

CURRENT AFFAIRS DECODED

LET'S MAKE IT TRULY SIMPLE.....

SEPTEMBER – 2019



• THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

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THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

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NATIONAL NEWS

NUTRITION RELATED ISSUE

NEWS: Nearly 10% of children in the age group of 5-9 years and adolescents in the age group of 10-19 years are pre-diabetic, 5% are overweight and another 5% suffer from blood pressure. These are among the key findings of the first-ever national nutrition survey conducted by the Centre

The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and UNICEF between February 2016 and October 2018 is the first study undertaken to measure malnutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies

With September being observed as Poshan Maah or Nutrition month, many argued that not all findings may be palatable to the Centre, forcing it to postpone releasing the study.

Nutrition woes

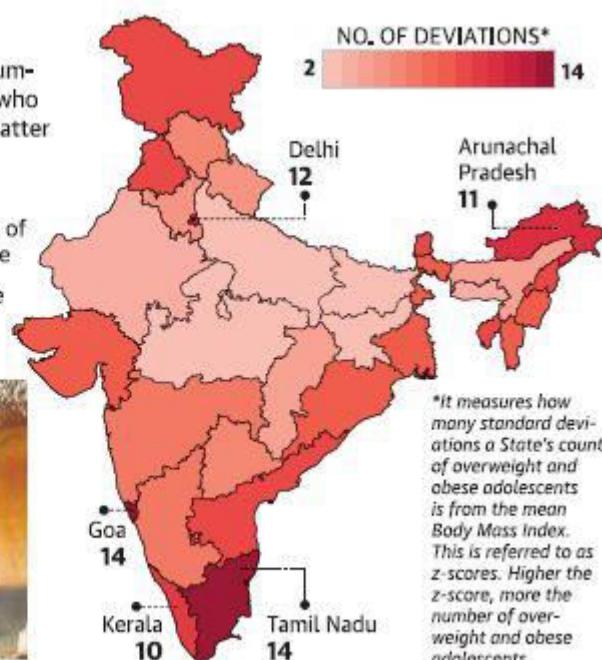
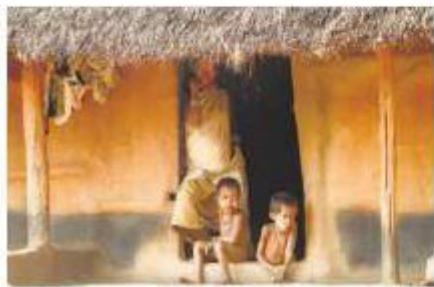
Tamil Nadu and Goa had the highest number of adolescents (aged 10-19 years) who were either overweight or obese. The latter had the most obese adolescents

10% children and adolescents are pre-diabetic

7% children and adolescents have risk of chronic kidney disease

4% adolescents have high cholesterol

5% adolescents were found to have high blood pressure



REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE ACT 1951

NEWS: Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang, who had been barred from contesting elections for six years after the completion of a one-year prison term for graft in 2018, was granted a reprieve by the Election Commission of India (ECI), which reduced the disqualification period to just a year and a month.

In their order on Sunday, **Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora** and Election Commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra reduced Mr. Tamang's period of disqualification, citing **Section 11 of the Representation of the People (RP) Act, 1951, which allows the ECI to reduce or remove disqualification "for reasons to be recorded".**

ABOUT RPA 1951

Contains provisions relating to following matters

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

1. Qualifications and disqualification for membership of Parliament and state legislatures.
2. Notification of General Elections
3. Administrative Machinery for the conduct of general elections
4. Registration of political parties
5. Conduct of Elections
6. Free supply of certain material to candidates of recognized parties
7. Disputes regarding elections
8. Corrupt practices and electoral offences

FOREIGNERS TRIBUNALS

NEWS: Several orders of a Foreigners' Tribunal in central Assam declaring some people as non-citizens have been found missing from record, a recent order of the Gauhati High Court has revealed.

The court also expressed disappointment "over the way the member conducted himself".

FOREIGNERS TRIBUNALS

Foreigners Tribunals is a QUASI JUDICIAL body.

Assam has 100 such tribunals that adjudicate the **Foreigners Act of 1946** to decide the fate of people suspected to be Bangladeshi by the Assam Police's border wing formed in 1962 to initially prevent infiltration of Pakistani nationals.

Power to establish foreigners tribunals lies with the DISTRICT MAGISTRATE.

CONCEPTUAL

ABOUT ARTICLE 35A

Article 35A of the Indian Constitution is an article that **empowers the Jammu and Kashmir state's legislature to define "permanent residents" of the state and provide special rights and privileges to those permanent residents. It was added to the Constitution through a Presidential Order.**

It was added by a 1954 presidential order issued under Article 370, the constitutional provision that mediates the relationship between the Union of India and Kashmir

Article 35A also empowers the State's legislature to frame any law without attracting a challenge on grounds of violating the Right to Equality of people from other States or any other right under the Constitution.

SUGGESTIONS GIVEN BY VICE PRESIDENT TO REDUCE PENDENCY IN JUDICIARY

WHY? Huge pendency of over 3 crore cases in different courts across the country with some of them pending over for 50 years

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

SUGGESTIONS

1. Bifurcation of the Supreme Court and setting up of four Regional Benches of the Apex Court
2. Evolving Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that limit the number of adjournments
3. Timeframe for disposal of cases by the courts.
4. Recommendation of the Law Commission towards splitting the Supreme Court into Constitutional Division and Courts of Appeal for steady disposal of cases.
5. Article 130 of the Constitution which says: "The Supreme Court shall sit in Delhi or in such other place or places, as the Chief Justice of India may, with the approval of the President, from time to time appoint."

ECI CELL TO MONITOR FAKE NEWS

Candidates contesting the Maharashtra Assembly elections will be under watch not just physically, but also in the cyberspace, with the Election Commission of India (ECI) setting up a dedicated cell to monitor their activities on social media platforms ahead of the polls.

The cell will mainly be keeping an eye out for three kinds of violations.

The first kind is any content being shared that might amount to defamation, rumour-mongering or fake news, and such instances will be forwarded to the concerned police units for further action.

The second is violation of the model code of conduct, which will be reported to the ECI.

The third category is of posts that might give rise to law and order problems, in which case they will be removed from the internet.

STUBBLE BURNING

NEWS: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday wrote to his counterparts in the neighbouring States of Punjab and Haryana and Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar urging them to take "bold, urgent action" on the issue of stubble burning.

SOLUTIONS FOR STUBBLE BURNING :

1. Government should encourage crop diversification.
2. Labour shortage should be addressed.
3. Happy Seeders and other such technologies should be available at rent.
4. Develop methods for effective use of paddy straw. Unlike wheat straw which can be used as fodder paddy straw cannot be used as it has high silica content, Paddy straw can be used for biomass generation and government should provide facilities for the same.

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

WHAT IS MCC?

These are the guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India for conduct of political parties and candidates during elections mainly with respect to speeches, polling day, polling booths, election manifestos, processions and general conduct.

AIM: To ensure free and fair elections.

WHEN DOES IT COMES INTO FORCE?

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- The Model Code of Conduct comes into force immediately on announcement of the election schedule by the commission.
- Election Commission (EC) has announced that Model Code of Conduct comes into force immediately in states where legislative assemblies have been dissolved prematurely.
- The Code remains in force till the end of the electoral process.

EVOLUTION:

- The Commission issued the code for the first time in **1971** (5th Election) and revised it from time to time. This set of norms has been evolved with the **consensus of political parties** who have consented to abide by the principles embodied in the said code and also binds them to respect and observe it in its letter and spirit.
- The MCC is not enforceable by law. However, certain provisions of the MCC may be enforced through invoking corresponding provisions in other statutes such as the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, and Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- The Election Commission has argued against making the MCC legally binding; stating that elections must be completed within a relatively short time (close to 45 days), and judicial proceedings typically take longer, therefore it is not feasible to make it enforceable by law.

THE MAIN POINTS OF THE CODE ARE:

- Government bodies are not to participate in any new recruitment process during the electoral process.
- The contesting candidates and their campaigners must respect the home life of their rivals and should not disturb them by holding road shows or demonstrations in front of their houses. The code tells the candidates to keep it.
- The election campaign rallies and road shows must not hinder the road traffic.
- Candidates are asked to refrain from distributing liquor to voters. It is a widely known fact in India that during election campaigning, liquor may be distributed to the voters.
- The election code in force hinders the government or running party leaders from launching new welfare programmes like construction of roads, provision of drinking water facilities etc. or any ribbon-cutting ceremonies.
- The code instructs that public spaces like meeting grounds, helipads, government guest houses and bungalows should be equally shared among the contesting candidates. These public spaces should not be monopolised by a few candidates.

BAN ON E CIGARETTES:-

WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

Electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or non-combustible tobacco products are known by many names — vapes, e-hookahs, electronic cigarettes and e-pipes

e-cigarette, which is a battery-operated device, produces aerosol by heating a solution containing nicotine among other things. The device contains nicotine and flavours in the form of liquid which is primarily composed of solvents such as glycerol and/or propylene glycol.

The aerosol containing a suspension of fine particles and gases simulates cigarette smoke.

Following a puff, the aerosol is delivered to the user's mouth and lungs and the rest is exhaled.

WHY IN NEWS

the Union Cabinet approved the promulgation of the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (production, manufacture, import, export, transport, sale, distribution, storage and advertisement) Ordinance, 2019 with immediate effect

As a result, anyone violating it will be imprisoned for up to one year or fined up to ₹1,00,000 or both for the first offence. Storage of electronic-cigarettes shall also be punishable

WHY BANNED?

1. Health issues
2. Could derail the government's programme to reduce tobacco consumption.
3. According to a white paper on e-cigarettes by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), depending on the battery output voltage used, nicotine solvents can release in varying amounts potential carcinogens such as acetaldehyde, formaldehyde and acetone.
4. The liquid-vapourising solutions also contain "toxic chemicals and metals that can cause several adverse health effects including cancers and diseases of the heart, lungs and brain".
5. Flavours such as diacetyl used in e-cigarettes are linked to serious lung disease. E-cigarettes also contain volatile organic compounds, heavy metals, such as nickel, tin and lead.
6. exposure to nicotine during adolescence can cause addiction and can harm the developing adolescent brain

ABOUT ORDINANCE

Ordinances are the temporary laws having the effect of an act.

Article 123 of the Constitution empowers the President to promulgate ordinances during the recess of the Parliament. Similar power is given to Governor under Article 213 of the Constitution.

Limitations on Ordinance Making Power of President

1. It can be issued only when one House is not in session or during recess of Parliament.
2. An ordinance may be made under circumstances that require immediate action.
3. An ordinance can be made on only those subjects on which Parliament can make laws and subject to same limitations to which a Parliamentary law is subjected.
4. An ordinance needs to be presented before the Parliament when it reassembles. It ceases to operate on the expiry of six weeks from the reassembly of Parliament.
5. Without being approved by the Parliament ordinance can last six months and six weeks.
6. President can withdraw ordinance at any time. However President exercises the power on the advice of Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.
7. Ordinance cannot be used to amend the Constitution.
8. In D C Wadhwa versus State of Bihar case (1987) Supreme Court ruled that it can strike down re promulgated ordinances.

ZONAL COUNCILS

NEWS: The 29th Northern Zonal Council meeting here on Friday saw member States deliberating on issues such as drug addiction, water sharing, rehabilitation of dam oustees and hurdles post the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who presided over the meeting, said that decisions taken by consensus would strengthen the federal structure of the country. He urged the CMs to ensure regular monitoring of cases related to narcotics, POCSO Act and murders.

ABOUT ZONAL COUNCILS

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

1. Statutory Body
2. State Reorganization Act 1956
3. Act divided country into 5 zones: Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western and Central.
4. Each zonal council consists of Home Minister, CM of all the states in the Zone, two other ministers from each state in the Zone, Administrator of each UT in the zone
5. Aims at promoting cooperation between states, UT and Central Government.
6. HQ: Northern: New Delhi Eastern: Kolkatta, Western: Mumbai, Southern: Chennai, Central: Allahabad

CENTRAL DRUGS STANDARD CONTROL ORGANIZATION

NEWS: The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), the agency responsible for approving new drugs, clinical trials and laying down standards for drugs, has decided to take more of its approval processes and procedures online.

ABOUT CDSCO:

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) under Directorate General of Health Services, **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India** is the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) of India.

Functions: Under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, CDSCO is responsible for

1. approval of New Drugs,
2. Conduct of Clinical Trials,
3. laying down the standards for Drugs,
4. control over the quality of imported Drugs in the country and
5. coordination of the activities of State Drug Control Organizations by providing expert advice with a view to bring about the uniformity in the enforcement of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

CDSCO along with state regulators, is jointly responsible for grant of licenses of certain specialized categories of critical Drugs such as blood and blood products, I. V. Fluids, Vaccine and Sera.

MALNUTRITION

NEWS: Report published in The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health by the India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative.

The India State-Level Disease Burden Initiative is a joint initiative of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Public Health Foundation of India, and Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare along with experts and stakeholders associated with over 100 Indian institutions, involving many leading health scientists and policy makers from India.

Two-thirds of the 1.04 million deaths in children under five years in India are still attributable to malnutrition, according to the first comprehensive estimate of disease burden due to child and maternal malnutrition and the trends of its indicators in every State from 1990.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Highest in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Nagaland and Tripura.

"For substantial improvements across the malnutrition indicators, States will need to implement an integrated nutrition policy to effectively address the broader determinants of under-nutrition across the life cycle. Focus will be needed on major determinants like provision of clean drinking water, reducing rates of open defecation, improving women's educational status, and food and nutrition security for the most vulnerable families

NATIONAL NUTRITION MISSION

POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission) is a flagship programme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Government of India,

The goals of NNM are to achieve improvement in nutritional status of Children from 0-6 years, Adolescent Girls, Pregnant Women and Lactating Mothers in a time bound manner during the next three years beginning 2017-18.

NNM targets to reduce stunting, under- nutrition, anemia (among young children, women and adolescent girls) and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively. Although the target to reduce Stunting is atleast 2% p.a., Mission would strive to achieve reduction in Stunting from 38.4% (NFHS-4) to 25% by 2022 (Mission 25 by 2022).

APPOINTMENT OF SUPREME COURT JUDGES

NEWS: Government has cleared the name of four more judges to be appointed to Supreme Court.

The Centre cleared the appointments of Justices V Ramasubramanian, Krishna Murari, S. Ravindra Bhat and Hrishikesh Roy as Supreme Court judges.

ABOUT COLLEGIUM

Collegium was coined by the Supreme Court in Third Judges Case 1998. Supreme Court opined that while tendering his advice to the President for appointing SC judge Chief Justice of India should consult the four senior most judges of the Supreme Court. Chief Justice of India along with four senior most judges of the Supreme Court constitute collegium.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR A SUPREME COURT JUDGE

A person to be appointed as the judge of the Supreme Court should have the following qualifications:

1. He should be the citizen of India
2. He should have been a judge of High Court (or has been the judge of High Courts in succession) for five years.
3. He should have been the advocate of High Court (or High Courts in succession) for ten years.
4. He should be distinguished jurist in the opinion of the president.
5. Constitution has not mentioned minimum age for the appointment of the judge of the Supreme Court.

CASES THAT LED TO THE FORMATION OF COLLEGIUM: Formation of collegium took place after Supreme Court gave its decision with respect to controversy surrounding consultation in appointment of Supreme Court judges.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

In the **First Judges Case (1981)** Supreme Court held that consultation does not mean concurrence and it only implies exchange of views.

In the **Second Judges Case (1993)** Supreme Court reversed its earlier ruling and changed the meaning of the word consultation to concurrence. Hence it ruled that the advice tendered by the Chief Justice of India is binding on President on matters of appointment of the judges of the Supreme Court. But the Chief Justice would tender his advice on the matter after consulting two of his seniormost colleagues.

In the **THIRD JUDGES CASE (1998)** Court opined that the consultation process to be adopted by the Chief Justice requires "plurality of judges". The sole opinion of Chief Justice of India does not constitute the consultation process. He should consult a COLLEGIUM of four senior most judges of Supreme Court and even if two judges give an adverse opinion he should not send the recommendation to the government.

PRELIMS BOOSTER

ARTICLE 341

Article 341 of the Constitution provides certain privileges and concessions to the members of Scheduled Castes

Under the provision of Article 341, first list of SCs in relation to a states/UT is to be issued by a notified Order of the President after consulting concerned state Government.

But the clause (2) of Article 341 envisages that, any subsequent inclusion in or exclusion from the list of Scheduled Castes can be effected through an Act of Parliament.

So far, six Presidential Orders have been issued between 1950 and 1978 for specifying SC in respect of various States/Union territories.

These Orders have been amended from time to time by Acts of Parliament enacted as per Article 341(2) of the Constitution between 1956 and 2016

MGNREGA

NEWS: Staring at a slump in demand and a slowdown in the rural economy, the Centre plans to inject more money into the UPA's flagship Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme by linking wages under the Act to an updated inflation index, which will be revised annually.

It hopes this will increase wages, thus increasing purchasing power and reviving rural demand.

The national average wage of an MGNREGA worker is ₹178.44 per day, less than half of the ₹375 per day minimum wage recommended by a Labour Ministry panel earlier this year.

CPI-AL [which determines MGNREGA wage revisions]

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 HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Govt of India is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments

Within 15 days of submitting the application or from the day work is demanded, wage employment will be provided to the applicant. Right to get unemployment allowance in case employment is not provided within fifteen days of submitting the application or from the date when work is sought. Receipt of wages within fifteen days of work done.

ABOUT CPI

Consumer Price Index is a measure of change in retail prices of goods and services consumed by defined population group in a given area with reference to a base year. Presently the consumer price indices compiled in India are Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW); COMPILED BY LABOUR BUREAU

Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL): COMPILED BY LABOUR BUREAU

Consumer Price Index for Rural Labourers (CPI -RL) and : COMPILED BY LABOUR BUREAU

Consumer Price Index for Urban Non-Manual Employees (CPI-UNME): DISCONTINUED

CPI (Urban) and CPI (Rural) compiled by Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation

CPI is based on retail prices and this index is used to calculate the Dearness Allowance (DA) for government employees.

In India, RBI uses CPI (combined) released by CSO for inflation purpose with base year as 2012.

The number of items in CPI basket include 448 in rural and 460 in urban.

NATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE FORCE

Facts:

- NDRF stands for National Disaster Response Force
- It comes under **Ministry of Home Affairs**
- It is the only dedicated disaster response force in the world
- Established in **2006**
- **HQ: New Delhi**
- It works under National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) which lays down POLICIES, PLANS AND GUIDELINES FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT.
- Chairman of NDMA is Prime Minister.
- At present there are 12 battalions in NDRF which are deployed strategically across country to provide immediate response.
- Each battalion comprises of 1149 people.

Background:

- The Disaster Management Act, 2005 has made the statutory provisions for constitution of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for the purpose of specialized response to natural and man-made disasters.

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- Two national calamities in quick succession in the form of Orissa Super Cyclone (1999) and Gujarat Earthquake (2001) brought about the realization of the need of having a specialist response mechanism at National Level to effectively respond to disasters. This realization led to the enactment of the DM Act on 26 Dec 2005.

Role and Mandate of NDRF: (during, before and after)

- Specialized response during disasters.
- Proactive deployment during impending disaster situations.
- Acquire and continually upgrade its own training and skills.
- Liaison, Reconnaissance, Rehearsals and Mock Drills.
- Impart basic and operational level training to State Response Forces (Police, Civil Defence and Home Guards).
- Community Capacity Building Programme.
- Organize Public Awareness Campaigns.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

The National Commission for Women was set up as statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990.

The primary mandate of the National Commission for Women and State Commissions for Women Commission is to safeguard and protect the interests of women. It has wide responsibility covering almost all aspects of women development.

The commission regularly publishes a monthly newsletter, Rashtra Mahila in both Hindi and English.

J&K PUBLIC SAFETY ACT

NEWS: Farooq Abdullah has been detained under the PSA Act of 1978.

What is the J&K PSA?

1. The **Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA)** received the assent of the J&K Governor on April 8, 1978.
2. The law allows the **government to detain any person above the age of 16 without trial for a period of two years.**
3. The PSA **allows for administrative detention for up to two years** “in the case of persons acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the State”, and **for administrative detention up to one year** where “any person is acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order”.
4. **Detention orders under PSA can be issued by Divisional Commissioners or District Magistrates.**
5. **Section 22 of the Act** provides protection for any action taken “in good faith” under the Act: “No suit, prosecution or any other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything done or intended to be done in good faith in pursuance of the provisions of this Act.”
6. Under **Section 23 of the Act**, the government is empowered to “make such Rules consistent with the provisions of this Act, as may be necessary for carrying out the objects of this Act”.

HABEAS CORPUS

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It is a Latin term which literally means ‘to have the body of’. It is an order issued by the court to a person who has detained another person, to produce the body of the latter before it.

The writ of habeas corpus can be issued against both public authorities as well as private individuals. The writ, on the other hand, is not issued where the (a) detention is lawful, (b) the proceeding is for contempt of a legislature or a court, (c) detention is by a competent court, and (d) detention is outside the jurisdiction of the court.

WRITS

The **SUPREME COURT (UNDER ARTICLE 32) AND THE HIGH COURTS (UNDER ARTICLE 226)** can issue the writs of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, certiorari and quo-warranto. Further, the Parliament (under Article 32) can empower any other court to issue these writs. Since no such provision has been made so far, only the Supreme Court and the high courts can issue the writs and not any other court.

These writs are borrowed from English law where they are known as ‘prerogative writs’.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

1. Article 76 of the Indian Constitution.
2. Appointed by President
3. Must be a person who is qualified to be the Supreme Court Judge.
4. Must be a citizen of India, must have been judge of the HC for 5 years or advocate in the HC for 10 years or an eminent jurist in the eye of President.
5. No fixed tenure.
6. No removal procedure mentioned in Constitution. Holds office during the pleasure of the President.
7. Resignation: President
8. Functions:
 - a. To give advice to the Government of India upon such legal matters which are referred to him by President
 - b. To perform such other duties of legal character that are assigned to him by the President.
 - c. To discharge the functions conferred on him by the Constitution or other law
 - d. To appear on behalf of the Government of India in all cases in the Supreme Court in which the Government of India is concerned.
 - e. To represent Government of India in any reference made by president to the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution.
 - f. To appear in any High Court in any case in which Government of India is concerned.
9. AG can take part in all courts
10. AG has the right to speak and to take part in the proceedings of both the Houses of Parliament or their joint sitting or any committee of the Parliament of which he may be named a member, but without a right to vote.
11. Enjoys all the privileges and immunities that are available to the Member of Parliament.
12. For defending criminal cases needs the permission of Government.

COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

The recent controversy over the transfer of the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, Justice Vijaya Kamlesh Tahilramani, to the Meghalaya High Court

How did the collegium system come into being?

The collegium of judges is the Supreme Court’s invention.

In effect, it is a system under which judges are appointed by an institution comprising judges.

The Second Judges Case (1993) introduced the Collegium system, holding that “consultation” really meant “concurrence”. It added that it was not the CJI’s individual opinion, but an institutional opinion formed in

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

consultation with the two senior-most judges in the Supreme Court. On a Presidential Reference for its opinion, the Supreme Court, in the Third Judges Case (1998) expanded the collegium to a five-member body, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.

The Chief Justice of High Courts is appointed as per the policy of having Chief Justices from outside the respective States. The collegium takes the call on the elevation.

High Court judges are recommended by a collegium comprising the CJI and two senior-most judges. The proposal, however, is initiated by the Chief Justice of the High Court concerned in consultation with two senior-most colleagues. The recommendation is sent to the Chief Minister, who advises the Governor to send the proposal to the Union Law Minister.

COMMON CRITICISM MADE AGAINST THE COLLEGIUM SYSTEM?

Opaqueness

Lack of transparency

Nepotism

Small base from which the selections were made

The collegium's resolutions are now posted online, but reasons are not given.

PROMOTION OF HINDI

Part XVII of the Constitution of India deals with the official language in articles 343 to 351.

Hindi written in Devanagri script is the official language of the Union.

Hindi Divas is observed to mark the decision of the Constituent Assembly on September 14, 1949 to extend official language status to Hindi. It was first observed in 1953.

Under the Official Languages Act, 1963, English is to be used for purposes of communication between the Union and a State which has not adopted Hindi as its Official Language.

There are 18 words to refer to a relationship in Hindi, whereas the word "Uncle" is used uniformly to explain all relations in English...We shouldn't surrender to slave mentality.

English is the medium of education for all medical studies and our graduates are able to go in for higher education and research, in all major developed countries, because their language skills are strong. Personally, when we are seeing patients, most are comfortable with their regional language. Language should not be imposed — it should be a matter of choice

Even countries like China are now offering medical courses in English. This allows their students to find jobs faster and also go in for higher education across the world. Almost all research work is available in English and it is a very unifying language now.

Earlier, the government issued an order that under the Act, all government files would have to be issued bilingually — in Hindi and English.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

BACKGROUND: Opposition parties have raised the issue of delay in appointment of Parliamentary Committees.

WHY COMMITTEES?

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

1. Given the volume of legislative business, discussing all Bills under the consideration of Parliament in detail on the floor of the House is impossible. Committees are PLATFORMS FOR THREADBARE DISCUSSION on a proposed law
2. Allows MORE OPEN, INTENSIVE AND BETTER INFORMED DISCUSSIONS. Committee meetings are 'closed door' and members are not bound by party whips, which allows them the latitude for a more meaningful exchange of views as against discussions in full and open Houses where grandstanding and party positions invariably take precedence.
3. Allows DETAILED ANALYSIS of a piece of legislation.
4. department standing committees go one step further and hear from SENIOR OFFICIALS of the government in a closed setting, allowing for more detailed discussions.
5. This mechanism also enables parliamentarians to UNDERSTAND THE EXECUTIVE PROCESSES CLOSELY.

CONDITIONS FOR ANY COMMITTEE TO BE RECOGNIZED AS PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

1. Is appointed or elected by the House or nominated by the Speaker/ Chairman
2. Works under the direction of Speaker/ Chairman
3. Presents its report to the House or to the Speaker/Chairman
4. Has a secretariat provided by the Lok Sabha/ Rajya Sabha

TYPES OF COMMITTEES

1. STANDING: existence is uninterrupted and usually reconstituted on an annual basis;
2. SELECT COMMITTEES: formed for a specific purpose, for instance, to deliberate on a particular bill. Once the Bill is disposed of, that select committee ceases to exist.

The three financial committees are the PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE, THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS. Parliament is not bound by the recommendations of committees.

The first Parliamentary Committee was constituted in 1571 in Britain

CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

1. They consist of members of parliament from both the houses of parliament.
2. Minister/ minister of state in charge of the ministry concerned is the chairman.

Constituted by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

NEWS: The Supreme Court said the nation has still not endeavoured to secure for its citizens a Uniform Civil Code.

Founders of the Constitution had expressed their hope that one day the State would fulfil expectations of a Uniform Civil Code.

ARTICLE 44 IN PART IV

The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a Uniform Civil Code throughout the territories of India,

Despite exhortations of this Court in the case of Shah Bano in 1985, the government has done nothing to bring the Uniform Civil Code

The Supreme Court hailed the State of Goa as a "shining example" where "uniform civil code applicable to all, regardless of religion except while protecting certain limited rights".

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Under this Code practised in Goa, a Muslim man whose marriage is registered in the State cannot practice polygamy, a married couple share property equally, pre-nuptial agreements are the order of the day and assets are divided equally between the man and woman on divorce.

In 2018, a Law Commission of India consultation paper had however said the Uniform Civil Code is “neither necessary nor desirable at this stage” in the country. The Commission said secularism cannot contradict the plurality prevalent in the country.

TRIPLE TALAQ

NEWS: The Supreme Court on Friday took on board a petition filed by an association of advocates from Andhra Pradesh challenging law criminalising the pronouncement of triple talaq by Muslim men.

ABOUT TRIPLE TALAQ

Triple Talaq or Talaq-e-biddat refers to the practice under Muslim personal laws where pronouncement of the word ‘talaq’ thrice in one sitting by a Muslim man to his wife results in an instant and irrevocable divorce.

MUSLIM WOMEN (PROTECTION OF RIGHTS ON MARRIAGE) ACT, 2019

The Act makes declaration of talaq a cognizable offence, attracting up to three years' imprisonment with a fine. (A cognizable offence is one for which a police officer may arrest an accused person without warrant.) The offence will be cognizable only if information relating to the offence is given by: (i) the married woman (against whom talaq has been declared), or (ii) any person related to her by blood or marriage.

The Act provides that the Magistrate may grant bail to the accused. The bail may be granted only after hearing the woman (against whom talaq has been pronounced), and if the Magistrate is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for granting bail.

The offence may be compounded by the Magistrate upon the request of the woman (against whom talaq has been declared). Compounding refers to the procedure where the two sides agree to stop legal proceedings, and settle the dispute. The terms and conditions of the compounding of the offence will be determined by the Magistrate.

Allowance: A Muslim woman against whom talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek subsistence allowance from her husband for herself and for her dependent children. The amount of the allowance will be determined by the Magistrate.

Custody: A Muslim woman against whom such talaq has been declared, is entitled to seek custody of her minor children. The manner of custody will be determined by the Magistrate.

GOVERNMENT'S ARGUMENT

Law is not about religion , it is for women's empowerment.”

Trying to control the social evil through the fear of law

CRITICISM OF THE BILL

1. Criminalizes the civil wrong.
2. Who will pay for the maintenance of Muslim women if husband is sent to jail.

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3. Introducing a law will not eradicate a social evil on women;
4. In the emblematic judgment in the Shyra Bano case majority on the judgment had called triple talaq unconstitutional and invalidated it. The Effect of this verdict is that triple talaq is invalid and has no effect on the Existing marriage. The matrimonial bond will remain intact in the eyes of The law. Therefore Bill TRIES TO CRIMINALIZE AN ACT WHICH IS NON EXISTENT IN THE EYES OF LAW.
5. Another criticism is the disproportionate punishment of three years for a Civil wrong.
6. Act does not provide any measure for reconciliation between the Muslim husband pronouncing talaq and his wife
7. There are "high chances" of misuse of some Sections of the Act, since, nothing had been provided in the Act to ascertain the truthfulness of the allegations of pronouncement of triple talaq.
8. Would result in increasing number of desertions instead of dissolution of marriage in the matter of those who are forced to live under unhappy marriages.

JAN SOOCHNA PORTAL

NEWS: In a pioneering step, the first-ever public information portal was launched in Rajasthan on Friday promising to provide information about government authorities and departments suo motu to the public in the true spirit of the Right To Information Act.

Jan Soochna Portal-2019, would ensure compliance with Section 4(2) of the RTI Act mandating the public authorities to disclose information in the public domain, so that the people need not file applications under the law to obtain information.

ABOUT RTI ACT 2005

An act to

1. Provide right of information to citizens
2. To secure access to information under the control of public authorities
3. In order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority.
4. The constitution of Central Information Commission and State Information Commission.

This Act extends to the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

INFORMATION : means any material in any form, including records, documents, memos, emails, opinions, advices, press releases, circulars, orders, logbooks, Contracts, Reports.

PUBLIC AUTHORITY: means any authority or body or institution of self government established or constituted by

1. Constitution
2. Parliament
3. State Legislature
4. Appropriate government
5. Body owned controlled or substantially financed
6. NGO substantially financed

IMPORTANT SECTIONS

1. Section 3: RTI is for all the Indian Citizens

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2. Section 4: It is duty of every public authority to maintain all its records duly catalogued and indexed in a manner and the form which facilitates the RTI under this Act.

