

25 Jun 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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B. GS 2 Related

Category: EDUCATION

1. Education gap widened: UNESCO

Context:

According to a UNESCO's 2020 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report, COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities in education systems across the world.

Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report

- Developed by an independent team and published by UNESCO, the Education For All Global Monitoring Report published from 2002–2015, aimed to sustain commitment towards Education for All.
 - It published 12 Reports from 2002 until 2015.
 - It was then **renamed, and re-launched** under a new mandate as the **Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report**, UNESCO, whose principal role is to monitor progress towards the education targets in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.
- In line with its mandate, the 2020 GEM Report assesses progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on education and its ten targets, as well as other related education targets in the SDG agenda.
- The Report also addresses inclusion in education, drawing attention to all those excluded from education, because of background or ability.
- The Report is motivated by the call to ensure an inclusive and equitable quality education in the formulation of SDG 4, the global goal for education.
- The Report also explores the challenges holding the world back from achieving this vision and demonstrates concrete policy examples from countries managing to tackle them with success.
 -
 - These include differing understandings of the word inclusion, lack of teacher support, absence of data on those excluded from education, inappropriate infrastructure, persistence of parallel systems and special schools, lack of political will and community support, untargeted finance, uncoordinated governance, multiple but inconsistent laws, and policies that are not being followed through.

Findings of the report:

- About 40% of low- and lower-middle-income countries have not supported learners at risk of exclusion during this crisis, such as the poor, linguistic minorities and learners with disabilities.
- The report noted that efforts to maintain learning continuity during the pandemic may have actually worsened exclusion trends.
- During the height of school closures in April 2020, almost 91% of students around the world were out of school.
- While India has also used distance learning solutions for educational continuity, the digital divide lays bare the limitations of this approach.
- School closures have also interrupted support mechanisms from which many disadvantaged learners benefit.
 - For poor students who depend on school for free meals or even free sanitary napkins, closures have been a major blow.
- The report highlighted that, cancellation of examinations in many countries, including India, may result in scoring dependent on teachers' judgements of students instead, which could be affected by stereotypes of certain types of students.
- Higher drop-out rates are also a concern.
 - During an earlier Ebola epidemic in Africa, many older girls never returned to school once the crisis was over.

Conclusion:

In order to combat the situation, 17% of low and middle-income countries are planning to recruit more teachers, 22% to increase class time and 68% to introduce remedial classes when schools reopen. However, how such classes are planned and targeted will be critical to whether disadvantaged students can catch up.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. OBC panel gets 6-month extension

Context:

The Union Cabinet on has approved a six-month extension to the commission appointed to examine sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes.

Details:

- The commission had been appointed in October 2017 with the initial deadline of 12 weeks.
- The commission headed by retired Delhi High Court Chief Justice G. Rohini will have to submit its report by January 31, 2021.
- The commission was constituted under Article 340 of the constitution to examine the issue of Sub-categorization within other Backward Classes in the Central List.

- Article 340 of the Indian Constitution lays down conditions for the appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of the backward classes.
- The President may by order appoint a Commission consisting of such persons as he thinks fit to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes within the territory of India.
- The commission is looking into the issues of communities that were not getting the benefits of reservation.
- Sub categorization of the OBCs will ensure that the more backward among the OBC communities can also access the benefits of reservation for educational institutions and government jobs.

Read more about **Sub-Categorization within OBCs and Terms of Reference of the Commission.**

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Pakistan to remain on FATF 'greylist'

Context:

- The FATF plenary session decided to continue to keep all countries that were on the list under scrutiny for Terror Financing and Money Laundering until October 2020.

Read more on this topic covered in **27th January 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis.**

Details:

- At the FATF plenary, Pakistan was due for a decision on whether it would be kept on the “greylist” or downgraded to the blacklist for failing to meet the 27-point action plan on countering terror financing and anti-money laundering (CFT/AML) measures.
 - FATF, had given Pakistan two extensions to comply with its action plan since October 2019.
 - It has received another extension on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) “greylist”.
- Islamabad faced setbacks on other fronts, with the United States slamming its record on terrorism, including its failure to act against groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and received a U.S. veto against its joint effort with China to list an Indian engineer on the UN Security Council (UNSC)'s 1267 list.

