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UPSC Current Affairs 2017: News Analysis

A. GS1 Related

Category: SOCIAL ISSUES

1. [Rural India starts to go nuclear, urban families grow in shrinking space](#)

In news:

- Data released by the central government shows decline in the proportional share of nuclear households in urban areas.
- Whereas in rural areas nuclear families are rising and joint families declining at a faster pace than in urban areas.

Reasons

- Lack of adequate housing in urban areas forcing people to stay together
- Increased migration as well as lack of housing

Classification based on family size

- Sub-nuclear family: It is a fragment of a nuclear family, such as a widow with unmarried children, or siblings living together.
- Supplemented nuclear families: Include a nuclear family's members plus other relations, without spouses.
- Broken extended nuclear families: Comprise a head without a spouse with other relations, of whom only one has a spouse.

C. GS2 Related

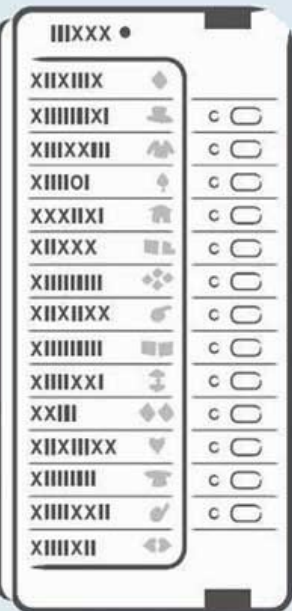
Category: POLITY

1. [Why not use VVPAT units for Gujarat polls, SC asks EC](#)

VOTER VERIFIABLE PAPER AUDIT TRAIL (VVPAT)

1 The EVMs currently display only the total number of votes polled, followed by votes secured by the individual candidates.

2 In the VVPAT system, when a vote is cast, a slip will be printed showing the name of the candidate, voter serial number and poll symbol.



3 Voter can see printout but not take it out. He can verify his vote was registered correctly. The paper trail can be used during a recount.

In news:

- The Supreme Court questioned the Election Commission on its reluctance to use **voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT)** units with electronic voting machines for the Gujarat Assembly polls in 2017, warning the poll panel against making excuses and compelling the court to force its hand.

Petition:

- Filed by Mohit Singh, represented by counsel Kapil Sibal.
- Plea to direct the commission to implement the VVPAT voting mechanism in the Gujarat polls or otherwise use ballot papers to ensure a transparent, free and fair election.
- Gujarat High Court dismissed it.
- Supreme Court's 2013 judgment in Subramanian Swamy vs Election Commission of India**
- Court's observation: "paper trail is an indispensable requirement of **free and fair elections**. The confidence of the voters in the EVMs can be achieved only with the introduction of the paper trail". **EVMs with VVPAT system ensure the accuracy of the voting system.**

VVPAT and fair elections:

- The execution of the VVPAT concept would result in printed receipts of what party the EVM machine has registered a vote for.
- The said printed receipts would then ideally be collected by the voters and subsequently dropped in a ballot box.
- Therefore, the votes registered in the EVM may then be tallied with the ballot papers collected in the ballot box, thus, allowing the commission to ascertain whether a recount is required or not.
- Such printed receipts ensure that the voting is carried out in a more transparent fashion and further inspiring confidence in the election process.

2. [Jobs secured with fake caste claim invalid: SC](#)

False claims

About 1,832 appointments were secured on the basis of fake caste certificates, as per Lok Sabha questions

- Disciplinary proceedings had been instituted in all the cases
- 276 had resulted in suspension/removal
- 521 cases were caught in litigations
- In the remaining 1,035 cases, disciplinary proceedings are pending

In news:

Supreme Court:

- Persons who secured government employment and got academic admissions under reserved categories with the help of forged caste certificates can have their jobs and admission declared invalid.
- **No retrospective effect:** verdict would not be made applicable with retrospective effect.
- Quashed earlier directives issued by Bombay High Court.

Bombay High Court decision in 2014: public servants who got their jobs using fake caste certificates and have spent considerable time in service can be afforded protection. Such persons could be allowed to keep their jobs.

3. [Constitutional status for backward classes panel?](#)

Context:

- The Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill, 2017 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Mr. Thaawarchand Gehlot on April 5, 2017.
- It seeks to grant the National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC) constitutional status, at par with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.

