

# 07 Oct 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## B. GS 2 Related

### Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

#### 1. [Centre to fix jurisdiction of river boards](#)

##### Context:

- Apex council meeting involving the Centre, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

##### Background:

- Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have had differences between the sharing of water resources post the bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Andhra Pradesh.
- The major point of difference between the two states is over the execution of irrigation projects and the sharing of water from the Krishna and Godavari rivers.

- There had been a similar apex council meeting called earlier in 2016 to address these differences.

#### Details:

- The key takeaways from the current apex council meeting include the following:
  - The Centre will determine the jurisdictions of the **Krishna and Godavari river management boards (KRMB and GRMB)**.
  - The two states would submit Detailed Project Reports (DPR) of new irrigation projects for appraisal and sanction by the apex council.
  - The apex council would work towards establishing a mechanism to determine the share of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the Krishna and Godavari waters. The centre is expected to refer water sharing issues to the Krishna Godavari tribunal.
  - The headquarters of the KRMB would be located in Andhra Pradesh.

#### Additional information:

- Article 262 of the Indian Constitution provides for the adjudication of [inter-state water disputes](#). It allows the Parliament by law to provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution and control of waters of any inter-state river and river valley.
- Under this provision, the Parliament has enacted two laws i.e. **the River Boards Act (1956) and the Inter-State Water Disputes Act 1956**.
- The River Boards Act, 1956 provides for the establishment of **river boards for the regulation and development of Inter-state River and river valleys**. A river board is established by the Central government on the request of the state governments concerned.

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. Pressure builds for ceasefire as Karabakh fighting rages

#### Details:

- The **Battle between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region** has continued, with both sides vowing to pursue the conflict despite increasing international pressure for a ceasefire.
- The battles mark an escalation of a long-simmering territorial dispute over **Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian enclave that broke away from Azerbaijan in the 1990s**.

For detailed information on this issue, refer to:

#### [CNA dated 30 Sep 2020: Why are Azerbaijan and Armenia fighting again?](#)

- Countries around the world are urging Turkey, a long-standing ally of Azerbaijan, to use its influence to restore peace in the region.

## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: ECONOMY

## 1. IMF chief says global economy less dire but long climb ahead

### Context:

- **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva's take on the global economic situation.

### Background:

- The IMF in its earlier **June forecast had predicted that the pandemic and the associated shutdowns would shrink global GDP by 4.9%**, making it the sharpest contraction since the 1930s Great Depression.

### Details:

#### Positives:

- IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has stated that the global economic condition is looking 'less dire' than it did in June and the International Monetary Fund is expected to make an upward revision to its 2020 global output forecast in its forthcoming report.
- The **\$12 trillion in fiscal support, coupled with unprecedented monetary easing** has allowed many advanced economies, including the United States and the eurozone, to **limit the economic impact of the pandemic**.
- Also another economic powerhouse, China also has recovered faster than expected.

#### Concerns:

- The economic recovery process is bound to take more time and effort and also the **economic recovery process would be uneven and uncertain and prone to setbacks** given the still-evolving scenario of the pandemic.
- **Emerging markets and low-income countries face higher risks** owing to their weak health systems, high external debt and dependency on sectors most exposed to the pandemic such as tourism and commodities as well as their relatively high external debt.

### Additional information:

- As part of its World Economic and Financial Surveys, the IMF publishes the following flagship reports twice a year: **World Economic Outlook, Global Financial Stability Report, and Fiscal Monitor**.

## 2. Govt. clears Rs. 11,000-cr. of PLI proposals by Samsung, others

### Context:

- The **Ministry of Electronics and IT has approved 16 proposals** by electronics manufacturers under its Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme.

### Background:

For information on the provisions of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, refer to the following article:

### [PIB dated Aug 01, 2020: Production Linked Incentive \(PLI\) Scheme](#)

#### Details:

- The approved firms include **five international mobile phone makers and five domestic firms**. Among the international firms approved, Foxconn Hon Hai, Wistron and Pegatron are contract manufacturers for Apple iPhones.
- Additionally, six proposals have been approved under the **Specified Electronic Components Segment** too.

#### Significance:

- The scheme by attracting global players into India is looking forward to building a **strong ecosystem across the value chain and integrating India with the global value chains**.
- This would allow **India to emerge as an export hub of high-value electronic goods** while at the same time decreasing its import dependence and better self-reliance in this emerging economic sector.
- The companies would bring **additional investment in electronics manufacturing to the tune of Rs. 11,000 crore**.
- The investment is expected to generate more than **two lakh direct employment opportunities** in the next five years, along with the creation of **additional indirect employment** of almost three times the direct employment.

For more related information on measures introduced to provide an impetus to electronic manufacturing in India, refer to:

### [CNA dated March 22, 2020: Cabinet okays 48,000-cr. plan for electronics manufacturing](#)

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: HEALTH

#### 1. Vanquishing viruses

##### Context:

- The announcement of the 2020 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

##### Details:

- The 2020 Nobel Prize in Medicine has been given to Harvey J. Alter, Michael Houghton and Charles M. Rice, for their work on the Hepatitis C virus (HCV).

