

# 04 Nov 2019: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## A. GS1 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## B. GS2 Related

### Category: HEALTH

#### 1. More countries are regulating and banning e-cigarettes

#### Context:

A comprehensive ban on e-cigarettes imposed in India.

#### Details:

- India has banned the sale, storage and manufacture of e-cigarettes. Once the ban comes into

force, consumption, production, manufacturing, import, export, transport, sale, distribution, storage and advertisement of e-cigarettes would become illegal in India.

- The decision to ban e-cigarettes is aimed at protecting the youth, the section that is most vulnerable to the health hazards of e-cigarettes. The comprehensive ban will help prevent its rising use among youth, as seen in the U.S. and other countries.
- In the U.S., policymakers have tragically allowed e-cigarette companies to foster a new generation of nicotine users who are now hooked to their products. The unregulated introduction of e-cigarettes into the U.S. market has led to an epidemic of youth vaping, with a jump of 73% over a single year, undermining the decades-long trend of reduction in tobacco use, particularly among youth.
- More and more countries around the world are increasing their support for regulating and banning e-cigarettes.

### **The link between smoking and TB:**

- Smokers are twice as likely to develop active TB and die from it as compared to non-smokers, and smoking also makes TB treatment less effective.
- Apart from the first-hand smokers, even secondhand smoke has been linked to TB relapse and also impacts the outcome of TB treatment. There is a lot of focus on TB globally and in India also, with the End TB campaign.
- Worldwide TB rates could drop by as much as 20% if smoking is eliminated, according to the most recent Tobacco Atlas. Hence tobacco control might help tuberculosis control. Implementing strong tobacco control policies is among the best ways that countries can prevent TB, especially in a high-burden country like India.
- Considering the synergies between tobacco control and tuberculosis treatment, India's [National Strategic Plan for TB elimination](#) provides a road map for coordination between the Tuberculosis Control and Tobacco Control Programme.

### **Conclusion:**

India is the second-largest consumer of tobacco, and tobacco consumption is a huge public health issue in India with its impact being especially devastating among the poor. Elimination of TB, the world's leading infectious killer, and issues like tobacco use need bold, coordinated, multi-sectoral action.

For more information on E-cigarettes refer:

[CNA dated Sep 20, 2019](#)

## **C. GS3 Related**

### **Category: ECONOMY**

#### **1. CII backs signing of RCEP, but farmers are against it**

#### **Context:**

The negotiations for the finalization of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) are nearing the final stages.

#### **Details:**

- Leaders from China and Southeast Asian states have called for swift agreement on what could become the world's largest trade bloc at the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

(ASEAN) in Bangkok, Thailand.

- Finalizing the Asia-wide Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which is backed by China, has been delayed by a considerable time given that the negotiations began in 2012 and the hopes of it being finalized by the end of 2019 seem dim.
- In India, there are varying voices regarding the utility of RCEP to India.

#### **CII's stand:**

- The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), one of India's largest industry bodies, has said there are a number of benefits the country will get from the RCEP, including being part of a much larger supply chain and being able to increase its exports.
- Trade within RCEP nations is expected to increase once the agreement is signed. India can leverage advantage in areas such as ICT, IT-enabled services, healthcare, and education services. RCEP would help in expanding into these markets and attracting greater FDI into these areas.
- By being part of RCEP, India will get an opportunity to tap large and vibrant economies and increase its exports. Not being part of the block is tantamount to not having an even footing in terms of preferential access and losing export competitiveness. This will only harm India's export and investment flow in the future.
- CII in its report on RCEP has stated that the opponents of RCEP have focused too much on the harm that could arise out of a trade deal involving China and not enough on the opportunities for India. RCEP provides an opportunity to gain additional market access and to get integrated into a robust regional value chain.
- Generally, the perception has been that India's importance in trade arises out of its large market. As the RCEP progresses and favourable tariffs and Rules of Origin (ROOs) kick in, India could become a major hub for coordinating regional value chains through itself. India could serve not only as a major market for final markets but also as a base for third-country exports, primarily to West Asia, Africa and Europe.

