

03 Jun 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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A. GS 1 Related

Category: GEOGRAPHY

1. Nisarga barrels towards Mumbai

Context:

Cyclone Nisarga, in India's west coast, is headed towards the coastline of north Maharashtra and south Gujarat.

Details:

- Cyclones formed in the Bay of Bengal side of the north Indian Ocean are more frequent and stronger than those on the Arabian Sea side.

- Meteorologists suggest the relatively cold waters of the Arabian Sea discourage the kind of very strong cyclones that are formed on the Bay of Bengal side; Odisha and Andhra Pradesh face the brunt of these cyclones every year.
- 2019 was slightly unusual as the Arabian Sea saw the most frequent and intense cyclonic activity in more than 100 years, according to the [India Meteorological Department](#).
- Five cyclones originated in the area in 2019 — Vayu, Hikka, Kyarr, Maha and Pavan – when normally only one or two are formed.
- The strength of the cyclones are measured by the wind speeds they generate.
- At its strongest, Nisarga would be associated with wind speeds in the range 95-105 km per hour.
- Amphan, on the other hand, was classified as a super-cyclone, of category 5, though it had weakened to category 4, 'Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm', ahead of its landfall, at which time the wind speeds were in excess of 180 kmph.
- Though the intensity of Nisarga is not likely to be as strong as [Cyclone Amphan](#), which devastated coastal Odisha, West Bengal and Bangladesh, IMD has issued warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall and rough sea conditions.

How big is the threat?

- If the system does intensify into a cyclonic storm, some coastal districts of Maharashtra will come directly in line of its predicted path.
- Though the exact location of the landfall is still to be determined, it is likely to be close to Mumbai. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is predicted in this area until June 4, 2020.
- The southwest monsoon has already made an onset over Kerala. There is an associated depression lying parallel to the west coast which is intensifying and moving northwards along the coast. Under such circumstances, the east-central and southeast regions of Arabian Sea are already experiencing rough weather conditions, which is likely to get intensified because of this cyclone.

B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Trump invites Modi for G-7 summit

Context:

U.S. President Donald Trump invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the next G-7 summit to be hosted by the U.S.

Details:

- President Trump spoke about the U.S. Presidency of the Group of Seven, and conveyed his desire to expand the ambit of the grouping beyond the existing membership, to include other important countries including India. In this context, he extended an invitation to Prime Minister Modi to attend the next G-7 Summit.
- Modi had attended the G-7 summit at Biarritz in France in 2019 after being invited by President Emmanuel Macron.
- India is studying the gesture and will examine if the invite is aimed at making India a permanent part of the global high table at the G-7 or its redesigned shape as G-11.

- In the next three years, India is expected to play a key role in the global diplomatic arena because of its three-year term at the executive board of the [World Health Organization](#) which is a crucial responsibility because of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Earlier, the US President had described the G-7 as outdated indicating that he wanted the inclusion of Russia, India, Australia, and South Korea in the group.

This topic has been covered in **1st June 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis**. [Click here](#) to read.

Also Read about [G-7](#).

2. China gets set to build power project in PoK

Context:

China, under the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, will set up a power project in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir despite India's objection to it.

Details:

- An agreement has been finalised to implement the Kohala hydroelectric power project under the [China-Pakistan Economic Corridor \(CPEC\)](#).
- It is a 1,124-megawatt power project.
- The project will be built on the Jhelum River and aims at annually providing more than five billion units of clean and low-cost electricity for consumers in Pakistan.
- It is reported that this marks one of the largest investments of USD 2.4 billion in an independent power producer (IPP) in the region.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC):

- The 3,000-km-long CPEC is aimed at connecting China and Pakistan with rail, road, pipelines and optical cable fiber networks.
- It connects China's Xinjiang province with Pakistan's Gwadar port, providing access to China to the Arabian Sea.
- The CPEC passes through PoK, over which India has conveyed its protests to China.

