

24 Nov 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. [GS 1 Related](#)

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Operation MASOOM \(Mitigation of Adolescent Sexually Offensive Online Material\)](#)

B. [GS 2 Related](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [India-US likely to sign ISA \(Industrial Security Annex\) pact](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [President's rule revoked via PM's Special powers](#)

HEALTH

1. [Study of one lakh individuals finds why India's Children are anaemic](#)

C. [GS 3 Related](#)

D. [GS 4 related](#)

E. [Editorials](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Rounding up migrants](#)

ECONOMY

1. [What is the push behind the strategic disinvestment move?](#)

F. [Tidbits](#)

G. [Prelims Facts](#)

1. [Exchange Traded Fund \(ETF\)](#)

H. [UPSC Prelims Practice Questions](#)

I. [UPSC Mains Practice Questions](#)

A. GS 1 Related

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Operation MASOOM (Mitigation of Adolescent Sexually Offensive Online Material)

- It is an initiative of the Delhi Police to fight online child pornography

CyberTips

- To control the growing menace of online child pornography they have also collaborated with International social media firms
- CyberTips are technical inputs from big social media and instant messaging platforms like Facebook.
- The CyberTips are collated by an international collaborative forum called National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children and shared with Delhi Police as per the digital trail of the sexual offender.
- Acting on these CyberTips, CyPAD unit has further developed the digital trail of the sexual predators involved in these heinous crimes.

B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India-US likely to sign ISA (Industrial Security Annex) pact

ISA :

- It is add on to GSOMIA (General Security of Military Information Agreement), signed by India and the US in 2002; which allowed sharing of classified information from the US government and defence manufacturers with Indian government and government-owned firms.
- ISA, will enable the US government and US defence companies to share classified information with Indian private defence manufacturers.
- **How it will work** : Transfer of technology from US to India would be done through government route. US companies will have to submit documentation to the US government which would then be shared with Indian counterparts and finally to Indian industry.

- It would be the first time India is entering into such a pact with any country.
- It involves Indian government assurances on safety and security of technology against transfer and access to third parties. This is to ensure that technology, acquired from the US, is not shared with other countries.

INDIA-US defence relation :

- India has now signed 3 of 4 foundational agreements with the US meant to improve interoperability between the militaries and allow transfer of high end military platforms.
- India concluded LEMOA (Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement) in 2016 and COMCASA (Communication Compatibility and Security Agreement) in 2018

Advantages :

- ISA will add to existing agreements on protection of classified military information.
- It will enable transfer of key high end technology pieces that are regulated under the US law. Presently US companies like Lockheed Martin and Boeing, are working on projects that do not involve transfer of key technology but “build to print” kind.
- It will enable the DTTI technology (Defence Technology and Trade initiative) signed in 2012.
- It will further promote Make in India through participation of US companies.
- It will further the US-India relationship and bring India on par with NATO allies.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. President’s rule revoked via PM’s Special powers

- Centre invoked Rule 12 (Departure from rules) of the Transaction of Business rules, 1961 empowering it to revoke the proclamation of President’s rule in Maharashtra.
- In the present context the cabinet approval was not taken.
- Under this rule,
- Prime Minister may, in case or classes of cases permit or condone a departure from these rules, to the extent he deems necessary.
- Cabinet can later give post-facto approval for any decision taken under rule 12.

Examples from the past

- The last key decision taken through invocation of Rule 12 was re-organisation of the

state of Jammu and Kashmir into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on October 31.

- The proclamations issued by the President that day, dividing various districts between the two Union Territories, were issued under Rule 12.
- The Cabinet gave post-facto approval to the same on November 20

Category: HEALTH

1. Study of one lakh individuals finds why India's Children are anaemic

Context

- Lancet Global Health report noted that 23% of Indian men suffered from anaemia and another paper published in Scientific Reports points out that about 58.5% of children below five years of age in India are anaemic.

What is Anaemia?

- Anaemia is a condition in which a person has a lower-than-normal count of RBCs, which reduces the capacity of blood to carry oxygen and may lead to death.
- Anaemia is an important indicator of malnutrition. (Global Nutrition Report,2017)

Stats :

- 58.6% of children and near to 52% of pregnant and non pregnant women were found to be Anaemic (NFHS-4).
- Lancet report, 2016 puts iron deficiency anaemia as a bigger cause of disability and highlights poor outreach and awareness issues.

Impact of Anaemia on health :

- Cause maternal health, Underweight among children.
- Risk of cognitive development and physical growth.
- Lower productivity in adults and thus loss to GDP.

Government interventions :

- National Anaemia Prophylaxis Programme and National Child Survival and Safe Motherhood programme, concentrated on distributing iron and folic acid tablets among pregnant women and infant children.
- RMNCH+A services, National Iron Plus Initiative and National Health policy addresses

micronutrient deficiencies nutrition.

- Aim to reduce anaemia among young children, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age by 1/3rd of NFHS-4 level by 2022 under National Nutrition Mission.

