

# 20 Feb 2023: UPSC Exam Comprehensive News Analysis



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## A. GS 1 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## B. GS 2 Related

### Category: HEALTH

#### 1. How is India addressing sickle cell anaemia?

**Syllabus:** *Issues relating to development and management of Social Sector/Services relating to Health*

**Prelims:** *About sickle cell anaemia*

**Mains:** *Sickle cell anaemia - prevalence of the disease in India, efforts to eliminate the disease and key challenges associated with it*

#### Context

The Union Finance Minister while presenting the [Union Budget 2023-24](#) has announced that the government will work in “mission mode” to eliminate sickle cell anaemia by 2047.

#### Sickle Cell Anaemia

- Sickle Cell Anaemia is an inherited blood disorder or red blood cell (RBCs) disorder.
  - Red blood cells contain hemoglobin which is a protein that carries oxygen through the body.
- Usually, the RBCs are disc-shaped and flexible in order to move easily through the vessels. In the case of sickle cell anaemia RBCs are crescent or sickle-shaped thereby slowing or at times blocking the blood flow.
- Haemoglobin normally has four protein subunits which consist of two alpha and two beta.
  - However, in some cases mutations in the gene that creates the beta subunits impact the shape of the blood cell and distort it to look like a sickle.
- The blocked blood flow through the body could cause serious issues such as anemia, pain, fatigue, acute chest syndrome, stroke, eye problems and infections among others.
- Furthermore, such sickle cells usually die early which causes a shortage of RBCs and hence deprives the body of oxygen.

- Sickle cell disease is said to be a lifelong illness and a blood and bone marrow transplant is said to be the only efficient cure for the disease.
- Gene therapies and stem cell transplants are also seen as possible cures for the disease.

### **Prevalence of the disease in India**

- India is said to be the second-worst affected country in terms of predicted births with Sickle cell anaemia.
- Sickle cell anaemia is highly prevalent in tribal children in India.
  - About 1 in 86 births among Scheduled Tribe populations in India have sickle cell anaemia.
- Researchers believe that the prevalence of the disease is higher in communities residing in areas where malaria is endemic.
  - In India, regions or areas with tribal populations account for a significant malaria case load.
- The reports also suggest that the prevalence of sickle cell anaemia is seen to be higher in communities that practice endogamy, as the chances of having two parents with sickle cell trait are higher.
- The prevalence of the disease is higher in central, western and southern parts of India.
- Gujarat has the second highest number of sickle cell anaemia cases in India followed by Maharashtra.

### **Key challenges for the government to meet the target of 2047**

- Since sickle cell disease being a genetic disorder, it is very difficult to bring about complete elimination of the disease.
- Further, the methods for treating the disease are either costly or still in developmental stages.
- Additionally, there is a severe shortage of donors, fears about the safe supply of blood and risk of infection associated with blood transfusion which involves the transfer of RBCs from donated blood and to a patient.

### **Initiatives undertaken in India**

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is undertaking various outreach programmes for better management and control of sickle cell disease.
- Under the [National Rural Health Mission \(NRHM\)](#), States are also undertaking awareness drives and outreach programmes.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has launched a portal that helps collect important data with respect to the prevalence of sickle cell anaemia among tribal communities.

- The Union Health Minister in the Union Budget speech announced that the government plans to distribute “special cards” across tribal areas to people below the age of 40.
  - These cards will be categorized into different categories based on the screening results and the programme will receive funding under the [National Health Mission \(NHM\)](#).
- The government is also required to conduct marriage counselling in areas with high incidences of the disease.

***Nut graf:** Reports indicate that about 50,000 infants are born with sickle cell anaemia every year which not only adds to the disabled population in India but has also become an economic burden for the Government. This has forced the Union Government to undertake actions in a “mission mode” to eliminate the condition by 2047.*

## C. GS 3 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## D. GS 4 Related

*Nothing here for today!!!*

## E. Editorials

### Category: POLITY

#### 1. Disqualification Of a Politician

*Syllabus: Indian Constitution*

*Mains: Disqualification of an MP/MLA under the Constitution and Representation of the People Act, 1951*

**Context:** Kerala High Court refuses to stay 10-year imprisonment against Lakshadweep Member of Parliament in an attempt to murder case.

