

30 Jan 2020: Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS 1 Related

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Cabinet nod for raising abortion limit to 24 weeks](#)

B. GS 2 Related

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Time limit on advance bail violates personal liberty: SC](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [Will Trump's peace plan help resolve Israel-Palestine crisis?](#)

C. GS 3 Related

ECONOMY

1. [Yellow rust in wheat crop causes alarm in Punjab and Haryana](#)

INTERNAL SECURITY

1. [Email accounts of govt. officials hacked](#)

D. GS 4 Related

E. Editorials

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [India- Australia Relations \(A road map for robust trade ties\)](#)
2. [Donald Trump's peace plan for Israel and Palestine](#)

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. [Compromising scientific curiosity for marketability](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [A mindset problem: On rural jobs scheme fund crunch](#)

ECONOMY

1. [India's no-fly list](#)

F. Tidbits

1. [Centre advises against travel to China; IndiGo, AI cut services](#)
2. [U.S. House warns China not to meddle in Dalai Lama succession](#)

G. Prelims Facts

1. [Nagoba jatara](#)

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Cabinet nod for raising abortion limit to 24 weeks

Context:

The Union Cabinet has approved the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020, to amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.

Details:

- The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 is for expanding access of women to safe and legal abortion services on therapeutic, eugenic, humanitarian or social grounds.
- The proposed amendments include substitution of certain sub-sections, insertion of certain new clauses under some sections in the existing Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971, with a view to increase upper gestation limit for termination of pregnancy under certain conditions and to strengthen access to comprehensive abortion care, under strict conditions, without compromising service and quality of safe abortion.

Significance:

- It is a step towards the safety and well-being of women and many women will be benefitted by this.
- Recently several petitions were received by the Courts seeking permission for aborting pregnancies at a gestational age beyond the present permissible limit on grounds of foetal abnormalities or pregnancies due to sexual violence faced by women.
- The proposed increase in gestational age will ensure dignity, autonomy, confidentiality and justice for women who need to terminate a pregnancy.
- In order to increase access of women to safe abortion services and taking into account the advances in medical technology, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed amendments after extensive consultation with various stakeholders and several ministries.

Salient features of proposed amendments:

- The Bill proposes requirement for opinion of one provider for termination of pregnancy, up to 20 weeks of gestation and introducing the requirement of opinion of two providers for termination of pregnancy of 20-24 weeks of gestation.
- Enhances the upper gestation limit from 20 to 24 weeks for special categories of women which will be defined in the amendments to the MTP Rules and would include vulnerable women including survivors of rape, victims of incest and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, minors), etc.
- The upper gestation limit not to apply in cases of substantial foetal abnormalities diagnosed by the Medical Board.
- Name and other particulars of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated shall not be revealed except to a person authorised in any law for the time being in force.

B. GS 2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Time limit on advance bail violates personal liberty: SC

Context:

A Constitution Bench of the [Supreme Court](#) ruled that the protection of anticipatory or pre-arrest bail cannot be limited to any time frame or fixed period as the denial of bail amounts to deprivation of the fundamental right to personal liberty in a free and democratic country.

Background:

The back story of **advance bail**

■ The old Cr.PC of 1898 did not contain any specific provision corresponding to the present Section 438. There was a difference of opinion among various HCs whether court had an inherent power to grant pre-arrest bail

■ The Law Commission of India on September 24, 1969, highlighted the need for introducing a provision in the Code enabling courts to grant "anticipatory bail" as an antidote to detention in false cases

■ Clause 447 of the Draft Bill of 1970 was enacted with some modifications and became Section 438 of the Cr.PC, 1973

A five-judge Supreme Court Bench in the 1980 case of **Gurbaksh Singh Sibbia vs. State of Punjab** interpreted that the power to grant anticipatory bail is

"cast in wide terms and should not be hedged in through narrow judicial interpretation". It held that courts could impose conditions which were appropriate



Issue:

The questions referred to the Constitution Bench were twofold:

1. Whether the protection granted to a person under Section 438 should be limited to a fixed period till the accused surrenders in court.
2. Whether the life of anticipatory bail should end when the accused is summoned by the court.

