

# 01 Apr 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### A. GS1 Related

#### **HISTORY**

1. [Going back to the salt pans of Mumbai](#)

### B. GS2 Related

### C. GS3 Related

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY**

1. [Spider research yet to pick up pace in India, say experts](#)
2. [SC suspends eco clearance for international airport in Goa](#)

### D. GS4 Related

### E. Editorials

#### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

1. [Seeking the next frontier - On India's ASAT test, Space militarisation](#)
2. [Kartarpur focus - On Kartarpur Corridor](#)

#### **SOCIAL ISSUES**

1. [The arrogance of the ignorant - On SC ruling on the Forest Rights Act, 2006](#)

### F. Tidbits

1. [A bond for life to save a garden in Mumbai](#)

### G. Prelims Fact

1. [MiG-27](#)
2. [H5N1 virus](#)

### H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

### I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

## A. GS1 Related

### Category: HISTORY

#### 1. [Going back to the salt pans of Mumbai](#)

##### Context:

A group of enthusiasts relives history, from Shivaji Maharaj to Gandhi's Dandi march, with a walk through Wadala.

##### Details:

- To mark the completion of 89 years of Salt Satyagraha led by Mahatma Gandhi, who marched 241 miles to Dandi along with 80 people to break the salt law imposed by the British, a group of enthusiasts in Mumbai relived a part of history by participating in a salt pan walk at Wadala organised by the Asiatic Society of Mumbai.
- Mumbai was always known for its salt pans. From Shivaji Maharaj to the British, everyone had an interest in this region because of its salt pans.
- The British had built a narrow-gauge railway between Mahul and Wadala and from Vikhroli towards Thane to collect and transport salt.
- Remains of these tracks are visible in some places. During Gandhi's salt satyagraha in 1930, many locations in Mumbai witnessed the civil disobedience movement, but the satyagraha at Wadala salt

pan was the most prominent.

- Thousands of satyagrahis would gather at the Wadala salt pans and often face brutal lathi charge.

### Importance of Salt pans:

- Salt pans play a significant role in the ecology of the city and an entire culture evolves around it.
- Shivaji Maharaj had fought a battle with the Portuguese to control the salt pans.
- Salt pans have different species of birds and insects thriving on them.
- They have an enormous water-holding capacity that helps in flood control.
- The communities that work on salt pans have their own songs revolving around them.
- But, there is a lack of awareness about salt pans. With the government's plan to use the salt pans for affordable housing projects, they now face a threat of extinction.
- Salt has a very rich history. It was the first commodity that was traded. It plays an important role in our body.

Read more about [Dandi March and Salt Satyagraha](#).

## B. GS2 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## C. GS3 Related

### Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

#### 1. Spider research yet to pick up pace in India, say experts

##### Context:

- Less encouragement to study the nitty-gritty and poor awareness are hurdles for spider research. The last major research was conducted between 1990s, 2000s.
- While the research in other parts of the world such as Thailand, Germany, Canada and the United States has been steady, experts said it is yet to pick up pace in India.

##### Details:

- The recent discovery of a new species of jumping spiders in Aarey Milk Colony in Mumbai has had arachnologists — specialists in spiders and related animals — and wildlife experts call for a greater focus on studying spiders in India.
- Experts believe a lot of diversities of spiders are yet to be discovered in India.
- Research on spiders was catalysed by Dr. B.K. Tikader, considered the father of Indian arachnology.
- While there are 4,800 species of spiders in the world, India alone accounts for 1,800 spider species.
- According to Dr. John Caleb, a Chennai-based arachnologist, who has been researching spiders for the last 10 years, species of spiders other than wolf, crab, orb-weaver and ground spiders have not received enough attention in India.

##### Importance:

- Spiders are important creatures as they are pest-controllers. They are like the tigers of the microhabitat world. Pulling them out could cause ecological imbalance.
- They are microhabitat specialists and are sensitive to sudden changes in their habitat, which makes

them the ideal environment indicators.

