

13 Jun 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



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B. GS 2 Related

Understanding the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation

Category: GS 2, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Syllabus: Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

Prelims: Facts about Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Mains: Organisation of Islamic Cooperation – its Functioning, criticism and its relations with India.

Context

The General Secretariat of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) condemned the comments made by two erstwhile spokespersons of an Indian political party on Prophet Muhammed.

Details

- The OIC sought that the perpetrators be held accountable and referred to it as a part of “growing spate of hatred and defamation of Islam in India”
- The Ministry of External Affairs responded by saying that India rejected the OIC Secretariat’s “unwarranted” and “narrow-minded” comments.
- Further, the ministry held that the views expressed by the two spokespersons did not reflect the views of the Indian government and the authorities had already initiated strong actions against them.

Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

- The Organization was set up at the Rabat summit, Kingdom of Morocco in 1969 following the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

- The OIC claims to be the “collective voice of the Muslim world”.
- The OIC is said to be the second largest organization in the world after the United Nations.
- OIC currently has 57 countries as its members and is spread across four continents.
- Currently, OIC is headquartered in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) and the organisation plans to move its headquarters to East Jerusalem
- Aim: to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.
- Objectives:
 - OIC endeavours to establish solidarity among member countries, help in restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity of any member state under occupation
 - Protect, defend and combat defamation of Islam, prevent growing dissension in Muslim societies and work to ensure that member states take a united stand in various International organisations such as the UN General Assembly and Human Rights Council.

To read more about – [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation \(OIC\)](#)

Eligibility to join the Organisation

- All UN members with a Muslim majority can join the organisation.
- The membership needs to be ratified with the full consensus at the OIC’s Council of Foreign Ministers.
- The provisions are the same for acquiring an observer status.
- The OIC is financed by the member states based on their national income.
 - If a member fails to meet such obligations prescribed, their voting rights would be suspended.

Functioning of OIC

- The Islamic Summit which comprises the Kings and the heads of states is the apex authority of the organisation.
 - The summit takes place biennially (once in two years) and is entrusted with undertaking policy decisions and providing guidance on issues associated with the organisation.
- The Council of Foreign Ministers is the chief decision-making institution and it meets every year to decide on the implementation of OIC’s general policies.
- The council appoints the Secretary General for a term of five years who is mandated to follow up on the implementation of the decisions, direct attention to OIC’s specific issues of concern, create a platform for coordination among various organs and submit yearly reports on the work undertaken.
- OIC adheres to its charter that mentions its objectives, principles and operating mechanism and the member states are expected to uphold and promote good governance, democracy, human rights, fundamental freedom and the rule of law

- Further, the OIC issues a 10-year Programme of Action (PoA) and it calls for actions to combat all aspects of terrorism globally.
- The OIC has standing committees for cooperation on aspects such as cultural affairs, economic and commercial matters, scientific and technological initiatives.
- All decision-making in the forum requires a quorum defined by the presence of two-thirds of the member states and complete consensus.
 - If a consensus cannot be reached, decisions would be made by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.

Criticisms on the OIC grouping

- Experts have criticised OIC for being more focused on the rights of Muslim minorities in regions like Palestine or Myanmar than the human rights violations of its member states.
- Critics opine that OIC lacks the power and resources to investigate human rights violations or enforce its policies through treaties and declarations.
- Critics also note that OIC is mainly focused on arbitrating conflicts where both parties are Muslims.
- Experts and analysts also point out that the organisation has failed to create a cooperative venture among its members and has also failed to become a significant organisation in international politics.

India and OIC

- India's association with OIC has not been easy despite having cordial relations with countries such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia.
- India has expressed its desire to become a member of OIC but its membership and engagement have been challenged by Pakistan.
- In the recent past, the Indian External Affairs Minister has addressed the OIC Plenary of Foreign Ministers in Abu Dhabi as a "guest of honour".
- Acknowledging India's sizeable Muslim population, Bangladesh proposed that India be given the observer status at the OIC in 2018, a move which was supported by Turkey but was opposed by Pakistan.

