

# 15 June 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## B. GS2 Related

### Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

#### 1. Medical services hit as doctors' agitation spreads

##### Context:

A nationwide strike has been called for, by the Indian Medical Association, protesting the attack on a doctor in Kolkata by the relatives of a patient who died.

##### Deepening Crisis:

- With the state government refusing to negotiate with the protesting doctors the crisis has deepened.
- Bengal is the worst hit by the strike with at least 13 big government hospitals affected.
- 300 doctors have tendered their resignation in government-run hospitals in Bengal.
- Doctors from across India have organised demonstrations and skipped work in solidarity with their colleagues from West Bengal.

- Emergency services will function normally as the resident doctors will purportedly continue to work in the emergency services as per their scheduled duties
- The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a public interest litigation over the safety and security of doctors in government hospitals across the country.

**Concerns:**

- The number of cases of violence against doctors — physical and verbal — has increased in recent times.
- AIIMS Delhi alone reported 32 cases of workplace violence in 2013 and 2014.
- With emotions running high, the casualty ward at the premier institute witnessed maximum cases of violence.
- Experts opine that the perceived injustice by patients' families is one of the key reasons of violence.
- The other reasons for violence include overcrowding, long wait for appointments, delay in patient care shortage of security guards and lack of soft skills among healthcare workers.

**Way forward:**

- The doctors have demanded additional security and assurance of a safe work environment.
- The IMA has said that it would ask the Prime Minister and the Home Minister to bring out a central law against such violence against doctors.
- Enhancing the security at hospitals with more security officers, CCTV cameras, panic buttons etc is a way to curb the incidences of such violence.
- Experts suggest having a central act prescribing strong punishment for perpetrators of violence against doctors.
- Some countries have taken the legal route to prevent such violence.
- In the UK, in rare cases, patients are excluded from National Health Trust, which means they will only be provided emergency treatment.
- China, on the other hand, is trying to promote the concept of family physicians so people with mild illnesses don't rush to hospitals, thus reducing overcrowding.

## 2. Metro man Sreedharan against free rides for women in Capital

**Context:**

- Chief Minister of Delhi recently announced that the Delhi government intended to subsidise travel in public transport for women commuters. It intends to allow them free travel on metro trains and State-run buses.
- Elattuvalapil Sreedharan popularly known as the "Metro Man", credited for changing the face of public transport in India with his leadership in building the Konkan Railway and the Delhi Metro has written to the Prime Minister against this proposal of the Delhi Government.

**Issues:**

- Delhi Metro is a joint venture of the Delhi government and the Centre, and the Delhi Metro Act has no provision for "concessions".
- He opined that this move could push Delhi Metro into inefficiency and bankruptcy.
- More deserving commuters like students, the disabled and senior citizens would raise similar demands.
- It would also set an alarming precedence for all other Metros in the country.

**Details:**

- Highlighting the fact that the Delhi Government and the Centre are equal equity partners in Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC), Mr. Sreedharan, a principal advisor to DMRC has requested the Prime Minister's personal intervention.
- He stressed upon the fact that one shareholder cannot take a unilateral decision to give concession to one section of the community.
- A conscious decision had been taken, when the Delhi Metro was inaugurated, to not provide any travel concessions, so as to ensure that the fee could be affordable to ordinary citizens, he said.

### 3. Govt. task force to ensure women's safety aboard public transport

#### Context:

The Delhi government has announced the formation of a task force to ensure the safety of female commuters aboard public transport. The announcement follows the proposal to make Metro travel and bus travel free for women in the capital.

#### Details:

- It is in the wake of a section of public transport experts stating that there is no correlation between the proposed free travel scheme and the safety of women commuters, that the announcement is made.
- The task force would conduct off and on-ground review of all the ongoing schemes and draft a proposal of new plans for women safety.
- The task force is constituted by all stakeholders of public transport, eminent experts from the civil society working in the field of women safety and public transport in Delhi, two daily female commuters nominated by the Transport Minister.
- The delhi government is moving ahead to ensure that its ambitious "free commute for women" proposal comes before Delhi goes for Assembly polls next year.

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. India to impose retaliatory tariffs on 29 American goods

#### Context:

The Commerce Ministry has said that India has decided to impose retaliatory tariffs on 29 goods imported from the U.S. starting June 16. The decision comes a year after it was initially decided.