- They are an integral component of the food web, and they primarily control insect populations

### Jumping Spiders:

- In a study published by Russian peer-reviewed journal *Arthropoda Selecta*, it was announced that a new species of jumping spiders in Mumbai's Aarey Milk Colony was discovered.
- It is named after additional principal chief conservator of forest, Sunil Limaye, Jerzego sunillimaye.
- This species was found for the first time in 2016 while carrying out a survey in the unique, eco-sensitive, dry-deciduous habitat of Aarey Milk Colony.
- In the research that spanned over the next three years, researchers were able to understand the natural history of this species and explore interesting aspects that were not documented before.
- This is the only second species from the genus Jerzego to be found from India and the fourth from the world, makes the discovery of this spider species from Aarey even more special.

## 2. SC suspends eco clearance for international airport in Goa

### Context:

The Supreme Court Friday suspended the environmental clearance granted for an international airport at Mopa in Goa and directed Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) to revisit the decision in light of its impact on ecology.

### EIA Report:

The Court delved into the EIA Report in detail. It noted various aspects with respect to the EIA Report. Some of them were:

- Failure to notice the existence of Ecologically Sensitive Zones within a buffer distance of 1 km of the project site which the Court termed as a “glaring deficiency”;
- Collection of both primary and secondary data of fauna in the EIA report was perfunctory;
- Attempt to gloss over the existence of tree at the airport site and felling of over 50,000 trees which the court terms as a “serious omission” and “serious dereliction of duty”.

### Details:

- In this case, the court said how the State of Goa, the Centre and the concessionaire highlighted the need for the new airport to accommodate the increasing volume of passengers. They had urged the court to disregard the “flaws” in the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) process. They had argued that setting up a new airport was a “matter of policy.”
- The court said that the role of the decision-makers is to ensure that every important facet of the environment is adequately studied and that the impact of the proposed activity is carefully assessed. “The analysis has indicated that there has been a failure of due process,” the court held.
- It said that a glaring deficiency which emerges from the EIA report is its failure to notice the existence of Ecologically Sensitive Zones of Western Ghats within a buffer distance of 10 km of the project site.
- Upholding the need to strengthen the ‘environmental rule of law’ for both intra and inter-generational equity, it was held that every branch of governance and institutions across the country should strive to enforce this rule of law.
- While the most direct effect of a strong rule of law is protection of the environment, a firm regime against environmental exploitation would “strengthen rule of law more broadly, support sustainable economic and social development, protect public health, contribute to peace and security by avoiding and defusing conflict, and protect human and constitutional rights.”

- The apex court said transparency is necessary for the robust enforcement of environmental rule of law.

### What is an Expert appraisal committee?

Expert appraisal committees (EAC) exist at the Union as well as state levels (state expert appraisal committee or SEAC) to advise the government on environmental clearance of development projects.

- - The SC said that EAC shall carry out the exercise within a month of the receipt of a certified copy of this order.
- The court also said that if EAC allows the construction to proceed then it will impose such additional conditions which in its expert view will adequately protect the concerns about the terrestrial eco systems.
- EAC would be at liberty to lay down appropriate conditions concerning air, water, noise, land, biological and socio-economic environment.

## D. GS4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. Seeking the next frontier – On India's ASAT test, Space militarisation

##### Context:

Though India's ASAT test has not violated any norm it is a reminder of the need for a global regulatory regime.

##### Background:

- India carried out an anti-satellite (ASAT) test using an interceptor missile (as a kinetic kill vehicle) to neutralise a target satellite (possibly the Microsat-R launched in January this year) in a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) at an altitude of around 300 km.
- The test was done to verify that India has the capability to safeguard our space assets. It is the Government of India's responsibility to defend the country's interests in outer space.
- The tests were done after India acquired the required degree of confidence to ensure its success, and reflects the intention of the government to enhance India's national security.
- The test, however, can be carried out only on one's own satellite. There are a large number of satellites currently in space, many of which have outlived their utility and orbiting aimlessly. One such satellite was chosen for the test.
- The test was done in the lower atmosphere to ensure that there is no space debris. Whatever debris that is generated will decay and fall back onto the earth within weeks.

##### Concerns:

- While India is the fourth country (after the U.S., Russia/USSR and China) to acquire this capability,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first leader to have announced the successful test in a national address.

- In contrast, China had quietly carried out its first successful hit-to-kill intercept in January 2007 till international reports about the consequent increase in space debris forced Beijing to acknowledge the test.
- France and Israel are believed to possess the capability.
- India's test has not violated any norm as there is no international treaty prohibiting the testing or the development of ASATs.

