

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS1 Related

MODERN INDIAN HISTORY

1. Family seeks official celebration of last Nizam's birth anniversary

B. GS2 Related

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. UAE upset as government drags feet on air services deal
2. NEARLY 80% TURNOUT IN MALDIVES POLL
3. U.S. to designate Iran's elite force as terrorist group

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. ITBP unit in Arunachal casts first service votes

C. GS3 Related

INDIAN ECONOMY

1. NYAY will 'remonetise' the economy, says Rahul
2. India's imports from China decelerating, says report
3. 'Merc EVs in India once infra in place'
4. India will be third-largest economy by 2030: Jaitley
5. G20 must tackle root causes of trade tensions that threaten growth: EU

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Will 'neelakurinji' bloom next season?
2. Integrated invaders

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. All low earth satellites in reach of ASAT missile: DRDO chief
2. Meteorite sheds light on the Sun's infant years

D. GS4 Related

ETHICS, INTEGRITY AND APTITUDE

1. Guidelines for doctors on boundaries with patients

E. Editorials

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Challenging electoral bonds
2. NaMo TV's case

F. Tidbits

G. Prelims Facts

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS1 Related

Category: MODERN INDIAN HISTORY

1. Family seeks official celebration of last Nizam's birth anniversary

Larger Background:

Events preceding the accession of Hyderabad into the Union of India:

- The Nizam-VII sent a message to Government of India, to continue Hyderabad as independent state in India and not to merge it with either India or Pakistan. But on 29th November, 1947, Hyderabad state entered into a standstill agreement with the Government of India. Under the agreement, defence and external affairs came under the control of the Indian Government. After the signing of the standstill agreement, the Nizam appointed Mir Laik Ali as the Prime Minister and Pingali Venkatarama Reddy as Deputy Prime Minister.
- Laik Ali made a secret visit to Karachi and met the Pakistan Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan and other leaders like Ghulam Mohammad and Zafrullah Khan. The latter advised Laik Ali to refer Hyderabad case to the Security Council. After returning to Hyderabad Laik Ali sent on 10th September a delegation to UNO headed by Moin Nawaz Jung. The Hyderabad politics was dangerous to Indian Security and peace. So on 13th September, 1948, the Government of India launched its 'Police Action' on Hyderabad.
- The Indian Army under the Command of J.N. Chaudary entered Hyderabad state from five directions. In the Army Headquarters the Military action was code named as "Operation Polo".
- The entire action was completed in five days.
- On 17th September, Nizam's forces under El Edroos surrendered and Indian Army entered Hyderabad city on 18th September, 1948. Laik Ali and Khasim Razvi were arrested.
- Later they escaped to Pakistan. J.N. Chaudary was made Military Governor of Hyderabad. He continued in that position till the end of 1949. In January 1950, M.A. Vellodi, a senior Civil Servant was made the Chief Minister and the Nizam was designated as the Raj Pramukh.

Some of the contributions of Mir Osman Ali Khan Nizam VII:

- Mir Osman Ali Khan Nizam VII was a progressive ruler and an enthusiastic patron of architecture. His reign ushered in a new era of construction of public buildings and he adorned the city of Hyderabad with a large number of beautiful buildings as monuments of his wise administration. Among the earlier works, mention may be made of the town hall, the High Court, the Osmania General Hospital, the Jagirdar College and the Hyderabad Museum.
- The more important construction of later dates are the Jubilee hall, the Industrial Museum, The Jubilee Pavilion, the Central Military Hospital. Aza Khana Zahra, Kachiguda Railway station, Shah Manzil, Secretariat Building, Health Museums. Nizamia Unani General Hospital, Asafia Library, Moazam Jahi Market, Bella Vista, Mahaboobia Girls High School, the City High School etc. The expense involved in these constructions was tremendous.

What's in the news?

- The family members of Nawab Mir Osman Ali Khan, the seventh Nizam, have requested the Telangana government to organise his birth anniversary as an official event every year in recognition of his umpteen contributions to transformation of Hyderabad into a modern city and his vision for the development of the erstwhile Hyderabad State.

Context:

- "The Telangana government should organise the last Nizam's birth anniversary officially as the common man of Hyderabad still uses a lot of amenities and utilities of the Nizam's reign in daily life even 52 years after the Nizam's death," Nawab Najaf Ali Khan, a grandson of the last Nizam said on the 133rd birth anniversary of Mir Osman Ali Khan.

