

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. [GS1 Related](#)

B. [GS2 Related](#)

POLITY

1. [Young lawyers make a plea for audible justice](#)
2. [Govt. to boost rural employment](#)
3. [Centre pushes for cash-free campuses](#)
4. [Most pollution-linked deaths occur in India](#)

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/BILATERAL RELATIONS

1. [Spain moves to suspend Catalonia's autonomy](#)

C. [GS3 Related](#)

ECONOMICS

1. [U.S. starts anti-dumping probe into PTFE resin from India](#)
2. [All major ports to get LDB services: official sources](#)

ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY

1. [Air quality nosedives in spite of a quieter Deepavali](#)
2. [New species of large gecko discovered](#)

INTERNAL SECURITY

1. [India eyes military expansion; Sitharaman to spend Diwali with soldiers in Andaman tri-service command](#)

D. [GS4 Related](#)

E. [Prelims Fact](#)

F. [UPSC Prelims Practice Questions](#)

G. [UPSC Mains Practice Questions](#)

Nothing here for Today!!!

Category: POLITY

1. [Young lawyers make a plea for audible justice](#)

Context:

- Justice should not only be done, but also seen to be done.
- A group of young lawyers and law students believes it should also be heard. And heard clearly.
- **Whistle for Public Interest (WHIP)**, a group of practising lawyers and law students who use the Right to Information Act of 2005 to promote transparency and accountability, said court proceedings are hardly audible for lawyers, litigants and even the media present in the courtrooms as judges do not switch on the microphones kept before them.

In news:

What the statute says?

- Under the **“open court” system of administration of justice**, the public should get reasonable access to courtrooms so that they could hear as well as watch the proceedings
- Section 153 B of the Civil Procedure Code and Section 327 of the Code of Criminal Procedure mandate **“public access”** to court proceedings.

WHIP request:

They want Supreme Court judges to use the microphones installed on their desks in courtrooms. Not using microphones has no **“rationale”** and amounts to **“wastage of public money”**.

2. [Govt. to boost rural employment](#)

In news:

- The Rural Development Ministry is in the midst of examining proposals that promises to leapfrog job creation for the rural youth.

Out of the box suggestions:

- Migrant tracking system, low-cost accommodation for urban workers, and changing the word **“labour”** to **“professional workers”**.

- The Ministry's flagship skill development programme "Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gramin Kaushal Yojana" needs to "reinvent itself to reach the next level."
- Link skill to entrepreneurship development and do not over-emphasize wage employment.
- Rural digital index on the same lines of smart city index.
- **Cluster approach:** Experts have suggested a cluster approach, where villages with **similar socio-economic conditions** should be clubbed and every village should have a gram vikas prerak (village development motivator), and call the "bottom of the pyramid as the foundation of the pyramid."

3. Centre pushes for cash-free campuses

In news:

- The Ministry of Human Resource Development aims to make financial transactions completely digital in all higher education institutions.
- The higher education regulators "University Grants Commission (UGC) and All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)" are also being taken on board to help facilitate the transition.
- The move will bring within the digital ambit all such institutions "public and private" including Central and State universities, IITs, NITs, business schools, etc.
- Eventually, the Centre aims to fully digitise all campus processes "including admissions, assistance, assessments, result declaration, admission, etc." with all these processes going on an integrated IT platform.

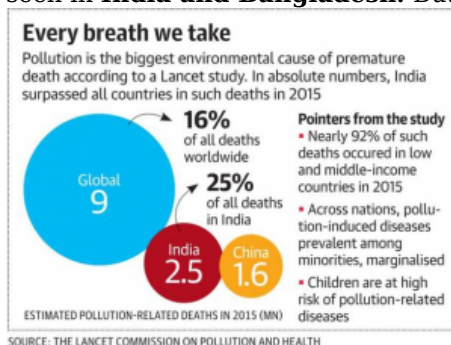
Vittiya Saksharta Abhiyan (VISAKA):

- The Centre had launched the **Vittiya Saksharta Abhiyan (VISAKA)**, meaning financial literacy campaign, for digital financial literacy early in 2017, enrolling lakhs of volunteers from among students to train families in their neighbourhood to conduct financial transactions digitally through the BHIM app.
- They were also asked to go to major markets, talk to shopkeepers, vendors and merchants' associations to help shift to digital transactions.

4. Most pollution-linked deaths occur in India

Highlights of the report by The Lancet Commission on pollution and health:

- **Number of deaths in 2015:** 2.51 million, India had been ranked the No.1 in pollution related deaths.
- China recorded the second highest number of such deaths (1.8 million).
- India accounted for about 28 per cent of an estimated nine million pollution linked deaths worldwide in 2015.
- **Leading cause of deaths in 2015:** air pollution accounting for 6.5 million premature deaths.
- Among the world's 10 most populous countries, the largest increase in numbers of pollution related deaths were seen in **India and Bangladesh**. But the absolute number of air pollution deaths in Bangladesh was only 0.2 million.



- The number of water pollution deaths in China was only about 34,000, compared to 0.64 million in the case of India.
- In the case of air pollution, the number of deaths in India from ambient air pollution was 1.09 million, while deaths from household air pollution from solid fuels were 0.97 million.
- In the case of water pollution, 0.5 million deaths were caused by unsafe water source, while unsafe sanitation caused 0.32 million deaths.
- Several cities in India and China recorded average annual concentrations of particulate matter PM_{2.5} pollution of greater than 100 µg/m³, and more than 50% of global deaths due to ambient air pollution in 2015 occurred in India and China.

