

# 13 Aug 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### A. GS1 Related

### B. GS2 Related

#### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

- [1. In Manasarovar, Chinese lend a helping hand to Indian pilgrims](#)
- [2. Decision on Kashmir doesn't affect LAC, Delhi tells Beijing](#)

#### **POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**

- [1. PM's health insurance scheme will cover cancer treatment also, say officials](#)

### C. GS3 Related

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY**

- [1. From Assam to Chhattisgarh, a maiden 1,500-km journey for wild buffaloes](#)
- [2. Wildlife sanctuary set to expand boundaries](#)

#### **ECONOMY**

- [1. 'Taxes making capital market unattractive'](#)

### D. GS4 Related

### E. Editorials

#### **ENVIRONMENT**

- [1. IPCC special report on climate change](#)

#### **POLITY**

- [1. Why scrapping 370 was a necessity?](#)

### F. Tidbits

- [1. Headgear made mandatory for children above four years](#)
- [2. BSF, Pakistan Rangers don't exchange festival sweets](#)
- [3. Assam villagers feed elephants to keep them at bay](#)
- [4. 'No toxic chemicals in PET bottles'](#)

### G. Prelims Facts

- [1. World Elephant Day](#)

### H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

### I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

## A. GS1 Related

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## B. GS2 Related

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. In Manasarovar, Chinese lend a helping hand to Indian pilgrims

##### Context:

The Chinese government has taken initiatives to improve the material comforts of the pilgrims undertaking trek to the high altitude Kailash Manasarovar.

##### Kailash Manas Sarovar Yatra:

- Lake Manasarovar or Mapam Yumtso is the highest body of freshwater lake in the world.

- It is fed by the Kailash Glacier.
- It is present near Mount Kailash in Tibet Autonomous Region.
- The Manasarovar lake is revered a sacred place in four religions: Bön, Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism.
- Lake Manasarovar has long been viewed by the pilgrims as being nearby to the sources of four great rivers of Asia, namely the Brahmaputra, Ghaghara, Sindhu and Sutlej.
- Pilgrimage tours are organized regularly from India.

#### Details:

- The Yatra involves trekking at high altitudes of up to 19,500 feet, under inhospitable conditions, including extreme weather, and rugged terrain, and may prove hazardous for those who are not physically and medically fit.
- The yatris (pilgrims) travel four to five days to get to the Pass. If conditions are improved, their journey could be made less exhausting.
- The Yatra is organized with the support of the state governments of Uttarakhand, Delhi, and Sikkim; and the cooperation of Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).
- Things have gotten easier from this year with Chinese lending a helping hand to Indian pilgrims.
- Under the Chinese Government's initiative, accommodation facilities, called reception centres, have been built at various points of the pilgrimage.
- The reception centres, each with about 150 beds, have rooms with charging points, a common kitchen and a common washroom, and provide food for the yatris.
- Besides the facilities that have already been made available, the government is planning to set up oxygen bars along the high altitude route.

#### Significance:

- Tibet has a very long history of exchanges with India in terms of culture and religion. It can play an important role in promoting relations between China and India.
- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who is visiting Beijing, said after meeting his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, that both countries are considering expanding the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra.
- Chinese Foreign Minister Wang said the pilgrimage has "increasingly become a pathway of friendship".

## 2. Decision on Kashmir doesn't affect LAC, Delhi tells Beijing

#### Context:

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar reassured China that New Delhi's decision to exercise greater administrative control over Ladakh would have no implications for India's external boundaries or the Line of Actual Control with China.

#### Background:

- On 5th of August 2019, the President of India promulgated the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 2019.
- The order effectively abrogates the special status accorded to Jammu and Kashmir under the provision of Article 370 - whereby provisions of the Constitution which were applicable to other states were not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
- A separate Bill - the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill 2019 - was introduced to bifurcate the State into two separate union territories of Jammu and Kashmir (with legislature), and Ladakh (without legislature).

