

14 Aug 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS 1 Related

B. GS 2 Related

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Arunachal groups push for 6th Schedule status](#)
2. ['Consider more languages in govt.'](#)
3. [PM announces taxpayers' charter](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [Australia shares experience on 5G](#)
2. [UAE, Israel reach agreement to establish diplomatic ties](#)
3. [India announces \\$500 mn package for the Maldives](#)

C. GS 3 Related

INTERNAL SECURITY

1. [Ravi no-show at NSCN-IM informal talks](#)

D. GS 4 Related

E. Editorials

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Right by birth](#)

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Historic ratification](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [Independent but not alone](#)

F. Prelims Facts

G. Tidbits

1. [Amid COVID-19, an 'infrastructure census'](#)
1. ['Selling EVs sans battery compromises warranty'](#)

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Arunachal groups push for 6th Schedule status

Context:

Political parties and community-based groups are demanding for Arunachal Pradesh to be brought under the ambit of the Sixth Schedule or Article 371 (A) of the Constitution.

Details:

- There is a revival of the demand for two autonomous councils in Arunachal Pradesh.
 - The renewed demand is for Mon Autonomous Council (MAC) comprising Tawang, West Kameng and parts of East Kameng districts, and
 - Patkai Autonomous Council (PAC) comprising Tirap, Changlang and Longding districts.
- Political parties have been seeking the inclusion of Arunachal Pradesh in the Sixth Schedule for making the State's indigenous communities owners of all the natural resources instead of being protectors only.

Why is inclusion in the 6th Schedule being demanded?

- Arunachal Pradesh is under the Fifth Schedule that does not provide special rights for the indigenous communities, unlike the Sixth Schedule.
- While executive powers of the union extend in scheduled areas with respect to their administration in the 5th Schedule; the 6th Schedule areas remain within the executive authority of the state.
- While the 5th schedule envisages the creation of Tribal Advisory Council, the 6th Schedule provides for District Councils and Regional Councils with certain legislative and judicial powers.

6th Schedule:

- The Sixth Schedule consists of provisions for the administration of tribal areas according to Article 244 of the Indian Constitution.
- The Schedule currently includes 10 autonomous district councils (ADCs) in four northeastern States — Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.
- Along with ADCs, the Sixth Schedule also provides for separate Regional Councils for each area constituted as an autonomous region.

Note:

- Nagaland is governed by Article 371 (A), which says that no act of Parliament shall apply in the State in several areas unless the Nagaland Assembly so decides by a resolution.
- These include administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law and ownership and transfer of land and its resources.

2. 'Consider more languages in govt.'

Context:

Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde suggested that the government should consider amending the Official Languages Act of 1963 to:

- Include more vernacular languages in governance.
- Not just confine it to Hindi and English.

Background:

- The court was hearing an appeal filed by the Union of India challenging the legality of a Delhi High Court judgment to translate the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) notification of 2020 into all 22 vernacular languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- The high court had allowed the plea holding that EIA notification should be translated and published in all the scheduled languages.

Details:

- Scheduled languages are those languages that are listed in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution and are given official recognition and encouragement by the Central Government.
- However, all official communication and publication of rules and notifications by the Central Government are in Hindi and English.
 - As per Article 343 of the Constitution, the official language of the Union is Hindi along with English.
- Further, section 3 of the Official Languages Act states that Hindi and English shall be used for resolutions, general orders, rules, notifications, administrative or other reports made by the Central Government or any of its ministries or departments.

8th Schedule of the Constitution:

- The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution consists of 22 languages.
- Of these languages, 14 were initially included in the Constitution.
- The Sindhi language was added in 1967.
- Thereafter, three more languages viz., Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included in 1992.
- Subsequently, Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali were added in 2004.

3. PM announces taxpayers' charter

Context:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched a “Transparent Taxation — Honouring the Honest” platform that provides faceless assessment, faceless appeal and a taxpayers’ charter.

Details:

- Some of the reforms are:
 - Reduction in corporate tax from 30% to 22% for existing companies and from 25% to 15% for new manufacturing companies.
 - Abolition of the dividend distribution tax.
- Steps have been taken to bring in efficiency and transparency in the functioning of the Income Tax Department, including Document Identification Number (DIN) and pre-filing of income tax returns to make compliance more convenient.

How does it work?

- With the help of technology, the cases of scrutiny will now be allocated randomly to any official in any part of the country.
- The document identification numbers will be issued from the central database.
- A review of orders will also be done by another team at some other place, chosen randomly using data analytics and [artificial intelligence](#).
- The officials in the Directorate General of Income Tax (Investigation) and the Principal Commissioner of I-T/Chief Commissioner of I-T (TDS) will be the only competent authorities for approving survey actions to gather information for scrutiny and assessment.

