

# 12 Oct 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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## B. GS 2 Related

### Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1. India, China commander talks end in impasse

##### Context:

The 13th round of senior military commander talks between India and China ended in a stalemate, with each side blaming the other for it.

##### Details:

- The focus of this round of talks was working out the third phase of disengagement from Patrolling Point 15 in Hot Springs as part of the overall disengagement and de-escalation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- The Corps Commanders were also set to work out new protocols for patrolling.

##### Issue:

- The Indian side pointed out that the situation along the LAC had been caused by unilateral attempts of the Chinese side to alter the status quo and in violation of the bilateral agreements.
- The Indian Army maintained that its side made constructive suggestions to resolve the remaining areas, while the Chinese military alleged that India made unreasonable and unrealistic demands.
- Both sides are preparing to be deployed in the high altitude areas of eastern Ladakh for the second straight winter in 2021. In this backdrop, China is continuing the build-up of troops and infrastructure on its side along the Line of Actual Control.

##### Concerns:

- This impasse has left tens of thousands of soldiers facing the prospect of another harsh cold season on the heights of Eastern Ladakh, with no resolution in sight.
- This leaves the LAC in a perilous situation.
- The latest round was to discuss Hot Springs, while disputes remain over Demchok and Depsang. At present, several hotspots are unresolved.

With [India – China relations](#) at their lowest, there is an urgent need to find an early resolution to all the remaining issues along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh.

## C. GS 3 Related

### Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

#### 1. Delhi govt. starts spraying bio-decomposer in farms

This topic has been covered in [Oct 11th, 2021 CNA](#).

### Category: ECONOMY

## 1. Economics Nobel for research on wages, jobs

### Context:

The Nobel prize for economics has been awarded to U.S.-based economist David Card for research on how minimum wage, immigration and education affect the labour market. The prize was shared with two, Guido Imbens and Joshua Angrist for creating a way to study these types of societal issues.

### Details:

- David Card's pioneering research challenges commonly held ideas.
- It showed that:
  - an increase in minimum wage does not lead to less hiring
    - One conclusion was that companies are able to pass on the cost of higher wages to customers by raising prices.
    - In other cases, if a company was a major employer in a particular area, it may have been able to keep wages particularly low, so that it could afford to pay a higher minimum without cutting jobs.
  - immigrants do not lower pay for native-born workers
    - It was found that the incomes of those who are native-born workers can benefit from new immigrants, while immigrants who arrived earlier are the ones at risk of being negatively affected.
  - This minimum wage research fundamentally alters economists' views of such policies.
  - Card's work on minimum wage is an example of a "natural experiment," or a study based on observation of real-world data. The problem with such experiments is that it can sometimes be difficult to isolate cause and effect.
    - Imbens and Angrist developed statistical methods to get around these challenges and determine more precisely what can actually be said about the causes and effects of natural experiments.

### Note:

Unlike the other Nobel prizes, the economics award wasn't established in the will of Alfred Nobel but by the Swedish central bank in his memory in 1968, with the first winner selected a year later. It is the last prize announced each year.

## 2. Industry seeks clarity on space policy

### Context:

Inauguration of the Indian Space Association (ISpA).

### Indian Space Association:

- Indian Space Association is an organisation meant to represent the interests of the space sector with government and private sector bodies across the board.

- It includes the [Indian Space Research Organisation](#), Walchandnagar Industries, TATA Nelco, Pixxel, Mapmy India and Bharti Airtel.
- It will act as an umbrella for all public and private entities contributing to the development of India's space sector.
- It will undertake policy advocacy and engage with all stakeholders in the Indian space domain, including the government and its agencies.
- The initiative will provide the Indian space sector with four pillars and will promote higher participation of private entities. The four pillars being:
  - The freedom of innovation to the private sector
  - The role of the government as an enabler
  - Preparing youth for the future
  - To see the space sector as a resource for the progress of the common man
- It would lead to better mapping, imaging and connectivity facilities for the common people.
- Also, the space sector implies better speed from shipment to delivery for entrepreneurs, this also means better security and income for fishermen and better forecast of the natural calamity.

