

18 Jan 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>A. GS 1 Related</u>
<u>B. GS 2 Related</u>
<u>C. GS 3 Related</u>
<i>ECONOMY</i>
1. Inequality Kills: A study of the new Oxfam report
<u>D. GS 4 Related</u>
<u>E. Editorials</u>
<i>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</i>
1. India's watchwords in a not so bright 2022
<i>AGRICULTURE</i>
1. Just what the doctor ordered for the livestock farmer
<u>F. Prelims Facts</u>
1. Kathak legend painted a divine romance on stage
2. Gati Shakti: Gadkari meets southern leaders
<u>G. Tidbits</u>
1. Vaccinate whole world to end pandemic, UN chief tells Davos
<u>H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions</u>
<u>I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions</u>

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

[1. Inequality Kills: A study of the new Oxfam report](#)

Syllabus: Inclusive Growth and issues arising from it

Mains: Findings of the Oxfam 'Inequality kills' report; Recommendations.

Context:

- **“Inequality Kills: The unparalleled action needed to combat unprecedented inequality in the wake of COVID-19”** report released by Oxfam.
 - Oxfam is a U.K.-based consortium of 21 charitable organisations.

Details:

- The report notes that the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) has **heightened economic inequalities** across the world.
 - The report points out that **160 million people were rendered poor during the pandemic**, while the **ten richest people doubled their fortunes** since the start of the pandemic.
- The report notes with concern the fact made obvious during the pandemic that the **peoples' life chances are directly linked to their access to wealth** and healthcare, their positions of power in society, their racial and caste identities, and their geographic locations.

How has the pandemic aggravated global inequality?

- The most impacted section of the population due to the pandemic was the poor who often indulge in **informal work**. The pandemic induced lockdowns led to the **loss of livelihood opportunities** for this section. This led to the **loss of income** and impacted the educational as well as nutritional security of the children of such families. The **lack of social and income protections** for the poor people only added to their concerns. Thus the pandemic only pushed the poor into greater poverty.
- The report notes that the emergency government expenditure meant as a fiscal stimulus (estimated at \$16 trillion) inflated stock prices and **disproportionately benefitted the rich who invested in stock markets** rather than helping the poor.
- The **structural and systemic policy and political choices** that are skewed in favour of the richest and most powerful people are also factors contributing to the gross inequality.

Concerns:

Form of economic violence:

- The report describes the gross economic inequality as being a **form of institutionalized 'economic violence' against poorer people** as it robs them of access to basic living standards.

Higher impact on the vulnerable:

- The major brunt of the inequality and the violence it begets is borne mostly by vulnerable sections like **women and Dalits in India**, Black, Native American and Latinx persons in the United States and indigenous groups in many countries.
- The economic inequality **only further marginalizes people already marginalized by social and economic structures** and removed from political decision making.

Impact on women:

- The lockdowns implemented to contain the spread of the pandemic led to an **increase in violence against women worldwide**, which has been described as a **shadow pandemic**.
- Available estimates note that around 13 million women have not returned to the workforce and 20 million girls are at risk of losing access to education due to the disruption caused by the pandemic.
- Hence the **goal of gender equality has suffered a huge setback** as women who were already unequal before the pandemic are now more unequal because of increased economic inequality.

Nutritional insecurity:

- Poverty, caused by rising inequality, also **leads to hunger and deaths due to hunger**. Around 369 million children have reportedly lost access to school meals during the pandemic robbing them of their access to the most nutritious meal of the day.

Impact on social trust in the society:

- The higher economic inequality could **fuel more crime and violence in the society** and would **lessen social trust** due to the glaring difference between the haves and have nots.

Climate crisis:

- The report argues that the **climate crisis is exacerbated by inequality between countries**.
- The extreme neoliberal models of economic growth have led to a skewed system of carbon-intensive production that favours richer countries while shifting the risk onto poorer countries. This is **undermining the global climate action efforts**.

Recommendations:

- The report warns that the increasing economic inequality could be profoundly dangerous for the world. The report argues for sustained and immediate action to end the pandemic, address global inequality and initiate concerted measures to tackle the climate emergency.
- The report proposes changes to structures of government, economy and policy-making to rectify the gross global inequality.

Addressing vaccine inequity:

- Given that the “**vaccine apartheid**” (unequal access to vaccines between countries) and the lack of universal vaccination programs in many countries has been a major cause of the emergence of multiple new strains of the coronavirus that has led to the continuation of the pandemic, the report asks for the **ending of monopolies over vaccines held by pharmaceutical companies**.
- The vaccine manufacturing process and the associated technical know-how should be openly available to every qualified vaccine manufacturer to enable easy manufacturing of the vaccines and **enable affordable vaccine access to everyone**.

