

## 26 May 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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### A. GS 1 Related

#### Category: GEOGRAPHY

1. [Bay of Bengal, fomenting Yaas, hotter than normal for season](#)

**Context:**

- **Cyclone Yaas** expected to make landfall on the Odisha and West Bengal coastal districts.

For information on this refer to:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 23rd May 2021](#)

**Background:**

**Cyclones in India:**

- Cyclones in the Bay of Bengal are an annual phenomenon in the **pre monsoon period** during late April- May.
- They are attributed to **increased ocean surface temperatures** of the North Indian Ocean during this season.
- Traditionally the cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal area have been more in number than those originating in the Arabian Sea area because of more favourable conditions for cyclone formation in the Bay of Bengal waters.

For related information refer to:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 20th May 2021](#)

- Also the cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal region have caused maximum damage in India given the **counter clockwise movement of these cyclones thus making landfall on the eastern Indian coastal areas**.
- About 60% of the cyclones that form in these seas make landfall in India causing significant damage and devastation.
- Example: **Amphan super cyclone** of 2020 in West Bengal, **Super cyclone of 1999** in Odisha, **Fani cyclone of 2019** in Odisha etc.
- Unlike these comparatively lower number of cyclones originating in the Arabian sea make their landfall on Indian coasts.
- However there seems to be a **change in this trend with a relative decrease in the number of cyclones in the Bay of Bengal and a rise in the Arabian Sea** as being observed in the last 4 years.

For more information on this topic refer to:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 19th May 2021](#)

- The cyclones are an important phenomenon from a climatological point of view as these **pre monsoon cyclones are favourable for drawing in the monsoon** into the Andamans and subsequently to the Kerala coast.

**Details:**

- Climate scientists say the **temperature in the North Bay of Bengal waters has reached temperatures up to 32 degrees Celsius**. This is at least two degrees warmer than what is normal for this time of the year.
  - The higher temperature will lead to more evaporation of water and result in **more intense cyclones**.
- However, given that the **distance to landfall is short**, this has prevented the cyclone from drawing the excess thermal energy from the warm waters and intensifying into an extremely severe cyclone.
  - Cyclone Yaas is predicted to make landfall as a very severe cyclone.

#### **Concern with respect to storm surge:**

- The storm surges are expected to be 2 -4 meters above astronomical tide levels along the West Bengal and Odisha coasts.
  - A storm surge is a **rise in sea level that occurs during tropical cyclones**. The storms produce strong winds that push the water into shore, which can lead to flooding. This makes storm surges very dangerous for coastal regions.
  - It is measured as the rise in water level above the normal tidal level, and does not include waves.
- The storm surge is a matter of concern because the **cyclone will coincide with the full moon tide** and the water level in the seas and river may rise further leading to breach of embankments.
  - Tides are the rise and fall of sea levels caused by the combined effects of the gravitational forces exerted by the Moon and the Sun, and the rotation of the Earth.
  - During the new moon and full moons, the tidal force due to the Sun reinforces that due to the Moon. **The tide's range is then at its maximum; this is called the spring tide.**

## **B. GS 2 Related**

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

#### **1. New IT rules come into force today; will comply, says FB**

##### **Context:**

- 'The Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021' would come into effect soon.
  - The IT rules, 2021 contain rules for social media intermediaries such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Google, Twitter and Telegram.

For more information on this refer to:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 28th Feb 2021](#)

##### **Concerns:**

**Non compliance:**

- Despite the closing in on the last date for compliance, **a majority of platforms are yet to fully comply with the new rules.**
- While all the concerned companies have vowed to comply with the new rules, some have sought more time for compliance and also asked for more consultation with the government agencies over some provisions of the rules.

#### **Chance of misuse:**

- Some experts have pointed out that the new rules **may amount to an over reach** and lead to suppression of the right to free expression of people on these platforms.
- Also the new rules can arm the ruling government to take **undue advantage of the power to regulate** to suppress views against the ruling dispensation.

