

01 Oct 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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B. GS 2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Crimes against Scheduled Tribes saw 26% rise in 2019: NCRB report](#)

Context:

Annual Crime in India report 2019 has been published by the [National Crime Records Bureau \(NCRB\)](#).

Findings:

Crimes against SCs and STs:

- Crimes against members of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and the Scheduled Tribes (STs) saw an increase of over 7% and 26% in 2019 compared with the 2018 figures.
- It showed an increase of 1.6% in the registration of cases over 2018.

- Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of crimes against the SCs in 2019, followed by Rajasthan and Bihar.
- In the number of cases of rape of women belonging to the SCs, Rajasthan topped the list followed by Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest number of cases against the STs, followed by Rajasthan and Odisha.
- The highest number of incidents of rape of tribal women was registered in Madhya Pradesh.

Crime against women:

- From 2018, the rate of crime against women has risen by 7.3%.
- India recorded an average of 87 rape cases every day in 2019.
- Assam reported the highest rate of crimes against women.
- Uttar Pradesh also had the highest number of crimes against girl children under the [POCSO Act](#), followed by Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

Murder and kidnapping cases:

- Murder cases across India in 2019 reported a slight dip – 0.3% – from the previous year.
- Kidnapping cases also reported a decline of 0.7% in 2019.

Note:

Due to the non-receipt of data from West Bengal for 2019, the 2018 data has been used to arrive at national and city-wise figures.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. Govt retains Rs. 12-lakh cr. borrowing plan

Context:

India's fiscal deficit soared to 109% of the Budget target in just the first five months of the year (2020-21), with revenues remaining muted.

Details:

- It was earlier announced that the estimated gross market borrowing in FY 2020-21 will be ₹12 lakh crore.
- The revision was necessitated owing to the [COVID-19](#) pandemic. The government has retained its ₹12 lakh crore borrowing plan.
- Experts suggest that the government is leaving some room for States who also have to do 'major borrowings' as well as the private sector to raise money in the second half of the year.
- Revenue collections were largely to blame for the fiscal deficit amounting to ₹8.70 lakh crore compared to the target of ₹7.96 lakh crore. Also, tax revenue has seen a decline across the board.
- The government resorts to market borrowing to make up for the mismatch between its revenue and expenditure.

2. 'New farm laws are a clear encroachment on State functions'

This topic has been covered in the [27th Sep 2020 CNA - Farm Bills: Who gains and who loses.](#)

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Time to shift focus to the maritime sphere

The editorial talks about the need for India to shift its focus from continental strategies to the maritime sphere as its continental grand strategy is facing an existential crisis today.

State of India's continental strategy

- India is a country that is traditionally obsessed with a continental approach to war and peace.
- However, India might have reached a dead-end in terms of its grand strategic plans in the continental space.

China and Pakistan:

- Given that reconciliation with its key adversaries (China and Pakistan) is unlikely and pursuing its ambitious territorial claims on the ground is almost impossible, India's continental options seem restricted to holding operations to prevent further territorial loss.
- China has begun to push the boundaries with India. The peaceful India-China Line of Actual Control in the northeast is now a thing of the past.
- In the northwest, the Pakistan front has also been heating up. Ceasefire violations on the Line of Control (LoC) have spiked since last year as has the infiltration of terrorists across the LoC. The India-Pakistan contestation over Kashmir has become fiercer.
- While the geopolitical collusion between Pakistan and China to contain and pressure India from both sides is not a new phenomenon, the intensity of the China-Pakistan containment strategy against India at the moment is unprecedented.
- The extent and intent behind this collusion will determine the future of the high stakes game in the Himalayas for a long time to come.

Changes in Afghanistan:

- The ongoing withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan and the consequent reduction of India's influence in Afghanistan, the return of the [Taliban](#), with whom India has very little contact, could turn the geopolitical tide against India.
- Also, the Taliban is no more an outcast, and with the withdrawal of forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from Afghanistan, the geopolitical interests of Pakistan, China and Russia would broadly converge in the region.

- The change of the geopolitical landscape in Afghanistan and the frictions in Iran-India relations will further dampen India's 'Mission Central Asia'.