#### **Farmer organizations stand:**

- At the heart of the RCEP is the idea of lowering trade tariffs. The RCEP will permanently bring down import duties on most agricultural commodities to zero which will lead to countries looking to dump their agricultural produce in India which would lead to a drastic drop in prices.
- This will aggravate the agrarian crisis even as the input prices in India are heavily taxed and farmers are not given profitable prices, resulting in substantial losses and farmer debts. This will serve as a big blow to their livelihood.
- Of particular concern in the agricultural sector would be that of the dairy sector and plantations sector, which are going to be hit very hard if India decides to be part of RCEP.
- Dairy farming and farm interests will get seriously compromised if the RCEP deal gets done. Dairy farming provides the much needed alternate income to farmers. New Zealand and Australia being part of RCEP will invariably lead to the dumping of their dairy products into India.
- The southeast Asian countries have larger and cheaper production of plantation crops like rubber, coconut, palm oil as compared to India and opening up of the markets will lead to a large inflow of these products given their price competitiveness.
- There are no benefits apparent at all for Indian farmers while on the other hand, they will be severely affected by dumping of heavily subsidized products, with nearly no tariff barriers possible and no other protection mechanisms either.
- Now is the wrong time for such liberalization, according to farmers' organizations, because the agrarian crisis refuses to get solved, and the manufacturing sector is in doldrums; together they are pulling down growth.
- The IPR clauses are likely to seriously impinge on farmers' seed freedoms. Seed companies will get more powers to protect their Intellectual Property Rights, and farmers would be criminalized when they save and exchange seeds.

- Foreign corporations could bypass national courts and sue our governments for favouring our farmers and workers at private arbitration tribunals.
- Opening up of the markets will lead to dependence on foreign imports. Any differences in the future might impact the food import supply. India's food sovereignty would be at stake. India's food security has been built up over years of hard work and this could be jeopardized.
- The actual details of the deal being negotiated by the Government of India are not in the public domain and there have been no consultations with state governments and farmers' movements so far. The government should defer the signing of the agreement and speak to farmers, state governments and other stakeholders before taking a final decision. Even if the government goes ahead with the deal, in this case, farmers have asked to keep agriculture out of the purview.

### Way forward:

While India is expected to make its stance clear on whether it will join the RCEP or not, India must commit only to a "balanced outcome" from the RCEP negotiations. It has to keep its larger interests and the interests of various sectors of the economy and the various trade deficits it has with the other member countries in mind while negotiating.

For more information on RCEP, click [here](#).

## Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### 1. ISRO's NavIC set to be commercialized by Antrix

#### Context:

Antrix, the commercial arm of ISRO has recently floated two separate tenders to identify industries that can develop dedicated NavIC-based hardware and systems.

#### Background:

- NavIC (Navigation in Indian Constellation) is the Indian system of eight satellites that is aimed at telling businesses and individual users where they are, or how their products and services are moving.
- The indigenous positioning or location-based service (LBS) works just like the established and popular U.S. Global Positioning System or GPS, but within a 1,500-km radius over the subcontinent.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and its older commercial arm Antrix Corporation Ltd. are poised to commercialize India's regional navigation satellite system, NavIC.

#### Commercialization of NavIC:

- ANTRIX is currently identifying suitable device manufacturers on one side and comprehensive integrators of NavIC-based systems (SIs) on the other. Eligible manufacturers from the two sets would be empanelled so that they could bid for government projects that require monitoring of moving assets and fleet.
- There is a huge market potential for commercialization. The early set of commercial NavIC users would potentially be transporters of resources such as mined ore, coal and sand in various States. Several transporters currently use GPS-based systems. Mining and transportation sectors need vehicle tracking applications that are tied to revenue sharing systems of the government.
- The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has mandated that all national-permit vehicles must have such tracking devices. As a pilot, many fishing boats have been fitted with these devices that

have a unique texting facility.

### Recent developments:

- Recent developments have paved the way for taking NavIC closer to end-users.
- ISRO has announced that Qualcomm Technologies Inc., a leading producer of semiconductor chips, had developed and tested NavIC-friendly chipsets across its user bases and that it would add NavIC to them.
- Another important development for NavIC was the certification of the Indian system by the 3GPP (The 3rd Generation Partnership Project), a global body for coordinating mobile telephony standards. This would help expand the possibilities of further commercialization of NavIC.