3. Section 6: Application for seeking the information may be made in writing or through electronic means in English or Hindi or in the official language of the area along with the fees prescribed by CPIO and SPIO

4. Section 7: information has to be provided within 30 days. If information concerns the life and liberty of person then information should be provided within 48 hours.

5. Section 8: Certain grounds on the basis of which information might be denied.

6. Section 19: First Appeal (30 days) and Second Appeal (90 days) to CIC and SIC.

7. Section 20: Empowers the Central Information Commission or the State Information Commission as the case may be a penalty of Rs 250 each day till application is received or information is furnished, however total amount of such penalty shall not exceed 25,000 rupees.

8. Section 24: Act does not apply to Intelligence and Security Agencies.

MARITIME COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

NEWS: Union Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Law & Justice Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad has launched the maritime communication services at Mumbai

Maritime Connectivity will enable high-end support to those in sea by providing access to Voice, Data and Video services while traveling on sailing vessels, cruise liners, ships in India, using satellite technology.

Nelco, India's leading VSAT solutions provider is the first Indian company that will now provide quality broadband services to the maritime sector.

PM KISAAN MAAN DHAN YOJANA

NEWS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today launched the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maan Dhan Yojana at Ranchi, the Capital of Jharkhand.

The Scheme shall secure the lives of 5 Crore Small and Marginal Farmers by providing a minimum pension of Rs 3000 per month, to those who attain 60 years of age.

PM LAGHU VYAPARI MAAN DHAN YOJANA

NEWS: Prime Minister Narendra Modil launched the The Pradhan Mantri Laghu Vyapari Maan-dhan Yojana, the Centre's pension scheme for traders, during a visit to Ranchi Saturday

Aboutpradhan Mantri Laghu Vyapari Maan-dhan, Yojana 2019.

MINISTRY: MINISTRY OF LABOUR EMPLOYMENT

It shall come into force on the 22nd day of July, 2019

BENEFICIARIES: Laghu Vyaparis, who are self-employed and working as shop owners, retail traders, rice mill owners, oil mill owners, workshop owners, commission agents, brokers of real estate, owners of small hotels, restaurants and other Laghu Vyaparis.

This Scheme shall be open only to the Laghu Vyapari for joining, whose annual turnover does not exceed Rs 1.5 crore, based on self-declaration, who has a savings bank account in his name and Aadhar number.

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(2) The Laghu Vyapari shall be not less than eighteen years of age and not exceeding forty years of age.

Each eligible subscriber under this Scheme shall receive assured minimum monthly pension of three thousand rupees after attaining the age of sixty years through Life Insurance Corporation of India.

(3) Once the eligible subscriber joins this Scheme at the entry age between eighteen to forty years, such subscriber has to contribute till attaining the age of sixty years and on attaining his age of sixty years, such subscriber shall be entitled to get the assured minimum monthly pension of three thousand rupees with benefit of family pension

PRIVATIZATION OF RAILWAYS

NEWS: The Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express will be the first train that will not be operated by the Railways

The Ministry of Railways plans to allow private players to operate certain trains, and as part of its 100-day agenda, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been asked to run two trains.

ABOUT IRCTC:-

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation is a subsidiary of the Indian Railways that handles the catering, tourism and online ticketing operations of the Indian railways, with around 5,50,000 to 6,00,000 bookings every day is the world's second busiest and highest of 15 to 16 lakh tickets every day Miniratna Company

HQ: New Delhi

ABOUT TEJAS:-

The Tejas Express is India's first semi-high speed fully air-conditioned train introduced by Indian Railways. It features modern onboard facilities with automatic doors

The train is designed to run at a maximum speed of 200 km/h (120 mph) but the maximum operating speed allowed is 130 km/h (81 mph) due to track and safety constraints

CONSTITUTION BENCH

Constitution Bench is the name given to the benches of the Supreme Court of India which **consist of at least 5 judges** of the court which sit to decide the case which involves the **substantial question of law or interpretation of the Constitution of India or for any case referred to Supreme Court by the President of India**. This provision has been provided in Article 145(3) of the Constitution.

CJI constitutes the Constitution bench and refer cases to it.

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SWACHHATA HI SEVA (SHS) 2019

NEWS: The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) 2019, a massive countrywide awareness and mobilization campaign on Swachhata at Mathura today

SHS 2019, with special focus on ‘plastic waste awareness and management’ is being organized from 11th September to October 2nd 2019, as the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is poised to dedicate an ODF India to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary.

This year’s Swachhata Hi Seva will see mass awareness generation activities on plastic waste management between 11th September to 1st October, nationwide Shramdaan for plastic waste collection and segregation on 2nd October, and recycling and effective disposal of the collected plastic waste from 3rd October to Diwali, 27th October 2019.

TRIBAL STATUS FOR LADAKH

NEWS: The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) on Wednesday wrote to Home Minister Amit Shah and Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda, recommending that Ladakh be declared a tribal area under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

The Home Ministry is the central authority for declaring an area as a “tribal area”.

SIXTH SCHEDULE: Provisions related to administration of tribal areas in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.

ABOUT NCST

NCST is **constitutional** body set up under **Article 338A** added through Constitution (**89th Amendment**) Act, 2003.

It was bifurcated from erstwhile National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The First commission was constituted on **2004** with Kunwar singh as the chairperson.

Composition:

Chairperson,

A Vice-Chairperson and

Three full-time Members (including one lady Member).

All of them have tenure of **three** years from the date of assumption of charge.

Functions:

Investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the sts under the Constitution or under any other law or under any order of the Government and evaluate the working of such safeguards.

Inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of sts.

Participate and advise in planning process of socio-economic development of the sts and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Centre and any State;

Present before President, annually reports upon the working of those safeguards.

It has to recommend measures to be taken by Governments for effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare and socio-economic development sts.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

MOTOR VEHICLES AMENDMENT ACT

NEWS: The Centre is gearing up for a tussle with the Gujarat government over the recently amended Motor Vehicles (MV) Amendment Act, 2019, which imposes steeper penalties for road traffic violations.

Road transport falls in the Concurrent List and, therefore, both Centre and States are allowed to legislate on the subject.

The Constitution is clear on what happens when there is a dispute between a State and the Centre regarding a subject on the Concurrent List

Article 254 of the Constitution States that if there is a dispute between a State and the Centre on a provision of law on a matter that falls in the Concurrent List then the law made by the Centre will overrule the State.

MAJOR PROVISIONS OF THE MOTOR VEHICLES AMENDMENT ACT



- **Compensation for road accident victims:** The central government will develop a SCHEME FOR CASHLESS TREATMENT OF ROAD ACCIDENT VICTIMS DURING GOLDEN HOUR. The Act defines golden hour as the time period of up to one hour following a traumatic injury, during which the likelihood of preventing death through prompt medical care is the highest.
- **Compulsory insurance:** The Bill requires the central government to constitute a MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT FUND, to provide compulsory insurance cover to all road users in India. It will be utilised for: (i) treatment of persons injured in road accidents as per the golden hour scheme, (ii) compensation to representatives of a person who died in a hit and run accident, (iii) compensation to a person grievously hurt in a hit and run accident, and (iv) compensation to any other persons as prescribed by the central government.
- **Good samaritans:** The Bill defines a good samaritan as a person who renders emergency medical or non-medical assistance to a victim at the scene of an accident. The assistance must have been (i) in good faith, (ii) voluntary, and (iii) without the expectation of any reward. Such a person will not be liable for any civil or criminal action for any injury to or death of an accident victim, caused due to their negligence in providing assistance to the victim.
- **RECALL OF VEHICLES:** The Bill allows the central government to order for recall of motor vehicles if a defect in the vehicle may cause damage to the environment, or the driver, or other road users. The manufacturer of the recalled vehicle will be required to: (i) reimburse the buyers for the full cost of the vehicle, or (ii) replace the defective vehicle with another vehicle with similar or better specifications.
- **NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICY:** The central government may develop a National Transportation Policy, in consultation with state governments. The Policy will: (i) establish a planning framework for road transport, (ii) develop a framework for grant of permits, and (iii) specify priorities for the transport system, among other things.
- **ROAD SAFETY BOARD:** The Bill provides for a National Road Safety Board, to be created by the central government through a notification. The Board will advise the central and state governments on all aspects of road safety and traffic management including: (i) standards of motor vehicles, (ii) registration and licensing of vehicles, (iii) standards for road safety, and (iv) promotion of new vehicle technology.
- **OFFENCES AND PENALTIES:** The Bill increases penalties for several offences under the Act. For example, the maximum penalty for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs has been increased from Rs 2,000 to Rs 10,000. If a vehicle manufacturer fails to comply with motor vehicle standards, the penalty will be a fine of up to Rs 100 crore, or imprisonment of up to one year, or both. If a contractor fails to comply with road design standards, the penalty will be a fine of up to one lakh rupees. The central government may increase fines mentioned under the Act every year by up to

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

10%.

- **TAXI AGGREGATORS:** The Bill defines aggregators as digital intermediaries or market places which can be used by passengers to connect with a driver for transportation purposes (taxi services). These aggregators will be issued licenses by state. Further, they must comply with the Information Technology Act, 2000.

NATIONAL ANIMAL DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAMME

NEWS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Animal Disease Control Programme (NACDP) to control and eradicate the FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE (FMD) AND BRUCELLOSIS amongst the livestock in the country at Mathura.

The 12,652 Crore fully Central Government sponsored programme will vaccinate over 600 million cattle in the country in an effort to mitigate the two diseases.

The Prime Minister also launched the National Artificial Insemination Programme and a country wide workshop in all the krishivigyanakendras(kvks) in all the 687 Districts of the country on vaccination and disease management, Artificial Insemination and Productivity.

AYUSHMAN BHARAT – PRADHAN MANTRI JAN AROGYAYOJANA (AB-PMJAY)

Launched by Shri Narendra Modi on 23rd September, 2018 at Ranchi, Jharkhand.

- “world’s largest government funded healthcare program” targeting more than 50 crore beneficiaries.
- Will provide a cover of up to Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year, for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization.
- Over 10.74 crore vulnerable entitled families (**approximately 50 crore beneficiaries**) will be **eligible** for these benefits.
- PMJAY will provide **cashless and paperless access to services** for the beneficiary at the point of service.
- PMJAY will **help reduce catastrophic expenditure for hospitalizations**, which impoverishes people and will help mitigate the financial risk arising out of catastrophic health episodes.
- Entitled families will be able to use the **quality health services they need without facing financial hardships**.
- When fully implemented, PMJAY will become the world’s largest fully government-financed health protection scheme. It is a **visionary step towards advancing the agenda of Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.

ANTI DEFLECTION LAW

NEWS: Five legislators of the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), four of whom switched sides to the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) and one to the BJP, were disqualified on Tuesday as members of the Haryana Assembly under the anti-defection law by Speaker Kanwar Pal.

ABOUT ANTI DEFLECTION LAW

The anti-defection law was passed by parliament in 1985 strengthened in 2003. The *52nd amendment to the Constitution added the Tenth Schedule* which laid down the process by which legislators may be disqualified on grounds of defection.

Conditions of Disqualification

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

IF A MEMBER OF A HOUSE BELONGING TO A POLITICAL PARTY:

1. Voluntarily gives up the membership of his political party, or Votes, or does not vote in the legislature, contrary to the directions of his political party.
2. However, if the member has taken prior permission, or is condoned by the party within 15 days from such voting or abstention, the member shall not be disqualified.

INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE

If an independent candidate joins a political party after the election.

NOMINATED MEMBER

- If a nominated member joins a party six months after he becomes a member of the legislature

DECISION MAKING AUTHORITY

- The decision on questions are to disqualification on ground of defection is referred to the chairman or the Speaker of such House, and his decision is final.
- All proceedings in relation to disqualification under this Schedule are deemed to be proceedings in Parliament or in the Legislature of a state.

EXCEPTIONS UNDER ANTI DEFLECTION LAW:

- Any person elected as speaker or chairman could resign from his party, and re-join the party if he demitted that post.
- A party could be merged into another if at least two-thirds (Initially one-third) of its party legislators voted for the merger.

However, the law has had some unintended **consequences** too:

- The law succeeded in checking the regular phenomenon of unstable governments and horse-trading due to floor crossing by legislators. However, it played a huge role in encouraging the centralisation of India's political parties.
- Legislators in India now cannot take a stand against party leaders or defy the party whip, and use their conscience to vote on a Bill in the House due to fear of losing their seat under the provisions of the Anti-Defection law.
- This has also the effect of dis incentivising lawmakers from seriously thinking, researching or even rifling for best practices to incorporate into legislation that is before the House for consideration and focus their energies on procedural matters.
- Also, a legislator cannot question the sweet deals or alliances between top party leaders.

NATIONAL PARTY

NEWS: The Election Commission met representatives of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), the Trinamool Congress and the Communist Party of India (CPI) on Monday hearing their arguments on why their status as national parties should not be revoked.

"As per the current rules performance in two consecutive general elections are to be counted.

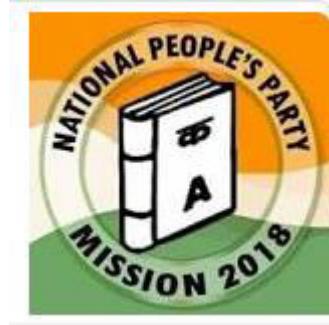
CRITERION FOR ANY PARTY TO BE DECLARED AS NATIONAL PARTY

A party is recognised as a national party if any of the following conditions is fulfilled

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

1. If it secures six percent of the valid votes polled in any four or more states at a general election to the Lok Sabha or to the Legislative Assembly and in addition it wins four seats in the Lok Sabha from any state or states; (644)
2. If it wins two percent of the seats in the Lok Sabha at a General Election, and these candidates are elected from three states or (23)
3. If it is recognized as a state party in four states (4)

NATIONAL PARTIES OF INDIA



- 1. BHARTIYA JANTA PARTY
- 2. INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
- 3. NATIONALIST CONGRESS PARTY
- 4. COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
- 5. COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA (MARXIST)
- 6. BAHUJAN SAMAJWADI PARTY
- 7. TRINAMOOL CONGRESS
- 8. NATIONAL PEOPLES PARTY

CRITERION TO BE RECOGNIZED AS STATE PARTY

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

For any political party to be eligible for recognition as a State Party in a state, it has to satisfy any of the five conditions listed below.

1. Secure at least 6% of the valid vote & win at least 2 seats in an Assembly General Election
2. Secure at least 6% of the valid vote & win at least 1 seats in a Lok Sabha General Election
3. Win at least 3% of the seats or at least 3 seats , whichever is more, in an Assembly General Election
4. Win at least 1 out of every 25 seats from a state in a Lok Sabha General Election
5. Secure at least 8% of the total valid vote in an Assembly or a Lok Sabha General Election

CONCEPTUAL

INDIAN SECULARISM VS WESTERN SECULARISM

Pluralism is at the heart of the word 'secular' as it is applied in India. The word secular in the West is a complete abjuring of religion, distancing of religion, negation of religion, whereas secular in India actually involves a proliferation of religion, the tolerance of all religions. This is not secular in the Western sense and that's why it creates confusion.

LOK ADALAT

NEWS: National Lok Adalat will be held at six district courts of the Capital, including Patiala House, Tis Hazari, Saket, Rohini, Karkardooma and Dwarka on September 14 where people can clear their pending dues and notices, said Delhi Traffic Police

What is Lok Adalat?

Lok Adalat is one of **the alternative dispute redressal mechanisms**, it is a forum where disputes/cases pending in the court of law or at pre-litigation stage are settled/ compromised amicably.

Based on Gandhian principles.

NALSA along with other Legal Services Institutions conducts Lok Adalats.

Their Ambit:

The Lok Adalats can deal with all Civil Cases, Matrimonial Disputes, Land Disputes, Partition/Property Disputes, Labour Disputes etc., and compoundable criminal Cases.

Key facts:

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- Lok Adalats have been given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.
- Under the said Act, the award (decision) made by the Lok Adalats is deemed to be a decree of a civil court and is final and binding on all parties and no appeal against such an award lies before any court of law.
- If the parties are not satisfied with the award of the Lok Adalat though there is no provision for an appeal against such an award, but they are free to initiate litigation by approaching the court of appropriate jurisdiction by filing a case by following the required procedure, in exercise of their right to litigate.
- There is no court fee payable when a matter is filed in a Lok Adalat. If a matter pending in the court of law is referred to the Lok Adalat and is settled subsequently, the court fee originally paid in the court on the complaints/petition is also refunded back to the parties.
- The disputing parties plead their case themselves in Lok Adalats. No advocate or pleader is allowed, even witnesses are not examined.

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT BILL

NEWS: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said the people of the northeast had nothing to fear from a fresh Citizenship (Amendment) Bill the Centre may push through.

The Citizenship Bill will not violate Article 371 that is applicable in the northeast. It will not affect any rights of the indigenous people, nor will it affect the Inner-Line Permit.

ABOUT CITIZENSHIP (AMENDMENT) BILL 2016:

Bill seeks to grant citizenship to people without valid documents from six communities- Hindus, Parsis, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Sikh from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh after six years of residence in the country.

Many political parties are opposing the Bill on the ground that it violates the provision of the Assam Accord and it violates the constitutional provisions by granting citizenship on the basis of religion.

ARTICLE 371: Special provision with respect to state of Maharashtra and Gujarat

ARTICLE 371A: Nagaland

ARTICLE 371B: Assam

ARTICLE 371C: Manipur

ARTICLE 371D: Andhra Pradesh

ARTICLE 371E: Andhra Pradesh (Establishment of Central University in Andhra Pradesh)

ARTICLE 371F: Sikkim

ARTICLE 371G: Mizoram

ARTICLE 371H: Arunachal Pradesh

ARTICLE 371I : Goa

ARTICLE 371J: Karnataka

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

INNER LINE PERMIT

NEWS: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that inner line permit will continue in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland.

ABOUT INNER LINE PERMIT

Inner Line Permit (ILP) is an official travel document issued by the Government of India to allow travel of an Indian citizen into a protected area for a limited period. It is obligatory for Indian citizens from outside certain states, to obtain such a permit.

At present, the ILP is in force in **Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland**. In Manipur, large scale protests have called for its implementation for years.

Under the ILP system, a certificate can be issued to outsiders only for travel in the areas covered by ILP. A non-resident also cannot buy property in these areas.

NORTH EASTERN COUNCIL

NEWS: At the NEC meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said Centre will not touch Article 371 of the Indian Constitution.

ABOUT NORTH EAST COUNCIL

North Eastern Council (NEC) was constituted as a statutory advisory body under the NEC Act 1971 (84 of 1971) and came into being on the 7th November, 1972 at Shillong.

The North Eastern Council is the nodal agency for the economic and social development of the North Eastern Region which consists of the eight States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura.

Functions under Ministry of Home Affairs

NATIONAL REGISTER OF CITIZENS

NRC is a list to segregate Indian citizens living in Assam from those who had illegally entered the State from Bangladesh after 24th March 1971.

The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is the list of Indian citizens of Assam. It was prepared in 1951, following the census of 1951.

For a person's name to be included in the updated NRC list of 2018, he/ she will have to furnish:

1. Existence of name in the legacy data: The legacy data is the collective list of the NRC data of 1951 and the electoral rolls up to midnight of 24 March 1971.
2. Proving linkage with the person whose name appears in the legacy data.

Why was it updated?

The process of NRC update was taken up in Assam as per a Supreme Court order in 2013. In order to wean out cases of illegal migration from Bangladesh and other adjoining areas, NRC updation was carried out under The Citizenship Act, 1955, and according to rules framed in the Assam Accord.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

BIGGEST PROBLEM:- Documents such as those of birth, schooling and land-ownership which impoverished and unlettered rural residents anywhere would find hard to muster, were insisted upon.

Even when documents were produced, they were refused for discrepancies in the English-language spelling of Bengali names or in ages.

Problems WITH NRC

1. Two million stateless people.
2. Mostly poor and unlettered are being targeted.
3. Opacity around the functioning of the Foreigners Tribunals.
4. Few members included and other excluded.
5. Expensive and Time Consuming

ONE NATION ONE RATION CARD SCHEME

Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), each beneficiary is eligible for five kg of subsidised grains per month at the rate of ₹3/kg for rice, ₹2/kg for wheat and ₹1/kg of coarse cereals.

However, until recently, this has been a location-linked benefit, leaving crores of migrant workers and families out of the food safety net. Each household's ration card is linked to a specific fair price shop and can only be used to buy rations in that particular shop

Over the last few years, 10 States (partially in one) have implemented the Integrated Management of Public Distribution System, which allows beneficiaries to buy rations from any fair price shop within that State.

The Centre is now in the process of expanding these efforts into a nationwide portability network which is called the 'One Nation One Ration Card' scheme. It is scheduled to come into full effect by June 2020, after which a ration card holder can buy subsidised grain at any fair price shop in the country.

BENEFITS

1. Migrant workers will have food security through out the nation.
2. Curb corruption and improve access and service quality by removing monopolies.
3. Faster implementation of initiatives to digitise and integrate the food storage and public distribution system.

CHALLENGES

1. In some rural and remote areas, epos connectivity also remains erratic, jeopardising smooth functioning.
2. Denial of food due to system failures
3. The challenge comes from the difference between ration benefits offered by the State in comparison to the Central entitlement. Tamil Nadu, for example, offers 20 kg of free rice per month to almost 2 crore ration card holders, as well as subsidised sugar, pulses and oil, over and above the NFSA benefits. The State government has made it clear that it will not be offering these benefits to migrant workers, as the Centre will cover the costs of NFSA benefits only.
4. Another issue could arise if the members of a single household are split between two different locations. The scheme's guidelines only permit purchase of half the subsidised grain at one time in an effort to prevent one member of the household taking the entire ration for the month, leaving family members in a different location stranded without food.
5. Lack of any concrete data on inter-State migration trends

UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES PREVENTION (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2019

NEWS: The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Union government to respond to petitions challenging its decision to amend the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act giving it powers to categorise anyone as a terrorist.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The petitions said the UAPA Amendment Act of 2019, passed by Parliament, gave the Centre “discretionary, unfettered and unbound powers” to categorise a person as a terrorist. The law could now be used by the government to bring a person into disrepute, and even worse, rob him or her liberty. The heavy burden to prove the entire government machinery wrong would lie on the person.

The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019 seeks to substantially modify Chapter VI of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 and Section 35 and 36 therein. The new Section 35 of the UAPA Act, 1967 empowers the Central government to categorise any individual as ‘terrorist’ and add name of such a person in Schedule 4 of the Act,

Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar, Hafiz Saeed of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, his deputy Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi and underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, who planned and executed the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts, are the first four persons designated as “terrorists” under the anti-terror law passed by Parliament on August 2.

The UAPA was first amended in 2004, then in 2008 and again in 2013. The 2004 amendment was to ban organisations for terror activities, under which 34 outfits, including the let and the jem, were banned.

IMPORTANT AMENDMENTS

The provisions of the Bill allow the government to DESIGNATE INDIVIDUALS suspected to have terror links as “terrorists”.

Empowers the Director-General, National Investigation Agency (NIA) to grant approval of SEIZURE OR ATTACHMENT OF PROPERTY when the case is investigated by the agency.

The law allows the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to GO TO ANY STATE WITHOUT TAKING PERMISSION from state police concerned for checking anti-terror activities.

The Bill additionally empowers the officers of the NIA, of THE RANK OF INSPECTOR or above, to investigate cases

About the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA):

1. This law is ***aimed at effective prevention of unlawful activities associations in India.***
2. Its main objective is ***to make powers available for dealing with activities directed against the integrity and sovereignty of India.***
3. The Act makes it ***a crime to support any secessionist movement or to support claims by a foreign power to what India claims as its territory.***

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS (NCPNR)

NEWS: The apex body for child rights, NCPNR, is visiting 117 Aspirational Districts to hold public meetings on complaints affecting children pertaining to education, health and nutrition as well as lack of infrastructure.

The Aspirational District Programme focuses on five main themes to improve socio-economic status which include Health and Nutrition, Education, Agriculture and Water Resources, Financial Inclusion and Skill Development.

ABOUT NCPNR

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is an Indian governmental commission, established by an Act of Parliament, the Commission for **Protection of Child Rights Act in December 2005**, thus is a statutory body.

The commission works under the aegis of **Ministry of Women and Child development, goi**.

The Commission began operation a year later in March 2007.

The Commission considers that its Mandate is "**to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.**"

As defined by the commission, child includes those up to the age of 18 years.

NCPCR Chairperson Priyanka Kanoongo

AYUSHMAN BHARAT SCHEME

NEWS: The Delhi High Court on Friday sought the Delhi government's response on a plea seeking its direction to the AAP dispensation to facilitate the implementation of the Centre's flagship Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme in the Capital.

ABOUT AYUSHMAN BHARAT SCHEME:

Ayushman Bharat Scheme has been launched by the Central Government in August 2018. It aims to cover 10 crore poor and vulnerable families by providing health cover up to 5 lakh rupees per family every year.

The expenses incurred are to be shared between Center and State in the ratio of 60:40.

Health is under State List in Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

NEWS: Centralised Technology Vertical (CTV) would be set up under the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) at a cost of ₹99 crore to facilitate real-time information sharing with investigators across the country.

ABOUT CBI

CBI is the main investigating agency of the Central Government. It plays an important role in the prevention of corruption and maintaining integrity in administration.

FORMATION: Central Bureau of Investigation was set up in **1963** by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Later it was transferred to the Ministry of Personnel and now it enjoys the status of attached office.

RECOMMENDED BY: Establishment of CBI was recommended by **Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962-64).**

WHICH TYPE OF BODY? CBI is **not a statutory body** and derives its power from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act 1946.

It also provides assistance to CVC and Lokpal.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Motto: Industry, Impartiality and Integrity

CBI Academy: Ghaziabad

SUPERINTENDENCE: With the enactment of the CVC Act 2003 superintendence of the CBI vests with the central government save investigations of offences under Prevention of Corruption Act 1988 in which the superintendence vests with the Central Vigilance Commission.

HEAD: Director of the CBI has been provided with the security of two year tenure in office by the CVC Act 2003.

Under the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act of 2013 central government shall appoint the Director of the CBI on the recommendation of a **three member committee consisting of the Prime Minister as the Chairperson, Leader of the opposition party in the Lok Sabha and Chief Justice of India or the judge of Supreme Court appointed by him.**

CBI acts as the National Central Bureau of Interpol in India.

EAT RIGHT INDIA MOVEMENT

NEWS: The Eat Right India movement is a crucial preventive healthcare measure to trigger social and behavioural change through a judicious mix of regulatory measures, combined with soft interventions for ensuring awareness and capacity building of food businesses and citizens alike

The country is in need of a movement on preventive health for all in the backdrop of the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases including diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases, widespread deficiencies of vitamins and minerals and rampant food-borne illnesses.

This movement is aligned with the government's flagship public health programmes such as POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukt Bharat, Ayushman Bharat Yojana and Swachh Bharat Mission.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has also put in place robust regulatory measures under three major pillars: Eat Safe, Eat Health and Eat Sustainably for the programme.

FSSAI has prescribed a limit for Total Polar Compounds (TPC) at 25% in cooking oil to avoid the harmful effects of reused cooking oil.

INSTITUTE OF EMINENCE

NEWS: The Human Resource Development Ministry has awarded the status of Institute of Eminence to IIT-Madras, IIT-Kharagpur, Delhi University, Banaras Hindu University and University of Hyderabad

ABOUT INSTITUTES OF EMINENCE SCHEME

The IOE scheme is aimed at developing 20 world-class institutions which would put India on the global education map.

Institutions will come up in top 500 of the world ranking in 10 years and in top 100 of the world ranking eventually overtime.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

To achieve the top world ranking, these Institutions shall be provided with greater autonomy

1. To admit foreign students up to 30% of admitted students;
2. To recruit foreign faculty upto 25% of faculty strength;
3. To offer online courses upto 20% of its programmes;
4. To enter into academic collaboration with top 500 in the world ranking Institutions without permission of UGC;
5. Free to fix and charge fees from foreign students without restriction;
6. Flexibility of course structure in terms of number of credit hours and years to take a degree;
7. Complete flexibility in fixing of curriculum and syllabus, among others.

Each public Institution selected as 'Institution of Eminence' will get financial assistance up to Rs. 1000 Crore over the period of five years under this scheme.

CONCEPTUAL

ABOUT PIL

The concept of Public Interest Litigation (PIL) originated and developed in the USA in the 1960s.

In India, the PIL is a product of the judicial activism role of the Supreme Court. It was introduced in the early 1980s. Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer and Justice P.N. Bhagwati were the pioneers of the concept of PIL.

Under the PIL, any public-spirited citizen or a social organisation can move the court for the enforcement of the rights of any person or group of persons who because of their poverty or ignorance or socially or economically disadvantaged position are themselves unable to approach the court for the remedies.

SHORTAGE OF RABIES DRUGS

NEWS: The shortage of anti-rabies vaccine in certain parts of the country has prompted the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) to step-in. Manufacturers and marketers have been asked by the Health Ministry to rush stocks to the areas where the shortage has been reported.

India accounts for more than one-third of the world's rabies deaths. Each year, as many as 20,000 people die due to the vaccine-preventable fatality. India has a population of 30 million stray dogs which cause 96% of rabies in humans.

Rabies is caused by RNA virus that is present in the saliva of rabid animal. It is invariably transmitted following a bite of a rabid animal that leads to deposition of the saliva and the virus in the wound.

The time interval between the bite and occurrence of symptoms/signs of rabies i.e. Incubation period varies from four days to two years or rarely even more.

ABOUT NPPA

NPPA is an independent body under Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

It was set up in 1997.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Its functions are to:

- Fix/revise the controlled bulk drugs prices and formulations,
- Enforce prices and availability of the medicines under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995/2013
- Recover amounts overcharged by manufacturers for the controlled drugs from the consumers
- Monitor the prices of decontrolled drugs in order to keep them at reasonable levels.

The NPPA currently fixes prices of drugs placed in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) under Schedule-I of the DPCO.

Medicines that are not under price control, manufacturers are allowed to increase the maximum retail price by 10% annually.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL

Basic Facts:

- CAT was established under Article 323A of the Constitution (inserted by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment, 1976).
- It is a multi-member body consisting of Chairman and members.
- It was established in 1985 under Section 29 of the Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985.
- The Principal seat of Central Administrative Tribunal is at New Delhi and it has 16 Outlying Benches scattered all over the Country.
- The Tribunal is headed by the Chairman and 65 Members, 33 from Judicial (including Chairman) and 33 from the Administrative stream.
- The Chairman is normally a retired Chief Justice of a High Court.

Functions of the tribunal:

- The tribunal adjudicates disputes and complaints with respect to Recruitment and Conditions of Service of the persons appointed to the Public Services and Posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or any State or of any other Local Authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India.
- Apart from above the Tribunal also has the jurisdiction on the employees of 208 Public Sector Undertakings/ Organizations notified by the Government.

NEW GOVERNORS

- Rajasthan: Kalraj Mishra
- Himachal Pradesh: Bandaru Dattatreya
- Maharashtra: Bhagat Singh Koshyari
- Kerala: Arif Mohammed Khan
- Telangana: Dr. Tamilsai Saundararajan

IMPORTANT ARTICLES RELATED TO GOVERNOR

ARTICLE 153: Governors of States There shall be Governor for each State: Provided that nothing in this article shall prevent the appointment of the same person as Governor for two or more States

ARTICLE 155: Governor is appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.

It is an independent constitutional office and is not under the control of or subordinate to the Central Government.

Qualification for Governor (**ARTICLE 157**)

1. Citizen of India
2. Should have completed 35 years of age

Oath (**ARTICLE 159**) : administered by the Chief Justice of High Court

1. Faithfully execute the office of Governor
2. Preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and the law
3. Devote myself to the service and well being of the people

INTERNATIONAL

PETRONET TELLURIAN DEAL

WHAT WAS THE DEAL?

