

14 Oct 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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Category: HEALTH

1. With 9 cases a day, Mizoram is top State with HIV prevalence rate

Issue:

Mizoram, one of the least populated States in India, reports nine positive cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) a day.

Details:

- The virus “strike rate” has made Mizoram top the list of States with an HIV prevalence rate of 2.04%

followed by two other north-eastern States —Manipur with 1.43% and Nagaland with 1.15%.

- Data compiled by the Mizoram State AIDS Control Society (MSACS) show that 67.21% of the positive cases from 2006 to March 2019 have been transmitted sexually, 1.03% of the transmission route being homosexual.
- The next major cause is infected needles shared by intravenous drug users.
 - Mizoram bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar has battled drug trafficking and abuse for a long time.
 - Narcotic substances such as methamphetamine and heroin are smuggled in from Myanmar.

Way forward:

- Focus has to be laid on raising awareness about the virus.
- Greater focus on the treatment and prevention of the disease is the need of the hour.
- The police and the administration must be on high alert to check smuggling of Narcotic substances.

HIV or Human Immunodeficiency Virus:

- HIV or Human Immunodeficiency Virus is a lentivirus, which is a sub-classification of the retrovirus.
- It causes the HIV infection which over time leads to AIDS or Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
- AIDS is a deadly condition in which the affected person's immune system fails leading to the spread of life-threatening infections and cancers in his body.
- The average survival period for a person affected with HIV without treatment is nine to eleven years subject to the subtype of HIV.
- HIV infection can occur by the transference of blood, breast milk, vaginal fluid, semen or pre-ejaculate.
- HIV occurs as both free virus particles and as virus inside the infected immune cells within the above-mentioned bodily fluids.

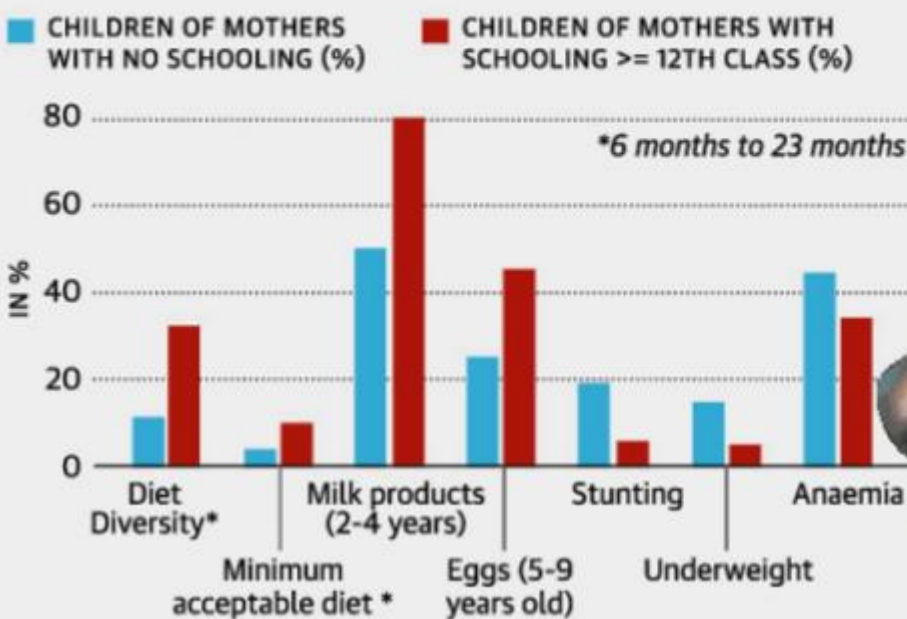
2. 'Education of mothers directly linked to better nutrition for children'

Context:

The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey shows children received better diets with higher levels of schooling among mothers.

