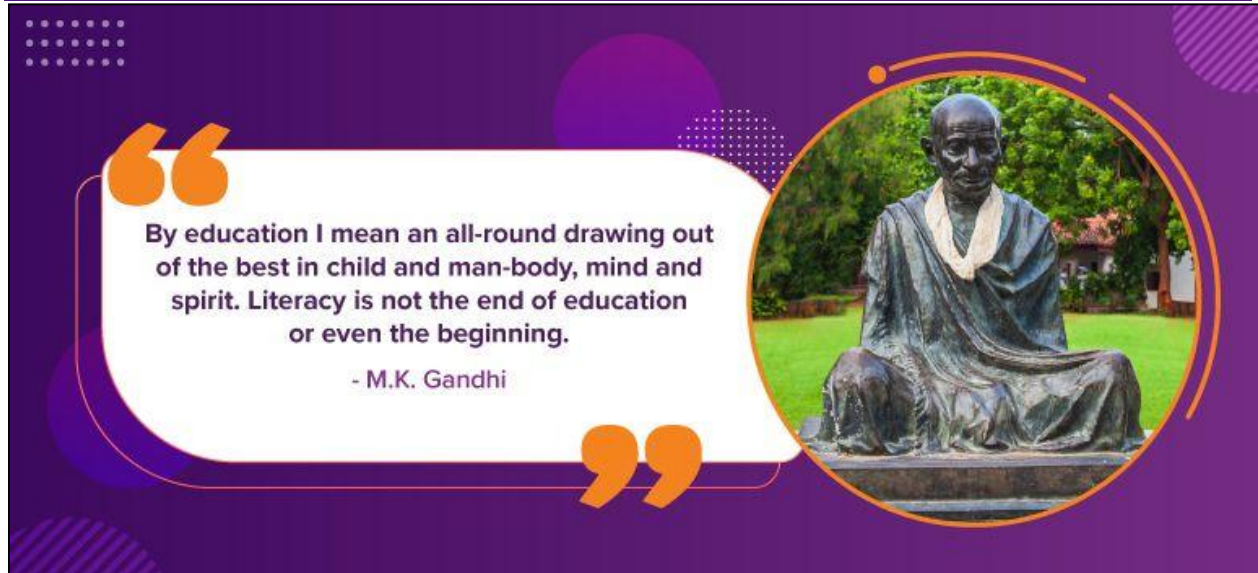


# 15 Jun 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



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## C. GS 3 Related

Category: Indian Economy

### 10 lakh persons to get govt. jobs in 18 months, announces Modi

*Syllabus: Employment*

*Mains: Issues related to unemployment and its repercussions on the Economy*

**Context**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced recruiting 10 lakh personnel within the next 1.5 yrs, "in a mission mode".

**Details**

- It will be a significant step because the recruitment to government jobs was hampered following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The government has reviewed the status of Human Resources in all departments and ministries and instructed on this mission.
- Recently, the Defence Minister and the three Service Chiefs made an announcement on the 'Agnipath' scheme of recruiting youth between the ages of 17.5 and 21.
- 'Agnipath' will be a four-year stint in the forces with an option of voluntary retention after this period, based on merit.

- The majority of the selections would be in the railways, armed forces, the Central Paramilitary Forces, Goods and Services Tax (GST) departments, including customs and excise and administrative staff for government-owned banks and insurance companies etc.

#### Why is this sudden urgency?

- Unemployment has emerged as one of the major obstacles before the government following two years of the global pandemic along with the economic woes.
- The frequent leak of examination papers for various departments has further aggravated the situation.
- At times it has resulted in the cancellation of the recruitment examination process altogether with protests and litigations.
- While not sharing figures of which department would be recruiting how many, a senior government official shared that

#### Significance of the move

- The recruitment for GST departments, banking and insurance sectors is important as they play a pivotal role in running the wheels of the economy.
- Selections in the revenue-generating departments and administrative sectors have been on hold for the last 15 years.
- The push for a recruitment deadline will certainly help expedite the process.

#### Way Forward

The government needs to take a more pragmatic approach considering a large number of vacancies for class 'A to C' officers in various departments and ministries (About a million as per the latest estimates). Moreover, the unemployment rate is also soaring high since the pandemic has struck and a large number of the workforce has also lost their jobs.

