

16 Feb 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>A. GS 1 Related</u>
<u>B. GS 2 Related</u>
<i>POLITY AND GOVERNANCE</i>
1. Anti-lynching Bills passed by four States hanging fire
2. India has 'positive secularism', petitioners tell Karnataka HC
3. India to make digital maps of all villages
4. Questioning the ban on online gaming platforms
<i>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</i>
1. India slams 'communal mindset' of OIC over remarks on hijab row
2. Phensedyl smuggling a challenge for BSF
3. The fate of the Afghan reserves in the United States
4. Where is the Ukraine crisis headed to?
<u>C. GS 3 Related</u>
<u>D. GS 4 Related</u>
<u>E. Editorials</u>
<i>SOCIAL JUSTICE</i>
1. The Pathology of School Closure in India
<i>HEALTH</i>
1. Why we need ventilation and air purifiers
<i>SOCIETY</i>
1. The Importance of caste data
<u>F. Prelims Facts</u>
<u>G. Tidbits</u>
<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

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. Anti-lynching Bills passed by four States hanging fire

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

Mains: Mob Lynching in India and legislative development

Context:

Bills passed against lynching in the past four years have not been implemented.

Definition of Lynching:

- The Union Home Ministry informed Parliament in 2019 that there was “no separate” definition for lynching under the [Indian Penal Code \(IPC\)](#).
- Such incidents could be dealt with under Sections 300 and 302 of the IPC which pertain to murder.

Developments on lynching legislation so far:

Year	Development	Description
2018	Manipur Assembly passed the Manipur Protection from Mob Violence Bill, 2018	Recommending life imprisonment for those involved in mob violence if it led to death. The Bill is still being examined by the Ministry.
2019	Rajasthan Assembly passed the Rajasthan Protection from Lynching Bill, 2019	Providing for life imprisonment and a fine ranging from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh to those convicted in cases of mob lynching leading to the victim's death.
2019	West Bengal Assembly passed the West Bengal (Prevention of Lynching) Bill, 2019	Proposes a jail term from three years to life imprisonment and West Bengal Lynching Compensation Scheme.
2021	Jharkhand Assembly passed the Prevention of Mob Violence and Mob Lynching Bill, 2021	Providing for punishment ranging from three years to life imprisonment. The Bill awaits the Governor's assent.

Know more about [Mob lynching](#) in CNA dated Jan 17, 2020.

Nut Graf

Anti-lynching bills by four states have not been implemented because of the disagreement between the Centre and some state governments on whether lynching needs to be defined separately as a crime in the IPC. The matter warrants urgent resolution so that mob lynching incidents are dealt with effectively and

the perpetrators are thoroughly detracted from indulging in such heinous acts.

2. India has ‘positive secularism’, petitioners tell Karnataka HC

Syllabus: Constitution of India — significant provisions and basic structure.

Prelims: Positive secularism

Mains: Positive secularism in India

Context: The argument was made on India's positive secularism by a senior advocate appearing for the two students who have questioned the restriction on wearing hijab in classrooms.

Positive Vs. Negative Secularism:

- **Positive Secularism:**
 - A nation performs positive secularism when the constitution of that country has more power than religion.
 - Positive secularism is where the state plays an enabler role in the exercise of fundamental rights and the religious freedoms of all communities.
- **Negative Secularism:**
 - Under ‘negative secularism’, the state says that nobody can display their religious identity in public and the ban on hijab in public places was upheld by the constitutional courts.
 - Turkey observes negative secularism.

Know more about [Secularism](#).

Positive Secularism in India:

- The Indian Constitution offers ‘positive secularism’ which recognises all religions as true.
- The Indian interpretation of secularism stems from the Vedic precept of Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava.
- The SC has observed that ‘Indian secularism’ is susceptible to a positive meaning, that is developing an understanding and respect towards different religions.

Nut Graf

Secularism, as practised in India, is different from the western concept of secularism. Contrary to the West, the Indian Constitution embodies positive secularism, i.e. protecting all religions equally and giving equal respect to all the religions.

3. India to make digital maps of all villages

Syllabus: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Prelims: Digital maps; Geospatial Technologies

Mains: Digital Mapping and Significance of Digital Maps

Context: India plans to prepare digital maps of villages. Under the [SVAMITVA scheme](#), geospatial technology along with drones will survey all the over 6 lakh Indian villages.