On February 14, Petronet and Tellurian had already signed an MoU for 5 million tonnes of LNG a year and an 18% equity stake. Tellurian Inc. had promised to “make a final investment decision and begin construction in the first half of 2019” for its Driftwood LNG project in Louisiana

WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

Second MoU was signed when PM Modi visited US in September.

Several loose ends are yet to be tied up in the \$2.5 billion (₹17,668 crore) investment planned by Indian PSU Petronet in American LNG company Tellurian.

Petronet board had disfavoured the Tellurian deal at a meeting in May 2019.

Reasons for the board’s disquiet included major price drops in LNG, India’s demand shortfall, expected LNG supply from the Indian market and a negative experience with “locking in” contracts for a long period.

ABOUT PETRONET

PETRONET LNG Limited, one of the companies in the Indian energy sector, has set up the country's first LNG receiving and regasification terminal in Dahej, Gujarat.

Formed as a joint venture by the Government of India to import LNG and set up LNG terminals in the country, it involves India's leading oil and natural gas industry players. Its promoters are GAIL (India) Limited (GAIL), Oil

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

& Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL).

SAARC

NEWS: Pakistan and India boycotted each other's statements at a meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Foreign Ministers .

After the meeting, Mr. Qureshi said Pakistan had secured the consent of the group to organise the SAARC summit in Islamabad next year.

SAARC

- SAARC stands for South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
- It is regional intergovernmental organization and geopolitical union in South Asia.
- Founded in **Dhaka** in **1985**
- Secretariat : **Kathmandu**
- **8 Members:**
 - Afghanistan (Joined in 2007)
 - Bhutan
 - Bangladesh
 - India
 - Pakistan
 - Nepal
 - Sri Lanka
 - Maldives

UNSC 1267 COMMITTEE

NEWS: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 1267 Committee has allowed Pakistan-based UN-designated terrorist Hafiz Saeed limited access to his otherwise sanctioned bank account.

Saeed is wanted by India in connection with the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. The UNSC decision is in response to a request made by Pakistan to which no objections were raised, as per a notification dated August 15 from the 1267 Committee, a UNSC committee that designates and sanctions terrorist entities and individuals.

ABOUT 1267 COMMITTEE

The UNSC 1267 Committee was established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). It is also known as the **AlQaida and Taliban Sanctions Committee**.

It was **established for the purpose of overseeing the implementation of sanctions measures imposed on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan for its support of Osama bin Laden.**

However in course of time, the 1267 sanctions regime has been modified and strengthened by subsequent resolutions.

If an individual or terrorist organisation is included in this list, it helps in restricting their movement, financial penalties and assets freeze among others.

The Committee comprises all 15 members of the UNSC and makes its decision by consensus and secretly. If single member opposes it there is no consensus.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

That's why China opposition to India's bid is not allowing UNSC to designate Masood Azhar as an international terrorist and freeze his assets and travel ban.

The committee is being criticised for being non transparent and in recent time there is demand for its reforms to address procedural shortcomings especially from India.

ABOUT UNSC:-

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations and is charged with the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Security Council consists of fifteen members. Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, and the United States—serve as the body's five permanent members. These permanent members can veto any substantive Security Council resolution, including those on the admission of new member states or candidates for Secretary-General.

The Security Council also has 10 non-permanent members, elected on a regional basis to serve two-year terms. The body's presidency rotates monthly among its members.

Its powers include the establishment of peacekeeping operations, the establishment of international sanctions, and the authorization of military action through Security Council resolutions;

It is the only UN body with the authority to issue binding resolutions to member states.

ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

NEWS: Calling on India to “rescind” its actions revoking Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, Saudi Arabia joined Pakistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Niger to issue a statement on behalf of the Organisation of Islamic cooperation (OIC) Kashmir Contact Group, criticising the government’s actions.

ABOUT ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

OIC is an international organisation founded in 1969 consisting of 57 member states.

World's second-largest intergovernmental organisation after the UN and is committed to protecting the interests of the Muslim world

Organisation states that it is the collective voice of the Muslims world and works to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony.

HQ: Jeddah Saudi Arabia.

India is not member of OIC.

India became the ‘Guest of Honour’ at the 46th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Abu Dhabi in March.

INDIA BANGLADESH RELATIONS

Bangladesh has emerged as key interlocutor in India's Act East Policy, BIMSTEC and BBIN initiative.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Bangladesh has emerged as India's largest trading partner in South Asia with an annual turnover of around \$9 billion. Cooperation in connectivity, energy, intelligence and security matters has intensified. Bangladesh has provided cyber connectivity between international gateway at Cox's Bazaar to Agartala for faster Internet Connectivity in India's North Eastern States. India has also become partner in Bangladesh's nuclear power programme with the beginning of construction at the Rooppur Nuclear power plant. India will export 1100 MW of electricity to meet energy deficit in Bangladesh. To offset economic asymmetry India has granted Bangladesh generous Line of Credits and grants with commitments reaching \$8 billion.

CHALLENGES AHEAD IN INDIA BANGLADESH RELATIONS:

- Rohingya Issue that has posed economic social and security challenge.
- Issue of illegal migration in India especially after publication of NRC in Assam.
- Sharing of waters. Teesta river dispute
- China's increasing influence in the region.

ATTACK ON SAUDI OIL INSTALLATIONS

WHO IS BEHIND THE ATTACKS?

Yemen's Houthi rebels have claimed responsibility for the attack. The Houthis, a Shia militia backed by Iran, and the Saudis are locked in a conflict for over five years.

The drones and the missiles evaded Saudi Arabia's U.S.-supplied air defence system and attacked the heart of the kingdom's oil industry with pinpoint accuracy.

After releasing the satellite images of the hit facilities, the U.S. has said that the attacks originated from the north or west — pointing to Iraq or Iran — not from the south (Yemen, where the Houthis are operating from). Saudi Arabia later concluded that Iran, whose oil sales have tanked amid biting U.S. sanctions, sponsored the attack.

The kingdom, which spends over \$80 billion a year on its defence budget (Saudi Arabia was the third largest defence spender in 2018, after the U.S. and China) could not protect its most critical economic assets.

IMPACT

1. Saudi Arabia is one of the largest producers of crude oil in the world. Price of oil may go up.
2. the energy markets will remain volatile as geopolitical tensions remain high in the Gulf.

Three-way conflict in the region.

One, Saudi Arabia and Iran are backing rival factions in Yemen. Saudi bombings have caused enormous damages to Yemen, while the Iran-backed Houthis are targeting Saudi oil assets.

Two, in the wider West Asia, Saudi Arabia and Iran are vying for greater influence. Saudi Arabia has the support of most of the Sunni majority countries, while Iran has established solid influence in at least four regional capitals — Baghdad, Beirut, Sana'a and Damascus.

Three, tensions between the U.S. and Iran are growing. U.S. President Donald Trump, in response to the September 14 attacks, has decided to step up sanctions on Iran.

UNICEF

NEWS: Protracted conflicts, the worsening climate crisis, a rising level of mental illness among young people, and online misinformation are some of the most concerning emerging global threats to children, cautions UNICEF.

ABOUT UNICEF

- UNICEF was created by **United Nations General Assembly on 11 December 1946** to provide emergency food and healthcare to children in countries that had been devastated by World War II.
- **Ludwik Rajchman** is widely considered as the **founder of the UNICEF and its first chairman**.
- In 1950 UNICEF's mandate was extended to address the long term needs of children and women in developing countries everywhere.
- In **1953 it became permanent part of the United Nations** and word Emergency and International was dropped from organizations name making it United Nations Children's Fund but it retained the acronym of UNICEF.

SAUDI ARABIA

1. Located in western Asia
2. Bordered by Jordan and Iraq to North, Kuwait to North East, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates to the east, Oman to the southeast and Yemen to the South.
3. It is separated from Israel and Egypt by the Gulf of Aqaba.
4. It is the only nation with both Red Sea coast and Persian Gulf coast.
5. Islam emerged in modern day Saudi Arabia. Mecca and Medina are in Saudi Arabia.
6. World's second largest oil producer and world's largest oil exporter.
7. GCC, OIC and G 20 member
8. Capital: Riyadh

ROHINGYA

NEWS: Rohingya Muslims remaining in Myanmar still face a "serious risk of genocide", UN investigators said on Monday,

The mission reiterated calls for the UN Security Council to refer Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC) or to set up a tribunal, like for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Who are Rohingya?

Rohingya are an ethnic group, largely comprising Muslims, who predominantly live in the Western Myanmar province of Rakhine. They speak a dialect of Bengali, as opposed to the commonly spoken Burmese language.

Though they have been living in the South East Asian country for generations, Myanmar considers them as persons who migrated to their land during the Colonial rule. So, it has not granted Rohingyas full citizenship.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

According to the **1982 Burmese citizenship law**, a Rohingya (or any ethnic minority) is eligible for citizenship only if he/she provides proof that his/her ancestors have lived in the country prior to 1823. Else, they are classified as “resident foreigners” or as “associate citizens” (even if one of the parents is a Myanmar citizen).

Since they are not citizens, they are not entitled to be part of civil service. Their movements are also restricted within the Rakhine state.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

- It is an intergovernmental organisation and international tribunal
- It sits in **The Hague, The Netherlands**
- The ICC has the jurisdiction to **prosecute individuals** for the international crimes of **genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes**
- It was created by the '**Rome Statute**'
- It began its functioning on 1 July 2002, the date that Rome Statute entered into force.
- The Rome Statute is multilateral treaty which serves as ICC's foundational and governing document.
- It has 123 member countries, **India is not one of them** (neither are China and the USA)
- The ICC has jurisdiction to prosecute individuals and is independent of United Nations (UN).
- But it may receive case referrals from UN Security Council and can initiate prosecutions without UN action or referral.

ARGENTINA

1. Eighth largest country in the world.
2. Capital: Buenos Aires
3. Member of G 20.
4. Rivers: Parana, Uruguay
5. Peso

YEMEN WAR

NEWS: Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi group on Saturday attacked two Saudi Aramco plants at the heart of the kingdom's oil industry, including the world's biggest petroleum processing facility in Abqaiq, and Khurais Aramco, the world's most profitable company.

ABOUT YEMEN

Capital: **Sana**.

Yemen is under Houthi's control.

President : Abed Mansour Hadi.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Houthi movement is an Islamic Religious political armed movement that emerged from the Sadah in Northern Yemen in the 1990's. The movements expressed goals include combating economic under development and political marginalization in Yemen while seeking greater autonomy for Houthis dominated region.

Houthis took over in Yemen is known as September 21 revolution.

INTERPOL RED NOTICE

NEWS: The Interpol has issued a Red Notice against Nehal Modi, step-brother of fugitive diamond trader Nirav Modi, in connection with the ₹13,578-crore Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud case. Nehal Modi is a Belgian national.

ABOUT INTERPOL

- Interpol is global police co-operation agency and a non-governmental organization (**NGO**).
- It was established as the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) in 1923.
- Its headquartered is located at **Lyon, France**.
- It is the world's largest international police organization, with 194 member countries (**including India**).
- It is second-largest international organization after United Nations in terms of international representation.
- Its work focuses on public safety and battling terrorism, crimes against humanity, genocide, war crimes, environmental crime etc.
- It seeks to facilitate international police cooperation even where diplomatic relations do not exist between particular countries.
- It ensures that police around world have access to tools and services necessary to do their jobs effectively.
- It also provides targeted training, expert investigative support, relevant data and secure communications channels.

The 8 types of notices and their objectives are:

1. Red Corner Notice

This notice is issued to seek the arrest or provisional arrest of wanted criminals, with the intention of extradition of the culprits.

2. Yellow Notice

This notice is issued to locate missing persons, often minors or to seek help in identifying persons who are unable to identify themselves (in case of minors and people of unsound mind).

3. Blue Notice

This notice is issued to the country the criminal belongs to and to collect more information about a person's identity or activities related to the crime.

4. Black Notice

Black Notice is issued by INTERPOL to seek information of unidentified bodies.

5. Purple Notice

This category aids Interpol's efforts to tackle environmental criminals. This notice is issued for those criminals who hunts wild animals and sell their body parts in international market.

6. Green Notice

Green Notice is issued to provide warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries as well. This type of notice is issued to many serial sex offenders.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

7. Interpol-United Nations Security Council Special Notice

This type of notice is issued for groups and individuals who are the targets of UN Security Council Sanctions Committees.

8. Orange Notice

This type of Notice is issued to set alert about a person, an object, parcel bombs, disguised weapons and other dangerous and explosive materials; representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.

RCEP

NEWS: After skipping the last Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) meeting in August, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will attend the seventh RCEP Ministerial meeting in Thailand that starts on Sunday, the Ministry of Commerce confirmed on Friday.

Amidst conflicting signals from the government over whether India will join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) this year, Australia's lead negotiator for the 16-nation free trade agreement (FTA) says all countries have "committed" to completing talks in time for the RCEP summit on November

India is seeking a mechanism to 'CAP' IMPORTS as a safeguard in case its withdrawal of tariffs under RCEP leads to a sudden surge in goods flooding the Indian market.

Other sticking points have been over a DUAL TARIFF MECHANISM for countries India doesn't have an FTA with like China, as well as the need for FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT FOR SERVICES from India to the other countries.

With Australia and New Zealand in particular, India has been negotiating on agricultural and DAIRY IMPORTS.

ABOUT RCEP

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is a proposed free trade agreement between ASEAN countries and six Asia Pacific states (India, China, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea) with which ASEAN countries have FTA.

RCEP was proposed in 2012 ASEAN meeting in 2012. First RCEP summit was held in 2017 in Manila Philippines. RCEP is considered as an alternative to TPP that includes many Asian and American countries but excludes India and China

INDIA CHINA BORDER

NEWS: Soldiers of India and China were engaged in a face-off which escalated into a scuffle near the Pangong Tso lake in eastern Ladakh on Wednesday. However, the face-off ended after a few hours following a delegation level meeting between the local commanders

Basics:

- India shares total boundary of around **3,488 km** with China (**second largest** after Bangladesh).
- The Sino-Indian border is generally divided into **three sectors** namely: Western sector, Middle sector, and Eastern sector.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- **5 states** viz. Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh share border with China.

Western Sector:

In the western sector, India shares about 2152 km long border with China. It is between Jammu and Kashmir and Xinjiang Province of China. In this sector, there is territorial dispute over Aksai Chin. Both countries went to war in 1962 over disputed territory of Aksai Chin. India claims it as part of Kashmir, while China claims it is part of Xinjiang.

The dispute over Aksai Chin can be traced back to the failure of the British Empire to clearly demarcate a legal border between China and its Indian colony. During the time of British rule in India, two borders between India and China were proposed **Johnson's Line** and **mcdonald Line**.

The Johnson's line (proposed in 1865) shows Aksai Chin in Jammu and Kashmir i.e. Under India's control whereas mcdonald Line (proposed in 1893) places it under China's control. India considers Johnson Line as correct, rightful national border with China, while on the other hand, China considers the mcdonald Line as the correct border with India.

At present, **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** is the line separating Indian areas of Jammu and Kashmir from Aksai Chin. It is concurrent with the Chinese Aksai Chin claim line.

Middle Sector

In this sector, India shares about 625 km long boundary with China which runs along the watershed from Ladakh to Nepal. The states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand touch this border with Tibet (China) in this sector. Both sides do not have much disagreement over border in this area.

Eastern Sector

In this sector, India shares 1,140 km long boundary with China. It runs from the eastern limit of Bhutan to a point near the Talu Pass at the trijunction of Tibet, India and Myanmar. This boundary line is called **mcmahon Line**. The boundary was established along the Himalayan crest of the northern watershed of the Brahmaputra, except where the Kemang, Subansiri, Dihang and Lohit rivers break through that watershed. China considers the mcmahon Line illegal and unacceptable claiming that Tibetans representatives who had sign the 1914 Convention held in Shimla which delineated the Mc Mahon line on the map were not having rights to do so.



CHINA PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR

NEWS: India on Tuesday rejected the reference to Jammu and Kashmir in the latest China-Pakistan joint statement and called on both countries to stop activities related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (pok).

ABOUT CPEC

- CPEC is a flagship project as part of China's multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), aimed at enhancing China's influence around the world through China-funded infrastructure projects.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- CPEC aims to construct and upgrade transportation network, energy projects, deep-water port at Gwadar and special economic zones (sezs) to eventually support Pakistan's industrial development as manufacturing hub by 2030.
- CPEC will link Gwadar in South Western Pakistan to China's North Western region Xinjiang through vast network of highways and railways.
- The proposed project is financed by heavily-subsidised Chinese loans, disbursed to Pakistan Government by Chinese banking giants such as China Development Bank, Exim Bank of China and Industrial and Commercial Bank of China.

CHABAHAR PORT

NEWS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani met on Thursday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's 74th session in New York. They discussed progress on Iran's Chabahar Port, which India is helping to develop.

India's decision to shut down oil imports from Iran owing to sanctions imposed by the United States is also hurting India-Iran bilateral trade and India's future in the Chabahar port, Iranian Ambassador to India Ali Chegeni said.

ABOUT CHABAHAR PORT

Where is Chabahar port?

Iran's Chabahar port is located on the **Gulf of Oman** and is the only oceanic port of the country. The port gives access to the energy-rich Persian Gulf nations' southern coast.

Why Chabahar port is crucial for India?

The first and foremost significance of the Chabahar port is the fact **that India can bypass Pakistan in transporting goods to Afghanistan**. Chabahar port will boost India's access to Iran, the key gateway to the International North-South Transport Corridor that has sea, rail and road routes between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.

Chabahar port will be beneficial to India in countering Chinese presence in the Arabian Sea which China is trying to ensure by helping Pakistan develop the Gwadar port. Gwadar port is less than 400 km from Chabahar by road and 100 km by sea.

With Chabahar port being developed and operated by India, **Iran also becomes a military ally to India**. Chabahar could be used in case China decides to flex its navy muscles by stationing ships in Gwadar port to reckon its upper hand in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and Middle East.

With Chabahar port becoming functional, there will be **a significant boost in the import of iron ore, sugar and rice to India**. The import cost of oil to India will also see a considerable decline. India has already increased its crude purchase from Iran since the West imposed ban on Iran was lifted.

MEASLES RUBELLA ELIMINATION

NEWS: Member-countries of the World Health Organisation (WHO) South-East Asia Region have resolved to eliminate highly infectious childhood killer diseases measles and rubella by 2023.

A resolution to eliminate the diseases was adopted at the 72nd session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in Delhi.

Bhutan, North Korea, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste have eliminated measles.

Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste have controlled rubella.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

1. Founded on 7th April 1948. Celebrated as World Health Day
2. HQ: Geneva
3. Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
4. Publication: World Health Report, World Health survey
5. WHO's main functions can be summed up as follows: to act as a directing and coordinating authority on international health work, to ensure valid and productive technical cooperation, and to promote research.

EASTERN ECONOMIC FORUM

NEWS: PM Modi is on 2 day visit to Russia to attend the Eastern Economic Forum summit. First Indian Prime Minister to visit the Russian Far East Region. India has decided to \$1 billion line of credit for the development of Russia's far east. PM also unveiled the Act Far East Policy. India and Russia are against "outside influence" in the internal matters of any nation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday after comprehensive talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin. New horizons of bilateral cooperation in areas like trade, defence, space, oil and gas, nuclear energy and maritime connectivity.

India and Russia on Wednesday agreed to open a maritime route between Chennai and to ensure connectivity between the two countries.

India will start manufacturing spare parts and components for the Russian military equipment under transfer of technology and set up joint ventures, as the two strategic partners tried to transform their existing buyer-seller relationship into one of collaboration.

We have also decided to set up more than 20 Russian-designed nuclear units in India in the next 20 years,

Oil and energy prospects, including a major agreement to import LNG from Russia will mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Vladivostok. India is actively seeking to "diversify oil & gas supplies beyond complete dependency in the Gulf."

EEF is termed as Russian version of India's "Look east, Act east" policy.

ABOUT EASTERN ECONOMIC FORUM

- The Eastern Economic Forum was established by the **decree of the President** of the Russian Federation in the year **2015**.
- It takes place **each year** in **Vladivostok**, a city in Russia.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- It serves as a platform for the discussion of key issues in the world economy, regional integration, and the development of new industrial and technological sectors, as well as of the global challenges facing Russia and other nations.
- The Forum business programme includes a number of business dialogues with leading partner countries in the Asia-Pacific region, and with **ASEAN**, a key integration organization of dynamically developing nations in Southeast Asia.
- Over the years, it has emerged as an international platform for discussing the **strategy** for developing **political, economic and cultural ties** between **Russia and Asia Pacific**.

KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

NEWS: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that Modi Government is committed to completing Kartarpur Corridor on time.

The agreement on the Kartarpur Corridor project, which will open the famed pilgrimage centre to Indians, could not be signed on Wednesday after Pakistan declared that it would charge fees from the visitors.

Pakistan declined India's request to let consular officials accompany the pilgrims. The presence of Indian consular officials at Kartarpur has acquired importance in view of the reported activities of Khalistan proponents in Pakistan.

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Thursday said the work on the Kartarpur Corridor on the Indian side would be completed by October 30.

Demanding immediate withdrawal by Pakistan the proposed facilitation charge of \$20 per visitor to the historic Gurdwara Sri Kartarpur Sahib, saying it was against the basic spirit of Sikh ideology.

ABOUT KARTARPUR CORRIDOR

Kartarpur Corridor will be a link between Gurdaspur in Indian Punjab and Kartarpur in Pakistani Punjab. Kartarpur Corridor will provide a visa free access to Indian Sikh pilgrims to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur. Gurudwara Darbar Sahib is built at the location where Guru Nanak Dev is believed to have spent his last few days.

Kartarpur is said to have been founded by the first Guru of Sikhism where he established the first Sikh commune. Name Kartarpur means place of God. It is located on the banks of river Ravi.

Kartarpur Corridor is expected to be completed by 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev in November 2019.

Chabahar port will ensure in the establishment of a politically sustainable connectivity between India and Afghanistan. This will in turn, lead to better economic ties between the two countries.

From a diplomatic perspective, ***Chabahar port could be used as a point from where humanitarian operations could be coordinated.***

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

ASEAN INDIA FTA

NEWS: India and the 10-member bloc of southeast Asian nations have agreed to review their free trade agreement, signed in 2009, to make it more business-friendly and boost economic ties.

The India-ASEAN trade in goods pact came into force from January 2010.

ABOUT ASEAN

ASEAN stands for Association of South East Asian Nations

It is a political and economic organisation of 10 SE Asian nations

Formed in **1967**

Founding members were Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand i.e. **All 10 current members were not founding members**

Current members are: (LCVT- PIB-MMS)

Laos

CAMBODIA

Vietnam

THAILAND

Philippines

Indonesia

Brunei

Malaysia

MYANMAR

Singapore

Aims:

Accelerating economic growth, social progress, and sociocultural evolution among its members,

Protection of regional stability

Providing a mechanism for member countries to resolve differences peacefully

'The ASEAN Way': Doctrine that the member countries will largely mind their own business when it comes to internal matters of member countries

ASEAN Plus Three: Was created to improve existing ties with the China, Japan and South Korea.

HQ : **Jakarta**, Indonesia

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

NEWS: The UN Human Rights Council urged India on Monday to end the lockdown in Kashmir and restore basic communication services.

ABOUT UNHRC

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is a United Nations body whose mission is to promote and protect human rights around the world.

The UNHRC has 47 members elected for staggered three-year terms on a regional group basis.

The headquarters of UNHRC is in Geneva, Switzerland.

Formation:- 15 March 2006

The UNHRC was established by the UN General Assembly on March 15, 2006 (by resolution A/RES/60/251) to replace the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR).

The term of each seat is three years, and no member may occupy a seat for more than two consecutive terms.

US INDIA TRADE ISSUES

1. American concerns on tariffs on ICT, price controls on medical devices
2. Market access to agricultural products e-commerce and data protection
3. Indian Concern: Section 232 tariffs (tariffs on steel and aluminum), the withdrawal of India's GSP status

PRELIMS BOOSTER

The Strait of Hormuz is a strait between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. It provides the only sea passage from the Persian Gulf to the open ocean and is one of the world's most strategically important choke points.

UIGHURS

NEWS: Uighurs in Australia wants their government to step up its criticism of China related to Uighur concentration camps.

ABOUT UIGHURS

The Uighurs are a Muslim ethnic minority mostly based in China's Xinjiang province. They make up around 45% of the population there.

Xinjiang is officially designated as an autonomous region within China, like Tibet to its south.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Human rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have submitted reports to the UN committee documenting claims of mass imprisonment, in camps where inmates are forced to swear loyalty to China's President Xi Jinping.

The World Uyghur Congress said in its report that detainees are held indefinitely without charge, and forced to shout Communist Party slogans.

INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

What is it?

- The International Court of Justice (ICJ) is the principal judicial body of the UN. Established in 1946 to replace the Permanent Court of International Justice,

It has two primary functions:

1. To SETTLE LEGAL DISPUTES submitted by States in accordance with established international laws,
2. And to ACT AS AN ADVISORY BOARD on issues submitted to it by authorized international organizations.

COMPOSITION

The International Court of Justice is composed of 15 judges elected to nine-year terms of office by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council. These organs vote simultaneously but separately. In order to be elected, a candidate must receive an absolute majority of the votes in both bodies.

What are the qualifications of ICJ judges?

- A judge should have a high moral character.
- A judge should fit to the qualifications of appointment of highest judicial officers as prescribed by their respective states or.
- A judge should be a juriconsult of recognized competence in international law.

The 15 judges of the Court are distributed as per the regions:

- Three from Africa.
- Two from Latin America and Caribbean.
- Three from Asia.
- Five from Western Europe and other states.
- Two from Eastern Europe.

HONG KONG

NEWS: Hong Kong office workers and high-school students turned out in their hundreds under a sweltering midday sun on Wednesday to denounce a policeman for shooting and wounding a teenager during the most violent clashes in nearly four months of unrest.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

ABOUT HONG KONG

1. Special administrative region of China
2. Eastern side of Pearl River Estuary, South China Sea.
3. Hong Kong became a colony of the British Empire at the end of First Opium War in 1842.
4. Sovereignty over the territory was transferred to China in 1997.
5. **ONE COUNTRY TWO SYSTEMS**
6. The Basic Law is the constitutional document for the HKSAR. It enshrines within a legal document the important concepts of "One Country, Two Systems", "a high degree of autonomy" and "Hong Kong People administering Hong Kong"
7. Umbrella Revolution and Water Revolution are associated with Hong Kong.

ECONOMICS

PROMPT CORRECTIVE ACTION FRAMEWORK

NEWS: The Reserve Bank has initiated Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) against Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) due to a high level of bad loans, lack of sufficient capital to manage risks, and negative return on assets for two consecutive years, the private sector lender.

ABOUT PROMPT CORRECTIVE ACTION FRAMEWORK

- RBI has issued PCA for maintaining sound financial health of banks
- Banks are assessed on the basis of three parameters: **CAPITAL, ASSET QUALITY (which is assessed on the basis of net NPA) and PROFITABILITY.**
- Breaching net NPA (non performing asset) ratio of 6% is one of the conditions that trigger restrictions of Prompt Corrective Action Framework.
- Once placed under the PCA framework banks are not allowed to renew or access costly deposits.
- Banks are also not allowed to enter into new lines of businesses.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- RBI also imposes restrictions on the banks ability to take inter bank loans.

HOW TO REVIVE THE DEMAND IN ECONOMY ?

WHY DEMAND IS BEING FOCUSED?

To revive the Indian economy.

Private consumption expenditure, which contributes more than half the gross domestic product and is the mainstay of demand, has decelerated so sharply that at 3.1%, the expansion is at an 18-quarter low.

Factors that have contributed to the demand drought are

1. A lack of jobs
2. a tenuousness about the incomes from such work,
3. the abiding rural distress,
4. widening inequality
5. Successful targeting of inflation are all cited as contributors.
6. Low inflation extracts costs in the form of lower nominal growth (growth measured in current prices) that could crimp tax receipts and in turn lead to cuts in government spending, these economists assert.
7. With wage/salary increases most often linked to inflation, slower price gains would result in smaller annual increments that would leave the earners more wary of spending on discretionary or non-essential purchases.
8. Rural wage growth was lower at 3-4% [last year] compared with an average 6% in the preceding two fiscals

HOW TO REVIVE THE DEMAND?

1. Consumer sentiment needs to be improved.
2. A mix of measures in the economic realm, both monetary and fiscal,
3. Ensuring a congenial socio-political climate that enhances the 'feel-good' factor.
4. Ensuring lower borrowing costs as well as adequate availability of credit are crucial to helping create an enabling environment for consumers to consider taking out loans to fund their purchases.
5. Tackle the crisis of low real farm incomes by radically recalibrating its approach to the agrarian economy. As an immediate and necessary measure, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme needs to be reinvigorated by ensuring timely and adequate funding and the fixing of appropriate wage levels.

CONCEPTUAL

INDUSTRY 4.0

'Industry 4.0' commonly referred to as the fourth industrial revolution, is a name given to the current trend of automation, interconnectivity and data exchange in manufacturing technologies to increase productivity. Industry 4.0 is a complex Cyber-Physical Systems which synergizes production with digital technologies, the Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Big Data & Analytics, Machine Learning and Cloud Computing.

CALL MONEY

Call money is minimum 5% short-term finance repayable on demand, with a maturity period of one to fourteen days or overnight to fortnight. It is used for inter-bank transactions. The money that is lent for one day in this market is known as "call money" and, if it exceeds one day, is referred to as "notice money".

Target rate is usually the rate at which reserves are borrowed or lent among banks, that is, the call money market rate in India.

STANDSTILL AGREEMENTS

NEWS: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has pulled up mutual funds for entering into standstill agreements with promoters and has clarified that regulations do not have provisions for such arrangement between corporates and asset management companies

ABOUT STANDSTILL AGREEMENT

The term standstill agreement refers to various forms of agreement which businesses may enter into in order to delay action which might otherwise take place.

ABOUT SEBI: SEBI was constituted on 12th April 1988 as an interim administrative body under the Finance Ministry. Four years later, on 4th April 1992 a notification awarding statutory powers to SEBI was issued (Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992). All decisions taken by Securities and Exchange Board of India are collectively taken by its Board that consists of a Chairman and eight other members.

Securities and Exchange Board of India is a quasi-legislative, quasi-judicial and quasi-executive body. It can draft regulations, conduct inquiries, pass rulings and impose penalties.

SEBI is capital markets regulator. A **capital market** is a financial **market** in which long-term debt (over a year) or equity-backed securities are bought and sold.

HOW INDIAN ECONOMY CAN BE REVIVED

1. The government can loosen its purse strings,
2. Make pending payments,
3. Give GST refunds quickly, and
4. Revamp MGNREGA to put more money in the hands of rural consumers,
5. identify the cause of the structural slowdown and address it directly.
6. India's share of manufacturing exports in the world is barely 2% or something, which needs to be improved
7. Demand needs to be improved
8. Not worry too much about the fiscal deficit target
9. Female Labour Force Participation rate needs to be improved. In the last 10 or 12 years, it has come down by 10 percentage points, from 30-32% to 22%, which means that only one out of five working age women are actually working for a paid job.
10. The unorganised sector has been hit now for a long time and unless rural incomes are revived, and that is where 70% of our population is, consumer demand is not going to grow.

CONCEPTUAL

ABOUT GDP

Gross Domestic Product is the value of the all final goods and services produced within the boundary of a nation during one year period.

For India, this calendar year is from 1st April to 31st March.

The different uses of the concept of GDP are

1. Per annum percentage change in it is the growth rate of an economy.
2. It is a quantitative concept and its volume/ size indicates the internal strength of the economy. But it does not say anything about the qualitative aspects of the produced goods and services.
3. It is used by the IMF/WB in the comparative analyses of its member nations.