- He also requested the State government to safeguard the monuments and structures built by the late Nizam.
- He underscored the need for taking up repairs to the heritage building of the Osmania General Hospital and the Unani Hospital on a priority basis.
- “The Nizam worked tirelessly and believed in providing the best of modern facilities for his people, irrespective of their caste or religion. He even contributed to the development of Hyderabad even after its merger with Indian Union,” Mr. Najaf Ali Khan said

B. GS2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. UAE upset as government drags feet on air services deal

What’s in the news?

- Despite good ties in several other spheres, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is disappointed that the government has completed its term without renegotiating a bilateral “air services agreement” that would allow more Gulf airlines into India.

Context:

- In an interview to The Hindu, UAE Ambassador Ahmed Al-Banna said it was “unlikely” that the negotiations, which have been pending for more than five years, would be held until after the elections now, meaning a further delay of several months.
- “We are not satisfied at all,” Mr. Al-Banna said. “This is a major issue. Our carriers and so many passengers are suffering due to this delay. I have been trying to hold a meeting on this, [but without success].”
- The issue had been raised most recently at the Global Aviation Summit in Mumbai in mid-January 2019, and was brought up by the UAE government during External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj’s visit to Abu Dhabi for the joint commission meeting in December 2018.
- This is not the first time that the UAE Ambassador has made his concerns public.
- At a speech at the Indian Institute of Technology a few months ago, he had hit out at “lobbying by Indian carriers” that have reportedly blocked any talks on allowing the four UAE carriers —Emirates, Etihad, FlyDubai and Air Arabia — more connections to India.

At full capacity:

- According to the original air services agreement between India and the UAE, signed in 2007, the sectorial pacts for the four UAE regions of Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ras Al-Khaimah, would be renegotiated if airlines reached 85% occupancy on the flights.
- However, according to the Ambassador, all UAE carriers and most Indian carriers reached 100% occupancy more than five years ago, without any revision in the seats offered.
- This has led to the seats being sold at high, non-discounted rates.
- The Ambassador said the government should take into consideration the fact that more than 55% of Indians flying out of India use UAE airports, and more than three million Indians living in the UAE, who need to travel home as well.
- Sources in the Ministry of External Affairs and the Civil Aviation Ministry admitted that an impasse has been reached, and no movement is expected on the issue in the next few months.

‘Govt. opposed’:

- A source in the Civil Aviation Ministry said the government has been opposed to raising bilateral rights for Gulf nations and the agreement would be revisited only if Indian carriers also demand an increase. An MEA official said those hit worst were Indian labourers working in the UAE.

- In addition, State governments of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Punjab, that send the most workers to the Gulf, have also been keen on increasing the flights with UAE carriers.
- **Officials said the issue has cast a cloud over otherwise strong bilateral ties that have seen an increase in trade, investment, cooperation on countering terror and the deportation of wanted individuals in the last few years.**
- **In recognition of the improvement in ties, UAE announced it was awarding Prime Minister Narendra Modi its highest civilian order of the Zayed Prize recently.**

Outside metros:

- In talks last year (2018), the UAE had sought an increase of 50,000 flight seats per week (over the existing 65,000 seats) from Dubai and 15,000 extra seats from Sharjah.
- The UAE has also been keen to run services outside of the main metros to places like Coimbatore, Goa and Chandigarh, but was turned down by the government.
- “We have had a status quo for five years and more,” Mr. Al-Banna said, adding that India’s plans for 100 new airports cannot be sustained without allowing more airlines in.
- The Ambassador also pointed out that given the financial problems Air India and Jet Airways and other airlines are going through, the number of flights from India was unlikely to increase. “Even so, all these Indian carriers create lobbies to stop other airlines,” he added.

2. NEARLY 80% TURNOUT IN MALDIVES POLL

What’s in the news?

- The Maldives witnessed a brisk polling day on 6th April, 2019, with nearly 80% voter turnout in the Indian Ocean archipelago’s third multi-party parliamentary election.

Further Details:

- The Election Commission extended polling time by two hours to accommodate more voters who were in queue braving the heat, its officials said.
- As counting continued late evening, the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) was leading in many constituencies. Supporters of the MDP gathered at the sea front at around 11 p.m. as their party seemed poised for a majority. President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and former President Mohamed Nasheed, who won a seat in Male, were on stage.
- Earlier, over 2,00,000 Maldivians voted across the island nation and in polling stations abroad, in Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia and the U.K.
- The polls on the 6th of April, 2019, to elect representatives to 87 seats in the legislature, came around six months after Maldivians voted for change.
- In September 2018, they elected Mr. Solih to power, dislodging former President Abdulla Yameen.