For related information refer to:

#### **[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 01st Mar 2021](#)**

#### **Consequences of non compliance:**

- Though there is no clarity on the immediate consequences of non-compliance. However, experts say these companies could lose the **'safe harbour' protection.**
  - The safe harbour protection gives the social media intermediaries **protection against liability (civil as well as criminal) for content posted on their platform by third party users.**
  - The safe harbour protection is granted under **Section 79 of the IT Act.**

#### **2. CJI made 'statement of law' at CBI panel**

#### **Context:**

- The high level committee consisting of the Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India and the leader of the opposition in Lok sabha had recently convened to appoint a director to the Central Bureau of Investigation.
  - **Subodh Kumar Jaiswal**, currently Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force, has been appointed as CBI Director.

#### **Details:**

- The Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana during the meeting had asked to **avoid officers with less than six months left to retire for appointment as CBI Director.**
- This opinion of the CJI should be viewed as just a **"statement of law"** flowing from the judiciary's observations in many landmark cases.

#### **Cases which guide appointment of director to CBI:**

##### *Vineet Narain judgment:*

- As per the Vineet Narain judgment of 1998, the Director of CBI is to hold the post for not less than two years.

- He/she may not be transferred except with the previous consent of the high-level appointment committee.

*2019 Supreme Court order:*

- **The six-month minimum residual tenure rule was introduced by the Supreme Court in a 2019 order.**
- It had noted that recommendation for appointment to the post of Director General of Police by the Union Public Service Commission and preparation of panel should be purely on the basis of merit from officers who have a minimum residual tenure of six months, that is, officers who have at **least six months of service prior to retirement.**
- The apex court had reasoned that officers with only a few days of service may be in an insecure state of mind and this would not augur well for the functioning of the CBI which has jurisdiction to investigate offences pertaining to 69 Central laws, 18 State Acts and 231 offences in the IPC.

#### **Laws which guide appointment of director of CBI:**

*Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003:*

- CBI works under the overall supervision of CVC in matters related to the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. **The CVC act provides for a security of two year tenure in office for CBI Director.**
- The CVC is also involved in the appointment of officers to the post about the level of SP and above except Director and also recommend the extension or curtailment of tenure of such officers in the DSPE (CBI) -An investigation wing of CBI.

### **3. Panel to define offences of speech, expression**

#### **Context:**

- The **Committee for Reforms in Criminal Laws** is likely to propose a separate Section on “offences relating to speech and expression.”

#### **Background:**

##### **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India:**

- The Supreme Court in 2015 had scrapped **Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000** that provided punishment for sending offensive messages through communication services.

##### **T.K. Viswanathan committee:**

- In the backdrop of the SC judgment in the Shreya Singhal case, the central government had appointed a committee headed T.K. Viswanathan. This committee had recommended **stricter laws for online “hate speech”.**
- Following this the Home Ministry had written to the Law Commission to prepare a distinct law for online “hate speech”.

##### **Committee for Reforms in Criminal Laws:**

- The Committee for Reforms in Criminal Laws was constituted by Union Home Ministry to **suggest reforms to the IPC framed in 1860 and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC)**
- The committee is undertaking extensive consultations with relevant stakeholders and is expected to submit its report soon.
- The suggestions received by the Committee for Reforms in Criminal Laws will be examined by the Ministry before the changes are adopted.

**Details:**

- There is **no clear definition of what constitutes a “hate speech” in the IPC.**
- Legally speaking, for criminal Sections to be invoked against a speech it has to lead to violence or disturbance of law and order.
- The **Bureau of Police Research and Development** in its recently published manual has defined hate speech as a “language that denigrates, insults, threatens or targets an individual based on their identity and other traits (such as sexual orientation or disability or religion etc.).”
- Given the **increasing threat posed by hate speech**, the attempt to define hate speech is a welcome move.

