

27 Oct 2021: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS 1 Related

B. GS 2 Related

HEALTH

1. [Centre plans 2 mobile hospitals](#)

GOVERNANCE

1. [Framework to manage drone traffic notified](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [China's Foreign Minister meets Taliban in Doha, offers support](#)

C. GS 3 Related

D. GS 4 Related

E. Editorials

POLITY

1. [Safety first](#)

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. [Why India shouldn't sign on to net zero](#)

F. Prelims Facts

1. ['Tax revenue set to beat forecast'](#)

G. Tidbits

1. ['Count on the not so big powers'](#)
2. [The highs and lows in states' IMR rankings](#)

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

Download the latest monthly updates at BYJU'S IAS & prepare for UPSC Mains 2021!

[Yojana Gist](#)

[Kurukshetra Gist](#)

[Current Affairs Magazine](#)

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: HEALTH

1. Centre plans 2 mobile hospitals

Context:

- Prime Minister recently launched the **Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission**.

Details:

- The scheme has been launched with an outlay of Rs. 64,180 crore over a period of five years.
- Some of the key features of the PM Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission are as follows.
 - **1,50,000 Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres** are to be set up at primary healthcare facilities.
 - The development of **critical care hospital blocks** has been proposed in 602 districts to augment the critical care capacities in public health facilities. These would be established in 12 central institutions such as the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, and in government medical colleges and district hospitals.
 - **Two container-based hospitals**, equipped with comprehensive medical facilities, will be stationed in Chennai and Delhi and kept at the ready to be swiftly mobilised by rail or air to respond to any calamity or disaster in the country. This would be the first such facility in Asia.
 - **Every district would have at least one medical college.**
 - The government will be establishing integrated district public health labs in 730 districts to provide comprehensive laboratory services. Laboratories and diagnostic facilities would be set up at all levels of healthcare. Around **134 different types of tests would be done for free at the district level.**
 - There are also proposals for the setting up of the **National Platform for One Health, Regional National Institutes of Virology**, strengthening of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), upgrade of labs and creation of additional BSL-3 facilities.
 - The 'one health' approach will help prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks in humans and animals.

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

[UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis of 24th Oct 2021](#)

Significance:

- The Mission is expected to bring about a paradigm shift in India's healthcare infrastructure. It will help **fill critical gaps in public health infrastructure**. Health Emergency Operation Centres and

the container-based mobile hospitals shall build capacities for effective emergency response during such times. It could also supplement the public health facilities in rural areas if required.

- The Mission would **prepare the Indian healthcare sector to deal with any future outbreaks and make it resilient**.
 - The proposals for the creation of Regional National Institutes of Virology and up-gradation of labs and creation of additional BSL-3 facilities will help strengthen the country's capacity to **detect and diagnose new infections**.
 - The development of an **IT-enabled network of surveillance labs** will be developed at the block, district, regional and national levels for detecting, investigating, preventing, and combating health emergencies and outbreaks.
 - The development of critical care blocks will make the districts self-sufficient in providing **comprehensive treatment for infectious diseases**.
- The availability of free diagnostic facilities will not only **do away with out of pocket expenses** but also help reduce unnecessary travel for the poor by making such services available closer to home.
- The Mission would help produce **robust outcomes in public health**.

Category: GOVERNANCE

1. Framework to manage drone traffic notified

Context:

- The Ministry of Civil Aviation has recently notified a **traffic management policy framework for drones**.

Details:

- The proposed framework envisages **private, third-party service providers** for ensuring safe drone operations. **Unmanned Traffic Management Service Providers (UTMSP)** will be responsible for segregating and separating a drone from other drones and manned aircraft.
- These UTMSP will extend **automated, algorithm-driven software services to drone operators** operating in airspace below 1,000 ft.
- UTMSPs will be allowed to **levy a service fee on users** for the offering of their services.
- The traffic management providers will be **assisted by Supplementary Service Providers (SSPs)**, who will maintain data about the terrain, weather, location of manned aircraft, etc.
- The drone traffic management policy also proposes the **integration of UTM with Air traffic management systems** to help ensure the separation of manned and unmanned aircraft routes.
- Law enforcement and security agencies will be allowed access to some information in the UTM ecosystem on a need-to-know basis.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. China's Foreign Minister meets Taliban in Doha, offers support

Context:

- The Chinese Foreign Minister met the Acting Deputy Prime Minister of Afghanistan in Doha, Qatar.