MDP going it alone:

- Solih, who was then backed by a coalition of diverse parties led by his Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), will need a parliamentary majority to implement initiatives he promised as part of his reform agenda.
- The MDP decided to go it alone this election and is hoping to garner the numbers in the legislature, even as differences have begun to emerge within the coalition.

3. U.S. to designate Iran’s elite force as terrorist group

What’s in the news?

- **The U.S. is expected to designate Iran’s elite Revolutionary Guards Corps a foreign terrorist organisation, three U.S. officials told.**
- **This development marks the first time where the U.S. has formally labelled another country’s military a terrorist group.**

Further Details:

- The decision, which critics warn could open U.S. military and intelligence officials to similar actions by unfriendly governments abroad, is expected to be announced by the U.S. State Department, perhaps as early as on the 8th of April, 2019 the officials said.
- The administration's decision to make the designation was first reported by The Wall Street Journal.
- **The U.S. has already blacklisted dozens of entities and people for affiliations with the IRGC, but the organisation as a whole has not been blacklisted.**
- In 2007, the U.S. Treasury designated the IRGC's Quds Force, its unit in charge of operations abroad, "for its support of terrorism," and has described it as Iran's "primary arm for executing its policy of supporting terrorist and insurgent groups."
- Iran said it put the U.S. military on its terror list in response. "If the Revolutionary Guards are placed on America's list of terrorist groups, we will put that country's military on the terror blacklist next to Daesh (Islamic State)," Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh, said head of Parliament's National Security Committee.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. ITBP unit in Arunachal casts first service votes

What's in the news?

- A total of 80 ITBP personnel cast their ballot under the service voter category from a border location in Arunachal Pradesh.

Context:

- The personnel voted for their respective constituencies in Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Karnataka, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh among few others, from the Animal Training School of the frontier guarding force in Lohitpur on the 5th of April, 2019.
- This is the first case of service voters exercising their franchise in this northeastern State in 2019.

C. GS3 Related

Category: INDIAN ECONOMY

1. NYAY will 'remonetise' the economy, says Rahul

What's in the news?

- Congress president Rahul Gandhi on 6th April, 2019, promised that his party would focus on the poorest sections through NYAY, a minimum income guarantee scheme.
- At a rally, Mr. Gandhi highlighted the importance of NYAY in "remonetising" the economy, which he said was shocked by the 2016 demonetisation. "NYAY will jump-start the Indian economy like a vehicle that is started by a key," he said.
- Gandhi also accused the Centre of providing large-scale benefits to businessmen such as Anil Ambani, Mehul Choksi and Nirav Modi, while neglecting the poorest sections.
- "If they can give money to the rich, we will give money to the poor," he said. "We will ensure payment of ₹72,000 per year to each family of the poorest section. In five years, we will provide ₹3,72,000," he said, explaining the NYAY scheme.

Further Details:

- The Congress leader said that under the present government, unemployment has hit the highest level in 45 years.
- Accusing Mr. Modi of depriving the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd of participating in the Rafale aircraft deal, he promised to give the public sector a boost by filling up vacancies in the government.

- “Congress will fill up 22 lakh government posts in a year after coming to power,” said Mr. Gandhi.

Farm loan waiver:

- Further, proposing a loan waiver for farmers, Mr. Gandhi said a special budget for agriculture will focus on farmers’ welfare and provide an annual report card for the sector.
- Under a Congress government, farmers will not be jailed for failing to pay back bank loans, he added.

2. India’s imports from China decelerating, says report

What’s in the news?

- India’s imports from China stood at \$60 billion during the April-January period of 2018-19 fiscal, a deceleration of 5% over the corresponding period a year ago, PHD Chamber of Commerce said on the 6th of April, 2019.

Context:

- According to the chamber, India’s trade deficit with China also eased to \$46 billion in April-January 2019 from \$53 billion in the same period a year ago.
- “Despite substantial volume of imports from China, India’s import growth from China shrunk from 24% during April to January 2018 to (-) 5% during April-January 2019,” PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry Secretary General Mahesh Reddy said.