#### **Background:**

- Earlier, the Kavaratti Sessions Court had convicted four persons, including Mohammed Faizal P.P. then sitting Member of Parliament (MP) of Lakshadweep for committing offences punishable under Indian Penal Code (IPC) and sentenced to undergo 10 years of rigorous imprisonment.

- On January 13, the Lok Sabha announced the disqualification of Faizal as an MP with effect from the date of conviction.
- On January 18, the Election Commission of India (ECI) fixed February 27 as the date for by-election to that constituency.
- An appeal in Kerala High Court suspended his conviction and sentence on January 25.
  - The High Court suspended his conviction until disposal of the appeal.
- Mr. Faizal also challenged the ECI's announcement in the Supreme Court of India due to which the ECI deferred the election.
  - The elected candidate will have just 15 months to function till the end of the term of the current Lok Sabha.

### **Provision for disqualification:**

- In case an MP is convicted of any criminal offence, there are provisions in place for their disqualification from the parliament.
- Article 102 of the Indian Constitution lays down the provisions for the disqualification of a Member of Parliament. According to this article, an MP can be disqualified on the following grounds:
  1. If he/she holds an office of profit under the government of India or the government of any state, other than an office declared by Parliament by law not to disqualify its holder;
  2. If he/she is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;
  3. If he/she is an undischarged insolvent;
  4. If he/she is not a citizen of India, or has voluntarily acquired the citizenship of a foreign State, or is under any acknowledgment of allegiance or adherence to a foreign State;
  5. If he/she is so disqualified by or under any law made by Parliament.
    - It means that Parliament can make laws to disqualify MPs on any other ground as well.

Section 8 of Representation of the People Act, 1951 provides that a person will be disqualified if convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more.

- The person is disqualified for the period of imprisonment and a further six years.

### **Differential Treatment:**

- There is an exception for sitting members under Representation of the People Act, 1951
  - Sitting members have been provided a period of three months from the date of conviction to appeal; the disqualification will not be applicable until the appeal is decided.
- The differential treatment of candidates for elections and sitting members was challenged under Article 14.

- The Supreme Court in *K. Prabhakaran vs P. Jayarajan* 2005 case, validated the differential treatment as the consequences of disqualifying a contestant and a sitting member were different.
  - The disqualification of an MP or MLA has several implications for the functioning of the House and the political party to which the member belongs.
  - The disqualification of an MP or MLA leads to a by-election in the constituency represented by the disqualified member. This not only entails additional expenditure for the government but also affects the political balance in the House.
- The Court also held that the removal of disqualification in case of acquittal of a candidate would be prospective and for future elections and not with retrospective effect as this would require the results of the election to be cancelled.
- However, in 2013, a two-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in the *Lily Thomas vs Union of India* case stated that the conditions for disqualification would apply equally to candidates and sitting members. Therefore, the exception carved out for sitting members was unconstitutional.
  - The judgement cited Article 101 that if a Member of Parliament was disqualified under Article 102, “his seat shall thereupon become vacant”. Therefore, the disqualification was automatic and had immediate effect if the conditions of Article 102 were met.
  - The judgement also stated that a disqualified person may obtain a stay on his conviction, and the disqualification would be removed from the date of the stay order.

