

# 29 Jun 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## A. GS 1 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## B. GS 2 Related

### Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

#### 1. SC dismisses review petitions challenging verdict on adultery

##### Context:

- Review petition of the Supreme Court verdict on adultery.

##### Background:

### Constitution bench judgment of 2018:

- The original judgment of the **September 2018 Constitution Bench** had held that **Section 497 (adultery) of the Indian Penal Code** cannot “command” married couples to remain loyal to each other for the fear of penal punishment and had struck adultery out of the penal statute book.
- The then Chief Justice had opined that two individuals may part if one cheats, but to attach criminality to infidelity was not right.

### Argument against it:

- Adultery was considered not a crime if the cuckolded husband connives or consents to his wife’s extra-marital affair. Hence, it was argued that **Section 497 treats a married woman as the commodity of her husband.**
- The court had reasoned that there was no data whatsoever to support claims that the abolition of adultery as a crime would result in “chaos in sexual morality” or an increase of divorce.

### Details:

- A five-judge Review Bench upholding the September 2018 Constitution Bench judgment has **dismissed the review petitions.**



## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

#### 1. 'Draft EIA notification fosters non-transparency, encourages environmental violations'

##### Context:

- The **South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP)** organization’s views on the draft **environmental impact assessment (EIA) notification** issued by the Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in March 2020.
  - The SANDRP is a network of researchers and experts working on water and environmental issues.

##### Details:

- When implemented, the MoEF's **draft will replace the 2006 EIA notification** for future projects.
- SANDRP argues that the draft notification dilutes the EIA process and **renders the environmental clearance (EC) process “non-transparent, undemocratic, unjust and unaccountable”**.
- SANDRP claims that the draft EIA notification encourages environmental violations in the case of large-scale hydropower and irrigation projects.
  - The SANDRP, through its field studies, has routinely witnessed irregularities like poor quality of work, dishonest EIAs coupled with misinformation about the project, and inadequate or no impact assessment.

### Concerns:

#### Unaccountable projects:

- The **threshold limits having been lowered**, a large number of projects will **not need an EIA or a public consultation for their appraisal**.
  - While hydro-electric projects lesser than 75 MW but higher than 25 MW fall in category 'B1', hydro-electric projects lesser than 25MW and irrigation projects that have a culturable command area between 2,000 and 10,000 hectares would fall into B2 category and will not need an EIA or a public consultation for their appraisal.
- The MoEF's draft ensures no monitoring of these projects which might also lead to **lesser compliance with respect to environmental guidelines**.

#### Undemocratic process:

- The draft notification **dilutes the provision of public consultation** as compared to the 2006 EIA notification.
- With the relaxing of the threshold limits for classification, a significant number of projects would now be pushed under category 'B2' projects, which are completely exempted from the EIA and public consultation process.
- The lack of public consultation would limit the avenue for public views into the whole process.

#### Environmental concerns:

- In the 2006 EIA notification, category 'B' project was treated as category 'A' project if the project fulfilled the 'general conditions', which meant if they were located (in whole or in part) within 10 km from the boundaries of protected areas, critically polluted areas, eco-sensitive zones, or inter-State and international boundaries.
- As per the new notification, 'B1' projects fulfilling the general condition will be appraised by the expert appraisal committee, but they will no more be treated as category 'A' projects. This would imply that such projects will undergo a less rigorous appraisal.
- With this new provision, **projects could now be proposed in close proximity to the boundary of protected and eco-sensitive zones** endangering the ecosystem of the region.

#### Non-transparent:

- The draft notification states that **projects concerning national defence and security** or “involving other strategic considerations as determined by the Central government” would not be treated as category 'A' and no information relating to such projects shall be placed in the public domain.
- This provision would allow the government to hide information from people which goes against the very stated intention of making the EC process more transparent.

