

20 Feb 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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B. GS 2 Related

Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Row over summoning West Bengal Assembly](#)

Syllabus: State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

Prelims: Powers of governors; Summoning of Assembly

Mains: Critical evaluation of Governor's Power to Summon and its discretionary use

Context: The West Bengal Governor returned the recommendation of the Chief Minister to summon the Assembly.

What is the Issue?

- The West Bengal CM recommended the governor to summon the Assembly.
- The governor returned the recommendation arguing that it has to be done for constitutional compliance.

What is the Summoning of Assembly?

- Summoning is the process of calling all members of the State Assembly to meet.
- The power to summon each house of the State Assembly from time to time is given to the Governor of the state.

Constitutional Provisions on Governor's Power to Summon the House

- The two Articles — 174 and 163 — are read together to outline the governor's powers in summoning the House.
- **Article 174** states that "The Governor shall from time to time summon the House or each House of the Legislature of the State to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit, but six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session."
- **Article 163** says "There shall be a council of Ministers with the chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions, except in so far as he is by or under this constitution required to exercise his functions or any of them in his discretion."

Role of governor in summoning an assembly

- The Governor summons the assembly on the recommendation made by the Cabinet after due compliance with Rules of Business under article 166(3) of the constitution.
- There are a few instances where the Governor can summon the House despite the refusal of the Chief Minister who heads the Cabinet.
- The Governor can decide on his or her own on summoning the House;
 - When the Chief Minister appears to have lost the majority
 - the legislative members of the House propose a no-confidence motion against the Chief Minister.
- But the actions of the Governor, when using his discretionary powers, can be challenged in court.

Discretionary Power of the Governor:

- **Article 163 states that** "If any question arises whether any matter is or is not a matter as respects which the Governor is by or under this Constitution required to act in his discretion, the decision of

the Governor in his discretion shall be final, and the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called in question on the ground that he ought or ought not to have acted in his discretion.”

- Article 163(1) essentially limits any discretionary power of the Governor only to cases where the Constitution expressly specifies that the Governor must act on his own and apply an independent mind.

When can a Governor use his discretion?

- The Governor’s discretionary powers are limited to specified areas like
 - giving assent or withholding/referring a Bill to the President
 - appointment of a Chief Minister or dismissal of a government which has lost confidence but refuses to quit, etc.
- Only in a situation where the government in power is seen to have lost the confidence of the majority, would it be open to the Governor to exercise the powers vested with him under Article 174 at his own discretion.

Supreme Court on Governor’s power to summon the House

- **2016 Arunachal Pradesh Assembly case:** In this case, SC concluded that In ordinary circumstances during the period when the CM and his council of ministers enjoy the confidence of the majority of the House, the power vested with the Governor under Article 174 to summon, prorogue and dissolve the house(s) must be exercised in consonance with the aid and advice of the chief minister and his council of ministers.
- **Nabam Rebia versus Deputy Speaker 2016 verdict:** In this case the Supreme Court had expressly stated that a “governor can summon, prorogue and dissolve the House, only on the aid and advice of the council of ministers”.
- **Madras High Court judgment of 1973:** This judgment answered the question on the discretion of power over prorogation by reading Article 163 into Article 174 to hold that a governor was bound by the aid and advice of the council of ministers.

Sarkaria Commission on Governor’s Discretion

- The Sarkaria Commission of 1983 had said that “so long as the Council of Ministers enjoys the confidence of the Assembly, its advice must be deemed as binding on the Governor.
- It is only where such advice would lead to an infringement of a constitutional provision, or where the Council of Ministers has ceased to enjoy the confidence of the Assembly, that the question arises whether the Governor may act in the exercise of his discretion”.

Recent Examples that highlighted the Governor’s Power to Summon the House: –

- In a tug-of-war between Kerala Governor and CM, the Governor had turned down a request to summon a special sitting of the Assembly to debate the new three central farm laws.
- In Rajasthan’s case, despite requests from the chief minister, the Governor has used discretionary power twice and returned requests to call for a session.