Way Forward :

- There is a need to improve women's education and health services to reduce anaemic burden.
- Targeting beneficiaries using grass root mechanism like Mid-Day meal scheme, and distributing Bio-Fortified staple foods.
- Building capacity of 3 A's (**ASHA** (Accredited Social Health Activist) workers, **Anganwadi workers** and **ANM** (Auxiliary Nursing Midwives)) in awareness and mass communication programmes similar to Assam example.
- Behavioural changes introduced by SBA (Swachh Bharat Abhiyan), needs to be taken forward to leverage potential of local bodies and convergence of multi sectoral interventions.
- There is a need to move away from the IFA (Iron and Folic Acid) supplementation approach followed in earlier years.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Rounding up migrants

Context:

The Home Minister's announcement in the Rajya Sabha that a National Register of Citizens (NRC) will be implemented across India, and repeated again in Assam, has ignited interest in the existing legal framework in India for illegal migrants. The first enactment made for dealing with foreigners was the Foreigners Act, 1864, which provided for the expulsion of

foreigners and their arrest, detention pending removal, and for a ban on their entry into India after removal.

What is the Passport Act?

- One of the early set of rules made against illegal migrants, The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920, empowered the government to make rules requiring persons entering India to be in possession of passports.
- This rule also granted the government the power to remove from India any person who entered without a passport.
- During the Second World War, the Imperial Legislative Assembly enacted the Foreigners Act, 1940, under which the concept of “burden of proof” was introduced.
- Section 7 of the Act provided that whenever a question arose with regard to the nationality of a person, the onus of proving that he was not a foreigner lay upon the person.

When was the Foreigners Act made more stringent?

- The legislature enacted the Foreigners Act, 1946, by repealing the 1940 Act, conferring wide powers to deal with all foreigners.
- Apart from defining a ‘foreigner’ as a person who is not a citizen of India, it empowered the government to make provisions for prohibiting, regulating or restricting the entry of foreigners into India.
- It also restricted the rights enjoyed by foreigners in terms of their stay in the country if any such orders are passed by the authority.
- The 1946 Act empowered the government to take such steps as are necessary, including the use of force for securing compliance with such directions.
- The most important provision of the 1946 law, which is still applicable in all States and Union Territories, was that the ‘burden of proof’ lies with the person, and not with the authorities. This has been upheld by a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court.

What about the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order?

- In 1964, the government brought in the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order.
- The tribunal has the authority to decide whether a person is a foreigner within the ambit of the Foreigners Act, 1946.
- The tribunal, which has powers similar to those of a civil court, gives reasonable opportunity to the person alleged to be a foreigner to produce evidence in support of

his case, before passing its order.

- In 2019, the Home Ministry made certain amendments in the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964. It was to empower district magistrates in all States and Union Territories to set up tribunals to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not.

Why did the IMDT Act fail?

- The Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983, which was unsuccessful was introduced for the detection and deportation of illegal migrants who had entered India on or after March 25, 1971.
- One factor for its failure was that it did not contain any provision on 'burden of proof' similar to the Foreigners Act, 1946. This put a very heavy burden upon the authorities to establish whether a person is an illegal migrant.
- The result of the IMDT Act was that a number of non-Indians who may have entered Assam after March 25, 1971 without possession of valid documents, continue to reside in Assam. This culminated, in 2005, in the Supreme Court landmark verdict on a petition by challenging the IMDT Act.
- In the course of the proceedings, the Central government submitted that since the enforcement of the IMDT Act, only 1,494 illegal migrants had been deported from Assam up to June 30, 2001. In contrast 4,89,046 Bangladeshi nationals had been deported under the Foreigners Act, 1946 from West Bengal between 1983 and November 1998.
- The top court not only quashed the IMDT Act but also closed all tribunals in Assam functioning under the Act. It, then, transferred all pending cases at the IMDT tribunals to the Foreigners Tribunals constituted under the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964.
- Any person excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) can approach The Foreigners Tribunals, established only in Assam, within 120 days of receiving a certified copy of rejection.
- In other States, a person suspected to be a foreigner is produced before a local court under the Passport Act, 1920, or the Foreigners Act, 1946.

Category: ECONOMY

1. What is the push behind the strategic disinvestment move?

Background:

The government recently announced that it would sell stakes in several public sector

undertakings (PSUs) and even give up management control in some.

- The Central government will cede full management control to buyers in the case of oil marketing company Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL), Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and Container Corporation of India Ltd (CONCOR).
- The government will transfer its 74.2% stake in THDC India Limited (formerly Tehri Hydro Development Corporation of India) and its 100% stake in North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO) to another public sector unit and power distribution major, NTPC Ltd.

This issue has been covered in detail in 21st November 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Why do governments divest stake in public sector undertakings?

- Some political parties that come to power believe that “the government has no business being in business”. That is, the government’s role is to facilitate a healthy business environment but the core competence of a government does not lie in selling fuel or steel at a profit. That is one reason that divestment is often a priority item in the election manifesto of such parties.
- With governments always having to spend more than they earn through taxes and other means, additional income from the proceeds of a stake sale is always welcome. This is especially so in the case of India now, where it has fallen to the government to spend higher amounts on infrastructure to boost economic growth, along with its commitments on health and education.
- It is true that at some point there would be nothing left to sell and cushion the fiscal deficit with, but the argument is, the government should not have been funding these companies in the first place.