- Their work has helped identify the viral origin of Hepatitis C.
- Their work helped characterize Hepatitis C to be a distinct clinical entity from Hepatitis B, and as caused by an RNA virus of the Flavivirus family, now known as HCV.

### **Significance of the findings:**

- According to the WHO Global Hepatitis Report, HBV and HCV are major causes for mortality and morbidity, with 1.34 million deaths reported in 2015, a 63% increase from 1990, mainly due to HCV. The number of deaths is also comparable to that caused by [TB](#) and higher than that caused by AIDS.
- The discoveries (of HBV and HCV), and the development of effective screening routines, have virtually eliminated the risk of transmission via blood products in much of the world.
- With the development of effective drugs against HCV, it is possible that the threat of this viral infection will reduce, and hopefully, be eliminated soon.

### **Hepatitis:**

- Hepatitis refers to an inflammatory condition of the liver.
- It's commonly caused by a viral infection, but there are other possible causes of hepatitis. These include autoimmune hepatitis and hepatitis that occurs as a secondary result of medications, drugs, toxins, and alcohol. Autoimmune hepatitis is a disease that occurs when your body makes antibodies against your liver tissue.
- There are 5 types of viral hepatitis - A, B, C, D, and E. A different virus is responsible for each type of virally transmitted hepatitis.
  - Hepatitis A is caused by an infection with the hepatitis A virus (HAV). This type of hepatitis is most commonly transmitted by consuming food or water contaminated by faeces from a person infected with hepatitis A.
  - Hepatitis B is transmitted through contact with infectious body fluids, such as blood, vaginal secretions, or semen, containing the hepatitis B virus (HBV). Injection drug use, having sex with an infected partner or sharing razors with an infected person increase your risk of getting hepatitis B.
  - Hepatitis C comes from the hepatitis C virus (HCV). Hepatitis C is transmitted through direct contact with infected body fluids, typically through injection drug use and sexual contact.
  - Also called delta hepatitis, hepatitis D is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis D virus (HDV). HDV is contracted through direct contact with infected blood. Hepatitis D is a rare form of hepatitis that only occurs in conjunction with hepatitis B infection.
  - Hepatitis E is a waterborne disease caused by the hepatitis E virus (HEV). Hepatitis E is mainly found in areas with poor sanitation and typically results from ingesting faecal matter that contaminates the water supply.

## **Category: GOVERNANCE**

### **1. Approaching the misinformation storm**

#### **Context:**

- The article discusses the major concerns over the **advent of social media platforms as information and news dispersion media** and suggests certain measures to counter these shortcomings.

#### **Details:**

- The advent of the Internet has led to the creation of big tech companies based on the social media platform business models.
- The number of people on these platforms has increased exponentially.
  - The increasing availability of affordable internet services has led to a situation where anywhere between **500 million and 700 million people are now newly online in India**, almost all from towns and rural areas.
- Of late, there has been a growing call to hold the tech firms accountable for their actions. These firms have been **struggling to meet calls to contain the online spread of misinformation and hate speech online** and are also being accused of suppressing both left-wing and right-wing views.

### Concerns:

#### Biased 'news':

- Most of the information available to the people have been through the social networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter where there are **no journalistic norms** and anyone can say anything at any time about any topic with scant respect for the truth.
- Everything is an opinion, but not clearly labelled as such. As a result, **much of the 'news' available on these platforms is biased.**

#### Echo chamber algorithms:

- The echo chamber effect has been greatly enhanced by the highly targeted algorithms that the social media companies use. The algorithms with an aim to make users stay online longer are likely to **bombard users with information that serves to reinforce what the algorithm thinks the searcher needs to know.**
- The fact that the social media platforms target advertising and hyper-personalisation of content makes them further **suspect as arbiters of balanced news.**

#### The threat of false news:

- The advent of the Internet was expected to lead to democratic access to a large variety of news from all corners of the globe. Though it has been able to ensure greater access to information, it has also **exposed the people to false news/information which can transmit very fast across society with detrimental impacts.** Most people now get their news from dubious Internet sources.
- The spread of false and malicious news can stoke violence at short notice.

#### Impending global threat:

- The US experience has shown the potential of misinformation/biased information on society. There has been a growing polarization in the U.S.
- This might be an indication of the impending **creation of an unmanageable fifth estate in the form of Big Tech.**

### Way forward:

- Learning from the U.S.'s experience with the Internet, **India should brace itself for the impending Internet misinformation storm** through the following measures.

#### Regulation:



- India might need to consider **regulating social media firms through appropriate new legislations**. Indian legislation needs to preserve free speech while still applying pressure on the platforms to make sure that Internet content is filtered for accuracy and decency.

#### *Corporate responsibility principle:*

- There is a need to **hold the firms accountable for their actions based on the principle of corporate responsibility**. There should be greater efforts to ensure transparency of information in the functioning of these tech firms.

#### *User's role:*

- The users too have to play an equally important role in this regard. Those who use social media platforms must also **ensure that they maintain access to a range of sources and views**.

