

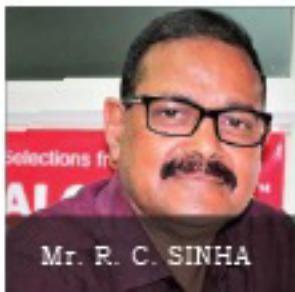


सार्विक्षण  
Comprehensive NEWS Analysis

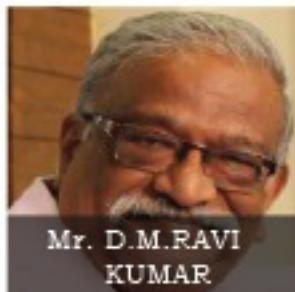
22-10-2018  
TO  
28-10-2018  
OCTOBER  
Week 04

# OUR TEAM

## GENERAL STUDIES



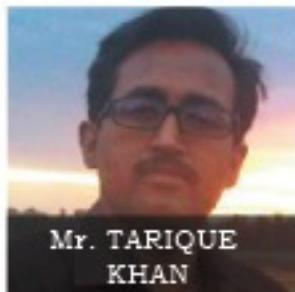
Mr. R. C. SINHA



Mr. D.M.RAVI KUMAR



Mr. SAROJ SAMAL



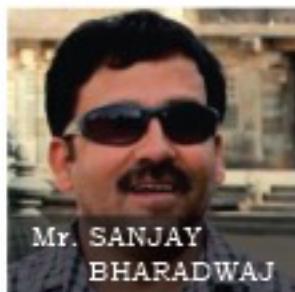
Mr. TARIQUE KHAN



Mr. PRIYESH SINGH SENGAR



Mr. SATYANARAYANA



Mr. SANJAY BHARADWAJ



Dr. ATUL TRIPATHI

Mr. KOUSHIK

Mr. PRANAY AGARWAL

Mr. CHETAN PRAKASH

Mr. NIHIL SAREEN

Mr. RAVI TEJA

Mr. UDAY SIMHA

Mr. SIVA KUMAR

Mr. VIJAY

## OPTIONALS



### SOCIOLOGY

Mr. SAROJ SAMAL

### Public Administration



Mr. R.C. SINHA



Mr. D.M.RAVI KUMAR



### MATHEMATICS

Mr. VINNAKOTA SRIKANTH



### GEOGRAPHY

Mr. PRIYESH SINGH SENGAR

## OTHER OPTIONALS

ANTHROPOLOGY

POLITICAL SCIENCE

TELUGU LITERATURE

HISTORY

# Contents

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page No</b>
<b>Polity and Governance</b>	<b>1 - 11</b>
1. Renaming of states	
2. Special courts for trial of benami transaction cases	
3. Large vacancies for judges in lower courts	
4. Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2016	
5. SC order on use and sale of firecrackers	
6. 'Main Nahin Hum' portal	
7. National Monitoring Framework on Sustainable Development Goals	
8. Office of Profit	
9. Anti- Defection law	
10. Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)	
<b>International Relations</b>	<b>12 - 18</b>
11. India and Bangladesh sign agreements for enhancing inland and coastal waterways connectivity	
12. Chabahar Port	
13. MoU amongst BRICS nations regarding cooperation in the social and labour sphere	
14. India, Myanmar sign MoU towards Sittwe Port operationalization	
15. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty	
<b>Economy</b>	<b>19 - 24</b>
16. Invest India	
17. Cross-Border Insolvency	
18. International Air Transport Association (IATA)	
19. Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)	
20. Appellate Tribunals against Benami Transactions	

## **Geography and Environment**

**25 - 35**

21. BS Norms
22. International Conference on Status and Protection of Coral Reefs (STAPCOR - 2018)
23. Earth's inner core is softer, a study reveals
24. India's longest river bridge
25. Green Climate Fund
26. Acinetobacter Junii
27. Third Pole
28. Tea Board
29. Citizen- Science repository of Indian mammals
30. Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)
31. Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali campaign

## **Science & Technology**

**36 - 37**

32. Fusion Energy Conference (FEC 2018)
33. Gaming Garage

## **Miscellaneous**

**38 - 40**

34. Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize
35. Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management Award, 2018
36. Cope India air exercise
37. Seoul Peace Prize
38. Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony

## Polity and Governance

### 1. Renaming of states

#### **Context:**

West Bengal government's move to rename WB as "Bangla" has hit a roadblock after concerns that the new name may sound like Bangladesh, and it would be difficult to differentiate the two at international forums.

- In a letter to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the Union Home Ministry stated that the proposed name "Bangla" may sound similar like Bangladesh and some confusions may arrive in the international arena over Bangla and Bangladesh. Since Bangladesh shares a cordial relationship with India, Home Ministry was advised to seek a response from MEA on the issue.
- In 2016, the West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to change the name of West Bengal to Bangla in Bengali, Bengal in English and Bangal in Hindi.

#### **Rationale behind renaming:**

- The state government first proposed the renaming in 2016. West Bengal parliamentary affairs minister Partha Chatterjee had then argued for the change saying bureaucrats and politicians from the state often complain that they are asked to speak at the end of every national-level meeting in Delhi.
- This was because the speakers' lists at such meeting are prepared according to alphabetical order of the states they represent. If West Bengal gets the new name, it will leapfrog from bottom of the list to the top of the pecking order.
- The renaming will help the state appear at the fourth spot after Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Assam in the alphabetic order of the states.

#### **The procedure of renaming of the state can be initiated by either the Parliament or the State Legislator and the procedure is as follows:**

- The renaming of a state requires Parliamentary approval under Article 3 and 4 of the Constitution.
- A bill for renaming a state may be introduced in the Parliament on the recommendation of the President.
- Before the introduction of the bill, the President shall send the bill to the respective state assembly for expressing their views within a stipulated time. The views of the state assembly are not binding, neither on the President nor on the Parliament.
- On the expiry of the period, the bill will be sent to the Parliament for deliberation. The bill in order to take the force of a law must be passed by a simple majority.

- The bill is sent for approval to the President. After the approval of the said bill, the bill becomes a law and the name of the state stands modified.

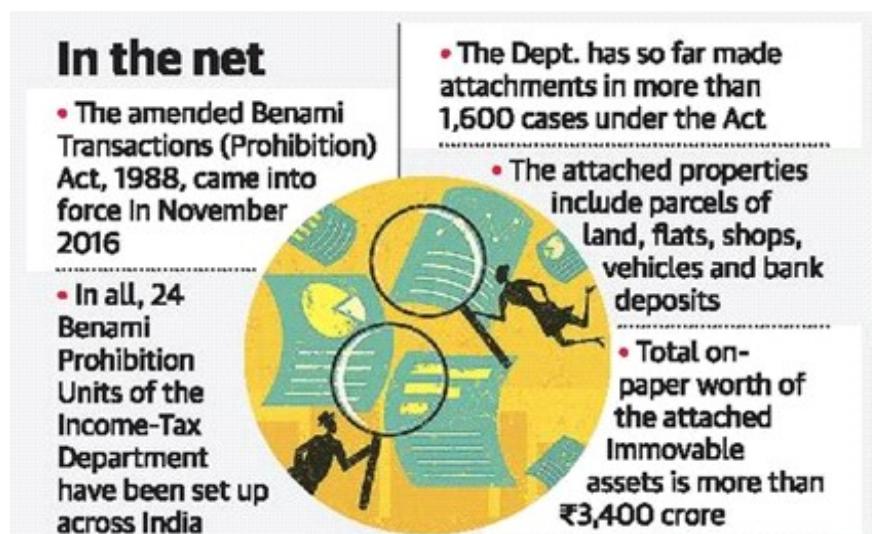
### **Initiation by a State:**

- If any fresh proposal comes from states to the Home Ministry, it will prepare a note for the Union Cabinet for an amendment to the Schedule 1 of the Constitution.
- Thereafter, a Constitution Amendment Bill will be introduced in Parliament, which has to approve it with a simple majority, before the President gives his assent to it.

## **2. Special courts for trial of benami transaction cases**

### **Context:**

The Union Government has issued a notification stating that sessions courts in 34 states and union territories, will act as special courts for the trial of offences under the benami transaction law.



- The sessions courts were notified after consultation with Chief Justices of High Courts under the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act, 1988 for the trial of offences punishable under the provision of the Act.
- In the case of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, the courts of additional session's judge in each district have been designated as the special court.

### **Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act:**

- The Indian Parliament passed the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act in August 2016 to curb the menace of black money. The bill sought to amend the Benami Transactions Act, 1988.
- The new legislation provided for seven years imprisonment and fine for those indulging in illegal transactions.
- The act has amended the definition of benami transactions and establishes adjudicating authorities and an Appellate Tribunal to deal with benami transactions.
- Further, the act defines benami transactions, prohibits them and provides that violation of the PBPT Act is punishable with imprisonment and fine.

- It also prohibits recovery of the property held benami from benamidar by the real owner. The properties held benami are liable for confiscation by the Government without payment of compensation.

### **3. Large vacancies for judges in lower courts**

#### **Context:**

Describing as “unacceptable” the existence of 5,133 vacancies of judges in “Higher Judicial Service” and “Lower Judicial Service”, the Supreme Court has sought the response of the State governments and the High Courts whether the time for the ongoing recruitment of 4,180 judicial officers could be shortened.

#### **Directions issued:**

- Passing a suo motu order on the huge number of vacancies in the subordinate judiciary across the country, the court has sought the response from the High Courts/State governments as it noted that the recruitment process for filling 4,180 posts was already underway.
- Noting that there was a mismatch in the number of vacancies, the number of posts for which recruitment process is underway and those still pending, the apex court also sought details of the vacancies that have occurred since the current recruitment process commenced.
- The court also sought information whether “infrastructure and manpower available in the different states is adequate if all the posts that are borne in the cadre are to be filled up.

#### **Malik Mazhar Sultan case:**

- A seven-month schedule for recruitment has been formulated by the top court in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case. If the time taken exceeds the schedule fixed by this Court, the reasons thereof should be furnished by the Registries of such High Courts/concerned authorities of the State where the recruitment is done through the Public Service Commission(s) which are in default.

