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Category: [SOCIAL ISSUES](#)

1. [Talaq to be a part of madrasa curriculum](#)

In news:

- To educate Muslims about the practice of talaq after the recent Supreme Court ruling on the matter, a leading dargah of the Sunni sect has decided to include it in the curriculum of the madrasas.
- The dargah has also issued a helpline number for such cases.

Category: [POLITY](#)

1. [Top court sets aside HC order on riot recompense](#)

In news:

- Gujarat High Court: directed the State to pay compensation to shrines destroyed in the 2002 communal riots.
- The Supreme Court set aside this particular order of Gujarat High Court.
- **State governments view accepted by the court:** taxpayers’ money cannot be spent to promote a particular religion.
- **Gujarat government scheme :** pay up to ₹150,000 as ex-gratia assistance to authorised religious places damaged, destroyed or desecrated during the riots.

Other cases:

Prafull Goradia judgment:

- **Supreme Court observation:** using “substantial part” of the tax-payers’ money for paying damages to destroyed religious structures would violate Article 27 of the Constitution.
- **Article 27. Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion:** No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the

promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination

2. [Centre argues against making marital rape a crime in Delhi high court](#)

Context:

- **NGO, RTI Foundation filed a plea before Delhi High Court:**
- Strike down the exception under **Section 375 (rape)** of the IPC, which does not penalize sexual intercourse between a man and his wife if she is over 15 years of age.
- Such an exception would be against the interest of married women as it is violative of Article 14 (equality under law) and 21 (right to life) of the Constitution.

In news:

Center's response:

- If marital rape is recognized as a crime then it would-
- Destabilize the institution of marriage, apart from being an easy tool for harassing husbands.
- The courts too would find it difficult to rely upon evidence in such circumstances as there could be "no lasting evidence in case of sexual acts between a man and his own wife".

Basic Information

Section 375 in The Indian Penal Code

375. **Rape**. "A man is said to commit "rape" who, except in the case hereinafter excepted, has sexual intercourse with a woman under circumstances falling under any of the six following descriptions:"

(First) "Against her will.

(Secondly) "Without her consent.

(Thirdly) "With her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her or any person in whom she is interested in fear of death or of hurt.

(Fourthly) "With her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband, and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married.

(Fifthly) "With her consent, when, at the time of giving such consent, by reason of unsoundness of mind or intoxication or the administration by him personally or through another of any stupefying or unwholesome substance, she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which she gives consent.

(Sixthly) "With or without her consent, when she is under sixteen years of age. Explanation."Penetration is sufficient to constitute the sexual intercourse necessary to the offence of rape.

(Exception) "Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under fifteen years of age, is not rape.]
STATE AMENDMENT

(Manipur) "(a) in clause sixthly, for the word "sixteen" substitute the word "fourteen";

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [With Doklam standoff resolved, PM to visit China](#)

Context:

- Narendra Modi is all set to visit China for the BRICS summit.

9th BRICS summit:

- **Location:** Xiamen, China's Fujian province.
- **Date:** September 3-5, 2017.

Basic Information

BRICS:

- BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa** .
- Originally the first four were grouped as "BRIC" (or "the BRICs"), before the induction of South Africa in 2010.
- The BRICS members are all leading **developing or newly industrialized countries** , but they are distinguished by their large, sometimes fast-growing economies and significant influence on regional affairs; all five are G-20 members.
- The term does not include countries such as South Korea, Mexico and Turkey for which other acronyms and group associations were later created.

Financial structure: Currently, there are two components that make up the financial architecture of BRICS, namely, the **New Development Bank (NDB)** and the **Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)** . Both of these components were signed into treaty in 2014 and became active in 2015.

a. New Development Bank:

- The New Development Bank (NDB) is based in Shanghai.
- The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, is a **multilateral development bank** operated by the BRICS states.
- The bank's primary focus of lending will be **infrastructure projects** with authorized lending of up to \$34 billion annually.
- South Africa will be the African Headquarters of the Bank named the "New Development Bank Africa Regional Centre".
- The bank will have starting capital of \$50 billion, with capital increased to \$100 billion over time.
- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa will initially contribute \$10 billion each to bring the total to \$50 billion.