**Issues:**

- Following the development, China had slammed India for according Ladakh the Union Territory status and India's decision to revoke special status to Jammu and Kashmir.
- Historically the district of Leh covered the area of Aksai Chin that remains out of Indian control.
- Commenting on the "Ladakh central territory," which covers territory of the western section of India's border with China, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said that "China has always opposed the Indian side's entry of the Chinese territory in the western section of the Sino-Indian border into the administrative jurisdiction of India."
- Chinese Foreign Ministry's complained that India had continued to damage China's territorial sovereignty by unilaterally modifying the form of domestic laws.
- It urged India to be cautious on the border issue, strictly abide by the relevant agreements reached between the two sides, and avoid taking actions that further complicate the border issue.

**India's response:**

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar assured China that the legislative measures were aimed at better governance and socio-economic development.
- He asserted that there was no implication for the external boundaries of India or the Line of Actual Control with China and that India was not raising any additional territorial claims.
- It was also made clear that the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, 2019, is an internal matter concerning the territory of India and that India does not comment on the internal affairs of other countries, hence expects other countries to do likewise.
- Regarding the boundary question it was said that it would be dealt with on the basis of the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles (2005).

**Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE****1. PM's health insurance scheme will cover cancer treatment also, say officials****Context:**

The Central Government is planning to cover cancer treatments under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY).

**Issues:**

- According to the World Health Organisation, the rate of mortality due to cancer in India is high, with cancer the second-most common disease in India, responsible for maximum mortality, with about 0.3 million deaths per year.
- Government figures note that the estimated number of people living with the disease stands at around 2.25 million, with over 11 lakh new cancer patients registered each year.
- In India, the risk of developing cancer before the age of 75 years for males stands at 9.81% and females at 9.42%.
- Lung cancer is the most common type of cancer in India, followed by breast cancer and oral cancers.

**Details:**

- The need for including cancer treatment into the healthcare package came from the fact that the cancer care costs were causing massive financial crisis among people and many had to go without treatment.
- Patients often need to undergo multiple therapies for cancer treatment, including chemotherapy,

surgery and radiation, which are very expensive.

- The Ayushman Bharat Yojana is planning to include all types of cancers and their treatment under its healthcare packages.
- There are plans to draft road map within the next three months.
- The rationale behind inclusion of cancer treatment in PM-JAY is that nobody should have to go without treatment for the want of money.

#### **PM-JAY:**

- PM-JAY is a scheme of the government under Ayushman Bharat.
- The Central Government's health insurance scheme aims to give medical cover to over 10 crore poor and vulnerable families of approximately 50 crore beneficiaries.
- It provides coverage of up to Rs.5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation.
- To ensure that nobody is left out (especially women, children and elderly) there is no cap on family size and age in the scheme.
- The benefit cover will also include pre and post-hospitalisation expenses.

## **C. GS3 Related**

### **Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY**

#### **1. From Assam to Chhattisgarh, a maiden 1,500-km journey for wild buffaloes**

##### **Context:**

Around the end of monsoon in October, five female wild buffaloes will be trans-located from Assam to Chhattisgarh.

##### **Concerns:**

- Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary in Raipur district in Chhattisgarh has just nine buffaloes, including three females, left.
- The survival hazard of inbreeding, continuing lineage and increasing male population have necessitated the translocation.
- Their revival across central India - a historical habitat, depends on hassle-free translocation, successful breeding and subsequent restocking of other habitats in the region.
- Major challenge is the translocation of the buffaloes, which are heavy and grow horns more than a metre long.

##### **Details:**

- The wild buffaloes will travel more than 1,500 km crossing five States — the longest such translocation in the country ever.
- They will be moved from Assam to the Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary in Raipur district.
- It is to help revive the waning population of Chhattisgarh's State animal and expand its territory across States.
- While the government will provide the infrastructure, the Wildlife Trust of India will provide technical support.
- 20-25 buffaloes of Indravati National Park in Bijapur, Chhattisgarh, also frequently travel to neighbouring Kolamarka Conservation Reserve in Gadchiroli, Maharashtra, as keeping them in one

place is not sustainable.

