

# 17 Sep 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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*Nothing here for today!!!*

## B. GS 2 Related

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. Maldives defends ties with India

##### Context:

The Maldives' Foreign Minister has said that the India-Maldives connection indicates a heart-to-heart relationship. The remarks come amidst protests speculating foreign military presence in Maldivian soil.

##### Details:

- During President Yameen's time in office, India-Maldives relations deteriorated, his government was accused of an evident China slant.

- China has been a close development partner and lender.
- Malé has been trying to renegotiate some \$1.4 billion it owes to Beijing.
- However, India's engagement with the Maldives has significantly grown since President Solih came to power, particularly in development partnerships.
- India announced a \$500 million package (including a grant of \$100 million) in addition to an earlier line of credit of \$800 million announced in 2018.

**Read:** [India announces \\$500 mn package for the Maldives.](#)

#### **Challenges:**

- Countering the recent anti-India rhetoric, from its political rivals, is one of the many challenges facing the current Maldivian government.
- According to the UNDP, the Maldives is amongst the worst affected countries in the Asia region and potentially globally, due to the impact of Covid-19.
- The Maldives is facing a massive challenge in the form of the economic impact of Covid-19 that has brutally hit the nation.

**Read more on** [India-Maldives Relations.](#)

## C. GS 3 Related

### **Category: ECONOMY**

#### **1. LS nod to amend banking Act**

##### **Context:**

The Lok Sabha passed an amendment to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

##### **Details:**

- Banking Regulation Act, 1949 regulates the functioning of banks and provides details on various aspects such as licensing, management, and operations of banks.
- The Bill replaces the [Banking Regulation \(Amendment\) ordinance](#) to the same effect promulgated in June 2020.

##### **Highlights:**

- The amendment will bring cooperative banks under the direct supervision of the RBI and bring them under some of the same governance norms as commercial banks.
- It will also allow the RBI to amalgamate or reconstruct a stressed cooperative bank without first imposing a moratorium.
- These amendments are proposed in order to protect the interests of the depositors.

#### **2. Farmers fear end of MSP regime**

##### **Context:**

Farmers in Punjab and Haryana are up in arms against the Centre's agriculture-related Bills as they fear their enactment.

Read more about the agri marketing reforms covered in [17th May 2020](#) and [4th June 2020](#) Comprehensive News Analyses.

#### Concerns:

- One of the bills has already been passed in the Lok Sabha. Protestors argue that it would be a step towards the abolition of the [Minimum Support Price \(MSP\)](#) regime.
- Agriculture experts too share similar concerns that this could leave farmers vulnerable to possible exploitation at the hands of big corporate houses.
- It is opined that the amendments to the Essential Commodities Act remove all cereals, pulses, oilseeds, potato and onion from trade restrictions and price control — which would ultimately benefit only the middlemen and traders.
- Protestors argue that, by doing away with the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act that facilitated the procurement of the produce of farmers, the government has given a free hand to private corporate houses to exploit the farmers.

### 3. 'Recovery not yet entrenched, may be gradual'

#### Context:

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor has said that, while there were some signs of stabilisation in the pandemic-hit economy, recovery was yet to take firm root and would probably take longer to gain momentum.

#### Details:

- It is observed that high-frequency indicators of agricultural activity, manufacturing PMI and private estimates for unemployment point towards some stabilisation of economic activity in the second quarter of 2020-21.
- It is opined that the recovery is likely to be gradual as efforts towards reopening of the economy are confronted with rising infections.

#### Way forward:

- The RBI governor highlighted five critical areas that would determine India's ability to sustain growth in the medium-run. These include:
  - Human capital, in particular education and health
  - Productivity
  - Exports, which are linked to raising India's role in the global value chain
  - Tourism
  - Food processing and associated productivity gains
- Indian banks and the financial system would need to respond proactively to opportunities arising from the NEP (new education policy) for new financing.
- The banks must also ensure the protection of depositors' interest.

## D. GS 4 Related

## E. Editorials

### Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

#### 1. Beyond the barriers of disability

##### **Background:**

- According to the [World Health Organization](#), **nearly 15% of the world's population suffers from some form of disability**. This amounts to a billion people worldwide being impacted by disability and the stigma surrounding it.
- About 80% of the estimated one billion persons with disabilities worldwide live in developing countries.

