

03 Mar 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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B. GS 2 Related

Category: HEALTH



1. Doctors for rural India

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

Mains: Shortage of medical facilities in rural India and how reintroducing Licentiate Medical Practitioners can help address the issues in rural health services.

The problem of shortage of doctors in rural areas

- About 600 million people, especially in the rural areas, have very limited or no access to health care facilities in India.
- The country faces a shortage of about five lakh doctors currently.
- Extensive violation of norms, failure in reaching the targets, and a state of helplessness have worsened the state of rural health.
- The issue of lack of doctors for rural areas can be addressed by reintroducing "Licentiate Medical Practitioners".

Licentiate Medical Practitioners

- In the 1940s, primary care physicians were trained under short-term courses, and were called Licentiate Medical Practitioners (LMPs).
- LMPs worked and delivered quality health services in the rural sector.
- The Bhore Committee (1946) recommended the abolition of LMPs as India produced sufficient MBBS doctors.

Arguments against LPMs

- Short-term courses in medicine have been associated with producing "cheaply made, poor quality doctors".
- By appointing lower tier doctors the people in rural areas would be made to feel like low class citizens.

Arguments for reintroduction of LMPs

- The profit-driven, private health-care sector has eroded the efficiency of the public health system in India.
- A short-term course in medicine will help design a medical curriculum that is more relevant to the country's requirements.
- The effectiveness of the service would be much more enhanced if the entry requirements focused less on merit and more on an aptitude for medical service and giving preference to applicants from within the community.
- LMPs can be adequately trained and have a well-defined role in health care.
- The present MBBS curriculum has a great amount of surplus detail, like forensic medicine, that has little relevance to primary care physicians.
- LMPs could be appointed in sub-centres where they undertake both clinical and administrative functions. This would also allow easier access to primary and emergency care.
- Medical officers (MBBS) could be employed in primary health centres (PHC), and the PHCs could deal with cases referred to them by the LMPs and supervise their work.

Advantages of reintroduction of LMPs



- As the LMPs work at the grass-root level, a single PHC would be able to handle a bigger population. This
 allows for the allocation of better resources to PHCs.
- Ancillary responsibilities can be taken off from the burden on MBBS doctors and their skills could be put to better use.
- The quality of emergency and inpatient attention at the PHC-level could be bettered.
- Issues of clinical and administrative inabilities of new MBBS graduates who are appointed as medical officers can be resolved.
- LMPs could be allowed to take up a postgraduate course and the ones with postgraduate qualifications could
 be allowed to start their own practice, work in hospitals, and also serve as faculty in medical colleges training
 LMPs.

Nut Graf

As the need for more quality medical facilities is being debated, the key issue of shortage of doctors in rural areas can be addressed by reviving Licentiate Medical Practitioners who can help address the scarcity of trained primary care physicians in rural India.

2. Can a person refuse COVID vaccine? SC seeks govt. View

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

Mains: Criticism and arguments against making vaccination mandatory.

Context

The <u>Supreme Court</u> asked the government to respond to the argument that a person has an absolute right to refuse the COVID vaccine.

Background

- Although the Centre has made vaccination voluntary, many States have issued notifications making vaccination mandatory.
- Children are denied access to schools if they or their parents are not vaccinated.

Arguments against the compulsion of vaccination

- Making vaccination mandatory denies the basic rights of the citizens.
- The decision whether or not to get vaccinated solely concerns individual health and not public health as even the ones who are vaccinated continue to get and transmit the virus.
- Reports suggest that children are showing symptoms of myocarditis after vaccination.
- Critics opine that vaccines create more variants of the COVID-19 virus.
- Critics argue that people with natural antibodies after surviving a COVID infection show better resilience compared to the ones who are vaccinated.
- Critics also feel that the government, by being opaque about vaccine trials and by not releasing the entire data up for the public, failed to get informed consent from people.