In sum, this could signal the end of the road for India's north-eastern and north-western geopolitical forays.

Way forward:

India needs to find a way out of this situation. One key part of the solution is to creatively deal with its continental dilemmas.

1) Deal with Pakistan:

- Pressure from the Pakistan front could be eased by addressing the Kashmir question with Islamabad.
- Creating a modicum of normalcy on the LoC by activating existing mechanisms such as the Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO) hotline is another way to deal with the Pakistan front.

2) Maritime Strategy:

- Excessive focus on the continental sphere since Independence has not yielded great returns in terms of secure borders, healthy relations with its neighbours or deterrence stability.
- India must shift its almost exclusive focus from the continental sphere to the maritime sphere.
- While India seems stuck between Pakistan and China from a continental perspective, the country is located right at the centre of the Indo-Pacific geopolitical imagination, in the midst of the oceanic space spanning from the shores of Africa to that of the Americas.
- India has already begun to think in this direction with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) establishing a new division to deal with the Indo-Pacific in April 2019.
- There is a need to fast-track the work in this direction to keep pace with the emerging realities and to make use of new opportunities.

Why should India focus on its Maritime Strategy?

- There are several reasons why a maritime grand strategy would work to India's advantage while still struggling with a continental dilemma.
- Unlike in the continental sphere where India seems to be hemmed in by China-Pakistan collusion, the maritime sphere is wide open to India to undertake coalition building, rule setting, and other forms of strategic exploration.

Focus on Indo-Pacific:

- While there is little any country can do to help India in its continental contestations, there is a growing great power interest in the maritime sphere, especially with the arrival of the concept of 'Indo-Pacific'.
 - Great powers remain ever more interested in the maritime sphere.
 - The interest has grown substantially since the term Indo-Pacific was coined.
 - Germany recently released its Indo-Pacific guidelines following the example of France which brought out its Indo-Pacific strategy.
- New Delhi must use its Indo-Pacific engagements to dissuade Beijing from salami-slicing Indian territory in the high Himalayas.
- It would provide India a unique opportunity to enhance its influence and potentially checkmate the Chinese ambitions in the region.

- Also, maritime space is a lot more important to China than engaging in opportunistic land grab attempts, owing to massive Chinese trade that happens via the oceanic routes and the complex geopolitics around the maritime chokepoints which can potentially disrupt that trade.
- A revitalised Indian maritime grand strategy may or may not affect China's activities in the Himalayas but will certainly provide India a lot more space for manoeuvre in the region.
- India must ideate on the current and future maritime challenges, consolidate its military and non-military tools, engage its strategic partners, and publish a comprehensive vision document on the Indo-Pacific.
- India must also consider appointing a special envoy for Indo-Pacific affairs.

Conclusion:

- It is high time New Delhi shifted its almost exclusive focus from the continental space to the maritime space, stitching together a maritime grand strategy.
- The MEA's Indo-Pacific Division is a good beginning.
- India's decision in 2019 to elevate the Quad meetings among India, Japan, the United States and Australia to the ministerial level is also a step in the right direction.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Is one language enough?

The example of Indonesia:

- Hundreds of languages were spoken across thousands of islands that now comprise the modern nations of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.
- Malay had evolved due to the need in maritime Southeast Asia for a common language for trade and other exchanges.
- While negotiating independence from Dutch colonial rule, Indonesian nationalists decided that a reformed version of Malay (renamed Bahasa Indonesia) would become the official language.
- With Bahasa, Indonesia aimed to bring more than 300 ethnic groups together with no one ethnic group, including the Javanese, overshadowing the rest.
- From the outset of its independence, Indonesia recognised the importance of avoiding the inequality that was likely to occur by imposing the language of one dominant ethnic group over others.

Debates in the Constituent Assembly:

- Unlike Indonesia, the issue of adopting a national language could not be resolved when the [Constituent Assembly](#) began drafting India's Constitution.
- The adoption of a national language, the language in which the Constitution was to be written, and the language in which the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly were to be conducted were the main questions debated.
- While the representatives of the Hindi-speaking provinces argued for adopting Hindi as the sole national language, members from the southern part of the country opposed this.

