

06 Mar 2020: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS 1 Related

B. GS 2 Related

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [EC moots linking Aadhaar with voter ID, Law ministry tells LS](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom hears witnesses on NRC, CAA](#)
2. [Freedom in the World 2020 report ranks India among least free democracies](#)

C. GS 3 Related

ECONOMY

1. [Yes Bank put under moratorium till April 3](#)
2. [Eight PSBs announce share swap ratios](#)

D. GS 4 Related

E. Editorials

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Sedition](#)

HEALTH

1. [China's high-tech battle against COVID19](#)

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Disabled and extremely poor](#)

F. Prelims Facts

1. [Nari Shakti Puraskar](#)

G. Tidbits

1. [EPF interest rate lowered to 8.5%](#)
2. [Social scientists, economists demand halt to NPR data collection](#)
3. [Zydus Cadila to launch drug for NASH](#)

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. EC moots linking Aadhaar with voter ID, Law ministry tells LS

Context:

The Law Ministry has informed the [Lok Sabha](#) that it has a proposal from the Election Commission (EC) to link the Aadhaar card with the Election Photo Identity Card (EPIC) to prepare an error-free electoral roll.

Details:

- The Law Ministry has said, in order to ensure preparation of an error-free electoral roll, and to prevent duplication of entries, a proposal to amend the [Representation of People's Act 1951](#) to enable linking of the electoral data with the Aadhaar system has been received from the Election Commission.
- One of the arguments being made in favour of the move is that it may allow migrant labour and workers to vote even if they are away from their homes at the time of elections. The move will help in providing remote voting rights.
- It is believed that this move will not only help in getting rid of bogus voters but will also help the easy movement of voters once the Aadhaar system and election data are linked.
- Various technologies, including blockchain, are being considered for the same. The linkage is considered crucial to the EC's larger objective of ridding the electoral roll of all discrepancies.

Note:

- The demand for linkage of Aadhaar with voter ID has been around since 2015.
- The EC had in 2015 taken up the matter as part of its National Electoral Roll Purification and Authentication Programme.
- Around 32 crore Aadhaar numbers were seeded, but the plan was put on hold after the Supreme Court judgment on restricting the use of Aadhaar.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom hears witnesses on NRC, CAA

What's in News?

India and Myanmar were the subjects of discussion at a hearing in Washington organised by an independent bipartisan federal government commission, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).

- In addition to discussing the Rohingya situation in Myanmar, the hearing also focussed on the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in India.
- There are no automatic legal outcomes from this hearing.

USCIRF:

- The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is a bipartisan, independent federal government commission in the US.
- It was created by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) of 1998.
- USCIRF's principal responsibilities are to review the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom internationally and to make policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and the Congress.
- The Commission on International Religious Freedom issues an annual report that includes policy recommendations to the U.S. government based on the report's evaluation of the facts and circumstances of religious freedom violations worldwide.
- In its Annual Report, USCIRF unflinchingly describes threats to religious freedom around the world and recommends to the State Department countries for designation as "countries of particular concern" (CPCs) for engaging in or tolerating "systematic, ongoing, egregious violations."
- USCIRF also recommends to the State Department that non-state actors cited for similarly severe violations be designated as "entities of particular concern" (EPCs).
 - USCIRF has placed India on CPC and watch list in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2009 and 2010.
 - In its 2019 report, India continues to remain a Tier 2 country, a list it has been unable to get off of since 2009.

2. Freedom in the World 2020 report ranks India among least free democracies

Context:

India has become one of the world's least free democracies, according to the Freedom in the World 2020 report – a global survey.


Freedom in the World 2020 report:

- The Freedom in the World 2020 report is released by Freedom House, a U.S.-based watchdog, which has been tracking global political and civil liberties for almost half a century.
- The report derives its methodology from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.
- It covers 195 countries, awarding scores based on political rights indicators such as the electoral process, political pluralism and participation and government functioning, as well as civil liberties indicators related to freedom of expression and belief, associational and organisational rights, the rule of law and personal autonomy and individual rights.

India's ranking:

- India is placed at the 83rd position, along with Timor-Leste and Senegal.
- This is near the bottom of the pile among the countries categorised as "Free", with only Tunisia receiving a lower score.
- India's score fell by four points to 71, the worst decline among the world's 25 largest democracies this year.