**Nut Graf:** *The disqualification of an MP on the ground of conviction has been a subject of controversy and debate in India. One of the main reasons for this is that the provision does not apply to an MP who has been convicted but has filed an appeal against the conviction. An MP can continue to hold his/her position in the parliament until the appeal is decided by a higher court.*

## Category: ENVIRONMENT

### 1. An effort to go green

**Syllabus:** *Guidelines, Legislations & Other Programmes on Conservation*

**Mains:** *Role of community-based environmental conservation efforts*

**Context:** Telangana state government’s green initiatives help create awareness about the environment.

**Introduction:**



- Telangana state in India has been recognized as one of the leading states in India for its initiatives towards the environment. It has implemented various green initiatives in the past few years, which have helped to create awareness about the environment among the people of the state.
- Over the past two years, Hyderabad has won multiple awards for being a green city with an improving forest cover.
  - Hyderabad is among the two cities in India, along with Mumbai, to be listed as 'Tree Cities of the World-2021' by Arbor Day Foundation and FAO of UN.
  - Hyderabad has also been awarded the overall 'World Green City Award 2022' at the International Association of Horticulture Producers (AIPH) 2022 World Green City Awards 2022.
- The Telangana government's green initiatives have not only helped create awareness about the environment but have also generated employment opportunities in the state.
  - The Haritha Haram program has created thousands of jobs in the nurseries, and the Vehicle Scrappage Policy has generated employment opportunities in the automobile sector.

### **Green Initiatives:**

#### **1. *Haritha Haram:***

- Haritha Haram is a flagship program of the Telangana state government, launched in July 2015. The aim of the program was to increase the green cover in the state from the existing 24% to 33% by planting 230 crore saplings in five years.
- The state government has replanted 9.65 lakh acres and developed 109 urban forests. This year, 13 lakh acres of forest have been “rejuvenated” with a funding of ₹1,500 crore.
- The program has been successful in creating awareness among the people about the importance of planting trees and protecting the environment. The government has involved various stakeholders, including schools, colleges, NGOs, and corporate companies, to plant saplings and take care of them.

#### **2. *Swachh Telangana***

- Swachh Telangana was launched in 2014 to create a clean and hygienic environment in the state. Under this program, the government has constructed public toilets, installed dustbins, and launched a massive awareness campaign to promote cleanliness.
- The program has been successful in creating awareness among the people about the importance of cleanliness and hygiene.

### 3. Mission Kakatiya

- Mission Kakatiya was launched in 2014 to rejuvenate the lakes and tanks in the state and improve the groundwater level. Under this program, the government has identified and restored more than 45,000 tanks and lakes in the state.
- The Mission Kakatiya program has contributed to improving the groundwater level in the state. The restoration of the lakes and tanks has led to an increase in the water storage capacity, which has helped in recharging the groundwater level.

#### Issues:

- One of the most significant issues facing Telangana's forest conservation efforts is the illegal felling of trees. Many people engage in this activity for commercial purposes, which has led to massive deforestation in several areas of the state. The lack of proper monitoring and enforcement of forest laws has contributed to this problem.
  - Environmental advocates have doubts over the numbers of rejuvenated forests and trees as there is a steady loss of tree cover due to evergrowing construction works in the city.
- Questions have also been raised about the awards. The nomination for 'Tree City of the World' was submitted by providing a certification from the Mayor on the number of trees and there is no external auditing to establish the truthfulness of the information.
- State is also facing the challenge of encroachments into forest lands by the indigenous people. The right for permanent settlement in areas that were once considered forest has been a divisive issue which could impact voting patterns.
  - Recently, a forest official was killed while trying to mark boundaries in the forest.
- Forest fires are a common occurrence in Telangana, especially during the summer months. These fires often result from human activities such as burning of agricultural waste, cigarette smoking, and campfires. The fires cause extensive damage to the flora and fauna of the forests, and the government's efforts to prevent them have been inadequate.

**Nut Graf:** *The Telangana state government's green initiatives have been successful in creating awareness about the environment and encouraging people to adopt sustainable practices. These initiatives have not only helped reduce pollution levels and conserve natural resources but have also generated employment opportunities in the state.*

## F. Prelims Facts

### 1. Teja Red Chilli

**Syllabus:** *Economy; Agriculture - Marketing of agricultural produce*



***Prelims: Teja variety of red chilli*****Context**

Teja red chilli has become a hot property in many nations and the export of this variety of red chilli is estimated to increase from the present ₹2,000 crores per annum to ₹2,500 crores in the coming year.

