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*Nothing here for today!!!*

## B. GS 2 Related

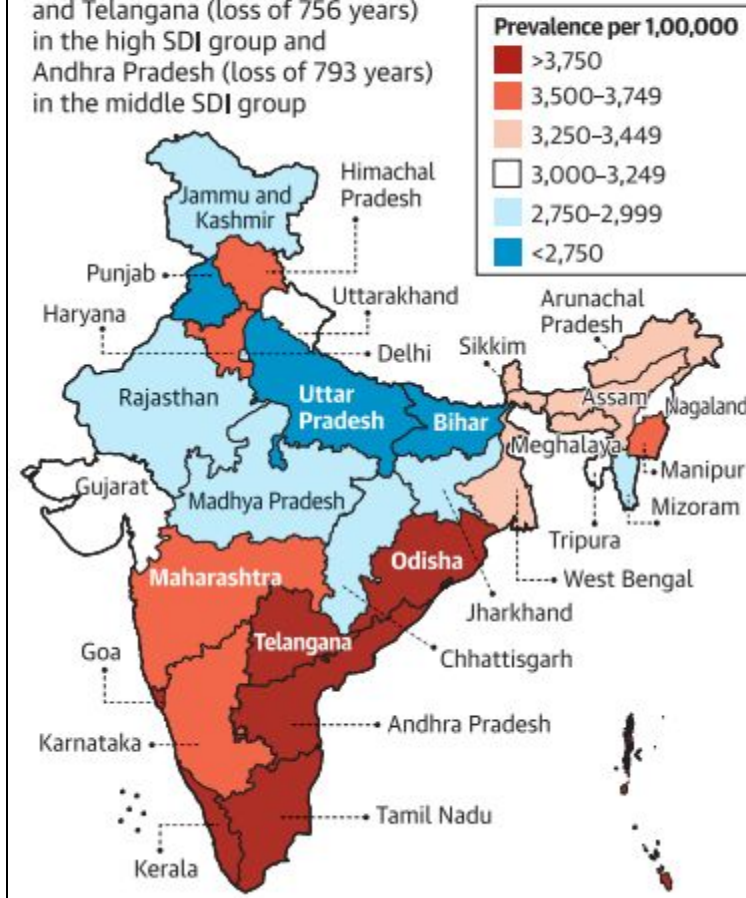
### Category: HEALTH

1. South has higher prevalence of mental disorders: study

Context:

## A heavy burden

Prevalence of depressive disorders was highest in Tamil Nadu (loss of 836 years per 1 lakh population), Kerala (loss of 641 years), Goa (loss of 626 years) and Telangana (loss of 756 years) in the high SDI group and Andhra Pradesh (loss of 793 years) in the middle SDI group



Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh account for a higher prevalence of mental disorders that manifest primarily during adulthood in depression and anxiety, according to the **first comprehensive estimates of disease burden attributable to mental health** from 1990 prepared by the India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative and published in the Lancet Psychiatry.

### Details:

- The study finds that roughly one in seven Indians, or 197 million persons, suffered from mental disorders of varying severity in 2017.
- These include depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, idiopathic developmental intellectual disability, conduct disorders, and autism.
- In its State-wise analysis, the study divides different States into three categories on the basis of their socio-demographic index (SDI), i.e low, medium and high SDI States.
- The SDI is a composite measure of per-capita income, mean education, and fertility rate in women younger than 25 years and is calculated on a scale of one.
- Prevalence of depressive disorders was highest in Tamil Nadu, Kerala (loss of 641 years), Goa and Telangana in the high SDI State group and Andhra Pradesh in the middle SDI State group.

- Similarly, anxiety disorders were found to be more common in Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, and Maharashtra in the high SDI State group and Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, and West Bengal in the middle SDI State group.

## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: ECONOMY

#### 1. RBI holds open market operations

**Context:**

The RBI has purchased Rs.10,000-crore worth long-term government securities and sold Rs.6,825 crore of short-term securities through open market operations (OMOs). Earlier, the RBI had announced simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities under OMOs for Rs.10,000 crore each.