What is Digital Mapping?

- Digital mapping is the process by which a collection of data is compiled and formatted into a virtual image.
- The primary function of this technology is to produce maps that give accurate representations of a particular area, detailing major road arteries and other points of interest.

What is the Significance of Digital Maps?

- The updated guidelines help private companies prepare a variety of maps without needing approval from a host of Ministries.
- It will ease the use of drones and develop applications via location mapping.
- The trinity of geospatial systems, drone policy and unlocked space sector will be the hallmark of India's future economic progress.
- The geographical information-based system mapping would also be useful in forest management, disaster management, electrical utilities, land records, water distribution, and property taxation.
- The focus will be to strengthen the innovative startup ecosystem with huge financial implications and job generation.

Nut Graf

The proposal to prepare digital maps of all villages using geospatial technology and drones is a push forward for, among others, better assessment of land records. The exercise would also provide an impetus to activities in various fields like forest management, disaster management, utilities and so on.

4. Questioning the ban on online gaming platforms

Syllabus: Gambling

Mains: Regulations of online gaming platforms; States resorting to banning online gaming

Context:

The amendments brought to existing regulations on betting and gambling in Karnataka have been struck down by the State's High Court.

Background:

- Karnataka Police (Amendment) Act, 2021 was introduced by the Karnataka government to ban online gambling and skill-based gaming platforms like rummy, poker and fantasy sports that involve any wagering or risking of money.
- A division bench of the Karnataka High Court delivered a judgment striking down major portions of the Act.
- A similar law introduced by the Tamil Nadu government was struck down by the Madras High Court in 2021.
- In 2021, the Kerala High Court had also quashed a notification issued by the State government specifically banning the game of online rummy when played for stakes.

Why are States resorting to banning online gaming?

- Many social activists, government officials and those in law enforcement believe that online games like rummy and poker are addictive in nature.
 - It means when played with monetary stakes, they lead to depression, mounting debts and suicides.
- Reportedly, there have been a few instances where youngsters, faced with mounting debts due to losses in online games have committed other crimes like theft and murder.

On what grounds did the Karnataka High Court strike down the online gaming law?

- The Karnataka High Court struck down the amendments to the Karnataka Police Act on **three major grounds**:
 - violation of [fundamental rights](#) of trade and commerce, liberty and privacy, speech and expression;
 - the law being manifestly arbitrary and irrational insofar as it did not distinguish between two different categories of games, i.e. games of skill and chance;

- lack of legislative competence of State legislatures to enact laws on online skill-based games.
- The court held that games, where substantial effort, knowledge and skill is required, are different from games of mere luck or chance.
- The judgment also noted that State governments have been granted powers under the Constitution to make laws for ‘gambling and betting’ but interpreted the word ‘betting’ for this purpose to mean betting on gambling games, i.e. **betting on games of chance and not games of skill**.

Is regulation of online gaming a better solution?

- An outright ban may not entirely curtail the playing of such online games, with or without stakes.
- Shifting of users to grey or illegal offshore online gaming apps results in loss of tax revenue for the State and job opportunities for locals.
- It also results in users being unable to avail remedies for any unfair behaviour or refusal to pay out winnings.

Way Forward:

- Experts believe that instead of a complete ban, one could look at
 - licensing and regulating the industry with various checks and balances such as diligent KYC and anti-money laundering processes
 - barring minors from accessing real money games
 - placing weekly or monthly limits on the money that can be staked or time that can be spent
 - counselling for addictive players
 - allowing self-exclusion of such players, etc.
- Further, the judges also opined that regulation of online games may be a better and proportionate solution rather than an outright ban.
- The State government should come up with new legislation dealing with betting and gambling in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

Nut Graf

Even as concerns about the addictive nature of online games persist, an outright ban rather than regulation seems to go against individual freedom and the freedom of trade as enshrined in the Constitution.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India slams 'communal mindset' of OIC over remarks on hijab row

Syllabus: *Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.*

Mains: *Hijab controversy in Karnataka and international interference and India's response*

Context:

India hit out at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), saying it was "hijacked by vested interests".

What is the issue?

