

27 Jan 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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A. GS 1 Related

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. The 'racial profiling' of the Chakmas and Hajongs



Syllabus: Regionalism

Prelims: Chakma and Hajongs

Mains: Concerns associated with extreme ethnic consciousness

Context:

- In November 2021, a letter was issued for a "special census" to be conducted in all the Chakma- and Hajong-inhabited areas of the Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister had stated that his Government was serious about **relocating the Chakma-Hajongs** to other States.

Background:

Migration of the Chakmas and Hajongs:

- The **Buddhist Chakmas and Hindu Hajongs** are migrants from the **Chittagong Hill Tracts of erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh**. They were **displaced in the 1960s** by the Kaptai dam on the Karnaphuli River and sought asylum in India.
- A large chunk of these migrants was settled in relief camps in the southern and south-eastern parts of Arunachal Pradesh from 1964 to 1969. A rehabilitation plan was formulated, land and financial aid were provided depending on the size of their families.
- Mizoram and Tripura also have a sizeable population of the Chakmas. Some Hajongs also inhabit the Garo Hills of Meghalaya and adjoining areas of Assam.

Current status of Chakmas and Hajongs:

- As of 2011, there are 47,471 Chakmas and Hajongs living in the State of Arunachal Pradesh. However, as per the Chakma Development Foundation of India, this number stands at about 65,000 currently. A majority of them live in the Changlang district.
- Of the total estimated 65,000, 60,500 of the migrants are **citizens by birth under Section 3 of the Citizenship Act, 1955**, after having been born before July 1, 1987, or as descendants of those who were born before this date. The applications of the remaining 4,500 surviving migrants have not been processed yet.
- The organisations representing the migrants argue that they were permanently settled by the Union of India in the 1960s and since 95% of the migrants were born in the North-East Frontier Agency or Arunachal Pradesh, the **Inner Line Permit** mandatory **under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873**, for outsiders seeking to visit the State, also does not apply to them.

Concerns expressed by Chakmas and Hajongs:

- Chakma organisations have termed the proposal for the special census as nothing but racial profiling of the two communities based on their ethnic origin. This they claim violates Article 14 of the Constitution of India (<u>Right to Equality</u>) and Article 1 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination which has been ratified by India.
- The repeated statements by Arunachal Pradesh officials to get the Hajongs and Chakmas relocated goes against previous <u>Supreme Court Judgments</u> on the issue.



- The Supreme Court had in January 1996 prohibited any move to evict or expel the Chakma-Hajongs and directed the Central and State governments to process their citizenship. Similar observations had also been made by the National Human Rights Commission.
- The Supreme Court in its September 2015 judgment had noted that Arunachal Pradesh cannot expect other States to share its burden of migrants.
- Members of the two communities have allegedly been victims of hate crime, police atrocities, discrimination and denial of rights and beneficiary programmes.

Concerns raised by locals:

- Local organisations argue that the Union government had **not consulted the local communities before settling the Chakma-Hajongs.**
- They argue that Arunachal Pradesh is having to carry the burden of hosting the migrant Chakmas and Hajongs.
- Local tribes claim the population of the migrants has increased alarmingly and could outnumber the indigenous communities. This they claim poses challenges to their own survival given the **increased competition over** land, resources and jobs.

Threats posed by extreme ethnic consciousness:

- Though ethnicity and ethnic consciousness are a universal phenomenon, this is considered a unique feature of tribal societies.
- Such ethnic consciousness in their more extreme forms of expression are exclusion and hatred of the 'Other.'
- Manifestations of the same have been observed in the recent attacks on non-tribal people in Meghalaya's capital Shillong or an Assam-based group's warning to a fuel station owner in Guwahati against employing Bihari workers.
- Violent ethnic assertions could **bring in divisions within the society**. This could take extreme forms of ethnic cleansing and **civil wars**. Ethno-nationalistic mobilisations could lead to calls for **separatism**.

Nut Graf

With a history of conflicts between the indigenous communities and the non-locals, the northeast of India continues to face challenges of identity and development. Unless the right to life and equality of both the local and the non-local population is preserved and balanced, the region will continue to face serious security issues including calls for ethnic cleansing, civil wars and separatism.

B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. PM to hold Central Asia summit today

Syllabus: Bilateral, Regional and Global Groupings and Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Prelims: Central Asian countries; trilateral working group on Chabahar

Mains: Potential of India-Central Asian countries partnership; Challenges

Context:



• Indian Prime Minister will be holding the **first India-Central Asia summit**, in a videoconference with five Presidents from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Proposed agenda for the summit:

• Government officials have stated that the major areas of focus for the conference would be trade and connectivity, building development partnerships and enhancing cultural and people-to-people contacts.