#### **Central recruitment to fill judges' vacancies is the right idea:**

- The Union law ministry is working with the Supreme Court to conduct a nationwide examination to recruit around 6,000 judges for the lower judiciary as a one-time measure.
- Under the nationwide recruitment scheme, a central agency will conduct the test with due importance given to local languages for those opting for a particular state. Subsequently, an all-India merit list will be prepared based on which the state governments will make the final appointments. Although this has been proposed as a one-time measure, there is a case here to have a permanent central judicial recruitment mechanism. This will also help ensure uniformity in judicial recruitment across the country.

## **Significance:**

- This is much needed given the huge number of vacancies for judges and the high pendency of cases. In fact, lower courts currently have a backlog of 2.78 crore cases. Unless judges are quickly recruited, this number can't be kept down.
- True, appointment of judges in district and subordinate courts is the responsibility of state governments and the high courts concerned. But things have come to this pass because of inordinate delays in holding examinations for judicial recruitment at the state level.

## **4. Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2016**

### **Context:**

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill is gaining momentum yet again as the Assam Government has refused the proposed rally of organisations from West Bengal in support of the Bill.

- The Citizenship Amendment Bill was proposed in Lok Sabha on July 19, amending the Citizenship Act of 1955.
- If this Bill is passed in Parliament, illegal migrants from certain minority communities coming from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan will then be eligible for Indian citizenship.
- In short, illegal migrants belonging to the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian religious communities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan would not be imprisoned or deported.
- Moreover, these citizens gain permanent citizenship after six years of residency in India instead of 11 years — as mentioned in the Citizenship Act (1955).
- The registration of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders may get cancelled if they violate any law.

### **What is the Citizenship Act 1995?**

- Under Article 9 of the Indian Constitution, a person who voluntarily acquires citizenship of any other country is no longer an Indian citizen.

**Citizenship by descent:** Persons born outside India on or after January 26, 1950, but before December 10, 1992, are citizens of India by descent if their father was a citizen of India at the time of their birth.

- From December 3, 2004, onwards, persons born outside of India shall not be considered citizens of India unless their birth is registered at an Indian consulate within one year of the date of birth.
- In Section 8 of the Citizenship Act 1955, if an adult makes a declaration of renunciation of Indian citizenship, he loses Indian citizenship.

### **Who is an illegal immigrant?**

- According to the Citizenship Act (1955), an illegal immigrant is defined as a person who enters India without a valid passport or stays in the

country after the expiry of the visa permit. Also, the immigrant who uses false documents for the immigration process.

### **What are the guidelines to become an Indian citizenship?**

- Citizenship is granted to an individual by the government of the country when he/she complies with the legal formalities, so it's like a judicial concept.

### **In India, the Citizenship Act, 1995 prescribes five ways of acquiring citizenship:**

- Birth.
- Descent
- Registration
- Naturalization
- Incorporation of the territory.

### **Assam NRC:**

- The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is a list that contains names of Indian citizens of Assam. It was last prepared after Census in 1951. Assam, which had faced an influx of people from Bangladesh since the early 20th century, is the only state having an NRC.
- The Assam government on July 30, 2018 released the second and final draft of the state's National Register of Citizens (NRC). The draft includes the names of Indian citizens who have been residing in Assam before March 25, 1971.
- As per the Draft, the total number of persons included in the list is 2,89,83,677 leaving a total of 40,70,707 as ineligible for inclusion. Out of 40,70,707 names, 37,59,630 names have been rejected and 2,48,077 names are kept on hold.

## **5. SC order on use and sale of firecrackers**

### **Context:**

The Supreme Court has ordered a partial ban on the sale and use of firecrackers, ahead of Diwali next month. Hearing a bunch of petitions seeking a blanket ban on firecrackers to help curb air pollution, the court has allowed the use of "safer" firecrackers for a limited time period during festivals.

- Refusing a complete ban, the top court has permitted the use and sale of "greener" firecrackers which have low emission. Firecrackers with permissible decibel sound limits will be allowed to be sold in the market.
- Firecrackers will be allowed to be burst for 2 hours, 8pm to 10pm on Diwali. For New Year and Christmas, the time allotted is 11.45 pm to 12.30 am.
- The Supreme Court has restrained E-commerce websites like Flipkart

and Amazon from selling firecrackers which are beyond the permissible limit. Websites will attract contempt of court charges if they don't adhere to court's direction.

- Station house officers of police stations concerned will be held liable if banned firecrackers are sold in their areas.
- The Court has also directed Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) to review the clinical composition of fireworks, particularly reducing Aluminium content.

### **Background:**

- Three children, aged between three and four, were among the petitioners who sought blanket ban on the sale, use and transportation of firecrackers citing concerns of air pollution. On October 9 last year, the Supreme Court had suspended the use of firecrackers till November 1 in Delhi-NCR to test whether and how much, firecrackers contribute to the air quality.
- The apex court had said there is a need to take into account all aspects, including the fundamental right of livelihood of firecracker manufacturers and the right to health of over 1.3 billion people in the country, while considering a plea for the ban.

## **6. ‘Main Nahin Hum’ portal**

### **Context:**

The government has launched ‘Main Nahin Hum’ portal for IT professionals.

### **About ‘Main Nahin Hum’ portal and its significance:**

- The portal, which works on the theme ‘Self4Society’, will enable IT professionals and organisations to bring together their efforts towards social causes on one platform. The platform has been developed by MyGov.
- The portal will also help the employees in identifying the volunteering opportunities for social causes and they can also collaborate with other employees on such projects.
- In doing so, the portal is expected to help catalyse greater collaboration towards the service of the weaker sections of society, especially by leveraging the benefits of technology.
- It is also expected to generate wider participation of interested people who are motivated to work for the benefit of society.

### **Way ahead:**

- Since India has already become the third largest in terms of the start-up, social start-ups should become an intrinsic part of the ecosystem. Some of areas which require participation are saving natural resources such as water, agriculture, climate change etc.

## 7. National Monitoring Framework on Sustainable Development Goals

### Context:

The Union Cabinet has approved the constitution of a High Level Steering Committee for periodically reviewing and refining the National Indicator Framework (NIF) for monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with associated targets.



of other related Ministries.

### Targets:

- Measures to mainstream SDGs into on-going national policies, programmes and strategic action plans to address the developmental challenges.
- Statistical indicators of NIF will be the backbone of monitoring of SDGs at the national and state level and will scientifically measure the outcomes of the policies to achieve the targets under different SDGs.
- Based on statistical indicator, the MoSPI will bring out national reports on implementation of SDGs. The Report will facilitate assessment of progress, identify challenges and give recommendations for follow up at the national level.
- High Level Steering Committee will review the National Indicator Framework on regular basis for its improvement.
- Data source Ministries / Departments will be responsible for providing regular information to MoSPI on these indicators at required intervals and disaggregation for national and sub-national reporting of SDGs.
- Advanced IT tools will be used for close and effective monitoring.

### Significance of the framework:

- SDGs with 17 Goals and 169 Targets intend for promotion of sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of

living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion, promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.

- NIF will help in outcome-based monitoring & reporting on progress on SDGs at National level. There is no direct financial implication on implementation of the National Indicator Framework. However, the respective Ministries will need to re-align and strengthen their data systems to facilitate monitoring of the SDG indicators.
- SDGs are expected to bring change in the lives of people and the monitoring of progress of implementation of SDGs will benefit the entire nation.

### **About SDGs:**

- The UN General Assembly in its 70th Session considered and adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the next 15 years.
- The 17 SDGs came into force with effect from 1st January, 2016.
- Though not legally binding, the SDGs have become de facto international obligations and have potential to reorient domestic spending priorities of the countries during the next fifteen years.
- Countries are expected to take ownership and establish a national framework for achieving these Goals. Implementation and success will rely on countries' own sustainable development policies, plans and programmes.
- Countries would be responsible for follow-up and review at the national level, with regard to the progress made in implementing the Goals and targets. Actions at the national level to monitor progress under SDGs will require quality, accessible and timely data.

## **8. Office of Profit**

### **Context:**

President R N Kovind has dismissed a petition seeking disqualification of 27 AAP MLAs from Delhi on grounds of having held 'office of profit' as chairpersons of patient welfare committees (Rogi Kalyan Samiti) constituted by Delhi government.

- The decision was based on an opinion tendered by the Election Commission in July, stating that the said office was exempt from purview of 'office of profit' under provisions of the Delhi MLAs (Removal of Disqualification) Act, 1997.
- Government of NCT of Delhi, in its submission to EC, had made it clear that Rogi Kalyan Samitis were constituted by it and that their chairpersons were not entitled to any remuneration and would therefore fall under the exemption granted by item 14 of the Schedule of the Delhi MLAs (Removal of Disqualification) Act. The Act provides for

exemption of office of chairman, vice-chairman and members of the hospital advisory committee, Delhi, from purview of “office of profit”.

### **What is an ‘office of profit’?**

- If an MLA or an MP holds a government office and receives benefits from it, then that office is termed as an “office of profit”. A person will be disqualified if he holds an office of profit under the central or state government, other than an office declared not to disqualify its holder by a law passed by Parliament or state legislature.

### **What are the basic criteria to disqualify an MP or MLA?**

- Basic disqualification criteria for an MP are laid down in Article 102 of the Constitution, and for an MLA in Article 191. They can be disqualified for: a) Holding an office of profit under government of India or state government; b) Being of unsound mind; c) Being an undischarged insolvent; d) Not being an Indian citizen or for acquiring citizenship of another country.

### **What is the underlying principle for including ‘office of profit’ as criterion for disqualification?**

- Makers of the Constitution wanted that legislators should not feel obligated to the Executive in any way, which could influence them while discharging legislative functions. In other words, an MP or MLA should be free to carry out her duties without any kind of governmental pressure.

## **9. Anti- Defection law**

### **Context:**

In a major relief to the AIADMK government in Tamil Nadu, the Madras High Court has upheld the state Assembly Speaker’s decision disqualifying 18 AIADMK legislators last year.