Category: Science and Technology

## Can the new Google chatbot be sentient?

*Syllabus: Developments in Science and Technology*

*Mains: Issues related to Developments in Science and Technology*

#### Context

Google's advanced conversational agent called Language Model for Dialogue Applications (LaMDA) has a neural network making it capable of deep learning.

#### Details

- LaMDA is an abbreviated form of 'Language Model for Dialogue Applications', Google's advanced conversational agent with a neural network capable of deep learning.
- LaMDA is a non-goal-directed chatbot which can have dialogues on various subjects.
- It has the potential to revolutionize customer interaction and AI-enabled internet search.

- The tech giant claims that the advanced software can make sense of nuanced conversation and engage in a natural conversation.
- LaMDA relies on pattern recognition, not empathy, wit, candour or intent.

#### What is a neural network?

- It is an AI tech that tries to mimic the network of neurons in the brain to learn and behave like human beings.
- The artificial neural network (ANN) requires training as a pet dog prior to being commanded. For example, thousands of specific cat images are broken down to pixels and fed into the ANN during the image recognition training.
- Its algorithm has been trained using 1.56 trillion words of public dialogue data and web text on diverse topics
- The AI tech learns to recognise the key patterns that specify what a general 'cat' looks like from these characteristics.
- With access to big data and a powerful processor, it is enough for the emerging deep learning software to do impossible looking tasks.

#### The story so far

- Blake Lemoine, a U.S. military veteran, was engaged in this project to test for bias/hate speech in the Language Model for Dialogue Applications (LaMDA).
- He asserts that with deep learning capacity the neural network has the consciousness of a child of seven or eight years old.
- However, consent from the software must be taken prior to running the experiments on it, although Google and several tech experts have denied the claim.

#### LaMDA vs other chatbots

- Chatbots like 'Ask Disha' of the IRCTC, routinely used for customer engagement, have a repertoire of topics and chat responses are narrow. The conversations are predefined and mostly goal-directed. LaMDA has been developed as a non-goal directed chatbot that converses on various subjects.
- For example, it can converse like a family over the dinner table on topics ranging from the taste of the food to price rise to war in Ukraine.
- Therefore, it could revolutionize customer interaction and help AI-enabled internet search.

#### The story so far

- Blake Lemoine, a U.S. military veteran, was engaged in this project to test for bias/hate speech in the Language Model for Dialogue Applications (LaMDA).
- He asserts that with deep learning capacity the neural network has the consciousness of a child of seven or eight years old.
- However, consent from the software must be taken prior to running the experiments on it, although Google and several tech experts have denied the claim.

#### How far and intelligent is AI technology?

- Although the AI technology appears futuristic, we do have Facebook's facial recognition software, voice recognition software like Alexa, and the Google Translate app in front of us.
- The AI technologies take inspiration from the mathematician Alan Turing's answer to the question 'Can a machine think?'
- Turing was the pioneer of the world's first computer, ENIGMA, which broke the German codes during the Second World War.

#### The first chatbots

- Joseph Weizenbaum of the MIT Artificial Intelligence Laboratory built ELIZA with which we could chat.
- ALICE (Artificial Linguistic Internet Computer Entity) was developed by Richard Wallace, capable of simulating human interactions.
- Linguist George Kingsley Zipf improved ALICE's response repertoire by analyzing user chats, making the fake conversions look real in the 1930s.

#### Issues with the AI technology

- The challenges of AI changing into sentient are far in the future; however, unethical AI carrying historical bias further and enabling easy hate speeches are the real dangers.
- Recently Google fired Timnit Gebru over her warnings on their unethical AI and now this development rightly caused ripples in social media.
- The issue of equity and equality in future benefit programmes may put the women and marginalized communities in the discriminated arena.
- AI tech learning from historical data may inadvertently perpetuate discrimination let alone the issue of bias which we are ignoring.

#### Way Forward

According to Robert A. Heinlein "Everything is theoretically impossible until it is done". This is true for the dynamic space of AI, Robotics and other similar domains. Therefore while making progress in these fields we need to balance the human-machine interface to save ourselves from falling prey to this necessary evil of the modern age.

