

# 16 Aug 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **A. GS 1 Related**

#### *SOCIAL ISSUES*

1. [Govt. may review the age of marriage: PM](#)

### **B. GS 2 Related**

#### *HEALTH*

1. [‘Digital Health Mission will liberate citizens’](#)

#### *POLITY AND GOVERNANCE*

1. [Enact law to bar criminals from polls: HC](#)

### **C. GS 3 Related**

#### *HEALTH*

1. [Govt. think tank flags chemical industry’s infra shortcomings](#)

### **D. GS 4 Related**

### **E. Editorials**

#### *INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS*

1. [How will the Israel-UAE pact impact the Gulf?](#)

#### *POLITY AND GOVERNANCE*

1. [The verdict on women’s right to property](#)

#### *INTERNAL SECURITY*

1. [Hurdles to Naga peace](#)

### **F. Tidbits**

1. [Bengal mulls ‘industry’ tag for logistics](#)
2. [Arunachal forms panel for autonomy demands](#)

### **G. Prelims Facts**

1. [Dimming star](#)
2. [The council of elders](#)
3. [Fifty years ago, when the black hole whispers were first plotted](#)

### **H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions**

### **I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions**

## A. GS 1 Related

### Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

#### 1. Govt. may review the age of marriage: PM

##### Context:

- The Indian Prime Minister has stated in his Independence Day speech that the government may take a **relook at the age of marriage of women.**

##### Background:

- The **Budget Speech of 2020 proposed the setting up of a task force to look into the issue of age of a girl entering motherhood** to help lower maternal mortality rates and malnutrition levels. In June 2020, the government announced a **10-member panel** for this purpose.
- The committee has missed its July 31 deadline to finalise its report and give recommendations.

##### Details:

- When a girl is married too early and has a child before the age of 20 years, available evidence highlights the **detrimental effect it has on the health and growth of the baby as well as the health of the mother.**
  - Scientific studies have shown that children born to adolescent mothers (10-19 years) were more likely to be **stunted (shorter for their age)** than those born to young adults (20-24 years), and adult mothers.
  - Children born to adolescent mothers also had higher prevalence of **low weight** as compared to adult mothers.
- Given the relation between age of a girl entering motherhood and the age of a girl at marriage, the government has indicated its willingness to take strong decisions about the age of marriage of girls.
- **Increasing age at first marriage, age at first birth, can be a promising approach to improve maternal and child nutrition.**

##### Counter arguments:

- The National Coalition Advocating for Adolescent Concerns has asserted that increasing the legal age of marriage for girls will only expand the number of married persons deemed underage and criminalise them and may **render underage married girls without legal protection.**
- There are also arguments that the **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006** instead of curbing child marriages, has only played as a weapon in the hands of parents to punish their daughters for elopement and is used in conjunction with other laws to punish boys in self-arranged marriages.
- The reasons for early marriage vary across the country. The issue of poor nutritional status in teenage mothers is also due to poverty and lack of safety driving early marriage in girls.

- Some have argued that **lack of proper education, poor economic status among teenage mothers also contribute to poor nutritional outcomes** for the mother and child and emphasize the need to act on these factors first before lowering the marriage age.

### Way forward:

#### **Focus on empowerment:**

- While legal enactment to prevent child marriages is necessary, there is also the need to **simultaneously work towards empowering the girls** by ensuring education, ensuring economic and social empowerment of women and girls.
- There is the need for well resourced initiatives aimed at **increasing girls' access to education and health, create enabling opportunities for economic independence of the girls**, which will result in empowerment of the girls. This will not just delay marriage but lead to a long term, positive health and education outcomes.

## B. GS 2 Related

### **Category: HEALTH**

#### **1. 'Digital Health Mission will liberate citizens'**

##### Context:

- The Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech has stated the government's intention to implement a **National Digital Health Mission (NDHM)**.

##### Background:

- The **National Health Policy (NHP) 2017** had laid significant emphasis on leveraging digital technologies for enhancing the efficiency effectiveness of all healthcare delivery services.

