

# 02 May 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## A. GS1 Related

### Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

#### 1. Religious freedom on the decline in India: U.S. panel

#### Context:

The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has said that there is an “overall deterioration of religious freedom conditions in 2018” in India, in its 2019 report released earlier this week.

#### The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF):

- The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is a bipartisan, independent federal government commission in the US.
- It was created by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) of 1998.
- USCIRF's principal responsibilities are to review the facts and circumstances of violations

of religious freedom internationally and to make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and the Congress.

- The Commission on International Religious Freedom issues an annual report that includes policy recommendations to the U.S. government based on the report's evaluation of the facts and circumstances of religious freedom violations worldwide.

### **Country Particular Concern (CPC):**

- Tier 2 countries are those in which “violations engaged in or tolerated by the government during 2018 are serious and characterized by at least one of the elements of the ‘systematic, ongoing, and egregious’ CPC (Country of Particular Concern) standard.
- CPCs are designated by the State Department and the.

### **Details:**

- USCIRF has placed India on CPC and watch list in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2009 and 2010.
- In its 2019 report released earlier this week, India continues to remain a Tier 2 country, a list it has been unable to get off of since 2009.
- Latest list, from November 2018, contains 10 countries including Burma, China, Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia in the CPC list. In these countries the government has tolerated or engaged in “particularly severe religious freedom violations, meaning those are systematic, ongoing, and egregious.”
- Other Tier 2 countries for 2018 are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Laos, Malaysia and Turkey.
- It says “ In countries like India, it is increasingly difficult to separate religion and politics, a tactic that is sometimes intentional by those who seek to discriminate against and restrict the rights of certain religious communities.”
- The report says conditions for minorities in India have deteriorated over the last decade, adding that a “multifaceted campaign by Hindu nationalist groups like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Sangh Parivar, and Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) to alienate non-Hindus or lower-caste Hindus is a significant contributor to the rise of religious violence and persecution.”
- It calls out the role of Hindutva/Hindu extremist groups, India’s anti-conversion laws, cow-protection lynch mobs, concerns that millions from Assam will be incorrectly left out of the National Register of Citizens and a lack of transparency on denying international NGOs registration and political targeting of NGOs.
- The Commission found that despite the overall deteriorating conditions there were “positive developments”.
- In this context, it took note of Home Minister’s observation from last December that communal attacks dropped by 12 % in 2018 from their 2017 levels, an 12% increase in the budget of the Ministry of Minority Affairs and the Supreme Court’s push for a 11-point plan to counter mob violence.

### **Chairman records dissenting view:**

- Tenzin Dorjee, Commission Chairperson dissented with the view that India’s religious freedoms continued to decline in 2018.
- “India is an open society with a robust democratic and judiciary system,” he writes in the report.
- “As I commented last year, overall, I believe religious harmony exists in India [sic],” Mr Dorjee says, describing his experience of having lived as a Tibetan refugee in India for over 30 years, where he mostly witnessed the best of India and sometimes worst due to intractable religious conflicts.
- A new Commission member, Anurima Bhargava, a Chicago-native of Indian origin, wrote that the Commission had not had the opportunity to officially visit India in over a decade and sought stronger

## B. GS2 Related

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. UN Security Council designates Masood Azhar as global terrorist

##### Context:

Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar is listed as a designated terrorist by the UN Security Council 1267 Committee.

##### Chronology of events:

2009: India moves a proposal by itself to designate Azhar as a global terrorist, a listing that will subject him to global travel ban, asset freeze and arms embargo. China blocks the move.

2016: India again moves the proposal with the backing of the P3 – the United States, the United Kingdom and France in the UN's 1267 Sanctions Committee to ban Azhar.

2017: The P3 nations move a similar proposal again. China, a veto-wielding permanent member of the Security Council, blocks the proposal from being adopted.

February 27, 2019: The US, the UK and France move a fresh proposal in the UN Security Council to designate Azhar as a global terrorist.

March 13, 2019: China puts the hold on the proposal scuttling yet another attempt to blacklist the JeM chief. The proposal was the fourth such bid at the UN in the last 10 years to list Azhar as a global terrorist.

March 28, 2019: The US, supported by France and the UK, directly moves a draft resolution in the UN Security Council to blacklist the Pakistan-based terror group's chief.

April 3, 2019: China hits out at the US for threatening to use all available resources to designate the JeM chief as a 'global terrorist', saying Washington's move is complicating the issue and not conducive to peace and stability in South Asia.

April 30, 2019: China says "some progress" has been achieved on designating Azhar as a global terrorist by the UN and hopes that the vexed issue will be properly resolved.

May 1, 2019: The 1267 Sanctions Committee designates Azhar as a global terrorist after China lifts the hold on the proposal of the US, the UK and France.

##### Details:

- At the end of March, the U.S. circulated a draft resolution (to sanction Azhar) among the UNSC members, i.e., outside the 1267 Committee, presumably to pressure China into either supporting the listing or having to take a stand in open proceedings and risk being seen as supporting terror.
- However, the US moved a draft resolution to the UNSC, which would have forced a vote on the issue and then the only way China could have blocked the process was by a veto.
- Earlier this week, China had said "some progress" had been made and indicated it was willing to change its decade-long position.

- The decision by China to lift its technical hold was achieved after intense negotiations across global capitals.
- Designation as a terrorist would mean a travel ban, arms embargo and asset freeze on Azhar.
- Indonesia as chair of the 1267 designation committee played a key role.