Nut Graf

A number of rulings by the Supreme Court has settled the position that the Governor cannot refuse the request of a Cabinet that enjoys majority in the House unless it is patently unconstitutional. The

constitutional checks and balances and landmark court rulings account for this and limit the discretionary powers of the Governor.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. Narendra Modi flags off 100 'kisan drones'

Syllabus: e-technology in the aid of farmers.

Mains: Use of Drones in Indian Agriculture

Context: The Prime Minister flagged off 100 "kisan drones" in different parts of the country for spraying pesticides and other farm materials.

Use of Drones in Indian Agriculture

Significance of Drone Technology

- Drone technology helps to enhance productivity and efficiency in the sector to reach the highest potential.
- Agriculture drones efficiently study external factors like weather, soil conditions, and temperature and empowers the farmer to make mindful choices accordingly.
- The gained data helps regulate crop health, crop treatment, crop scouting, irrigation, and carry out field soil analysis and crop damage assessments.
- The drone survey helps boost crop yields and minimize time and expenses.

Applications of Drone in Agriculture

- **Locusts Attacks:** The drones can be used for spraying of insecticides in the areas affected by locusts. Recently, the Maharashtra government decided to use drones to spray insecticides on swarms of locusts.
- **Mapping/Surveying:** The process of using a drone to map or survey crops is a relatively efficient way to gather exact information in a precise manner.
- **Crop Dusting/Spraying:** Use of drones in spraying and dusting crops helps reduce costs and potential pesticide exposure to workers who would have needed to spray those crops manually.
- **Irrigation Monitoring:** Drone survey helps improve water efficiency and disclose potential pooling/leaks in irrigation by providing Irrigation monitoring yields.
- **Crop Health Monitoring and Surveillance:** Agriculture drones can see which plants reflect different amounts of green light and Near-infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) light. This data helps produce multispectral images to track crop health.
- **Field Soil Analysis:** The drone survey allows seizing soil data, field soil analysis, irrigation, and nitrogen-level management which permits farmers to analyze their soil conditions thoroughly.

Challenges:

- **Knowledge and Skill:** An average farmer cannot analyze drone functioning as it requires specialized skills and knowledge to translate it to any useful information.

- **Flight Time and Range:** Due to relatively higher payloads, the flight duration of drones used in agriculture is short which results in limited coverage of land.
- **High Cost:** Mostly, agricultural drones are costlier as it includes the cost of imaging sensors, software, hardware and tools.
- **National Laws:** Multiple laws governing drone use in India creates ambiguity besides affecting the production and use of drones.
 - The requirement of obtaining an unmanned aircraft operator's permit (UAOP) for piloting drones, Permission for each flight through Online Digital Sky platform for No Permission No Take off (NPNT) compliance limits use of drones in agriculture.
- **Connectivity:** Farmers intending to use drones have to invest in connectivity or buy a drone with local data storing capability in a format that can be transferred and processed later.
- **Weather Dependent:** Drones are weather dependent. Under windy or rainy conditions, flying drones is not easy, unlike traditional aircrafts.
- **Misuse:** There is a chance of misuse to infringe the privacy of people and illegal transfer of information.

Recommendations

- Encourage Start-ups to establish local drone manufacturing/assembling units for agriculture use.
- Develop a comprehensive legal and policy framework in the form of Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR 3.0) to encourage applications of drones in agriculture.
- Expedite Digital sky platform with its revision for pragmatic and practical implementation for enhanced drone usage.
- Capacity development for flying drones is required as it is a skill-based operation.
- Develop an enabling ecosystem with a single-window concept for entrepreneurs.
- Encourage Research in drone applications to study various operating parameters in agriculture.

