

05 Aug 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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B. GS2 Related

Category: POLITY

1. Assam minorities get re-verification notices on National Register of Citizens (NRC)

Context:

A number of minorities included in the draft National Register of Citizens (NRC) have been asked to undergo re-verification by the Local Registrar of Citizen Registration (LRCR).

Details:

- Notices have been served in mostly Muslim areas two days after the State government disclosed district-wise data on NRC inclusions and exclusions in the State Assembly.
- The notices cited The Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules 2003.
- As many as 149 persons were served with the notice.
- About 50% of the people in most Muslim-dominated villages, such as Goroimari, Sontoli, Kalatoli, Topamari and Maligari, in Kamrup district had received the notice.
- There were reports of similar notices served in minority areas of districts such as Barpeta, Goalpara, Dhubri, Morigaon and Karimganj.
- Those who received the notice are not among the 40.07 lakh and 1.02 lakh put on the two lists of people excluded from the NRC.
- The notice gives less than 48 hours to appear at very distant offices for re-verification of their citizenship documents with all family members.

Concerns:

- The Citizenship rules amendment, 2009, and the Standard Operating Procedure for the NRC exercise say that a person has to be given at least 15 days to appear for a hearing.
- The Supreme Court had ordered that a person should be called for hearing to a centre within a convenient distance in the same district.
- A group called Sachetan Nagarik Mancha has been demanding re-verification of 20% NRC applicants in districts bordering Bangladesh and 10% in other districts.

2. Demands call for reservation of Assam Assembly seats for indigenous groups

Context:

A coordination committee, Janagosthiya Samannwoy Parishad, of the indigenous groups in Assam has demanded the reservation of 21 assembly seats for indigenous communities.

Background:

- Many indigenous groups have been affected by the Assam Accord that settled for March 24, 1971, as the cut-off date for detecting illegal migrants instead of 1951.
- The Janagosthiya Samannwoy Parishad is an umbrella body of 21 organisations representing indigenous communities, including the Assamese Muslims who distinguish themselves from the Bengal-origin migrant Muslims.
- It is alleged that the Assam Accord had legitimised the stay of more than 50 lakh migrants from East Pakistan and Bangladesh between 1951 and 1971.
- The Centre had constituted a 13-member committee to look into the pros and cons of implementing Clause 6 that seeks to guarantee constitutional safeguards for the Assamese people.

Demands Raised:

- It also sought the formation of a Legislative Council to let numerically weaker communities be represented in the 126-member Assembly.
- There is also demand for amending Clause 6 of the Assam Accord in a manner that Assembly seats are reserved for indigenous communities who do not have the number to contest elections.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Sudan military, protesters sign deal for civilian rule

Context:

Sudan's pro-democracy movement signed a power-sharing agreement with the ruling military council on Sunday aimed at paving the way for a transition to civilian rule.

Background:

- The military overthrew al Bashir in April following months of mass protests against his three-decades-long autocratic rule.
- The protesters continued to remain on the streets, demanding a rapid transition to a civilian authority.
- They have been locked in tense negotiations with the military for weeks.

Details:

- Representatives initialled a Constitutional document that would establish a joint military and civilian council to rule for a little over three years until elections can be held.
- The agreement would establish a Cabinet appointed by the activists, as well as a legislative body.
- The deal has presumably ended an era in Sudan's history characterized by rivalry and fighting.

2. Hate Crimes continue to occur in the US

Context:

Gunman kills 20 people at a Walmart store in Texas while another murders nine, including his sister, in Ohio.

Details:

- Thirty people died and dozens were wounded in two mass shootings within just 13 hours of each other in the U.S.
- The incidents have shocked the country and prompted calls from some politicians for tighter gun control.
- Authorities investigating the motive behind the attack said they are treating it as a case of domestic terrorism.
- The rampage at Texas appeared to be a hate crime and a "manifesto" attributed to the suspect has appeared online.
- The manifesto spoke of a "Hispanic invasion of Texas."
- The attacks can be connected to a resurgence in white nationalism and xenophobic politics in the U.S.

3. Iran seizes foreign oil tanker in Gulf

Context:

Iranian forces seized a foreign oil tanker in the Gulf that was smuggling fuel to Arab states and has detained seven crewmen.