2019 country report for terrorism (The U.S.A):

- The U.S. released its 2019 country report for terrorism, where the State Department said Pakistan had continued to serve as a safe haven for regional terrorist groups.
 - Pakistan allowed groups targeting Afghanistan, including the Afghan Taliban and affiliated HQN, as well as groups targeting India, including LeT and its affiliated front organizations, and JeM, to operate from its territory said the report.
 - It added that while Pakistan had taken modest steps in 2019 to tackle terror financing and restrain some India-focused terrorist organizations after the Pulwama attack in 2019, it still had not taken decisive action that would undermine the operational capability of India and Afghanistan focused terrorists.

- The report also took note of LeT chief Hafiz Saeed's arrest last year but pointed out that JeM founder Masood Azhar and Sajid Mir were at large. Azhar was designated a global terrorist by the U.N. in 2019.
- However, the report said Pakistan had played a "constructive role" in facilitating U.S. talks with the Taliban.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. RBI will supervise cooperative banks

Context:

An ordinance bringing all urban and multi-State cooperative banks under the supervision of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been approved by the Union Cabinet.

Details:

- Urban cooperatives and multi-State cooperative banks, which are 1,540 in number and have a depositor base of 8.6 crore have been brought under RBI supervision process, which is applicable to scheduled banks.
- Currently, these banks come under dual regulation of the RBI and the Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

Significance:

- The move to bring these urban and multi-State coop. banks under the supervision of the RBI comes after several instances of fraud and serious financial irregularities, including the major scam at the Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank.
 - The RBI was forced to supercede the PMC Bank's board and impose strict restrictions.
- The ordinance has been passed with a view to protect the depositors. With this, depositors will get more security.

Read more about Co-operative banks and PMC bank scam, covered in [27th September 2019 Comprehensive News Analysis](#).

2. RBI slams banks, NBFCs as digital loan agents flout code

Context:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has come down heavily on banks and non-banks as it found violation of fair practices code by digital platforms that act as an agency of these lenders to sell loans.

Details:

- The RBI said it found the platforms tend to portray themselves as lenders without disclosing the name of the bank/ NBFC at the back end as a result of which customers were not able to access grievance redressal avenues available under the regulatory framework.

- “Of late, there are several complaints against the lending platforms which primarily relate to exorbitant interest rates, non-transparent methods to calculate interest, harsh recovery measures, unauthorised use of personal data and bad behaviour,” RBI said.
- The RBI said it was concerned due to non-transparency of transactions and violation of guidelines on outsourcing of financial services and Fair Practices Code.

Measures taken:

- RBI has prescribed norms such as loan sanction letter to be issued to the borrower on the letter head of the lender concerned.
 - Immediately after sanction but before execution of the loan agreement, the sanction letter must be issued to the borrower on the letter head of the bank/ NBFC concerned.
- The lenders are told to disclose the names of all digital lending platforms, engaged as agents, on the websites of banks/ NBFCs.
- The RBI has instructed that a copy of the loan agreement along with a copy each of all enclosures quoted in the loan agreement be furnished to all borrowers at the time of sanction/ disbursement of loans.

3. CCEA nod for animal husbandry infra fund

Context:

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its nod to set up a ₹15,000 crore Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund.

Details:

- This Fund is expected to incentivize infrastructure investments in dairy, meat processing and animal feed plants.
- Eligible beneficiaries under the scheme include farmer producer organisations and MSMEs with a minimum 10% margin money contribution by them.

This topic has been covered in 24th June 2020 PIB Summary and Analysis. [Click here](#) to read.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. With space reforms, private sector to get level playing field

Context:

The Union Cabinet has approved the creation of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) to provide a level playing field for private companies to use Indian space infrastructure.

IN-SPACe:

- Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPAC) is the new body that the government has formed which will act as a regulator and whose rulings would be bound by both the space agency as well as private firms in the country.
- IN-SPACe will hand-hold, promote and guide the private industries in space activities through encouraging policies and a friendly regulatory environment.
- It is part of reforms aimed at giving a boost to private sector participation in the entire range of space activities.

Significance:

- India is among a handful of countries with advanced capabilities in the space sector and these reforms would allow the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to focus more on research and development activities, new technologies, exploration missions and human spaceflight programme.
- Some of the planetary exploration missions will also be opened up to private sector through an 'announcement of opportunity' mechanism.

NISL:

- New Space India Limited (NSIL) was incorporated to carry forward the industry production of space systems and the ISRO's efforts in realising Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV) from industry.
- It is the commercial arm of ISRO, which will be the interface to engage with startups and private companies for new applications and use the space infrastructure to build them
- NSIL would endeavour to reorient space activities from a "supply driven" model to a "demand driven" one, thereby ensuring optimum utilisation of the nation's space assets.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: GOVERNANCE

1. Signaling intent: On Government e-Marketplace (GeM)

Context

- The government's e-commerce platform has made it mandatory for sellers to specify the country of origin while registering new products on the portal.
- This comes against the backdrop of calls to boycott Chinese goods following border clashes between India and China in Ladakh.