Category: Environment

## New plan to save jumbos from train hits

*Syllabus: Conservation*

*Mains: Issues related to the conservation of Biodiversity*

#### Context

The Environment and Railway Ministries are exploring a project to minimize the number of elephant collision accidents.

#### Details

- As per the official data, close to 200 elephants have been killed in collisions with trains in the past decade.
- The latest initiative will analyze patterns geographically and come up with the measures that the Railways can feasibly implement.
- A preliminary analysis shows that the States with the highest elephant numbers are not always the ones with the most deaths.
- Assam, West Bengal and Uttarakhand are hilly States that saw the most number of deaths.
- Slopes and tricky terrain make animals' attempts to cross railway lines precarious resulting in collisions.
- An elephant is the only mammal with six toes, one of which is specialized for gripping function on the slopes.

#### Solutions so far

- We have been creating underpasses or dedicated elephant passes near existing lines and these are not always feasible for the Railways.
- Elephants mostly refuse to abandon their young when they get trapped on the lines, resulting in casualties.
- Providing fencing, erecting signage boards to warn locomotive pilots, sensitizing train personnel on a regular basis, clearing vegetation on the sides of the track within railway land, and posting a Forest Department staffer in Railway control offices etc. have shown mixed results till now.

#### Way Forward

Due to an expanding human population requiring economic and infrastructural development, it is almost inevitable that humans will encroach into the natural habitats of animals. Therefore a more sustainable approach is needed going forward.

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### The Way to end Child Marriage

GS:2: Social Issues

Syllabus: Issues related to vulnerable sections of India

Mains: Critically analyze the Union's cabinet decision to increase the legal age of marriage in India.

Context:

The article discussed child marriage, its adverse impacts, and the role of education in reducing it.

Background:

- In India, child marriage has been a stumbling block for women since time immemorial.
- While earlier it was rampant across all parts of the country, government rules and acts managed to reduce it to an extent but it is still prevalent.
- In the 19th century, the marriageable age for women used to be 10 years and 15 years from 1949 onwards.
- However, in 1978, an amendment was passed under the Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA) to increase the marriageable age for girls to 18.
- In 2006, the Government of India enacted the Prevention of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) which replaced CMRA with a motto of the abolishment of child marriage.
- While it has been 44 years since the anti-child marriage act, the primitive practice continues in several parts of the country.
- Now, to bring women on equal footing with men, Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government has decided to raise the legal age of marriage for women to 21 from 18 years.
- Whether increasing the age of child marriage will solve the problem or not is analyzed with the help of the recently released data of the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), 2019-20.

#### Child Marriage and Health Outcomes:

- According to some empirical studies from South Asia, there is a correlation between early marriage and negative health and educational outcomes. Following are some adverse impacts of early marriage:
  - Early pregnancy and a lower likelihood of accessing ante-natal health care,
  - Higher risks of maternal morbidity and mortality,
  - Poor nutritional status of women, and
  - Poor nutritional and educational outcomes of children.
- These studies provide significant reasons to increase the age of marriage from 18 to 21 years.

#### Structural factors behind early marriage:

There are several structural factors behind early marriage. Some of them are discussed below:

- Social norms:
  - In some areas, social and cultural norms play a significant role in the early marriage of a girl child. Parents start preparation for the marriage once the girl has attained her menarche.
- Poverty:
  - In many cases, child marriage occurs due to poverty and the huge costs of dowry associated with late marriages.
- Lack of education:
  - In rural areas, a boy over a girl is preferred when it comes to education. Parents with low financial backgrounds promote the study of a boy and indulge the girl child in household chores.
  - Hence, lack of education also plays an important role in early marriage.

#### State-wise data:

- The recently released NFHS-5 data shows the percentage of marriages in states in which the girls have not attained the legal age of marriage.
- The data shows that around 25% of the women aged between 18-29 got married before the legal age of 18. However, the percentage has declined as compared to the NFHS-4 survey which stood at 28%.
- The percentage is higher in rural areas as compared to urban areas. In rural areas, it is 28% and in urban areas, it is 17%.
- West Bengal registered the highest percentage (42%) followed by Bihar and Tripura (40% each).
- States with the lowest percentages are Goa, Himachal Pradesh, and Kerala (between 6% to 7%).