India's Stand:

- India had protested Pakistan's plans to build a dam in Gilgit-Baltistan, saying such projects in territories under Pakistan's illegal occupation was not proper.
 - India protested to Pakistan awarding a mega contract to build a dam in Gilgit-Baltistan. More about it in [15th May 2020 CNA](#).
- It has been asserted time and again that India's position is clear and the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir is part of India.
- In the past too, India has opposed projects jointly taken up by Pakistan and China in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

This topic has been covered in **5th May 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis**. [Click here](#) to read.

Category: **HEALTH**

1. Scientists identify second most common coronavirus type in India

Context:

Scientists at multiple CSIR laboratories have identified a type of coronavirus that may be the second most prevalent in India, and may comprise 3.5% of the genomes globally.

Details:

- There are 11 SARS-CoV-2 types identified globally, with at least six of them identified in India.
- The most dominant coronavirus clade in India is the A2a, and of 213 genomes analysed by the group, 62% of them were A2a.
- The newly identified type - A3i, comprised 41% of those analysed.
- Previous studies indicate that while type O was the first ancestral family of the virus identified from China, it's the A2a type that has emerged dominant the world over because of a mutation in its genes that allows that coronavirus' spike to more efficiently infiltrate the lungs.
- Epidemiological assessments suggest that the common ancestor [of this subtype of viruses] emerged in the month of February 2020 and possibly resulted in an outbreak followed by countrywide spread.
- According to a paper that is yet to be peer-reviewed, so far, there is no evidence that A3i is more virulent — that is, it's linked to more deaths.

Coronavirus Type:

- The coronavirus type, or clade, is a cluster of SARS-CoV-2 viruses that share evolutionary similarities.
- Such classifications are useful in establishing whether certain strains are particularly virulent, spread more easily, how they are likely to evolve over time and whether some could be less vulnerable to certain kinds of vaccines.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: SECURITY

1. Proposed BSF firing range in fresh row

Context:

A proposed firing range for the Border Security Force (BSF) has become the trigger for unrest in northern Tripura's Kanchanpur Subdivision over the rehabilitation of Bru tribal people displaced from adjoining Mizoram.

Read more about [Bru-Reang Refugee Crisis](#) covered in 17th January 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis.

Details:

- Mizoram Chief Minister has also walked into the standoff by pointing out to his Tripura counterpart that settling the Brus in Mizo-inhabited areas of Tripura would have repercussions in Mizoram and defeat the very purpose of the January 16, 2020 rehabilitation agreement.

- The Mancha has formed the Joint Movement Committee with the Tripura Mizo Convention, the organisation representing the Mizo tribe in Jampui Hills within the subdivision.
- The Convention leaders said their protest will continue till the government looks beyond their area for the rehabilitation of some 35,000 Bru refugees across seven relief camps.

Category: ECONOMY

1. Electronics incentive schemes launched

Context:

Telecom and IT Minister launched three incentive schemes with a total outlay of about ₹48,000 crore to boost large-scale manufacturing of electronics in the country.

Details:

- The three schemes — were approved by the Union Cabinet in March 2020, however, the government has now begun inviting the applications under these schemes. The schemes are:
 1. Production Linked Incentive (outlay of nearly ₹41,000 crore)
 2. Component Manufacturing Scheme (about ₹3,300 crore)
 3. Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (about ₹3,800 crore)
- Under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI), which is targeted at mobile phone manufacturing and specified electronic components, the government initially plans to incentivise 10 firms — five global and five local.
 1. Globally 5-6 companies control 80% of the mobile market.
 2. India plans to pick up five global champions who will be permitted to participate under PLI. Five Indian companies would also be incentivised.
- These firms will be selected as per the guidelines of the scheme. There are norms in the guidelines, such as the company's turnover, the quality and rate of their mobiles, etc. There is a proper transparent system in place according to which the selection would be made.

Conclusion:

- With the three new schemes, the government aims to manufacture electronics worth ₹8 lakh crore, while generating employment for about 10 lakh people in the next five years.
- According to the Minister, this is a step towards self-reliant India. A self-reliant India is not an India of isolation. It is one which enhances its capacity and develops an ecosystem as an asset to the global economy.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Now, more light on sun's coronal heating puzzle

Context:

- A group of scientists working at the Pune-based National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA) has recently discovered tiny flashes of radio light emanating from all over the sun, which they say could help in explaining the long-pending coronal heating problem.

