

27 Jan 2023: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



TABLE OF CONTENTS
A. GS 1 Related
B. GS 2 Related SOCIAL JUSTICE 1. The path to righting historical wrongs in Tamil Nadu
C. GS 3 Related SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 1. Japan to flush Fukushima wastewater
D. GS 4 Related
E. Editorials GOVERNANCE 1. Level Playing Field for Sportswomen in India
F. Prelims Facts 1. Etikoppaka toy craft
2. Aditya-L1 mission
G. Tidbits 1. India and Egypt reiterate support for Non-Aligned Movement
2. States fall short of target to improve forest cover, quality
H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions
I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

A. GS 1 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

B. GS 2 Related

Category: SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. The path to righting historical wrongs in Tamil Nadu

Syllabus: Mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of vulnerable sections.

Prelims: About Irula tribes

Mains: Challenges faced by the tribal communities in India

Context

- Two snake-catching experts named Vadivel Gopal and Masi Sadaiya belonging to the Irula community were chosen to be honoured with the Padma Shri awards.
- In this context, the article highlights the challenges faced by the Scheduled Tribe communities in the state of Tamil Nadu and the need for changes.

C. GS 3 Related

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Japan to flush Fukushima wastewater

Syllabus: Science and Technology- developments

Mains: Discharge of wastewater from Fukushima facility and its associated concerns

Context

Japan is set to undertake the flushing of 1.25 million tonnes of wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean.

Details

- Japan has come up with a \$76-billion project to decommission the facility and as a part of this project, Japan is looking to flush out wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear power plant.
- The decommissioning project was approved by the Japanese cabinet in 2021 and is expected to take close to 30 years to complete.

The Fukushima disaster

- In March 2011, a massive tsunami triggered by an earthquake (magnitude 9), impacted the power supply and cooling system of three Fukushima Daiichi reactors in Okuma, resulting in a major nuclear accident.
- The loss of power arrested the coolant supply to reactors and the tsunami had also impacted backup systems.
- Despite the quick shut down of the reactors, the radioactive materials leaked from reactor pressure vessels that produced heat and as the cooling system was impacted, the entire plant was melted down.
- The radioactive materials which leaked from the reactor have been exposed to the air, water, soil, and local population in the areas. Ever since the incident, the surrounding areas of the power plant have been uninhabitable.
 - Further, the winds have also carried radioactive material into the Pacific.
- Post the Fukushima accident there was a transformation in the nuclear power situation beyond Japan and plans for scaling up nuclear power were put on hold across the globe.

The wastewater from the plant and the treatment of wastewater

- The Japanese government intends to flush out wastewater from the plant that was then used to cool the reactors, rainwater and groundwater.
- The wastewater in the plant contains radioactive isotopes from the damaged reactors and is hence radioactive.
- The Japanese government aims to release this wastewater into the Pacific Ocean in the next three decades.
- According to Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), which operates the Fukushima plant, the company has treated this wastewater available in the plant to remove most radioactive isotopes.
- As per former Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga in 2021, the treated wastewater will be “far above safety standards” as his government had mandated that the water

must have 1/40th of the concentration of Tritium levels permitted under safety standards.

Key concerns

- Experts say that there is no known threshold below which radiation can be considered safe and that exposure to radioactive materials will increase the risk of cancer and other health problems.
- Experts also feel that the release of affected water into the ocean will affect marine wildlife.
 - South Korea since 2013 has banned all imports of seafood from around Fukushima due to concerns over their radiation level.
- Experts further feel that it is very difficult to remove Tritium from the water and it can be easily absorbed and distributed by the bodies of living creatures.
- Furthermore, according to the reports published by Kyodo News in 2018, other radionuclides such as the isotopes of ruthenium and plutonium could not be removed completely by TEPCO's treatment procedure.

Impact on Pacific Ocean

- Pacific Ocean countries such as China, South Korea and Taiwan have expressed concerns over Japan's move to flush out wastewater into the Ocean.
- A representative of the Pacific Islands Forum, which is a bloc of Oceania countries including Australia and is the region's leading political and economic policy body, has called the move "simply inconceivable" and has expressed concern over "nuclear contamination".
- As per a study conducted by The National Institute of Marine Laboratories, which is a non-profit group from the U.S., the supporting data published by the TEPCO and the Japanese Government are insufficient and also have flaws with respect to sampling protocols, sample analyses, design, and assumptions.

Recommendations and alternatives

- Researchers and experts have urged for more studies and examination of the treated water and TEPCO's water-treatment procedure before the water is flushed into the ocean.
- Experts have also asked the Japanese government to store the water for longer before discharging it as the half-life of Tritium's half-life is 12-13 years.

