

17 Dec 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. GS 1 Related

B. GS 2 Related

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Japan's Defence Policy

C. GS 3 Related

D. GS 4 Related

E. Editorials

ART AND CULTURE

1. Forging a connect along the Ghats

SECURITY

1. Countering terror

F. Prelims Facts

1. Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

2. Hattee community

3. Trade Data by Commerce Ministry

G. Tidbits

1. 'Kasturi'

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. Japan's Defence Policy

Syllabus: *Effect of Policies & Politics of Developed & Developing Countries on India's Interests*

Mains: *Role of Japan for peace in Asia-pacific.*

Context: Japan's government approved a major defence policy overhaul on December 16, 2022.

Key Details:

- Japan approved a new national security strategy, including a significant spending hike - one of the country's largest defence overhauls since [World War II](#).
 - Cabinet approved three documents which outlined the strategy shift — the National Security Strategy (NSS), the National Defense Program Guidelines, and the Mid-Term Defense Program.
- Japan vowed to increase security spending to 2% of GDP by 2027, reshape its military command, and acquire new missiles that can strike far-flung enemy launch sites.
- Increased defence spending will bring Japan in line with NATO member guidelines.

Implications:

- This is a marked shift from the country's pacifist approach, which has dominated its political discourse for decades.
- This is done to counter threats from China and a heavily armed North Korea.
 - Japan describes China as “the greatest strategic challenge ever to securing the peace and stability of Japan”, as well as a “serious concern” for Japan and the international community.
 - Under the new strategy, the country will increase its military presence in its southernmost islands to counter Beijing's threats.
- This marks a significant increase from historic spending of around one percent and has sparked criticism over how it will be financed.

- Public polls suggest Japan's public largely backs the shift, but Japan's post-war Constitution does not officially recognise the military and limits it to nominally self-defensive capabilities.
- The documents rule out preemptive strikes and insist Japan is committed to "an exclusively defence-oriented policy".
- An effective Japanese counter-strike capability would set the stage for a far deeper level of command-and-control integration with the United States than exists today.

Japan's new approach towards China and Russia:

- The defence revamp has significantly hardened Japan's language towards China and Russia.
- Japan, which once sought enhanced ties and cooperation with Russia, now warns Moscow of its military posture in Asia and calls its proximity to China – "a strong security concern."
- Japan joined the G7 in imposing sanctions on Moscow following the invasion of Ukraine, Russia labelled Japan an "unfriendly" country and increased military activity near Japan.
- Japan has been a driving force in promoting the [Quad](#) arrangement with Australia, the US and India, with new initiatives in maritime domain awareness, climate change, disaster relief, cyberspace and infrastructure announced.

***Nut Graf:** Japan recently approved a major defence policy overhaul to counter the strengthening of nuclear missile capabilities, and rapid military build-up by China and North Korea. Worried by growing regional threats, Japan's public largely backed the shift in Japan's defence policy.*

C. GS 3 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: ART AND CULTURE

1. Forging a connect along the Ghats

Syllabus: Indian Heritage and Culture.

Mains: Kashi Tamil Sangamam - Bond between Kashi and Tamil Nadu.

Context: The Kashi Tamil Sangamam.

Details:

- The Union government's Thirty-day Kashi Tamil Sangamam programme intends to celebrate the bond between Kashi (the ancient name of Varanasi) and Tamil Nadu under the [Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat](#).
 - Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat aims to enhance interactions between people of different States/Union Territories.
- Under Kashi Tamil Sangamam, people travel from Varanasi to Sarnath, Ayodhya, and Prayagraj in six days.
- The period of the programme was chosen from November 16 to December 19, as it coincides with the Hindu month of Karthigai and would have enabled guests from the south to finish their journey before the coldest months of north India.
- The event linked the two oldest and most important centres of traditional knowledge systems in India.

Historical links between the two cities:

- Several ancient philosophers from Tamil Nadu such as Ramunajacharya visited Kashi to expand their spiritual learnings.
- Furthermore, the Tenkasi and Sivakasi temples in Tamil Nadu drew inspiration from Varanasi's Kashi Vishwanath temple after the [Pandya](#) king, Adhivēera Rama Pandiyan, went on a pilgrimage to Varanasi.
- There is a popular practice in Tamil Brahmin weddings where the groom embarks on a Kashi Yatra before he is called back to marry the bride.
- There are also multiple references to Kashi in Tamil texts like Kalittokai and Thiruppugazh.