Taxation measures:

- The report proposes addressing the gross wealth inequality by administering **solidarity taxes on the rich** that have profited during and because of the pandemic.
 - A solidarity tax is a government-imposed tax that is levied in an attempt to provide funding towards theoretically unifying (or solidifying) projects. The tax acts in conjunction with income taxes and places an additional burden on taxpayers, including individuals, sole proprietors, and corporations.
- The report also calls for permanent **cancellation of tax havens, progressive taxation on corporations and an end to tax dodging by corporations**.
- The revenue thus collected should be redirected towards **building income safety nets, universalising healthcare and investing in protecting the vulnerable sections**.

Climate action:

- The unequal impact of climate change on underdeveloped nations needs to be recognized and acknowledged. These countries should be adequately **financed for adaptation measures**.
- The developed and developing countries should take higher responsibility for mitigation measures. There should be a **higher investment in green technologies** to reduce the carbon footprint.

Political empowerment:

- The report advocates for **redistributing political power by strengthening workers' unions and boosting political representation of marginalised groups** to ensure higher political bargaining power for these sections.

Nut Graf

The increasing economic inequality would have adverse economic, social, political as well as environmental impacts on the global community. Unless strong measures are taken by governments to reverse the widening inequality, the achievement of goals envisaged under the sustainable development

goals by 2030 would be impossible.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India's watchwords in a not so bright 2022

Syllabus: Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests.

Mains: Geopolitical Challenges and Risks for India in 2022

Context:

In this article, the author examines the uncertainties and impermanence India would face in the context of domestic and geopolitical world affairs for the year 2022.

What are the Geopolitical Challenges and Risks for India in 2022?



- **China as disruptor:** The role of China in 2022 is possibly the most disrupting one, given the challenge it poses to the existing international order.
 - Militarily, China is openly challenging U.S. supremacy in many areas, including ‘state-of-the-art weaponry’ such as hyper-sonic technology.
 - China has abandoned the ‘one country two systems’ policy, stripping Hong Kong of its freedom and inviting international opprobrium.
 - It is now threatening Taiwan, which could well become one of the flash points of conflict in 2022.
- **Concerns in Indo-Pacific:** China might well be tempted to demonstrate its ability in the Indo-Pacific region. This, in the context of US ambitions in the same region, could constitute a serious risk.
- **Russia-Ukraine Conflict:** The Russia and Ukraine conflict has grave possibilities and could result in a series of cyclical outcomes with considerable damage potential.
- **Kazakhstan Crisis:** The current unrest in Kazakhstan demonstrates a sharper cleavage between the U.S.-led West and its principal opponents, Russia and China.
- **Return of the Taliban:** Taliban’s return to power in Afghanistan has led to a material shift in the balance of power in an already troubled region on India’s periphery.
 - Taliban’s return to power represents a significant victory for Pakistan.
 - Developments in Afghanistan have fuelled the ambitions of quite a few ‘anti-state militant groups’ across the region.
- **Concerns with Indonesia:** In Indonesia, a resurgence of radical activities is taking place which provides fertile ground for other radical groups to enlarge their activities across the Asian region.

- **Border issues with China:** The Chinese transgressions across the Line of Actual Control in different sectors in Ladakh could well be expanded in 2022 at many more points on the Sino-Indian border.
- **Challenges in Central Asia:** In Central Asia, India will be challenged on how best to manage its traditional friendship with Russia with the pronounced tilt seen more recently in [India-U.S. relations](#).
- **Challenges in West Asia:** In West Asia, the challenge for India is how to manage its membership of the Second Quad (India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the U.S.) with the conflicting interests of different players in the region.

Way Forward:

- India's foreign policy needs to demonstrate more flexibility to manage the contradictions that exist.
- India needs to develop a strategy on how to counter the publicity given by China to its low-yield nuclear weapons meant for battlefield use even during conventional military operations and against conventional targets.
- India would need to strengthen its military posture to convince India's neighbours that it can stand up to China.

Nut Graf

Facing a host of unprecedented challenges, India's foreign policy in 2022 should demonstrate more flexibility in managing contradictions and find rational answers to questions that cannot be ignored for long.

Category: AGRICULTURE

1. Just what the doctor ordered for the livestock farmer

Syllabus: *Issues and economics of animal-rearing.*

Mains: *Challenges in accessing veterinary services in rural areas and concerns*

Context:

This article discusses the challenges in accessing veterinary services as the country's livestock is concentrated in rural and remote areas.