- Further, the amount of other radioactive isotopes present in the water will also reduce if it is stored longer which means that the water is less radioactive.
- In order to store such treated water, thousands of tanks can be built in the areas around the Fukushima plant as the government has declared the land around the plant to be uninhabitable.

Japanese's stand

- The Japanese officials have defended the move by saying the TEPCO is running out of room for the water-tanks and that nuclear plants across the world regularly release such treated water containing traces of radionuclides into large water bodies.
- The officials from International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) after visiting the plant in 2020 had also said that the discharge of wastewater is technically a more feasible option over storage and vapourisation.

***Nut graf:** The Japanese government's move to discharge treated wastewater from the Fukushima facility into the ocean has attracted concerns over its impact on the water, marine life, livelihoods of fishing communities and other countries in the area.*

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: GOVERNANCE

1. Level Playing Field for Sportswomen in India

***Syllabus:** Aspects of Governance, Transparency & Accountability*

***Mains:** Issues with current model of sports governance in India*

Context: This article discusses various problems in Indian sports governance, especially with sportswomen in India.

Introduction:

- Following protests by India's top wrestlers, including Olympic medallists, Union Sports Ministry constituted a five-member oversight committee to investigate the charges of sexual harassment against Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh and coaches of the Federation.
- The committee, led by M.C. Mary Kom, has also been tasked with managing the day-to-day affairs of the Federation until the submission of its report.
- Questions have also been raised over the conduct of the newly elected Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and the Athletes' Commission, and the redressal mechanisms in place.

Challenges faced by Sportswomen in India:

- The overall progress rate of Indian women in sports across the nation has been tremendously low. Majorly, it is the socio-psychological barrier that dominates the Indian female participation in sports.
- Physical assault or sexual harassment is a common phenomenon observed amongst Indian female athletes.
- Lack of encouragement, both socially and financially is also one of the major reasons for the lower number of women in sports .
 - With 84 million of its population living below the poverty line, a majority of people don't have the resources to afford quality food, required coaching or even access to the requisite equipment.
- Issues related to gender inequalities are common in almost every sport as most of the authoritative positions in the sports are occupied by male sportspersons.

Issues with Sport Governance in India:

- Various sports organisations in India have come under several controversies in recent years.
- In July 2022, the Executive committee of All India Football Federation(AIFF) was dissolved by the Supreme Court for violating the Government of India's sports code. The administration of AIFF is done by the court mandated Committee of Administrators (CoA).
- In 2022, Delhi High Court found Hockey India's executive board in violation of the National Sports Code.
- In February 2022, the Delhi High court appointed Gita Mittal as the chairperson of the CoA to administer the Table Tennis Federation of India, which was suspended

following an inquiry into the match-fixing allegations raised by one of India's leading players.

- The Supreme Court in 2017 had appointed a CoA in place of BCCI for Cricket administration reforms as suggested by the [Justice R.M. Lodha committee](#).
- Complete lack of check and balance is the biggest concern regarding these bodies.
- These bodies have excessive autonomy which results in arbitrary decision making with zero transparency and accountability.
- They also face allegations of nepotism, fiefdom and financial irregularities.
- Many Indian sport organisations, particularly the governing bodies, have not made structural adaptations to meet the associated challenges of a commercialised and professional sector.

Way Forward:

- Sporting systems in India continue to falter in safeguarding its young athletes, despite the [Protection of Children from Sexual Offences \(POCSO\) Act](#) has been in force since 2012. This needs to become a priority in the Indian sporting ecosystem, right from the grassroots and recreational level to the elite and professional level.
- By clearly outlining the rights and duties of the administrative bodies, proper checks and balances should be put in place.
- There must be a presence of powerful and defined sports legislation in India covering all the nuances of sports and giving no arbiter powers to any authority.
- They should be brought under the ambit of RTI to make the system transparent.
- A separate 'Corporate Functions' group can be formed to address the issues of financial irregularities and revenue management.
- Auditing by government agencies will subject these bodies to greater public scrutiny and bring in greater accountability.
- Further, safeguarding sport in India needs to take a holistic approach and hold those delivering, managing and governing sport accountable for having policies and globally recognized best practices in place to deter and deal with incidents effectively.

