BYJU'S
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18 Mar 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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A. GS1 Related

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B. GS2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India, Maldives agree to cooperate on defence, development, health

Context:

The External Affairs Minister was on a visit to Maldives. In a meeting between the two counterparts, India and Maldives have decided to ramp up cooperation in various fields as the two nations restarted the Joint Commission talks after a break of 15 years.

Details:

- India and Maldives discussed cooperation in defence and security, trade, economic development partnership, connectivity, health, energy, HRD, culture and tourism.
- Following the meeting, the two sides signed MoUs on cooperation between Foreign Service Institutes of both countries and for cooperation sports and youth affairs.
- Three agreements on visa facilitation for diplomatic and official passport holders, development cooperation, and renewable energy were also signed.
- They agreed on a broad spectrum of issues for further collaboration, including development cooperation and enhancing people-to-people contact.
- Swaraj reiterated PM Narendra Modi's words, saying that "India attaches the highest importance to further developing and expanding its relationship with Maldives on basis of mutual trust and sensitivity to each other's interest."

Importance of the meeting:

- Ties between New Delhi and Male came under strain during former Maldivian President Abdulla Yameen's five-year rule, which saw him cosying up with China for various development projects, cracking down on dissent and imposing a state of emergency by jailing opposition leaders.
- Relations deteriorated after the then President Abdulla Yameen imposed emergency on February 5 last year.
- India had criticised his decision and asked his government to restore the credibility of the electoral and political process by releasing political prisoners. The emergency lasted for 45 days.
- Solih became president in November after he defeated Yameen in presidential elections.
- Solih visited India in December last year during which India announced a USD 1.4 billion financial assistance to the island nation.
- External Affairs Minister's visit to the Maldives is aimed at strengthening the "close and friendly relations" between the two nations.

C. GS3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. Migration in Bengal delta driven by livelihood issues, social factors

Context:

An international study titled "Deltas, Vulnerability and Climate Change: Migration and Adaptation (DECMA) reveals that Economic reasons are the precipitating factor for migration in the Indian Bengal Delta that comprises the Sunderbans.

Details:

- The study covers 51 blocks of districts of South and North 24 Parganas

- The study was held between 2014 and 2018 focusing on three deltas Ganga Brahmaputra Meghna Delta (India and Bangladesh) Volta (Ghana) and Mahanadi (India)
- It looks into the aspect of climate change, adaptation and migration in these deltas.
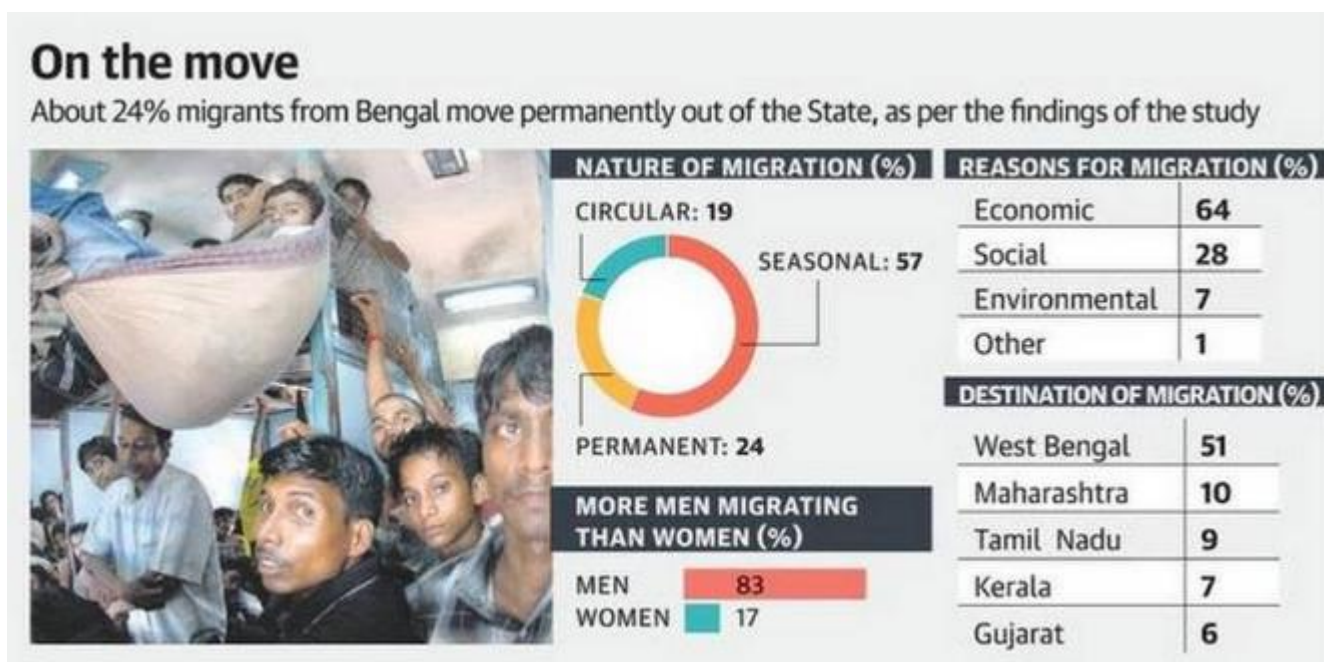
What does the DECMA study say?