## F. Prelims Facts

### 1. 3 black hole researchers get Nobel Prize for Physics

- Roger Penrose of Britain, Reinhard Genzel of Germany and Andrea Ghez of the U.S. have won the **Nobel Physics Prize for their research on the black hole**.
  - The term “black hole” refers to a point in space where matter is so compressed as to create a gravity field from which even light cannot escape. **Black holes are super dense objects formed when a heavy star collapses under the weight of its own gravity.**
- Mr Penrose was honoured for showing that the **general theory of relativity** leads to the formation of black holes, while Mr Genzel and Ms Ghez, were jointly awarded for discovering that an invisible and extremely heavy object governs the orbits of stars at the centre of the galaxy.
- Andrea Ghez is just the fourth woman to receive the physics prize since 1901.** The first woman to win the prize was Marie Curie in 1903, who was also the first person to receive two Nobel prizes when she won the 1911 chemistry prize.

## G. Tidbits

### 1. Services PMI shows slump easing, but job losses swell

- The **Nikkei/IHS Markit Services Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** has witnessed an improvement with the pace of contraction in services sector activity easing considerably in September after the government lifted some COVID-19 restrictions and relaxed lockdown rules.
  - The **services sector accounts for about 55% of India's economy and almost a third of its jobs.**
- This sign of stabilization in the services sector along with recent indications of India's manufacturing sector also recovering augurs well for **India, Asia's third-largest economy.**
- However, sub-indexes tracking **domestic and foreign demand have remained firmly in contraction territory, leading firms to cut their workforce.**

### 2. Child should learn mother tongue: SC

- The Andhra Pradesh government has approached the Supreme Court challenging its State High Court decision to strike down a government order which made English medium education compulsory from classes I to VI in primary, upper primary and high schools under all managements from 2020-21.
- Andhra Pradesh government's argument has been that given the limitations of education in the vernacular medium, English education was expected to empower a large number of people.
- The Supreme Court while agreeing to hear the matter has noted that a child has to learn his mother tongue to gain a foundation.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

**Q1. Which of the following statement/s is/are correct with respect to the appointment of external members to the Monetary Policy Committee?**

1. They are appointed for a term of three years.
2. They are not eligible for re-appointment.

**Options:**

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

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: b**

Explanation:

- The Monetary Policy Committee is responsible for fixing the benchmark interest rate in India.
- The committee comprises six members - three officials of the Reserve Bank of India and three external members nominated by the Government of India.
- According to the RBI Act, external members of the MPC will be appointed by the central government "from amongst persons of ability, integrity and standing, having knowledge and experience in the field of economics or banking or finance or monetary policy."
- The previous three external members were appointed for a term of 4 years.
- All the central government nominees are not eligible to be re-appointed.

**Q2. Which of the following is not a report published by the International Monetary Fund?**

- a. World Economic Outlook
- b. Global Financial Stability Report
- c. Fiscal Monitor
- d. Global Competitiveness Report

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: d**

Explanation:



- While the World Economic Outlook, Global Financial Stability Report, and Fiscal Monitor are flagship reports of the IMF, the Global Competitiveness Report is published by the World Economic Forum.

**Q3. Which of the following statement/s is/are incorrect with respect to the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme of the Ministry of Electronics and IT?**

1. It is applicable only to the domestic firms and global firms are barred from applying under the scheme.
2. The scheme shall extend an incentive of 40% to 60% on incremental sales (over the base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments, to eligible companies, for a period of 10 years subsequent to the base year as defined.

**Options:**

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

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: c**

Explanation:

- The Ministry of Electronics and IT has approved 16 proposals by electronics manufacturers under its Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme. The approved firms include five international mobile phone makers and five domestic firms.
- The scheme offers a production linked incentive to boost domestic manufacturing and attract large investments in mobile phone manufacturing and specified electronic components, including Assembly, Testing, Marking and Packaging (ATMP) units.
- The scheme shall extend an incentive of 4% to 6% on incremental sales (over base year) of goods manufactured in India and covered under target segments, to eligible companies, for a period of five years subsequent to the base year as defined.

**Q4. Which of the following statement/s is/are correct?**

1. Article 262 of the Indian Constitution provides for the adjudication of inter-state water disputes.
2. Article 263 provides for the establishment of Inter-State Council to effect coordination between the states and between Centre and states.

**Options:**

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

**CHECK ANSWERS:-**

**Answer: c**

Explanation:

- Article 262 of the Indian Constitution provides for the adjudication of inter-state water disputes. It allows the Parliament by law to provide for the adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to the use, distribution and control of waters of any inter-state river and river valley. Under this provision, the Parliament has enacted two laws i.e. the River Boards Act (1956) and the Inter-State Water Disputes Act 1956.
- The provisions of Article 263 deal with Inter-state council. Article 263 contemplates the establishment of an Inter-State Council to effect coordination between the states and between Centre and states.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Discuss the major concerns over the advent of social media platforms as information and news dispersion media and suggest measures to address these concerns. (15 marks, 250 words)(GS Paper 2/Governance)
2. Enumerate the recent schemes and programmes launched in India in the domain of electronic manufacturing and discuss their significance. (15 marks, 250 words)(GS Paper 3/Economy)