Further Details:

- Commerce Ministry data showed India’s export to China totalled \$13.8 billion, whereas its imports from the neighbouring country stood at \$60.1 billion during the April-January period.
- Indian shipments to China totalled \$13.33 billion in 2017-18 (April-March), whereas the country’s imports from China stood at \$76.38 billion in the period.
- **The chamber said India has seen a major breakthrough in its exports to China during the last few months, whereas imports of Chinese products in India are decelerating.**
- Its exports to China grew 31% in April-January 2019, increasing from \$10 billion in April-January 2018 to \$14 billion in April-January 2019, Mr. Reddy said.

Concluding Remarks:

- Meanwhile, India has identified and shared with China a list of 380 products including horticulture, textiles, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, as their shipments hold huge export potential in the neighbouring country.
- **Increasing exports of these products would help India narrow the widening trade deficit with China, which stood at \$50.12 billion during April-February 2018-19.**

3. ‘Merc EVs in India once infra in place’

What’s in the news?

- Mercedes-Benz will launch electric vehicles (EVs) in India once the infrastructure and demand for such automobiles are in place, a senior company executive said.
- By mid-2019, Mercedes Benz is aiming to launch its battery-powered vehicle globally, according to information available.

World premiere

- The company made its entry into this area of mobility in September 2018 through the world premiere of its first all-electric people mover EQC, the first Mercedes-Benz model under the product and technology brand EQ. The name EQ stands for electric intelligence, insiders said.

- Mercedes-Benz India Managing Director and CEO, Martin Schwenk, had said that the launch of EVs would be synchronised with real demand for such vehicles in those markets. “We will analyse the markets,” he had said then.
- **Consumers see inadequate access to charging facilities as one of the top three hurdles to EV adoption**, according to a McKinsey & Company article titled ‘Charging ahead: Electric vehicle infrastructure demand’.
- **The Indian government has taken efforts to lay down an enabling framework for setting up charging infrastructure. In December 2018, the Union Power Ministry had written to chief secretaries of all States and union territories on the matter.**
- The Centre wanted power distribution companies (Discoms) to facilitate creation of private charging facilities, while making public charging stations a de-licensed activity. It also wanted the Central Electricity Authority to create an online database of all public charging stations.
- It was learnt that by 2022, the entire Mercedes–Benz product range is set to be electrified with electric alternatives in every segment, starting from its sub-brand Smart, with over 130 electric vehicle variants in total.
- This would range from the 48 volts on-board electrical system to plug-in hybrids to all-electric vehicles with battery or fuel cell. Out of these, over 10 models would be purely electric passenger cars in all segments.

4. India will be third-largest economy by 2030: Jaitley

What’s in the news?

- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 6th April, 2019 said India was expected to become the third-largest economy in the world by 2030 with the gross domestic product (GDP) touching \$10 trillion, helped by consumption and investment growth.
- Currently, the size of the economy is about \$2.9 trillion, he said, while addressing the students of the Shri Ram College of Commerce here.

Further Details:

- “We keep oscillating between fifth and the sixth-largest economy, depending on the dollar rate. As we look at the years ahead, we would be \$5 trillion by 2024 and \$10 trillion by 2030 or 2031. That’s when we will be amongst the first three — the U.S., China and India and then of course, we would in the race of the big three wanting to catch up with much mightier competitors. So the sheer size and opportunity is going to expand,” he said.
- Talking about avenues of growth for the next 20 years, the Minister listed infrastructure creation, rural expansion and gender parity, among others.
- Jaitley said **the 2011 Census showed that 21.9% of India’s population lived below the poverty line and with the present rate of growth, this might have further reduced to 17% today.**
- It should shrink to 15% by 2021 and further down to single digits by 2024-25, he said. At the same time, the middle-class population would increase to 44% from 29% in 2015, he said citing a study. “Therefore, as you look ahead you would see poverty deplete, you will see an exponential growth of middle class and probably by 2030, almost half of India would be in that category [middle class],” Mr. Jaitley said.

5. G20 must tackle root causes of trade tensions that threaten growth: EU

What’s in the news?

- The European Union will tell a meeting of finance leaders from the world’s 20 biggest economies next week that they must all tackle the root causes of global trade tensions because they are putting global growth at risk, an EU document showed.