### **Wild buffaloes (*Bubalus arnee*):**

- The wild water buffalo, also called Asian buffalo, Asiatic buffalo and wild Asian buffalo, is a large bovine native to the Indian Subcontinent and Southeast Asia.
- It is classified as “Endangered” in the IUCN Red List and is listed under Schedule 1 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- The estimated population of the wild buffaloes (*Bubalus arnee*) in the Northeast is around 3,000-4,000, the largest in the country and accounting for 92% of the world population.
- In India, the species is largely restricted to in and around Kaziranga, Manas and Dibru-Saikhowa National Parks, Laokhowa Wildlife Sanctuary and Bura Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary and in a few scattered pockets in Assam; and in and around D'Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh.
- A small population survives in Balpakram National Park in Meghalaya, and in Chhattisgarh in the Indravati National Park and the Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary.

## **2. Wildlife sanctuary set to expand boundaries**

### **Context:**

In Andhra Pradesh, the Forest Department has identified 308.84 hectares of revenue land for inclusion in the Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS).

### **Details:**

- The decision has been taken on the recommendation by the National Board for Wildlife, compensating for the land being diverted for setting up a Missile Test Launch Facility.
- The Missile Test Launch Facility is being established by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) in Nagayalanka mandal in Krishna District.
- The huge chunk of revenue land adjacent to the existing sanctuary is now supporting a moderately dense mangrove cover in Nagayalanka mandal, geographically near the confluence point of the river Krishna and the Bay of Bengal.
- Of the total 154.42 hectares of forest land to be diverted to the DRDO, 45 acres falls in the heart of the sanctuary where it proposes build a road facility that connects to the test and technical facility of the project.
- The stretch of 308.84 hectares of revenue land adjacent to the KWS has been identified as per the recommendations of the National Board for Wildlife.
- The final notification exercise to include the area in the sanctuary has almost been completed.

### **Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS):**

- Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary and estuary located in Andhra Pradesh.
- Declared a sanctuary in 1989, the KWS is spread across 194.84 hectares in Krishna and Guntur districts.
- It is one of the rarest eco-regions of the world because it harbors vast tracts of pristine mangrove forests.

## **Category: ECONOMY**

### **1. ‘Taxes making capital market unattractive’**

### Context:

The Association of National Exchanges Members of India (ANMI) has urged finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman to withdraw long term capital gains tax and also taxation of dividends in the hands of the investors.

### Concerns:

- The trading costs in the Indian stock markets are among the highest globally.
- India is the only country to levy a tax on equity trading in the form of securities transaction tax (STT).
- Dividends currently are taxed thrice in the form of corporate tax, dividend distribution tax and finally at the investor level.

### Details:

- The capital market participants highlighted the fact that while a tax is levied on all equity market transactions, India also taxes business income and the capital gains on securities, which, combined with the triple taxation on dividends, make the Indian capital market quite unattractive globally.
- The broking body has requested the government to take urgent steps to boost investor sentiment, especially given the overall weak sentiment among investor community, especially foreign portfolio investors (FPIs).
- It is urged that the Long term capital gain tax and taxation on dividends in the hands of Indian investors should be withdrawn.

## D. GS4 Related

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## E. Editorials

### Category: ENVIRONMENT

#### 1. IPCC special report on climate change

##### Context

- The IPCC approved and accepted Climate Change and Land: an IPCC special report on climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security, and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems at its 50th Session in August 2019.

##### Climate crisis is damaging the ability of the land to sustain humanity

- About a quarter of the Earth's ice-free land area is subjected to what the report describes as “**human-induced degradation**”.
  - Rapid agricultural expansion has led to destruction of forests, wetlands and grasslands and other ecosystems. Soil erosion from agricultural fields, the report estimates, is 10 to 100 times higher than the soil formation rate. This has created spinoff effects.
- The report said that land is heating up faster than the oceans. The average surface temperature is now 1.5C higher than in the late 19th century.
- This is affecting food security, as heat, drought, and changes in rainfall damage crops.