Nut Graf

India was seen improving its engagement and enhancing its influence on the OIC in recent years but the comments made by former spokespersons of a political party recently have outraged the members of OIC and this now threatens to strain India's relations with OIC.

The FATF and Pakistan's position on its 'grey list'

Category: GS 2, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Syllabus: Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate.

Prelims: Facts about Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

Mains: Functions of FATF; Grey and Black list of FATF

Context

The Plenary session of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is scheduled to take place between June 14 to 17 (2022) in Berlin.

Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

- FATF is the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog.
- FATF was set up at the G7 Summit of 1989 in Paris with an aim to address loopholes in the global financial system after the member states raised concerns about increasing money laundering activities
- FATF mandates international standards that aim to prevent illegal activities and the harm they cause to society.
- FATF further declared terror financing as its main focus area post the 9/11 attacks in the U.S. which has been expanded to include restricting the funding of weapons of mass destruction.
- Members: At present, FATF has 39 members and India has been a member since 2010.
 - Indonesia has been accorded the observer status.
- Headquarters: Paris, France

Plenary of FATF

- Plenary is the decision-making body of the FATF,
- It usually meets three times a year.
- Plenary meetings are attended by 206 countries across the world which include members, observer organisations like the World Bank, a few offices of the UN and other regional development banks.

Functions of FATF

- The FATF sets standards for the countries which are aimed at resolving the loopholes in their financial systems and help them be less vulnerable to illegal financial activities.
- FATF conducts regular peer-reviewed evaluations called Mutual Evaluations (ME) of countries to analyse their performance based on the prescribed standards.
 - The reviews are conducted by FATF and FATF-Style Regional Bodies (FSRBs), which then release Mutual Evaluation Reports (MERs).
- FATF recommends time bound measures for the countries that fail to perform well on certain standards.
 - These recommendations include identifying and assess the risks of crimes and establishing legislative, investigative and judicial bodies on money laundering and terror funding.

FATF's Grey and Black lists

- At the end of every plenary meeting, FATF prepares these lists of countries.

- The Grey list represents countries that are required to work on complying with FATF and its directives.
 - The grey countries are designated as “jurisdictions under increased monitoring”, working with the FATF to counter criminal financial activities.
 - FATF does not recommend other members to carry out due-diligence measures on the listed countries but suggests they acknowledge the risks such countries possess.
 - At present, 23 countries are on the grey list which includes Pakistan
- The Black list represents “Non-Compliant or Non-Cooperative Countries or Territories (NCCTs)”.
 - These countries are designated as ‘high-risk jurisdictions subject to call for action’.
 - These countries have significant deficiencies in their anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing regimens and FATF urges its members and non-members to apply due diligence and members are also told to initiate counter-actions like sanctions on these listed countries.
 - At present, North Korea and Iran are on the black list.
 - The Black list countries face difficulties in getting help from organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the European Union thereby affecting their capital inflows, foreign direct investments, and portfolio flows.
- The words ‘grey’ and ‘black’ lists are not mentioned in the official FATF vocabulary.

Reasons for Pakistan to be on the Grey list

- Pakistan has been listed under the “Grey list” frequently since 2008 due to its weaknesses in fighting terror financing and money laundering.
- It was excluded from the list in 2015 due to its progress but it was put back in 2018.
- Pakistan has prescribed a 27-point action plan to restrict terror financing activities. After warnings and two deadline extensions on the first plan, Pakistan was given another set of seven-point action plans in 2021 focused mainly on combating money laundering.
- FATF retained Pakistan’s listing in its plenary meeting held in March 2022 as it was yet to address concerns on the front of terror financing investigations and prosecutions targeting senior leaders and commanders of UN designated terrorist groups
 - Pakistan informed FATF that it had completed 32 of the total 34 action items in the two plans but was retained on the list.
 - The FATF extended the timeline till January 2023 to complete the 2021 plan.
- Pakistan has initiated measures in this regard such as the sentencing of terror outfit chief Hafiz Saeed, prosecution of Masood Azhar, arrest of over 300 other designated terrorists, and the seizure of more than 1,100 properties owned by terror groups.
- Pakistan is currently banking on its potential exclusion from the grey list to help improve the status of tough negotiations with the International Monetary Fund to get bailout money.