Deterring democracy



■ PTI

The Freedom House report said that India showed a deteriorating trend when it came to personal autonomy

Year	Political rights	Civil Liberties	Total Score
2017	35/40	42/60	77/100
2018	35/40	42/60	77/100
2019	35/40	40/60	75/100
2020	34/40	37/60	71/100

Top five countries in the free category:
Finland, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, Luxembourg

Bottom five countries in the free category:
Botswana, Peru, India, Timor-Leste, Tunisia

What does the report say?

- The annulment of autonomy and the subsequent shutdown of Kashmir, the National Register of Citizens and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, as well as the crackdown on mass protests have been listed as the main signs of declining freedom in the report.
- The report has slammed the internet blackout in Kashmir, terming it the longest shutdown ever imposed by a democracy. It has said that the freedom of expression was under threat in India, with journalists, academics and others facing harassment and intimidation when addressing politically sensitive topics.
- The report noted that India has long been seen as a democratic counterweight to China and hence a strategic partner for the United States in the region. However, that view is changing, with India attracting criticism similar to that levied against China.

Note:

The report treats “Indian Kashmir” as a separate territory, which saw its total score drop from 49 to 28 this year, moving it from a status of “Partly Free” to “Not Free”.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. Yes Bank put under moratorium till April 3

Context:

The government has put private sector lender Yes Bank under moratorium till April 3, 2020 and capped deposit withdrawal at Rs. 50,000 after a severe deterioration of the bank’s financial position.

Why is Yes Bank put under moratorium?

- RBI said the financial position of Yes bank deteriorated as it failed to raise capital to address loan losses.
- This resulted in rating downgrades and triggered invocation of bond covenants by investors, and withdrawal of deposits.
- According to RBI, the bank has also experienced serious governance issues and practices in recent years which have led to a steady decline of the bank.
- In the meantime, the bank was also facing regular outflow of liquidity.

After taking into considering these developments, the Reserve Bank came to the conclusion that in the absence of a credible revival plan, and in public interest and the interest of the bank's depositors, it had no alternative but to apply to the Central Government for imposing a moratorium under Section 45 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Details:

- The decision was taken by the government after an application from the Reserve Bank of India ([RBI](#)).
- Following the moratorium, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) superseded the board of the bank and has appointed Prashant Kumar – the deputy managing director and chief financial officer of State Bank of India as the administrator.
 - Yes Bank cannot make in aggregate, payment to a depositor of a sum exceeding Rs. 50,000 lying to his credit, in any savings, current or any other deposit account.
 - During the moratorium period, the bank cannot grant or renew any loan or advance, make any investment but is allowed to make certain expenses like salaries of employees.

What next?

- RBI said it was in constant engagement with the bank's management to find ways to strengthen its balance sheet and liquidity.
- The regulator said it gave adequate opportunity to the bank to draw a credible revival plan, which did not materialise.
- RBI has said that it will explore and draw up a scheme in the next few days for the bank's reconstruction or amalgamation, and with the approval of the Government, it will put the plan well before the end of the moratorium period of thirty days.

2. Eight PSBs announce share swap ratios

What's in News?

With the deadline approaching for the biggest-ever amalgamation scheme approaching, eight state-owned banks have announced swap ratios for the proposed mergers.

Background:

- The Union Cabinet approved amalgamation of 10 public sector banks, including Allahabad Bank, Andhra Bank and Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC), to create four large state-owned lenders with effect from April 1, 2020.
- As per the mega consolidation plan, OBC and United Bank of India will merge into Punjab National Bank; Syndicate Bank into Canara Bank; Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank into Union Bank of India; and Allahabad Bank into Indian Bank.

