

16 Mar 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

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Category: POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

1. [Wearing hijab is not essential part of religion: Karnataka HC](#)

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

Prelims: Fundamental Rights on Freedom of Religion

Mains: *Karnataka Hijab Row and the recent Karnataka High Court's ruling*

Context:

- The Karnataka High Court upheld the hijab ban and dismissed several petitions contesting the prohibition on wearing hijabs in educational institutions.

What is the Karnataka Hijab row?

- Six female students from Government College in Udupi reported that they were not permitted to enter classrooms wearing hijab, bringing the hijab debate to the fore.
- The ban of hijab in classrooms was justified by the Karnataka government under the 1983 Education Act.
- Muslim students filed several applications in the Karnataka High Court, claiming the right to wear hijabs in class under Articles 14, 19, and 25 of the Indian Constitution.
- **Know more about the [Karnataka Hijab row](#) in CNA dated Feb 7, 2022.**

Karnataka High Court Observation:

The Karnataka High Court observed that wearing the headscarf is not an obligatory religious practice in Islam. As a result, it is not protected under Article 25 of the Constitution's [right to freedom of religion](#).

- The Karnataka government's order providing guidelines for uniforms in schools and pre-university colleges under the provisions of the Karnataka Education Act, 1983 was also supported by the Bench. The court ruled that it was a reasonable and legally valid restriction.

Nut Graf

The Karnataka High Court ruled that the guidelines for uniforms were reasonable and that the students cannot oppose them. The ruling of the Karnataka High Court in the hijab case demonstrates that India's Constitution reigns supreme above religion and belief.

2. SC averse to 'sealed cover jurisprudence'

Syllabus: *Structure, organization and functioning of the Judiciary*

Prelims: *Sealed Cover Jurisprudence*

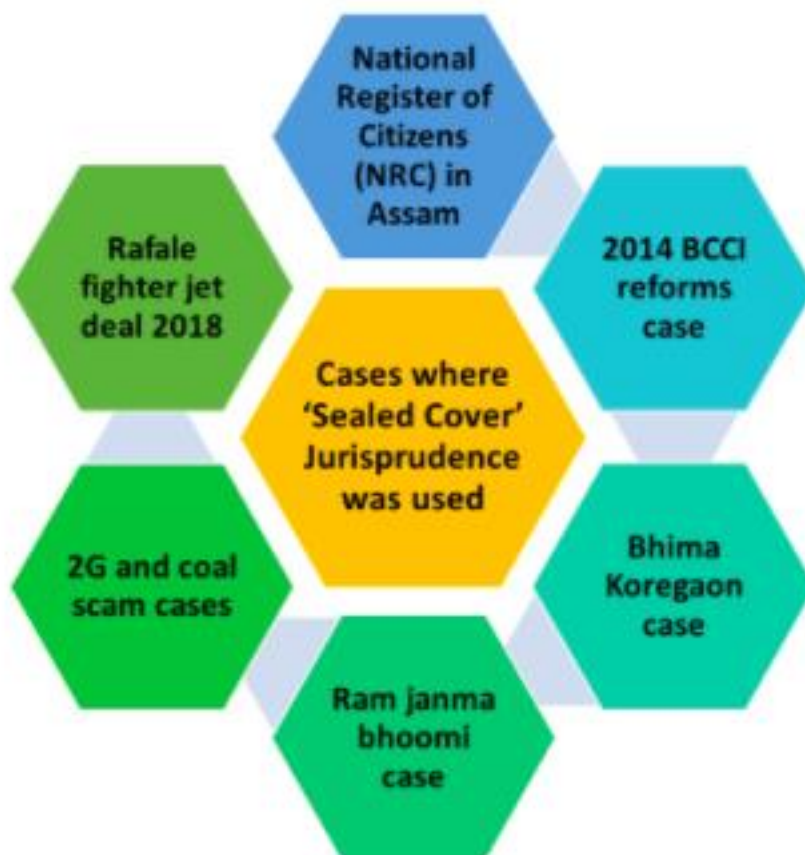
Mains: *Concerns associated with Sealed Cover Jurisprudence*

Context: The Supreme Court's two distinct benches have criticized the government's "sealed cover jurisprudence" in the courts.

What is 'Sealed Cover' Jurisprudence?