Nut Graf: *Recent controversies have brought into focus the many problems in Indian sports governance. Given the close association of sports with national pride and the influence it has on the psyche of the country, the state's role is imperative in sports governance to improve the level playing field for sportswomen in India.*

F. Prelims Facts

1. Etikoppaka toy craft

Syllabus: GS-1; Indian Art and Culture

Prelims: About Etikoppaka toy craft and Padma awards

Context

An agriculturist-turned-craftsman, Mr. C.V. Raju was honored with the Padma Shri award for his contribution to the Etikoppaka toy craft.

Etikoppaka toy craft

- Etikoppaka toys or Etikoppaka Bommalu are wooden toys made in the Etikoppaka region of Andhra Pradesh.
- The Etikoppaka toy-making art has a history of over 400-years.
- Etikoppaka toys are made out of wood and are coloured with natural dyes obtained from seeds, lacquer, bark, roots and leaves.
- The wood derived from “Ankudi Karra” tree (*Wrightia Tinctoria*) is used in this toy making craft.
- According to historians, the toymakers in the past received patronage from the affluent landlords in the region to make such wooden toys for their children.
- The Etikoppaka toys are famous for their attractive colours, soft finish and their link with the Indian heritage.
- The Etikoppaka wooden toys have been accorded the [Geographical Indication \(GI\) tag](#) in 2017.

2. Aditya-L1 mission

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

Prelims: About Aditya-L1 mission

Context

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is looking to launch its Aditya-L1 mission by June or July 2023.

Aditya-L1 mission

- Aditya-L1 is India's first space mission to observe the Sun and the solar corona.
- The Aditya-L1 mission will be launched by ISRO to the first Lagrangian point of the Sun-Earth system (L1 orbit), as the L1 orbit facilitates Aditya-L1 to look at the Sun continuously.
- Aditya-L1 has seven payloads in total.
 - Out of the seven payloads Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC) has been designed and fabricated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics in Bengaluru.
 - The other six payloads are being developed by the ISRO and other scientific institutions.
- According to scientists, no other solar coronagraph in space has the ability to image the solar corona as close to the solar disk as Visible Line Emission Coronagraph (VELC)
- The Aditya-L1 mission will be launched using PSLV-XL (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle).

G. Tidbits

1. India and Egypt reiterate support for Non-Aligned Movement

- A joint statement issued by India and Egypt after the bilateral engagements with President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who was invited as the chief guest at the Republic Day parade 2023 has reiterated both countries' support for the [Non-Aligned Movement](#).
- Further, both the countries also reiterated their commitment to multilateralism, the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.
- India and Egypt are celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties.
- India and Egypt have also agreed to initiate new engagements to better military-to-military engagements and have planned more joint exercises between their armed forces.
- The leaders of the two countries expressed concern over the spread of terrorism across the world and believe that it poses one of the most serious security threats to humanity

2. States fall short of target to improve forest cover, quality

Status check

The table shows State-wise physical progress under the Green India Mission. It lists the targeted increase in tree cover, achievement and shortfall for select States



Green cover: A view of a forest in Andhra Pradesh.

State	Target	Achievement	Shortfall
Uttarakhand	6,446	1,505	-4,941
Madhya Pradesh	5,858	1,882	-3,976
Kerala	1,686	616	-1,070
West Bengal	558	175	-383
Maharashtra	1,316	933	-383
Andhra Pradesh	186	75	-111

All figures are in hectares

Image Source: the Hindu

- As per the information accessed through the [Right to Information \(RTI\) Act](#), India is lagging behind in the targets set to increase the number and quality of tree- and forest-cover plantations under the [Green India Mission \(GIM\)](#).
 - The National Mission for a Green India or the Green India Mission (GIM) is one of the eight missions under the [National Action Plan on Climate Change \(NAPCC\)](#).
- One of the key targets under GIM is 10 million hectares (mha) of forest and non-forest lands for increasing the forest and tree cover and improving the quality of existing forests.

- However, between 2015-16 to 2021-22, the Centre has only approved a target of increasing tree and forest cover by 53,377 hectares and improving the quality of degraded forest by 1,66,656 ha.
- According to the Union Environment Ministry, tree/forest cover had increased by 26,287 hectares and forest quality improved by only 1,02,096 hectares as of December 31, 2022.
- Further, out of the total allocation of ₹681 crores by the Union government, only about ₹525 crores had been utilised.
- According to the [India State of Forest Report-2021](#), forest and tree cover in the country increased by 2,261 square kilometres since the last assessment in 2019.
 - However, critics believe that the increase in green cover was mainly through commercial plantations which can not compensate for natural forests and their biodiversity being monocultures susceptible to pest attacks.

