

07 May 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis

A leader is a dealer in hope.

- Napoleon Bonaparte



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A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: HEALTH

1. 'Fertility rate falls further, obesity rises'

Syllabus: Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health, Education, Human Resources.

Prelims: About National Family Health Survey (NFHS)

Mains: National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) Findings

Context: National Report of the fifth round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) was released recently.

- The report comprises detailed information on key domains of population, health and family welfare and associated domains like characteristics of the population; fertility; family planning; infant and child mortality; maternal and child health; nutrition and anaemia; morbidity and healthcare; women's empowerment etc.

Know more about [National Family Health Survey \(NFHS-5\)](#)

Key results from NFHS-5 National Report- Progress:

- **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):**
 - It is an average number of children per woman.
 - It has further declined from 2.2 to 2.0 at the national level between National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 4 and 5.
- **Overall Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR):**
 - It has increased substantially from 54% to 67% in the country.
 - The use of modern methods of contraceptives has also increased in almost all States/UTs.
 - Unmet needs for family planning have witnessed a significant decline from 13 percent to 9 per cent.
- **Institutional Births:**

- Institutional Births have increased substantially from 79 percent to 89 percent in India.
- Even in rural areas around 87 percent of births are delivered in institutions and the same is 94 percent in urban areas.
- **Stunting:**
 - The level of stunting among children under 5 years has marginally declined from 38 to 36 percent for India since the last four years.
 - Stunting is higher among children in rural areas (37%) than in urban areas (30%) in 2019-21.
- **Rise in obesity:**
 - Compared with NFHS-4, the prevalence of overweight or obesity has increased in most States/UTs in NFHS-5.
 - At the national level, it increased from 21% to 24% among women and 19% to 23% among men.