LIQUID FUNDS

NEWS: As part of its attempts to strengthen the risk management framework for liquid funds, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has made it mandatory for such funds to hold at least 20% of its net assets in liquid assets while mandating an exit load on investors that exit within seven days of making an investment.

Liquid funds shall hold at least 20% of their net assets in liquid assets. For this purpose, liquid assets shall include cash, government securities, T-bills and repo on government securities,

WHAT ARE LIQUID FUNDS?

Liquid funds belong to the debt category of mutual funds. They invest in very short-term market instruments like treasury bills, government securities and call money. They are getting popular with retail investors due to their higher than savings bank account returns and easy liquidity. Once you submit a redemption request you get money back in one working day.

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THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

NEWS: The government has decided to allow corporate India to use their mandatory corporate social responsibility (CSR) spending for investments in publicly-funded incubators and contribute to research efforts in science, technology, medicine and engineering at major institutions and bodies.

India's spending on research and development (R&D) activities has been far less than 1% of GDP for years, with the private sector chipping in less than half of investments

They can also make contributions to publicly- funded universities, IITs, national laboratories and autonomous bodies (established under the auspices of ICAR, ICMR, CSIR, DAE, DRDO, DST and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology),

HISTORY OF CSR

Voluntary initially

2013: Incorporated in Companies Act

2019: Penalties

ABOUT CSR

APPLICABILITY: Every company having net worth of rupees 500 crore or more or turnover of rupees 1000 crore or more or net profit of rupees 5 crore or more during any financial year

WHAT COMPANIES HAVE TO DO? Spend at least 2% of the average net profits of the company made during three immediately preceding financial years in CSR

AREAS WHERE CSR COULD BE SPEND

1. Extreme poverty and hunger
2. Education
3. Gender Equality
4. Child Mortality
5. Vocational Skills
6. Environmental Sustainability

PERFORMANCE OF CSR IN LAST SIX YEARS

1. Only half of the companies have filed for their reports
2. Average CSR by private companies 95 lakh and by public sector companies 9.40 crore.

STEPS TO REVIVE THE ECONOMY

Centre issues ordinance to amend the Income Tax Act of 1961 and the Finance Act of 2019.

Reduced the corporate tax rate for domestic firms and new manufacturing units by 10 to 12 percentage points,

The effective tax rate for domestic corporates, inclusive of surcharges, would fall from 34.94% to 25.17% if they stopped availing themselves of any other tax sops.

For new manufacturing firms set up after October 1, 2019, and commencing operations by March 31, 2023, the effective tax rate will fall from 29.1% to 17%

Rollback of the enhanced surcharge levied on foreign portfolio investors in the Union Budget and a reduction in the Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) rate from 18.5% to 15% for all businesses

Spurring the economy

Some of the announcements made by the Finance Minister on Friday:

- Tax rate to be 22% without exemptions
- Corporate tax rate after surcharge to be 25.17%
- Local companies incorporated after October and whose projects are commissioned before March 31, 2023 will pay tax at the rate of 15%
- Tax rate for new companies will effectively be 17.01%, including cess and surcharge
- Companies enjoying tax holidays can avail themselves of concessional rates after the exemption period
- Minimum alternate tax (MAT) now stands lowered to 15% from 18.5% for companies that avail themselves of exemptions and incentives
- No enhanced surcharge on capital gains by foreign portfolio investors
- Buyback tax on listed companies that had announced buybacks before July 5 exempted from taxation
- Revenue foregone for reduction on corporate tax and other measures pegged at ₹1.45 lakh crore per year



EXPERTS VIEW ON TAX CUT BY GOVERNMENT

Mere reduction in levies will not result in increased private sector investments and the move will definitely result in fiscal deficit slippage.

The overall view is that since the corporate tax cuts do not address the subdued demand conditions in the economy, private sector firms will wait for demand to revive before they start investing.

The cuts have to encourage manufacturing companies, that have not been investing, to start investing. Only if demand actually increases, will the tax cut help in bringing about higher investment, not otherwise.

There is also the view that corporate tax rate cuts will make Indian companies more competitive globally, and will encourage foreign companies to invest in India, which could boost private sector investments.

ABOUT ORDINANCE

Ordinances are the temporary laws having the effect of an act.

Article 123 of the Constitution empowers the President to promulgate ordinances during the recess of the Parliament. Similar power is given to Governor under Article 213 of the Constitution.

Limitations on Ordinance Making Power of President

9. It can be issued only when one House is not in session or during recess of Parliament.
10. An ordinance may be made under circumstances that require immediate action.

11. An ordinance can be made on only those subjects on which Parliament can make laws and subject to same limitations to which a Parliamentary law is subjected.
12. An ordinance needs to be presented before the Parliament when it reassembles. It ceases to operate on the expiry of six weeks from the reassembly of Parliament.
13. Without being approved by the Parliament ordinance can last six months and six weeks.
14. President can withdraw ordinance at any time. However President exercises the power on the advice of Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.
15. Ordinance cannot be used to amend the Constitution.
16. In D C Wadhwa versus State of Bihar case (1987) Supreme Court ruled that it can strike down re promulgated ordinances.

NON BANKING FINANCIAL COMPANIES

NEWS: After mandating banks to implement external benchmarking for retail loan pricing, the Reserve Bank is now looking at the loan pricing regime of non-banking finance companies to make the practice more transparent.

According to sources, the central bank is internally discussing the loan pricing mechanism of the non-banking sector. At present, there is no anchor rate for NBFCs, similar to banks, that is linked to the lending rate of a particular loan.

For example, banks have the marginal cost of fund based lending rate (MCLR) — the anchor rate — and all the loans are linked to such a rate. Earlier, the base rate acted as an anchor rate.

Banks were not allowed to lend below the base rate or the MCLR rate. Banks are allowed to add a spread, based on the risk assessment, to the anchor rate.

ABOUT NBFC'S

NBFCs or Non Banking Financial Companies are those companies which provide banking services without meeting the legal definition of a bank. A NBFC is incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 and desirous of commencing business of non-banking financial institution as defined under Section 45 I(a) of the RBI Act, 1934.

Difference between NBFC and Banks:-The major differences between NBFCs and Banks are as follows:

NBFC cannot accept demand deposits (they can accept term deposits)

NBFCs do not form part of the payment and settlement system

NBFCs cannot issue cheques drawn on themselves

Deposits with NBFCs are not covered by Deposit Insurance.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA (SEBI)

NEWS: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has barred Gautam Thapar, chairman, CG Power & Industrial Solutions along with senior officials of the company from accessing the capital market for their alleged role in siphoning off money from the listed firm

ABOUT SEBI

SEBI was constituted on 12th April 1988 as an interim administrative body under the Finance Ministry.

Four years later, on 4th April 1992 a notification awarding statutory powers to SEBI was issued (Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992).

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SEBI is capital markets regulator. A **capital market** is a financial **market** in which long-term debt (over a year) or equity-backed securities are bought and sold.

SIMS AND NIRVIK

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal launched the common digital platform for the issuance of certificates of origin and a **STEEL IMPORT MONITORING SYSTEM (SIMS)**.

SIMS

The SIMS will provide advance information about steel imports to Government and stake holders including, steel industry (producers), steel consumers(importers) to have effective policy interventions.

NIRVIK

Enhanced export credit insurance scheme for banks that lend working capital to exporters.

At the moment, the Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) gives a cover of 60% of the loss to banks. The new scheme will give 90% coverage of the principal and interest of the loan for pre- and post-shipment credit, and half of this will be provided in 30 days.

Claim inspection would be waived for up to ₹10 crore. For claims higher than this amount, inspection of bank documents and records by ECGC officials will be mandatory. The previous limit for document inspection was ₹1 crore.

ABOUT ECGC

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

ECGC is a fully Government of India owned company established in the year 1957 to promote exports by providing credit insurance services. ECGC provides Export Credit Insurance to Banks (ECIB) to protect the Banks from losses on account of export credit at the Pre and Post-Shipment stage given to exporters due to the risks of insolvency and/or protracted default of the exporter borrower.

ANNOUNCEMENTS TO REVIVE THE ECONOMY

NEWS: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday announced a third set of government decisions to revive the economy, including a ₹50,000 crore EXPORT INCENTIVE SCHEME and a ₹10,000 crore special window to provide last mile funding for UNFINISHED HOUSING PROJECTS.

Follow two previous mega announcements designed to encourage PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT, and bring further stability into the BANKING SYSTEM through several public sector bank mergers.

Exports contracted 6.05% in August.

For the housing sector, the most notable decision was the setting up of a SPECIAL FUND that would provide last-mile funding for housing projects that are not categorised as non-performing assets and are not undergoing National Company Law Tribunal proceedings.

Scheme for REMISSION OF DUTIES OR TAXES ON EXPORT PRODUCT (RoDTEP), which would replace the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS).

Textiles and all other sectors which currently enjoy incentives up to 2% over MEIS will transit into RoDTEP from January 1, 2020

A FULLY ELECTRONIC REFUND MODULE for the quick and automated refund of input tax credits that will become operational by the end of this month.

EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL BORROWING guidelines will be relaxed to facilitate financing for home buyers who are eligible under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana,

Interest rate on house building advances will be lowered and linked with the 10 Year Government Security yields.

ABOUT EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL BORROWINGS:

It refers to commercial loans in the form of bank loans, securitised instrument buyers credits, suppliers credit availed off from non resident lenders with a minimum average maturity of three years.

SMALL FINANCE BANKS

NEWS: RBI has said that the minimum paid up capital for Small Finance Bank is 200 crore.

What are small finance banks?

The small finance bank will primarily undertake basic banking activities of acceptance of deposits and lending to unserved and underserved sections including small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and unorganised sector entities.

What they can do?

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- Take small deposits and disburse loans.
- Distribute mutual funds, insurance products and other simple third-party financial products.
- Lend 75% of their total adjusted net bank credit to priority sector.
- Maximum loan size would be 10% of capital funds to single borrower, 15% to a group.
- Minimum 50% of loans should be up to 25 lakhs.

What they cannot do?

- Lend to big corporates and groups.
- Cannot open branches with prior RBI approval for first five years.
- Other financial activities of the promoter must not mingle with the bank.
- It cannot set up subsidiaries to undertake non-banking financial services activities.
- Cannot be a business correspondent of any bank.

INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

NEWS: Industrial activity rebounded in July to 4.3% on a broad-based recovery across key sectors such as mining, manufacturing and construction, official data released on Thursday showed.

ABOUT IIP

- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an **index which details out the growth of mining (14.373%), electricity (7.994%) and manufacturing (77.633%) sectors.**
- The all India IIP is a composite indicator that measures the **short-term changes** in the volume of production of a basket of industrial products during a given period with respect to that in a chosen base period.
- It is compiled and published monthly by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) six weeks after the reference month ends.
- The **eight core industries comprise 40.27% of IIP**. Eight Core Industries are: **Coal, Crude oil, Natural Gas, Refinery products, fertilizers, steel, cement and electricity.**
- Base year for IIP is 2011-12.

RETAIL INFLATION

NEWS: Growth in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) touched 3.21% in August, compared with 3.15% in July. Within the index, inflation in the food category touched a 14-month high of 2.96% in August, up from 2.33% in the previous month.

In India, the index which shows the inflation rate at retail level is known as Consumer Price Index (CPI). CPI is based on 260 commodities, but includes certain services too.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

These four indices were Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW); Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL); Consumer Price Index for Rural Labourers (CPI -RL) and Consumer Price Index for Urban Non-Manual Employees (CPI-UNME).

The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation releases Consumer Price Indices (CPI). CPI is based on retail prices and this index is used to calculate the Dearness Allowance (DA) for government employees.

GIG ECONOMY

NEWS: In a major legislative development that could have a profound impact on the gig economy, California's State Senate passed, 29 to 11, a Bill requiring ride hailing companies like Uber and Lyft to treat their contract workers as employees.

ABOUT GIG ECONOMY

Gig economy refers to **labour market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work** as opposed to permanent jobs.

RISKS ASOCIATED WITH THE GIG ECONOMY

1. Lack of regulation
2. Risk of not getting paid for the work done is high.
3. Companies are hesitant to hire the gig worker as they are not assured of quality of resource.

FINANCE COMMISSION

NEWS: The 15th Finance Commission has assured of action on the Rajasthan government's demand for additional funds with the sympathetic consideration of factors such as difficult geography, heterogeneous society, limited resources and future needs. The commission completed its four-day visit to the State on Monday.

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said here on Saturday that the Centre ought to have consulted the State governments before introducing additional terms of reference for the 15th Finance Commission seeking to create separate funds for defence and internal security.

While the Finance Ministry has been asking the Fifteenth Finance Commission for a lower limit for tax devolution to the States, the Chairman's office told The Hindu that the Centre's plea was just one among 30 different requests, including those from the States, and that the Commission would decide its devolution formula independently after balancing all the requests.

ABOUT FINANCE COMMISSION

Article 280 of the Constitution of India provides for FC as a quasi-judicial body.

It is constituted by the President of India every fifth year

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Article 280(1) of Constitution lays down that FC should be constituted within two years from commencement of Constitution. Thereafter at expiration of every fifth year or at such earlier time as President considers necessary.

In keeping with this requirement, practice has generally been to set up next FC within five years of date of setting up of the previous Finance Commission.

The recommendations of 15th Finance Commission (FFC) will come into effect from 1 April 2020.

It consists of a chairman and four other members to be appointed by the president.

The recommendations made by FC are only advisory in nature and hence, are not binding on the government.

It makes recommendations about the following to the President of India:

Distribution of net proceeds of taxes between centre and states and allocation between states of respective shares of such proceeds.

Principles that should govern grants in aid to states by centre.

Measures needed to augment consolidated fund of states to supplement resources of local governments in states on basis of recommendations made by State Finance Commissions.

Any other method referred to it by President in interests of sound finance.

CONCEPTUAL

UNICORN

A unicorn is a privately held startup company valued at over \$1 billion. The term was coined in 2013 by venture capitalist Aileen Lee, choosing the mythical animal to represent the statistical rarity of such successful ventures.

SECURITIES APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

NEWS: The Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) has quashed the capital markets regulator's order that barred Price Waterhouse (PW) from auditing listed entities for two years for its alleged role in the fraud committed at the erstwhile Satyam Computer Services.

ABOUT SECURITIES APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

Securities Appellate Tribunal is a statutory body established under the provisions of Section 15K of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992

Its task is to hear and dispose of appeals against orders passed by the Securities and Exchange Board of India or by an adjudicating officer under the Act

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

It also exercise jurisdiction, powers and authority conferred on the Tribunal by or under this Act or any other law for the time being in force.

It covers the whole of India.

DECLINE IN AUTOMOBILE SECTOR

NEWS: Continuing the free fall, automobile sales in the country declined by 23.55% in August 2019 — the worst drop in monthly sales since the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) started recording wholesale vehicle sales data in 1997-98.

The automobile industry, seen as a bellwether of activity in the post-liberalisation years, is in crisis, as automakers, parts manufacturers and dealers have laid off about 350,000 workers since April this year, with more job cuts likely.

MCLR

NEWS: State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender reduced its benchmark lending rate — the MCLR — by 10 basis points (bps). With this cut, the one year MCLR of the bank, to which most loan rates are linked, will be 8.15%

The bank has cut its MCLR by 40 bps since April.

The RBI has reduced the key policy rate or the repo rate by 110 bps between February and August to boost slowing growth. The central bank has expressed displeasure at banks for not passing on the reduction in rates to customers.

ABOUT MCLR

The marginal cost of funds based lending rate is minimum interest rate that a bank can lend at.

The Reserve Bank of India introduced the MCLR methodology for fixing interest rates from 1 April 2016. It replaced the base rate structure which had been in place since July 2010.

Under the MCLR regime, banks are free to offer all categories of loans on fixed or floating interest rates.

NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL (NCLT)

NEWS: The Government has approved establishment of two new benches of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), one at Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh and the other at Indore in Madhya Pradesh.

The jurisdiction of the Bench at Amaravati will be the state of Andhra Pradesh and that of Indore will be the state of Madhya Pradesh.

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Thursday approved JSW Steel's ₹19,700 crore bid for Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL).

ABOUT NCLT

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Central government has constituted NCLT under section 408 of the companies Act 2013 w.e.f 1st June 2016.

NCLT is a QUASI JUDICIAL body in India that has the power under Companies Act to adjudicate on Proceedings Initiated before the **COMPANY LAW BOARD** under the previous Companies Act of 1956, Cases pending before **BOARD FOR INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION** including those pending under the **Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act 1985**, and Case pertaining to claims of **OPPRESSION AND MISMANAGEMENT OF COMPANY**, winding up of companies and All other powers prescribed under the Companies Act.

NCLT was set up on the recommendation of JUSTICE ERADI COMMITTEE on law relating to insolvency and winding up of companies.

NCLT is adjudicating authority under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016.

The Act provides for appointment of a President and such number of Members as the Government may deem necessary. As on date there are 17 Judicial Members and 10 Technical Members

Presently, 16 numbers of NCLT Benches have been established, including the Principal Bench in New Delhi, and three recently set up benches at Jaipur, Kochi and Cuttack.

Justice MM Kumar is the current President of NCLT.

GST COUNCIL

NEWS: The Council left unchanged the rates on products like automobiles and biscuits that had been clamouring for a rate rationalisation in view of falling sales.

Among many procedural changes, the Council arrived at an ‘in-principle decision’ to link Aadhaar with registration of taxpayers under GST and examine the possibility of making Aadhaar mandatory for claiming refunds.

To factor in the new Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, suitable amendments in the Central GST Act, the Union Territories’ GST Act, and the corresponding State GST Acts have been approved, a Finance Ministry statement said after the meeting.

ABOUT GST COUNCIL

GST council is a **CONSTITUTIONAL BODY**. It has been formed under **Article 279A** of the Constitution.

For making recommendations to the Union and State Governments on issues related to the Goods and Service Tax.

GST Council is chaired by Union Finance Minister and other members are Union State Minister of Revenue or Finance and Minister in charge of Finance or Taxation in all other states.

DECISION MAKING POWER

1. One third voting power: Centre
2. Two Third Voting Power: States
3. 75% support for taking any decision.

FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENT

NEWS: Attempts by the government to revive foreign investors' interest in the Indian stock markets by rolling back the contentious surcharge has failed to make any impact as selling by overseas investors continues unabated.

Data shows that since August 23 when Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the roll-back of the surcharge, foreign portfolio investors (fpis) have been net sellers on all trading sessions but one, having sold shares worth nearly ₹6,200 crore.

ABOUT FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTMENT:-

Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) is investment by non-residents in Indian securities including shares, government bonds, corporate bonds, convertible securities, infrastructure securities etc

SEBI has recently stipulated the criteria for Foreign Portfolio Investment. According to this, any equity investment by non-residents which is less than or equal to 10% of capital in a company is portfolio investment. While above this the investment will be counted as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

CONCEPTUAL

MONEY LAUNDERING

Money laundering is the process of making large amounts of money generated by a criminal activity, such as drug trafficking or terrorist funding, appear to have come from a legitimate source.

ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE

- ED is a **multi disciplinary organization** mandated with the task of enforcing provisions of the two special laws: **Foreign Exchange Management Act 1999** and Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002.
- The origin of Directorate goes back to **1956** when an ENFORCEMENT UNIT was formed in Department of Economic Affairs for handling Exchange Control Laws Violations under Foreign Exchange Regulation Act 1947.
- In the year 1957 Unit was renamed as Enforcement Directorate.
- Current Chairman: Sanjay Kumar Mishra
- It functions under **Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance**, Government of India.

ISSUE: GOLD RESERVES

India has pipped the Netherlands to move into the list of top ten countries in terms of total gold reserves.

India has gold reserves totalling 618.2 tonnes, which is marginally higher than the Netherlands' reserves of 612.5 tonnes.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

U.S. leads the country list with total gold reserves of 8,133.5 tonnes followed by Germany with 3,366.8 tonnes.

While the IMF is ranked third with a holding of 2,451.8 tonnes, it is followed by Italy (2,451.8 tonnes), France (2,436.1 tonnes), Russia (2,219.2 tonnes), China (1,936.5 tonnes), Switzerland (1,040 tonnes) and Japan (765.2 tonnes) before India at the 10th spot.

EXTERNAL BENCHMARK BASED LENDING RATE

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday made it mandatory for all banks to link floating rate loans — to retail customers and loans to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) — to an external benchmark.

Some banks have already started to link home and auto loan rates to the repo rate, which is an external benchmark.

Banks can choose from one of the four external benchmarks — repo rate, three-month treasury bill yield, six-month treasury bill yield or any other benchmark interest rate published by Financial Benchmarks India Private Ltd.

The move is aimed at faster transmission of monetary policy rates.

The interest rate under external benchmark shall be reset at least once in three months

Adoption of multiple benchmarks by the same bank is not allowed within a loan category

Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill, 2019

Draft Bill which states that anyone who attacks a doctor at a hospital may be jailed for up to 10 years or fined ₹10 lakh.

High expectations, lack of understanding of limitations, patient load, and lack of professional counselling are all contributory factors. Such determinants of violence have to be addressed comprehensively

T N MANOHARAN COMMITTEE

Formed for the development of secondary market for corporate loans.

A secondary market is a marketplace where already issued securities – both shares and debt – can be bought and sold by the investors.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Online loan sales platform to conduct auctions.
2. Self-regulatory body of participants should be formed to finalise detailed modalities for the secondary market for corporate loans, including standardisation of documentation.
3. Setting up a central loan contract registry.
4. Amendments in regulations issued by SEBI, IRDA and PFRDA were needed to enable participation of non-banking entities such as mutual funds, insurance companies and pension funds.

SENSEX

NEWS: Concerns over the surge in crude oil prices and its impact on the economy kept equity investors on tenterhooks for a second straight session on Tuesday, with benchmark indices extending their slide.

On Tuesday, while equities saw their worst single-day fall since October last year, the Indian rupee registered its biggest single-day fall in over a month to close at its lowest level since November as weak domestic economic data, coupled with concerns over the U.S.-China trade tensions, made investors jittery.

The weakness in the Chinese currency amid trade tensions between the United States and China added to the currency's woes.

ABOUT BOMBAY STOCK EXCHANGE

Facts :-The Bombay Stock Exchange(BSE) is an Indian stock exchange located at Dalal Street, Mumbai.

Established in 1875, the BSE (formerly known as Bombay Stock Exchange Ltd.) Is Asia's first stock exchange.

The BSE is the world's 10th largest stock exchange . The BSE SENSEX (also known as the S&P Bombay Stock Exchange Sensitive Index or simply the SENSEX) is a free-float market-weighted stock market index of 30 well-established and financially sound companies listed on Bombay Stock Exchange. The base value of the SENSEX was taken as 100 on 1 April 1979 and its base year as 1978–79. On 25 July 2001 BSE launched DOLLEX-30, a dollar-linked version of the SENSEX.

How to calculate Sensex :-

SENSEX = Total Free float market cap (FFMC) of 30 companies today divided by Total (FFMC) of 30 companies on 1st April 1979

"Free float Market capitalization" =: Number of shares held by general public multiplied with Value of Each share on the given date in Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) Ex.suppose 70000 shares of Infosys are held by Public and value of each share is 150 Rs. Thus FFMC at present i.e todays prices = $150 \times 70000 = 10500000$ (105 lakhs)

This is FFMC for infosys, similarly we will calculate FFMC for all the 30 companies and add them

Thus suppose for all 30 companies total FFMC at present todays prices = 15 crore

But since base year is 1979 therefore we will calculate FFMC of these 30 companies at 1st april 1979 prices as well and add them , suppose we get FFMC at 1979 prices = 10 Lakh

Now SENSEX = Total Free float market cap (FFMC) of 30 companies today divided by Total (FFMC) of 30 companies on 1st April 1979 = $(15 \text{ crores} / 10 \text{ lakh}) \times 100 = 15000$

NCLAT

NEWS: The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), New Delhi, has junked an appeal filed by Shaji Purushothaman, director, Empee Distilleries Ltd., who had sought the setting aside of the bankruptcy proceedings against the company.

ABOUT NCLAT

- National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) was constituted under **Section 410 of the Companies Act, 2013 for hearing appeals against the orders of National Company Law Tribunal(s) (NCLT)**, with effect from 1st June, 2016.
- NCLAT hears appeals against the orders passed by NCLT(s) under Section 61 of the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (IBC)**.
- NCLAT is also the Appellate Tribunal for hearing appeals against the orders passed by **INSOLVENCY AND BANKRUPTCY BOARD OF INDIA** under Section 202 and Section 211 of IBC.
- NCLAT is also the Appellate Tribunal to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction issued or decision made or order passed by the **COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA (CCI)**.

SLOWDOWN IN THE GARMENT SECTOR

NEWS: Exports have declined from 1200 crore in 2017-18 to 1000 crore in 2018-19 till January.

Because of a slew of local, domestic and foreign factors,

1. Liquidity crunch due to delay in Goods and Services Tax refunds.
2. The Indian garments sector has been fast losing exports business to Bangladesh, China, Vietnam and Indonesia primarily on account of high labour cost and lack of technological advancement
3. Bangladesh and Vietnam garments exports to the U.S. were around three times compared to the India. In Europe too, Bangladesh had an edge over India since it enjoyed complete duty waiver.
4. Bangladesh garments industry also poses a serious threat to the domestic garments industry with the imports from the neighbouring country registering a growth of around 160% over the past few years
5. As a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Bangladesh enjoys duty-free import of raw material from India and China
6. The government has withdrawn or reduced certain tax benefits to the garments industry over the past two years putting it under financial stress. The Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS), under which Duty Credit Scrips were given to the entrepreneurs with the tax benefit of around 4%, has been withdrawn from August 1
7. The entrepreneurs are apprehensive that the government pushing for shift to piped natural gas will also add to the financial burden making them further uncompetitive in the market.

ENVIRONMENT

EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

1. increase in global temperatures
2. Global warming will drastically affect agriculture — the production of rice, wheat, maize and soya will decrease significantly.
3. Apart from malnutrition, climate change will give birth to newer infections and illness.
4. This imbalance will in turn affect the economy which will lead to conflict, war and global unrest.
5. Global warming is already melting the polar ice caps. If this continues, sea levels will rise and submerge coastal cities. These natural disasters will make millions of people climate refugees.

WHAT COULD BE DONE?

1. UN and climate experts have called for the declaration of a global climate emergency.
2. The Indian government should declare a climate emergency immediately.
3. Immediate policy changes should include reducing the usage of fossil fuels by half by 2030, encouraging the use of public transport, increasing forest area, promoting non-conventional energy, devising good water management policies, implementing the plastic ban stringently, banning the burning of waste, promoting innovative urban planning policies and reducing mass rearing of cattle for human consumption

PRELIMS BOOSTER

TEESTA RIVER

Flows through West Bengal, Sikkim and Bangladesh

Origin: Pahunri Glacier or Teesta Kangse

End: Bay of Bengal

FRIDAY'S FOR FUTURE

International movement of school students who take time off from class to participate in demonstrations to demand action to prevent further global warming and climate change.

GRETA THUNBERG THE SWEDISH STUDENT is the main force behind the campaign.

Between Friday and September 27, FFF, a worldwide youth-led movement against climate change spurred on by 16-year-old activist Greta Thunberg from Sweden, is marking Global Climate Strike, timed to be in sync with the Climate Action Summit that UN Secretary-General António Guterres will hold on September 23 to address the “global climate emergency”

PRELIMS BOOSTER

VEMBANAD LAKE

It is the longest lake in India.

Spanning several districts in the state of Kerala, it is known as Vembanad Lake in Alappuzha, Punnamada Lake

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

in Kuttanad and Kochi lake in Kochi.

Nehru Trophy Boat race is conducted in a portion of the lake.

It has been identified under the National Wetlands Conservation Programme.

Vembanad Lake is protected wetland under the Ramsar convention.

ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

NEWS: The Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority on Thursday said authorities in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana have not been taking enough steps to keep industrial sources of air pollution in check and many units in the two states have “not switched to cleaner fuels”.

ABOUT EPCA

Environment Pollution Control Authority is a Supreme Court mandated body tasked with taking measures to tackle air pollution in the National Capital Region.

It was notified in 1998 by Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change under the Environment Protection Act 1986.

Its mandate is to protect and improve quality of environment and prevent and control environmental pollution in the NCR.

It is also tasked with enforcing the Graded Response Action Plan in NCR as per the pollution levels.

IAS officer Bhure Lal is current chairman of the EPCA.

NILGIRI BIOSPHERE RESERVE :-

Declared as World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2012.
Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve includes Aralam, Mudumalai, Mukurthi, Nagarhole, Bandipur and Silent Valley

National Parks as well as Wayanad and Sathyamangalam wildlife sanctuaries.

Tribal groups like **Todas, Kotas, Irullas, Kurumbas, Paniyas, Adiyans** are native to the reserve.

Shola forests are found in the Western Ghats

GHARIAL:-

NEWS: The National Green Tribunal has directed the Madhya Pradesh government to submit within three weeks separate progress report of the departments concerned on the steps taken according to an action plan to conserve gharial habitat along the Son river.

According to the IUCN, their population has declined by 96-98% since 1946, despite the Centre declaring it a protected species under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Gharial is CRITICALLY ENDANGERED in the IUCN Red List.

Native to sandy freshwater river banks.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

ABOUT IUCN:-

International Union for Conservation of Nature is an international organization working in the field of NATURAL CONSERVATION and SUSTAINABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

It was established on 5th October 1948 and is located in Gland Switzerland.

It is best known for publication of IUCN RED LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES.

WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT 1972:- Wildlife Protection Act 1972 is an act of Parliament of India for protection of plants and animal species.

Act extends to the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

It has six schedules which give varying degrees of protection:

- **Schedule I and II:** provides highest degree of protection and offences under these are prescribed highest penalties.
- **Schedule III and IV:** also provide protection but penalties are much lower.
- **Schedule V:** includes **animals which may be hunted.**
- **Schedule VI:** endemic plants which are prohibited from planting and cultivation.

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL :-

NEWS: In a bid to facilitate petitioners from across the country to file their respective pleas online, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) will launch an e-court on Wednesday,

ABOUT NGT:

National Green Tribunal was formed under the **National Green Tribunal Act of 2010**. Act was enacted under the India's constitutional provision of **Article 21** which assures the citizens of India the right to healthy environment.

Tribunal has been created **for effective and expeditious disposal of the cases relating to environmental protection** and giving relief and compensation for damages to persons and property and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto.

Tribunal is mandated to make endeavour for disposal of applications or appeals filing **within 6 months** of the filing of the same.

Chairman of the tribunal must be a **serving or retired Chief Justice of a High Court or judge of the Supreme Court of India.**

The tribunal shall **not be bound by the procedure laid under the Code of Civil Procedure 1908** but shall be guided by the **principles of natural justice.**

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

New Delhi is the principle place of sitting of the tribunal and Bhopal, Pune, Kolkatta and Chennai are other four places of sitting of the tribunal.

Present NGT Chairperson is **Justice (Retired) Adarsh Kumar Goel.**

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

NEWS: A plea challenging the odd-even vehicle rationing scheme announced by the Delhi government was filed at the National Green Tribunal on Monday.

The plea filed by advocate Gaurav Bansal, however, challenged the effectiveness of the scheme, stating that reports from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) showed that the odd-even policy has had no impact on the ambient air quality in the Capital.

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

Central Pollution Control Board is a statutory organization under Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change. It was established in 1974 under the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974.

It serves as field formation and also provides technical services to the MOEFCC under the provisions of the Environment Protection Act 1986. It coordinates the activities of the State Pollution Control Boards and guide them and resolves disputes between them. CPCB is generally led by the career civil servant. Current acting chairman is S P Singh Parihar.

CHAMBAL:-Rises near Mhow in the Malwa plateau of Madhya Pradesh & Flows through MP, Rajasthan and UP

Gandhisagar Dam is on this.