Details:

- A five-judge Bench, led by Justice Arun Mishra, acknowledged that anticipatory bail helps thwart influential powers from implicating their rivals in false cases.
- **Section 438** (anticipatory bail) of the **Code of Criminal Procedure** protects people from the ignominy of detention in jail for days on end and disgrace to their reputation.
- **"The life or duration of an anticipatory bail order does not normally end at the time and stage when the accused is summoned by the court, or when charges are framed, but can continue till the end of the trial,"** the court held.
- The court held that a plea for anticipatory bail can be filed even before the registration of FIR as long as there is a reasonable basis for the apprehension of arrest and clarity of facts.
- An application for anticipatory bail should be based on concrete facts and not vague or general allegations. The application should also contain bare essential facts relating to the offence and why the applicant reasonably apprehends arrest.

Can restrictions be imposed on Anticipatory bail?

- **Nothing in Section 438 of the CrPC compels or obliges courts to impose conditions limiting the relief in terms of time, or upon filing of FIR or recording of statement of witnesses by the police during investigation or inquiry, etc.**
- Courts, depending on the seriousness of the threat of arrest, need not wait to hear the prosecution's version before granting anticipatory bail. Issuance of notice to the prosecutor can be done simultaneously while granting protection from arrest to the accused.
- The grant of protection should not be blanket but confined to specific offence or incident for which relief from arrest is sought. It is open for the police to move court for arrest of the accused if there is any violation of bail conditions, the Bench said.
- The court held that protection against arrest should adjust in favour of the accused. Restricting the protection would prove unfavourable for the accused.
 - However, **it is open for a court to impose appropriate conditions for grant of anticipatory bail if the specific facts or the features of the offence involved demand it.**
 - Courts have to consider the nature of the offence, the role of the person, the likelihood of his influencing the course of investigation or tampering of evidence, including intimidating witnesses and fleeing justice.
 - But restrictions/conditions can be imposed only on a case-to-case basis.
 - Special or other restrictive conditions may be imposed if the case or cases warrant, but should not be imposed in a routine manner in all cases, the Bench pointed out.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Will Trump's peace plan help resolve Israel-Palestine crisis?

Context:

The West Asia peace plan has been unveiled by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Details:

- The Peace plan seeks to give the Israelis what they have long wanted — an expansive state with Jerusalem as its undivided capital and tight security control over a future Palestinian state.
- With his plan, Mr. Trump is actually pushing to revive the stalled two-state talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians, but on his own terms.



What's the plan?

- The Trump plan seeks to address most of the contentious issues in the conflict such as the border of Israel, the status of Palestinian refugees, Jewish settlements on the West Bank, Israel's security concerns and the status of the city of Jerusalem.
- However, the solutions Mr. Trump has proposed to almost all of these issues favour the Israeli positions.
 - For example, Israel would be allowed to annex the Jewish settlements on the West Bank as well as the Jordan Valley.
 - The Palestinian refugees, who were forced out from their homes during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war that followed the declaration of the state of Israel in historic Palestine, would not be allowed to return. They could move to the future Palestinian state, be integrated into the host countries or settled in other regional countries.
- Jerusalem, perhaps the most contentious issue, would be the undivided capital of Israel, with Palestine gaining its capital in the east of the city.
- In return, Israel would freeze further settlement activities on the West Bank for four years — the time for negotiations. During this period, the Palestinian Authority should dismiss its current complaints at the International Criminal Court against Israel and refrain itself from taking further actions. It should also crackdown on “terrorist” groups such as Hamas and the Islamic Jihad.
- Trump has also proposed \$50 billion in investment over 10 years should Palestine accept the proposals.
- In the final settlement, Palestine would get control over more land than what it currently controls.
- The plan also proposes to enlarge Gaza and connect the strip with the West Bank through a tunnel.
- The Arab towns in the southeast of Israel, which are close to Gaza, could become part of a future Palestinian state.