#### Community, and Wealth Wise data:

- If we look at the community-wise data, it implies that Adivasis and Dalits contribute 39% of the total early marriages in India.
- The contribution of the advantaged social group is 17% and the remaining share is from other backward classes.
- The wealth-wise data shows that 58% of the total early marriages take place among the poorest wealth groups. Approximately 40% of them take place among the middle 50% and only 2% of them take place among the top 10% of wealth groups.

#### Role of Education:

- According to the data of NFHS-5, only 4% of the early marriage takes place among women who have completed 12 years of education.
- Hence, it indicates that most child marriages happen in the case of the girls who did not attend 12 years of schooling and those who are socially and economically backward.
- The age of marriage automatically increases from 17 (in the case of those who attended 5 years of schooling) to 22 years (in the case of those who have attended more than 12 years of schooling).
- Hence, education and an increase in the years of marriage go hand-in-hand.
- The data also shows that 27% of women who were illiterate and got married before the age of 18 are underweight as compared to those who were literate and got married at 21 years of age.
- Approximately, 64% of illiterate women suffer from anemia, and iron deficiencies, irrespective of their age at marriage.
- The gap between marriage and first pregnancy is higher in illiterate than literate women and the former gives more birth in comparison to the latter.
- The above-mentioned educational and health outcomes highlight the importance of education.

#### Way Forward:



- Increasing the legal age of women without increasing the educational status of women is not going to provide better health and nutritional outcomes. In fact, this will impact the poor and illiterate more adversely.
- The education of women is also important for their personal freedom, social and economic well-being, and overall development.
- An increase in the legal age of marriage will result in a positive outcome only when it is associated with increasing the education level and skills of women for employability.

## Nut Graf

*Despite increasing the legal age of marriage from 18 to 21 years, child marriage is still prevalent in India. Some structural factors such as social norms, poverty, and lack of education contribute to it. Among all the factors, education plays an important role. Hence, educating women will not only result in delaying marriages but also produce positive health and nutritional outcomes.*

## Malnutrition in India is a worry in the modern scenario

**GS:2: Social Issues and Justice**

**Syllabus: Issues related to poverty and hunger**

**Mains: Critically analyze the nutritional status of the country.**

**Context:**

The article discusses the recently published NFHS-5 survey on malnutrition and also discusses the measures to improve the nutritional status of the country.

**Background:**

- Adequate nutrition is necessary for the empowerment of the present and future generations. The greatest treasure of India is its people but even after completing 75 years of independence, the majority of India's population does not get an adequate diet to meet their nutritional needs.
- There is a direct relationship between the nutritional status of a child with the mother. If the pregnant woman has poor nutritional status then it is going to affect the child and the future generation.
- Under-nourished children face the risk of under-performing in studies and jobs as well. This in turn hampers the development of a country.

**The National Family Health Survey-5:**

- It is evident from the data of NFHS-5 that there is a marginal improvement in the different indicators of nutritional status which indicates that the pace is slow.
- Despite the reduction in poverty, self-sufficiency in food production, and the introduction of various government programs, the improvement in malnutrition is limited.
- Children in some states are more malnourished than they were five years ago.

### **Stunting, Wasting, and Anaemia:**

- According to NFHS-5, the country reported a marginal improvement in two key indicators of undernutrition among children under five years, stunting and wasting.

#### **Stunting:**

- The WHO has defined stunting as impaired growth and development that children experience from poor nutrition, repeated infection, and inadequate psychosocial stimulation.
- The NFHS-5 data show that 35.5 percent of children under five years are stunted (height-for-age) as compared to 38.8 percent reported in NFHS-4.
- The latest data also reveals that the percentage of stunted children is higher in rural India (37.3 percent) when compared to urban areas (30.1 percent).

#### **Wasting:**

- According to WHO, wasting among children indicates recent and severe weight loss, although it can also persist for a long time.
- The NFHS-5 reported wasting (weight-for-height) in 19.3 percent of children under five years as compared to 21 percent in NFHS-4.
- The percentage of children in this category is slightly higher in rural areas (19.5 percent) compared to urban India (18.5 percent).
- But the data also reveal a disturbing trend: 7.7 percent of children under five years fall in the severely wasted (weight-for-height) category as compared to 7.5 percent in NFHS-4.