### **Is India entering into an arms race in outer space?**

- India has no intention of entering into an arms race in outer space. India has always maintained that space must be used only for peaceful purposes. India is against the weaponization of Outer Space and support international efforts to reinforce the safety and security of space based assets.
- India believes that Outer space is the common heritage of humankind and it is the responsibility of all space-faring nations to preserve and promote the benefits flowing from advances made in space technology and its applications for all.
- India is a party to all the major international treaties relating to Outer Space. India already implements a number of Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) – including registering space objects with the UN register, pre-launch notifications, measures in harmony with the UN Space Mitigation Guidelines, participation in Inter Agency Space Debris Coordination (IADC) activities with regard to space debris management, undertaking SOPA (Space Object Proximity Awareness and COLA (Collision Avoidance) Analysis and numerous international cooperation activities, including hosting the UN affiliated Centre for Space and Science Technology Education in Asia and Pacific. India has been participating in all sessions of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
- India supported UNGA resolution 69/32 on No First Placement of Weapons on Outer Space. India's sees the No First Placement of weapons in outer space as only an interim step and not a substitute for concluding substantive legal measures to ensure the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which should continue to be a priority for the international community.
- India supports the substantive consideration of the issue of Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) in the Conference on Disarmament where it has been on the agenda since 1982.

### **Details:**

- After the Indian test, a senior U.S. Air Force Space Command official, Lt. Gen. David D. Thompson, appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee (Strategic Forces Subcommittee) and said that based on public information, the U.S. had expected a test, and that a base in Colorado had tracked it.
- U.S. systems are monitoring between 250-270 objects of space debris that were created following the test.
- The U.S. will notify satellite operators in case a threat to any is assessed.
- He added that the debris did not pose a threat to the International Space Station, which orbits at an altitude of around 350 km.
- An ASAT capability is normally a part of a Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) programme. While a BMD targets an incoming ballistic missile, an ASAT interceptor targets a hostile satellite.
- Since a satellite moves in a precise orbit which is tracked, it gives greater time for target acquisition though satellites in higher orbits pose greater challenges for the kill vehicle.

### **Developments so far:**

- While 'Mission Shakti' may have targeted an object in outer space, India has long developed the ability to intercept incoming missiles.



- Faced with Pakistan's growing missile capability in the 1990s (Pakistan acquired the M-9 and the M-11 missiles from China and the No-dong from North Korea), India embarked on its BMD programme in 1999.
- A modified Prithvi was to be developed as the intercept missile. Work on a long-range tracking radar (Swordfish) that could track incoming ballistic missiles to enable target acquisition was also taken up. Testing began nearly 15 years ago followed by the integration of the various systems, including the active RF seekers, fibreoptic gyros and directional warheads.
- In 2011, an incoming Prithvi missile was destroyed by the interceptor missile over the Bay of Bengal at an altitude of around 16 km. Another half a dozen tests have been carried out since 2011, gradually expanding the parameters of the system to enable taking on targets at higher altitudes.
- Both the U.S. and USSR began to develop ASAT systems as a part and parcel of their anti-ballistic missile programmes. During the 1980s, both countries concluded their kinetic kill interceptor testing. Instead, they began to focus on co-orbital anti-satellite systems and directed energy (laser) systems which could neutralise a satellite without fragmenting it and generating space debris.
- With developments in offensive cyber capabilities, a promising new area is to disrupt communication links between the satellite and ground control by damaging the transponders or the power source.
- After the 2007 test, China too has carried out subsequent ASAT development along these lines.