Government's stand

• The government said that the claims about children showing symptoms of myocarditis have no relevance as the vaccine administered to them in India was Covaxin which contained an inactive virus.



Myocarditis

- Myocarditis is an inflammation of the middle layer of the heart wall usually caused by a viral infection.
- A severe case can weaken the heart, which can lead to heart failure, abnormal heartbeat and sudden death.

Nut Graf

The Supreme Court said it was ready for a "limited enquiry" into the question of whether the decision taken by the States to make vaccination mandatory was based on relevant data or executed arbitrarily. As to give consent to the vaccination one has to be thoroughly informed and the trial data by the pharmaceutical companies have to be studied, if not the companies will hide inconsistencies.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ENVIRONMENT

1. IPCC sounds another climate warning

Syllabus: Environmental pollution and degradation

Mains: The threats highlighted and key remedial measures suggested by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Context

A report by the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).**

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report

- The report assesses the prospects for the planet if the global average surface temperature exceeds 1.5°C from the pre-industrial era.
- The report predicts severe implications on food supply, human health, biodiversity loss and integrity of the natural environment if carbon emissions are not reduced sharply.
- The report also reviewed the scientific evidence on natural, ecological, social and economic spheres and concluded that climate change has already caused permanent damage to land, coastal and marine ecosystems.

Read more about the report in CNA dated 01 March 2022.

Key features of the report

- The report analyses near-term, mid-term and long-term impacts of climate change due to an average increase of temperature by 1.5°C.
- The Working Group II suggests immediate measures that the world's leaders must take.
- The **Working Group II** report named "Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability" plays a significant contribution to the overall Assessment Report 6 of the IPCC that will be released in September 2022.
- Based on the strength of the evidence, the IPCC's conclusions are classified as having 'very high confidence' to 'low confidence'.

The threats

• Food Security – Food production is considered a fundamental factor for determining human well-being.



- The scientists opine that "unsustainable agricultural expansion, driven in part by unbalanced diets" has increased the stress on the ecosystem, resulting in competition for land and water.
- The report suggests that with increased global warming levels in the mid-term (from 2041-60), the risks of food security would be severe.
- This will lead to malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Central and South America and Small Islands.
- **Risk of extinction** The IPCC report says that in the current situation, about 3% to 14% of all species on earth are at a very high risk of extinction at 1.5°C, with disastrous losses at higher temperatures.
 - This will have an impact on ecological catastrophes.
- **Disasters** According to the report, between 2010-2020, human deaths from floods, droughts and storms was 15 times more in highly vulnerable regions, compared to very low vulnerability regions.
 - South Asia is a hotspot.
 - Heavy rainfall has increased in the Indian subcontinent, and regions like Chennai, Chittagong, Dhaka and Mumbai, the Gangetic Plains and the Delhi Lahore corridor are seen as future hotspots.

Suggested remedial measures

For food security

- Raising the output through cultivar improvements, agroforestry, community-based adaptation, farm and landscape diversification, and urban agriculture.
- Applying the principles of agroecology (a composite measure of using ecological and social concepts
 for sustainable agriculture), ecosystem-based management in fisheries and aquaculture, and use of
 natural processes can improve food security, nutrition, health, livelihoods, and biodiversity.

• For disaster management

- Heat Health Action Plans that include early warning and response systems for extreme heat.
- Water-borne and food-borne disease threats can be tackled by bettering the access to potable water, and insulating the water and sanitation systems to floods and other extreme weather events.
- Mainstreaming of adaptation actions into institutional budget and policy planning.
- Introducing incentives and economic instruments that help address market failures to help public and private players sustain themselves.

Climate-resilient development

- Climate Resilient Development would help achieve a reduction in <u>greenhouse gas</u> emissions, formulation of actions to absorb existing CO2 in the atmosphere, and increase the allocation of funds for adaptation.
- The IPCC feels the current trend of energy-intensive and market-led urbanisation demands an immediate and critical need for climate-resilient development.
- Weak and insufficient finances, wrong policies in areas such as housing, poor land-use policies, flawed approaches in health, ecological and social planning impact resilient development.