- The OIC commented on the hijab controversy in Karnataka.
- The OIC called upon the UN and the Human Rights Council to take "necessary measures" following reports of Muslim students being prevented from wearing hijab in Karnataka.
- Pakistan, a leading member of the OIC, had criticized the developments in Karnataka.
- **Know more about [Karnataka Hijab row](#) in CNA dated Feb 7, 2022.**

What is India's Response?

- OIC has commented on the hijab controversy in Karnataka and requested the Human Rights Council to intervene.
- India criticized this action of OIC as communal and argued that this response is not at all appreciated by India.
- According to India, OIC continues to be hijacked by vested interests to further their nefarious propaganda against India.

Know more about the [Organization of Islamic Cooperation \(OIC\)](#).

Nut Graf

Even as the Hijab controversy rages on in India, the remarks made by the OIC in this regard smacks of double standards considering the rather poor human rights record of many of its member countries. Moreover, an internal development in India ought to be resolved by the country and under the guidance of its Constitution.

2. Phensedyl smuggling a challenge for BSF

Syllabus: *Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora*

Prelims: *What is Phensedyl? What is Phensedyl smuggling?*

Mains: *Phensedyl smuggling across India-Bangladesh border*

Context:

Phensedyl, a codeine-based cough syrup, remains a challenge for the border guarding forces along the India-Bangladesh border.

What is Phensedyl?

- Phensedyl is a codeine-based cough syrup.
- It is abused as an intoxicant in the neighbouring country that follows liquor prohibition.
- It is consumed in large quantities against the recommended small dose to "get a kick".
- Phensedyl is a schedule H drug and can only be sold on a doctor's prescription.

What is Phensedyl smuggling?

- Phensedyl smuggling is the smuggling of cough syrup from India to Bangladesh utilizing the well-oiled network of pharmaceutical companies, agents and influential people.
- Excess Phensedyl is diverted through trucks to the bordering cities from where it is brought to nearby border areas and kept in safe houses managed by the main kingpins of the crime.

Challenges

- It is difficult to contain the smuggling because Phensedyl is smuggled in low quantities from India to Bangladesh.
- The Border Security Force (BSF) faces challenges like -
 - "non-supportive" attitude of state police against Phensedyl smugglers,
 - use of poor locals as couriers in the crime,
 - international border cutting through villages,
 - use of women and children to smuggle Phensedyl bottles.
- Along with Phensedyl, another narcotic that is smuggled in huge quantities is Yaba tablets which originate in Myanmar and come to India from Bangladesh.
 - Yaba is a mixture of methamphetamine and caffeine, sold as cheap red or pink pills, and works as a stimulant to the central nervous system.

Nut Graf

Drug smuggling across the India - Bangladesh border continues to remain a challenge and unless strong and effective measures are undertaken by both countries cooperating with each other, the crime can become too widespread and too enmeshed in the system making it extremely difficult to unravel and bring the perpetrators to justice.

3. The fate of the Afghan reserves in the United States

Syllabus: *Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora*

Mains: *Domestic situation of Afghanistan; U.S. argument and Taliban's response*

Context:

U.S. President Joe Biden signed an executive order declaring that \$7 billion of the frozen Afghan reserves will be used for the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people.

What is the source of the Afghan funds in the U.S.?

- At the time of the fall of Kabul to the Taliban in August 2021, at least \$9 billion belonging to Afghanistan was parked abroad in various countries.
- The USA held around \$7 billion and others like Switzerland, Germany, the United Arab Emirates and two other countries held the rest.
- The money belonged to Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB).

What is the domestic situation of Afghanistan?

- The economic situation in Afghanistan crashed immediately in the aftermath of the takeover by the Taliban.
 - Supply lines were disrupted and inflation shot up prices across the country.
 - An unusual drought came as an additional burden.
- As the revenue system inside the country collapsed, the Taliban administration found itself incapable of proceeding along the lines of the Doha agreement.
 - The Taliban-U.S. agreement had envisaged that an Afghan Islamic Government as determined by intra-Afghan dialogue would be formed when the Taliban joined the mainstream Government.

- In view of the military takeover by the Taliban and in the absence of any "intra-Afghan dialogue", the agreement's financial sections were not activated.
- However, the Taliban has been demanding that the \$9 billion belong to the Afghan people and the U.S. should return the money.

What is the U.S. argument on taking control of the reserve?