### **A crowded space:**

- Since the Sputnik was launched in 1957, more than 8,000 satellites/manmade orbiting objects have been launched, of which about 5,000 remain in orbit; more than half are non-functional.
- Currently, more than 50 countries own/operate the nearly 2,000 functional satellites in orbit.
  - The U.S. accounts for more than 800 of these, followed by China (approximately 280), Russia (approximately 150).
  - India has an estimated 50 satellites.
  - Of these 2,000 satellites, over 300 are dedicated military satellites.
  - Once again, the U.S. has the biggest share here, with nearly 140, followed by Russia with nearly 90 and China with nearly 40.
  - India has two dedicated satellites, one each for the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force.
  - Indian defence forces also use the civilian government owned satellites extensively for communications, remote sensing, and location accuracy and meteorology.
- Growing amounts of space debris pose a real risk to satellites and spacecraft.
- There are over 20,000 objects of debris which are the size of golf balls while those of smaller size run into hundreds of thousands, totalling nearly 6,000 tonnes.
- The U.S. Department of Defence routinely tracks approximately 23,000 man-made objects achieving orbit to ensure safety of its space-based assets.
- One of the reasons that the international community protested strongly about the 2007 Chinese test was that it added nearly 3,000 pieces of debris as the test was done at a higher altitude (800 km), from where it would take decades to dissipate. The debris created by the Indian test, which was undertaken at a low altitude, is expected to dissipate much faster.

### **Patchy international control:**

- The salience of space in defence is evident from the fact that all three countries — the U.S., Russia and China — have set up 'Space Commands'.
- This has given rise to demands to prevent the militarisation of space so that it is preserved "as the common heritage of mankind".
- The 1967 Outer Space Treaty followed by the 1979 Moon Treaty laid the foundations of the legal regime for space beginning with the rule of law, refraining from appropriating territory, non-placement of any weapons of mass destruction in space, and prohibition of military activities on the moon and other celestial bodies.
- However, these treaties were negotiated when the technology was still in a nascent stage.

- Satellite registration was introduced in the 1970s though compliance has been patchy.
- The U.S. has been adamantly opposed to negotiating any legally binding instrument to prevent 'militarisation of space', questioning the very meaning of the term, given that space as a medium is increasingly used for military applications.
- In 2008, Russia and China had proposed a draft to kick off negotiations on the Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects.
- The European Union, mindful of U.S. allergy to any negotiations on this issue, began to develop an international code of conduct based on transparency and confidence-building measures.
- The UN General Assembly has called for a declaration of political commitment by all countries that they shall not be the first to place weapons in space. This initiative too has floundered as norm building cannot take place in a political vacuum.
- At present, the U.S. is the dominant presence in space, which reflects its technological lead as well its dependence on space-based assets. It therefore perceives any negotiations as a constraint on its technological lead.
- While countries have developed and tested ASATs, they are not known to have stockpiled ASAT weapons.

Effective use of an ASAT also requires space situational awareness capability, which works best if it is a cooperative effort. India's successful ASAT test is, therefore, a technology marker. Further development of interceptor technology and long-range tracking radars is necessary for a robust BMD and the Defence Research and Development Organisation also needs to move on to newer technologies to enhance its ASAT capability in the coming years.

## 2. Kartarpur focus – On Kartarpur Corridor

### Issue:

- In the backdrop of efforts of operationalizing a corridor from Dera Baba Nanak in Punjab to Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara in Pakistan's Punjab, which was hailed as a step forward in an otherwise fraught relationship between India and Pakistan, is round upon round of complicated dispute between the two governments over every detail: from the number of pilgrims to be accommodated, to the security restrictions, to the documentation and mode of transport to be used by pilgrims.
- At the base of the differences is the deep distrust between the two governments, a chasm that has deepened in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack and the Balakot strike.

### Kartarpur Corridor:

- Kartarpur corridor is a proposed border corridor between the neighbouring nations of India and Pakistan, connecting the Sikh shrines of Dera Baba Nanak Sahib (located in Punjab, India) and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur (in Punjab, Pakistan).
- Currently under planning, the corridor is intended to allow religious devotees from India to visit the Gurdwara in Kartarpur, 4.7 kilometres (2.9 miles) from the Pakistan-India border, without a visa.

### Background:

- The Kartarpur Corridor was first proposed in early 1999 by the prime ministers of Pakistan and India, Nawaz Sharif and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, respectively, as part of the Delhi-Lahore Bus diplomacy.
- In 2018, the foundation stone for the Kartarpur corridor was laid down on the Indian side. Two days later the foundation stone for the corridor was laid down on the Pakistani side. The corridor was initially intended to be completed before the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev in November 2019.

