

25 Sep 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS 1 Related

SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Death penalty awarded in T.N. inter-caste couple killing](#)

B. GS 2 Related

HEALTH

1. [Centre notifies medical device parks scheme](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Campaign launched for social accountability law](#)

C. GS 3 Related

SECURITY

1. [Mizoram fears fresh influx from Myanmar](#)
2. [Gujarat drug seizure case likely to go to NIA](#)

D. GS 4 Related

E. Editorials

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [India is not a bystander in the AUKUS saga](#)

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Complex count](#)

ECONOMY

1. [When global firms disengage, employment suffers](#)

F. Prelims Facts

1. [MoD strikes ₹22,000 cr. deal with Airbus](#)

G. Tidbits

1. [Modi, Biden talk of a new phase in relations](#)

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Death penalty awarded in T.N. inter-caste couple killing

Context:

The Special Court for SC/ST Act cases awarded the death sentence to the brother of a Hindu woman and sentenced 12 others, including her father, to life imprisonment in the killing of an inter-caste couple in 2003.

Honour Killing:

- Honour killing is the murder of an individual, either an outsider or a member of a family, by someone seeking to protect what they see as the dignity and honour of their family.
- It is defined as the killing of a relative, especially a woman, who is perceived to have brought dishonour on the family.
- A crime in the name of 'honour' is one of a range of violent or abusive acts. This includes emotional, physical and sexual abuse and other coercive acts.
- Those instrumental in committing these killings are families of the couple. Either they kill the couple themselves or in association with other persons from the same caste or khap or community-based panchayats.

“Honour Killing” has been covered in [Comprehensive News Analysis 29 August 2019](#).

B. GS 2 Related

Category: HEALTH

1. Centre notifies medical device parks scheme

Context:

The Union government has notified the medical device parks scheme to promote medical device parks.

Details:

- The scheme aims to ensure easy access to testing and infrastructure facilities.
- The Medical Devices Parks to be developed under the scheme will provide common infrastructure facilities at one place thereby creating a robust ecosystem for the medical device manufacturing in the country.
- It is expected that this will bring down the cost of production of medical devices, thereby making them more affordable for domestic consumption.

Financial Assistance:

- It has been notified with a financial outlay of ₹400 crores till the financial year 2024-2025.
- The financial assistance for a selected medical device park would be 90% of the project cost of common infrastructure facilities for the northeastern and hilly States.
- For the rest, it would be 70%.
- However, the maximum assistance under the scheme for one such park will be ₹100 crores.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Campaign launched for social accountability law

Context:

A State-wide campaign has been launched in Rajasthan for demanding passage of the social accountability law in the next Assembly session.

What is social accountability?

“Social accountability” refers to actions initiated by citizen groups to hold public officials, politicians, and service providers to account for their conduct and performance in terms of delivering services, improving people’s welfare and protecting people’s rights.

Background:

- The Congress government’s support of the Rajasthan Transparency and Social Accountability Bill goes back to the year 2016.
- The activists had come up with the draft accountability law following the 100 days Jawabdehi Yatra.
- The 100-day campaign had witnessed seminars, clinics and workshops on [Right to Information \(RTI\)](#), Right to Education (RTE) and Right to Hearing Act (RTH).
- It was followed up with camps on RTI application, grievance submission and District Shiksha Sammelans in which ward panch and Panchayati raj representatives, among others, had participated.
- The yatra touched upon several social issues under government programmes such as MGNREGA, ration, pension, health, social security, etc. while pushing for an accountability law.
- In 2019, activists under The Suchana Evam Rojgar Adhikar Abhiyaan (SR Abhiyaan) came up with a comprehensive Rajasthan Public Accountability Bill, 2019.

Draft of Rajasthan Social Accountability Bill:

- The draft 2019 Bill had proposed an independent District Grievance Redressal Officer.
 - This is said to have been opposed by some bureaucrats, who believe that it will undermine the authority of the District Collector.
- The proposed law touched upon 22 issues, such as job chart, grievance redress architecture, fortnightly hearing, automatic escalation, first/second appeal, online registration, etc.

Objectives of the Bill:

- To seek the accountability of public functionaries and authorities for timely delivery of goods and services.
- To create a democratic, decentralized and participative approach to enable wider public participation.
- To initiate monitoring of programmes and policies through community score cards, citizens report cards and social audits.

