

# UPSC 2017: Comprehensive News Analysis “November 17

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**Category: POLITY**

1. [Govt. will uphold freedom of press in all forms: Modi](#)

#### In news:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the role of a free media was a “cornerstone of a vibrant democracy” and its contribution in giving “voice to the voiceless” was commendable, while greeting the press on the occasion of National Press Day.
- He underlined his government’s commitment to “upholding the freedom of the press and expression in all forms.”

2. [Anti-superstition Bill passed, with minor changes](#)

#### In news:

- The State Legislative Assembly passed the **Karnataka Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Bill, 2017**, popularly known as the “anti-superstition” Bill, with minor changes.
- While stamping of mudra on the body, a practice in the upper caste community (Madhwa Brahmins), has been exempted from the ban, advertisements that offer miracle cures for diseases have been banned.

3. [Quota in promotions: Five-judge bench to decide whether 2006 order needs to be revisited](#)

#### Context:

- A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court will examine whether its 2006 judgment on the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in promotions needs to be revisited.
- The matter was referred to the Constitution Bench by a three-judge bench.

#### Issue:

- The Constitution Bench has to decide on the limited issue whether the order in *M Nagaraj vs the Union of India* needs to be looked at afresh.
- The Constitution Bench will not go into the merit of the matter.

#### The 2006 Judgment

- In 2006, a five-judge Constitution Bench had ruled that the state was not bound to provide reservation for SCs/STs in promotions.
- But in case any state wished to make such a provision, it was required to collect quantifiable data showing backwardness of the class as well as its inadequate representation in public employment.
- Additionally, the state was required to ensure that reservation does not breach the 50 percent ceiling, adversely affect the creamy layer or extend it indefinitely.

#### Petition:

- Acting on a 2015 petition filed by the Tripura government which challenged an order of the Tripura High Court, a two-judge bench referred the matter to a Constitution Bench under Article 145(3).
- A petition before the High Court had challenged certain provisions of The Tripura Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of vacancies in services and posts) Act, 1991, saying that under these provisions, the state had granted reservation in violation of rules laid down in M Nagaraj vs Union of India case.

#### CJI views:

- The CJI is examining the issue whether a two-judge bench directly refers a matter to Constitution Bench
- According to him a Constitution Bench will first decide if the matter needs to be reconsidered at all

#### 4. [Govt planning to rent a roof policy in solar power push](#)

#### In news:

- The Union government is working on a "rent a roof" policy to support its ambitious plan to generate 40 gigawatts (GW) of power from solar rooftop projects by 2022
- While investors have been enthused by India's large ground-mounted, grid-connected solar parks, the solar rooftop market hasn't gained much traction
- Of India's ambitious target of 175GW of clean energy capacity by 2022, 100GW is to come from solar projects
- Of these, while 60GW is targeted from ground-mounted, grid-connected projects, 40GW is to come from solar rooftop projects. Wind power projects are to contribute 60GW

#### Suitability of India for such kind of projects

- The country offers a big opportunity given its 750GW potential as it records around 300 sunny days a year, with an average solar radiation range of 4-7 kilowatt-hours per square metre.

#### Various Concerns:

- According to some experts, there are concerns as India is not expected to achieve even half of the solar rooftop targets by December 2021

#### Government Strategy for Wind power Projects

- The central government is also firming up its strategy to expedite bidding out wind power contracts
- India has an installed wind power capacity of 33GW
- The country has auctioned 2GW of wind power contracts that saw tariffs fall to a record low of Rs2.64 per unit in the October auction conducted by state-run Solar Energy Corp. of India

#### Category: INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/BILATERAL RELATIONS

##### 1. [UN must list Azhar a global terrorist: France](#)

- Emphasising the need to designate Pakistani terror mastermind Masood Azhar as a global terrorist under the 1267 counter-terror committee of the UN Security Council, France sought international consensus on countering cross-border terrorism.
- France and India are successfully cooperating in areas like counter-terrorism and defence and highlighted France's territorial interests in the Indian Ocean region.