- The prime minister of India, Narendra Modi, compared the decision to go ahead with the corridor by the two countries to the fall of the Berlin Wall, saying that the project may help in easing tensions between the two countries.
- Currently pilgrims from India have to take a bus to Lahore to get to Kartarpur, which is a 125 km journey, despite the fact that people on the Indian side of the border can physically see Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur on the Pakistani side. An elevated platform has also been constructed for the same on the Indian side, where people use binoculars to get a good view.

### Editorial Analysis:

- Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's administration feels it should be given more credit for having cleared the Kartarpur proposal, something Indian Sikh pilgrims have demanded for decades, ever since the Radcliffe Line left their sacred shrine on the other side of the border in 1947.
- For its part, New Delhi refuses to acknowledge Pakistan's overture, and has made it clear the corridor will have no connection with furthering bilateral talks on other issues.
- Meanwhile, security agencies have voiced concerns about a possible attempt by Pakistan's military establishment to use the corridor to fuel separatist Khalistani sentiment.
- India has fresh concerns about the safety and security of pilgrims and misuse of the corridor for anti-India activities.
- The government's decision now to postpone the next round of technical talks, which were scheduled for April 2, is driven mainly by those concerns, in particular the inclusion of some known Khalistan activists in a gurdwara committee that would interact with pilgrims from India.
- Last week, the Ministry of External Affairs summoned Pakistan's Deputy High Commissioner and sought clarifications on the "controversial elements" on the committee, and said the next meeting would only be held after it receives Pakistan's response.

### Way forward:

- While none of the government's concerns is inappropriate, it could not have been unprepared when it agreed to the corridor proposal.
- Pakistan's support to separatist Sikh groups goes back several decades, and India must work to secure its border from the threat even as it opens the gates for thousands of pilgrims to travel to Pakistan.
- National security must get priority. But for this, there must be an effort by all stakeholders in India — the Centre, the State government and the leadership of the BJP, the Akalis and the Congress — to resist scoring political points against one another.
- Modalities and technical issues, such as on the numbers, eligibility and identity proof required for the trip to Kartarpur Sahib, should be ironed out by both governments.
- Putting off meetings is not a constructive solution, given the proposed opening of the corridor by November to mark the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak.

## Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

### 1. The arrogance of the ignorant – On SC ruling on the Forest Rights Act, 2006

#### Context:

- On February 13, the Supreme Court ruled that over 1.12 million households from 17 States, who have had their claims rejected under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, are to be evicted by the State governments before July 27.
- It is not clear what fraction of these are individual claims and what fraction are community claims. Nor are all of these Adivasi households. Some might fall under the 'other traditional forest-dwellers'



(OTFD) category and some under forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST).

### Issue:

- The articulate arrogance of 'New India', sadly, is such that it is unable to see any virtue in the lives of Adivasis and other forest-dwellers who have lived in and by the forests since times immemorial.
- Comfortably settled as it is in the air-conditioned offices of metropolitan India, duly alienated from any living ecology of the earth, while fully predatory on it, it sees people who live in and by the jungles as 'underdeveloped' criminals who are among those responsible for the thinning of the forests.
- It is tragic that 'New India' chooses to attack Adivasis and forest-dwellers instead of those destroying its ecology

### Anecdotes:

The forests inhabited by Adivasis are some of the best conserved in the subcontinent is a long-standing fact contrary to the understanding of supposedly educated Indians. What is invaluable is what is often described as 'indigenous knowledge' — as though the knowledge gained over centuries of lived experience is of somehow lower value than the literacy acquired in a school, or perhaps of no value at all.

- **An account of Instincts:**

When the tsunami hit the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 2004, thousands perished. However, some of the oldest Adivasi tribes, the Jarawas and the Onges, lost nobody. These communities followed animals to the highlands well before the waves hit. Formal education was of little survival value in a context where you needed swift instincts.

- **The narrative of Biopiracy:**

When Western drug and pharma corporations send their scouts to remote regions in India to look for herbs to patent, the scouts do not consult top Indian doctors or scientists first. They smuggle their way into jungles inhabited by Adivasis where, in a moment of weakness, an elderly woman adept in the healing arts may reveal a secret or two. Later, the companies might test the herb in their labs and find that the woman's claims were correct. This has long been the staple of biopiracy.