Details

- The sellers who have already added their products on the marketplace have been asked to **update the country of the origin** and a warning has been issued stating that products will be delisted if the country of origin is not updated.
- In addition to the country of origin, the e-marketplace has a provision where **sellers can list the percentage of local content in products**.
- With this new feature, now, the country of origin, as well as the local content percentage, are visible in the marketplace for all items.

Extent of local content

- Class I local suppliers (local content greater than 50 per cent)
- Class II (local content greater than 20 per cent)
- Buyers can now reserve any bid for Class I local suppliers
- For bids below Rs 200 crore, only Class I and Class II, local suppliers will be eligible to bid, with Class I suppliers getting purchase preference.

Significance

- The decision has been taken to promote 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

'Make in India' attempt has been futile

- The government's attempts to raise the share of manufacturing in the economy through the 'Make in India' programme have so far failed to significantly boost investment in new, cutting-edge technology-driven or export-oriented industries and instead only **taken the country back to import substitution plants** making goods predominantly for domestic consumption.
- To that extent, the drive for self-reliance and greater localisation risks once again **eroding Indian industry's global competitiveness by placing a premium on 'Indianness' over quality or cost**.

Pharma Industries

- India is seen as a pharmacy hub of the world and manufacturers drugs which are affordable. But the Indian pharmacy Industry depends on China for about 70% of their requirements of bulk drugs and intermediates.
- For India to wean itself off these dependencies will take time.

Conclusion

- Attaining genuine self-reliance is a long and capital intensive process that would require far greater **investment in education, skill-building and infrastructure**.
- For now, policymakers have to tone down any trade-linked rhetoric and give diplomats and military negotiators the room to smoothen ties between India and China.
-

Government e Marketplace (GeM)

It is a platform which was launched in 2016 as an online, end to end solution for procurement of commonly used goods and services for all Central Government and State Government Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Units (PSUs) and affiliated bodies.

- The **goods procured by the Government range from** highly standardized goods like A4 printing paper, printing cartridges and electronic goods like printers and laptops to highly specialized goods like drilling equipment and medical equipment.
- Similarly, for **services, the spectrum ranges from** standard services such as security services, chauffeur services and gardening services to a more complex set of specialized services such as consulting services and engineering services.
- GeM aims to replicate the offline market on its online platform to create an open market that bring **together sellers across the board** ranging from established brands to MSEs, individual suppliers, suppliers of innovative products and services and artisans.
- GeM shall permit any seller, registered in India in accordance with prevalent laws and regulations, manufacturing or marketing genuine goods/ services to sell on GeM.
- The GeM platform shall be a trust based portal where the **buyer** shall hold the responsibility to ensure value for money and timely payment in any purchase made and the **seller** shall hold the responsibility to ensure the accuracy and integrity of all information shared, the quality of products and services sold and the timeliness of the delivery.
- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) comes under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Reason behind the GeM initiative

- Need for reform to bring consistency in public procurement
- Existing malpractices in the system due to buyer-supplier interaction

Significance

- GeM aims to enhance transparency, efficiency and speed in public procurement.

Category: HEALTH

1. The many questions about Favipiravir

Context

- Covid-19 has thrown many questions and the answers are still not available. It has not only exposed the dire situation of the public health infrastructure, but also the opacity with which drug/medical device approvals are given.
- Recently Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has **granted approval to Favipiravir** for the treatment of COVID-19 patients with mild or moderate symptoms

Favipiravir

- It is an antiviral given to inhibit viral replication. It is used as an anti-influenza drug.
- Originally it was manufactured by Japan's Fujifilm Toyama Chemical Ltd.

How Favipiravir works?

- Since the **novel coronavirus is an RNA virus**, studies have shown that favipiravir gets activated inside the cells and then gets incorporated into the viral RNA.
- Favipiravir inhibits the RNA-dependent RNA polymerase (RdRp) — an enzyme that allows the coronavirus to replicate inside host cells
- It restricts the multiplication of the virus in the body **reducing viral load**.

Which firms are manufacturing Favipiravir and what are the costs?

- Glenmark Pharmaceuticals has launched the drug under the brand name FabiFlu, making it the first oral Favipiravir-approved medication in India for the treatment of Covid-19.
- The firm has fixed its price at Rs 103 per tablet.