Bone of contention:

- Constitutional status to the NCBC will take away powers from States to add or remove communities to the backward class category for the purpose of reservation.
- The State governments will then only be left with the power to make a recommendation in this regard.

4. [No-detention policy to go from 2018](#)

In news:

- The government has decided to do away with the no-detention policy for students from the next academic session.

What does the law say?

- Under the Right to Education Act, 2009, no child admitted to a school will be held back in any class or expelled till the completion of elementary education covering Classes 1 to 8.

Why such a move?

- The decision was taken following representation from most of the States as they said the **standard of education had deteriorated** because of the policy.

What is the no-detention policy?

- No student up to Class VIII can be detained or failed. All students up to Class VIII are automatically promoted to the next class.

When were these implemented? Why?

- The no-detention policy was implemented as part of the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) under the

RTE Act in 2010 to ensure holistic development of students. The idea was also to reduce dropout rates. Several states already had no-detention policies. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation emphasises on evaluating a child through the year, and not just based on performance in one or two term exams.

What is wrong with the no-fail policy?

- A section of teachers and parents have complained that this policy has led to students developing a lackadaisical attitude, with there being no risk of failing. They also say this system makes no distinction between good and bad students, and between those who work hard and those who don't. Some states have demanded revocation of the policy, claiming this has led to a sharp fall in learning outcomes and academic levels.

5. [CJI, governors should come under RTI: SC](#)

In news:

- Supreme Court for the first time favoured bringing the **office of the chief justice** within the domain of the transparency law.

Supreme Court Observation:

- All constitutional functionaries should be made amenable to the RTI law to bring transparency and accountability in their functioning.
- The court specifically pointed out that the offices of governors and the Chief Justice of India should be brought under the ambit of RTI Act.

Central Information Commission (CIC): declared the CJI's office as public authority under the RTI Act.

The Delhi high court had in 2009 declared the CJI as a public authority under the Act and asked the top court to make assets of its judges public.

A case before Constitutional bench

- The issue whether the Supreme Court should come within the ambit of RTI Act making it obligatory for the CJI to make public information pertaining to appointment of judges and his correspondences with the government is under consideration before a Constitution bench.
- But it is for the first time that the apex court battled for implementation of RTI in judiciary .

6. [PETA moves SC to quash T.N.'s amended jallikattu law](#)

Context:

- 2014 Supreme court judgment in the **Animal Welfare Board of India vs. A. Nagaraja and others** : banned jallikattu as cruelty and held it violative of Sections 3 and 11 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.
- The People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) moved the Supreme Court for quashing the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act 2017 and the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Conduct of Jallikattu) Rules, 2017.**
- **Tamil Nadu:** brought bulls back into the fold of "performing animals" and opened the gates for the conduct of the popular bull-taming sport in the name of **culture and tradition** despite a 2014 ban by the Supreme Court.

PETA's contention in the petition filed:

- **Jallikattu abuse:** events lead to severe injuries, including broken bones, and even the death of humans and bulls.
- **Jallikattu Act and Rules violate the five internationally recognised freedoms** " the freedom from hunger, malnutrition and thirst; freedom from fear and distress; freedom from physical and thermal discomfort; freedom from pain, injury and disease; and freedom to express normal patterns of behaviour.

Basic information:

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals is an American animal rights organization based in Norfolk, Virginia, and led by Ingrid Newkirk, its international president.

Section 3 in The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

3. Duties of persons having charge of animals."It shall be the duty of every person having the care or charge of any animal to take all reasonable measures to ensure the well-being of such animal and to prevent the infliction upon such animal of unnecessary pain or suffering.

Section 11 in The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

11. Treating animals cruelly."

(1) If any person"

(a) beats, kicks, over-rides, over-drives, over-loads, tortures or otherwise treats any animal so as to subject it to unnecessary pain or suffering or causes or, being the owner permits, any animals to be so treated; or

(b) 13 [employs in any work or labour or for any purpose any animal which, by reason of its age or any disease], infirmity, wound, sore or other cause, is unfit to be so employed or, being the owner, permits any such unfit animal to be so employed; or

(c) wilfully and unreasonably administers any injurious drug or injurious substance to 14 [any animal] or wilfully and unreasonably causes or attempts to cause any such drug or substance to be taken by 14 [any animal]; or

(d) conveys or carries, whether in or upon any vehicle or not, any animal in such a manner or position as to subject it to unnecessary pain or suffering; or