- **About 23% of global human-caused greenhouse gas emissions come from agriculture, forestry and other land uses.**
  - Land use change, such as clearing forest to make way for farms, drives these emissions.
- Additionally, **44% of recent human-driven methane**, a potent greenhouse gas, came from agriculture, peatland destruction and other land-based sources.
- Therefore the IPCC report warns that clean energy, clean transport and reduction emissions alone will not cut global emissions enough to avoid dangerous warming beyond 2 degrees Celsius. It points out that the global food system is responsible for 21 to 37 per cent of the world's GHG emissions.

### Steps to be taken

- One of the most effective ways of degraded area development is conservation and an efficient use of natural resources, and this can best be achieved through watershed development **adopting ridge-to-valley approach.**
- The report says there is scientific evidence which says that **certain diets have a lower carbon footprint.**
  - The UN report points out that **global meat consumption must fall** to curb global warming, reduce growing strains on land and water and improve food security, health and biodiversity.
  - Another compelling reason not to espouse a purely plant-based diet is that billions of poor people around the world depend on fish, and to a lesser extent meat, for protein and nutrients that may not be readily available elsewhere.
- This means going for much more **climate-sensitive food, and less wastage.**
  - Scientific studies have shown that alternative grains like millets and sorghum could help the country cope better with the impact of global heating on agriculture and variations in supply, than continuing to rely on water-intensive rice and wheat.

## Category: POLITY

### 1. Why scrapping 370 was a necessity?

#### Introduction

- **Nations bond and unite over time due to the unhindered flow of people**, trade, ideas, customs, food, festivals, culture and attire. This melting pot of building the modern Indian Republic went exactly as per the script the founding fathers envisioned.
  - For 70 years, the people in Kashmir and other parts of the country simply did not get to know each other. It simply did not allow the people to people bond, to build and flourish.
  - For the people living in other parts of the country, they had no lived experience of knowing and growing up with a Kashmiri as a neighbor or a friend or a colleague. The process of being emotionally vested in each other simply did not take place.

The land was physically with India, with or without Article 370. With the obliteration of the instrument, the people have also now finally become one.

#### By reorganizing Kashmir's political status, Modi govt is addressing a colonial mess

- In Africa and Asia, there are countless territorial conflicts. The **Indo-Tibetan frontier** opened up by Curzon remains a contested boundary dispute between India and China. More broadly, the buffers and protectorates constructed by the Raj to limit conflict with Russia are now zones of political contestation between India and a rising China.
- The **Durand Line drawn between India and Afghanistan in 1893**, a few years before Curzon arrived in India, remains disputed between Kabul and Islamabad. Even the Taliban, nurtured by

Pakistan as an instrument to gain influence in Afghanistan, does not accept the Durand Line.

- Many other peripheries of the Raj, from **Balochistan in the west to Xinjiang and Kashmir in the north to Tibet** and the eastern Himalayan regions between India, upper Burma and China are all in turmoil of varying degrees.

**Part of the problem lies in the nature of the frontiers that the Subcontinent inherited from the Raj.**

The land borders of India were not defined by a single line; but by what Curzon identifies as the three-fold frontier.

- There was the “**administrative frontier**” that marked out regions that the Raj governed to the fullest extent.
- Beyond that was the “**frontier of active defence**” like the Durand Line
- A third was the “**strategic frontier**” consisting of the outer boundaries of protectorates over which the Raj exercised a measure of control.

**Confusion over Control of territories**

- While the British Raj, Czarist Russia and Qing China found ways to live with ambiguities in remote corners of the empire, the new nationalist regimes that succeeded them have had much more difficulty.
- The Partition of the Subcontinent, based on religious considerations, added an explosive dimension to an already complex inheritance.
- The successor states to the empires laid formal claims to tracts of territory that had an ambivalent status, but have struggled to realise them.