Joins Yamuna:-Famous for badland topography

VULTURES:-In the late 1990s, the population of the vultures in the country had begun to decline sharply.

To study the cause of deaths of vultures, a Vulture Care Centre (VCC) was set up at Pinjore, Haryana

At present there are nine Vulture Conservation and Breeding Centres (VCBC) in India, of which three are directly administered by Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS).

The total number of vultures in these VCBCs is more than 700

Three species of vultures bred in the VCBC are the White-backed, Long-billed and the Slender-billed vulture.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The major reason behind the vulture population getting nearly wiped out was the drug Diclofenac, found in the carcass of cattle the vultures fed on. The drug, whose veterinary use was banned in 2008, was commonly administered to cattle to treat inflammation.

CONSERVATION STATUS: CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan

Declining population India has nine species of vultures, six of which are found in Assam



Vultures of the genus 'Gyps'

- Oriental white-backed (Assam, critically endangered)
- Long-billed (critically endangered)
- Slender-billed (Assam, critically endangered)
- Himalayan griffon (Assam, winter visitor from Himalayas)

Single representative species

- Egyptian
- Bearded
- Cinereous (Assam)
- King (Assam, critically endangered)

MAHANADI RIVER

1. Flows through Odisha and Chattisgarh
2. Origin: Sihawa in Raipur
3. 851km long
4. Hirakud Dam

SINGLE USE PLASTICS

Single-use plastics, or disposable plastics, are used only once before they are thrown away or recycled. These items are things like plastic bags, straws, coffee stirrers, soda and water bottles and most food packaging.

What are the alternatives to single-use plastic?

There are alternatives such as **GLASS, PAPER AND CARDBOARD**. But, they too leave a significant impact on the environment. While paper means cutting trees, glass leaves a significant carbon footprint and consumes a lot of power. Other elements that need to be looked into are recycling rate, safety, weight, transportability and affordability. Also, there are some products wherein there is no clarity on the alternatives.

MEASURES ANNOUNCED BY THE DELHI GOVERNMENT TO CONTROL POLLUTION

1. The odd-even vehicle rationing scheme. Studies conducted on the effect of the scheme say that when it is enforced, air pollution in Delhi is reduced by 10%-13%,
2. Distribution of free anti-pollution masks to citizens.
3. Mechanised sweeping and water sprinkling on roads,
4. Tree plantation, and
5. Special measures to be put in place at 12 pollution hotspots in Delhi.
6. Avoid bursting crackers

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

7. Two 'environmental marshals' in each municipal ward, the Delhi government, will also set up a dedicated control room to monitor complaints related to air pollution.

COP 14 OF UNCCD

NEWS: India proudly hosted the COP 14 in Noida from 2nd to 13th September 2019.

In an unprecedented global campaign to save productive land, country parties have agreed to make the Sustainable Development Goal target of achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030 a national target for action.

Delhi Declaration is an ambitious statement of global action by each country on how to achieve [Land Degradation Neutrality](#)

Neutrality is defined by the UN as ensuring that enough land is available across the world to ensure a sustainable future.

India had agreed, again on a voluntary basis, to restore 20 million hectares by 2020. Nearly 96 million hectares of land is deemed 'degraded' in India.

On August 14th, 2018, India claimed it had brought an area of 9.8 million hectares under restoration since 2011.

About UNCCD:

1. Established in **1994**.
2. It is **the sole legally binding international agreement linking environment and development to sustainable land management**.
3. It is **the only convention stemming from a direct recommendation of the Rio Conference's Agenda 21**.
4. To help publicise the Convention, **2006 was declared "International Year of Deserts and Desertification"**.
5. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is **the nodal Ministry for this Convention**.

EPCA

NEWS: Commercial vehicles with RFID tags which have not got their accounts recharged will have to pay double the toll amount at 13 border points in Delhi where RFID systems are installed

The EPCA had announced that cash transactions would not be accepted from vehicles that do not have accounts recharged, starting Friday.

ENVIRONMENT POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Environment Pollution Control Authority is a Supreme Court mandated body tasked with taking measures to tackle air pollution in the National Capital Region.

It was notified in 1998 by Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change Under the Environment Protection Act 1986. Its mandate is to protect and improve quality of environment and prevent and

Control environmental pollution in the NCR. It is also tasked with enforcing the Graded Response Action Plan in NCR as per The pollution levels. IAS officer Bhure Lal is current chairman of the EPCA.

BS NORMS:- NEWS: Honda has launched BS VI norms compliant Activa.

ABOUT BS NORMS:-

- Bharat stage norms are emission standards instituted by Government to regulate output of air pollutants from internal combustion engine equipment, including motor vehicles.
- The standards and timeline for implementation are set by Central Pollution Control Board (**CPCB**) under Ministry of Environment & Forests and climate change.
- The standards are based on European regulations and were first introduced in **2000**.
- Since then, various stages Bharat Stage compatible fuel and ungraded and modified vehicles were introduced throughout the country.
- The harmful emissions that are identified for regulations in different Bharat Stages (BS) are carbon monoxide (CO), unburnt hydrocarbons (HC), Nitrogen Oxides (nox) and Particulate matter (PM).
- Each stage specifies a certain limit on the pollutants released, Higher the Bharat Stage goes lesser it emits pollutants. BS-I, BS-II and BS-III stages were launched in 2000, 2005 and 2010 respectively.

BS VI Norms

- The BS-IV compliant fuels have Sulphur concentration of 50 parts per million (ppm).
- It will come down to 10 ppm in BS-VI compliant fuels and auto engines.
- It will result in lower level of harmful emissions and reduced incidence of lung diseases.
- Moreover, switch to BS-VI norms will also reduce concentration of carbon monoxide (CO), unburnt hydrocarbons, nitrous oxide (nox) and particulate matter from emissions.
- Will increase the prices of cars and other automobiles.
- The oil marketing sector has said the retail price increase for BS-VI fuel could be anything from a few paise per litre to ₹2.

YAMUNA RIVER SYSTEM

About Yamuna River System :- Yamunotri, which is north of Haridwar in the Himalayan Mountains, is the source of the Yamuna. The river Yamuna, a major tributary of river Ganges, originates from the Yamunotri glacier near Banderpoonch peaks.

The Tons is the largest tributary of the Yamuna.

Tributaries of River Yamuna:-

Tons River

Giri River

Hindon River

Betwa River

Dhasan River

Ken River

Sind River

River Chambal

Tributaries of Chambal River:

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Kali Sindh

Parwan River

Parwati River

Banas River

Kshipra River

PROBLEM OF LAND DEGRADATION

NEWS: India has raised by 10% (26 MILLION) the area of degraded land that the country has agreed to restore by 2030, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday.

India faces a severe problem of land degradation, or soil becoming unfit for cultivation. About 29% or about 96.4 million hectares are considered degraded.

Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said India had committed to rejuvenate 50 lakh hectares (5 million) of degraded land between 2021 and 2030.

This January, India became part of the “Bonn Challenge”, a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020, and 350 million hectares by 2030.

At the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) 2015 in Paris, India also joined the voluntary Bonn Challenge and pledged to bring into restoration 13 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020, and an additional 8 million hectares by 2030. India’s pledge is one of the largest in Asia.

Schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Soil Health Card Scheme, Soil Health Management Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana are seen as prongs to tackle this land degradation

India for the first time will be hosting the 14th session of the Conference of Parties (COP-14) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) from September 2 to 13 IN Greater Noida.

NILGIRI TAHR

NEWS: In more good news for the State animal, the Nilgiri tahr, its sightings in the Mukurthi National Park have risen from 568 in 2018 to 612 this year.

ABOUT NILGIRI TAHR

1. Endemic to the Nilgiri Hills and southern portion of Western Ghats in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala in Southern India.
2. It is the state animal of Tamil Nadu.
3. Endangered in the IUCN Red List.

NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

ABOUT NTCA:- The National Tiger Conservation Authority(NTCA) Was established in December 2005 following a recommendation of the Tiger Task Force.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 was amended to provide for Constituting the National Tiger Conservation Authority responsible For implementation of the Project Tiger plan to protect endangered Tigers.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority is set up under the Chairmanship of the Minister for Environment and Forests.

It approves the State Govt. Plans for Tiger Conservation.

Lays down Standards and Measures.

Also Prepares Report to be laid down in front of Parliament.

Project Tiger was Launched in 1973.

NTCA at Present is a Statutory Body under MOEF.

It conducts Tiger Census every 4 year.

KRISHNA RIVER

1. Second largest east flowing peninsular river
2. Rises near Mahabaleshwar in Sahyadri, Jor village Satara Maharashtra
3. 1401km
4. Koyna, Tungabhadra and Bhima, Panchganga (the Kasari, the Kumbhi, the Tulsi and the Bhogawati. Local tradition believes in an underground stream Saraswati which together with the other four streams make the Panchganga.) Are important tributaries
5. States: Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh
6. Bay of Bengal
7. Important Dams and Reservoirs on Krishna: Almatti Dam, Srisailam Dam, Nagarjuna Sagar

NARMADA RIVER

1. Narmada along with Tapi is the only long river which flow west and make estuary.
2. Narmada rises in the Amarkantak hills in Madhya Pradesh.
3. Flows in the rift valley between the Satpura in the south andvindhyan range in the North formed due to faulting.
4. Dhuadhar falls.
5. Sardar Sarovar Project has been built on this river.
6. States: Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra.
7. Tributaries: the Sher, the Shakkar, the Dudhi, the Tawa, the Ganjal from the le and the Tendoni, the Barna, the Kolar from the right.
8. Indira Sagar, Omkarehwar, Maheshwar, Bargi, Tawa project on Narmada river.

PANGOLINS

NEWS: Five people have been arrested by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau for trafficking of pangolins.

ABOUT PANGOLINS

1. Most trafficked mammals of the world
2. Threatened by poaching
3. CITES Appendix I
4. Nocturnal

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

ABOUT WILDLIFE CRIME CONTROL BUREAU:-Wildlife Crime Control Bureau is *a statutory multi-disciplinary body established by the Government of India under the moefcc, to combat organized wildlife crime in the country.*

Under Section 38 (Z) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, it is mandated:

- To collect and collate intelligence related to organized wildlife crime activities.
- To disseminate the same to State and other enforcement agencies for immediate action so as to apprehend the criminals.
- To establish a centralized wildlife crime data bank.
- Co-ordinate actions by various agencies in connection with the enforcement of the provisions of the Act.
- Assist foreign authorities and international organization concerned to facilitate co-ordination and universal action for wildlife crime control.
- It also assists and advises the Customs authorities in inspection of the consignments of flora & fauna as per the provisions of Wild Life Protection Act, CITES and EXIM Policy governing such an item.

UNEP has also awarded WCCB with Asia Environment Enforcement Award, 2018.

STANLEY RESERVOIR

1. Built on Cauvery river
2. Also known as Mettur Dam
3. Completed in 1934

CAUVERY RIVER:

- River **rises on Brahmagiri Hill** of the Western Ghats in south-western Karnataka state.
- It **flows in a south-easterly direction** for 475 miles through the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Before emptying into the Bay of Bengal south of Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, the river breaks into a large number of distributaries.
- Since the upper catchment area receives rainfall during the southwest monsoon season (summer) and the lower part during the northeast monsoon season (winter), the river carries water throughout the year with comparatively less fluctuation than the other Peninsular rivers.
- The river Kaveri makes the second biggest waterfall in India, known as Sivasamudram.
- The Kaveri's **main tributaries are the Kabani (Kabbani), Amaravati, Noyil, and Bhavani rivers.**

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

NEWS: Noting the high mortality rate of the Great Indian Bustard, the National Green Tribunal has directed the Centre to prepare a time-bound action plan within two months for protection of the birds.

Critically endangered by hunting and loss of its habitat.

Found in Pakistan also

Found in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan

State bird of Rajasthan

MEASURES TO REDUCE THE USE OF PLASTICS

NEWS: Union government is working on a multi-ministerial plan to discourage the use of single use plastics across the country, likely to kick off on October 2, Gandhi Jayanti.

The nodal Ministry for the scheme would be the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, which has been asked not just to ensure and enforce the ban on single use plastics but also finalise the pending policy for Extended Producer Responsibility, especially on milk packets.

The Department of Industrial Promotion is to ensure that all cement factories use plastic as fuel, while the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has been asked to ensure that not only is plastic waste collected and transported responsibly along National Highways but also all collected plastic waste is used for road construction.

Roads constructed using water plastic are durable against extreme weather conditions and are also cost-effective.

Since 70% of the total plastic waste in India is from urban areas, all 4,378 urban local bodies have been tasked with massive shramdaan for plastic collection and segregation of waste into recyclable and non-recyclable categories.

Gram panchayats have been asked to mobilise shramdaan on October 2 to ensure that all roads under the Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana, or rural roads programme, are built using plastic waste and segregate waste in rural areas.

ETHANOL BLENDING:-

NEWS: The Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved a higher procurement price for ethanol purchased by oil marketing companies for the ethanol blended petrol (EBP) programme, which will come into effect from December 1 for a period of one year.

The price of ethanol from C-heavy molasses will be increased from ₹43.46 per litre to ₹43.75 per litre. The price of ethanol from B-heavy molasses will be increased from ₹52.43 per litre to ₹54.27 per litre. The price of ethanol from sugarcane juice, sugar, and sugar syrup has been set at ₹59.48 per litre.

ETHANOL BLENDED PETROL (EBP) PROGRAMME:

1. It was launched by the Government in 2003 on pilot basis which has been subsequently extended to the Notified 21 States and 4 Union Territories to promote the use of alternative and environmental friendly fuels.
2. It aims at blending ethanol with petrol, thereby bringing it under the category of biofuels and saving millions of dollars by cutting fuel imports.
3. Ethanol Blended Petrol Programme is being implemented by the Ministry or Oil Marketing Companies (omcs).
4. This intervention also seeks to reduce import dependency for energy requirements and give boost to agriculture sector.
5. The National Policy on Bio-fuels has set a target of 20% blending of biofuels, both for bio-diesel and bio-ethanol.

Increased ethanol blending in petrol has many benefits like

1. Reduction in import dependency,
2. Support to agricultural sector,
3. More environmental friendly fuel,
4. Lesser pollution and
5. Additional income to farmers.

BRAHMAPUTRA RIVER

1. Origin in the Chemayundung glacier of the Kalish range near the Mansarovar lake.
2. In Southern Tibet it is known as Tsangpo. Rango Tsangpo is its major tributary in Tibet.
3. In China it is known as Yarlung Zangbo.
4. Forms a deep gorge in the Central Himalayas near Namcha Barwa.
5. It enters India west of Saidya town in Arunachal Pradesh.
6. Flowing Southwest it receives its main left bank tributaries Dibang or Sikang and Lohit thereafter it is known as Brahmaputra.
7. Major left bank tributaries: Burhi Dihang and Dhansari
8. Right Bank Tributaries: Subansiri, Manas, Kameng and Sankosh.
9. Brahmaputra enters into Bangladesh near Dhubri and flows southward.
10. In Bangladesh Teesta joins it on its right bank from where it is known as Yamuna.
11. It finally merges with Padma which falls in the Bay of Bengal.
12. Brahmaputra is well known for floods, channel shifting and bank erosion. This is due to the fact that most of its tributaries are large and bring large quantity of sediments owing to heavy rainfall in its catchment area.

PRELIMS BOOSTER

PANCHAGANGA

Panchganga (the Kasari, the Kumbhi, the Tulsi and the Bhogawati. Local tradition believes in an underground stream Saraswati which together with the other four streams make the Panchganga.

Tributary of Krishna river.

CHILIKALAKE :CHILIKALAKE is largest coastal lagoon of India.

Second largest coastal lagoon of world after New Caledonian Barrier Reef in New Caledonia.

It was the first wetland site to be designated under Ramsar Convention from India in 1981.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND DEFENCE

QUANTUM COMPUTERS

WHY IN NEWS?

Google had claimed to have achieved 'quantum supremacy'. In a line, it means that researchers at Google had solved a really difficult problem in seconds with the help of quantum computers which a supercomputer could not.

QUANTUM SUPREMACY refers to quantum computers being able to solve a problem that a classical computer cannot.

'Quantum supremacy' coined by theoretical physicist [John Preskill of the California Institute of Technology, United States.](#)

Google's quantum computer, named Sycamore, claimed 'supremacy' because it reportedly did the task in 200 seconds that would have apparently taken a supercomputer 10,000 years to complete.

WHAT ARE QUANTUM COMPUTERS? : Work on the principles of quantum mechanics.

Conventional computers process information in 'bits' or 1s and 0s, following classical physics under which our computers can process a '1' or a '0' at a time.

Quantum computers compute in 'qubits' (or quantum bits). They exploit the properties of quantum mechanics, the science that governs how matter behaves on the atomic scale.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

In this scheme of things, processors can be a 1 and a 0 simultaneously, a state called quantum superposition. While this accelerates the speed of computation, a machine with less than a 100 qubits can solve problems with a lot of data that are even theoretically beyond the capabilities of the most powerful supercomputers.

Quantum computers do not look like desktops or laptops that we associate the word ‘computer’ with.

Instead (and there are only a handful of them) they resemble the air-conditioned server rooms of many offices or the stacks of central processing units from desktops of yore that are connected by ungainly tangled wires and heaped in freezing rooms.

ADVANTAGE

1. Faster
2. Reduced processors and reduced energy

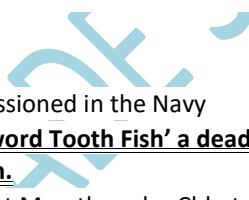


IS INDIA WORKING ON QUANTUM COMPUTING?

There are no quantum computers in India yet. In 2018, the Department of Science & Technology unveiled a programme called Quantum-Enabled Science & Technology (QuEST) and committed to investing ₹80 crore over the next three years to accelerate research. The ostensible plan is to have a quantum computer built in India within the next decade.

INS KHANDERI

1. Indigenously built submarine INS Khanderi commissioned in the Navy
2. The name Khanderi is inspired by the dreaded ‘Sword Tooth Fish’ a deadly fish known to hunt whilst swimming close to the bottom of the ocean.
3. Khanderi is also name of an island fort built by great Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.
4. INS Khanderi is the second of Kalvari Class diesel electric attack submarines of the Indian Navy. It has been built in India to the French Scorpene design and is the second submarine of the Project-75.
5. Built indigenously by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, INS Khanderi is a lethal addition to Navy’s conventional submarine arsenal and is designed for silent and stealthy sub-surface operations.
6. INS Khanderi is the follow-on to INS Kalvari, which was the first of the French origin Scorpene class submarines being indigenously constructed in India and commissioned by the Prime Minister in 2017.



INS NILGIRI

1. The first of the Navy's seven new stealth frigates, of Project17A.
2. Project 17A frigates is a design derivative of the Shivalik class stealth frigates with much more advanced stealth features and indigenous weapons and sensors.
3. In modern navies, **frigates** are used to protect other warships and merchant-marine ships, especially as anti-submarine warfare (ASW) combatants for amphibious expeditionary forces, underway replenishment groups, and merchant convoys.
4. 70% of India's trade by value and 95% by volume is taking place through the sea route and even a slight disruption of seaborne trade due to piracy, terrorism or conflict, could have serious repercussions on the economic growth and well-being of the nation.
5. Indian Ocean region is the epicentre of activity and the entire world sees Indian Navy as a Net Security Provider. He said, with growing stature of India in geo-political and geo-strategic dimension and increasing reliance of neighbors on us, it is the Navy's responsibility to provide credible security and peaceful and prosperous sea routes.

INDIAN OCEAN NAVAL SYMPOSIUM

About IONS:

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

What is it? IONS, the 21st century's first significant international maritime security initiative launched in February 2008, provides **a forum for discussion of regional maritime issues and promotes friendly relationships among member nations.**

It is a voluntary initiative that seeks **to increase maritime co-operation among navies of the littoral states of the Indian Ocean Region** by providing an open and inclusive forum for discussion of regionally relevant maritime issues and, in the process, endeavors to generate a flow of information between naval professionals that would lead to common understanding and possibly agreements on the way ahead.

Under the charter of business adopted in 2014, the grouping has working groups on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), Information Security and Interoperability (IS&I) and anti-piracy now renamed as maritime security.

The 35 **member nations** of the IONS are grouped into four sub-regions- South Asian, West Asian, East African and South East Asian and Australian.

There are **nine states with observer status**.

BIPOLAR DISORDER

WHAT IT IS?

Bipolar disorder is an illness that affects about 0.8% of the global population. Also known as manic-depressive illness, it is characterised by mood swings, irrational behaviour and phases of mania or extreme highs, and at other times, phases of depression.

WHY IN NEWS?

A study by researchers from the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), in Bengaluru, identifies two specific genes which may be related to bipolar disorder variants of two genes (KANK4 and CAP2) were the likely candidates.

KANK1, one of the KANK family of genes, has been implicated in cerebral palsy, spastic quadriplegia-2 and steroid resistant nephritic syndrome

CURCUMIN

A study carried out on mice models has found that curcumin in nanoparticle form has the potential to enhance the efficacy of BCG vaccine such that it confers protection against adult pulmonary TB.

Curcumin also helps in the activation of innate immune cells known as macrophages and dendritic cells. TB bacteria reside and grow inside the macrophages. But once activated by curcumin nanoparticles, the macrophages and dendritic cells clear the bacteria and also enhance the level of TB-specific acquired immune cells (Th1 and Th17 cells).

ASTRA MISSILE: Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile . First air to air missile developed by India

Range: 20-80km

HOG TECHNOLOGY

The Railways on Tuesday said it would move to a HOG system or Head on Generation technology for powering of trains, a move which will make the train journey quieter for travellers and more economical for the carrier.

"The power generator cars which used to make huge noise and emit fumes will no more be there. In HOG, the power will be drawn from the overhead electric supply.

URANIUM

Uranium is a very important element because it provides us with NUCLEAR FUEL used to generate electricity in nuclear power stations. It is also the major material from which other synthetic transuranium elements are made.

Naturally occurring uranium consists of 99% uranium-238 and 1% uranium-235. Uranium-235 is the ONLY NATURALLY OCCURRING FISSIONABLE FUEL (a fuel that can sustain a chain reaction). Uranium fuel used in nuclear reactors is enriched with uranium-235. The chain reaction is carefully controlled using neutron-absorbing materials. The heat generated by the fuel is used to create steam to turn turbines and generate electrical power.

Uranium is also used by the military to power nuclear submarines and in nuclear weapons.

Depleted uranium is uranium that has much less uranium-235 than natural uranium. It is considerably less radioactive than natural uranium. It is a dense metal that can be used as ballast for ships and counterweights for aircraft. It is also used in ammunition and armour.

WHAT DOES ANCIENT DNA SHOW ABOUT OUR HISTORY?

NEWS: Last Thursday, the journal Cell published a paper, 'An Ancient Harappan Genome Lacks Ancestry from Steppe Pastoralists and Iranian Farmers', which claimed that the inhabitants of the Indus Valley civilisation lacked the steppe-pastoralist ancestry which had brought Indo-European languages into South Asia.

The findings of the paper are based on the DNA sequencing of the remains of a woman found at Rakhigarhi in present-day Haryana.

The aDNA studies make clear that the genetic makeup of South Asian populations changed between 2000-1500 BCE.

Even so, what we can assert from these results is that our ancestor from Rakhigarhi was so different from us that no one alive today has her particular suite of admixed DNA ancestry.

SPECTRUM AUCTION

NEWS: India will launch its much-awaited spectrum auction later this year or early next year, a move that could see government mopping up ₹5.86 lakh crore at base price.

Auction will see the debut of fifth generation (5G) spectrum, which is expected to propel the telecom industry towards the next phase of growth, besides the sale of 4G spectrum.

However, the telecom industry is reeling under debt of almost ₹8 lakh crore, with leading operators like Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea having debts of ₹1.16 lakh crore and ₹1 lakh crore, respectively.

ABOUT 5G TECHNOLOGY

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WHAT IS 5G?

It is the next generation cellular technology that will provide faster and more reliable communication with ultra low latency.

A government panel report points out that with 5G, *the peak network data speeds are expected to be in the range of 2-20 Gigabits per second (Gbps). This is in contrast to 4G link speeds in averaging 6-7 Megabits per second (Mbps) in India as compared to 25 Mbps in advanced countries*

In April, **South Korea and the U.S. became the first countries to commercially launch 5G services.** South Korea claimed it was the first to do so, beating the U.S. by a couple of hours, a claim disputed by U.S carriers.

With 5G technology, consumers will be able to download data heavy content such as 8K movies and games with better graphics in just a few seconds

5G is expected to form the backbone of emerging technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT) and machine to machine communications, thereby supporting a much larger range of applications and services, including driverless vehicles, tele-surgery and real time data analytics.

The **ultra low latency offered by 5G makes the technology desirable for such use cases.**

Latency is the amount of time data takes to travel between its source and destination.

5G will extend the use of wireless technologies — for the first time — across completely new sectors of the economy from industrial to commercial, educational, health care, agricultural, financial and social sectors.

One of the primary applications of 5G will be implementation of sensor-embedded network that will allow real time relay of information across fields such as manufacturing, consumer durables and agriculture.

5G can also help make transport infrastructure more efficient by making it smart.

5G will enable vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication, making driverless cars, among other things, a reality.

5G is expected to create a cumulative economic impact of \$1 trillion in India by 2035,

DEFENCE ACQUISITION COUNCIL

NEWS: The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh here today and accorded approval for Capital Procurement for the Services amounting to approximately Rs 2,000 crores.

ABOUT DEFENCE ACQUISITION COUNCIL

- The DAC is Defence Ministry's highest decision making body for capital acquisition proposals forwarded by the Indian armed forces.
- HEADED by Defence Minister
- It was set up in **2001** as part of the post-Kargil reforms in defence sector
- It approves the long-term integrated perspective plan for the forces, accords acceptance of necessity (AON) to begin acquisition proposals, and grants its approval to all major deals through all their important phases.
- It also has the power to approve any deviations in an acquisition, and recommends all big capital defence purchases for approval of the Cabinet committee on security (CCS) headed by Prime Minister.

WATER IN EXOPLANET

Water has been discovered for the first time in the atmosphere of an exoplanet with earth-like temperatures that could support life as we know it

Eight times the mass of earth and twice as big, K2-18b orbits in its star's "habitable zone" at a distance — neither too far nor too close — where water can exist in liquid form,

Discovered in 2015, K2-18b is one of hundreds of so-called "super-earths" — planets with less than ten times the mass of ours — spotted by NASA's Kepler spacecraft.

Exactly how much remains uncertain, but computer modelling suggested concentrations between 0.1 and 50 %.

By comparison, the percentage of water vapour in earth's atmosphere varies between 0.2% above the poles, and up to 4% in the tropics.

Exoplanets.nasa.gov

An **exoplanet** or extrasolar **planet** is a **planet** outside the Solar System

BUREAU OF POLICE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Established on 28th August 1970
2. Formed for the purpose for the modernisation of police forces.
3. Four divisions: Research, Development, Training and Correctional Administration
4. To take direct and active interest in the issues
5. To promote a speedy and systematic study of the police reforms
6. To apply science and technology in the methods and techniques used by the police.
7. Ministry: Ministry of Home Affairs

DRDO

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) today successfully flight tested indigenously developed low weight, fire and forget Man Portable Antitank Guided Missile (MPATGM) in the ranges of Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh.

The test paves the way for the Army to have developed 3rd generation man portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile indigenously.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is an agency of the Government of India, charged with the military's research and development, headquartered in New Delhi, India.

It was formed in 1958

Ministry: Ministry of Defence

IODINE

NEWS: Tamil Nadu has the lowest consumption of iodised salt despite being the third biggest producer of salt in the country, according to a first-of-its-kind national survey conducted by Nutrition International in

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collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and the Indian Coalition for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCIDD).

Iodine is a vital micro-nutrient for optimal mental and physical development of human beings.

Deficiency of iodine can result in a range of disabilities and disorders such as goitre, hypothyroidism, cretinism, abortion, still births, mental retardation and psychomotor defects. Children born in iodine deficient areas may have up to 13.5 IQ points less than those born in iodine sufficient areas.

SALT PRODUCTION IN INDIA: Rajasthan, which is the second largest producer of salt, also figured among the five worst covered States. Gujarat produces 71% of salt in the country, followed by Rajasthan at 17% and Tamil Nadu at 11%. The rest of the country accounts for a mere 1% of salt produced.

India made fortification of salt with iodine mandatory for direct human consumption in 1992. This was relaxed in 2000 and then reimposed in 2005. In 2011, the SC, too, mandated universal iodisation for the control of iodine deficiencies.

The survey also revealed that 13 out of 36 States have already achieved Universal Salt Iodisation with.

VECTOR BORNE DISEASES

NEWS: The Municipal Council (NDMC) on Wednesday said that cases of vector-borne diseases this year have reduced in areas under its jurisdiction, compared to the last two years.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced the launch of a mega 10-week campaign Titled 10 Hafte, 10 Baje 10 minute Har Ravivar, Dengue Par War,

ABOUT VECTOR BORNE DISEASES

Vector-borne diseases are human illnesses caused by parasites, viruses and bacteria that are transmitted by mosquitoes, sandflies, triatomine bugs, blackflies, ticks, tsetse flies, mites, snails and lice.

Vectors are living organisms that can transmit infectious diseases between humans or from animals to humans. Many of these vectors are bloodsucking insects, which ingest disease-producing microorganisms during a blood meal from an infected host (human or animal) and later inject it into a new host during their subsequent blood meal.

Mosquitoes are the best known disease vector. Others include ticks, flies, sandflies, fleas, triatomine bugs and some freshwater aquatic snails.

1) Mosquitoes:-

A) Aedes:-

Chikungunya

Dengue fever

Lymphatic filariasis

Rift Valley fever

Yellow fever

Zika

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

B)Anopheles:-

Malaria

Lymphatic filariasis

C)Culex:-

Japanese encephalitis

Lymphatic filariasis

West Nile fever

2)Sandflies:-

Leishmaniasis

3)Ticks:-Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever

Lyme disease

4)Tsetse flies:-

Sleeping sickness (African trypanosomiasis)

CHANDRAYAAN 2

NEWS:

Notwithstanding the inability to establish contact with the lunar lander Vikram within the 14-day window that came to an end on Saturday, ISRO Chairman K. Sivan termed Chandrayaan 2 a huge success.

Scientists will receive 7.5 times data more than expected.

Chandrayaan-2's lander Vikram has been located on the lunar surface and it must have been a hard-landing.

The lander was spotted some distance away — possibly half a kilometre — from its intended touchdown point.

Three minutes before lunar touch down, it lost contact with the earth and went blank. It was 2.1 km above the moon's surface then, ISRO said soon after it detected the setback around 2 a.m.

An increased horizontal velocity might have cast the lander away from the planned site.

ABOUT CHANDRAYAAN 2

1. India's second lunar mission and first lunar lander rover mission.
2. Launched on July 22 from Sri Harikota (*sriharikota is a barrier island off the bay of bengal coast located in the nellore district of andhra pradesh, india. It houses the satish dhawan space centre, one of the two satellite launch centres in india.*) Using the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle.
3. Earlier its launch was cancelled due to leakage of liquid fuel in the crucial cryogenic upper stage of rocket GSLV Mark 111..
4. First moon mission was in 2008. India was the fourth country to reach moon. Chandrayaan 1 conclusively detected traces of water along with magnesium, aluminium and silicon.
5. First moon landing occurred on July 20, 1969, on the Apollo 11 mission which was launched on July 16.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

6. Chandrayaan 2 was expected to be the first mission to reach and study the south pole of the moon.
7. It is made up of an orbiter, a lander named 'Vikram', after Vikram A. Sarabhai, the founding father of space science research in India, and a rover named 'Pragyan', which means 'wisdom'.
8. Chandrayaan-2's 27 kg robotic vehicle Pragyan, which translates to 'wisdom' in Sanskrit, can travel up to 500 m from the landing spot on the Moon and leverages solar energy for its functioning.
9. The lander carries three scientific payloads to conduct surface and sub-surface science experiments, while the rover carries two payloads to enhance our understanding of the lunar surface,
10. Chandrayaan 2 will use rocket technology to soft land 'Vikram', carrying its 'Pragyan' rover in a suitable high plain on the lunar surface, between two craters, Manzinus-C and Simpelius N.
11. It will be the first soft landing of a probe by India.