- The study reveals that 64% people migrate because of economic reasons, unsustainable agriculture, lack of economic opportunities and debt; 28 % of the migration from the region is for social reasons and about 7% for environmental reasons like cyclones and flooding.
- The study also points out that there is huge gender disparity when it comes to those migrating from the region.
- When it comes to migration in the Indian Bengal Delta, the study finds a huge gender disparity, with men outnumbering women by almost five times. It shows that of the people migrating 83% are men and only 17 % are women. While most of the men migrate due to economic reasons, women do so, driven by mostly social factors.
- The DECMA report also finds that most migrants both in case of men and women are young, in the age group of 20-30 years.
- In terms of the destination of migrations, the study finds that 51% of migration from the Indian Bengal Delta is to other areas of the State particularly to the city of Kolkata, 10% to Maharashtra, 9% to Tamil Nadu, 7% Kerala and 6% to Gujarat.
- It shows that 57% of migration is seasonal, where people move once or twice a year; 19% is circular where those migrating move thrice a year irrespective of reasons and 24% permanent where people intend to stay for at least six months in the place they are migrating to.
- According to experts behind the study, one of the reasons for migration is failed adaptation in the areas which are under stress due to climate change.

Vulnerable areas:

In the study, experts also map the climate change hot spots and highest risk areas of Sunderbans based on an analysis of climate change hazards. The areas of Gosaba, Basanti, Kultali, Sagar, Kakdwip, Namkhana, Canning and Mathurapur (all in South 24 Parganas) have high levels of agriculture dependency and so are sensitive to climate hazards such as flood and salinity.

What is Circular Migration?

Circular migration or repeat migration is the temporary and usually repetitive movement of a migrant worker between home and host areas, typically for the purpose of employment. It represents an established pattern of population mobility, whether cross-country or rural-urban.

On the move

About 24% migrants from Bengal move permanently out of the State, as per the findings of the study

NATURE OF MIGRATION (%)
- CIRCULAR: 19
- SEASONAL: 57
- PERMANENT: 24

REASONS FOR MIGRATION (%)

Economic	64
Social	28
Environmental	7
Other	1

DESTINATION OF MIGRATION (%)

West Bengal	51
Maharashtra	10
Tamil Nadu	9
Kerala	7
Gujarat	6

MORE MEN MIGRATING THAN WOMEN (%)

MEN	83
WOMEN	17

2. A bond that's not worth its weight in gold

Issue:

Preference for physical gold, need for demat accounts, lock-in period are all deterrents to the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme. Indians' cultural preference for physical gold, coupled with a lack of incentives on the supply side have meant that the Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme, launched in late 2015, is yet to take off in any significant way.

What is Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme?

- SGBs are government securities denominated in grams of gold. They are substitutes for holding physical gold. Investors have to pay the issue price in cash and the bonds will be redeemed in cash on maturity.
- The Bond is issued by Reserve Bank on behalf of Government of India.
- The quantity of gold for which the investor pays is protected, since he receives the ongoing market price at the time of redemption/ premature redemption.
- The SGB offers a superior alternative to holding gold in physical form. The risks and costs of storage are eliminated.
- Investors are assured of the market value of gold at the time of maturity and periodical interest.
- SGB is free from issues like making charges and purity in the case of gold in jewellery form.
- The bonds are held in the books of the RBI or in demat form eliminating risk of loss of scrip etc.

Why was SGB Scheme introduced?

The government had announced the SGB scheme in November 2015 in an effort to wean people away from purchasing physical gold and encouraging them to buy gold bonds instead. The idea was to help reduce the quantity of the yellow metal imported every year, thereby reining in a rising current account deficit.