The Big Four

Share swap announced for creation of four big State-owned lenders from April 1, 2020

- OBC and UBI will merge into Punjab National Bank
- Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank to amalgamate with Union Bank of India
- Allahabad Bank to merge into Indian Bank
- Syndicate Bank to merge into Canara Bank

Share swap ratios:

- Swap ratio is the ratio at which an acquiring company will offer its own shares in exchange for the target company's shares during a merger or acquisition.
- In simple words, the number of shares to be issued in lieu of their existing holdings to the target company is called the swap ratio.
- To calculate the swap ratio, companies analyze financial ratios such as book value, earnings per share, profits after tax, and dividends paid, as well as other factors, such as the reasons for the merger or acquisition.
- The current market prices of the target and acquiring company's stock are compared along with their respective financial situations.
- A swap ratio tells the shareholders of a target company how many shares of the acquiring company's stock they will receive for every one share of target company stock they currently own.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Sedition

Origin of sedition law in modern India

- The law was originally drafted in 1837 by Thomas Macaulay but was inexplicably **omitted when the IPC was enacted in 1860.**
- Section 124A was inserted in 1870 by an amendment introduced by Sir James Stephen.
- It was enacted to silence the Indian people by the colonial rulers. The law was mainly used against Indian political leaders seeking independence from British rule.
- It was one of the many draconian laws enacted to stifle any voices of dissent at that time.

Definition

Section 124A IPC states: “Whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which a fine may be added; or, with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which a fine may be added; or, with fine.”

According to the law, disaffection includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity. However, disapprobation (criticism) of the **measures or administrative action** of the government to obtain their alteration by **lawful means is not an offence**.

It is classified as “**cognisable**” and “**non-bailable**” — the accused cannot get bail as a matter of right, but is subject to the discretion of the session’s judge.

Pre-independence Cases

Queen Empress vs. Jogendra Chunder Bose & Ors. (1891)

- The British government enacted the Age of Consent Act which raised the age of consent from ten to twelve years.
- A vernacular by the name of **Bangobasi** was a weekly newspaper which had a large circulation in Bengal; its name meant “**Citizen of Bengal**”.
- After the Act was passed the newspaper published articles attacking the Age of Consent Act as being opposed to Hindu traditions and morality.
- As a **consequence of the publication of the offending articles**, the proprietor, editor, manager and printer of Bangobasi were all **charged by the government for sedition under Section 124A before the Calcutta High Court**.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

- During his lifetime, he was tried for Sedition Charges three times by the British rulers -in 1897, 1909 and 1916.
- In **1897**, Tilak was sentenced to 18 months in prison for inciting the people against the British.
- It was the **1909** sedition case, which is worth recalling.
 - Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose, threw a bomb on a carriage at Muzzafarpur, to kill the Chief Presidency Magistrate Douglas Kingsford of Calcutta, but erroneously killed two women traveling in it. While Chaki committed suicide when caught, Bose was hanged.
 - Tilak, in his paper **Kesari**, defended the revolutionaries and called for immediate Swaraj or self-rule. The Government swiftly charged him with sedition.

Read more on [Bal Gangadhar Tilak](#).

Gandhiji (1922)

- He had written three ‘politically sensitive’ articles in his **weekly journal Young India**. He was jailed on the charges of sedition. He was sentenced to a six-year jail term.
- Gandhi famously denounced the law against sedition in the court: “Section 124A under which I am happily charged, is perhaps the prince among the political sections of the IPC designed to suppress the liberty of the citizen.”

Post-independence

1. Kedarnath vs. State of Bihar (1962)

- The Constitution bench of the Supreme Court explained the amplitude of sedition for the first time in 1962 in the case of **Kedarnath vs. State of Bihar (1962)**. The judgment went into the issue of whether the law on sedition is consistent with the fundamental right **under Article 19 (1) (a)** which guarantees each citizen's **freedom of speech and expression**.
- So, as per the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, a person can be charged with sedition only **if there is incitement to violence in his speech or writing or an intention to create disorder**.
- Supreme Court, in this case, **upheld the constitutional validity of S. 124A** however, with certain caveats of safeguards.
- The Supreme Court laid down that every citizen has a right to say or write about the government, by way of criticism or comment, as long as it does not “incite people to violence” against the government established by law or with the intention of creating public disorder.

And what is not sedition?

- The court ruled that **disapproval of the measures of government with a view to their improvement or alteration** by lawful means is not sedition.
- It held that “comments, however strongly worded, expressing disapprobation of actions of the Government, without exciting those feelings which generate the inclination to cause public disorder by acts of violence” **would not attract the penal offence**.
- The court added that “**commenting in strong terms upon the measures or acts of Government**, or its agencies, so as to ameliorate the condition of the people or to secure the cancellation or alteration of those acts or measures by lawful means, that is to say, without exciting those feelings of enmity and disloyalty which imply excitement to public disorder or the use of violence”, is not sedition.