This topic has been covered in 21<sup>st</sup> December Comprehensive News Analysis. [Click here to read.](#)

#### 2. Airlines may fly into a \$600-mn loss: CAPA

**Context:**

Aviation consultancy Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) estimates a full-year loss of \$500-600 million for Indian carriers primarily due to a sharp fall in airfares on some of the most profitable routes as the airlines mounted additional capacity in a bid to capture coveted airport slots owned by the now defunct Jet Airways.

- CAPA said that the latest estimate for India's domestic market was its sharpest downward revision from one quarter to the next in 16 years.
- It had earlier predicted a profit of \$500-700 million for Indian airlines.

**Issues:**

## A plummeting nosedive

- Loss estimate is CAPA's sharpest downward revision from one quarter to the next in 16 years
- Profit of \$500-700 million previously predicted for Indian airlines
- Domestic and international traffic volumes remained flat in first 9 months of FY20
- Air India set to post loss of \$500 mn in FY20, following a loss of \$1.2 bn last year
- IndiGo may clock profit of only \$70-\$90 mn; it was earlier expected to achieve \$400-500 mn
- SpiceJet may break-even or clock moderate loss from the previously estimated record profit



### Challenges:

- The primary challenge before the airline has been the complexity of operations due to the induction of Jet Airways' aircraft configured differently from its own to include business class.
- Moreover, there was also a significant cost increase as these were older planes which required more maintenance.
- Further, a lack of financial support for Air India from the government has resulted in as many as 26 of its planes being grounded due to a shortage of funds to replace engines as well as buy spare parts.

### Way Forward:

The consultancy recommends that the government review the challenges before the sector following the demise of Jet Airways and subject airlines to an annual review where they may be required to prove that they have sufficient cash reserves to continue flying.

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

## Category:POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

### 1. Safeguarding constitutional morality

#### Context:

- On the occasion of Constitution Day, at a joint sitting of Parliament to mark the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution, President Ram Nath Kovind, (quoting B.R.Ambedkar) made a significant observation that all three organs of the state, persons occupying constitutional posts, civil society members, and citizens should abide by 'constitutional morality'.
- However, concerns are increasingly being voiced by different segments of people regarding violations of the Constitution by those in authority.

#### Concerns:

- Concerns about the future of democracy and democratic traditions are growing across the world.
- In quite a few democracies, one can also perceive a decrease in democratic freedoms and a trend in favour of illiberal populism. India was hitherto perceived to be an exception to this, being protected by safeguards found in its Constitution – the product of a Constituent Assembly that consisted of not only the best legal minds, but also of compassionate individuals who espoused the finest human values.

#### Issues:

#### Article 370, and after:

- Recent developments in India, however, seem to blacken, without as yet undermining, the basic structure and principles of the Constitution. Steps need to be taken expeditiously to prevent any further slide.
  - For instance, much has been made of the fact of diluting Article 370, that it was a temporary provision.
  - Even if the end justified the means, the haste was unwarranted.
- While the Indian Constitution provides for a federal system with a unitary bias, the Central and State Governments both derive their authority from the Constitution. This implies that States are not exactly subordinate to the Centre.
  - Splitting Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) into two Union Territories, without due consultation with different segments and shades of opinion there, including its political leadership, ran contrary to this essential principle was considered by the masses as a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the Constitution.

#### Secularism:

- Lately, it would seem, that some biases are beginning to emerge in many circles in India as well, undermining its long held secular precepts. In its seminal judgment in the Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala case (1973), the Supreme Court held that secularism is part of the basic structure of the Constitution and cannot be trifled with in the name of security or other considerations.

#### Maharashtra State Assembly elections:

- The unfortunate drama enacted after the Maharashtra State Assembly results were announced could have been avoided if constitutional proprieties were adhered to.
- President's rule had to be invoked.