Will the plan work?

- The Palestine position is that an independent, sovereign Palestinian state should be formed based on the 1967 border (meaning the whole of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) with East Jerusalem as its capital (including the Old City that houses Haram esh-Sharif, also known as Temple Mount, a holy site for both Muslims and Jews).
- Issues like the right of return of the Palestinian refugees are to be settled in final negotiations.
- But Mr. Trump has effectively rejected the Palestinian claims and asked them to make more compromises.
 - He seeks to give Jerusalem and about 30% of the West Bank to the Israelis and has denied the right of return of the Palestinian refugees — all for truncated sovereignty for the Palestinians in a state that would practically be surrounded by Israel.
 - And for this, the Palestinians should take action against militant groups, stop supporting Palestinian families of those jailed or killed by Israel and refrain themselves from questioning the occupation in international fora.
- The Fatah party of President Mahmoud Abbas runs the Palestinian Authority on the West Bank, while Hamas is running Gaza. While there's a bitter feud between these two, both sides, as well as the Islamic Jihad, have come together in rejecting the Trump plan.
- It would be difficult for any Palestinian leader to sell Mr. Trump's proposals to the people who are living under occupation for decades.
- The Palestinians say that the Trump administration, which recognised the disputed Jerusalem as Israel's capital and supported the settlements on the West Bank, cannot be an impartial mediator for peace. The Trump plan seems to be underscoring this argument.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. Yellow rust in wheat crop causes alarm in Punjab and Haryana

Context:

The detection of yellow rust disease in the wheat crop in sub-mountainous parts of Punjab and Haryana has raised anxiety among farmers about a drop in the crop's yield.

Details:

- Agriculture officials from both the States have fanned out to fields suggesting farmers to adopt remedial measures to deal with the situation.
- The anxiety persists among the farmers, even as respective agriculture departments are leaving nothing to chance to ensure the spread of the disease doesn't go beyond control.

Yellow Rust Disease:

- Wheat yellow rust, also known as wheat stripe rust, is one of the three major wheat rust diseases, along with stem rust of wheat and leaf rust.
- Yellow rust is a fungal disease that turns the crop's leaves into a yellowish colour and stops photosynthetic activity, which eventually could result in a drop of wheat crop productivity.

1. Email accounts of govt. officials hacked

Context:

An independent security researcher has alerted the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre, Government of India, that the credentials of the official email accounts of at least 3,000 employees working in sensitive establishments such as the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indian Space Research Organisation ([ISRO](#)) and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) among others have been hacked in various data breaches.

Details:

- The founder of Hackrew did an analysis of data leaks from several services spanning the last six years and compiled a dossier of the leaked credentials from various websites in the “dark web” among other resources.
- The results of Mr. Kothapalli’s analysis revealed that 3,202 accounts ending with “gov.in” format were hacked and their login name/passwords made available in plain text over the deep web.
- It is opined that these organisations were specifically targeted, which is why the count of leaked data is so high compared to other organisations.
- The results of the research also show that 85% of the passwords were in plain text. Out of these, the ones belonging to government employees were all in plain text, without exception.
 - This implies that if the employees use that same email ID-password combination for any other web-based services, then there is a high probability that all those services will also be compromised.

Concerns:

- Several industry experts believe that this raises a serious concern about the security of digital infrastructure in the country and also highlights the government authorities’ carelessness.
- Over the years, India has witnessed massive security breaches across various segments, institutions and government departments.
- According to a new Data Security Council of India (DSCI) report, India has been the second most cyberattacks affected country between 2016 to 2018. The average cost for a data breach in India has risen 7.9% since 2017, with the average cost per breached recorded mounting to \$64.

Recent initiatives by the government:

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeiTY) and Nasscom-affiliated DSCI have recently launched the ‘Cyber Security Grand Challenge.’
- The Indian government has allocated a Rs. 3.2 Crore grant for innovative startups in the Indian cybersecurity space.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India- Australia Relations (A road map for robust trade ties)

Introduction

- India and Australia share a strong bilateral relationship based on historical ties, cultural links and extensive people-to-people connections.
- As large democracies, the two countries play a central role in strengthening geopolitical cooperation and maintaining peace and security.

