

## 13 Feb 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

#### A. GS 1 Related

##### *SOCIAL ISSUES*

1. [Inter-marriages can reduce caste tensions, says court](#)
2. [Ph.D. entry in IITs tougher for students from marginalised communities](#)

#### B. GS 2 Related

##### *POLITY AND GOVERNANCE*

1. [‘Governance and lawmaking should be left to legislature’](#)

##### *INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS*

1. [Slap sanctions on Myanmar, say UN rights envoy and U.S.](#)

#### C. GS 3 Related

#### D. GS 4 Related

#### E. Editorials

##### *GOVERNANCE*

1. [Regulation lite](#)

##### *ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY*

1. [Climate change resilience actions, in step with India](#)

#### F. Tidbits

1. [‘Excessive alcohol can cause irreversible changes to DNA’](#)

#### G. Prelims Facts

1. [A puppet master with a chip in the brain](#)
2. [Kalari, the new yoga?](#)

#### H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

#### I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

### A. GS 1 Related

#### Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Inter-marriages can reduce caste tensions, says court](#)

### **Context:**

In a recent judgement, the Supreme Court said that educated youngsters are showing the way forward to reduce caste and community tensions in India by tying the knot in inter-marriages.

### **Details:**

- It observed that the departure from the earlier norms of society where caste and community played a major role is possibly the way forward where caste and community tensions will reduce by such inter-marriages.
- Justice Kaul quoted B.R. Ambedkar's Annihilation of Caste – "I am convinced that the real remedy is intermarriage. Fusion of blood can alone create the feeling of being kith and kin, and unless this feeling of kinship, of being kindred, becomes paramount, the separatist feeling — the feeling of being aliens — created by caste will not vanish."
- Also, Justice Kaul in his judgement observed that "consent of the family or community or clan is not necessary once the two adult individuals agree to enter into a wedlock and that their consent has to be piously given primacy".

### **Issues:**

- Several states have passed the religious conversion laws.
- The promulgation of Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance drew much criticisms and concerns.

**To understand the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Ordinance in-depth, watch [Explained "Love Jihad Laws"](#).**

### **Note:**

The Supreme Court has ordered the police authorities to lay down some guidelines and training programmes on handling socially sensitive cases relating to inter-marriages.

## **2. Ph.D. entry in IITs tougher for students from marginalised communities**

### **Context:**

Data collated from a series of RTI applications, on the number of applicants versus the number of those admitted to Ph.D. programmes in the five older IITs have indicated that the acceptance rate is skewed against students from the SC, ST, and Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities.

### **Details:**

- This finding comes against the backdrop of the Education Ministry's data submitted to Parliament last year showing the failure of the IITs to fill Ph.D. seats as per reservation.
- The government's reservation policy mandates allocation of 7.5% seats for students from the STs and 15% from SCs.

### **Acceptance Rate:**

The acceptance rate refers to the number of students selected for every 100 students who applied.

### Concern:

- Acceptance rate stood at 4% for students from General Category.
- It falls to 2.7% for OBC students and further down to just 2.16% for SCs and 2.2% for STs.
- Similarly, 23.2% seats went to applicants from the OBCs against the 27% mandated by reservation. Remaining 65.6%, or roughly two-thirds of all the seats, went to GC applicants.
- The IITs have often cited the lack of applicants from the marginalised communities for the situation. However, the RTI data reveal quite the opposite.
- Also, the recent report of an Education Ministry-constituted committee, which included administrators from a few IITs, has faced criticism for recommending the abolition of reservation in faculty recruitment.

### Issues:

- It is opined that the argument of “merit” was often used as an alibi for continuing social exclusion.
- There has been long-standing opposition among IIT administrators and faculty to reservations, which they see as a form of unjust government intervention in their meritocratic institutions.
- It is opined that the failure to fill the reserved seats was due to selection bias.

### Way Forward:

- There is a need for a further detailed study on the issue.
- Increased transparency is needed in the admission process and the presence of OBC, SC and ST members on the selection panels.