Context:

- Finance ministers and central bank governors of the Group of 20 (G20) major economies are to meet in Washington on April 11-12, 2019 to discuss the main challenges to the world economy.
- “Current trade tensions put the on-going expansion at risk and are therefore a source of concern,” a joint position paper agreed by EU Finance Ministers on 6th April, 2019 said.
- The United States and China are engaged in intense negotiations to end a months-long trade war that has rattled global markets. Hopes of a resolution soared after both sides expressed optimism following talks in Beijing last week.
- “The international community has to tackle the root causes of the on-going trade tensions by ensuring a level playing field for open and free trade in goods and services, investment and intellectual property rights,” the joint EU statement said.
- The U.S. is also in talks with the European Union on a trade deal after imposing tariffs on European steel and aluminium last year (2018) and threatening to impose tariffs on European cars.
- “We reaffirm our commitment to keep the global economy open as well as rules-based, to support an inclusive multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its centre and to keep international economic cooperation on track,” the EU said.
- **It is important to note that Washington has reservations about the WTO which it believes is unable to tackle modern trade challenges and issues such as intellectual property theft.**
- **The EU believes the WTO is the best way to deal with trade disputes but that it should be reformed to address U.S. and its own concerns.**

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Will ‘neelakurinji’ bloom next season?

What’s in the news?

- Wildlife experts say the recent large-scale wildfires on the grasslands where Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) blossomed widely in the year 2018, after a period of 12 years could have wiped out all the seeds of the endemic flowers from the area.
- The Forest Department suspects that the recent wildfires were man-made. Some areas are still engulfed in flames in the Munnar region. About 1,000 ha of forestland, grantis and eucalyptus plantations and grasslands have been destroyed in the fire.
- There are allegations that the areas coming under the proposed Kurinji sanctuary were set on fire with a motive to destroy the germination of Neelakurinji seeds, immediately after the flowering season, so that the area would not come under the sanctuary.
- According to a senior forest official, in the proposed Kurinji sanctuary, there were encroachments and land grabbers wanted to keep the area off the limits of the sanctuary. According to P. Sujanalal, scientist, Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI), Peechi, **Neelakurinji seeds are sensitive without a hard cover and are unlikely to survive a massive fire.**
- As a habitat, the Western Ghats is known for its rare collection of flora and fauna. There are some rare orchids in the area and even a flash of fire could destroy the seeds. A massive fire could wipe out an entire habitat and there are many rare plants in the Western Ghats which are yet to be studied. All these and insects endemic to the area might face extinction in a massive fire, he added.
- According to botanist Jomy Augustine, who has been studying Neelakurinji and the flora in the Western Ghats for over a decade, massive fires are rare in the sanctuary.
- The area was widely covered with flowers in the last season. The seeds, so small, usually are distributed in the soil by January after the flowering season and by February they would get a soil cover through the summer rain. However, this season was noted for its absence of rain in February.
- Only after a serious study, it would be known how much the fires have affected the Neelakurinji, he said.

2. Integrated invaders

What’s in the news?

- A study published in Science analysed the structure of seed dispersal networks in Hawaii, where many invasive bird species have replaced native species.

Context:

- They found that **native plants now depend on the invaders for seed dispersal**.
- This indicates how survivors and invaders, such as the **red-whiskered bulbul** in this case, could get integrated into the system.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. All low earth satellites in reach of ASAT missile: DRDO chief

What's in the news?

- The anti-satellite (ASAT) test, Mission Shakti, conducted recently is a **“deterrence capability”** and **the missile can cover all satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO)**, Dr. Satheesh Reddy, Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), said on Saturday.

Further Details:

- “The test happened as per design. We don't need any more tests in this orbit as of now. The guidance and control algorithm has been developed to do interception at 1,000 km above the earth. This test covers all LEO satellites, including those for military use,” Dr. Reddy said, adding that hitting multiple satellites was feasible. He was addressing a press conference on the ASAT test.
- On March 27, 2019, a live satellite in LEO of 300 km was shot down using a modified interceptor of the Ballistic Missile Defence system.

Views of the militarisation of space:

- On the issue of militarisation of space, Dr. Reddy said space had gained importance in the military domain. “When a country like India has done an exercise like this and shown capability of interception of a target, you have shown the capability for such operations. Best way of defence is to have deterrence.”
- Giving details of Mission Shakti, Dr. Reddy, the chief architect of the ASAT test, said the first discussion on the test started in 2014 and the “formal detailed presentation was made in 2016 and post that we took two years to develop the system.”
- On the timing of the test, Deputy National Security Adviser Pankaj Saran said it was a “technologically and scientifically driven one.”