(e) keeps or confines any animal in any cage or other receptacle which does not measure sufficiently in height, length and breadth to permit the animal a reasonable opportunity for movement; or

(g) being the owner, neglects to exercise or cause to be exercised reasonably any dog habitually chained up or kept in close confinement; or

(h) being the owner of 15 [any animal], fails to provide such animal with sufficient food, drink or shelter; or

(i) without reasonable cause, abandons any animal in circumstances which render it likely that it will suffer pain by reason of starvation or thirst; or

(j) wilfully permits any animal, of which he is the owner to go at large in any street while the animal is affected with contagious or infectious disease or, without reasonable excuse permits any diseased or disabled animal, of which he is the owner, to die in any street; or

(k) offers for sale or, without reasonable cause, has in his possession any animal which is suffering pain by reason of mutilation, starvation, thirst, overcrowding or other ill-treatment; or

16 [(l) mutilates any animal or kills any animal (including stray dogs) by using the method of strychnine injections in the heart or in any other unnecessarily cruel manner; or;]

17 [m] solely with a view to providing entertainment”

(i) confines or causes to be confined any animal (including tying of an animal as a bait in a tiger or other sanctuary) so as to make it an object of prey for any other animal; or

(ii) incites any animal to fight or bait any other animal; or]

(n) 18 [***] organises, keeps, uses or acts in the management of, any place for animal fighting or for the purpose of baiting any animal or permits or offers any place to be so used or receives money for the admission of any other person to any place kept or used for any such purposes; or

(o) promotes or takes part in any shooting match or competition wherein animals are released from captivity for the purpose of such shooting; he shall be punishable, 19 [in the case of a first offence, with fine which shall not be less than ten rupees but which may extend to fifty rupees, and in the case of a second or subsequent offence committed within three years of the previous offence, with fine which shall not be less than twenty-five rupees but which may extend to one hundred rupees or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with both.]

(2) For the purposes of sub-section (1), an owner shall be deemed to have committed an offence if he has failed to exercise reasonable care and supervision with a view to the prevention of such offence: Provided that where an owner is convicted of permitting cruelty by reason only of having failed to exercise such care and supervision, he shall not be liable to imprisonment without the option of a fine.

(3) Nothing in this section shall apply to”

(a) the dehorning of cattle, or the castration or branding or nose-roping of any animal, in the prescribed manner; or

(b) the destruction of stray dogs in lethal chambers or 20 [by such other methods as may be prescribed]; or

(c) the extermination or destruction of any animal under the authority of any law for the time being in force; or

(d) any matter dealt with in Chapter IV; or

(e) the commission or omission of any act in the course of the destruction or the preparation for destruction of any animal as food for mankind unless such destruction or preparation was accompanied by the infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering.

Category: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [Indian, Israeli defence firms join hands](#)

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Israel

In news:

- Indian and Israeli companies entered into agreements to bid **jointly for defence contracts for the Indian military** and locally build the systems under “Make in India”.
- MoU between Bharat Forge and Israel Aircraft Industries
- To expand the joint venture that the companies are establishing as part of a February 2017 agreement meant to develop, build, market and manufacture selected air defence systems and light weight special purpose munitions.
- The new MoU covers the establishment of a maintenance centre for selected advanced air defence systems in Hyderabad in Telangana in India
- Dynamatic Technologies, IAI and Elcom signed a strategic teaming agreement for industrial cooperation and local production of **Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) in India.**

2. [Modi, Xi will not hold talks at G-20 summit](#)

Context:

- The Prime Minister of India is visiting Hamburg, Germany from July 6-8 for the G-20 summit.

Planned meetings:

- Pre-planned bilateral meetings of India, on the sidelines of the summit are with Argentina, Canada, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Republic of Korea, the U.K. and Vietnam.
- Prime Minister Modi to also participate in the BRICS leaders'™ meeting which will be held a day before the main summit
- No bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping had been scheduled on the sidelines of the G-20 meeting in German

C. GS3 Related

Nothing here for Today!!!

D. GS4 Related

Nothing here for Today!!!

