

19 Sep 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. CJI calls for 'Indianising' legal system

Context:

- The [Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana](#) speaking at an event has called for the Indianisation of the country's legal system.

Details:

Difficulties faced by the ordinary litigants:

- **Judicial proceedings have been mostly lengthy and expensive. Judgments have been either too long or too technical for the ordinary citizens to comprehend.**
- The **extensive use of English in court proceedings** results in a major impediment for the ordinary citizens not fluent in the language. The litigants do not understand the arguments or pleadings which are mostly in English.
- These multiple barriers have **thwarted the ordinary, poor and rural Indian citizen's access to justice.**
- The Chief Justice of India lamented the fact that the ordinary Indian felt out of place in courts.

Indianisation of the judiciary:

- The Chief Justice of India, noting that the **systems, practices and rules of courts were foreign and sourced from the colonial days**, pointed out that they did not adequately take care of the practical realities of India.
- In this regard the CJI exhorted the [judiciary](#) to come out of the colonial insensibility attitude towards the ordinary citizens and called for Indianisation of the judiciary which he explained as the need to **adapt to the practical realities of Indian society and localise the justice delivery systems.**

Recommendations:

- **Rules and procedures of justice delivery should be made simple.** Also justice delivery must be made more **transparent, accessible and effective.** The litigant's interest must be the focus of the judiciary. The access to justice must be made as quick and inexpensive as possible.
- **Alternative dispute mechanisms** such as mediation and conciliation should be promoted to reduce pendency in the judiciary by avoiding unnecessary litigation. This will help save resources for the judiciary.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. IISc researchers find a way to substitute for single-use plastics

Context:

- Researchers from [Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru \(IISc\)](#) have developed a **biodegradable substitute for single-use plastic**.

Background:

Plastic pollution:

- There has been an **exponential surge in the usage of single use plastics**. According to a report by [Central Pollution Control Board of India](#), for the year **2018-2019, 3.3 million metric tonnes of plastic waste are generated in India**. Some experts point out the fact that this figure might as well be a gross under-estimation as well.
- More worryingly, **only 9% of all plastic waste produced in the world is recycled and around 79% enters the environment**.
- Landfills are choking with single use plastics. Accumulation of such large amounts of plastic waste is detrimental to the environment and ecology more so for aquatic ecosystems where a large amount of plastic waste ultimate makes its way to.

Details:

- The researchers have developed a **polymer using non-edible oil and cellulose extracted from agricultural stubble**.
 - The process makes use of non-edible Castor oil. However other non-edible oils such as jatropa oil and neem oil could also be experimented with.
- The proportion of cellulose to non-edible oil can be varied to **tune the flexibility of the polymer**.
 - Higher amount of cellulose makes the polymer stiffer while higher proportion of oil made the material more flexible
- The sheets of polymer have **performed satisfactorily in the leaching and thermal stability tests**.

Significance:

Environmental friendly:

- The newly developed material is **biodegradable and non toxic**.
- This would be a viable substitute for single-use plastic that can help **mitigate the problem of accumulating plastic waste in the environment**.

Multi-purpose material:

- Given the fact that the material's flexibility is tuneable makes its viable for multi-purpose uses. These polymers can be moulded into sheets having properties suitable for making bags, cutlery or containers.
- Given that they are leak proof and non-toxic this material could also be used for **food packaging and healthcare applications**.

Alternate use for agricultural stubble:

- Given that the process makes use of agricultural stubble as a raw material ensures that the agricultural stubble are not burnt which in turn **helps in avoiding [air pollution](#) in several States**.

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Bias in AI is a key topic of concern: Capgemini VP

Artificial Intelligence:

- Artificial intelligence is the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems.
- The AI systems are taught through sharing of enormous data of past human actions to learn from. This large amount of data is subject to fast, iterative processing and intelligent algorithms, allowing the software to learn automatically from patterns or features in the data.
- **Specific applications of AI include expert systems.** This helps in reducing the human interference in repetitive decision-making processes.

Challenges in AI systems:

Threat of bias and discrimination:

- The approach used in AI systems is wrought with **inherent challenges of bias and discrimination of the fed data** which could give rise to biased AI platforms. This could lead to a number of forms of biases including gender bias.
- The identification, segregation, correction needed to ignore such bias or discrimination in the fed data is one of the biggest challenges to the application of AI systems.

