

# 04 Feb 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## A. GS 1 Related

### Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

#### 1. [Most missing women from Maharashtra, M.P.](#)

#### Context:

A study by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**.

#### Background:

- In 2019, the [Supreme Court](#) had directed the NCRB to analyze the data on missing persons,

mainly women and children, so that areas prone to persons being trafficked can be identified.

#### Details:

- The NCRB study was based on the **annual Crime in India Reports** of the years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

#### Important observations:

- The study states that the **highest number of women and children who go missing in the country are from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.**
- The trend was observed for all the considered years of 2016, 2017 and 2018.
- According to the report, the States where the highest number of women went missing in the three years of the study are Maharashtra, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh.

#### Significance of the study:

- Considering the fact that incidents of missing women and children are **not uniform across the country**, the study aimed to identify the areas where registered cases of missing persons, specifically women and children, are higher than in other areas.
- Such **areas could be one of the sources, transit or destination sites for child/women trafficking.**
- This will help the state plan **appropriate preventive measures for implementation** in such areas.

## 2. NPR, NRC will affect homeless people: NCU

#### Context:

Findings from the survey conducted by the **National Coalition for inclusive and sustainable Urbanisation (NCU).**

#### Details:

- The survey was conducted in the five states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.
- The NCU based on its survey has expressed concerns that the proposed National Population Register (NPR) and the National Register for Citizens (NRC) may **adversely impact 1.77 million homeless people in India.**
- Although the Home Ministry has not notified the NPR form yet, there are reports that the respondents may have to provide documents for the date of birth.
- The survey revealed that **99% of homeless people do not have birth certificates.**
- **Thirty percent of the urban homeless population do not have any identity proof.**
- A number of **nomadic and de-notified tribes, as well as migrants** driven by rural distress, do not possess the documentation that the NRC-NPR process may require.

#### Way forward:

- The burden of proof of citizenship of the homeless people should not fall on them. The State will have to **provide for appropriate provisions** for them.

## B. GS 2 Related

**Category: HEALTH**

### 1. nCoV outbreak declared a State calamity in Kerala

**Context:**

- Following the confirmation of a third case of the novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection in the State, Kerala has declared the epidemic a State calamity.

**Details:**

- The apex committee of the State Disaster Management Authority** had proposed the idea of declaring the outbreak a state calamity.
- The decision will help **ensure that the outbreak is controlled.**

Efforts underway:

- 2,239 travellers from China and other nCoV-affected countries have been placed under surveillance in the State.
- Control rooms have been opened at the State and district levels and all activities were being reviewed on a daily basis.
- A high-level Group of Ministers** has been constituted to review the management of the outbreak.

For more on the Wuhan Coronavirus, click [here](#).

## C. GS 3 Related

**Category: ECONOMY**

### 1. Will not splurge to end slowdown: Sitharaman

**Context:**

Finance Minister's statement on fiscal stimulus.

**Background:**

The financial crisis of 2008:

- Indian economy experienced a sharp slowdown triggered by the **global financial crisis of 2008.**
- In the **2009-10 Budget, the fiscal deficit target was raised to 6.7% of GDP**, with an aim to pump prime the economy with state expenditure.
- However, despite the best intentions, the effects of the 2009-10 fiscal stimulus wore off and **growth**

**plunged sharply again over 2011 and 2012.**

- The splurge in spending had led to a **higher fiscal deficit with subsequent higher interest payments**, limiting the government's ability to devote more resources for capital expenditure.
- Faced with a similar scenario of an economic slowdown in recent times, there were expectations that the government in the [Union Budget of 2020-21](#) would consider providing a fiscal stimulus to the Indian economy.

#### Details:

- The Finance Minister has asserted that the government was not going to resort to a major fiscal stimulus to come out of the economic slowdown but is **willing to spend to pump prime the economy**.
- The Finance Minister noted that the money will be spent to **create public assets that bring greater connectivity**. This will be done transparently so that it will help the businesses plan their investments.

## 2. 'Govt. will catalyze infra investment'

#### Context:

Expenditure Secretary's statement on the Budget's provision.

#### Details:

##### Revenue estimates:

- The budget **assumes a 10% nominal growth rate** for the coming fiscal.
- **A 12% revenue growth** is very likely in a normal year if there are no structural changes like corporate tax cuts or other major tax reforms.