Nut Graf

With 3.3 to 3.6 billion people vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, it is high time the IPCC report is taken seriously and Climate Resilient Development is undertaken by the stakeholders. This can provide solutions to the greenhouse gas emissions and also raise sufficient funds to tackle the issue of climate change.



Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. The Russian invasion is making the global chip shortage situation worse

Syllabus: Awareness in the fields of IT, Computers, nano-technology.

Mains: Impact of Russian invasion on global semiconductor chip shortage.

Context

The ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine has worsened the global shortage of chips.

Reasons for the shortage of semiconductor chips

- Covid 19 pandemic resulted in decreased products due to lockdowns and restrictions and also increased the
 demand for laptops and tablets as people switched to work from home and children connected to schools
 digitally.
- **Logistical complexities** the cost of moving containers across the world increased the price of the core component and thus aggravated the problem.

Read more about the semiconductor chip shortage and its reasons in the link.

Impact of Russian Invasion

- Ukraine supplies rare gases used in the production of semiconductor fab lasers, and Russia exports rare metals like palladium to make semiconductors.
 - Palladium is used in almost all electronic devices and is a key material in making chipsets and circuit boards.
- Russia is being subjected to sanctions by Western countries that disrupt the country's exports affecting the semiconductor industries.
- Palladium is used as an alternative to gold in making various devices as it is highly malleable and resistant to corrosion.
- It is considered to be softer than gold, but is much harder and more durable than gold.
- Palladium gives more protection against an impact and a greater resistance to denting.
- Russia and South Africa are the two largest producers of palladium.

Various measures undertaken for offshoring production

- Intel announced a \$20 billion plan for two new chip fabrication facilities in the state of Ohio in the U.S.
- India recently announced a ₹76,000-crore scheme to incentivise companies to design and make semiconductors.
- The U.S. government is planning to bring in the CHIPS Act, which would provide \$52 billion in subsidies to encourage chip production in the country.

To read more about the issue refer to CNA dated 14 Feb 2022.

Nut Graf



With the recent trends in electric mobility, automotive safety, and the Internet of Things (IoT), the global semiconductor market is expected to grow by 8.8%. In this regard, the implications of the Russian invasion will further alleviate and prolong the existing chip crisis globally. Reshoring of production should be considered as an option to protect companies and the sector from global supply chain disruptions.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ETHICS

1. An appetite for war but no place for peace

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

Mains: Legitimacy of wars in the present world of geopolitics drawing lessons from history.

Context: The article offers a narrative on the bitter consequences of war that disturb the peace and intends to create an anti-war consciousness with respect to the ongoing tensions between Russia and Ukraine.

Know the details of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict in the linked article.

Going back to history:

- In order to explain the futility of wars as an inference to Ukraine's invasion, Ashoka's transformation and moral discourse against war provide an exemplary lesson that is required to be applied in the present world of geopolitics.
- Emperor Ashoka's transformation followed a destructive war during his conquest of Kalinga that resulted in massive bloodshed.
- Hyper masculine virtues received enormous appreciation in the pre-Ashokan elite culture that considered the invasion of someone else's territory and waging war as completely legitimate.
- Even in the period of the Rig Veda, Indra, the god of sky, rain and thunder was also regarded as the god of war

The anti-war consciousness: In the light of Ashoka's Dhamma

- As we turn the pages of history, it is witnessed that the destructive consequences gathered prominence after Ashoka's conquest of Kalinga that sparked in him a sense of remorse and regret.
- Consequently, Ashoka publicly denounced his conquest and dismissed the idea that fame and glory are goods in themselves.
- The onset of a transformative journey bound Ashoka with the Dhamma that expounded public and political morality with a redefined characteristic of fame and glory.
- Ashoka's Dhamma emphasised the central theme of 'Sarvajana, sarvaloka hita' which means the welfare of all living beings in this world and hereafter.
- History remembers Ashoka as the emperor who gave up war in the pursuit of compassion, peace and humanity.