Background:

- Tensions have risen between Iran and the West since last year when the U.S. pulled out of an international agreement which curbed the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme in return for an easing of economic sanctions on Iran.
- Iran has retaliated by resuming uranium enrichment seen in the West as a potential conduit to developing an atom bomb.
- But it faces severe economic damage under intensified U.S. sanctions designed to strangle its vital oil trade.
- In July, British forces seized an Iranian oil tanker near Gibraltar, accused it of violating sanctions on Syria.
- Then Iran seized a British tanker in the Strait of Hormuz for alleged marine violations.
- It allowed a second one to proceed after issuing a warning.
- Britain said on July 25 that it had started sending a warship to accompany all British-flagged vessels through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Describing the seizure of the Stena Impero in the Strait of Hormuz as illegal, Britain has rejected the idea that it could release the Iranian tanker in exchange for the British-flagged vessel seized by the Revolutionary Guards.

Details:

- The vessel was intercepted near Iran's Farsi Island in the Gulf.
- The seizure of the oil tanker was in coordination with Iran's judiciary authorities and based on their order.

Conclusion:

- Fears of a Middle East war with global repercussions have risen.

C. GS3 Related

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY**1. Tensions Escalate in the State of Jammu and Kashmir****Context:**

Former Chief Ministers Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti were placed under house arrest along with an imposition of Section 144 in Srinagar.

Background:

- Last week, the Army said that Pakistan based terror groups had made attempts to launch fidayeen attacks in the valley.
- There are also worries over the Pakistan based drug trafficking, based on a recent seizures of over 1,100 kg of heroin.
- Centre has sent additional troops to the state.

- The State is now under President's rule.

Details:

- Restrictions under Section 144 CrPC has come into effect from 12 a.m. in Srinagar.
- In a phased manner, mobile Internet services were snapped in all districts of the Kashmir Valley.
- Additional security forces occupied civilian installations and police stations and were put in "standby mode."
- Several colleges, factories and hostels were vacated and occupied by additional troops in the Valley.
- Hospitals were put in emergency mode, said a senior official on the condition of anonymity.
- Dozens of mobile bullet-proof bunkers were installed across the Valley.
- Tourism industry also took a major hit in Kashmir as tourists and Amarnath pilgrims are being evacuated.

CrPC Section 144 Order:

- The order contained following instructions:
 - There shall be no movement of the public.
 - All educational institutions shall remain closed.
 - There will be a complete bar on any kind of public meetings or rallies during the period of operation of this order.
 - Identity cards of essential services officials will be treated as movement passes wherever required.
- According to the order, there is no curfew in place.

Infiltration Attempt:

- The Army said it had foiled an infiltration attempt by Pakistani soldiers on Saturday and inflicted heavy casualties on the team.
- However, Pakistan has denied any "cross LoC action" by its soldiers.
- The Army has asked Pakistan to take back the bodies of its Border Action Team soldiers lying in Indian Territory.

Category: DISASTER MANAGEMENT

1. Heavy rain hits life in Mumbai again

Context:

Heavy rain in Mumbai and adjoining regions disrupted life for the second consecutive day.

Details:

- The heavy downpour had thrown train services off the track, disrupted air traffic and caused power outages.
- Over 400 people residing along Mithi River were moved to safety, while another 400 people were evacuated in Palghar district.
- Teams of the Navy, the Air Force and the Army were requisitioned by the State government to rescue those stranded in Thane and Palghar.
- For over 12 hours, no train ran between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) and Thane.
- Suburban services between CSMT and Mankhurd on the Harbour Line were suspended due to acute flooding.

- Rains accompanied by gusty winds, also lashed districts in western Maharashtra including Pune, Satara and Sangli, as well as Nashik in north Maharashtra throughout Sunday.

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Nehru Trophy Boat Race to Follow Green protocol

Context:

The green protocol will be strictly enforced during the 67th edition of the Nehru Trophy Boat Race.