- In 2017, a group of 19 lawmakers met then Governor C.Vidyasagar Rao and gave a memorandum expressing loss of confidence in Palaniswami and requested him to appoint a new Chief Minister.
- The Speaker then issued notice to the lawmakers asking them why they should not be disqualified under the anti-defection law. Subsequently, one of legislators, S.T.K. Jakkaiyan, switched over to the Palaniswami side and the others were disqualified.

### **The anti-defection law:**

- The 10th Schedule to the Constitution, popularly referred to as the ‘Anti-Defection Law,’ was inserted by the 52nd Amendment in 1985.

### **The grounds for disqualification are mentioned under Articles 102 (2) and 191 (2). A Member of Parliament or state legislature is deemed to have defected:**

- When the elected member voluntarily gives up his membership of a political party.

- If he votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to any direction issued by his political party or anyone authorised to do so, without obtaining prior permission.
- Independent members would be disqualified if they joined a political party.
- Nominated members who were not members of a party could choose to join a party within six months; after that period, they were treated as a party member or independent member.

### **Exceptions under the Law:**

- Any person elected as speaker or chairman could resign from his party, and rejoin the party if he demitted that post.
- A party could be merged into another if at least two-thirds of its party legislators voted for the merger.
- The law initially permitted splitting of parties, but that has now been outlawed.

### **Decision of the Presiding Officer is subject to judicial review:**

- The law initially stated that the decision of the Presiding Officer is not subject to judicial review. This condition was struck down by the Supreme Court in 1992, thereby allowing appeals against the Presiding Officer's decision in the High Court and Supreme Court. However, it held that there may not be any judicial intervention until the Presiding Officer gives his order.

## **10. Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)**

### **Context:**

Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched the web portal of the Scheme “Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)”.

### **About Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC):**

- The Government in August 2018 had sanctioned the scheme “Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC)” at a total cost of Rs.418 Cr for implementation up to 31.3.2020.
- Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur is the National Coordinating Institute to implement the SPARC programme. Details may be viewed at [www.sparc.iitkgp.ac.in](http://www.sparc.iitkgp.ac.in).
- The scheme aims at improving the research ecosystem of India’s higher educational institutions by facilitating academic and research collaborations between Indian Institutions and the best institutions in the world.

- Under this Scheme, 600 joint research proposals will be awarded for 2 years to facilitate strong research collaboration between Indian research groups with the best in class faculty and renowned research groups in the leading universities of the world, in areas that are at the cutting edge of science or with direct social relevance to the mankind, specifically India.

### **Significance of the scheme:**

- This Scheme is expected to have a major impact in providing the best international expertise to address major national problems, expose Indian academicians to the best collaborators abroad, enable international faculty to stay in India for a longer duration, provide Indian students an opportunity to work in the world class laboratories, to develop strong bilateral relationships in research, and improve the international ranking of Indian Institutes.



## International Relations

### 11. India and Bangladesh sign agreements for enhancing inland and coastal waterways connectivity

#### Context:

India and Bangladesh have signed several milestone agreements for enhancing inland and coastal waterways connectivity between the two countries for trade and cruise movements. These agreements will facilitate easier movement of goods and passengers between the two countries, giving an impetus to trade and tourism.

- The two countries have signed an agreement to use Chattogram and Mongla Ports in Bangladesh for movement of goods to and from India. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has also been signed for movement of passenger and cruise services.
- An addendum to 'Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade' (PIWTT) between India and Bangladesh has been signed for inclusion of Dhubriin India and Pangaonin Bangladesh as new Ports of Call.
- The two sides have also agreed to consider inclusion of Rupnarayanriver (National Waterway-86) from Geonkhali to Kolaghat in the protocol route and to declare Kolaghatin West Bengal as new Port of Call.
- Both sides agreed to declare Badarpur on river Barak (NW 16) as an Extended Port of Call of Karimganj in Assam and Ghorasal of Ashuganj in Bangladesh on a reciprocal basis.
- Both sides have also agreed for development of Jogighopa as a hub/trans-shipment terminal for movement of cargo to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Bhutan and notifying Munsiganj River terminal by Bangladesh Customs for routing third party Exim cargo through Kolkata Port.

#### Benefits and significance:

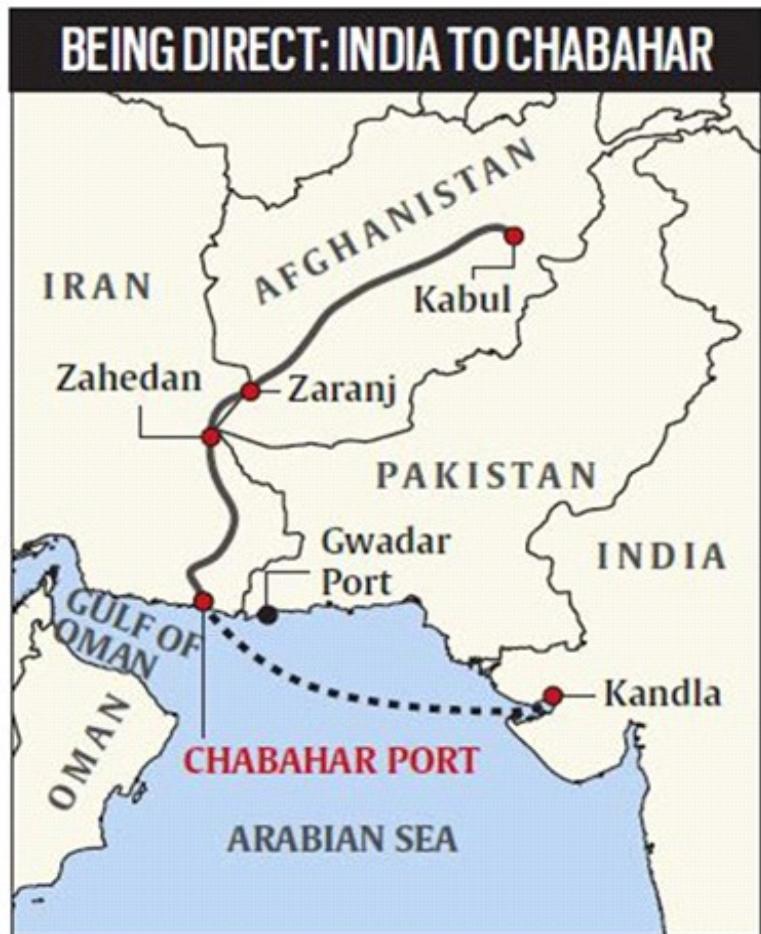
- The new arrangement will facilitate the movement of fly ash, cement, construction materials from India to Bangladesh through IWT on Rupnarayanriver.
- The North Eastern states would get connected to directly to the ports of Kolkata and Haldia in India and Mongla in Bangladesh through waterways which would facilitate movement EXIM cargo and would also reduce the logistic costs.
- The reconstruction and opening up of Jangipur navigational lock on river Bhagirathi subject to the provisions of the Treaty between India and Bangladesh on Sharing of Ganga Waters at Farakka,1996. This move has the potential to reduce the distance to Assam by more than 450 kms on the protocol routes

## 12. Chabahar Port

### Context:

India, Afghanistan and Iran recently held their first trilateral meeting on Chabahar port project during which they reviewed its implementation. The

meeting assumes significance as the strategically-located port on the energy-rich Iran's southern coast was coming under the ambit of US sanctions on Tehran.



### Outcomes of the meeting:

- The meeting decided to constitute a follow-up committee that would hold its first meeting within two months in Chabahar port. The committee would discuss and aim to finalise protocol to harmonise transit, roads, customs and consular matters for making the route attractive and decrease logistic costs.

### Where is Chabahar port?

- Iran's Chabahar port is located on the Gulf of Oman and is the only oceanic port of the country. The port gives access to the energy-rich Persian Gulf nations' southern coast and India can bypass Pakistan with the Chabahar port becoming functional.

### Why Chabahar port is crucial for India?

- The first and foremost significance of the Chabahar port is the fact that India can bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan. Chabahar port will boost India's access to Iran, the key gateway to the International North-South Transport Corridor that has sea, rail and road routes between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.
- Chabahar port will be beneficial to India in countering Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea which China is trying to ensure by helping Pakistan develop the Gwadar port. Gwadar port is less than 400 km from Chabahar by road and 100 km by sea.
- With Chabahar port being developed and operated by India, Iran also becomes a military ally to India. Chabahar could be used in case China decides to flex its navy muscles by stationing ships in Gwadar port to reckon its upper hand in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and Middle East.

- With Chabahar port becoming functional, there will be a significant boost in the import of iron ore, sugar and rice to India. The import cost of oil to India will also see a considerable decline. India has already increased its crude purchase from Iran since the West imposed ban on Iran was lifted.
- Chabahar port will ensure in the establishment of a politically sustainable connectivity between India and Afghanistan. This will, in turn, lead to better economic ties between the two countries.
- From a diplomatic perspective, Chabahar port could be used as a point from where humanitarian operations could be coordinated.

### **13. MoU amongst BRICS nations regarding cooperation in the social and labour sphere**

#### **Context:**

The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China, South Africa, regarding Cooperation in the Social and Labour Sphere. The MoU was signed on 3rd August, 2018 during BRICS Labour and Employment Ministers (LEM) Meeting.

#### **As per the MoU:**

- The parties including India have agreed to cooperate and hold mutual events in the prominent areas viz. labour legislation and enforcement, protection of workers' rights with focus on vulnerable groups, Employment and labour market policies, Professional education, skills and training and Social protection.
- The member countries may utilize the BRICS Network of Labour Research Institutes and BRICS Social Security Cooperation Framework for cooperation on Social Security and other labour issues.
- However, the Memorandum is not an International Treaty and does not create rights and obligations for the parties governed by international law.

#### **Significance and major Impacts:**

- The MoU provides a mechanism for cooperation, collaboration and maximum synergy amongst BRICS member countries with the common objective of inclusive growth and shared prosperity in the new industrial revolution.
- This would facilitate member countries to share knowledge and also implement joint programmes on matter of Labour and Employment, Social Security and Social dialogue.
- This would also ensure networking of International Training Centre of International Labour Organisation (ILO) with the BRICS Network of Labour Institutes which includes V.V. Giri National Labour Institute of India. This network would specifically focus on the theme of youth

employment and research on new forms of employment. This network will also explore new learning technologies, including virtual network to deepen cooperation, exchange of information and capacity building.