#### Details:

- Ahead of major launches in 2022, India has announced its intent to liberalise the space sector and have more private companies use the facilities of the ISRO for developing as well as launching satellites. While there have been drafts of a new space policy, these are yet to take shape.
- In this backdrop, the industrialists have sought a clearer picture of the government's space policy at the earliest.
- They suggested that, for the space industry to grow, the government should help small and medium sector enterprises (SME) access more capital as well as move faster on finalising its space policy.
- They have requested flexibility for satellite frequency users to use any frequency range and to be able to freely buy technology from abroad.

## D. GS 4 Related

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## E. Editorials

### Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

#### 1. Tackling the climate crisis

##### Background:

The threat posed by climate change:

- According to the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report**, the past decade (2011-2020) was warmer by 1.09°C than the period from 1850 to 1900, and

the **1.5°C global warming threshold** set as per the Paris Climate agreement is likely to be breached very soon.

- This is likely to lead to **severe weather events** leading to large scale death and destruction. This will derail the global development process.

For detailed information on the IPCC sixth assessment report, refer to the following article:

**UPSC Comprehensive News Analysis of 10th Aug 2021**

- Countries like India are likely to face more intense heat waves, heavy monsoons and rise in weather extremes in the future.
  - The Global Climate Risk Index (2021) ranked India the seventh-most affected country by weather extremes.
- Such a scenario necessitates **immediate climate action**. **Mitigation measures** are required to reduce GHG emissions and limit global warming. Also given the escalating climatic risks, there is an urgency to adopt suitable **adaptation strategies** as well.

**Climate action measures being taken in India:**

**Mitigation:**

- India has been taking critical mitigation commitments for reducing emission intensity and enhancing renewable capacity.
  - NITI Aayog in collaboration with US-based Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) and RMI India, has launched a campaign named **Shoonya**, to promote zero-pollution delivery vehicles by working with consumers and industry. The campaign will **promote the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs)** in the urban deliveries segment and create consumer awareness about the health, environmental and economic benefits of electric vehicles.
  - The National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency announced as part of India's National Action plan for climate change aims for a **reduction in energy and carbon intensity of the economy** in a bid for more sustainable economic growth.
  - India aims to have 175 GWs by 2022 and **450 GWs of renewable energy capacity by 2030**.
  - India has set ambitious solar energy missions. As part of its National Solar Mission, India has set itself a target of **100 GW of solar power by 2022**.
  - In a bid to adopt more environmentally sustainable energy sources India has also announced the setting up of a **green hydrogen mission**.

**Adaptation:**

- While taking necessary steps towards mitigation measures, given India's vulnerability to climate change India has accorded equal importance to adaptation measures as well and has taken the following measures.
  - The National Mission on Sustainable Habitat, **Water Mission**, Mission for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem and the **Mission for Sustainable Agriculture** all aim at **streamlining adaptation measures in critical sectors**.

- **National Innovations on Climate Resilient Agriculture** launched by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research aims at strategic research, technology demonstrations and capacity building to make the critical agricultural sector more resilient to climate changes.
- The **National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC)** has been established to meet the cost of adaptation to climate change for the State and Union Territories of India that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
- **NABARD has been designated as the National Implementing Entity (NIE)** for the implementation of adaptation projects under NAFCC by Govt. of India.

#### Need for a more robust adaptation strategy:

- While laudable measures are being taken, adaptation planning needs to go beyond a business-as-usual approach given the **existential threat posed by climate change**. Climate change poses grave threats to water, food and livelihood security as is evident from the increasing instances of severe climate events leading to rising poverty levels and increased instances of distress migrations.
- A breakthrough on adaptation and resilience actions is needed to **save hard-earned developmental gains and adjust to new climate conditions**.

#### Recommendations:

- **Proactive and timely need-based adaptation measures** are the need of the hour. To strengthen adaptation and resilience, India can consider the following measures.

#### Improving forecasting capability:

- Given the criticality of early warning systems in reducing the vulnerability to climate disasters, India should focus on **improving its forecasting capability with an emphasis on high-quality meteorological data**.
- Premier research institutes must be roped in to **develop regional climate projections for robust risk assessments**.