### Significance:

- With certification by the 3GPP, NavIC can be integrated into devices like smartphones and tablets. The announcement gives a big boost to India's mobile telecom industry while also encouraging the use of NavIC throughout the Asia-Pacific region.
- Smartphones and cellular internet-of-things (IoT) devices that use location information will begin to use the NavIC system in contrast to the current usage of the American GPS system. This will bring NavIC technology to the mass market for use in 4G, 5G and Internet of Things (IoT).
- It also means that Indian companies and startups have an opportunity to design ICs and products based on NavIC. The potential market for these chipsets and products can be large as it can be exported to other countries as well. This will produce a significant increase in NavIC usage and the uptake of NavIC enabled services and applications throughout India.
- More NavIC apps will benefit the common man through applications like terrestrial navigation aid for hikers and travellers and visual and voice navigation for drivers.

## Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

### 1. BSF tracks earth, water and air on Bangladesh border

#### Context:

The BSF's Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System along the Indo-Bangla border to ensure foolproof security.

#### Background:

- Five States — Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura and West Bengal — share a 4,096-km border with Bangladesh. Of the 263 km that Assam shares, 119.1 km is riverine.
- The 61-km border in western Assam's Dhubri sector, where the expansive Brahmaputra river flows into Bangladesh, is arguably the toughest to man. Vast sandbars or river islands and innumerable water channels make surveillance a challenge, especially during the rainy season.
- Managing such a diverse border is a complex task but vital from the point of view of national security. The challenges include illegal migration, smuggling and crime and trans-border movement of insurgents, which are serious threats to the security of the country.
- Smuggling is usually done at night and through blind spots that are difficult to monitor. Under these trying circumstances, the use of high-tech solutions for border security was considered through the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS).

#### Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System:



- The CIBMS is touted as a robust and integrated system that is capable of addressing the gaps in the traditional system of border security by seamlessly integrating human resources, weapons, and high-tech surveillance equipment.
- CIBMS has three main components:
  - New high-tech surveillance devices such as sensors, detectors, cameras, ground-based radar systems, micro-aerostats, lasers as well as existing equipment for round-the-clock surveillance of the international border.
  - Efficient and dedicated communication network including fibre optic cables and satellite communication for transmitting data gathered by this diverse high-tech surveillance and detection devices.
  - Command and control center to which the data will be transmitted in order to apprise the senior commanders about the happenings on the ground and thus provide a composite picture of the international border. A composite picture would help senior commanders analyze and classify the threat and mobilize resources accordingly to assist the field commander in his response.
- The purpose of the CIBMS is to eventually replace manual surveillance/patrolling of the international borders by electronic surveillance and organizing the BSF personnel into quick reaction teams to enhance their detection and interception capabilities.
- Other factors such as power back up, training of the BSF personnel in handling the sophisticated equipment, and maintenance of the equipment are incorporated into the CIBMS project.

#### **CIBMS along the Indo-Bangla border:**

- The Border Security Force (BSF) has extensively adopted the CIBMS system in the Dhubri sector of the India-Bangladesh border.
- The border force has procured an unspecified number of Israeli tether drones for the Dhubri sector that stretches from Meghalaya to Cooch Behar in West Bengal.
  - Tethered to a base for the continuous supply of power, these drones are equipped with day-and-night vision cameras that can capture images within a range of 2 km. The tether drones serve as an extension of the BSF's physical and biological limitations, with cameras constantly feeding images from a maximum height of 150 metre.
  - Cattle smugglers or human traffickers can detect the tether drones. Still, the idea is to send them the message that they are being watched day and night.
- Apart from the drones, the BSF has employed thermal-imagers — non-contact temperature measurement devices — and both underground and underwater sensors to detect movement of people, animals and other objects. The underwater sensors are crucial given the topography of the area where men cannot patrol without boats.

#### **Conclusion:**

- Though technical solutions to border security seem to be the way forward, certain challenges to large scale implementation need to be addressed first.
- Basic amenities have not been improved on the ground like power supply and border roads. In the recent past, the optimum use of sophisticated technical equipment has been weighed down by its incompatibility with the terrain and existing border security infrastructure. The lack of well-trained technical manpower is a nagging issue. Repair and maintenance is a vital aspect. The fact cannot be ignored that there is a strong correlation between sophisticated technology and human adaptability.
- Conceptually speaking, there are four components involved in the project of CIBMS – detection, identification, response and neutralization. Detection and identification can be achieved through technological solutions, but their success depends on smooth integration with the response and neutralization aspects which require robust human intervention.
- A judicious mix of properly trained manpower and affordable and tested technology is likely to yield

## 2. Home Ministry warns of 'lone wolf' attacks by IS operatives

### Context:

A high alert has been issued to security forces across the country by central intelligence agencies, warning of possible 'lone wolf' attacks by Islamic State (IS) operatives.