2. Balwant Singh v State of Punjab (1995)

- In 1995, the Supreme Court, in Balwant Singh v State of Punjab, acquitted persons from charges of sedition for shouting slogans such as “**Khalistan Zindabaad**” and “**Raj Karega Khalsa**” outside a cinema after Indira Gandhi’s assassination.
- Instead of looking at the “tendency” of the words to cause public disorder, the Court held that mere sloganeering which evoked no public response did not amount to sedition, for which a more overt act was required; the **accused did not intend to “incite people to create disorder”** and no “**law and order problem**” actually occurred.

Recent examples

- A 43-year-old man was charged with sedition **after he allegedly chanted pro-Pakistan slogans** before the mini Vidhan Soudha at Kundapur in Karnataka.
- The police arrested a school principal and a parent in Bidar, Karnataka, for an allegedly seditious and **inflammatory play against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA)**.

Arguments against Section 124A

- It **stifles the democratic right of people to criticize** the government.
 - Sedition leads to a sort of unauthorised self-censorship, for it produces a **chilling effect on free speech**.

- It has been **used arbitrarily to curb dissent**. In many cases the main targets have been writers, journalists, activists who question government policy and projects, and political dissenters.
- The massive levels of poverty, poor health care, unemployment, malnourishment and poor policies leading to farmer's suicide – justify expressing dissent and disenchantment against the government openly.
- The **press should be protected so that it could bare the secrets of government and inform the people**. Only a free and unrestrained press can effectively expose deception in government.
- Legislation exists to deal with unlawful activities and armed movements. There is no need to criminalize words spoken or written.

Arguments in favour of Section 124 A

- The **Law Commission of India** had undertaken a careful re-examination of Section 124A. In its **42nd report, published in 1971**, it wanted the section to be extended to include disaffection towards the Constitution of India, Parliament and state legislatures and the administration of justice. It also wanted the punishment to be reduced to a maximum of seven years.
- We cannot forget that dozens of districts in different states face a Maoist insurgency and rebel groups virtually run a parallel administration. These groups openly advocate the overthrow of the state government by revolution. Against the backdrop of this stark reality, the abolition of Section 124A would be ill-advised.
- It is used to combat “anti-national, secessionist and terrorist elements”.
- There is no data on the number of complaints that have been filed under this section in different states. What were the seditious utterances or activities? How many persons have been convicted? Without an analysis of the empirical evidence on the implementation of this section, it would be perilous to abolish it as an outdated colonial provision.

Sedition laws in international jurisdiction

- Sedition was viewed as a draconian law and was revoked in the United Kingdom in 2010.
- In Australia, following the recommendations of the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) the term sedition was removed and replaced with references to ‘urging violence offenses’.

How can we tackle this problem?

- First, all speech-related offences **should be made bailable offences**; this would lessen the harmful impact of using arrest and custody as a way of harassing anyone exercising their rights under Article 19(1) (a).
- Second, the **offences should be made non-cognisable** so that there is at least a judicial check on the police acting on the basis of politically motivated complaints.
- Third, in the case of hate speech, it is important to raise the **burden of proof** on those who claim that their sentiments are hurt rather than accept them at face value.
- Fourth, it is crucial that **courts begin to take action against** those who bring malicious complaints against speech acts.
- The Judiciary can also set up a **search committee** in every State, and a particular judge of the High Court can take suo moto action on each sedition case being filed.
 - And if it is baseless, if it has been used to only intimidate the ordinary citizen expressing his views, it must be quashed without putting the onus on the citizen to come to the court.

Conclusion

- Experience has shown us that sedition law on the statute book has been misused and abused.
- Even if new laws are legislated or existing laws are removed, it can still be distorted. So it is time the judiciary starts acting and the gaps in the law are addressed.

