

02 Jan 2023: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



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A. GS 1 Related

Category: MODERN INDIAN HISTORY

1. Bhima-Koregaon War Memorial

Syllabus: Important Modern History Events Before 1857

Mains: Bhima-Koregaon war as a Dalit Symbol

Context: The 205th anniversary of the <u>Bhima-Koregaon battle</u> of 1818 was celebrated on January 1, 2023

Introduction:

- The programme to mark the 205th anniversary of the Battle of Koregaon Bhima at the 'Jaystambh' in Perne village of Pune district passed off peacefully on January 01,2023.
 - o 'Jaystambh' is a 'military monument' erected by the British government in 1821 in memory of its soldiers, who fought against the Peshwas during the Maratha rule at Koregaon Bhima on January 1, 1818.
 - It was one of the last battles of the Third Anglo-Maratha War, which ended the Peshwa domination.
- In 2018, incidents of violence were registered during the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Bhima-Koregaon battle.
- The 2018 clashes, which heightened social tensions across the State while its reverberations were felt throughout the country, resulted in massive destruction of property belonging to Ambedkarite members.
- To prevent any law and order situation, the Pune Rural Police strictly monitored social media, deleting over 100 posts found to contain provocative content with the possible aim of rupturing peace. Around 7,000 security personnel were deployed in the area.

Why is Bhima Koregaon seen as a Dalit symbol?

- The Battle of Bhima Koregaon attained a legendary status among the Scheduled Castes of India because a large number of soldiers in the Company force were the Mahar Dalits.
- Dalits consider the win in the Battle of Bhima-Koregaon as a victory of the Mahars against the injustices perpetrated by the Peshwas, who were Brahmins.
 - The denunciation of the Peshwas is being related with Mahars' social and political marginalisation in contemporary times.
- On 1st January 1927, Dr B.R.Ambedkar visited the site of Koregaon Victory Pillar which revitalised its memory for the Dalit community, making it a rallying point and an assertion of pride.



• Every year on January 01st, lakhs of his followers visit the site to commemorate the visit of Dr B.R.Ambedkar.

Nut Graf: 205th anniversary of the Battle of Koregaon Bhima at the 'Jaystambh' was celebrated peacefully on January 01,2023. Pune police kept a watchful look out for any resurgence of the violence that took place during the bicentennial commemoration of the fight in 2018 with heightened security at the 'Jaystambh' and across social media.

B. GS 2 Related

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India-Pakistan Relations

Syllabus: India and its Neighborhood – Relations

Mains: Confidence-building measures to put India-Pakistan relations on a positive track

Context: India and Pakistan exchanged lists of nuclear installations and prisoners on January 01,2023

Lists of nuclear installations and facilities:

- Both countries exchanged lists of nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities.
 - The agreement was signed on December 31, 1988, and it became operative on January 27, 1991.
 - It stipulates that on January 1st of each calendar year, India and Pakistan must exchange information regarding the nuclear sites and facilities covered under the Agreement.
 - These nuclear installations cannot be attacked in the event of hostilities.
 - Following the first exchange on January 1, 1992, there have been 32 exchanges of these lists between the two nations till date.

Lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen:

- Lists of fishermen and civilian captives held by each nation were also shared on January 01,2023.
 - Such lists are exchanged twice a year, on January 1 and July 1, as per the 2008 Agreement on Consular Access.
- India shared lists of 339 Pakistani civilian prisoners and 95 Pakistani fishermen currently in Indian custody.



- Similarly, Pakistan has shared lists of 51 civilian prisoners and 654 fishermen in its custody, who are Indians or are believed to be Indians.
- The exchange took place through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad.
- The exchange of the list came amid continuing strain in ties between the two countries over the Kashmir issue as well as cross-border terrorism.

India's Call to resolve humanitarian Matters:

- The Indian government called for early release and repatriation of civilian prisoners, missing Indian defence personnel, and fishermen along with their boats, from Pakistan's custody inorder to address all humanitarian matters.
- Additionally, India requested that the release of 631 Indian fisherman and two Indian civilian detainees who have served their time and whose nationality has been verified and conveyed to Pakistan be expedited.
- As per the External Affairs Ministry, the Indian side had sought "immediate" consular access to the "remaining 30 fishermen and 22 civilian prisoners in Pakistan's custody, who are believed to be Indian".
- Pakistan was also asked to confirm the "nationality status" of 71 Pakistani detainees, including fishermen, whose repatriation is still pending since Pakistan has not yet certified their citizenship status.