#### Background:

- The US has withdrawn the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits to India, effective 5th June.
- The commerce and industry minister said that India has accepted the decision of the US to withdraw GSP benefits gracefully, and would work towards making the exports competitive.
- It was also clarified that the duty hikes were against the tariff hikes on steel and aluminium products by the U.S. and not because it withdrew duty-free benefits to Indian exporters.
- America had in March last year imposed 25 per cent tariff on steel and a 10 per cent import duty on aluminium products. As India is one of the major exporters of these items to the US, the US decision has revenue implication of about \$240 million on Indian steel and aluminium products.
- The move to impose retaliatory tariffs comes ahead of the meeting between Modi and Trump on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Japan

### Details:

- India had repeatedly postponed the imposition of retaliatory tariffs since they were first announced in June 2018.
- The tariff would now be imposed on 29 US products, including almond, walnut and pulses.
- The other products on which duties will be hiked include certain kind of nuts, iron and steel products, apples, pears, flat rolled products of stainless steel, other alloy steel, tube and pipe fittings, and screws, bolts and rivets.
- The move will hurt American exporters of these 29 items as they have to pay duties on these products. India would get about \$217 million additional revenue from such imports.
- The consensus view is that the impact is commensurate to the impact on India due to the U.S. tariffs on aluminium and steel imports.
- India has also dragged the US to the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) dispute settlement mechanism over the imposition of import duties on steel and aluminium.
- India's exports to the US in 2017-18 stood at \$47.9 billion, while imports were at \$26.7 billion. The trade balance is in favour of India.



## 2. Modi, Imran exchange pleasantries at Bishkek

### Context:

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit 2019 is being held in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan.

### What is SCO?

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation is a Eurasian Economic, Political and Security organization. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was formed with the primary objective of military cooperation between its member nations. It works towards intelligence sharing and counter terrorism operations in the Central Asian Region (CAR).

### Fight against Terrorism:

- Addressing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit, PM Modi highlighted the spirit and ideals of the SCO to strengthen cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

- To combat the menace of terrorism, countries will have to come out of their narrow purview to unite against it, he said.
- Prime Minister called on the SCO member states to cooperate under the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) against terrorism.
- The Bishkek Declaration urged the international community to encourage global cooperation to fight terrorism, without politicisation and double standards; with respect for the sovereignty and independence of all countries.
- It sought the support of the member countries to work towards a consensus on adopting the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
- The summit signed a document titled 'Roadmap for Further Action of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group.
- The other agreements on sports, mass media, coordination of humanitarian affairs, tourism, healthcare were signed.
- A separate MoU was signed for establishment of Astana International Financial Centre.

#### **Details:**

- Without naming Pakistan, Mr. Modi raised the issue of state-sponsored terrorism at Bishkek and said that countries sponsoring, aiding and funding terrorism must be held accountable as he called for a global conference to combat the menace.
- However, Prime Minister exchanged usual pleasantries with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan.
- It is the first exchange since the Pulwama terror attack that had led to escalation of tensions between the India and Pakistan.

#### **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS):**

The Regional Antiterrorism Structure (RATS) was established in the year 2004 at the Tashkent Summit. SCO-RATS is a permanent body established to bring about coordination and interaction between member states in ensuring security in the region. The Regional Antiterrorism Structure works on information sharing and joint counter terrorism measures between the member states. Post the Astana summit declaration of 2005, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has emerged as a regional security organization.

### **3. PM hits out at trade protectionism**

#### **Context:**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned unilateralism and trade protectionism Addressing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit.

#### **Background:**

- The SCO member states have acknowledged that the situation in global politics and economy remains turbulent and tense. And that the process of economic globalisation is being hindered by the growing unilateral protectionist policies and other challenges in international trade.
- The points were highlighted in the Bishkek Declaration of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Heads of State Council.
- The importance of further improving the architecture of global economic governance, and deepening cooperation to build a transparent, predictable and stable environment for the development of trade and investment cooperation have been stressed in the declaration.

#### **Details:**



- The PM stressed on the need for a rules-based, anti-discriminatory and all inclusive WTO-centred multilateral trading system.
- He expressed the need for a rule-based, transparent, anti-discriminatory, open and all inclusive WTO-centred multilateral trading system.
- He added that such a trading system should be focused so that the interests of every country specially the developing ones can be taken care of.