Details:

- Despite the introduction of the scheme, gold imports have remained at elevated levels.
- The SGB scheme, and the other gold schemes the government had introduced, such as the Gold Monetisation Scheme, have all fared fairly poorly compared with their targets over the years.
- Some analysts said the poor response to the SGB scheme is because people prefer physical gold, while others argued that the design of the SGB Scheme is faulty and so, people are not attracted towards it.
- Demand for gold in India is primarily in the form of jewellery. The argument is SGBs don't provide an alternative to that but only to those looking for investment options.
- Apart from buyer behaviour, the other factor dissuading people from buying gold bonds is the method of purchase and the lack of education about the procedure and the benefits of gold bonds over physical gold.
- It also comes with a lock-in period post-purchase.

Way forward:

- Experts are of the opinion that the Scheme has to be revised by looking at it from the buyers' perspective.
- The scheme has to be made attractive as there are already a plethora of options like fixed deposit, corporate bonds, equity, mutual funds, exchange traded funds, liquid funds apart from the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme.
- From the supply side, there has to be a push from the people selling the bonds, be it the government or authorised dealers.
- Penetration of Demat accounts has to increase.
- Masses should be educated about extent of ease of investing in SGB, and also what advantages gold bonds have over physical gold.
- There are a number of changes such as removing the lock-in and allowing gold bonds to be sold on tap that the government can do to at least spur the scheme on from where it is languishing at present.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Only 26% of rural toilets use twin-leach pits: survey

Context:

With the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme claiming to be on the verge of completing toilet construction for all rural households, a government-commissioned survey shows that just over a quarter of rural toilets use the twin-pit system.

What is twin-pit system?

- Under the twin-pit system, two pits are dug with honeycombed walls and earthen floors which allow liquid to percolate into the surrounding soil.
- When one pit is filled and closed off, waste flow is transferred to the second pit, allowing waste in the first pit to be converted into manure after a year or two.
- The twin pit has been promoted by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and the World Health Organisation as an in-situ sanitation system, which claims to bypass thorny issues as owners will be dealing with manure, not excreta.
- With the government intensively promoting twin pits over the last two years, it is unsurprising that the highest ratio of twin pits are found in States which have only recently completed toilet construction.
- Jharkhand, which is second on the list, with almost 58% of its toilets connected to twin pits, was declared open defecation free (ODF) only late last year.
- Uttar Pradesh, which tops the list with 64% of toilets with twin pits, had made the technology mandatory for anyone who wanted to avail the government's ₹12,000 subsidy to build toilets.

Details:

- A government advertisement featuring film actors has been preaching the benefits of the "do gadde" or twin-pit latrines, which would create valuable farm manure from human excreta. "Shauchalaya ka ashirvad," proclaims Mr. Akshay Kumar in the advertisement produced by the Centre's flagship sanitation scheme Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
- The Hindu's analysis of raw data from the National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey 2018-19, shows that just 26.6% of rural households use the recommended twin-pit system to dispose of excreta from their toilets. S
- Septic tanks are the most popular option, with 28% of toilets connected to a septic tank with a soak pit and 6% to a tank without a soak pit.
- Others use a single leach pit (18%) or a closed pit (11%). Open pits, open drains or nallahs, or simply discarding waste directly into a nearby pond or waterbody are the other options, while a few toilets are connected to a closed drain leading to a sewer system.
- A 2018 survey of 30 cities and towns in Uttar Pradesh by the Centre for Science and Environment found that 87% of toilet waste is dumped into water bodies and farm lands.

What is the issue with Twin Pit System?

The waste from the remainder of rural toilets could create a new nightmare — harmful to health and the environment, and even pushing a new generation into manual scavenging. It's not enough to connect [the toilet] to a drain if it is simply emptied out into local land or ponds. It will lead to large-scale pollution of groundwater.

Way forward:

- For the more than 70% of toilets without twin pits, a faecal sludge management system is desperately needed.
- How is the faecal sludge going to be emptied, transported and treated? – has to be an immediate priority.

2. A viable alternative to open-heart surgery

Context:

The findings of a study performed by seven cardiothoracic surgeons at six private institutions over 13 months were presented at the American Association for Thoracic Surgeons.