Potential for misuse:

- AI systems find extensive use in the operation of search engines. The entire cycle of collecting, indexing and ranking content is automated with the help of AI systems.
- **The AI system used in such vital applications is prone to misuse and unintentional bias.** This is extremely worrisome as search engines have the power to shape user behaviour. This goes against the need for secular, neutral, unbiased and conflict-free search engines.

Privacy concerns:

- Personal data is used about individuals to build sharper algorithms to target them for offers, recommendations, treatments etc. The **use of personal sensitive information without informed consent gives rise to ethical concerns** on the use of AI systems.

Lower degree of understanding and insensitivity:

- There is still a **great degree of ignorance about how AI can impact our lives among the general populace and even the governments.**
- **Technology developers seem to be insensitive** to some critical issues in the domain of AI.
- This does not augur well for the future given the inevitable large scale implementation of AI systems in the coming years.

Recommendations:

- Data collection, curation and the methodology involved in processing the information in AI systems must **ensure fairness and ethical outcome**.
- **Accountability and ownership of AI systems** have to be well-defined.
- There is the need to develop a **regulatory and compliance framework** for AI systems through appropriate legal frameworks.

UNESCO's framework for ethical AI

- UNESCO's framework for ethical AI envisages a holistic and evolving **framework of values, principles and actions** that can guide societies in dealing responsibly with the known and unknown impact of AI on humans and society at large.
- The framework will impact areas such as **sensitivity to privacy and inclusion; transparency, fairness and non-discrimination**; accountability through participation; mindset change that supports a sustainable AI environment and a **balance between business growth and promotion of values**.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Why is it difficult for India to get to net zero?

Context:

- The recent visit of the U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate to India in a bid to raise global climate ambition ahead of the upcoming UN Climate Change conference in Glasgow failed to receive any assurance on carbon neutrality from India.
 - The **Indian government has stated that it does not consider the “net zero” goal its only priority at present** and is focused on the **“key issues” of climate justice and sustainable lifestyles**.

For detailed information on this development refer to the following article:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 15th Sep 2021](#)

Carbon neutrality goals:

- **Major GHG emitters- China, U.S. and the E.U. have committed to a net zero target.**
 - China has pledged to peak CO₂ emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.
 - The U.S., as the second biggest emitter with large historical emissions has pledged a 2050 net zero plan.
 - The European Union (EU) member-states have committed themselves to reducing emissions by at least 55% by 2030 over 1990 levels and carbon neutrality by 2050.

- According to the United Nations, **the net zero concept is being considered by about 130 countries** that have either committed themselves to carbon neutrality by 2050, or are considering that target.
- India, as the third largest GHG emitter is under pressure to come up with a higher ambition on cutting CO₂ emissions including a target for carbon neutrality.

India's commitments:

- India has pledged to **cut the emissions intensity of GDP by 33%-35% by 2030 over the 2005 level.**
- India has also set ambitious renewable energy targets of around 450 GW by 2030. It plans to increase the **share of clean and renewable energy in total power production to 40% by 2030.**
- By 2030, India also intends to **increase our carbon sinks by creating an additional capacity equivalent to 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂** through afforestation efforts.
- India is working to reduce its emissions, **aligned with the goal of less than 2°C global temperature rise.** Notably, India's plan is not aligned with the goal of 1.5°C temperature rise.
- **India is not in favour of a binding commitment towards carbon neutrality.**

Arguments in favour of adopting net zero target:

- Given **recent reports pointing towards the rapid global warming**, there are questions over Paris climate commitments. This makes measures such as achieving carbon neutrality inevitable in the global climate action efforts.
- Given the global impact of climate change despite the low contribution of GHG from the developing world and the fact that **India continues to remain extremely vulnerable to climate change risks**, it would be in India's interests to adopt ambitious climate action targets like the carbon neutrality goal.
- A net zero target can put India on a **green development trajectory**, attracting investment in innovative technologies. This could provide a **new avenue for economic growth in India.**

Arguments against adopting net zero target:

- The **UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** provides for common, but **differentiated, responsibilities of nations.** The goal of carbon neutrality seems to be against this concept as it pushes developing countries to adopt steeper targets and **forego cheaper developmental** avenues which the developed world had access to.
- Carbon neutrality **deflects important aspects such as emission reduction, improving energy efficiency and sustainable lifestyle practices** and emphasis more on nascent technology to suck out CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Hurdles for India:

- The heavy reliance on coal is a major hurdle for India in committing to a net zero target.
 - According to the International Energy Agency's India Energy Outlook 2021, **coal accounts for close to 70% of electricity generation in India.**

Category: ECONOMY

1. Auto boost

Context:

- The Union government has approved a **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** for **Auto Industry and Drone Industry** with a budgetary outlay of Rs. 26,058 crore.