#### Nature-based solutions:

- Nature-based solutions should be promoted. There is a need to **protect mangroves and forests** to address climate-related risks by blending traditional knowledge with scientific evidence.
  - Nature-based solutions are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

#### Decentralized approach:

- Responses to climate change vary from place to place as there are differences in production systems, agro-climatic and socio-economic conditions. This necessitates the need to **encourage local and non-state actors** to actively participate in adaptation measures against climate change.
- Also, adaptation planning requires **governance at different levels to understand, plan, coordinate, integrate** and act to reduce vulnerability and exposure.



- Such an approach will help systematically **understand micro-level sensitivities**, plan resource allocation, and design responses to serve at different levels of intensities of climate hazards.
- Such an approach will also **allow for continuous monitoring and evaluation** which will help in ensuring effective feedback mechanisms for any possible mid-course correction.

#### **Integrated approach:**

- A **development-centric approach that aligns climate change, food security, and livelihood perspectives** and takes into consideration regional specificities is inevitable in the present scenario.

#### **Involving the private sector:**

- A **more collaborative approach towards climate change adaptation involving the public and private sectors is crucial.**
- There is the need to **encourage private sector participation** for investment in adaptation technologies and for designing and implementing innovative climate services and solutions in areas such as agriculture, health, infrastructure, insurance and risk management.
- The government should work towards **promoting new business and climate service opportunities across various economic sectors** to incentivize private participation. This will not only speed up adaptation measures but also help open up green growth opportunities in the Indian economy.

#### **Promoting sustainable products and their usage:**

- India should work towards the development of well-functioning markets for environmentally friendly products and disseminate them for the desired behavioural change.

#### **Other measures:**

- India should focus on creating **resilient infrastructural assets**, diversifying the economy and **enhancing the adaptive capacity of the most vulnerable sections** of the society through appropriate social protection schemes.

## **Category: GEOGRAPHY**

### **1. Protecting India's natural laboratories**

#### **Background:**

#### **India's geological diversity and heritage:**

- **India's geodiversity is unique.** It is home to a variety of geological and physical elements of nature including mountains, valleys, coastlines, hot mineral springs, active volcanoes, diverse soil types, mineralised areas, and globally important fossil-bearing sites.
  - **The Kutch region in Gujarat has numerous dinosaur fossils.**
  - The **Tiruchirappalli region of Tamil Nadu**, originally a Mesozoic Ocean, houses Cretaceous (60 million years ago) **marine fossils.**
- India's geological history contributes to its geodiversity. The Indian landmass broke loose from the Gondwana or Gondwanaland supercontinent 150 million years ago and drifted northwards for 100

million years until it settled under the southern margin of the Eurasian plate. The geological features and landscapes in India have evolved over billions of years through numerous cycles of tectonic and climate events.

- Given this geological diversity and heritage of India, it is long known as the **world's 'natural laboratory' for geo-scientific learning.**

#### Efforts towards conservation of geological heritage:

- In 1991 at a UNESCO-sponsored event, 'First International Symposium on the Conservation of our Geological Heritage', the **Digne declaration** was adopted. The declaration endorsed the concept of a shared geological heritage and declared the responsibility of the governments to act as their custodians.
- Later there was the **establishment of geo-parks** as sites that commemorate unique geological features and landscapes within their assigned territories; and as spaces that educate the public on geological importance. These sites also helped promote geo-tourism to generate revenue and employment.
- In the late 1990s, **UNESCO** facilitated efforts to create a formal programme promoting a **Global Geoparks Network**. Currently, there are 169 Global Geoparks across 44 countries.
  - India is also a signatory to the establishment of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

#### Significance of geological literacy:

- Geo-heritage sites would provide for **acquiring of geological literacy.**
- Such geological literacy will not only help one better **understand the impact of physical geography on human culture** but also provide **valuable insights for dealing with some contemporary challenges like global warming.**
  - The geological past, like the warmer intervals during the **Miocene Epoch (23 to 5 million years ago)**, could serve as an analogue for future climate events. Geological literacy will make it easy for humans to memorialise past events of climate change and appreciate the adaptive measures to be followed for survival.