the latest edition of the plenary session of the FATF is keenly awaited as Pakistan, which is experiencing an economic crisis is hoping for some respite in the form of its removal from the FATF's 'Grey list'. Meanwhile, India doubts the efficacy and permanence of Pakistan's actions regarding anti-money laundering and counter terror funding.

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Afghan women's rights are at risk

Category: GS 2, IR

Context:

- In the initial period of the takeover, the Taliban had demonstrated a modicum of moderation to gain international acceptability, funding and recognition.
- As the time has passed, the Taliban rule has reversed progress with regard to women and education which the country had seen earlier. Girls were forbidden from attending schools and women banned from working.

Who are the Taliban?

- The Taliban is a Sunni fundamentalist organisation that is involved in Afghan politics. The word 'Taliban' in Pashto means 'students'.
- Since 16th August 2021, the Taliban has taken control over Afghanistan.
- In the past, the Taliban has also controlled almost three-quarters of the country from 1996 to 2001 and was notorious for their strict implementation of the Sharia or Islamic law there.
- The Taliban officially refers to itself as the 'Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan'.

Taliban in the Past

- The Taliban introduced their interpretation of Sharia law, which meant that several rights were suspended for people, especially women and children.
- They endorsed Sharia mixed with the Pashtun tribal code.
- Women were required to wear burqas covering their whole bodies including faces; men had to grow beards.
- Women could not go out of the house without a male family member accompanying them. They could not work outside.

- The Taliban discouraged girls from going to school, and at one point, banned girls above the age of eight from going to school.
- Public executions were held for those accused of murder and adultery. Amputations were also done for those accused of stealing.
- They banned television, music, kite-flying, cinema, photography, painting, etc. Women were barred from attending sports events or playing them.
- People, especially women, faced public floggings for any perceived wrongs.

Present Scenario

- The Taliban are not just identifying dress codes for girls and women; men too have been asked to wear particular types of clothes and grow a beard.
- The regime brought in rules which forbade women from venturing out if they were not accompanied by a male.
- A report from the International Labour Organization in January 2022 found that Afghan women's employment levels fell by an estimated 16% in the third quarter of 2021, compared with 6% for men.
- By mid-2022, women's employment is expected to be 21% lower than before the Taliban takeover.
- As per speculation, Taliban are in the process of finalising the dress code in schools for girls.
- Haqqani, minister in the present Taliban government, said that education should be based on Afghan "culture" and "Islamic rules and principles".
- As per the World Bank, in 2019, 36% of teachers in the country were women, the highest number for 20 years. But most female educators have been forced out of work by the Taliban's ban on education for girls in March 2022.
- As per the Reporters Without Borders data, by the end of 2021, fewer than 100 of Kabul's 700 female journalists were still working.

Conclusion

- It is clear that the new Taliban is in no way different from the Taliban that ruled the country between 1996 and 2001.
- As the international attention has shifted its focus toward the conflict in Ukraine, the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan is becoming more complex. The international community, therefore, needs to make a concerted and coordinated attempt to protect the rights of Afghan women and girls and ensure that Afghanistan's de facto rulers are held accountable for their actions.

F. Prelims Facts

1. Apache, Chinook choppers

Syllabus: GS3, Security; Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

Prelims: Apache and Chinook choppers

Context

India is in talks for more Apache and Chinook choppers.