Category: HEALTH

1. China's high-tech battle against COVID19

Role of technology

- **'Close Contact Detector':** It is a platform for the **public to detect if someone has had close contact with a person confirmed or suspected to have been infected** in the recent past.
 - It pays particular attention to public transport records, including trains and flights.
 - It can be accessed via popular mobile apps including Alipay, WeChat and QQ.
- **Health QR code system:** In Hangzhou, a city famous for its technology companies, **e-commerce giant Alibaba's Alipay app has rolled out a health QR code system.**
 - It assigns colour codes to citizens marking their risk level, drawing on their travel history and contacts.
 - **A green code** means you can travel freely, **yellow** requires seven days of quarantine, while **red** requires a 14-day quarantine.
- **Beijing-based Face++:** It has come up with a sophisticated **temperature screening tool** that can work in crowded places and screen thousands of people.
 - It can detect an abnormal body temperature and alert authorities who can then do a second check on the person.
 - It is now deployed in some of Beijing's subway stations and government offices.
- China, which has invested billions of dollars in new **Artificial Intelligence technologies**, is deploying some of them in fighting the outbreak.
 - **Drones with cameras** are being operated to tell people to wear masks.
 - Drones are being used to transport medical samples and conduct thermal imaging.
 - Two other prominent **AI players, Baidu and SenseTime**, are helping police identify people who aren't wearing masks in public places and offices.
 - In northwestern Yinchuan, authorities have deployed drones **armed with loudspeakers** — reminding residents to keep a distance from each other and to wear masks — and to spray sanitisers.
 - In Sichuan province, doctors are using a new **5G telecom network to help remote hospitals** — as well as overburdened doctors in the Hubei province epicentre — promptly assess CT scans to detect COVID-19 cases.
 - Food delivery app Meituan and e-commerce giant JD have deployed autonomous vehicles for **"contactless" deliveries to hospitals and high-risk areas.**
 - **COVID-19 app:** It tells people whether they have been in close contact with anyone confirmed, infected, based on flight and train records.

Schools shut but classes continue

- Technology is also helping school children. Their schools remain closed but classes haven't stopped, with millions of students receiving lessons every day through live-streaming apps.

Concerns

While these new tools may be considered efficient – and perhaps necessary during a health crisis – they have prompted concerns about privacy.

- Chinese media have reported **numerous cases of wrong codes being assigned**, preventing many low-risk citizens from using public transport or going to work.
- Many of these health apps require users to register with their name, national identification number and phone number. Authorities have also sourced data from phone carriers, health and transport agencies and state-owned firms.
 - There is **little transparency on how the government plans to cross-check the data**, and there have been reports about personal **health data being leaked on the internet**.
- There's the added fear that it could exacerbate paranoia and **lead to discrimination against coronavirus patients**.
- Critics say China could use the health crisis as a justification to **expand its already vast surveillance system**.

Conclusion

- Thus, the new technologies are aiding in the fight to curb the transmission of coronavirus.

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Disabled and extremely poor

Introduction

- This article discusses the economic hardships faced by the disabled.

Definition

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) “Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions”.

- An impairment is a problem in body function or structure;
- An activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action;
- A participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.

Disability is thus not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives.

A look at key stats

- Disabled Population in India as per census 2011 (2016 updated) – In India, out of the 121 Cr population, 2.68 Cr persons are disabled which is 2.21% of the total population. Among the disabled population, 56% (1.5 Cr) are males and 44% (1.18 Cr) are females.
- A majority (69%) of the disabled population resided in **rural areas** (1.86 Cr disabled persons in rural areas and 0.81 Cr in urban areas).
- The **educational level** of disabled persons is better in urban areas compared to rural areas, both for males and females.

- The **number of disabled persons is highest in the age group 10-19 years** (46.2 lakhs). 17% of the disabled population is in the age group 10-19 years and 16% of them are in the age group 20-29 years. Elderly (60+ years) disabled constituted 21% of the total disabled at all India level.

Issues in measuring disability

- From the conceptual point of view, there is **no universal definition of what constitutes a disability** or of who should be considered as having a disability. Moreover, there is no one static condition of disability.
- **Eliciting information:** In places where disability is a stigma, people may be reluctant to report it. Also, this being a very sensitive question, the investigators need to be adequately trained to collect data on disabilities.
 - The design of questions to identify persons in the population with disabilities presents complex problems.

Employment and participation

In terms of participation in the labour market, persons with disabilities are an underemployed group of the workforce.