Education route to good health

Children of women who are more educated are likely to receive more nutritious diets which consequently increases their resistance to future illnesses



Details:

- Diet diversity, meal frequency and minimum acceptable diet are the three core indicators of nutrition deficiency among infants and young children.
- Data from the study show that with higher levels of schooling in a mother, children received better diets. Only 11.4% of the children of mothers with no schooling received adequately diverse meals, while 31.8% whose mothers finished Class XII received diverse meals.
- The study found 3.9% of the children whose mothers had zero schooling got minimum acceptable diets, whereas this was at 9.6% for those whose mothers finished schooling. Moreover, 7.2% of the children in the former category consumed iron-rich food, whereas this was at 10.3% for those in the latter category.
- Levels of stunting, wasting and low weight were higher in children whose mothers received no schooling as opposed to those who studied till Class XII.
- Anaemia saw a much higher prevalence of 44.1% among children up to four years old with mothers who never went to school, versus 34.6% among those who completed their schooling.

The topic has been covered comprehensively in 9th October 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Many denied PDS rice due to non-seeding of Aadhaar

Background:

“One Nation, One Ration Card” has been covered in detail in 30th June 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Issues:

- A survey was conducted by the Odisha chapter of the National Right to Food Campaign, an informal network of organisations and individuals working on right to food issues.
- The survey has found that hundreds of people have not been provided rice through the Public Distribution System for two months due to the non-seeding of Aadhaar.
- The study also found that exclusion due to Aadhaar linking is more prevalent in tribal areas.

Merits of the One Nation, One Ration Card Scheme:

- The scheme, according to Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution would ensure that all beneficiaries can access PDS across the nation from any shop of their choice.
- The biggest beneficiary of this would be migrant labourers who move to other States to seek better job opportunities.
- The scheme would provide freedom to the beneficiaries as they will not be tied to any one PDS shop and reduce their dependence on shop owners.
- The objective is to ensure that this is implemented nationally in a time-bound manner.
- The process also aims to do away with manual recordings of transactions, thereby ensuring clarity of record keeping.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**1. Nepal, China ink road connectivity deal****Context:**

China and Nepal concluded agreements for all-weather connectivity between Kathmandu and the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Details:

- The infrastructure-building agreements were part of the 20 documents that were signed after delegation-level talks held by visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping and Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.
- An agreement for the upgraded all-weather road connection that includes building of Himalayan tunnels was reached between the Ministry of Finance of Nepal and the China International Development Cooperation Agency.
- The current road network is unsafe as it is prone to disruption due to landslips and poor maintenance.
- The joint statement declared that both sides would intensify cooperation to realise “trans-Himalayan multidimensional connectivity network”.
- The tunnel network will connect Tokha and Chhahare within Nepal that will ultimately reduce the road distance between Nepal and China.

Other agreements:

- Nepal agreed to allow Chinese banks to open branches and other financial services in Nepal and increase imports from China.
- Nepal also signed a treaty with China on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters which will allow China to investigate cases of crime that might target Nepal.
- Nepal reiterated its “firm commitment” to the One China policy.
- Under the agreements, China will offer 100 training opportunities to the Nepalese law enforcement officers each year, increase exchange of visits of security personnel, joint exercises and training of

personnel for disaster relief and prevention.

- China has agreed to build the Madan Bhandari University for Science and Technology as a mark of respect for the late leader of the Communist Party of Nepal.
- It also committed to build a railway line connecting Kathmandu and Pokhara with the birthplace of Lord Buddha at Lumbini.

C. GS3 Related

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Delhi's air quality slips to 'very poor' category

Issue:

Sources in the Meteorological Department have said that the smoke from crop residue burning in neighbouring States had started reaching Delhi and is not getting dispersed due to calm winds, creating a haze over Delhi.

Context:

A Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is scheduled to kick-in on October 15, 2019 to check rising air pollution in the Capital.

Details:

- Starting October 15, some stricter measures to fight air pollution will come into force in Delhi's neighbourhood, as part of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).
- The action plan has already been in effect for two years in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR).
- What is new in the recent announcement is that measures aimed at stopping the use of diesel generator sets will, extend beyond Delhi to the NCR, where many areas see regular power cuts.
- All these measures are part of GRAP, which was formulated in 2016 and notified in 2017.

What is Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)?

