

29 Oct 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.GS1 Related

GEOGRAPHY

1. Supercyclone 'Kyarr' moves away from Indian coast

B.GS2 Related

HEALTH

1. 'Unintended pregnancy endangers mother, child'

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. After Manipur, Arunachal wants to be kept out of Naga peace deal

C.GS3 Related

DISASTER MANAGEMENT

1. Panel to submit report on A.P. boat tragedy

ECONOMY

1. 'Ambiguity in policy to be blamed for SC order on AGR'

D.GS4 Related

E. Editorials

HEALTH

1. Vaping is injurious to health

SECURITY

1. Death of a terrorist

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. The many gaps in NCRB data

F. Tidbits

1. Countdown begins for J&K's transition
2. 'Deep discounts by e-com firms hitting GST revenue'

G. Prelims Fact

1. Second round of Smart Cities may roll out in 2020

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

A. GS1 Related

Category: GEOGRAPHY

1. Supercyclone 'Kyarr' moves away from Indian coast

Context:

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Supercyclone 'Kyarr', in the Arabian Sea has moved westwards and away from India's coast.

What is a Tropical Cyclone?

- A tropical cyclone is a rapidly rotating storm system characterized by a low-pressure center, a closed low-level atmospheric circulation, strong winds, and a spiral arrangement of thunderstorms that produce heavy rain or squalls.
- It is an intense low-pressure area in the atmosphere over tropical or sub-tropical waters, with organised convection (i.e. thunderstorm activity) and winds at low levels, circulating either anti-clockwise (in the northern hemisphere) or clockwise (in the southern hemisphere).
- From the centre of a cyclonic storm, pressure increases outwards.
- The amount of the pressure drop in the centre and the rate at which it increases outwards gives the intensity of the cyclones and the strength of winds.
- The cyclones are classified as severe (MSW of 48-63 knots), very severe (MSW of 64-89 knots), extremely severe (MSW of 90-119 knots) and super cyclonic storm (MSW of 120 knots or more). One knot is equal to 1.8 kmph.

How are Cyclones formed?

Tropical cyclones require certain conditions for their formation. These are as follows:

- A source of warm, moist air derived from tropical oceans with sea surface temperature normally near to or in excess of 27 °C
- Winds near the ocean surface blowing from different directions converging and causing air to rise and storm clouds to form.
- Winds that do not vary greatly with height - known as low wind shear. This allows the storm clouds to rise vertically to high levels;
- Coriolis force/spin induced by the rotation of the Earth. The formation mechanisms vary across the world, but once a cluster of storm clouds starts to rotate, it becomes a tropical depression.
- If it continues to develop it becomes a tropical storm, and later a cyclone/ super cyclone.

Details:

- Kyarr is the ninth super cyclone to have developed in the North Indian Ocean, after Super Cyclone Gonu in 2007.
- Gonu was also the strongest cyclone to have made landfall in Oman.
- Before that, Odisha was hit by a Super Cyclone in 1999 causing catastrophic damage to the state and massive loss of life and property.
- The name Kyaar was given by Myanmar.

Note:

- In 2000, eight countries came together to assign names to the tropical cyclones that originate in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian sea: Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- It was then decided that each country will submit a set of names which will be used one by one to name the cyclones. The framing of the list began in September 2004 and later 64 names, eight from each country, were finalised
- The names will be used sequentially, column-wise.

Bangladesh	Onil	Ogni	Nisha	Giri	Helen	Chapala	Ockhi	Fani
India	Agni	Akash	Bijli	Jai	Lehar	Megh	Sagar	Vayu
Maldives	Hibanu	Gonu	Aila	Keila	Madi	Roanu	Mekunu	Hikaa
Myanmar	Pyarr	Yemyin	Phyan	Thane	Nanauk	Kyant	Daye	Kyarr
Oman	Baaz	Side	Ward	Murjan	Hudhud	Nada	Luban	Maha
Pakistan	Fanoos	Nargis	Laila	Nilam	Nilofar	Vardah	Titli	Bulbul
Sri Lanka	Mala	Rashmi	Bandu	Viyaru	Ashobaa	Martha	Gaja	Pawan
Thailand	Mukda	Khai Muk	Phet	Phailin	Komen	Mora	Phethai	Amphan

B. GS2 Related

Category: HEALTH

1. ‘Unintended pregnancy endangers mother, child’

Context:

Following a study conducted in 36 countries, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that unwanted pregnancies may lead to a wide range of health risks for the mother and child.