Nut Graf

Agricultural drone technology is undoubtedly the future of the Indian agrarian community. It can transform traditional farming methods in uncountable ways. Drones will prove to be a milestone in the development of the drone sector and also open infinite possibilities leading to Smart and Sustainable Agriculture.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: HEALTH

1. Eating right

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

Prelims: *Facts about Eat Right India initiative and FSSAI*

Mains: *The role of the Eat Right India initiative in promoting good food habits in the country.*

Context

Eat Right India initiative of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

Background

- As a one-of-its-kind initiative, four police stations in New Delhi have been designated as '**Eat Right Campus**' by the **FSSAI** for providing nutritious and wholesome meals to police personnel.
- The scheme has been implemented since 2017 in various government colleges and hostels.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

- FSSAI is an autonomous statutory body set up under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.
- FSSAI works under the aegis of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare with an objective of maintaining food safety and standards in India.

To read more about – [FSSAI](#)

Eat Right India initiative

- Eat Right India is a flagship mission of FSSAI.
- The mission aims to ensure the people of the country are provided with nutritious meals that help address the problem of various lifestyle-related diseases.
- The initiative works on the principles,
 - Ensure that the food being served to officers, jawans, visitors and staff is safe to consume and in compliance with the **Food Safety and Standards (FSS) Act, 2006**.
 - It aims at promoting balanced meals and eliminating trans-fats or “bad fat” found in industrial food products.
 - It ensures a reduction in consumption of salt and sugar that increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases.
- The programme also aims at promoting local and seasonal vegetables and reducing the use of chemicals.
- Delhi government's Department of Food Safety is the implementing body of the initiative in the capital and has launched a programme called '**Sehatmand Delhi**' under which places are designated as 'Eat Right Campus'.

The process for getting the 'Eat Right' tag

- To get the 'Eat Right Campus' certificate, the programme directs an initial audit of the campus and identifies gaps in cooking and hygiene.
- Later, a final audit by a third party is conducted upon which a certificate with a validity of two years is handed over.
- Regular inspections will be carried out by the Food Safety Department to keep a check on the food quality.

Changes introduced at the police stations as apart of the initiative

- Ban on the use of plastic or aluminum plates
- Cooking oil has been changed and better quality lentils are used for meals
- Cooks are directed to follow a dress code with gloves and caps
- The cooking process is recorded on CCTV cameras

Significance of the Scheme

- The campaign holds significance as it aims at good food habits for the people of the country.
- It adopts a judicious mix of regulatory, capacity building, collaborative and empowerment approaches to ensure that all the parameters are followed.
- The Initiative adopts a holistic approach as it brings together food-related mandates of the agriculture, health, environment and other ministries.
- The key reason behind the initiative was the welfare of all personnel, especially Police personnel who face difficult tasks during their duties and fall sick due to unhygienic food.
- Specific diet charts have been prepared to ensure that all police staff and visitors are provided with nutritious meals who earlier used to eat outside. This has made it budget-friendly.

Conclusion

Considering the benefits and significance of the initiative, it has to be implemented and extended to all the police stations and other government institutions across the country to promote healthy food habits.

Nut Graf

In a country that has been affected by various non-communicable, lifestyle-related and food-borne diseases, the Eat Right India initiative if implemented duly has the potential to bring a behavioural change and create awareness about the benefits of eating nutritious food.

Category: ECONOMY

1. LIC IPO

Syllabus: *Issues relating to planning, and mobilization, of resources.*

Mains: *Risks associated with the IPO of LIC*

Context

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) filed its draft red herring prospectus with capital markets regulator SEBI.

Background

- For the Centre to meet the fiscal's disinvestment targets the IPO of LIC is expected in March 2022.
- With the Government planning to sell 5% of its 100% stake in LIC, market participants expect the IPO to raise about ₹60,000 crores for the exchequer.