##### **Concerns:**

##### **For disabled people:**

- Continuous discrimination and lack of understanding of the special needs of the disabled and their rights often lead to **denial of equal access to education, employment, healthcare and other opportunities to such people**.
  - Despite the considerable improvement in enrolment rates of children with disabilities in schools, there is very little capacity available currently to ensure **inclusive education** which can meet the special and diverse needs of the disabled children. The COVID-19 pandemic has only worsened the situation for the students with disabilities as they have found it extremely difficult to access remote learning through digital platforms.
  - The [International Labour Organization](#), reports that **73.6% of persons living with disabilities in India are outside the labour force**. This would have a detrimental impact on the financial and economic needs of such people.
  - Women and girls with disabilities are at a higher risk of experiencing sexual and other forms of gender-based violence.
  - People with mental disabilities, women with disabilities and those in rural areas have to face higher discrimination.
- In such a scenario, it becomes very difficult for disabled people to attain their full potential.

##### **For society:**

- Given that the disabled account for a substantial proportion of the total population, the lack of opportunities for their meaningful involvement in the development process has led to a situation where an **enormous reservoir of untapped resources is being excluded from the workforce**.
- **An unequal society is not sustainable** as the pandemic has shown us that we are only as healthy as our neighbour. The inequality being faced by the disabled will only hold back India from realizing its full potential and ensure a sustainable society.

##### **Way forward:**

- The society needs to **reaffirm faith in the dignity and worth of humans, and in equal rights of all**.

- All persons with disabilities must be able to enjoy the full range of human rights. This would require the need to make inclusion the norm in all future endeavours.
- The **marginalised PWD community must be brought back into the developmental mainstream** with appropriate governmental measures.

### **Additional Information:**

- **UNESCO's Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network** aims to raise awareness about the need to put in place strategies to mitigate the impact of school closures on learners with disabilities.

## **Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**

### **1. Stop press**

#### **Context:**

- The interim order of the Andhra Pradesh High Court imposing a ban on the mainstream media and social media from mentioning anything in relation to an FIR filed by the police against a former Advocate General of the State and others.

#### **Background:**

- In recent years, there have been quite a few instances of interim injunctions against all media houses obtained by the petitioner solely to prevent any news reporting about them. Such orders by the courts restrain the media from reporting on particular cases or people.
- While claiming to be defamed by one publication, they have been able to obtain open-ended stays on publications.

#### **Concerns:**

- A blanket gag order against the media has **serious consequences for both free speech and media freedom on one side and the common citizen's right to know or right to receive information on the other.**
- This also raises important questions of **prior restraint on media publication.**
  - The blanket ban on media publications even without examining their content goes against the spirit of previous judgments of the SC which have held that pre-broadcast or pre-publication censorship is not tenable and that all grievances against objectionable content should be dealt with in accordance with the law of the land after its publication.
  - This observation helps uphold the **right of the media as enshrined under Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution that guarantees freedom of speech and expression.**
- Such blanket bans limit media coverage and the consequent public scrutiny.

#### **Counter-arguments:**

- Injunctions against publication could help **prevent possible defamation or invasion of privacy and could also help protect the fairness of a trial or investigation in genuine cases.**
- This could avoid the concerns associated with a media trial.

#### **Way forward:**

- As a matter of principle, **courts must avoid blanket orders** against publication.
- The Supreme Court Judgment in the Sahara vs. SEBI (2012) case can act as an important guiding point for the judiciary in this direction.
  - As per the judgment, the Court can grant preventive relief on a balancing of the right to free trial and a free press. However, such temporary restraint on publication **must only be favoured in cases of real and substantial risk of prejudice to the administration of justice or a fair trial.**

## Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### 1. New order in West Asia

This issue has been covered previously in the following article:

[CNA dated 16 Aug 2020: How will the Israel-UAE pact impact the Gulf?](#)

## F. Prelims Facts

### 1. Nationalism and the crisis of federalism

#### Committees for state reorganization:

##### **Dhar Commission:**

- The Linguistic Provinces Commission under the chairmanship of S K Dhar was set up by the central government in June 1948.
- The commission recommended that the formation of provinces on exclusively or even mainly linguistic considerations is not in the larger interests of the Indian Nation.

##### **JVP committee:**

- The Congress set up the **JVP Committee comprising of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya to study the recommendations of the Dhar Commission.**
- It too rejected language as the basis for the reorganization of states for the time being but also acknowledged that overwhelming public sentiment could necessitate this in the future.