#### Concerns:

- The **unhindered development process** is leading to the destruction of India's geological heritage. Important geological sites like the ones at Anjar, Kutch district and the **Lonar impact crater in Buldhana district of Maharashtra** are under the grave threat of destruction and damage. Similarly, a national geological monument exhibiting a **unique rock called Nepheline Syenite in Ajmer district of Rajasthan** was destroyed in a road-widening project.
  - The geological section at **Anjar, Kutch district has a high concentration of iridium** and could provide evidence for a massive meteoritic impact that caused the extinction of dinosaurs about 65 million years ago.
- The **unplanned and booming real estate business is leading to encroachment** of many geological heritage sites.
- **Unregulated stone mining activities** have also contributed to the damage and destruction of important geological sites.



### Lacunae:

#### **Lack of geological literacy in India:**

- **Disciplines like environmental science and geology have not received adequate attention in India.**
- The lack of interest in the government and academic circles towards geological literacy is unfortunate and is contributing by some degree to the lackadaisical approach towards geological sites and their degradation and destruction.

#### **Apathy towards geo-conservation:**

- **The concept of geo-conservation has not found much traction in India.** Unlike countries like Vietnam and Thailand that have implemented laws to conserve their geological and natural heritage, India does not have any such legislation and policy for conservation. Previous attempts for such legislation have not been fructified.
- Despite being home to rich and varied geological heritage **none of the 32 sites identified as National Geological Monuments by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) is recognised by UNESCO.** This in part is reflective of the lack of seriousness on the part of the administration to comply with the guidelines for establishment of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

### Recommendations:

- Preserving geological heritage is as important as safeguarding biodiversity and cultural heritage and requisite measures should be taken in this direction.
  - The government should come out with a **national conservation policy** and also constitute a **national body for the protection of geo-heritage sites backed by suitable geo-conservation legislation.**
  - Geo-conservation should be a major guiding factor in land-use planning.

## **Category: HEALTH**

### **1. The next step is a constitutional right to health**

#### Background:

- The **COVID-19 pandemic has exposed and aggravated the cracks in India's healthcare systems** and also brought to light the significance of the health sector in a country. The under resourced health sector in India struggled amid the pandemic to cater to the needs of the people.
- The government has come up with several new initiatives including new and enhanced investment to address the serious drawbacks in the healthcare sector.
- However, the author, Kailash Satyarthi expresses doubts over the effectiveness of such investments to translate into a sense of health security for the citizens. In this regard the **author argues for the declaration of health care as a Fundamental Right.**

#### Details:

- The constitutional 'Right to Health for all' could have **many positive impacts.**

- A fundamental right to health approach would **provide the much needed medical financial security to the poor sections of the society**. This will help **reduce out of pocket expenditure** for such sections of the society which often pushes them into debt trap and poverty. The implementation of the right to health can **provide simple, transparent and quality health care** to those who are most in need of such care. The medical financial security will also have a long-term positive impact on the emotional, psychological and social security of such people.
- Significantly a fundamental right to health approach will **ensure better access to medical facilities for vulnerable sections like women** by helping address social and economic challenges that prevent them from freely and openly accessing health care facilities. A 'Right to Health' would mean that services reach the woman where and when she needs them.
- A fundamental right to health approach will also help ensure that the **large number of children who belong to the poorest and most marginalised communities have access to quality and affordable healthcare facilities**.
- A constitutional 'Right to Health' will transform not only the health and well-being of our people but will act as a **leap for the economic and developmental progress** of the nation. The immediate financial security that will come with the constitutional 'Right to Health' will have a measurable impact on family savings, greater investment, and jobs creation.

#### Conclusion:

- The vision for **Ayushman Bharat** will be strengthened with a constitutional 'Right to Health' and the government should consider this seriously.

## F. Prelims Facts

### 1. 'India invited to become full-time IEA member'

#### What's in News?

International Energy Agency (IEA) has invited India to become its full-time member.

- This is significant for India which is the world's third-largest energy consumer.
- The country's reliance on fuel imports makes further improving energy security a key priority for the Indian economy.
- The proposal, if accepted, will require India to raise strategic oil reserves to 90 days' requirement.
- In March 2017, India became an associate member of IEA.