What is a strategic sale?

- A strategic sale by a government is one where the management control is ceded to the buyer.
- A divestment could be stake sale to a buyer, via an initial public offering or a direct deal, but in which the government still retains majority and management control.
- A strategic sale is also different from cases where the government transfers majority stake but only to another PSU over which it has control, as happened recently with HPCL (bought by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation) and with Tehri Hydro and NEEPCO in the latest round.

What is the history of disinvestment in India?

Since liberalisation began in India in 1991 under then Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, the country saw a steady flow of disinvestment decisions. However, privatisation, where buyers took over management control, began later under the National Democratic Alliance governments. Arun Shourie, the country's first Disinvestment Minister, gave an impetus to the exercise. He is credited with the privatisation of Maruti, Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd., Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited and Hindustan Zinc through the strategic sale process.

What does the government get out of divestment?

- In the latest round, the government stands to get a sum in the region of ₹80,000 crore from a stake sale in the five aforementioned units, which would take the total disinvestment value for the fiscal close to the ₹1.05 lakh crore amount it had planned.
- India is currently facing an economic slowdown in which indirect tax collections are below par.
- The government has cut corporate tax rates hoping that companies will use these savings for price cuts or dividend payouts, or for investments that create jobs.
- As consumption is highly muted, the Central government may look to place more disposable cash in the hands of the taxpayer through lowering personal income tax rates.
- As a result of cut and to-be-cut tax rates, the government would have less and less cash for its own expenditure in infrastructure and the social sector.
- Further, if the fiscal deficit goes out of hand, global rating agencies may lower the country's investment grade. This would make any future foreign currency loans costlier, both for the country and for large Indian conglomerates whose fortunes rise and fall with the local economy.

Conclusion:

Here is where proceeds from strategic sales give the government extra spending cushion. This fiscal has been a year without precedent for the government on the fiscal front.

- The Reserve Bank of India gave the Central government a record dividend payout of about ₹1.76 lakh crore.
- The joy over this would have been short-lived as the government has had to execute a corporate tax cut — to mitigate the effects of a slowdown — and will suffer an annual loss of ₹1.45 lakh crore.
- So at least meeting the year's disinvestment target, if not exceeding it, would give the government some respite from the string of bad fiscal news that has been

flowing its way.

F. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Prelims Facts

1. Exchange Traded Fund (ETF)

- An exchange-traded fund is an investment fund traded on stock exchanges.
- It is a collection of securities such as stocks that tracks an underlying index.
- **ETFs** can contain many types of investments, including stocks, commodities, bonds, or a mixture of investment types.

Bharat 22 ETF

- The government is coming up with a fresh tranche of Bharat 22 ETF for individual investors.
- It is a part of the government's divestment programme.
- The ETF, which will be managed by ICICI Prudential Asset Management Company, intends to raise up to 2,000 crore with an option to retain oversubscription.
- An open-ended ETF, the fund allows investors to invest in a basket of government-owned and private sector entities.
- Bharat 22 ETF invests in the 22 companies that comprise the S&P BSE Bharat 22 index.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statement about rare disease:

1. A rare disease is a health condition of particularly low prevalence that affects a small number of people compared with other prevalent disease.
2. All rare diseases are only genetic in nature

Choose the correct options from below :

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

Answer: a

Explanation:

A rare disease is a health condition of particularly low prevalence that affects a small number of people compared with other prevalent disease.

Q2. Consider the following statements about Paris Club:

- 1. An informal group of creditor countries focussed on dealing with borrower nations that face debt crises.
- 2. China is a member of the Paris Club.

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:

Paris club is an informal group of creditor countries that discusses solutions to debtor country country issues. China is continuously criticised for its BRI project, offering financing but is not a member of the Paris club.

Q3. Consider following statements about strategic sale:

- 1. It implies the sale of a substantial portion of the government shareholding of Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) of more than 51% or such percentage as authority may determine.
- 2. It also involves transfer of management control.

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: d

Explanation:

Self Explanatory

Q4. Project Masoom, recently in news is related to

- a. Rescuing missing children
- b. Spreading awareness about child sexual abuse
- c. Co-contributory pension scheme for the worker in unorganised sector
- d. Rehabilitation for women in difficult circumstances

Answer: b

Explanation:

Project Masoom :

The nation-wide initiative that aims at spreading awareness of child sexual abuse, teach children about good touch and bad touch and sensitise teachers.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. It is time that the government stops looking at divestment as an option to cover for short-term fiscal gains and begins to include it as a part of the strategic plan to improve the production of goods and services in the country. Comment. (15 Marks, 250 Words)
2. Discuss, with examples, the socio-economic and political impacts of illegal migrations. Is a nation-wide National Register of Citizens (NRC) a solution to resolve the issues associated with illegal migration? (15 Marks, 250 Words)

