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**A. GS 1 Related**

*Nothing here for today!!!*

**B. GS 2 Related**

**Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE**

**1. In India, calls for looking beyond the binary are growing stronger**

*Syllabus: Mechanisms and laws for the protection and betterment of vulnerable sections.*

*Prelims: About Special Marriage Act, 1954*

*Mains: Examining the appeals for extending marriage rights to same-sex couples in India and various judgements by the Courts.*

**Context**

The Supreme Court has asked for the government's response to various requests for the solemnisation of same-sex marriage under the Special Marriage Act, 1954.

**For detailed background information on this issue: [Supreme Court on same-sex marriages](#)**

**Special Marriage Act, 1954**

- In India, marriages can be registered under various laws such as the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, the Muslim Marriage Act of 1954, or the Special Marriage Act of 1954.
  - The Special Marriage Act was enacted in 1954 to provide a special form of marriage in certain cases, for the registration of such and certain other marriages and divorces.
- The Special Marriage Act, 1954 has provisions for civil marriage for citizens of India and Indian nationals in foreign countries, irrespective of religion or faith followed by either party.
  - Through the Special Marriage Act, people from different religious backgrounds can come together in the bond of marriage as the Act provides the procedure for both solemnisation and registration of marriage, where either the husband or wife or both are not Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, or Sikhs.
  - As per the Act, the marrying couple must serve a notice with the relevant documents to the Marriage Officer 30 days before the date of the marriage.
    - Any person can raise objections to this marriage, before the expiration of 30 days

on the ground that the marriage would contravene one or more of the conditions laid down in the Act.

• **Conditions laid down in the Act:**

- Both individuals intending to marry must not have a living spouse.
- Both individuals must not be of unsound mind or suffering from mental disorders to such an extent as to be unfit for marriage and the procreation of children.
- The male should have completed the age of 21 years and the female the age of 18 years.
- Both the individuals are not within the degrees of prohibited relationship, provided that a custom governing at least one of the parties permits a marriage between the individuals.

**This article has been comprehensively covered in the following link:**

[UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis dated 19 June 2021](#)

C. GS 3 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

E. Editorials

**Category: SOCIETY**

**1. Still a nightmare for domestic violence survivors**

*Syllabus: GS1, Society, Issues related to women.*

*Prelims: Protection of Women in Domestic Violence Act 2005 (PWDVA)*

*Mains: Domestic violence.*

**Context:** 25 November is recognized as the International Day for the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women.

**Details:**

- Domestic violence is considered to be a violation of human rights and is a punishable offence under the [Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 \(PWDVA\)](#).
  - It is progressive legislation that promises both civil and criminal protections to protect and support women from violence within the household.
  - However, the promise and provisions of the law are unevenly implemented, unavailable and out of reach for most women.
- According to the National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21), 32% of ever-married women aged between 18 to 49 years have experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence committed by their husbands. It was revealed that more rural women in contrast to urban women have reported experiences of domestic violence. It should be noted that these figures do not capture the prevalence of violence by other family members.
- NFHS-5 reports that despite a third of women being subject to domestic violence, only 14 % have sought help. This number is much lower in rural areas of the country.
- Moreover, NFHS-5 data further reports that women are more likely than men to justify a scenario in which it is acceptable for a husband to commit violence against his wife.

**For more information on NFHS-5, read here: [National Family Health Survey 5](#)**

### **Research Analysis:**

- A research was conducted in Maharashtra, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu to analyze the everyday realities, fears, obstacles, prejudices, and help-seeking attitudes of women experiencing domestic violence.
- It was analyzed that:
  - Many women were hopeful of the change in their husband's behaviour and eventual change in their conditions.
  - Women do not report cases of domestic violence, as they believe that it would be a problem or a source of tension for their families. They don't want to become a burden on others.
  - They believe that by naming the violence, they would bring dishonour and shame to the family, irrespective of the women's level of education, caste, or class.
  - The above fears were more pronounced for migrant women, transpeople, or those with sisters, or ill/older/deceased parents, as they felt that the violence committed against them was their own individual responsibility.
- On the aspect of seeking help: Two main groups were identified in this category -
  - Those who shared experiences within six months:
    - These women turned to their parents. In the majority of cases, parents insisted their daughters preserve the family environment and adjust and accommodate their husband's (and/or his family's) needs.
    - In a minority of cases, the daughter's welfare was prioritized and measures to mediate or exit the relationship were taken before resorting to police and lawyers.