**Teja Red Chilli**

- Teja Red Chilli which is also known as S-17 is one of the hottest varieties of red chillies produced in India.
- Teja chilli is a fine variety of Guntur chilli which is mostly produced in the southern states of India.
- Khammam district of Telangana is the largest producer of the Teja variety of red chilli.
- Teja red chillis are famous for their culinary, medicinal and other wide-ranging uses such as being the main ingredient in making pepper spray.
  - The paste extracted from this variety of chilli is also in demand for its use as a protective layer beneath ships in some Asian countries.
- Teja red chilli is being exported extensively to China, Bangladesh and a few other south Asian countries from Khammam.

**G. Tidbits****1. Odisha focuses on bringing behavioural and social change to end child marriage**

- At a time when Assam is seeing mass arrests for child marriage which has attracted criticism for the suddenness of the extreme drive, Odisha has taken a long-term view to bring about social and behavioural change to address the issue of child marriage.
- The multi-pronged strategy to end child marriage include:
  - Districts are mandated to track the absence of girls in schools and villages and then report the numbers to the district administration, who would then send representatives for counselling.
  - Formulation of “Advika -- Every Girl is Unique” platform which would link all schemes targeting girls, from 10 to 19 years.
  - Guidelines by the Chief Minister to declare villages child marriage-free.
  - Extending monetary incentives for [particularly vulnerable tribal groups \(PVTGs\)](#)
- Odisha witnessed an overall drop in the prevalence of child marriage from 21.3% in National Family Health Survey-4 to 20.5% in NFHS-5

- Further, the Police Inspectors were entrusted with the job of conducting regular meetings in the community to discuss the issues of school dropout and child marriages with the panchayat members, parents, and children.
  - Police stations are also made child friendly which encourages girls to approach the police.
- Experts believe that over-emphasis on prosecution will take the administration nowhere when the issue is deeply rooted in culture and social norms.

## 2. India plans to export solar power: official

- According to the Ministry for New and Renewable Energy official, the Indian industry would be able to manufacture solar modules every year that can generate 100 gigawatts of power, and help the country be a net exporter of solar power by 2026.
  - The move will significantly help India achieve its target of installing 500 GW of electricity capacity from non-fossil sources by 2030
- As of December 2022, India should have installed 175 GW of renewable energy from solar (100 GW), wind, biomass and small hydropower sources. However, only 122 GW has been installed.
- One of the key challenges has been the cost of solar modules as India has relied on Chinese-made components such as polysilicone wafers, necessary to make modules, which have high customs duty on them.
  - Further, land acquisition has also been a major challenge for solar power manufacturers as installing a megawatt of solar power requires about four acres of land on an average.
- According to the official, the future phase of India's renewable energy development will be led by hybrid projects and renewable energy parks that will host solar and wind projects along with battery storage systems.
- The [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Uttham Mahabhiyan \(PM KUSUM\)](#) scheme aims to aid farmers to tap reliable daytime solar power for irrigation which reduces power subsidies and helps decarbonise agriculture.

## 3. Navy plans for another Vikrant-size carrier before Vikramaditya retires

- The Indian Navy is looking to develop an INS Vikrant-size Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC)-2, with some modifications before the [INS Vikramaditya](#) leaves service.
- The Initial plan was to build the IAC-2 bigger than IAC-1 (INS Vikrant)
  - i.e. IAC-2 was planned for around 65,000 tonnes as compared to INS Vikrant's size of around 44,000 tonnes.
- The Indian Navy requires three aircraft carriers as when the ship undergoes maintenance, it takes time given its size and the possible delays.

- The Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) which has gained significant expertise in building an aircraft carrier with INS Vikrant has expressed confidence about building an INS Vikrant-sized carrier (with modifications) within 8 years from when the order is placed.