##### Expenditure estimates:

- The budget has **projected approximately 11%-plus expenditure growth**, with capital expenditure growing at a much higher rate.

##### Expenditure to GDP ratio:

- **The expenditure to GDP ratio for 2019-2020 has observed a 0.43% fall.** The estimates for the coming fiscal estimate the expenditure to GDP ratio going up by nearly 0.33%.

##### Prudent expenditure:

- The fact that capital expenditure would involve a large proportion of the expenditure indicates that the government is striving to spend money on the more productive sectors to spur the economy **without becoming fiscally imprudent**.

##### Increasing capital expenditure:

- Increasing capital expenditure, in particular, will **require re-prioritizing** and changing from low

value addition schemes to more capital expenditure and **projects with high multiplier effects**.

The national infrastructure pipeline:

- **The national infrastructure pipeline involves an overall ₹102 lakh crore investment plan**, with the Central Government, States and the private sector expected to pool in the requisite resources.

Other avenues of increasing investments:

- There is a provision under the **Department of Economic Affairs** which will help create a fund of approximately ₹20,000 crores **to catalyze private investment in infrastructure**.
- The government could consider **the PPP model** to help private investments in infrastructure development.

### 3. Manufacturing activity reaches a near 8-year high in January

**Context:**

The IHS Markit **India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index**.

**Background:**

- **The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** is an index of the prevailing direction of economic trends in the manufacturing sector.
- It consists of a diffusion index that **summarizes whether market conditions**, as viewed by purchasing managers, are expanding, staying the same, or contracting.
- **The headline PMI is a number from 0 to 100**. A PMI above 50 represents an expansion when compared with the previous month. A PMI reading under 50 represents a contraction, and a reading at 50 indicates no change.

**Details:**

- The IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index rose from 52.7 in December to **55.3 in January, its highest level in just under eight years**.
- January 2020 is the 30th consecutive month the index has remained above the 50-point mark.

Underlying factors:

- The country's manufacturing sector activity improved driven mainly by a **sharp rise in** new business orders, greater client requirements and a general improvement in **demand conditions**.
- The rise in total sales was also supported by **strengthening demand from external markets**, evident from the fastest increase in new export orders since November 2018.

Significance:

- The increased manufacturing activity has led to the **growth of new business, output, exports, input buying and employment**.
- **Hiring activity has improved considerably**, with firms increasing employment at the quickest rate in close to seven-and-a-half years. This helps solve the issue of unemployment in India.
- **The increased exports** will help India earn foreign exchange and **reduce its current account**

**deficit.**

- Increases in both input costs and output charges have been observed, which implies **improving market conditions.**
- **The business sentiment has also strengthened** buoyed by the increased demand conditions.

## Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

### 1. India able to deter terror groups: Rajnath

#### Context:

The Defence Minister's address to the third conference of defence attachés (DAs).

#### Background:

##### Security scenario for India:

- In the backdrop of the continued presence of **terrorist infrastructure and state support to terrorists in the neighbouring country**, India has to remain vigilant. India should develop **capabilities to secure its interests** and to disrupt and deter the activities of terrorist groups and their patrons.
- India needs to **increase defence and security cooperation with the Indian Ocean rim countries** so as to create a stable maritime environment.

##### Concept of Defence Attaches:

- **Defence Attaches (DAs) are deputed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to various Indian Embassies** and are responsible for various aspects of **bilateral military and defence relations** between India and the respective country.
- The Defence Attache is expected to maintain a complete and detailed knowledge and awareness of the host country's defence activities and requirements.

##### Defence Production Policy:

- India is emerging as a manufacturing hub for defence production and **Defence Production Policy 2018 envisages an export target of Rs 35,000 crore by 2025.**

##### Efforts by the government:

- **Defence industrial corridors have been proposed in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.** This is expected to increase defence manufacturing and exports from India.
- India has also offered **defence lines of credit (LOC) to friendly countries** to allow Indian defence exports and increase their presence in the global market.
- The government has also introduced a **scheme to promote defence exports through DAs** to their respective countries. Under the scheme, funds have been allocated for export promotion to 34 countries. The scheme will play a catalytic role in addressing interventions required for **exploring new markets and promoting export-oriented activities.**