- Those who shared experiences after 5 or more years:
  - In these cases the actions of relatives or neighbours (more specifically witnesses of violence) were crucial.
  - The ‘tipping’ points in these cases that led to reporting were survivors’ concerns for their children’s safety, the discovery of a husband’s affair, or extreme violence that required medical assistance.
  - The major reasons behind such a long struggle were financial insecurity and/or patriarchal norms associated with property ownership.
- It was found that women who took action against domestic violence got new hope in life.
- The research also highlighted that many women have nowhere else to go. Moreover, accessing legal justice through the courts was possible only for women with independent wealth and connections or those supported by some [NGOs](#).
- Role of Police in reporting domestic violence:
  - The majority of the participants of the research reported that police were more likely to send women back to their violent households without filing an official complaint or connecting women to protection officers as explicitly given in PWDVA.
  - Many states of India have not yet implemented the provision of Protection Officers and if implemented they are under-resourced, under-skilled, or over-burdened.
  - However, a small number of women have reported a positive response from the police.

### Conclusion:

- It is a powerful step for women to share experiences of violence. Moreover, accessing support and services available through legal measures often causes disappointment, fear, and uncertainty.
- Transforming the situation for the survivors also depend on the ability to secure economic self-sufficiency by pursuing new skills and livelihood opportunities.
- Even though it is well recognized that domestic violence is a crime, and there is the availability of civil remedies, managing the fallout of domestic violence is still being subcontracted to survivors and their families.

**Also read:** [International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women \(25 November\)](#)

*Nut Graf: Despite the existence of a strict law against domestic violence, it persists in Indian society to a great extent. It is important that its accessibility and enforcement should be made much more effective to curb this menace and make the world a safer place for women.*

**Category: ENVIRONMENT**

## 1. Loss and Damage decisions, pitfalls and promises

*Syllabus: GS3, Environment, Climate Change negotiations.*

*Mains: Loss and Damage fund.*

*Prelims: COP27.*

**Context:** Outcome of COP27 - Loss and Damage Fund.

### **Details:**

- A major outcome of [COP27](#) is the decision on the new funding arrangements focusing on Loss and Damage (L and D), especially for countries that are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.
- A transitional committee would be established to prepare elements for the operationalization of the new funding arrangement. The new arrangement would be adopted at COP28.
- The intent of the committee is to identify and expand funding sources and restore faith in the process of multilateralism.
- However, there are concerns associated with the non-compliance by developed countries in terms of climate finance commitment (mobilizing \$100 billion per year by 2020).
- It is assumed that the new funding mechanism would complement the existing arrangements and include sources, funds, processes, and initiatives within and outside the Convention and the [Paris Agreement](#). This would assist in mobilizing new and additional resources.
- It would dilute the consistent demand raised at COP27, and outside of it by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) to set up a dedicated loss and damage response fund, which is on top of existing climate finance commitments.
- This decision recognizes the mitigation-centric nature of climate change negotiations suiting the developed nations.
  - The mitigation-centric nature of the negotiation can be traced to Article 2 of the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\) 1992](#).
  - Article 2 states that adaptation is possible once ‘stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations is achieved at a level that prevents anthropogenic interference with the climate system and allows ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change.’
  - Article 8(1) only makes the party recognize the significance of averting, minimizing, and addressing L and D related to climate change.

