

04 May 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [7 Myanmar refugees can approach UNHCR: HC](#)

Context:

The **High Court of Manipur** allowed **seven Myanmar nationals**, who entered India secretly following the military coup in the country, to travel to New Delhi to seek protection from the [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#).

Details:

- Though **India is not a party to the UN Refugee Conventions**, the court observed that the **country is a party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966**.
- It noted that the far-reaching and multitude **protection afforded by [Article 21](#) of the Indian Constitution encompasses the right of non-refoulement**.
 - **Non-refoulement** is the principle under international law that **a person fleeing from persecution from his own country should not be forced to return**.

Note:

- Thousands of other Myanmar nationals are taking shelter in the bordering villages of Manipur without any support and protection apart from the hospitality and warmth of the poor villagers.
- **India and Myanmar share a 1,643-km border** and people on either side have familial ties.
- People including policemen and women from Myanmar have fled to India, following a military crackdown.

2. Myanmar ethnic guerrillas say they shot down helicopter

Context:

An **ethnic rebel group (Kachin Independence Army) in northern Myanmar** said it shot down a government military helicopter during heavy fighting over a strategic position.

Details:

- The Kachin are one of several ethnic minorities who have allied themselves with the nationwide protest movement against the military's ouster of the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, who remains in detention.
- It would be the first aircraft shot down during recent hostilities between the government and ethnic guerrilla armies.
- Government offensive is underway against the **Kachin and the Karen (another ethnic minority in eastern Myanmar) that maintains its own armed force and also has been the target of airstrikes**.
- The **fighting in Kachin and Karen states has displaced more than 45,000 villagers**.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

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E. Editorials

Category: HEALTH

1. A 'One Health' approach that targets people, animals

The article analyses how the battle against COVID-19 could be used as an opportunity to meet **India's 'One Health' targets**.

The 'One Health' approach:

- The World Veterinary Day (April 24) discussions focused on acknowledging the **interconnectedness of animals, humans, and the environment, an approach referred to as "One Health"**.
- In 1856, the father of modern pathology, Rudolf Virchow, emphasised that **there are mostly no dividing lines between animal and human medicine**.
- The concept of 'One Health' becomes more relevant as the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The transboundary impact of viral outbreaks in recent years such as the **Nipah virus, Ebola, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Avian Influenza** has further reinforced the need for us **to consistently document the linkages between the environment, animals, and human health**.

Diseases spreading across the species barrier:

- Studies indicate that **more than two-thirds of existing and emerging infectious diseases are zoonotic**.
 - Zoonotic diseases are those which **can be transferred between animals and humans, and vice versa**.
 - The pathogen in question **originates in any life form but circumvents the species barrier**.
- Another category of diseases, **anthropozoonotic infections** get transferred from humans to animals.

Read more on [zoonotic diseases](#) in the link.

India's framework, plans:

- **India's 'One Health' vision** derives its **blueprint from the agreement between the tripartite-plus alliance** comprising the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) — a global initiative supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the **World Bank under the overarching goal of contributing to 'One World, One Health'**.
- India established a **National Standing Committee on Zoonoses** as far back as the 1980s, **for keeping with the long-term objectives**.
- In 2021, funds were sanctioned for setting up a **'Centre for One Health' at Nagpur**.
- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) **has launched several schemes to mitigate the prevalence of animal diseases since 2015**, with a funding pattern along the lines of 60:40 (Centre: State); 90:10 for the Northeastern States, and 100% funding for Union Territories.
- DAHD will also **establish a 'One Health' unit** within the Ministry.

- ₹13,343 crore have been sanctioned for **Foot and Mouth disease and Brucellosis control**, under the **National Animal Disease Control Programme**.
- The government is also working to **revamp programmes that focus on capacity building for veterinarians**.
- It is **upgrading the animal health diagnostic system** such as **Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD)**.
- There is **increased focus on vaccination against livestock diseases and backyard poultry**.
- DAHD has partnered with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the National Action Plan for **Eliminating Dog Mediated Rabies**. This initiative is for sustained **mass dog vaccinations** and public education to render the country free of rabies.

Challenges in achieving targets under ‘One Health’ vision:

- Veterinary manpower shortages.
- Lack of information sharing between human and animal health institutions.
- Inadequate coordination on food safety at slaughter, distribution, and retail facilities.

