

31 Oct 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



TABLE OF CONTENTS
A. GS 1 Related
B. GS 2 Related GOVERNANCE 1. Anti-Superstition Laws in India
C. GS 3 Related
D. GS 4 Related
E. Editorials INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS 1. A check over of the U.S.'s much anticipated NSS
F. Prelims Facts 1. Gangetic Dolphins
G. Tidbits 1. Share of stubble burning in Delhi's pollution
2. National Unity Day 2022
3. C-295 Transport Aircraft
H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions
I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: GOVERNANCE

1. Anti-Superstition Laws in India

Syllabus: Government Policies & Interventions

Mains: Need for a comprehensive Anti-Superstition law in India.

Context: Recently two women were murdered as part of “ritualistic human sacrifices” in Kerala.

Introduction:

- The brutal murders of two women as part of “ritualistic human sacrifices” have sparked a debate about the prevalence of superstitious beliefs, black magic and sorcery in Kerala.
- As per the 2021 report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), six deaths were linked to human sacrifices, while witchcraft was the motive for 68 killings.
 - Kerala saw two cases of human sacrifice.
 - The maximum number of witchcraft cases were reported from Chhattisgarh (20), followed by Madhya Pradesh (18) and Telangana (11).

Witchcraft-related and child/human sacrifice-related deaths 2012-21

Data for child/human sacrifice-related deaths in 2012 and 2013 is not accounted for in the NCRB

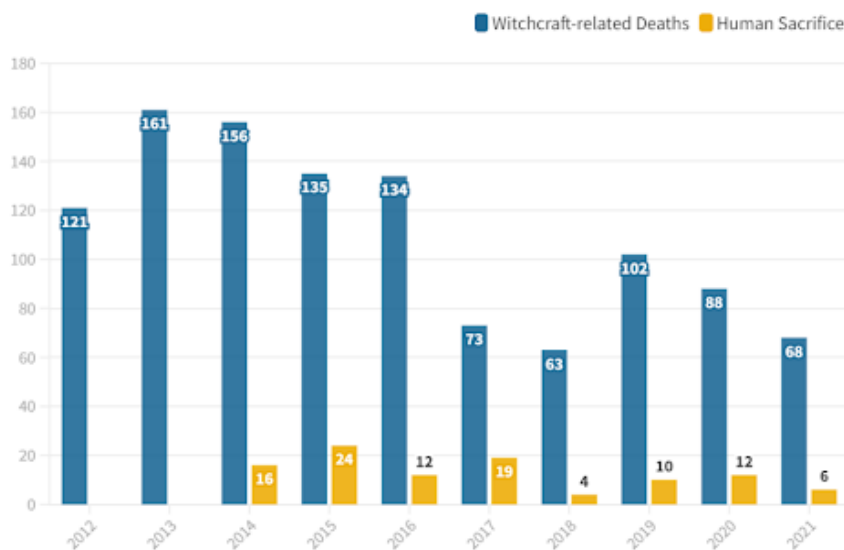


Image Source: The Hindu

What are the laws in India?

- While presently there exists no nationwide legislation to deal with superstitious practices, black magic, or human sacrifice in particular, certain sections of the Indian Penal Code enlist penalties applicable for such incidents.
- Section 302 (punishment for murder) takes cognisance of human sacrifice, but only after the murder is committed.
- Section 295A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) works to discourage such practices.
- [Article 51A \(h\)](#) of the Indian Constitution makes it a fundamental duty for Indian citizens to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform.
- Other provisions under the Drugs and Magic Remedies Act of 1954 also aim to tackle the impact of various superstitious activities present in the country

State Specific Laws:

- In the absence of a nationwide legislation, a few States have enacted laws to counter witchcraft and protect women from deadly 'witch-hunting'.
- Bihar was the first State to enact a law to prevent witchcraft, identification of a woman as a witch in October 1999.

- A similar law was passed in Jharkhand in 2001 — the Prevention of Witch (Daain) Practices Act.
- Chhattisgarh enacted the Chhattisgarh Tonahi (witch) Pratadna Nivaran Act in 2005.
- Following the directions of the Odisha High Court to frame a law to deal with rising cases of witch-hunting in the State, the Odisha Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill was passed by the Assembly in 2013.
- The Maharashtra Prevention and Eradication of Human Sacrifice and other Inhuman, Evil and Aghori Practices and Black Magic Act, 2013 was passed after the murder of anti-superstition activist Dr. Narendra Dabholkar.
- The Assam Witch Hunting (Prohibition, Prevention and Protection) Act, 2015, which received the President's assent in 2018, prohibits witch hunting completely.
- Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Act, 2017 came into effect in January 2020.
 - The law bans several practices related to black magic and superstition such as, forcing a person to walk on fire at religious festivals and the practice of piercing rods from one side of the jaw to the other.

