocean Dipole
- El Niño is expected only in the later part of the year when the monsoon is in its final stages, the expectation of normal rainfall is reasonable (A confirmation could come in June)

#### **Agricultural infrastructure:**

- More than half the population is sustained by agricultural livelihoods, therefore, highly efficient water utilisation holds the key to higher farm productivity
- Preparing for drought remains a top priority today, in spite of a big increase in outlays for irrigation made over successive five-year plans
- Data on five decades of grain output from 1951 show that the negative impact of drought on productivity is disproportionately higher than the positive effects of a normal or surplus monsoon

- This underscores the need to help farmers with small holdings to look ahead

**What needs to be done:**

- Agriculture scientist M.S. Swaminathan pointed that focus has to be on plant protection, water harvesting and access to post-harvest technologies
- The NITI Aayog has also been calling for ways to cut water use, since India uses two to three times more water per tonne of grain produced compared to, for example, China, Brazil and the U.S
- The way forward is to create ponds, provide solar power for more farms, mechanise operations and expand drip irrigation coverage
- Aiding small farmers with the tools and providing them formal financing can relieve their cyclical distress
- The area under drip irrigation, estimated to be less than 10% of net area sown, can then be expanded
- The government should incentivize residents to install scientific rainwater harvesting systems

**G.S.PAPER-2**

**Topic: International Affairs**

**1. UN to issue commemorative stamps for International Yoga Day**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/un-to-issue-commemorative-stamps-for-international-yoga-day/article18132868.ece>

**What's in news?**

- The United Nations will issue special stamps commemorating the International Yoga Day on June 21 this year
- The UN postal agency, UN Postal Administration (UNPA) will issue the new special event sheet to commemorate Yoga Day that has been marked annually since 2015
- The special sheet consists of stamps with images of the sacred Indian sound “Om” and various yogic asanas
- Yoga Day: The first International Yoga Day was commemorated at the UN in 2015 with aplomb
- In December 2014, the UN General Assembly had adopted a resolution with a record number of 177 co-sponsoring member states to commemorate the International Day of Yoga every year on June 21
- About UN Stamps: United Nations stamps are issued simultaneously at UN offices in New York, Geneva and Vienna
- Each issue carries a related design theme, with different denominations for each office
- Usually six new commemorative issues are released each year and remain on sale for 12 months only

- UN stamps have illustrated the aims and achievements of the United Nations and its family of organizations

## 2. Dialogue on stalled BCIM corridor set to resume in Kolkata

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/dialogue-on-stalled-bcim-corridor-set-to-resume-in-kolkata/article18131888.ece>

### Context:

- Negotiations on the stalled Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor are set to resume next week in Kolkata
- After a gap of over two year, the meeting of Joint Study Group (JSG) of academics and officials of the four countries on April 25-26 is expected to finalise the road map for the BCIM economic corridor
- The last meeting of the BCIM was held in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh in December 2014

### China:

- India had become lukewarm to the BCIM project by linking it with its reservations on the China-Pakistan economic corridor which passed through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)

### India:

- Declined the possibility of a connection between the two
- However, India has expressed readiness for participation in standalone connectivity projects with China, which were not necessarily connected with the Beijing-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)
- Both the BCIM and the CPEC predate the formal launch of the BRI

### Back2basics:

#### About BCIM:

- The BCIM economic corridor is an ambitious undertaking that hopes to connect Kolkata with Kunming, capital of the Yunnan province
- It envisages formation of a thriving economic belt, focusing on cross-border transport, energy and telecommunication networks
- Starting from Kunming, the route passes through nodal points, such as Mandalay and Lashio in Myanmar
- It heads towards Kolkata after passing through Manipur and Silchar, before crossing Bangladesh via Sylhet and Dhaka, with branches



extending to the ports of Cox's Bazar and Chittagong

- Chinese experts in Yunnan say that except for a 200-km stretch between Silchar in Assam and Manipur, and a similar length between Kalewa and Monywa in Myanmar, the central artery of the route is nearly functional

### **3. China's Arunachal move 'illegal'**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/chinas-arunachal-move-illegal/article18163684.ece>

#### **What's in news?**

- India rejected China's move to rename six towns in Arunachal Pradesh, giving them new Chinese names in its official record.
- Beijing's move is being seen as an escalation of tensions by China that has been angered by the government's decision to allow the Dalai Lama to visit the Tawang monastery this month.