- The BRICS Social Security cooperation framework will deepen social security cooperation among BRICS nations and would facilitate cooperation for improvement of social security systems and social security agreements among member countries.

## **What is BRICS?**

- BRICS is an acronym for the grouping of the world's leading emerging economies, namely Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- **Summits:** The BRICS Leaders' Summit is convened annually with discussions representing spheres of political and socio-economic coordination, in which member countries have identified several business opportunities, economic complementarities and areas of cooperation.
- **Chairship:** The Chairship of the forum is rotated annually among the members, in accordance with the acronym B-R-I-C-S. Over and above the summit, BRICS cooperation in the past decade has expanded to include an annual programme of over 100 sectoral meetings. Cooperation among members is predicated on three levels or "tracks" of interaction, namely:
  - **Track I:** Formal diplomatic engagement between the national governments.
  - **Track II:** Engagement through government-affiliated institutions, e.g. state-owned enterprises and business councils.
  - **Track III:** Civil society and "people-to-people" engagement.

## **14. India, Myanmar sign MoU towards Sittwe Port operationalization**

### **Context:**

India and Myanmar have signed an important MoU for the appointment of a private Port Operator for the Operation and Maintenance of Sittwe Port, Paletwa Inland Water Terminal and associated facilities included in the Kaladan Multi Model Transit Transport Project in implementation of India's Act East Policy.

- Sittwe is the capital of Rakhine State (which has been in the news for the plight of Rohingya Muslims) in south-western Myanmar. It is located at the mouth of the Kaladan river, which flows into Mizoram in north-eastern India.

### **Significance of this port for India:**

- India has for years sought transit access through Bangladesh to ship goods to the landlocked north-eastern States. At present, the only



route to this region from the rest of India is a rather circuitous one through a narrow strip of Indian territory nicknamed the Chicken's Neck in West Bengal, sandwiched between Bhutan and Bangladesh.

- The new route through Sittwe would significantly lower the cost and distance of movement from Kolkata to Mizoram and beyond.

### **About Kaladan project:**

- The Kaladan project connects Sittwe Port in Myanmar to the India-Myanmar border.
- The project was jointly initiated by India and Myanmar to create a multi-modal platform for cargo shipments from the eastern ports to Myanmar and to the North-eastern parts of the country through Myanmar.
- It is expected to open up sea routes and promote economic development in the North-eastern states, and also add value to the economic, commercial and strategic ties between India and Myanmar.
- This project will reduce distance from Kolkata to Sittwe by approximately 1328 km and will reduce the need to transport goods through the narrow Siliguri corridor, also known as Chicken's Neck.

### **Way ahead:**

- Following this MoU the process of identifying bidders to maintain these facilities will be initiated by floating an RFP. Subsequent to the commencement of operations at this port, it would offer new infrastructure for trade including between India and Myanmar, thereby contributing to job creation and development in the whole region, particularly in the Rakhine and Chin States of Myanmar.

## **15. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty**

### **Context:**

U.S. President Donald Trump has announced that he would "terminate" the INF Treaty in response to a long-running dispute over Russian noncompliance with the treaty.

- The United States first alleged in its July 2014 Compliance Report that Russia is in violation of its INF Treaty obligations “not to possess, produce, or flight-test” a ground-launched cruise missile having a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometers or “to possess or produce launchers of such missiles.” Subsequent State Department assessments in 2015, 2016, and 2017 repeated these allegations.

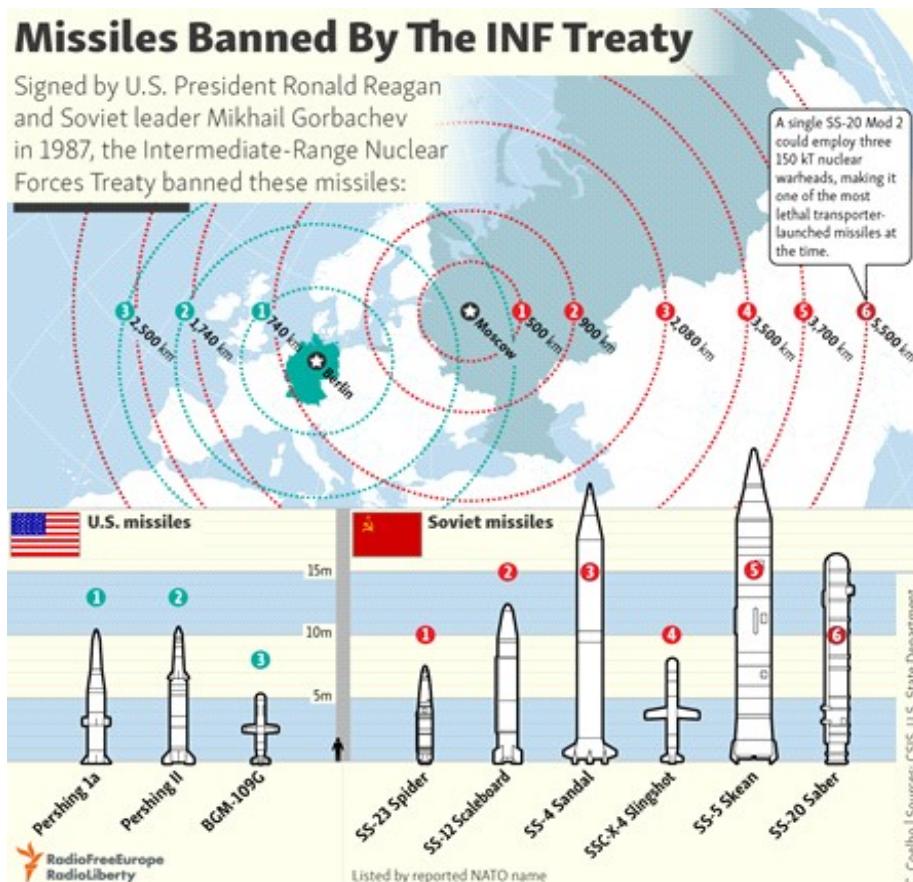


Russia denies that it is in violation of the agreement. On December 8, 2017, the Trump administration released a strategy to counter alleged Russian violations of the Treaty.

- Russia denies that it is in violation of the agreement. On December 8, 2017, the Trump administration released a strategy to counter alleged Russian violations of the Treaty.

### About the Intermediate- Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty:

- The 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty required the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate and permanently forswear all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers.
- The treaty marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals, eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons, and utilize extensive on-site inspections for verification. As a result of the INF Treaty, the United States and the Soviet Union destroyed a total of 2,692 short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missiles by the treaty's implementation deadline of June 1, 1991.



- Despite its name, the INF Treaty covers all types of ground-launched cruise and ballistic missiles — whether their payload is conventional or

nuclear. Moscow and Washington are prohibited from deploying these missiles anywhere in the world, not just in Europe. However, the treaty applies only to ground-launched systems. Both sides are free to deploy air- and sea-launched missiles within the 500-to-5,500-kilometer range.

### **What are the military implications of withdrawal?**

- It is unclear what INF-prohibited systems the United States could deploy to Europe or Asia in the near term. The U.S. military has not developed any land-based missiles within the prohibited ranges for decades and has only just started funding a new ground-launched cruise missile to match the 9M729.
- Moscow is in a very different position and could rapidly expand deployment. The number of operational 9M729 missiles has been quite limited, but released from its official obligations under the treaty; Moscow could deploy more units rapidly.
- Russia could also effectively reclassify the RS-26 Rubezh, an experimental system that has been tested just above the INF Treaty's 5,500-kilometer limit. To avoid violating the INF, Russian officials previously described the RS-26 as an intercontinental ballistic missile. However, it could form the basis for a missile of a slightly shorter range if Moscow wished to boost its INF forces — without counting it under the U.S.-Russian New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or New START, governing longer-range systems.

### **What are the diplomatic implications of withdrawal?**

- Withdrawal is likely to be controversial with U.S. allies in NATO, further splitting the alliance at a difficult time for transatlantic relations. Many Western European NATO states favor retaining the INF, in conjunction with previous U.S. policy designed to push Moscow back into compliance. This raises concerns that divisions within NATO may worsen when the United States officially withdraws from the INF.
- Withdrawal will probably not lead to a new INF deal. Given its heavy investment in intermediate-range systems, China will not take up Trump's offer of talks with the United States and Russia. Moscow seems to be in no mood for negotiations.
- Trump's move is also likely to undermine the 2010 New START treaty governing U.S. and Russian long-range nuclear systems. The INF Treaty's demise will undercut New START by reopening questions on the relationship between intermediate and strategic systems that have been resolved for 30 years by the elimination of ground-based, intermediate-range missiles.

## Economy

### 16. Invest India

#### Context:

Invest India, the country's investment promotion body, has won United Nations (UN) Award for excellence in promoting investments in sustainable development.

- Invest India received this award for excellence in servicing and supporting major global wind turbines company in establishment of blade manufacturing plant in India while committing to train local staff and produce 1 gigawatt (GW) of renewable energy. Implementation of this project is expected to reduce India's wind energy cost significantly.

#### What is Invest India?

- Invest India is the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of India and acts as the first point of reference for investors in India.
- Invest India is set up as a non profit venture under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industries, Government of India.

#### A joint venture:

- Operationalized in early 2010, Invest India is set up as a joint venture company between the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce & Industry (35% equity), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) (51% equity), and State Governments of India (0.5% each).

#### Functions:

- The core mandate of Invest India is investment promotion and facilitation. It provides sector-specific and state-specific information to a foreign investor, assists in expediting regulatory approvals, and offers hand-holding services. Its mandate also includes assisting Indian investors to make informed choices about investment opportunities overseas.

#### Why Invest in India?

- India to remain one of the fastest growing economies in the world- International Monetary Fund.
- FDI inflows increased by 37% since the launch of Make in India initiative.
- Leading investors ranked India as the most attractive market.
- Largest youth population in the world.