### Details:

- A communication issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs to all the States stated that the overall security scenario in the country remained a cause for concern on account of the threat emanating from Pakistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan belt.
- Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) continued to provide infrastructural and other financial/logistical assistance to terror groups, particularly the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, operating in Pakistan.
- The reported nexus between home-grown terror outfits and Pakistan-based extremist organizations in terms of procurement of weapons, technology and training has added a new dimension to the threat scenario.
- The IS has succeeded in radicalizing a few Indian youths and attracting certain sections of the local population/Indian diaspora to participate in its activities or support terrorist groups operating in India. The alert warned of a desperate individual resorting to some extreme measures in the backdrop of the killing of IS head Baghdadi. Significantly, the IS has urged its followers to carry out 'lone wolf' attacks in the country of their residence.
- The statement notes that the porous coastline in the southeast and southwest of India was an easy landing ground for terror outfits to push their men and material into the country.
- Inputs indicated that Sri Lanka and the Maldives were used by Pakistan-based terrorist elements for anti-India activities.

### Lone wolf attacks:

#### Definition:

A lone actor, lone-actor terrorist, or lone wolf is someone who prepares and commits violent acts alone, outside of any command structure and without material assistance from any group. They may be influenced or motivated by the ideology and beliefs of an external group and may act in support of such a group.

#### Threat:

- Lone wolf attacks are a relatively rare type of terrorist attack but have been increasing in number. For example, the recent attacks in New York and London where vehicles were used to run over and kill a number of people.
- Access to advanced technology including cyber-space, Internet, electronic mail, etc. has provided terrorist groups with a global communication system. Social media has helped in propagating radical ideology and indoctrinating and encouraging individuals to carry out lone-wolf attacks.
- Significantly, the IS has urged its followers to carry out 'lone wolf' attacks in the country of their residence.

#### Indian Scenario:

- India has remained free of the phenomenon until now. This situation could, however, change as is indicated by some distinct shifts in the nature of the terrorist challenge confronting the country. The

defence minister has admitted that 'lone wolf' terror attacks are a major challenge for India.

- Currently, police capacities in countering this threat are very limited.

### Way forward:

- There is a need to focus attention on potential target groups through monitoring and infiltration of social media sites that are the principal source of radical propaganda.
- Big data analytics must be used to discern the level of radicalization of potential recruits, their networks and sources of information, funding and leadership in order to help unravel the roots of radicalization.
- The police and intelligence services are neither trained nor equipped to handle the vital aspect of rolling back radicalisation in society. Helplines should be created and manned by professional counsellors and psychologists who can help reverse the process as part of the efforts of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) supported by the state.
- There is a need for regular revision and tightening of laws to ensure that the existing loopholes and gaps in legal mechanisms are not exploited to continue with the propagation of radical ideologies.
- The security agencies will have to keep changing and updating tactics to counter these evolving threats.

### Category: ENVIRONMENT

#### 1. Delhi chokes as air pollution levels hit a three-year high

##### Context:

Pollution levels in Delhi peaked to a three-year high.

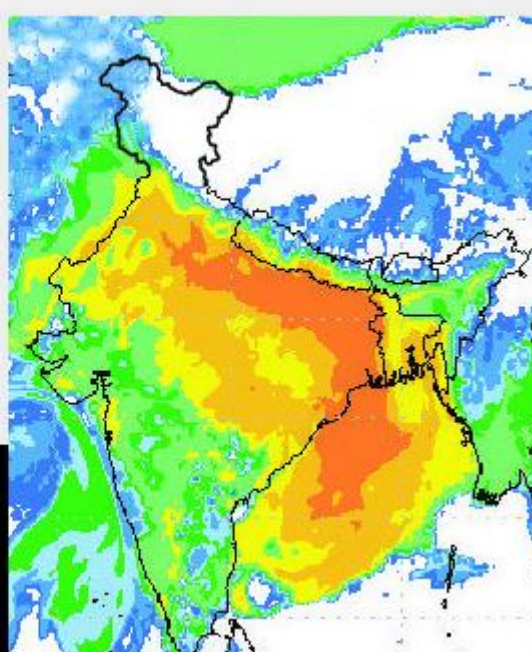
##### Details:

- The Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality monitor, SAFAR, said that Delhi's overall AQI reached as high as 708, which is 14 times the safe level of 0-50.
- Cities across the northern and eastern parts of India remain affected due to air pollution.