Need for a country-wide Anti-superstition and Black Magic Act:

- Allowing such practices violates an individual's fundamental right to equality and right to life under Articles 14 and 21 of the Indian Constitution.
- Such practices tend to target the vulnerable sections of society in a lopsided manner, including women, children, and the poor.
- In the absence of steps to combat superstition, illogical and unscientific practises like faith healing, quackery, and disinformation about medical treatments may also rise, which may have serious negative impacts on citizens' health and public order.

***Nut Graf:** Recent incidents of "Human Sacrifices" in Kerala have increased the demand for a strict anti-superstition law as India lacks a comprehensive law to address such acts. Comprehensive legislation along with increased awareness among the masses must be the focus to deal with this social issue.*

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. A check over of the U.S.'s much anticipated NSS

Syllabus: Effect of policies of developed countries on India's interest.

Mains: National Security Strategy of the U.S.

Prelims: National Security Strategy(NSS).

Context: U.S. released its National Security Strategy.

Details:

- The United States of America released its National Security Strategy (NSS). According to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, it is compulsory on the part of every U.S. president to formulate their NSS and communicate the vision of the Executive regarding national security to the Legislative body.
- The NSS reflects the views of the government regarding the National Security agenda.
- Moreover, it also gives Congress an opportunity to assess the investment areas and overall expenditure that the country will have to bear to achieve national security goals.

New National Security Strategy:

- The newly proposed NSS majorly focuses on the current decade as a 'decisive' one where the U.S. is looking forward to sustaining its global leadership, improving its economy, and building a huge and good network of partnerships and alliances.
- It also wishes to counter China and Russia as its strategic competitor and disruptor respectively. It aims to defend its democracy and boost its competitiveness.
- Furthermore, it portrays the ambitious agenda of the present administration, comprehensively covering transnational challenges, and tying domestic issues with international ones. These would incorporate issues like food insecurity, inflation, climate change, pandemics, energy security, and terrorism. Apart from these issues, a substantial focus is also given to outer space security and governance.
- The three main fulcrums of the new NSS are:
 - Invest: The strategy seeks to invest in the "tools of influence and power" by bolstering the domestic economy, upgrading critical infrastructure, and investing in technologies like microchips and semiconductors.

- Build: It aims to build ‘the strongest possible coalition of countries,’ recognizing both the ambitions and limitations of the United States in unilaterally controlling global geopolitics.
- Modernize: Modernization seeks to cater to internal and external security demands simultaneously.
- The three broad purposes served with the release of NSS are:
 - It fulfills the strategic vision of the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (made public in March 2021).
 - It provides better clarity and regulation on other policy measures of the present administration.
 - It further puts an end to all speculations on the critical presidential doctrines in the U.S.
- It comes at the time of mid-term elections (November 2022) and can sway the elections owing to policy clarity.
- One of the most critical aspects of the NSS is to inform the U.S. Department of Defence’s strategy, particularly in two major areas- nuclear use and missile defence. Though the release of the NSS was delayed because of the [Russia-Ukraine war](#), it has provided useful lessons about the potent use of nuclear weapons, which was last used in the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962).
- U.S. administration also released the Nuclear Posture Review, the National Defense Strategy, and the Missile Defense Review recently, thereby reinforcing the basic idea of the NSS.

China-Russia challenge:

- The NSS takes both immediate as well as long-term views on the emerging challenges and threats from China. Though it has outlined a joint strategy to deal with external challenges by out-performing China and restricting Russia, its focus is more tilted towards China.
- The present government places China at the pivot of its decadal outlook. The prominence of China is increasing globally and is particularly pronounced in the Indo-Pacific region across dimensions like development, economy, security, technology, global governance, and diplomacy.
- The document names China as the ‘only competitor’ with the ability and intent to change the international order in a fundamental way.
- The NSS has also clearly opposed the unilateral change in Taiwan’s status by China. Therefore, creating a collective capacity through international alliances and partnerships.
- The new strategy also makes a serious case for downgrading the Russian economy, global influence, military, and soft power. It also identifies countries like India and Japan to fill the emerging gaps.