- Sealed Cover Jurisprudence is a practice used by the Supreme Court and sometimes lower courts, of asking for or accepting information from government agencies in sealed envelopes that can only be accessed by judges.
- There is no specific law that defines the doctrine of sealed cover.
- **Reasons for providing details in sealed cover are:**
 - To protect highly sensitive information which may injure even national security or "public order".
 - The disclosure would affect an ongoing investigation.
- Know more about [Sealed Cover Jurisprudence](#) in CNA dated Mar 8, 2022.

Examples of 'Sealed Cover' Jurisprudence:



What is the criticism of 'Sealed Cover' Jurisprudence?

- 'Sealed Cover' Jurisprudence is challenged because it is incompatible with the Indian legal system's values of transparency and accountability.
- It is in contrast with the concept of an open court, where decisions can be scrutinized by the public.
- Furthermore, it is maintained that denying accused parties access to such information obstructs their right to a fair trial and adjudication.
- The Supreme Court ruled in the case of P Gopalakrishnan v. State of Kerala in 2019 that disclosure of documents to the accused is constitutionally required.

Nut Graf

The Supreme Court's criticism of the 'sealed cover jurisprudence' is significant as the practice is not only against the concept of a fair trial but also infringes upon important fundamental rights of citizens.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**1. An accidental missile launch**

Syllabus: *India and its neighbourhood relations.*

Mains: *India-Pakistan Relations and concerns associated with accidental missile launch*

Context: In March 2022, a missile was “accidentally released” from India which landed inside the territory of Pakistan.

About the accidental missile launch incident:

- A missile was "accidently launched" during routine maintenance and inspection and landed within Pakistani territory.
- The Indian Defense Ministry expressed regret for the incident, claiming that the missile was accidentally launched due to a technical malfunction.
- India declared that the government places the utmost importance on the safety and security of weapon systems, and that any flaws discovered would be addressed swiftly.
- **Know more about the issue in [CNA: 13th March 2022.](#)**

Which is the missile system in question?

- Although the government has not confirmed which missile was engaged, reports say it was the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile system.

- Since India joined the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in 2016, it has been working to improve the missile's range, and multiple tests have been conducted.
- **Know more about [BrahMos](#).**

Implications of the accidental missile launch

- Both India and Pakistan are nuclear-weapons powers with a diverse arsenal of tactical and strategic missiles.
- Given the sensitive nature of the relationship, any such mishap could be misinterpreted as an attack, prompting retaliatory steps on the other side and further escalation.
- Pakistan further urged the international community to take seriously this "grave nature incident in a nuclearized environment" and do its part in promoting regional strategic stability.

Concerns with strategic stability regime in South Asia with respect to crisis management

- Despite the fact that India and Pakistan signed a 'Pre-Notification of Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles' agreement in October 2005, cruise missiles are not included as part of this agreement.
- For some years, the two sides have not held structured discussions on nuclear and conventional confidence-building measures (CBMs).
- China, the region's third nuclear-armed power, has so far declined to engage in strategic stability talks with India. Apart from being in a military standoff with India, China is more involved than ever in the India-Pakistan dispute. This adds to the strategic instability in the region.
- As a result of the above developments, the regional strategic stability regime is becoming increasingly insecure.

Way Forward:

- During both crisis and peacetime, India and Pakistan urgently require faster means for communicating sensitive information. It will ensure that messages are delivered on time and that confidence-building initiatives are implemented correctly.
- India and Pakistan could consider establishing mechanisms similar to nuclear risk reduction centers (NRRCs), which were established during the [Cold War](#) between the US and the Soviet Union. Such a group may exchange messages on a regular basis, provide timely clarifications, and monitor compliance with agreements.

Nut Graf

The unfortunate incident of an accidental missile launch casts a shadow over India's storage, maintenance, handling, and even engineering norms for high-tech weapon systems. As both India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, any such accident may be mistaken for an invasion, prompting response steps on the other side, escalating the situation further. Thus necessary measures to avoid such preventable escalations are required.

Category: ENVIRONMENT**1. India's solar capacity: Milestones and challenges**

Syllabus: *Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.*

Mains: *Solar energy capacity in India and the challenges in mainstreaming solar energy*

Context: This article examines the milestones achieved by India in solar capacity installations and the challenges associated with it.