- Huge domestic market.
- Rising economic influence- IOR and INSTC.
- India registered a record improvement on EoDB ranking from 142 to 100 between 2014-2017.

### **UN Investment Promotion Award:**

- The awards are given annually by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) since 2002 as part of its investment promotion and facilitation programme.
- It honours investment promotion agencies (IPAs) and their governments for their achievements.
- It also seeks to showcase best practices in attracting investment into Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)-related projects that can inspire investment promotion practitioners in developing and developed countries.

## **17. Cross-Border Insolvency**

### **Context:**

The Insolvency Law Committee (ILC) on October 22, 2018 submitted its 2nd Report on Cross Border Insolvency to Arun Jaitley, Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs. The ILC was constituted by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs to recommend amendments to Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India, 2016.

<b>Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016: Salient Features</b>						
<b>Clear &amp; Speedy Process for Early Identification &amp; Resolution of Financial Distress for Corporates &amp; LLPs (if underlying business found viable)</b>	<b>Two Distinct Resolution Processes:</b> (a) Fresh Start; (b) Insolvency Resolution	<b>Adjudicating Authorities:</b> National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and Debt Recovery Tribunal	<b>Regulator:</b> Insolvency & Bankruptcy Board of India for IPs, IPAs & Information Utilities	<b>Insolvency Professionals (IPs):</b> To handle commercial aspects of Insolvency Resolution Process	<b>Insolvency Professional Agencies (IPAs):</b> To develop professional standards & code of ethics for insolvency professionals members	<b>Information Utilities:</b> To process financial information to be used in insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings.

- The ILC recommended the adoption of the UNCITRAL Model Law of Cross Border Insolvency, 1997 as it provides for a comprehensive framework to deal with cross border insolvency issues.
- The Committee also recommended a few steps to ensure that there is no inconsistency between the domestic insolvency framework and the proposed Cross Border Insolvency Framework.

### **Need for cross-border insolvency framework:**

- As the size of the Indian economy grows, business and trade have adopted an increasingly international character. Creditors and corporates frequently transact business in more than one jurisdiction.

Foreign banks and creditors finance Indian companies and Indian banks have foreign exposure. Also, as part of its Ease of Doing Business and Make in India policies, India seeks to attract foreign companies to set up manufacturing facilities in India.

- Besides, global experience demonstrates that cross-border investment decisions and their outcomes, are considerably affected by the insolvency laws in force in a country. Towards this end, even though the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 has resulted in significant improvement in India's insolvency regime, there is a need to include cross-border insolvency in the Code to provide a comprehensive insolvency framework.

### **Benefits associated:**

- Inclusion of cross-border insolvency framework will further enhance ease of doing business, provide a mechanism of cooperation between India and other countries in the area of insolvency resolution, and protect creditors in the global scenario.
- Also, it will make India an attractive investment destination for foreign creditors given the increased predictability and certainty of the insolvency framework.

### **UNCITRAL Model Law of Cross Border Insolvency, 1997:**

- The UNCITRAL Model Law has till now been adopted in 44 countries and forms part of international best practices in dealing with cross border insolvency issues. The model law gives precedence to domestic proceedings and protection of public interest.
- The advantages of the model law include greater confidence generation among foreign investors, adequate flexibility for seamless integration with the domestic Insolvency Law and a robust mechanism for international cooperation.
- Four major principles of UNCITRAL Model Law- The model law deals with four major principles of cross-border insolvency, namely:
  - i. Direct access to foreign insolvency professionals and foreign creditors to participate in or commence domestic insolvency proceedings against a defaulting debtor.
  - ii. Recognition of foreign proceedings & provision of remedies.
  - iii. Cooperation between domestic and foreign courts & domestic and foreign insolvency practitioners.
  - iv. Coordination between two or more concurrent insolvency proceedings in different countries. The main proceeding is determined by the concept of centre of main interest (COMI).

### **Global scenario:**

- On the global scale, the UNCITRAL (United Nations Commission on International Trade Law) Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency, 1997

(Model Law) has emerged as the most widely accepted legal framework to deal with cross-border insolvency issues while ensuring the least intrusion into the country's domestic insolvency law.

- Due to the growing prevalence of multinational insolvencies, the Model Law has been adopted by 44 States till date, including Singapore, UK and US.

## 18. International Air Transport Association (IATA)

### Context:

In its latest 20-year forecast for the aviation industry, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) says that India will be the third largest aviation market globally a year sooner than was earlier predicted. It is now expected to be among the top three countries by 2024 from its current seventh position.

### Highlights of the report:

- Air passenger numbers worldwide could double to 8.2 billion in 2037. The biggest contribution in this growth will come from the Asia-Pacific region, which will account for half the total number of new passengers over the next 20 years.
- While China will climb up one spot to displace US as the world's largest aviation market in the mid-2020s, India will take the third place by surpassing the U.K. around 2024.
- By 2037, India is expected to add 414 million passengers to its existing 572 million passengers.
- In fact, the Asia-Pacific region is expected to see the fastest growth at the rate of 4.8%, followed by Africa (4.6%) and west Asia (4.4%).
- The other south-east Asian countries predicted to grow rapidly include Indonesia, likely to be the fourth largest by 2030 from its current ranking of 10th largest aviation market. Thailand, too, is expected to enter the top 10 markets in 2030.

### About IATA:

- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the trade association for the world's airlines, representing some 280 airlines or 83% of total air traffic. Formed in April 1945, it is the successor to the International Air Traffic Association, which was formed in 1919.
- IATA supports airline activity and helps formulate industry policy and standards. It also provides consulting and training services in many areas crucial to aviation.
- **Headquarters:** It is headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, Canada with Executive Offices in Geneva, Switzerland.

## 19. Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI)

### Context:

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) and Certified Professional Accountants Afghanistan (CPA Afghanistan).

- The MoU will establish mutual co-operation framework in the areas of Capacity Building of “Afghanistan Accountancy Board (AAB)”, strengthening the IT Capacity and Quality Assurance in Afghanistan through facilitating Knowledge Transfer; Students and Members Exchange Programs; Conduct of Seminars, Conferences and Joint Activities mutually beneficial to both the parties.

### About ICAI:

- The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) is a statutory body established by an Act of Parliament of India, 'The Chartered Accountants Act, 1949' , to regulate the profession of Chartered Accountancy in India.
- ICAI is the second largest professional Accounting & Finance body in the world.
- ICAI is the only licensing cum regulating body of the financial audit and accountancy profession in India.
- It recommends the accounting standards to be followed by companies in India to National Advisory Committee on Accounting Standards (NACAS).
- ICAI is solely responsible for setting the Standards on Auditing (SAs) to be followed in the audit of financial statements in India.
- ICAI is one of the founder members of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA), and Confederation of Asian and Pacific Accountants (CAPA).

## 20. Appellate Tribunals against Benami Transactions

### Context:

The Union Cabinet has approved setting up of Appellate Tribunal and Adjudicating Authority for speedy disposal of cases related to benami transactions.

- Earlier the cabinet had notified sessions courts in 34 states and Union Territories, which will act as special courts for trial of offences under the benami transaction law. The rules and all the provisions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act came into force on November 1, 2016.

# AUTHORITY FOR BENAMI STRUCTURE TRANSACTIONS



## Salient Features:

- Under the Prohibition of Benami Property Transactions Act of 1998, the government will appoint Adjudicating Authority Appellate Tribunal.
- The officials will come from the existing posts at the same level from the Income Tax Department and the Central Board of Direct Taxes.
- The Adjudicating Authority and Appellate Tribunal will be based in the National Capital Territory of Delhi (NCTD).
- Benches of Adjudicating Authority may sit in Kolkata, Mumbai and Chennai, and the necessary notification in this regard will be issued after consultation with the Chairperson of the proposed Adjudicating Authority.

## Benefits of the Tribunals:

- The approval will result in effective and better administration of cases referred to the Adjudicating Authority and speedy disposal of appeals filed against the order of the Adjudicating Authority before the Appellate Tribunal.
- It would provide first stage review of administrative action under the PBPT Act. Establishment of the proposed Appellate Tribunal would provide an appellate mechanism for the order passed by the Adjudicating Authority under the PBPT Act.

# Geography and Environment

## 21. BS Norms

### Context:

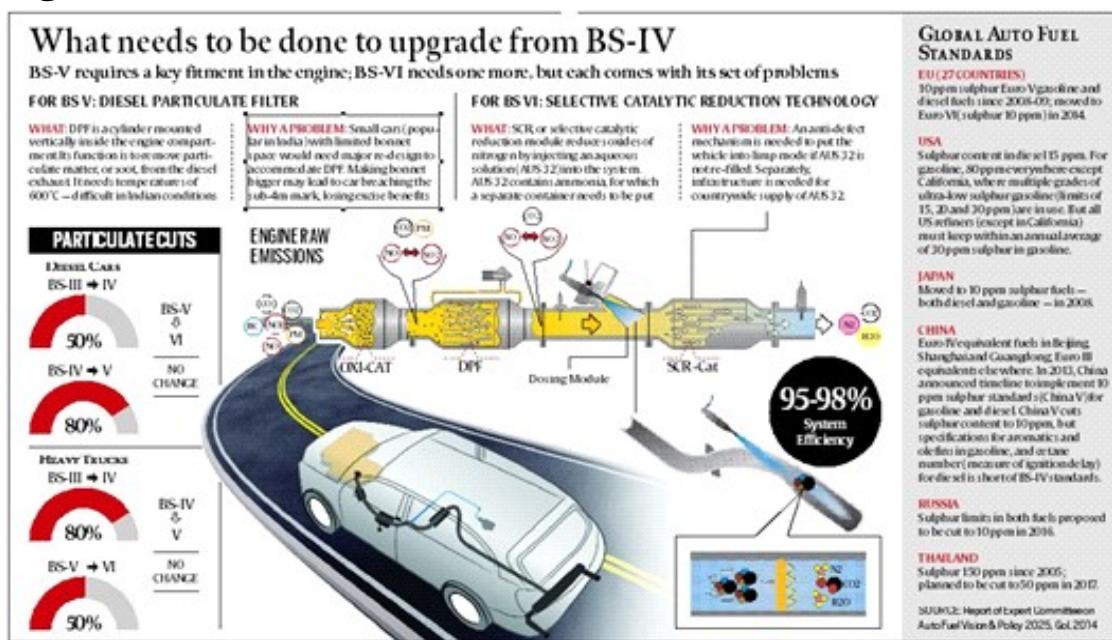
The Supreme Court has banned the sale and registration of motor vehicles conforming to the emission standard Bharat Stage-IV in the entire country from April 1, 2020.