### **4. Logistics pact with U.S. 'almost done'**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/logistics-pact-with-us-almost-done/article18164540.ece>

#### **What's in news?**

- In the month of August -2016, India and the U.S. concluded the logistics agreement, the first of the three foundational agreements between the two nations.
- India is expected to notify the operationalising of the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) with the U.S.
- The other foundational agreements are the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geospatial Information and Services Cooperation (BECA).
- Meanwhile, discussions are under way on the next one — the COMSCA — as the BECA is considered the trickiest of the three with India expressing serious reservations about the clauses as well as the need for it.

#### **What is LEMOA?**

- LEMOA gives access to both countries to designated military facilities on either side for refueling and replenishment in primarily four areas — port calls, joint exercises, training and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

## Topic: Polity

### 5. Centre promises election reforms

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-promises-election-reforms/article18117793.ece>

- SC: Asked the Centre to file an affidavit during the day on a PIL petition seeking debarment of convicts for life from contesting polls and stopping them from entering the judiciary and the executive
- Govt: It has constituted a task force to frame a road map for implementation of the Law Commission's recommendations on decriminalisation of politics
- Disqualification period: The Law Ministry said that the disqualification period specified under the Representation of the People Act, 1951, was a policy decision that had been enacted by Parliament after due deliberations for curbing the entry of persons with criminal antecedents into the political arena
- SC has held in a catena of cases that no mandamus can lie to the government for framing law or introducing amendments to existing law as framing of policy, setting standards and the making of law falls within the executive domain of the legislature
- It is submitted that the judiciary may step in to fill gaps only where there is a statutory vacuum, but not where a valid law already occupies the field

## G.S.PAPER-3

### Topic: Economics

#### 1. Anti-dumping duty likely on hydrogen peroxide

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/anti-dumping-duty-likely-on-a-chemical-import-from-6-nations/articleshow/58240565.cms>

#### What's in news?

- India may impose anti-dumping duty of up to \$118 per tonne on import of a chemical used by industries in applications such as **corrosion control and paper bleaching from six countries.**
- The move is aimed at guarding domestic players from cheap imports of 'hydrogen peroxide' from Bangladesh, Taiwan, Korea, Indonesia, Pakistan and Thailand

#### Basic information:

#### Hydrogen peroxide

- It is a chemical compound with the formula  $H_2O_2$
- In its pure form, it is a colourless liquid, slightly more viscous than water
- It is the simplest peroxide (a compound with an oxygen–oxygen single bond)



- It is used as an oxidizer, bleaching agent and disinfectant
- Concentrated hydrogen peroxide, or “high-test peroxide”, is a reactive oxygen species and has been used as a propellant in rocketry
- Its chemistry is dominated by the nature of its unstable peroxide bond
- Hydrogen peroxide is unstable and slowly decomposes in the presence of base or a catalyst
- Because of its instability, hydrogen peroxide is typically stored with a stabilizer in a weakly acidic solution
- Hydrogen peroxide is found in biological systems including the human body
- Enzymes that use or decompose hydrogen peroxide are classified as peroxidases

## 2. Railways seeks aid for unviable routes

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-business/railways-seek-aid-for-unviable-routes/article18121581.ece>

- The Railway Ministry has sought compensation for operating railway lines of strategic and national importance — a practice discontinued following the merger of Railway and Union Budget
- Such projects include: National projects, projects of national importance, uneconomic branch lines, border area projects and all strategic lines
- **Background:** Every year, the Indian Railways used to get subsidy from the Finance Ministry for losses incurred on railway operations on strategic lines
- After the Budget merger, the Finance Ministry had discontinued the practice of providing annual subsidy to the Railways for operating loss-making strategic routes as the Railways was no longer required to pay an annual dividend
- Recently, two Parliamentary bodies — Standing Committee on Railways and Estimates Committee — recommended that the Finance Ministry should continue compensating the Railways for losses in operating strategic lines
- Standing Committee on Railways: Considering the role of Railways in nation building, reimbursement to Railways on their operating losses on strategic lines is justifiable
- As these lines mainly cater to defence movements on border areas and development of social and backward region, the Committee recommends that reimbursement of operational losses on strategic lines and railway lines in hilly, coastal and backward areas should be continued
- The panel felt that compensation helped the Railways in providing relief towards “socially desirable projects” which are usually loss-making projects

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Pakistan has raised objections in the past to India’s hydroelectric project on the Kishanganga. The Kishanganga is a tributary of river

- a) Indus
- b) Jhelum
- c) Chenab
- d) Ravi

Solution: B.

