

UPSC 2017: Comprehensive News Analysis – May 31

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UPSC Current Affairs 2017: News Analysis

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Category: POLITY

1. [Madras HC stays new curbs on cattle trade](#)

In news:

- The Madras High Court Bench stayed the operation of Rules 22(b)(iii) and 22(e) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Regulation of Livestock Market) Rules 2017 notified by the Centre .

Legality of rules under challenge



BENCH OBSERVATIONS

RULE 22(b) (iii) requires that a written declaration should be given saying the cattle has not been brought to the market for sale for slaughter

RULE 22(e) requires that the purchaser shall not sell the animal for slaughter, nor sacrifice the animal for religious purposes

- This court is not in full agreement as to whether the presumption is in favour of the Central government when a particular rule is introduced not by Parliament, but by the executive

- The subject of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act is in the Concurrent List. At the same time, slaughtering of animals is exclusively in the State List

- In the above background, it should be tested if the impugned rule is within the constitutional or legal framework

- The new rules ban the sale of bulls, bullocks, cows, buffaloes, steers, heifers, calves and camels for slaughter in animal markets.

Public interest litigation:

- Interim stay granted for a period of four weeks on a public interest litigation petition filed by S. Selvagomathy, an activist-cum-lawyer.

Challenges posed in the PIL:

- Constitutional validity of the 2017 Rules.
- Legislative competence of the Centre to frame rules
- Matter related to slaughter of animals is concerned, it is exclusively in the State list.

2. [Odisha extends free cancer treatment to all districts](#)

In news:

- The Odisha government extended free treatment for cancer patients in the whole State.
- Under the programme, all cancer patients can avail chemotherapy and consultations from oncologists **free of cost** at all district headquarters hospitals.
- **Key fact:** In the first phase of the free cancer treatment programme, about 5,000 patients have been benefited.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [UAE ready for air traffic pact](#)

In news:

- **Unified bilateral air traffic pact** : The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is in favour of India's proposal for a unified bilateral air traffic pact provided the Gulf nation gets access to more Indian airports.
- India has signed separate agreements with emirates of the UAE which is a unique arrangement as bilateral air traffic rights are generally signed between two countries.
- India has an agreement each with Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah.

Global Practice:

- Countries sign air service agreement bilaterally which decides the equal number of flights or seats per week that can fly into each other's country depending upon their own requirements. Then, the government distributes the allocated seats to the respective airlines.

Present Scenario:

- Airlines from India and UAE are entitled to fly around 1.34 lakh seats a week from both sides at present.
- Airlines from India and Dubai have exhausted their bilateral entitlement.
- Dubai has been constantly demanding more entitlements, where as India has refrained from renewing its present bilateral agreement due to lack of viable slots available for Indian carriers in Dubai.

2. [Farzan B gas field row: Iran threatens to replace India's OVL with Russian firms](#)

Context:

In news:

- Iran has threatened to rope in Russian oil companies for developing the Farzad B gas field, replacing the consortium of Indian state-run entities (ONGC Videsh Ltd) that discovered it.
- The threat comes in retaliation to New Delhi's move to cut purchase of Iranian oil over Tehran's delay in awarding the block.
- Reports from Vienna quoted Iran's oil minister Bijan Zanganeh as saying that he expected Russian firms to enter the field if the Indian consortium failed to come up with a satisfactory offer.

3. [Modi, Merkel nudge FTA, sign a dozen agreements](#)

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Germany

In news:

- India and Germany signed a dozen wide-ranging but low-profile MoUs on the subjects of education, health, skill development and sustainability.

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Category: **INTERNAL SECURITY**

1. [Minesweeper deal to be inked soon](#)

In News:

- India and South Korea ready to finalise pact for 12 minesweepers or Mine Counter Measure Vessels for the Navy.
- Mine Counter Measure Vessels ships would be manufactured in India under Transfer of Technol
- Minesweepers are crucial to detect mines and explosives planted by the enemy targeting our ships as they enter or leave harbours
- Discussions are underway between Goa Shipyard Limited, which has been nominated as the yard for construction by the government, and Kangnam Corporation of South Korea. The GSL has already created necessary infrastructure and facilities to build the vessels.

Category: **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

1. [Scientists find what causes spread of cancer & new way to stop it](#)

In news:

- An international team led by scientists from Johns Hopkins University has, for the first time, found what causes the spread of cancer and what could slow it down.
- **Important findings:**
- 90% of cancer deaths are caused when cancer cells break off from the origin and start spreading elsewhere in the body.
- There are no existing drugs for stopping this spread, known as metastasis, of cancer.
- No commercial drugs are now being produced specifically to inhibit metastasis because drug companies believe the best way to stop cancer from spreading is to destroy the primary tumor from which it originates.
- **Findings:**
- When cancer cells get densely packed they secrete two proteins that deliver a stark message to other cells: go away. This causes the cancer cells to break off from the pack and float through the blood stream or lymphatic system to other sites and start growing afresh.
- The team found that two existing drugs – Tocilizumab and Reparaxin – prevented cancer cells from getting their marching orders.
- Tocilizumab is an approved medication for rheumatoid arthritis and is in trials for use in ovarian cancer cases. Reparaxin is being evaluated as a possible treatment for breast cancer.

2. [Ministry of Earth Sciences to launch "Deep Ocean Mission" by January 2018](#)

In news:

- Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India is all set to launch "Deep Ocean Mission" by January 2018.
- The program on Poly metallic nodules was initiated at CSIR-NIO with the collection of the first nodule sample from Arabian Sea on board the first Research Vessel Gvishani on 26 January 1981.
- India was the first country in the world to have been given the Pioneer Area for exploration of deep-sea mineral viz. Polymetallic nodules in the Central Indian Ocean Basin in 1987.
- This was based on the extensive surveys carried out by the scientists of CSIR-NIO, on several research ships leading to the allocation of an area of 150,000 sq km to the country with exclusive rights under the UN Law of the sea.
- India has now retained an area of 75,000 sq km with an estimated resource of about 100 million tons of strategic metals such as Copper, Nickel, Cobalt besides Manganese and Iron.
- A First Generation Mine-site (FGM) with an area of 18,000 sq km has been identified. Latest technologies for extraction of metals from the minerals have also been developed under the programme. Detailed environmental data has been collected for compliance with International Seabed Authorities requirements. Besides identifying the mineral resource and developing technologies for mining and extraction, the programme has also resulted in high impact research as well as manpower development.

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