## C. GS 3 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: EDUCATION

#### 1. Still grappling with online classes

**Background:**

- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a **decisive shift from traditional modes of classroom education to online education.**

**Concerns:**

- Though the online education mode has allowed maintaining a semblance of continuity in education, yet online education in India suffers from the following lacunae.

**Lack of requisite infrastructure:**

- The **low public expenditure in the education sector** has resulted in poor infrastructure in state run universities.
  - The **government spent only 3.2% of its GDP on education in 2020-21.**

- Even this low expenditure is marked by **stark differences within government institutions**. While centrally funded elite institutes such as the IITs, IIMs, NITs and Central universities receive a large proportion of government funds, the financial health of state universities in the country continues to be worrisome.
- This allowed centrally funded elite institutes to adapt to the new requirement quickly. They were able to launch video channels and upload e-content on institutional websites and digital platforms.
- However, a **majority of the state universities still struggle without proper Internet connectivity and bandwidth in their campuses**. Also the severe crunch of human resources in universities of India is an added challenge to the already overburdened teachers.

#### **Digital divide:**

- Many of the **students lack the facilities to attend online classes**.
- Despite impressive growth in digital connectivity, **internet penetration is still low** in India.
- The difference in students' access to digital education, will lead to the exclusion of the less privileged student community and deepen the existing inequalities in the society.

#### **Lack of appropriate study material:**

- The lack of appropriate study material is a major concern too for online education. Merely using scanned lecture notes or powerpoint presentations does not serve any meaningful purpose.
- There has been the **absence of application-based learning avenues for students** in the online education mode. Without this the practical field and laboratory-based learning would suffer.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Given that there is talk of more COVID-19 waves, it is imperative for the government to embrace a pragmatic approach to online education.
- The higher education institutions were directed by the government to shift from classroom education to online education, without taking cognisance of changes needed in infrastructure, training, etc. Neither the institutions nor the students were prepared for this sudden change. The **transition from conventional classroom teaching and learning to online education needs to be done in a phased manner**.

#### **Ensure funding:**

- The government should provide sufficient financial support to the state universities to build the requisite infrastructure for online education. The government must provide suitable **financial aids to state universities to obtain appropriate IT tools, platforms, devices etc.**
  - The Fifteenth Finance Commission in its report has also recommended investing in online education.

#### **Bridging digital divide:**

- Development of **massive open online courses (MOOCs), direct-to-home (DTH) content development**, digital classrooms and provision of devices (laptop/tablets) for 25 lakh students

belonging to the socially and economically weaker sections of society could help close the digital gap to some extent.

**Additional information:**

- There are 993 universities, 39,931 colleges, 3.73 crore students and 14.16 lakh teachers in India, according to All India Survey on Higher Education (2018-19).

**Category: HEALTH**

**1. Slowing the pace of India's mucormycosis threat**

This topic has been discussed previously in the following article:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 16th May 2021](#)

## F. Prelims Facts

**1. SEBI to appoint forensic auditors for listed firms**

- Markets regulator SEBI is looking to appoint auditors for conducting forensic audits of financial statements of listed companies as part of efforts to curb frauds.
  - **A forensic audit is an examination and evaluation of a firm's or individual's financial records.** During a forensic audit, an auditor seeks to derive evidence that could potentially be used in court.
  - A forensic audit is used to **uncover criminal behavior such as fraud or embezzlement.**

**2. OSCs to be set to aid women survivors**

- The Central government will set up **One Stop Centres (OSCs) across 10 foreign missions** to provide assistance to Indian women who are survivors of gender-based violence.
  - One stop centre is a **centrally sponsored scheme of Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)**. It is intended to support women affected by violence, in private and public spaces, within the family, community and at the workplace.

**3. One-state solution, the way forward in Palestine**

**Two state solution:**

- The two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict envisions an **independent State of Palestine alongside the State of Israel, west of the Jordan River.**
- There have been many diplomatic efforts to realize a two state solution, starting from the 1991 Madrid Conference. Then there was the **1993 Oslo Accords**, the failed **2000 Camp David Summit** and the **Taba negotiations of 2001.**

**Context:**

- In the light of the ongoing Israel and Hamas face off, there have been calls for a two state solution.