Apache choppers

- Apache is an attack helicopter that is regarded as the world's most lethal helicopter.
- The helicopter was first introduced to the US army in 1986.
- The helicopter is manufactured by Boeing
- AH-64E is an upgraded version of the Apache attack helicopter.
- These helicopters can hover and can precisely target and mow down even man-sized targets with things like millimetre radar and night vision
- Apache choppers are equipped with FIM 92 Stinger and AGM-114 Hellfire Missiles

Chinook choppers

- The CH-47 F(I) "Chinook" is an advanced multi-mission helicopter that was manufactured by Boeing
- It was introduced in 1962 and took part in many operations in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iran. It is said to be one of the most advanced heavy-lift helicopters in the world.
- It is an advanced multi-mission helicopter and it contains features such as a fully integrated, digital cockpit management system, Common Avionics Architecture System (CAAS) Cockpit and advanced cargo-handling capabilities that complement the aircraft's mission performance and handling characteristics.
- The chopper can carry a payload of 9.6 tonnes including heavy machinery such as artillery guns, howitzers, and even light armored vehicles.
 - This capacity can be used for rescue operations, disaster relief, aircraft recovery, and parachute drops.

G. Tidbits

1. Starting afresh: how women at Tihar jail are upskilling, breaking stereotypes

- Tihar's jail number 6 houses about 400 women prisoners who engage themselves in operating a full-time kitchen and an in-house beauty parlour and also are attending tailoring and embroidery classes.
- The move has helped them address their concerns and has provided them hope for a future through which they can earn and gain recognition
- The jail Superintendent and the staff encourage the prisoners to pursue such skills professionally in the future after being granted bail or acquitted
- The jail staff also counsels inmates who suffer from anxiety and other mental trauma.

2. New advisory on Type-1 diabetes

- Type-1 diabetes is a chronic condition in which the pancreas produces little or no insulin.
 - It is generally seen during adolescence and symptoms include increased thirst, frequent urination, hunger, fatigue and blurred vision.
- According to the recent estimates of the International Diabetes Federation, India has the highest number of incidents and prevalent cases of Type-1 diabetes in the world.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has now issued a holistic document that advises on the care of diabetes in children, adolescents and adults with Type-1 diabetes.
- The advisory includes guidelines such as not wearing brand new shoes for a trip, travelling with flash cards to navigate language barriers, managing meals while crossing time zones, storage of insulin and how to minimise glucose fluctuation
 - This is India's first-ever list of dos and don'ts to ensure the safety of Type-1 patients during travel.
- The Council has recommended patients to inform the physician in advance, preferably four to six weeks before the trip and must carry medications and blood testing materials for the whole trip along with reserve supplies.

3. Study reveals child artists work for more than 12 hours a day

- A study named "Child Artists in India" by Child Rights and You (an NGO) suggests that the total number of child artists is estimated to be between 6,059 and 12,334 based on Media and Entertainment Skills Council estimates for 2017 and Census of India 2011 respectively.
- The study also points out that a child below the age of 15 working in the entertainment sector in India, works for over 12 hours a day and the casting agencies are violating the **Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act (CALPRA), 1986** which prohibits engagement of children in all occupations.
 - CALPRA provides that no child shall be allowed to work for more than five hours in a day, and for not more than three hours without rest.
 - CALPRA also mandates that at least 20% of the income earned by the child from the production or event is to be directly deposited in a fixed deposit account in a nationalised bank in the name of the child. However, the study reveals that the money is being utilised completely on the families.
- In 2019, India's Media and Entertainment sector was valued at ₹1.67 trillion out of which children (up to 15 years of age) account for nearly 30% share of "impressions"

4. 'Abnormal' dinosaur egg found in India

- A group of researchers from the University of Delhi has discovered a distinct set of fossilised dinosaur eggs, with one egg nesting within the other.
 - The eggs-within-eggs are said to be a rare phenomenon and are known to occur only in birds and never known in reptiles.
 - This discovery establishes new relations between reptilian and avian evolution.