- A Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is a set of stratified actions that are taken once the pollution level reaches a certain specified limit.
- Approved by the Supreme Court in 2016, the plan was formulated after several meetings that the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) held with state government representatives and experts. The result was a plan that institutionalised measures to be taken when air quality deteriorates.
- GRAP works only as an emergency measure. As such, the plan does not include action by various state governments to be taken throughout the year to tackle industrial, vehicular and combustion emissions. When the air quality shifts from poor to very poor, the measures listed under both sections have to be followed since the plan is incremental in nature.
- If air quality reaches the severe+ stage, GRAP talks about shutting down schools and implementing the odd-even road-space rationing scheme.
- GRAP has been successful in doing things that had not been done before —
 - Creating a step-by-step plan for the entire Delhi-NCR region and getting on board several agencies: all pollution control boards, industrial area authorities, municipal corporations, regional officials of the India Meteorological Department, and others.
 - The plan requires action and coordination among 13 different agencies in Delhi, Uttar

Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan (NCR areas). At the head of the table is the EPCA, mandated by the Supreme Court.

- GRAP was notified in 2017 by the Centre and draws its authority from this notification.
- Before the imposition of any measures, EPCA holds a meeting with representatives from all NCR states, and a call is taken on which actions has to be made applicable in which town.
- In 2018, the ban on using diesel generator sets was implemented only in Delhi.
- This year, it is being extended to a few NCR towns. Rural areas are, however, being left out of this stringent measure because of unreliable power supply.

Has GRAP helped?

- The biggest success of GRAP has been in fixing accountability and deadlines. For each action to be taken under a particular air quality category, executing agencies are clearly marked.
- In a territory like Delhi, where a multiplicity of authorities has been a long-standing impediment to effective governance, this step made a crucial difference.
- Also, coordination among as many as 13 agencies from four states is simplified to a degree because of the clear demarcation of responsibilities.
- Three major policy decisions that can be credited to EPCA and GRAP are the closure of the thermal power plant at Badarpur, bringing BS-VI fuel to Delhi before the deadline set initially, and the ban on Pet coke as a fuel in Delhi NCR.
- The initial mandate of the body was to ensure the shift of Delhi's bus and auto fleet to CNG — a mammoth task that was among the most crucial ones in cleaning Delhi's air in the late 2000s.
- The body continues to monitor pollution and assists the Supreme Court in several pollution-related matters.

Way forward:

- One criticism of the EPCA, as well as GRAP, has been the focus on Delhi.
- While other states have managed to delay several measures, citing lack of resources, Delhi has always been the first one to have stringent measures enforced.
- In meeting that discussed the ban on diesel generator sets, the point about Delhi doing all the heavy lifting was also raised.
- In 2014, when a study by the World Health Organization found that Delhi was the most polluted city in the world, panic spread in the Centre and the state government.
- The release of a study on sources of air pollution the following year also gave experts, NGOs and scientists a handle on why Delhi was so polluted.
- All of these things, state government officials say, have made Delhi the obvious pilot project.
- For GRAP as well as EPCA, the next challenge is to extend the measures to other states effectively.

Air Quality Indications:

1. Moderate to poor
2. Very Poor
3. Severe
4. Severe+ or Emergency

2. 'Foreign' plastic invades Great Nicobar Island

Context:

A survey of five beaches in the Great Nicobar Island has recorded plastic that is found to be of 'non-Indian origin'.

Details:

- About 10 countries including India contribute to the plastic litter in the island.
- They are Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam, India, Myanmar, China and Japan.
 - Major portion of the litter (40.5%) was of Malaysian origin. It was followed by Indonesia (23.9%) and Thailand (16.3%).
 - Other countries contributed a minor portion.
 - The litter of Indian origin only amounted to 2.2%.
- The overwhelming contribution from Indonesia and Thailand was likely due to its proximity to the island; the plastic is likely to have made its way to the island because of water currents via the Malacca Strait, which is a major shipping route.
- The huge quantities of marine debris observed on this island could be due to improper handling of the solid waste from fishing/mariculture activity and ship traffic.