‘NASA ties continue’:

- On concerns raised by the U.S. space agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Mr. Saran said, “NASA is continuing its cooperation with India, including in the manned mission to space. We have had several statements from the U.S., as far as India is concerned the official position is contained in the State Department statement.”
- To questions on the debris created by the test, Dr. Reddy said extensive simulations were conducted and **there was no threat to the International Space Station (ISS)**.
- “LEO was chosen based on simulations with primary objective being to minimise debris. It was intentionally done at 280 km altitude so that debris decay fast,” Dr. Reddy said, adding that the interception was designed to hit at an angle so that minimal debris go up and also have minimal velocity.
- “Some of the debris have already decayed. Our simulations show all debris will decay in 45 days,” he added.

2. Meteorite sheds light on the Sun's infant years

What's in the news?

- In 1962, a meteorite weighing 21 kg was found at Efremovka, now in Kazakhstan.
- **By analysing a piece of this meteorite and studying the relative abundances of isotopes of lithium, beryllium and boron, two researchers have envisaged how the Sun behaved in its infancy.**
- Then, they deduce, the Sun could let off superflares which were a million times stronger than the strongest recorded solar flare – the 1859 Carrington event.
- Such superflares must have taken place 4.5 billion years ago, when the Sun was barely forming.
- Further, they infer that irradiation by such superflares from the Sun is one of the sources of short-lived nuclides, for example, beryllium-7, which has a half-life of approximately 53.12 days.

First -formed solids:

- Among the first-formed solids of the solar system were the calcium aluminium-rich inclusions (CAI).
- The CAIs are nearly 4.567 billion years old.
- They become the refractory components within meteorites with irregular shape and are predominantly composed of oxides and silicates of calcium and aluminium.
- This study suggests that these were pushed to large distances measuring up to a few times the Earth-Sun distance (which is equal to one astronomical unit).
- These primordial solids were cooked by the superflares and moved to this distance in short times in the order of a year.
- “This study provides a quantum jump in understanding the activity and event and processes occurring in the early solar system and its protoplanetary disk,” says Kuljeet Kaur Marhas from Physical Research Laboratory, co-author of the paper which has been published online in Nature Astronomy.

Pristine meteorite:

- The Efremovka meteorite piece was lent to Professor J. N. Goswami, of Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad, for scientific study.
- “Efremovka is one of the most pristine meteorites in our collections,” says Ritesh Kumar Mishra, the first author, who is at Ruprecht-Karls Heidelberg University. “Hence, there is a much greater probability of finding preserved isotopic records from the time of formation of the solar system, which is contemporaneous with the formation of CAIs,” he adds.
- The first suggestion of irradiation by the Sun as a source of elements found in early solar system solids came from a study of the beryllium-10 radio nuclide in the Allende meteorite.
- Before this suggestion, it was believed that the only source of such elements was the contribution from ambient gas and dust.
- More recently, another hypothesis was added – namely that the beryllium-10 in CAIs could also arise core-collapse supernova from a low-mass star.
- Each of these possibilities would lead to different scenarios for the formation of the solar system. Since beryllium-10 has a very long half life of about 1.38 million years, it is possible that a part of it could have been created in any of the above processes. Therefore, studying beryllium-10 does not clearly indicate which of the three hypotheses is correct.
- This work, on the other hand, studies both beryllium-7 decaying to lithium -7 and beryllium-10 decaying to boron-10. This short half life of beryllium-7 helps rule out the two competing theories and indicates that it is only irradiation by solar flares that led to the formation of the elements captured by the CAI.
- “To understand the activity of Sun further, we could look at recurrence of such events in various time scales and its effect on evaporating and recondensing solids in the early solar system,” says Dr. Marhas.

D. GS4 Related

Category: ETHICS, INTEGRITY AND APTITUDE

1. Guidelines for doctors on boundaries with patients

What's in the news?

- Recognising patients as a particularly vulnerable group and understanding the need for specific guidelines on sexual boundaries for doctors, the Indian Psychiatry Society (IPS) along with the Bangalore Declaration Group (a team of doctors across various medical specialties in India) have come up with a set of guidelines, for the first time, to direct doctors on what is ethically right and wrong.