What is the Issue?

- The twentieth livestock census indicated that 95.8% of the livestock population in India is concentrated in rural areas.
- When livestock producers' animals require treatment, they are frequently forced to travel far from their villages.
- There are difficulties in obtaining veterinary services as the country's livestock is located in rural and distant locations.
- This also has a negative influence on their livestock's longevity and output.

Veterinary services:

Veterinary services refer to the treatment, care, counseling, or direction, as well as other services or supplies, that are related to the health of the population of animals.

Importance of veterinary services:

Veterinary services play an important role in surveillance, early detection and treatment of diseases in animals – in order to minimize foodborne pathogens from entering the food chain.

What are the issues with livestock in rural livelihood?

- **Antibiotic Resistance:**
 - The untrained animal health workers have caused the inappropriate administration of antibiotics because of flawed prescriptions.
 - So, problems pertaining to Antimicrobial Resistance occur when the animal no longer responds to a drug to which it was originally responsive.
 - Antimicrobial resistance can be caused because of factors such as high or low dosages, incorrect duration of medication, and overprescription.
- **Challenges faced by livestock farmers:**
 - The M.K. Jain Committee Report has highlighted that livestock farmers face greater challenges in accessing credit and livestock insurance.
 - Since a majority of livestock farmers have two to four animals per household, enhancing the longevity and the productivity of their livestock will go a long way towards alleviating rural poverty.
- **Milk loss:**
 - For most farmers, death of or disease in livestock could mean the difference between sustenance and starvation.
 - The animal health issue is compounded by the growing presence of salesmen of drug distributors in rural communities.

What are the Government Measures?

- **LH&DC Programme:** The Government has identified a slew of measures within the revised provisions of the Livestock Health and Disease Control (LH&DC) programme.
 - It focuses on the ‘Establishment and Strengthening of Veterinary Services – Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs)’.
- **Doorstep Services:** The Government has been providing doorstep services related to artificial insemination and vaccination for livestock. The MVUs will build on the doorstep delivery model, as stationary hospitals cannot be easily accessed by most livestock farmers.

Way Forward

During the novel coronavirus pandemic, India witnessed innovations by start-ups that provided video consultation sessions between livestock farmers and veterinarians, along with apps that provide detailed information to farmers on livestock health and nutrition. Thus, there is a great deal of scope for innovations and intervention by the private sector in the context of veterinary services in rural areas. Further, with the growing prevalence of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, veterinary services are poised to generate higher returns on investment.

Nut Graf

While the latest government measure of establishing Mobile Veterinary Units will go a long way in improving access to veterinary services for rural livestock owners, more can be achieved in this regard in the form of innovations and interventions from public-private partnerships leading to desirable outcomes for the rural agrarian sector.

F. Prelims Facts

1. Kathak legend painted a divine romance on stage

Kathak:

- Kathak is one of the major forms of **Indian classical dance**.
- Kathak originated as a storytelling device for portraying the epic tales from Hindu scriptures, Mahabharata and Ramayana. Poetry was combined with rhythmic movement to aid in the **worshipful storytelling**.

- Kathak is found in distinct forms, called "**gharanas**", named after the cities where the Kathak dance tradition evolved – **Jaipur, Banaras and Lucknow**.
- Kathak is indigenous to northern India and developed under the influence of both Hindu and Muslim cultures. **Kathak** is characterized by intricate footwork and precise rhythmic patterns that the dancer articulates by controlling ankle bells.

Context:

- Death of Kathak legend Pandit Birju Maharaj (Lucknow Gharana).

2. Gati Shakti: Gadkari meets southern leaders

Gati Shakti:

- The **Pradhan Mantri Gati Shakti** is basically a digital platform that aims to bring around 16 Ministries including Railways and Roadways together for **integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects**. It is part of the **National Master Plan for Multi-modal Connectivity**.
- It will incorporate the infrastructure schemes of various Ministries and State Governments like **Bharatmala, Sagarmala, inland waterways, dry/land ports, UDAN, etc.**
- Economic Zones like textile clusters, pharmaceutical clusters, defence corridors, electronic parks, industrial corridors, fishing clusters, agri zones will be covered to improve connectivity & make Indian businesses more competitive.