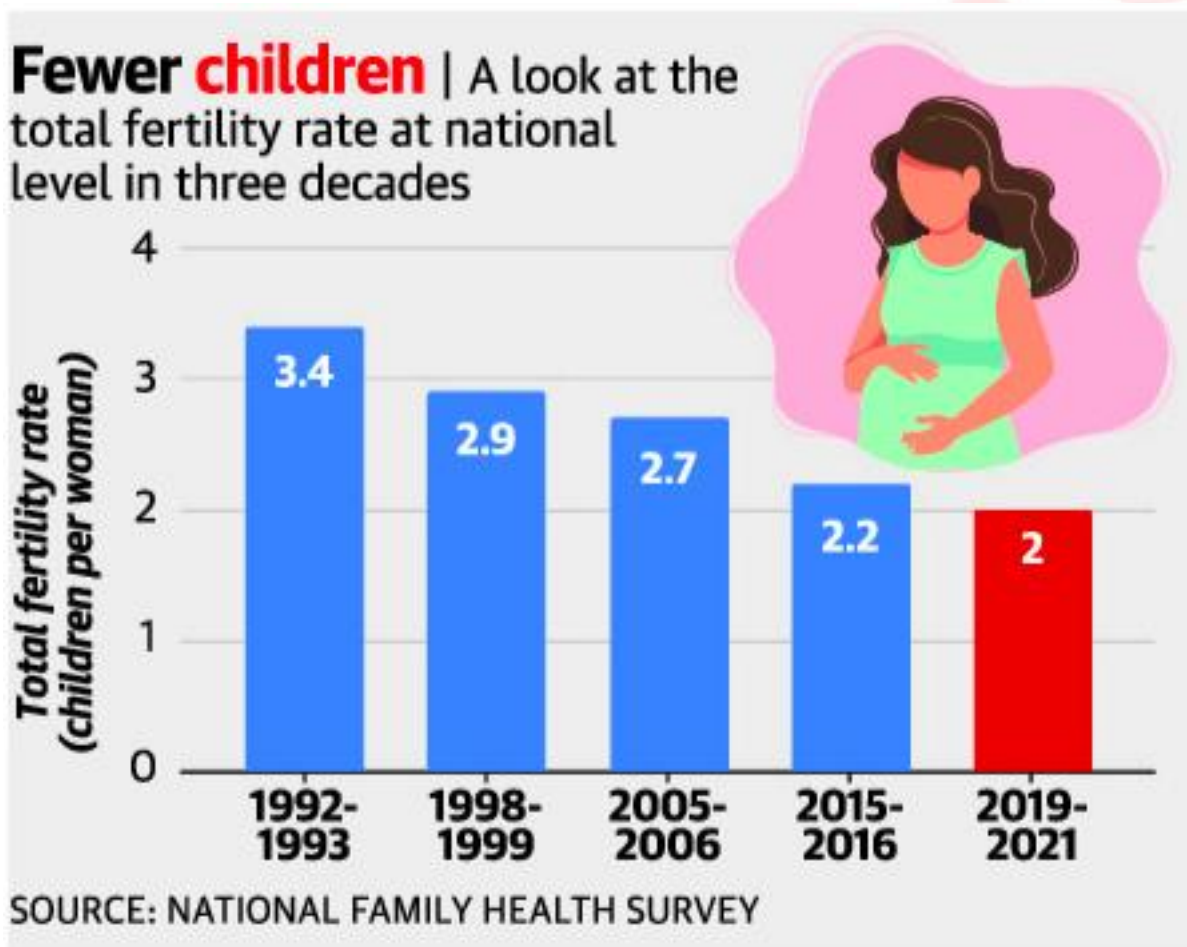


Image source: The Hindu

Know more facts about [National Family Health Survey 5.](#)

Nut Graf

The National Report of the fifth round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) provides reliable and comparable data relating to health and family welfare and other emerging areas in India. This socio-economic data should be used to ensure effective policy formulation, strengthen existing programmes and evolve new strategies for policy intervention.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ENVIRONMENT

1. In rising heat, the cry of the wilting outdoor worker

Syllabus: Conservation, Climate Change, environmental pollution and degradation

Prelims: Heatwaves

Mains: The increase in the frequency of heatwaves, its implications and various remedies.

Context

This article discusses the impact of the rising frequency of heatwaves on outdoor workers.

What are heatwaves?

The [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#) defines a heatwave as five or more consecutive days during which the daily maximum temperature exceeds the average maximum temperature by five degrees Celsius.

Read more about - [Heatwaves Risk Reduction](#)

Rise in the frequency of heatwaves in India

- The intensity and frequency of heatwaves have increased in South Asia and they are expected to increase further in the future.
- The extreme heat conditions which were earlier limited to the northern states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and New Delhi have now increased in the southern States also.
- The India Meteorological Department's (IMD) April forecast had said that temperatures in some parts of Tamil Nadu would increase by 2° to 3° Celsius and the temperature recorded in Vellore, Karur, Tiruchi and Tiruttani reached 41°C.
- With an average temperature of 40.2°C, Delhi recorded its second warmest April in over 70 years and Gurgaon in Delhi's neighbourhood hit the 45°C mark for the first time.
- The year 2022 has been the fifth-warmest year on record with still about eight months remaining, as global temperatures have increased by 1.5°C in the last century and at the current rate, could reach 4°C by 2100.

The role of global warming

- The frequency of extreme weather conditions around the globe suggests that India's warming is caused due to both local factors and global warming.
- Experts have demonstrated how greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions magnify the temperatures in the oceans, resulting in increased temperatures.
- It is said that anthropogenic GHG emissions are the main reason for the increased frequencies of heatwaves as heatwaves and wildfires are unimaginable without human-caused climate change.

Impact of increased frequency of heatwaves

- On health
 - India faces the largest heat exposure impacts in South Asia.
 - According to reports, about 1,40,000 lives have been lost due to extreme weather conditions in India between 1971 and 2019, of which the loss of 17,362 lives was linked to extreme heat.
- On livelihood
 - The labour-intensive agriculture and construction work has become almost impossible during the heatwaves.
 - As about 33% of South Asia's population depends on outdoor work, heatwaves have severely impacted the livelihood of the people.
 - India's outdoor workers, working under daily temperatures of more than 40°C, are most vulnerable to climate catastrophe.
- On the economy
 - Worldwide economic losses are expected to reach ₹1.6 lakh crores annually if global warming exceeds 2°C.