Benefits:

- In the new system, the department would escape unnecessary litigation and the officials would get reprieve from the energy otherwise spent on transfers and postings.
- It seeks to eliminate corrupt practices by doing away with the territorial jurisdiction of income-tax offices.
- The platform would instil a sense of fairness and fearlessness in the taxpayers.
- The efforts are directed at making the tax system seamless, painless and faceless.
- The new facilities are in consonance with the government's motto of 'minimum government, maximum governance'.

Note:

- While the faceless assessment and taxpayers' charter has come into force, the faceless appeal system will be available from September 25, 2020, the birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyaya.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Australia shares experience on 5G

Context:

Comments by senior Australian High Commission official on cybersecurity cooperation between India and Australia.

Details:

- There is a huge increase in cybersecurity cooperation between India and Australia.
- The countries are sharing experiences on protecting critical infrastructure, including 5G networks.
- In June 2020 both countries had signed a cyber and cyber-enabled critical technology framework agreement along with the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP).
 - The [cyber] agreement sets out practical actions to enhance digital trade, harness critical technology opportunities and address cybersecurity challenges.
 - As part of this, the two countries have been increasing information sharing and stepping up cooperation.
- Another area which the two countries were exploring was of regulatory space, including Australia's encryption legislation, and how that could be used to prevent cyber-enabled crime.
- The categories of threats that the two countries are looking at are criminal groups, financial gain, sophisticated state-based actors and so on.

2. UAE, Israel reach agreement to establish diplomatic ties

Context:

The United Arab Emirates has become the first Gulf Arab country to reach a deal on normalising relations with Israel.

Details:

- The United Arab Emirates and Israel have agreed to establish full diplomatic ties as part of a deal to halt the annexation of occupied land sought by the Palestinians for their future state.
- The development caps years of discreet contacts between the two countries in commerce and technology.
- The so-called "Abraham Agreement", announced by United States President Donald Trump, secures an Israeli commitment to halt further annexation of Palestinian lands in the occupied West Bank.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has sought to build settlements on lands sought by the Palestinians and embraced a Trump proposal that would allow him to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank while granting Palestinians limited autonomy in other areas.
- For the UAE, it further polishes its international campaign to be seen as a beacon of tolerance in West Asia despite being governed by autocratic rulers.
- Delegations would meet to sign deals on direct flights, security, telecommunications, energy, tourism and health care. The two countries also will partner on fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It is believed that opening direct ties between two of the Middle East's most dynamic societies and advanced economics will transform the region by spurring economic growth, enhancing technological innovation and forging closer people-to-people relations.

3. India announces \$500 mn package for the Maldives

Context:

Responding to a request from the Government of Maldives, India has announced its support in the implementation of the Greater Male Connectivity project (GMCP in the Maldives).

Details:

- The financial package comprises of a new Line of Credit (LoC) of USD 400 million and a grant of USD 100 million.
- New connectivity measures for the Maldives, including air, sea, intra-island and telecommunications, have been announced by India.
 - It is an effort to help Maldives deal with the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Among the initiatives announced are an air connectivity bubble for travel, a direct ferry service, a submarine cable for telecom connectivity and assistance for GMCP.
- GMCP would be the largest civilian infrastructure project in the Maldives.
 - GMCP will consist of a number of bridges and causeways to connect Male to Villingili, Thilafushi and Gulhifahu islands.
 - It will take much of the pressure off the main capital island of Male for commercial and residential purposes.

Significance:

- The President of Maldives, thanking India, termed the assistance, a landmark moment in Maldives-India cooperation.
- When completed, the project would render the Chinese-built Sinemale Friendship bridge connecting Male to two other islands insignificant in comparison.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY

1. Ravi no-show at NSCN-IM informal talks

This issue has been covered in [12th August 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis](#).

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Right by birth

Context:

- Supreme Court observations regarding the **provisions of the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005**.

Background:

Mitakshara law:

- Mitakshara is one of the schools belonging to Hindu law dealing with property rights and succession. **Mitakshara law** is still in practice across most of India except for West Bengal and Assam where the **Dayabhaga system** is practiced.
 - **The Mitakshara is a legal treatise on inheritance, written by Vijnaneshwara**, a scholar in the Western Chalukya court in the 12th century.
- Mitakshara law provides **the principle of division of ancestral property held by the Hindu joint family**. Partition of such landholding among offsprings is possible even with the father still living, unlike the Dayabhaga system.
- As per the law, the **right to Hindu joint family property is by birth**. So, a son immediately after birth gets a right to the property. The Mitakshara School of coparcenary **recognizes the birthright of son, son's son, son's son's son**.
- The **system of devolution of property is by survivorship**. The share of coparceners in the joint family property is not definite or ascertainable, as their shares are fluctuating with births and deaths of the coparceners.