Trade:

- The participants are expected to discuss ways to increase trade between India and the Central Asian countries.
- Currently, the **bilateral trade stands at a meagre \$2 billion** and also a major proportion of this is attributed to energy imports from Kazakhstan by India. India's exports to this region remain minuscule.

Connectivity:

• India hopes to **expand its trilateral working group on Chabahar with Iran and Uzbekistan** to strengthen connectivity to the region.

Development partnership:

• India has previously extended a **\$1 billion Line of Credit (LOC) for development projects** in the areas of energy, healthcare, connectivity, IT, and agriculture in 2020 and an expansion on this front could be on the agenda given India's expertise in the above sector and its experience with developmental aid.

People-to-people contacts:

• India would do well to increase the number of **educational opportunities for students from Central Asian countries**. This would help build essential people-to-people contacts with Central Asian nations and will help build goodwill for India in the longer run.

Other aspects:

- Global and regional developments are also likely to form a part of the discussions.
 - The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the **rebuilding of the economies affected by the pandemic** is likely to be a major aspect of the discussions.
 - The volatile **Afghanistan situation** is also likely to be discussed.

Challenges:

Ukraine-Russia tensions:

- The growing **tensions between Russia and the U.S. led-West** over the troop build-up on the Ukraine-Russia border could pose a challenge to the relationship.
- The five Central Asian nations being former Soviet States enjoy close strategic ties with Russia. During the recent uprising in Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan President had received support from Russia.
- Given the **increasingly strategic alignment with the U.S.**, India would be caught in a catch 22 situation in case a war breaks out.

Afghanistan issue:



- Though the Afghanistan issue has been discussed at the National Security Advisers meet of India-Central Asia countries as well as at the meeting of India-Central Asia Foreign Ministers, **not all Central Asian countries are on the same page as India on dealing with the <u>Taliban</u>.**
- With the exception of Tajikistan, all have exchanged high-level diplomatic visits with Kabul, while at least two, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have reopened their missions in Afghanistan.

China factor:

- In a recently organized virtual summit, China has offered \$500 million in assistance to the Central Asian region and pledged to ramp up trade between the two sides to \$70 billion by 2030. Currently, China's trade with the five countries crossed \$40 billion in 2018, roughly 20 times India's trade with the region for 2018.
- China has several **big projects of strategic importance** with the Central Asian region including natural gas pipeline, crude oil pipeline, highway and expressways.
- The **growing Chinese influence in the region** could undermine Indian efforts to build a robust relationship with the nations of the Central Asian region.

Connectivity challenges:

- Connectivity to Central Asia remains one of the major challenges to deepening the relationship between India and the region given that India lacks direct land route access to the region.
- Pakistan has been reluctant to provide land route access.
- The alternate route of connectivity through <u>Chabahar port</u> in Iran and Afghanistan to Central Asia has not made much progress and the recent takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban further decreases the chances.

Nut Graf

A robust relationship between India and the Central Asian nations can help reap rich dividends in the domain of security, energy, economic opportunities and geopolitics for both sides. The recent initiatives to deepen the cooperation and collaboration is a welcome move.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ECONOMY

1. Unlock India's food processing potential

Syllabus: Food processing and related industries in India

Mains: Production-Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry.

Context:



India has formulated a **Production-Linked Incentive Scheme** (PLI Scheme) **for the Food Processing Industry** that aims to incentivise incremental sales with an outlay of Rs. 10900 crores.

The Potential of Food Processing Industry in India

- India is one of the largest producers of fruits and vegetables in the world.
- India has a competitive advantage in terms of resource endowment, large domestic market and scope for promoting value-added products.
- Due to the pandemic, there has been a significant number of people working from home, resulting in a 170% rise in demand for products from the ready-to-eat market between March-June 2020.

Know more on the **PLI Scheme** in the link.

Objectives of the PLI Scheme

- To support food manufacturing entities with minimum sales and willing to make a minimum investment for expansion of processing capacity and branding abroad to incentivise emergence of strong Indian brands.
- To provide global visibility and wider acceptance in the international markets for Indian brands of products.
- To increase employment opportunities.
- To ensure remunerative prices for farm produce and increase the income of farmers.

Key Features

- The first component relates to incentivising manufacturing of four major food product segments namely,
 - Ready to Cook/Ready to Eat (RTC/ RTE) foods including Millets
 - Processed Fruits & Vegetables
 - Marine Products
 - Mozzarella Cheese
- Organic products of SMEs including Eggs, Poultry Meat, Egg Products are also covered under the first component.
- The second component relates to support for branding and marketing abroad to incentivise the emergence of strong Indian brands.
- For the promotion of the Indian Brand abroad, the scheme envisages grants for in-store branding, shelf space renting and marketing.
- The Scheme will be implemented for over six years from 2021-22 to 2026-27.