## G. Tidbits

### 1. 'Use of cloud tech can help boost profits'

- **Cloud computing is the on-demand availability of computer system resources**, especially data storage and computing power, **without direct active management by the user**. The term is generally used to describe data centers available to many users over the Internet.
- The use of cloud technology will help bring new solutions to market. It will also help leverage the benefits of artificial intelligence and automation.

#### Context:

- A survey by the Infosys Knowledge Institute has shown that the **effective adoption of cloud technologies can help add to enterprise profits**.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the given statement/s is/are correct?

1. Tides originate in deep sea under impact of crustal movement.
2. They occur on the impact of gravity of moon and the sun.
3. Gravitational force and centrifugal force give rise to tides.

#### Options:

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

**Answer: b**

#### Explanation:

- Tsunami's originate in deep sea under impact of crustal movement.
- Tides are the rise and fall of sea levels caused by the combined effects of the gravitational forces exerted by the Moon and the Sun, and the rotation of the Earth. The rotation of the earth gives rise to centrifugal forces.

Q2. Which of the following is/are the importance of Mangroves?

1. Stabilize the coastal shores.
2. Enhance the natural recycling of nutrients.
3. Act as carbon sinks.
4. Reduce the turbidity of water.

#### Options:

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- Mangroves play a critical role in the environment. They help in the following ways.
  - Stabilize the coastal shores and help limit coastal erosion.
  - Enhance the natural recycling of nutrients.
  - Act as carbon sinks and hence play a critical role in carbon cycle of the environment
  - By reducing the rate of flow of water it helps reduce the turbidity of water.

**Q3. Arrange the following Islands in Lakshadweep from North to South:**

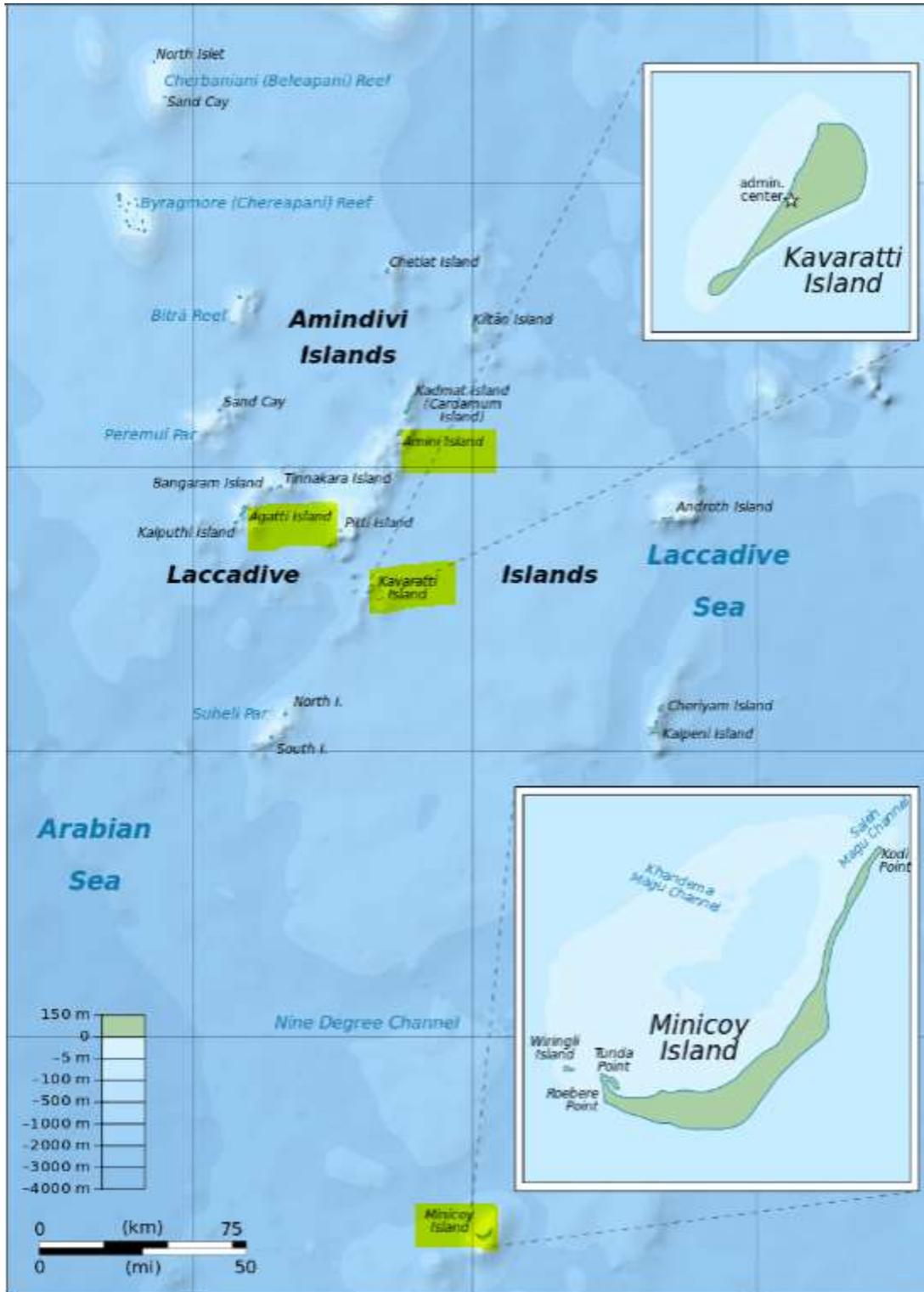
- 1. Kavaratti
- 2. Agatti
- 3. Minicoy
- 4. Amini