Our learnings for a peaceful present and future:



- With time, the progress of human beings has been a continuity that responds to the emerging social, economic, political and geopolitical needs.
- However, the age-old inclinations towards war and conquests failed to get detached from human nature despite
 us having travelled a long distance from the era of wars and conquests.
- We are at an age wherein the doctrines of international peace and security are promoted in the international
 fora but the reality is a deviation from what is conveyed through gatherings and conferences of the
 international community. The recent invasion of Ukraine can be the best example that determines the existing
 tendency of individuals to wage war.
- It is recommended that there is a need to find peaceful alternatives to secure the good and eliminate the devastating implications of war, invasion and conquest.
- There is a lesson to be learned by the international community that wars are interpretations of strong aspirations to suppress the weak, thereby destroying the stability of the region, promoting hatred and disrupting the global supply chain and trade which badly impact the economy.
- Reform is much required in the mindset of those who derive masculinity, power and glory from wars, territorial conquests and attacks.

Reaching the end:

Despite the well-articulated moral consciousness against war to which history is a witness, a group of powerful individuals still find an appetite for wars that lead to the sufferings of ordinary people in different parts of the world. Therefore, it is essential to replace the theories of war and conquest with peaceful alternatives like diplomatic resolutions, negotiations, dialogues and other means of peaceful settlements.

Nut Graf

War and conquest, for ages, have interfered with human security and brought devastating consequences without any meaningful purpose. Although it is difficult to imagine a world without anger and aggression or free of conflict, multiple ways exist as peaceful alternatives to manage and prevent large-scale violence and war.

Category: POLITY

1. A negation of the individual and a collective moral decay

Syllabus: The Judiciary and its role in the polity

Prelims: About Capital Punishment

Mains: Critical analysis of death sentences as an effective tool for the prevention of crime.

Context: A special court in Gujarat sentenced 38 convicts to death and 11 others to life imprisonment for their involvement in the serial bomb blasts in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in 2008. This makes the judgement unique in the history of Independent India in terms of the death sentence.



49 convicts sentenced 14 years on

A total of 49 convicts, which included former SIMI chief Safdar Nagori, were on Friday handed sentences for carrying out 21 blasts in Ahmedabad on July 26, 2008

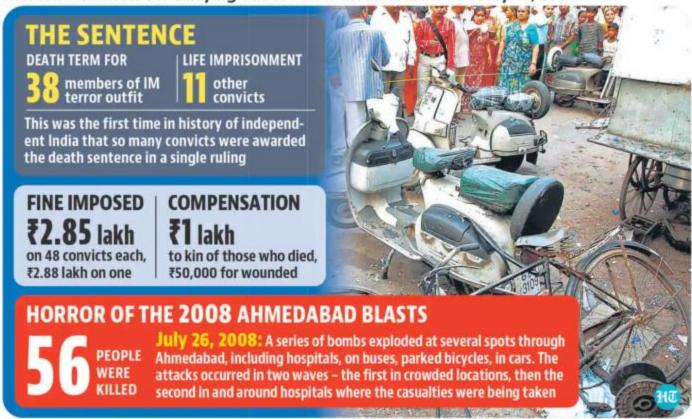


Image source: Hindustantimes.com

An Overview:

- According to a report by Project 39A at the National Law University, Delhi, a total of 488 prisoners in India (as of 2021) were on death row.
- This shows an increase of 21% in the number of individuals on death row.
- The recent decision of the special court of Ahmedabad to award death sentences to 38 convicts reflected an emerging trend of the trial courts to overuse their discretion to declare death sentences.
- This has been inferred by many legal experts as hasty and a matter of major concern.

Death Sentence: To what extent is it valid?