Historically, India-Australia relations suffered from deep structural impediments.

- The first was the logic of the Cold War, during which **Australia decided to be among Britain and the United States' closest allies**, while India initially opted for non-alignment.
 - This led to a number of disagreements and misunderstandings.
 - As India achieved Independence, for example, Australian leaders advocated to their British counterparts that the strategically important Andaman and Nicobar Islands be retained by the Empire.
- The second complicating factor was **India's nuclear status** outside the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
 - This resulted in Australia **taking a particularly strong stance against India's 1998 nuclear tests**, which came soon after French nuclear tests in the South Pacific.
 - However, the 2008 waiver granted to India by the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the subsequent lifting by Australia of its uranium ban against NPT non-signatories, and a bilateral civil nuclear agreement in 2014-2015 largely addressed the matter.
- Third, the relationship **historically suffered from a lack of economic content**. This has changed.
 - India is one of the largest export destinations for Australia, and Australia is a top 20 trade partner for India.
 - Yet, **merchandise trade remains below potential**.
- Fourth, the relationship was previously held back by an **absence of people-to-people content**.
 - In recent years, however, Indian immigrants have been among the largest contributors to Australia's population growth.
 - In addition to the massive influx of Indian students, Indian tourists are also visiting Australia in larger numbers.

Strategic Side

- India-Australia relations have experienced a major upswing. This is evident in a growing number of military exercises involving all three services, as well as staff talks and military training initiatives.
- In 2019, the countries took part in large-scale anti-submarine warfare exercises in the Bay of Bengal.
- The establishment of a bilateral 2+2 dialogue (involving senior foreign and defence ministry officials) represent more heft and purpose in strategic coordination.

[su_box title="Trade relationship" box_color="#7960a0" title_color="#ffffff"]

- The trade between the two countries has been at a modest \$31 billion, largely composed of resources like coal and other minerals.

Issue Area

- Negotiations on a **Free Trade Agreement**, which began in 2011, have not moved forward significantly.
- It is important for India to concentrate on various underdeveloped and undervalued sectors such as agriculture, education, tourism and services.
- Adani Group's coal project in Australia has been hampered by regulatory delays and difficulty in securing financing amid a passionate environmental protest movement.

India Economic Strategy 2035 Report

- It was prepared by former Foreign Secretary of Australia Peter Varghese for the government of Australia which lays down a comprehensive road map for strengthening Australia's trade engagement with India.
- This report recommends that Australia strive by 2035 to **lift India into its top three export markets, to make India the third-largest destination in Asia** for Australian outward investment, and to bring **India into the inner circle of Australia's strategic partnerships**, and with people to people ties as close as any in Asia.

Entrepreneurship and Digital Technology

India-Australia trade has been steadily evolving into a new architecture underpinned by developments in digital technology, the rise of a younger generation of entrepreneurs, and a noticeable shift in the trade basket from resources to services.

- **Technology and young entrepreneurship make a formidable combination** and should set the agenda for the future of bilateral trade relations.
 - About 80% of the Australian small and medium-sized enterprises are managed by young professionals.
- Young Australians, like young Indians, carry the compelling vision of 21st century **globalization, multiculturalism and quality education**.
 - What adds strength to this process is a great deal of social engineering, **people-to-people contacts, and knowledge partnerships**.
 - The young can see issues like immigration and outsourcing with far more equanimity than the older generation.
 - Young Australians are thus emerging as great champions of India-Australia trade relations.
- There is also recognition that Australia is a laboratory of ideas, innovation, technology-led growth and university-industry partnerships. India is a large and demographically young market with a love for innovation and an appetite for new products and services. These synergies should add momentum to a growing engagement in trade relations.

The weakest link in India's exports to Australia is in merchandise.