Significance of the Scheme

- A total of ₹10,900 crores has been spent on the scheme and 60 applicants have been selected under the first component.
- The sector will witness ₹6,500 crores worth of investment over the next two years if executed properly.
- A study in the US concluded that a 1% increase in public infrastructure increased the food manufacturing output by 0.06% in the long run.
 - The correlation holds good for India too.



• The scheme will help explore the untapped markets of Europe, the Middle East/West Asia, Africa, Oceania and Japan.

The Challenge of access to credit for the MSME Industries

- Access to finance for the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is a problem in the country.
- The problem is mainly due to a lack of proper credit mechanisms for MSMEs.

Way Forward

- Smart financing alternatives such as peer-to-peer (P2P) lending hold potential for micro-food processors.
 - Example: The UK Government-owned British Business Bank, has helped more than 1,18,000 small businesses get access to more than \$17.88 billion.
- **Trade Receivables Discounting System** (TReDS), a platform for facilitating the financing of trade receivables of MSMEs through multiple financiers, requires considerable scaling-up and enforcement of strict measures for the corporates to comply with.
- Achieving the complete potential of the sector would need Indian companies to improve their competitive strength w.r.t. scale of output and productivity.

Conclusion

By welcoming the new brands in the category, the PLI Scheme aims to create an ecosystem to enable innovation in both food products and processing.

Nut Graf

Considering the challenge to feed the 10 billion population by mid-century there is a need for efficient ways of production that are both economically viable and ecologically sustainable. In this regard, there is a need to revamp the traditional approach of farm to fork and with a lower environmental footprint.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Keeping faith

Syllabus: India and its neighbourhood-relations

Mains: How people-to-people interactions can help reduce the tension between India and Pakistan.

Context:

The proposal of the Pakistan Hindu Council to allow pilgrims of both countries to travel by air has been forwarded to India by Pakistan.

• The council says as pilgrims from both sides are screened before being allowed to travel, the move is unlikely to pose any security threat.

Movement of Pilgrims between India and Pakistan

• The religious exchanges, of Muslim pilgrims from Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs from India, are governed by a protocol signed in 1974.



• Hundreds of Indian and Pakistani pilgrims cross over at the Wagah/Atari border to travel to the **Hinglaj Mata Mandir** in Balochistan, the **Paramhans Mandir** in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the **Ajmer Sharif dargah** in Rajasthan, the **Nizamuddin Aulia** in Delhi and other such shrines.



Image Source: The New Indian Express Current Challenges in Movement

- The India-Pakistan ties are possibly at their worst ever in peace times.
- No political dialogue at a bilateral or multilateral level has taken place for over five years.
- After many terror attacks, India stopped normal communications and cultural exchanges with Pakistan.
- After the Government's moves on <u>Article 370</u> in Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan stopped all trade ties.
- Both sides have downsized their diplomatic missions.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the closure of borders for two years, with very few direct routes operating.

Recent goodwill gestures between the countries

- The LoC ceasefire announcement in February 2021.
- The decision to reopen the Kartarpur corridor in November 2019.
- The Government's nod for cricket under the T20 World Cup as well as other sporting events.

Read about Kartarpur Corridor.



Conclusion

While the proposals by the council could help ease travel restrictions and induce greater people-to-people interactions, the Indian Government must examine various aspects of security, before considering the proposal as increased people-to-people interactions can help ease out the tensions between the two countries and set the stage for future political discussions and this augurs well for peace and security in the region.

Nut Graf

In an atmosphere filled with tensions between India and Pakistan, people-to-people initiatives can help build a degree of goodwill.

Category: HEALTH

1. The Dravidian model of public health

Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health

Mains: Tamil Nadu model of Public Health

Context

The recent Supreme Court judgement of upholding the constitutionality of reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC) in National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 's All-India Quota (AIQ) is considered a landmark in the history of social justice in the country.

Tamil Nadu model of Public Health

- The governments in Tamil Nadu have had a broad and inclusive understanding of 'merit' and its social implications.
- The affirmative action to provide reservations for in-service doctors has stood the test of time for over forty years.
- The introduction of the scheme reserving 50% of the postgraduate and super-specialty medical seats for government doctors had a big impact in providing tertiary health care in government hospitals.
- The policymakers included a unique superannuation bond for these government doctors to ensure that those who secure postgraduate or super-specialty seats by availing themselves of in-service reservations will serve the government till their retirement.