Details:

- Doctors across multiple hospitals in India have asserted that performing coronary bypass surgery on beating hearts is just as effective as surgery performed on the organ when stopped.
- The findings, overturn the prevailing notion in the West that bypass surgery on a beating heart can be less effective than surgery on stopped hearts.
- It was shown that graft patency, risks of death, kidney problems and paralytic stroke after surgery are similar for Indian patients in either of the surgeries.
- Coronary Artery Bypass Surgery (CABG), commonly referred to as bypass surgery, has traditionally been performed after stopping the heart and connecting the body's circulation to a heart-lung machine (HLM).
- The HLM, referred by doctors as 'the pump', helps the body meet its oxygen and nutrient requirement by taking over the functioning of heart and lungs for the duration of the surgery.
- In the case of surgery without a pump, the heart is not stopped. The surgeon proceeds to bypass the blocked coronary artery with a graft, which is a blood vessel obtained from another part of the part like the chest or the leg.
- According to the team, nearly 60% of the bypass surgeries being performed in India every year are off-bump surgeries on beating heart.

Category: ENVIRONMENT

1. Pollution: 6 States told to submit action plan

Context:

NGT has directed 6 States to Submit Action Plan by April 30, to bring air quality standards within prescribed norms. The states, where action plans are found to be deficient and deficiencies are not removed till April 30, will be liable to pay Rs 25 lakh each.

Details:

- A Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel ordered the Chief Secretaries of Assam, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Nagaland governments to submit their plan within the stipulated time.
- It said that budgetary provision must be made for execution of such plans.
- The direction came after the CPCB informed the green panel that out of 102 cities, action plan has been received from 83 cities, while 19 have not submitted it.
- NGT said "The CPCB is directed to update the number of cities. If on parameters applied, there are other cities, not included in list of 102, they may be also included,".

Carrying capacity:

- Concerned over the threat posed to limited natural resources due to their overuse, the tribunal has directed assessment of carrying capacity of 102 cities, including Delhi, where the air quality does not meet the national ambient air quality standards.
- The concept of "carrying capacity" addresses the question as to how many people can be permitted into any area without the risk of degrading the environment there.
- It had said that it is undisputed that air pollution is a matter of serious concern and large number of deaths take place every year in the country on account of air pollution.
- The NGT had said that Delhi is over-polluted and figures quite high in the ranking of most polluted cities and there is no study about the capacity of the city with respect to the extent of population which can be accommodated and number of vehicles which can be handled by its roads.

2. New hydro policy to help meet renewables target

Context:

The Union Cabinet approved a new hydroelectricity policy that, among other things, included large hydro projects within the ambit of renewable energy.

Background:

Prior to the policy, only small hydro projects of a capacity of less than 25 MW were treated as renewable energy. Large hydro projects were treated as a separate source of energy.

Details:

- India's renewable energy sector had an installed capacity of 75,055.92 MW as of February 2019, according to data with the Central Electricity Authority. This made up about 21.4% of the overall energy mix, with the rest coming from thermal, nuclear and large hydro sources.
- With the inclusion of large hydro in renewable energy, the energy mix changes drastically.
    1. Whereas earlier, wind energy contributed nearly 50% of all renewable energy capacity, it will now make up only 29.3%.
    2. Similarly, solar energy's share will fall from 34.68% to 21.61%. T
    3. The hydro sector, however, will see its share grow from just over 6% to over 41%.
- While the government's decision to re-classify large hydroelectric projects as renewable energy will certainly help the sector, the move will also go a long way in meeting the targets set by it for the sector.
- It must be noted that this is a purely cosmetic change. No additional resources have been created through this policy. It is a reclassification of existing capacity.

Huge imbalance:

- "There has been a huge imbalance in the thermal-hydro mix for the last few years because of a sharp growth in thermal and complete stagnation in hydro.
- The basic idea is to ramp up hydro because it provides grid stability which a renewable source like wind and solar do not. The key reasoning seems to be providing grid stability and a better energy mix.
- Other analysts, say that the government has additional reasons for bringing in such a re-classification, which have more to do with the renewable energy targets it set for itself.
- Apart from the good to the sector, one main reason for the re-classification of hydro as renewables is to add all that capacity to the renewable energy kitty.
- The move will help in reaching the 175 GW renewable energy target by 2022," a sector analyst said on the condition of anonymity.

Category: SECURITY

1. Balakot air strikes: When key naval assets were put on alert

Context:

As tensions between India and Pakistan mounted, India put its key naval assets, including the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya and nuclear submarines, on operational alert.

Details:

- The deployment came amid the largest war game of the Navy, Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX 19), which began on January 7 and which was planned to be concluded by March 10.
- However, the terrorist attack in Pulwama on February 14 "led to the rapid redeployment of the Navy for operations in the North Arabian Sea," the Navy said.
- The Navy said the availability of a large number of combat-ready assets in the theatre of operations for TROPEX allowed it to "expeditiously respond to the developing situation in synergy with the three services."
- "The overwhelming superiority of the Indian Navy in all three dimensions forced the Pakistan Navy to remain deployed close to the Makran coast and not venture out in the open ocean," the Navy said.