- The U.S. does not agree that the reserve belongs to the Afghan people.
- White House argues that a part of that amount came from international donors.
- The U.S. has declared that it will access around \$3.5 billion for supporting the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people.
- This contribution is expected to be channelled through international aid and relief agencies like the [World Food Programme](#) that are involved in providing food support to Afghanistan.

What has been the Taliban's response?

- Taliban spokespersons have described the US's announcement as "unilateral".
- The "Permanent Representative-designate for the United Nations" of the Taliban has assured that the reserve of the Da Afghanistan Bank does not belong to "governments or factions" and is a "property" of the Afghan people.
- It is meant for implementation of "monetary policy, facilitation of trade and boosting of the financial system of the country."
- The Taliban described the U.S. move as an act of "injustice" against the Afghan people.

Nut Graf
<i>The USA's decision on splitting frozen Afghan assets in the United States has sparked an outcry among ordinary Afghans who believe the decision would exacerbate the already dire humanitarian crisis.</i>

4. Where is the Ukraine crisis headed to?

Syllabus: *Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests, Indian diaspora*

Mains: *Recent Developments of Ukraine Crisis*

Context:

The predictions by western intelligence agencies of a possible attack of Russia on Ukraine seem to have been proven wrong.

Encircling Ukraine Crisis:

- Russia says it won't escalate or launch an invasion.
- However, the West had warned that there could be a "false flag operation" in the rebel-controlled Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, which Russia could use as an excuse to attack.
- Russia could overrun Ukraine within weeks and install a friendly regime in Kiev.
- But managing the post-invasion status quo in Europe's largest country where the public opinion on Russia is almost evenly split would not be easy.

Know more about the [Russia - Ukraine Crisis](#) in the link.

Nut Graf

The fragile situation in Ukraine is worrisome as there are fears it could blow up into an all-out conflict situation in the European continent. The stakeholders should proceed cautiously and genuinely strive to resolve the differences amicably and through diplomatic channels.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. The Pathology of School Closure in India

Syllabus: Issues relating to Education

Mains: Root causes of school closure, its impact on the learning outcomes of the children and necessary interventions.

Context: The article intends to provide the root causes of school closure in India to guide the intervening policies of the future.

The background:

- In the wake of the pandemic, the impact of school closures on learning losses has been immense.
- According to the [United Nations](#), it has been reported that school closure in India is continuing for 82 weeks with some intermittent classes in between.
- The reopening of schools is backed by scientific evidence pertaining to its benefits. However, it is necessary to analyse the root causes of school closure in India.

The Misinformation: Probable Causes

- Widespread misinformation has been a major reason for the continuation of school closure.
- There is information all across the country regarding the third wave of the pandemic that was anticipated as detrimental to children. As a result, the parents are eager to wait for the kids to get vaccinated prior to the resumption of schools.
- Such information is without any substantial ground and is propagated through social media.
- A significant wave of fear was promoted among parents as the news channels highlighted cases of children going to hospitals in different parts of the world boosting their target rating point (TRP).
- This has contributed to the sensitivity of the entire issue of school closure driven by the pandemic and incorrect fears associated with it.
- Various surveys and reports indicated that poor and middle-class parents were willing to send their children to schools. Contrastingly, the privileged parents were unwilling to support the reopening of schools.
- In the midst of such a mismatch of opinions, the issue became complicated and rumours gathered more importance than epidemiological and scientific evidence.
- An essential inference has been highlighted that reveals the considerable preference given to the parents of privileged sections neglecting the holistic opinion of every section of the society.
- This has furthered the widening of educational inequities.
- The indifference of the government on the entire issue along with the silence of the stakeholders of education has assisted misinformation to grow further bringing huge losses in terms of learning and receiving quality education.
- There has been a consistent lack of planning and discussion on the need to reopen the schools.
- Moreover, the delay in the resumption of schools is accompanied by several social aspects.

Impacts: The Social Aspects:

- School closure has a major impact on the children from the disadvantaged section resulting in significant learning losses and difficulties.
- The voices of the poor parents regarding the opening of schools were unheard and representation was mostly by the association of parents from the privileged section.

The One Class, One TV Channel Initiative:

- The Union Budget 2022-23 acknowledged the learning losses due to the pandemic.
- In order to overcome the losses, the government announced to expand the One Class, One TV channel programme of the [PM eVidya](#) scheme to 12 TV channels with a sum total of 200 channels offering supplementary teaching.