### **Reasons for listing:**

The reasons for designating Azhar as a terrorist as per the listing includes

- His support for the JeM since its founding
- Being associated with the al-Qaeda by recruiting for them and “participating in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing, or perpetrating of acts or activities or supplying, selling or transferring arms and related material”.
- It also pointed to his role in recruiting fighters in Afghanistan.
- The JeM itself was sanctioned by the 1267 Committee in 2001.
- However, the reasons for listing did not mention the Pulwama attack of February 14, for which the JeM had claimed responsibility, and which found mention in the latest (February 27) listing request for Azhar.

### **What is its significance to India?**

- It is a significant outcome for India because India has been at it for several years.
- The first effort that India made in this regard was in 2009.
- More recently, India has been persistent, diligent and in a subterranean manner, making all the efforts towards this goal. Now that goal stands achieved.

While the US was backed by the UK and France in its endeavour, India engaged separately with China to strengthen its case during its foreign secretary’s visit to Beijing last month. Russia, the other P-5 member, played a quiet role by urging China to accede to India’s request in the backdrop of Pulwama terror attack to earn India’s goodwill.



The terror list prepared by the 1267 Sanctions Committee of the United Nations, includes **262 individuals** and **83 entities**

### Individuals listed apart from Masood Azhar:

▪ **Ayman Al-Zawahari:**  
al-Qaeda leader

▪ **Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi:**  
Islamic State leader

▪ **Aamir Ali Chaudary:**  
Tehreek-e-Taliban  
Pakistan (TTP)  
explosives expert

▪ **Maulana Fazlullah:**  
TTP leader  
(died last year)

▪ **Abdul Rehman  
al-Sindhi:**  
al-Qaeda operative

▪ **Sidi Mohamed Arhali:**  
linked to al-Qaeda

▪ **Ibrahim Hassan Tali Asiri:**  
Chief bomb-maker for al-Qaeda

▪ **Othman al-Ghamdi:**  
Commander of al-Qaeda

▪ **Ghalib Abdallah al-Zaydi:**  
Leader of al-Qaeda

▪ **Ali Musa al-Shawagh:**  
Islamic State leader

▪ **Hamza bin Laden:**  
Son of Osama  
bin Laden



## 2. Assange sentenced to 50 weeks in jail

### Context:

In April 2019, Julian Assange was dragged out of the Ecuadorian embassy by the British police after Ecuador abruptly revoked his seven-year asylum, paving the way for his extradition to the U.S. for involvement in one of the biggest-ever leaks of classified information.

### Background:

- Julian Paul Assange is an Australian computer programmer and the founder and director of WikiLeaks.
- He had been under the protection of Ecuador as an asylum seeker, and had been living in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London since 2012.
- Assange founded Wiki Leaks in 2006 and came to international attention in 2010 when WikiLeaks published a series of leaks.
- These leaks included the Collateral Murdervideo (April 2010), the Afghanistan war logs (July 2010),

the Iraq war logs (October 2010), and Cable Gate (November 2010).

- Following the 2010 leaks, the federal government of the United States launched a criminal investigation into WikiLeaks and asked allied nations for assistance.
- In November 2010, Sweden issued an international arrest warrant for Assange. He had been questioned there months earlier over allegations of sexual assault and rape.
- Assange denied the allegations, and said that he would be extradited from Sweden to the United States because of his role in publishing secret American documents.
- Assange surrendered to UK police on 7 December 2010 but was released on bail within 10 days.
- Having been unsuccessful in his challenge to the extradition proceedings, he breached his bail in June 2012 and absconded.
- He was granted asylum by Ecuador in August 2012 and remained in the Embassy of Ecuador in London until his arrest in April 2019.
- Assange has held Ecuadorian citizenship since 12 December 2017.
- Swedish prosecutors later dropped their investigation into the rape accusation against Assange; they applied to revoke the European arrest warrant in May 2017.
- The London Metropolitan Police indicated that an arrest warrant was in force for Assange's failure to surrender himself to his bail.
- During the 2016 Democratic Party presidential primaries, WikiLeaks hosted emails sent or received by candidate Hillary Clinton from her private email server when she was Secretary of State.
- The Democratic Party, along with cybersecurity experts, claimed that Russian intelligence had hacked the emails and leaked them to WikiLeaks; Assange consistently denied any connection to or cooperation with Russia in relation to the leaks.
- Ecuadorian president Lenín Moreno said on 27 July 2018 that he had begun talks with British authorities to withdraw the asylum for Assange.
- UK police entered the London embassy at the invitation of the Ecuadorian ambassador and arrested Assange on 11 April 2019.

#### Details:

- The founder of WikiLeaks has been sentenced to 50 weeks in jail – just under the maximum possible sentence of 12 months - for flouting bail conditions by a court in London.
- It comes ahead of a hearing due to take place at Westminster Magistrates Court as part of efforts to extradite him to the U.S.
- The issue of Mr. Assange's extradition to the U.S. has become the subject of political debate in the U.K., with Labour expressing its opposition to those effort.
- The Labour's Shadow Home Secretary said Mr. Assange was being pursued by the U.S. not to protect U.S. national security but because he had "exposed wrongdoing by US administrations and their military forces..." these whistleblowing activities about illegal wars, mass murder, murder of civilians, and corruption on a grand scale have put Julian Assange in the crosshairs of the US Administration," she told the House of Commons.