TROPEX 19:

- Theatre Level Readiness and Operational Exercise (TROPEX) is an inter-service military exercise involving the participation of the Indian Army, Air Force, Navy and the Coast Guard.
- The exercise generally commences at the beginning of each year and lasts a month.

- It is generally carried out in three phases: independent workup phase, joint workup phase and tactical phase.
- The exercise is designed to test the combat readiness of the Indian naval units, as well as the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard.
- About 60 ships of the Navy, 12 ships of the Coast Guard and 60 aircraft had taken part in the exercise – TROPEX 19.
- It began with a tri-service amphibious exercise in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- This was followed by the largest coastal defence exercise, 'Sea Vigil,' on January 22 and 23, with the participation of all 13 coastal States and UTs along with all maritime stakeholders.

INS Vikramaditya:

- INS Vikramaditya was built in 1987 and had served the Soviet navy (named as Baku).
- India had purchased it in 2004 at cost of $2.3 billion and was commissioned in Indian Navy in November 2013 at Severodvinsk in Russia.
- Its design is based on Kiev-class aircraft carriers.
- It is 284 metres long and 60 metres high (high as 20-storeyed building). It weighs 40,000 tonnes and is biggest and heaviest ship in the Indian Navy.
- Its air wing consists of 30 MiG 29K fighter jets and six Kamov helicopters.
- It is based atits home port at Karwar in Karnataka.

2. Second Scorpene submarine ready for induction

Context:

The Navy is set to induct the second Scorpene submarine *Khanderi* by early May, a defence source said.

Details:

- Khanderi was launched in January 2017 and has since been undergoing a series of trials.
- The remaining submarines in the series are in advanced stages of manufacturing and trials.
- Another source stated that the fourth submarine *Vela*is ready to be launched into water for trials around the same time depending on the ocean tide.
- Mazagon Dock Limited (MDL), Mumbai, is manufacturing six Scorpene submarines under technology transfer from Naval Group of France under a 2005 contract worth $3.75 bn. After a series of delays in the project, the first submarine of the class *Kalvari* joined service in December 2017. The entire project is expected to be completed by 2020.
- The third in the Scorpene series Karanj which was launched in January last year is in advanced stage of trials and could be ready for induction by year end.
- The last two submarines Vagir and Vagsheer are in advanced stages of manufacturing on the assembly line. The fifth submarine is in the final stages of being booted together. The 'Boot Together' is where the five separate sections are welded together to form the submarine.
- Kalvari is the first modern conventional submarine inducted by the Navy in almost two decades.
- In addition, the Navy currently operates four German HDW class submarines and nine Russian Kilo class submarines.
- The Navy had last inducted a conventional diesel-electric submarine, INS Sindhushastra, procured from Russia in July 2000.

3. Good response to trials of ocean surveillance ship

Context:

The sea trials of India's first and most prestigious missile tracking ocean surveillance ship built at the Ministry of Defence-owned Hindustan Shipyard Limited have received an encouraging response.

Details:

- After successful harbour trials, Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) is now conducting a series of sea trials to prove the ship's resilience for any type of situation. It will be handed over to the Ministry of Defence

shortly.

- The ship, being built under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister's Office and the National Security Adviser, is being referred to as yard number VC 11184.
- It will get a formal name to be chosen by the Navy once it is inducted into the naval fleet.
- The ship, a highly confidential project. The hull for the ship, which will provide a shot in the arm to the strategic weapons programme including Indian Ballistic Missile Development Programme.
- It has a displacement capacity of over 10,000 tonnes with carrying capacity for a complement of 300 crew members and a helicopter. It has a primary X-band and two secondary S-band scanned array and missile tracking antennas.

Turnaround:

- HSL, set up in 1941, has achieved a turnaround. The yard is all set to record a net profit for four year in a row.
- Visakhapatnam is the headquarters of the submarine arm of the Navy, Marine Commandos.
- A Naval Alternate Operational Base is under development at Rambilli near to dock Arihant-class nuclear-powered submarines being built at the Ship Building Centre, also located in the city.

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY: EXTREMISM

1. Christchurch Massacre

Editorial Analysis:

What's in the news?