Challenges:

- Equating learning with syllabus completion stands as the major challenge in this programme and other learning programmes across the country.
- The School Children Online and Offline Learning (SCHOOL) survey in India has determined the ineffectiveness of TV-based education programmes.

Ways Suggested:

- It is suggested that certain measures can be adopted to ensure the safety of every child before the schools reopen. **P-E-R-I (Prepare, Engage, Reimagine and Innovate)** is a structured approach that has been recommended.
- This method envisages the following:
 - **Prepare** for the continuity of school education with proper planning and preventive measures.
 - **Engage** with the stakeholders that include parents, community members, schools, public health experts and local governments to counter all misinformation and spread awareness on the importance of quality education.
 - **Reimagine** every facet of school functioning, for example, improved ventilation and blended learning methods.
 - **Innovate** for compensating for learning losses and make schools place for holistic development of the child.
- There is an urgent need for effective government policy to promote innovative thinking with sustainable solutions for better learning outcomes.
- Establishing a favourable ambience for quality and equitable education will exemplify the essence of a responsible society that advocates inclusive growth.

Nut Graf
<i>The continuity in school closure due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns has led to the</i>

emergence of difficulties in the entire learning process. Therefore, school closure on the basis of misinformation without scientific and epidemiological grounds should be checked and corrected to ensure quality and equitable education for all.

Category: HEALTH

1. Why we need ventilation and air purifiers

Syllabus: *Issues related to health*

Prelims: *About Air Purifiers*

Mains: *Significance of Ventilation/air purification as a preventive measure against infectious diseases.*

Context: Proper ventilation or air purification are essential steps to be taken as a preventive measure to reduce the risk of infections like the COVID-19. The article expounds on the advantages of air purification or ventilation.

What is Ventilation?

- The act that involves the replacement of existing room air with fresh outdoor air can be defined as ventilation.
- This is required when an enclosed space is filled with exhaled carbon dioxide.
- Through the process of ventilation, the carbon dioxide levels in the indoor space get reduced, cooling the surrounding with fresh air.
- Ventilation reduces the risk of spreading infections in an enclosed environment especially during the pandemic.
- Natural ventilation is also an effective step to replace virus-laden indoor air with fresh air.
- With an increase in air pollution, improper ventilation can lead to the accumulation of construction dust and traffic pollutants which can cause severe damage to the respiratory system of the body. In such cases, air purifiers can be used to ensure filtered ventilation.

Air Purifiers:

- Air purifiers are specially designed to remove airborne particles that spread infections.
- Special filters are employed that eliminate infectious agents that cause flu, colds, tuberculosis and so on.
- Experts recommend the usage of HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters.

- Some of the HEPA filters come with activated carbon that reduces the odours of volatile organic compounds. This can be helpful for those who work in industries and laboratories which involve extensive uses of these compounds which when inhaled, cause severe damage to health.
- HEPA filters trap the dust particles, pollutants and infectious agents through interception and larger particles are captured by impaction.
- These particles adhere to the filter fibres and remain embedded there.
- In the HEPA filter, the motion of the particles slows down and remains captured within the filter fibres separating them from the mainstream air so that fresh air is released in the surroundings.
- Electronic air purifiers usually use ionisers and are not recommended as they release harmful byproducts such as indoor ozone, ultrafine particles and additional volatile compounds.
- Therefore, HEPA filters are recommended.
- The air purifiers are chosen on the basis of the Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) reported in cubic metres per hour. Higher the CADR, better will be the air purification.