### What are BS norms?

- The BS — or Bharat Stage — emission standards are norms instituted by the government to regulate the output of air pollutants from internal combustion engine equipment, including motor vehicles. India has been following the European (Euro) emission norms, though with a time-lag of five years.

### Difference between BS-IV and the new BS-VI:

- The major difference in standards between the existing BS-IV and the new BS-VI auto fuel norms is the presence of sulphur. The newly introduced fuel is estimated to reduce the amount of sulphur released by 80 per cent, from 50 parts per million to 10 ppm. As per the analysts, the emission of NOx (nitrogen oxides) from diesel cars is also expected to reduce by nearly 70 per cent and 25 per cent from cars with petrol engines.



### Why is it important to upgrade these norms?

- Upgrading to stricter fuel standards helps tackle air pollution. Global automakers are betting big on India as vehicle penetration is still low here, when compared to developed countries. At the same time, cities such as Delhi are already being listed among those with the poorest air quality in the world. The national capital's recent odd-even car experiment and judicial activism against the registration of big diesel

cars shows that governments can no longer afford to relax on this front.

- With other developing countries such as China having already upgraded to the equivalent of Euro V emission norms a while ago, India has been lagging behind. The experience of countries such as China and Malaysia shows that poor air quality can be bad for business. Therefore, these reforms can put India ahead in the race for investments too.

### **The government could face two key challenges in implementing the decision:**

- First, there are questions about the ability of oil marketing companies to quickly upgrade fuel quality from BS-III and BS-IV standards to BS-VI, which is likely to cost upwards of Rs 40,000 crore.
- Second, and more challenging, is the task of getting auto firms to make the leap. Automakers have clearly said that going to BS-VI directly would leave them with not enough time to design changes in their vehicles, considering that two critical components — diesel particulate filter and selective catalytic reduction module — would have to be adapted to India's peculiar conditions, where running speeds are much lower than in Europe or the US.

## **22. International Conference on Status and Protection of Coral Reefs (STAPCOR – 2018)**

### **Context:**

The International Conference on Status and Protection of Coral Reefs (STAPCOR – 2018) is being held at Bangaram coral Island of Territory of Lakshadweep.

- Theme:** "Reef for Life"
- Organizers:** It was jointly organized by Department of Environment and Forest, Union Territory of Lakshadweep Administration with the technical support of Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and in association with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Environmental Information System (ENVIS) in consonance with declaration of year 2018 as 3rd decadal International year of Reefs.

### **What is STAPCOR?**

- The effect of climate change and global warming along with El-Nino on the corals has lead to heavy bleaching internationally during the year 1998. This led to the foundation of STAPCOR with a decision to have a international conference in every 10 years to review the status and progress of coral reefs all over the world.

## **The goals of the 3rd IYOR – 2018 are to:**

- Strengthen awareness about ecological, economic, social and cultural value of coral reefs and associated ecosystems.
- Improve understanding of the critical threats to reefs and generate both practical and innovative solutions to reduce these threats.
- Generate urgent action to develop and implement effective management strategies for conservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems.

### **Background:**

- The first IYOR was designated in 1997 in response to the increasing threats on coral reefs and associated ecosystems. The hope was to increase awareness of the value of and threats to coral reefs, and to promote conservation, research and management efforts on a global scale.

### **What are Corals?**

- Corals are invertebrates belonging to a large group of colourful and fascinating animals called Cnidarians. Other animals in this group include jellyfish and sea anemones. Each individual coral animal is called a polyp, and most live in groups of hundreds to thousands of genetically identical polyps that form a ‘colony’. The colony is created by a process called budding, where the original polyp literally grows copies of itself.

### **Hard and Soft Corals:**

- Corals are generally classified as either “hard” or “soft”. There are around 800 known species of hard coral, also known as ‘reef building’ or scleractinian corals. Soft corals, or octocorals, which include seas fans, sea feathers and sea whips, don’t have the rock-like calcareous skeleton, instead they grow wood-like cores for support and fleshy rinds for protection.
- Soft corals also live in colonies, that often resemble brightly coloured plants or trees, and are easy to tell apart from hard corals as their polyps have tentacles that occur in multiples of 8, and have a distinctive feathery appearance. Soft corals are found in oceans from the equator to the north and south poles, generally in caves or on ledges. Here, they hang down in order to capture food floating by in the currents.

### **What are coral reefs?**

- Coral reefs have evolved on earth over the past 200 to 300 million years, and have developed a unique and highly evolved form of symbiosis. Coral polyps have developed this relationship with tiny single-celled algae known as zooxanthellae. Inside the tissues of each coral polyp live these zooxanthellae, sharing space and nutrients.
- This symbiosis between plant and animal also contributes to the brilliant colors of coral that can be seen while diving on a reef. It is the

importance of light that drives corals to compete for space on the sea floor, and so constantly pushes the limits of their physiological tolerances in a competitive environment among so many different species. However, it also makes corals highly susceptible to environmental stress.

## 23. Earth's inner core is softer, a study reveals

### Context:

Contrary to the fact the Earth's inner core is solid, researchers from Australian National University (ANU) have found that it is comparatively softer.

- **Radius:** 1,220 kilometres (760 miles) i.e. 70 per cent of the Moon's radius.
- **Composed of:** Nickel-iron alloy.
- **Temperature:** 5,700 K (5,430 °C) or 9806 °F, which is almost the temperature of Sun.

### What is inner core made of?

- The inner core is made up of two layers outer and inner.
- Outer core is 1,355 miles (2,180 km) thick.

### Why is the radius of inner core unknown?

- There is no estimated radius of the inner core; however, it plays a distinct role in making Earth's magnetic field.
- The inner core is measured by shear waves, a seismology term, which are so tiny and feeble that it can't be observed directly.
- In fact, detecting them has been considered the 'Holy Grail' of global seismology since scientists first predicted the inner core was solid in the 1930s and 40s.

### Purpose of the Earth's inner core:

- When charged particles from the solar wind collide with air molecules above Earth's magnetic poles, it causes the air molecules to glow, causing the auroras – the northern and southern lights.

### How has it been discovered?

- Researchers came up with a way to detect shear waves, or "J waves" in the inner core – a type of wave which can only travel through solid objects.
- According to the research published by the university, the wavefield method looks at the similarities between the signals at two receivers after a major earthquake, rather than the direct wave arrivals. The study shows these results can then be used to demonstrate the existence of J waves and infer the shear wave speed in the inner core.

- It has been found that the inner core shares some similar elastic properties with gold and platinum.

## What is the significance of this method?

- The understanding of the Earth's inner core has direct consequences for the generation and maintenance of the geomagnetic field, and without that geomagnetic field there would be no life on the Earth's surface.

## 24. India's longest river bridge

### Context :

India's longest river bridge with total length of 19.3 kilometers will be built on Brahmaputra river in Assam.



- This bridge will connect Dhubri of Assam to Fulbarani of Meghalaya. This bridge will reduce the distance between these two places by 203 kms. At present, India's largest river bridge is Dhola-Sadia bridge, its length is 9.15 kilometers.
- Japanese Finance Agency (JICA) has approved the loan for this project as part of road infrastructure improvement package in the northeast after assessing the economic benefit of the big project.
- Two northeastern states of Assam and Meghalaya will be connected by NH127B with the help of this bridge.

## 25. Green Climate Fund

### Context:

Green Climate Fund has approved more than \$1 billion in new investments after a meeting held recently in Bahrain.

- The meeting approved 19 new projects, including a programme to protect freshwater resources in Bahrain. Environmentalists had argued the Gulf nation should pay for the project itself using money it made from its vast reserves of oil and gas.

### About GCF:

- The GCF was set up in 2010 under the UNFCCC's financial mechanism to channel funding from developed countries to developing countries

to allow them to mitigate climate change and also adapt to disruptions arising from a changing climate. It was central to the Paris climate agreement signed in 2015, that the world's largest historical emitter.

### **How it helps?**

- The Green Climate Fund will support projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties using thematic funding windows.
- It is intended to be the centrepiece of efforts to raise Climate Finance of \$100 billion a year by 2020.
- The Fund will promote the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways by providing support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change, taking into account the needs of those developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
- The Fund will strive to maximize the impact of its funding for adaptation and mitigation, and seek a balance between the two, while promoting environmental, social, economic and development co-benefits and taking a gender-sensitive approach.

### **Who will govern the Fund?**

- The Fund is governed and supervised by a Board that will have full responsibility for funding decisions and that receives the guidance of the COP. The Fund is accountable to, and functions under the guidance of, the COP.

## **26. Acinetobacter Junii**

### **Context:**

Using bacteria- *Acinetobacter Junii*, isolated from soil and effluents near an oil refinery, researchers from the University of Delhi and IIT-BHU, have successfully degraded toluene into less-toxic byproducts.

### **Background:**

- Toluene is one of the petrochemical wastes that get released without treatment from industries such as refineries, paint, textile, paper and rubber. Toluene has been reported to cause serious health problems to aquatic life, and studies point that it has genotoxic and carcinogenic effects on human beings.

### ***Acinetobacter Junii*:**

- The bacteria were isolated from the soil samples, identified and studied for their toluene-degrading abilities.
- These bacteria change the morphology of toluene to remove its toxicity. The degradation is found to be general aerobic (in presence of oxygen)

biodegradation. The bacteria use up this toluene as their carbon source in the presence of oxygen.

## 27. Third Pole

### Context:

Scientists conducting research in the third pole area have warned of disturbing global warming trends, and how, if they continue, they could affect the lives of 1.3 billion people. The glacier has lost 60% of its mass and shrunk 250 m since 1982.