- On 15th of March, at least 49 people were killed by a terrorist in two mosques in Christchurch and the attack has left New Zealand shaken to the core.
- The attack is a wakeup call on the rising threat of anti-immigration, white supremacist cult.

The suspect and his motives

- An Australian national, Brenton Harrison Tarrant, is believed to be the suspect and he livestreamed the massacre on social media after releasing a white supremacist manifesto titled 'The Great Replacement Manifesto'.
- The manifesto is loaded with far-right wing extremist ideas and uses the language of white supremacists and neo-Nazis.
- It called for removing the "invaders" and "retaking" Europe, a clear indication of the attacker's anti-immigration views and Islamophobia.
- The document and the symbols he carried clearly suggest that he was influenced by far-right terrorists and their anti-Muslim, anti-immigration and anti-Semite ideology. His targets were clearly Muslims, who make up less than 1% of New Zealand's population.
- He wore military fatigues, carried neo-Nazi emblems and was listening in his car to a song devoted to Bosnian war criminal Radovan Karadžić.
- His manifesto lauds Anders Breivik, the Norwegian far-right terrorist who killed 77 people in 2011 who had released a 1,518-page racist manifesto.
- He also mentions US President Donald Trump as a "symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose" in his manifesto.

What is White Supremacism?

- White ssupremacy or white supremacism is the racist belief that white people are superior to people of

other races and therefore should be dominant over them.

- White supremacy has roots in scientific racism, and it often relies on pseudoscientific arguments.
- Like most similar movements such as neo-Nazism, white supremacists typically oppose members of other races as well as Jews.

White Supremacism across the world

United States

- White supremacy was dominant in the United States both before and after the American Civil War, and it also persisted for decades after the Reconstruction Era.
- After the mid-1960s, white supremacy remained an important ideology to the American far-right.
- White supremacist groups (such as the Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazi organizations, and racist skinheads) and a religious fundamentalist movement (such as Christian Identity) were notorious for targeting non-whites and immigrants.
- This extremist ideology has witnessed a resurgence in the US after the 2016 Presidential elections which fueled anti-immigration hatred and Islamophobia.

Europe

- White supremacist ideology was dominant in many European countries during the colonial era.
- The imperial powers believed that the whites were of a superior race as compared to the non-white natives in their colonies.
- It was pre-dominant during the world wars and it was later countered by modern, liberal and progressive values.
- But in the last one decade the ideology is being revived in several countries including Britain, France, the Scandinavian countries etc.
- This is believed to be an outcome of the culture of hatred, Islamophobia and Xenophobia which has been cultivated by certain political parties and their leaders following the huge flow of refugees and immigrants in to Europe over the last 15 years and a series of terror attacks on European soil attributed to radical Islamic outfits such as AL-Qaeda and ISIS.

Germany

- Nazism promoted the idea of a superior Germanic people or Aryan race in Germany during the early 20th century.
- Notions of white supremacy and Aryan racial superiority were combined in the 19th century, with white supremacists maintaining the belief that white people were members of an Aryan "master race" which was superior to other races, particularly the Jews, who were described as the "Semitic race".
- In the 1930's systematic anti-Semitic violence was unleashed by the Nazis against the Jews.

South Africa

- A number of Southern African nations experienced severe racial tension and conflict during global decolonization, particularly as white Africans of European ancestry fought to protect their preferential social and political status.
- Racial segregation in South Africa began in colonial times under the Dutch Empire, and it continued when the British took over the Cape of Good Hope in 1795.
- Apartheid was introduced as an officially structured policy after the general election of 1948. Apartheid's legislation divided inhabitants into four racial groups—"black", "white", "colored", and "Indian", with colored divided into several sub-classifications.
- In 1970, the government abolished non-white political representation, and starting that year black people were deprived of South African citizenship. South Africa abolished apartheid only in 1991.

Resurgence of Right-wing terrorism in Western countries

- Right-wing racist terror, which has largely been on the fringes in the post-war world, is emerging as a major political and security threat, especially in white majority societies.
- In recent years, mosques in Germany and France have been targeted; in Britain an MP was stabbed to death; and in the U.S. a synagogue was attacked, leaving 11 people dead.
- In most cases, the attackers were obsessed with immigration and the far-right ideas of Euro-Christian white racial purity, which is fundamentally not different from the ideology of the Nazis.
- The language these attackers use resembles that of mainstream anti-immigrant politicians in Western countries, such as Mr. Trump, who wanted to ban Muslims from entering the U.S.; Viktor Orbán, the Prime Minister of Hungary, who wants to defend "Christian Europe"; or Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini, known for his hardline views on migrants.
- Besides, a number of far-right parties known for their Islamophobic, white nationalist views are either in power in Europe or are on the rise, be it the Freedom Party of Austria, the AfD of Germany or the National Front of France.
- While they and their leaders set the broad contours of anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic politics as part of their nationalist narrative, neo-Nazis such as Breivik and the Christchurch shooter are killing common people.