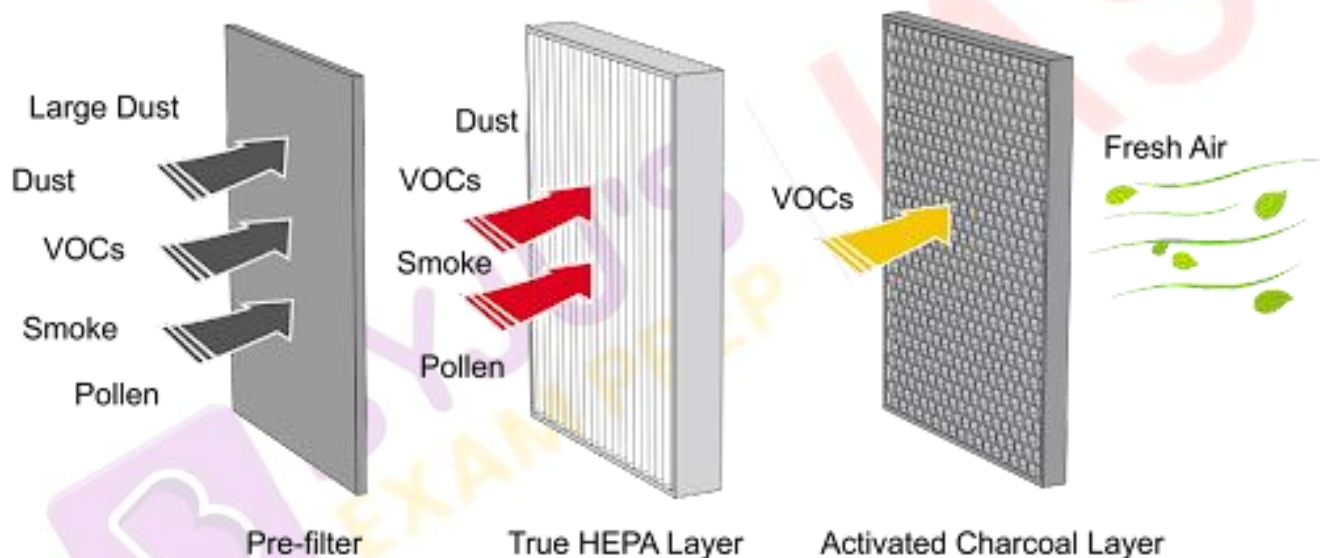


Image source: www.pranaair.com

Way Ahead:

Ensuring proper ventilation can bring down the risk of spreading infectious diseases and add to the awareness among the citizens to keep a healthy surrounding. Usage of high-quality air purifiers is highly recommended and should be adopted in indoor spaces experiencing extensive public gatherings.

Nut Graf

Although a zero risk condition pertaining to the spread of infectious diseases is impossible to achieve, setting up proper ventilation with the usage of air purifiers can minimise the risk of infecting people. This can be a preventive measure in addition to masks and vaccination in reducing the COVID-19 infection.

Category: SOCIETY

1. The Importance of caste data

Syllabus: Population and associated issues

Mains: Effectiveness of caste data towards the identification of the actual needs of various sections of the society.

Context: The importance of caste data to determine the actual needs of different underprivileged sections and the identification of the real needy has been discussed.

Background:

- 27% reservation for Other Backward Classes in the All-India Quota seats for National Eligibility cum Entrance Test has been upheld by the Supreme Court along with the reiteration that reservations for backward classes were not an exception but an extension of the principle of equality under Article 15(1) of the constitution.
- The judgement highlighted how competitive exams provide the illusion of giving equal opportunity ignoring the steep rise in inequalities existing in the educational set-up.
- It was pointed out by the court that disparities are not only limited to the challenges of access to good education, financial issues but also to psychological and social effects like communication skills, books, accent, academic accomplishments, social networks and other essences of inherited cultural capital.
- The entire subject of reservation invites several controversies as many perceive this as an impediment towards a casteless society.
- On the other hand, a group of individuals emphasise the requirement to recognise the socio-economic and political rights of the deprived sections of society.
- Despite reservation in place, there is a prevalent challenge in identifying the real needs of the poor and deprived sections and covering them within the ambit of several benefits of policies and welfare schemes especially with respect to their educational rights.

Significance of Caste Data:

- It has been rightly pointed out that there is a considerable risk involved in blindly trusting the caste-based politics of some states over the issue of reservation.

- There is a necessity of producing justifiable data regarding the castes of this country, their needs, identity along with an assessment of benefits reaching them.
- Even though there is data regarding the Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes, no similar data is available regarding the OBCs.
- Besides, the [Socio Economic Caste Census](#) 2011 has been termed as faulty and unreliable by the experts.
- The recommendations of the [Mandal Commission](#) were criticised as they were based only on the grounds of personal knowledge of the members of the commission and sample surveys.
- In the Indra Sawney judgement, the Supreme Court held that the states must conclude the “backwardness” of a particular class of people only after proper assessment and objective evaluation.
- There have been efforts made by the government to include caste data in the upcoming census exercise which could not be carried out in the wake of the pandemic.