Details:

- **China's Foreign Minister pledged support and assistance to the Taliban**. China expressed its willingness to continue to **provide humanitarian aid** to Afghanistan and also work with the

international community to **help Afghanistan realise economic reconstruction and development**. China pledged 200 million yuan (\$30.96 million) worth of grains, winter supplies, medicines and vaccines to Afghanistan.

- The Chinese Foreign Minister also **called on the U.S. and the West to lift sanctions on members of the Taliban regime**.
- In return China **expects the Taliban to dissociate itself from the East Turkestan Islamic Movement [ETIM]** and other terrorist organisations and also take effective measures to crack down on them.
 - The ETIM has been blamed by China for several attacks in its western Xinjiang region.
- Taliban represented by the acting Deputy Prime Minister noted that a friendly policy towards China is a firm choice by their regime and has stated that they will not allow anyone to use Afghan territory to harm Chinese interests.
- The **Taliban have also expressed interest in Chinese investments** and in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), including extending the [China Pakistan Economic Corridor](#) to Afghanistan.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: POLITY

1. Safety first

Context:

- An online meeting of the **high-power committee appointed by the Supreme Court on the Mullaperiyar dam** was held recently to decide on fixing the maximum water level in the dam. This has revived the controversy surrounding the Mullaperiyar dam.

Background:

Mullaperiyar dam:

- Mullaperiyar Dam is a **gravity dam on the Periyar River**.
- It is **located in Kerala** on the Cardamom Hills of the Western Ghats in Thekkady, Idukki District of Kerala.
- Though it is located in Kerala, the Mullaperiyar dam is **operated and maintained by Tamil Nadu** to meet the water requirements of five of its southern districts.
 - For Tamil Nadu, the Mullaperiyar dam acts as a lifeline for Theni, Madurai, Sivaganga, Dindigul and Ramnad districts, providing water for irrigation and drinking, and also for the generation of power in Lower Periyar Power Station.

Issues:

Inter-state dispute:

- The control and the **validity and fairness of the lease agreement have been points of dispute between Kerala and Tamil Nadu states.**
- While Kerala has pointed out the unfairness in the 1886 lease agreement and has challenged its validity, Tamil Nadu has insisted on exercising the unfettered colonial rights to control the dam and its waters, based on the **1886 lease agreement.**

Safety issues:

- In a UN report, the **Mullaperiyar dam was identified as one among the world's big dams which needs to be decommissioned** due to being 'situated in a **seismically active area** with **significant structural flaws** and poses risk to 3.5 million people if the 100+ years old dam were to fail'.
- The safety concerns of the **ageing Mullaperiyar dam** and alleged leaks and cracks in the structure have been repeatedly raised by the Kerala Government while the Tamil Nadu governments have sought to downplay these concerns. While Tamil Nadu has sought to increase the limit of maximum water level in the dam to 152 ft, Kerala has strongly argued against such a move citing safety concerns.
- Kerala's proposal for decommissioning the dam and constructing a new one has been challenged by Tamil Nadu.

Details:

- The recent Supreme Court order was issued while hearing a petition raising apprehensions about the supervision of water levels of the reservoir, especially during the rainy season.
- Notably, **Kerala has been experiencing unusually heavy spells of rain which have resulted in record inflows to the Mullaperiyar dam reservoir.** Kerala has pressed upon Tamil Nadu to consider the urgent need for the gradual release of water from the fast-filling Mullaperiyar dam reservoir to ensure that there is no damage to the ageing dam structure.
- Kerala also fears that the sudden release of water from the Mullaperiyar could contribute to the flood situation in the state of Kerala.

Recommendations:

Addressing safety concerns first:

- Assuring the **safety of the downstream population should be the topmost priority** in this scenario.
- The remaining **works to strengthen the dam are to be done at the earliest.** The Kerala state government and the Central Government must provide their approval for the same without much delay.
- Tamil Nadu must assure Kerala that all the instruments for **monitoring the safety and health of the dam** are installed and are functioning properly.