- First, despite globalization, markets are country-specific and culturally sensitive.
 - Indian companies will need to **invest a little more in market research on Australian consumer expectations** and lifestyles before their products can successfully penetrate the Australian market.
- Second, **Australia is a brand-conscious market** while India has not created a single consumer brand of international acceptance.

- Only when India's textiles, leather products, cars and two-wheelers, kitchen equipment and other products are visible across the world's shopping malls and supermarkets displaying their own brands, that India will be recognised as a major player in the global markets. [/su_box]

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Conclusion

- Thus innovation is key for the success of global trade.
- The future must be woven around the three pillars, which are economic relationship, geostrategic congruence and people-to-people ties. The glue that can bind this is a sustained momentum.

2. Donald Trump's peace plan for Israel and Palestine

Context

- President Donald Trump has come up with a 'Middle East plan, Peace to Prosperity: A Vision to Improve the Lives of the Palestinian and Israeli People'
 - It proposes to create a **Palestinian state with capital in eastern Jerusalem**, dependent on Palestinians taking steps to become self-governing, to end decades of conflict in the region.
 - Israel would control a unified **Jerusalem as its capital** and not require it to uproot any of the settlements in the West Bank.

Plan for Israel

- **Israel** gets unified Jerusalem as its capital, and it does **not have to dismantle any of its illegal settlements** in the West Bank.
- The plan says the **Jordan Valley**, "which is critical for Israel's national security, will be under Israeli sovereignty".
- In exchange, Israel would agree to accept a four-year freeze on new settlement activity while Palestinian statehood is negotiated.

For Palestinians

- Trump promised to provide \$50 billion in **international investment** to build the new Palestinian entity and open an embassy in its new state.
 - It includes constructing essential infrastructure including "high-speed transportation links" between the West Bank and Gaza, promoting private sector growth, upgrading education, and improving the healthcare sector and the overall quality of Palestinian life.
- To the **Palestinians**, the deal offers the possibility of a **US-recognised quasi-sovereign state** that will **not, however, have a standing army**; they will also have to **give up violent resistance to Israel**, and ensure the disbandment of Hamas, which governs Gaza.
- The Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, immediately denounced the plan as a "conspiracy deal" unworthy of serious consideration.

Status of Jerusalem

- Both Israel and the Palestinians make non-negotiable claims over Jerusalem. The plan says Jerusalem will not be divided, and it will remain "the sovereign capital of the State of Israel".
- The capital of Palestine can occupy far-flung eastern neighborhoods lying beyond "the existing security barrier", which can be renamed Al Quds, the Arabic name for Jerusalem.



It is not a fair deal, say the observers

- The deal was drawn up without any meaningful Palestinian participation and is loaded in Israel's favor.
 - For any peace process to be successful, the first step is to take all conflicting parties into confidence.
 - By that standard, U.S. President Donald Trump's peace plan for Israel and Palestine is a failure from the start.
- The Palestinians believe that Mr. Trump, whose administration recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 2017, **is not an impartial negotiator between the two sides.**
- Trump has thrown his weight behind the two-state solution. But to achieve the solution, the plan **overly favors the Israeli positions and demands excessive concessions from the Palestinians.**
- According to the plan, **Israel can annex the Jordan Valley** as well as the Jewish settlements on the West Bank.
 - It also recognizes Jerusalem as the "undivided capital" of Israel, while the Palestinian capital could come up in the eastern outskirts of the city.
 - It proposes to **enlarge Gaza** and swap the Arab-populated towns in southeast Israel with Palestine for parts of the West Bank.
 - In effect, the **Palestinians would lose roughly 30% of the West Bank**, their claim to Jerusalem and the right to return of refugees.
 - In return, they will get an independent state in a **shrunk West Bank and an enlarged Gaza** connected through a tunnel that would practically be encircled by Israel.
- Even to achieve statehood under the proposed conditions, the **Palestinian Authority (PA)** is required to crack down on Hamas and Islamic Jihad (which is practically impossible as both operate from Gaza and the PA runs only West Bank territories), stop supporting families of those jailed or killed by Israel and stop challenging Israeli actions on international fora.