Type: Current Affairs

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

“The dispute over the hydroelectric project on the Kishanganga, a tributary of the Jhelum, is not new. Pakistan took it to the Court of Arbitration in 2010...”. Also, the Ratle project is a run-off the river hydroelectric project under construction on River Chenab.

2. The ‘Soil Health Card’ (SHC), under the SHC scheme, is

- a) A card akin to a voter’s ID given to each farmer for each of his holdings, containing information regarding soil nutrient status only; recommendations regarding soil amendments need to be sought by farmers from Krishi Vigyan Kendras of their district.
- b) A card akin to a voter’s ID for each of a farmer’s holdings, giving him advice only on the dosage of fertilisers and needed soil amendments to maintain soil health in the long run.
- c) A printed report – that a farmer will be handed over for each of his holdings – containing the status of his soil with respect to soil nutrients and recommendations required for soil amendments.
- d) A report card of the Indian Government’s fertiliser-subsidy policy since the Green Revolution, to understand the associated impacts and help formulate a coherent strategy to rectify the fertiliser-subsidy regime.

Solution: C.

Type: Schemes

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

**What is SHC Scheme?**

Government of India's scheme promoted by the Department of Agriculture & Co-operation under the Ministry of Agriculture. It will be implemented through the Department of Agriculture of all the State and Union Territory Governments. A SHC is meant to give each farmer soil nutrient status of his holding and advice him on the dosage of fertilizers and also the needed soil amendments, that he should apply to maintain soil health in the long run.

What is the SHC? It is a printed report that a farmer will be handed over for each of his holdings. It will contain the status of his soil with respect to 12 parameters, namely N,P,K (Macro-nutrients) ; S (Secondary- nutrient) ; Zn, Fe, Cu, Mn, Bo (Micro – nutrients) ; and pH, EC, OC (Physical parameters).

### **How can a farmer use a SHC?**

The card will contain an advisory based on the soil nutrient status of a farmer's holding. It will show recommendations on dosage of different nutrients needed. Further, it will advise the farmer on the fertilizers and their quantities he should apply, and also the soil amendments that he should undertake, so as to realize optimal yields.

3. Atlas Mountains are a series of mountain ranges which act as a divide between which of the following regions?
  - a) The Mozambique Channel and the Kalahandi desert
  - b) The Red Sea and the Libyan desert
  - c) The Mediterranean basin and the Sahara desert
  - d) The Gulf of Sudra and the Katanga plateau

Solution: C.

Type: Geography

Level: Moderate

Explanation:

Britannica: Atlas Mountains, series of mountain ranges in northwestern Africa, running generally southwest to northeast to form the geologic backbone of the countries of the Maghrib (the western region of the Arab world)—Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. They extend from the Moroccan port of Agadir in the southwest, to the Tunisian capital of Tunis in the northeast. Their thick rim rises to form a high sill separating the Mediterranean basin to the north from the Sahara to the south, thus

constituting a barrier that hinders, without completely preventing, communication between the two regions. Across, the mountains filter both air masses and human migrations.

## G.S.PAPER-2

### Topic: Polity

#### 1. What is the logic behind making Aadhaar mandatory for filing I-T returns, SC asks Centre

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sc-questions-centre-over-making-aadhaar-mandatory-for-filing-it-returns/article18181420.ece>

##### What's in news?

- The Supreme Court: Questioned
  - ✓ The Central government's logic behind making Aadhaar mandatory for filing income tax returns.
  - ✓ Whether such a move is a remedy to end the generation of fake PAN and ration cards.
- **Petition questions the constitutionality of Section 139AA of IT act:**
  - ✓ The court was hearing a petition filed by former Kerala Minister Binoy Viswam, represented by senior advocate Arvind Datar and advocate Sriram Prakkat, **challenging the constitutionality of Section 139AA inserted in the Income Tax Act by the Finance Act, 2017.**

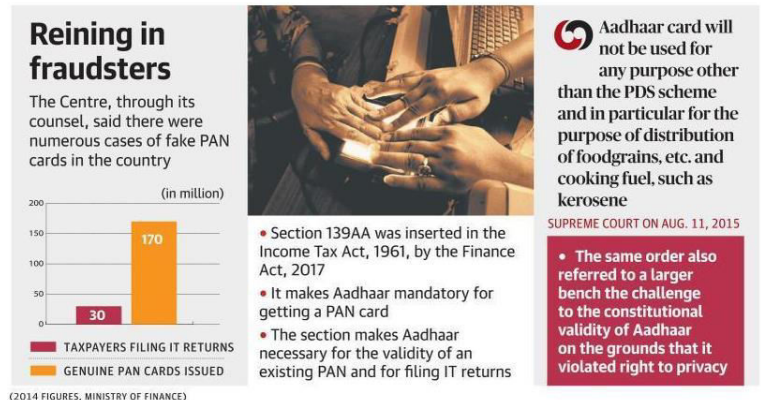
- ✓ **Section 139AA inserted in the Income Tax Act:** Makes Aadhaar mandatory for getting a PAN. Possession of an Aadhaar card is necessary for the continuing validity of an existing PAN and for filing returns under the income tax law.