Conclusion

- Societies worldwide should wake up to the growing danger right-wing racist terrorism poses, and not view it as mere isolated, irrational responses to Islamist terror.
- It has to be fought politically, by driving a counter-narrative to white supremacism, and by using the security apparatus, through allocation of enough resources to tackle all threats of violence.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: UNSC

1. Nehru, China, and the Security Council seat

Editorial Analysis:

What's in the news?

- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley recently blamed India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, for favouring China over India for permanent membership in the UN Security Council.
- His statement obviously refers to Washington's feeler sent to New Delhi in August 1950 through the Indian Ambassador in the U.S., mentioning the American desire to remove China from permanent membership of the UNSC and possibly replace it with India.
- The assumption that Nehru was responsible for the lost opportunity is the result of the critics' inability to comprehend the complexity of the international situation in the early 1950s and the very tentative nature of the inquiry.

Understanding the Asian landscape during the Cold War

- During the early days of the Cold War, The People's Republic of China, had just emerged from a bloody civil war and was seen at the time as the Soviets' closest ally
- The PRC was prevented from taking its permanent seat in the UNSC because of American opposition premised on Cold War logic.
- Furthermore, war was raging in the Korean peninsula, with U.S. and allied troops locked in fierce combat with North Korean forces supported by China and the Soviet Union.
- Nehru was trying to carve a policy that ensured India's security, strategic autonomy and state-led industrialisation in these very dangerous times. He was well aware of the fact that pushing China out, as the U.S. wished to do, was a recipe for perpetual conflict that could engulf all of Asia.
- Nehru did not want India to get embroiled in hazardous Cold War conflicts and become a pawn in the superpowers' great game risking its own security.
- Nehru's approach to China was dictated by realpolitik and not wishful thinking. He understood that peace could not be assured in Asia without accommodating a potential great power like China and providing it with its proper place in the international system.
- Moreover, China was India's next door neighbour and it was essential for New Delhi to keep relations

with China on an even keel and not fall prey to the urgings of outside powers, the U.S. foremost among them, which were following their own agendas that had nothing to do with Indian security interests.

Possible impact if India had taken up the 'so-called' American offer

- Nehru refused to consider the American feeler not because he was a wide-eyed Sinophile but because he was well aware that all Washington was interested in was to use India for its own ends.
- Had India accepted the American bait, it would have meant enduring enmity with China without the achievement of a permanent seat in the UNSC.
- The Soviet Union, then China's closest ally, would have vetoed any such move since it would have required amendment of the UN Charter that is subject to the veto of the permanent members.
- It would have also soured relations between India and the Soviet Union and made it impossible to establish the trust required to later build a close political and military relationship with Moscow that became necessary once the U.S. entered into an alliance relationship with Pakistan.
- The Indo-Soviet relationship paid immense dividends to India during the Bangladesh war of 1971.
- Jaitley and other critics of Nehru's eminently sensible decision not to fall into the American trap would do well to analyse the decision in the particular strategic and political context in which it was made and not allow their current political preferences to dictate their amateurish conclusions.

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

- The UNSC is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations.
- It is charged with the maintenance of international peace and security as well as accepting new members to the United Nations and approving any changes to its United Nations Charter.
- Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions;
- It is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to all member states of the UN.

Category: INDIAN ECONOMY: EMPLOYMENT

1. The problem is jobs, not wages

Editorial Analysis:

What's in the news?

- Multiple surveys point to a massive employment crisis in the country, yet the government steadfastly refuses to even acknowledge this issue, let alone address it.
- India is not unique in experiencing rising unemployment rates and, consequently, income inequality. Many developed and developing nations are grappling with this problem, too.
- Such a crisis requires acknowledgement of the issue first, then a vibrant public debate on solutions to tackle the crisis, and finally, a coordinated implementation of ideas.
- Instead, the govt. has failed to acknowledge the existence of a jobs crisis and neither is it looking to provide the diagnosis to it.

Understanding demand and supply in the job market

- There is this notion that India does not have a jobs crisis but a wages crisis. But what determines wages for an employee is the demand for such skills versus the supply of such skills.
- Wages are not determined by some external factor that is removed from labour market conditions. It is entirely a function of the labour market.
- If demand is higher than supply, wages automatically rise; if not, they remain stagnant. To understand the unemployment issue as a wages problem shows ignorance.