b. BRICS CRA:

- The BRICS **Contingent Reserve Arrangement** (CRA) is a framework for providing protection against **global liquidity pressures**.
- This includes currency issues where members' national currencies are being adversely affected by global financial pressures.
- It is found that emerging economies that experienced rapid economic liberalization went through increased economic volatility, bringing uncertain macroeconomic environment.
- The CRA is generally seen as a competitor to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and along with the New Development Bank is viewed as an example of increasing South-South cooperation.
- It was established in 2015 by the BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- The legal basis is formed by the Treaty for the Establishment of a BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement, signed at **Fortaleza**, Brazil on 15 July 2014.

2. [Govt to ease norms for organ donors](#)

Possible amendment to the Human Organs and Tissues Transplantation Act, 1994 (as amended in 2011)

- The government plans to include **step-parents, step-siblings and extended family members** in the definition of "near relatives" allowed to donate critical organs
- This move is likely to benefit patients awaiting transplants.

Present scenario:

Near relatives include: spouses, children, parents, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren.

Category: ECONOMICS

1. [Consolidated FDI policy document released](#)

Context

- The government has come out with the latest edition of its **consolidated FDI policy document** "a compilation of the changes made in the past one year in a single document."

Importance:

- It is an initiative aimed at ensuring greater ease of doing business in India and an investor-friendly climate to foreign investors so that the country attracts more FDI.

Consolidated FDI policy:

- For the first time, the document has included start-ups.
- As per the norms, start-ups can raise up to 100 per cent of funds from Foreign Venture Capital Investor (FVCI).
- The document said the start-ups can issue equity or equity linked instruments or debt instruments to FVCI against receipt of foreign remittance.
- Person residing outside India (other than citizens/entities of Pakistan and Bangladesh) will be permitted to purchase convertible notes issued by an Indian start-up company for an amount of Rs 25 lakh or more in a single tranche.
- Non Resident Indians can also acquire convertible notes on non- repatriation basis.
- The start-up issuing convertible notes would be required to furnish reports as prescribed by the RBI

2. [Unease of doing business](#)

Context:

- Niti Aayog survey shows starting a business remains a difficult task.

Keypoints:

- World Bank's Ease of Doing Business (2016) Ranking positioned India at a dismal 130 out of 150 countries.
- A survey by the Niti Aayog and the Mumbai-based think tank, IDFC Institute, post a year disclose that the determinations of the Centre and state governments to ease the system of permits and clearances could not satisfy the interests of most entrepreneurs who are discomfited with the country's regulatory environment.
- The survey across the country demonstrates that most firms do not use the single-window systems for business and regulatory clearances.
- Survey claims Tamil Nadu, the best performing states where the process takes more than 60 days and on average four months to set up a business in India.

- Persistent drawbacks with governance in India are seen as the reason behind the gap between the claims and realities.
- The difficulty of cutting the red tape of the lower bureaucracy is one of the major hurdles in the process.
- The World Bank's report (2016), highlighted that delays in issuing construction permits affected the ease of doing business in India.
- A key worry to the administrators come in as entrepreneurs from employment-intensive sectors are more likely to face problems and securing construction and other permits, compared to the capital-intensive ones.
- The survey should serve as a wake-up call to government and a reminder that over two decades after economic reforms the Indian state is still flailing when it comes to easing the path for entrepreneurs.

3. [Centre to unveil 'future-ready' industrial policy in October](#)

In news:

- The government is all set to announce the **new 'future-ready' Industrial Policy** in October
- **Policy aim:**
 - To facilitate the use of smart technologies such as the **internet of things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics for advanced manufacturing** .
 - To make India a manufacturing hub by promoting 'Make in India'
 - To subsume the National Manufacturing Policy.
- **Six thematic focus groups:** manufacturing and MSME; technology and innovation; ease of doing business; infrastructure, investment, trade and fiscal policy; and skills and employability for the future, would facilitate inputs.
- **Constraints to Industrial growth:**
 - Inadequate infrastructure
 - Restrictive labour laws
 - Complicated business environment
 - Slow technology adoption
 - Low productivity
 - Challenges for trade including the Indian MSME sector facing tough competition from cheap imports from China and FTA countries,
 - Inadequate expenditure on R&D and Innovation.