**For more information on SIDS and AOSIS, read here: [Small Island Developing States](#).**

**Background details of funding negotiations:**

- The developed nations have constantly opposed the liability of climate change in all the climate negotiations of the past. Their contribution to certain funds is based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR).
- The aspect of compensation requires a legal challenge of establishing causal relationships between the perpetrator and the victim of climate change, as the impact of [greenhouse gas](#) emissions occurs substantially later.
- While the negotiation for the UNFCCC in 1991 was under process, AOSIS “unsuccessfully” tried to establish an international insurance pool to compensate the most vulnerable small island and low-lying coastal developing countries for loss and damage arising from sea level rise.
- If the 1991 proposal was realized then ‘who’ pays for L and D would have been clear. The international insurance pool concept requires in-depth research and deliberation amongst major emitters in developed and developing countries.
- AOSIS in Egypt insisted on a dedicated L and D Response Fund instead of an insurance pool.
- It is assumed that the fund would also draw upon other potential sources like a tax on oil and gas companies’ profits.
- However, taxing fossil fuel, oil, and gas companies require further research as it is an alternative to the nation-state approach to climate change negotiations. It highlights that ‘significant emissions have come from fossil fuels sourced from non-Annex I countries like India, Brazil, China, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Iran, and South Africa, and from countries that are not large-scale emitters like Angola, Kuwait, Nigeria, Libya, Malaysia, and Venezuela’.
- Another part of COP27’s decision was a German-backed “Global Shield Scheme against climate risks”.
  - The aim of the initiative is to increase pre-arranged finance to be disbursed before or just after disasters occur.
- The AOSIS supports a dedicated L and D response fund to disburse funds from different propositions, including the Global Shield, and avoid a piecemeal approach.
- The other possible approaches to address L and D are litigation. However, there are challenges of causation, attribution, and standing at both domestic and international levels.

**For more information on Climate Change, read here: [Climate Change In India](#)**

**Also read: [COP27 - Progress and Outcomes: Sansad TV Perspective](#)**

***Nut Graf:** One of the major outcomes of COP27 is the establishment of the Loss and Damage fund. There are still some uncertainties in fixing the responsibilities of climate change and in the funding process. The transitional committee will deliberate on these aspects and operationalize them in COP28.*

## F. Prelims Facts

## 1. SARAS 3 Telescope

*Syllabus: GS-3; Science and Technology; Achievements of Indians in science & technology*

*Prelims: About SARAS 3 Telescope*

### Context

SARAS 3 telescope has helped to provide key details about the nature of the universe's first stars and galaxies.

### SARAS 3 Telescope



*Image Source: The Hindu*

- SARAS 3 is a radio telescope designed and developed indigenously at the Raman Research Institute (RRI).
  - The Raman Research Institute (RRI) is an autonomous research institute for scientific research located in Bangalore.
  - RRI was founded by Nobel laureate [C. V. Raman](#) in 1948.
- In 2020, the SARAS 3 radio telescope was deployed in lakes in Karnataka namely the Dandiganahalli Lake and Sharavathi backwaters.
  - Radio telescopes are astronomical instruments consisting of radio receivers and antenna systems that help detect radio-frequency radiation emitted by extraterrestrial sources.
  - Radio telescopes are used to study naturally occurring radio light from stars, galaxies, black holes, and other astronomical objects.
- With the help of data from the SARAS 3 telescope, astronomers and researchers have been able to determine the properties of radio luminous galaxies formed in a period about 200 million years after the Big Bang which is known as the Cosmic Dawn.



- Researchers and astronomers have used the inferences from SARAS 3 data to throw light on the energy output, luminosity, and masses of the first generation of galaxies that are bright in radio wavelengths.
- In March 2022, the [SARAS 3](#) team used the data from the telescope to reject claims of the detection of an anomalous 21-cm signal from Cosmic Dawn made by the EDGES radio telescope developed by researchers from Arizona State University and MIT.

## 2. Sriharikota gets India's first private space launchpad

*Syllabus: GS-3; Science and Technology; Awareness in the fields of Space*

*Prelims: About India's first private launchpad*

### Context

India's first-ever launchpad for a private launch vehicle has been established at Sriharikota.