- The Hindu Kush-Himalayan region spans an area of more than 4.3 million square kilometres in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan.
- The region stores more snow and ice than anywhere else in the world outside the polar regions, giving its name: 'The Third Pole'. The Third Pole contains the world's highest mountains, including all 14 peaks above 8,000 metres, is the source of 10 major rivers, and forms a formidable global ecological buffer.

### Significance:

- The Third Pole region has enormous socioeconomic and cultural diversity; it is home to many different ethnic communities speaking more than 600 languages and many more dialects. It is endowed with rich natural resources and contains all or part of four global biodiversity hotspots.
- The mountain resources provide a wide range of ecosystem services and the basis for the livelihoods to the 210 million people living in the region, as well as indirectly to the 1.3 billion people — one fifth of the world's population — living in the downstream river basins. More than 3 billion people benefit from the food and energy produced in these river basins that have their origin in the mountains.

### The Third Pole and Climate Change:

- Climate change has become a major concern in the Third Pole. Mountain systems are particularly sensitive to climate change and the Third Pole region is home to some of the people most vulnerable to these changes in the world. Changes in the river systems and their basins have impacted directly on the wellbeing of millions of people.
- The rate of warming in the Third Pole region is significantly higher than the global average, and the rate is higher at higher altitude, suggesting a greater vulnerability of the cryosphere environment to climate change. This trend is expected to continue.
- Climate change projections suggest that all areas of South Asia are likely to warm by at least 1°C by the end of the century, while in some areas the warming could be as high as 3.5-4°C. The life and livelihoods of the people in the Third Pole region is challenged due to climate

change, and the stability and prosperity of the region affected by the Third Pole is at risk, which will have implications for all of Asia and for the world.

- However, there is still little knowledge of this situation, and its potential implications, outside the immediate vicinity; a special effort is needed to raise awareness of the fragility of the mountain social-ecological system.

### **Concerns:**

- The melting of glaciers of the Third Pole could affect the lives of 1.3 billion people because of its proximity to densely populated and industrialised regions. And the continuous melting of glaciers will be catastrophic for the people who depend on water from the Third Pole.

## **28. Tea Board**

### **Context:**

Tea Board of India is planning to launch an app aimed at guiding small growers, whose share in total tea production is increasing. The proposed name of the app is Chai Sahay (tea help).

- The mobile platform would have user-interface facilities with the targeted user groups (the small tea grower) and the various officials. It would also have information on the various activities of the board officials.
- The existing database of the STGs would be incorporated in the app, which would also give information on their registration process. There would be advisories on application of farm inputs and pesticide use. Small growers can also post queries for advice on pest control.

### **About Tea Board of India:**

- The Tea Board is set up under the Tea Act 1953. It has succeeded the Central Tea Board and the Indian Tea Licencing Committee which functioned respectively under the Central Tea Board Act, 1949 and the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938 which were repealed.
- The Tea Board is functioning as a statutory body of the Central Government under the Ministry of Commerce.
- The Board is constituted of 31 members (including Chairman) drawn from Members of Parliament, tea producers, tea traders, tea brokers, consumers, and representatives of Governments from the principal tea producing states, and trade unions. The Board is reconstituted every three years.

### **Functions:**

- The Tea Board India is responsible for the assignment of certification numbers to exports of certain tea merchants. This certification is

intended to ensure the teas' origin, which in turn would reduce the amount of fraudulent labelling on rare teas.

- The Tea Board India's tasks include endorsement of the diverse production and productivity of tea, financial support of research organisations and the monitoring of advances in tea packaging as it relates to health beneficial aspects.
- It coordinates research institutes, the tea trade and government bodies, ensuring the technical support of the tea trade in the global industry.

## **29. Citizen- Science repository of Indian mammals**

### **Context:**

Scientists and researchers from the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) in Bangalore have come up with a new citizen-science repository on Indian mammals, called Mammals of India (MaOI). MaOI is a part of the Biodiversity Atlas (India project).

- The initiative aims to develop individual species pages for all Indian mammals with information on identification, variation, distribution, breeding and non-breeding ecology and species conservation.
- Now one can contribute to the cause of science by sharing the picture of the animal on a specific website, providing the location of spotting. This will make more information available about lesser known mammals of the country.
- As per current estimates, 426 species of mammals are found in India; of them 47 species are endemic to the Indian subcontinent. Along with well known species, the mammals of 100 species of rats and 126 species of bats and 24 species of whales of dolphins.

### **Significance of MaOI:**

- These photographic records will help researchers in having distribution map of mammals in the country. The photographs will not only help gather information on the distribution of the various species but also interactions between different species of mammals, like predation and mutualism.

## **30. Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)**

### **Context:**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for creation of special Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF).

- The approval entails an estimated fund size of Rs.7,522 crore, comprising Rs.5,266.40 crore to be raised by the Nodal Loaining Entities (NLEs), Rs. 1,316.6 crore beneficiaries contribution and Rs.939.48 crore budgetary support from the Government of India.

**#CabinetDecisions**

**Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare  
Government of India**

# Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF)

**Sectors/ Activities that will be Focussed**

- Establishment of Fishing Harbours, Fish Landing Centres and infrastructure for Mariculture and Advanced Inland Fisheries.
- Construction of Ice Plants, Cold Storages, Fish Transport and Cold Chain Network.
- Development of Modern Fish Markets, Fish Processing Units and Fish Feed Mills/Plants.
- Setting up of Brood Banks, Hatcheries, Aquaculture, Mariculture.
- Modernization of State Fish Seed Farms & establishment of Fisheries Training Centres.
- Establishment of Cage culture in Reservoirs & introduction of Deep Sea Fishing Vessels.

- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), National Cooperatives Development Corporation (NCDC) and all scheduled Banks (hereinafter referred as Banks) shall be the nodal Loaning Entities.

### Benefits- it helps in:

- Creation of fisheries infrastructure facilities both in marine and Inland fisheries sectors.
- Employment opportunities to over 9.40 lakh fishers/fishermen/ fisherfolk and other entrepreneurs in fishing and allied activities.
- Attracting private investment in creation and management of fisheries infrastructure facilities.
- Adoption of new technologies.
- Augmenting fish production to achieve its target of 15 million tonne by 2020 set under the Blue Revolution; and achieving a sustainable growth of 8% -9% thereafter to reach the fish production to the level of about 20 MMT by 2022-23.

### Funds:

- FIDF would provide concessional finance to State Governments / UTs and State entities, cooperatives, individuals and entrepreneurs etc.,

for taking up of the identified investment activities of fisheries development.

- Under FIDF, loan lending will be over a period of five years from 2018-19 to 2022-23 and maximum repayment will be over a period of 12 years inclusive of moratorium of two years on repayment of principal.

## 31. Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali campaign

### Context:

Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has launched Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali campaign. MOEFCC has merged this year's campaign with "Green Good Deed" movement that has been initiated as social mobilization for conservation and protection of environment.

- **Aim:** To reduce adverse environmental conditions especially pollution in the country after post Diwali celebrations due to excessive bursting of crackers which contributes significantly to air and noise pollution.

### Harit Diwali-Swasth Diwali campaign:

- This campaign was initiated in 2017-18 to enlighten children about harmful fire crackers and motivate them to celebrate Diwali in environment-friendly manner and not to buy fire crackers, instead buy gift, food items, or sweets for poor and underprivileged children living in their locality.
- Under this campaign, the MoEFCC will undertake various activities for creating awareness among various stakeholders and encourage people to participate in combating air pollution. This campaign was extremely successful and the air quality had not deteriorated post Diwali in 2017 unlike what was experienced in 2016.

### Background:

- Air pollution is a serious health issue in the country especially in the northern parts during winter seasons. It is attributed to dust, burning of crops in certain states, burning of garbage construction and prevailing climatic conditions.
- This air pollution has serious impacts on the health of children aged people and people suffering from respiratory ailments. Diwali which is a festival of lights falls during the same period. As a matter of practice people have been celebrating Diwali by bursting crackers.
- Crackers contains combustible chemicals that include potassium chlorate powdered aluminum, magnesium, salts of barium, copper, sodium, lithium, strontium etc. and emits smoke on combustion of these chemicals along with sound. This smoke and sound has health impacts on children, aged people and also animal and birds. Apart from these compounds large amount of waste is also generated after bursting of crackers.

## Science & Technology

### 32. Fusion Energy Conference (FEC 2018)

#### Context:

The 27th Fusion Energy Conference (FEC 2018) was held recently in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

- It was organised by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and hosted by Department of Atomic Energy and Gandhinagar-based Institute of Plasma Research.

#### Fusion Energy Conference (FEC 2018):

- The 27th IAEA Fusion Energy Conference (FEC 2018) aims to provide a forum for the discussion of key physics and technology issues as well as innovative concepts of direct relevance to the use of nuclear fusion as a source of energy.
- The scientific scope of FEC 2018 is intended to reflect the priorities of this new era in fusion energy research.
- With the participation of international organizations such as the ITER Organization and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), as well as the collaboration of more than forty countries and several research institutes, including those working on smaller plasma devices, it is expected that this conference will, like previous conferences in the series, serve to identify possibilities and means for continuous and effective international collaboration in this area.

#### About IAEA:

- The IAEA is the world's centre for cooperation in the nuclear field. It was set up as the world's "Atoms for Peace" organization in 1957 within the United Nations family. The Agency works with its Member States and multiple partners worldwide to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies.
- It seeks to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and to inhibit its use for any military purpose, including nuclear weapons.
- IAEA reports to both the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.
- The IAEA has its headquarters in Vienna, Austria.
- The IAEA serves as an intergovernmental forum for scientific and technical cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear technology and nuclear power worldwide.

#### Board of Governors:

- 22 member states (must represent a stipulated geographic diversity) — elected by the General Conference (11 members every year) – 2 year term.

- At least 10 member states — nominated by the outgoing Board.
- Board members each receive one vote.
- Recommendations to the General Conference on IAEA activities and budget.
- Responsible for publishing IAEA standards.
- Responsible for making most of the policy of the IAEA.
- Appoints the Director General subject to General Conference approval.

