

UPSC 2017: Comprehensive News Analysis “November 13

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Category: GOVERNANCE

1. [Rs. 330 cr. towards MNREGA wage payment pending](#)

- Wage payments of a whopping Rs. 330 crore under the MNREGA have been stuck in Karnataka since September 7 because of non-transfer of funds from the Centre.
- Karnataka is among the 19 States where wage payments have been delayed.

About MGNREGA

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), also known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) is Indian legislation enacted on August 25, 2005. The MGNREGA provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Govt of India is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments
- This act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or unskilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India. It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country. Roughly one-third of the stipulated work force must be women.
- Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address with photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his /her photo. Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to Panchayat or to Programme Officer.
- The Panchayat/Programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at Panchayat office. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 km: if it is above 5 km extra wage will be paid.

Category: JUDICIARY

1. [JM courts in all taluks](#)

- The government proposes to set up judicial magistrate courts in all the taluk headquarters in the Tamil Nadu State in three years, based on the suggestion of the Madras High Court.
- The Madras High Court has suggested to the government to ensure that all the taluks in the State accounted for judicial magistrate courts.
- State Government has been implementing all the recommendations and suggestions made by the Madras High Court

- from time to time for the development of infrastructure facilities in the courts, filling up vacancies etc.,.
- Another suggestion of the High Court was strengthening security arrangements in the courts.
- The government has issued orders for the installation of metal detectors and closed circuit television cameras in the courts.

Category:Â INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. [PM lands in Manila to participate in ASEAN, East Asia summits](#)

- Beginning a new diplomatic initiative, India participated in the first formal official-level discussions conducted under the recently mooted regional coalition known as the “Quad”, the quadrilateral formation that includes Japan, India, the United States and Australia.
- The discussions focused on cooperation based on their converging vision and values for promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in an increasingly inter-connected region that they share with each other and with other partners.
- They agreed that a free, open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific region serves the long-term interests of all countries in the region and of the world at large.
- The officials also discussed on addressing common challenges of terrorism and proliferation linkages impacting the region as well as on enhancing connectivity.
- Indicating the boiling regional tension with China and Beijing’s assertiveness over the South China Sea issue, a statement from the Australian Foreign Ministry informed that freedom of navigation figured at the “Quad”.
- Upholding the rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific and respect for international law, freedom of navigation and over flight; increased connectivity; challenges of countering terrorism and upholding maritime security in the Indo-Pacific were also discussed.

2. [South China Sea, Rohingya on ASEAN map](#)

- **China’s build-up of air surveillance and domination projects in the region also likely to come up for discussion**
- The maritime dispute over the South China Sea, mass departure of the Rohingya citizens of Myanmar into Bangladesh and India, North Korean nuclear posturing and Islamic State-linked terrorism are likely to be the key talking points at the 31st ASEAN summit.
- The South China Sea has been at the center of discussions on multilateral problems at the ASEAN-China level, which has been further complicated by China’s land reclamation projects aimed at building air surveillance and domination projects in the region.
- **Rohingya crisis**
- Dhaka expected ASEAN to raise the issue in a prominent way and convince Myanmar to stop the atrocities against the Rohingya.
- The presence of the pro-Islamic State militants in the Marawi city in southern Philippines is also expected to receive attention as the fight with the militants has been a major domestic issue of the Philippines.
- The developments in Marawi have also emerged as a reason for it to seek international support. China has in recent months extended support to the Philippines.
- It is expected that the simmering tension between the North Korea and the U.S. and Japan will also feature prominently on the agenda.

Category:Â SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. [The AI battlefield](#)

- The first formal inter-governmental discussion on what machine autonomy means for the laws of armed conflict was organized by a United Nations group of experts in Geneva.
- The norms around what is considered acceptable in warfare have also evolved in response to new technologies.
- The norms that have been codified in international humanitarian law, is more or less universally accepted as regulating armed conflict among civilized states. But recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI) are throwing up a new challenge to these norms.

Concerns related to the AI

- Reality might not have yet caught up with popular culture depictions of “killer robots” and “conscious synths” demanding their rightful place in society
- Indeed, such depictions can be a distraction from the complex challenges that do exist
- But many technology leaders are worried about autonomous systems taking life-and-death decisions without a “meaningful human supervision or control”
- The American tech billionaire Elon Musk and over 100 others recently signed a letter warning that the weaponisation of AI-based technologies risks opening a Pandora’s box
- These are not the only concerns about AI
- Technologists and ethicists are also grappling with other questions
- Such as legal liability when autonomous vehicles share the streets with pedestrians, predictive analytics subverting due process, and the algorithmic entrenchment of human biases