- Persons with disabilities are frequently not considered potential members of the workforce. **Negative perception, fear of failure to deliver and prejudice** continue to limit understanding and acceptance of disability in workplaces.
- **People with Disabilities (PWDs)** are assumed to be less productive than people without disabilities and entail higher labour costs, including insurance costs.
- Employers may have concerns that coworkers will react negatively to working with PWDs.

Way forward

Just like others, the majority of persons with disabilities want a dignified and productive life. Employment provides not only income but also opportunities for social participation. This is especially important for persons with disabilities.

- Incentives should be given to the **Private Sector** for employing skilled PWDs.
- Government should **provide loans and other facilities to NGOs** which run Production Centres and employ people with disabilities. Government should create policies that encourage government departments and public sector undertaking to purchase products from disability NGOs.

Conclusion

- It is therefore important that as a society we stand up to the needs of the less fortunate and create a congenial environment for persons with disabilities.
- Eliminating discriminatory tendencies must become the first step in empowering the disabled. It should be the collective responsibility of the society, people and institutions to support and empower them to lead a dignified life.

F. Prelims Facts

1. Nari Shakti Puraskar

- The National Award is given annually to individuals, groups, institutions in recognition of their exceptional work towards the cause of women empowerment, especially for vulnerable and marginalized women.
- Nari Shakti Puraskars will be given away on International Women's Day observed on 8th March 2020.
- The President gives away the awards.
- The award was formerly known as the Stree Shakti Puraskar. It was instituted in the year 1991.
- The award carries a cash prize of rupees one lakh and a citation.

G. Tidbits

1. EPF interest rate lowered to 8.5%

What's in News?

The Central Board of Trustees of the Employees' Provident Fund has reduced the interest rate on provident fund deposits from 8.65% to 8.5%.

- Salaried employees will now get 0.15% less in interest on provident fund deposits for 2019-2020.
- The Board also ratified the restoration of normal pension after 15 years from the date of commutation — a move that will benefit about 6.3 lakh pensioners who had opted for commutation on or before September 25, 2008.

Read more about the **Employee Provident Fund Organisation**.

2. Social scientists, economists demand halt to NPR data collection

What's in News?

A collective of economists and social scientists has published a joint statement demanding that data collection commissioned as part of updating the National Population Register (NPR) be stopped and that it be de-linked from the ongoing Census 2021 data-gathering exercise.

Background:

- The National Population Register, a register of residents of the country with demographic and biometric details, was supposed to be prepared between April 2020 and September 2020 ahead of the Census slated for 2021.

This issue has been covered in **4th March 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis**. [Click here to read](#).

Details:

- They argue that it is essential to ensure that the exercise of data collection for Census 2021 is absolutely safe, comprehensive and uncontaminated by any other factors.
- The statement issued states that conducting NPR along with the Census violates Clause 15 of the Census Act 1948 that bars anyone from accessing "any book, register or record made by a census officer in the discharge of his duty".
- It also argued that it violates the provision in the same clause that "no entry in any such book, register, record or schedule shall be admissible as evidence in any civil proceeding other than a prosecution under this Act."

3. Zydus Cadila to launch drug for NASH

- The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has approved Zydus Cadila's new drug application (NDA) for Saroglitazar for treatment of Non-Cirrhotic, Non-Alcoholic SteatoHepatitis (NASH) in India, making it the first-ever drug in the world for the treatment of the disease.
- The new drug will stop the deterioration of liver for NASH patients.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. "Freedom in the World" Report is published by:

- a. Economist Intelligence Unit
- b. United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)
- c. Freedom House
- d. Transparency International

Answer

-
-
-

Q2. "Idlib", frequently seen in news is in:

- a. Iran
- b. Turkey
- c. Afghanistan
- d. Syria

Answer

Q3. Consider the following statements:

1. In Lok Sabha, the authority of suspension of a member and revocation of such suspension order is vested with the Speaker.
2. In Rajya Sabha, the Chairman has the power to suspend a Member.

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

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

Answer

Q4. Which of the following is/are Major Port(s)?

1. Paradip Port
2. Beypore Port
3. Tuticorin Port
4. Deendayal Port

Choose the correct option:

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

Answer

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Should the sedition law be scrapped? Critically Analyze. (15 marks, 250 words)
2. The coronavirus continues to spread and claim victims. Illustrate with examples how technology is helping to control the outbreak. (10 marks, 150 words)