Hindu Succession Act, 1956:

- The **Mitakshara School of Hindu Law was codified as the Hindu Succession Act, 1956**.
- The Hindu Succession Act, 1956 **only recognised males as legal heirs**.

Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005:

- The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 is an amendment to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956.
- The amended Hindu Succession Act **gives daughters equal rights to ancestral property**.

- The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 aimed to **remove gender discriminatory provisions regarding property rights in the Hindu Succession Act, 1956** by balancing the property rights of male and female siblings.
- The Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 had a **retrospective effect** with the provision that partitions or testamentary disposition that had taken place prior to December 20, 2004, would remain valid and unaffected by the change. This led to the interpretation that the daughters' coparcenary rights, being prospective, would not come into effect unless both the coparcener father and his daughter were alive on September 9, 2005- the date the law came into effect. This interpretation was upheld by the Supreme Court in its 2015 judgment in the **Prakash and Others vs. Phulavati case**.

Details:

- The Supreme Court has recently held that a **Hindu woman's right to be a joint heir to the ancestral property is by birth** and does not depend on whether her father was alive or not when the law was enacted in 2005.
- The court has recognised that the 2005 amendment conferred **equal status as a coparcener on daughters in Hindu families governed by Mitakshara law**, and this right accrued by birth.

For more details on this, refer to:

[CNA dated August 12, 2020](#)

Significance of the verdict:

Upholding the spirit of the 2005 amendment:

- The decision of the Supreme Court corrects an **anomaly in the interpretation of the 2005 amendment to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956**. Though the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 took reformatory steps towards ending gender discrimination with respect to property inheritance, the wrong interpretations of its provisions had disabled many Hindu women to claim ancestral property.
- By locating the origin of the coparcenary right in one's birth, the SC's decision has allowed the **application of this prospective legislation to be retroactive**.
- The SC judgment has sought to give full effect to the reformatory intent of the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 by setting at rest doubts arising from varying interpretations.

Gender equality:

- SC's decision on the coparcenary rights of women is in line with the aim of ending gender discrimination. The judgment helps uphold the daughter's rights as being equal to that of a son and **endorses gender equality**.
- This is in consonance with the [right of equality](#) as enshrined under **Article 14, 15, & 21 of the Constitution of India**.

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Historic ratification

Context:

- Ratification of Convention no.182 of the International Labour Organization by Tonga.

Background:

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182):

- The Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, known in short as the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, was adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1999 as ILO Convention No 182.
- It is one of eight ILO fundamental conventions.

Eight core International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions:

- The Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
- The Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- The Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- The Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- The Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- The Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
- The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

- Under Convention No 182, a country commits itself to taking immediate action to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labour.
- Convention 182 prohibits the sexual exploitation of children, trafficking, deployment in armed conflict and other conditions that compromise their overall well-being.

Details:

- Recently, Tonga formally deposited the ratification instruments for the ILO Convention No 182.
- This marks a historic event as it is the first time for an International Labour Convention to be ratified by all member states. This marks the first universal ratification of a global labour standard.
- India ratified Convention 182 and the instrument prescribing the minimum age of work for children in 2017. This signals India's commitment to eliminate child labour.

For more information on this issue, refer to:

[CNA dated June 14, 2017](#)

Significance:

- The Convention no 182 complements the ILO's efforts under the 1973 Minimum Age Convention to prevent the employment of children below a lower age threshold.
 - The ILO Convention no 138, concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, requires the ratifying states to pursue a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work.

- Under the influence of Convention no 182 and no 138, millions of young boys and girls have been rescued from hazardous conditions of work. Subsequently, there has been a significant increase in enrolments in primary education.
- The ILO conventions in general provide the necessary framework to counteract the predominance of informality in the conditions of work.

Challenges:

- Despite the impressive progress being made in the elimination of child labour, significant challenges remain.
 - An estimated 152 million are trapped in child labour and 72 million of them are engaged in hazardous work. This would entail significant ground to be covered to achieve the ambitious goal of total abolition of child labour by 2025.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to undo the recent gains. COVID-19 pandemic has led to widespread job losses, deterioration in conditions of work, decline in household incomes and temporary school closures. These could lead to an increase in child labour.

Additional information:

The [United Nations General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#) has unanimously adopted a resolution declaring 2021 as the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour and has asked the International Labour Organization to take the lead in its implementation.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Independent but not alone

Context:

- The article authored by Ben Wallace, the **United Kingdom's Secretary of State for Defence** discusses the historic as well as contemporary defence relations between India and the United Kingdom.