- ✓ Section 139AA of the Income Tax Act, 1961,
  - The amendment to make Aadhaar mandatory were included in a Finance Bill , the main intention was to avoid Rajya Sabha where the ruling party lacks majority.
  - The said amendment is completely contrary to Article 110 of the Constitution, which defines a Money Bill.

- **Governments response:**

- ✓ Fake PANs and ration cards have flooded the market and jinxed financial transactions.
- ✓ A person can get multiple PAN.

- **Statutory support to Aadhaar:**



- ✓ The Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act of 2016.
  - ✓ The enactment of this Act as a **Money Bill** is itself under **challenge in the court** on a petition by Congress MP and former Union Minister Jairam Ramesh.
  - ✓ **Aadhaar Act does not make obtaining Aadhaar mandatory.**
- **Earlier orders of Supreme Court:**
    - ✓ The Supreme Court had asked the government to make Aadhaar optional until the very validity of the Aadhaar scheme on the basis of right to privacy was decided by the court.

## 2. Govt. plans home delivery of petrol

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/govt-plans-home-delivery-of-petrol/article18185976.ece>

### What's in news?

- The government is exploring the possibility of allowing all petroleum products — not just LPG cylinders — to be delivered at consumers' doorstep.
- Petro products may be door-delivered to consumers on pre-booking.
- This would help consumers avoid spending excessive time and long queues at fuel stations

## 3. OBC benefits to be restored to Gujjars in Rajasthan

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/obc-benefits-to-be-restored-to-gujjars-in-rajasthan/article18185814.ece>

### What's in news?

- Gujjar leaders decided to go ahead with a 'Mahapanchayat' planned in Sikandra to raise the issue of reservation.
 

**Main demand:** 5% separate quota within the 50% cap on reservation imposed by the Supreme Court.
- BJP government has assured Gujjars and four other communities that the benefits of Other Backward Classes (OBC) category would be restored to them.
- **Issue:**
  - ✓ The Rajasthan High Court had scrapped the Rajasthan **Special Backward Classes (SBC) reservation Act 2015** that provisioned for 5% quota to five communities. The Act had provided 5% reservation in jobs and educational institutes to five communities: Gujjars (Gurjars), Banjara (Baldia, Labana); Gadia-Lohar (Gadolia), Raika (Rebari, Debasi), Gadaria (Gadri, Gayari).

- ✓ The court struck down the notification of October 2015, saying there were "**no extraordinary circumstances**" to allow the state's overall reservation in government jobs and education institutes to go beyond the 50% cap. Following the notification, the overall reservation in the state reached 54%, which was in violation of the 50% cap set by the Supreme Court.

#### 4. Be enablers, Modi tells civil servants

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/prime-minister-narendra-modi-addresses-bureaucrats-on-civil-servants-day-in-new-delhi/article18181494.ece>

##### What's in news?

- Highlights of Speech of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Civil Service Day Function
  - ✓ Anonymity was one of the greatest strengths of civil services, cautioning government officials that the use of social media should not lead to a decline in this strength, even as social media and mobile governance were leveraged for connecting people to benefits and government schemes.
  - ✓ Assured the civil servants that he would stand by them if they took decisions with an honest intention and in public interest.
  - ✓ Focus should now be on improving quality, and making excellence a habit.
  - ✓ While "political will" was needed for reform, the "performance" part must come from civil servants and that "transformation" was enabled by people's participation.

### Topic: Bilateral Relations

#### 5. India, South Korea to sign MoU to boost defence ties

[http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/india-south-korea-to-sign-mou-to-boost-defence-ties-117042100413\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ani/india-south-korea-to-sign-mou-to-boost-defence-ties-117042100413_1.html)

##### What's in news?

- ✓ India and South Korea signed two agreements:
  - a) To build artillery guns for the Army - **K9 Vajra-T tracked**, self-propelled artillery guns.
  - b) For collaboration in shipbuilding manufacturing.
- ✓ One of them is an Inter-Governmental Agreement between the governments while the other is a manufacturing agreement between two private companies.