Nut Graf: India remains committed to addressing, on priority, all humanitarian matters, including those pertaining to prisoners and fishermen in each other's country. Therefore, India called to expedite necessary action for early release and repatriation of Indian prisoners in Pakistan.

Category: POLITY

1. Delimitation in Assam

Syllabus: Elections; Representation of the People Act, 1950

Mains: Issues over Delimitation in the Northeast Region

Context: Election Commission begins Delimitation process in Assam.

Introduction:

• The <u>Election Commission of India</u> began the delimitation of Assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Assam on December 27,2022 by using the Census data of 2001 for the readjustment of seats.



- Following a request from the Union Law Ministry in November 2022, the procedure to redistribute Assam's assembly and parliamentary seats in accordance with Section 8A of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, has been started.
 - Section 8A of the Representation of the People Act allows for the <u>delimitation of</u>
 <u>Parliamentary and Assembly constituencies</u> in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam,
 Manipur or Nagaland.
- On the basis of the 1971 Census, Assam's seats were last redrawn in 1976 in accordance with the provisions of the Delimitation Act, 1972.
- According to the Commission, until the exercise is finished, a ban on the creation of new administrative entities in the state is in effect as of January 1, 2023.
- Reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will be as per Articles 330 & 332 of the Constitution.

Status of current representation:

- The State has 14 Lok Sabha, 126 Assembly and 07 Rajya Sabha seats.
- The term of the current Assam Legislative Assembly will end on May 20, 2026.

Opposition to Delimitation Exercise:

- Opposition pirates in the state are questioning why the delimitation exercise is being done on the basis of the 2001 Census, and not the 2011 Census.
 - According to critics, the 2011 Census figures are available and the 2021 Census process must also be accounted for to conduct the delimitation process.
 - As mandated under Article 170 of the Constitution, census figures (2001) shall be used for the purpose of readjustment of Parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies in the State.
- Assam Chief Minister is critical of the criterion of delimiting Assembly constituencies on the basis of population, as it disincentivizes government's two-child policy.
- Concerned Pressure Groups in Assam had opposed the last delimitation exercise insisting that it should be carried out only after the completion of National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise to weed out "illegal immigrants" was completed.

Nut Graf: The Election Commission has begun the process of delimitation constituencies in Assam based on 2011 Census data. While most have welcomed the delimitation process, which was long overdue, some have raised concern for using the 2001 census for the process rather than the 2011 census and have also opined to stop the delimitation till the NRC is final.



C. GS 3 Related

Category: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. Danger of deepfakes

Syllabus: Artificial Intelligence

Mains: Ethical and legal challenges of DeepFakes.

Context: The article discusses the threats posed by the use of deepfakes and analyses possible solutions.

What are deepfakes?

- Deepfakes are digital media video, audio, and images edited and manipulated using Artificial Intelligence.
- Access to commodity cloud computing, public research AI algorithms, and abundant data and availability of vast media have created a perfect storm to democratise the creation and manipulation of media. This synthetic media content is referred to as deepfakes.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Generated Synthetic media or deepfakes have clear benefits in certain areas, such as accessibility, education, film production, criminal forensics, and artistic expression.
- Deepfakes can be used to damage reputation, fabricate evidence, defraud the public, and undermine trust in democratic institutions.

Nut Graf: Disinformation in the form of deepfakes have evolved as weapons of warfare that can create social discord, increase polarisation. Threats from deepfake can be mitigated with collaborative actions and collective techniques across legislative regulations, platform policies. Having taken cognizance of the issue, almost all social media platforms have some policy for deepfakes.

D. GS 4 Related

Nothing here for today!!!

E. Editorials

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India-China: between pre-1962 and now

Syllabus: India and Neighborhood relations.



Mains: India-China relations.

Prelims: Disputed and sensitive areas along the international boundary.

Context: The recent altercation between Indian and Chinese troops at Yangtse in Arunachal Pradesh.

Details:

• The Galwan clash of 2020 and the recent altercation between the Indian troops and the Chinese PLA at Yangtse in Arunachal Pradesh have once again brought to the fore the lingering boundary dispute between the two neighbors as well as the complex Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Background details:

- Both the India-China relations of the present-day and of the 1960s are associated with the boundary dispute. However, in the 1950s the fundamental question was the "territorial dispute" that involved the entire Aksai Chin claimed by India and the whole of NEFA (now Arunachal Pradesh) claimed by China.
- It should be noted that the Chinese firmly occupy the Aksai Chin today and India is guarding its territorial integrity in Arunachal Pradesh. The immediate issue in the 2020s has moved on to transgressions along the LAC.
- Unlike the earlier decades, differences in Ladakh (western sector) are not just confined to Trig Heights in the Daulet Beg Oldie (DBO) area and Demchok in the south. China is seeking to claim other areas like the Depsang Bulge, Galwan, Pangong Lake, and Hot Springs.
- Post the Galwan clash, the two sides have disengaged at multiple friction points, despite military and diplomatic talks continuing to find a way out of the impasse at Depsang and Demchok.
- In the middle (central sector), the area of dispute for almost seventy years is the Barahoti pasture, north of Chamoli in Uttarakhand.
- In Arunachal Pradesh (eastern sector), China is seeking inroads in the Tawang sector and other areas like the Upper Subansiri region, and near the tri-junction with Myanmar. It should be remembered that the international boundary and the LAC were defined by the 1914 McMahon Line, based on the watershed principle.
- The difference today is that the focus is majorly on the LAC as against the larger boundary dispute even though neither of them has given up their extensive territorial claims.



Figure: Disputed and Sensitive area between India and China



Source: Times of India

China's stand:

- Traditionally, China benefitted in terms of terrain and logistics in Tibet. It has always projected a spurious interpretation of the LAC and has also avoided the clarification of its position through an exchange of large-scale maps following the one-off exchange of maps two decades ago concerning the middle sector.
- In the 1950s, China revealed its biases in favour of Pakistan (including the Kashmir issue). Today, China openly works in tandem with Pakistan against India's interests to internationalize the issue at the United Nations.
- China's internal vulnerabilities have always impacted bilateral relations with India. For instance,
 - In the late 1950s, Mao Zedong adopted an aggressive approach toward India in order to consolidate his leadership during internal challenges and to avoid the censure of disastrous political and economic policies.
 - Similarly, Chinese leadership today is facing mounting scrutiny for the Zero-COVID policy, and growing authoritarianism.
 - Moreover, Tibet has also remained a source of insecurity for China.

Lessons learned:

- In 1962, India was compelled to approach the U.S. and Western countries for military assistance. However, the support came very late and was also meager. In the current scenario, India has proactively inducted new weapon systems giving adequate importance to 'Aatmanirbharta' (self-reliance) in defence manufacturing.
- In another incident, the Chinese ingressed the Sumdorong Chu valley in the Tawang sector in 1986-87. This caused a close confrontation between the two neighbors. The two sides pulled back after eight years in 1995, with India relocating its Jaya and Negi posts on the south side of the Hathungla-Lungrola ridgeline. It is argued that unintentionally



India created a buffer zone on its own territory. Thus India should take lessons from this incident and act accordingly in Ladakh.

Conclusion:

The Government of India's endeavour is to engage China by aligning with its broader world vision of good-neighborly and peaceful ties, and inclusive growth. Whereas China aims to build a China-centric hierarchy with scant regard for notions of equality and multipolarity.

Nut Graf: The long-drawn contentious issue between India and China is about the international boundary. There are multiple incidents in the past that have highlighted this and the recent incidents in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh also emerge from it. India should carefully examine past incidents and take appropriate measures for its security and territorial integrity.

Category: INDIAN POLITY

1. Ayes and nays

Syllabus: Powers, functions, and responsibilities of constitutional bodies.

Mains: Election Commission of India and voting rights to migrants.

Context: Recent proposal of the Election Commission of India to grant voting rights to migrants.

Details:

- India has a high rate of migration due to regional variations in demographic trends and economic opportunities. The migration rate almost doubled in the census decade of 2001-2011.
- The economic and political rights of the migrants are often compromised at their place of origin and residence. To deal with this situation, the <u>Election Commission of India (ECI)</u> has proposed a mechanism to facilitate remote voting for domestic migrants.
- The Remote Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) prototype can be utilized for up to 72 constituencies simultaneously from a single, remote polling booth.
- The Commission has also invited political parties for a demonstration of the prototype on 16 January 2023.
- Any attempt to advance migrants' rights should be welcomed. However, a hurried approach might damage the integrity of the electoral process.

Trends in voter participation:

• Though voter participation in India is relatively high, yet, in 2019, one in three voters did not vote.



• As per the 2017 Economic Survey, there are approximately 14 crore internal-migrants in India, and they face multiple challenges in voting.

Associated Concerns:

- It is suggested by many experts that the public trust in the <u>Electronic Voting Machine(EVM)</u> is low, as the voter has no way to see whether the vote is recorded or not.
- It is also argued that the recent proposal will further add to public scepticism about ECI's impartiality and reliability of the EVMs.
- Some of the fundamental questions associated with the new plan are the correlation between <u>citizenship</u> and territoriality.
- Furthermore, defining a migrant who is eligible to vote remotely is going to be controversial. For example, when does a migrant at a place become a resident?
- ECI has also expressed doubts about the practicality of remote voting rights for migrants in the past.
- Meanwhile, there is also a demand for voting rights for Non-Resident Indians(NRIs).