##### Details:

- Under the National Digital Health Mission, every Indian will be given a digital health ID which will contain information regarding disease, medical reports, medicine prescribed and consultant doctor details of a person.
- **The National Health Authority (NHA)**, which runs the **Ayushman Bharat** Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, would be designing and implementing the NDHM.
- While the core systems of NDHM like Health ID, Digi-Doctor and Health Facility Registry shall be owned, operated and maintained by the Government of India, **Private stakeholders will be given an equal opportunity to integrate** with the core system and create their own products.
- The NDHM would be a **voluntary programme**.

##### Significance:

#### **Patient-centric healthcare:**

- The National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) aims to empower the citizens and make the **health care system more patient centric**.
- The system will lead to **convenience for the patient**, given that the patient will not need to store and carry old records. The digital access to patient data can lead to more **effective diagnosis**.
- The digital data will also help in **providing prompt and accurate treatment**, especially in emergencies by avoiding repetition of medical history taking and unwarranted tests.

#### **Affordability:**

- Digital health can help ensure the **delivery of health services to a large population at affordable costs**.

#### **Improved accessibility:**

- NDHM will help improve access by providing a big boost to consultation through **telemedicine with specialist doctors for patients in smaller towns and remote locations**.
- The introduction of telemedicine and e-pharmacy will bring in **more inclusivity**. NDHM can help provide quality healthcare to rural masses and bridge the divide between urban and rural India.
- It will lead to quality care and better access to healthcare facilities and doctors.

#### **Quality healthcare:**

- Providing a unique identification to doctors as well as health facilities can lead to streamlining several **issues of quality and accountability**.

#### **Integrating the stakeholders:**

- The NDHM will help revitalize India's healthcare delivery system. The NDHM will **help reduce the gap among stakeholders, such as doctors, hospitals and other healthcare providers**, by connecting them in an integrated digital health infrastructure.

#### **Data value:**

- The use of **machine learning and artificial intelligence techniques to analyse the data generated** from the records will help learn disease patterns, predict the onset of ailments and suggest seasonal outbreaks, bringing efficiencies and effectiveness in healthcare.

#### **Impetus to entrepreneurship:**

- The NDHM brings a huge opportunity for digital health start-ups to work with providers and insurers to help build the continuum of patient centric care. **NDHM provides opportunities for innovation in the healthcare sector**.

#### **Challenges:**

##### **Implementational challenges:**

- To achieve the proposed shift in the storage and retrieval of medical records in the country, the **digital integration of interfaces** of various stakeholders in the healthcare sector will have to be achieved.

- Given the large participation of the private sector in the healthcare delivery system in India, the challenge would be to bring the private health care sector under the NDHM and ensure both reliability and quality of the information recorded.
  - **Currently, 66 percent of treatment of all ailments is met by private hospitals and clinics** (as per NSS 75th Round: Key Indicators of Social Consumption in India: Health, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, 2017-18).
  - A large share of diagnostic centres and pathology labs are run by the private sector.

#### **No digital penetration:**

- The low penetration of digital technology in rural areas will be a challenge in ensuring the potential of inclusivity and accessibility offered by NDHM.

#### **Data privacy:**

- Data privacy and security issues would be a prime concern in the NDHM.
- Dealing with ethical issues, **breach of privacy**, and dealing with social stigma are significant challenges for the NDHM.

#### **Public health infrastructure:**

- **The digital health mission must be backed up by high-quality public health infrastructure.** The absence of a robust public health infrastructure will rob the NDHM of its potential benefits.
- The biggest hurdle for NDHM is the **meagre health budget of India.**
- Currently, total health expenditure (both private and public) in India is just 3.6 per cent, while public spending on health is just above 1 per cent of the country's GDP, which is a low compared to the countries that have some of the best digital health systems in the world.

## **Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**

### **1. Enact law to bar criminals from polls: HC**

#### **Context:**

- The Madras High Court has directed the Central government to explain in two weeks as to why the centre should not **enact a law prohibiting people with criminal background from contesting in parliamentary, Assembly and local body elections.**

#### **Background:**

- The analysis carried out by the **Association for Democratic Reforms** has revealed that 43% Members of Parliament had declared criminal cases pending against them while 29% of the legislators were facing serious criminal cases.