- ✓ The MoU was conceived under the overall umbrella of the 'Special Strategic Partnership' between both sides

## 6. India, EU discuss next summit

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-eu-discuss-next-summit/article18187026.ece>

### What's in news?

- India and the European Union firmed up plans for holding the 14th bilateral summit to be held in India later this year.
- Common area of concerns between the two: trade, counter-terror cooperation, maritime security and defence cooperation.

## G.S.PAPER-3

### Topic: Security

## 1. Indian Navy test-fires land attack version of BrahMos missile

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/indian-navy-test-fires-land-attack-version-of-brahmos-missile/1/934743.html>

### What's in news?

- The Indian Navy today moved towards acquiring a pin-point ability to attack targets on land with its first test of the land-attack variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.
- The missile has a range of 400km.
- This is the first time a land-attack variant of the missile was fired from a warship and also the first sea-to-land missile test in the country.

### Key Facts:

- BrahMos, derived from Russian P-800 Oniks or Yakhont missile, is a joint product of India and Russia.
- The present range of the BrahMos is 290 km, which is now in the process of being extended up to 450 km following India's entry into the **Missile Technology Control Regime** last year.
- The Indian Navy began inducting the first version of BrahMos Missile System in all of its frontline warships from 2005. BrahMos can be launched in single or in a salvo from ship towards single or different types of targets within an interval of 2-2.5 seconds in various trajectories.
- The Navy has already inducted anti-ship versions of the BrahMos on its warships including the Rajput and is integrating them into two other ships of the class.
- The missiles will also equip the three 7000-ton Kolkata class destroyers currently under construction at the Mazagon Docks Ltd, Mumbai.



**Basic Information:**

**Missile Technology Control Regime:** The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is a multilateral export control regime. It is an informal and voluntary partnership among 35 countries to prevent the proliferation of missile and unmanned aerial vehicle technology capable of carrying above 500 kg payload for more than 300 km.

**Topic: Economics****2. Consumers get a free hand on hotel service charge payout**

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/consumers-get-a-free-hand-on-hotel-service-charge-payout/1/935141.html>

**What's in news?****▪ The Guidelines on Fair Trade Practices Related to Charging of Service Charge from Consumers by Hotels and Restaurants-**

- ✓ The government approved new guidelines which gives consumers the right to decide service charge they wish to voluntarily pay on a hotel or restaurant bill.
- ✓ While the new norms provide relief to those dining out, the hotel industry is not likely to take it lying down as they feel being singled out.
- ✓ The new guidelines has been issued in public interest to protect consumers right
- ✓ Mandatory levy of service charge amounts to unfair trade practice.
- ✓ Hotels and restaurants should not decide how much service charge is to be paid by the customer and it should be left to the discretion of the customer.
- ✓ The (food) bill presented to the customer may clearly display that the service charge is voluntary and the service charge column of the bill may be left blank for the customer to fill before making payment.
- ✓ The guidelines made it clear that a component of service is inherent in provision of food and beverages ordered by a customer and pricing of the product is expected to cover both goods and service components.
- ✓ Placing of an order by a customer amounts to his or her agreement to pay the prices displayed on the menu card along with the applicable taxes. Charges for anything other than the aforementioned without express consent of the customer would amount to unfair trade practices as defined under the Act
- ✓ Tip or gratuity paid by customers is towards hospitality received by them beyond the basic minimum service already contracted

between them and the hotel management. It is a separate transaction between the customer and the staff of the hotel or restaurant, which is entered into at the customer's discretion.

- ✓ Customers can assess quality of service and decide whether or not to pay tip only after having the meal, the order said it is "not correct" if a hotel or restaurant considers that entry of a customer to its premises amounts to his or her implied consent to pay service charge.
- ✓ Any restriction on the entry into a hotel based on this amounts to restrictive trade practice as defined under the Act.

### 3. MPC warns of upside risks to inflation

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-business/mpc-warns-of-upside-risks-to-inflation/article18168485.ece>

- In the first bi-monthly monetary policy review of 2017-18, the RBI decided to keep the policy interest rate unchanged at 6.25%.
- While all the six members of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), that sets interest rate, voted in favour of a status quo,
- One member discussed the possibility of increasing the rate to achieve the 4% retail inflation target over the medium-term.
- According to him, a pre-emptive 25 basis points increase in the policy rate now would point MPC better at the target of 4% to which the Committee has committed explicitly.
- It will also obviate the need for back-loaded policy action later when inflation is unacceptably high and entrenched.
- Inflation outlook has many other risks.