3. India displays indigenous arms and women power

- The push for atmanirbharta (self-sufficiency) in the country's military strength and the role played by women in the armed forces were in the spotlight at the 2023 Republic Day celebrations held at the Kartavya Path, formerly known as Rajpath.
- As the Indian National Flag was unfurled, the 21-gun salute was presented for the first time by **Indian-made 105-mm field guns** which replaced the **seven vintage Quick Fire 25-pounder guns** used since Independence.
- The Indian Army further showcased Made-in-India defence equipment such as [Arjun \(main battle tank\)](#), the **NAG missile system**, the **K-9 Vajra-T gun system**, the **Akash air defence system**, and the **BrahMos missile**.
- Further, the marching contingents of the Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy were led by women officers for the first time showcasing women empowerment.
 - The theme of “nari shakti” (women power) was highlighted even in the parade of cultural tableaux.
 - **Example:** Tripura's tableau showed the active role of its women in creating sustainable livelihoods through tourism and organic farming.
 - Kerala tableau presented folk traditions of women's empowerment.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of these statements are not true? (Level – Moderate)

1. The Green Railway Station Certificate is given by the Ministry of Environment and Forest.
2. Visakhapatnam Railway station is the first station in India to receive this certification.

Options:

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: C

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, The Green Railway Station Certificate is given by the **Indian Green Building Council (IGBC)** for adopting green concepts thereby reducing the adverse environmental impact.
 - The Environment Directorate of Indian Railways, along with the support of the IGBC, has developed the Green Railway Station rating system.
- **Statement 2 is not correct**, Visakhapatnam Railway station is one of the few railway stations to get this prestigious certificate.
 - In 2022, Bhagalpur railway station (BGP) of Malda division, Eastern Railway (ER) received Green Railway Station Certification
 - In 2021, Central Railways's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station (CSMT) was awarded IGBC Green Railway Station Certification.

Q2. Consider the following statements: (Level – Moderate)

1. India launched its first solar mission in December 2022.
2. It will be placed on Lagrange point 1.
3. Aditya 1 will study the solar atmosphere and solar wind patterns among other things.

Options:

- A. 1 and 2
- B. 2 and 3
- C. 1 and 3

D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, The ISRO is planning to launch the Aditya-L1 mission which is the first Indian space mission to observe the Sun and the solar corona, by June or July **2023**.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, The Aditya-L1 mission will be launched by ISRO to the L1 orbit (which is the first Lagrangian point of the Sun-Earth system).
 - L1 orbit allows Aditya-L1 to look at the Sun continuously.
- **Statement 3 is correct**, Aditya 1 will study the solar atmosphere and solar wind patterns among other things.

Q3. Which of the following is/are not located in or around Egypt?(Level – Difficult)

1. Lake Victoria
2. Mediterranean Sea
3. Red Sea
4. Gulf of Aden

Options:

- A. 1, 2 and 3
- B. 1 and 4
- C. 2 and 3
- D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer: B

Explanation:



Image source: World Atlas

Q4. Which of the following are correctly matched? (Level – Easy)

1. Recession: Decline in growth for 2 consecutive quarters
2. Stagflation: Stagnant Inflation
3. Deflation: Negative inflation

Options:

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

Answer: C

Explanation:

- **Pari 1 is correct**, A recession is a significant and prolonged downturn in economic activity and a common rule of thumb is that **two consecutive quarters** of negative GDP growth mean recession.

- **Pari 2 is not correct**, Stagflation is an economic condition when **stagnant economic growth, high unemployment, and high inflation combine together**.
- **Pari 3 is correct**, Deflation is referred to as the decrease in the price of goods and services. In such a situation the purchasing power of the population increases.
 - It is also referred to as **Negative inflation**.

Q5. Consider the following statements: (Level – Easy) PYQ 2020

1. The Constitution of India defines its basic structure in terms of federalism, secularism, fundamental rights and democracy.
2. The Constitution of India provides for 'Judicial review' to safeguard the citizens' liberties and to preserve the ideals on which the Constitution is based.

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: D

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, The Supreme Court in its landmark Kesavananda Bharati case 1973 judgement laid down the doctrine of the “basic structure” of the Constitution.
 - Thus, the Constitution of India does not define the term “basic structure”.
- **Statement 2 is not correct**, **There is no direct provision in the Indian constitution** that provides for “Judicial review” to safeguard the citizens' liberties and to preserve the ideals on which the Constitution is based.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. [What are the impediments being faced in increasing the participation of women in Indian armed forces?](#) (250 words; 15 marks) (GS-2; Social Justice)
2. [India can overlook Non-Aligned Movement only at its own peril. Comment.](#) (250 words; 15 marks) (GS-2; International Relations)