4. [Minimum wage to vary across states](#)

Context:

- **The Code on Wages Bill** proposed by the Union government.

In news:

- Proposed bill will not fix a single national level minimum wage for the whole country, but will vary across states and geographies.
- Code on Wages Bill 2017: 'It provides for national minimum wage for different geographical areas so as to ensure that no State Government fixes the minimum wage below the national minimum wage, notified for that area by the Central Government.'
- The Centre will fix different wages through a notification after consulting the Central Advisory Board.
- As per the new provisions of the bill- if the minimum wages fixed by the states are **already higher** than the 'national minimum wage', the states will **not be allowed to lower their wage levels** .
- The Code on Wages Bill combines four labour laws 'Payment of Wages Act, 1936, Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 and Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.

Category: INTERNAL SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

1. [Only Indian phones for defense officials?](#)

Context:

In news:

- The Centre is considering the creation of a **secure communications ecosystem** for its officials, especially those working in the **defence sector** .
- **Proposals:**
- Mandating the use of mobile phones manufactured by Indian companies for official communication.
- Secure email service to its officials. The email will offer enhanced security authentication mechanisms such as **geo-fencing** and **device mapping** .

Basic Information

- **Geo-fencing** is a feature in a software program that uses the **global positioning system (GPS)** or **radio frequency identification (RFID)** to define geographical boundaries.
Geo-fencing allow an administrator to set up triggers so when a device enters (or exits) the boundaries defined by the administrator, an alert is issued. Many geo-fencing applications incorporate Google Earth, allowing administrators to define boundaries on top of a satellite view of a specific geographical area. Other applications define boundaries by longitude and latitude or through user-created and Web-based maps.

2. [Eastern turbulence](#)

Context:

- Calls for Gorkhaland and Bodoland are churning the region afresh.
- An exceptionally sizeable attendance of women blocked the national highway to Assam demanding Bodoland.

Keypoints:

- The blockade impact can be on the disruption of trade and transport links between the Northeast and the rest of India.
- This region is already facing the burnt of the seasonal floods in the Brahmaputra basin.
- Both these instances together can result in severe economic costs to this region.
- Tea and tourism, which are lifelines of the local economy, have almost crumpled.
- Well-timed state involvement handled with patience and wisdom may prevent these agitations from spreading, and becoming violent.

Reason behind the demand:

- At the roots of these protests lies in the communal identity and their representation. The Gorkhas in the Darjeeling hills and the Bodos in upper Assam believe that a separate state is necessary to protect their collective social, cultural and political identities including language and ethnicity.
- The seeds of separatist politics now churning the region are the result of the constitution of states like Bengal and Assam.
- The majority or dominant groups established their linguistic and ethnic identity without giving much attention towards the minorities, who were then in the margins of the region's politics.

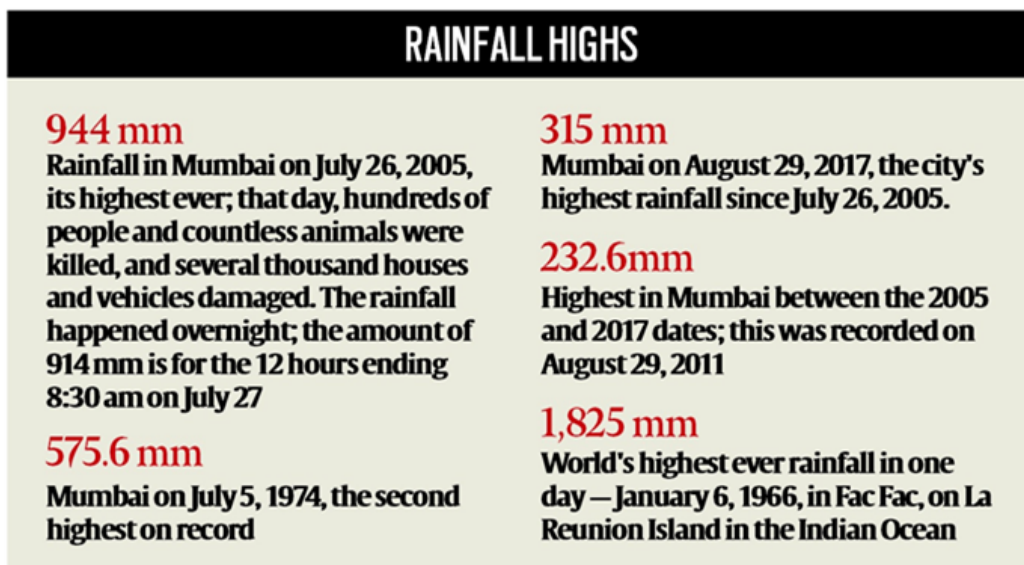
Way forward:

- The run of identity politics needs to be destroyed, where the autonomous bodies can play a prominent role.
- Gorkhaland Territorial Administration and Bodo Autonomous Council are valuable tools in delivering the public goods and build physical and social infrastructure. However, the unfinished and unsatisfying work of politics in these states may not fully satisfy the aspirations of these groups.

3. [Behind Mumbai flood, cruel August](#)

Context:

- **Ceaseless showe** r in the financial capital of India over the last two days has



- _____ paralyzed the city.

Keypoints:

- Mumbai recorded **315.8 mm of rainfall between 8:30 am and 8:30 pm** Tuesday.
- Had so much rainfall occurred in May or June, the condition in Mumbai might have been less severe, says meteorological office.
- Despite these rains being forecast well in advance, **no mitigative/preventive steps** were taken.
- Mumbai has **recieved about 2,000 mm of rainfall this monsoon season** (since June), which is more than normal.
- Larger impact of the rains on city life could be due to the moisture saturated soil whose ability to absorb water is diminished.

Reason behind Intense rainfall

- The strong low-pressure area that had developed over southern Madhya Pradesh, is one of the several reasons behind the intense monsoon this year.
- The regional distribution of monsoon rainfall has been quite even.
- Only Kerala, south-interior Karnataka, Vidarbha, eastern Madhya Pradesh, western Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Delhi, and Punjab have had deficient rainfall this season.
- Bengaluru had received massive rains previous week, about 180 mm in a single day, and was faced with similar flooding and resultant chaos.
- Earlier, huge parts of Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha

have also faced floods this season.

Category: ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. [Lakes of fire](#)

Context:

- Lakes froth spilling in Bengaluru is a symptom of a pervasive urban problem.

Keypoints:

- Bellandur lake in Bengaluru has been much in the news for the outpouring foam and froth and the rise of smoke and flames from the area surrounding it.
- City's heaviest rains in a century, rose the froth and foam as high as 10 to 12 feet from Bellandur and spread onto the streets, endangering traffic and entering shops and homes across the road, causing huge inconvenience to those living in the area.
- In May 2015, the Bellandur lake itself was on fire, creating enormous fear and anxiety in the minds of the people living in the area.
- The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) submitted a report to the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, which resulted in setting up an expert committee by the state government.
- The report highlights the sustained inflow of untreated sewage and industrial effluents as the principal forces behind the phenomena of froth and fire.
- The Silicon Valley of India, which has been known for its hundreds of lakes originally built in the 16th century by damming the natural valley systems is threatened with pollution today.
- The National Green Tribunal has issued a number of directions emphasising the need for removal of silt from the lake, treatment of municipal sewage which is going into the water body, closure of polluting industries, ban on dumping of municipal solid waste around the lake, penalty on apartment buildings in the area which are sending untreated sewage to the lake and an environmental fine of Rs 5 lakh on anyone found dumping waste in and around the lake.
- The untreated wastewater or sewage of local waterbodies feeds the growth of water-weeds, which blankets surface water.
- Apparently, the huge roots of water hyacinth absorb impurities and can lock up pollutants in the water.
- The microbes feeding on the rotting organic matter consume all the oxygen in the water, disturbing the ecology for the survival of fish life.
- When such organic matter naturally breaks down, it releases fatty acids that float to the surface. This is how foam is formed and turns into froth.
- The phosphorus content in the detergents in India is much higher than 2.2 per cent, which contributes to the formation of these weeds.
- Urban planning in India must ensure that wetlands which are natural recharge zones are typically not disturbed