### 3. Iraq remains top oil supplier to India

#### Context:

Iraq has, for the second year in a row, become India's top crude oil supplier, meeting more than a fifth of the country's oil needs in 2018-19 fiscal year.

#### Details:

- Saudi Arabia has traditionally been India's top oil source, but it was for the first time dethroned by Iraq in 2017-18 fiscal year.
- While India stopped importing crude oil from Iran following reimposition of economic sanctions this

- month by the U.S., the Persian Gulf nation was the third largest crude oil supplier to India.
- Iran was India's second biggest supplier of crude oil after Saudi Arabia till 2010-11, but western sanctions over its suspected nuclear programme relegated it to the seventh spot in subsequent years.
  - UAE topped Venezuela to become India's fourth-largest crude supplier.
  - Nigeria, Kuwait and Mexico are other major suppliers.
  - The U.S., which began selling crude oil to India in 2017, is fast becoming a major source.

## C. GS3 Related

### Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

#### 1. 15 jawans killed as Maoists trigger IED in Gadchiroli

##### Context:

In one of the worst retaliatory attacks on the anti-naxal security forces, Maoist insurgents blew up an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) killing 15 jawans and a civilian in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district.

##### Details:

- The latest ambush on police seems to be in retaliation for the killing of two senior women cadre of the rebels, Manku Norate and Manu Dasru, by the anti-naxal forces during an encounter in the forests of Etapalli taluka, South Gadchiroli
- The insurgents have been targeting the ongoing Lok Sabha elections and had triggered as many as four IED blasts leading up to the polls, injuring six commandos of the Gadchiroli police..

##### Who are Maoists?

- Maoists in India are anti-state rebellion groups spread in mainland country covering tribal areas of seven states.
- The insurgency began in 1967 in remote forests of West Bengal's village 'Naxalbari'.
- While Naxalism originated in India, Maoism in China. The common thread between the two is "armed resistance" and "violence".
- The Maoists consider Parliamentary democracy to be tools of exploiting their rivers and natural resources by capitalists and politicians.
- They want to establish a 'communist society' through armed revolution against the government.

##### Measures taken to deal with Left Wing Extremism:

In 2017, a security operations doctrine called 'SAMADHAN' was launched. Highlights of the strategy:

- The acronym SAMADHAN stands for Smart leadership, Aggressive strategy, Motivation and training, Actionable intelligence, Dashboard Based KPIs (key performance indicators) and KRAs (key result areas), Harnessing technology, Action plan for each theater, and No access to financing.
- The MHA suggested the use of trackers for weapons, and bio-metrics in smart guns.
- Unique Identification number (UID) for Gelatin sticks and explosives.
- At least one UAV or Mini UAV for each of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) battalions deployed in the Maoist hotbed.
- Joint Task Forces for operations along inter-State boundaries to be set up. Better inter-state coordination and intelligence sharing.
- 400 fortified police stations to be set up in Naxal belt.
- Resumption of Left Wing Extremism (LWE) - specific schemes such as SRE, SIS, IAP/ACA, CIAT

schools.

- Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to be reviewed to ensure effective choking of fund flow to LWE groups.
- Fast tracking building infrastructure, with a focus on solar lights, mobile towers with 3G connectivity, and road-rail connectivity.
- Indian Army or specialized forces - such as Greyhounds - to train forces to take on Naxals.

### Way forward:

The forces should be more proactive and aggressive in owning operations, rather than being reactive. To overcome the Maoist Challenge, there needs to be a comprehensive policy and not just a military or security centric approach.

## Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### 1. Chandrayaan-2 gets new launch window

#### Context:

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said that India set to launch second mission to the moon Chandrayaan-2 in July.

#### Details:

- India's much-delayed second lunar mission, Chandrayaan-2, is now set to be launched any time between July 5 and July 16 this year.
- The moon landing is likely to be in September nearly two months after the launch, close to the lunar South Pole, ISRO said.
- The lunar South Pole is believed to contain ice and other minerals, and international space expedition plans are hotting up with NASA planning to land astronauts there by 2024, while China reportedly plans to build a scientific research station on the lunar South Pole within the next decade.

#### Chandrayaan-2:

- Chandrayaan-2 is a fully-indigenous mission that comprises three modules
  1. An Orbiter,
  2. A Lander named 'Vikram'
  3. A Rover named 'Pragyan'
- It will be launched on board a GSLV-MkIII rocket.
- The GSLV-MkIII is a three-stage heavy lift launch vehicle that has been designed to carry four-tonne class satellites into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).
- The Chandrayaan-1 mission was launched on board a PSLV.
- The Chandrayaan-2 weighs around 3,290 kg.
- It would orbit around the moon and carry out remote sensing of the moon.
- The payloads will collect scientific information on lunar topography, mineralogy, elemental abundance, lunar exosphere and signatures of hydroxyl and water-ice.
- The Orbiter and the Lander will be stacked together as an integrated module, while the Rover will be housed inside the Lander.
- According to ISRO, once the Orbiter reaches the 100 km lunar orbit, the Lander will separate from it and ISRO will carry out a controlled descent at a specific site and deploy the Rover.
- The six-wheeled Rover will "move around the landing site in semi-autonomous mode as decided by the ground commands.



- The instruments on the rover will observe the lunar surface and send back data, which will be useful for analysis of the lunar soil.

## Category: ECONOMY

### 1. ADB steps up metro rail funding

#### Context:

Asian Development Bank (ADB), traditionally strong in funding social sector projects in education, water and irrigation in India, is moving into financing metro rail projects in the country in a big way.