Recommendations

- Immediate efforts are needed to reverse climate change and the leading emitters, including India must replace carbon-emitting fossil fuels with cleaner fuels.
- But despite the mitigation efforts, temperatures are set to increase due to the damage already done and hence climate adaptation becomes a priority.
 - The main aspect of adaptation is better environmental care that can contribute to cooling.
 - Measures of afforestation can help mitigate the effects of global warming.
 - Urban green such as street trees, urban forests and green roofs can help reduce urban temperatures.
- Water-intensive agriculture in heat wave-prone areas is also not feasible and hence there is a need to promote better agricultural practices.
 - **Example:** Promoting drip irrigation and discouraging slash and burn method of agriculture and [stubble burning](#).
- Extending the financial transfers which are targeted towards outdoor workers helps them significantly in climate adaptation.
 - Transfers can be made based on the magnitude of heatwaves across locations.
- Early warning systems coupled with better preparedness through community outreach programmes benefit the outdoor workers.
- Insurance schemes can help transfer the risks of heatwaves by the industrial, construction and agricultural workers to insurers.
 - Insurance against natural hazards is minimal not only in India but also in Asia.
 - The governments and insurers must collaborate to ensure greater coverage of losses from extreme weather events.
 - Insurance schemes require public and private sectors to jointly set out risk-sharing mechanisms that benefit outdoor workers.
- The efficiency of existing subsidy transfers must be relooked as only 26% of the subsidy value is estimated to reach the targeted ones and instead, the provisions of transfers and insurance aimed at ensuring climate resilience must be accorded the highest priority.

Nut Graf

As the increase in the frequency of heatwaves has large scale implications on people's health, livelihood and the economy, countries must prioritize extending safety nets which are focused on targeted transfers and insurance schemes to provide financial support to the outdoor workers and also attract small-scale investments to build climate resilience.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Overcoming differences

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

Mains: Significance of stronger ties with European countries to India.

Context

The Prime Minister of India attended a series of bilateral talks with his counterparts from various European countries.

Background

For a detailed background of the topic refer to the following article:

[UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis dated 5th May 2021](#)

Significance of the India-Europe Cooperation

- **Ukraine war**
 - The meeting between the leaders has gained significance in the backdrop of the [conflict in Ukraine](#) where India has a different stand as compared to Europeans.
 - Despite the differences, the leaders discussed ways to mitigate the adverse effects of the war.
- **Food security**
 - France urged India to cooperate with the Food and Agriculture Resilience Mission (FARM) initiative for food security in the most vulnerable countries, especially in terms of wheat exports.
 - However, a severe heatwave has impacted India's crops and the Government is looking for ways to supply wheat to the rest of the world at a time when the world is facing shortages and soaring prices.
- **Climate change**
 - France and India have collaborated on the success of the Paris climate accord and co-founded the [International Solar Alliance \(ISA\)](#) in 2015.
 - The two countries now plan to extend the projects under ISA by signing industrial partnerships to build integrated supply chains in solar energy production for markets in Europe and Asia.
- **Space**
 - India and France also had a bilateral strategic dialogue on space issues, which will further strengthen their 60 years long partnership in the field of space.
- **Nuclear energy and technology**

- In 1998, France was the only western country that did not impose sanctions on India for its nuclear tests.
- Also in 2008, France became the first country to sign a civil nuclear deal with India after the NSG passed a waiver allowing India to access nuclear fuel and technology.
- France also plans to bid for six nuclear power plants in Maharashtra's Jaitapur.

Know more about - [India-EU Relations](#).