Side-effects

- Birth defects and liver damage.
- The drug should also be used with caution in patients with history of abnormalities in metabolism of uric acid or having gout.
- Gout is a common and complex form of arthritis
 - In severely ill patients, the toxic proteins — known as the cytokine storm — produced by the overreaction of the body's immune system inhibit the activity of the favipiravir-RTP.
 - The drug is ineffective in stopping this cytokine storm from damaging the organs.

Evidence-Based Medicine

- It requires the testing of pharmaceutical drugs through **Randomized Clinical Trials (RCT)** wherein one set of patients get a **placebo** (or an alternate therapy) and the other set of patients gets the **investigational drug**.
- Neither the doctors nor the patients know who gets what drug.
- If the set of patients that gets the **investigational drug shows a better outcome**, it can be presumed that the drug has a demonstrable therapeutic effect on the disease in comparison to the comparator. This is the gold standard for demonstrating the efficacy of a drug in treating a particular disease.
- The data collected from such clinical trials are usually published in a peer-reviewed journal where they are subject to scientific scrutiny.
- This system has worked during this pandemic to **disprove claims that hydroxychloroquine was useful in treating COVID-19**.

Concerns

1. No scientific consensus

- The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, to **sell generic versions of Favipiravir for the treatment of COVID-19**.
 - This drug, originally invented by a Japanese company, was meant to treat influenza.
 - After the outbreak of COVID-19, doctors in China and Russia started using it to treat COVID-19 patients although there is no scientific consensus on the efficacy of the drug.
2. As per Glenmark's filing with the Bombay Stock Exchange, the company has received "accelerated approval" from the DCGI for "restricted emergency use in India".
- On what basis did the DCGI grant approval?
 - Will the underlying data be made publicly available to the medical community?
 - While the **New Drugs and Clinical Trial Rules, 2019** allow the DCGI to grant approvals for the use of certain drugs based on approvals granted overseas, that does not mean they do not question whether the drug can be approved or not in India on the basis of scientific rationale.
- There is no information on the DCGI's website explaining the scientific basis of its approval of Favipiravir for COVID-19.
3. According to the **Clinical Trials Registry of India (CTRI)**, Glenmark's study was meant to be carried out on 150 patients at different hospitals with the aim of comparing Favipiravir with "standard care" provided to patients with mild or moderate COVID-19.
- The decision to enroll patients with "mild" COVID-19 is baffling given that **virtually all these "mild" cases often resolve themselves without any intervention**.
 - Further, the **CTRI** does not explain the nature of the "standard care" being provided to the patients. It is important to disclose this information from a scientific and ethical viewpoint.
 - If we do not know the treatment with which Favipiravir is being compared, how do we know if it is any better than perhaps a placebo?
4. Glenmark claims in a letter to the Bombay Stock Exchange that it was granted approval based on evaluation of data and expert opinion
- PubMed, a database that contains more than 30 million citations and abstracts of biomedical literature, lists a single study published in a journal called Engineering.
 - It shows that a group of Chinese investigators did an observational study on 80 patients and concluded that those who got the drug tended to have faster disappearance of virus and quicker improvement of shadows in their chest x-rays.
 - The study was not a randomised controlled trial and therefore, small size apart, had two serious flaws —
 - bias (the sample studied is not representative of the population it was drawn from or the population at large) and
 - Confounders (risk factors) (unable to control for all other factors that might differ between the two groups).

- Confounding leads to an error in the interpretation of a measurement.
- Thus a well-designed robust scientific study on the effectiveness and safety of this drug in COVID-19 patients is missing.

5. Subject Expert Committee (SEC)

Subject Expert Committee (SEC)

In 2012, the DCGI instituted a system of review by a Subject Expert Committee (SEC) to decide whether a new drug should be approved for the Indian market.

- The SEC was meant to have **external experts** who were specialists in the field of therapy being considered.
 - After a SEC approval, the **DCGI is required to take the final call** on whether to approve a drug.
 - Thereafter the information on which such decisions were made was required to be disclosed because the **Right to Information Act requires such a disclosure**.
 - However, in this case, the **minutes of the meetings, the composition of the SEC and the clinical trial results submitted to the SEC/DCGI are not available** on the DCGI's website.
 - A representative of Glenmark disclosed on a channel that the approval for restricted use was based on an **“early readout” from the study**; the study is expected to be completed in the coming weeks and months.
 - So, on what basis did the DCGI approve restricted use of this drug?
6. The drug is currently not approved in “any of the highly-regulated markets” like the US and Europe for any indication.
- It has been approved in China, Russia and Japan for the seasonal viral flu.