For information on the provisions of this scheme refer to the following article:

[15 Sep 2021: PIB Summary & Analysis](#)

Significance:

- The scheme will provide a much needed **boost to the auto sector railing under the impact of the pandemic.**
- Incentivising local production through this scheme could translate into more **investments in the auto segment.** The government expects the scheme would lead to fresh investments of more than Rs. 42,500 crore, incremental production worth over Rs. 2.3 lakh crore and creation of an **additional 7.5 lakh jobs.**
- The incentive scheme could provide a much needed **impetus to EV vehicles as well as those that use hydrogen fuel cells.**
 - The emphasis on these alternate fuel vehicles will **help lower fossil fuel emissions** as part of the efforts to meet commitments under climate change agreements
 - This will **also help India reduce dependence on oil imports** and ensure some degree of energy security for India.

2. What is the need for a 'bad bank'?

Context:

- The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs. **30,600-crore guarantee for securities issued by the National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd. (NARCL).**
 - The NARCL is envisaged as a 'bad bank' to help aggregate and consolidate banks non-performing assets (NPAs) or bad loans.

For detailed information on this topic refer to the following article:

[UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 17th Sep 2021](#)

3. Can the telecom industry get out of the rut?

Context:

- The Union Cabinet had recently approved a set of **reform measures to help major telecom companies in trouble.**

In this context, the article discusses the stress in the telecom sector of India, the measures announced under the new reforms and analyzes how these measures can help in the revival of the telecom sector in India. This issue has been discussed in detail in the following article previously:

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

F. Prelims Facts

1. 'Safdarjung Tomb needs urgent care'

Safdarjung Tomb:

- [Safdarjung's Tomb](#) is a **sandstone and marble mausoleum in Delhi**, India.
- It was **built in 1754 in the Mughal style** for Nawab Safdarjung.
 - Mirza Muqim Abul Mansur Khan, who was popularly known as Safadarjung, ruled over **Awadh as an independent ruler** under **Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah**.
 - With the death of Emperor Muhammad Shah, Safadarjung moved to Delhi and became the **Prime Minister (Vazir) of the mughal empire, with the title of Vazir ul-Mamalk-i-Hindustan** under Ahmed Shah Bahadur

Context:

- Well known historian S. Irfan Habib has noted the need for urgent care of the Safdarjung tomb from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)

2. NIA needs infra, specialists: experts

National Investigation Agency (NIA):

- The [National Investigation Agency \(NIA\)](#) is **India's counter-terrorist task force**.
- It is headquartered in New Delhi.
- NIA came into existence with the enactment of the **National Investigation Agency Act 2008**.
- The Agency has been empowered to **conduct investigation and prosecution of offences under the Acts specified in the Schedule of the NIA Act**.
 - The agency is empowered to deal with **terror related crimes** across states.
 - The NIA was empowered to probe cases of **cyber terrorism** under the National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Act, passed of 2019.
 - The National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Act, 2019 states that, 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.

Context:

- Experts have emphasized the need to provide the National Investigation Agency (NIA) with additional infrastructure and domain experts to probe cyber terrorism offences more efficiently.

G. Tidbits

1. 10,000 migrants cross into U.S.

- The state of Texas in U.S. has declared a state of emergency after **more than 10,000 undocumented migrants, many of them Haitians, poured into the border city of Texas** from across the Mexico-U.S. border.

2. As U.S. approves booster shots, just 3.5% vaccinated in Africa

- Recently the WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus has highlighted **vaccine inequity between high- and low-income countries.**
 - More than 75% of all vaccines have been administered in just 10 high income countries. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 60.1% of the people in the high-income countries have been vaccinated with at least one dose as on September 15, while in the low-income countries, it is just 3%.
- **The vaccine inequity is all the more visible particularly in Africa.** Of the nearly 6 billion doses administered globally, only 2% of those have been in Africa while about 80% have been administered in high- and upper-middle income countries.
- It is noteworthy that this vaccine inequity **does not hurt the low income countries alone but the whole world itself.** The longer vaccine inequity persists, the more the virus will keep circulating and mutating, the higher the chances that more variants will emerge that render vaccines less effective. This will only **prolong the social and economic disruption** brought out by the pandemic.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following is/are the components of National Mission for Sustained Agriculture?