G. Tidbits

1. Vaccinate whole world to end pandemic, UN chief tells Davos

- **United Nations chief Antonio Guterres** addressing the Davos forum called on the participating leaders to ensure that everybody is vaccinated against COVID-19 to ensure a way out of the pandemic. He noted how the **vaccine apartheid** was giving rise to new variants and was resulting in repeated disruption of lives and the economy.
- He pointed out the **gross vaccine inequity** wherein the vaccination rates in high-income countries were observed to be around seven times higher than in African countries. He stressed the fact that the pandemic cannot be stopped until each and every citizen had access to vaccines.
- He called on the international community to **confront the pandemic with equity and fairness**.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements with regards to Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act, FCRA:

1. Foreign funding of persons in India is regulated under the FCRA Act and is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
2. Under the Act, registered NGOs can receive foreign contributions for five purposes - social, educational, religious, economic and cultural.
3. The Act ensures that the recipients of foreign contributions adhere to the stated purpose for which such contribution has been obtained.

Choose the correct code:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Foreign funding of persons in India is regulated under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act and is implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- Under the Act, registered NGOs can receive foreign contributions only for the purposes of/activity related to social, educational, religious, economic and cultural nature.
- The Act requires that the recipients of foreign contributions adhere to the stated purpose for which such contribution has been obtained. The money cannot be used for any other purpose.

Q2. The election schedule for state assembly elections in India is decided by:

- a. State Election Commission
- b. Governor
- c. Election Commission of India
- d. President on the advice of Council of Ministers

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The Election Commission of India announces the dates for the state assembly elections.

Q3. Which of the given statements with regards to Kathak dance is/are not correct?

1. Usually a solo performance, the dancer often pauses to recite verses followed by their execution through movement.
2. Kathak is the only form of classical dance wedded to Hindustani or North Indian music.
3. Under the Tughlaq and Khilji emperors and their nobles, Kathak was performed in the court, where it acquired its present features and developed into a form of dance with a distinctive style.

Options:

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

Answer: c**Explanation:**

- Kathak is one of the major forms of Indian classical dance.
- Kathak originated as a storytelling device for portraying the epic tales from Hindu scriptures, Mahabharata and Ramayana. Poetry was combined with rhythmic movement to aid in worshipful storytelling.
- Kathak is indigenous to northern India and developed under the influence of both Hindu and Muslim cultures. It was under the Mughal emperors and their nobles that Kathak was performed in the court, where it acquired its present features and developed into a form of dance with a distinctive style.
- Kathak is characterized by intricate footwork and precise rhythmic patterns that the dancer articulates by controlling ankle bells.

Q4. Consider the following statements with regards to India State of Forest report 2021:

1. The first survey was published in 1987, and ISFR 2021 is the 17th.
2. Three categories of forests are surveyed – very dense forests (canopy density over 70%), moderately dense forests (40-70%) and open forests (10-40%).
3. It has for the first time assessed forest cover in tiger reserves, tiger corridors and the Gir forest which houses the Asiatic lion.

Which of these statements is/are correct?

- a. 1 & 2 only
- b. 2 & 3 only
- c. 1 & 3 only

d. All of the above

Answer: d

Explanation:

- India State of Forest report 2021 for the first time assessed forest cover in tiger reserves, tiger corridors and the Gir forest which houses the Asiatic lion.
- The first such forest survey was published in 1987 and the current 2021 edition is the 17th edition of the survey.
- Under the survey, the forests are categorized into three types– very dense forests (canopy density over 70%), moderately dense forests (40-70%) and open forests (10-40%).

Q5. With reference to Swadeshi Movement, consider the following statements: (UPSC 2019)

1. It contributed to the revival of the indigenous artisan crafts and industries.
2. The National Council of Education was established as a part of Swadeshi Movement.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a. 1 only
- b. 2 only
- c. Both 1 and 2
- d. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The Swadeshi movement was launched in 1905 as a protest against the partition of Bengal. Swadeshi textile mills, soap, tobacco and match factories, tanneries, etc. were established under the swadeshi movement. Therefore the swadeshi movement contributed to the revival of the indigenous artisan crafts and industries.
- National Council of Education was established in Bengal in 1906 to promote technical education in India as part of the swadeshi movement.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Ensuring better India-Nepal relations is in the best interest of both the nations. Suggest some diplomatic measures that can be taken by the Indian government to improve the bilateral relations with our Himalayan neighbour. (250 words; 15 marks) (GS Paper 2/International Relations)

2. Livestock farming has the potential to reduce farmers' stress in India. Do you agree? What steps has the government taken to support livestock farmers in India? (250 words; 15 marks) (GS Paper 3/Agriculture)