Context:

- Posted on the Medical Council of India's (MCI) website, the guidelines, initially meant for the IPS' members, specify that doctors "must not enter into unhealthy relationships with patients", particularly in the sexual context.
- **"It is important for the doctors to know their boundaries in being intimate with a patient, both physically and mentally. Non-consensual sexual activity is a crime but doctors agree that even consensual sexual activity in a power-imbalanced relationship like that of a doctor and patient is not truly consensual,"**explained Dr. Ajit. V. Bhide, chairperson of the task force that framed the guidelines.
- The 15-point guidelines begin with: **"The ethical duty of all doctors is to ensure effective care for their patients. This would mean that their own conduct should in no way harm their patient. Sexual relationships between doctors and patients invariably harm both the patient and the doctor. Trust, which is central to an effective doctor-patient relationship, is inevitably damaged. In view of the power gradient that invariably exists in the doctor-patient relationship, the onus is on the doctor to ensure he or she does not enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a patient."**

Concluding Remarks:

- The guidelines, which aim to serve both doctors and patients of all genders, further state, "Doctors are reminded that even a relationship with a former patient is discouraged and could be construed as unethical, as the previous professional relationship can influence the current relationship."

E. Editorials

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Challenging electoral bonds

What's in the news?

- The Supreme Court on 5th April, 2019 adjourned till April 10th, 2019 the hearing of a number of petitions challenging the legality of the Electoral Bond Scheme.
- The Election Commission of India, in an affidavit filed in the court, said the electoral bonds had made political funding opaque and would have "serious repercussions on transparency of political funding" owing to its anonymous nature.

What is the Electoral Bond Scheme?

- The scheme was launched last year (2018) by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in an attempt to "cleanse the system of political funding in the country."
- A donor may buy an electoral bond at specified banks and branches using electronic modes of payment and after having completed the KYC (know your customer) requirements.
- The political party will have to deposit the encashed money in a bank account it has informed the Election Commission about.

Where are they available?

- The electoral bonds are available at specified branches of the State Bank of India (SBI) for 10 days each in the months designated by the government from time to time.

- The bonds may be bought for any value, in multiples of ₹1,000, ₹10,000, ₹1 lakh, ₹10 lakh or ₹1 crore.

What was the system earlier?

- The rules for declaring sources of funding for political parties are outlined in Section 29C of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- Prior to 2017, the Act said all registered parties had to declare all donations made to them of over ₹2,000. The problem, according to political analysts and watchdog bodies, was that large donations were anonymous.

What is the controversy?

- The bone of contention over the electoral bond scheme is that while the government has consistently said the scheme will increase transparency in electoral funding, it has ignored the reservations of several political parties and even the Election Commission.
- The argument put forth by the Election Commission is that it allows political parties not to disclose the source of these bonds.
- The parties do not have to disclose where their money comes from, as long as the mode of funding is through electoral bonds. This provision, to exempt parties from declaring the sources of the electoral bonds they receive, was done through an amendment to the Representation of the People Act by the Finance Act, 2017.
- The Election Commission also criticised several other changes made by the government.
- For example, it said the amendments introduced by the government in the Income Tax Act also facilitated anonymous donations by saying that parties did not have to disclose the names, address or PAN of donors of less than ₹20,000.
- It is important to note that the bulk of the donations to parties have been coming in sums smaller than that amount, the Election Commission said.
- Another amendment that has been criticised is the one to the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), which the Election Commission said will allow political parties to receive funding from foreign companies with a majority stake in Indian companies.

Are people using these bonds?

- Data revealed through the Right to Information replies by the State Bank of India show that large sums have been bought through electoral bonds.
- The State Bank of India issued a whopping ₹1,716 crore in electoral bonds in just two months of 2019, the data show.
- The RTI replies say electoral bonds worth ₹495.6 crore were sold in Mumbai in 2019, which is the largest share (28.9%) of the total amount sold.
- Observers are alarmed that the bulk of anonymous electoral bonds sold seem to be going to the Bharatiya Janata Party. A separate RTI reply by the SBI has shown that the bank had sold ₹222 crore worth of electoral bonds in March 2018, the only month in financial year 2017-18 when these bonds were sold.
- Given that, at the time, the bonds could only be sold by the SBI, and the fact that a review of the BJP's audit report for 2017-18 showed that it had received ₹210 crore worth of donations that year from electoral bonds, the party received 94.6% of all the electoral bonds sold in 2017-18.

2. NaMo TV's case

What's in the news?

- On March 31, NaMo TV made its debut on Direct to Home (DTH) platforms, raising several questions about its identity, ownership and content.
- Opposition parties asked the Election Commission to take action as the channel was launched after the model code of conduct came into effect ahead of the Lok Sabha election.

- The Election Commission has sought an explanation from the Information and Broadcasting Ministry.

Why is it problematic?