#### Details:

- Addressing journalists from South Asia at the 52nd Annual Meeting of the ADB, Director General, South Asia Department, ADB said “Transport and energy are two of our biggest areas for funding. We’re now moving into metro rail financing in a big way.”
- It was also emphasised that financing logistics projects would also be a priority area for the bank.
- The bank is involved with the \$1 billion Mumbai metro, and is in talks with the respective State governments for funding the Bhopal Metro and Bengaluru Metro.
- It is also engaged in discussions to extend assistance to Chennai Metro Phase II — possibly even subsequent phases — and the new Indore metro.
- Funding for the Mumbai project is the largest extended to India by the ADB.
- The bank is also working with the Centre to finance the newly-announced Delhi-Meerut Rapid Rail project cleared by the Cabinet in February.
- The ADB is working closely with the AIIB, which is “still in the initial phase” of its operations, and has raised a lot of funds to on-lend.

#### Asian Development Bank (ADB):

- The **Asian Development Bank(ADB)** is a regional development bank established on 19 December 1966, which is headquartered in Manila (Philippines).
- The company also maintains 31 field offices around the world to promote social and economic development in Asia.
- The bank admits the members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP, formerly the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East or ECAFE) and non-regional developed countries.
- This bank modeled on the lines of the world bank.
- Japan holds the largest share in ADB
- The aim of the ADB is social development by reducing poverty in Asia Pacific with inclusive growth, sustainable growth and regional integration.
- This is carried out through 80% investment in the public sector. ADB invests in infrastructure, health, public administration system, helping nations to reduce the impact of climate change and to manage natural resources.

Also Read about: [AIIB](#)

## D. GS4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

#### 1. Power shift

##### What's in the news?

- Recently, The Madras High Court issued a verdict that the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry should not interfere in the day-to-day administration of the Union Territory.
- Experts opine that this development is a serious setback to the incumbent Administrator, Kiran Bedi.

##### Editorial Analysis:

- It is important to note that the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry, Kiran Bedi has been locked in a prolonged dispute over the extent of her powers with Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy, who says she has been disregarding the elected regime and seeking to run the Union Territory on her own.

##### What did the court rule?

- The court has laid down that “the decision taken by the Council of Ministers and the Chief Minister is binding on the Secretaries and other officials.”
- As a matter of fact, inspired by the Supreme Court’s appeal to constitutional morality and trust among high dignitaries, the High Court has also reminded the Centre and the Administrator that they should be true to the concept of democratic principles, lest the constitutional scheme based on democracy and republicanism be defeated.

##### What was the judgement based on?

- The judgement is based mainly on the principles that were laid down in last year’s (2018) Constitution Bench decision on the conflict between the elected regime in the National Capital Territory (NCT) and its Lt.Governor.
- The five-judge Bench had ruled that the L-G has to either act on the ‘aid and advice’ of the Council of Ministers, or refer to the President for a decision any matter on which there is a difference with the Ministry, but has no independent decision-making powers.
- The High Court also says the Administrator is bound by the ‘aid and advice’ clause in matters over which the Assembly is competent to enact laws.
- The L-G’s power to refer any matter to the President to resolve differences should not mean “every matter”, the court has cautioned.

##### The difference in status between Delhi and Puducherry:

- Justice R. Mahadevan, who delivered the Madras High Court judgment, is conscious of the difference in status between Delhi and Puducherry.
- It is important to note that the Puducherry legislature is the creation of a parliamentary law, based on an enabling provision in Article 239A of the Constitution, whereas the NCT legislature has been created by the Constitution itself under Article 239AA.
- The Supreme Court had described the NCT as sui generis.
- At the same time, the NCT Assembly is limited in the extent of its legislative powers, as it is barred from dealing with the subjects of public order, police and land.
- However, looking at the Business Rules as well as other statutory provisions on Puducherry, the judge has sought to give greater credence to the concept of a representative government.

- The judge has set aside two clarifications issued by the Centre in 2017 to the effect that the L-G enjoys more power than the Governor of a State and can act without aid and advice. In view of the Constitution Bench judgment on Delhi, he has differed with another Madras High Court decision of 2018 in which the LG's power to act irrespective of the Cabinet's advice was upheld.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

- In the event that the latest judgment is taken up on appeal, a key question may be how far the decision of the five-judge Bench on the limits of the Delhi L-G's powers would indeed apply to Puducherry.

## **2. The smokescreen of an infiltrator-free India**

### **Note to Students:**

- This article is critically worded, but takes into account the larger issue of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) which has been a subject of controversy.

### **Larger Background:**

#### **Some Noteworthy points:**

- Assam is the only State in the country that had prepared an NRC in 1951.
- It also became the first State to get the first draft of its own updated NRC.
- The Register is meant to establish the credentials of a bona fide citizen as distinguished from a foreigner.
- This was done to detect Bangladeshi migrants who may have illegally entered Assam after the midnight of March 24, 1971.
- This cut-off date was originally agreed to in the 1985 Assam Accord.

#### **What is the Assam Accord?**

- Assam witnessed a range of law and order problems and political turbulence driven by the anti-foreigners movement, in the early 1980s.
- Responding to this development, the Assam Accord (1985) was signed by the Centre and the All Assam Students' Union (AASU).
- Consequent to this, those foreigners who had entered Assam between 1951 and 1961 were to be given full citizenship, including the right to vote.
- The entrants between 1961 and 1971 were to be denied voting rights for ten years but would enjoy all other rights of citizenship.
- Anyone who entered the state without documents after March 24, 1971 will be declared a foreigner and were to be deported.
- Having said this, the Accord also had a package for the economic development of Assam.
- It also had assurance to provide safeguards to protect the cultural, social, and linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people.