Details:

- In 2019, the Rajasthan government constituted a committee under retired IAS officer Ram Lubhaya to examine the previous draft.

- Although The Rajasthan Guaranteed Delivery of Public Service Act, 2011 and The Rajasthan Right to Hearing Act (2012) are in existence, the committee found major issues with both the Acts though both the laws had a few provisions among the 22 issues covered in the draft bill.
- The Lubhaya committee proposed repeal of both the Acts, while comparing their provisions with the proposed accountability law.
- The Lubhaya committee also proposed the designation of Grievance Redress Officers, from the state, district to the panchayat level.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: SECURITY

1. Mizoram fears fresh influx from Myanmar

Context:

A fresh offensive by the Myanmar military in areas near the border with India has triggered fears of more people crossing over to Mizoram.

Details:

- More than 11,500 Myanmar nationals have taken refuge since February 2021 when the country's military staged a coup.
- While some of the refugees have been moving back and forth depending on the situation in Myanmar, recent airstrikes by the armed forces have made it one-way traffic over the last few days.

This issue has been covered in [March 21st, 2021 CNA](#).

2. Gujarat drug seizure case likely to go to NIA

Context:

The Department of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) recently seized almost 3,000 kg of heroin that was originally shipped from Afghanistan at Mundra Port in Gujarat.

Details:

- Such large-scale smuggling of expensive drugs via sea route in the country has stunned the Union government.
- The seizure is also said to be one of the largest seizures in the world.
- The Central government may enlist the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for undertaking a comprehensive probe into the drug seizure.

This issue has been covered in [Sep 23rd, 2021 CNA](#).

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India is not a bystander in the AUKUS saga

Context:

The announcement of AUKUS — a new security pact between the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Details:

- The announcement is significant as it involves the transfer of nuclear submarine technology to Australia.
- It also implies the cancellation of an ongoing U.S.\$90 billion project by France to manufacture conventional submarines for Australia.

Read more on this topic covered in [Sep 17th, 2021 CNA](#), and [Sep 22nd, 2021 CNA](#).

How does it impact India?

For observers in India, the AUKUS has evoked mixed feelings.

- Many are happy for Australia which is a partner in the Quad to receive top quality nuclear submarine technology from the U.S. and the U.K., strengthening China deterrence in the Indo-Pacific.
- There is also a sense of pity with France, India's foremost partner in the Indian Ocean.
 - Some Quad-sceptics see this as a sign of what the future might hold for India. If Australia and the U.S. could deceive France which is a NATO partner, the question is what would prevent them from doing the same with lesser allies.
- There is apprehension that the deal could eventually lead to crowding of nuclear attack submarines (SSNs/submersible ship nuclear) in the Eastern Indian Ocean, eroding India's regional pre-eminence.
 - The Indian Navy presently dominates the space, but its conventional underwater capability has been shrinking.
 - An Indian plan to develop a fleet of nuclear attack submarines has not got an offer of help from the U.S. that does not share its prized nuclear submarine technology with even its closest allies; all except Australia.
 - Recent development raises the possibility that Australia could deploy nuclear submarines in the Eastern Indian Ocean well before India positions its own.

AUKUS versus the Quad:

- AUKUS seems to have taken the focus away from the [Quad](#).
- There is more than a subtle hint of U.S. favouritism for Australia in the new deal as it asserted that the transfer of nuclear submarine technology was a one-off event.
- The agreement suggests preferential treatment on the part of Washington for a close Anglo-alliance partner.
- Critics wonder why the U.S. made an allowance for one Quad partner and not another.

Conclusion:

- While India has rarely received any submarine technology from the U.S, it has instead relied on Russia for nuclear submarine technology.
 - It took Russia's assistance in the construction of the reactor of India's first SSBN/submersible ship ballistic missile nuclear (Arihant) and in the acquisition (on lease) of a nuclear attack submarine.
- The Indian Navy's indigenous SSN programme requires a nuclear reactor more powerful than the one installed in the Arihant (a non-war-fighting platform).
- Following the deepening of Quad ties, it was hoped that the U.S. would consider providing the Indian Navy with nuclear submarine propulsion technology.
- There is now speculation that Delhi might consider seeking French help with nuclear submarines.
- However, India must be careful in its official response to AUKUS. France, the U.S., the U.K. and Australia are some of India's closest partners. The bottom line for New Delhi is that it cannot be seen to be taking sides in a feud among friends.
- Despite worries over the prospect that Australia's nuclear submarine capability could overtake India's own in coming years, Indian officials recognise Canberra's need to reappraise its strategic environment and reinforce deterrence against China.