Conclusion

- Under the present plan, it is virtually impossible for any Palestinian leader to sell these proposals to a people who have been resisting Israel's occupation for decades.
- Any plans going forward that seek constructive and lasting peace should include Palestine's participation from the beginning, rather than a unilateral imposition by the USA.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Compromising scientific curiosity for marketability

Introduction

- At the recently concluded 107th Science Congress, the Prime Minister has conveyed that young researchers should “**innovate, patent, produce, prosper**”.
- In 2015, the directors of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) labs under the ‘**Dehradun Declaration**’ decided to **market patents as a means to self-finance research**.
 - It was a market-driven revenue model that encourages students, researchers and universities to innovate, come up with a new product and market this product to gain monetary benefits.
- It is this model that has been encouraged by the Union Government. It has been directing laboratories and other research centres to earn their own revenue from external sources **by marketing their expertise** and investing the surplus to develop technologies for national missions.
- Consequently, there has been a steady decline in government expenditure in higher education and research, reflecting this changed stand on making the **government labs financially autonomous and leaving their fortunes to be determined by the market forces**.

Investments in R&D

- Investments are key inputs in economic growth. The impact of this is proven on productivity, exports, employment and capital formation. India's investment in R&D has shown a consistently increasing trend over the years.
- However, it is a **fraction of India's GDP**, it has remained constant at around 0.6% to 0.7% of India's GDP.
- This is below the expenditure of countries like the US (2.8), China (2.1), Israel (4.3) and Korea (4.2).

Concerns

- There is a genuine concern among the researchers and academics that this transformation will have **serious repercussions for India's competence in research**.
- Science is essentially an end-product of human curiosity and a desire to understand the world. Thus, an increasing **emphasis on the immediate applicability of science** should not be allowed to steal the space of curiosity-driven basic science which can be **sustained only by direct government funding**.
- Besides the 40 CSIR laboratories and a few premier research institutions like the Indian Institute of Science and the Indian Institutes of Technology, there are over 600 universities, meeting the educational requirements of about 29 million students.
 - But hardly any international-level research is done in the universities. **Our impact on global science continues to be minimal, except for a few isolated bright spots**.
- The situation is so dire in India that even the country's premier technology colleges, the **Indian Institutes of Technology, are reaching out to their alumni for funds**.
- As for developing self-financing models for government labs, the government should tread its path slowly and selectively looking at the strengths and weaknesses of each of the institutes. It will be **counterproductive to implement a one-size-fits-all solution in a hasty manner**.

Way forward

- Government expenditure, almost entirely the Central Government, is the driving force of R&D in India which is in contrast to the advanced countries where the private sector is the dominant and driving force of R&D spend. There is a need for **greater participation of State Governments and private sector** in overall R&D spending in India especially in application-oriented research and technology development.
- India needs to **re-double its efforts to improve its ranking in the science and research ecosystem by increasing the national expenditure on R&D.**
- The immediate priority in this regard should be to increase government funding in higher education and R&D. The forthcoming Union Budget will provide an excellent opportunity to make this long-standing demand a reality.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. A mindset problem: On rural jobs scheme fund crunch

Background

[Check CNA dated 27 Jan 2020](#) to read more.

How MGNREGS has transformed the rural sector?

- Several studies have shown that MGNREGS has helped the rural poor by providing **employment** in the agricultural off-season, **offering alternative jobs during years of lean agricultural growth** and as a safety net during crop failures.
- Researchers have also found that a large proportion of those availing the scheme **is from the 18-30 age group, which suggests that this has addressed the problem of youth unemployment.**
- MGNREGS has **improved agricultural productivity** where it has been implemented properly.

Way forward

- MGNREGS should **involve rural workers in skilled work and pay them more wages for asset creation** beyond just roads, wells and check-dams.
- A change in mindset is therefore important as this not only creates new opportunities for the unemployed but it also provides **an opportunity to address the slowdown.**
 - Economists have pointed to a slowing of rural consumption, which has also dragged down the economy.
 - By paying wages adequately, and on time, to rural workers, the government could allow for **more spending and consumption and stimulate the economy.**
- A more meaningful allocation for the scheme in the budget is, therefore, a much needed imperative.