- After a compromise was reached between the Shiv Sena, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress to form a government, the President's rule was revoked in a midnight charade using the **Prime Minister's 'special powers'**, and a BJP-led government was sworn in.
- The State also witnessed unseemly incidents such as sequestering of MLAs who were taken to safe havens to avoid poaching in the event of a trial of strength in the Assembly

### **Citizenship Amendment Act:**

- The passage of Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) is being widely protested.
- CAA is believed to violate India's liberal traditions and when combined with the move to compile a National Register of Citizens, it is believed to carry an ominous ring.
- Many experts had apparently warned that the proposals were in violation of the Constitution, but these warnings were not heeded.
- That the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill passed through both the Houses without any detailed debate or discussion thereafter is, hence, unfortunate, giving an impression that a majority in Parliament is adequate to push through Acts which may or may not be in tune with the Constitution.
- Granting citizenship may be the sole discretion of the Centre, with the States having no role.
- A more detailed and in-depth study was called for before pushing through such a key measure.

### **Conclusion:**

These are all portents of danger, and call for a great deal of introspection. They merit a calibrated response. At this juncture, it may be worthwhile to quote Winston Churchill 'the price of greatness is responsibility'. The ones in authority must be answerable to the question, "Is India acting responsibly?"

## **2. A decision without forethought**

### **Issue:**

- The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019 has had huge consequences on both the domestic and foreign policy front.
- In India, widespread protests that began in the Northeast are now raging across the country.
- On the international front, soon after the protests broke out, two Bangladesh ministers cancelled their visit to India, the Japanese Prime Minister postponed his visit to the country and the annual India-Japan summit was cancelled.
- From the perspective of India's ambitious development plans and strategic diplomacy, the question that arises is whether the Central government factored in the ramifications of the CAA on India's Act East Policy and its potential side effects on the country's relationship with foreign stakeholders heavily invested in the Northeast.

### **Repercussions on various fronts:**

- Apart from being the unique region that links India with ASEAN nations, the Northeast is also the springboard for India's engagement with Southeast Asia. This is precisely why New Delhi roped in Tokyo to fulfill its ambitious plan of expanding its global footprints via development in the Northeast. As part of its Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy, Japan has been investing in the Northeast in a big way.
- Recently Tokyo decided to invest 13,000 crore in different projects in the Northeast. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is actively engaged in building Northeast road network connectivity, water supply projects and economic modernisation of the region. It will be financing the

construction of India's longest bridge between Dhubri in Assam and Phulbari in Meghalaya. Japan has contributed official development assistance loans for the North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project. Private Japanese organisations are also financing a host of developmental projects in the region.

- It is but natural that the CAA protests and Internet shutdowns in the region would have come as a huge shock to Japan and its investment plans in the region which hinge on stability and a business-friendly environment conducive. Given these considerations, the government could have done well to analyse how such a decision would affect the economic development of the Northeast.
- The volatility of the Northeast can possibly be a setback to the collaborative efforts between India and Japan in providing an alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative.
- Besides being a development partner, Japan is also a member of the Quad, which came into existence to counter Chinese economic prowess and unlock India's potential in the Indo-Pacific.
- In case Japan has a rethink on these development projects, will it do so keeping in mind only the Northeast or the rest of India too? JICA is involved in various big-ticket infrastructure projects in Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Odisha, etc.

## Category:INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### 1. Brexit on fast-track

#### Context:

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Brexit deal has been passed in the British Parliament. It is now almost certain that the country would exit the European Union (EU) on or before the current deadline – January 31, 2020.

#### Larger Background:

- Johnson became Prime Minister after his predecessor Theresa May's repeated attempts to get lawmakers' support for her Brexit deal failed.
- Johnson first reached a new agreement with the EU and then called fresh elections.
- With his party's resounding win in the parliamentary election and a surge in the number of Brexiteers among Conservative lawmakers, the passage of the Bill in the House of Commons was a mere formality. The deal got the support of 358 lawmakers against 234.