Details:

- The study found that two-thirds of sexually active women who wished to delay or limit childbearing stopped using contraception for the fear of side effects, health concerns and underestimation of the likelihood of conception which led to one in four pregnancies being unintended.
 - Globally, 74 million women living in low and middle-income countries have unintended pregnancies annually.
 - This leads to 25 million unsafe abortions and 47,000 maternal deaths every year.
- WHO has warned of the risks that unwanted pregnancies may carry. The risks include malnutrition, illness, abuse and neglect, and even death. Unintended pregnancies can further lead to cycles of high

fertility, as well as lower educational and employment potential and poverty – challenges which can span generations.

Indian Scenario:

- As per the figures published by Lancet on the incidence of abortion and unintended pregnancy in India, it is estimated that 15.6 million abortions occurred in India in 2015.
- In India, the abortion rate was 47 per 1,000 women aged 15-49 years.
- The study found that 3.4 million abortions (22%) were obtained in health facilities, 11.5 million (73%) abortions were medication abortions done outside of health facilities, and 0.8 million (5%) abortions were done outside of health facilities using methods other than medication abortion.
- In India, abortions accounted for one-third of all pregnancies, and nearly half of the pregnancies were unintended.

Way forward:

- The WHO report stated that modern methods of contraception had a vital role in preventing unintended pregnancies.
- It is opined that high-quality family planning offered a range of potential benefits that encompassed not only improved maternal and child health, but also social and economic development, education, and women's empowerment.
- The study's findings highlighted the need for services that
 - Take a shared decision-making approach to selecting and using effective methods of contraception that most fit the needs and preferences
 - Identify early when women and girls are having concerns about the method they are using
 - Enable women and girls to change modern methods while remaining protected through effective counselling and respect of their rights and dignity.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. After Manipur, Arunachal wants to be kept out of Naga peace deal

Issue:

- Arunachal Pradesh has echoed Manipur and has demanded to be kept out of any territorial changes that might be incorporated in the settlement of the Naga political problem.
- The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland - NSCN-IM's map of Nagalim spreads over 1,03,473 sq km beyond the 16,527 sq km area of Nagaland. It includes much of eastern Arunachal.

The Issue has been covered in 27th October Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click Here to read.](#)

C. GS3 Related

Category: DISASTER MANAGEMENT

1. Panel to submit report on A.P. boat tragedy

Context:

The six-member committee appointed by the government to study the reasons for the recent Godavari boat accident and to suggest ways for safe water transport will submit its report soon. It will examine the reasons for the accident and find out the lacunae, if any.

This issue has been covered in 16th September 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here to read.](#)

Category: ECONOMY

1. ‘Ambiguity in policy to be blamed for SC order on AGR’

Context:

The Supreme Court recently upheld the government’s contention that non-core revenue in telecom groups should be included in adjusted gross revenue (AGR) — the figure on which statutory levies are charged.

Issue:

- Telecom operators are looking to the government for a possible relief, such as waiver of penalties and interest though the Supreme Court had categorically stated that companies must pay many years’ worth of charges, plus interest and penalties.
- Ideally, companies are required to make provisions in their books for any potential liability that may arise from a legal dispute.
- Industry sources have said that provisioning for the full amount has not been made.
- Also, there is no sight of promoters willing to infuse more equity into the companies to clear the liabilities.
- After the judgment, the telcos had stated that they didn’t have the money to pay the government.
- Some of the Industry specialists have blamed the policymakers for ambiguity in the policy and have urged them to step in to correct the situation.
- It is opined that the verdict is one more challenge with regard to the implementation of 5G.

This issue has been covered in 25th October 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click Here to read.](#)

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: HEALTH

1. Vaping is injurious to health

Context:

1604 cases of severe lung illness and 34 confirmed deaths associated with vaping have been confirmed in

the United States. While the investigation on the harmful effects of vaping products continues, several reports provide the much needed evidence to prove previous doubts regarding the safety of E-cigarettes.

Details:

- The absence of vaping-related illnesses in the last 10 years that have seen increased use has often been cited to silence the critics of electronic cigarettes.
- While the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the US are yet to identify the cause of the lung injuries in reported cases, the only commonality among all the patients is that they were e-cigarette users.

For more information on E-cigarettes, Click here

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. The many gaps in NCRB data

Context:

After a delay of 2 years, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has published the annual 'Crimes in India Report- 2017'.

- The 2017 report by the National Crime Records Bureau apart from providing important data on the crimes in India also presents important insights on different aspects of the **criminal justice system**.
- Though the recent report has brought in many changes as compared to the previous reports, there are still crucial gaps in the data collected.
- The opacity surrounding the methodology for collection and compilation makes the data obscure and renders them ineffective for policymaking.