Details:

- The boat race will be held on Punnamada Lake on August 10.
- A total of 79 boats, including 23 sneak boats to take part in Nehru Trophy.
- Use of plastic will be completely discouraged including in the cultural procession to be organised in connection with the Nehru Trophy.
- Volunteers had been given training under the aegis of the Suchitwa Mission and Alappuzha Municipality.
- Volunteers involved in activities related to green protocol will be seen in green coloured jerseys during the event.
- Other volunteers who will help women, senior citizens and differently-abled spectator will be given different coloured jerseys too.
- Separate pavilions had been constructed for senior citizens and differently-abled spectators.
- The Champions Boat League (CBL) will also be kicked off along with the Nehru Trophy.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Biotechnology Department will scan 20,000 Indian genomes

Context:

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) plans to scan nearly 20,000 Indian genomes over the next five years and develop diagnostic tests that can be used to test for cancer.

Details:

- The programme is named as the Genome India Initiative.
- It will be a two-phase exercise.
- The first phase involves sequencing the complete genomes of nearly 10,000 Indians from all corners of the country and capture the biological diversity of India.
- In the second phase, about 10,000 “diseased individuals” would have their genomes sequenced.
- National Centre for Cell Sciences (Pune) will also collect samples of the microbiome from the human gut.
- The diversity of the bacterial samples is at the frontier of global research.
- Scientists have said that there is an intimate connection between the genome, the gut microbiome and disease.
- The data sets would be compared using machine learning techniques to identify genes that can predict the risk of cancer and other diseases that could be significantly influenced by genetic anomalies.
- The programme is expected to formally launch in October, with an estimated budget of ₹250-350 Cr. for the Phase-1.

- Genomics research is a major thrust area for the Department of Biotechnology.
- The data generated would be accessible to researchers anywhere for analysis.
- 22 institutions, including those from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the DBT would be involved in the exercise.
- The CSIR already has an effort underway to scan 1,000 genomes from healthy Indians.

Biological Data Storage, Access and Sharing Policy

- The policy is still in early stages of discussion.
- The data management would be through a proposed National Biological Data Centre envisaged in the policy.

A Boom in Genome Sequencing:

- The declining costs have enhanced the interest among private and public companies in sequencing genomes.
- China, the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, etc. have announced plans to sequence their population.
- At present Asia, particularly India, is under-represented in genomic data sets.
- The Asian/Indian population and diverse ethnicity make it an attractive prospect for genome-mining efforts.

Category: ECONOMY

1. Rs 25,000 Cr. tenders cancelled or modified to promote Make in India products

Context:

Government tenders worth over Rs 25,000 Cr. were either cancelled or modified and re-issued after the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) stepped in to change their conditions in order to promote 'Made in India' goods.

Background

- DPIIT is taking every step for effective implementation of public procurement order, 2017, to promote 'Made in India' products.
- The government issued the order on June 15, 2017, to promote manufacturing and production of goods and services in India and enhance income and employment in the country.
- DPIIT had earlier held a series of meetings with all the concerned departments and ministries including steel, railways, defence, oil and gas, pharmaceutical, electronics, telecommunications, heavy industries, textiles, shipping and power in this regard.
- Directions were given to ensure strict compliance of the order in letter and spirit.
- All nodal ministries were directed to ensure notification of local content.
- Under the Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India) Order, it was envisaged that all central government departments, their attached or subordinate offices and autonomous bodies controlled by the Government of India should ensure purchase preference be given to domestic suppliers in government procurement.
- Last year, the Central Vigilance Commission had issued directives to all central vigilance officers to exercise oversight on all contracts of over Rs. 5 Cr. to ensure that restrictive and discriminatory clauses against domestic suppliers are not included in the tender documents for public procurement.
- Any grievance related to the issue had to be taken care of by the standing committee on implementation of this order. It is chaired by the DPIIT Secretary.
- Several departments and ministries including pharmaceuticals and defence production have already

identified a number of items which would have a minimum level of domestic content.

Details:

- The following tenders were allegedly cancelled, withdrawn or re-issued:
 - A tender worth Rs. 8,000 Cr related with setting up of a urea and ammonia plant for gasification was re-issued.
 - A tender worth Rs. 5,000 Cr for procurement of train set coaches was cancelled as the tender had certain restrictive conditions which were discriminatory against domestic manufacturers and favoured foreign players.
 - A tender for Rs 8,135 crore was modified with revised eligibility criteria for setting up of a 3x800 MW project.
 - A tender worth Rs 3,000 crore for Mumbai Metro was also modified.