Way Forward:

- WHO estimates that rabies (a zoonotic disease) costs the global economy approximately \$6 billion, annually. Considering that **97% of human rabies cases in India are attributed to dogs**, interventions for disease management in dogs are considered crucial.
- Scientists have observed that **many of the 1.7 million viruses circulating in wildlife are zoonotic**.
 - This implies that unless there is timely detection, India risks facing many more pandemics in times to come.
- There is a **need for consolidating existing animal health and disease surveillance systems** such as the **Information Network for Animal Productivity and Health** and the **National Animal Disease Reporting System**.
- **Best-practice guidelines for informal market and slaughterhouse operation** and creating **mechanisms to operationalise ‘One Health’** at every stage down to the village level must be developed.
- **Awareness generation and increased investments toward meeting ‘One Health’ targets** is the need of the hour.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. The nuclear challenge

Context:

The President of America - Joe Biden, in his first address to Congress, called **North Korea and Iran’s nuclear programs a serious threat to America’s security and world security**, in response, **North Korea has accused U.S. President Joe Biden of pursuing a hostile policy** and has warned of a response.

This topic has been covered in the [3rd May 2021 Comprehensive News Analysis](#).

Issue:

- The recent developments suggest that **both countries are headed towards a diplomatic showdown.**
- Biden's administration has completed a **review of the U.S.'s North Korea policy.** He is likely to steer between Barack Obama's strategic patience and Donald Trump's top-level summitry in dealing with the North Korean nuclear challenge.

Details:

- North Korea has remained a **foreign policy puzzle for all post-war American presidents.**
- In recent times, U.S. presidents have shown a willingness to diplomatically engage with Pyongyang.
 - The **Clinton administration** had signed a **framework agreement with North Korea to halt its nuclear programme.**
 - **Obama had initiated talks in 2012, which collapsed** after Pyongyang launched a satellite. He then adopted a wait-and-watch approach, which came to be called "**strategic patience**".
 - While Mr. Trump reached out to the regime and met its leader, Kim Jong-un thrice, there was no breakthrough. In theory, the Trump administration and North Korea had agreed to a complete de-nuclearisation of the Korean peninsula, but failed to agree on its formula.
 - However, **Trump-Kim summits created a diplomatic momentum for engagement.**
- **After Mr. Biden assumed office, North Korea had conducted short-range missile tests,** which the U.S. saw as a provocation.

Way forward:

- The U.S.'s key goal in northeastern Asia is the **de-nuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.**
- **Military strike on North Korea is not an option** as the country is a nuclear power.
- Despite its threats to expand its nuclear programme, **North Korea sticks to the self-imposed moratorium on nuclear and long-range ballistic missile tests.**
- As acknowledged by Mr. Kim, the **country is going through a tough economic crisis** and is open to talks. Mr. Biden should seize this opportunity.
- The focus of the Biden administration's **new North Korean strategy should be to reach a common ground that addresses both North Korea's economic worries and the U.S.'s nuclear concerns.**
- The only practical way to achieve this is through diplomacy.

F. Prelims Facts

1. COVAX to buy 500 mn doses from Moderna

What's in News?

The COVAX global programme, which has relied heavily on AstraZeneca vaccines, said that it has struck a deal to buy 500 million doses of Moderna's COVID-19 vaccines.

- The doses will broaden the portfolio of vaccines under COVAX.

COVAX:

- The COVAX project is a **global risk-sharing mechanism for pooled procurement and fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines**, an ambitious programme based on funding from high and middle-income countries.
- COVAX aims to accelerate the development and manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines and to guarantee **fair and equitable access for every country in the world**.
- It aims to **deliver 2 billion doses by the end of 2021**.
- COVAX is co-led by Gavi, the **Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)** and **WHO**.

2. German philosopher refuses UAE prize

What's in News?

In 2021, German philosopher Juergen Habermas declined his Zayed Book Award, citing the UAE's political system (a repressive non-democracy).

- The **Sheikh Zayed Book Award** is a literary award begun in the UAE.
- The award is named after **Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**, the **first president of the UAE** when the federation of seven sheikhdoms became a country in 1971.

G. Tidbits

1. 'States cannot impinge on autonomy of pvt. schools'

What's in News?