- Experts opine that as the identity and ownership of the entity is shrouded in mystery, it violates broadcasting norms and regulations governing the ownership of content providers.
- These norms fall under the categories of uplinking and downlinking policies that came into force in 2005 and that have been amended since.
- These policies lay the groundwork for channels that wish to uplink content through satellites and later downlink them to television-viewing homes.
- In this regard, there are channels that uplink from outside the country, such as the BBC and CNN, and downlink in India, for which permission is sought and licences are given by a clutch of government ministries that include the Ministries of Home and Information and Broadcasting.
- **NaMo TV falls in a grey area.**

What does that mean?

- Well, DTH platforms claim that NaMo is a Value Added Service (VAS) that every DTH operator offers to its subscriber.
- For example, TATA Sky could offer a series of cookery shows or fitness programmes as add-on services to viewers for subscription.
- The number of VAS channels on offer varies from one DTH operator to another with as many as 35 VAS services made available.

Can VAS be live?

- For want of specific guidelines, VAS can be live. Channels like Astha have often shown their Guru's spiritual discourses live. NaMo TV goes live with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rallies.

Is VAS paid for?

- Technically, the DTH operator is paid by those who wish to show their content on the DTH platform. The carriage fee for content on DTH platforms for VAS is between ₹1 lakh and ₹2 lakh and is negotiable.

Why is the Opposition upset?

- Some experts opine that as it is the platform of the ruling party's leader, it gives an unfair advantage to the BJP.
- Traditionally, time is allotted for propaganda/advertising on government channels: All India Radio and Doordarshan. There are other issues. If NaMo TV is the BJP mouthpiece, it will have to declare it as an election expenditure to the Election Commission.

F. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1) Consider the following statements:

- 1) The boundary between the Sun's interior and the solar atmosphere is called the photosphere. It is what we see as the visible "surface" of the Sun.
- 2) The lower region of the solar atmosphere is called the chromosphere. Its name comes from the Greek root

chroma (meaning color), for it appears bright red when viewed during a solar eclipse. Which among the above statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The boundary between the Sun's interior and the solar atmosphere is called the photosphere. It is what we see as the visible "surface" of the Sun.
- The lower region of the solar atmosphere is called the chromosphere. Its name comes from the Greek root chroma (meaning color), for it appears bright red when viewed during a solar eclipse.
- There are three main parts to the Sun's interior: the core, the radiative zone, and the convective zone. The core is at the center. It is the hottest region, where the nuclear fusion reactions that power the Sun occur. Moving outward, next comes the radiative (or radiation) zone. Its name is derived from the way energy is carried outward through this layer, carried by photons as thermal radiation. The third and final region of the solar interior is named the convective (or convection) zone. It is also named after the dominant mode of energy flow in this layer; heat moves upward via roiling convection.

Q2) Consider the following statements:

1. Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) is a shrub that used to grow abundantly in the shola grasslands of Western Ghats in India.
2. The Nilgiris, which literally means the blue mountains, got its name from the purplish blue flowers of Neelakurinji that blossoms gregariously once in 12 years.

Which among the above statements is/are incorrect?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Netither 1 nor 2

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Neelakurinji (*Strobilanthes kunthiana*) is a shrub that used to grow abundantly in the shola grasslands of Western Ghats in India.
- The Nilgiris, which literally means the blue mountains, got its name from the purplish blue flowers of Neelakurinji that blossoms gregariously once in 12 years.

Q3) Consider the following statements:

1. The International Space Station is in low Earth orbit, or LEO. LEO is the first 100 to 200 miles (161 to 322 km) of space.
2. Any satellite with an orbital path going over or near the poles maintains a polar orbit. Polar orbits are usually low Earth orbits.

Which among the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only

- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The International Space Station is in low Earth orbit, or LEO. LEO is the first 100 to 200 miles (161 to 322 km) of space.
- Any satellite with an orbital path going over or near the poles maintains a polar orbit. Polar orbits are usually low Earth orbits.

Q4) Consider the following statements:

1. The United Arab Emirates consists of seven emirates. They are Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm al-Quwain.
2. The UAE is bordering Oman and Saudi Arabia and has maritime borders with Iran.

Which among the above statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

-
- The United Arab Emirates consists of seven emirates. They are Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm al-Quwain.
- The UAE is bordering Oman and Saudi Arabia and has maritime borders with Iran.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Forest Fires are a major threat to flora and fauna along with the vital ecosystems that sustain it. Justify. (10 Marks; 250 Words)
2. The rising tensions between the U.S. and Iran have major geopolitical implications. Examine this with a focus on India. (10 Marks; 250 Words)

See previous [CNA](#)