'Two-sector economy' identified by Arthur Lewis

- The proponents of the argument that there is a wage crisis and not a jobs crisis would do well to go back to economic history and study the work of Arthur Lewis, the Nobel Prize-winning economist from the West Indies.

- Lewis, in his seminal work in 1954, showed how in economies such as India and China, which have an "infinite supply of labour", there tends to be a two-sector economy — the capitalist sector and the subsistence sector.
- His summary finding was that the living standards of all citizens in such two-sector economies are determined by the wages of the people in the subsistence sector.
- If there is demand for labour and skills in the capitalist sector, then the endless supply of labour from the subsistence sector will transition, and wages will ultimately rise only when the demand for labour exceeds the supply of labour in the subsistence sector.
- The harsh and simple reality of India's jobs situation is that we are not creating as many jobs as we need to. There can be many reasons for the lack of our ability to generate enough jobs but at the very least, we must first acknowledge this problem.
- Calling this a wages crisis and not a jobs crisis is neither helpful nor sensible.

Need for formalizing the economy

- The proponents of the 'there is a wage crisis' argument also go on to say that the largely informal nature of India's economy leads to low productivity and hence keeps wages low.
- So, their solution for higher wages is to embark on a mission to explicitly formalise India's economy.
- Again, economic history tells us that formalisation is an outcome of economic development, not a cause.
- No large market economy in history has embarked on an explicit economic policy for forced formalisation.
- India's economic commentary today has a tendency to claim absolute truth based on limited subject experience.
- There is no need to complicate the state of India's jobs market. The simple truth of it is that we do not produce enough jobs.

F. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Prelims Fact

1. Flash floods

- A flash flood is a rapid flooding of low-lying areas: washes, rivers, dry lakes and basins. It may be caused by heavy rain associated with a severe thunderstorm, hurricane, tropical storm, or melt water from ice or snow flowing over ice sheets or snowfields.
- Flash floods may occur after the collapse of a natural ice or debris dam, or a human structure such as a man-made dam.
- Flash floods are distinguished from regular floods by having a timescale of fewer than six hours between rainfall and the onset of flooding.
- Flash floods can occur under several types of conditions. Flash flooding occurs when it rains rapidly on saturated soil or dry soil that has poor absorption ability. The runoff collects in gullies and streams and, as they join to form larger volumes, often forms a fast flowing front of water and debris.
- They most often occur in normally dry areas that have recently received precipitation, but they may be seen anywhere downstream from the source of the precipitation, even many miles from the source.

Read more about Floods.

H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Attappadi Reserve Forest is a protected area located in Tamil Nadu.
2. Attappadi Reserve Forest is an informal buffer zone bordering the Silent Valley National Park.

Which of the statement/s given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: b

Explanation:

Attappadi Reserve Forest is a protected area in Kerala. It is one of many reserved forests and protected forests of India. It is an informal buffer zone bordering the Silent Valley National Park (in Kerala) to the West.

Q2. Consider the following:

1. Indian Ocean – Cyclones
2. Hurricanes – Atlantic
3. Typhoons – Western Pacific and South China Sea
4. Willy-willies – Western Australia

Which of the following is NOT matched correctly?

a. 1 only
b. 2 and 3 only
c. All of the above
d. None of the above

Ans: d

Explanation: Self-explanatory. These are the names of cyclone in different regions.

Q3. Among the following, which is the oldest living animal in the world?

a. Chameleon
b. Gastrotrichs
c. Corals
d. Mayflies

Ans: c

Explanation:

- Chameleon, Corals and Mayflies have some of the shortest lifespans ranging from 24 hours to a few days.
- On the other hand, studies show that some corals can live for up to 5,000 years, making them the longest living animals on Earth.

Q4. From which of the countries, the Constitution of India has adopted fundamental duties?

a. USA
b. Canada
c. Erstwhile USSR
d. UK

Ans: c

Explanation: The Fundamental Duties in the Indian Constitution are inspired by the Constitution of erstwhile USSR.

I. Practice Questions for UPSC Mains Exam

Q1. Would reclassifying Hydro within the ambit of renewable energy help India reach the 175 GW Renewable Energy Target By 2022. (10 Marks)

Q2. Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme, launched in late 2015, is yet to take off in a significant way. What are the deterrents to the Scheme? Suggest measures to make it more attractive. (20 Marks)