Details:

Historic ties:

- India played a big role in the Second World War. **Indian soldiers were involved** in British operations in Asia, Africa, the Mediterranean as well as the Pacific region.
- Indians formed the largest all-volunteer force in the world, with over 2.5 million fighting in Europe, North Africa, Singapore, Hong Kong and, Burma. India **also provided material resources** for the war effort in the form of coal, iron ore and steel. Indian non-combatants secured the supply lines for the British war efforts.

Contemporary ties:

- India and the U.K. Armed Forces exercise together biannually.
 - The joint **army Ajeya Warrior** biennial exercises have been held since 2005 at battalion-level strength.

- The joint **navy Konkan annual exercises** being held since 2004, include destroyers/frigates in ship-to-ship passage exercises.
- The joint **air Indradhanush exercises**, run since 2006 and include modern combat aircraft.
- There is **Defence and International Security Partnership** in the form of **collaboration in jet engine technology and cyber technology**.

For more information on this topic, refer to:

[CNA dated Jan 18, 2020](#)

- Seven Royal Navy vessels operate in the Western Indian Ocean.

For more information on this topic, refer to:

[CNA dated Jan 20, 2020](#)

- The **Atmanirbhar Bharat vision** of India can be supplemented by the **Global Britain vision** to ensure **collaboration in the area of defence modernization and maritime technology**.
- Contemporary shared challenges include the current COVID-19 pandemic, piracy, extremism and sub-conventional warfare.

Conclusion:

- Given the shared values and commitments to justice, stability and free markets, there is immense potential for India-U.K. partnership to grow.

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

1. Amid COVID-19, an 'infrastructure census'

- The Pune rural administration has carried out a gap analysis and decided on an innovative infrastructure census to plan rural works in a transparent manner while also coping with the pandemic.
- The rural infrastructure development works have kept its pace in Pune's rural areas under the APJ Abdul Kalam PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) initiative.
- After the gap survey, an online system was created on the Zilla Parishad (ZP) website where members can log in with their mobile number.
- Members can click and see all projects proposed by the gram panchayat and add new projects which may not have been set by the gram panchayat in their infrastructure census.
- Based on the level of priority, works will come before the subject committee at the ZP as a neat list, thus helping the committee in approving the budget.
- The PURA system will eventually transform into a dashboard showing the status of public works suggested by the Zilla Parishad members.

2. 'Selling EVs sans battery compromises warranty'

What's in News?

Mahindra Electric, a market leader in battery-powered electric vehicles (EVs), has questioned the Centre's decision to allow the sale and registration of EVs without batteries.

- It has said that the move would end up compromising the warranty that EV manufacturers provide.
- The Centre's move is aimed at cutting the cost of electric two- and three-wheelers.
 - Batteries account for about 30-40% of the vehicle's cost.
- Concerns have been raised stating that the move has not been thought through and the industry has not been consulted.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. 'Island of Crete' is located in:

- a. Eastern Mediterranean Sea
- b. South China Sea
- c. Indian Ocean
- d. Black Sea

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: a

Explanation:

Crete is the largest and most populous of the Greek islands. It is located in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea.

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to African Swine Fever:

1. It is a respiratory disease of pigs.
2. It is caused by type A influenza virus.
3. It does not affect humans and spreads from animals to other animals only.

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

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

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: c

Explanation:

- African Swine Fever (ASF) is different from swine flu. The virus does not affect people and there is no impact on human health.
- Swine influenza or swine flu is a respiratory disease of pigs, which is caused by type A influenza virus.

- ASF is a severe viral disease that affects wild and domestic pigs typically resulting in an acute haemorrhagic fever.
- ASF is caused by a large DNA virus of the Asfarviridae family.

Q3. Nyishi tribes belong to which state?

- Madhya Pradesh
- Assam
- Arunachal Pradesh
- Manipur

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Nyishi Tribes (also called Bangni) are the tribal people of eastern Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh.
- Nyishi is a Scheduled Tribe.

Q4. 6th Schedule of Indian Constitution consists of provisions for the administration of tribal areas in which of the following states?

- Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura
- Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura
- Assam, Mizoram, Manipur and Tripura
- Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Manipur

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: a

Explanation:

The Sixth Schedule consists of provisions for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. The recent Supreme Court decision on the coparcenary rights of women with respect to inheritance is in line with the spirit of gender equality as espoused in the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act of 2005. Comment. (10 marks, 150 words)(GS paper 2/Polity and Governance)
2. Discuss how the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to undo the recent gains made in reducing child labour in India. Also suggest necessary measures to address this threat. (10 marks, 150 words)(GS paper2/Social issues)