#### Details:



- Recognizing the fact that India should not restrict its defence cooperation to a few countries, efforts are being made to expand the number of countries with which India is engaged in defence cooperation. This will further **strengthen India's defence diplomacy**.
- The Defence Minister has announced the creation of 10 new defence wings which will result in the **appointment of 10 more DAs**.
- The Defence Minister has called upon the DAs to work to **increase India's defence exports**.
  - Defence attachés deputed across the world, therefore, play a pivotal role in **showcasing India's capabilities in defence product manufacturing** and promoting export of defence products.
  - There is a lot of scope for DAs to work and **attract FDI (foreign direct investment) in the defence industrial corridors proposed in India**.

## Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

### 1. If tap water meets BIS norms, RO systems will be banned

#### Context:

The Union Environment Ministry's publication of a **draft notification**.

#### Background:

The **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** had passed an order, which **prohibited the use of reverse osmosis (RO) purifiers** in places where total dissolved solids (TDS) in the supplied water are below 500 mg per litre.

#### Details:

- The Ministry has issued a notification to comply with the NGT order.
- The draft notification effectively prohibits users from installing **membrane-based water purification, mainly reverse osmosis (RO) systems** in their homes if the water has been sourced from a supply that meets the **Bureau of Indian Standards' (BIS) drinking water norms** or has been subjected to conventional **flocculation, filtration and disinfection processes**.
- **Current BIS regulations consider 500 mg/litre—1,200 mg/litre of total dissolved solids, which consist of salts and some organic matter, as acceptable**.
- The proposed regulation is not final and the Ministry is awaiting comments from the public for 30 days, after which it may incorporate the changes before it becomes a law.

#### Reasons for the NGT order:

- The NGT had ordered a ban on **RO filters** on the grounds that they **wasted water** and that, in the process of removing salts, they often **deprived drinking water of essential salts**, which could affect the nutritional intake of the people.
- RO, while useful in reducing salts, **does not tackle bacterial agents or trace chemicals**. The proposed rule would help inform consumers that RO systems aren't needed always.

## D. GS 4 Related

## E. Editorials

### Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

#### 1. Towards cooperative federalism

##### Context:

- The article defends the state's right to oppose the Central laws and acts.

##### Background:

- The states of West Bengal and Kerala, have stopped all work on the National Population Register (NPR).
- The Punjab Legislative Assembly has passed a resolution seeking amendments to the NPR form to ensure that it does not seek data that may be used for verification of citizenship.
- Chief Ministers of at least 11 States have expressed their unwillingness to implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

##### Details:

##### Making of the NRC:

- **The Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003**, provide for the process by which taluk level officers will prepare a National Register of Indian Citizens from the NPR.
- The stated process is **difficult to implement and is ridden with wide discretion** for the officers in charge.
- It involves, after the enumeration, procedures for citizenship verification and scrutiny, objections and appeals.
- Officers may identify citizens as “doubtful” without any just cause and demand evidence of their citizenship.
- The rules also permit any person to object to the inclusion of a name in the draft register.

##### Constitutional governance:

- The Constitution provides more power to the Centre in order to enable the Union Government the power to bring errant States in line with the Constitution. The Constitution bars States from “impeding” the Union's work and requires them to comply with central laws.
- **Article 355** entails that the **government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution**.
- The Union is empowered to temporarily declare **President's rule in the State under [Article 356](#)** for restoring constitutional governance in a State.
- The states are not empowered to hold the Union government accountable to its obligations under the Constitution.
- In the backdrop of State governments raising concerns about the NPR, the Union government has



insisted that **States are under a constitutional duty to implement laws passed by Parliament.**

### State's right to oppose:

#### Laws in line with constitutional provisions:

- The state's duty to obey laws passed by Parliament is dependent on whether the law is upholding the constitutional provisions or not. The states are well **within their right to oppose central laws if they find it unconstitutional.**
- All constitutional actors including the State and Union legislators, State and Union governments and judges in the higher judiciary are duty-bound to uphold the provisions of the Constitution of India, by way of their oath. Thus, the **states are duty-bound to oppose any unconstitutional laws.**

#### India as a "Union of States":

- **Article 1 of the Indian Constitution notes India's identity as a "Union of States".** Thus, States, their legislatures and governments, are indispensable to the working of the Constitution of India.
- The landmark [S.R. Bommai judgment](#) notes that States are not mere "appendages" of the Centre. Given the State's exclusive and distinct legislative and administrative competences, they cannot be understood to be mere administrative agencies entrusted with enforcing Parliament's laws.