## H. UPSC Prelims Practice Questions

**Q1. How many of the following statements are true regarding Kuno National Park?**  
(Level – Moderate)

1. It is located in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.
2. It was considered a site for introducing the Asiatic lions.
3. It includes vegetation like Tropical Dry Deciduous and Grasslands.

Options:

- A. Only 1 statement
- B. Only 2 statements
- C. All 3 statements
- D. None of the statements

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is not correct**, Kuno National Park is located in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, The Kuno National Park was considered a site for introducing the Asiatic lions.
- **Statement 3 is correct**, The vegetation of Kuno National Park includes Anogeissus pendula forest and scrub, Boswellia and Butea forest, dry savanna forest and grassland and Tropical Dry Deciduous.

**Q2. How many of the below does the balance of payments include: (Level – Moderate)**

1. Export and import of services
2. Transfer Payments
3. Exchanges in financial assets
4. Export and import of goods

Options:

- A. Only 1 of the above

- B. Only 2 of the above
- C. Only 3 of the above
- D. All 4 of the above

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

- The balance of payments summarises the economic transactions of an economy with the rest of the world.
- The balance of payments include exports and imports of goods, services and financial assets, along with transfer payments such as foreign aid.

**Q3. Which of the statements are true regarding organ donation in India?(Level–Difficult)**

1. People above 65 years of age are not allowed to register themselves as organ recipients.
2. The recipients need to register themselves in their state of domicile.

Options:

- 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 Union Health Ministry has announced a major change in the organ donation policy of India.
  - The clause that people aged over 65 years could not receive cadaver organ transplants has now been removed.
- **Statement 2 is not correct**, Further, an organ recipient was also required to register for a transplant only in the domicile State which the Gujarat High Court had quashed saying that such a policy was discriminatory in nature.
  - In line with the High Court judgment, the Union government has removed this clause and now a patient irrespective of domicile State can register in any other State for a transplant.

**Q4. Which of the statements is/are true? (Level – Moderate)**

1. India has a target to install 500 GW of electricity capacity from non-fossil by 2030.
2. Under the National Solar Mission, India was to install 100 GW of Solar Power by 2022.
3. The PM KUSUM Scheme aims to reduce power subsidies to the agricultural sector.

Options:

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

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct**, India has a target to install 500 GW of electricity capacity from non-fossil by 2030.
- **Statement 2 is correct**, Under the National Solar Mission, India was to install 100 GW of Solar Power by 2022.
  - The 100 GW solar power capacity has been divided into:
  - Rooftop solar electricity generation – 40 GW
  - Large and Medium Scale grid-connected solar projects – 60 GW
- **Statement 3 is correct**, The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Uttham Mahabhiyan (PM KUSUM) scheme aims to aid farmers to tap reliable daytime solar power for irrigation which reduces power subsidies and helps decarbonise agriculture.

**Q5. Why are dewdrops not formed on a cloudy night? (Level – Easy) PYQ 2019**

- A. Clouds absorb the radiation released from the Earth's surface.
- B. Clouds reflect back the Earth's radiation.
- C. The Earth's surface would have low temperature on cloudy nights.
- D. Clouds deflect the blowing wind to ground level

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

- Dew is formed when moisture is deposited as water droplets on cooler surfaces of solid objects (rather than nuclei in the air above the surface) such as stones, grass blades, and plant leaves.

- When the sky is clear and the trees and plants are cooler at night, more water evaporates, resulting in more dew formation. However, **when the sky is cloudy, the trees and plants do not cool down at night, resulting in less dew formation.**
- Clear skies, calm air, high relative humidity, and a cold and long night are ideal conditions for its formation. The dew point must be higher than the freezing point in order for dew to form.

## I. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

1. What is Sickle Cell Anaemia? Discuss the unique traits of the disease in terms of its prevalence and the steps initiated by the government in order to control the disease. (15 marks, 250 words) (GS-2; Health)
2. Discuss the provisions dealing with the disqualification of members from parliament. Highlight the recent judgements of Supreme Court dealing with disqualifications. (15 marks, 250 words) (GS-2; Polity)