#### **Anemia:**

- The data in NFHS 2019-21, the fifth in the series, show that among all age groups, the highest spike in anemia was reported among children aged 6-59 months (67.1 percent) (NFHS-5) from 58.6 percent (NFHS-4, 2015-16).
- The data show that the number was higher in rural India (68.3 percent) compared to urban India (64.2 percent).
- This is followed by anemia in females aged 15-19 years – 59.1 percent (NFHS-5) from 54.1 percent (NFHS-4). In this group, too, the number was higher in rural areas (58.7 percent) compared to urban India (54.1 percent).
- Among pregnant women aged 15-49 years, 52.2 percent were found to be anemic compared to 50.4 percent in the previous survey.
- Anemia reduces the work capacity of people and which in turn impacts the economy and overall growth of the country.

#### **Measures to deal with malnutrition:**

- The government has been working toward reducing malnutrition and introduced several programs but, the improvement recorded is marginal. Following are certain measures that will help in improving the nutritional status:

#### Financial commitment:

- There should be an increase in the investment in children and women's health & nutrition to ensure sustainable development and better quality of life.
- The government has implemented several measures such as Prime Minister's Overreaching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) but the budget allocation for POSHAN 2.0 is not very satisfactory. Hence, there is a need for a better investment.

#### Reforms at the local level:

- The local government should create awareness about the issue, its impacts, and solutions to the problem of malnutrition.
- There should be direct contact between the nutritionally vulnerable groups and the local government to ensure the last-mile delivery of key nutrition services and interventions.
- This will ensure greater awareness on the one hand and proper planning and implementation of programs at the grassroots level on the other, which can then be replicated at the district and national levels.

#### Education:

- Education can improve the nutritional status of women and children as well. A little awareness among the citizens can lead to the change.
- One can take the initiative at a personal level and become the agent of change.

#### Evaluation:

- There should be a proper mechanism for the implementation and evaluation of a program. The ground challenges should be considered and then policies should be implemented.
- The nutritional status across the states should be evaluated time-to-time. The challenge of malnutrition should be taken practically and innovatively.
- Everyone should take initiative to deal with nutritional deficiencies so that a healthy future can be secured.

#### Nut Graf

*The NFHS-5 survey shows some marginal improvement in nutritional indicators. Stunting, wasting, and Anemia are still at significant levels. There should be a proper mechanism to deal with the nutritional challenge.*

## F. Prelims Facts

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## G. Tidbits

## 'ASI Act to be made more flexible'

- The Union Culture Minister has announced that a law that provides for the preservation of monuments and archaeological sites will be made more flexible and people-friendly.
- The Culture Ministry has been working on an amendment to the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, to change the present 100-metre prohibited area around protected monuments to site-specific limits.
- The need for ASI to focus more on employment generation in the tourism sector, and funds to be provided for excavations and training for States is also under consideration.
- The ASI would hoist the national flag at 2,000 monuments in the country on Independence Day as a part of the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign.
- The G20 leader's summit to be hosted by India next year would be an opportunity to showcase the country's culture and heritage.

## Elderly lack financial, social security: study

- A national survey undertaken by HelpAge India revealed that almost half of the elderly population are economically dependent on their families for income.
- It also showed that 34% relied on pensions and cash transfers, while 40% of the surveyed people have expressed a desire to work "as long as possible".
- It highlights the need to pay heed to the lack of social security for senior citizens in the country.
- The report was released by the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry on the eve of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.
- It was based on a survey of the involvement of 4,399 senior citizens and 2,200 caregivers across more than twenty cities.
- The survey showed that 52% of them have inadequate income; 40% did not feel financially secure; 57% have expenditures in excess of their savings, and for 45% the pension amount was not enough for survival.
- HelpAge India had been advocating for a universal pension of ₹3,000 a month.
- The survey also found that 71% of senior citizens were not working, while 36% were willing to work and 40% wanted to work "as long as possible". As many as 30% of the elders were willing to volunteer their time for various social causes.
- 87% of elders reported there is the availability of healthcare facilities nearby, however, 78% said unavailability of app-based online healthcare facilities and a significant 67% of them told that they do not have any health insurance and only 13% are covered under government insurance schemes.
- While 59% of elders mentioned that elder abuse was "prevalent" in society only 10% accepted being victims themselves.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements with regards to the census exercise in India:

1. Census is conducted under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948.
2. The decennial Census is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. The information collected during the population Census is so confidential that it is not even accessible to the courts of law.