## **B. GS 2 Related**

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

#### **1. ‘Governance and lawmaking should be left to legislature’**

##### Context:

Law Minister asserted that governance and lawmaking should be left to the elected members of the legislature.

##### Details:

- He told the Lok Sabha that just as independence of the judiciary is a part of the [basic structure of the Constitution](#), the principle of separation of powers is also a part of that basic structure.
- He also urged the judiciary to exercise its discretion in accepting public interest litigations.
- While there is a rush to file PILs on most of the issues, he appealed to the judiciary to look at “genuine” issues.

### **Judicial Overreach:**

- Judicial overreach is a term commonly used when the judiciary seems to have overstepped its mandate.

Read more on **Judicial Overreach and its examples.**

**Note:**

- Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Act, 2021, which was passed by the Lok Sabha, was also discussed.
- The amendment to the Arbitration Act proposes to empower courts to stay arbitration awards if they have been obtained through fraud or corrupt means.
- While several members questioned the need to amend the Arbitration Act retrospectively, and to be brought in the form of an ordinance, the Law Minister said it was necessary to ensure that some parties did not try to take advantage of an arbitral award that may have been obtained through fraud or corrupt means.

## Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### 1. Slap sanctions on Myanmar, say UN rights envoy and U.S.

**Context:**

The United Nations human rights investigator for Myanmar has urged the UN Security Council to consider imposing punitive sanctions, arms embargoes and travel bans in response to a military coup.

**Details:**

- The 47-member forum was meeting at the request of Britain and the European Union to consider a resolution calling for the release of ousted Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi.
- The United States, which imposed its own sanctions, urged other UN member states to follow suit, in its first remarks to the Human Rights Council since returning to the forum.

This topic has been covered in **12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 Comprehensive News Analysis.**

**Note:**

- The coup ousted the civilian government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi and prevented recently elected lawmakers from opening a new session of Parliament.
- Factory workers and civil servants, students and teachers, medical personnel, LGBTQ communities, Buddhist monks and Catholic clergy have all come out against the coup in force.
- In the latest developments in Myanmar, the country's coup leader has called on people to work with the military if they want democracy.
- In addition, the new junta also announced that it would mark Union Day by releasing thousands of prisoners and reducing other inmates' sentences.

## C. GS 3 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

## E. Editorials

### Category: GOVERNANCE

#### 1. Regulation lite

##### Context:

India's Internet-based Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming services have operationalised a code of self-regulation soon after the I&B Ministry announced that it had prepared a set of guidelines and directives for the industry.

##### Background:

- In 2020, a gazette notification was issued by the government placing 'Over the Top' (OTT) platforms or video streaming service providers like Netflix, Hotstar, Amazon Prime and digital news under the ambit of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

This topic has been covered in **12<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Comprehensive News Analysis**.

- Recently, 17 'Over the Top' (OTT) platforms or video streaming service providers have adopted a 'toolkit' for effective implementation of the self-regulation code introduced in 2020.

This topic has been covered in **12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 Comprehensive News Analysis**.

##### Why self-regulation?

- Governments are lending tacit support to the view that creative expression may be becoming too influential to be left free.
  - Several instances such as the FIRs in U.P. against the Amazon Prime Video series, Tandav, invoking legal provisions on cyber terrorism, obscenity, promoting social enmity and defiling places of worship and a plea in M.P. on the same series seeking a court direction to bring OTT channels under censorship laws indicate the growing oppressive environment.
- The urgency of this code arises not from any challenge to law and order or morality posed by films, but from the police and court cases that film-makers and the channels are having to run.

##### Details:

- While it might be argued that it also has a small minority pursuing crass commercialism, the inexorable growth of OTT channels has infused creative talent into film-making, aided by the absence of overbearing censors and vested interests.
- The code of self-regulation under the aegis of the Internet and Mobile Association of India places emphasis on abiding by the [IPC](#), laws on women's and children's rights, copyright and age-appropriate certification and parental control, while upholding constitutional provisions on free speech.

