

9 Dec 2022: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



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A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. What will India offer during its presidency of the G20?

Syllabus: Global groupings involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Prelims: G20

Mains: India's G20 Presidency - significance, challenges and the way forward

Context: India assumed the presidency of the G20 on the 1st of December 2022.

The history of G20 or the Group of Twenty

- The G20 is a multilateral forum that was set up in 1999 by the finance ministers and central bank governors of seven countries namely the U.K., the U.S., Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan against the backdrop of the 1997-98 financial crisis and its aftermath.
- The first meeting of G20 leaders was held in 1999, and it was elevated to the level of heads of government/state in 2008.
- Further, G20 was designated as the premier forum for international economic cooperation in 2009.
- The G20 forum which earlier used to deal only with matters related to macroeconomics, has now expanded its agenda to cover a wide range of issues such as trade, energy, healthcare, agriculture, climate change, environment, sustainable development, etc.

List of G 20 Members	
Argentina	Australia
Brazil	Canada
China	France
Germany	India
Indonesia	Italy
Japan	Mexico
Republic of Korea	Russia
South Africa	Saudi Arabia
United States of America	United kingdom
European Union	Turkey

The working of G20 forum

- The working processes of G20 are categorised into two parallel tracks namely the **finance track** and the **sherpa track**.
 - **Finance track:** It is led by Finance Ministers and the governors of the central bank of member countries. They meet regularly throughout the year.
 - **Sherpa track:** Sherpas are personal emissaries of leaders who lead the sherpa track. Sherpas help oversee negotiations throughout the year and are also responsible for discussing the agenda for the summit and coordinating the work of the G20.
- The working groups are designed and set up based on specific themes and they operate within both tracks. These working groups include representatives of various ministries of member countries and also guest countries.
- Further, other prominent international organisations such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ([OECD](#)) also participate in the working groups of the G20 forum.

What does India's presidency mean?

- The G20 Summit is held annually under a rotating presidency and India assumes the role for the year 2023.
- The G20 does not have a permanent secretariat, and the presidency is supported by the previous, current, and future holders of the post, together called the **G20 troika**.

- G20's 2023 troika includes Indonesia (previous), India (current) and Brazil (future).
- India as the G20 President will host the **18th G20 Heads of State and Government Summit** in New Delhi in December 2023.
- The G20 presidency does not provide any other formal powers other than providing an opportunity to host its summit and set the theme.
 - The theme of India's G20 Presidency is "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**" or "**One Earth · One Family · One Future**".
 - The theme also facilitates focus on the [LiFE \(Lifestyle for Environment\) initiative](#).
- According to an official statement, India's G20 presidency is "striving for just and equitable growth for all in the world, as we navigate through these turbulent times, in a sustainable, holistic, responsible, and inclusive manner".

***Nut graf:** India's presidency has come at a crucial juncture for the G20 forum and the challenge ahead of India is to safeguard global multilateral institutions such as the G-20 from a global economic and geopolitical crisis caused due to the COVID pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war and the tensions between the Russia-China block and the western countries.*

C. GS 3 Related

Category: ECONOMY

1. The sustained growth in remittances

***Syllabus:** Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, and development*

***Prelims:** About remittances*

***Mains:** Trends in remittances worldwide and in India*

Context

- As per the World Bank's latest Migration and Development Brief named the "Remittances Brave Global Headwinds", remittances to India are expected to reach a record level of \$100 billion in 2022.
- In 2021, India received about \$89.4 billion and is expected to become the first ever country to reach the \$100 billion mark.

Remittance

- Remittance broadly means a sum of money transferred by one person to another.
- The term remittance is now used to describe the money sent by an individual working abroad to their family in their home country.
- Remittances can also be in the form of money sent as payment for a bill.
- Remittances are one of the most important sources of income for people in low-income and developing nations.
- With respect to India, the largest sources of remittances have been from Indians working in the [Gulf Cooperation Council \(GCC\)](#) countries, the U.S. and the U.K.

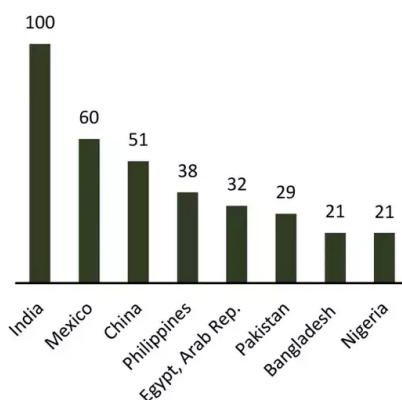
Trends in remittances

- The remittances sent worldwide are expected to cross \$794 billion in 2022 as compared to \$781 billion in 2021.
 - Trends indicate a 4.9% in 2022 as compared to 10.2% in 2021, which was the highest since 2010.
- Out of the total \$794 billion, \$626 billion worth of remittances were sent to low- and middle-income countries.
- In low- and middle-income countries, remittances have become a larger source of external finance even when compared to foreign direct investment ([FDI](#)), official development assistance (ODA), and portfolio investment flows.