**Options:**

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**



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

1. Ahimsa, Karma and Nirvana are the three ratnas of Buddhism.

2. Right observation, right determination and right livelihood are a part of Buddha's Ashtangamarga.
3. Mahayana and Theravada are the two major sects of Buddhism created by Gautama Buddha.

**Options:**

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 only
- c. 1, 2 and 3
- d. None of the above

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- The Triratna of Buddhism comprises the Buddha, the dharma (doctrine, or teaching), and the sangha (the monastic order, or community).
- The eight elements of the eight fold path (Buddha's Ashtangamarga) includes the following:
  - (2) correct intention, avoiding thoughts of attachment, hatred, and harmful intent,
  - (3) correct speech, refraining from verbal misdeeds such as lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, and senseless speech,
  - (4) correct action, refraining from physical misdeeds such as killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct,
  - (5) correct livelihood, avoiding trades that directly or indirectly harm others, such as selling slaves, weapons, animals for slaughter, intoxicants, or poisons,
  - (6) correct effort, abandoning negative states of mind that have already arisen, preventing negative states that have yet to arise, and sustaining positive states that have already arisen,
  - (7) correct mindfulness, awareness of body, feelings, thought, and phenomena (the constituents of the existing world), and
  - (8) correct concentration, single-mindedness.
- Mahayana and Hinayana are the two major sects of Buddhism.

**Q 5. 'Net metering' is sometimes seen in the news in the context of promoting the**

- a. Production and use of solar energy by the households/consumers
- b. Use of piped natural gas in the kitchens of households
- c. Installation of CNG kits in motor-cars
- d. Installation of water meters in urban households

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- Net metering is a billing mechanism that credits solar energy system owners for the electricity they add to the grid.
- The provision for earning from solar energy production incentivizes consumers to install solar energy systems.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Write a note on the new Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021. Examine the possible consequences with the non-compliance. (15 Marks, 250 Words)[GS-2, Polity and Governance]
2. COVID-19 is an opportunity to bridge the digital gap and reform the education system in India. Discuss. (10 Marks, 150 Words)[GS-2, Education]