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## E. Editorials

### Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

#### 1. Shaky building blocks

##### Editorial Analysis:

- Some experts opine that many children in elementary classrooms across India cannot read and write proficiently, as demonstrated on an annual basis by the Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER). As a consequence, they assert, **this affects other school-based learning, as well as functioning in societies and economies that prize literacy.**

##### A Perspective on the capabilities of young children:

- It was heartening, therefore, to see a chapter devoted to “Foundational Literacy and Numeracy” in the draft National Education Policy, 2019.
- As a matter of fact, the focus it places on the early years is welcome, and the continuity it recommends between the pre-primary and primary years is necessary.
- Likewise, its emphasis on mother tongue-based education and oral language development are critical.
- However, experts point out that the analysis presented on why children fail to learn to read and write largely points to factors surrounding the teaching and learning process — the health and nutritional status of children, high student-teacher ratios, and so on.
- It is important to note that while each of these factors is undoubtedly important, they do not address with sufficient clarity curricular, pedagogical and teacher education-related issues that plague the teaching and learning of early literacy in many Indian classrooms.

(a) What plagues the teaching and learning of early literacy in many Indian classrooms?

- Most classrooms across India view the task of foundational literacy as teaching children to master the script, and being able to read simple words and passages with comprehension.
- Higher order meaning making, critical thinking, reading and responding to literature, and writing are typically reserved for later years of schooling.
- Critics opine that this draft reinforces such restrictive and outdated ideas about the goals of a foundational literacy programme.

- It is important to note that research evidence from around the globe demonstrates unequivocally that even very young children are capable of using early forms of reading, writing and drawing to express themselves and to communicate; they are also capable of inferential meaning-making, critical thinking, and so on.
- As a matter of fact, this entire body of scholarship, referred to as “**emergent literacy**”, has been ignored in the draft.
- Experts opine that this has powerful consequences for the recommendations that follow, which propose largely oral activities for the pre-primary grades, reading hours for Grades 1-3, with an additional hour for writing starting only in Grades 4 and 5.
- Further, it contradicts evidence suggesting that young children be taught listening, speaking, reading and writing simultaneously and not sequentially.

(b) A Look at the many pedagogical approaches:

- Another concern is that the recommendations are based on generic theories of early childhood education, such as multiple age groups learning together in flexible, play- and activity-based ways.
- Critics opine that they don’t draw upon ideas specific to the teaching and learning of early literacy.
- Early literacy requires a “balance” between helping children to acquire the script, and engaging them with higher order meaning making.
- It also requires knowledge of a variety of pedagogical approaches, such as reading aloud to children, guiding children in their efforts to read and write, encouraging independent exploration, helping them learn about different genres of texts, and so on.
- Further, it needs a balance of materials — moving beyond textbooks and workbooks to high quality children’s literature, material created by the children themselves, and the like.

(c) The Onus on Teachers:

- Teachers need to know how to differentiate instruction for learners at different levels and how to provide specific help to students who are struggling.
- As a matter of fact, this also requires sufficient time — an average of two-three hours per day, as per the recommendations of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD).
- Further, while it may be beyond the scope of a policy document to detail specific curricular and pedagogical approaches, it must provide sufficient direction for a national curriculum framework to pick up from — in this case, it should signal the need for a balanced and comprehensive approach to foundational literacy and knowledgeable teachers for its implementation.
- Earlier documents addressing this issue (for example, MHRD’s Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat, 2014, and Ambedkar University’s position paper on Early Language and Literacy in India, 2016) have been far more specific in recommending a comprehensive approach with expanded time, and a balance of goals, methods and materials.

(d) Teaching literacy

- Experts point out another important concern as well. This concern centres on the lack of discussion about what it takes to prepare teachers to successfully teach foundational literacy in a multilingual country.
- Instead, the document recommends recruiting volunteers and community members to support the acquisition of early literacy (even remedial instruction!) in the primary grades, albeit under the guidance of teachers.
- Critics point out that this lends credence to a dangerous and erroneous idea that any literate person can teach literacy, and undercuts sophisticated understandings related to children’s development and literacy learning that teachers ideally bring to their jobs.
- Volunteers can be used, but cannot be a primary mechanism that a national policy relies upon to

deliver foundational literacy to students.