## Blanketed by smog

Cities across the northern and eastern parts of India choked due to air pollution on Sunday. A look at the degree of pollution levels across cities

Map shows the PM 2.5 particulate matter levels as of 6.30 a.m. on Sunday. Deeper the orange, higher the PM 2.5





- A chemical-pollutants dispersal model called SILAM (System for Integrated modeLLing of Atmospheric composition), developed by the Finnish Meteorological Institutes indicated that the plume of dust and smoke hanging over Delhi would travel towards east India, move into the Bay of Bengal and hike pollution levels as far away as Tamil Nadu. However, such a scenario has been dismissed by a scientist at the India Meteorological Department.
- The deterioration in air quality over Delhi was blamed on pollution and adverse weather conditions. This was primarily due to increased moisture from a passing Western Disturbance (WD). The WD didn't bring as much rain as expected, stalled winds and retarded the disbursement of pollutants.
- Meteorologists said a strong wind is expected to pick up and flush pollutants within the next 12 hours.

## D. GS4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

#### 1. Intransigence as villain of the peace?

##### Context:

The peace talks between the Government of India and the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah), NSCN (IM), could not yield a peace agreement by October 31, the government's deadline for concluding an accord.

##### Details:

- The Centre's push for a solution to the vexed issue by October 2019 and the non-flexibility of the Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) on the "Naga national flag" and "Naga Yezhabo (constitution) have delayed the peace settlement.
- NSCN (IM) intends to have a framework where India and Nagaland would be independent allies in a shared-sovereignty federal relationship. The Indian government is not ready to accept these demands though is willing to allow for regional autonomy within the framework of the Indian constitution.
- Other Naga groups namely the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) have already promised a settlement with or without the NSCN (IM). However, it is important to have NSCN (IM) on board to find a perpetual solution to this issue.
- Recognizing the importance of peace in the region, both sides have apparently agreed to step back a little from earlier stances and to sign a deal sometime soon.

##### Changed Scenario:

- There have been radical shifts in aspirations all around brought by new challenges and opportunities of a new era.
- Several decades down the line, the fight of the Nagas is getting weary. Obviously, no revolution can sustain on 70-year-old slogans. Moreover, this struggle has also seen violent splits, ugly divisive tribalism, fratricidal feuds and untold sufferings.

##### Stakeholders:

- In the last 22 years of Naga peace negotiations, radical shifts in perspective have been evident. For instance, when parleys began in 1997, it was exclusively with the NSCN (IM). In August 2015, the Government signed the Framework Agreement with the NSCN (IM). The latter continued to hold centre stage in all negotiations.
- Realising that the NSCN (IM) cannot be the sole representative of the Nagas, in 2017 other Naga underground factions were also brought to the negotiating table, lowering the prestige of the NSCN (IM). Today there are seven of these factions under an umbrella organisation, the Naga National Political Groups (NNPG), taking part in the parleys, and they are willing to sign a peace pact under the Constitution, leaving other demands to be pursued later.
- The Framework Agreement of 2015 envisaged a bilateral truce between “two entities” i.e; the Indian government and the NSCN (IM), but today it is set to be a multilateral one.

#### Changed Demands:

- The willingness of the NNPG, most of whose leaders are Nagaland based, to keep in abeyance demands such as a Greater Nagaland, in exchange for enhanced autonomy is a strong indication of the shift in demands. A Nagaland-centred truce looks the most possible solution to the issue.

#### Changed political scenario:

- Other issues are taking centre stage in Nagaland Politics. There has also been a growing social movement in Nagaland for the consolidation of Nagaland’s own people. The demand for a Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland, and now the formation of the Nagaland Indigenous People’s Forum on October 28 are some of these.