### Concerns:

- The difference in opinions may lead to **withholding cooperation in a federal scheme** severely **affecting the constitutional governance** in India.

### Way forward:

- **New institutional norms** can play an important role in enhancing federal relations. The Union must develop newer conventions to **foster cooperation.**
- The examples of countries that have **strengthened federalism by actively including the provinces or states in national policy** like Australia and Canada can act as guiding lights to India.
- The Union government can include States in how decisions are made and enforced. This will not only help consider the state's views and perspectives making it **more representative**, but will also **aid in the successful implementation of the laws.**

## Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### 1. What Brexit means for the EU and its partners

#### Context:

The United Kingdom leaving the European Union on January 31, 2020.

#### Details:

##### Withdrawal Agreement:

- As against the fears of a no-deal exit, the **EU and the U.K. negotiated a Withdrawal Agreement**, which enabled both parties to secure an orderly exit of Britain. This will help **minimize disruption**

in the lives of citizens, businesses, public administrations, as well as the international partners of the two parties.

- As per the Withdrawal Agreement, **the EU and the U.K. have agreed on a transition period of 11 months**, during which the U.K. will continue to participate in the EU's Customs Union and in the Single Market, apply EU law, and continue to abide by the international agreements of the EU even though it is no longer the Member State of EU.
- Due to the provision of the transition period, there is a **degree of continuity**.

#### A new chapter in relations:

- Post the Brexit, there is a need to start **a new chapter in the relations between the U.K. and the European Union**.
- The negotiations between the two parties will be beginning soon to chart a future source of cooperation.

#### Need for Cooperation:

- The EU and the U.K. are **bound by history, geography, culture, shared values and principles** and a strong belief in rules-based multilateralism.
- The cooperation needs to go beyond trade and they need to keep **working together on security and defence**, areas where the U.K. has experiences and assets that are best used as part of a common effort.
- The world faces big **challenges and changes in the form of climate change, extremism, cybercrime, rising inequality, and trade protectionism**. The more the U.K. and the EU are able to work together, the greater the chances of addressing these challenges effectively.
- **Consultation and Co-operation** between the two bilaterally and in key regional and global fora, such as the United Nations, the [World Trade Organization](https://www.wto.org/), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or the G20 will benefit both the parties.

#### **Additional Information:**

- **EU, with 27 Member States** constitutes a single market of 450 million citizens and more than 20 million businesses. It remains the **largest trading bloc in the world and the world's largest development aid donor**.

### **Category: HEALTH**

#### **1. Camel in the tent**

##### **Context:**

Union Budget 2020-21 proposal.

##### **Details:**

- The proposal is to **attach medical colleges to existing district hospitals in the public-private partnership (PPP) model**.
- **Viability gap funding** is provided for projects that the government does not find commercially viable because of **long gestation periods, and relatively minor revenue flows** and involves PPP.
- States that fully allow the facilities of the hospital to the medical college and wish to provide land at

a concession would be eligible for viability gap funding.

#### Arguments of the government:

- The proposal is envisaged primarily to **address the shortage of doctors in the country**.
- Given the fact that it is practically not possible for Central and State governments to bridge the gaps in medical education with their **limited resources and finances**, it necessitates the **formation of a PPP model to address the challenge**.
- The proposal will help **increase the number of medical seats available and moderate the costs of medical education**.

#### Arguments against the proposal:

##### Significance of district hospitals:

- The proposal originally made by [NITI Aayog](#) does not attach significance to the role of the **district hospital as the pivot of primary health care in every State**.
- There is opposition to the scheme in States such as Tamil Nadu that have a robust public health-care system, and a medical college in nearly every district. There are concerns regarding handing over the hospitals to **the private sector motivated by profit rather than the public interest**.

##### Effect on public health services:

- The move to allow private parties to operate and maintain the district hospital and provide healthcare services could seriously **dent public health services**.
- The provision which allows the private firm to demand, collect and appropriate hospital charges from patients may **destabilize people's access to affordable public health services**.