- It also hints at India's integration into important global forums like [G7](#). However, it should be noted that these reflect the interests of the U.S., rather than the ambitions of its Indo-Pacific partners.

India's dimension in NSS:

- NSS identifies India as an important bilateral and multilateral partner in the Indo-Pacific region apart from its significance as a major defense partner and the largest democracy.
- It gives importance to the U.S.-India partnership through the [Quad](#) (Australia, India, Japan the U.S.) and the [I2U2](#) (Israel, India, the United Arab Emirates, and the U.S).

Nut Graf: *The National Security Strategy of the United States was released. It is one of the most important presidential doctrines of the country. The recent strategy has clarified various policy decisions of the present government and aims to sustain the leadership of the United States in the world by adopting appropriate actions.*

F. Prelims Facts

1. Gangetic Dolphins

Syllabus: *GS03-Biodiversity and Conservation*

Prelims: *National Aquatic Animal of India.*

Context: Dolphins have started breeding again in Ganga river as water quality improves.

Introduction:

- The [National Mission for Clean Ganga \(NMCG\)](#), which implements the government's flagship scheme Namami Gange, has been taking some initiatives for saving dolphins.
 - Dolphins have started coming back to the Ganga with improvement in the quality of the river water made possible by the Namami Gange programme.
 - At present, the population of dolphins in the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh is estimated to be around 600
- Aquatic life is an indicator of the health of river ecosystems. As the Gangetic dolphin is at the top of the food chain, protecting the species and its habitat will ensure conservation of aquatic lives of the river.
- The Uttar Pradesh government has completed 23 projects under the Namami Gange project since the implementation of the scheme in 2015.

- The assessment of river water quality during 2014 to 2022 at 20 locations in Uttar Pradesh has shown that there has been a significant improvement in parameters such as dissolved oxygen (DO), biochemical demand (BOD) and faecal coliform (FC).
- Under the programme, the State had stopped the flow of more than 460 MLD (million litres a day) of sewage into the Ganga.

Threats to Dolphins in Ganga:

- Due to the flowing of dirty water from sewage and industries, River Ganga became polluted and the biodiversity, especially [Ganga Dolphins](#) started disappearing.
- Dam Construction and other irrigation-related projects make them vulnerable to inbreeding and other threats because they cannot move to new areas.
 - Dolphins below a dam are threatened by heavy pollution, increased fishing activities and vessel traffic.
 - Dams disturb the migration, breeding cycles and habitat of fish and other prey which deprive dolphins from their food source.

G. Tidbits

1. Share of stubble burning in Delhi's pollution

- The share of [stubble burning](#) in Delhi's PM2.5 pollution rose to 26% on October 30, 2022, the highest this year.
- Delhi's air quality remained in the 'very poor' category.
- The impact of stubble burning on the Delhi air pollution was low earlier (at 7%) due to a prolonged rain spell in October and slow winds.
- Delhi administration has resorted to local measures such as water sprinkling and anti-smog guns to control localised sources of pollution.
- During the winter season, there is usually a spike in pollution in the city due to an increase of biomass burning and localised factors such as vehicular pollution and dust. These factors, combined with meteorological situations such as changes in the speed or direction of the wind, lead to a further spike in pollution levels.

2. National Unity Day 2022

- National Unity Day, also called Rashtriya Ekta Diwas, is celebrated on 31st October each year to commemorate the birth anniversary of [Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel](#).
- This year will mark the 147th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

- It was celebrated for the first time in 2014 with the aim to pay tribute to the ‘Iron man of India’ by remembering his extraordinary works for the country.
- According to the Union Home Ministry of India, Rashtriya Ekta Diwas “will provide an opportunity to reaffirm the inherent strength and resilience of our nation to withstand the actual and potential threats to the unity, integrity, and security of our country.”
- Even an award is dedicated to Rashtriya Ekta Diwas to inspire the nation with the contributions made by individuals for the country.