Important question in front of the UN expert group

- How, then, to deliver on the promise of AI while protecting the hard-won tenets of international humanitarian law and respecting the legitimate security and commercial interests of states and industry?
- This is the question we will be grappling with this week in Geneva

Importance of the UN solving such kind of issues

- In an era of diffusion of power and mistrust among the major powers, multilateral inter-governmental forums remain

- the only way to extend norms across the globe
- For bad or for worse, governments still decide matters of war and peace. And the UN still offers a neutral venue to bring different points of view together

The way forward

- The discussions in Geneva are an opportunity to test a new approach, one we might call “distributed technology governance”
- This means the multilateral system’s search for durable international norms needs to integrate national regulatory approaches and industry self-regulation.
- Each level in this chain of subsidiarity “international humanitarian law, national regulations, and industry self-regulation” needs to move in full cognition of the other two
- We need to find ways for them to enjoy their respective sovereignty, while working in unison to deliver what the international community expects

Category:Â ECONOMY

1. More capital will push PSBs to up MSME credit: Arun Jaitley

- While there has been a significant increase in public investment and FDI inflows, but the private investment a key growth engine has continued to lag.
- The finance ministerÂ said more capital for public sector banks will prompt them to increase credit flow to MSMEs.
- This will ensure thatÂ “third engine” of private investment is fired up to propel growth and create jobs.
- MSMEs the sector creating jobs and giving the boost to the economy has no access to international finance or bond market and the DemonetizationÂ decision has especially affected the MSMEs thus increased flow of credit plays a significant role.

Solution

- government had unveiled a mega capital infusion worth Rs 2.11-lakh crore two-year roadmap to strengthen PSBs, which includes recapitalization bonds, budgetary support, and equity dilution
- The government alsoÂ ensured noninterference in commercial transactions
- A robust public sector banking system is desired so that ability to support growth itself increases

Category:Â ENVIRONMENT

1. Crisis is in the air

Delhi has become world’s air pollution outcaste

- Three years ago, theÂ World Health Organisation (WHO) revealed that Delhi was the most polluted city in the world
- Particulate matter “PM of less than 2.5 microns” was at an annual average of 153 micrograms per cubic meter that year, well above the WHO limit of 35.
- Delhi’s air was declared a “national emergency” thus resulting in

1. Visitors will think more before visiting Delhi this winter
2. Children can’t attend school or play outside
3. There will be financial losses due to days missed at work

Causes of air pollution

- Burning of farm residue
- Pollutants from thermal power stations in and around the capital
- Dust from construction
- Pollutants from vehicles

Preventive measures

- To prevent burning of farm residue, encourage farmers to recycle crop waste rather than burn it
- Stiff penalties can be imposed on thermal power plants and construction sites for not complying with pollution standards
- Pollution caused by private vehicles, whether they are four- or two-wheelers, can be curbed by restricting their numbers
- Odd-and-even number plate scheme, ought to be extended through the winter
- Parking fees ought to be drastically increased, and payable even at night time

Mistakes in administration

- Mumbai is building an Rs 15,000-crore coast road only for cars
- Mumbai has been spared the ignominy of Delhi when it comes to air pollution, one reason being that the sea breezes waft pollutants away
- Once this road is built, all that will change since the prevailing winds are in a south-west direction
- All cities are making the mistake of prescribing metros as the solution for local transport
- In Delhi, the 200-km-plus Metro network doesn’t seem to have reduced the number of cars appreciably, only two-wheelers

Alternative

- Buses, which can run both long distances in cities, as well as provide last-mile connectivity to and from metros and

- local railway stations
- Reserved bus lanes are the most cost-efficient and egalitarian means of city transport
- TheseÂ penalize the polluters “ cars and two-wheelers “ and carry commuters comfortably and cleanly

Nothing here for Today!!!

Nothing here for Today!!!

F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

1. Latitude and its influence on solar radiation received.
2. Air mass influences.
3. Location of global high and low pressure zones.
4. Heat exchange from ocean currents.
5. Distribution of mountain barriers.
6. Altitude.

1. 1, 2, 3 only
2. 3, 4, 5, 6 only
3. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 only
4. All

1. Mudrarakshasa “ Vishakhadatta
2. Ratnavali “ Harshavardhan
3. Kalidasa “ Malavikagnimitra
4. None of the above

G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

GS Paper III

- The Bonn Climate conference carries the spirit of Paris agreement. Discuss the challenges faced in the implementation of Paris agreement.

GS Paper II

- Aadhaar based Biometric Authentication is one of the ways to check corruption in the provision of Public services . Comment.
- Multilateral alliance has become an important means for India to counter the threat of Chinese dominance in South Asia. Critically analyse.