Rational approach:

- The issue should be addressed in an amicable manner while giving no room for passion and chauvinism on what is mostly a technical subject regarding the operation and maintenance of Mullaperiyar.
- As there are sufficient **scientific and technological tools** to respond effectively to any legitimate and genuine concern, every stakeholder should adopt a rational approach while deciding on the storage levels and safety aspects of the dam.

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. Why India shouldn't sign on to net zero

Context:

- Amid the growing calls for net zero carbon emissions, the article argues against India announcing any such net zero target year.

Arguments against net zero target:

- The timing of the world's carbon dioxide emissions **reaching net zero is not the critical parameter** for the safety of humanity. Rather, there is the **need to cap the global cumulative emissions of carbon dioxide (global carbon budget)**. The calls for net zero carbon emissions tend to overlook this crucial concept of global carbon budget.
- The net zero targets announced by the top three emitters of the world — China, the U.S. and the European Union — will **not be sufficient to keep global temperature increase below 1.5°C**.
- Notably, the [Paris Climate Agreement](#) which forms the basis of the global climate action framework does not require that net zero be reached individually by countries by 2050.
- The net zero carbon emission targets seem to be **against the principle of equity and climate justice**. This approach front-loads emission reduction requirements on developing countries, despite their already low emissions and allows the developed world to backload its emissions, buying time for its own transition. It seems to be **neglecting the legacy emissions from the global north**. Hence this concept **allows for the over-appropriation of the global carbon budget by the global north**.

Recommendations for India:

- The article recommends that India should **refrain from agreeing to a net zero target year** based on the following arguments.

Low legacy emissions:

- **India is responsible for no more than 4.37% cumulative emissions of carbon dioxide since the pre-industrial era**, despite being home to more than a sixth of humanity.

Low per capita emissions:

- **India's per capita emissions are less than half the world average.**
- India's contribution to global emissions is so disproportionately low that even a more ambitious climate action plan by India will not make any drastic impact on global climate action.

Developmental necessities:

- The adoption of a net zero target year risks **endangering the economic development process of India** which is of paramount importance to eradicate poverty, hunger and malnutrition in India.

Conclusion:

- India, in enlightened self-interest, must stake its **claim to a fair share of the global carbon budget**.
- It should **call for restriction of the future cumulative emissions by the big emitters**, to their fair share of the global carbon budget.
- India should call for **technology transfer and financial support, together with “negative emissions” from the developed countries** to compensate for the legacy emissions.

For more related information refer to the following article:

[UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis of 25th Oct 2021](#)

F. Prelims Facts

1. 'Tax revenue set to beat forecast'

- The **Indian government expects its tax revenues for the current fiscal year to be 10% above budgeted estimates**. This would be the first time in four years that the tax revenues could be higher than its budgeted estimates if the projection holds true.
 - Tax revenues have been below projections ever since 2017-18 as the economy lost momentum even before COVID-19 and then slipped into a deep recession due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The **uptick in government tax revenues, pickup in retail sales and exports seem to be suggestive of a robust economic recovery in India**.
- The robust tax revenue projections and the meeting of the disinvestment targets will help the government beat its **fiscal deficit projection of 6.8%** by as much as 30-40 basis points.
 - **India aims to raise Rs. 1.75 lakh crore in the current fiscal year through disinvestment.**

G. Tidbits

1. 'Count on the not so big powers'

- Syed Akbaruddin, India's former Permanent Representative to the UN with rich experience in international diplomacy and power play **calls for India to attach equal importance to bilateral relationships with the middle powers as well as other smaller nations** in addition to the natural importance that India attaches to its relationship with the superpowers of the world.
- This he argues is essential as the **support from the middle and smaller powers form the base of India's global support** on which the relationships with global superpowers can be leveraged upon.
- This can also help insulate India from the powerplay often employed by superpowers in international relations to protect their mutual self-interests.