## 2. Centre unveils new rules to regulate exotic animal trade

### Context:

- The Environment Ministry's wildlife division has introduced new rules to regulate the import and export of 'exotic wildlife species'.

### Background:

#### Concerns of wildlife trading:

- In its first **global report on the illegal wildlife trade**, the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)** has described **wildlife trafficking as a "global threat"**, which also has links with other organised crimes such as modern slavery, drug trafficking and arms trade. The illegal trade is estimated to generate revenues of up to \$23 billion a year.
- According to the **World Wildlife Crime Report 2016 of the UN**, criminals are illegally trading products derived from over 7,000 species of wild animals and plants across the world.
- Apart from such activities being illegal, they **also threaten the biodiversity of the world**.
- On the domestic front, India continues to battle wildlife crime, with reports suggesting that many species are available for trade on online marketplaces.
  - Currently, it is the [Directorate-General of Foreign Trade](#), Ministry of Commerce that oversees the legal trade of wildlife species. **The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is tasked with monitoring illegal trade in India.**

### Details:

- Under the new rules, owners and possessors of exotic animals and birds must register their stock with the Chief Wildlife Warden of their respective States.
- Officials of the Wildlife Department will prepare an inventory of such species and have the right to inspect the facilities of such traders to check if these plants and animals are being housed in appropriate conditions.
- Exotic live species would mean **animals named under Appendices I, II and III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) of Wild Fauna and Flora**. It will not include species from the Schedules of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
  - The CITES is part of a multilateral treaty that includes plants, animals and birds under varying categories of threat of extinction and which will be jointly protected by members of the [International Union for Conservation of Nature](#). **India is a signatory to the CITES.**

## Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

### 1. Hackers get data of 80,000 COVID-19 patients in Delhi

### Context:

- Hacking of the Delhi government's State Health Mission website.

### Details:

- Recently, the website of the Delhi State Health Mission ([dshm.delhi.gov.in](https://dshm.delhi.gov.in)) was taken down temporarily by a group of hackers.

- The group has claimed that it merely wanted to highlight the vulnerability of the data system and express its dissatisfaction with the government's approach towards healthcare personnel.

#### Concerns:

- Data of more than 80,000 corona positive patients in Delhi, recovered and active, could potentially be at risk as a result of the hacking. This could lead to **privacy concerns** for the patients.
- The hacking incident has brought to light the fact that **sensitive data was stored in the servers without sufficient security**.
- Given that the server is used by the Delhi government to investigate, report, and track the COVID-19 situation in Delhi, and the fact that a **hacker can edit, manipulate as well as misuse these data to make profits**, there are dire consequences to the entire Indian security. For instance, manipulating these data will cause miscalculations and inaccuracy in tracking COVID-19.

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: HISTORY

#### 1. The Mapillah uprising

##### Context:

- The recent controversy in Kerala over the making of a film on **Variyamkunnath Kunhamed Haji**, a leading figure of the **Mapillah rebellion of 1921**.

##### Background:

##### The revolt:

##### *Economic resentment:*

- The pre-British relations between landlords and tenants were based on a code that provided the tenants with a decent share of the produce.
- The British introduced **new tenancy laws** that tremendously favoured the landlords and instituted a far **more exploitative system** than before. The new laws deprived them of all guaranteed rights to the land and its produce and in effect rendered them landless.
- This change created **enormous resentment among the tenants against British rule**.

##### Immediate trigger:

- The immediate trigger of the uprising was the **Non-Cooperation Movement** launched by the Congress in 1920 in tandem with the Khilafat agitation.
- The anti-British sentiment fuelled by these agitations found fertile ground among the Muslim Mapillahs of south Malabar living in economic misery which they blamed in large part on British rule.



These movements acted as the spark to the Mapillah revolt **against the British rulers and their Hindu landlords.**

#### **Details:**

- There have been calls against the making of the film on Variyamkunnath Kunhamed Haji based on the arguments that he was the leader of the Mapillah rebellion which had led to **severe atrocities against many Hindu landlords.** The detractors have pointed out to the **religious undertones** of the movement and lamented its consequences.