Concerns:


- Plastic pollution has emerged as one of the severest threats to ocean ecosystems and its concentration has reached 5,80,000 pieces per square kilometre.
- Plastic represents 83% of the marine litter found.
- The remaining 17% is mainly textiles, paper, metal and wood.

Plastic threat

Country-wise plastic litter (in %) found on the beaches of Great Nicobar Island

Country	S-1*	S-2*	S-3*	S-4*	S-5*
Indonesia	24.2	23.8	23.5	22.6	25.2
Malaysia	37.4	45.0	44.7	39.6	36.0
Vietnam	2.2	1.3	2.4	2.8	2.7
Thailand	15.4	12.5	18.8	17.0	18.0
Myanmar	2.2	2.5	0.0	1.9	3.6
Singapore	6.6	10.0	5.9	9.4	5.4
China	2.2	0.0	2.4	1.9	3.6
The Philippines	2.2	2.5	1.2	2.8	3.6
Japan	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.9
India	5.5	2.5	1.2	0.9	0.9

* S-1 to S-5 are five beach areas in the eastern part of the Great Nicobar Island



Tourists walking past a pile of plastic garbage on a beach on Phi Phi Don island in the Andamans ■ AFP

Great Nicobar Island:

- The Great Nicobar Island of Andaman has an area of about 1044 sq. km.
- According to the 2011 census, has a population of about 8,069.
- The island is home to one of the most primitive tribes of India — the Shompens.
- The island includes the Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve (GNBR) comprising of the Galathea National Park and the Campbell Bay National Park.
- The island harbours a wide spectrum of ecosystems from tropical wet evergreen forests, mountain ranges and coastal plains.
- The island is also home to giant robber crabs, crab-eating macaques, the rare megapode as well as leatherback turtles.

Conclusion:

The recent findings of the survey highlight the need for proper guidelines and adequate staff to monitor these islands.

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Chennai Connect

Introduction

- Gains of the Mamallapuram informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping were incremental and optical.
- The most concrete takeaway was the decision to establish a “High-Level Economic and Trade Dialogue”, with three intersecting objectives:
 - “To deepen economic cooperation”;
 - To achieve “enhanced trade and commercial relations, as well as to better balance” bilateral trade,
 - To “encourage mutual investments in identified sectors through ... a manufacturing partnership”.

Market Access to India in China

- The Modi Govt since 2014 is offering China greater market access — provided India genuinely gains from Chinese investments, and provided **economic engagement moves beyond a buyer-seller relationship**.
- Separately, Modi hopes to continue to **press China for greater market access for products and services** where Indian companies are competitive.
- Recent Chinese permission for an **Indian pharma company** to bid for a drug-supply contract within their public health system represents a new start, but only a first step.

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

- At Mamallapuram, the mention of RCEP, the mega-free trade agreement being negotiated between ASEAN and six major partner countries, was telling.
- Modi knows he cannot walk away from RCEP; that would **undermine gains of his foreign policy and “Act East” approach**. Yet, he cannot wish away the cautionary voices at home either.
- The terms of India’s entry into RCEP — both in the text as well as using a wider economic and diplomatic metric — could well be **dependent on what comfort or space China has offered India in Mamallapuram**.
- This political understanding — or its absence — will likely determine Modi’s big RCEP decision.

Kashmir and Issues of Terrorism

- It would, however, have been unrealistic to expect that this meeting would lead to the removal of all the irritants that have plagued the relationship in recent months, principal among them being the manner in which **China had backed Pakistan’s efforts to take the Kashmir issue** to various

bodies of the United Nations.

- That the two sides **did not raise or discuss the Kashmir issue** was an indication that Mr Modi and Mr Xi were looking at consolidating the strategic guidance and communications that had emerged from the Wuhan meeting and helped bridge some of the gaps between the militaries of the two countries.
- Too much should not be read **into a reference in the Indian statement, issued after the meeting, about joint efforts to counter the training, financing and support for terror groups**, at least not until China shows it is willing to ask its all-weather ally Pakistan to tackle this issue decisively.
- Mr Xi's call for developing military-to-military relations to enhance trust and an invitation to the Indian defence minister to visit China, however, are significant.