Category: ECONOMY

1. India's no-fly list

Why is there a no-fly list?

- The **Civil Aviation Requirements issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** note that unruly behaviour onboard aircraft has been declared an offence and is a punishable act. Even one unruly passenger can jeopardise safety on board.
- The government kick-started the process of developing these rules after an incident involving then Shiv Sena MP Ravindra Gaikwad assaulting an Air India staffer on a flight back in 2017 occurred.
- Subsequently, a number of airlines banned Gaikwad from travelling on their flights. The government then came out with the no-fly list in 2017.

Guidelines for no-fly list

In 2017, the government issued rules for preventing disruptive behaviour by air travellers and laid down guidelines.

- As per the rules, a complaint of unruly behavior needs to be filed by the pilot-in-command, and this is to be probed by an internal committee to be set up by the airline.
- During the period of pendency of the inquiry, the rules empower the concerned airline to impose a ban on the passenger. The committee is to decide the matter within 30 days, and also specify the ban duration.

The rules define three categories of unruly behavior:

- Level 1 refers to behaviour that is verbally unruly, and calls for debarment up to three months;
- Level 2 indicates physical unruliness and can lead to the passenger being debarred from flying for up to six months;
- Level 3 indicates life-threatening behaviour for which the debarment would be for a minimum of two years.

How does someone end up on the list?

- A no-fly list essentially begins with a passenger causing **verbal, physical or life-threatening unruliness**. The DGCA has given an indicative list of actions that may be construed as unruly.
- These include: consuming alcohol or drugs resulting in unruly behaviour; smoking in an aircraft; using threatening or abusive language towards a member of the crew or other passengers; intentionally interfering with the performance of the duties of a crew member, etc.
- Once the pilot-in-command submits his complaint, the airline is bound to refer the complaint to its internal committee.
- During the course of the inquiry, the airline can ban the passenger from flying for a maximum period of up to 30 days.
- In addition, the **Ministry of Home Affairs** provides a list of individuals identified as national security threats to DGCA and to the airlines, for inclusion in the no-fly list.

What is the structure of the internal committee?

- The internal committee is to consist of a retired district and session's judge as Chairman, along with a representative from a different scheduled airline and a representative from a passengers' association or consumer association as members.
- The internal committee shall give the final decision in 30 days by giving the reasons in writing, the rules state, and the **decision of the committee shall be binding on the airline concerned**.
- In case the committee fails to take a decision in 30 days, the passenger will be free to fly.

Is there redress for someone declared guilty by the internal committee?

- Any aggrieved person, upon receipt of communication of a ban from the airline, may appeal within 60 days from the date of issue of the order, to an **Appellate Committee constituted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation**, consisting of a retired judge of a High Court as Chairman; a representative from a passengers' association or a consumer association; and an airlines representative not below the rank of vice-president or equivalent.
- The rules, however, do not specify the functional details of either the internal committee or the appellate committee, and whether they would invite the accused to make their case.
- The Civil Aviation Requirements state that the **decision of the appellate committee shall be final and that any further appeal shall lie in a High Court.**

Context

- Four airlines in India — IndiGo, SpiceJet, Air India and GoAir — have banned stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra from taking their flights after he allegedly heckled television news anchor Arnab Goswami on an IndiGo flight.

F. Tidbits

1. Centre advises against travel to China; IndiGo, AI cut services

What's in News?

- The Union Health Ministry has advised people to refrain from travelling to China in the wake of the [coronavirus outbreak](#).
- The fresh advisory came hours after a communication from the Ministry said, "All non-essential travel to China should be avoided."
- Chinese Ambassador to India said, "The World Health Organisation (WHO) does not recommend the evacuation of nationals, and called on the international community to remain calm and not overreact. The WHO is confident in China's epidemic prevention and control ability."