India's Efforts in Solar Energy and Manufacturing Capacity:

- In 2021, India added a total of 10 Gigawatts (GW) of solar energy to its installed capacity.
- India already has more than 50 GW of installed solar capacity.
- India's capacity additions place the country fifth in the world in terms of solar power deployment, accounting for about 6.5 percent of total worldwide capacity.
- According to Crisil, India has 3 GW of solar cell production capacity and 8 GW of solar panel production capacity.
- India bought almost \$76.62 billion worth of solar cells and modules from China alone in 2021-22, accounting for 78.6% of the country's total imports.

Why is India falling short in roof-top solar installations?

- The sharp increase in large-scale ground-mounted solar energy is symptomatic of a significant drive across the country to increase the share of utility-scale solar projects. There seems to be a greater focus on such projects over smaller rooftop projects.
- Residential consumers and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that want to install rooftop solar (RTS) have limited financing options.
- RTS continues to have limited penetration across the country, owing to lukewarm responses from power distribution firms (DISCOMS) to adopting net metering.

Challenges to India's solar power capacity addition

- Despite large increases in installed solar capacity, solar energy's contribution to the country's power output has not kept pace.

- For example, solar power generated only 3.6 percent of India's total electricity generation in 2019-20.
- Domestic solar manufacturing capacity is insufficient to meet the country's current prospective demand for solar energy.
- Land costs, substantial T&D (expand) losses and other inefficiencies, and grid integration issues continue to plague the utility-scale solar PV business.
- Conflicts with local people and biodiversity preservation norms have also arisen under large scale solar power plants.
- Furthermore, because India lacks the capacity to manufacture solar wafers and polysilicon, there is no backward integration in the solar value chain.

Recommendations:

- For solar systems, India has to embrace a circular economy approach. This would allow for the recycling and reuse of solar PV waste throughout the solar PV supply chain. This could reduce the need for new materials and also in the process reduce the costs of the PV modules.
- India may want to consider adopting norms for [Extended Producer Responsibility \(EPR\)](#). This might provide a competitive advantage for indigenous manufacturers while also resolving waste management and supply-side restrictions.
- Governments, utilities, and banks will need to look into new financial mechanisms to lower lending costs and lower the risk of investment for lenders.
- Increased knowledge and accessible financing for solar projects could help ensure that solar devices are used by a large number of SMEs and households across the country.

Nut Graf

India has progressed from strength to strength in overcoming challenges to reach the 50 GW milestone for solar energy installation, however, further measures are required to overcome the challenges faced by the sector to realize the goals set under the National Solar Mission.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. 'Bharat Natyam' in Indian diplomacy

Syllabus: Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora.

Mains: Challenges for India in the international relations domain in the early 1990s; India's diplomatic moves during the period and its results.

Important diplomatic moves of India in the early 1990s:

- India's foreign policy challenge in the early 1990s was as profound as the economic crisis that India faced during the same period.
- The disintegration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) into 15 republics in 1991 marked a major change in global international relations and more so for India which had a reliable ally in USSR. The end of the Cold War and the world order becoming unipolar forced Indian policymakers to adapt to the **changed global political and economic realities**.
- Indian policymakers were forced to reshape India's foreign policy and national security strategy.
 - Recognising that India would need the support of the West and especially the US the then administration laid the foundations for a **revival of US-India ties** acknowledging the importance of the US in the global strategic architecture. The leadership of the two countries decided to have frank exchanges on issues that had divided them during the Cold War including issues like 'nuclear proliferation and disarmament'.
 - This was done even as India **maintained its traditional ties with Russia**. India opened new embassies to build new relationships with the erstwhile Soviet Union states.
 - In the Middle East, India shed its reluctance and moved forward to take unprecedented initiatives. India established **full diplomatic ties with Israel in 1992** announcing the opening of embassies and exchanging Ambassadors for the first time, even as it **reached out to Iran**.
 - Recognizing the pattern of shifting of the centre of gravity of global economics to East Asia and also realizing the potential of linking India's economic future to the booming economies in East Asia, India under its '**Look East**' policy worked towards expanding its engagements with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Notably, apart from being critical to India's economic revival aspirations, the move was also a subtle attempt to counterweight rising Chinese dominance in the region.
 - In 1992 India and ASEAN embarked on a **sectoral-dialogue partnership** which became a **full dialogue partnership by 1995**.
 - In 1993, India and China initiated the first of many confidence-building measures, notably the **Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control** in the India-China Border Areas. Simultaneously, **India and Taiwan deepened their economic and cultural ties**.