##### **Fazl Ali Commission:**

- The three-member states reorganization commission under the chairmanship of Fazl Ali was appointed in 1953 to re-examine the issue.
- It recommended the abolition of the existing four-fold classification of states. It stated that it is neither possible nor desirable to reorganize the states on the basis of language alone and that the promotion of the welfare of the people must be the priority.
- Consequently, the **States Reorganization Act was passed in 1956.**

## G. Tidbits

## 1. Most cases related to IS filed in south India

### What's in News?

Investigations by the NIA have revealed that the IS is most active in Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

- Islamic State/Islamic State of Iraq and Levant/Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/Daish/Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP)/ISIS Wilayat Khorasan/Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham-Khorasan (ISIS-K) and all its manifestations have been notified as a Terrorist Organisation and included in the First Schedule to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 by the Central government.

Read more about the [Unlawful Activities \(Prevention\) Act](#).

## 2. \$186 bn import substitution possible

### What's in News?

A study titled 'Self-Reliant India: Approach and Strategic Sectors to Focus' by the Export and Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) states that several sector-specific strategies can lead to import substitution of over \$186 billion for India.

- According to the study, promoting self-reliance in sectors such as electronics and defence equipment, among others will help in import substitution, thus facilitating progress towards India's vision of self-reliance.
- Other sectors identified for import substitution and enhancing domestic production include machinery, chemicals and allied sectors, and select agricultural products.
- The study has also included sectors such as auto components and iron and steel where, though there is an overall trade surplus for the country, in some sub-categories, there is trade deficit, particularly with China.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements with respect to the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI):

1. It is a mechanism between Russia and India, established to strengthen the opportunities in the field of defence.
2. Its aim is to bring sustained leadership focus to the bilateral defence trade relationship and create opportunities for co-production and co-development of defence equipment.
3. DTTI was launched in 2020.

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

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

d. 1 and 3 only

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- The Defence Technology and Trade Initiative, between the USA and India, was launched in 2012.
- The DTTI is a mechanism by which senior leaders from the defence establishment of both India and the US meet and discuss challenges and opportunities for growth in defence cooperation.
- While DTTI is not a treaty or law, it is a flexible mechanism to make sure that senior leaders from both countries are engaged consistently to strengthen the opportunities in the field of defence.
- The aim of the DTTI Group is to bring sustained leadership focus to the bilateral defence trade relationship and create opportunities for co-production and co-development of defence equipment.
- Four Joint Working Groups focused on land, naval, air, and aircraft carrier technologies have been established under DTTI to promote mutually agreed projects within their domains.

**Q2. Which of the following committees/commissions dealt with the 'reorganization of states'?**

1. JVP Committee
2. Fazl Ali Commission
3. Dhar Commission
4. Kothari Commission

**Options:**

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

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- National Education Commission (1964-1966), popularly known as Kothari Commission, was an ad hoc commission set up by the Government of India to examine all aspects of the educational sector in India, to evolve a general pattern of education and to advise guidelines and policies for the development of education in India.

**Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to the DISHA Scheme:**

1. It is an early intervention and school readiness scheme for children in the age group of 0-14 years.
2. It covers children with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.
3. The scheme also provides housing and care services throughout the life of the person with disability.

**Which of the given statement/s is/are INCORRECT?**

- a. 3 only



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

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- DISHA is an early intervention and school readiness scheme for children up to 10 years with the disabilities covered under the National Trust Act.
- To be eligible for the scheme, the Person with Disability must have one of the disabilities covered under the National Trust Act, 1999 i.e, Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.
- GHARAUNDA scheme provides housing and care services throughout the life of the person with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

**Q4. Consider the following statements with respect to Institution or Institute of National Importance (INI):**

1. INI is a status conferred by an act of the Parliament, on a public institution of higher education in India.
2. Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) will be the first institution to be granted the INI status in the AYUSH sector.
3. INI is defined as an institution that serves as a pivotal player in developing highly skilled personnel within the specified region of the country/state.

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

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

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Institution or Institute of National Importance (INI) is a status conferred by an act of Parliament on a public institution of higher education in India.
- The status is conferred to an institution which “serves as a pivotal player in developing highly skilled personnel within the specified region of the country/state”.
- These institutes receive special recognition and funding from the government.
- Examples: IITs, AIIMS, NITs, National Institute of Design, etc.
- Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA) will be the first institution to be granted the INI status in the AYUSH sector.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. The discrimination and lack of understanding of the special needs of the disabled and their rights have serious consequences for both the disabled as well as the larger society. Comment. (10 marks, 150 words)(GS Paper 1/Social issues)
2. Discuss the history of the formation of linguistic states in post-independent India. Examine the significance and concerns associated with the formation of these linguistic states. (15 marks, 250 words)(GS Paper 1/Post Independence India)