- The three scientists have jointly written a paper on their discoveries titled ‘First Radio Evidence for Impulsive Heating Contribution to the Quiet Solar Corona’, which was published in Astrophysical Journal Letters.

Issue:

- For more than a half-century, astronomers have tried to figure out what causes the corona to be so hot. It is one of the most vexing problems in astrophysics.
- One of the big questions of coronal heating has been: Is the corona heated everywhere at once, or is heat delivered in discrete, bomb-like events?

Details:

- The researchers state that these radio lights or signals result from beams of electrons accelerated in the aftermath of a magnetic explosion on the sun.
- They state that these weak radio flashes that they have discovered are ‘smoking guns’ or the evidence for magnetic explosions and hence bring us closer to explaining the coronal heating problem.
 - Corona is the aura of plasma that surrounds the sun and other stars.
- These observations are the strongest evidence till date that the tiny magnetic explosions, originally referred to as ‘nanoflares’ by eminent American solar astrophysicist Eugene Parker, can indeed be heating up the corona.
- While the phenomenon of coronal heating has been known for the last 70 years, the availability of cutting edge data from the Murchison Widefield Array (MWA) radio telescope proved to be a game-changer.

Conclusion:

- With this work, researchers have the strongest evidence till date of the magnetic explosions or ‘nanoflares’ as called by Prof. Parker in a theory he put forth in 1988.
- According to the researcher, the strength of the magnetic fields varies a lot from one place on the surface of the Sun to another, by more than a factor of 1,000. But the corona is hot everywhere. So, this heating process has to work all over the corona, even in regions of weak magnetic fields. Until now, the process of how this magnetic energy is deposited in the corona had remained a mystery. Now, the observations can bring us closer to solving this.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Multilateralism in the new cold war

Context:

- The article analyzes the detrimental effect of the new cold war on multilateralism and articulates India’s role and opportunity in such a scenario.

Background:

The new cold war:

- China has come out with **alternative governance mechanisms to the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization** with its all-encompassing [Belt and Road Initiative](#).
 - The agenda-setting role of the G7 over UN institutions and global rules has been on the wane.
- China's rise has been based on technology, innovation and trade thus balancing U.S. military superiority. This comes at a time of declining global trust in free-market liberalism, central to western civilisation.
- The **U.S. has been seeking a security partnership in Asia to contain China**. It has been keen on deepening its relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations trade bloc.
- The U.S. has implicitly rejected the [G20](#) and the UN Security Council, for an expanded G7 to counter China's rise.

Threat to multilateralism:

- The clash between China and the U.S. at the just concluded World Health Assembly marks the end of the multilateralism of the past 70 years.
- Given the U.S.'s "**America First**" policy, the U.S. has been withdrawing from key global and regional institutions.
- The [European Union](#) and Japan are also re-evaluating their position on globalisation.

Welcome change:

- The clash between the U.S. and China marks a seismic shift within the UN system.
 - After World War II, the newly independent states were not consulted when the U.S. imposed global institutions fostering trade, capital and technology dependence, ignoring socio-economic development.
 - **Social and economic rights have emerged to be as important** as political and procedural rights in the current scenario.
- There has been the slow yet steady shift of global wealth to Asia, which has only accelerated during the novel coronavirus pandemic.
 - Colonised Asia played no role in shaping the Industrial Revolution. However, the **Digital Revolution of the future** will be shaped by different values wherein **equality would be a major aspect**.

Details:

India's role:

- The world is questioning both the **U.S.' and China's exceptionalism**. Hence, for India, the strategic issue is neither adjustment to China's power nor deference to U.S. leadership.
- In the **new cold war, defined by technology and trade, not territory**, non-alignment is an uncertain option; **India should craft a global triumvirate**. By proposing an alternative structure, India would not have to choose between the emerging power centres.
- The global vacuum, shift in relative power and its own potential, provides India the capacity to articulate a benign **multilateralism as a NAM-Plus**, that resonates with large parts of the world and brings both [BRICS](#) and the G7 into the fold.
 - At the online summit of the [Non-Aligned Movement](#), in May 2020, the Indian Prime Minister called for new principles for the international system. His new globalisation model based on humanity, fairness and equality has wide support in the current circumstances.