Conclusion

- India often sees China through the prism of its ties with Pakistan, while China looks constantly for an American role in Indian actions.
 - Both the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the U.S.-India joint Indo-Pacific vision have further derailed bilateral trust.
- It is thus **necessary to remove the worry of “third parties” from the room** if New Delhi and Beijing are to move beyond laying the foundations of engagement and building atmospherics to actually resolving the serious issues they have in territorial, economic and strategic areas.
- Only when they see each other as independent and autonomous decision-makers will the leaders realise their vision of an Asian century where the “elephant and dragon” learn to dance.

2. To go abroad, what clearances do CMs need?

Context

- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal addressed a conference in Denmark through videoconferencing, with the Centre having denied clearance to a trip abroad.

About C40

[CNA dated 7th October 2019](#)

Why clearance?

- For a foreign trip, public servants need political clearance from the External Affairs Ministry.
- Since 2016, applications for political clearance can be made online, on a portal opened by the Ministry. These are processed and clearance issued through coordination among various Ministry divisions.

Previous CMs denied

- During the previous UPA regime, the External Affairs Ministry denied political clearance for trips by then Chief Ministers Tarun Gogoi (Assam, Congress) to the US and Israel, and to Arjun Munda (Jharkhand, BJP) to Thailand.

Debate over protocol

- On June 14, 2014, then Civil Aviation Secretary Ashok Lavasa (now Election Commissioner) wrote to then Cabinet Secretary Ajit Seth that the “dilatatory system” of the External Affairs Ministry clearing all proposals for travel abroad by officials should be changed.
- Seth forwarded the letter to the Ministry; then Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh wrote back on

August 13, 2014. She stressed it was the Ministry's prerogative to decide on the suitability, desirability and level of participation of Indian officials in engagements abroad.

Other clearances

While all public servants need political clearance for foreign trips, different officers need different additional clearances.

- **Chief Ministers, state ministers and other state officials** also need clearance from the Department of Economic Affairs.
- For **Union ministers**, after getting political clearance from the External Affairs Ministry, additional clearance is needed from the Prime Minister, whether the trip is official or personal.
- **Lok Sabha MPs** need clearance from the Speaker and Rajya Sabha members from the Chairperson (Vice President of India).
- For **various ministry officers up to Joint Secretary level**, clearance is given by the minister concerned, after political clearance. For those above that rank, the proposal needs approval of a screening committee of secretaries.
- Rules vary according to the duration of the visit, the country to be visited, and the number of members in a delegation.
- If the foreign trip involves the hospitality of organisations other than those of the UN, then FCRA clearance is needed from the **Home Ministry**.

Source: Indian Express

Category: ECONOMY

1. A tax policy that could work

A look at numbers revealing slowdown in the economy

- Private consumption has contracted and is at an 18-quarter low of 3.1%;
 - Weaker consumer demand and slowing private investments are the two key factors behind the ordeal of core Indian sectors.
- Rural consumption is in a deep southward dive and is double the rate of the urban slowdown;
- Credit off-take by micro and small industries remains stagnant;
- Net exports have shown little or no growth;
- GDP growth is at a six-year low with the first quarter of FY20 registering just 5%; and unemployment is at a 45-year-high.
 - According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), overall unemployment in India has now touched 8.2 per cent, with urban figure as high as 9.4 per cent.
- Almost all Indian sectors including auto, manufacturing, agriculture, FMCG, real estate and construction have slumped badly, and official data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) confirm that. All of these indicators also explain the reason behind the recent jump in job losses.

To overcome these issues of slowdown some measures like reducing the corporate tax rates were taken. But this could ultimately result in less tax collection for the Govt

- The Indian government should now be desperate to raise more tax revenues. It missed its tax targets massively in the last fiscal year, **largely because of poor goods and services tax (GST) collections**.
- Its declared budgetary target for the current year requires tax receipts to increase by around 25%, when the first quarter increase was only 6% over the previous year.
- In the misplaced belief that what is required to address the current slowdown is **more tax relief to**

corporates, it has offered tax rate reductions to 25% of profits to companies that do not avail of other concessions, and further rebates to new companies.