#### IEA:

- The IEA was founded in 1974 by industrialised countries – within the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (**OECD**) – in response to the oil embargo.
- It is a Paris based body that advises industrialised nations on energy policies.
- IEA is made up of 30 member countries and eight associate nations.
- Four countries are seeking accession to full membership – Chile, Colombia, Israel and Lithuania.

- The agency is working with major economies around the world to enhance energy security and to help accelerate their clean energy transitions.
- According to IEA, a member country must maintain crude oil and/or product reserves equivalent to 90 days of the previous year's net imports, to which the government has immediate access (even if it does not own them directly) and could be used to address disruptions to global oil supply.
  - India's current strategic oil reserves equal 9.5 days of its requirements.
- Also, a member of IEA has to show "a demand restraint programme to reduce national oil consumption by up to 10%."
  - But, India has the fastest-growing energy market in the world.

## G. Tidbits

### 1. Killing of minorities a threat to democratic fabric of India: NHRC

#### What's in News?

There has been a spurt in terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir in which several civilians have been killed.

- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notices to the Jammu and Kashmir Government and the police over the recent spate of targeted killings of civilians from minority communities.
- The notices have been issued after taking suo motu cognisance of media reports.
- It has condemned the acts calling them a gross violation of the human rights of minority communities in the Valley.

Read more on [National Human Rights Commission of India.](#)

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

**Q1. Consider the following statements:**

1. The Chief Justice of India may, after consultation with the collegium, transfer a Judge from one High Court to any other High Court.
2. Only the transferred judge and no one else is entitled to file a case challenging such transfer.

**Which of the above statements is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- Article 222 of the Indian Constitution talks about the transfer of a Judge from one High Court to any other High Court.
- They may, after consultation with the Chief Justice of India, transfer a Judge from one High Court to any other High Court.
- Only the transferred judge and no one else is entitled to file a case challenging such transfer.

**Q2. With reference to OneWeb, which of the following statements is/are correct?**

1. It is a Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) of the Government of India and commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
2. The main objective is to scale up industry participation in Indian space programmes.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- OneWeb is a global communications company building a capability to deliver broadband satellite internet services worldwide by making use of low Earth orbit satellites.
- Its objective is the provision of internet services from the satellite to the ground stations.

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

1. The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) does not have the authority to declare any community as a minority.
2. In case of admission of the student, minority educational institutions can have a reservation of up to 50 per cent for the student of their own community.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) does not have the authority to declare any community as a minority. However, it can make recommendations to the central government.
- Only the central government has the authority to declare any community as a minority.
- In case of admission of the student, minority educational institutions can have a reservation of up to 50 per cent for the student of their own community.

**Q4. With respect to International Energy Agency (IEA), which of the following statements is/are correct?**

1. India is a founding member of the IEA.
2. Membership in the IEA is restricted to advanced economy members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
3. The World Energy Outlook is published by IEA.

**Options:**

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

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- The IEA was founded in 1974 by industrialised countries – within the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – in response to the oil embargo.
- It is a Paris based body that advises industrialised nations on energy policies.
- IEA is made up of 30 member countries and eight associate nations.
- India is not a member of the IEA. In March 2017, India became an associate member.
- Membership in the IEA is restricted to advanced economy members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- The World Energy Outlook is published by IEA.

**Q5. The term 'Core Banking Solutions' is sometimes seen in the news. Which of the following statements best describes/describe this term? (UPSC 2016)**

1. It is a networking of a bank's branches which enables customers to operate their accounts from any branch of the bank on its network regardless of where they open their accounts.
2. It is an effort to increase RBI's control over commercial banks through computerization.
3. It is a detailed procedure by which a bank with huge non-performing assets is taken over by another bank.

**Select the correct answer using the code given below.**

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

'Core Banking Solutions' is a networking of a bank's branches that enables customers to operate their accounts from any branch of the bank on its network regardless of where they open their accounts.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. India's geodiversity, or variety of the geological and physical elements of nature, is unique. Preserving this geological heritage is as important as safeguarding biodiversity and cultural heritage. Discuss. (250 words; 15 marks)[GS-I, Geography] & [GS-III, Environment and Ecology]
2. Evaluate the need for the constitutional 'Right to Health for all'. (250 words; 15 marks)[GS-II, Polity & Governance]

Read the previous CNA [here](#).