WHAT DOES IT AIM TO STUDY?

1. Water or ice in the near South Pole of the moon
2. Examining its atmosphere
3. Studying lunar seismic activities
4. Mapping of the moon using high resolution cameras.

GENOME

NEWS: In a move to take cancer research to the next level and make treatment viable for people of different economic classes, the government has plans to set up a National Genomic Grid, which will study genomic data of cancer patients from India

The grid to be formed will be in line with the National Cancer Tissue Biobank (NCTB) set up at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras and will collect samples from cancer patients to study genomic factors influencing cancer and identifying the right treatment modalities for the Indian population.

ABOUT GENOME

A genome is the genetic material of an organism.

It consists of DNA. The genome includes both the genes and the noncoding DNA, as well as mitochondrial DNA and chloroplast DNA.

The study of the genome is called genomics

ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWER ACT

NEWS: Assam Government has extended AFSPA in Assam for six more months. Assam has been under the AFSPA since November 1990.

ABOUT AFSPA

- In simple terms, **AFSPA gives armed forces the power to maintain public order in "disturbed areas".**
- They have the authority to prohibit a gathering of five or more persons in an area, can use force or even open fire after giving due warning if they feel a person is in contravention of the law.
- **If reasonable suspicion exists, the army can also arrest a person without a warrant; enter or search a premises without a warrant; and ban the possession of firearms.**
- Any person arrested or taken into custody may be handed over to the officer in charge of the nearest police station along with a report detailing the circumstances that led to the arrest.

What is a "disturbed area" and who has the power to declare it?

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- A disturbed area is one which is declared by notification under **Section 3 of the AFSPA**. An area can be disturbed due to differences or disputes between members of different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities.
- **The Central Government, or the Governor of the State or administrator of the Union Territory can declare the whole or part of the State or Union Territory as a disturbed area.** A suitable notification would have to be made in the Official Gazette. As per Section 3 , it can be invoked in places where “the use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary”.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs would usually enforce this Act where necessary, but there have been exceptions where the Centre decided to forego its power and leave the decision to the State governments.

What's the origin of AFSPA?

- The Act came into force in the context of increasing violence in the Northeastern States decades ago, which the State governments found difficult to control. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Bill was passed by both the Houses of Parliament and it was approved by the President on September 11, 1958. It became known as the Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958.

Which States are, or had come under this Act?

- It is effective in the whole of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur (excluding seven assembly constituencies of Imphal) and parts of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Centre revoked it in Meghalaya on April 1, 2018. Earlier, the AFSPA was effective in a 20 km area along the Assam-Meghalaya border. In Arunachal Pradesh, the impact of AFSPA was reduced to eight police stations instead of 16 police stations and in Tirap, Longding and Changlang districts bordering Assam.
- Tripura withdrew the AFSPA in 2015. Jammu and Kashmir too has a similar Act.

TUBERCULOSIS

The disease tuberculosis (TB) has been with us since around 10,000 years ago. We in India have known it since ancient times. Sanskrit texts dating back to 1500 BCE knew it and called it Sosha.

Sushruta Samhita (ca. 600 BC) recommended that the disease be treated with breast milk, alcohol and rest.

The compendium called Madhukosa (ca. 900 AD) described the disease as Yaksma or consumption .That the disease is transmitted from person to person (even animals to humans) through sputum and cough was also known.

It was in 1882 that the German microbiologist H.H. Robert Koch discovered that the disease is caused by a germ he called Mycobacterium tuberculosis (or Mtb) for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1905.

Since then, drugs against TB have been successfully marketed, e.g., Rifampicin, Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide and the latest ones Pretomanid and Bedaquiline. The Indian government is using most or all of them to treat millions of TB cases every year.

Vaccine against TB: Bacillus Calmette-Guerin or BCG.

The protection lasts for as long as 20 years, as recent studies have shown. India has been using BCG vaccine with success for decades now.

PROBLEMS WITH BCG

1. It has come to be known that while BCG is good for children, it may not be as effective in adults
2. It is also not effective if a person is affected by other diseases (for example, AIDS) and thus immune-compromised

3. Also, occasionally people react to BCG with some fever and also skin itching at the injection spot, making it uncomfortable to use

RFID TAGGING

NEWS: The total traffic entering Delhi through at least eight border points, where Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) systems were installed since July, has gone down by 13% in the month of August compared to July, data from the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) shows.

The RFID system was installed with the purpose to effectively charge toll tax and environmental congestion charge and to thus encourage diversion of vehicles simply passing through Delhi. The project was carried out under the directions of the Supreme Court.

WHAT IS RFID TAGGING?

RFID tagging is an ID system that uses small radio frequency identification devices for identification and tracking purposes. An RFID tagging system includes the tag itself, a read/write device, and a host system application for data collection, processing, and transmission. An RFID tag (sometimes called an RFID transponder) consists of a chip, some memory and an antenna.

RFID tags that contain their own power source are known as active tags. Those without a power source are known as passive tags. A passive tag is briefly activated by the radio frequency (RF) scan of the reader.

GENETIC LINEAGE OF ANCIENT INDUS VALLEY SETTLERS

NEWS: Throwing fresh light on the Indus Valley Civilisation, a study of DNA from skeletal remains excavated from the Harappan cemetery at Rakhigarhi argues that the hunter-gatherers of South Asia, who then became a settled people, have an independent origin.

The researchers who conducted the study contend that the theory of the Harappans having Steppe pastoral or ancient Iranian farmer ancestry thus stands refuted

The researchers also suggest that there was a movement of people from east to west as the Harappan people's presence is evident at sites like Gonur in Turkmenistan and Sahr-i-Sokhta in Iran.

As the Harappans traded with Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Persian Gulf and almost all across South Asia, there was bound to be movement of people, resulting in a mixed genetic history. India had a heterogeneous population right from the beginning of settled life.

In Europe, ancient-DNA studies have shown that agriculture tended to spread through an influx of people with ancestry in Anatolia, in modern day Turkey.

ABOUT INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

1. Most accepted period: 2500-1700BC
2. John Marshall was the first scholar to use the term Indus Valley Civilization
3. Indus Civilization belongs to the proto historic period (Chalcolithic/ Bronze Age)
4. Rakhigarhi the largest Indian site of Indus Civilization.

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ANAEMLIA

NEWS: According to the 2015 National Family Health Survey, 47.2% of the women of reproductive age in Hailakandi were anaemic. The district, thus, has the most anaemic children below 5 years, adolescents and women of reproductive age in Assam.

But mothers, pregnant women and children in the district, data reveal, consume only 24.3% of the total iron-folic acid tablets that the district receives and distributes.

To get around the problem while launching Poshan Maah, or nutrition month, a few days ago, the district administration decided to produce roundish amla-gur candies with a dose of salt. Nutritionists involved in the campaign said amla, or gooseberry, is rich in Vitamin C and antioxidants, while gur, or jaggery, is rich in iron, vital vitamins and minerals that boost the immune system.

ABOUT ANAEMLIA

Anaemia is a condition wherein one lacks healthy red blood cells to carry adequate oxygen to the body's tissues. Anaemic children, therefore, are weak, fatigued and unable to grow to their full potential.

Iron deficiency is one of the major triggers

APACHE ATTACK HELICOPTER

NEWS: The Indian Air Force (IAF) on Tuesday inducted eight AH-64E Apache attack helicopters into service at the Pathankot Air Force Station.

The U.S.-made Apache is the most advanced multi-role heavy attack helicopter in the world.

Apache attack helicopters are being purchased to replace the Mi-35 fleet.

Alongside the capability to shoot fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missiles, air-to-air missiles, rockets and other ammunition, it has modern Electronic Warfare capabilities to provide versatility to helicopters in a network-centric aerial warfare. India is the 16th nation to select apache Built by Boeing Company.

Apache is the tribe of New Mexico in United States.

GAGANYAAN MISSION:-

Announced on August 15, 2018 Gaganyaan the country's first crewed mission is set to happen by **2022**.

Rocketman **Unnikrishnan Nair** will helm the mission.

Gaganyaan Mission is slated to take place at a near earth distance of 400 km.

Human Space Flight Center at ISRO headquarters in **Bengaluru** will be the hub of ISRO's manned mission.

ABOUT ISRO

- ISRO was formed on **15 August 1969**.
- It superseded the Indian National Committee for Space Research formed in 1962.
- It is managed by Department of space which reports to the PM of India .
- ISRO launched **India's first satellite Aryabhata** on 19 April 1975 from Soviet Union.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

- Rohini was the first satellite to be launched on Indian launch vehicle.
- Headquarter: Bengaluru
- Chariman: K Sivan

EL NINO

NEWS: El Nino like conditions are likely to resurge in September.

ABOUT EL NINO

El Nino is a complex weather phenomenon that appears once every three to 7 years bringing drought, floods and other extreme weather events.

El Nino is a warming of the Pacific Ocean between South America and the Date Line, centred directly on the Equator, and typically extending several degrees of latitude to either side of the equator.

It accompanies high air surface pressure in the western Pacific.

El Nino usually causes less than normal rainfall in the case of south-west monsoon.

However, it does the reverse in the case of the northeast monsoon. It causes above-normal rainfall during the northeast monsoon. Chennai Floods were caused due to heavy rainfall caused by strong NE Monsoon due to strong El-Nino.

ENDOSCOPIC SLEEVE GASTROPLASTY

Way to treat obesity

Artemis Hospital has become the first hospital in North India to introduce ESG, the newer and revolutionary procedure to treat obesity,

ESG is a procedure in which a flexible tube with endoscopic suturing device attached is inserted into the stomach through the mouth and fat is taken out. With no operative complications involved, the process is cost-effective. The process takes approximately 90 minutes with no anaesthesia required. Most patients are discharged the same day.

The endoscopic device reduces the size of the stomach without surgery. Apprehensions regarding cuts, surgeries and scars are no more involved in the treatment." The effect can be noticed over 6 months to one year and the patient loses around 60-80% of the excessive body weight.



MISCELLANEOUS

VIJAYNAGAR EMPIRE

Hampi was the capital of the mighty Vijaynagar Empire. Two brothers, Harihara and Bukka founded it in 1336. Krishnadevaraya (1509-1529) was the greatest ruler and controlled almost all of peninsular India south of Tungabhadra River.

BATTLE OF TALIKOTA

The battle of Talikota was fought between Sultanates of Deccan and Vijaynagar kingdom on 26 January 1565 AD. The Vijaynagar kingdom suffered a defeat in the battle fought near the villages of Rakshasi and Tangdi.

At the time of Battle of Talikota, Sadasiva Raya was the ruler of Vijaynagar kingdom. But he was a puppet ruler. The real power was exercised by his minister Rama Raya.

Its Consequences

- The battle of Talikota ended the prominence of Vijaynagar kingdom in South Indian politics.
- The Kingdom of Mysore, Nayakas of Vellore, Nayakas of Keladi in Shimoga declared their independence from Vijayanagar.
- The Muslim Sultanates of Deccan could not gain much out of this victory because they soon engaged themselves in fighting among themselves and fell easy prey to the Mughals.

AJANTA CAVES

The wall paintings of Ajanta caves belong to period from 2nd century BCE to 7th century CE.

Satavahanas, Vakatakas and Chalukyas dynasty are associated with Ajanta Caves

Location:-Maharashtra State near Aurangabad.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The subject matter of these paintings is almost exclusively Buddhist, excepting decorative patterns on the ceilings and the pillars. They are mostly associated with the Jatakas, collection of stories, recording the previous births of the Lord Buddha. The compositions of these paintings are large in extent but the majority of the figures are smaller than life size. Principal characters in most of the designs are in heroic proportions.

FORM: As they are drawn over many centuries and by artisans belonging to various guilds they show great stylistic variation along with maintaining certain common features.

The common features are

- **Centrality**
- **perspective drawing**
- **common physical features such as half closed eyes**
- **black outline with various body colours**

ISSUES: RAISED BY PM MODI IN MANN KI BAAT

1. Inequality
2. Celebrating the daughters #BHARATKILAXMI
3. Exam Warriors book written by PM Narendra Modi
4. US Open Winner Rafael Nadal. Runner Up: Daniil Medvedev. The way Medvedev heaped praise on his opponent after a defeat in a fierce duel makes him a living example of the true essence of the spirit of sportsmanship
5. Talked against TOBACCO CONSUMPTION. e-cigarette got banned in India. An e-cigarette is a type of electronic device unlike a typical cigarette. In an e-cigarette, the heating of nicotine-containing fluids creates a type of chemical smoke and this is the pathway through which nicotine is consumed. While we all understand the dangers of common cigarettes, a misconception has been generated about e-cigarette
6. Fit India does not mean that if we go to the gym for two hours every morning and evening, it will suffice! All these addictions have to be avoided to be a part of Fit India
7. On the coming 13th October, His Holiness Pope Francis will declare Sister Mariam Thresia a saint. Sister Mariam Thresia
8. She founded the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family
9. 150TH Birth Anniversary of Gandhi
10. 15 tourist destinations in India
11. 27th of September, was celebrated as World Tourism Day

TRIBES OF MEGHALAYA

Meghalaya is divided into autonomous councils in the names of the three major matrilineal communities — **GARO, KHASI AND JAINTIA**.

The minority tribes include the Hajong, Koch, Rabha, Boro and Mann.

HEART DISEASES

NEWS: Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) claim the lives of 17.9 million people every year, 31% of all global deaths.

World Heart Day observed on September 29.

According to doctors, millennials are at a higher risk of developing heart disease at a younger age than the previous generation.

The biggest cause of heart diseases among young people is wilful ignorance of healthy lifestyle, leading to the risk of uninvited heart attacks.

Lifestyle issues, such as smoking and substance abuse, family history, alcohol abuse, lack of exercise, sedentary lifestyle and poor dietary choices, were the leading causes of heart ailment at a younger age.

WHO is supporting governments around the world to scale up efforts to prevent and control CVDs through three technical packages: **MPOWER for tobacco control; SHAKE for salt reduction; and HEARTS for the strengthening of CVD management in primary health care.**

Deaths due to cardiovascular diseases in India increased from 1.3 million in 1990 to 2.8 million in 2016

SARSWATI SAMMAN

1. Given by K K Birla Foundation
2. Dr. K. Siva Reddy who won the 'Saraswati Samman' for his Telugu poetry collection 'Pakkaki Ottigilite'.

WORLD TOURISM DAY

1. 27th September
2. India is the HOST COUNTRY for this year.
3. **Organized by United Nations World Tourism Organization**
4. World Tourism Day was celebrated every year to create awareness on the social, cultural and economic values of tourism and to encourage global communities to travel, experience and learn to respect the diverse cultures of the world.
5. India had been placed at 34th position out of 140 economies, in the **World Economic Forum's 'World Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Rank' in 2019**.
6. THEME: 'Tourism and Jobs: A better future for all'
7. India is now the 7th largest tourism economy in the world and is among the top 3 destinations in the world for medical tourism.

ISHWAR CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR

1. Great scholar and reformer
2. His ideas were blend of Indian and Western Thought
3. In 1850 he became the principle of Sanskrit College.
4. Opened the Sanskrit College to non Brahmins to break the monopoly of priestly class on rituals
5. Devised a new Bengali primer
6. Started a movement in support of WIDOW REMARRIAGE which resulted in legalisation of widow remarriage.
7. Supported women education. As government inspector of schools organized 35 girls schools many at his own expense

KEELADI

NEWS: In a major turning point in the cultural historiography of the ancient Sangam Age, the Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department (TNAD) has stated that the cultural deposits unearthed during excavations at Keeladi in Sivaganga district could be safely dated to a period between 6th century BCE and 1st century CE.

The report titled, ‘Keeladi-An Urban Settlement of Sangam Age on the Banks of River Vaigai’, was published by the TNAD. The results from the fourth excavations suggested that the “second urbanisation [the first being Indus] of the Vaigai plains happened in Tamil Nadu around 6th century BCE as it happened in the Gangetic plains

Society in Keeladi had used animals predominantly for agricultural purpose

INDIA'S EMIGRANTS

NEWS: India has emerged as the leading country of origin for immigrants across the world, with 17.5 million international migrants in 2019 coming from India, up from 15.9 million in 2015, according to a dataset released by the Union Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) in New York

International Migrant Stock 2019, released by the UN DESA's Population Division,

The percentage of international migrants of the total global population has increased to 3.5% from 2.8% in 2000.

India saw a slight decline from 5.24 million in 2015 to an estimated 5.15 million in 2019 – both 0.4% of the total population of the country.

Bangladesh was the leading country of origin for migrants in India

MAMALLAPURAM

NEWS: Xi Modi informal summit will take place here.

ABOUT MAMMALPURAM

1. Also known as Mahabaliupuram or the Seven Pagodas
2. Important centre for Pallavas and named after Pallava king Narasimhavarman who was known as Mamalla.
3. Five ratha temples
4. Arjuna's penance or the Descent of Ganga.
5. Included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list are the seven temples.
6. Shore Temple

DEDICATED FREIGHT CORRIDOR

To ease the situation on the saturated Golden Quadrilateral, the Government of India has, in the first phase, approved construction of the two corridors, the WDFC with a length of 1504 route kms and the EDFC with a length of 1856 route kms.

The Indian Railways' Golden Quadrilateral comprises the railways network linking the four metropolitan cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Howrah, along with its two diagonals (Delhi-Chennai and Mumbai-Howrah), adding up to a total route length of 10,122 kms and carries more than 58 per cent of the railways' revenue earning freight traffic.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Some of the salient features of Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) Project are as:-

- Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor (EDFC) is from Ludhiana to Dankuni (1318 Kms Ludhiana to Sonnagar and 538 Kms Sonnagar to Dankuni) and Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (WDFC) is from Jawaharlal Nehru Port Terminal (JNPT) to Dadri (1504 Kms);
- Designed for a maximum speed of 100 Kmph;
- Substructure designed for an axle load of 32.5 tons and superstructure with axle load of 25 tons; and
- Capacity to run long haul train of 1500 meter length.

AGNES KHARSHIING

Meghalaya-based rights activist Agnes Kharshiing, awarded 11th International Hrant Dink Award along with Turkish activist against male violence Nebahat Akkoç.

Since 2009, the Hrant Dink Award is presented every year to individuals, organisations or groups that work for a world free from discrimination, racism and violence, and who take personal risks for achieving those ideals, break the stereotypes and use the language of peace and by doing so give inspiration and hope to others.

SABRIMALA TEMPLE

Sabrimala temple is a Hindu pilgrimage center located in the Periyar Tiger Reserve in the Western Ghat region of Pathanamthitta District of Kerala.

The famous pilgrimage is located in the 18 hills.

The shrine at Sabrimala is ancient temple of Ayyappan.

SAFDAR JUNG

1. Abul Mansur Mirza Muhammad Muqim Ali Khan better known as Safdar Jung
2. Nawab of Oudh after Saddat Khan , Burhan ul Mulk
3. Muhammad Shah gave him the title of Safdar Jung.

BRENT

NEWS: Following the attacks, on Saudi Arabia, Global Brent crude futures shot up more than 20% to \$66.91 per barrel.

Brent crude is a trading classification of sweet light crude oil that serves as a benchmark price for purchases of oil worldwide. This grade is described as light because of its relatively low density and sweet because of its low sulphur content.

Saudi Arabia is a major source of oil imports for India, accounting for nearly 18% of the 226 million tonnes of crude the country imported during 2018-19, according to data with the Ministry of Commerce.

India, which imports more than 80% of its crude oil requirement, is particularly vulnerable to geopolitical risks arising out of the oil producing countries.

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

- Tradition of Vedic chanting
- Ramlila, the traditional performance of the Ramayana
- Kutiyattam, Sanskrit theatre
- Ramman, religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas.
- Mudiyettu, ritual theatre and dance drama of Kerala
- Kalbelia folk songs and dances of Rajasthan
- Chhau dance
- Buddhist chanting of Ladakh: recitation of sacred Buddhist texts in the trans-Himalayan Ladakh region, Jammu and Kashmir.
- Sankirtana, ritual singing, drumming and dancing of Manipur
- Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab
- Yoga
- Nawrouz
- Kumbh Mela

BABUR

NEWS: Certain fringe groups defaced the name of Babur in Babur road saying he was invader and foreigner.

ABOUT BABUR

1. Founder of Mughal empire in India
2. He was a descendant of Timur from the side of his father and Chengiz Khan from the side of his mother
3. First battle of Panipat was fought between Babur and Ibrahim Lodhi on 21 April 1526.
4. Battle of Khanwa-1527 between Babur and Rana Sanga
5. Battle of Chanderi -1528- defeated Medini Rai
6. Died 1530 in Agra. His tomb is at Kabul
7. He adopted Tughluma and flanking party system and first to use GUN POWDER and artillery in India
8. Autobiography: Tuzuk-i Baburi in Turuki
9. Baburnama: translation of this book by Abdur Rahim Khanekhana

PULIKKALI is a recreational folk art from the state of Kerala. It is performed by trained artists to entertain people on the occasion of Onam, an annual harvest festival, celebrated mainly in the Indian state of Kerala

BLACK RICE

Black rice is known as chakhao in Manipur which is an Indian state on the eastern border with Myanmar, where desserts made from black rice are served at major feasts.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Black rice is a source of iron, vitamin E, and antioxidants (more than in blueberries).

The bran hull (outermost layer) of black rice contains one of the highest levels of anthocyanins found in food.

OPERATION BLUE STAR was the codename of an Indian military action carried out between 1 and 8 June 1984 to remove militant religious leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his followers from the buildings of the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) complex in Amritsar, Punjab.

LADAKH

1. Ladakh is a cold desert lying in the Great Himalayas, on the eastern side of Jammu and Kashmir
2. The Karakoram Range in the north and the Zanskar mountains in the south enclose it
3. Part of Kashmir or Northwestern Himalayas
4. Indus being the most important among them. The rivers form deep valleys and gorges. Several glaciers are found in Ladakh, for example the Gangri glacier
5. Due to its high altitude, the climate is extremely cold and dry. The air at this altitude is so thin that the heat of the sun can be felt intensely
6. Ladakh is also known as Khapa-chan which means snow land
7. BIRDS : Robins, redstarts, Tibetan snowcock, raven and hoopoe are common
8. The animals of Ladakh are wild goats, wild sheep, yak and special kinds of dogs
9. Leh, the capital of Ladakh
10. Khardung La pass is in the Ladakh range
11. Pangong Tso and Tso Moriri salt water lakes are in this region
12. Nubra Valley is located in Ladakh

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG

NEWS: Erode turmeric, that got the GI tag in March this year.

Araku Arabica Coffee was awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for its unique flavour and aroma. Araku coffee has a distinct intensity and rich aroma, thanks to the peculiar mix of climate in Araku — hot days and cool nights — coupled with naturally iron-rich soil.

Kodaikanal malai poondu (hill garlic) got a GI tag in July this year

Palani Panchamirtham first prasadam to get GI tag

ABOUT GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION TAG:-

A Geographical Indication or a GI is an indication used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin.

GI products can benefit the rural economy in remote areas, by supplementing the incomes of artisans, farmers, weavers and craftsmen.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The first product to get a GI tag in India was the Darjeeling tea in 2004.

There are a total of 325 products from India that carry this indication.

At international level, GI is governed by WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). **In India, Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection Act), 1999** governs it.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry,

The registration of GI is **valid for 10 years** after which it needs to be renewed.

Violation of GI tags is punishable offence under law.

What are the benefits of a GI Tag?

- Legal protection to the products
- Prevents unauthorised use of a GI tag products by others
- Helps consumers to get quality products of desired traits
- Promotes economic prosperity of producers of GI tag goods by enhancing their demand in national and international markets.
- The GI tag allows the producers of the objects to claim a premium for their products. Thus, it is financially beneficial to them.
- The GI tag can also pique interest of consumers and thus raise demand for a product again benefiting the producer.

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO PM

Dr Pramod Kumar Mishra, has been appointed as Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister of India.

Recently, he was conferred with the United Nations SASAKAWA Award 2019, the most prestigious international award in disaster management.

His publications include

- *The Kutch Earthquake 2001: Recollection Lessons and Insights*, National Institute of Disaster Management, New Delhi, India (2004).
- *Agricultural Risk, Insurance and Income: A Study of the Impact and Design of India's Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme*, Avebury, Aldershot, UK (1996).
- *Edited Development and Operation of Agricultural Insurance Schemes in Asia*, Asian Productivity Organization, Tokyo, Japan (1999).

BATTLE OF SARAGARHI

The Battle of Saragarhi was fought before the Tirah Campaign on 12 September 1897 between the British Indian Empire and the Afghan tribesmen. It occurred in the North-West Frontier Province. Sikh soldiers fought on behalf of the British Indian Army against Pashtun Orakzai tribesmen

Havildar Ishar Singh

4th Battalion of Sikh Regiment celebrates it as Saragarhi day

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

21 Jat Sikh fought against 10,000 to 12,000 Afghans.

GURU RAVIDAS

NEWS: The Supreme Court on Monday said a plea seeking permission for reconstruction of Guru Ravidas Temple in Tughlaqabad forest area here, which was demolished by the DDA on the apex court's direction, should be placed before the Chief Justice of India for "appropriate orders".

Ravidas was an Indian mystic poet-saint of the Bhakti movement during the 15th to 16th century CE. Venerated as a guru in the region of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, the devotional songs of Ravidas have had a lasting impact upon the bhakti movement.

Ravidas was COBBLER by caste.

He was the disciple of Ramananda.

ABOUT BHAKTI MOVEMENT

Bhakti means mystical devotion to one God.

Bhakti had its seed in Vedas but was not much emphasized during the earlier period.

It became popular with the rise of Mahayana Buddhism.

Bhakti movement became popular in south India during 7th-12th century.

In north India it became popular during 14th-15th century.

Namdeva, Ramananda, Kabir, Ravidas, Sena, Sadhana, Nanak Dev are the important Bhakti saints.

Bhakti movement played an important role in spread of vernacular languages.

JALLIANWALLAH BAGH MASSACRE

NEWS: The Archbishop of Canterbury, Reverend Justin Welby, on Tuesday visited the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar and said visiting the site of a horrific massacre was deeply humbling and provoked feelings of profound shame.

HISTORY

A large but unarmed crowd had gathered on 13 April 1919 at Amritsar (in the Punjab) in the Jallianwala Bagh to protest against the arrest of their popular leaders, Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr Satyapal. General Dyer, the military commander of Amritsar, decided to terrorise the people of Amritsar into complete submission.

General Dyer surrounded the Bagh (garden) with his army unit, closed the exit with his troops and then ordered his men to shoot into the trapped crowd with rifles and machine-guns. They fired till their ammunition was exhausted.

Rabindranath Tagore who renounced his knighthood in protest.

Hunter Committee was appointed to look into the excesses of Jallainwallah Bagh Massacre.

US OPEN

Winner (Men): Rafael Nadal defeated Daniil Medvedev

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Winner (Women): Teenager Bianca Andreescu became Canada's first Grand Slam singles champion on Saturday with a rollercoaster 6-3, 7-5 win over 23-time Major champion Serena Williams in the US Open final.

The 19-year-old Andreescu became the youngest Grand Slam winner since Svetlana Kuznetsova at the 2004 US Open.

JAGANNATH TEMPLE

NEWS: Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh wrote to Odisha's Naveen Patnaik on Saturday, urging him to retract his government's decision to demolish the Mangu Mutt in Puri, which is associated with Sikhism founder Guru Nanak.

The Mutt is among many structures within 75-metre radius of the Jagannath Temple that are being demolished to ensure safety and security of the 12th century shrine, following a decision of the Odisha government

ABOUT JAGANNATH TEMPLE

1. Located in Jagannath Puri
2. Construction started by King Anantavarman of Ganga Dyansaty in the 10th century.
3. Famous rath yatra
4. Image of Lord is made of wood which is replaced every 12 or 19 years.
5. One of the char dham other three being Rameshwaram, Badrinath and Dwarka

AMRITA DEVI BISHNOI

The Bishnois are considered as the first environmentalists of India. They are born nature lovers.

The famous 'Chipko Movement' was inspired by a true story of a brave lady called Amrita Devi Bishnoi who refused to let the kingsmen cut the trees. Her head was severed. Seeing their mother lay down her life for the trees, her daughters clung to them. Their heads were severed too. Agitated by the happenings, the neighboring village folk clung to the trees, as the massacre continued. More than 300 people were killed for non-obeyance and for trying to protect the trees.

When the king came to know of this, he was ashamed of his mistake. He apologized to the Bishnoi community, ordered to stop felling the trees and hunting of wild animals in Bishnoi areas and punished those who transgressed his orders.

This sacrifice not only inspired the "Chipko Andolan" by Sunder Lal Bahuguna but also the Government of India in the form of "Amrita Devi Bishnoi Smrithi Paryavaran Award" for contributing to environment conservation.

VALMIKI

1. Author of Ramayana
2. Known as Adi Kavi , the first poet, the first epic poem.

GURU RAVIDAS

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POLAVARAM PROJECT

NEWS: The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet at its meeting held on Wednesday ratified the pre-closure of the Polavaram Hydro Electric Project (PHEP) contract that was awarded to Navayuga Engineering Company Limited (NECL) for nearly ₹3,217 crore and gave its nod for reverse tendering, a process which has already been set in motion in spite of objections by the Polavaram Project Authority (PPA). The Cabinet also decided to recover the ₹780 crore mobilisation advance paid to NECL.

ABOUT POLAVARAM PROJECT

Polavaram project is an underconstruction multi-purpose irrigation **project** on the Godavari River in the West Godavari District and East Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh. The **project** has been accorded national **project** status by the Union Government of India and will be the last to be accorded the status.

GODAVARI RIVER

Largest Peninsular river system 1465 km long

Also called as the Dakshin Ganga

Rises in Nashik district of Maharashtra

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Flows through Maharashtra, Telangana, Chattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

Tributaries: Penganga, Indravati, Paranhita and Manjra.

ASSOCIATION OF WORLD ELECTION BODIES

NEWS: Meeting of AWEB being held in Bengaluru.

India will be the chair for 2019-21.

Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora assumed charge of the post of the Chairman of the Association of World Election Bodies

The **Association of World Election Bodies**, commonly referred to as 'A-WEB,' was established on October 14, 2013 in Song do South Korea.

A-WEB is the first global organization of election management bodies, and the membership currently consists of 115 members and 20 regional associations and organizations as associate members.

Under the slogan of 'Democracy to Grow for All Worldwide,' the A-WEB Secretariat provides training programs for election officials of member nations and undertakes country programs at the request of member organization, providing support during the election cycle to boost election management capacity

MAMMALLAPURAM

NEWS: Second informal summit between PM Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping to be held in Mamallapuram in October.

ABOUT MAMMALLAPURAM

1. Also known as seven pagodas or Mahablipuram
2. Located in Tamil Nadu
3. UNESCO World Heritage Site
4. One of the two major port cities by the 7th century within the Pallava kingdom.
5. It became a centre of a group of battle monuments carved out of rock.
6. Rathas temple
7. Shore Temple
8. Descent of the Ganges or Arjuna's penance

SNAKEBOAT RACE

1. Held in Punnamada Lake
2. Nehru Trophy given to the winner
3. Nadubhagam Chandan has won the first Nehru Trophy in 1952 and it has won again in 2019 after 67 years.