### Concluding Remarks:

- In focusing on the limitations of the non-academic nature of anganwadi experiences on the one hand, and the inappropriate curricular and pedagogic practices followed by many private pre-schools on the other, critics opine that **the authors of the draft appear to have not engaged with the advances made by scholars, practitioners and policy-makers in the field of early literacy.**

## 2. Reversing the scale of priorities

### Editorial Analysis:

- Experts opine that in the weeks ahead, the honourable Supreme Court of India will hear arguments on an appeal filed against a judgment of the Madras High Court in P.V. Krishnamoorthy v. The Government of India.
- As a matter of fact, there, a series of notifications acquiring land for a proposed eight-lane expressway connecting Chennai to Salem were quashed.
- The Supreme Court has already denied, with good reason, the National Highway Authority of India's urgent request for a stay of the judgment.
- Experts opine that such an order would have rendered unavailing the High Court's lucidly reasoned ruling. Indeed, the quality of the High Court's verdict is such that, when the appeal made against it is heard, the Supreme Court could find that the judgment demands a wider, national embracing.

### Question of procedure:

- The eight-lane highway is part of the “**Bharatmala Pariyojana**”, which is a centrally sponsored highways programme, aimed chiefly as a corridor for more efficient freight movement.
- The intended highway between Chennai and Salem will cover more than 250 km, and, once constructed, **will cut its way through a slew of agricultural and reserve forest lands.**
- It is important to note that **although the High Court framed a series of questions that required answering, the ultimate controversy in the case came down to this: was an environmental impact assessment (EIA) required before efforts were made to acquire land for the highway project? If not, at what stage of the project was such an assessment required?**

### What did the petitioners say?

- According to the petitioners, many of them landowners, the state had failed to obtain an environmental clearance for the project before acquiring land and had thereby violated its responsibilities.
- What is more, in any event, such permission, they argued, could hardly be obtained since it was clear that the project would have a deleterious impact on the forests, the surrounding water bodies and the wildlife of the region.

### What did the government say?

- The government denied this.
- It argued that its power to acquire land under the National Highways Act, 1956, was unconditional.
- There was, it said, **no law mandating an EIA before efforts are made to acquire private land.**
- Critics opine that in its belief, a notification under the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, which required an EIA for the construction of a new highway, did not decree such an assessment for the purposes of securing the land.



## Emergence and Relevance of Sustainable development:

- It is important to note that for some time now, it's been evident that the environment is in a state of utter ruin.
- Recognising this, in 1987, a United Nations-backed committee led by the former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Brundtland proposed a long-term strategy which called for sustainable development, among other things.
- This programme, radical at the time, titled **"Our Common Future"**, defined the principle as an endeavour to ensure that any development "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs."
- **Since then, sustainable development has been viewed as something of a mantra in environmental jurisprudence.**
- So much so that in India, even before the principle crystallised into a binding international norm, the Supreme Court in Vellore Citizens' Welfare Forum (1996) read the idea as intrinsic to India's constitutional structure.
- As a matter of fact, **"The traditional concept that development and ecology are opposed to each other is no longer acceptable,"** wrote Justice Kuldip Singh. **"Sustainable Development' is the answer."**
- Having said that, and as grand as this statement sounds, in practice it's proved scarcely useful.
- **For the courts have invariably seen sustainable development as demanding a balancing exercise, as requiring a calculation of trade-offs between the environment and the economy.**
- Experts opine that what this has meant is that the courts of neoliberal India wound up fashioning a sliding scale of priorities in which the environment, particularly the urban ecosystem, always trumped people, but where eventually development trumped it all.
- This approach, experts show, was typified in the Supreme Court judgment in a case concerning industrialisation at the Kudremukh National Park (Godavarman, 2002).
- Holding that any development would have an adverse effect on the ecology and the environment, a balance, wrote Justice Arijit Pasayat, had to be struck.
- **"Where the commercial venture or enterprise would bring in results which are far more useful for the people, difficulty of a small number of people has to be bypassed,"** he wrote.
- "The comparative hardships have to be balanced and the convenience and benefit to a larger section of the people has to get primacy over comparatively lesser hardship."