Concerns:

- Basis for classification:
- NCRB has taken the right step in categorizing crimes outside the provisions of the Indian Penal Code and other special and local laws keeping in mind the growing complexity of crimes and the inadequacy of the existing codes.
- The report itself states that "socio-economic causative factors or reasons of crimes" have not been captured and also non-legislative parameters for classifying some offences have not been adequately explained. This raises questions about the basis for classification.
- The purpose of the changed and enlarged classification would be achieved only if a more detailed description of the categories was provided.
- Example: While reporting the offence of murder, NCRB has segregated the numbers based on the different motives for murder (honour killing and dowry, for instance), rather than on a more detailed description of the categories for motives such as "gain" or "class conflict".
- Prison Statistics:
- Prison statistics do not provide any offence-wise data on under trials and convicts. This prevents cross-referencing and examination of the numbers.

- Prison statistics provide information on the different kinds of sentences being served by convicts, these numbers have not been categorised on the basis of offences. Thus it is impossible to gain insights into the sentencing trends for various offences and in various States to help in better formulation of policy on sentencing.
- Prison statistics provide some information on the kind of facilities available for reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners, but they do not go beyond the enrolment rate to evaluate their efficacy. In the absence of information on the quality and impact of these programmes, robust policies cannot be formulated which would ensure successful reintegration of prisoners and provide those serving life-term imprisonments an opportunity to reform.
- These policies are especially important since 94.4% of those entering the criminal justice system were arrested for the first time.
- Methods of computation and presentation of data:
 - The crime statistics report, while recording rates of recidivism (tendency of a convicted criminal to reoffend), collates State-wise information on the number of juveniles and adults who were arrested earlier but not convicted, and those who were previously convicted.
 - The reliability of this data is questionable, given that the count of recidivism also includes arrests of people who may not have been convicted earlier for crimes they were accused of.
 - This is especially problematic given that socio-economically marginalised people are known to repeatedly come in conflict with the law, and are routinely arrested and released on mere suspicion.
 - Even for those who were arrested and convicted previously, the data does not speak of the nature of crimes involving their prior conviction, and the crimes leading to their arrest now, rendering the data irrelevant for any analysis with respect to recidivism.
- Methodology used:
 - There are methodological concerns about the rate of calculating charge-sheeting, which has been measured based on the total number of cases disposed of by the police, and not the total number of cases for investigation. This approach portrays a higher charge sheet rate. A more relevant approach would be to measure it against the number of cases for investigation.
 - There are similar concerns about the presentation of data on arrests, convictions and acquittals. For instance, it is unclear if the number of persons acquitted, discharged and convicted is calculated in reference to the number of persons arrested in 2017, or those charged and arrested in previous years. The statistics in this section does not speak of the total number of cases disposed of by courts in 2017.

Way forward:

- The criminal justice system is being plagued by a number of issues like low rate of conviction, inefficiency and delay in justice delivery, increasing complexity of the crimes and is in need of urgent reforms.
- This results in a big problem of people losing faith in the Criminal Justice System of India – which is very dangerous. The system has not undergone any substantial changes even after 70 years of Independence.
- The importance of the statistics from the annual crime report is irreplaceable in helping formulate

better policy. However, in order to explore more precise and effective solutions to criminal justice issues, NCRB must first take steps towards ensuring the accuracy, reliability and comprehensiveness of these reports.

- The NCRB must note the discrepancies and deficiencies in the present report and incorporate appropriate changes in its subsequent reports to make the annual Crime report of India more useful.

More info on NCRB and the Crimes in India report 2017 refer:

17th October PIB Summary and Analysis. [Click here.](#)

23rd October Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click Here.](#)

Category: SECURITY

1. Death of a terrorist

Context:

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the founder-leader of the Islamic State(IS) was killed in a night raid by U.S. Special Forces in northwest Syria.

Background:

Growth of IS

- At the height of its power in 2014, the Caliphate established by Baghdadi controlled 1 lakh sq. km territory straddling the Iraqi-Syria border from Deir Ezzor in eastern Syria to Mosul in northern Iraq with Raqqa as its de facto capital.
- The Caliphate drew in radicalised young Muslims world-wide into its fold. One estimate puts the number of foreign fighters at around 35000 from more than 80 countries.
- The IS carried out around 6600 attacks in the 2007-2018 period, killing about 43516 people.
- It fought the Syrian and Iraqi national armies as well as rebel groups in Syria, and unleashed violence against anyone who disagreed with its version of Islam and against minority groups in Islam and non-Muslims.
- IS claimed the establishment of its affiliates in countries like Algeria, Libya and Tunisia.
 - A growing number of terrorist organizations from around the world like the Boko Haram from Nigeria owed allegiance to IS and had begun collaborating.
 - A growing number of lone wolf attacks claimed allegiance to the IS.