#### **What happened thereafter?**

- Experts opine that the successive governments in the State failed to effectively detect and deport foreigners as set out in the Assam Accord.
- In 2005, another agreement was signed between the Centre, the Assam government and the AASU.
- Accordingly, it was decided to update the NRC that was first published after the Census data of 1951.

- The NRC update though started as a pilot project in some districts was stopped after violence broke out in some parts of the State.
- As a matter of fact, in 2009, Assam Public Works (APW), an NGO filed a petition in the Supreme Court. It called for **identification of Bangladeshi foreigners in the State and deletion of their names from the voters' list**.

### **A Look at the challenges that lie ahead:**

#### **1. Challenge Associated with Claims:**

A security challenge could possibly emerge when the process of updating the NRC gets completed.

#### **2. Post marriage migration:**

Nearly 29 lakh women, who have migrated after marriage, have claimed for residency status.

Their claim is supported by certificates issued by gram panchayat secretaries and executive magistrates. Further, the Supreme Court has clarified that while these documents could be allowed, it could by no means be taken as proof of citizenship.

- #### **3. Verifying Authenticity:** The challenge lies in verifying the authenticity of the certificates for establishing the link between the claimant and the legacy person (who has to be a citizen).

### **A Look at Clause 6 of the Assam Accord?**

- The Assam Accord came at the culmination of a movement against immigration from Bangladesh.
- For recognition as citizens, the Accord sets March 24, 1971 as the cutoff date.
- It was proposed that the immigrants up to the cutoff date would get all rights as Indian citizens.
- Thus, Clause 6 was inserted to protect, preserve and promote the cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the "Assamese people".
- It seeks to offer constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards to the Assamese people.
- "Assamese people" - As agreed by most stakeholders, the NRC of 1951 was the basis for defining "Assamese people".
- The current NRC update is based on March 24, 1971, which defines citizenship.
- On the other hand, Clause 6 relates to "Assamese people".
- It is important to note that if 1951 is accepted as the cutoff, it would imply that those who migrated between 1951 and 1971 would be Indian citizens.
- However, they would not be eligible for safeguards meant for "Assamese people".

### **Perspective on Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016:**

- Citizenship Bill - The Centre is pushing for the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2016.
- It seeks to grant citizenship to Hindu Bangladeshis who have entered Assam illegally post-1971.
- Various groups have opposed identification of illegal migrants on the basis of religion.
- This unresolved citizenship related issue could further pose a challenge for the positive outcome of the NRC, even if completed.

### **Editorial Analysis:**

- Critics allege that the current administration's poll promise to implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in a phased manner in other parts of the country is only a smokescreen to hide its real agenda of using the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill to segregate non-citizens on the basis of religion and subjecting only the Muslims among them to anti-immigration laws of the country.



- At present, Assam is the only State in the country to have an NRC, which was compiled way back in 1951.
- The process of updating the 1951 NRC in Assam has been on since 2015 under constant monitoring by the Supreme Court.
- The complete draft of the updated NRC in Assam published on July 30, 2018 excluded the names of over 40 lakh of the total 3.29 crore applicants.
- The Supreme Court has fixed July 31, 2019 for publication of the final NRC list after disposal of all claims and objections.

### **The problem of the cut-off date:**

- However, critics allege that the NRC smokescreen has thickened as the current administration has not spelt out in its manifesto the cut-off date for the proposed NRC for the entire country.
- An important question arises: If the cut-off date is going to be different from that taken for updating the NRC in Assam, what will be the legal status of those included in the updated register in Assam in the rest of the country, and vice versa?
- The cut-off date for updating the NRC in Assam is March 24, 1971, which is also the cut-off date in the Assam Accord for implementation of the core clause, Clause 5, which calls for identification, deletion of names and expulsion of “illegal migrants” from Bangladesh, irrespective of their religion.
- The Accord facilitated acceptance of undocumented migrants from erstwhile East Pakistan who came until this cut-off date as Indian citizens, except in respect of the stream of people who came in 1966-71 and who are to remain disenfranchised for a period of 10 years from the date of their registration as foreigners.
- It is important to note that updating the NRC in Assam on the basis of this core clause led to a broad political consensus in the State that the updated register will be a critical document for implementing this clause and addressing the apprehension of the Assamese and other ethnic communities in the State of losing their linguistic, cultural and ethnic identities due to unabated migration from Bangladesh.

### **View of the Current Administration at the Centre:**

- The current administration has been pushing the campaign in Assam that 1951 should have been the cut-off date in the Assam Accord for identification of “infiltrators” from erstwhile East Pakistan and present-day Bangladesh.
- Though it has not taken any official position on reviewing the Assam Accord for fear of antagonising the Assamese, critics allege that it has been pushing the campaign in a desperate bid to make them accept religion as the basis in place of language, culture and ethnicity for construction of an Assamese identity.
- The Assam government recently informed the Supreme Court that it has submitted a ₹900 crore proposal to the Ministry of Home Affairs for sanctioning 1,000 Foreigners Tribunals to decide the cases of those to be excluded from the final NRC list.
- The State has a hundred Foreigners Tribunals at present.