Conclusion:

- In an era of unprecedented human mobility, the concept of portable voting rights is worth considering.
- Moreover, higher turnout during elections is worth striving for, but there should be sufficient safeguards from the far-reaching ramifications.

Nut Graf: The Election Commission of India's recent proposal to grant voting rights to migrants is a good step in the direction of achieving higher turnout during elections. However, there are associated concerns that should be carefully addressed by the commission.

F. Prelims Facts

1. India-Austria

Syllabus: GS02-International Relations

Prelims: Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement

Context: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held talks with his Austrian counterpart Alexander Schallenberg, his first diplomatic engagement in 2023.

Key Details:



- This is the first EAM-level visit from India to Austria in the last 27 years, and it takes place against the backdrop of 75 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2023.
- During his visit to Austria, EAM Jaishankar is scheduled to discuss regional and global issues with the Foreign Ministers of Czech, Slovak, and Austria in the Slavkov format.

Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement:

- India and Austria are expected to sign a "Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement" (MMPA) on January 02,2023.
 - The agreement is a useful tool to combat illegal migration together, as it enables the swift return of illegal migrants. Austria was confronted with over 15,000 illegal migrants from India with practically no chance of asylum.
 - The agreement will also regulate multiple entry visas for professionals and student exchange programmes, and will be reviewed regularly by a Joint Working Group.
- India recently entered similar mobility agreements with France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Finland.
- These agreements with European countries act as a stepping stone to resolve issues over the long-pending India-European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement and facilitate Indian professionals working in these countries.
- The European countries also see them as a way to curb illegal immigration from India.

2. International Year of Millets (IYM)

Syllabus: GS03-Agriculture

Prelims: Millets and its Significance

Context: In an effort to promote cultivation and consumption of millets on a larger scale, the Union government has launched the International Year of Millets (IYM) on January 01,2023.

Kev Details:

- The Government of India sponsored the proposal for <u>International Year of Millets (IYM)</u> 2023 which was accepted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
- The declaration has been instrumental for the Government of India to be at the forefront in celebrating the IYM.
- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has also shared his vision to make IYM 2023 a 'People's Movement' alongside positioning India as the 'Global Hub for Millets'.



Multi-stakeholder engagement approach:

- The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has taken a proactive approach engaging all the central government ministries, states/UTs, farmers, start-ups, exporters, retail businesses, hotels, Indian Embassies etc. to achieve the aim of IYM 2023 and taking Indian millets globally.
- Ministries, states and Indian embassies have been allocated focussed months in 2023 to carry out various activities for promotion of IYM and increase awareness about benefits of millets for the Consumer, Cultivator and Climate.
- In January, the Union Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, and the Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Rajasthan governments will conduct IYM events and activities.
- Millets are also an integral part of the G-20 meetings and delegates will be given a true millet experience through tasting, meeting farmers and interactive sessions with start-ups and FPOs.

G. Tidbits

1. Unemployment rate in India

- According to the data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) India's unemployment rate rose to 8.3% in December 2022, the highest in 16 months, from 8% in November.
 - The unemployment rate rose to 37.4% in Haryana, followed by 28.5% in Rajasthan and 20.8% in Delhi.
- The urban unemployment rate rose to 10.09% in December from 8.96% in November.
- Rural unemployment rate slipped to 7.44% from 7.55%.
- The labour participation rate shot up to 40.48% in December, the highest in 12 months.
- The employment rate has increased in December to 37.1%, highest since January 2022.
- The unemployment rate had declined to 7.2% in the July-September quarter compared to 7.6% in the previous quarter, according to separate quarterly data compiled by state-run National Statistical Office.

H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. Which of the following statements are correct? (Level-Medium)

- 1. Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) find a legal basis under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- 2. Madhav Gadgil Committee and Kasturirangan Committee dealt with implementation of ESZs.