Read more about [LIC IPO](#)

Risks associated with the returns

- With an offer of sale of up to ₹31.62 crores equity shares by the Government, the IPO's main objective is to achieve the benefit of listing LIC's shares on stock exchanges.
- As the stake belongs to the Government, LIC will not receive any proceeds from the share sale. Instead, the Government will be entitled to the entire proceeds after deducting the offer expenses and relevant taxes.
- The risks that could impact LIC and shareholder returns are,
 - Complex regulatory requirements
 - Competition
 - The impact of pandemic
 - Segregation of its single consolidated 'Life Fund'

Complex regulatory requirements

- LIC is considered too big to fail and hence subjected to enhanced regulatory supervision.
- LIC has pointed to the complex laws/regulations issued by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) that govern its operations.
- These include,
 - Investment restrictions
 - Issuance of capital
 - Foreign investment restrictions
 - Solvency ratio requirement
 - Restrictions on the place of business
 - Approval for appointments and remuneration of certain managerial personnel
 - Limit on commission or remuneration to agents and insurance intermediaries
 - Regulations for unit-linked and non-linked insurance products
 - Obligations to rural and social sectors
- Although becoming a listed entity will make way for more relaxations, LIC's management control would remain vested with the Government. This could hurt, as it would lack the operational flexibility that private competitors have.

Impact of Competition

- LIC was a monopoly in the sector until India opened up insurance to private players.
- LIC continues to be the largest insurer, with a vast network of offices and agents.
- LIC has a 66% market share in terms of new business premium, accounting for 75% of the number of individual policies issued, and has an 81% share in the number of group policies issued for fiscal 2021.
- Private sector insurance companies have been growing faster and gaining market share since their entry into the Indian insurance industry in 2001.

- From FY-2016 to FY-2021, the total premium for life insurance private sector players in the life insurance industry in India increased at a CAGR of 18% while LIC's total premium in India increased at a CAGR of 9%.

Risk of segregation of LIC's single, 'consolidated Life Fund'

- The LIC's consolidated Life Fund has been segregated into two funds of **participating policyholders' fund** and **non-participating policyholders' fund**, from September 2021.
- Before segregation, the surplus was distributed among policyholders in the ratio **95:5**.
 - Post segregation, 100% surplus generated out of the non-participating business is available for distribution to all shareholders and the surplus from the participating business would be distributed amongst policyholders in the ratio of 95:5 for FY-2022.
- The decrease in surplus available to participating policyholders' may reduce the attractiveness of LIC's products and in turn, could impact the business, financial condition, and cash flows.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

- The pandemic has resulted in an increase in the number of death claims.
- From ₹17,128.84 crores in FY19, the death claims paid rose to ₹23,926.89 crores in FY21.
- The lockdowns and social distancing measures also limited LIC's agents' ability to sell products.

Nut Graf

Considering the fact of widening fiscal deficits, the LIC IPO is said to be crucial for the Indian economy, as an IPO of this size will help the government meet its divestment targets and narrows the fiscal gaps, thus bringing stability to India's economy.

F. Prelims Facts

1. Sudha Ragunathan is member of CABC

Syllabus: GS2: Polity and Governance: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors

Prelims: Central Advisory Board on Culture (CABC)

Context: The Ministry of Culture has appointed Sudha Ragunathan as a member of the Central Advisory Board on Culture (CABC).

Central Advisory Board on Culture (CABC):

- The Central Advisory Board on Culture (CABC) has been constituted to advise the Ministry of Culture to focus attention on creativity at different levels of Indian society.
- Aims and Objectives:**
 - To evolve programmes which would focus attention on creativity at different levels of Indian society, and in different regions.
 - To promote closer contacts of the Archeological Survey of India with Indian Universities.
- Tenure:** The tenure of CABC will be **three years** from the date of resolution.
- Chairperson:** The **Minister of Culture** presides over the meeting of the Central Advisory Board on Culture.

2. Night pollinators: how moths help the Himalayas

Syllabus: GS3: Environment: Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation,

Prelims: Role of moths in Pollination

Context: The recent study reveals that moths are vital to pollination in the Himalayan ecosystem of northeast India.

Findings of the Study:

- The study assumes significance of diurnal pollinators (bees and butterflies) and the role of nocturnal pollinators.
- The moth species *Achaea janata* (a well-known pest of various economically important plants) was identified as a potential pollinator.
- It indicates that moths can provide net benefits as pollinators even when acting as larval herbivores of the same species.