Background Details:

- The Kashi Tamil Sangamam was proposed by the High-Powered Committee for the Promotion of Indian Languages (Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti) appointed by the Ministry of Education.
- According to the website for the event, the objective of the programme is to ensure a "holistic" approach to education and integration of the "wealth of Indian knowledge systems", as prescribed in the [National Education Policy \(NEP\) of 2020](#). The holistic approach includes 4 interrelated domains namely art, culture, knowledge, and language.
- During the inauguration of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi released the translation of the [Thirukkural](#) in 13 languages. He further announced

that a chair dedicated to the Tamil poet Subramania Bharati, or Bharatiyar, would be established at Banaras Hindu University (BHU).

- The different batches arriving in Varanasi belong to 12 different categories: artisans, students, businessmen, literature, teacher, heritage, temples, spirituality, entrepreneurs, professionals, rural, and culture.
- The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) is providing IT support for the event and has launched a dedicated website to register participants.
- Some examples of the themes for the academic session of the participants are:
 - Literature Group: Bharatiyar's Kashi connect.
 - Spiritual Group: Vaishnavite and Shaivite mutts and temples in the two cities and lectures on Lord Shiva.
 - Teachers Group: Ancient pedagogical methods and the need to integrate ancient storytelling forms in modern education.
 - Heritage Group: Participants from this group would learn about the Kallanai dam which runs across the Cauvery river and was built during the reign of the [Chola](#) king, Karikalan.

***Nut Graf:** The Kashi Tamil Sangamam, a month-long programme celebrates the ancient bond between Varanasi and Tamil Nadu. The intermingling of visitors from Tamil Nadu with the locals of Varanasi reveals the innate oneness as well as the mutual affection between the diverse population of India.*

Category: SECURITY

1. Countering terror

***Syllabus:** Security challenges and their management.*

***Mains:** Counter-terrorism efforts of India.*

Context: UNSC special briefing on 'Global Counterterrorism Approach'.

Details:

- According to India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, the four major areas that need urgent attention while dealing with terrorism are:
 - State support for financing terror.
 - Multilateral mechanisms that are opaque and agenda-driven.
 - Double standards and politicization of countering terrorism.
 - The use of emerging technologies like drones and virtual currency by terrorists that was referred to as the "next frontier".
- A special briefing of the [UNSC](#) on the 'Global Counterterrorism Approach' was convened by India. It was a well-timed deliberation as the "Global War on Terrorism"

and the sanctions regimes launched post 9/11 are in disarray. For example, in their haste to exit Afghanistan in 2021, the U.S. and the U.K. (UNSC's permanent members) derailed the sanctions regime by holding talks with the Taliban, easing their path to power in Afghanistan and letting their handlers in Pakistan off the hook.

- Furthermore, it was highlighted that a P-5 country (China) constantly blocks the designations of Pakistan-based terrorists, including five named this year from the LeT and the JeM.
- Concerns were raised that instead of uniting to accept India's proposal, of 1996, of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terror, the P-5 countries are divided and polarized on the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- In this direction, India is rightly highlighting the issues during its two-year UNSC tenure and holding several briefings like the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee meeting, the [No Money For Terror conference](#), and an Interpol conference.
- Unfortunate Happening:
 - The briefing has been overshadowed by heated arguments between the Indian External Affairs Minister and his Pakistani counterpart outside the Council.
 - In response to Pakistan being described as the "epicentre of terrorism", a personal tirade was launched against the Indian Prime Minister.
- The Government should ignore the comments, and instead re-invigorate the global agenda and counter-terrorism architecture by stressing the need for unity on the issue.
- All countries should cooperate and provide resources to the battle against those driven by a radical ideology that threatens civilian populations worldwide.

***Nut Graf:** India has convened several special briefings against terrorism and has highlighted the need for global cooperation against groups targetting civilians.*

F. Prelims Facts

1. Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

Syllabus: GS-3; Issues Relating to Intellectual Property Rights

Prelims: Geographical Indications - India

Contains: Nine new products have been granted [Geographical Indication \(GI\)](#) status.

Key Details:

- Nine new items, including gamocha of Assam, Tandur red gram of Telangana, Raktsey Karpo apricot of Ladakh, and Alibag white onion of Maharashtra, have been given the GI tag.