- So very significant tax shortfalls are likely even in the current year, **unless the government takes proactive measures**.

Looking at MNCs

But such measures need not — and should not — take the form of the tax terrorism by increasing GST rates, which would be regressive and counterproductive in the slowdown. Fortunately, there are other measures that could provide significantly more tax revenues to the government.

- One obvious low-hanging fruit is a strategy to **ensure that multinational companies (MNCs) actually pay their fair share of taxes**.
- It is well known that **MNCs manage to avoid taxation in most countries**, by shifting their declared costs and revenues through transfer pricing across subsidiaries, practices described as “Base Erosion and Profit Shifting” (BEPS).
 - Matters have got even worse with digital companies, some of the largest of which make billions of dollars in profits across the globe, but pay barely any taxes anywhere.
 - The International Monetary Fund has estimated that countries lose \$500 billion a year because of this.
 - Also, it creates an uneven playing field, since domestic companies have to pay taxes that MNCs can avoid.

A new Idea of tax Collection

- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has now recognised this through its BEPS Initiative, and has even attempted a belated attempt to include developing countries through what it calls its inclusive process.
 - So far, this process has delivered a few benefits, but these are limited because it has continued to operate on the basis of the arm’s-length principle of treating the subsidiaries as separate entities.
- But this can change if there is political will. The basic idea is breathtakingly simple, and has been proposed by the **Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation, or ICRIT**
 - The idea is this: since an MNC actually functions as one entity, it should be treated that way for tax purposes. So the total global profits of a multinational should be calculated, and then apportioned across countries according to some formula based on sales, employment and users (for digital companies).
 - Obviously, a **Minimum Corporate Tax** should be internationally agreed upon for this to prevent companies shifting to low tax jurisdictions
 - Then, each country **can simply impose taxes on the MNCs operating in their jurisdictions**, in terms of their own shares based on the formula.

Key concerns

- The biggest problem is the arbitrary separation between what OECD calls “routine” and “residual” profits, and the proposal that **only residual profits will be subject to unitary taxation**.
 - This has no economic justification, since profits are anyway net of various costs and interest.
 - The proposal **does not clearly specify the criteria for determining routine profits**, instead suggesting that the “arm’s-length principle” will be used to decide this, which defeats the entire purpose.
- Another concern is about the formula to be used to distribute taxable profits.
 - The OECD suggests only sales revenues as the criterion, but developing countries would lose

out from this because they are often the producers of commodities that are consumed in the advanced economies.

Instead, the G24 group of (some of the most influential) developing countries has proposed that a combination of sales/users and employment should be used, which makes much more sense.

Conclusion

- The OECD BEPS Initiative will be meeting on October 19 to set out its own proposal, and for the first time, it is willing to consider the possibility of unitary taxation.
- It is important for the Indian government to look at this issue seriously and take a clear position at the OECD meeting, because the outcome will be very important for its own ability to raise tax revenues.

F. Tidbits

1. Social media etiquettes, pranayam part of UGC's 'life skills' curriculum

- Ethics and etiquettes of social media, ways to use Google search better, yoga, pranayama and resume-writing are part of the life skills curriculum developed by the University Grants Commission (UGC).
- The Commission had recently launched 'Jeevan Kaushal', a life skills programme in the curriculum for undergraduate courses across the country.
- The programme is aimed at inculcating emotional and intellectual skills in students, while also developing verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

G. Prelims Facts

1. Typhoon halts bullets

- Typhoon Hagibis is Japan's worst storm in decades.
- The name Hagibis has been used to name four tropical cyclones in the Western North Pacific Ocean.
- The name was contributed by the Philippines and means "rapidity" or "swiftness."