**For more information on this, refer to:**

[CNA dated June 28, 2020](#)

- The author of the article argues against the monocausal explanation of historical events and states that important historical events always have multiple causes and do not occur in a social, economic, and political vacuum.

#### **Critical analysis of the revolt:**

- The fiery speeches by Muslim religious leaders that accompanied the Khilafat movement **added to the religious fervour** of an already desperate peasantry and fuelled their ire against the British and the Hindu landlords leading to the atrocities committed by a segment of the mobilised Mapillahs against Hindus.
- The fact that most of the landlords were Namboodiri Brahmins while most of the tenants were Mapillah Muslims compounded the problem.

#### **Significance of the revolt:**

- The author argues that the Mapillah rebellion of 1921 was one the greatest challenges to British rule between the great uprising of 1857 and the Quit India movement of 1942, and **contributed to the national resistance to British colonial rule.**

#### **Conclusion:**

- The author argues that the non-partisan analysis of the Mapillah rebellion of 1921 would bring to light the **multiple factors that contributed to the character of the movement.** These included **economic distress, anger against foreign rule** and the tenancy laws it instituted, **and religious zeal.**
- The author chooses to refer to the Mapillah rebellion as an agrarian revolt that simultaneously took on the garb of anti-colonialism and religious fanaticism.

### **Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**

#### **1. Letter and spirit**

##### ***Letter and spirit***

##### **Context:**

- Issuance of domicile certificates in Jammu and Kashmir.

### Background:

- The erstwhile State of J&K had gained special powers to define its ‘**permanent residents**’ and **restrict land, educational and employment rights** only to them.
- Subsequent to changes to Articles 370 and 35A in August 2019, in March 2020, the concept of “permanent resident of the State” was discontinued in J&K.
- As per the **new domicile rules**, those persons and their children who have resided for 15 years in J&K, or have studied for seven years and appeared in the Class X or XII exam in an educational institution in the UT, are eligible for grant of domicile.

For more information on this topic, refer to:

[CNA dated April 2, 2020](#)

### Significance of the domicile rules:

#### Setting right deprivations:

- New domicile rules for Jammu and Kashmir have brought succour and hope for a segment of its population that had to contend with fragmented citizenship rights.
  - Around two to three lakh people including **refugees from Pakistan, sanitary workers resettled from other parts of India were not classified as permanent residents**, leading to a **denial of opportunities** to them in education, employment and politics leading to gross injustice to this section of the society.
- It will help mitigate the **historical deprivation** of this segment of the population.

#### Economic development:

- Movement and settlement of people across political and natural borders have been a constant feature of progress.
- Movement into the region will be largely driven by economic reasons. **Economic growth would be aided by the flow of resources and people** into the relatively underdeveloped region.

#### Integration with India:

- The domicile rules which will help **increase the interaction between the region and the rest of India** will provide for opportunities for better understanding. This will **help the region integrate into the Indian Union not only politically but also psychologically**. This would also help India and the region **address the internal security issue of terrorism** which seems to have deprived a whole generation of the region of its share of peace and development.

### Concerns:

- There are concerns that the changes in domicile rules will lead to a **huge influx into the region** leading to a change in the demographic character of the region.
- There are concerns that there could be **dispossession of land and a shrinking of economic opportunities for local people**.

### Conclusion:

- There is a need to guard against politics hampering the prospects of growth and development in Jammu and Kashmir. There is a need to **guard against the politics based on the principle of nativism** while at the same time taking necessary measures to protect the region’s genuine interests.