Top Recipients of Remittances among Low- and Middle-Income Countries, 2022e

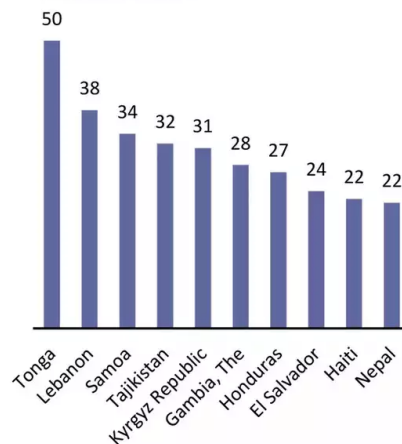
a. By Total Amount

(\$ billion, 2022e)



b. As a Share of GDP

(% of GDP, 2022e)*



Source: KNOMAD/World Bank staff.

Note: GDP = gross domestic product; e = estimate.

* South Sudan is excluded due to data validity.

Image Source: Times of India

Reasons for the sustained growth in remittances

- Post-pandemic reopening, revival and recovery of various sectors in home countries.
- Improvement in the income of migrant workers and employment situations has improved their ability to send remittances.
- According to the report, the 10.2% growth in remittances achieved in 2021 was due to various stimulus measures introduced in high-income countries such as the U.S. and Europe to support their fluctuating economies.

- This helped to better the employment situation and led to an increase in the incomes of migrant workers.
- Further, there seems to be an increased determination among migrant workers to help their families back home in the post-pandemic recovery phase.

Reasons for the sustained inward remittance flows in India

- The report highlights the fact that remittances to India have benefited from a structural change with respect to top destinations from low-skilled, informal employment in the GCC countries to high-skilled jobs in countries like the U.S., the U.K., Singapore, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.
- The share of remittances from the U.S., the U.K. and Singapore has improved from 26% to 36% between 2016-17 and 2020-21, whereas the share from GCC countries has declined from 54% to 28%.
- The U.S. (with a share of 23%), displaced Saudi Arabia as India's top source country for remittances.
- This structural change has made a huge impact during the pandemic as Indian migrants in high-income countries worked from home and also benefited from large fiscal stimulus packages and in the post-pandemic phase, wage hikes and record-high employment levels have led to a gradual growth in remittances.
- Additionally, the migrant workers in the GCC countries also benefited from the direct support measures undertaken in these countries to check the increasing inflation.
- The report also expects the Indian migrants to have taken advantage of the depreciation of the Indian rupee as compared to the U.S. dollar which might have also increased their remittances.

Path ahead

- The report expects the growth in remittances to decline by about 2% in 2023 as the drop in the GDP growth in high-income countries would affect migrant workers' wage gains.
- The growth in remittances is estimated to decline from 3.5% in 2022 to 0.7% in 2023 in South Asian countries.
- Also in the U.S., the higher inflation rate along with a slowdown is expected to restrict remittance flows and the GCC countries are also expected to witness a slowdown in remittance outflows.
 - The demand for labour would also decrease as the construction activities in Qatar on account of the FIFA World Cup have also ended.
- Despite this global trend, remittances to India are expected to grow by 4% in 2023 as a large percentage of Indian migrants are earning relatively high salaries in developed countries and their salaries are expected to be more resilient than those of lower-wage migrants in GCC countries.

***Nut graf:** The structural change in India's remittance economy, both in terms of the top destination countries and the nature of the jobs held by migrants is expected to underpin the faltering economy on account of rising inflation and the depreciation of the Rupee.*

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Nothing here for today!!!

F. Prelims Facts

Nothing here for today!!!

G. Tidbits

1. RS clears Wildlife Bill that promises better protection

- The Rajya Sabha passed the [Wildlife \(Protection\) Amendment Bill](#) in its ongoing winter session.
 - The Lok Sabha passed the Bill in August during the Monsoon Session (2022) and the Bill had also undergone scrutiny by a Parliamentary Panel.
- The Bill aims to conserve and protect wildlife through better management of protected areas and rationalise schedules that list out species under the [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#).
- The Bill also aims for better management of protected areas and permits activities such as grazing or movement of livestock and bonafide use of drinking and household water by local communities.
- The opposition parties have expressed concerns that the amendment has provided a huge leeway for the transportation of elephants and that the protection of the animal as the amendment contravened Section 27 of the Act.
 - However, the Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has assured the House that elephants would be protected and conserved according to the provisions of the Act.

2. Sri Lanka to resume negotiations on stalled trade agreement with India

- Sri Lanka is expected to resume negotiations with India on the stalled Economic and Technological Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) as the island country is looking towards trade pacts and foreign direct investments (FDI) inflows to rebuild its crisis-hit economy.
- About 11 rounds of bilateral discussions were held between 2016 and 2019 with the aim of broadening and deepening the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA).
- However, the following governments in Sri Lanka failed to complete ETCA negotiations as the move faced severe opposition from the nationalist groups and trade unions of Sri Lanka as they felt that the pact would give India an unfair advantage.
- Further, Sri Lanka has resumed its efforts to integrate with key markets like India and China. Sri Lanka is also resuming its trade negotiations with Thailand and FTA negotiations with Singapore.
 - India and China are the top two sources of import for Sri Lanka.