#### Category: HEALTH ISSUES

##### 1. [Why the Amish live longer](#)

#### In news:

- Scientists have identified a **genetic mutation** found in an Indiana Amish family that may extend life by up to ten years, and are now testing an experimental "longevity" drug that recreates the effect.
- The genetic mutation, discovered by the Northwestern University in the United States in an extended family of **Old Order Amish** living in the vicinity of Berne, Indiana, appears to protect against multiple aspects of biological ageing in humans.

#### Key Facts:

- Indiana Amish kindred with the mutation live more than 10 per cent longer and have 10 per cent longer telomeres (a protective cap at the end of our chromosomes that is a biological marker of ageing) compared to Amish kindred members who do not have the mutation.
- Amish with this mutation also have significantly less diabetes and lower fasting insulin levels.
- A composite measure that reflects vascular age also is lower "indicative of retained flexibility in blood vessels in the carriers of the mutation" than those who do not have the mutation, the research also found.
- These Amish individuals have very low levels of PAI-1 (plasminogen activator inhibitor), a protein that comprises part

of a ‘molecular fingerprint’ related to ageing or senescence of cells. It was previously known that PAI-1 was related to ageing in animals but unclear how it affected ageing in humans.

### The community’s origins:

- The Amish kindred in Berne, Indiana, have been genetically and culturally isolated and most are at least distantly related.
- The ancestors of the Indiana Amish emigrated in the middle of the 19th century from Berne, Switzerland.
- The mutation was introduced into the Amish kindred by farmers from Switzerland, who moved into the area.
- Two of their descendants, who carried the mutation, married into the Amish community. The Amish community outside the Berne area does not carry this mutation.
- People with the mutation live to be 85 on average, significantly longer than their predicted average lifespan of 71 for Amish in general and which has not changed much over the last century.

### Category: ECONOMY

#### 1. [GST rate cut: Centre doubles down on GST’s gains for consumers](#)

##### In news:

- The Union Cabinet approved the creation of **the National Anti-profiteering Authority** to ensure that businesses pass on the benefits of GST to consumers.
- The authority has been granted wide-ranging powers, including to cancel the registration of offending firms in extreme cases.
- The apex body has been mandated to ensure that the benefits of the reduction in GST rates on goods or services are passed on to the ultimate consumers by way of a reduction in prices.
- According to the rules, if the NAA confirms that there is a need to apply **anti-profiteering** measures, then it has the authority to order the supplier to reduce its prices or return the undue benefit availed by it along with interest to the recipient of the goods or services. If this can’t be done, then the company can be ordered to deposit the amount in the Consumer Welfare Fund.
- In extreme cases, the NAA can impose a penalty on the defaulting business entity and even order the cancellation of its registration under GST.

### Category: ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND ECOLOGY

#### 1. [U.P. bans garbage burning in urban areas to tackle pollution](#)

##### In news:

- As air quality in major cities of Uttar Pradesh hovers around ‘every poor’ and ‘severe,’ the State government has banned garbage burning in urban areas in a bid to reduce the pollution.
- The State government has also sought technological assistance from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, to create artificial rain.
- The government is also considering a review of old vehicles. It could remove them from roads, if necessary, to reduce vehicular pollution.
- **Key Fact:** The Air Quality Index of major cities in Uttar Pradesh like Moradabad, Lucknow, Kanpur, Ghaziabad, Varanasi and Noida has consistently been in the higher range of 400. It even touched 500 on a few days leaving the residents worried.

***Nothing here for Today!!!***

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### F. Practice Questions for UPSC Prelims Exam

### G. UPSC Mains Practice Questions

#### GS Paper III

- What are the major reasons for declining rice and wheat yield in the cropping system? How crop diversification is helpful to stabilize the yield of the crop in the system?

#### GS Paper IV

- Young people with ethical conduct are not willing to come forward to join active politics. Suggest steps to motivate them to come forward.