Way Forward:

- Caste-based data will ensure independent research on identifying those who are in dire need of affirmative actions adding to the effectiveness of the reservation system.
- This will be a welcoming step to uproot reservations originating from caste politics.
- Therefore it will provide authentic information to people on both sides of the arguments regarding reservation - for and against.
- It is not reservation policy that acts as the causative agent to divide the society but certainly the misuse of reservation.

Nut Graf

The caste data will act as a credible exercise to resolve the complexities arising from the existing reservation system restoring the faith of the citizens. Without authentic data concerning the various castes of the country, it is difficult to identify the real needs of the backward castes and minimise the misuse of reservation.

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Bhiku Ramji Idate commission was set up by the Government of India to

- a. Review the governance of the board of banks in India
- b. Suggest appropriate measures in respect of Denotified and Nomadic Tribes that may be undertaken by the Central Government or the State Government
- c. Review various Acts administered by the Ministry of Environment
- d. Consider reforms to the country's existing criminal laws

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Bhiku Ramji Idate Commission on Denotified and Nomadic Tribes was constituted in 2015 for a period of three years from the date of Gazette Notification or appointment of Chairperson.
- The terms of reference of the Commission include preparation of a State-wise list of castes belonging to Denotified and Nomadic Tribes and suggest appropriate measures in respect of Denotified and Nomadic Tribes to be undertaken by the Central Government or the State Government.
- Hence **Option B is correct.**

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to East Asia Summit (EAS):

1. The concept of an 'East Asia Grouping' was first promoted in 1991 by the then Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir bin Mohamad.
2. The First East Asia Summit was held in Tokyo, Japan.
3. India is a founding member of the East Asia Summit.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect?

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- The East Asia Summit (EAS) is the Indo-Pacific's premier forum for strategic dialogue.
- The concept of an 'East Asia Grouping' was first promoted in 1991 by the then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- The first EAS was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. **Hence Statement 2 is not correct.**

- The East Asia Summit comprised 16 participating countries, namely ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**

Q3. With respect to The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is a not-for-profit, policy research organization that is headquartered in New Delhi.
2. The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual event of TERI.
3. Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment was conceived by TERI and developed jointly with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Options:

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

Answer: a

Explanation:

- TERI is an autonomous, not-for-profit, research institute established in 1974. It is headquartered in New Delhi. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship Track II initiative of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- GRIHA, an acronym for Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment, is the National Rating System of India. GRIHA has been conceived by TERI and developed jointly with the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Government of India. Hence Statement 3 is not correct.**

Q4. Which of the following statements about Guru Ravidas is/are correct?

1. He was an Indian mystic poet-saint of the Bhakti movement.
2. His poems were included in the Guru Granth Sahib which is the sacred scripture of Sikhism.

Options:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Sant Ravidas was a poet-saint of the Bhakti movement in northern India. He was the founder of the Ravidassia sect. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- Some of the devotional verses he composed have been included in the Guru Granth Sahib. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**

Q5. Consider the following statements in respect of the Bharat Ratna and Padma Awards:

1. Bharat Ratna and Padma Awards are titles under Article 18(1) of the Constitution of India.
2. Padma Awards, which were instituted in the year 1954, were suspended only once.
3. The number of Bharat Ratna Awards is restricted to a maximum of five in a particular year.

Which of the above statements are not correct? PYQ (2021)

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The national awards such as Bharat Ratna, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri “do not amount to titles within the meaning of Article 18(1) of the Constitution and thus are not to be used as prefixes or suffixes to the name of the recipient in any manner whatsoever”. **Hence Statement 1 is not correct.**
- Padma Awards, which were instituted in the year 1954, are announced every year on the occasion of Republic Day except for brief interruptions during the years **1978 and 1979 and 1993 to 1997. Hence Statement 2 is not correct.**
- The number of Bharat Ratna Awards is restricted to a maximum of **three** in a particular year. **Hence Statement 3 is not correct.**

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. A decline in the Chinese growth story presents an opportunity for India to stake a claim as the world’s factory. Discuss the challenges in achieving this mission. (250 words; 15 marks) GS III (Economic Development)

2. Discuss the major objectives of the SVAMITVA scheme. How would it help in resolving ground level disputes? (250 words; 15 marks) GS II (Governance)