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Consular access and Freeing Kulbhushan Jadhav

Context:

Pakistan has been refusing full consular access in the **Kulbhushan Jadhav** case despite an ICJ order.

Background:

- Jadhav was arrested in 2017 and was convicted with **death sentence** for terrorism and espionage charges.
- The conviction was based on a purported confession by Mr. Jadhav.
- The **International Court of Justice** at The **Hague** ruled near-unanimously in favor of India, providing him **consular access**, in the case two weeks ago.
- However, Pakistan is yet to take the first step towards implementing the order.
- ICJ pointed that by not informing Jadhav of his rights and not allowing the Indian High Commission to meet with him and arrange for his legal representation, Pakistan was in violation of the **Vienna Convention on consular relations**.

Pakistan's Position:

- Pakistan's Foreign Ministry had **offered a meeting** between Mr. Jadhav and the Indian High Commission in Islamabad on Friday afternoon.
- But the offer came with conditions such as **CCTV cameras** on proceedings and a **Pakistani official** being in the room during the meeting.
- This was a violation of the unimpeded consular access that the ICJ had ordered.
- **India decided to reject** the offer until Pakistan reconsiders its conditions.

India's concerns:

- India's concerns are three-fold.
1. **Pakistan's delay** in granting full consular access displays a non-serious attitude to implementing a clear-cut order from the UN's highest judicial body.
 2. This augurs badly for Pakistan's application of the rest of the ICJ order that calls for a **full review of Mr. Jadhav's trial** conviction and death sentence for terrorism and espionage charges.
 3. The nature of the conditions indicates Pakistan wants to monitor what Mr. Jadhav tells Indian officials closely. If he shares **adverse details of coercion** India may have a stronger chance of trying to have the trial overturned.

Recent Contentions between India and Pakistan:

- **Shelling at the Line of Control** has opened up with a new fury in the last few days.
- Pakistan has been alleging that the Indian Army is deploying cluster-munitions on civilian areas.
- Indian army had claimed that several Pakistani regulars and terrorists were killed in an infiltration attempt by a **Border Action Team (BAT)**.
- Government of India has raised security levels in the valley and cancelled the **Amarnath Yatra**.

What is the way forward?

- Islamabad must stop creating unnecessary hurdles in providing the basic human right for Mr. Jadhav.
- New Delhi needs to keep its rhetoric low while pressing its case for access to Mr. Jadhav consistently and firmly.
- Care must be taken to ensure that the situation in the border will not overshadow the fate of Mr. Jadhav.

2. Pulling a Vietnam in Afghanistan

Context:

There are striking similarities between the U.S' attempt at an exit from the war in Afghanistan and earlier in Vietnam.

Vietnam War:

- The U.S.'s involvement in Vietnam goes back to the last years of **French colonial rule**.
- The U.S. first backed France against the **Viet Minh guerrillas**.
- After **France exited Vietnam** in 1954, the **S. backed South Vietnam** against the **communist-led North**.
- Initially, the U.S. involvement was limited to advisory roles but later it was steadily escalated.
- At its peak, in 1968, American troop deployment in Vietnam reached 549,500 personnel.
- However, by the late 1960s, it became **evident to American leaders that they could not win the Vietnam War**.
 - By then, the American **public opinion** also had largely turned against the war.
 - Besides, the South Vietnamese regime that the U.S. had supported was unpopular, oppressive and weak at the same time.
- President **Richard Nixon** assigned **Henry Kissinger**, the National Security Adviser, to hold talks with the communist North Vietnam, seeking '**peace with honour**'.
- The goal was not to defeat North Vietnam but to stop them from taking over the South.
- Nixon started by **reducing U.S. troop** presence in Vietnam and shifting the focus from direct participation in land war to training and advisory roles.
- When talks were deadlocked, the U.S. offered to pull out of the South as a compromise.
- **In 1973**, the U.S., North Vietnam and representatives of South Vietnam and Viet Cong, the

communist guerillas from the South, signed the **Paris Peace Accords**.

- The North and the South agreed to a **ceasefire** and continue **holding peace talks**, while the S. agreed to **pull troops out of Vietnam**.