Impending opportunity for India:

- In the light of the upcoming events, there is an impending **opportunity for agenda-setting**.
 - As **chair of the Executive Board of the World Health Assembly**, India can set the global response in terms of multilateralism.
 - India can set the world response to COVID-19, also using the opportunity to recover its global thought leadership.
 - In September 2020, the United Nations General Assembly will discuss the theme, “The Future We Want”.
 - **In 2021, India joins the UN Security Council (non-permanent seat)** and chairs the BRICS Summit, and in **2022, India would be hosting the G-20**.
- India should look upon the changed circumstances as an **opportunity for its own re-emergence**.
 - India should use this opportunity to **recover its global thought leadership**, like the days of Nalanda, astronomical computation, the zero, Ayurveda, Buddhism, Yoga and Ahimsa.

Way forward for multilateralism:

- The Asian Century should be defined in terms of **peaceful co-existence**. Non-interference in the internal affairs of countries should be ensured.
- The global community requires **new principles for trade**. This could involve rejecting the 25-year-old trade rule creating intellectual property monopolies. **Global public goods** should include public health, crop research, renewable energy and batteries and even AI as its value comes from shared data.
- There is a need for **restructuring both the economic order and societal behaviour for equitable sustainable development**, which a climate change-impacted world is seeking.

Category: GEOGRAPHY

1. Monsoon bounty

Context:

- Onset of Monsoon in India.

Background:

Onset of monsoons:

- Heavy rains over Kerala alone do not determine onset of the monsoons. The IMD has clearly defined criteria for declaring the onset of Monsoon:
 - Eight of the 14 designated meteorological stations in Kerala and Karnataka must register 2.5mm rain for two consecutive days.
 - There must be 30-40 kmph **westerlies (winds from the equator reaching India)** at a certain height.
 - There must be a certain value of **Outwave Longwave Radiation (OLR)**.

For more information on this, refer to:

[CNA dated 31 May, 2020](#)

Monsoon 2020 onset:

- The monsoon has set in over Kerala in keeping with the textbook date of June 1.
- In May, the IMD had previously forecast a four-day delay in the onset over Kerala. This was premised on a **relatively mild summer**, in early May, in north India and several spells of **Western Disturbances**, which are rains from the Mediterranean, as well as the impact of **super cyclone Amphan in the Bay of Bengal**.

For more information on this, refer to:

[CNA dated 16 May, 2020](#)

Monsoon 2020 forecast:

- The 2020 monsoon forecast from IMD predicts that **except for India's northeast region, there would be normal rains in other areas**, especially the northwest, the central parts and the southern peninsula.

Challenge to IMD's monopoly:

- IMD is the only agency with the equipment to measure wind speeds and radiation at higher elevations, along with multiple weather stations. It therefore has a monopoly of declaring onset.
- The IMD also gives outlook on how the monsoon might pan out over India and how much rain is likely in July and August, the key months for the summer crop. However, the **IMD faces competition from domestic and international companies in providing weather-related services**.
 - In crop insurance, power distribution and short-range forecasts, the IMD no longer has a monopoly on providing weather information.

Importance of accurate forecasts:

- In 2019, the IMD failed to communicate that 2019 would turn out to be the wettest in two decades. The lack of dependable forecasts resulted in **large scale losses in the agricultural sector**.
- Even years of normal monsoon have brought with it both torrential floods and long dry spells. This seems to catch the administrations off guard.
- The **complexity of climate change** is now such that excess rains in a year seem to have long-ranging impact with reports of a second consecutive year of a locust plague in India on the horizon which can affect the Kharif crop.

Way forward:

- With improved science and forecasting, the IMD should work at disseminating **more precise localised weather forecasts**.
- While the IMD's public interface and technology adoption are improving, particularly in cyclone forecasts, the organisation needs more focus on **communicating improved forecasts to a wider population**.

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

1. The challenge of law enforcement post-COVID-19

Context:

- Law enforcement in the post-COVID world.