##### Way Forward:

- Such a voluntary code is consistent with the recommendations of the I&B Ministry's Expert Committee on film certification chaired by Shyam Benegal in 2016.
  - The panel upheld creative expression and full ownership of any visual production, leaving viewing decisions to audiences, more accurately classifying films by viewer age, and ensuring transparency in the way reviewing bodies are constituted.
- A good number of legislations exist to assess whether there has been a violation of law. A policed approach to films and media can only grow a monoculture of propaganda.
- The collective initiative of the OTT services should be given an opportunity to work.
- It is time the Centre took a firm stand against displays of manufactured outrage and let newer channels of creativity flourish.

## **Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY**

### **1. Climate change resilience actions, in step with India**

The article throws light on how a well-equipped Australia is working with major economies to transfer technologies supporting lower global emissions.

#### **Opportunity at Climate Adaptation Summit:**

- The virtual Climate Adaptation Summit hosted by the Netherlands provided a valuable opportunity to the international community for collective action to realise a more climate-resilient future.
- At the summit, Australia reaffirmed the commitment to ambitious and practical action to combat the impacts of climate change at home and around the world.

#### **Australia's environment and ecology:**

- Australia is one of the driest inhabited continents in the world.
- They have the oldest living cultures and some of the richest biodiversity in the world.
- They have traditional knowledge from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
  - For over 65,000 years their traditional knowledge and practices have preserved and protected Australia's natural environment.
  - Indigenous Rangers are on the frontline of preserving and protecting Australia's natural and cultural heritage.
  - For example, using traditional fire management practices, through cool and controlled burns.
- The recent bushfires demonstrated the importance of bringing together traditional Indigenous knowledge about the land with modern science.

#### **Australia's commitment in ensuring climate change and disaster resilience:**

##### **National Resilience, Relief and Recovery Agency:**

- Australia has committed over ₹1,500 crore to make our natural resources, environment and water infrastructure more resilient to drought and climate disasters.
  - They are spending more than ₹200 crore on bushfire recovery efforts, supporting local communities to design their own economic, social and environmental recovery.

- By July 2021, Australia will establish a new National Resilience, Relief and Recovery Agency to drive the reduction of natural disaster risk, enhance natural disaster resilience and ensure effective relief and recovery to all hazards.

#### Supporting Neighbours:

- Australia is also committed to supporting neighbouring and global communities tackle climate change.
- Australia has pledged at least ₹150 crore over the period 2020 to 2025 for global climate finance; ₹50 crore of this funding is for its Pacific neighbours to deploy renewable energy, and improve their climate change and disaster resilience.

#### Working with India:

- Australia is involved in an engagement with the International Solar Alliance — a global initiative designed to harness solar power to provide for the energy needs of members of the alliance.
- It is working with India for Water Resources Management initiated by India designed to further enhance each country's water management capabilities and share expertise and best practices.
- The Australia-India Joint Energy Dialogue will strengthen cooperation in pumped hydro storage, cost-effective battery technologies, hydrogen and coal gasification, adoption of clean energy technology, fly ash management technologies, and solar forecasting and scheduling.
- There are many more opportunities for Australia and India on low-emissions technology.

#### Green technologies:

- Australia is also investing in and developing the green technologies of tomorrow.
- It is aiming to leverage ₹7,000 crore of new investment in low emissions technologies by 2030.
- The country recently released the Technology Investment Roadmap — a comprehensive plan to invest in the technologies needed to bring emissions down.
- They are focused on technologies like hydrogen, carbon capture use and storage, soil carbon, energy storage to backup renewables and decarbonise transport, and low or zero-emissions steel and aluminium.
  - Widespread global deployment of those technologies will reduce emissions or eliminate them in sectors responsible for 90% of the world's emissions.

#### Way Forward:

- Climate change is an increasingly pressing global issue, which demands a collective will to ensure a sustainable future for the world.
- By working together, emissions can be reduced — which will remain critical to ensuring global average temperatures stay well below 2° Centigrade.
- A collective contribution is required to adapt and build resilience to climate change already occurring.
- Now is the time to embrace innovation and strengthen global partnerships. Together, the countries can make a difference.

## F. Tidbits

## 1. 'Excessive alcohol can cause irreversible changes to DNA'

### What's in News?

A study by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) has revealed that excessive alcohol consumption can cause irreversible changes to the DNA and these can persist even when alcohol is no longer consumed.