Afghanistan's Similarities with Vietnam:

- The U.S. went into Afghanistan after the **September 11, 2001** terrorist attacks, launching its **war on terror**.
- At the peak of the war here, there were over 1, 00,000 troops.
- Despite the massive deployment of troops and superior air power, the U.S. got stuck in the war and **failed to stabilize the country**.
- After 18 years of fighting, the U.S. has **realized that it cannot win the Afghan war**.
- The American goal is no longer defeating the Taliban but to stop them from taking over Kabul.
- The role of veteran diplomat **Zalmay Khalilzad** is comparable to that of Henry Kissinger.
- Just as Nixon wanted to get out of Vietnam, President Donald Trump too wants to get out of Afghanistan.
- Here also, the U.S. is negotiating from a position of weakness.
- **America's allies in Afghanistan stand divided:**
 - **The government in Kabul**, which the U.S. backs, is known for **infighting and chronic corruption**.
 - **The security forces** are struggling to ensure basic security to the public, even in the capital city.
- U.S. President Barack Obama had started **pulling out most troops** and moving the remainder to training and advisory roles.
 - The **Afghan war is also unpopular in America**.
 - Trump campaigned to **wind down America's foreign interventions**.

Challenges:

- **Taliban:**
 - Taliban **remains offensive despite multiple rounds of talks** with the U.S representatives in Doha, Qatar.
 - The main demand of the Afghan insurgents is a **complete U.S. troop withdrawal**.
 - The U.S. has already made a **big compromise** in its rush for an exit deal by agreeing with the Taliban demand that **the Afghan government should be kept away from the peace process**.
 - Further, U.S. continued to hold talks even in the **absence of a ceasefire**.
- Apprehension about Afghanistan's fate after the complete withdrawal of U.S.
 - **Taliban is an anti-modern, anti-woman, anti-minority fundamentalist machine**, whose earlier regime was notorious for excessive sectarian violence.
 - **In Vietnam**, the peace did not last long. In the two years after the U.S. pulled out, the communists captured Saigon and **the government crumbled**.

Solution:

- According to recent reports, the U.S. and the Taliban have agreed to a **road map for peace**.
- The deal envisages the **US.'s withdrawal in return for the Taliban's assurance that Afghanistan would not be used by terrorists**.

Conclusion:

- **The Taliban is part of the problem, not a solution.**

- US needs to be more cautious before yielding to the Taliban's demands.

Category: POLITY

1. Should We Increase the Number of Supreme Court judges?

Context:

Given the perennial complaint that the availability of judges is not increasing in proportion to the institution of cases, there needs to be an increase in the strength of the judiciary.

Background:

- There is a **large pendency** of 59,331 cases in the Supreme Court as on July 11.
- The law that fixes the number of judges in the highest court was last amended in **2009** to raise the figure **from 26 to 31**.
- Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi had written to the Prime Minister recently, highlighting the problem of paucity of judges.
- He cited it as the reason for his **inability to constitute enough Constitution Benches** to decide important questions of law.

Union Cabinet's decision:

- The Union Cabinet has decided to raise the strength of the Supreme Court **from 31 to 34**, including the Chief Justice of India.

Criticisms against Increasing the Number of Judges:

- The question remains whether the highest court should go into the **correctness of every decision of every high court**.
- There is also a reservation on the **optimal use of the available judicial resources**.
- Valuable time is being taken up by **mundane matters** that do not impinge on larger questions that involve interpretation of laws and constitutional provisions.

Ex.: Routine bail matters, etc.

- Every major crime or disaster seems to invite a litigant, presumably in **public interest**, who mentions the matter before the Chief Justice for **urgent hearing**.
- The court is being invited to even oversee flood relief work.

What is the Solution?

- A **reasonable restraint** can be placed on the **duration of oral arguments**.
- A **disciplined adherence to a schedule of hearings** can be implemented.
- It must be ensured that the apex court's **primary role as the ultimate arbiter of constitutional questions and statutory interpretation** is preserved.
- All other questions involving a final decision on routine matters ought to be considered by a **mechanism** that will not detract from the court's primary role.

Global Best Practices:

- Some countries have brought in a **clear division at the level of the apex judiciary** by having

separate constitutional courts.

- The separation limits themselves to deciding questions of constitutional importance.