Choose the correct code.

1. 1 & 2 only
2. 2 & 3 only
3. 1 & 3 only
4. All of the above

Difficulty Level: (Level – Medium)

Answer: D

Explanation:

- An Act to provide for certain matters in connection with the taking of census. This Act may be called the Census Act, 1948.
- The decennial Census of India has been conducted 15 times, as of 2011. Census Division assists the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India for timely and successful conduct of Census Operations once in ten years in the country.
- The information gathered during the census is so private that it is not even available to courts of law. The Census Act of 1948 ensures confidentiality. The legislation establishes penalties for both public and census authorities who fail to comply with or violate any part of the Act.
- Hence all the statements are correct

Q2. Consider the following statements with regards to the National Pension System:

1. NPS is being implemented and regulated by PFRDA (Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority).
2. OCI (Overseas Citizens of India) and PIO (Person of Indian Origin) card holders and Hindu Undivided Family (HUFs) are not eligible for opening of NPS accounts.
3. The withdrawals are permitted from the Tier 1 account as per the needs of the subscriber as and when claimed.

Choose the incorrect code:

1. 1 & 2 only
2. 2 & 3 only
3. 1 & 3 only
4. All of the above

Difficulty Level: (Level –Medium)

**Answer:B**

**Explanation:**

- National Pension System is now regulated under PFRDA Act, 2013 and regulation framed thereunder by Department of Financial Services and PFRDA. Under the NPS, every Government servant is registered and allotted a Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN). Hence statement 1 is correct.
- NPS is now made available for Overseas Citizens of India (OCI). OCI will be considered at par with Non-Resident Indian (NRI) while subscribing to NPS. The option of the NPS Tier II account will not be available for both NRI & OCI Subscribers. Hence statement 2 is incorrect.
- The NPS Tier 1 account matures when the member reaches the age of 60, however you can defer withdrawal until the age of 70. You can take up to 60% of your corpus tax-free under existing NPS withdrawal guidelines for withdrawal after maturity. Hence statement 3 is incorrect.

Q3. The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, a development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) has four more members apart from the five founding states. Name them. (Level - Difficult)

1. Bangladesh, Egypt, UAE, Uruguay
2. Italy, Israel, Japan, Germany
3. Bangladesh, Lebanon, Singapore, Australia
4. Nigeria, Mexico, Fiji, Kuwait

**Difficulty Level:**

**Answer:A**

**Explanation:**

- The New Development Bank (NDB) was established in 2015 by BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The Bank's membership is open to members of the United Nations.
- Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Uruguay joined the NDB in 2021.
- Hence option A is correct.

Q4. Consider the following statements with regards to the Periodic Labor Force Survey: (Level - Easy)

1. It was launched by the National Statistical Office.
2. The National Statistical Office (NSO) uses "rotational panel sampling design" in urban areas to assess the labor force participation rate (LFPR).

3. The Labor Force Participation Rate is the percentage of persons in the labor force (that is, working or seeking work or available for work) in the population.

Choose the correct code:

1. 1 & 2 only
2. 2 & 3 only
3. 1 & 3 only
4. All of the above

Difficulty Level:

Answer:D

Explanation:

- Considering the importance of availability of labour force data at more frequent time intervals, National Statistical Office (NSO) launched Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) in 2017. Hence statement 1 is correct
- The Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS) gives estimates of Key employment and unemployment Indicators like, the Labor Force Participation Rates (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Unemployment Rate (UR), etc. Hence statement 2 is correct
- Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR): LFPR is defined as the percentage of persons in the labour force (i.e. working or seeking or available for work)in the population. Hence statement 3 is correct

PYQ (2021)

Q5. With reference to Madanapalle of Andhra Pradesh, which one of the following statements is

correct?

1. Pingali Venkayya designed the tricolour Indian National Flag here.
2. Pattabhi Sitaramaiah led the Quit India Movement of Andhra region from here.
3. Rabindranath Tagore translated the National Anthem from Bengali to English here.
4. Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott set up headquarters of Theosophical Society first here.