### **A legal shield? What the Critics Say?**

- Critics allege that the current administration at the Centre needs the Bill to be first enacted as a legal shield for the large number of Bengali Hindus in Assam, in other north-eastern States, and in West Bengal, who migrated from erstwhile East Bengal and after the creation of Bangladesh.
- They further point out that the current administration pushed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019, notwithstanding widespread protests in the north-eastern States and got it passed in the Lok Sabha. But it did not push it in the Rajya Sabha for lack of numbers.
- It is important to note that the Ministry of Home Affairs on October 18, 2018 notified the Citizenship (Amendment) Rules, 2018 **making it mandatory for a person applying for Indian citizenship to**

**declare her or his religion.**

**Concluding Remarks: A cautionary note:**

- It is important to note that the smokescreen of an infiltrator-free India without explicitly defining an infiltrator will not be able to hide the real threat posed to the country's secular fabric.
- Further, some experts believe that if the Bill is made into an Act, it poses the threat of abusing the NRC to divide people on religious lines.
- The country can ill afford such a divisive agenda.

**Category: ECONOMY**

**1. The cost of resistance**

**Editorial Analysis:**

- Even though antimicrobial resistance is acknowledged by policymakers as a major health crisis, few have considered its economic impact.
- Now, a report from the Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance (IACG) puts the financial fall-out in perspective.

**More Specifics on the Report:**

- This report is titled **"No Time to Wait: Securing The Future From Drug Resistant Infections"**.
- The report says that in about three decades from now, uncontrolled antimicrobial resistance will cause global economic shocks on the scale of the 2008-09 financial crisis.
- With nearly 10 million people estimated to die annually from resistant infections by 2050, health-care costs and the cost of food production will spike, while income inequality will widen.

**A Look at the Economic Costs:**

- In the worst-case scenario, the world will lose 3.8% of its annual GDP by 2050, while 24 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030.
- Nations must acknowledge this eventuality, the IACG says, and act to fight it.
- It is important to note that for high- and mid-income nations, the price of prevention, at \$2 per head a year, is extremely affordable. For poorer countries, the price is higher but still modest compared to the costs of an antibiotic apocalypse.

**Perspective on India:**

- India first published almost nine years ago the broad contours of a plan to fight antimicrobial resistance.
- The difficulty has been in implementing it, given the twin challenges of antibiotic overuse and underuse.

**The Twin Challenge being faced:**

- **On the one hand, many Indians still die of diseases like sepsis and pneumonia because they don't get the right drug at the right**
- **On the other hand, a poorly regulated pharmaceutical industry means that antibiotics are freely available to those who can afford them.**

## Concluding Remarks: The Way Forward

- The IACG report acknowledges these obstacles, and calls for efforts to overcome them. Some steps can be initiated right away, it says, such as phasing out critical human-use antibiotics in the animal husbandry sector, such as quinolones.
- But these steps cannot be driven by regulation alone.
- A multi-stakeholder approach, involving private industry, philanthropic groups and citizen activists is needed.
- Private pharmaceutical industries must take it upon themselves to distribute drugs in a responsible manner.
- Philanthropic charities must fund the development of new antibiotics, while citizen activists must drive awareness.
- **These stakeholders must appreciate that the only way to postpone resistance is through improved hygiene and vaccinations.**
- It is a formidable task as India still struggles with low immunisation rates and drinking water contamination. But it must consider the consequences of a failure.
- While the 2008-09 financial crisis caused global hardships, its effects began to wear off by 2011. Once crucial antibiotics are lost to humankind, they may be lost for decades.

## 2. Fighting polio in Pakistan

### Note to Students:

This article focusses on polio eradication with a special emphasis on Pakistan. However, it is important to read this topic with a focus on India; we have elaborated on this narrative under the section, “Larger Background”.

### Larger Background:

- India has been certified Polio free by the Regional Polio Certification Commission on the 27th March 2014.
- Last case of Wild poliovirus in the country was reported on 13th January, 2011 from Howrah, West Bengal and no wild poliovirus case have been reported thereafter from any State/UT of the country.
- The polio-free certification pertains to the absence of wild poliovirus and thus country remains polio-free.
- India continues to maintain a highly sensitive surveillance system for polio.
- All cases of paralysis with sudden onset in children up to 15 years (which is called Acute Flaccid Paralysis or AFP) are picked up by the polio surveillance network. Each of these cases is followed up and their stool samples tested for poliovirus in WHO accredited laboratories. In addition, sewage samples are collected from over 30 sites spread across the country for poliovirus detection at regular intervals.
- Strong measures have been put in place in India to mitigate the risk of an importation and spread of poliovirus from countries with continued circulation of poliovirus.
- Polio vaccination is being carried out at international borders and is a must for people travelling to polio affected countries.
- The polio eradication programme in India continues to protect children from the crippling disease by conducting two nationwide mass polio vaccination campaigns and two to three sub-national campaigns each year.
- Intensive efforts are also being undertaken in India to improve routine immunization coverage that involves administering polio vaccines, in addition to other vaccines, to infants under the **Universal Immunization Programme (UIP)**.
- To maintain the polio-free status of the country, government is taking following measures:

1. Population immunity against polio is being maintained by observing polio campaigns every year. In the year 2018, two National Immunization Days (NID) have been conducted and two sub-national polio immunization rounds (SNID) are planned, in addition to polio vaccination through routine immunization. Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) has also been introduced across the country to further boost the population immunity as additional protection against polio.
2. Vaccination to international travellers to and from 8 other countries and continuous vaccination at the international borders of India are being carried out throughout the year to mitigate risk of importation.
3. Sensitivity of polio surveillance is maintained through **Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) surveillance in human and environment surveillance to detect any polio threat** as early as possible and respond quickly to mitigate the risk of circulation.