## Topic: Science and Technology

### 4. After Mars, ISRO turns eye on Venus

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/after-mars-isro-turns-eye-on-venus/article18161738.ece?homepage=true>

#### What's in news?

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has invited scientists to suggest studies for a potential orbiter mission to Venus – somewhat similar to the one that landed in Mars in 2013
- ISRO plans to send a spacecraft that will initially go around Venus in an elliptical orbit (500 km x 60,000 km) before getting closer to the 'Yellow Planet'
- The spacecraft will carry a set of instruments weighing 175 kg and using 500W of power
- The scientific community has been given a month's time to suggest space-based studies by May 19

**When?**

- A formal mission may not happen before 2020 according to senior officials
- A mission must be approved by ISRO's Advisory Committee on Space Sciences, then the Space Commission and later by the government

**Why?**

- The planet, described as Earth's twin sister, is similar to our planet in size, mass, density, gravity and is also believed to be around 4.5 billion years old
- About Venus: Venus, the second planet from the Sun, comes closest to Earth roughly every 583 days, or about 19 months
- It is our closest planetary neighbour, and is similar to Earth in many aspects. However, it takes only 225 days to revolve around the Sun. Secondly, the surface is very hot due to nearness to the Sun

**Previous Missions:**

- India's previous and second planetary outing, the record-setting ₹450-crore Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) of 2013, continues to impress
- The orbiter is going round the Red Planet even as you read this — well beyond its planned life of six months
- MOM was sent on the light-lift PSLV launch vehicle. The more powerful GSLV rocket has started transporting regular communication satellites and may be an option for the Venus mission
- An orbiter sent to the Moon in 2008 was delivering data until about three months before its estimated life span came to an end. A second Moon landing mission is planned in early 2018

**International Missions:** Ever since the then USSR sent the Venera mission to Venus in February 1961, there have been close to 30 missions to the planet, the last one being Japan's Akatsuki in 2010. These comprised orbiters, landers, atmospheric probes and fly-bys

The erstwhile Soviet Union tops the list with 16 Veneras and two Vegas. The US had Mariner, Pioneer and Magellan missions. New missions are in the pipeline

**ARTICLE IN NEWS****1. Article 110. Definition of Money Bill**

(1) For the purposes of this Chapter, a Bill shall be deemed to be a Money Bill if it contains only provisions dealing with all or any of the following matters, namely

- (a) the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax;
- (b) the regulation of the borrowing of money or the giving of any guarantee by the Government of India, or the amendment of the law with respect to any

financial obligations undertaken or to be undertaken by the Government of India;

(c) the custody of the consolidated Fund or the Contingency Fund of India, the payment of moneys into or the withdrawal of moneys from any such Fund;

(d) the appropriation of moneys out of the consolidated Fund of India;

(e) the declaring of any expenditure to be expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund of India or the increasing of the amount of any such expenditure;

(f) the receipt of money on account of the Consolidated Fund of India or the public account of India or the custody or issue of such money or the audit of the accounts of the Union or of a State; or

(g) any matter incidental to any of the matters specified in sub clause (a) to (f)

(2) A Bill shall not be deemed to be a Money Bill by reason only that it provides for the imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or for the demand or payment of fees for licences or fees for services rendered, or by reason that it provides for the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax by any local authority or body for local purposes

(3) If any question arises whether a Bill is a Money Bill or not, the decision of the Speaker of the House of the People thereon shall be final

(4) There shall be endorsed on every Money Bill when it is transmitted to the Council of States under Article 109, and when it is presented to the President for assent under Article 111, the certificate of the Speaker of the House of the People signed by him that it is a Money Bill

### **Schemes in news:**

#### **1. UDAN-** Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik

- Civil Aviation Ministry's Regional Connectivity Scheme
- **Main motive:** A major step towards making flying a reality for the small town common man. UDAN is an innovative scheme to develop the regional aviation market. It is a market-based mechanism in which airlines bid for seat subsidies. This first-of-its-kind scheme globally will create affordable yet economically viable and profitable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.
- **Features:**
  - ✓ The scheme UDAN envisages providing connectivity to un-served and under-served airports of the country through revival of existing air-

strips and airports. The scheme would be in operation for a period of 10 years.