- The subject of the death sentence has invited several debates on its efficacy or constitutionality.
- The central issue that is often ignored is that it grants the state to execute a monopoly of violence.
- This monopoly is backed by calling it a preventive measure to mitigate crime.
- In reality, it is witnessed that the death sentence for the 'rarest of the rare' crimes is the highest measure of retributive justice in criminal law which is entirely based on discretion.



Read more about theories of punishment in CNA dated Dec 19, 2019

- The concept of 'Rarest of the Rare' cases is accompanied by an ambiguity allowing the courts to use public sentiments as a judicially reliable standard in handing out the death sentence.
- The critics' argument against capital punishment is majorly backed by the fact that it violates the Right to Life and Personal Liberty of the individuals guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution.

Death Penalty in India:

- In India, the death penalty is imposed in case of murder, rape with injuries that may result in the death of a victim, gang robbery coupled with murder, abetting the suicide of an insane person, a minor, abetting mutiny by a member of the armed forces and waging war against the government and involvement in terror activities.
- In Bachan Singh vs State of Punjab, the Supreme Court, in its landmark judgement ruled that the death sentence shall be applied only to the 'Rarest of the Rare' cases.
- The entire concept of 'Rarest of the Rare' cases is ill-defined and opens the door of discretion to the courts to award the death sentence resulting in their cursory decisions.
- In **Machhi Singh vs the State of Punjab**, the supreme court propounded two tests to be performed to identify the 'Rarest of the Rare' cases.
 - It was ruled that capital punishment should be given only when the option of awarding the sentence of life imprisonment is "unquestionably foreclosed".
 - **Test 1:** The uncommon feature of the crime to which, if life imprisonment is sentenced, it will be a travesty of justice.
 - Test 2: The circumstances in the crime that considers life imprisonment to be inadequate even after the maximum weightage is given to the mitigating circumstances that speak in favour of the accused.
 - The supreme court ruled that there shall be a balance between aggravating circumstances and mitigating circumstances.

Observation by Justice P.N. Bhagwati:

- In Bachan Singh vs State of Punjab, Justice P. N. Bhagwati in a dissenting opinion observed that Section 302 of the IPC that provides for the imposition of the death penalty as an alternative to life sentence is beyond the purview of the legal authority.
- Therefore, it is unconstitutional and void as it infringes the rule of law enshrined in <u>Article 14</u> of the Constitution along with the violation of Article 21.

Other dissenting opinions:

- The death sentences raise a major question pertaining to their efficacy in serving any penological purposes.
- There exists a diverse set of opinions across the country regarding death sentences. However, a group of individuals is doubtful about the extent to which such punishments can serve the objectives of deterrence.
- It has been rightly pointed out that the term 'death penalty' comes with a fault of diluting the intensity of the actual punishment that results in the loss of life of the individual awarded with the death sentence.

Conclusion:



It is recommended that the legislative institutions, judiciary, legal practitioners and other stakeholders should pay a revisit to the entire framework of capital punishment before bringing the individuals within the ambit of such permanent sentences as an outcome of a hasty decision. Therefore, discretion is a poor substitute for principle taking someone's life merely on the basis of 'Rarest of the Rare' cases. This is an upfront discouragement to justice and infringement of the important constitutional provisions.

Nut Graf

The discretion of the courts to award death sentences in a cursory manner, merely on the grounds of 'Rarest of the Rare' cases and other arbitrary grounds is a major concern. This needs a revisit by the legal institutions, courts and other stakeholders to prevent the moral decay of justice.

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

1. India, once again, abstained as the United Nations General Assembly

- A special emergency session of the UNGA was convened after a resolution failed to pass the <u>UN Security</u> Council (UNSC) when Russia exercised its veto.
- India, as it did in the UNSC meeting, abstained from voting as the United Nations General Assembly voted 141-5 to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, calling upon Russia to unconditionally withdraw its troops.
- India's neighbours such as Bhutan, Nepal, the Maldives, Afghanistan, and Myanmar supported the resolution while, Bangladesh, Pakistan, China and Sri Lanka abstained.