EDITORIALS :- IMPORTANT CONCEPT FOR MAINS

ISSUE: CRITICISM OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION

Government will provide piped water to all rural households by 2024 under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

CENTRAL ARGUMENT: This will be a costly and futile exercise since over 70% of India's surface water (rivers and lakes) and groundwater is polluted.

REASONS

1. The plan will require digging up the whole country and squandering lakhs of crores away for little gain.
2. Since surface and groundwater is unfit for domestic use, Indians will soon need reverse osmosis (RO) for home, which will only burden the country's already expensive water programme.

WHAT COULD BE DONE?

There are two non-invasive schemes which can perennially provide natural mineral water and unpolluted bulk water for our cities

Yamuna Palla floodplain scheme for Delhi in 2009. It has been actively pursued by the Delhi Jal Board and provides quality water to more than a million people in Delhi.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Floodplains can be secured by planting organic food forests or fruit forests which don't demand or consume much water.

The other source of unpolluted water is natural mineral water that underlies forests. This water is of the highest international quality.

We need to declare the floodplains and forest aquifers as water sanctuaries similar to national parks and tiger reserves. If not, we will lose this amazing gift of natural infrastructure, as has already happened in some cases.

ISSUE: PRIME MINISTER SPEECH AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PM highlighted the WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT schemes he had started.

PRAISE BY THE EDITORIAL

India's achievements in housing, sanitation, health care, banking and education are significant.

His tenacious public campaign on issues such as water conservation, environment and girls' education has brought these issues to the centre of the development discourse and he deserves full credit for it.

Emphasized on UNITY IN DIVERSITY.

CRITICISM BY THE EDITORIAL

But his UNGA speech sits at odds with his campaign speeches at home, and corresponding administrative measures.

The claim that there can be a neat insulation of internal issues of a country from global concerns is antithetical to the rationale of all global institutions, particularly the UN.

Human rights, democracy and liberty are as much global questions as climate change, health and terrorism. Selective globalisation is difficult to sustain or defend.

SUGGESTIONS

The best — and the only way — to keep domestic issues domestic is to resolve them through internal dialogue and accommodation.

Tamil poet Kaniyan Pungundranar's verse **Yaadhum Oore Yaavarum Kelir** — all places are our own, everyone is our kin — that Mr. Modi cited to underscore India's ancient faith in universalism is a tenet far from fulfilment, but worth striving for. Deviation from it could be detrimental, and would have consequences at home and abroad.

ISSUE: FAILURE OF THE PMC

Thousands of customers of the Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative Bank (PMC), who were told last Tuesday by the Reserve Bank of India that no more than ₹1,000 could be withdrawn from their accounts for a period of six months.

WHY?

Financial irregularities, failure of internal control and systems of the bank and under-reporting of exposures' This should allow 60% of its depositors to recover their entire savings.

The RBI must still explain what made it increase the withdrawal limit ten-fold within 48 hours, lest it be seen as a politically weighted move ahead of the Maharashtra election.

Perhaps the only major gain from demonetisation was the deployment of public savings into the formal financial sector. But failures like PMC Bank can quickly erode that. Time-bound, transparent action to fix the PMC mess and a systemic overhaul is necessary to prevent cash from moving back below household mattresses.

ABOUT COOPERATIVE BANKS

1. Called so because they are organized under the Cooperative Credit Societies law of the states.
2. First such bank was established in 1904.
3. State Cooperative Bank, Central Cooperative Bank and Primary Agriculture Credit Societies

ISSUE: CRITICISM OF KASHMIR POLICY OF MODI GOVERNMENT

WHAT HAS HAPPENED? Modi government has revoked the special status of Jammu and Kahsmir saying that it will result in better SECURITY, ECONOMIC AND WELFARE MEASURES.

On Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), the official argument is that the dilution of Article 370 and demotion of the State to two Union Territories will enable better security.

It is also argued that preventive detentions, curfews and a communications lockdown are necessary to prevent a security deterioration.

The two appear contradictory: if the first slew of measures enables better security, what was the need for the second slew of measures? Conversely, if the second leads to better security then what was the need for the first?

DECLINE IN NUMBER OF CASUALTIES

From a high of 5,938 incidents of terrorist violence in J&K in 1995, with 2,600 casualties, violence has steadily declined to 365 incidents in the first nine months of this year, with 237 casualties. Surely, these figures do not suggest a major or even imminent security threat.

REAL REASON FOR THIS LOCKDOWN: In fact, the Modi administration acknowledges that the lockdown was necessary because widespread protests against its new J&K policy were anticipated.

Two questions arise. First, if the administration knew their new J&K policy would be widely, even violently, protested, why did they adopt it? Second, has this new policy made our security more vulnerable.

INEFFECTIVENESS OF THESE LOCKDOWNS

Even with the lockdown, security forces have not been able to plug the gaps along the border with Pakistan: 60 terrorists have reportedly infiltrated in the past month.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Given the widespread resentment not only at what has been done but also the way in which it was done, even the scant support our troops received from local communities may evaporate — indeed the threat of attacks from the rear is likely to rise exponentially.

Beginning 10 years ago, cross-border militants had started becoming unwelcome in the Valley and their sanctuaries were drying up. They might now have renewed sustenance. Moreover, with the suspension of mobile telephony, intelligence on militancy will be more difficult to collect.

Our security forces lack the range of protective equipment needed to deal with internal security, and their spans of duty are so long as to increase the stress that makes so many trigger-happy. We are yet to hear how the Modi administration plans to deal with these challenges.

As violence mounts, so will our security costs, both human and economic. Is this a price we are willing to pay for what may turn out to be a self-generated security threat?

ISSUE: MEDIATION ON THE AYODHA ISSUE

BACKGROUND: The Supreme Court earlier this month permitted mediation to resume in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute after its three-member mediation panel informed that some Muslim and Hindu parties were keen on going back to the negotiating table to find an amicable way out of the imbroglio.

Author praises the Supreme Court for allowing mediation and concurrently hearing the case.

CHANGE IN THE STANCE OF SUPREME COURT

Author says that the court was quoted in the media as suggesting that the case was not about a portion of disputed land but “about religious sentiments”.

Renowned jurist Nani Palkhivala is also on record stating: **Courts can decide only questions of fact or of law. They cannot decide, and should never be called upon to decide, questions of opinion or belief or political wisdom.**

WHAT COULD BE DONE?

The Hindu parties, notwithstanding their unshakeable views on the exact birthplace of Lord Rama, must try to “heal the minds and hearts” of the Muslims by accepting that what happened on December 6, 1992 was a gross violation of law.

Other confidence-building measures may include a legally enforceable assurance to Muslims that, after the peaceful resolution of this issue, no Hindu organisation would stake claim to any other “disputed” Muslim place of worship in India.

Swami Vivekananda, who pointed out more than a century ago: “For our own motherland, a junction of the two great systems, Hinduism and Islam — Vedanta brain and Islam body — is the only hope. I see in my mind’s eye the future perfect India rising out of this chaos and strife, glorious and invincible, with Vedanta brain and Islam body.”

ISSUE: INCREASING INFLUENCE OF CHINA IN SRI LANKA

This article has highlighted the GROWING INFLUENCE OF CHINA IN THE REGION.

Author highlights that for the last 5 years despite having pro Indian government in Sri Lanka Chinese influence has increased in Sri Lanka.

EVIDENCE:-Hambantota port is being built by China. When it becomes a reality, it will stand beside the Colombo port, which serves as a major transshipment hub for India.

A Chinese company has got Hambantota on lease for 99 years along with associated land of 15,000 acres

Sri Lanka is a member-country of the Belt and Road Initiative.

According to the 2018 annual report of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, imports from China accounted for 18.5%, just a little less than the 19% from India.

Apart from clinching a joint venture deal in May with Japan and Sri Lanka to develop the East Container Terminal at the Colombo Port, India cannot boast of having taken up any major infrastructure project in Sri Lanka.

There seems to be little progress in India's proposals to develop the Palaly airport in the North, (where commercial flight services in a limited way are expected to be launched shortly) and acquire a controlling stake in the Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport. And for all practical purposes, the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement, an improved version of the existing bilateral Free Trade Agreement, has been shelved.

SUGGESTION

When Sri Lanka gets a new President in two months, India must sit with that leader not just to get expeditious approvals for all the pending infrastructure projects but also contribute to a holistic development of Sri Lanka's youth.

Also, New Delhi should sustain its interest on developmental issues concerning the hill country Tamils, regarded as the most backward in Sri Lanka.

ISSUE: ADVICE GIVEN BY OIC TO REVOKE ARTICLE 370

Editorial says that advice might not be worth the paper it is written on.

This advice allows the Pakistani Prime Minister to tell its home audience that his trip has been successful.

It is also extremely doubtful if the statement issued by the Contact Group reflects faithfully the national positions of the individual member states. The United Arab Emirates, for instance, conferred the Order of Zayed, its highest civilian award on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, more than a week after New Delhi's moves on Article 370, and declared that Kashmir was India's internal matter.

The OIC's record of conflict resolution when it comes to issues between OIC member states is poor. So they should mind their own business.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The organisation, constituted on religious lines, but seeking to fulfil geopolitical interests, needs reforms from within. It could begin by asking Pakistan to change its state policy on terrorism.

India, though not a part of the OIC, has the second largest numbers of Muslims in the world, perhaps more than Pakistan and some of its most ardent backers put together.

The OIC would do a lot better if it did something useful to better the lot of its members or mediate between warring Saudi Arabia and Yemen, for instance.

ISSUE: SUPREME COURT ABDICATING ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT FREEDOMS AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

BACKGROUND: Neglect of Habeas Corpus writs filed from Jammu and Kashmir.

Author highlights that J&K high court is not functioning for last 50 days and it is being called as an aberration.

Author says that Supreme Court is often grave of freedom. Throughout history the court has consistently seen individual liberty as an expendable value.

EVIDENCES

1. In ADM Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla SC ruled that fundamental rights could be validly negated during a period of the Emergency.
2. Upholding of legislation like The Preventive Detention Act, 1950; The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 or (AFSPA); Maintenance of Internal Security Act, 1971; The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1985, or TADA; and The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002.
3. In A K Gopalan case Supreme Court upheld the preventive detention without trial.
4. Even more damagingly, the court held that the guarantee of a right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 could be denied so long as there existed a validly enacted piece of legislation.
5. Gopalan's logic persisted through the ensuing decades when the court upheld the TADA and the AFSPA, respectively, in Kartar Singh (1994) and in Naga People's Movement of Human Rights (1997).

ISSUE: CHINA NEPAL RELATIONS

BACKGROUND: For the first time in last 23 years Chinese President will be visiting Nepal.

WHY CHINA AND NEPAL ARE COMING CLOSER?

Due to blockade imposed by India in 2015 when India was dissatisfied with the constitution of Nepal.

It was an act that alienated a whole generation of Nepali youth, and Nepali leaders played the nationalism card to reach out to China.

Chinese interest grew after the earthquake and the blockade.

Nepal signed agreements with China to ensure it was not "India locked", in turn opening transit and trade opportunities through its northern border.

Author says that there is little expectation about the upcoming visit apart from keeping nationalism alive from an electoral point of view: in general about creating doubts about India to making anti-India statements.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

BASIC LACUNA OF NEPALI FOREIGN POLICY: Failure to develop partnership status like Bangladesh developed with India and China. Nepal's engagements with the outside world have been more of theatrics, speeches and little action.

Author highlights that Communism in Nepal is the version of West Bengal Communism not the Chinese communism.

EVIDENCE

1. First, the communist movement like the one in West Bengal has been about multiple factions that keep splitting and coming together rather than it being about one single and unified party. At one point in time, people had lost count of how many communist parties in Nepal were overground and underground.
2. Second, the communist movement in both India and Nepal has been about rent-seeking on positions and selling rhetoric and hypocrisy.
3. Third, Nepali communists, especially the former insurgents, still talk about Mao and the Maoist ideology. In China, Mao is a word best avoided and is jarring for the current key leadership. Finally, in China, over the years, when a majority group within the party decides on an issue, people with opposing views accept the decision and do not challenge them in the future. You can debate on an issue but after a decision is made, you abide by it. Nepali communism has been about continuous infighting and creating fiefdoms rather than accepting an individual's leadership.

WAY AHEAD

Till there is a complete recalibration in Nepal's long-term vision of development, a willingness to implement investor-friendly policies and enable concrete steps towards efficiency, President Xi's visit will be once again be one made by a "friendly neighbour or cousin", who brings some gifts, exchanges pleasantries and then moves on.

ISSUE: PROBLEMS FACED BY THE CHILDREN OF KASHMIR

EVIDENCE:

Around 1.8 million adults in Kashmir Valley — 45% of its population — showed symptoms of mental illness in 2015, according to Doctors Without Borders. Thus, even prior to the incidents of August 5, the disastrous results of a history of violence, illegal detentions and torture in the Valley were visible on the region's children.

Media has reported illegal detention of scores of children, many of them whisked away at midnight by law enforcement officers with no record of their arrests, making it difficult to trace them.

These disappearances are in clear breach of the Supreme Court's directions in the D.K. Basu case, where the court said that the next of kin have to be informed of every such arrest and the reasons thereof.

Between 1990 and 2005, a total of 46 schools were occupied by the armed forces and more than 400 schools gutted between 1990 and 2005, according to a 2006 report of the Public Commission on Human Rights. Such destruction of educational infrastructure, in addition to the unlawful detentions, leaves a lifelong impact on children, perpetuating a cycle of trauma, fear and bitterness.

In 2018, the Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) found through Right to Information applications that hundreds of children had been detained under the PSA between 1990 and 2013. In many of these cases, the police/magistrates had no procedure to verify the age of the detainees and minors were kept

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

in custody along with adult criminals and released only after judicial intervention. About 80% of these detentions were held illegal by courts.

JUDGEMENTS WHICH ARE BEING VIOLATED DUE TO ILLEGAL DETENTION OF CHILDREN

In 2003, the Madras High Court in *Prabhakaran v. State of Tamil Nadu* held that the Juvenile Justice Act is a comprehensive law and overrides preventive detention laws enacted for national security.

Earlier, in 1982, the Supreme Court had in the *Jaya Mala* case condemned the preventive detention of a student and observed that young people, even if their acts are misguided, cannot be punished with a sledgehammer.

CONCLUSION: No curbs on democratic rights on the promise of development can justify inhumane treatment of children. We need to speak out for the children of Kashmir or we will also be complicit in the ‘aggravated crime’ by the state apparatus. The preventive arrests should be stopped lest the children of Kashmir go missing forever.

ISSUE: WEAKENING OF INSTITUTIONS

BACKGROUND:

The credibility of three such important institutions — the Reserve Bank of India (RBI); the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO); and the Planning Commission/NITI Aayog — has taken a beating in recent times.

UNDERMINING OF RBI

The RBI, which was clamouring for more autonomy, has been systematically brought under the ambit of the Central government. Starting from the sidelining of the central bank on the important issue of currency demonetisation, the attempt has been to steadily erode the central bank’s independence.

A three-pronged strategy resulted in this —

first, the RBI was bypassed on matters relating to currency;

second, its role as regulator of the banking sector was questioned when banks faltered; and,

finally, its reserves were siphoned

The net result has been that the RBI has been reduced into an institution which presides over a limited space of monetary policy, that is, inflation targeting.

UNDERMINING OF CSO

In an era of ‘big data’, we find that India’s official data procuring and publishing agency has been crippled. Often we find that the official series, ranging from national accounts to unemployment, has been smothered with repeated revisions and change of data definitions. When data that needs ‘approval’ before release, as in the case of the unemployment data, questions are bound to arise on the credibility of the numbers.

IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONS: Nobel laureate Oliver Williamson said ambitions of economic development practitioners and reformers are often not met because institutions are persistently neglected in the planning process.

Institutions are formed to reduce uncertainty in human exchange. Together with the technology employed, they determine the costs of transacting (and producing). While the formal rules can be changed overnight, as has been practised by the present government, the informal norms change only gradually.

ISSUE: RATE CUTS ANNOUNCED BY THE FINANCE MINISTER

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced deep cuts in corporate taxes and roll-back of some market-unfriendly proposals in the Budget she presented in July.

Corporate tax rate has been cut to 22% from 30% for companies that do not avail exemptions — this means that the effective tax rate for such companies will fall from 34.94% presently to 25.17% which is a significant saving indeed.

For companies that are incorporated after October 1 and whose projects will be commissioned before March 31, 2023, the tax rate will be as low as 15% (compared to 25% currently). The effective tax rate for this category of companies will be 17.01%, about 12 percentage points lower than what prevails now.

ADVANTAGE

Generate private investment

Attract foreign investors looking for alternative sites for their global value chains disrupted now by the tariff war between China and the U.S.

CHALLENGES

revenue foregone is ₹1,45,000 crore.

The corporate tax cuts are certainly good for the economy in the medium term but in the short term, until revenues bounce back, the government has a fiscal problem on its hands.

ISSUE: LINKING OF MGNREGA WAGES WITH CPI (AL)

Government has decided to link wages under the Act to an updated inflation index, which will be revised annually.

The basket of items whose prices are tracked for constructing the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL), for instance, has not been updated for at least three decades.

Rural expenditure patterns have altered significantly in the intervening period, making space for higher spending on services such as education, transport and, of course, telecom. But two-thirds of the dated inflation index is still driven by food prices, which may effectively end up understating the price pressures facing rural households.

Giving a fillip to the rural economy as a critical tool to combat the headwinds of the slowing economy. The slowdown narrative (and the Centre's measures to address it) so far has been dominated by urban India's consumption crimp and easing the corporate tax structure, but the distress in villages where incomes are more vulnerable is more disconcerting.

ISSUE: USELESSNESS OF THE ULTRA NATIONALISM

BACKGROUND: PM Modi and Trump addressing the rally of Indian Americans in the Houston.

Author highlights that Mr. Trump and Mr. Modi lead politics that seeks to assert and privilege a national identity by subordinating particularities, and rebuild their nations into puritan, unitary communities

This rally will be a reflection for them to identify that people could have multiple identities.

The India of Mr. Modi's Hindutva dreams, advancing rapidly under his rule, will be "one nation" with one people, one language, one religion, one election, one market, and one everything — a homogeneous, Hindu utopia.

The Houston rally could be an opportunity for both leaders to see up close the fallacy of this pursuit. It will be one people cheering leaders of two countries that they divide their loyalty for. The irony is that Mr. Modi and Mr. Trump ride populism that targets various minorities for fractured loyalties.

DOUBLE SPEAK OF PM MODI

Seeking absolute and unalloyed loyalty to the nation from the entire population, expressed as unquestioning fealty to the regime, is the fulcrum of Mr. Modi's politics within India, but abroad he seeks and encourages the Indian diaspora to maintain dual loyalties — for India and their host countries.

Mr. Trump has taken a leaf out of the book of their common friend and the leader of the only democracy in West Asia, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who tried to use his projected proximity with Russian President Vladimir Putin to drum up support for himself among Russian-speaking Israeli citizens in his re-election bid. He lost.

Indian American Hindutva groups, largely upper caste Indians, are advocates of minority rights in the U.S., but simultaneously and contradictorily supportive or uncritical of cultural supremacism and majoritarianism in India.

Mr. Modi's followers in the U.S. want American Democrats to fight back Mr. Trump's cultural supremacism that belittles them and their culture.

But they want American Democrats to keep their mouths shut about the rights of those living in India for generations — whether in Kashmir or those who are arbitrarily being asked to prove their citizenship though they never took an oath abjuring and renouncing India.

Hyphenated identities have sat well within Indian nationalism and one could be a Malayali or Tamil or Kashmiri and still be Indian with all rights and privilege until the recent upsurge of Hindutva began to advocate the pre-eminence of a Hindu-Hindi, religious-linguistic framework for its unitary project.

ISSUE: PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICE

Parliament, which controls where and how money flows into our government and our country.

Besides the few Ministers privy to expertise from the civil service, most parliamentarians do not benefit from timely access to good quality analysis on economic, fiscal or financial matters.

These bodies help shape the debate and discourse around the state of the nation's finances and the fiscal implications of significant proposals

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Will allow evidence-based discussion around important policies that affect the trajectory of our Republic, discussions which can quickly blur the line between fact and fiction.

A question — and a reasonable one — that often arises is the necessity of such an office when we already have an auditor general. However, this misunderstands the role the auditor general performs, which is to provide retrospective audits and analysis of the financial accounts and performance of government operations.

SITUATION ACROSS THE WORLD

Internationally, similar offices have been established across the world, with the most prominent being the Congressional Budget Office in the United States which provides impartial advice to both upper and lower houses of the legislature. Offices in the Netherlands, Korea, Australia and the United Kingdom have also been established for varying lengths of time. PBOs are also making an appearance in emerging economies in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia.

Legislatures across the world have witnessed an increasingly stronger executive try to wrest away its rightful power of the purse. A PBO would help resuscitate these powers that have fallen into disuse. This is why India's Parliament and government need to work quickly and energetically to establish such an office; it is in everyone's interests to do so.

ISSUE: CAN HINDI UNITE INDIA?

BACKGROUND: Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement last week that Hindi can unite the country

IS HINDI EVERYONE'S LANGUAGE?

The 2011 Census listed 1,369 'mother tongues' in the country. Hindi is only one among them.

When the languages were enumerated, Hindi subsumed Bhojpuri, which is spoken by a little over five crore people. The Census has put Bhojpuri as a subset of Hindi. So, it may be true that Hindi is spoken by a large number of people in India, but it is equally true that it is not spoken by a majority of Indians.

What connects the country is the Constitution, which has made space for 22 languages in the Eighth Schedule. It upholds the language diversity principle.

What connects Indians is the Constitution, our history and some epoch-making phenomena, whether it is the Buddha, the Bhakti movement or the freedom struggle.

The real problem is his belief that notwithstanding this multiplicity, we need one language to unite the country and that language can only be Hindi.

'One nation, one language, one culture' is a 19th century European idea that failed to create unity. Instead, it caused a lot of bloodshed in the world. Just when the world is moving away from this preposterous idea, our rulers wish to copy it. This is the real curse of the colonised mind.

The language choice of citizens should be widened and not narrowed by the state.

A united nation has to have space for diversity. India is united in its diversity. Diversity is a great philosophical idea and should never be seen as a cultural burden.

HOW TO TEACH THE LANGUAGES?

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

When a child goes to school, her initial language of instruction should be as close to the language spoken by her mother or home language

Then, gradually, the child should be shifted to the State's official language, say, Marathi or Kannada.

English can and should be taught from the beginning as a language but not as a medium of instruction. Those who need higher-level skills in English for higher or technical education should be given that, but everyone need not be burdened with that.

ISSUE: BAN ON e-CIGARETTES

NEWS: Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Promulgation of the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (production, manufacture, import, export, transport, sale, distribution, storage and advertisement) Ordinance, 2019.

Upon promulgation of the Ordinance, any production, manufacturing, import, export, transport, sale (including online sale), distribution or advertisement (including online advertisement) of e-cigarettes shall be a cognizable offence punishable with an imprisonment of up to one year or fine up to Rs. 1 lakh or both for the first offence; and imprisonment of up to three years and fine up to Rs. 5 lakh for a subsequent offence. Storage of electronic-cigarettes shall also be punishable with an imprisonment up to 6 months or fine up to Rs 50,000 or both.

Electronic-cigarettes are battery-operated devices that produce aerosol by heating a solution containing nicotine, which is the addictive substance in combustible cigarettes.

Nicotine is an addictive substance that may, according to studies, function as a "tumour promoter" and aid neuro-degeneration.

There is evidence now that vaping, dangled as a cool, fun, activity, lures youngsters, and ironically, serves to introduce them to smoking.

The FCTC (Framework Convention on Tobacco Control) also records that e-cigarettes are unlikely to be harmless, and long-term use is expected to increase the risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer, and possibly cardiovascular disease and other diseases also associated with smoking.

The government, already on the right path, must go all out to ensure that its ban is implemented earnestly in letter and spirit, unlike the patchy execution of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act. It is essential to ensure this progressive ordinance does not go up in smoke.

ISSUE: DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF HIMALAYAN STATES

WHAT ARE THE DEMANDS?

1. 11 Himalayan States of India met in Dehradun demanding a "GREEN BONUS", or a payment for environmental services they provide to the nation.
2. help to develop hydropower resources,
3. recognition of their efforts to meet human development parameters.

Author has highlighted that world wide mountains have faced the problem of integration with the nation states which are based in plains.

EVIDENCE: If one takes a look at the entire mountain zone stretching from Balochistan, through Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, J&K, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Nepal, Sikkim and Gorkhaland, to Arunachal

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and the Chittagong Hill Tracts, it is easy to see that each of these regions has had problems when it comes to integration

China is struggling to integrate its mountain people and their homelands with its national mainstream, as are Myanmar, Thailand, and other countries.

REASON: Most of the policies of any nation states are being framed keeping in mind the needs of the people living in plains.

SUGGESTION

1. Green Bonus
2. Stop commodification of resources
3. Autonomy should be provided.
4. Strengthen the federalism

ISSUE: MATHS HELPED THE EINSTEIN

Einstein's general theory of relativity is the most accurate theory of gravity available to us at present.

More than two centuries prior to him, Isaac Newton had proposed a universal law of gravitation. However, Newtonian theory of gravity, though remarkably accurate most of the times, had its limitations. When gravity was extremely strong or when the motions involved were extremely fast, the calculations became imprecise

Einstein's description of gravity was radically different from that of Newton. Newton assumed the existence of an absolute space and universal time. According to Einstein, space and time are part of a single entity called 'space-time'

Space-time is universal. And gravity is the manifestation of curved space-time. Any massive object would curve the space-time around it.

It is hard to imagine a curved space-time, an entity that spans four dimensions — three spatial dimensions and the time. Typically we can see the curvature of a surface when we have access to a higher dimension.

Einstein himself was not well-versed in the geometry of curved spaces. Here, Einstein turned to his friend, mathematician Marcel Grossmann, to master the necessary techniques and tools. Armed with these tools, and driven by some unique physical insights which are marks of a genius, Einstein was able to construct an elegant mathematical theory of space-time.

Wishful thinking and ideological propaganda are poor substitutes to quantitative reasoning.

ISSUE: US IRAN RELATIONS

US Iran relations are tensed at the moment. Root of this tension can be traced to unilateral pull out of US from Nuclear deal signed between Iran and P5+1 countries.

US President Trump imposed sanctions on Iran thinking that this will help him in signing tougher deal with Iran. However since the imposition of sanctions tensions have increased in West Asia. Latest in the flare up is attack on two Saudi installations.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

FAILURE OF TRUMP: Mr. Trump failed to foresee the magnitude of Iran's resistance when he started putting "maximum pressure" on the country. He may have thought that since Iran had once caved in to American pressure and signed an agreement, it could do that again if the pressure was multiplied. But Iran acted exactly in the opposite way.

He has surrounded himself within the administration with warmongers and neocons. He has failed to foresee how far Iran would go if it is pushed to a corner. His unilateral actions have destroyed even the fragile order that existed in the region before May 8, 2018, the day he killed the nuclear deal. If the Gulf is in flames today, Donald Trump is its arsonist.

IRAN'S RESPONSE TO PRESSURE: Faced with a precarious economic situation and mounting U.S. pressure, Iran adopted a two-pronged strategy — start violating the nuclear deal step by step and target oil supplies through the Strait of Hormuz, a choke-point between the Gulf and the Arabian Sea and through which a third of crude oil exports transported on tankers pass.

With Saturday's attack on the Saudi oil installations, Iran has upped the ante further, sending a message across the world that no oil facility or tanker is safe in the Gulf as long as Iran is not allowed to trade its oil.

WHAT IRAN WANTS: Sanctions relief without surrendering to the pressure of the US.

PRAISE FOR OBAMA: Author has praised the former President Obama's carrot and stick approach in dealing with Iran. He consolidated international opinion, got both allies and partners on his side, imposed UN-recognised sanctions and then offered the olive branch of talks.

ISSUE: ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

Author's central argument in this article is that this economic slowdown is self inflicted and she had put the blame on

1. DEMONETISATION
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF GST and
3. IGNORING THE ADVICE OF NOTED ECONOMISTS AND BUREAUCRATS.

In May 2014, after Mr. Modi's Cabinet was sworn in, it was made clear to the new government that purposeful steps would strengthen this recovery. Without reforms, though, the recovery would be difficult to sustain.

IGNORING ADVICE: But advice on action needed and decisions that should be avoided were ignored. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cautioned the government against demonetisation in writing; the former RBI Governor, Raghuram Rajan, did so orally.

Ahead of the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), on invitation from the government, well-regarded economist and former Finance Secretary Vijay Kelkar briefed the Prime Minister and key Cabinet ministers on the criticality of avoiding the business-unfriendly rate structure and compliance system that had been worked out for introduction. He was invited to the midnight launch in Parliament's Central Hall of the GST, but his advice went unheeded.

After the Budget was tabled, economist Surjit Bhalla drew attention to the need for changing the status quo in agriculture and the impossibility of doubling farmer incomes

CONSEQUENCES OF IGNORING ADVICE:

The loss of growth momentum in the three years from 2016-17 to 2018-19 is significant: 8.2%, 7.2% and 6.8%. GDP growth hit a 25-quarter low of 5% in the April-June 2019 quarter.

Scores of private sector jobs are getting axed. Growth in car sales, retail loans and property has plummeted to multi-year lows, as the impact of the slowdown spreads across the economy.

ISSUE: TALIBAN

After the failure of talks between US and Taliban, Taliban has increased its attack.

Both the 2014 presidential election and last year's parliamentary poll were violently disturbed by the Taliban. This time, the group has asked civilians to stay away from political gatherings, making all those who participate in the political process potential targets.

The Afghan government seems determined to go ahead with the election. It has deployed some 70,000 troops to protect over 5,000 polling stations. But the threat from the Taliban is so grave that the President is largely addressing campaign rallies through Skype.

The fundamental problem with the U.S.-Taliban peace process was that it excluded the Kabul government at the insistence of the insurgents, which itself was a major compromise by the U.S. On the other side, the Taliban was not even ready to cease hostilities. A peace agreement dictated by the Taliban won't sustain. The Taliban can't be allowed to have a free terror run either.

WHY WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED?

A permanently unstable Afghanistan and an insurgent group growing further in strength is not good news for any nation, including Afghanistan's neighbours.

WHAT COULD BE DONE?

Afghanistan needs a comprehensive peace push in which all stakeholders, including the government, the U.S., the Taliban and regional players will have a say. The U.S. should continue to back the Kabul government, put pressure on Pakistan to crack down on the Afghan Taliban, double down its counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan and invite regional players such as Pakistan, Iran, Russia, India and China to take part in the diplomatic efforts.

ISSUE: DISCREDITING OF J&K LEADERS

BACKGROUND: Detention of Farooq Abdullah.

The 81-year old leader has been thrice Chief Minister, Union Minister and five times Member of Parliament. He is currently MP from Srinagar. His father and National Conference founder, Sheikh Abdullah, led Kashmir's Muslim population in rejecting the two-nation theory that led to Partition and the formation of Pakistan in 1947.

Despite his declining popularity in the Valley, Farooq Abdullah continued to argue that Kashmir's destiny was with secular, pluralist India. To treat him as a threat to public safety is a travesty of justice and an assault on democratic principles.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The manner in which he was detained smacks of complete disregard for the rule of law and accountability. His detention, for 12 days, was announced hours before the Supreme Court was to consider MDMK chief Vaiko's plea seeking a directive that Mr. Abdullah be produced before it.

Almost all Kashmir's political leaders are in jail, including former Chief Minister and PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti and the IAS officer-turned-politician Shah Faesal.

The argument that Kashmiri politicians used the State's special status to shield their corruption and nepotism is disingenuous, as these problems are endemic to Indian politics.