- ✓ UDAN has a unique market-based model to develop regional connectivity. Interested airline and helicopter operators can start operations on hitherto un-connected routes by submitting proposals to the Implementing Agency. The operators could seek a Viability Gap Funding (VGF) apart from getting various concessions. All such route proposals would then be offered for competitive bidding through a reverse bidding mechanism and the route would be awarded to the participant quoting the lowest VGF per Seat. The operator submitting the original proposal would have the Right of First Refusal on matching the lowest bid in case his original bid is within 10% of the lowest bid. The successful bidder would then have exclusive rights to operate the route for a period of three years. Such support would be withdrawn after a three year period, as by that time, the route is expected to become self-sustainable.
- ✓ The selected airline operator would have to provide a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 40 UDAN Seats ( subsidized rates ) on the UDAN Flights for operations through fixed wing aircraft and a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 13 Seats on the Flights for operations through helicopters. On each such route, the minimum frequency would be three and maximum of seven departures per week. Route networks would also be encouraged under the scheme to achieve economies of scale and optimal usage of aircraft.
- ✓ The fare for a one hour journey of appx. 500 km on a fixed wing aircraft or for a 30 minute journey on a helicopter would now be capped at Rs. 2,500, with proportionate pricing for routes of different stage lengths / flight duration.
- ✓ This would be achieved through (1) a financial stimulus in the form of concessions from Central and State governments and airport operators and (2) a Viability Gap Funding to the interested airlines to kick-off operations from such airports so that the passenger fares are kept affordable.
- ✓ Central Government would provide concessions in the form of reduced excise duty, service tax.
- ✓ State governments will have to lower the VAT on ATF to 1% or less, besides providing security and fire services free of cost and electricity, water and other utilities at substantially concessional rates.
- ✓ Airport operators shall not impose Landing and Parking charge and Terminal Navigation Landing Charges in addition to discounts on Route Navigation Facility Charges.

- ✓ A Regional Connectivity Fund would be created to meet the viability gap funding requirements under the scheme. The RCF levy per departure will be applied to certain domestic flights.
- ✓ The partner State Governments (other than North Eastern States and Union Territories where contribution will be 10 %) would contribute a 20% share to this fund. For balanced regional growth, the allocations under the scheme would be equitably spread across the five geographical regions of the country viz. North, West, South, East and North-east.
- ✓ The States have a key role under the scheme. The selection of airports where UDAN operations would start would be done in consultation with State Government and after confirmation of their concessions.
- ✓ The UDAN is likely to give a major fillip to tourism and employment generation in the hinterland. Through introduction of helicopters and small aircraft, it is also likely to significantly reduce travel timings in remote and hilly regions, as well as islands and other areas of the country.

**Prelims worthy factual information:**

1. **UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property:** The UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property is an international treaty. It is the first international instrument dedicated to the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property. India is a signatory to this convention.
2. **Deer musk:** It is a substance with a persistent odor, obtained from a gland of the male musk deer situated in its back/rectal area. The substance has been extensively used as a perfume fixative, incense material, and medicine, since ancient times. It was and still is one of the most expensive animal products in the world. The name originates from the Persian word moshk meaning "deer's navel".  
Musk deer—more commonly known as Kasturi in India—of the Himalayas is one of the most endangered species in the region. Scent glands from these deer can fetch thousands of rupees and are used for manufacturing perfume and medicine.
3. The **H-1B visa** is a non-immigrant visa that allows U.S. companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise in specialised fields.

## PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Identify the correct statement with reference to K9 Vajra
  - A. It is a Submarine
  - B. It is an artillery gun
  - C. It is a naval ship
  - D. None of the above

Correct Answer: B

Topic: Current Affair

Level: Moderate

**Explanation: India, South Korea to sign MoU to boost defence ties**

**What's in news?**

- ✓ India and South Korea signed two agreements:
  - a) To build artillery guns for the Army - **K9 Vajra-T tracked**, self-propelled artillery guns.

2. **Section 139AA inserted in the Income Tax Act, which was in news recently deals with?**

- A. Provision of Aadhaar being mandatory for getting a PAN.
- B. Provision of Aadhaar being mandatory for getting a GST number.
- C. Provision of Aadhaar being mandatory for getting IT rebates.
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: A

Topic: Economics

Level: Moderate

Explanation: **Section 139AA inserted in the Income Tax Act:** Makes Aadhaar mandatory for getting a PAN. Possession of an Aadhaar card is necessary for the continuing validity of an existing PAN and for filing returns under the income tax law.