Details:

- Law enforcement is as important as healthcare during the current crisis.
- The police have been endowed with the task of ensuring strict observance of guidelines, including physical distancing during the lockdown phase.
- COVID-19 will affect future law enforcement, which will require the management of new patterns of crime.

Overall drop in crime:

- There has been a sharp reduction in traffic accidents and fatalities caused by such accidents. With anti-social elements confined to their homes, trespass and burglary also became more difficult crimes to commit.
- A survey across nations has indicated a **measurable drop in overall crime**. Major cities that generally report a high number of crimes found a drop in crime levels during the lockdown period.

New trends:

- The pandemic and the lockdown have ensured that many crimes have gone down. However, many other crimes have gone up or will assume new forms in the near future.

Domestic violence:

- There has been the worrying **surge in domestic violence cases**.
 - There was an **increase in sexual and gender-based violence in West Africa during the 2013-16 Ebola outbreak**.
- There are two major factors for the rise in domestic violence.
 - Most men are at home, either without work or in fear of losing their jobs. Data show that domestic violence increases when there is greater unemployment. The fear and insecurity of these men cause tension at home and unfortunately, women become the victims of this tension.
 - The non-availability of liquor during the lockdown period, which caused frustration among those men who are habituated to drinking daily, has also been a causative factor.
- Epidemics **leave women and girls more vulnerable to violence**. As the administration is busy combating the pandemic, there is little help for domestic violence victims during times such as these.

Organized crime:

- The **Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime**, a network of prominent law-enforcement, governance and development practitioners based in Geneva, believes that the pandemic is **both a threat to, and an opportunity for, organised crime**, especially illicit drug trade.
- Travel restrictions across borders, especially in Africa, have made international trade in drugs extremely difficult.
- The Global Initiative believes that organised gangs will infiltrate health services and make profits through the sale of prescription drugs that are not otherwise easily available to the public.
 - There is large-scale manufacture of ineffective masks and hand sanitizers.

Cybercrime:

- A notable trend has been the **rise in cybercrime**.
 - New portals have been launched to get people to donate money for the cause of combating COVID-19. These fraudulent sites have been able to cheat a large number of people.

Prison management:

- A major challenge would be **keeping prisons free of the virus**.
- Many prisons have taken steps to insulate prisoners who reported positive for the virus from the rest of the inmates.
- A number of human rights activists have said that we need to consider the premature and temporary release of prisoners with some human rights activists even asking for complete evacuation of prisons, irrespective of whether a prisoner tests positive or not. But such a drastic move will make a mockery of the **criminal justice system** and expose society to many unrepentant violent offenders.
 - Recently, the Supreme Court directed the States and Union Territories to constitute high-powered committees to consider releasing convicts who have been jailed up to seven years on parole, in order to decongest prisons.

Conclusion:

- As India enters the unlock mode, it is critical that **law-enforcement officials think of ways of dealing with new** challenges in maintaining law and order.
- The COVID experience provides an important lesson for the law enforcement agencies. An **active police-public relation** can be a critical building block for future.

Category: ECONOMY

1. A reformative and fiscal package

For related information, refer to:

[CNA dated 26 May, 2020](#)

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

1. '60 mn could be pushed into poverty'

What's in News?

In its Global Economic Prospects (GEP) June 2020 report, the World Bank said that the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have severe short and long-term effects on economic growth.

Details:

- The report states that EMDEs (Emerging Market and Developing Economies) are especially vulnerable.
- The report said EMDEs face health crises, restrictions and external shocks like falling trade, tourism and commodity prices, as well as capital outflows.
- These countries are expected to have a 3-8% output loss in the short-term, based on studies of previous pandemics, as per the Bank's analysis.

- EMDEs are also expected to witness the spill-over effects of the U.S., the Euro Area and China, which represent almost half of global output, being unlikely to return to pre-pandemic levels of output before the end of 2021.
- If these three big economies simultaneously lose 1% in output, EMDEs (excluding China) are expected to lose 1.3% in their output with the lag of a year, the Bank warned.
- Longer term, there is a risk not just of a drop in the level of output but a lowering of potential output growth, it said. The severity of the current recession has been unseen in eight decades.
- Also, sixty million people could be pushed into extreme poverty this year, World Bank President said.
- He also said that the policy choices — including greater debt transparency to invite new investment, faster advances in digital connectivity, and a major expansion of cash safety nets for the poor — will help limit the damage and build a stronger recovery.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Corona is the outermost shell of the Sun's atmosphere.
2. Chromosphere is a transparent layer between the corona and the photosphere.
3. Photosphere is the visible surface of the Sun.