Dixit principles and its relevance:

- India's diplomatic moves of the early 1990s give an idea of how India was responding to the changes taking place around it in the wider world even as it sought to secure its own national interests. The author of the article, Rakesh Sood terms this approach to international relations as the Dixit principles in honour of the then Foreign Secretary, Jyotindra Nath Dixit.
- These principles helped India effectively navigate the turbulent times of the 1990s and also set the course for successful Indian foreign policy going ahead. The decisions of those times have continued to shape India's international relations over the last two decades.
 - The [India and Israel relationship](#) has blossomed into one of India's most significant strategic partnerships in the last three decades.
 - The India U.S. relationship, revived in the early 1990s, led to the path-breaking **India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement in 2008**.
 - In 1996, India joined the security dialogue platform, the **ASEAN Regional Forum**. Since 2002, the relationship has strengthened further with the **annual India-ASEAN summit**.
- The approach of the early 1990s is everywhere in Indian foreign policy today: Moving away from non-alignment to **issue-based alignments**; Delhi's subtle balancing act in the Middle East; trying to establish a stable balance with China; more robust defence diplomacy in key global geographies; the outreach to East and Southeast Asia as part of India's 'Look East' and 'Act East' policies.
- The approach has transformed the way India engaged with the world and contributed to India's rise in the global inter-state hierarchy.

Relevance to the present times:

- The Dixit principle and the approach it recommends would be very useful for India under the present circumstances too amid the turmoil caused by the Russia-Ukraine crisis in international relations.
- **India's neutral stand on the Ukraine conflict and its abstention from the votes in the UN Security Council and General Assembly** are based on an assessment of India's core national interests and also an attempt to take the middle path which would allow India to create space for diplomatic manoeuvre with the different stakeholders.

Nut Graf

India is well advised to adopt the Dixit principles while dealing with the challenges brought forth by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. India should maintain its neutral stand, engaging with all stakeholders to safeguard its own core national interests while also trying to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

2. Pakistan's neutrality, Taliban's worry

Syllabus: Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries

Mains: Changes in Pakistan's foreign policy and how this would impact the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Pakistani interests.

Background:

Systemic changes in Pakistan's foreign policy:

- The **Pakistani Prime Minister's recent visit to Moscow** and the holding of a three-hour-long meeting with the Russian President despite Russia's announcement of an invasion of Ukraine came across as Pakistan **implicitly endorsing Russia's military action**.
- Also, the increasing engagement between Russia and Pakistan seems to indicate a **break in the traditional alignment of Pakistan with the U.S.** and a turn towards Russia.
- Pakistan seems to be gradually drifting toward a **new strategic alignment with Russia and China**.

Impact of the new developments:

On Afghanistan:

- Given that the [Taliban](#) regime in Kabul shares a strategic multi-dimensional relationship with Pakistan, the changes in Pakistani foreign policy relations will also affect the Afghan Taliban.
 - **Pakistan remains the main foreign backer for the Afghan Taliban** and is supporting its campaign for international recognition.
- The **deepening distrust between U.S. and Pakistan** and the well-established links between the Taliban and Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) will only **dampen the Afghan Taliban's chances of getting immediate international recognition**. Taliban's rehabilitation in the international system will become harder.
- It will also become difficult for the Afghan Taliban to negotiate the reversal of economic sanctions imposed by the U.S.
- The **shifting of global focus away from Afghanistan onto the refugee crisis induced by the [Russia-Ukraine conflict](#)** will only make it difficult for the Afghan Taliban to mobilize aid to help Afghanistan overcome its economic and financial challenges which have created a humanitarian crisis.

On Pakistan:

- Pakistan's increasing closeness to Russia will only further deepen the distrust between the U.S. and Pakistan.
- It will become **difficult for the Pakistani establishment to mobilize aid from the Western countries, for Afghan refugees living in Pakistan.** This will only further exacerbate Pakistan's own set of **economic problems** under pressure from the [Financial Action Task Force](#).
 - Pakistan hosts around 1.5 million Afghan refugees.
- The existence of an internationally unrecognized Taliban regime in its neighbourhood would have negative implications for Pakistan's image in the global order.
- Also, it compounds the **threat of domestic terrorism in Pakistan.** The ISIS-Khorasan recently claimed responsibility for the suicide terror attack in Peshawar, the capital of the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan.
- Some experts also point to the possibility of the Taliban regime demanding more autonomy from Pakistan in dealing with the outside world. This **could reduce Pakistan's overall influence on the foreign policy direction of Afghanistan.**

Nut Graf

The move by Pakistan towards a new strategic alignment with Russia and China will have a marked impact on the Afghan Taliban regime given the relationship between the Afghan Taliban and Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

Nothing here for today!!!