### Details

- Agnikul, which is a Chennai-headquartered space tech start-up, has established India's first-ever launchpad operated by a private player at Sriharikota.
- The new facility was designed by Agnikul and was executed with the support of ISRO and the [Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center \(IN-SPACe\)](#).
- The new facility consists of two sections namely the Agnikul launchpad (ALP) and the Agnikul Mission Control Centre (AMCC).
- The launchpad is designed keeping in mind the requirements to support liquid stage controlled launches and also the need for ISRO's range operations team to monitor key flight safety parameters during launches.
- Further, the facility has the ability to share crucial information with ISRO's Mission Control Centre.
- Other initiatives of Agnikul:
  - **Agnibaan** is the company's highly customisable, two-stage launch vehicle which is capable of carrying a 100 kg payload to [Low Earth Orbits \(LEO\)](#) of around 700 km and enables plug-and-play configuration.
  - **Agnilet** is the world's first single-piece 3-D printed engine fully designed and manufactured in India. Agnilet successfully test-fired in 2021 which made Agnikul the first company in India to test its engines at ISRO.

## 1. Right to religion does not include right to convert, Home Ministry tells court

- The Ministry of Home Affairs told the Supreme Court that the right to religion does not include the right to convert other individuals to a particular religion, particularly through coercion, deception, allurements and other means.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs held that the term “propagate” in Article 25 ([right to freedom of religion](#)) does not include the right to convert and instead, it refers to a positive right to spread one’s religion by exposition of its tenets.
- The Union Government has held that forceful, coercive, or fraudulent conversions violate the right to freedom of conscience of an individual and disrupt public order. Thus, the state has the power to regulate or restrict it.
- The government also has reiterated the fact that such laws that have been enacted in the past to address the challenges of organised, sophisticated large-scale illegal conversion were upheld by the Supreme Court.
- Recently, the Supreme Court has also noted that fraudulent religious conversions adversely impact the security of the nation and freedom of religion and conscience of citizens and has urged the government to step in and clarify in an affidavit what it intended to do to curb coercive or fraudulent religious conversions.
- The court had further held that the freedom of religion is guaranteed but there is no freedom of religion by forced conversion as every individual has the right to choose their religion, but not by forced conversion or by temptation.

## 2. Centre plans to document cultures, social practices of indigenous, tribal societies

- The Union government along with the [National Commission for Scheduled Tribes \(NCST\)](#), is looking for the “re-documentation” of the cultures and social practices of indigenous and tribal societies in India as the existing literature is heavily based on knowledge compiled by colonial administrators.
- The government now aims to encourage more sociologists, anthropologists and researchers from India’s indigenous and tribal communities to research and re-document the cultural, social and historical practices of their own communities as this move will help the government to understand tribal societies, identity and rights better.
- During a recent event, the President of India Droupadi Murmu said that knowledge of tribal communities such as the ways of treating illnesses, making weapons, protecting nature and the transfer of knowledge through community song must be included in the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) which is in the focus through the [National Education Policy](#)

- The President of India also held that the knowledge of tribal communities plays a key role in making India a “knowledge superpower”.

### 3. Canada says India a crucial partner, terms China an ‘increasingly disruptive’ power

- Canada has released its “Indo-Pacific strategy” in which it has said that the Indo-Pacific region will play a significant role in its future, regarded China as an increasingly disruptive global power and recognised India as a crucial partner.
- The strategy document has said that Canada will seek opportunities to collaborate and engage in dialogue with India in areas of common interest such as security, promotion of democracy, pluralism and human rights.
- Recognising India’s increasing strategic, economic and demographic importance in the Indo-Pacific region strategy, the document further says that China will improve economic ties through deeper trade and investment and by cooperating on building resilient supply chains.
- The strategy document has also sought to expand market access by concluding an Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA) as a step toward a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and improve people-to-people-connect with India by investing in bolstering Canada’s visa-processing capacity in New Delhi and Chandigarh and also by supporting academic, educational, cultural, youth and research exchanges.