2. Clear road map for 5G auction: PM

- The Indian Prime Minister calls for relying less on foreign supply chains by citing Biden's call to 'Make in America'.
- The PM said that the Budget emphasized sunrise sectors like Artificial Intelligence, geospatial systems, drones, semi-conductors, space technology, genomics, pharmaceuticals, clean technologies and 5G.
- The PM further said that the global gaming market was expanding and therefore the budget had focussed on Animation Visual Effects Gaming (AVGC).
- The PM also emphasised the importance of a robust data security framework for the country, and asked for a framework for setting standards in its regard.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mIH8GYIEjw&t=106s

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

- 1. World Wildlife Day is celebrated on the 3rd of March as on this day in 1973, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed.
- 2. According to the WWF, the most trafficked mammal in the world is Pangolins.
- 3. Vaquita is the world's rarest marine mammal and is on the edge of extinction.



Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- All the above statements are correct.
- Hence **option d** is correct.

Q2. With respect to National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), which of the following statements is/are correct?

- 1. It is an extra-constitutional body.
- 2. It functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) of the central government.
- 3. A person who has held the office of the chairperson shall be eligible for re-nomination.

Options:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is a **statutory body** established in 2007 under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
- Statement 2 is not correct. It functions under the Ministry of Women & Child Development of the central government.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** A person who has held the office of the chairperson shall be eligible for renomination.

Q3. Which of the following statements about Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is/are correct?

- 1. The IPCC engages in scientific research.
- 2. The IPCC provides objective and comprehensive scientific information on anthropogenic climate change, including the natural, political, and economic impacts and risks, and possible response options.



Options:

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is not correct. The IPCC does not conduct its own research but instead, it provides regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.
- Statement 2 is correct. The IPCC provides objective and comprehensive scientific information on anthropogenic climate change, including the natural, political, and economic impacts and risks, and possible response options.

Q4. Which of the following States are parties to Convention on Cluster Munitions?

- 1. France
- 2. New Zealand
- 3. United Kingdom
- 4. India
- 5. Ukraine
- 6. Russia
- 7. South Africa

Options:

- a. 1, 2, 3 and 7 only
- b. 1, 3, 4 and 7 only
- c. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
- d. 2, 5 and 7 only

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The Convention on Cluster Munitions is a United Nations-adopted legal instrument that prohibits all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions.
- The convention was adopted in Dublin, Ireland in 2008, and was opened for signature in Oslo, Norway. Currently, the convention has 110 State Parties and 13 Signatory States.
- India has not signed the convention and is not a party to it. Other countries that are not parties are the US, Russia, China, Pakistan and Israel.
- Read more about Cluster Bombs.



Q5. Why is there a concern about copper smelting plants? (UPSC CSE 2021)

- 1. They may release lethal quantities of carbon monoxide into the environment
- 2. The copper slag can cause the leaching of some heavy metals into the environment
- 3. They may release sulphur dioxide as a pollutant

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: b

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is not correct. During the copper smelting process, initially, the Carbon combusts with Oxygen in the air to produce carbon monoxide (CO). Later, the carbon monoxide reacts with ore and releases carbon dioxide. Hence, it does not release a lethal quantity of CO into the atmosphere.
- Statement 2 is correct. When copper slag remains on the soil, it may lead to leaching with the required conditions present.
- Statement 3 is correct. The copper smelting process may release sulphur dioxide.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

- 1. Is war ever morally justified? Support your answer with the help of Just war theories. (10 Marks, 150 Words) [GS-4, Ethics]
- 2. The victim suffers only the injury, but the offender under the retributive justice suffers both the injury and the anxiety of death penalty. Examine. (10 Marks, 150 Words)[GS-2, Polity]