Official Languages Act 1963:

- There was widespread resistance to the imposition of Hindi on non-native speakers, especially in Tamil Nadu.

- This led to the passage of the Official Languages Act of 1963, which provided for the continued use of English for all official purposes.
- Hindi became the sole working language of the Union government by 1965 with the State governments free to function in the language of their choice.
- Meanwhile, the constitutional directive for the Union government to encourage the spread of Hindi was retained within Central government entities in non-Hindi-speaking States.

Loss of language and a way of life:

- The Census points to the fact that while Hindi is the fastest growing language, the number of speakers of other languages has dropped.
- According to the 2001 Census, India has 30 languages that are spoken by more than a million people each.
- The Constitution lists 22 languages and protects them in the [Eighth Schedule](#).
- Many languages are kept out of this schedule even if they deserve to be included.
- Eg: Tulu, which is spoken by over 1.8 million people and has inscriptions dating back to the 14th and 15th centuries.
- Hindi, a much younger Indo-Aryan language, has been gaining prominence since before independence.
 - Old Hindi assimilated words from Persian.
 - With the arrival of Islamic administrative rule in north India, it became Hindustani.
 - The growing importance of Hindustani in colonial India and the association of Urdu with Muslims prompted Hindus in north India to develop a Sanskritised version, leading to the formation of a modern standard Hindi a century later.
 - It was based on the vernacular of Delhi and the surrounding region and came to replace prestige dialects such as Awadhi, Maithili and Braj.
 - The literary value of these dialects has diminished in due course.

Conclusion:

- When a refined language loses its status in literary and daily interactions, the way of life associated with it also vanishes.
- If other well-evolved or endangered and indigenous languages are not protected and promoted, our future generations may fail to understand their real roots and culture.
- While discussing Hindi and its use, there is a need to focus on the merit of other Indian languages.
- Instead of focusing on one national language, emphasis must be on learning a language beyond one's mother tongue and getting to know a different way of life.

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

1. Fermented liquid to stop crop burning

What's in News?

The Chief Minister of Delhi has announced that the Delhi Government would start the process of preparing a fermented liquid solution to be sprayed on 800 hectares of land in the city where farmers practise stubble burning.

This topic has been covered in the [27th Sep 2020 CNA: CM writes to Javadekar over IARI technique to tackle stubble burning](#).

2. Incentive for not burning stubble unviable: EPCA

What's in News?

The Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority, has said that the inclusion of the cost of stubble removal in [MSP](#) may not be a viable option.

- It has been found that giving an incentive of ₹100 per quintal of paddy to farmers for not burning stubble may not be a viable option.
- The report points out that effort should be towards making the machines for straw management affordable and accessible.
- In 2019 Punjab and Haryana had given incentives to farmers for not burning stubble.

3. Southwest monsoon ends with 8% surplus

What's in News?

The southwest monsoon has ended with an 8.7% surplus.

- The figures have surpassed the estimates by the [India Meteorological Department \(IMD\)](#).
- This is also the first time since 2010 that India has got more than 100% of its long period average (LPA) of 88 cm in consecutive years.
- India has not got over 105% of the LPA in consecutive years in at least 30 years.
- In 2019, India saw record rainfall of 110% of the LPA, the highest in a quarter-century.

Reasons for surplus rainfall:

- The heavy rains in 2020 have been attributed to several long-lasting low-pressure systems in the Bay of Bengal that fuelled heavy rain over large swathes of India in August 2020.
- A developing La Nina, the converse of an El Nino, contributed to generous rain this year.

Read more about [El-Nino, La-Nina & ENSO](#).

4. Ideal weight of Indian men, women redefined

What's in News?

The ideal weight of Indian men and women has been redefined based on the latest nationally representative data sourced from the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4, 2015-16), the National Nutrition

Monitoring Bureau (NNMB, 2015-16), the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO, 2006-07) and the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP 2015).