[PIB Articles Editorials Roundup](#)

E. Concepts-in-News: Related Concepts to Revise/Learn

PRELIMS WORTHY FACTUAL INFORMATION

Haifa Day

- The Indian Army commemorates September 23 every year as Haifa Day to pay its respects to the two brave Indian Cavalry Regiments that helped liberate the city following a dashing cavalry action by the 15th Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade.
- In the autumn of 1918, the Indian Brigade was a part of the Allied Forces sweeping northwards through Palestine in what is seen as the last great cavalry campaign in history.
- Captain Aman Singh Bahadur and Dafadar Jor Singh were awarded the Indian Order of Merit and Captain Anop Singh and 2nd Lt. Sagat Singh were awarded the Military Cross in recognition of their bravery in this battle. Major Dalpat Singh was awarded a military cross for his bravery.

F. Bills/Acts/Schemes/Orgs inÂ News

Articles in News

About the Articles

- The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine.
- The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.
- The title of the RTE Act incorporates the words 'free and compulsory'. 'Free education'™ means that no child, other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate Government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education.
- 'Compulsory education'™ casts an obligation on the appropriate Government and local authorities to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in the 6-14 age group

Main objectives:

- Right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school.
- It clarifies that 'compulsory education'™ means obligation of the appropriate government to provide free elementary education and ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education to every child in the six to fourteen age group. 'Free'™ means that no child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education.
- It makes provisions for a non-admitted child to be admitted to an age appropriate class.
- It specifies the duties and responsibilities of appropriate Governments, local authority and parents in providing free and compulsory education, and sharing of financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Governments.
- It lays down the norms and standards relating inter alia to Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school-working days, teacher-working hours.
- It provides for rational deployment of teachers by ensuring that the specified pupil teacher ratio is

The Right to education Act, 2009

- maintained for each school, rather than just as an average for the State or District or Block, thus ensuring that there is no urban-rural imbalance in teacher postings. It also provides for prohibition of deployment of teachers for non-educational work, other than decennial census, elections to local authority, state legislatures and parliament, and disaster relief.
- It provides for appointment of appropriately trained teachers, i.e. teachers with the requisite entry and academic qualifications.
 - It prohibits (a) physical punishment and mental harassment; (b) screening procedures for admission of children; (c) capitation fee; (d) private tuition by teachers and (e) running of schools without recognition,
 - It provides for development of curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution, and which would ensure the all-round development of the child, building on the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent and making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a system of child friendly and child centred learning.
 - The Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill, 2017 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Mr. Thaawarchand Gehlot on April 5, 2017. It seeks to grant the National Commission on Backward Classes (NCBC) constitutional status, at par with the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.
 - **Role of NCSC:** Currently, under the Constitution the NCSC has the power to look into complaints and welfare measures with regard to Scheduled Castes, backward classes and Anglo-Indians. The Bill seeks to remove the power of the NCSC to examine matters related to backward classes.
 - **Constitutional status to National Commission for Backward Classes:** The NCBC is a body set up under the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993. It has the power to examine complaints regarding inclusion or exclusion of groups within the list of backward classes, and advise the central government in this regard. The Bill seeks to establish the NCBC under the Constitution, and provide it the authority to examine complaints and welfare measures regarding socially and educationally backward classes.
 - Note that this Bill was introduced alongside the National Commission for Backward Classes (Repeal) Bill, 2017 that seeks to repeal the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993.
 - **Backward classes:** The Constitution Amendment Bill states that the President may specify the socially and educationally backward classes in the various states and union territories. He may do this in consultation with the Governor of the concerned state. However, a law of Parliament will be required if the list of backward classes is to be amended.
 - **Composition and service conditions:** Under the Constitution Amendment Bill, the NCBC will comprise of five members appointed by the President. Their tenure and conditions of service will also be decided by the President through rules.
 - **Functions:** Under the Constitution Amendment Bill, the duties of the NCBC will include: (i) investigating and monitoring how safeguards provided to the backward classes under the Constitution and other laws are being implemented, (ii) inquiring into specific complaints regarding violation of rights, and (iii) advising and making recommendations on socio-economic development of such classes. The central and state governments will be required to consult with the NCBC on all major policy matters affecting the socially and educationally backward classes.
 - The NCBC will be required to present annual reports to the President on working of the safeguards for backward classes. These reports will be tabled in Parliament, and in the state legislative assemblies of the concerned states.
 - **Powers of a civil court :** Under the Constitution Amendment Bill, the NCBC will have the powers of a civil court while investigating or inquiring into any complaints. These powers include: (i) summoning people and examining them on oath, (ii) requiring production of any document or public record, and (iii) receiving evidence.
-