##### State's welfare role:

- **Providing quality, accessible and affordable healthcare is the duty of the government** and it should guard against privatizing this vital sector.

#### Way forward:

- The government must consider **raising health-care spending beyond the usual under 2% of GDP**, and ensure more resources are available to **provide free, quality health care to all**.

## F. Tidbits

### 1. Siachen troops given poor gear, says CAG

- The setting up of the **Indian National Defence University (INDU)**, was **proposed by the Kargil Review Committee in 1999** to address the deficiencies in India's security management system.
- The lack of research and development by defence laboratories in India has led to continued dependence on imports, **affecting security needs and also foreign exchange**.

## 2. Budget 2020, a tightrope walk indeed

- The major take-away of the Budget was **structural reforms in the financial sector**. Robust financial infrastructure with **adequate liquidity and credit access** is the backbone of any economy.
- The Budget proposed changes in the banking laws **to enable public sector banks to raise funds from capital markets and flexible debt restructuring for the NBFCs**.
- It also tries to enhance **professionalism and transparency in the functioning of the financial sector**. This will augment India's position as an investment destination and facilitate ease of doing business in India.
- The opening up of **government securities to NRIs and allowing FII stake in corporate bonds to 15%** is a significant move.

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. Operation Vanilla brings island closer

- **The Indian Navy conducted "Operation Vanilla"**, with INS Airavat delivering relief material such as food, clothing, medicines, and water to **Madagascar devastated by a cyclone and the subsequent rainfall and landslide**.
- Delhi has also **incorporated Madagascar into the "Indian Ocean Region (IOR)"**. This is part of India's policy of **"Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)" for the IOR islands**.
- It also reflected the growing strategic importance of the Indian Ocean Islands within the framework of the **Indo-Pacific concept** that describes the entire neighbourhood from the coast of Africa to the U.S. west coast.
- The Indian Navy undertakes **Joint EEZ patrols with Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius**, which have all **joined India's coastal radar chain network**.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following statements is/are correct with respect to the national infrastructure pipeline?

1. It is the investment plan for enhancing infrastructure in identified sectors for a period of ten years from 2020-30.
2. The funding for it will be jointly made by the Centre and states only.

Options:

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

Answer: d

**Explanation:**

- National Infrastructure Pipeline is the investment plan unveiled by the Central Government for enhancing infrastructure in identified sectors for a period of five years from 2020-25.
- The Rs 102 lakh crore (\$1.4 trillion) National Infrastructure Pipeline will spend in the infrastructure sector over a five-year period (2020-25). The plan will help India to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2025.
- The funding of the National Infrastructure Pipeline will be jointly made by the Centre, states and the private sector in the proportion of 39:39:22 (39 % each by the centre and states and 22% by the private sector).

**Q2. Which of the following statements is/are correct?**

1. Defence industrial corridors have been proposed in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.
2. According to data released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), India is the largest arms importer for the period between 2014-2018.

Options:

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- The Government has set up defence industrial corridors in **Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu**.
  - Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor involves the cities of Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra, Aligarh, Chitrakoot and Jhansi.
  - Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor involves the cities of Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli.
- India was the world's second-largest arms importer from 2014-18, ceding the long-held tag as the largest importer to Saudi Arabia.

**Q3. The Operation Vanilla of the Indian Navy is associated with which of the following?**

- a. Madagascar
- b. Reunion island
- c. Mauritius
- d. Seychelles

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

The Indian Navy had launched the 'Operation Vanilla' to assist the population of Madagascar affected by Cyclone Diane.

Vanilla Islands is an affiliation of the island nations Seychelles, Madagascar, Réunion, Mauritius, Comoros,

Mayotte in the Indian Ocean to form a new travel destination brand.

**Q4. Arrange the following islands starting with the closest to the equator and moving towards the farthest to the equator:**

1. Seychelles
2. Comoros
3. Reunion island
4. Mauritius

Options:

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

Self-explanatory.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. In the backdrop of a few states opposing the implementation of the NPR-NRIC, discuss the constitutional provisions with respect to the current crisis. Discuss the concerns with respect to the current scenario and suggest a suitable way forward. (10 marks, 150 words)
2. Post Brexit, there is a need to start a new chapter in the relations between the U.K. and the European Union. Discuss the need and potential of such a cooperation. (10 marks, 150 words)