2. The highs and lows in states' IMR rankings

- The **infant mortality rate (deaths per 1000 live births of children under one year of age)** has improved in all states between 2014 and 2019.
- However, wide variations exist among the states in the pace of decline.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q.1 Consider the following statements with regards to National Population Register:

1. NPR has been termed as the register of usual residents of the country by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner.
2. A “usual resident”, for the NPR, is a person who has lived in an area for at least one year or more, or a person who intends to live in an area for the next one year or more.
3. The Registrar General of Citizen Registration would be responsible for providing the notification regarding the duration of the enumeration in the Official Gazette.

Options:-

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The National Population Register (NPR) is a Register of usual residents of the country. It is being prepared at the local (Village/sub-Town), sub-District, District, State and National levels under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.
- A “usual resident” is defined for the purposes of NPR as a person who has resided in a local area for the past six months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next six months or more.
- The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country. The database would contain demographic as well as biometric particulars.
- The Registrar General of CitizenRegistration shall notify the period and duration of the enumeration in the Official Gazette.

Q.2 Consider the following statements with regards to the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration:

1. The Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (often abbreviated as GTA) is an Autonomous District Council for the Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas of West Bengal.

2. The GTA was formed in 2012 to replace the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council.
3. The formation of GTA resulted from a tripartite agreement between the Union government, the State government and Gorkha Janamukti Morcha.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Gorkhaland Territorial Administration is an Autonomous District Council for the Darjeeling and Kalimpong areas of the West Bengal state in India. It currently consists of three hill subdivisions Darjeeling, Kurseong, Mirik, some areas of Siliguri subdivision of Darjeeling district and the whole of Kalimpong district under its authority.
- The GTA was formed in 2012 to replace the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council, which was formed in 1988 and administered the Darjeeling hills for 23 years.
- The GTA was formed as a result of the tripartite agreement between the State, Centre and the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM).

Q.3 Consider the following statements with regards to languages in India and choose the incorrect one:

- a. "Rajbhasha Bharati" is a quarterly magazine published by the Department of Official Language and is dedicated to encouraging Hindi writing in the fields of technology, information, literature, etc.
- b. There are no fixed criteria for any language to be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- c. Since 2018, members of parliament can speak in any of the 22 languages in the 8th schedule after giving a 24-hour prior notice.
- d. None of the above

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Department of Official Language brings out 'Rajbhasha Bharati', a quarterly magazine, dedicated to encouraging writings in the field of Official Language, literature, technology, information technology, etc., in Hindi and also to give wide publicity to the efforts being made in different Central Government Offices for the use and propagation of Official Language Hindi.
- As the evolution of dialects and languages is dynamic, influenced by socio-eco-political developments, it is difficult to fix any criterion for languages to be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

- Since 2018, members of parliament can speak in any of the 22 languages in the 8th schedule after giving a 24-hour prior notice.

Q.4 Electoral bonds are sold by

- a. All the Scheduled Commercial Banks in India
- b. All the Scheduled Public Sector Banks in India
- c. All the Scheduled Private Sector Banks in India
- d. Only a few designated branches of the State Bank of India

Answer: d

Explanation:

- State Bank of India (SBI) has been authorised to issue and encash Electoral Bonds through its 29 Authorized Branches. No other bank can undertake these functions.

Q.5 With reference to forced labour (Vishti) in India during the Gupta period, which one of the following statements is correct? (UPSC-2019)

- a. It was considered a source of income for the State, a sort of tax paid by the people.
- b. It was totally absent in the Madhya Pradesh and Kathiawar regions of the Gupta Empire.
- c. The forced labourer was entitled to weekly wages.
- d. The eldest son of the labourer was sent as the forced labourer.

Answer: a

Explanation:

- Vishti was a form of forced labour extracted by either the state, the provincial governor or the local chief. It is also mentioned in the Gupta era copper inscriptions that enlist a variety of taxes. Junagarh inscription mentions vishti as one form of tax, which indicates that it was extracted from Gujarat and Malwa regions.
- Since it was a forced labour in lieu of tax, it was not a wage labour. Wage labour existed in ancient India but it was not called vishti. Vishti could be extracted from anyone, not in particular from the eldest son only.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Examine the controversy surrounding Mullaperiyar dam in the light of recent directions given by the Supreme Court. (15 marks, 250 words)[GS-2, Polity]
2. The Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission aims to build a robust public health infrastructure. Discuss. (15 marks, 250 words)[GS-2, Governance]