3. Recently government of India issued Guidelines on Fair Trade Practices Related to Charging of Service Charge from Consumers by Hotels and Restaurants, Identify the correct statement with reference to that guidelines.

- A. Consumers are not given the right to decide service charge.
- B. Hotels and restaurants to decide how much service charge is to be paid by the customer.
- C. It is mandatory for the consumers to give a tip to the waiter or waitress.
- D. None of the above

Correct Answer: D

Topic: Current Affairs

Level: Moderate

Explanation: **The Guidelines on Fair Trade Practices Related to Charging of Service Charge from Consumers by Hotels and Restaurants-**

- ✓ The government approved new guidelines which gives consumers the right to decide service charge they wish to voluntarily pay on a hotel or restaurant bill.
- ✓ While the new norms provide relief to those dining out, the hotel industry is not likely to take it lying down as they feel being singled out.
- ✓ The new guidelines has been issued in public interest to protect consumers right
- ✓ Mandatory levy of service charge amounts to unfair trade practice.
- ✓ Hotels and restaurants should not decide how much service charge is to be paid by the customer and it should be left to the discretion of the customer.
- ✓ The (food) bill presented to the customer may clearly display that the service charge is voluntary and the service charge column of the bill may be left blank for the customer to fill before making payment.
- ✓ The guidelines made it clear that a component of service is inherent in provision of food and beverages ordered by a customer and pricing of the product is expected to cover both goods and service components.
- ✓ Placing of an order by a customer amounts to his or her agreement to pay the prices displayed on the menu card along with the applicable taxes. Charges for anything other than the aforementioned without express consent of the customer would amount to unfair trade practices as defined under the Act
- ✓ Tip or gratuity paid by customers is towards hospitality received by them beyond the basic minimum service already contracted between them and the hotel management. It is a separate transaction between the customer and the staff of the hotel or restaurant, which is entered into at the customers discretion.
- ✓ Customers can assess quality of service and decide whether or not to pay tip only after having the meal, the order said it is "not correct" if a hotel or restaurant considers that entry of a customer to its premises amounts to his or her implied consent to pay service charge.
- ✓ Any restriction on the entry into a hotel based on this amounts to restrictive trade practice as defined under the Act.

4. As per article 110 of the Constitution of India , who endorse the money bill?  
A. Speaker of Lok Sabha



- B. Chairman of Rajya Sabha
- C. President of India
- D. Finance Minister

Correct Answer: A

Topic: Polity

Level: Easy

**Explanation:**

**Article 110. Definition of Money Bill**

(1) For the purposes of this Chapter, a Bill shall be deemed to be a Money Bill if it contains only provisions dealing with all or any of the following matters, namely

(a) the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax;

(b) the regulation of the borrowing of money or the giving of any guarantee by the Government of India, or the amendment of the law with respect to any financial obligations undertaken or to be undertaken by the Government of India;

(c) the custody of the consolidated Fund or the Contingency Fund of India, the payment of moneys into or the withdrawal of moneys from any such Fund;

(d) the appropriation of moneys out of the consolidated Fund of India;

(e) the declaring of any expenditure to be expenditure charged on the Consolidated Fund of India or the increasing of the amount of any such expenditure;

(f) the receipt of money on account of the Consolidated Fund of India or the public account of India or the custody or issue of such money or the audit of the accounts of the Union or of a State; or

(g) any matter incidental to any of the matters specified in sub clause (a) to (f)

(2) A Bill shall not be deemed to be a Money Bill by reason only that it provides for the imposition of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or for the demand or payment of fees for licences or fees for services rendered, or by reason that it provides for the imposition, abolition, remission, alteration or regulation of any tax by any local authority or body for local purposes

(3) If any question arises whether a Bill is a Money Bill or not, the decision of the Speaker of the House of the People thereon shall be final

(4) There shall be endorsed on every Money Bill when it is transmitted to the Council of States under Article 109, and when it is presented to the President

for assent under Article 111, the certificate of the Speaker of the House of the People signed by him that it is a Money Bill

5. How many times money bill gets endorsed by the Speaker of the House
- A. Once
  - B. Twice
  - C. Thrice
  - D. None of the above

Correct Answer: B

Topic: Polity

Level: Easy

**Explanation:** There shall be endorsed on every Money Bill when it is transmitted to the Council of States under Article 109, and when it is presented to the President for assent under Article 111, the certificate of the Speaker of the House of the People signed by him that it is a Money Bill