2. U.S. House warns China not to meddle in Dalai Lama succession

What's in News?

The U.S. House of Representatives has voted to authorise sanctions against Chinese officials who interfere in the process of determining the Dalai Lama's (Tibetan spiritual leader) successor.

- Under the legislation, Washington would freeze any U.S. assets and ban travel to the United States, of Chinese officials found to be involved in identifying or installing a government-approved Dalai Lama.
- The Act still needs approval from the Senate, before heading to President Donald Trump for his signature.
- The law would also prohibit China from opening any further consulates in the U.S. until Washington can open a mission in Lhasa; the Himalayan territory's tightly restricted capital.
- The Bill aims to encourage Beijing to resume dialogue with envoys of the Dalai Lama that broke off a decade ago.

Beijing slammed the U.S. over the Bill, saying that it grossly interferes in China's internal affairs.

G. Prelims Facts

1. Nagoba jatara

- Nagoba Jatara is a tribal festival held in Keslapur village in Telangana.
- It is the second biggest tribal carnival and celebrated by the Mesram clan of Gond tribes for 10 days.
- Tribal people from Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh belonging to the Mesram clan offer prayers at the festival.
- The event also includes a ceremony called 'bheting', which incorporates new brides into the clan. The Raj Gond Adivasis of Adilabad follow an elaborate ritual called Bheting, one of their many regalistic ceremonies, through which new daughters-in-law are formally introduced to the clan. All those who are married into the clan during the last year need to 'meet' clan deities through Bheting so that they become eligible to enter the deity's temple.
- The women clad in white saris are the Bhedi Koriad or daughters-in-law to be introduced to goddess Jangubai and belong to the eight clans which have Jangubai as the clan deity.
- Adivasis celebrate with music and more than 15 types of dances.
- The Gusadi Dance performance by dancers from the Gond tribe is a major special attraction of the event.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. "Yellow Rust Disease" is:

- a. A fungal disease that stops photosynthetic activity.
- b. A viral disease that develops due to the lack of photosynthetic activity.
- c. A bacterial disease particularly affecting the root.
- d. None of the above

Answer: a

Explanation:

Yellow rust is a fungal disease that turns the crop's leaves into a yellowish colour and stops photosynthetic activity, which eventually could result in a drop of wheat crop productivity. Wheat yellow rust, also known as wheat stripe rust, is one of the three major wheat rust diseases, along with stem rust of wheat and leaf rust.

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to "Nagoba jatara":

1. It is a tribal carnival held in the state of Chattisgarh.
2. Gusadi Dance performance by the Gond tribe is a major attraction of the event.
3. The event includes a ceremony called 'bheting', which incorporates new brides into the clan.

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

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Nagoba Jatara is a tribal festival held in Keslapur village in Telangana. It is the second biggest tribal carnival and celebrated by Mesram clan of Gond tribes for 10 days.
- Tribal people from Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh belonging to the Mesram clan offer prayers at the festival.
- The event also includes a ceremony called 'bheting', which incorporates new brides into the clan.
- Adivasis celebrate with music and more than 15 types of dances.
- The Gusadi Dance performance by dancers from the Gond tribe is a major special attraction of the event.

Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment

Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) :

1. The MGNREGA provides a legal guarantee for two hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of rural households at a statutory minimum wage.
2. The Central Government bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour, under the scheme.
3. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments.

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

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), also known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) is an Indian legislation enacted on August 25, 2005. The MGNREGA provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments. The Central Government bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour, under the scheme.

Q4. Consider the following statements with respect to the Gaza Strip:

1. It is a territory on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea.
2. It borders Egypt on the South-West and Israel on the East and North.

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:

Both statements are correct.



I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. India needs to redouble its efforts to improve science and research and development in the country. Discuss. Also suggest suitable measures. (15 Marks, 250 Words).
2. Discuss how Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has transformed the rural economy and the employment scenario. Evaluate the successes and failures of the scheme. (15 Marks, 250 Words)

Read previous [CNA](#).