- Gamosa of Assam is a traditional textile having great significance for the people of Assam in all rituals related to puja and 'nam prasang'.
- The Tandur Red gram is a traditional crop in the rain-fed tract of the Telangana region. It contains about 22-24% protein, which is almost three times that of cereals.
- Kerala has been awarded five GI tags for its agricultural produce.
 - Attappady Attukombu Avara (beans), Attappady Thuvara (red gram), Onattukara Ellu (sesame), Kanthalloor-Vattavada Veluthulli (garlic), and Kodungalloor Pottuvellari (snap melon) are given GI tag from Kerala.
 - The Attappady Thuvara is an important traditional woody shrub, generally grown as an annual crop. The Kerala government has formulated a special scheme under the Attappady Millet Village programme to conserve the traditional crops of the area for securing the livelihood of tribal people.
- With this, the total number of GI tags in India comes to 432. Of these, 401 are Indian-origin products, 31 foreign-origin
- Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are states with the highest number of GI tags, followed by Kerala (35), Uttar Pradesh (34), and Maharashtra (31).
- The unique features of the products, imparted by the agro-climatic conditions of the geographical area of their production, are the basis for getting the Geographical Indication tag.

2. Hattee community

Syllabus: GS-2; Social Justice

Prelims: Schedule Tribes of India

Context: Lok Sabha on December 16, 2022, passed the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Third Amendment) Bill, 2022.

Key Details:

- Lok Sabha passed the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Third Amendment) Bill, 2022 to include the Hattee community in the Trans-Giri region in Himachal Pradesh in the Scheduled Tribes list of the State.
- The Bill has already been cleared by the Rajya Sabha.
- The community was listed as ST in Uttarakhand already.
- The government's move to introduce the Bill came after the Himachal Pradesh government requested the Centre to include the community in the ST list, excluding those communities which are already notified as Scheduled Castes for Himachal Pradesh.

- As per the 2011 Census, there are over 700 recognised Scheduled Tribes in India. However, states/UTs like Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, NCT of Delhi, and Puducherry have no listed STs at present.

3. Trade Data by Commerce Ministry

Syllabus: GS-3; Economy

Prelims: Import and Export Data

Context: Union Commerce Ministry data show trends in imports and exports of various commodities.

Imports:

- India's imports of crude oil increased by 52.6% to \$146.57 billion during the April-November period of FY 2022-23.
- Coal and coke imports increased by 97.7% to \$37.25 billion in the same period.
- Electronics, chemicals, transport equipment and vegetable oil recorded double-digit growth in imports.
 - Vegetable oil imports rose by 16.7% to \$14.28 billion.
- Gold imports decreased by 18.1% to \$27.21 billion during the same period.

Exports:

- India's exports posted a marginal growth of 0.59% to \$31.99 billion in November 2022, even as the trade deficit widened to \$23.89 billion during the month.
- Various sectors recorded negative growth in exports in this period.
 - Engineering goods (-2%), cotton yarn/fabrics/made-ups (-25.8%) and plastic (-9.66%).
- Petroleum exports grew by 58.9% to \$62.65 billion.
- Gems and jewellery exports increased by 2% to \$26.45 billion.

		April-November 2022 (USD Billion)	April-November 2021 (USD Billion)
Merchandise	Exports	295.26	265.77
	Imports	493.61	381.17
Services*	Exports	204.41	158.67
	Imports	117.09	90.52
Overall Trade (Merchandise+Services) *	Exports	499.67	424.45
	Imports	610.70	471.68
	Trade Balance	-111.02	-47.23

Image Source: PIB

G. Tidbits

1. 'Kasturi'

- The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (Texprocil) and the Cotton Corporation of India had signed an MoU to start branding and labelling Indian cotton under the 'Kasturi' brand from the current season.
- The Union Ministry of Textiles had announced the "Kasturi Cotton India" brand of cotton on the eve of World Cotton Day on 7th October 2020.
 - This provided Indian cotton with a brand and a logo that represents Whiteness, Softness, Purity, Lustre and Indianness.
 - This was done with a focus on building the image of Indian cotton at the Global level, making India Atma Nirbhar and vocal for local in the field of cotton.
- This mechanism will provide complete traceability of Cotton from the origin farm level, QR Code based Certification technology to validate "KASTURI Cotton India" at each stage and will Promote "KASTURI Cotton India" as a premium brand by enhancing international perception & valuation of Indian Cotton.
- This will make Indian cotton a reliable quality product, both in the domestic and global markets thereby facilitating premium pricing.
- This collaboration will benefit cotton farmers to get the actual value of their produce due to brand building and quality assurance.
 - Farmers, traders and spinners could apply to get the cotton tested for 'Kasturi' branding.
- It will also encourage the Industry to work on the principle of self-regulation by owning complete responsibility of the Traceability, Certification and Branding of Indian cotton.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

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

1. Each person's DNA, except for identical twins, is unique.
2. DNA can be extracted from clothes, linen and combs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both
- D. None

Answer: C

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is correct**, Every person's DNA, except for identical twins, is unique. By analyzing selected DNA sequences (called loci), a crime laboratory can develop a profile to be used in identifying a suspect.
- **Statement 02 is correct**, DNA can be extracted from many sources, such as hair, bone, teeth, saliva, and blood.
 - Because there is DNA in most cells in the human body, even a minuscule amount of bodily fluid or tissue can yield useful information. Samples may even be extracted from used clothes, linen, combs, or other frequently used items.