#### Details:

- The agreement deals with issues such as:
  - Citizens' rights
  - The settlement amount the U.K. has agreed to pay the EU
  - An arrangement to avoid physical barriers between the Northern Ireland, which is part of the U.K., and the Republic of Ireland, an EU member.
- Under the terms of withdrawal, Northern Ireland will continue to remain within the EU jurisdiction after Brexit. The arrangement would maintain the existing soft border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which has underpinned the region's tenuous peace since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.
- A new clause outlaws an extension to the standstill transition period that would expire on December 31, 2020.
- The bill gets rid of the need for parliamentary approval, for the government's negotiating mandate as well as the final agreement on the country's future relationship with the bloc.
- Guarantees on labour rights previously included in the withdrawal bill have been removed.

## What next?

- The accord will be put on vote in the House of Commons once more, and then the upper chamber, the House of Lords, will vote on it.
- The formalities have been completed, in the U.K; the deal will go to the EU Parliament.
- Once the EU lawmakers ratify it, the U.K. will formally exit the union.
- A formal exit, however, doesn't mean that the tedious Brexit process is over. Even after the formal exit, the U.K. will continue to remain in the EU single market and customs union, at least for 11 months – this means trade will continue as usual.

## Challenges ahead:

- Johnson's biggest challenge is to reach another agreement with the EU on the country's future relationship with the bloc.
- He has ruled out extending talks beyond the December 31, 2020 deadline, which means a no-deal exit can still not be ruled out.
- Furthermore, Mr. Johnson faces legislative and political challenges ahead even if the current deal goes through the EU hurdle. His government has to pass a series of new legislation replacing the existing EU laws. He should also be mindful of the impact his deal may have on the delicate peace in Northern Ireland.
  - Desperate to secure a complete break with the EU customs union while at the same avoiding a physical barrier between the two Irelands, Mr. Johnson's deal seeks to erect a customs border between Great Britain and the island of Ireland.
  - This has already irked the unionists and strengthened the nationalists in Northern Ireland.
- EU leaders have described Mr. Johnson's cramped time-table as highly problematic to finalise a zero-tariffs, zero-quotas free trade agreement.
  - Brussels is wary of granting these concessions to a major economy such as Britain. In exchange for any flexibility, the EU insists on a close regulatory alignment and a level playing field on state subsidies, competition policy, and labour and environmental rights to safeguard its single market. Such demands are at odds with the Eurosceptic vision of Britain wresting control of its laws and borders.
  - In any case, a narrow 'goods only' deal excluding the large services sector from any agreement would deprive Britain of the benefits from its pre-eminence in financial and digital services.
- If no agreement is within sight by this time next year, a cliff-edge exit on WTO terms is a very real possibility.

## Conclusion:

The new scenario could strengthen demands in Belfast for unification with Dublin, potentially imperilling the U.K.'s constitutional integrity. Brexit has strengthened calls for a second referendum on independence by the Scottish National Party, which won a big majority in the UK elections. The uncertainty over Brexit is now over. But the uncertainty on how Brexit will happen still remains. Mr. Johnson should be mindful of the speed-breakers. If not, the economic and political costs of Brexit could be huge.

## F. Tidbits

### 1. Aadhaar to be made mandatory for GST

- With 66.79 lakh new dealers registered under the Goods and Service Tax contributing just 15% of the total revenue under the tax regime, the GST Network has decided to make Aadhaar authentication or



- physical verification mandatory for new dealers from January 1, 2020, to check malpractices.
- Briefing about the decisions taken at the GST meeting, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister, who heads the Group of Ministers on Integrated Goods and Services Tax, told that 66.79 lakh new registered dealers were paying just 15% of the taxes, constituting about 10,000 crore in monthly collections.