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Complex count

This topic has been covered in [Aug 25th, 2021 CNA.](#)

G6

1. When global firms disengage, employment suffers

Context:

The most recent labour statistics, for August 2021, released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) shows that the unemployment rate has increased from around 7% in July to 8.3% for August 2021. In absolute terms, 1.9 million jobs were lost in one month.

Details:

- A sectoral analysis presents the fact that most of the jobs lost were farm jobs.
- While employment in agriculture fell by 8.7 million, non-farm jobs increased by 6.8 million, mainly in business and small trade, but the manufacturing sector shed 0.94 million jobs.
- Much of the labour shed by agriculture has been absorbed in low-end service activities.
- While non-farm jobs increased to absorb some of these, the quality of new jobs generated is a matter of concern.
- During normal times, seasonal labour released from agriculture gets accommodated in the construction sector.
- But, currently, the construction sector itself is shedding jobs, forcing workers to find employment in the household sector and low-end services.
- This non-availability of sufficient jobs in manufacturing and higher-end services could be the dampener for economic recovery in the subsequent quarters of the current fiscal year.

Raising the level of investments:

- The economy has been waiting for private investments, but their levels have been very low, accentuating the unemployment situation.
- According to the elementary economic theory, raising the level of investments is the key to output and employment growth.
- While public investments are important, there is a dire need to complement them with even more private investments.
- Turning to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to supplement domestic capital formation is an approach that India has been pursuing by making 'ease of doing business' more attractive.

Issues – Employment sustainability:

- When FDI increases, the sustainability of increased employment is often threatened as it depends on the business avenues that other competing economies open up leading to corporate restructuring at the global level and firm exits from earlier locations.
- When such firms exit, they create massive disruption in the local economy.
- The exits of high-profile global firms affect employment generation in the following ways.
 - It creates apprehensions among potential investors about choosing that location for greenfield investments or for scaling up existing facilities.
 - It affects private investments even if an economy claims to have the tag of investor friendliness. A downturn in private investments leads to slower employment growth.
 - The process of the destruction of jobs through exits creates mismatches in the labour market.
 - It leads to a levelling down of wages which occurs when high-end services firms exit.
 - When large assembly firms exit there would be a big influx of low-skilled workers to other sectors as the same sector might not be able to absorb the workforce released.
 - This disruption in the labour market aggravates an existing unemployment problem.

Way Forward:

- While inward FDI does generate jobs both directly and indirectly through an increase in production activities, the magnitude of employment generated especially in the manufacturing sector needs closer scrutiny.
- The euphoria on the inflow of FDI and associated benefits must be evaluated in comparison with the reality of the emergence of modern transnational corporations (TNC).
 - When TNCs emerge as key players in an industry, a proliferation of mergers and consolidations across national and international borders might be frequent.
 - These are efforts to open up new opportunities in new markets. Such waves of expansions and contractions are aimed at acquiring new markets and new trade opportunities.
 - This process of internationalisation of production is driven by the big firms by investing in and out of developing economies.

- Growing scepticism towards more open trade policies and the rise of protectionism have increased the risk and unpredictability of policy environments, leading to deeper reflection on both existing and new investments by global firms.
- Thereby, the permanency of large foreign firms operating for decades is slowly waning.
- It is here that domestic capital formation and private investments must be encouraged.

F. Prelims Facts

1. MoD strikes ₹22,000 cr. deal with Airbus

What's in News?

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed an estimated ₹22,000-crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space S.A., Spain.

C-295MW transport aircraft:

- The deal is for 56 C-295MW transport aircraft to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing 56 Avro aircraft that were procured in the 1960s.
- The C295, having 510 tonne capacity, is used for tactical transport of up to 71 troops or 50 paratroopers, and for logistic operations not accessible to current heavier aircraft.
- It also has a proven capability of operating from short or unprepared airstrips.