Law Commission's Recommendation:

- The **229th Report of the Law Commission** suggests a new system under which there will be **one Constitution Bench in Delhi** and **four 'Cassation Benches'** for different regions of the country.
- These will be final appellate courts for routine litigation.
- This arrangement may also increase access to justice to those living in far-flung areas of the country.
- It may also cut down **the expenditure** and **the time taken** for disposal of cases.

Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. The roots of sexual brutality

Context:

Complainants of sexual assault cases have to deal with lot more challenges, particularly when the criminal is powerful.

Background:

- The young woman survivor from **Unnao** is battling for her life after she met with a road accident.
- Several rounds of **police and judicial reforms** have sought to improve its workings and humanise its approach.
- However, the fact remains that at the level of the police station some other factors direct police action:
 - Local political power
 - Economic, social and sexual tensions between individuals
 - Caste and community equations
 - Habitual misogyny and
 - The measure of impunity that a perpetrator of crime might claim and exercise

Challenges faced by the Complainants:

- **Sexual assault complainants** are most likely **disbelieved, blamed** for what happened to her, and denigrated and rubbished if she is a **Dalit or Adivasi**, or from a community perceived as **marginal**.
- If she persists in keeping with the justice system, its menacing indifference may even **demoralize**
- There might be some relief and care if her **family supports** But if they don't or cannot, because they are themselves **under pressure to keep quiet**, she is left feeling abandoned, friendless and tainted.
- Many a time, **a protest or a campaign** or the continued presence of **women's groups, Dalit groups and progressive political and civil rights interventions** alone have made it possible for even an FIR to be registered.

Civic indifference:

- In the Unnao incident the **alleged perpetrator, an MLA**, made sure that the police did only the bare minimum that was required of them.
- It was only after the **victim threatened self-immolation** in front of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister's office did the case witnessed a progress.
- **Civic indifference to sexual violence is rampant and has become a norm.**
- In a similar and equally outrageous act in **Banda, Uttar Pradesh**, in 2010, when a minor girl

accused a sitting MLA of rape.

- Her family had approached him for **assistance and protection** since there had been an attempt to kidnap and sell the girl with the collusion of the local police.
- Unlike in the Unnao instance the Chief Minister called for the **prosecution of her MLA**.
- The victim also had the support of the **country's only rural women's news network, Khabar Lahariya**.

Challenges to the Constitution:

- When a woman approaches an **elected representative** of the people for assistance, exercising her **right to state redressal and assistance**, she realizes that her claims are not transactable in a civic sense, but only in a violently sexual sense.
- Not only is her **bodily integrity** violated, but also a series of **constitutionally guaranteed rights**, including the **right to life and livelihood**.
- Irony is that the violators are those who have taken **an oath in the name of the Constitution**.
- **The Constitution is seldom viewed as enunciating shared civic values and morality**.
- Rather, it exists as a **formal and ornamental document** that affirms not so much our sovereign democratic selves, but the privileges we have gained as elected representatives.

Validation by the Society:

- **Criminals are validated** by their family, kin and caste networks.
- Unnao accused, Kuldeep Sengar's brother and henchmen were fully behind his various reportedly criminal acts.
- Further, Sengar and Dwivedi's spouses felt **honour-bound** to insist that their husbands could never have done what they ostensibly did.
- **Female complicity** in these instances helps secure male authority as given and 'natural', thus placing it beyond the pale of questioning.
- Both within the family and without, **a powerful man's right to a woman's body** appears a natural extension of his
- It is widely accepted that **marital rape** is not an issue and **male sexual entitlement** is something that women are expected to reckon with.

Caste society:

- Such male entitlement and power are affirmed by **the caste society**.
- **Birth based superiority** cannot be sustained unless it is renewed day in and day out through a combination of patent lies and brute force.
- **Verbal and physical acts of sexualized humiliation and violence** directed at the **lower castes and Dalits** are necessary for the survival of caste society.
- In the Unnao instance, and in other such instances, sexual brutality is thus not an afterthought: it is the quintessential form of **political privilege and social authority** in our social context.
- Our **criminal justice system** is yet to reckon with such routinized and habitual criminality.

F. Tidbits

1. Yeh Dosti

- Israel greeted India on friendship day with a Twitter message that featured the song 'yeh dosti' from Bollywood blockbuster Sholay.
- An equally warm response from Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that the bond between the two countries is "strong and eternal".