### World polio status today:

- Today, there are only three countries where transmission of wild poliovirus is occurring: Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. Polio cases have decreased by over 99.9% since 1988, from an estimated 3,50,000 cases then, to 22 reported cases in 2017 worldwide.

### About Polio:

- Poliomyelitis (polio) is a highly infectious viral disease, which mainly affects young children (under 5 years of age).
- The virus is transmitted by person-to-person spread mainly through the faecal-oral route or, less frequently, by a common vehicle (e.g. contaminated water or food) and multiplies in the intestine, from where it can enter the nervous system and can cause paralysis.

### Symptoms:

- Initial symptoms are fever, fatigue, headache, vomiting, stiffness of the neck and pain in the limbs.
- 1 in 200 infections leads to irreversible paralysis (usually in the legs).
- Among those paralysed, 5% to 10% die when their breathing muscles become nonfunctional.

### Prevention:

- There is no cure, but safe and effective vaccines are there. Polio can be prevented through immunization. Polio vaccine given multiple times, almost always protects a child for life. The strategy to eradicate polio is therefore based on preventing infection by immunizing every child until transmission stops and the world is polio-free. There are two types of vaccine to prevent infection.
- **OPV (Oral Polio Vaccine):** It is given orally as birth dose for institutional deliveries, then primary three doses at 6, 10 & 14 weeks and one booster dose at 16-24 months of age.
- **Injectable Polio Vaccine (IPV):** Two fractional doses are given at 6 and 14 weeks of age by Intradermal route on right upper arm.

### National Immunization Days:

- As Polio is eliminated from India but the risk of importation still persists from remaining three countries (Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria) where poliovirus is still circulating, the need for the country is to maintain the population immunity and sensitive surveillance till global polio eradication happens. This is maintained through National and Sub National Polio rounds along with sustained high quality polio surveillance.



### **Editorial Analysis:**

- Recently, the polio eradication programme in Pakistan was in the news for all the wrong reasons.
- A government hospital in Mashokhel in Peshawar district was set on fire after many children allegedly fell sick after being given the anti-polio vaccine.
- What soon followed, in two separate incidents, two police officers guarding vaccinators were shot dead.
- Subsequent to this, in Chaman, which borders Afghanistan, a polio worker was shot dead and her helper injured.
- It is important to note that since December 2012, nearly 90 people have been killed in Pakistan for working to eradicate polio.
- Due to recurrent threats to workers, the Pakistan government has now suspended the anti-polio drive.

### **Cases of wild poliovirus type 1:**

- This is the worst time to take this decision. In 2019 alone, eight paralysed children with wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) have been found in Pakistan.
- Environmental surveillance by testing sewage samples has shown 91 WPV1-positive samples, in the provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh. This is a worrying sign.
- Experts opine that with suspended immunisation activities, WPV1 will spread fast and the number of polio cases could increase and cause an outbreak.
- What is also worrying is that if Pakistan cannot eliminate polio, the global eradication programme is sure to stall.

### **Perspective on India:**

- When India eliminated WPV1 in January 2011, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), a public-private partnership led by national governments with five partners, did not ask if Pakistan would be able to follow suit; it simply assumed it would.
- This was unrealistic. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, oral polio vaccine (OPV) coverage of 98-99% was sustained with an average of 15 doses per child from 2003.
- There was full cooperation from the health workers and the public. The war on polio requires such intensity and coverage and it is unrealistic to expect this in Pakistan, where polio eradication is falsely depicted as a Western agenda with the sinister motive of reducing fertility.
- The GPEI has pinned all its hopes on the OPV and has excluded the alternate inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) to eradicate WPVs.

### **Comparing OPV with IPV:**

- The OPV is cheap and easy to give to children, but it has to be given to them again and again in pulse campaigns since its efficacy is poor.
- On the other hand, the IPV is highly efficacious and needs to be given just two-three times as part of routine immunisation.

### **Risk of polio outbreaks:**

- The OPV has another problem. If coverage declines (as is bound to happen in Pakistan), vaccine viruses will spread to children who are not vaccinated, back-mutate, de-attenuate and become virulent.
- Such viruses are called circulating vaccine-derived polioviruses (cVDPV).
- They can cause polio outbreaks. Thus Pakistan will soon be at risk of polio outbreaks by both WPV1 and cVDPV.
- It is to avoid the emergence of cVDPV that India strives to maintain high OPV coverage through

routine immunisation, Mission Indradhanush and annual national pulse campaigns.

- In 2018, Papua New Guinea developed a cVDPV polio outbreak as OPV coverage fell to 60%. In 2017, as OPV coverage fell to 53%, Syria had an outbreak of cVDPV polio.
- There is yet another problem in Pakistan. With the OPV being identified as the weapon in the war on polio and with some in Pakistan believing that the aim of eradication is to reduce fertility, a vaccine is given only three or four times, not 15-20 times.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

- Hope is not lost for polio eradication provided that the GPEI relents on its insistence on the OPV and uses the IPV along with other common vaccines.
- IPV-containing vaccines could be included in the routine immunisation programme and given without attracting the attention of militants.
- The false propaganda about polio vaccination in Pakistan will then lose its sting.
- While near-100% coverage with the OPV is necessary, 85-90% coverage with the IPV given in a routine schedule would be sufficient.
- If the GPEI insists on the OPV as the only weapon against polio, we have hit the end of the road in Pakistan.
- But the world cannot afford to lose this war on polio. India could show the way forward by giving the IPV in its universal immunisation programme (at least two doses and preferably three) and then discontinuing the infectious OPV altogether.