Facts:

- Out of 480 million litres per day (MLD) of wastewater discharged to the lake, only 308 MLD is treated.
- According to the CPCB, 75 per cent of the measured pollution in our rivers from point sources is from municipal sewage and 25 per cent is from industrial effluents.

Nothing here for Today!!!

NATIONAL PARKS/SANCTUARIES/BIOSPHERE RESERVES:

Nanda Devi National Park

- Location:** National park situated around the peak of Nanda Devi (7816 m) in the state of Uttarakhand in northern India.
- Key Features:** The National Park was inscribed a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Rajaji National Park

- Location:** Shivaliks, near the foothills of the Himalayas. The park is spread over 820 sq.km in the state of Uttarakhand.
- Key Features :** Indian national park and tiger reserve. The park is most renowned for its elephants.

IUCN Red List:

Rameshwaram ornamental, or Rameshwaram parachute spider



- Scientific Name:** *Poecilotheria hanumavilasumica*
- IUCN Classification:** Critically endangered species

- **Distribution:** Endemic to the Ramanathapuram district in the state of Tamil Nadu, India, but also been identified outside India in the Mannar District of Northern Sri Lanka.

Peacock tarantula



- **Scientific name:** *Poecilotheria metallica*
- **IUCN Classification:** critically endangered species
- **Distribution:** This is an Old World species of tarantula. The species natural habitat is deciduous forest in Andhra Pradesh, in central southern India.

F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

GS Paper I

1. Lake froth spilling in Urban localities are being a major concern in urban ambience. What steps can be taken to address the issue?

GS Paper II

1. What are the essentials of a true federalism? Analyze the nature of the Indian federation?
2. Examine the need for the review of Indian Constitution?
3. Claims for separate statehood are seen repeatedly in news. Can the grant for separate state address the regional problems? What are the problems behind demanding a separate statehood in India?

GS Paper III

1. Considering the threats cyberspace poses for the country, India needs a “Digital Armed Force” to prevent crimes. Critically evaluate the National Cyber Security Policy, 2013 outlining the challenges perceived in its effective implementation.
2. Are urban floods a cause of concern? What are the measures taken in pre and post disaster management as per the NDMA,2005 guidelines with respect to the urban floods?
3. Despite many guidelines the ease of doing business lies abysmal in the country as per the recent NITI aayog survey. What are the hurdles inhibiting the growth in this area despite a significant progress post the economic reforms? What measures can be taken to address the issue?

GS Paper IV

Topic: CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Question 1.

You are stranded in traffic in your car. You are driving the car. A poor girl looking very frail approaches you and start begging for money. Looking at her frail appearance, out of compassion, you take out your wallet to search for a ten Rupees note. The girl who is standing very near to you snatches the wallet and starts running. A man on a motorbike who see this act, catches the girl and starts beating her in full view of public. Now the traffic is moving and your car is in the middle of the road. What will you do in such a situation? Explain the course of action and reason?

Answer

Action should be as follow:

- Park Car- so that no disturbance to the traffic
- Call to destination where I was heading about the emergency so that they will not wait for me.
- Reach the spot where the man is beating girl and immediately stop him and ask him not to beat or take law in his hand. Thank him for taking notice of the theft and taking action, but remind him that the girl is very young and could have acted out of hunger too. Remind him gently that it is a public space and such act physical violence could land him in legal trouble. This should lower his anger.
- If girl is injured- carry out first aid from the box available in the car. Get her something to eat and drink.

- Try to know her history and then informing to NGO or child care centre and personally taking to there will be my choice since leaving her just like that will make her to repeat the act since it's the poverty and poor care made her to act. If these are given girl will desist from such acts.
- Make an occasional follow up of the girl with the agency to whom she had been handed over to.