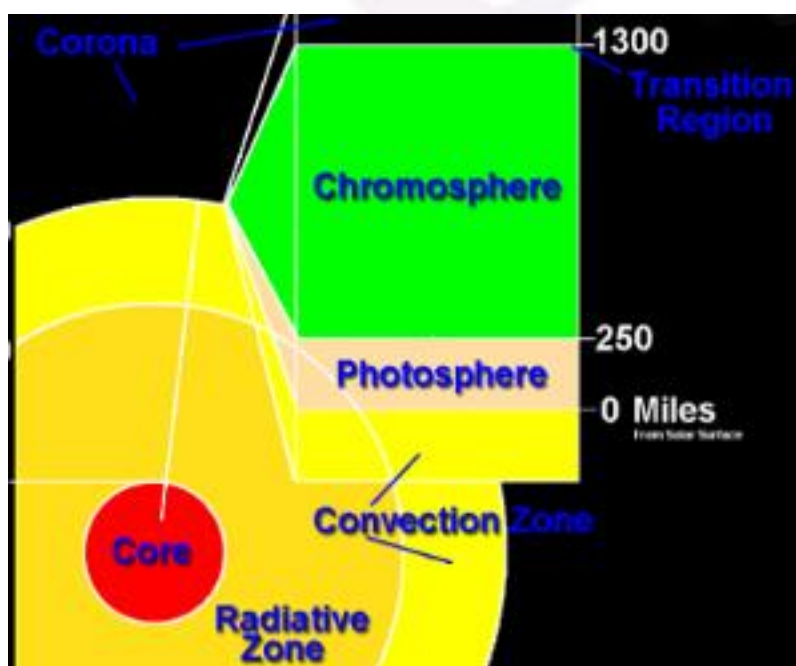
Which of the given statement/s is/are correct?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

Corona is the outermost shell of the Sun's atmosphere. Chromosphere is a transparent layer between the corona and the photosphere. Photosphere is the visible surface of the Sun.



Q2. Which among these tribes rear Changthangi and are the traditional producers of the Pashmina wool in the Ladakh region?

- a. Changpa Tribe
- b. Bakarwal Tribe
- c. Dogra Tribe
- d. Balti Tribe

[su_dropcap]See[/su_dropcap][su_spoiler title="Answer"]

Answer: a

Explanation:

The Changthangi or Pashmina goat is a special breed of goat indigenous to the high altitude regions of Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir. Changpa tribespeople are the traditional producers of the Pashmina wool in the Ladakh region.

Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT):

- 1. It was constituted under the Companies Act, 2013.
- 2. It hears appeals against the orders of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- 3. It is the Appellate Tribunal to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction issued by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

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

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 3 only
- d. None of the above

Answer: d

Explanation:

National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was constituted under Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013. It hears appeals against the orders of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). It is also the Appellate Tribunal to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction issued or decision made or order passed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

Q4. Gilgit-Baltistan borders:

- 1. China
- 2. Afghanistan
- 3. Tajikistan

Choose the correct option:

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

d. 2 only

Answer: a

Explanation:

- Gilgit-Baltistan borders China in the North, Afghanistan in the west, Tajikistan in the northwest and Kashmir and Ladakh to the southeast.
- It shares a geographical boundary with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), and India considers it as part of the undivided Jammu and Kashmir, while Pakistan sees it as separate from PoK.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Discuss how the emerging new cold war like scenario has proved to be detrimental to multilateralism. Suggest what should be India's role in this evolving situation. (15 marks, 250 words)
2. Though the pandemic and the lockdown have resulted in a measurable drop in overall crime, specific crimes have gone up or have assumed new forms. Comment. (10 marks, 150 words)