1. Rainfed Area Development (RAD)
2. Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF)
3. National Bamboo Mission (NBM)
4. Soil Health Management (SHM)
5. Green India Mission (GIM)

Options:

- a. 1, 2 and 4 only
- b. 2, 3, 4 and 5 only
- c. 1, 2, 3 and 4 only
- d. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Answer: c

Explanation:

- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) is one of the major missions of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).

Components of National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture:

- Soil Health Management (SHM)
- Rainfed Area Development (RAD)
- Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF)
- National Bamboo Mission (NBM)
- Climate Change and Sustainable Agriculture: Monitoring, Modeling and Networking (CCSAMMN)

Green India Mission:

- The National Mission for a Green India or the commonly called Green India Mission (GIM), is one of the eight Missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).
- It was launched in February, 2014 with the objective to safeguard the biological resources of our nation and associated livelihoods against the peril of adverse climate change and to recognise the vital impact of forestry on ecological sustainability, biodiversity conservation and food-, water- and livelihood-security.
- It aims at protecting, restoring and enhancing India's diminishing forest cover and responding to climate change through adaptation and mitigation measures. It envisages a holistic view of greening that extends beyond tree planting. GIM focusses on multiple ecosystem services such as biodiversity, water, biomass, preserving mangroves, wetlands, critical habitats etc. along with carbon sequestration.

Q2. Which of the given statements with respect to Lala Lajpat Rai is/are INCORRECT?

1. He founded the Indian Home Rule League of America in New York City
2. He established the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School in Lahore.
3. He authored the book 'Young India'.

Choose the correct option:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Lala Lajpat Rai was an Indian independence activist who played a pivotal role in the Indian Independence movement. He was popularly known as Punjab Kesari.
- Some of his important contributions include the following:
 - He founded the Indian Home Rule League of America in New York City
 - He established the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School in Lahore.

- He authored the book 'Young India'.

Q3. Makemake, Eris and Haumea seen in News are:

- a. Supermassive black holes
- b. Dwarf Planets
- c. Asteroids
- d. Lunar Craters

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Makemake, Eris and Haumea are dwarf planets along with Pluto and Ceres.
 - Eris, the largest dwarf planet, is only slightly bigger than Pluto.
 - Haumea dwarf planet has an extremely elongated shape. Haumea rotates very rapidly and has the shortest day of all the dwarf planets.
 - Makemake, discovered in 2005, has no known moons
 - Ceres, first spotted by astronomers in 1801, was first called a planet and later an asteroid. In 2006 it was reclassified as a dwarf planet. Ceres is the closest dwarf planet to Earth.

Q4. Which of the given statements with respect to POSHAN Abhiyan is/are INCORRECT?

1. Ministry of Women and Child Development is the implementing agency.
2. Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog is the Chairperson of the National Council on Nutrition set up under the POSHAN Abhiyaan.
3. The goals of the mission are to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children under the age of 14 years, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers.

Options:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition or POSHAN Abhiyaan or National Nutrition Mission, is Government of India's flagship programme to improve nutritional outcomes for children (0-6 years), pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- Ministry of Women and Child Development is the implementing agency of the POSHAN Abhiyan

- Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog is the Chairperson of the National Council on Nutrition set up under the POSHAN Abhiyaan.

Q5. With reference to India's Desert National Park, which of the following statements are correct? (UPSC-2020)

1. It is spread over two districts.
2. There is no human habitation inside the Park.
3. It is one of the natural habitats of the Great Indian Bustard.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Desert National Park is a national park situated in the Indian state of Rajasthan. This is one of the largest national parks. It is spread over the two districts of Jaisalmer and Barmer.
- The endangered great Indian bustard is found in this national park.
- The given statement that there is no human habitation inside the Desert National Park seems like an extreme statement and hence incorrect.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Anticompetitive business practices are likely to cause an appreciable adverse effect on competition. Explain the statement with relevant examples. (10 Marks, 150 Words)[GS-2, Governance]
2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) based decisions are susceptible to inaccuracies, discriminatory outcomes and bias. Discuss the safety guidelines on the ethics of artificial intelligence. (10 Marks, 150 Words)[GS-4, Ethics]

Read the previous CNA [here](#).