The Supreme Court held that the **States cannot impinge on the autonomy of private unaided schools to fix and collect just and permissible school fees from parents**, especially in the name of the pandemic.

- The Bench asserted that while the **State may regulate the fee structure of private unaided schools to ensure that the school management does not indulge in profiteering and commercialisation**, in the guise of exercise of that power, **it cannot transcend the line of regulation and impinge upon the autonomy of the school**.
- The judgment, which would **help schools retain their autonomy in deciding fee structure**, came on the basis of a series of **appeals filed by private unaided schools in Rajasthan** against State notifications to defer collection of fees and reduce tuition fees, in view of the reduction of syllabus due to the aftermath of the pandemic.

2. 'OPEC share slid as India's oil imports shrank 11.8%'

What's in News?

OPEC's share of India's oil imports fell to the lowest in at least two decades in the year to the end of March 2021.

- **Overall purchases by India fell to a six-year low.**
- Total crude imports by the **world's third-biggest oil importer (India)** fell by 11.8% from a year earlier.
- **India bought more U.S. and Canadian oil** at the expense of that from Africa and West Asia, reducing purchases from members of the [Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries \(OPEC\)](#) squeezing the group's share of imports to 72% from about 80% previously.
 - That is the lowest share since at least FY02, before which crude import data is not available.
- The **U.S. emerged as the fifth-biggest supplier**, up to two places from FY20.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1950 to address the refugee crisis that resulted from World War II.
2. In recognition of its work, UNHCR is the only organization to win Nobel Peace Prize more than once.
3. It is a member of the United Nations Development Group, a consortium of organizations dedicated to sustainable development.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 1 and 3 only
- d. All of the above

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created in 1950 to address the refugee crisis that resulted from World War II.
- It is a member of the United Nations Development Group, a consortium of organizations dedicated to sustainable development.
- UNHCR, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has received the Nobel Peace Prize twice, in 1954 and 1981. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been honoured three times, in 1917, 1944 and 1963.

Q2. Which of the following is correct regarding the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)?

1. NHRC is an independent statutory body established in 1993 in conformity with the Paris Principles.
2. NHRC has the power to interfere in any judicial proceedings involving any allegation of violation of human rights.

Select the correct option from below:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Both the statements are correct.

Q3. Which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. If a candidate belonging to a registered political party dies before the commencement of the poll, the election to that constituency is adjourned.
2. In case the polling in a particular constituency is adjourned, the Model Code of Conduct is revoked immediately.

Options:

- a. Only 1
- b. Only 2
- c. Both
- d. None

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Only when a candidate belonging to a **recognised** political party dies before the commencement of the poll the election to that constituency is adjourned.
- However, if a candidate belonging to a registered political party or an independent candidate dies before the commencement of the poll, the election to that constituency is conducted as per schedule.
- In case the polling in a particular constituency is adjourned, the Model Code of Conduct is revoked only after the results of the polls being conducted in that particular state are declared.

Q4. Consider the following statements:

1. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent, intergovernmental organization, created at the Baghdad Conference in 1960.
2. Qatar is the latest country to suspend its membership in OPEC.
3. Currently, the organization has a total of 23 Member Countries.

Which of the above statement(s) is/are correct?

- a. 1 only

- b. 1 and 2 only
- c. 2 and 3 only
- d. All of the Above

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is a permanent, intergovernmental organization, created at the Baghdad Conference in 1960.
- Qatar terminated its membership on 1 January 2019. Ecuador is the latest country to suspend its membership of OPEC effective 1 January 2020.
- Currently, OPEC has 13 member countries. Algeria, Angola, UAE, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Republic of Congo, Libya, Nigeria, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.

Q5. Karl Marx explained the process of class struggle with the help of which one of the following theories? [UPSC 2011]

- a. Empirical liberalism
- b. Existentialism
- c. Darwin's theory of evolution
- d. Dialectical materialism

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Karl Marx explained the process of class struggle with the help of dialectical materialism.
- Dialectical materialism is a philosophy of science, history, and nature developed in Europe and based on the writings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. The battle against COVID-19 should be used as an opportunity to meet India's 'One Health' targets. Discuss. (15 Marks, 250 Words) [GS-2, Health]
2. Controlling the threat posed by North Korea will require a strategic approach that combines North Korea's economic worries and dialogue. Examine. (10 Marks, 150 Words) [GS-2, International Relations]