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which amongst the given States have introduced an 'anti-lynching Bill' to deal with mob-lynchings and hate crimes?

1. Karnataka
2. Maharashtra
3. Manipur
4. Rajasthan

Options:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

Bills have been passed against mob lynching in the past four years by at least 4 States.

They have not been implemented, with the Union government taking a view that lynching is not defined as a crime under the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

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.

Hence Option 'd' is correct.

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

1. 'Dictionary of Martyrs of India's Freedom Struggle' was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the uprising of 1857.
2. It contains an account of the martyrs from India's First War of Independence in 1857 to India's Independence in 1947.
3. It was compiled by the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR).

Options:

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- The Ministry of Culture has released the Dictionary of Martyrs of India's Freedom Struggle in 2019. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- It contains an account of the martyrs from India's First War of Independence in 1857 to India's Independence in 1947. **Hence Statement 2 is correct.**
- The project was compiled by the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the uprising of 1857. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**
- It includes ex-INA or ex-military personnel who died fighting the British.
- It includes the martyrs of the 1857 Uprising, Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (1919), Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22), Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34), Quit India Movement (1942-44), Revolutionary Movements (1915-34), Kisan Movements, Tribal Movements, Agitation for Responsible Government in the Princely States (Prajamandal), Indian National Army (INA, 1943-45), Royal Indian Navy Upsurge (RIN, 1946), etc.
- Information of about 13,500 martyrs has been recorded in these volumes.

Q3. Foreign funding restrictions on NGOs are placed under which law?

- a. Foreign Contribution Regulations Act
- b. Prevention of Money Laundering Act
- c. Reserve Bank of India Act
- d. Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act

Answer: a

Explanation:

- FCRA was enacted with an aim to regulate the utilization of foreign contributions/hospitality by individuals, associations to keep it consistent with the values of a sovereign, democratic republic.
- The FCRA was enacted in 1976 in order to maintain strict control over voluntary organizations and political associations that received foreign funding.
- It is an act passed for regulating and prohibiting the acceptance and utilization of foreign contribution or foreign hospitality by companies, associations or individuals for such activities that could prove to be detrimental to the national interest and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.
- **Hence Option A is correct.**

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

1. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was launched by Prime Minister Modi ahead of the 2015 Paris summit of the Climate Change Convention.
2. Its membership has been limited to only those countries that fall within the tropics.
3. The alliance has partnered with the World Bank to launch the Global Solar Atlas.

Options:

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- In 2015, PM Narendra Modi and former President of France, Francois Hollande announced the launch of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) at the 2015 Paris summit. **Hence Statement 1 is correct.**
- The aim of this organization is to increase the use of solar energy. This organization was backed by 120 countries present in the tropical belt.
- The International Solar Alliance is a group of nations that lie within the Tropics (Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn) and receive sunshine for more than 300 days. **Hence Statement 2 is not correct.**
- The World Bank, in partnership with the International Solar Alliance (ISA), launched the Global Solar Atlas. **Hence Statement 3 is correct.**
 - It is a free, web-based tool to help investors and policymakers identify potential sites for solar power generation virtually anywhere in the world.

Q5. In India, the use of carbofuran, methyl parathion, phorate and triazophos is viewed with apprehension. These chemicals are used as – [UPSC 2019]

- a. pesticides in agriculture
- b. preservatives in processed foods
- c. fruit-ripening agents
- d. moisturizing agents in cosmetics

Answer: a

Explanation:

- The state Agriculture Department in Kerala ordered a ban on the use of several dangerous pesticides in agriculture in 2019 in order to encourage organic farming.
- During this time, the Kerala Agriculture University was urged to come up with alternatives to pesticides including carbofuran, phorate, methyl parathion, monocrotophos, methyl demethon, prophenophos, and triazophos, which are all banned. Pesticides including acephate, carbaryl, dimethoate, and flubendiamide, according to Kerala Agriculture University, are less dangerous.
- **Hence Option A is correct.**

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. What are some of the challenges India is facing while expanding its solar power capacity? Suggest possible ways to overcome the same. (250 words; 15 marks) [GS 3, Energy]
2. How is the Indian concept of secularism different as compared to the Western form of secularism? Why are these differences essential in the context of Indian societal composition? (250 words; 15 marks) [GS 2, Polity]