- It is found that the effects of alcohol were more pronounced in those who had started drinking at an early age.
- It suggested that starting to drink early may physically alter many genes, including those of the brain.

## G. Prelims Facts

### 1. A puppet master with a chip in the brain

#### What's in News?

In a unique amalgamation of tradition and modernity, a shadow leather puppet in Kerala's famous temple art Tholpavakkoothu is being animated by a robot. For the first time, the famous shadow leather puppets will tell stories of the epic Ramayana with the help of robots.

#### Puppet forms in India:

- Puppet is a doll or a figure controlled by a person so that it appears to be moving on its own.
- There are 4 different types of this art form in India, namely Glove puppets, Rod puppets, Shadow puppets and String puppets.

Read more on [Puppets forms in India](#).

### 2. Kalari, the new yoga?

#### What's in News?

Kalaripayattu martial art form is seeing a resurgence through Zoom classes.

#### Kalaripayattu:

- Kalaripayattu is a traditional martial art form originating from Kerala.
- It is believed to be the oldest surviving martial art in India and is also among the oldest martial arts in existence worldwide.
- Its origins date back to at least the 3rd century BCE.
- The term Kalaripayattu is derived from two words – “Kalari” meaning place of exercise or gymnasium and “payattu” meaning to fight or exercise.

Read more on [Kalaripayattu covered in 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021 Comprehensive News Analysis](#).

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the given pairs are correctly matched?



1. Tholu Bommalata – Karnataka
2. Ravanachhaya – Tamil Nadu
3. Tolpavakoothu – Kerala
4. Chamadyache Bahulya – Maharashtra

**Choose the correct option:**

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

Different types of shadow puppet forms in India are:

- Tholu Bommalata – Andhra Pradesh
- Togalu Gombeyata – Karnataka
- Tolpavakoothu – Kerala
- Chamadyache Bahulya – Maharashtra
- Ravanachhaya – Odisha
- Thol Bommalattam – Tamil Nadu

**Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to Saubhagya scheme:**

1. Under the scheme, free electricity connections to all households to both APL and poor families in rural areas and poor families in urban areas are provided.
2. Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has been designated as the nodal agency for the scheme.

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

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

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana – ‘Saubhagya’ scheme aims to achieve universal household electrification in all parts of the country.

- Under the scheme, free electricity connections to all households to both APL and poor families in rural areas and poor families in urban areas are provided.
- Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has been designated as the nodal agency for the scheme.

**Q3. Consider the following statements:**

1. While the 'Basic Structure of the constitution' was not defined in the original Constitution, subsequent amendments defined the term in the Indian Constitution.
2. The Constitution of India defines its 'basic structure' in terms of federalism, secularism, fundamental rights and democracy.

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

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Even though the Supreme Court gave the Basic Structure Doctrine, the term has not been defined in the Indian Constitution.
- Understanding of the basic structure comes from various judgements of the Supreme Court.
- Both the statements are wrong.

**Q4. Consider the following statements with respect to Kalaripayattu:**

1. Kalaripayattu is a traditional martial art form originating from Andhra Pradesh.
2. The word kalari appears in Sangam literature to describe a battlefield and combat arena.
3. The art form is restricted only to men.

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

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Kalaripayattu is a traditional martial art form originating from Kerala.

- The word kalari first appears in Sangam literature to describe a battlefield and combat arena.
- Unlike other parts of India, warriors in Kerala belonged to all castes. Women in Keralite society also underwent training in Kalaripayattu, and still do so to this day.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. What do you understand by Judicial Overreach? Judicial Activism can reduce people's faith in the integrity, quality, and efficiency of the government. Critically comment. (15 Marks, 250 Words) [GS-2, Polity and Governance]
2. The idea that films must be pre-censored and arbitrary cuts made by government-appointed nominees, is antiquated and repugnant to liberal societies. Critically evaluate the need for regulation of OTT platforms in the light of code of self-regulation operationalised by them. (15 Marks, 250 Words) [GS-2, Polity and Governance]