Difficulty Level: (Level – Difficult)

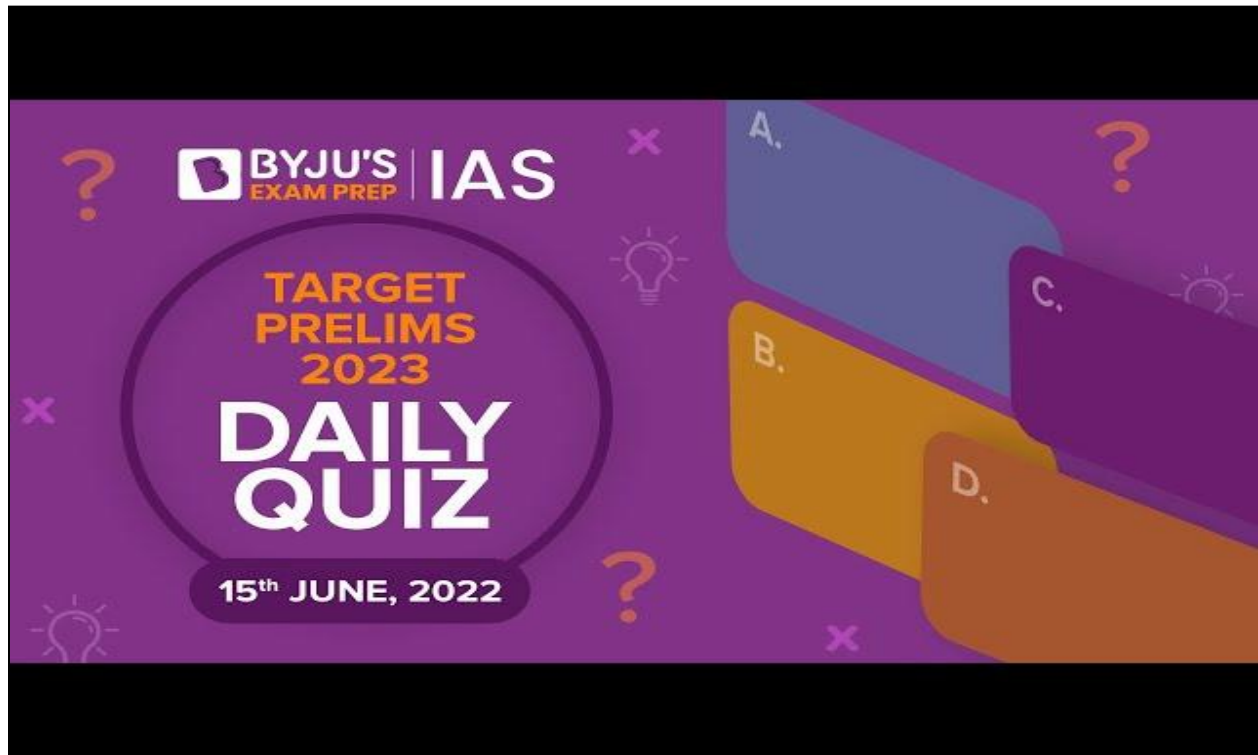
Answer – C

Explanation:

In 1919, Rabindranath Tagore during his brief stay at Theosophical college, Madanapalle, a town in Chittoor, A.P., translated his Bengali poem / National Anthem 'Jana Gana Mana' into English as 'Morning Song of India'.

CHECK ANSWERS:-

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



1,482

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. Is there a possibility of future Artificial Intelligence technologies becoming 'conscious'? Critically examine the concerns. (250 words; 15 marks) (GS III Science & Technology)
2. Since child marriage is rampant in India, will increasing the age of marriage for women solve this issue? Discuss and suggest a way to end child marriage. (250 words; 15 marks) (GS I Social Issues)

### IAS General Studies Notes Links

Csat Syllabus	Which Is The Highest Peak In India
Mid Day Meal Scheme	West Bengal Public Service Commission
Fundamental Rights Of Indian Constitution	First Freedom Fighter Of India
In Which Year India Got Independence	Parliamentary System
Panipat War 1	Primary Sector Examples