## 2. 'Road fatalities high among young men'

- Road injury was the leading cause of death in India among 15 to 39-year-old men in 2017 and was the second leading cause for both sexes combined, according to the findings of the **India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative** published in the Lancet Public Health.
- The study gives the first comprehensive population-level estimates of road injury deaths by type of road users in each State.
- Of the 2,19,000 road injury deaths in India in 2017, 77% were of men, with the death rate three times higher as compared to women.
- Motorcyclist and cyclist road injury death rates were 69% and 33% higher in India as compared to the global average.
- The study noted that if the estimated trends of road injury deaths up to 2017 were to continue, none of the States are likely to meet the SDG 2020 target of reducing such deaths by half from 2015 to 2020 or even by 2030.

## 3. Beijing attacks Washington for 'weaponisation' of outer space

### What's in News?

China has said that the U.S. is turning the cosmos into a "battlefield", after Washington announced a new military arm called the Space Force. The Space Force will be the sixth formal force of the U.S. military, after the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard.

- Following concerns that China and Russia are challenging its position in space, U.S. President Donald Trump signed the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act— which created a new branch of the U.S. military.
- Beijing responded by accusing the U.S. of "pursuing the weaponisation of outer space". "These actions from the U.S. strongly violate the international consensus of the peaceful use of outer space.... posing a direct threat to outer space, peace, and security," said China's Foreign Ministry spokesman.

## 4. Russia hopeful of India's free trade pact with EAEU

- Russia is looking forward to India concluding a new Free Trade Agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).
- Russian ambassador said that both countries would move forward on military and technical cooperation based on commitments, with Russia seeking de-escalation of the domestic challenges that arose after the adoption of the new citizenship law in India.
- "In 2020 we are hopeful of an early conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement between the EAEU and India and the next round of the Russian-Indian Strategic Economic Dialogue with the focus on transport, agriculture, small and medium enterprises," he said.
- The envoy said both Moscow and Delhi were going to reach a new level of security partnership by increasing oil and natural gas supplies through "long-term arrangements".

# G. Prelims Facts

## 1. SAFAR Air Quality Index

Read about **SAFAR – the state of art Air Quality and Weather Forecast system**

## 2. Cold wave

### What's in News?

As Punjab continues to reel under cold wave conditions, the State government has decided to change the timings for all schools.

### What is a cold wave?

- Cold wave is characterized by a rapid fall of temperature. It describes an unusual fall in temperature that is triggered by the transport of cold air masses into a specific area.
- The “wave” in cold wave is apparent in the upper-air flow (the jetstream), which is usually amplified into a strong ridge-trough pattern during a major cold outbreak.
- Cold waves affect much larger areas than blizzards, ice storms, and other winter hazards.
- The core requirement of a cold wave at the surface is a strong high pressure center that forms during winter in high latitudes.

India’s “core cold wave” zone covers Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha and Telangana.

## 3. Bar-headed goose

- The bar-headed goose (*Anser indicus*) is known to be one of the highest flying birds in the world.
- It can fly at altitudes of 25,000 feet, while migrating over the Himalayas, where oxygen and temperature levels are extremely low.
- The species has been reported as migrating south from Tibet, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Russia before crossing the Himalaya.
- This pale grey bird is distinct from other geese in its genus because of the black bars on its head.
- The summer habitat of the bar-headed goose is high-altitude lakes where it grazes on short grass, whereas the winter habitat is cultivated fields, where it feeds on barley, rice and wheat and could therefore cause crop damage.
- It is classified as “Least Concerned” as per the IUCN Red List.

## 4. Konda Reddi:

- They are a designated Scheduled Tribe in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.
- They are found all along the Godavari River starting from Karimnagar to East Godavari and West Godavari districts.
- Konda Reddi tribes are classified as **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group(s)**.
- The Konda Reddis are known for their eco-friendly practices such as use of household articles made of bamboo, bottle gourd, and seeds.

## 5. National Investigation Agency (NIA)

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is a central counter-terrorism agency under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Read more about the **National Investigation Agency**

## 6. DRDO successfully tests quick reaction missile

### What's in News?

The Defence Research and Development Organisation has successfully conducted twin tests of the Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) from the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur off the Odisha coast.