Conclusion

- A culture of secrecy around drug approvals serves no purpose except to benefit pharmaceutical companies.
- If the drug does not work as advertised, the regulator would be responsible for promoting irrational medicine.
- Therefore until the DCGI makes public the clinical information on the basis of which the accelerated approval has been granted along with the minutes of the SEC meeting, where this drug was approved, doctors and patients should be cautious about its usage.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. The U.S. trial at The Hague

Background

- Please read CNA 12th June 2020: Trump targets ICC with sanctions over Afghanistan war crimes case. [Click here](#)

USA's Arguments

- The U.S. has always refused to recognise ICC jurisdiction over U.S. personnel on the grounds that it is not party to the Rome Statute that underpins the court.
 - In 2002, the George W. Bush administration suspended its signature to the Statute
- S. Congress has also passed the **American Service-Members' Protection Act**, requiring the President to protect American forces from prosecution in The Hague court, besides extending such commitment to the troops of its allies.

Rome Statute

- On the other hand, the Rome Statute provides for the prosecution of crimes committed in the territory of any one of the 123 states-parties, **even if the accused come from a non-member nation.**
- This is the basis for the current investigation wherein Afghanistan and the three European nations, the location of the alleged crimes, are within the ICC's jurisdiction, even if the U.S. remains outside.

Category: DEFENCE

1. High-Altitude Warfare

Context

- The violent standoff between Indian and Chinese troops in Galwan Valley of Ladakh region has thrown the spotlight on high-altitude warfare and the challenges that troops face, particularly when advantageous positions on the heights are occupied by the other side.

How is high-altitude warfare fought?

- High-altitude warfare is fought keeping the terrain and weather in mind.
- The kind of infrastructure and training that the troops require for high-altitude warfare are key factors.
- The evolution of such warfare goes back a long way: European countries had mountain brigades in view of the kind of terrain prevalent in those countries.
- The harshness of the terrain calls for a specialised kind of training to prepare soldiers in terms of mindset and acclimatisation.

How is India equipped in such warfare?

- Generally, India is considered a hub of mountain warfare skills since most of the country's north and northeast requires such skills.
- The **troops** are imparted training in basic and advance training in mountaineering to make them equipped for mountain warfare
- **Ladakh Scouts** are considered the best in this kind of warfare.

- **Mountain chop**, a tactic involved in such warfare, evolved in India where the mountainous terrain is very difficult to scale.

Approaches to be employed

- The most difficult approaches where the enemy is likely to give the least resistance need to be used efficiently
- The mindset of the enemy sitting above needs to be assessed. Taking stock of the entire situation, one needs to find out the easiest approaches.

What are the challenges involved in warfare in a high-altitude place like Galwan Valley?

- A big factor is who has taken defensive positions and who is sitting on higher ground. Once troops are sitting on high ground, it becomes very difficult to dislodge them from there. In a place like Galwan Valley, which is absolutely barren, there is not much concealment.
- The soldier on high ground is absolutely stationary, which makes those on lower terrain easy targets; the enemy can pick them up one by one.
- Normally in mountain warfare, troops on lower ground use a combat ratio of 1:6, but in circumstances as in Galwan, it may go up to 1:10

How to overcome the vulnerability?

- Generally, mountain warfare is fought using the period of darkness to reach the opposing army, engage and overpower them before the first light of day.
- Without adequate trained troops who are well-versed with the terrain and are properly acclimatised, it is not an easy game

What are the other challenges faced by soldiers in high altitudes?

- The first major factor is acclimatisation since the oxygen supply reduces drastically.
- Next, the load carrying capacity of individuals reduces drastically.
- Things move very slow in the mountains and mobilisation of troops consumes time.
- Thus, time and place need to be kept on top priority when deciding where the troops have to be stationed and how they have to be mobilised.

What are the logistical challenges in this kind of warfare?

- One major challenge is that **weapons jam**, particularly in high-altitude areas.
 - When a soldier is at a height of 17,000 ft or above, it is very cold, and he needs to grease the weapons and clean the barrels at least once a week to ensure they function efficiently. But at the time of combat, this becomes difficult.
- **Vehicles do not start when fuel jams**. If the fuel is diesel, it won't ignite unless it is mixed with thinners or other chemicals to make them thin enough to fire the engine.