Nut Graf

In the context of the latest developments in geopolitics, close bilateral ties between India and Europe countries are crucial and beneficial for both and give a much-needed fillip to seal an India-EU Free Trade Agreement.

F. Prelims Facts

1. ISRO's unique goal for Venus mission

Syllabus: GS3: Science and technology: Awareness in the fields of Space

Prelims: Venus mission; about planet Venus

Context: Indian Space Research Organisation ([ISRO](#)) Chairman laid down the expenditure of the mission to Venus depending on the level of instrumentation.

Venus mission:

- India plans to launch a new orbiter to Venus in 2024.
- It is commonly called the Shukrayaan. It is the first mission to Venus by the India Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and will study the planet for four years.
- The most important instrument of Shukrayaan is its Dual Frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar which had been prepared by ISRO for the [Chandrayaan-2](#) mission.
- **The objective of the mission:**
 - To study what lies below the surface of the hottest planet in the solar system and also unravel the mysteries under the sulphuric acid clouds enveloping it.

Missions to Venus:

- Sputnik 7, launched by the Soviet Union, was the world's first Venus mission, but it was unsuccessful.
- Mariner-1 was also used to launch the first flyby Venus mission, which failed in 1962.
- The first successful interplanetary traveller, Mariner 2, arrived on Venus in 1962.
- In 1967, Russia achieved success in the Venus mission with Venera-4.
- The European Space Agency's Venus Express mission was also successful in 2005.
- When Japan's Mission Akatsuki was successful in 2010, it joined a select group of countries with successful Venus missions.

Active Missions to Venus:

- **Akatsuki:** In 2015, the Japanese Akatsuki spacecraft entered orbit around Venus in search of information about the planet's atmosphere.
- **BepiColombo:** The BepiColombo spacecraft of the European Space Agency is on its way to Mercury, but it will stop by Venus twice on the way.

Future Missions:

- **VERITAS:** In 2028, NASA will launch the VERITAS spacecraft to investigate Venus and its history.
- **DAVINCI:** NASA's DAVINCI aims to get detailed measurements of the composition and structure of Venus.
- **EnVision:** The EnVision spacecraft is being launched by the European Space Agency (ESA) to study Venus and its past.

About Venus:

- Venus is the second planet from the Sun and is the brightest planet in the solar system.
- It is sometimes referred to as the sister planet to Earth, because of its similar mass and size.
- The first aircraft to visit Venus was NASA's Mariner 2 in 1962.
- Venus has roughly the same diameter as Earth and sports a rocky surface and has an iron core.
- However, the planet doesn't rotate fast enough to generate an Earth-like magnetic field.

G. Tidbits**1. Italy, India discuss Ukraine, energy and G-20 cooperation**

- India and Italy expressed concern about the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and demanded an end to hostilities immediately.
- The Ministers of both countries talked about how to put the "India-Italy Strategic Partnership on Energy Transition" into action.
- The visit of the Italian foreign minister will provide an opportunity to discuss all aspects of bilateral relations.
- It will deepen close cooperation, particularly in priority areas such as trade and investment, defence and security, clean and renewable energy, and science and technology cooperation.

2. Travesty of justice: SC on delay in bail to Azam

- The Supreme Court expressed displeasure over the delay in hearing the bail application in a land grabbing case, saying "this is a travesty of justice".
- A travesty of justice is an unjust legal act or decision that appears to be a horrific mockery or imitation of how the justice system should work.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements with respect to "Operation AAHT": (Level: Medium)

- a. It is an operation launched by the Railway Protection Force to combat human trafficking.
- b. It is an operation launched to reduce deforestation by replacing wood used for cremations with biofuel.
- c. An evacuation operation by the Government of India to evacuate the Indian citizens amidst the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- d. An operation launched to repatriate Indian citizens from overseas during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Answer: a

Explanation:

- **Operation AAHT** is a nationwide effort to combat human trafficking that has been begun by the Railway Protection Force.
- The RPF's (Railway Protection Force) infrastructure and intelligence network would be made use of as part of "Operation AAHT" to collect, collate, and assess clues on victims, origin, path, destination, prominent trains in use by perpetrators, the identity of carriers/agents, crime lords, and other law-enforcement agencies, and then shared with other law-enforcement agencies.
- **Hence option 'a' is correct.**

Q2. Consider the following statements with respect to Syngas: (Level: Difficult)

1. Syngas is a mixture primarily consisting of carbon monoxide (CO), hydrogen (H₂) and carbon dioxide (CO₂).
2. It can be used to produce Liquid Fuels such as Methanol, Ethanol, Synthetic diesel.
3. It can be used to produce nitrogenous fertilizers like Ammonia.

Which of the given statements is/are INCORRECT?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- Syngas is a mixture of carbon monoxide and dihydrogen. Since the mixture of the two gases is used for the synthesis of methanol, it is called syngas, or water gas. **Hence statement 1 is correct.**
- Syngas produced from coal can be used to produce:
 - Gaseous Fuels such as Hydrogen (Blue coupled with CCUS), Substitute Natural Gas (SNG or Methane), Di-Methyl Ether (DME), Liquid Fuels such as **Methanol, Ethanol, Synthetic diesel; Hence statement 2 is correct.**
 - Chemicals like Methanol derivatives, Olefins, Propylene, Mono-Ethylene Glycol (MEG), nitrogenous **fertilizers including Ammonia. Hence statement 3 is correct.**

Q3. Which of the following statements best describes the (PM MITRA) Parks Scheme? (Level: Medium)

- a. It is a central sector scheme introduced to create modern infrastructure with efficient supply chain management from farm gate to retail outlets.
- b. It is a scheme launched to create an Integrated Textiles Value Chain right from spinning, weaving, processing/dyeing and printing to garment manufacturing, etc. at one location.
- c. It is a scheme launched to bring about sustainable development of the fisheries sector by establishing modern post-harvest infrastructure and supply chain management.
- d. A scheme launched for the creation of state of the art support infrastructure in a well-defined agri/horticultural zone for setting up of modern food processing units in the industrial plots provided in the park with a well-established supply chain.

Answer: b

Explanation:

- The government has approved the setting up of seven PM MITRA Parks to create an Integrated Textiles Value Chain.
- The seven Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) parks will be established at Greenfield or Brownfield sites located in different states.
- PM MITRA is motivated by PM Modi's 5F vision of farm to fibre; fibre to factory; factory to fashion; and fashion to foreign.
- This integrated vision will help to further the growth of the textile sector in the economy.
- The scheme is under the Textiles Ministry.
- **Hence option 'b' is correct.**

Q4. Consider the following statements: (Level: Difficult)

1. Guantánamo Bay is located in Cuba.
2. The Florida Strait separates Cuba and the United States.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

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

Answer: c

Explanation:

- Guantánamo Bay is a bay in Cuba's southeastern province of Guantánamo.
- The Florida Strait, which runs south-southeast of the North American mainland, separates the United States from Cuba.



Image source: worldatlas.com

Q5. In the Constitution of India, promotion of international peace and security is included in the: (Level: Easy) [UPSC 2014]

- Preamble to the Constitution
- Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)
- Fundamental Duties
- Ninth Schedule

Answer: b

Explanation:

Promoting international peace and security, as well as maintaining just and honourable relations between nations is stated in Article 51 of the Directive Principles of State Policy. Its goal is to promote international law and treaty obligations, as well as arbitration as a means of resolving international disputes. Part IV (Articles 36–51) of the Indian Constitution contains these provisions. However, these are not enforceable by any court.

Hence B is the correct answer.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Identify the roadblocks delaying the signing of the India – EU free trade agreement. How can the two sides work around these roadblocks? (250 words; 15 marks) GS III (Economic Development)
2. Elaborate on the progress made by India in declining its total fertility rate in the past couple of decades. How does it impact the demographic dividend of India in the years to come? (250 words; 15 marks) GS I (Indian Society)