### **General Conference:**

- 169 member states — one vote per member.
- Forum for debate on current issues and policies.
- Meets once a year.
- Approve the actions and budgets passed on from the Board of Governors.
- Approves the nominee for Director General.

## **33. Gaming Garage**

### **Context:**

Andhra Pradesh government has proposed to set up a ‘Gaming Garage’ to generate employment and encourage entrepreneurs and game developers in view of its growing importance. The ‘Gaming Garage’ will be launched in Vijayawada very soon.

- Companies such as the Unity Technologies, Denmark/San Francisco would provide the software. The Kajaani University of Applied Sciences (KAMK) of Finland would be knowledge/operational partner.
- Any creative thinker could walk into the Garage to develop a game of choice. The government would provide them with “the necessary software and infrastructure free of cost”. It would also encourage them in commercialising their product.
- The gaming became an industry with crores of rupees turnover with the rapid development of computers and smartphone technologies. The Cabinet in April gave its nod to animations and visual effects, gaming and comics policy to attract the best from the sector and an investment of about <sup>1</sup> 6,400 crore by 2020.

## Miscellaneous

### 34. Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize

#### Context:

US-based writer Sujatha Gidla has won 2018 Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize for her debut book “Ants Among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and the Making of Modern India”.

#### About Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize:

- The Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize is funded by the Shakti Bhatt Foundation. It was set up in 2008 in memory of young writer and editor Shakti Bhatti.
- It honours first-time writers from Indian sub-continent for their outstanding work of fiction or non-fiction. It carries cash prize of Rs. 2 lakh.

### 35. Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management Award, 2018

#### Context:

India wins Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management Award, 2018.

#### About CAPAM:

- Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM) is a non-profit association representing an international network of over 1100 senior public servants, Heads of Government, leading academics and researchers located in over 50 different countries across the Commonwealth.
- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions is an institutional member of Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM).
- CAPAM has been announcing its International Innovations Awards (IIA) Programme bi-annually, since 1998. The CAPAM Awards celebrate the spirit of innovation in the public service by recognizing organizations that have made significant contributions to improve governance and services in the public sector.

#### Awardees:

- **Unnayan Banka:** The initiative entitled “Unnayan Banka- Reinventing Education Using Technology of Banka District, State of Bihar has been awarded under the Category “Innovation Incubation”. “Unnayan Banka” is an initiative which envisages “Quality education for all’ especially for those at the bottom of the Pyramid, using latest

technologies. It's a holistic model of overall development of youths from Education to Employability.

- **Unified Agriculture Markets:** "Unified Agriculture Markets" of Co-operation Department of Government of Karnataka has also been selected under the Category 'Innovation in Public Service Management'. This initiative has also been awarded the overall Gold Award for CAPAM Awards, 2018.

## 36. Cope India air exercise

### Context:

India and US have agreed to elevate their bilateral 'Cope India' air exercise to trilateral format by including Japan. The next edition of this exercise is scheduled to be held in December 2018.

### About Cope India:

- It is series of international Air Force exercises between Indian Air Force (IAF) and United States Air Force conducted on and over Indian soil.
- The first such exercise was conducted at IAF air force station in Gwalior from February 2004.

## 37. Seoul Peace Prize

### Context:

Seoul Peace Prize Committee has decided to confer 2018 Seoul Peace Prize on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- PM Modi has been selected for award in recognition of his dedication for improving international cooperation, raising global economic growth, accelerating Human Development of people in India by fostering economic growth and furthering development of democracy through anti-corruption and social integration efforts.

### About Seoul Peace Prize:

- It was established in 1990 to commemorate success of the 24th Olympic Games held in Seoul, South Korea.
- It was established to crystallize Korean people's yearning for peace on Korean Peninsula and in the rest of the world.
- It is awarded biennially to those individuals who have made their mark through contributions to harmony of mankind, reconciliation between nations and world peace.

## 38. Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony

### Context:

The Tagore Award for Cultural Harmony for the years 2014, 2015 & 2016 is being conferred on the doyen of Manipuri dance Sh. Rajkumar Singhajit Singh; Chhayanaut (a cultural organization of Bangladesh) and on one of India's greatest sculptors, Sh. Ram Vanji Sutar, respectively.

### About the Tagore award:

- The annual award was instituted by the Government of India during the commemoration of 150th Birth Anniversary of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore.
- The first Tagore Award was conferred on Pt. Ravi Shankar, the Indian Sitar Maestro in 2012 and second was conferred on Shri Zubin Mehta in 2013.
- The award carries an amount of Rs. 1 crore, a citation in a scroll, a plaque as well as an exquisite traditional handicraft/ handloom item.
- The award is open to all persons regardless of nationality, race, language, caste, creed or sex.
- Awardees are selected by a jury headed by the Prime Minister of India.



**ASHOK NAGAR**  
+91 991 244 1138



**MADHAPUR**  
+91 990 856 4438  
WEEKEND BATCH



**NEW DELHI**  
+91 880 028 3132



**VISAKHAPATNAM**  
+91 998 513 6789



**GUNTUR**  
+91 996 335 6789

**ADMISSIONS OPEN FOR NEW BATCHES**

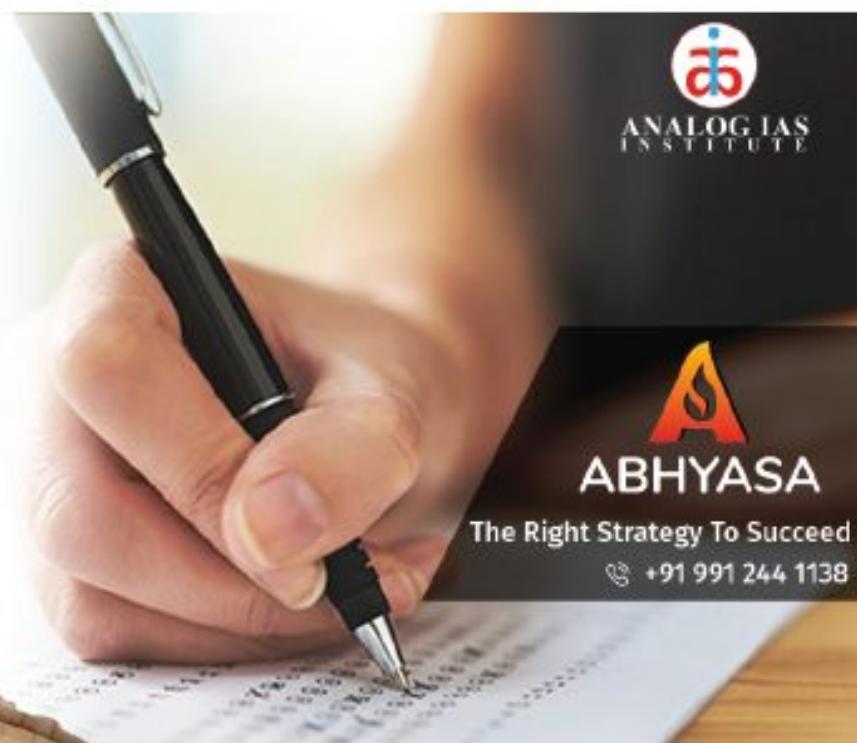
**JULY**  
**09**  
MONDAY

**JUNE**  
**09**  
SATURDAY

**JULY**  
**02**  
MONDAY

**JUNE**  
**25**  
MONDAY

**JULY**  
**02**  
MONDAY



## Abhyasa Program Structure

	Multiple Choice Questions (PRELIMS)	Descriptive Questions (MAINS)	Total Marks
<b>Daily Test</b>	<b>10</b> (10*1 = 10 marks)	<b>1</b> (1*10= 10 Marks)	<b>20</b>
<b>Weekly Test</b>	<b>20</b> (20*1 = 20 marks)	<b>2</b> (2*10= 20 Marks)	<b>40</b>
<b>Fortnightly Test</b>	<b>30</b> (30*1 = 30 marks)	<b>3</b> (3*10= 30 Marks)	<b>60</b>
<b>Monthly Test</b>	<b>50</b> (50*1 = 50 marks)	<b>5</b> (5*10= 50 Marks)	<b>100</b>
<b>3 Months Test</b>	<b>100</b> (100*1 = 100 marks)	<b>10</b> (10*10= 100 Marks)	<b>200</b>
<b>Total Questions</b>	<b>4250+</b>	<b>500+</b>	

RIGHT STRATEGY TO  
CRACK CIVILS  
IN FIRST ATTEMPT



Mr. Srikanth Vinayaka  
Cleared IAS 2018 Exam

ABHYASA

To know more, scan this QR Code  
and watch video.



Subscribe to our youtube channel  
[www.youtube.com/analogiasacademy](https://www.youtube.com/analogiasacademy)

# OUR BRANCHES

## Hyderabad : Indira Park

Domalguda  
Ph: 040-27620440, +91 991 244 1137  
Email: ias.analog@gmail.com

## Hyderabad : Madhapur

100 Ft Road, Ayyappa Society,  
Ph: 040-48522831, +91 990 856 4438  
Email : ias.analog@gmail.com

## Vizag : Dwaraka Nagar

Office-3, 3rd Floor, GK Towers,  
Ph: 0891- 2546686, +91 998 513 6789  
Email : ias.analogvizag@gmail.com

## Hyderabad : Ashok Nagar

Above OBC Bank  
Ph: 8121046686, +91 991 244 1138  
Email : ias.analog@gmail.com

## New Delhi : Old Rajinder Nagar

57/12, Third Floor,  
Ph : 011- 49785868, +91 880 028 3132  
Email : ias.analog.delhi@gmail.com

## Guntur : Arundalpet

2nd Floor, Eluri Mansion 2/1,  
Ph: +91 996 335 6789  
Email : ias.analog.guntur@gmail.com

# OUR RESULTS - 2017

62



Fathima Zeba  
HT No : 786820

83



Srivastava  
HT No : 29379

100



Mourya  
HT No : 255748

105



Mishra  
HT No : 262146

144



149



187



295



296



360



412



417



474



480



548



614



673



713



726



758



761



765



768



769



828



832



872



886