Q2. Which among the following statements is the best description of the EAGLE Act? (Level-Difficult)

- A. The act identifies trade barriers to United States companies and products due to the intellectual property laws, such as copyright, patents and trademarks
- B. It is a United States Federal Law that has imposed sanctions against Iran, Russia and North Korea
- C. The goal of the Act is to allow US employers to focus on hiring immigrants based on merit, not their birthplace, by eliminating the "per country" limitation on employment
- D. This Act is the fundamental U.S. law on both the civilian and the military uses of nuclear materials

Answer: C

Explanation: If passed, the (Equal Access to Green Card for Legal Employment) EAGLE Act of 2022 will allow US employers to focus on recruiting immigrants based on 'merit' over 'birthplace' by eliminating the "per country" limitation on employment-based immigrant visas (green cards).

- A green card, issued to immigrants, allows them to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis. The card serves as evidence that the holder has been accorded the privilege of residing permanently.

Q3. With respect to Court vacations, which of the following statements is/are correct? (Level-Difficult)

1. High Courts have the power to structure their calendars according to the service rules.
2. A Vacation Bench of the Supreme Court is a special bench constituted by the Chief Justice of India.

3. Justice Malimath Committee, set up to recommend reforms in the criminal justice system suggested that the period of vacation should be reduced.

Options:

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 and 3 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

Explanation:

- **Statement 01 is correct**, High Courts have the power to structure their calendars according to the service rules. The Supreme Court has 193 working days a year for its judicial functioning, while the High Courts function for approximately 210 days, and trial courts for 245 days.
- **Statement 02 is correct**, Vacation Benches are Special Benches designated by the Chief Justice of India during summer and winter holidays to hear 'urgent matters', which include pleas concerning bail, habeas corpus and other fundamental rights issues.
- **Statement 03 is correct**. In 2000, the [Justice Malimath Committee](#) suggested that the period of vacation should be reduced by 21 days, keeping in mind the long pendency of cases.
 - It suggested that the Supreme Court work for 206 days, and High Courts for 231 days every year.

Q4. Consider the following Pairs: (Level-Difficult)

GI Product	State
1. Gamosa	Assam
2. Alibag White Onion	Maharashtra
3. Tandur Red gram	Telangana
4. Kodungallur Pottuvellari	Kerala

How many pairs given above are correctly matched?

- A. Only one pair
- B. Only two pairs
- C. Only three pairs
- D. All four pairs

Answer: D

Explanation:

- Nine new items, including gamocha of Assam, Tandur red gram of Telangana, Raktsey Karpo apricot of Ladakh, Alibag white onion of Maharashtra and Kodungalloor Pottuvellari (snap melon) from Kerala have been given the GI tag recently.

Q5. If a particular area is brought under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution of India, which one of the following statements best reflects the consequence of it? (CSE-PYQ-2022) (Level-Medium)

- A. This would prevent the transfer of land of tribal people to non-tribal people.
- B. This would create a local self-governing body in that area.
- C. This would convert that area into a Union Territory.
- D. The State having such areas would be declared a Special Category State.

Answer: A

Explanation: 5th Schedule of the Indian Constitution deals with the administration and control of certain areas called Scheduled and Tribal Areas in all Indian states except Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Assam.

- Under this, the Governor can make regulations for the peace and good government of a scheduled area after consulting the tribes advisory council. Such regulations may prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by tribal to non-tribal members or among members of the scheduled tribes, and regulate the allotment of land to members of the scheduled tribes.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. [Events such as the 'Kashi Tamil Sangamam' can go a long way in strengthening cooperative federalism in India. Elaborate.](#) (250 words; 15 marks) (GS-2; Polity)
2. [A shift in Japan's security policy may have long term consequences on the region's status quo. Do you agree? Critically analyze.](#) (250 words; 15 marks) (GS-2; International relations)