#### **Details:**

- Recognizing the increasing criminalization of politics and the threat posed by it, the Madras HC has stressed on the need to cleanse the system.
- Recognizing that **measures against the criminalization of politics can succeed only when political parties do not admit criminals in their parties** and given the reluctance of the parties to do so, the Madras HC has called on the Central government to come out with comprehensive legislation to prohibit persons with criminal background from contesting elections.

For more information on the issue of criminalization of politics refer to: [CNA 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020](#).

## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: ECONOMY

#### 1. Govt. think tank flags chemical industry's infra shortcomings

##### Context:

- Report prepared by the **Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC)**.
  - The Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) is an autonomous technology think tank **under the Department of Science & Technology (DST)**, Government of India.

##### Details:

- The report flags the **lack of technology, plants and infrastructure in the chemical industry of India to manufacture key chemicals in a cost effective manner**.
  - Solvent and chemicals manufacturing costs in India are over 15% more than China.
- **India depends on China for 67% of chemical intermediates and API that it needs to manufacture drugs and export**. The United States and Italy are the other countries that India depends on for API.
- The report underlined that India had nearly stopped manufacturing several key active pharmaceutical ingredients (API).

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. How will the Israel-UAE pact impact the Gulf?

##### Context:

- The recently signed **deal to normalize relations between the United Arab Emirates and Israel**.

For more information on this issue refer to: [CNA 14<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020](#).

## Background:

### Conflicts:

- Arab-Israeli ties have historically been conflict-ridden.
- Arab countries, including Egypt, Transjordan, Syria and Iraq, fought their first **war with Israel in 1948**. The war ended with Israel capturing more territories, including West Jerusalem, than that proposed by the UN Partition Plan.
- Israel and Arab states have also fought three more major wars — **the 1956 Suez conflict, the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur War**.
  - In the 1967 war Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt, East Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria.
- Arab countries had declared their intentions of having **no peace with Israel, no talks with Israel and not granting recognition to Israel**.

### Attempts at reconciliation:

- **The Camp David Accords of 1978** was a watermark in setting right Arab-Israel relations. In **1979, Israel and Egypt concluded a peace treaty**, as part of which Israel withdrew from Sinai in return for Egyptian recognition.
- **In 1994, Jordan became the second Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel**.
- Following the **Oslo Accords**, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) recognised Israel and was allowed to form the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza.

### Details:

- The UAE and Israel would establish **formal diplomatic relations** and in exchange, Israel would suspend its plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.
- As part of the deal, **bilateral agreements** regarding investment, tourism, direct flights, security, telecommunications, technology, energy, healthcare, culture, the environment, would also be considered.

### Causative factors:

#### Decreasing enmity:

- The old enmity between Arab countries and Israel has dissipated. The Sunni Arab kingdoms in the Gulf region such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE had developed backroom contacts with Israel over the past several years.

#### Antipathy towards Iran:

- One of the major factors that seem to have brought Israel and The UAE closer has been their **shared antipathy towards Iran**.
- The current U.S. administration seems to have played a role in getting the two sides together.

### Significance:

### **Breakthrough in Arab-Israel relations:**

- This development marks a historic breakthrough in Arab-Israel relations.
- **The UAE is only the third Arab country and the first in the Gulf region to establish diplomatic relations with Israel.**
- If more countries in the Gulf follow the UAE's lead, it would open a new chapter in Arab-Israel ties and bring Peace to the region.

### **Chance for peace:**

- Israel's plan to annex the West Bank would have drastically changed the status quo in the Palestine issue and would have completely eliminated the possibility of a **two-state solution**. The UAE-Israel agreement seems to have averted such a scenario.

### **Concerns:**

#### **Geopolitical implications:**

- The Saudi bloc, consisting of Egypt, the UAE, Bahrain and others, see their interests being aligned with that of the U.S. and Israel, while Turkey and Iran are emerging as their rival bloc.
- The agreement between The UAE and Israel could **further sharpen divisions in the region**.
- The tension between the countries could only further **deteriorate the peace and security in the region**.

#### **The Palestinian cause:**

- Unlike the past two Arab-Israeli peace agreements, Palestinian concerns are not considered in the current agreement.

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

#### **1. The verdict on women's right to property**

For detailed information on this topic refer to: [CNA 14<sup>th</sup> Aug 2020](#).