3. Field trials of GM mustard DMH-11 showed high yield, says Minister for Science

- According to the Union Science Minister, the field trials of the transgenic mustard variety, Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11 (DMH-11) have shown a higher yielding and the use of DMH-11 did not affect the pollination habits of honeybees.
- The DMH-11 was approved by the [Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee \(GEAC\)](#) for cultivation.
- The Union government has defended the approval of the DMH-11 in the Supreme Court, which is hearing a petition filed by an activist challenging the GEAC approval of DMH-11.
- The Minister has said that DMH-11 was tested for three years against national check Varuna and zonal check RL1359 during which DMH-11 showed about 28% more yield than the national check and 37% more than the zonal checks.
- The Minister further added that the studies conducted on toxicity, allergenicity, compositional analysis, field trials and environmental safety of DMH-11 have proven that DMH-11 is safe for cultivation, food and feed use and it was also found that the visitation of bees to the DMH-11 was similar to that of non-transgenic crops.
- At present, the only transgenic seed permitted for commercial cultivation in India is Bt Cotton.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. Article 127 of the Indian Constitution proposes that when a quorum of permanent judges is needed to continue or hold a Supreme Court session, the President can nominate a High Court judge as an ad hoc Supreme Court judge for a specified time.
2. The Ad hoc judge in India carries all of the power, authorities, and advantages and the obligations of a Supreme Court judge.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, According to Article 127 of the Constitution, the **Chief Justice of India** can nominate a High Court judge as an ad hoc Supreme Court judge for a specified time with the prior consent of the President and consultation of the Chief Justice of the respected High Court concerned
- **Statement 2 is correct**, While performing the duty of an ad hoc judge, the newly appointed judge carries all of the powers, authorities, and advantages and the obligations of a Supreme Court judge.

Q2. Which of the following statements about the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 is/are correct?

1. The Act provides for the protection of the country's wild animals, birds, and plant species, in order to ensure environmental and ecological security
2. The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) were constituted as statutory organisations under the provisions of the Act.
3. Schedule 6 of the Act consists of animals that are considered as vermin which can be hunted freely.

Options

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

Answer: A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct**, The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 provides for the protection of the country's wild animals, birds, and plant species, in order to ensure environmental and ecological security
- **Statement 2 is correct**, The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) and National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) were constituted as statutory organisations under the provisions of the Act.
- **Statement 3 is not correct**, **Schedule 5** of the Act consists of animals that are considered as vermin which can be hunted freely.
 - **Schedule 6** of the Act contains plants that are forbidden from cultivation. It provides for regulation in cultivation of a specified plant and restricts its possession, sale and transportation.

Q3. Which of the following Central Asian Country is not a part of International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC)

- A. Tajikistan
- B. Kazakhstan
- C. Kyrgyzstan
- D. Turkmenistan

Answer: D

Explanation:



Image Source: russiancouncil.ru

Q4. Consider the following statements:

1. The Constitution of India has laid down the technical criterion for a party to be recognised as a national party.
2. A political party would be considered a national party if: it is 'recognized' in four or more states; or if its candidates polled at least 6% of total valid votes in any four or more states in the last Lok Sabha or Assembly elections and has at least four MPs in the last Lok Sabha polls; or if it has won at least 2% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha from not less than three states.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has laid down the technical criterion for a party to be recognised as a national party.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, According to ECI's Political Parties and Election Symbols, 2019 handbook, a political party would be considered a national party if:
 - it is 'recognised' in four or more states; or
 - if its candidates polled at least 6% of total valid votes in any four or more states in the last [Lok Sabha](#) or Assembly elections and has at least four MPs in the last Lok Sabha polls; or
 - if it has won at least 2% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha from not less than three states.

Q5. Consider the following pairs:

Country and Important reason for being in the news recently

1. Chad - Setting up of permanent military base by China
2. Guinea - Suspension of Constitution and Government by military
3. Lebanon - Severe and prolonged economic depression
4. Tunisia - Suspension of Parliament by President

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: C

Explanation:

- **Pair 1 is not correct**, China **does not have any permanent military base** in Chad.
- **Pair 2 is correct**, In Guinea, military leaders detain the president, declare the dissolution of government and suspend the constitution.
- **Pair 3 is correct**, Lebanon is experiencing a severe and prolonged economic and financial depression.
- **Pair 4 is correct**, The Tunisia President invoked an emergency act from Tunisia's constitution and removed the Prime Minister and suspended the Parliament.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. [2023 presents a chance for India to walk the talk on 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'. Comment.](#) (250 words; 15 marks) (GS-2; International Relations)
2. [While increasing remittances is a good sign for India's foreign exchange reserves, it also points out towards the problem of brain drain in India. Do you agree? Elaborate.](#) (250 words; 15 marks) (GS-3; Economics)