Key achievements of the TN model:

- It resulted in the expansion of public health infrastructure in the State.
- The progressive reform has ensured the availability of specialists in multiple disciplines such as gynaecology, anaesthesia, general medicine, paediatrics, general surgery and orthopaedics, in almost every district hospital.
- This resulted in a steady rise in the availability of multi-specialty experts not only in metropolitan cities but also in Tier-2 cities.
- Currently, the public health sector in Tamil Nadu has 900 super-specialists in different disciplines.
- The scheme encouraged young MBBS graduates to serve in rural areas.
 - As a result, State PHCs and government hospitals did not witness a shortage of doctors.
 - People got better healthcare facilities at their doorsteps.



• The superannuation bond has ensured that a vast majority of the specialists continue their service in the government sector throughout their careers.

Criticism on current admission policies of NEET

- Since 2017, it is compulsory for States to surrender all the seats of super-specialty courses to the central pool for common counselling i.e. 15% of MBBS seats, 50% of postgraduate seats and 100% of super-specialty seats are surrendered to Centre, which is known as All India Quota (AIQ).
- The Medical Council of India (MCI) has framed a policy of giving only 50% of postgraduate diploma seats to service doctors, exempting super-specialty degrees.
- The weightage for government doctors who serve in rural areas has reduced, putting the rural healthcare delivery system in peril.
- The union government is criticized for the lack of consultation with stakeholders and the policy as a short-sighted move in the public domain.
- States feel that not incentivising the serving doctors would jeopardise the healthcare delivery system.
- The policy discourages young rural doctors, who find it difficult to compete with their urban counterparts who have access to coaching institutes.
- The policy's attempts to force unwilling doctors to take up compulsory rural service after MBBS or to introduce a bridge course for AYUSH doctors to incarnate them as rural physicians are also criticised.

The Court's View

- Hearing of a case filed by members of the Service Doctors and Postgraduates Association for the reintroduction of 50% service doctors' reservation in super-speciality courses, the Madras High Court directed the Centre to provide reservations for service doctors in super-speciality courses.
- In the recent judgment the Supreme Court held that, "the correctness of actions and dedication to public service should also be seen as markers of merit, which cannot be assessed in a competitive examination."
- The court also said that "Merit should be socially contextualised and reconceptualised as an instrument that advances social goods like equality that we as a society value".

Conclusion

Examining the success of the model followed in Tamil Nadu and following the recent court's directions, the union government must look to redefine the concept of merit by facilitating the reintroduction of in-service doctors and reservation for respective States in super-specialty courses.

Nut Graf

The Tamil Nadu model of providing 50% reservations to government doctors in PG and super-specialty seats merits consideration and replication across India due to its success in developing accessible public health infrastructure in rural areas. The current admission policy should be reexamined taking into consideration the past experience and all stakeholders into account, otherwise, decades of strides made in rural health infrastructure could be undermined.

F. Prelims Facts

1. Spot-billed pelicans dying en masse in Andhra Pradesh

Context:



• Nematode infestation triggers mass mortality of spot-billed pelicans at Telineelapuram Important Bird Area (IBA) in Naupada swamp of Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh.

Spot-billed pelicans:

- The **spot-billed pelican** (*Pelecanus philippensis*) or grey pelican is a member of the pelican family. It is a bird of large inland and coastal waters, especially large lakes.
- The spot-billed pelican is a relatively small pelican but still a large bird.
- Thousands of spot-billed pelicans **migrate from the Siberian region** to breed in the Telineelapuram IBA and a majority of them prefer to stay here instead of going back home.
- In South India, the **Telineelapuram IBA** is the prime winter sojourn for the bird for breeding.
- The spot-billed pelican is capable of hunting huge fish from the water bodies and swamps.

2. Tamil Nadu showcases tableau rejected by Centre

Context:

• **Republic Day celebrations in Tamil Nadu** saw the showcasing of the tableau featuring the sacrifice of freedom fighters — the Marudu Brothers, Velu Natchiyar, Tiruppur Kumaran, and many others.

Lesser known Freedom fighters from the state of Tamil Nadu:

- The Marudhu Pandiyars were Diarchal Kings of Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu, during the end of the 18th century. They were known for fighting against the East India Company. The two brothers— Chinna Marudu and Periya Marudu — were hanged at Tirupattur after they were defeated by the British.
- Rani Velu Nachiyar was a queen of the Sivaganga estate. She was the first Indian queen to wage war with the East India Company in India.
- Kumaran or Kumarasamy Mudaliyar also known as **Tiruppur Kumaran** was an Indian revolutionary and freedom fighter who participated in the Indian independence movement. Tirupur Kumaran had continued to hold the flag even after he fell prey to the lathis of the British police. Though he may not have played a major part in the country's independence, his national pride, patriotic fervour and selfless commitment garner credit.