### Details:

- It is mostly believed that humans are not a part of nature and can never coexist with it. It is far from their imagination to distinguish between Adivasis who know something about living sensibly with nature and the rest of us, who do not.
- This appears to be the view held by petitioners, including retired forest officers and conservation NGOs, in a lawsuit filed in the Supreme Court in 2008.
- That even the courts would fall to such abysmal levels of understanding has become a defining feature of the reforms era.

### Concerns:

- Ironically, the FRA contains no legal provision for the eviction of rejected claimants. In the face of loud protests from around the country, the court issued a stay order (till July 10) on its ruling.
- Many States are yet to give their details to the courts. Once they do, the number of households to be evicted may rise.
- Close to 8-10% of the Adivasi population may be asked to vacate their traditional homes and abandon their livelihoods.

- What has to be addressed is: Has the court contemplated the gravity of the implications? Where are these people supposed to live and make a living? What justice is there in acting in such an inhumane manner?
- It is among the weakest and the wisest that they choose to attack.

#### Example:

- The world's largest refinery is coming up in the Konkan, uprooting 17 villages, over half a million cashew trees and over a million mango trees.
- Thousands of acres of Himalayan forests and over a hundred villages will be submerged by one of the world's tallest dams coming up in Pancheshwar in Uttarakhand.
- Little is being done by the conservationist petitioners and courts to stop any of this. They show little courage when it comes to tackling the land mafias, builder-developers, realtors, constructors and miners, but their conscience is ablaze over conserving Adivasis in the jungles.
- If remote habitats are emptied of Adivasis, there may be nobody to forewarn us when ecologically perilous tipping points are crossed in the future.

#### Conclusion:

- Freeing the forests of their traditional inhabitants is almost certain to expose their erstwhile habitats in short order to the speedy, organised destruction of the forces of what has come to be seen by the elites as 'development'.
- To make matters worse, worrying amendments that have been proposed to the Indian Forest Act, 1927, which further strengthen the stranglehold of forest officials over India's jungles and its inhabitants, have now been made public.
- Before its too late, the safe-keepers of justice might wish to ponder Gandhi's words: "A time is coming when those, who are in the mad rush today of multiplying their wants, vainly thinking that they add to the real substance, real knowledge of the world, will retrace their steps and say: 'What have we done?'"

## F. Tidbits

### 1. A bond for life to save a garden in Mumbai

- The *Rakhi Bandho Vriksha Bachao Abhiyan*, saw senior citizens, as well as children, joining in with placards — little over a fortnight after the city police halted a peaceful protest against the road project.
- Many tied 'rakhis' to trees in Tata Garden facing the axe under Coastal Road project.
- South Mumbai residents deployed a novel to register their protest against the city's ambitious Coastal Road project. A recent peaceful march was stopped by the police for lack of permission.
- In an approach merging Sunderlal Bahuguna's Chipko movement and *Munnabhai MBBS*' Gandhian semantics, around 200 residents tied pieces of cloth as *rakhis* to over 100 trees in the Tata Garden on Bhulabhai Desai Road. Close to half of the green lung will be lost to the project.

#### Coastal Road project:

- Coastal Road Project is a 9.98 km Coastal Road that will run from Marine Drive at the city's southern end, to Worli, where it could connect to the sea link road that runs up to Bandra.
- The project is facing resistance from several quarters, including fishermen and residents of Breach Candy, Peddar Road and Malabar Hill where the new road will alter localities as well as the coastline.

- Fishermen have already moved the Bombay High court seeking a stay on the reclamation work.
- Activists have voiced concerns that the large scale reclamation for the project will lead to flooding in these areas.

Read more about: [Chipko Movement](#).

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. MiG-27

- The Mikoyan MiG-27 is a variable-geometry ground-attack aircraft, originally built by the Mikoyan-Gurevich design bureau in the Soviet Union and later licence-produced in India by Hindustan Aeronautics as the Bahadur.
- It is based on the Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-23 fighter aircraft, but optimized for air-to-ground attack.
- It remains in service with the Indian, Kazakh and Sri Lankan Air Forces in the ground attack role.
- All Russian and Ukrainian MiG-27s have been retired.