Pollution and diseases:

- Deaths from air pollution were a result of diseases such as heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Pollution has been responsible for the most non-communicable disease deaths.
- Pollution is responsible for more deaths than a high-sodium diet (4.1 million), obesity (4.0 million), alcohol (2.3 million), road accidents (1.4 million), or child and maternal malnutrition (1.4 million).
- Pollution was also responsible for three times as many deaths as AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined.

Background information:

The Lancet Commission on pollution and health is a two-year project in which more than 40 international health and environmental authors were involved.

Category: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/BILATERAL RELATIONS

1. Spain moves to suspend Catalonia's autonomy

Context:

- Spain said it will move to seize some of the Catalan regional government's powers after its leader warned that he could declare independence, escalating the country's worst political crisis in decades.
- The central government in Madrid had given separatist leader Carles Puigdemont time until 10:00 am to say whether or not he was declaring a breakaway state in the semi-autonomous region following a chaotic referendum on October 1.
- Prime Minister of Spain had warned he would trigger Article 155 of Spain's Constitution a never before used measure allowing it to impose direct rule over the wealthy northeastern region unless Mr. Puigdemont backed down.

Impact of this decision:

- There are fears that such a move, allowing Madrid to potentially suspend Mr. Puigdemont's government and take over its police force, could spark unrest in a region where even Catalans who oppose independence cherish their autonomy highly.
- The separatist leader responded that Catalan lawmakers could vote to declare secession unilaterally if Madrid triggers Article 155.
- Article 155 a process that would take several days to restore legality in the region.
- The Catalonia crisis has prompted a series of huge street rallies, worried investors and added to the woes of a European Union already grappling with Brexit.
- Catalonia's 7.5 million residents are fiercely attached to their own language and culture but are divided on whether to break away from the rest of Spain.
- But according to the separatist leader his regional administration has a mandate to declare independence from what he says was a 90% "Yes" vote on October 1.
- But turnout was given as only 43%.

Many voters who oppose independence stayed away from a referendum that had been declared illegal by Spain's Constitutional Court.

Category: ECONOMICS

1. [U.S. starts anti-dumping probe into PTFE resin from India](#)

In news:

- The U.S. has initiated anti-dumping duty investigations against import of **polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) resin** from India and China.
- The probe is being started to determine whether imports of PTFE resin from China and India are being dumped in the U.S., and a countervailing duty investigation to determine whether producers of PTFE resin in India are receiving alleged unfair subsidies.
- Alleged margins**: The PTFE is mostly used as a non-stick coating for utensils. The department has stated that the estimated dumping margins alleged by the petitioner range from 23.4%-408.9% for China and 15.8% to 128.1% for India.

Investigations:

- In the **anti-dumping investigations**, it said the department would determine whether imports of the resin from China and India were being dumped in the American market at less than fair value.
- In the countervailing investigation, it will determine whether Indian producers of PTFE resin are receiving unfair government subsidies.
- If the department establishes that the products are being dumped, they can impose duties on those imports.

Anti-dumping investigation:

- Countries initiate anti-dumping probes to determine if the domestic industry has been hurt by a surge in below-cost imports. As a counter-measure, they impose duties under the multilateral WTO regime.
- Anti-dumping measures are taken to ensure fair trade and provide a level-playing field to the domestic industry.
- They are not a measure to restrict imports or cause an unjustified increase in cost of products.

2. [All major ports to get LDB services: official sources](#)

Context:

- The **Logistics Data Bank's (LDB)** services will soon be extended to all major ports in India.
- The LDB project's objective**: to ensure greater efficiency in the country's logistics sector through the use of information technology.

In news:

- Discussions between the Government and the **Indian Ports Association (IPA)** in this regard have begun.
- The IPA is the apex body for India's major ports under the shipping ministry's supervisory control. Until now, the LDB project covered only the country's western logistics corridor.
- As part of the LDB project, each container is attached to a **Radio Frequency Identification Tag (RFID) tag** and tracked through RFID readers. This, in turn, helps importers and exporters to track their goods in transit.

Background information:

- The LDB project was unveiled in July 2016 as an important **"ease of doing business" initiative** to boost the country's foreign trade and bring about greater transparency.

- It helps reduce the overall lead time of container movement, besides bringing down transaction costs that consignees and shippers incur.
- The project is implemented through a **Special Purpose Vehicle called Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation Logistics Data Services Ltd. (DLDSL)** – jointly (50:50) owned by the Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) Trust and Japanese IT services major NEC Corporation.
- The LDB project covers – the entire movement through rail or road till the Inland Container Depot and Container Freight Station.
- The DLDSL so far provides – container tracking services to around 70% of the container traffic in India.
- The services include providing users the – “average delivery time” as well as notifications through SMS and email.
- The LDB project also provides other services such as – “congestion and bottleneck analysis” as well as a – “performance bench-marking” that aids the users to pinpoint supply chain inefficiencies, and in turn help improve the system.

Nothing here for Today!!!

Nothing here for Today!!!

F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

GS Paper I

1. How do the Indian debates on Secularism differ from the debates in the West?

GS Paper II

1. Why does Constitution of India provide different forms of Oaths for the President, the Ministers, the legislators and the member of the judiciary? Discuss their significance.