Read more about: [India-Canada relations](#)

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

### Q1. Consider the following statements with regard to Ordinances: (Level – Medium)

1. Ordinances may be promulgated only if both the Houses of Parliament are not in session.
2. In RC Cooper Case 1970, Supreme Court held that the President’s decision to promulgate an ordinance could be challenged on the grounds that ‘immediate action’ was not required, and the ordinance had been issued primarily to bypass debate and discussion in the legislature.
3. Article 123 places no numeric limits on ordinances.

Choose the correct code:

- a. One statement is correct
- b. Two statements are correct
- c. All statements are correct
- d. None of them

**Answer: b**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, The President can promulgate an ordinance **only when both houses are not in session or only one house is in session**.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, In RC Cooper Case 1970, Supreme Court held that the President's decision to promulgate an ordinance could be challenged on the grounds that 'immediate action' was not required, and the ordinance had been issued primarily to bypass debate and discussion in the legislature.
- **Statement 3 is correct**, Article 123 places no numeric limits on ordinances.

**Q2. Consider the following statements with regard to India's stand on the Israel – Palestine issue: (Level – Difficult)**

1. In 2019, India voted in favour of Israel at the ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) to deny observer status to a Palestinian organisation named Shahed.
2. In 1947, the United Nations (UN) adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.
3. In 2017, India's PM visited only Israel and not Palestine.

**Choose the correct code:**

- a. 1 & 3 only
- b. 2 & 3 only
- c. 1 only
- d. All of the above

**Answer: d**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct**, In 2019, India voted in favour of Israel at the ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) to deny observer status to a Palestinian organisation named Shahed.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, In 1947, the United Nations (UN) adopted Resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which sought to divide the British Mandate of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.
- **Statement 3 is correct**, In 2017 Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian prime minister to visit Israel who skipped visiting the Palestinian Authority.

**Q3. Which of the following days is observed as 'Red Planet Day'? (Level – Difficult)**

- a. The day NASA launched Mariner 4 space mission towards Mars
- b. The day NASA's Curiosity rover landed on Mars
- c. The day NASA's Viking 1 landed on Mars
- d. The day NASA released first-ever photos of the Martian surface

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- November 28th is observed as Red Planet Day to commemorate the launch of the **Mariner 4** space mission towards Mars.
- Mariner 4 was launched on 28th November 1964. It was the first time that a spacecraft undertook the first flyby of the red planet and became the first-ever spacecraft to take close-up photographs of another planet.

**Q4. 'SARAS 3', recently seen in the news refers to (Level – Medium)**

- a. A Sonar used for high-end sea navigation
- b. India's deep ocean research vessel
- c. A radio telescope trying to discover radio wave signals from cosmic dawn.
- d. A specially designed speaker to catch cosmic sounds

**Answer: c**

**Explanation:**

- SARAS 3 is a radio telescope designed and developed indigenously at the Raman Research Institute (RRI).
- In 2020, the SARAS 3 radio telescope was deployed in lakes in Karnataka namely the Dandiganahalli Lake and Sharavathi backwaters.
- With the help of data from the SARAS 3 telescope, astronomers and researchers have been able to determine the properties of radio luminous galaxies formed in a period about 200 million years after the Big Bang which is known as the Cosmic Dawn.

**Q5. What is/are the consequence/consequences of a country becoming the member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group? (Level – Medium) [PYQ (2018)]**

1. It will have access to the latest and most efficient nuclear technologies.
2. It automatically becomes a member of "The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)".

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: a**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct**, The [Nuclear Suppliers Group \(NSG\)](#) is a transnational body composed of nuclear supplier countries that aim to control the proliferation of nuclear weapons by curbing the export of nuclear weapons development materials and related technology.
  - By joining NSG, countries will get access to the latest, most efficient nuclear technologies and sophisticated nuclear technology,
- **Statement 2 is not correct**, India is not a member of the NSG but wishes to be a part of the NSG. However, since India is not a member of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), China and Pakistan have objections to its enrollment.

### I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. The indigenous knowledge system of the tribal community needs to be preserved and propagated. Suggest ways to ensure the same. (250 words; 15 marks) (GS II - Polity)
2. India needs to look beyond 'binary' genders. Do you agree? Analyze. (250 words; 15 marks) (GS I - Society)