**The colonial past has left territories that are claimed by many countries with significant challenges**

- **Pakistan** has struggled to find stability on its western border lands — where the **Baloch** and the **Pashtun** continue to challenge its claims.
- **China** reacted furiously when Delhi in 1975 ended Sikkim’s protectorate status and integrated it with India. It took nearly three decades for China to accept the new reality.
  - Beijing continues to claim the entire state of Arunachal Pradesh.
  - But the arguments with China are now mostly political. After instigating trouble in each other’s territory for a period, Delhi and Beijing are now committed to managing the dispute peacefully, while expanding the broader relationship.
  - There is frequent spike in military tensions, but there has been no shooting war.
- India has had greater success with **Bangladesh**. Early on in his first term, Prime Minister Narendra Modi seized the opportunities to settle the disputes with Dhaka on the land and maritime boundary inherited from the Partition.

**Persuading the Pakistan army**

- But unlike Dhaka and Beijing, Rawalpindi is not really prepared for a peaceful resolution. Repeated efforts by Indira Gandhi (1972), Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1999), and Manmohan Singh (2005-07) ended in failure. The inherent difficulty of negotiation has been compounded by **Pakistan’s use of terrorism and Kashmir’s ambiguous political status within the Indian Union**.
- In confronting Pakistan’s terrorism and reorganizing the political status of Kashmir, the Modi government has set a new policy template.
- The key to its success lies in finding early political reconciliation within Kashmir and urging the Pakistan Political System that its interests are better served by stable, peaceful and a legitimate frontier with India.

### Conclusion

- With J&K a Union territory, the central government must ensure that funds are deployed properly and don't line the pockets of a few families and their cronies.
- The doubting Kashmiri must realize that Article 370 made him special in a very negative way. It kept him alienated from his nation for seven decades. No Malayali, Gujarati, Assamese, and no Dogra or Ladakhi has lost his identity because he is an Indian. India has opened her arms. It is now up to sceptical Kashmiris to accept the offer.

## F. Tidbits

### 1. Headgear made mandatory for children above four years

- President of India giving assent to the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act 2019, that has amended the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.
- The safety measures for the children travelling on motorcycles have been included in the Act.
- Protective headgear of prescribed standards has been made mandatory for children above four years while travelling on a motorcycle.
- Pillion riders, including children, are more prone to the injuries than the rider of the motorcycle in case the vehicle collides. Helmets of prescribed standards fastened to the head by straps or other fastenings can avoid head injuries.
- Only Sikhs wearing turban have been exempted from the provision of Section 129 that makes helmets mandatory for all riders of motorcycles above four years of age.

### 2. BSF, Pakistan Rangers don't exchange festival sweets

- The two forces that are deployed along over 3,000 kms of the border, exchange sweets on major festivals such as Eid, Holi, Diwali and their respective national days.
- The customary exchange of sweets between the BSF and the Pakistan Rangers along the International Border did not take place on the occasion of Eid al-Adha.
- The unilateral downgrading of diplomatic ties by Pakistan in the wake of the Indian government's decision to revoke provisions of Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir, is being seen as the reason.
- However, a similar exchange of sweets between BSF personnel and their Bangladeshi counterparts, Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB), took place at designated locations along the 4,096-km frontier shared by the two countries.

### 3. Assam villagers feed elephants to keep them at bay

- A cluster of villages in central Assam's Nagaon district have found a way of keeping crop-raiding elephants off their crops by setting aside land to create a meal zone for them.
- Most farmers of 12 villages in the Ronghang Hatikhuli area of central Assam's Nagaon district do not have enough land to sustain their families.
- They have donated roughly 33 hectares of community land and took turns to plant paddy exclusively for the elephants that often come down the hills of the adjoining Karbi Anglong district.
- The jumbo kheti (cropland) has been envisaged as the last line of mealy defence against some 350-400 elephants that have often paid for venturing too close to human habitations.
- About 10 km from the paddy field, toward the hills, is an 8-hectare plantation of Napier grass that has been grown for the elephants. This plantation is on land belonging to a tea estate.
- The locals have also planted saplings of 2,000 outenga (elephant apple), 1,500 jackfruit and 25,000 banana trees on barren land between the paddy field and the grass plantation.
- This is an example for the world to follow towards reducing man-animal conflicts.