#### Neighbouring states stake in the talks:

- There has been a clarification from the Home Ministry that the accord will only be concluded after consultations with Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, all States which have a stake in the matter. Till date the talks were in complete secrecy, raising anxiety in these States.
- This changed stance shows that the chances of a greater Nagalim are bleak as these States, most vocally Manipur, are unwilling to make compromises to their territorial integrity or administrative structures. Whatever is to be given to the Nagas in their State, they want it done via their existing State governments and institutions.

#### **Way forward:**

- The NSCN (IM) must realize and accept the changed scenarios and work towards a lasting solution to the Naga issue.
- To find a solution to the decades-old Naga issue is in the interest of both the Nagas as well as the Centre. It will help India address a decades-old security issue on the one hand while it will bring in much-needed growth in the region.
- The geopolitical situation demands the Nagas to be pragmatic and realistic in their negotiations with the Government of India. There is scope for regional autonomy as per the Indian constitution. The peace accord must safeguard the Naga’s right to self-determination.
- The unresolved contentious issues must be pursued earnestly post a peace settlement, politically and democratically.

For more information on the Naga issue and the peace talks refer:

[CNA dated 27 Oct 2019](#)

## 2. Pegasus misadventure

### Context:

WhatsApp revelation that some Indian users of WhatsApp came under surveillance using Israeli spyware called Pegasus.

### Details:

- WhatsApp in October 2019 sued the NSO Group, an Israeli surveillance firm and developers of Pegasus, which is reportedly behind the technology that helped unnamed entities hack into roughly 1,400 devices across at least 20 countries, including India, Bahrain, Mexico and UAE. Indian users were among those impacted by the spyware.
- WhatsApp's revelation that Indian journalists and human rights activists were among some 1,400 people globally spied upon have raised a worrying question as to on whose directions were the Indian journalists and human rights activists spied upon.

### Observations:

- Observations into the case make it certain the spying was not done with money in mind and the intention was to track the movements and communications of the targets.
- The NSO Group has issued a statement saying that NSO products are used exclusively by government intelligence and law enforcement agencies to fight crime and terror. The NSO, by its own admission, sells its service only to government agencies.
- Three of those targeted include civil rights activists, lawyers, and journalists who had questioned government moves in the recent past.

### Concerns:

- There have been questions raised regarding the role of the government in the given episode. It is extremely important for the Government to clear the air on this issue in no uncertain terms.
- The breach affects the privacy of WhatsApp's users in India, estimated to be around 400 million.
- In a country where data protection and privacy laws are still in a nascent stage, incidents such as this highlight the big dangers to privacy and freedom in an increasingly digital society.
- This issue is being politicised and this reduces the scope for deliberation and implementation of effective solutions to prevent similar incidents in the future.

### Conclusion:

- It is thus imperative that the Government sends a strong message on privacy, something that the Supreme Court in 2017 declared to be intrinsic to life and liberty and therefore an inherent part of Fundamental Rights.

For more information regarding this article refer:

[CNA dated Nov 2, 2019](#)

## F. Tidbits

### 1. 500 passenger trains get ISRO-enabled GPS

- About 500 passenger locomotives of the South Central Railway (SCR) have been fitted with the

newly developed Real-time Train Information System (RTIS) to monitor precise speeds and movement throughout the journey from the first point to the destination.

- It has been developed by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) with the help of the Indian Space Research Organisation-Airports Authority of India's GAGAN (Global Positioning System (GPS) aided geo-augmented navigation, originally developed for air traffic management).

## 2. Araku valley

- Araku Valley is a hill station in Visakhapatnam district in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. This place is often referred to as Ooty of Andhra. It is a valley in the Eastern Ghats inhabited by different tribes.
- The Anantagiri and Sunkarimetta Reserved Forest, which are part of Araku Valley, are rich in biodiversity and are mined for bauxite.

## 3. IS claims responsibility for Mali attacks

- The Islamic State (IS) on Saturday claimed responsibility for a devastating raid that killed 49 Malian troops and a French soldier.