## What do such utilitarian reckonings hold in store?

- Experts opine that utilitarian reckonings of this kind, perhaps, represent a problem inherent in seeing sustainable development as a virtuous model.
- It could easily be argued that by its very design, the principle calls for a form of calculation that tends to see growth as outplaying all other concerns. As Amartya Sen wrote, while the prominence accorded to sustainable development may be laudable, **we must equally ask whether "the conception of human beings implicit in it is sufficiently capacious"**.
- A project, for example, which might deny future generations the opportunity to breathe fresh air may well be defended on a simple application of the norm if those future generations are likely to be rich enough to enable them to live comfortably without breathing fresh air.
- In this illustration, the principle overlooks, as Prof. Sen wrote, **"the need for anti-emission policies that could help future generations to have the freedom to enjoy the fresh air that earlier generations enjoyed."**

## Primacy to the environment:

- Sustainable development can, therefore, work only if the environment is seen as valuable for its own sake.

- The Madras High Court does this in its judgment in Krishnamoorthy.
- To argue, as the government did, that an EIA wasn't required before land was acquired for a highway, as the court recognised, was to effectively place the cart before the horse.
- As the court pointed out, **the highway in question here was a greenfield project that was intended as an altogether new road to be constructed on virgin land.**
- In such a case, **to eschew an EIA before land was obtained would have created irreversible effects that would have had a bearing not only on the environment, but also on the social and economic life of the landowners.**

#### A Few more notable perspectives:

- “The land of an agriculturist,” wrote Justice T.S. Sivagnanam, for the court, “is vital to sustain his livelihood... The land provides dignity for the person.”
- The judgment, therefore, not only holds the state accountable for the violation of basic notions of due process, in exercising the power of eminent domain, but also sees the possession of farmlands by farmers as an article of faith.
- **However, most importantly, the ruling deepens a commitment to the protection of forests and waterbodies. It places the environment in a position of primacy over unthinking measures of ostensible development.**
- There are important questions that emerge:
- When a highway passes through a reserve forest would it not, the court asks, “pave way for establishments in the near vicinity”? Would it not “pave way for poaching of endangered species of birds and animals”? Would it not “pave way for illicit felling and transportation of valuable timber”?
- **The rigours of the country's environmental laws, the judgment therefore holds, ought to outweigh those of procedural laws concerning acquisition of land, for “the protection of environment stands in a higher pedestal when placed on scale with that of the economic interest.”**

#### Concluding Remarks:

- By so holding, the Madras High Court has effectively reversed the prevailing scale of priorities.
- This is especially remarkable since it comes at a time when the government is seeking to further weaken the existing norms for environmental clearance.
- Lastly, the fact that such efforts at diluting environmental protections are underway when it has become increasingly apparent that climate change represents an existential threat ought to alarm us into action.
- One way to act is to compel the state to look beyond exercises of balancing, as the High Court does, and to see nature as intrinsically valuable.

#### Category: ECONOMY

##### 1. Full disclosure

#### What's in the news?

- Amidst the recent rising number of defaults by companies, the chief markets regulator (SEBI) is taking the fight to what it thinks is the enemy: ratings agencies.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has asked credit rating agencies in the country to, among other things, clearly state the “probability of default” of the instruments they rate for the benefit of investors.

### Editorial Analysis:

- There have been a record 163 downgrades of debt instruments this year (2019), according to data released by Prime Database recently.
- This is more than double the number of defaults over the whole of last year (2018).
- Further, it is important to note that debt instruments issued by prominent companies including Yes Bank, Essel and Jet Airways have been downgraded this year (2019).
- Experts opine that this spate of defaults, which may well be a sign of the turning of the credit cycle in the broader economy, may have forced SEBI to crack the whip on credit rating agencies.

### Information Conveyed in a recently issued circular:

- In a recently issued circular, SEBI laid down a new standard framework for financial disclosure by credit rating agencies that it believes will enhance the quality of information made available by these agencies to investors.
- Notably, the agencies will have to publish information on how their performance in the rating of debt instruments compares with a benchmark created in consultation with SEBI.
- As a matter of fact, the regulator believes this will help investors to better gauge the performance of credit rating agencies.