Details:

- The ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) has redefined the ideal or reference Indian adult man and woman with regard to age 19-39 years instead of 20-39 years.
- The body weight has been put at 65 kg for men and 55 kg for women (earlier 60 kg and 50 kg respectively).
- The 'Recommended Dietary Allowances' and 'Nutrient Requirements' report prepared by NIN includes Estimated Average Requirements (EARs) and Tolerable Upper Limits of nutrients for the first time.

Recommended Dietary Allowance:

- Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) are daily dietary nutrient intake levels which would be sufficient to meet the nutrient requirements of nearly all healthy individuals while EARs are the average daily nutrient intake levels of the population.
- The cereal-legume-milk composition of the diet; visible fat intake for sedentary, moderate and heavy activity, fiber based on energy intake, sodium and potassium intake, etc. have been recommended.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following could be the reason/s for Current Account Deficit?

1. Overvalued exchange rate
2. Increase in exports
3. Long periods of consumer-led economic growth
4. High inflation

Choose the correct option:

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

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The current account deficit is a measurement of a country's trade where the value of the goods and services it imports exceeds the value of its exports.
- If the currency is overvalued, imports will be cheaper, and therefore there will be a higher quantity of imports resulting in a Current Account Deficit.
- One of the reasons for the Current Account Surplus is an increase in exports.
- A period of consumer-led economic growth will cause deterioration in the current account. Higher consumer spending will lead to higher spending on imports. The recession of 2009 also led to a temporary improvement in the deficit as consumers cut back on spending.

- If a country's inflation rises faster than its main competitors then it will make the exports less competitive and imports more competitive for that country. This will lead to deterioration in the current account.

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to the Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA) :

1. EPCA is a Supreme Court-mandated body tasked with taking various measures to tackle air pollution in all the metropolitan cities across India.
2. System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) is a national initiative introduced by EPCA.
3. The body is constituted under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

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

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

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Environment Pollution Control Authority is a Supreme Court-mandated body tasked with taking various measures to tackle air pollution in the Delhi-NCR (National Capital Region).
- The body is constituted under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- It is mandated to enforce the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in the Delhi-NCR (National Capital Region).
- The System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR) is a national initiative introduced by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) to measure the air quality of a metropolitan city, by measuring the overall pollution level and the location-specific air quality of the city.

Q3. Which of the following have been given the Geographical Indication Tag?

1. Sawantwadi toys
2. Channapatna toys
3. Etikoppaka toys
4. Kondapalli toys
5. Kinhal toys

Choose the correct option:

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

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Channapatna toys – Karnataka, Etikoppa Toys and Kondapalli Bommalu (Toys) - Andhra Pradesh have been given the Geographical Indication Tag.
- Sawantwadi toys refer to handmade works of art made of wood in Sawantwadi, a town in Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra.
- To mark the occasion of 151 years of postcards in India, Maharashtra Circle of India Post will release picture postcards on 'Sawantwadi Toys'. The postcard is inspired by the Prime Minister's speech on the country's ability to become a "toy hub".

Q4. Consider the following statements with respect to BrahMos:

1. It is a supersonic cruise missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation of India (DRDO) and Russia.
2. It is a two-stage missile with a solid propellant engine in the first stage and a liquid ramjet in the second.
3. It can be launched from land, air, and sea.

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

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

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Answer: c

Explanation:

- BrahMos is a joint venture between the Defence Research and Development Organisation of India (DRDO) and the NPOM of Russia.
- Brahmos is named after the rivers Brahmaputra of India and Moskva of Russia.
- BrahMos is a two-stage missile with a solid propellant booster engine as its first stage which brings it to supersonic speed and then gets separated. The liquid ramjet or the second stage then takes the missile closer to 3 Mach speed in cruise phase.
- It can be launched from land, air, and sea.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. With India's excessive focus on the continental sphere since Independence not having yielded great returns, the time has come for a shift in its strategic approach to the maritime sphere. Evaluate. (15 Marks, 250 Words) (GS 2 International Relations).
2. What are the issues associated with prioritising a single language in multi-lingual India? Discuss the need for preserving India's linguistic diversity. (15 Marks, 250 Words) (GS 2 Polity and Governance).