## G. Prelims Facts



### 1. NRC exercise only to update 1951 list, says CJI

- The NRC is a *list of Indian citizens* and was prepared in 1951, following the census of 1951.
- NRC updation was carried out under the Citizenship Act, 1955, and according to rules framed in the Assam Accord.
- The process of *NRC update was taken up in Assam as per a Supreme Court order in 2013*. All residents of Assam had to produce documents proving that they or their families lived in India before March 24, 1971.
- The cut-off date for detecting and deporting foreigners- *March 24, 1971*– was agreed upon while signing the *Assam Accord in August 1985* to end a six-year violent agitation against foreigners in the State. Updating the NRC to root out foreigners was a demand during the Assam Agitation (1979-1985).

### 2. Army to have first Dhanush regiment by March 2020

- Dhanush is the indigenously upgraded variant of the Swedish Bofors gun imported in the 1980s. It is being produced by the Ordnance Factory Board. Dhanush is a towed artillery gun with a range of 36km.

### 3. India, Uzbekistan ink three defence deals

- The first edition of India-Uzbekistan Joint Exercise, “Dustlik 2019” began in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan.

Read more on Dustlik 2019 on [PIB dated 3rd Nov 2019](#).

## H. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

Q1. Which of the following are considered part of the eight core industries in the formulation of the Indian Index of industrial production?

1. Electricity
2. Fertilizers
3. Cement
4. Textiles
5. Automotive industry

#### Options:

- a. 1, 2 and 3 only
- b. 2, 3 and 4 only
- c. 4 and 5 only
- d. 1, 2, 3 and 5 only

#### Answer: a

#### Explanation:

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an index for India which details out the growth of various sectors in an economy such as mineral mining, electricity and manufacturing. The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27 per cent of the weight of items included in the [Index of Industrial Production \(IIP\)](#).

- The eight Core Industries are electricity, steel, refinery products, crude oil, coal, cement, natural gas and fertilizers.

**Q2. Which of the following statements are correct regarding the office of Governors in India?**

1. The governor is appointed by the President of India for a fixed term of five years.
2. The Constitution of India empowers the governor to act upon his or her own discretion, such as the ability to appoint or dismiss a ministry, recommend President's rule, or reserve bills for the President's assent.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- The governor is appointed by the President of India for a term of five years, and holds office at the President's pleasure. The governor can be removed before the end of five years.
- Article 163(1) states that 'there shall be a Council of Ministers headed by CM to aid and advise the Governor who shall act in accordance with such advice except in cases where the constitution requires the governor to act in his discretion.'
- Article 162(2) 'if any dispute arises whether the power of Governor is his discretionary power or not, his decision shall be final and binding.' This means that whether the power of a governor is his discretionary power or not is itself a discretionary power.
- Major discretionary powers include:
  - In Appointing a Chief Minister: If there is no clear cut majority of a party or an alliance of parties in the Legislative Assembly and there are two claimants for the post of CM, the Governor can appoint the person to be CM whom he thinks fit to provide a stable Government.
  - Dissolving the Legislative Assembly: Similarly, if the party in power has lost majority in the Legislative Assembly and the CM advises the Governor to dissolve the Assembly; the Governor can find alternatives to form the Government without going for dissolution.
  - Reserve Bill for Consideration of the President.

**Q3. Which of the following rivers is not a tributary of Yamuna River?**

- a. Ken
- b. Chambal
- c. Son
- d. Tons

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Son River, also spelled Sone, is the principal southern tributary of the Ganges (Ganga) River, rising in Madhya Pradesh.

- Son River of central India is the second-largest of the Ganges' southern tributaries after Yamuna River.

Q4. Which of the following is not correctly matched?

- a. Barak Valley: Assam
- b. Chenab Valley: Jammu and Kashmir
- c. Kangra Valley: Uttarakhand
- d. Nubra Valley: Ladakh UT

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Kangra Valley: Himachal Pradesh
- Kangra Valley is situated in the Western Himalayas. Administratively, it predominantly lies in the state of Himachal Pradesh in India. Dharamshala, the headquarters of Kangra district, lies on the southern spur of Dhauladhar in the valley.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. With the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations moving towards the final phase, enumerate India's associated concerns in being a part of the RCEP. Also, discuss the potential benefits that can accrue to India from being a part of RCEP. (15 marks, 250 words)
2. In the backdrop of the severe air pollution problem in the National Capital Region, comment on the efforts being taken by the governments and the reasons for lack of subsequent results. Suggest measures needed. (10 marks, 150 words)