3. C-295 Transport Aircraft

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 30, 2022 laid the foundation stone of a C295 aircraft manufacturing plant in Vadodara, Gujarat.
- Tata-Airbus consortium will manufacture the transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- It is the first project of its kind in which a military aircraft will be manufactured in India by a private company.
- It is also the first time that the C295 aircraft will be manufactured outside of Europe.
- In September 2021, India signed a Rs 21,935 crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space to procure 56 C295 aircraft to replace the IAF’s ageing Avro-748 planes, which entered service in the early 1960s.
- The C295MW is a transport aircraft with 5 to 10-tonne capacity and a maximum speed of 480 kmph. It has a rear ramp door for quick reaction and para-dropping of troops and cargo. Short take-off and landing from semi-prepared surfaces are some other features.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements: (Level-Medium)

1. When a state gives a general consent to the CBI for probing a case, the agency is not required to seek fresh permission every time it enters that state in connection with investigation or for every case.
2. Withdrawal of consent, if any, by a State Government can be effected prospectively and not retrospectively.

Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?

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

Answer: d

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is correct,** The consent of the state government to CBI can be either case-specific or general.
 - General consent is normally given by states to help the CBI in investigation of cases of corruption against central government employees in their states. This is consent by default, in the absence of which the CBI would have to apply to the state government in every case, and before taking even small actions.
- **Statement 02 is correct,** Withdrawal of consent by a State Government can be effected prospectively and not retrospectively.
 - Further, in the cases which are referred by the Constitutional Courts, the entry of CBI cannot be denied by that State as these do not require the consent of the State.

Q2. With respect to C295 aircraft, which of the following statements is/are correct? (Level-Difficult)

1. The C295 was originally produced by a French aircraft manufacturer named Construccionaes Aeronauticcas SA.
2. The C295MW is a transport aircraft with 5 to 10-tonne capacity and a maximum speed of 480 kmph.

Options:

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

Answer: b

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is incorrect**, The C295 was originally produced by a *Spanish* aircraft manufacturer named Construcciones Aeronauticas SA.
- **Statement 02 is correct**, The C295MW is a transport aircraft with 5 to 10-tonne capacity and a maximum speed of 480 kmph. It has a rear ramp door for quick reaction and para-dropping of troops and cargo.

Q3. Which of the following provisions were amended by the First Amendment Act, 1951? (Level-Difficult)

1. Empowered the state to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and economically backward classes.
2. Added Ninth Schedule to protect the land reform and other laws included in it from the judicial review.
3. Gave the status of a state to Nagaland and made special provisions for it
4. Empowered the Parliament to control the production, supply and distribution of the foodstuffs, cattle fodder, raw cotton, cotton seed and raw jute in the public interest.

Options:

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

Answer: a

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is correct**, [1st Constitutional Amendment Act, 1951](#) empowered the state to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and economically backward classes.
- **Statement 02 is correct**, It added Ninth schedule to protect the land reform and other laws included in it from the judicial review.
- **Statement 03 is incorrect**, : 13th Constitutional amendment act, 1962 gave the status of a state to Nagaland and made special provisions for it.
- **Statement 04 is incorrect**, Third Amendment Act 1954, amended the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution and empowered the Parliament to control the production, supply and distribution of the foodstuffs, cattle fodder, raw cotton, cotton seed and raw jute in the public interest.

Q4. Which of the following countries are part of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)? (Level-Medium)

1. Bahrain
2. Iran
3. Kuwait
4. Oman
5. Qatar
6. Saudi Arabia
7. United Arab Emirate
8. Yemen

Options:

- a) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only
- b) 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 only
- c) 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 only
- d) 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8 only

Answer: b

Explanation: The six members of the [Gulf Cooperation Council](#) are Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait.

Q5 With reference to the expenditure made by an organisation or a company, which of the following statements is/are correct? (CSE-PYQ-2022) (Level-Difficult)

1. Acquiring new technology is capital expenditure.
2. Debt financing is considered capital expenditure, while equity financing is considered revenue expenditure.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: a

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is correct**, Capital expenditure refers to the expenditure that either creates an asset or reduces the liability of the government. Therefore, acquiring new technology is considered a capital expenditure as it will generate profit in the future and helps in the creation of new assets.
- **Statement 02 is incorrect**, Revenue expenditure is referred to as the expenditure incurred by an organisation to manage the day-to-day functions of a business, which include employee wages, inventory, rent, electricity, insurance, stationery, postage, and taxes.
 - These are the expenditures that neither help in the creation of assets nor in reducing the liabilities of a business. It is recurring in nature and very essential to maintain the daily operations of a business or an organisation.
 - Debt Financing and equity financing are considered under capital expenditure.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. What is the National Security Strategy of the U.S.? Where does India figure in it? (150 words; 10 marks) (GS-2; International Relations)
2. In the context of the recent events, does India need a central Anti-Superstition Law? (150 words; 10 marks)(GS-2; Polity and Governance)