- For **communication equipment**, troops need to carry more batteries because they drain very quickly at high altitude. While a battery tends to last for 24 hours in the plains, it will drain in 1-2 hours in these severely cold areas .
- **Transport animals such as mules** need to be used to maintain adequate supplies, which is not an easy task.
- Weather constraints also play a major factor.

Planning has to be done in advance, with recesses carried out, which again is difficult in the mountains. There has to be a contingency plan to first identify the tactical points that need to be used in case of an assault.

What kind of training do Indian troops get in mountain warfare?

- First, the troops are **trained in skilled mountaineering techniques**, rock-craft as well as mountain craft. The training continues whenever the units are inducted.
- Then comes the **acclimatisation** to avoid non-battle, cold casualties. Almost all units have these trainers who keep troops well-equipped and efficient to meet any contingency.

F. Tidbits

1. India GDP to contract 4.5% on COVID-19: IMF

What's in News?

International Monetary Fund has said that key emerging market economies are taking a severe hit to GDP amid the COVID-19 pandemic, with India seeing the first contraction in decades.

- The updated World Economic Outlook shows India's GDP will fall 4.5% this year.
- The U.S. economy is set to contract 8% in 2020, while China fares slightly better, posting growth of 1%.
- Mexico will see a double digit decline of 10.5% while Brazil of 9.1%.
- Argentina is projected to fall 9.9%, with the country already in the middle of a massive debt crunch on top of the health and economic crises.
- During the global financial crisis in 2009, these emerging markets, along with China, were booming, supporting the global economy even as advanced nations faced severe recessions.

2. United Nations Public Service Day

- Every year on June 23rd, since 2002, United Nations Public Service Day is celebrated as a tribute to the people who are associated with public service in all the countries of the world.
- UN public service day is celebrated to acknowledge the creative achievements and contributions by the public service institutions. The aim is to acknowledge as well as the reward public service so that they continue to work effectively and responsibly in all countries.
- Theme for 2020: "Honouring the public servants who have been working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic".

G. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Koundinya wildlife sanctuary is also an Elephant Reserve.
2. It is the only sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh with a population of Asian Elephants.

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:

- Kaundinya Wildlife Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary and an elephant reserve situated in Andhra Pradesh.
- It is the only sanctuary in Andhra Pradesh with a population of Asian Elephants.

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to Bal Gangadhar Tilak:

1. He is the author of Geetarahasya.
2. He founded two newspapers – Kesari in English and Mahratta in Marathi.
3. He was one of the founders of the All India Home Rule League.

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

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Tilak founded two newspapers '**Kesari**' in Marathi and '**Mahratta**' in English. Both the newspapers actively propagated the cause of national freedom and stressed on making the Indians aware to be self-reliant.
- The two important books are written by Tilak are Gita Rahasya and Arctic Home of the Vedas.
- He was one of the founders of the All India Home Rule League.

Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to The Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA):

1. It is a regulatory mechanism that enables RBI to pass regulations and the Central Government to pass rules relating to foreign exchange in tune with the Foreign Trade policy of India.
2. Violation of FEMA is a criminal offence.
3. Enforcement Directorate is responsible for enforcement of the provisions of Foreign Exchange Management Act.

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

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) is a regulatory mechanism that enables RBI to pass regulations and the Central Government to pass rules relating to foreign exchange in tune with the Foreign Trade policy of India.
- This act seeks to make offenses related to foreign exchange civil offenses.
- Enforcement Directorate is responsible for enforcement of the provisions of Foreign Exchange Management Act.

Q4. Which of the following are literary works of Aurobindo Gosh?

1. Hour of God
2. Savitri
3. The Future Evolution of Man
4. Bhagavad Gita and Its Message

Choose the correct option

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 1, 2 and 4 only

- c. 2 only
- d. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: d

Explanation:

Aurobindo Gosh was an eminent nationalist, philosopher, yogi, guru and a poet.

Some of Aurobindo's many literary works:

- Bhagavad Gita and Its Message
- The Future Evolution of Man
- Savitri: A Legend and a Symbol
- Hour of God

Read more about [Aurobindo Gosh](#).

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. The GeM move to specify the country of origin while registering new products on the portal is at best symbolic and a cosmetic measure. Analyze. (10 Marks, 150 Words)
2. Use of drugs without Randomized Clinical Trials and scientific evidence could end up promoting widespread misuse of drug and a false sense of security amongst the population. Discuss the key Concerns associated with such approval by the regulatory bodies in India. (10 Marks, 150 Words)