### 2. H5N1 virus

- H5N1 is a type of influenza virus that causes a highly infectious, severe respiratory disease in birds called avian influenza (or "bird flu").
- Human cases of H5N1 avian influenza occur occasionally, but it is difficult to transmit the infection from person to person. When people do become infected, the mortality rate is about 60%.
- H5N1 infection in humans can cause severe disease and has a high mortality rate.
- Almost all cases of H5N1 infection in people have been associated with close contact with infected live or dead birds, or H5N1-contaminated environments.
- The virus does not infect humans easily, and spread from person to person appears to be unusual. There is no evidence that the disease can be spread to people through properly prepared and thoroughly cooked food.

#### Symptoms of H5N1 avian influenza in humans:

- The symptoms of H5N1 infection may include fever and malaise, cough, sore throat, and muscle aches.
- Other early symptoms may include abdominal pain, chest pain and diarrhoea.
- The infection may progress quickly to severe respiratory illness (for example, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, pneumonia, Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome) and neurologic changes (altered mental status or seizures).

#### Treatment:

- In most cases, avian influenza in humans develops into a serious disease that should be treated promptly in the hospital and may require intensive care, where available.
- The antiviral medicine oseltamivir can reduce the severity of illness and prevent death, and should be used in all cases.

## H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. IUCN Red List is an information source on the global conservation status of animal, fungi and plant species.

2. IUCN Red List divides the species into five categories.

Which of the statement/s is/are correct?

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

IUCN Red list divides species into nine categories: Not Evaluated, Data Deficient, Least Concern, Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild and Extinct.

**Q2. Which of the following statements is correct with respect to SAMADHAN Portal?**

- a. It is a dedicated web portal for conciliation, arbitration and adjudication of the industrial disputes.
- b. It is a dedicated web portal for providing a functional link between education and industry/service sectors on a sustainable basis.
- c. It is a dedicated web portal for bovine germplasm.
- d. It is a dedicated web portal ensuring the security of passengers especially women passengers during Railway travel.

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

Recently, the Ministry of Labour and Employment launched Samadhan (Software Application for Monitoring and Disposal, Handling of Industrial Disputes) portal. It is a dedicated web portal for conciliation, arbitration and adjudication of the industrial disputes. It brings all stakeholders - Government, Industry and Labour - involved in industrial disputes on a single integrated platform. Workers have the option to go to the labour court directly in case no action is initiated within 45 days of raising a dispute online, putting a time limit on the process which presently is missing.

**Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to the World Government Summit:**

- 1. It is a global platform dedicated to shaping the future of governments worldwide.
- 2. World Government Summit 2019 was held in Delhi, India.

Which of the statement/s is/are correct?

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

The World Government Summit 2019 was held in Dubai, UAE. Each year, the Summit sets the agenda for

the next generation of governments, focusing on how they can harness innovation and technology to solve universal challenges facing humanity. It comprises a wide network of leaders of the public and private sectors, and inspires them to think collectively and creatively about disruptive intersections between government and innovation.

**Q4. Consider the following statements with respect to E-AUSHADHI Portal:**

1. The portal was launched by the Ministry of health and family welfare.
2. It is a portal for Online Licensing System of AYUSH Medicine.

Which of the statement/s is/are correct?

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

e-AUSHADHI portal for Online Licensing System of AYUSH Medicine was launched by the Ministry of AYUSH.

**Q5. Which of the following statement/s is/are correct with respect to GHUMOT?**

1. It is a drum covered with the animal hide on both sides.
2. It has been notified as the heritage instrument of Goa.

Which of the statement/s is/are correct?

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

Ghumot, a type of percussion instrument that has been notified as a heritage instrument of Goa. It is also known as Ghumat, Dakki or Budike. It is part of the Mando, a musical form of the Goan Catholics that combines elements of both Indian and Western music. It is also part of the Zagor folk dance and Dulpod (Goan dance song).

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. "Rigidity of the caste system, illiteracy and unawareness about the rights, Khap Panchayats, danger of losing prestige and status in society are the major causes which are leading to Honour Killing in India". In the context of the above statement analyse the incidents of Honour Killing in India. What are the existing provisions against honour killing and what can be the way forward in eradicating such malady from the society? (15 Marks)



2. Multiple drives for development of backward areas have resulted in isolating the tribal population who face multiple displacements. It is tragic that 'New India' chooses to attack Adivasis and forest-dwellers instead of those destroying its ecology. Comment. (10 Marks)