Typhoon Hagibis has been covered in detail in 13th October PIB Summary & Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

2. Red notice

- A Red Notice is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action.
- It contains two main types of information:
 - Information to identify the wanted person, such as their name, date of birth, nationality, hair and eye colour, photographs and fingerprints if available.
 - Information related to the crime they are wanted for, which can typically be murder, rape, child abuse or armed robbery.
- Red Notices are published by INTERPOL at the request of a member country, and must comply with INTERPOL's Constitution and Rules.
- A Red Notice is not an international arrest warrant.

INTERPOL Notices:

Types of Notice

	Red Notice To seek the location and arrest of wanted persons with a view to extradition or similar lawful action.		Yellow Notice To help locate missing persons, often minors, or to help identify persons who are unable to identify themselves.
	Blue Notice To collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a crime.		Black Notice To seek information on unidentified bodies.
	Green Notice To provide warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries.		Orange Notice To warn of an event, a person, an object or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.
	INTERPOL–United Nations Security Council Special Notice Issued for groups and individuals who are the targets of UN Security Council Sanctions Committees.		Purple Notice To seek or provide information on modus operandi, objects, devices and concealment methods used by criminals.

3. Army EME Corps gears up for automation

Project Beehive:

- The Army's Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME) has launched a major initiative under Project Beehive for automation of the entire Corps to enable real-time monitoring and response of its 2,000 workshops across the country.
- The Army is collaborating with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on this.
- The project seeks to achieve greater automation of the corps and connect all its workshops onto an integrated smart network endowed with real-time data analytics capabilities.
- The automated platform will make the information on Army equipment available in a hierarchical fashion at the click of a button.
- The Army had earlier automated its workshops under WASP (Workshop Honey bees) which is now being upgraded to be on same level with Beehive.
- WASP has been in existence for two years now.

H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Consider the following statements with respect to Sanjay Gandhi National Park:

1. Sanjay Gandhi National Park is a part of Western Ghats biodiversity.
2. Kanheri rock-cut caves situated within the national park was an important Buddhist learning centre.

3. The park encompasses three lakes.

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

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

Sanjay Gandhi National Park is a protected area near Mumbai in Maharashtra. It is part of Western Ghats biodiversity. It was formerly known as Borivali National Park. The park encompasses two lakes, Vihar Lake and Tulsi Lake, which meet part of the city's water requirements. Kanheri Caves, 2000 year old complex of some 160 rock-cut caves (was important Buddhist learning centre) is situated within the national park and is a protected archaeological site.

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to Bio-Chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) :

- 1. It is the amount of dissolved oxygen needed by aerobic biological organisms to break down organic material.
- 2. Lesser the BOD worse is the health of the river.

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:

Explanation:

Biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), the amount of dissolved oxygen used by microorganisms in the biological process of metabolizing organic matter in water. The more organic matter there is (e.g., in sewage and polluted bodies of water), the greater the BOD; and the greater the BOD, the lower the amount of dissolved oxygen available for higher animals such as fishes. The BOD is therefore a reliable gauge of the organic pollution of a body of water. Higher the BOD worse is the health of the river

Q3. Consider the following statements:

- 1. Doklam is a narrow plateau lying in the tri-junction of India, China and Bhutan.
- 2. It lies between Chumbi Valley to the East, Ha Valley to the North and Sikkim state to the west.

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

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2

d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: b

Explanation:

Doklam is a narrow plateau lying in the tri-junction of India, China and Bhutan. It lies between China's Chumbi Valley to the north, Bhutan's Ha Valley to the east and India's Sikkim state to the west.

Q4. Consider the following statements Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) :

1. Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, and military organisation.
2. China, Russia, India, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan are the founding members of SCO.
3. The first summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was organised in China.

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

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, and military organisation. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001 by six countries, People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan officially joined this organisation in 2017. The first summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was organised in China.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. India often sees China through the prism of its ties with Pakistan, while China looks constantly for an American role in Indian actions. It is necessary to remove the worry of “third parties” if the two countries are to actually act on resolving serious issues they have in territorial, economic and strategic areas. Elucidate. (15 Marks, 250 Words).
2. What do you understand by Base erosion and profit shifting? Explain how Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) has emerged as one of the most important challenges for governments across the world today. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