G. Tidbits

1. Oil rises towards \$89 on Russia tension

- Oil rose towards \$89 a barrel, coming close to a seven-year high price.
- The tight supply and demand balance is being seen as a factor for the increase in prices.
- Heightened tensions over Ukraine and the threat to oil infrastructure in the UAE by the Houthis have increased the anxiety over potential supply disruptions and further increase in oil prices.

2. Growth affected

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has estimated a 4% world GDP forecast for 2022.
- The IMF notes the obstacle being created by the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in the global economic recovery process.

3. Clubhouse chatrooms of hate and misogyny



- Increasing **reports of communal and misogynistic conversations on social audio app Clubhouse** has brought to light the **intersection of technology and extreme ideology** in many social media groups. This points to the propagation of **hate being facilitated by technology**.
- Despite the threat posed by such developments, social intermediaries cannot be held responsible for the content posted on their platforms. Under India's IT Act, Clubhouse is an 'intermediary' that hosts third-party content online. Such intermediaries enjoy the 'safe harbour' provided by Section 79 of the <u>IT Act</u>, which says that they cannot be held liable for the content on their platforms as long as they don't initiate, choose the recipient, or moderate it. Facebook, Twitter and Google are all beneficiaries of this rule.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Milena Salvini is known for her contribution to which Indian classical art form?

- a. Sattriya
- b. Kathakali
- c. Odissi
- d. Kuchipudi

Answer: b

Explanation:

Milena Salvini, an Italy-born dancer, was a great enthusiast of Indian classical art, especially Kathakali.

Q2. Which of the following are the tri-service agencies or commands of the Indian Armed Forces?

- 1. Andaman & Nicobar Command
- 2. Strategic Forces Command
- 3. Defence Cyber Agency
- 4. Defence Space Agency

Options:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) is the first tri-service theatre command of the Indian Armed Forces.
- Strategic Forces Command overlooking nuclear command of India is a tri-service command.



- Defence Cyber Agency is a tri-services command.
- Defence Space Agency draws staff from all 3 services of the Indian Armed Forces.

Q3. Which of the following statements is/are correct about the SSLV Project?

- 1. The Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) project of ISRO was launched in the 1960s with the support of the Soviet Union.
- 2. It is intended to cater to the commercial market for the launch of small satellites into low earth orbits.

Options:

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

- The SSLV is intended to cater to a market for the launch of small satellites into low earth orbits which has emerged in recent years on account of the need for developing countries, private corporations, and universities for small satellites.
- The Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) project of ISRO dealing with the design and development of the SSLV is a recent undertaking of ISRO. The launch of the maiden flight of the SSLV was scheduled for July 2019 but has been delayed due to setbacks from the Covid 19 crisis and other issues.

Q4. The America COMPETES Act of 2022 is likely to benefit India because -

- a. It offers India a military role in the Indian Ocean to counter-balance China
- b. It extends American technological support for developing EV batteries in India
- c. It proposes to open up new vistas for talented individuals from across the world with a new startup visa
- d. It assures climate finance to countries like India to invest in renewable energy

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The United States House of Representatives has recently unveiled the ambitious America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology, and Economic Strength Act of 2022, or the America COMPETES Act of 2022, which proposes to open up new vistas for talented individuals from across the world with a new start-up visa.
- It would mean more opportunities in the US for Indian talent, and for skilled workers.



Q5. Which principle among the following was added to the Directive Principles of State Policy by the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution?

- a. Equal pay for equal work for both men and women
- b. Participation of workers in the management of industries
- c. Right to work, education and public assistance
- d. Securing living wage and human conditions of work to workers

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Article 39(A), promoting equal justice and free legal aid to the poor, Article 48A, stating the principle to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard forests and wildlife and Article 43A, stating the right of participation of workers in the management of industries, were added to the Directive Principles during the 42nd Constitutional Amendment of 1976.
- Equal pay for equal work for both men and women Article 39
- Right to work, education and public assistance Article 41
- Securing living wage and human conditions of work to workers Article 43

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

- 1. Food processing industry is still at a nascent stage in India. Suggest ways to make India a world leader in food processing industry. (250 words; 15 marks)[GS-3, Agriculture]
- 2. Improved people to people contact is the way forward towards achieving cordial India-Pakistan relations in the long run. Comment. (250 words; 15 marks)[GS-2, International Relations]