## **Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### **1. Beyond Khalistan (Indo-Canadian Ties)**

#### **Editorial Analysis:**

- Experts opine that India-Canada ties have deteriorated in recent years.
- This aspect becomes evident especially given the view that the current Justin Trudeau administration is soft on individuals and organisations that support the demand for Khalistan, a separate Sikh homeland.

#### **A Look at the Immediate Past:**

- Members of Mr. Trudeau's Cabinet, especially Defence Minister Harjit Singh Sajjan, have been accused of having links with Sikh separatists.
- When Mr. Sajjan visited India in April 2017, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh refused to meet him for this reason.
- Similarly, Mr. Trudeau received the cold shoulder during his India visit in February 2018.
- When Mr. Singh met Mr. Trudeau, their discussion was on the Khalistan issue, rather than on areas of mutual cooperation.
- Recently, Mr. Trudeau drew the ire of the Indian government when a report on terror threats avoided the words 'Khalistani extremism'.

#### **The Way Forward:**

- There is no doubt that some overseas Sikhs support a separate Sikh homeland, and that there is not much appetite for the same in Punjab.
- However, it is important to not link criticism of India on human rights issues, such as the Sikh pogrom of 1984 and extrajudicial killings in the 1980s and 1990s, with Sikh separatism.
- The Indian media, the government and even politicians in Punjab need to realise that Sikhs based in

Canada, the U.K. and the U.S. may have different political views. Similarly, non-violent support for a cause cannot be labelled as a militant activity.

- If there is evidence of support for any violent activity, New Delhi and Canada must work together to tackle the problem.
- Experts opine that by focusing only on the Khalistan issue, New Delhi risks alienating the Sikh diaspora. India should instead reach out to the Sikh diaspora in a year when Sikhs and all other followers of Guru Nanak will be commemorating his 550th birth anniversary.
- Critics of the Canadian government must also bear in mind that like all relationships, this is a multi-layered one. While New Delhi may be uncomfortable with the Canadian government's approach towards the activities of certain Sikh hard-liners, it is important to bear in mind that for the year 2017, **Indian students received well over 25% (over 80,000) of the available study permits.**
- Further, in 2017, well over 40% of the 86,022 people who received invitations for permanent residency were Indians. During 2018, this rose by a staggering 13% to 41,000.
- It is important to handle ties with Canada with nuance.
- First, members of the Sikh diaspora and Sikh politicians who are vocal on human rights issues shouldn't be labelled Khalistani sympathisers. Second, it should be remembered that the New Delhi-Ottawa relationship goes well beyond the Khalistan issue.

## F. Tidbits

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. Varuna - Indo-French joint naval exercise

- The annually held Varuna naval exercise is an integral part of France–India strategic relationship in the 21st century and consists of naval cooperation drills between the French Navy and the Indian Navy.
- The inaugural Varuna naval exercise took place in 2001.
- The joint-exercises are held either in the Indian Ocean or Mediterranean Sea with the aim of improving Indo-French coordination on capabilities like cross-deck operations, replenishment-at-sea, minesweeping, anti-submarine warfare and information sharing.
- The Indo-French joint naval exercise, Varuna 19.1, began off the Goa coast.
- The exercise aims at developing interoperability between the two navies and mutual cooperation.

## H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Bardoli Satyagraha was led by Gandhi.
2. It was in Bardoli satyagraha where Vallabhbhai patel got title "Sardar".

Which of the following statement/s is/are correct?

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

The Bardoli Satyagraha movement was started in January 1928 after the land revenue in Bardoli taluka was increased by 30 per cent. In February 1928, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was called to lead the movement. It was Bardoli satyagraha where Vallabhbhai Patel got the title "Sardar".

**Q2. Cyberdome, recently seen in news is**

- a. A hi-tech centre for cyber security that has been set up in Kerala
- b. The nodal agency to deal with cyber security threats like hacking and phishing
- c. A recently conceptualised AI-enabled solution to deal with cyber crimes
- d. A civil society organization and a think tank of cyber security experts

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

Cyberdome is the hi-tech centre for cyber security that has been set up by the Kerala Police at the Technopark campus in Thiruvananthapuram. Established on a public-private partnership model, the Cyberdome is expected to enable sleuths to obtain vital leads in cases of cyber-related offences using advancements in the field of information technology. The areas that will come under the purview of the technology centre will include cyber forensic, cyber intelligence, cyber security, incidence response, internet monitoring, cyber crimes against women and children, VOIP/Skype call analysing, cyber terrorism, dark net exploring and crimes related to the social media, which will be examined through the social media analysing laboratory.

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

- 1. Fundamental Duties were added on the recommendation of Swaran Singh Committee
- 2. Fundamental Duties were added by the Forty-second Amendment of the Constitution

Which of the following statement/s is/are correct?

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

Self-explanatory

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

- 1. A major cause of the pile up of bad loans in India is because of judicial delays. Elucidate. (10 Marks, 150 Words)
- 2. Discuss the contributions of Swadeshi Movement in India's freedom struggle. (10 Marks, 150 Words)