What is Pollination?

- Pollination is the act of transferring pollen grains from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma.
- The goal of every living organism, including plants, is to create offspring for the next generation.
- Seeds can only be produced when pollen is transferred between flowers of the same species.

What are Moths?

- Moths are in the insect Order Lepidoptera which are not butterflies.
- Most species of moth are nocturnal, but there are also crepuscular and diurnal species.

G. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements with respect to Tolkappiyam:

1. It was composed by Tolkappiyar.
2. It is the oldest extant Tamil work till date
3. It is a unique work on grammar

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Tolkappiyam was Composed by Tolkappiyar. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- Oldest extant Tamil work till date. Dated between 4th and 5th century CE. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- It offers information on social life, human psychology, political and economic conditions during the Sangam Age.
- Tolkappiyam also discusses Tamil grammar. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**
- Sanskrit influence on this work is peripheral and very little.

Q2. Which of the following statements is/are correct about Gravitational lensing?

1. It occurs when a huge amount of matter such as a massive galaxy creates a gravitational field that distorts and magnifies the light from objects behind it
2. The more massive the object, the stronger its gravitational field and hence greater the bending of light rays
3. The effect allows researchers to study the details of early galaxies too far away to be seen otherwise with even the most powerful space telescopes.

Options:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- A gravitational lens can occur when a huge amount of matter creates a gravitational field that distorts and magnifies the light from distant galaxies that are behind it but in the same line of sight. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- The gravitational field of a massive object will extend far into space, and cause light rays passing close to that object to be bent and refocused somewhere else.
- The more massive the object, the stronger its gravitational field and hence the greater the bending of light rays. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- The effect allows researchers to study the details of early galaxies too far away to be seen otherwise with even the most powerful space telescopes. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**

Q3. With respect to the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT), which of the following statements is/are correct?

1. It is one of the largest radio telescopes in the world located in Nainital
2. It is operated by the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences(ARIES)

Options:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) Observatory, **located near Pune, Junnar, Narayangaon in India**, is an array of thirty fully steerable parabolic radio telescopes observing at meter wavelengths. **Hence Statement 1 is not correct.**
- The GMRT is designed, built and operated by Indian scientists and engineers. It is not operated by the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES). **Hence Statement 2 is not correct.**

Q4. Messier 77 recently seen in news is a/an

- a. New exotic planet outside our solar system in the constellation Cassiopeia.
- b. Red dwarf star which is about 110 light years from the Earth
- c. Barred spiral galaxy
- d. Solar array designed by NASA

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Messier 77 is a barred spiral galaxy located 47 million light-years from Earth in the constellation Cetus.
- Also known as NGC 1068, it is one of the most famous and well-studied galaxies.
- **Hence Option C is correct.**

Q5. Which of the following have species that can establish a symbiotic relationship with other organisms?

1. Cnidarians
2. Fungi
3. Protozoa

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- A symbiotic relationship is an intimate interaction between two or more species, which may or may not be beneficial to either.
- The symbiotic association between the invertebrate phylum **Cnidaria** and the unicellular dinoflagellate algae, called zooxanthellae, is very common. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- **Fungi** have several mutualistic relationships with other organisms. Two common mutualistic relationships involving fungi are mycorrhizae and lichen. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- Symbiosis in protozoa mostly represents a close mutualistic association between
 - a protozoan and unicellular symbionts (bacteria, cyanobacteria or/and unicellular algae) or
 - protozoans and a multicellular organism (ruminants, lower termites, wood-eating cockroaches, plants).
- **Hence Statement 3 is also correct.**

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. As the government readies LIC for an IPO, examine the challenges that lie ahead. Will regulatory requirements, competition, COVID-19 and government retaining majority control impact the company? (250 words; 15 marks)[GS-3, Economy]
2. Discuss the objectives of the 'Eat Right India' mission. How can it help improve nutrition and health across campuses? (250 words; 15 marks)[GS-2, Governance]