#### 4. 'No toxic chemicals in PET bottles'

- A comprehensive evaluation by the CSIR-Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore has determined PET bottles are safe.
- There has been a debate internationally on whether PET (Polyethylene Terephthalate) bottles, leach harmful chemicals when exposed to high temperatures.
- The CFRTI analysis, commissioned by an industry body, concluded that antimony, arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, lead, mercury, selenium and zinc were below their detection limits (BDL) of 0.001 mg/kg. Bisphenol-A was below its detection limit of 0.02 mg/kg.
- BPA is a synthetic organic compound and used in the manufacture of PET bottles but is now phased out after research found a link between the presence of BPA and the disruption of hormone regulation, as well as breast cancer.
- The CFTRI scientists found that the presence of metals, BPA and phthalates were below detection limit.
- The analysis found that no chemicals breached the EU-specified norms.
- In most cases the EU standards are similar to the ones specified by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.
- The studies further confirmed that antimony does not leach out of PET bottles. These findings further establish that no endocrine disruption happens from the use of PET bottles.

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. World Elephant Day

- World Elephant Day is an international annual event observed on August 12.
- It is dedicated to the preservation and protection of the world's elephants.
- The goal of International Elephant Day is to create awareness of the urgent plight of African and Asian elephants, and to share knowledge and positive solutions for the better care and management of captive and wild elephants.
- African elephants are listed as "Vulnerable" and Asian elephants as "Endangered" on the IUCN Red List of threatened species.
- This day highlights need for better protection for wild elephants, improving enforcement policies to prevent the illegal poaching and trade of ivory, conserving elephant habitats, better treatment for captive elephants, etc.

## H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Agenda 21 is an action plan of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development.
2. It is a non-binding action plan.

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: c**

**Explanation:**

Agenda 21 is a non-binding action plan of the United Nations with regard to sustainable development. It is a product of the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

**Q2. Basel Convention deals with:**

- a. Sustainable Development
- b. Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal
- c. Ozone layer depletion
- d. Trans-boundary Movements of Genetically Modified Organisms

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

Basel Convention, also known as the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, is an international treaty that was designed to reduce the movements of hazardous waste between nations.

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

- 1. The Liaquat–Nehru Pact was a bilateral treaty between India and Pakistan.
- 2. The pact agreed to guarantee full right to the minorities and to accord them the status of citizens.

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: c**

**Explanation:**

The partition of Pakistan and India in 1947 resulted in communal riots. In 1950, an estimated one million people — Hindus from East Pakistan (present-day Bangladesh) and Muslims from West Bengal — crossed the borders. The two Prime Ministers Liaquat Ali Khan and Jawaharlal Nehru met in Delhi on, April 2, 1950 to sign an agreement to safeguard the rights of the minorities. This pact, came to be known as the Liaquat-Nehru Pact. Some of the objectives of this pact were to lessen the fear of religious minorities, to put an end to communal riots and to create an atmosphere of peace. This pact agreed to guarantee full right to their minorities and to accord them the status of citizens.

**Q4. Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary is located in**

- a. Chattisgarh
- b. Odisha
- c. Maharashtra
- d. Assam

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

The Udanti Wildlife Sanctuary occupies the southeastern portion of Gariaband Taluka of Raipur District, Chattisgarh. To its east lies the state of Odisha.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Deterrence has its own limitations and it has to be supplemented by exhaustive measures that include an overhaul of the criminal justice administration. With respect to the recently passed POCSO bill 2019, evaluate the probable ramifications of 'death penalty' provision in the Act. (15 Marks, 250 Words)
2. With the frequency of disasters on the rise, localized management plans need to be drawn out for mobilizing resources to tackle disasters, natural or otherwise. Discuss the steps taken by the government and suggest the way ahead. (15 Marks, 250 Words)