## F. Prelims Facts

### 1. Thriving in seclusion

#### Hornbills:

- The hornbills build nests on tree cavities. Though the birds are **frugivores** that primarily eat fruits and berries, during breeding, the males also bring insects, worms, owl kills, giant squirrels and rats to meet the high protein requirement of the chicks.
- The major species of hornbills found in India include the **Malabar grey hornbill**, **Malabar pied hornbill** (both endemic to the Western Ghats), the **Great hornbill**, **Indian grey hornbill** and the **Narcondam hornbill**.

#### Narcondam hornbill:

- The Narcondam hornbill is an **endangered species and is endemic to the Narcondam Island in Andamans**. The dormant volcanic island of Narcondam is a protected habitat for the hornbills.

#### Threats:

- **Habitat destruction** remains the biggest threat to hornbills around the world.
- Narcondam hornbills faced the threat of extinction due to **habitat loss and hunting**. Being **endemic to an isolated, uninhabited island**, the Narcondam hornbill faces the threat of extinction in the event of a natural calamity causing a species wipe-out.

### 2. Rare biological phenomenon spotted in dragonflies

- The **Scarlet Skimmer (*Crocothemis servilia*)**, a species of dragonfly spotted in the **Kole wetlands, Kerala** has exhibited a rare biological phenomenon referred to as '**gynandromorphism**'.
  - Gynandromorphs are chimeric individuals **having both male and female tissues** and it is viewed by the scientific community as a genetic aberration.
- Gynandromorphism, though common in some arthropod taxa such as Crustacea and Arachnida, is **very rare in odonates** and only 30 individuals from seven families have been reported with the condition worldwide.
  - The Odonata is an order of flying insects that includes dragonflies and damselflies.
  - Odonates are aquatic or semi-aquatic as juveniles. Thus, adults are most often seen near bodies of water and are frequently described as aquatic insects. However, many species range far from water. They are carnivorous (or more specifically insectivorous) throughout their life, mostly feeding on smaller insects.
- Further research has to be undertaken to investigate the **influence of environmental factors** on this phenomenon of Gynandromorphism.

### 3. Russia agrees to speed up defence deals

- Russia has agreed to quickly address some urgent defence requirements sought by India.



- The long-pending deals for **AK-203 assault rifles** and **Ka-226T light utility helicopters** were discussed in a review of the India-Russia defence cooperation.
- In 2016, India and Russia signed an Inter-governmental Agreement (IGA) for the supply of five S-400 regiments. **The S-400 Triumf** is an **anti-aircraft weapon system** developed by Russia.

## G. Tidbits

### 1. Church moves SC, seeks to intervene in Sabarimala case

- Members of the Malankara Jacobite Syrian Church in Kerala have approached the Supreme Court for permission to intervene in the **Sabarimala review case before a nine-judge Constitution Bench**.
  - The nine-judge Bench is poised to decide “larger questions” of what constitutes **religious freedom under Article 25 of the Constitution**. The Bench will also determine whether the court can examine religious practices across multiple faiths and decide if they are really essential or not.
- The applicants claim that the extent of judicial review with regard to religious practices under Article 25 is very limited and therefore, the **religious denomination should have the right to determine whether a particular practice is an integral part of a religion**.

Also read: [Right to Freedom of Religion](#)

### 2. Russian firm to be probed over Arctic ‘dumping’

- **Increased developmental activity in the Arctic region** threatens to disturb the fragile ecosystem and affect the biodiversity of the region.
- There have been recent reports of **unauthorised dumping of liquid waste into the tundra** by a mining company operating in the region. Liquids used to process minerals were discharged from a holding reservoir into the surrounding areas.
  - There are concerns that the discharge of toxic substances could pose a threat to the nearby Kharayelakh river.
- Previously an **unprecedented fuel leak in the region** had sparked a state of emergency. More than 21,000 tonnes of diesel leaked into soil and rivers after a fuel reservoir collapsed at a power plant also near Norilsk.