The Decline:

- Recognizing the threat posed by the IS, a Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant was set up in 2014. It is a group of countries and non-state actors working together to defeat the ISIS, led by the United States.
- The codename for the joint operations against ISIS is called Operation Inherent Resolve.
- Following multi-pronged and co-ordinated military operations against the IS, by 2016, IS had lost

much of its territory on the Syria-Turkey border to the Kurdish forces and Fallujah in Iraq.

- In 2017, IS lost both its capital Raqqa in Syria and the historic city of Mosul in Iraq, signifying the beginning of its reign's end. By 2018 the IS had witnessed severe territorial losses.
- By March 2019, the IS was driven out of the last pocket of land it held in Baghuz. The capture of senior IS leaders in May 2019 followed by the death of its leader has delivered a body blow to IS, which is at its weakest point of its short history.

Concerns:

- Though the IS has lost control of its previous territories and the subsequent revenue sources the jihadists who owe allegiance are still on the run. The so-called lone wolves are likely to seek revenge.
- Baghdadi's death does not mean that the group is defeated because, the IS, like its peers in global jihadism such as al-Qaeda, is not completely a leader-dependent organisation. It is fundamentally an insurgency comprising ideologically linked autonomous cells that are loyal to one leadership. So Baghdadi's death, while a blow to the organisation and its propaganda, does not mean that IS operations are over.
- The geopolitical conditions that led to the IS's creation have not changed much. When Syria began plunging into chaos in the early days of the civil war in 2011, the al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), under Baghdadi's leadership, morphed into a bigger, more powerful terrorist machinery — the IS.
- The present situation in Syria remains the same providing fertile ground for the birth of other terrorist organizations.
- According to a 2015 study by the Financial Action Task Force, one of IS's five primary sources of revenue included donations from Saudi Arabia and Gulf states, often disguised as meant for "humanitarian charity". IS has not been completely cut off from sources of finance.
- IS use of social media such as Twitter and Telegram continues unabated to spread its propaganda and for fundraising. It has been successful in indoctrinating followers and sympathisers to initiate ramming and attacks This threat still remains.

Way forward:

- With the IS's double loss of territory and leadership, the focus should now be on stabilising Iraq and Syria and ending the conditions that led to the rise of the IS. Otherwise, Baghdadi's death would not mean much for the global fight against terrorism.
- The campaign against the Islamic State (IS) is not over. The security forces have to prepare for a long battle to thwart the group's ideology and brace for retaliation by Islamic State loyalists, including "lone wolf" attacks by radicalised locals. The fight still continues to finally defeat the terrorist organisation materially and ideologically.

F. Tidbits

1. Countdown begins for J&K's transition

The State of Jammu and Kashmir will transition into two Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh on October 31, 2019 and the process will begin with the swearing-in of the two newly appointed Lieutenant-Governors in Srinagar and Leh, respectively.

Kashmir in transition

Just a few days are left for the State of Jammu & Kashmir to cease to exist and the Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh to come into existence

August 6: Parliament passes the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019

October 31: The Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh will come into existence

- The number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of J&K has been increased from 107 to 114. Ladakh will not have an Assembly

2. 'Deep discounts by e-com firms hitting GST revenue'

- Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has urged the government to probe the business model of e-commerce majors like Amazon and Flipkart.
- CAIT said e-commerce companies sell goods much below their market value, thereby denying the government the legitimate GST revenue.
- It has alleged that deep discounts on products were causing loss of GST revenue to the Centre and state governments.
- According to the traders' body, under GST Act, the government has the power to determine actual market value of the products if it appears that it is under billed.

G. Prelims Facts

1. Second round of Smart Cities may roll out in 2020

What's in News?

Union Minister of State (independent charge) Housing and Urban Affairs has said that the second round of the Centre's flagship urban development schemes — the Smart Cities Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) — are being considered and could be rolled out in 2020.

Smart Cities Mission:

- The Smart Cities Mission is an urban renewal and retrofitting mission undertaken by the Urban Development Ministry.
- In the approach to the Smart Cities Mission, the objective is to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment and application of Smart Solutions.
- Under smart cities initiative, focus will be on core infrastructure services like: Adequate and clean Water supply, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, Efficient Urban Mobility and Public Transportation, Affordable housing for the poor, power supply, robust IT connectivity, Governance, especially e-governance and citizen participation, safety and security of citizens, health and education and sustainable urban environment.
- Smart Cities focus on their most pressing needs and on the greatest opportunities to improve lives.
- They tap a range of approaches - digital and information technologies, urban planning best practices, public-private partnerships, and policy change - to make a difference.
- The Mission covers 100 cities.
- The Smart City Mission is being operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS). It works in partnership with the state governments.

Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT):

- Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) was launched in 2015.
- The scheme's focus is on urban renewal projects that would establish infrastructure which facilitates sufficient and efficient sewerage networks and water supply. This is to enable an urban transformation.
- AMRUT adopts a project approach to ensure basic infrastructure services relating to water supply, sewerage, septage management, storm water drains, transport and development of green spaces and parks with special provision for meeting the needs of children.
- Implementation of this Mission will be linked to promotion of urban reforms such as e-governance, constitution of professional municipal cadre, devolving funds and functions to urban local bodies, review of Building bye-laws, improvement in assessment and collection of municipal taxes, credit rating of urban local bodies, energy and water audit and citizen-centric urban planning.
- AMRUT covers 500 cities.

H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Which of the following pollutant/s is/are not included in the National Air Quality Index?

1. Lead
2. Carbon Monoxide
3. Carbon Dioxide
4. Sulphur Dioxide

Choose the correct option:

- a. 1 only
- b. 3 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 2 and 4 only

Answer: b

Explanation:

National Air Quality Index (AQI) was launched in 2014 to disseminate information on air quality in an easily understandable form for the general public. AQI has six categories of air quality. These are: Good, Satisfactory, Moderately Polluted, Poor, Very Poor and Severe. The measurement of air quality is based on eight pollutants, namely:

- Particulate Matter (size less than 10 μm) or (PM_{10}),
- Particulate Matter (size less than 2.5 μm) or ($\text{PM}_{2.5}$),
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2),
- Sulphur Dioxide (SO_2),
- Carbon Monoxide (CO),
- Ozone (O_3),
- Ammonia (NH_3), and
- Lead (Pb)

Q2. Which of the following is not correctly matched?

- a. Fani – Bangladesh
- b. Vayu – India
- c. Hikaa – Sri Lanka
- d. Kyarr – Myanmar

Answer: c

Explanation:

Eight countries in the Indian Ocean Region - Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand – have all contributed a set of names which are assigned sequentially whenever a cyclonic storm develops. The names recommended by the 8 countries have been listed below.

Bangladesh	Onil	Ogni	Nisha	Giri	Helen	Chapala	Ockhi	Fani
India	Agni	Akash	Bijli	Jai	Lehar	Megh	Sagar	Vayu
Maldives	Hibanu	Gonu	Aila	Keila	Madi	Roanu	Mekunu	Hikaa
Myanmar	Pyarr	Yemyin	Phyan	Thane	Nanauk	Kyant	Daye	Kyarr
Oman	Baaz	Side	Ward	Murjan	Hudhud	Nada	Luban	Maha
Pakistan	Fanoos	Nargis	Laila	Nilam	Nilofar	Vardah	Titli	Bulbul
Sri Lanka	Mala	Rashmi	Bandu	Viyaru	Ashobaa	Martha	Gaja	Pawan
Thailand	Mukda	Khai Muk	Phet	Phailin	Komen	Mora	Phethai	Amphan

Q3. Consider the following statements:

1. The Smart Cities Mission is an urban renewal and retrofitting mission undertaken by the Urban Development Ministry.
2. The Smart City Mission is being operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS).
3. The implementation of the Mission at the City level will be done by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV).

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

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

The Smart Cities Mission is an urban renewal and retrofitting mission undertaken by the Urban Development Ministry. Under smart cities initiative, focus will be on core infrastructure services like: Adequate and clean Water supply, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, Efficient Urban Mobility and Public Transportation, Affordable housing for the poor, power supply, robust IT connectivity, Governance, especially e-governance and citizen participation, safety and security of citizens, health and education and sustainable urban environment. The Smart City Mission is being operated as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS). It works in partnership with the state governments. The implementation of the Mission at the City level will be done by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) created for the purpose. The SPV will plan, appraise, approve, release funds, implement, manage, operate, monitor and evaluate the Smart City development projects. Each smart city will have an SPV.

Q4. Nagaland borders the states of:

1. Assam
2. Arunachal Pradesh
3. Manipur
4. Mizoram

Choose the correct option:

- a. 1, 2 and 3 only
- b. 1, 2 and 4 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: a

Explanation:



I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Discuss the features and process of formation of a tropical cyclone. How are they different from temperate cyclones? (15 Marks, 250 Words).
2. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) double loss of territory and leadership has been a body blow to the terrorist group. However, the fight against the ISIL has not ended. Comment. (10 marks, 150 words).