- The QRSAM weapon system, which operates on the move, comprises fully automated command and control, active array battery multi-function radar and launcher.
- Both the radars are four-walled having 360-degree coverage with search on move and track on move capability.
- This missile is an all-weather, all-terrain surface-to-air missile equipped with electronic counter measures against jamming by aircraft radars.
- The missile can be mounted on a truck and is stored in a canister.
- QRSAM uses solid-fuel propellant and has a range of 25-30 km.
- The single-staged missile utilized by the system is propelled using solid propellants.
- The missile is equipped with a mid-course inertial navigation system with a two-way data link and a DRDO-developed terminal active seeker.
- The system has the capability to search and track targets while moving.
- QRSAM is a compact weapon system and is mobile.
- It is expected to be ready for induction by 2021.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. The Eurasian Economic Union(EAEU) is an economic union of states located in Central and Northern Asia and Eastern Europe.
2. Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Syria are the member states of EAEU.

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

1. 1 only
2. 2 only
3. Both 1 and 2
4. Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer**

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) currently comprises 5 member states, which are party to the founding treaties of the EEU and thereby subject to the privileges and obligations of membership. Syria is not a member.

**Q2. Consider the following statements:**

1. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) is a Constitutional category.
2. A sub-category of Primitive tribal group was created on the recommendations of the Dhebar Commission.
3. 75 tribal groups have been categorized categorized by Ministry of Home Affairs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)s.

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

1. 1 and 2 only
2. 2 only
3. 1 only
4. 1 and 3 only

**Answer**

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

PVTG is not a Constitutional category. It is a government of India classification created with the purpose of enabling improvement in the conditions of certain communities with particularly low development. A sub-category of Primitive tribal group was created on the recommendations of the Dhebar Commission. 75 tribal groups have been categorized categorized by Ministry of Home Affairs as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)s.

**Q3. Consider the following statements with respect to Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile:**

1. It is a single-staged missile that uses solid-fuel propellant.
2. It has a range of 250 – 300 km.
3. It is equipped with electronic counter measures against jamming by aircraft radars.

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

1. 1 and 2 only
2. 2 and 3 only
3. 1 and 3 only
4. 1, 2 and 3

**Answer**

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- The QRSAM weapon system, which operates on the move, comprises fully automated command and control, active array battery multifunction radar and launcher.
- Both the radars are four-walled having 360-degree coverage with search on move and track on move capability.
- This missile is an all-weather, all-terrain surface-to-air missile equipped with electronic counter measures against jamming by aircraft radars.
- The missile can be mounted on a truck and is stored in a canister.
- QRSAM uses solid-fuel propellant and has a range of 25-30 km.
- The single-staged missile utilized by the system is propelled using solid propellants.
- The missile is equipped with a midcourse inertial navigation system with a two-way data link and a DRDO-developed terminal active seeker.
- The system has the capability to search and track targets while moving.
- QRSAM is a compact weapon system and is mobile.

**Q4. Consider the following statements with respect to National Investigation Agency (NIA) :**

1. NIA acts as the Central Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency.
2. It investigates and prosecutes on offences on atomic and nuclear facilities in the country.
3. The officers of the NIA have the same powers as other police officers in relation to the investigation of such offences, across India.

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

1. 1 only
2. 1 and 3 only
3. 1 and 2 only
4. 1, 2 and 3

**Answer**

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

NIA acts as the Central Counter-Terrorism Law Enforcement Agency. It investigates and prosecutes on offences on atomic and nuclear facilities in the country. The officers of the NIA have the same powers as other police officers in relation to the investigation of such offences, across India. The officers of the NIA will have the power to investigate scheduled offences committed outside India, subject to international treaties and domestic laws of other countries.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Constitutional Morality requires a co-existence of freedom and self- imposed restraint. Analyse. (15 Marks, 250 Words).
  2. Are National Register of Citizens (NRC) and Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) detrimental for the secular nature of India. Critically comment. (15 Marks, 250 Words).
- 

Read previous [CNA](#).