### **Category: INTERNAL SECURITY**

#### **1. Hurdles to Naga peace**

For detailed information on the Naga issue refer to: [CNA 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2019](#).

## **F. Tidbits**

#### **1. Bengal mulls 'industry' tag for logistics**

- The West Bengal government is contemplating to **grant industry status to the logistics sector**. This would aid the seamless development of infrastructure projects in the state. The conversion of agricultural land to develop logistics-related infrastructure will become easier.
- The State is also working on a logistics policy.



- The Union government has been formulating a **national policy** aiming to **reduce logistics cost from the present 14% of the Gross Domestic Product to less than 10% by 2022.**

## 2. Arunachal forms panel for autonomy demands

- The Arunachal Pradesh government has recently formed a nine-member committee to discuss the issue of creation of **two autonomous councils in the State.**
- The demands are for **Mon Autonomous Region and Patkai Autonomous Council.**
- Larger **ethnic groups such as the Nyishi and Galo** inhabiting the central parts of Arunachal Pradesh have expressed concern over the demands.
- **Arunachal Pradesh is under the 5th Schedule.**

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. Dimming star

- **Betelgeuse is an aging, red supergiant star.**
- Betelgeuse is the **second brightest star in the constellation Orion.**

### 2. The council of elders

- **A Loya jirga is a type of tribal council in Afghanistan.** It is basically a gathering of elders.
- The Loya Jirga of approximately 3,200 representatives from various parts of Afghanistan, including **Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks**, met recently on the issue of Intra-Afghan negotiations.

### 3. Fifty years ago, when the black hole whispers were first plotted

- Gravitational waves are disturbances in the curvature of space-time, generated by accelerated masses and propagate as waves outward from their source at the speed of light.
- **US based Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO)** and the **European-based Virgo detectors** are involved in the observation of gravitational waves.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

1. Which of the following tribes are predominantly found in the North eastern states of India:

1. Nyishi
2. Galo
3. Kuki
4. Konyak
5. Rengma

Options:

- a. 1,2 and 3 only
- b. 3,4 and 5 only
- c. 1,3 and 5 only
- d. 1,2,3,4 and 5

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- Nyishi and Galo are basically found in Arunachal Pradesh. Kuki tribe is predominantly found in Manipur while the Konyak and Rengma are mostly from Nagaland.

**2. Article 129 of the Indian Constitution deals with which of the following provisions?**

- a. Advisory jurisdiction of the Supreme Court
- b. Contempt power of the Supreme Court
- c. Judicial predominance in appointment process
- d. Provisions of judicial review.

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- Article 129 declares the Supreme Court a court of record and it further provides that the Supreme Court shall have all the powers of such a court including the power to punish for contempt of itself.

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

- 1. Godavari's origin is at Triambakeshwar.
- 2. Pranhita is the largest tributary of the Godavari
- 3. The Jayakwadi dam is built across the Godavari

**Options:**

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

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- The Godavari is India's second longest river after the Ganga. Its source is in Triambakeshwar, Maharashtra.
- The major the left bank tributaries of Godavari include the Pranhita, Indravati and Sabari River covering nearly 59.7% of the total catchment area of the basin and the right bank tributaries Pravara, Manjira, Manair together contributing 16.1% of the basin.
- Pranhita is the largest tributary covering about 34% of its drainage basin. Indravati is the 2nd largest tributary.
- Jayakwadi dam, located near Paithan, is one of the largest earthen dams in India.

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

1. T cells are developed in the thymus gland.
2. T cells are a type of leukocyte.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- A T cell is a type of lymphocyte, which develops in the thymus gland and plays a central role in the immune response. T cell is a type of leukocyte (white blood cell).
- T cells are one of the major components of the adaptive immune system. Their roles include directly killing infected host cells, activating other immune cells, producing cytokines and regulating the immune response.
- T cells are one of two primary types of lymphocytes—B cells being the second type—that determine the specificity of an immune response to antigens (foreign substances) in the body.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. The proposed National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) has several associated benefits as well as challenges. Analyze. (15 marks, 250 words)(GS Paper 2/Health)
2. Increasing the age at first marriage for women can be a promising approach to improve maternal and child nutrition and health. Examine. Suggest suitable measures in this direction. (10 marks, 150 words)(GS Paper 1/Social Issues)