- 3. The Supreme Court has directed that every protected forest, national park and wildlife sanctuary across the country should have a mandatory eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of a minimum one km starting from their demarcated boundaries.
- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

Explanation:

- Statement 01 is correct, Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) is a buffer or transition zone around highly-protected areas such as National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
 - Eco Sensitive Zones are notified by the Union Government through Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change (MOEFCC) under the provisions of the Environment Protection Act of 1986
- Statement 02 is correct, Madhav Gadgil Committee and Kasturirangan Committee dealt with implementation of ESZs.
 - The Madhav Gadgil Report had classified the whole of the Western Ghats, spread across six states and covering 44 districts and 142 talukas, as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).
 - The Kasturirangan Committee had reduced the ESZ to 37 percent of the total area, covering about 60,000 sq km. It had recommended that 123 revenue villages be demarcated as ESA.
- Statement 03 is correct, The Supreme Court in June 2022 directed that every national park and wildlife sanctuary in the country will have a mandatory eco-sensitive zone of at least one kilometre starting from its demarcated boundaries. The decision was made in response to a petition to protect forest lands in Tamil Nadu's Nilgiris district.

Q2. Which of the following best describes the term 'deepfakes'? (Level-Easy)

- A. Fake news deeply implanted in media and social media platforms.
- B. Hidden information found on the Deep Web that enables illicit activities.
- C. Digital media manipulated using Artificial Intelligence to create hyper-realistic digital falsification.
- D. None of the above

Answer: C



Explanation: Deepfakes are digital media - video, audio, and images edited and manipulated using Artificial Intelligence. Deepfakes can be used to damage reputation, fabricate evidence, defraud the public, and undermine trust in democratic institutions.

Q3. It is a natural, deep-water port on the East coast of India located at the confluence of the Mahanadi river and the Bay of Bengal. It recently clocked the highest ever monthly cargo throughput in the history of all Major Ports in the country. Which port does the description refer to? (Level-Medium)

- A. Visakhapatnam
- B. Paradip
- C. Haldia
- D. Kakinada

Answer: B

Explanation:

- Paradip Port is a natural, deep-water port on the East coast of India in the Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha. It is situated at the confluence of the Mahanadi river and the Bay of Bengal.
- The port is administered by the Paradip Port Trust (PPT), an autonomous corporation wholly owned by the Government of India.
- Paradip Port Trust (PPT) is a Major Port under Government of India and administered under the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963, was commissioned in 1966 as a mono commodity port for export of iron ore.
- In December 2022, the Paradip Port handled 12.6 million metric tonnes of cargo, the highest monthly cargo volume recorded by any major port in the nation.
 - As of December 2022, PPA has handled 96.81 MMT of cargo, compared to 83.6 MMT over the same period in the prior fiscal year.





Q4. Which of the following statements are incorrect? (Level-Medium)

- 1. The Indian Science Congress, the annual gathering of researchers in India, is organised by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).
- 2. It is the brainchild initiative of two British Chemists, Professor J. L. Simonsen and Professor P.S. McMahon.
- 3. The first gathering of the Indian Science Congress was held in 1914 at the Asiatic Society in Calcutta.
- A. 1 only
- B. 1 and 2 only
- C. 1 and 3 only
- D. 2 and 3 only

Answer: A

Explanation:

- Statement 01 is incorrect, The <u>Indian Science Congress</u> is the annual gathering of researchers in India. It is organised by ISCA (Indian Science Congress Association), headquartered in Kolkata, West Bengal.
- Statement 02 is correct, The Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) owes its origin to the foresight and initiative of two British Chemists, namely, Professor J. L. Simonsen and Professor P.S. MacMahon.
- **Statement 03 is correct,** The first meeting of the Congress was held from January 15-17, 1914 at the premises of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

Q5. The experiment will employ a trio of spacecraft flying in formation in the shape of an equilateral triangle that has sides one million km long, with lasers shining between the craft. The experiment in the question refers to?(CSE-PYQ-2022)(Level-Medium)

- A. Voyager-2
- B. New horizons
- C. LISA pathfinder
- D. Evolved LISA

Answer: D

Explanation:

• The evolved Laser Interferometer Space Antenna (eLISA) is a mission aiming at exploring the Gravitational Universe from space for the first time.



- The eLISA mission consists of a "Mother" and two "Daughter" spacecraft. These will orbit the Sun in a triangular configuration.
- The three satellites will form a precision interferometer, with the two Daughter spacecraft connected to the Mother one by 1 million km long laser beams.
- This interferometer will be capable of detecting gravitational waves at frequencies in the range of 0.1 mHz to 1 Hz.
- eLISA is designed with orbits that allow the three satellites to maintain their near-equilateral triangular configuration.

I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

- 1. The EC's decision to enable migrant workers to vote remotely is going to be historic in making India a more inclusive, participatory and vibrant democracy. Comment. (150 Words; 10 marks) (GS-2; Polity)
- 2. China's India policy has been shaped by its view of the larger great power strategic triangle of China, the Soviet Union (later Russia), and the United States. Discuss. (250 Words; 15 marks) (GS-2; International Relations)

Read the previous CNA here.