- The findings point out the “egg-in-egg” phenomenon in a Titanosaurus dinosaur egg found at Bagh in Madhya Pradesh’s Dhar district.
- Dinosaurs of the Sauropod family were among the largest land animals that ever lived
 - Fossils of these animals have been found in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya.
 - The Upper Cretaceous Lameta Formation of Central India is famous for its dinosaur fossils (both skeletal and egg remains)

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following statements are correct? (Level - Moderate)

1. Dinosaurs of the Sauropod family were widespread millions of years ago in the territory that is now India.
 2. Fossils of these animals have been found in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya.
1. a) 1 only
 2. b) 2 only
 3. c) Both 1 and 2
 4. d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer:

Option c

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct, Dinosaurs of the Sauropod family were among the largest land animals that ever lived and were widespread millions of years ago in the territory that is now India.
- Statement 2 is correct, the fossils of these animals have been found in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Meghalaya.
 - The Upper Cretaceous Lameta Formation of Central India is famous for dinosaur fossils (both skeletal and egg remains)

Q2. Which of the following statements are incorrect? (Level - Easy)

1. Groundwater contamination can occur only due to industrial pollutants.
 2. Contaminants found in groundwater cover a broad range of physical, inorganic chemical, organic chemical, bacteriological, and radioactive parameters.
1. a) 1 only
 2. b) 2 only
 3. c) Both 1 and 2
 4. d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer:

Option a

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct, Groundwater contamination occurs due to a wide range of pollutants such as nitrates, fluoride, iron, total coliform and faecal coliform, gasoline, oil, road salts and other chemicals.**
- **Statement 2 is correct, Contaminants found in groundwater cover a broad range of physical, inorganic chemical, organic chemical, bacteriological, and radioactive parameters.**

Q3. Which of the following statements best defines the G-33? (Level - Easy)

1. **a) It is an informal grouping at the UN to push for UN reforms.**
2. **b) It is group of small island countries for collectively representing their interests at the**

Climate Change convention

1. **c) It is a coalition of developing countries for coordination during WTO negotiations, specifically in regard to agriculture.**

1. **d) It is list of countries that have boycotted Persistent Organic Pollutants or POP's.**

Answer:

Option c

Explanation:

- **The G33 is a coalition of developing countries, established prior to the 2003 Cancun ministerial conference, that have coordinated during the Doha Round of World Trade Organization negotiations.**
- **The aim of the G33 group is to limit the degree of market opening required of developing countries.**

Q4. Which of the following initiatives under Purvottar Kalyan have helped in transforming the political & economic landscape of North-East India, in recent years? (Level - Moderate)

1. **AFSPA areas reduced & peace accords with insurgent groups.**
2. **New air routes for improving connectivity under UDAN.**
3. **Construction of Bogibeel bridge.**
4. **Setting up of higher education institutions.**
5. **Establishment of Bamboo technology parks.**

Choose the correct code.

1. a) 1, 3 and 4 only
2. b) 2, 4 and 5 only
3. c) 2 and 5 only
4. d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Answer:

Option d

Explanation:

- All the above initiatives have contributed significantly in transforming the political & economic landscape of North-East India.
- Hence option d is correct.

PYQ (2020)

Q5. Consider the following statements: (Level - Difficult)

1. Genetic changes can be introduced in the cells that produce eggs or sperms of a prospective parent.
2. A person's genome can be edited before birth at the early embryonic stage.
3. Human induced pluripotent stem cells can be injected into the embryo of a pig.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer:

Option d

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct, Germline gene therapy involves the modification of germ cells (gametes) that will pass the change on to the next generation. With germline therapy, genes can be corrected in the egg or the sperm that is being used to conceive
 - Hence, genetic changes can be introduced in the cells that produce eggs or sperms of a prospective parent.
- Statement 2 is correct, A person's genome can be edited before birth at early embryonic stage
- Statement 3 is correct, Human induced pluripotent (iPS) stem cells were injected into the pig embryos and these cells have the potential to develop into any tissue type in the resulting foetus.

CHECK ANSWERS:-

Watch the detailed explanation of the questions in the video below:



1,445

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Pakistan's inclusion in the FATF 'grey list' has a major impact on its economy. Comment. (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS II – International Relations)

2. Why was the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) established? What has been its role in the international arena? (10 Marks, 150 Words) (GS II – International Relations)