### What does SEBI's approach suggest?

- Experts opine that SEBI's aggressive regulatory approach seems to suggest a certain disappointment with credit rating agencies, which may not be unfounded.
- They have been caught napping on several occasions, including during the recent default by Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services on its debt commitments.
- Importantly, they are also seen by many as being more loyal to companies whose instruments they rate rather than to investors who provide precious capital.
- These concerns need to be addressed.

### Concluding Remarks:

- SEBI's attempt seems to be to align ratings methodologies with global best practices.
- The suggestion to revise the method of computing default rates and the precise definition of terms that raters should use in describing a client's liquidity position — strong, adequate, stretched and poor — are aimed at sharpening disclosure and leaving little room for raters to be ambiguous.
- Lastly, what is not clear, though, is how the new framework will effectively resolve the conflict of interest issue that plagues the rating industry.
- The issuer-pays model where the ratings agency is paid by the issuer of the instrument that it rates is not a healthy one.
- But the problem is that a viable alternative is yet to be proposed.
- The bottomline is that the poor track record of credit rating agencies is known to most investors and is appropriately discounted by market participants.

## F. Tidbits

### 1. Show titles in Hindi, regional languages, TV channels told

- In a bid to promote Indian languages, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has directed all satellite TV channels to display the casting, credits and titles of Hindi and regional language serials in the respective languages in addition to English.
- The ministry took cognizance of the credits being displayed only in English.

- It also noted that practise tends to deprive people versed with Hindi and regional languages of the valuable information about casting of TV serials or programmes.
- The direction comes with a view to enhance outreach and benefit TV viewers of the country.

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES)

- AES is characterized as acute-onset of fever and a change in mental status (mental confusion, disorientation, delirium, or coma) and/or new-onset of seizures in a person of any age at any time of the year.
- The disease most commonly affects children and young adults and can lead to considerable morbidity and mortality.
- AES has symptoms of high fever, vomiting, nausea and unconsciousness.
- Viruses are the main causative agents in AES cases, although other sources such as bacteria, fungus, parasites, spirochetes, chemicals, toxins and non-infectious agents have also been reported over the past few decades.
- Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) is the major cause of AES in India (ranging from 5% -35%).
- Herpes simplex virus, Influenza A virus, West Nile virus, Chandipura virus, mumps, measles, dengue, Parvovirus B4, entero-viruses, Epstein-Barr virus and scrub typhus, S.pneumoniae are the other causes of AES in sporadic and outbreak form in India.
- Nipah virus, Zika viruses are also found as causative agents for AES.

## H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

**Q1. Consider the following statements with respect to Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation program (SVEEP):**

1. It is a flagship program of the Government of India.
2. The programme was launched for spreading voter awareness and promoting voter literacy in India.

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

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation program, better known as SVEEP, is the flagship program of the Election Commission of India.

**Q2. Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojanawas launched in order to**

- a. Boost organic farming
- b. Promote the use of traditional farming methods
- c. Prevent sub division of agricultural land
- d. Promote shifting cultivation

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

PKVY aims at supporting and promoting organic farming, reduction in dependence on fertilizers and agricultural chemicals, in turn, resulting in improvement of the soil health while increasing the yields. The government of India came up with Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana in order to boost organic farming, particularly in Northeast India. Women Self Help Groups are also being encouraged by the government to take up organic farming in clusters under National Rural Livelihood Programme.

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

1. NASA's Voyager 2 is the first and only manmade object to exit the Heliosphere.
2. It is the only spacecraft to have visited all four gas giant planets — Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

Consider the following statements:

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

NASA's Voyager 2 is the second human-made object in history to exit the Heliosphere (bubble created by solar winds). Voyager 1, crossed this boundary in 2012. Voyager 2 is the only spacecraft to have visited all four gas giant planets — Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune — and discovered 16 moons, as well as phenomena like Neptune's mysteriously transient Great Dark Spot, the cracks in Europa's ice shell, and ring features at every planet. The Voyager mission was launched in the 1970's, and the probes sent by NASA were only meant to explore the outer planets – but they just kept on going.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Discuss the aims of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and analyse how SCO presents both challenges and opportunities for India. (15 Marks, 250 Words)
2. Describe the economic benefits of Migration. Why is migration mostly seen as unfavourable by the recipient states? (15 Marks, 250 Words)