Details:

- This is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India under technology transfer by the private sector.
- Of the 56 aircraft, 16 will be delivered in flyaway condition from Spain within 48 months and the remaining will be manufactured in India by the Tata Group within 10 years from the date of the contract.

G. Tidbits

1. Modi, Biden talk of a new phase in relations

What's in News?

Prime Minister of India and the U.S. President kicked off their bilateral talks, with comments on the promise of the India-U.S. relationship in the areas they would work on like COVID-19 and climate, and the importance of the diaspora.

Details:

- Both leaders suggested that the countries were at an inflexion point in their relationship.
- The US President said that the two countries were launching a new chapter in bilateral ties, taking on some of the toughest challenges, starting with COVID-19.
- Modi's remarks also made reference to the bilateral relationship having a more global positive impact.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. This river rises near Sihawa in the Raipur district of Chhattisgarh.
2. It is one of the most active silt-depositing streams in the Indian subcontinent.
3. Hirakud Dam is built across this river.

The above statements best describe:

- a. Bedti
- b. Subarnarekha
- c. Mahanadi
- d. Shetrunji

Answer: c

Explanation:

The Mahanadi is a major river in East Central India. It rises near Sihawa in the Raipur district of Chhattisgarh. It is one of the most active silt-depositing streams in the Indian subcontinent. Mahanadi is also known for the Hirakud Dam. The river flows through the states of Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

Q2. With respect to the Co-operative Societies, which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. The 97th Constitutional Amendment act made the right to form co-operative societies a fundamental right.
2. The conduct of elections to a co-operative society is vested with the state election commission.

Options:

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

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The 97th Constitutional Amendment Act made the right to form co-operative societies a fundamental right as a part of Article 19.
- State Election Commission is not responsible for conducting elections to a co-operative society.
- The state government appoints a body for the conduct of elections to a co-operative society.
- The superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections to a co-operative society shall vest in such an authority or body, as may be provided by the Legislature of a State.

Q3. Which amongst the following States in India shares the longest border with Myanmar?

- a. Arunachal Pradesh
- b. Nagaland
- c. Mizoram
- d. Manipur

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The total length of the India-Myanmar border is about 1643 km.
- Arunachal Pradesh (520 km) shares the longest border with Myanmar.
- Other Indian states that share a border with Myanmar are Mizoram (510 km), Nagaland (215 km), Manipur (510 km).

Q4. Which of the following statements about Foot and Mouth Disease is/are correct?

1. Humans are not infected by the foot-and-mouth disease virus.
2. National Animal Disease Control Programme for FMD and Brucellosis (NADCP) is a Central Sector Scheme where 100% of funds shall be provided by the Central Government to the States/UTs.

Options:

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) or hoof-and-mouth disease (HMD) is an infectious and sometimes fatal viral disease that affects cloven-hoofed animals, including domestic and wild bovids. It is a contagious disease.
- Humans can also be infected by the foot-and-mouth disease virus, however, the cases are very rare.
- National Animal Disease Control Programme for FMD and Brucellosis (NADCP) is a Central Sector Scheme where 100% of funds shall be provided by the Central Government to the States/UTs.

Q5. With reference to Congress Socialist Party, consider the following statements:

1. It advocated the boycott of British goods and evasion of taxes.
2. It wanted to establish the dictatorship of proletariat.
3. It advocated separate electorate for minorities and oppressed classes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Congress Socialist Party was a socialist entity within the Indian National Congress.
- It was founded in 1934 by Congress members who rejected what they believed was a pacifist and anti-rational mysticism of Gandhi. They also rejected the sectarian attitude of the Communist Party of India towards the Congress.
- It was formed with Acharya Narendra Deva as President and Jay Prakash Narayan as General Secretary in 1934.
- The ideal of this party was decentralized socialism in which there was substantial share in the economic power of co-operatives, trade unions, independent farmers, and local authorities.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Examine how the exit of high-profile global firms affect employment generation in India. (10 Marks, 150 Words)[GS-3, Economy]
2. Discuss the importance of Social Accountability in Democracy. (10 Marks, 150 Words)[GS-2, Polity and Governance]