- The move can be observed as an example of social network diplomacy, a subset of soft power.
- Narendra Modi visited Israel in July 2017, the first by an Indian prime minister in 70 years.

2. Jatropha Seed Poisoning

- Thirteen children and four farmers were rushed to different hospitals in Mysore after they ate jatropha seeds (locally called Kachalli seeds).
- Kachalli is a local plant that is grown on the borders of agricultural land as fences.
- The nuts contain a kind of liquid like soap water.
- Children generally use the nuts to play by blowing bubbles from nuts in the air.
- The elders use the sticks to brush their teeth.

3. Hong Kong protesters attacked with Tear Gas

- Riot police fired tear gas at pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong on Sunday.
- The semiautonomous southern Chinese city is reeling from two months of protests and violence triggered by opposition to planned extradition law.
- China has been delivering fresh warnings over the unrest.

G. Prelims Facts

1. Koundinya Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is a wildlife sanctuary and an elephant reserve situated in Andhra Pradesh.
- It is the only sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh with a population of Asian elephants.
- A 10-member herd of wild elephants which left the sanctuary located at tri-State border (Palamaner-Kuppam-Tamil Nadu) three weeks ago resorted to crop raids Somala mandal of Punganur range.

2. Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM)

- The Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) on Sunday successfully test-fired the indigenously developed Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur.
- Two missiles have been tested against two live targets meeting complete mission objectives of engaging the targets.
- The systems have been tested in final configuration with radar mounted on a vehicle and missiles on the launcher.
- The missiles with many state-of-the-art technologies engaged the targets at different ranges and altitudes.
- The system is being developed for the Army with search and track on move capability with very short reaction time.
- The systems are equipped with indigenously developed phased array radar, inertial navigation system, data link and radio frequency seeker.
- The entire mission was captured by various electro-optical tracking systems, radar systems and telemetry systems at ITR Chandipur.

3. L 14 Camera

- The first set of images taken by the L 14 camera aboard the Chandrayaan-2 was released by ISRO.
- The images were captured on Saturday.
- Meanwhile, Chandrayaan-2, launched on July 22 was given its fourth orbit rise on August 2.

- It will continue to orbit earth until August 14 and is expected to land on the Moon on September 7.

H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Which of the following countries are members of the European Union at present?

1. Belarus
2. Iceland
3. Greece

Options:

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 3 only

Ans: d

Explanation:

The European Union (EU) consists of 28 member states. Belarus, Iceland, Kosovo, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and Vatican City are not E.U members.

Q2. Which rebellion was led by the two brothers, Sidhu and Kanhu?

- a) Santhal Rebellion
- b) Kuka Rebellion
- c) Mappila Rebellion
- d) Ramosi Rebellion

Ans: a

Explanation:

The Santhal rebellion was a native rebellion in present-day Jharkhand against both the British colonial authority and zamindari system by the Santhal people. It started in 1855 and martial law was proclaimed which lasted until 1856 when the movement was brutally ended by troops loyal to the British. The rebellion was led by the four Murmu Brothers - Sidhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairav.

Q3. With reference to Walvis Bay, which of the following statements are correct?

1.
 1. It is located on the west coast of the African continent.
 2. Recently, China opened a port terminal near the Bay.
 3. The Bay is located near Mali.

Options:

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 1 and 3 only

d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: b

Explanation:

Recently, Namibia inaugurated a China built port terminal at a site reclaimed from Walvis Bay. The port situated near Windhoek is to become a strategic gateway to emerging markets of southern and west Africa.

Q4. Which of the following organizations published the 'Global Risks Report, 2019'?

- a) International Monetary Fund
- b) United Nations Environment Program
- c) World Economic Forum
- d) World Bank

Ans: c

Explanation:

The Global Risks Report 2019 is published by the World Economic Forum against a backdrop of worrying geopolitical and geo-economic tensions.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. What are the salient features of 'Sustainable Development'? Analyze the 'United Nations Sustainable Development Goals' and suggest measures for the sooner achievement of those goals. (15 Marks, 250 Words).
2. What are Genetically Modified (GM) organisms and GM foods? What are the main issues of concern for human health and the environment? (15 Marks, 250 Words).