### 3. Proof of planting trees must for availing govt. services in Odisha

- The Jajpur district administration in Odisha has made **planting trees a precondition for granting approval to licenses and government tenders**.
- Plantation, which has to be self-certified through photographic or video evidence, has been made mandatory for eight services including society registration, license for minor mineral, setting up crusher units, purchase of new vehicles and issuance of solvency certificate.
- People have been asked to choose any government land, school premises, temples, mutt or their own backyards to do the plantation before submission of applications.
- The Jajpur administration has stumbled upon the novel idea to **popularise plantation drive** by assigning specific number of trees to be planted against each license or service. The move aims to inculcate a practice whose outcome will be beneficial for the future generations.

#### 4. The mosquito buzz may get louder

- Every year, domestic breeding checkers, employed by the municipal corporations in Delhi, check whether their surroundings are conducive for mosquito breeding, slap fines if violations are observed and spray insecticides to limit **mosquitoes which act as carriers of a host of diseases**.
- This year, however, as a consequence of the **COVID-19 pandemic, which has diverted public health resources and made certain interventions more difficult**, such screening and preventive measures are lagging compared to previous years. Experts warn that the lack of attention and surveillance measures could lead to an **outbreak of vector-borne diseases** in the coming season.

### H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following statement/s is/are correct?

1. Narcondam hornbill is classified as endangered under the IUCN Red List.
2. Narcondam hornbill is endemic to the Narcondam Island in the Lakshwadeep Islands.

Options:

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

Answer:

Option a

Explanation:

- Narcondam hornbill is an endangered species and is endemic to the Narcondam Island in Andamans. The dormant volcanic island of Narcondam is a protected habitat for the hornbills.
- The Narcondam hornbill has the smallest home range out of all the species of Asian hornbills. Being endemic to an isolated, uninhabited island, the Narcondam hornbill faces the threat of extinction in the event of a natural calamity causing a species wipe-out.

Q2. Which of the following correctly describes the term 'gynandromorphism'?

- a. Condition in which a species individual has alternating male and female characteristics over its lifetime.
- b. Condition in which a species individual has both male and female tissues at the same time.
- c. Condition in which a species exhibits multi-habitat adaptation capabilities by morphological changes.
- d. Condition in which a species exhibits adaptability to drastic changes in climatic conditions.

Answer:

Option b

Explanation:

- The Scarlet Skimmer (*Crocothemis servilia*), a species of dragonfly spotted in the Kole wetlands, Kerala has exhibited a rare biological phenomenon referred to as 'gynandromorphism'.
- Gynandromorphs are chimeric individuals having both male and female tissues and it is viewed by the scientific community as a genetic aberration.

**Q3. The Kole wetland is situated in which of the following states?**

- a. Tamil Nadu
- b. Andhra Pradesh
- c. Kerala
- d. Karnataka

**Answer:**

**Option c**

**Explanation:**

- Thrissur Kole Wetlands is a wetland lying in Thrissur District in Kerala, India. It gives 40 percent of Kerala's rice requirement and acts as a natural drainage system for Thrissur city and Thrissur District.
- The Kole Wetlands is one of the largest, highly productive and threatened wetlands in Kerala and it comes in the Central Asian Flyway of migratory birds.

**Q4. Which of the following is the correct description of the S-400 Triumf?**

- a. Anti-submarine warfare helicopter
- b. Naval surveillance system
- c. Third generation Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle
- d. Anti-aircraft weapon system

**Answer:**

**Option d**

**Explanation:**

- The S-400 Triumf is an anti-aircraft weapon system developed by Russia.
- In 2016, India and Russia signed an Inter-governmental Agreement (IGA) for the supply of five S-400 regiments.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. In the light of the draft environmental impact assessment (EIA) notification, discuss the major concerns associated with the environmental clearance (EC) process propounded by it. Also, analyze the Environment Ministry's arguments for the changes. (15 marks, 250 words)
2. Increased developmental activity in the Arctic region threatens to disturb the fragile ecosystem and affect the biodiversity of the region. Examine. (10 marks, 150 words)