The amorality of the government's treatment of pro-India forces is certainly dispiriting, but dangerous is the vacuum this is creating. The void will be filled only by forces inimical to India, if the government removes politicians from public spaces by wrongly labelling them anti-India.

ISSUE: HOW TO HANDLE THE FAKE NEWS

Author's central argument is that fake news is not the new problem. It has been around for some time.

The advent of social media has merely decentralised the creation and propagation of fake news.

CURRENT RESPONSE TO FAKE NEWS primarily revolves around three prongs — REBUTTAL, REMOVAL OF THE FAKE NEWS ITEM AND EDUCATING THE PUBLIC.

Rebuttal is a form of fact checking wherein the fake news is debunked by pointing out errors like mismatch, malicious editing and misattribution.

However, the biggest shortcoming of this approach — the fact that the very act of rebuttal reinforces the fake narrative being pushed — goes beyond this cat-and-mouse problem. Since the act of rebuttal gets confined within the original framework of the fake news item, the political impact of the rebuttal is far less than ideal.

HOW TO HANDLE THE FAKE NEWS?

1. Restore the credibility of liberals
2. we must mobilise public opinion around an alternate narrative that makes the fake news item irrelevant.

ISSUE: SARDAR SAROVAR DAM

The Gujarat government has filled up the Sardar Sarovar this year, flooding the Narmada. In Madhya Pradesh alone, reportedly, more than 28,000 families still live in the submergence zone. They have not been given due rehabilitation or compensation.

IMPACT OF DAM

Beyond Sardar Sarovar, the once mighty Narmada is now a seasonal drain that carries sewage and industrial effluents. At the mouth of the river in Gujarat, because of lower freshwater pressure on account of the dam, the sea water has ingressed several km inland, rendering vast fertile lands saline. With some 10,000 hectares of agricultural land having been destroyed, the farmers of the area are devastated.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

When the dream of the Sardar Sarovar was sold to the people of Gujarat, these features of the dam were not mentioned. Even today, when proponents continue to defend the project after all that has happened, they fail to report these 'gifts' of the dam.

For years, industrial lobbies constantly pushed politicians to build the dam despite activists raising important questions about it. The politicians found it opportune to go along with the industrialists' agenda.

Farmers as far as Kutch were promised Narmada waters. They are still waiting as the canals leading to their agricultural lands have not been built as yet. Instead, the situation has worsened. As Gujarat neglected its own water resources and the changing climate, farmers, fishermen and herders have begun leaving, signalling the beginnings of a climate refugee crisis.

Today, it is clear that the primary beneficiaries of the dam were the industrialists of Gujarat. Tata's plant in Sanand, shifted from West Bengal after farmers there protested illegal land grab, draws a generous amount of Narmada's water and as does Coca-Cola, which was thwarted from expanding in Plachimada, Kerala, and Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, due to protests. Meanwhile, Gujarat's own river, Sabarmati, now draws water from the Narmada to fill it.

ISSUE: MEASLES SPREAD

30% increase in measles cases worldwide in 2018,

REASON: vaccine hesitancy which is defined as the "reluctance or refusal to vaccinate despite the availability of vaccines",

A 2018 report on vaccine confidence among the European Union member states shows why vaccine coverage has not been increasing in the European region to reach over 90% to offer protection even to those not vaccinated. It found younger people (18-34 years) and those with less education are less likely to agree that the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine is safe

A 2018 study found low awareness to be the main reason why 45% of children missed different vaccinations in 121 Indian districts that have higher rates of unimmunised children.

Measles vaccine not only provides lifelong protection against the virus but also reduces mortality from other childhood infections. This is because measles viruses kill immune cells, leaving the child vulnerable to infectious diseases for two to three years.

ISSUE: WHETHER REVOCATION OF ARTICLE 370 HAS CHANGED ANYTHING

The BJP government may be congratulated for having taken a bold step. It has definitely shaken the apple tree of Kashmir.

WHAT WERE THE PROBLEMS OF THE KASHMIR

The problems of alienation among Kashmiris, militancy, and cross-border support of militants.

HOW IT COULD BE ADDRESSED?

Either by a demographic reshaping of Kashmir and the invasion of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), or by winning over Kashmiri hearts

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The second option — winning over Kashmiri hearts — is not possible as long as curfews, etc. continue and leaders who can mediate between Kashmiris and India are locked up.

Similarly, kicking out the Kashmiri leadership with the claim that it is corrupt is not enough. More so, because if all these leaders had just exploited Kashmiris then there would have been no need to lock them up: Kashmiris would not have listened to them anyway. India desperately needs to find credible interlocutors in Kashmir. This is going to be more difficult than in the past.

Now that they are indubitably Indian citizens, we need to treat them like Indian citizens. This would include, among other things, not firing pellet guns at their demonstrations — just as pellet guns are not used on protests by Indian citizens. Is this possible?

ISSUE: WAR IN YEMEN

ABOUT YEMEN

Yemen is in the south-west corner of the Arabian Peninsula.

The northern and southern parts of the country are two distinct entities. While the north is hilly and fertile and has some oil reserves, the southern part is mostly desert. The country has a population of around 27 million, with most living in the north. With GDP per capita of \$944, which is less than half of India's, Yemen's poverty is a sharp contrast to the oil-riches of her northern neighbours.

The population in the north is mostly Zaidi which is closer to the Shia sect followed in Iran. The southerners are mostly Sunnis akin to a majority of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) citizens.

HISTORY

In November 2011, the Yemeni Arab Spring movement managed to remove Saleh who was replaced by his southern deputy Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi; Saleh and his clan remained influential till his assassination in 2017.

The al-Houthi rebels rebelled against Mr. Hadi, ousting him in 2014 and forcing him to flee to Riyadh where he currently heads an 'internationally recognised' but largely ineffective government of Yemen.

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt began a military campaign ("Operation Decisive Storm") against the al-Houthi rebels in March 2015.

INDIAN INTERESTS

India's west-bound sea trade passes through Bab al Mandeb. India, therefore, needs to watch the evolving situation carefully and revive long-standing ties with the emerging stakeholders in Yemen, particularly along the southern coastal belt.

India as world's third largest crude importer (with Saudi Arabia supplying nearly a fifth). The oil price surge hits India precisely when the economy is already struggling. A rise of oil price by even a dollar raises India's annual oil bill by \$1.5 billion, the country having spent \$112 billion on crude imports in 2018-19.

Additionally, the attacks could affect Saudi Aramco's ongoing negotiations of two major upstream investments in India totalling over \$30 billion with Reliance Industries and the proposed Ratnagiri Refinery, respectively.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Drones could emerge as a weapon of choice for motley anti-Indian non-state actors. Indeed, many of them are no worse than the al-Houthis in their resourcefulness and foreign sponsorships. Much of our infrastructure could be vulnerable to copy-cat attacks using such affordable and effective platforms available virtually off-the-shelf internationally. India's defence and security experts need to urgently devise counter measures to mitigate such vulnerabilities.

ISSUE: TENSION IN THE GULF

WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

Last week's drone attacks on the Saudi Aramco-owned Khurais oilfield and Abqaiq oil processing facility

IMPACT

Suspension of more than half of Saudi Arabia's daily crude oil output, thereby affecting contribution to global supply.

Sudden disruption resulted in the highest spike (nearly 20%) in Brent crude prices in more than a decade

SOLUTIONS

Iran must seize and work toward de-escalation through diplomacy

Saudis must halt their Yemen intervention and leave it to the UN to broker peace in a battered country.

WHY WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED?

India importing more than two-thirds of its oil from West Asia, a price surge is expected to impact the current account, and will result in further currency depreciation as was the case on Monday.

Higher fuel costs and the imported inflation could also hurt the consumer at a time of a slowdown in the economy.

The government should be prepared to handle the fallout with steps such as re-evaluating the excise duties on petroleum products.

ISSUE: PROTECTING THE MEDIA:

- Highlights the incidents when for true reporting journalists were booked.

There are many regional journalists like Singh in India who work at the district and tehsil levels in the Hindi hinterland without proper security. In exchange for doing their job, they face intimidation, threats, abuse, coercion and false police cases.

Such journalists often have little organisational backing or hope that their grievances will be redressed. Unlike journalists in the English language media, they are more vulnerable as regional bureaus are known to often turn the other way if they land in a controversy.

Despite this, they are poorly paid, have few rights or statutory entitlements, are randomly sacked, and sometimes not even issued proper identity cards. This leaves them vulnerable to administrative excesses, political pressure and corruption.

ISSUE: ISRAEL PAKISTAN RELATIONS

WHY IN NEWS?

Recently, Israeli and Pakistani scholars and opinion-makers appear to have speculated about the possibility of the two states establishing diplomatic ties.

Pakistan's national interests would better be served by having ties with Israel, particularly since Israel carries weight in Washington and could perhaps mediate on recurring U.S.-Pakistan tensions. Concerns regarding Iran were also cited as a point of convergence.

WHY PAKISTAN WOULD NOT DEVELOP CLOSER TIES WITH ISRAEL?

Pakistan is considered the "sword-arm" of the Sunni world. . If Pakistan were to establish diplomatic ties with Israel, it would dilute its Islamic credentials and lead to a weakened support base within the OIC on Kashmir, Pakistan would also face the heat from its many domestic conservative Islamist groups.

WHY ISRAEL WOULD LIKE TO GO CLOSER TO ISLAMIC COUNTRIES?

No doubt, mutual apprehensions about Iran have nudged Israel and the Gulf states closer.

Under a changing rubric, Israel is also looking at increasing its diplomatic footprint in South Asia and beyond. Forging closer ties with populous Asian Muslim countries such as Bangladesh and Indonesia would help it to gain greater legitimacy in the Islamic world.

ISSUE: HOW TO BECOME \$5 TRILLION ECONOMY/ GROWTH STORY OF INDIA

1. **REDUCE ECONOMIC INEQUALITY:** Credit Suisse, for example, has shown recently that 1% of the wealthiest in India increased their share in wealth from 40% in 2010 to more than 60% in the last five years, and the richest 10% in India own more than four times wealth than the remaining 90%
2. **INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES:** Our growth experience so far shows that the rate of growth of employment has declined with increasing economic growth; we have now reached a stage where the economy is suffering from the highest ever unemployment rate.
3. **FOCUS ON HUMAN CAPITAL:** Health, Nutrition and Education needs to be improved. The literacy rate has grown very slowly and according to the United Nations, India's literacy was 71.1% in 2015. India is now far behind many African countries such as Rwanda, Morocco and Congo in terms of literacy. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2018, about 70-74 % children (in the age group 6-14 years) go to school regularly; far fewer go to secondary school. The quality of education is far from satisfactory, if one is to read ASER 2018.
4. 6% of GDP (at present 4%)should be spent on education and 3% of GDP on Health (at present 1.5%).
5. **CONSERVE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:** A recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report has warned India of the seriousness of climate change and its severe adverse impact on the environment and the livelihood of masses.

CURRENT PROBLEMS OF THE INDIAN ECONOMY

The rate of economic growth, at 5%, is the lowest in the last few years.

Also, the rates of savings and investment in the Indian economy have declined, as also exports and total credit.

Among the major industries, the automobile industry is experiencing continuous decline, which has led to the retrenchment of 3.5 lakh workers so far

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Agriculture is in crisis today on account of rising costs of inputs and low prices of produce, and low public investments in this sector

SOLUTIONS

Increase public expenditure in investing in agriculture — in infrastructure, inputs, extension, marketing and storage and training — and in providing profitable prices to farmers. It should also raise funds for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to push up demand by following a Keynesian approach.

It should raise public employment by filling all vacant sanctioned posts in the Central and State governments, which would be around 2.5 million jobs.

The government should also regularise contract, casual and “honorary” jobs and make them regular jobs.

Increasing additional jobs for ensuring basic health and good quality education up to secondary level to all so that any meaningful skill formation is possible should be another aim

The government should also focus on promoting labour intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery, textiles and garments and leather goods

ISSUE: CONTROVERSY RELATED TO PROMOTION OF HINDI

WHY CONTROVERSY?

1. Amit Shah's sweeping claims that Hindi alone could unite the country
2. language which should become India's “identity” globally.
3. Hindi was a unifying force,

EDITORIAL'S VIEW (ARGUMENTS FOR WHY HINDI SHOULD NOT BE IMPOSED)

1. Imposing a language on the unwilling is hardly unifying, but could turn out to be divisive.
2. National identity cannot be linked to any one language, as it is, by definition, something that transcends linguistic and regional differences.
3. Centre realised that the creation of linguistic States has obviated the need for a campaign against a “foreign language”
4. Regional languages have become the official languages of the States, and the continued use of English has a strong utilitarian value.
5. While the development of Hindi is undoubtedly a constitutional command the Union government cannot ignore, the manner in which it is done should not give the impression to the States that there is creeping imposition of Hindi.
6. According a hegemonic role to the “most-spoken” language in the country may promote cultural homogenisation, but that is hardly desirable in a country with a diverse population, a plural ethos and is a cauldron of many languages and cultures.

FACTS:

1. Hindi Divas : 14th September
2. Department of Official Language: MHA

ISSUE: TRAIN 18

In October 2018, the country was celebrating a technological achievement of a purely terrestrial nature: the successful rolling out of a gleaming state-of-the-art, semi-high-speed (of 160 kmph-200 kmph speed) train set called ‘Train 18’ in an incredibly short time span of 18 months.

Train 18 propelled India into the exclusive club of about a half a dozen countries in the world that have the capability to turn out a brand new design of a high-speed/semi-high-speed train set in such a short time.

The train has provided a trouble-free performance in the last six months. Unfortunately, perhaps it was the outstanding success of the Train 18 project that proved to be its undoing.

Following top-level changes in the Railway Board at the turn of the New Year, a vigilance investigation was launched into certain alleged procedural irregularities and allegations of undue favours shown to a particular indigenous firm in awarding contracts for the crucial propulsion system.

It was also reported that deviations had been observed from the specifications prescribed by the Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO). Meanwhile, the man who had spearheaded the Train 18 project — from its conception and design to its launch — as General Manager of Integral Coach Factory (ICF) and who retired at the end of last year, was not even extended an invitation for the train’s ceremonial inaugural run in February 2019.

It was announced at the highest policymaking level of the Indian Railways that “the Railways would be willing to start import of complete train sets from foreign suppliers if they agreed to establish the coach manufacturing facility in India”.

With the train set’s production having come to a halt in ICF, Chennai, despite tenders having been floated, Project 18 is as good as dead now.

Enormous damage that the scourge of interdepartmental rivalries and internecine turf wars within the Indian Railways has done to the organisational morale and synergistic functioning of the nation’s prime public transporter. Unfortunately, Train 18 appears to have become the latest victim of this age-old malady of the Indian Railways.

ISSUE: LAUNCH OF JAN SOOCHNA PORTAL IN RAJASTHAN

The launch of the “Jan Soochna Portal” (public information portal) by the Rajasthan government on Friday marks a milestone in increasing transparency and accountability in governance

The portal details various schemes run by 13 government departments — the employment guarantee programme, sanitation, the public distribution system among others, by not only explaining the schemes but also providing real time information on beneficiaries, authorities in charge, progress, etc.

This is a laudable effort by the State government which is worthy of emulation by other States.

There have been dilutions in the Act pertaining to the appointments of information commissioners, therefore impinging on their autonomy.

It is important to note that Section 4(2) of the Act, which specifically enjoins upon public authorities to publish information pro-actively, has not been implemented holistically so far.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Some of the better maintained central websites have also tended to deploy “dashboard” information, which is meant more to showcase data and records rather than release structured information for extensive study and for the knowledge of the citizenry.

It is important to educate the citizenry about the use of data on the portal. While digital connectivity and literacy have increased over time, these have not adequately translated into digital knowledge of public affairs.

ISSUE: STEPS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT TO REVIVE THE ECONOMY

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday presented the third round of stimulus measures to resuscitate the struggling economy.

THREE SET OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Focused primarily on reviving the automobile sector, boosting the confidence of foreign investors
2. Improving the health of dangerously fragile state-owned banks by doing everything short of privatising them
3. Underperforming export and real estate sectors through piecemeal fiscal reforms.

LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT

1. New tax refund scheme and greater priority sector lending for the export sector to incentivise exports
2. External commercial borrowing norms have been eased to make it easier for Indian real estate companies to tap funds from abroad, and funds worth ₹10,000 crore have also been allocated to aid the completion of affordable housing projects.

EDITORIAL'S VIEW

1. These have largely failed to live up to the initial hype around them.
2. With lack of demand and major supply-side bottlenecks being the primary issues facing exports and real estate, it is doubtful whether the present measures will be enough to revive these flailing sectors.
3. Without enacting any major supply-side reforms like land and labour reforms that can raise potential growth, it is also hard to see how greater spending can raise growth for very long.

ISSUE: ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN IN INDIA

EVIDENCE: The economic growth rate (quarterly) has been sliding for the last five quarters from 8% to 7% to 6.6% to 5.8%.

WHAT BIG AGENCIES ARE PREDICTING GROWTH RATE OF INDIA?

The Economic Survey in July talked of a growth rate of 7% for the current year.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its August policy statement, talked of a slowdown to 6.9%, from the 7% predicted in June and 7.2% predicted before that.

The Asian Development Bank cut its growth forecast from 7.2% to 7% in April 2019.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Similar is the case with the IMF which cut its forecast for the year from 7.3% to 7%. So, they all talked of a 7% rate of growth when a year earlier it had fallen below that.

WHY THEY ARE SO OFF THE MARK?

The reason is that they are not independent data gathering agencies and depend on official data.

The question to ask is, if the economy is growing at 5 or 6%, which is historically a good rate of growth, why is investment rate not rising and consumption in the economy stagnant?

The alternative explanation is that the rate of growth is much less than 5%; that is why investment rate and consumption are stagnating or declining.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE GOVERNMENT TO REVIVE THE ECONOMY

1. Big bank merger.
2. Rate cuts by the rbi
3. the package for the automobile sector or making banks pass on interest rate cuts to businesses
4. The announcement of a transfer of ₹1.76 lakh crore from the rbi to the government will only cover the shortfall expected in revenue.

SOLUTION

1. Capacity utilization of the economy needs to be improved. (Capacity utilization refers to the manufacturing and production capabilities that are being utilized by a nation or enterprise at any given time. It is the relationship between the output produced with the given resources and the potential output that can be produced if capacity was fully used.)
2. Focus on the unorganized sector which accounts for producing 45% of the output and employing 94% of the workforce.

ISSUE: PROBLEMS WITH THE REVOCATION OF ARTICLE 370

Technically, Article 370 has not been abrogated. the existing Article 370 has been substituted by a new paragraph whereby all provisions of the Constitution of India, as amended from time to time, without any modifications and exceptions, have been made applicable to Jammu and Kashmir.

The August 5, 2019 order is illegal. The reason is that while exercising powers under Clause (1) of Article 370, the President is not competent to amend Article 370 itself; and his powers are confined only to amending the “other provisions of the Constitution” in their application to Jammu and Kashmir, meaning thereby provisions other than Articles 1 and 370.

Since the amendment made in proviso to Article 370(3) is illegal, the consequent action of the President in issuing the C.O. No. 273 virtually abrogating Article 370, based upon a recommendation made by Parliament which in turn became possible due to the said illegal amendment, is also rendered illegal.

The virtual abrogation of Article 370 will leave indelible scars on the psyche of the vast population inhabiting the strategically located territory of India; otherwise there had been practically nothing ‘special’ about Kashmir’s ‘special status’ for all the years that have passed by.

ISSUE: SITUATION IN KASHMIR

The dilution of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution that accorded special status to Jammu and Kashmir through a controversial process, the constitutionality of which is being challenged in the Supreme Court

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Reduced tourist interest this season

Hotels across Kashmir have been empty since the government forced tourists to leave on August 2,

End corruption in Kashmir, but where has corruption ended

Kashmiri students are going out to study. Aren't students from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh going to other States to study

People are fearful about land ownership, demographic changes,

Infiltration is on the rise from across the border; and arms seizures this week clearly point towards heightened militant activity, home-grown and foreign.

Until Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip to the United States later this month is concluded, the restrictions will stay.

Muslim extremists are claiming victory for having said India is a Hindu country for long. The refrain is that while Hindu extremist groups get a free run and Muslims are lynched in many parts of the country, we are targeted for our faith,

BJP leaders in Jammu have called for protection of the domicile rights of the State's people.

It is all meant for domestic politics in the rest of India, and this is no different from the way Pakistani politicians drum up support in our name and reinforce their power

The overriding sentiment in Kashmir is not azadi but the deep revulsion and contempt towards the Indian media, particularly TV channels that blare vitriol and threats into their drawing rooms every evening.

ISSUE: LAUNCH OF JAN SOOCHNA PORTAL

The Jan Soochna Portal (JSP) launched by the government of Rajasthan yesterday is a remarkable achievement in furtherance of the right to information (RTI) — especially Section 4 of the RTI Act — that deals with proactive disclosure of information. Transparency must be accompanied by accountability,

EXAMPLE OF HOW INFORMATION CAN BRING ACCOUNTABILITY

Some time back, a year-wise breakup of pending cases was given on the grid and it was found that more than 70,000 cases were pending for over 30 years. These figures meant nothing until the justice delivery system was asked to account for the enormous delay in such a large number of cases. Chief Justices and Registrars in many courts appreciated the fact that they needed to answer questions relating to such enormous delays; now many courts have begun to concentrate on the disposal of old cases with considerable success. This is a good example of transparency accompanied by accountability brought about by civil society.

FOR SMOOTH FUTURE OF JSP

Various departments of the government of Rajasthan, called Line Departments, have been given a set of obligations that they are expected to fulfil. For example, they are expected to ensure digitisation of records. In addition, the Department of Information Technology will serve as the nodal department for the development, operationalisation and maintenance of the JSP.

ISSUE: END OF TALK BETWEEN US AND TALIBAN

On September 9 morning (Indian Standard Time), U.S. President Donald Trump abruptly called off ‘peace’ talks with the Taliban — led directly by the U.S. Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad — citing the killing of an American soldier just days before in a suicide bomb attack for which the Taliban claimed credit.

The agreement had been in the making over many rounds of talks, largely in Doha, Qatar, of which the Afghan government was not a part on account of a Taliban veto that the U.S. implicitly accepted, ostensibly to bring peace to Afghanistan

POINTS OF DEAL

Initial timetable for the withdrawal of around 5,400 out of nearly 14,000 U.S. troops from five Afghan bases in 135 days.

Tight timeline of two weeks to kick-start intra-Afghan talks before the Afghan presidential elections scheduled on September 28.

AUTHORS ASSESSMENT OF THE DEAL

The deal as negotiated was one-sided, partial and highly flawed. It was loaded heavily towards Mr. Trump’s goal of a withdrawal of all U.S. troops by November 2020, weak in guarantees against terrorism aimed at the U.S., and lacking safeguards for the security and stability of Afghanistan.

The Afghan government with which the U.S. has bilateral strategic partnership and security agreements, was sidelined and powerless, contributing to a public sense of helplessness that decisions regarding Afghanistan were being taken by foreigners. The government has gained from the backlash.

Deal would have pushed Afghanistan towards instability and even a civil war worse than the intra-Mujahideen fighting of the 1990s with unpredictable consequences.

It was seen as a “negotiated withdrawal”, “abdication”, and even a “surrender” rather than a peace agreement, sacrificing the political, military and economic investments and civic gains of the last 18 years including democracy and the advancement of women, and creating the conditions for a likely descent into civil war, fanning radical extremism

ROLE FOR INDIA

A window of opportunity for the international community and India to reset their approach to peace and withdrawal.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

The Afghan election authorities and security forces should be supported in every way to conduct free and fair elections as an exercise of Afghan sovereignty.

Talks with the Taliban that are Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled, and not as dictated from Washington, Islamabad, Doha or Moscow. India should be able to support such talks.

Free from elections, the Afghan government should take the lead in forging a national consensus behind talks with the Taliban that it has failed to do until now.

Every possible instrument should be brought to bear on Pakistan to deliver on this.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

India should be able to use Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rapport with Mr. Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin to influence their policies and play a larger international diplomatic role in Afghanistan.

ISSUE: ARE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES UNDER THREAT

BACKGROUND: Recently, Romila Thapar and 11 others were asked to submit their cvs so that a committee appointed by Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) could evaluate their body of work and decide on their continuation as Professors Emeriti.

Universities like JNU, Hyderabad University, Allahabad University, Delhi University and Tata Institute of Social Sciences have been under attack.

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

1. **IMPORTANT FOR SOCIAL MOBILIZATION:** public university is an important institution for a country like India. We have a lot of poverty and inequality. We are not in a position to redistribute any resources other than access to higher education. We can't distribute land and wealth. So, the only resource that provides hope for social mobility for the have-nots is access to higher education. For that reason, public universities are important.
2. **CRITICAL THINKING**
3. Universities are meant to be distinct from society so that space can be used to experiment with ideas

ISSUE: EXIT OF US NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

BACKGROUND: John Bolton was asked by the US President to leave office. His term in the office would be remembered for ultra hawkish positions He pursued hostilities with Iran, Sanctions with Russia, Brinkmanship on trade with China, Opposed talks on Afghanistan, and with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, And pushed for regime change in Venezuela Greatest damage on multilateral institutions and agreements, as he advocated the U.S.'s exit from the Human Rights Council and UNESCO, Presided over the cancellation of the multi-party nuclear deal with Iran, And informed Moscow that the U.S. was pulling out of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

LESSONS FOR INDIA:

investing too much in any one adviser, or expecting consistency in American policy as a result, would be a folly India would do well to not allow its bilateral relationship with the U.S. or other relationships to be determined by such a fluid dynamic. A case in point is ties with Iran, where New Delhi may have been better off not acceding to the tough Bolton line, and instead, like China, Russia, Iraq and Turkey, keeping its own counsel on the issue of oil sanctions.

ISSUE: STEEPER PENALTIES FOR TRAFFIC RULES VIOLATIONS

The steep penalties for violation of road rules that came into force on September 1 under the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 have produced a backlash, with several State governments opting to reduce the quantum of fines, or even to reject the new provisions.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

India has some of the deadliest roads in the world, and 1,47,913 people died in road accidents only during 2017.

The question that has arisen is whether enhanced fines can radically change this record when other determinants, beginning with administrative reform, remain untouched.

WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Until infrastructure meets legal requirements, fines and enforcement action are naturally liable to be challenged in courts; the condition of roads, traffic signals, signage and cautionary markings which affect motorists, cyclists and pedestrians, would all fall within its ambit.

The Transport Ministry could well have made electronic delivery of RTO services mandatory, something that a lapsed UPA-era Bill promised. It should act on this now.

Ultimately, ending the culture of impunity that allows government vehicles and VIPs to ignore road rules will encourage the average citizen to follow them.

Mr. Gadkari should lose no time in forming the National Road Safety Board to recommend important changes to infrastructure and to enable professional accident investigation.

ISSUE: JUDICIARY ABANDONING ITS ROLE OF PROTECTING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Author highlights that judiciary had abandoned its role of protecting the civil liberties and Fundamental Rights during emergency(1975-77) giving importance to the EXECUTIVE SUPREMACY.

Principle of executive supremacy — that the government would decide when to detain, whom to detain, and for how long to detain, based upon its assessment of when a region was ‘ready’ for democracy.

Infamous case of ADM Jabalpur where Supreme Court held that at the time of emergency even right to life and liberty could be taken by the government.

SC corrected its mistake in 2017 and erected the PRINCIPLE OF PROPORTIONALITY: if the state wants to infringe peoples’ rights in service of a larger goal, then it must demonstrate that the measures it is adopting bear some rational relationship with the goal.

However Supreme Court again abandoned its role of protecting the Fundamental Rights of the citizens in August 2019.

From August 5, 2019, the State of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has been placed under a ‘communications lockdown’. In addition, political leaders along with an unknown number of other individuals have been detained.

WHICH FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS ARE BEING VIOLATED?

Communications shutdown violates the FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION, prevents those outside the State from being in touch with their families, provides cover for civil rights violations that cannot come to light,

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

and finally, in this day and age, damages an entire infrastructure, of health, food, and transport, causing real suffering.

Detention self-evidently violates personal liberty.

Unlike the Emergency, the courts have not upheld the government's actions — so far. What they have done is DODGED, DUCKED, EVADED, AND ADJOURNED. Political leader Shah Faesal's petition challenging his detention has been twice adjourned by the Delhi High Court (one time because the government lawyer was not present). At the time of writing, it has been over two weeks since the petition was filed.

Thus, by not ruling upon the cases before it, in effect, the courts have allowed the infringements of civil liberties to continue. And they have done so in a particularly insidious manner: by exempting the government from its constitutional obligation to explain itself, and by exempting themselves from their obligation to hold the government to account.

ISSUE: CASE OF TABREZ ANSARI

Police diluting the case by changing the Sections against accused. Police has changed the section from 302 attempt to murder to Section 304 (culpable homicide).

Editorial says that it is hard to believe police claim.

Tabrez was tied to the pole, beaten for hours in night and now police is saying intention of beating was not to murder.

POLICE ARGUMENT

1. Medical report that he died of heart attack due to stress
2. Victim did not die immediately

WHY CHANGING IS BEING HIGHLIGHTED?

After this it might be highlighted that victim was at fault and he provoked the accused to attack him.

SUGGESTION:

Need for special anti lynching law. Such a law could cover acts of group violence, whether spontaneous or planned, so that those who join lynch mobs do not gain from any ambiguity about their intentions.

ISSUE: CLIMATE CHANGE

BACKGROUND: The most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report suggests that we, as humankind, might have just over a decade left to limit global warming. The IPCC says total global emissions will need to fall by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. If these targets are not met, tropical regions of the world, which are densely populated and happen to be mainly concentrated in the global South, are likely to be most negatively affected because of their low altitudes and pre-existing high temperatures.

SOLUTION OFFERED BY THE AUTHORS

1. Both developed and developing countries should come together.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

2. Global sharing of the responsibility among countries according to their respective shares in global emissions.
3. Just Energy Transition (JET): global energy transition be financed through a system of the global carbon tax.

Those countries which emit more than the global per capita average pay for their own transition plus fund a part of the energy transition of those who are below this average. So, those at the receiving end of climate injustice are duly compensated for even as the entire world transitions to greener earth as a result of this process of carbon tax sharing.

Currently, the global average of carbon emissions is 4.97 metric tonne per capita. All the countries with emissions above this level (68 in all) are “payers” to finance energy transition for ‘beneficiary’ countries (135 in number), which are emitting below this level.

The two top ‘payer’ countries in terms of absolute amounts of transfers are the U.S. and China since their emissions are higher than the global average.

In terms of ‘compensated’ countries, India comes at the top due to its population size and its distance from the global emissions’ average (India has per capita emissions of 1.73 metric tonne).

ISSUE: NRC

BACKGROUND: Defence of NRC exercise by some of the intellectuals of Assam.

AUTHOR’S ARGUMENT: even though these writers admit that the NRC was flawed, they staunchly defend the exercise and justify it by different means. None of them seems to be concerned about the serious follies in the process that has had real consequences on the lives, bodies and fate of millions of human beings.

PROBLEMS

The process is designed such that the law itself and various attendant institutions — Foreigners’ Tribunals (fts), the Border Police, detention camps, Doubtful-Voter — have come to haunt the people

Even with 521 fts, registering and disposing of more than 19 lakh cases within a reasonable period of time is nearly impossible. The opacity of the procedures of the fts alongside the constrained appeal period make the NRC’s institutional basis even more precarious.

Those excluded from NRC will be converted into second-class citizens, but isolate even the included who were able to prove their Indian citizenship by legal means but won’t be considered ‘ethnic Assamese’ by means of the ethno-nationalist consensus.

Regional exclusivism

ISSUE: MEDIA REPORTING ON J&K

Author begins with highlighting the crisis of credibility in Indian Media.

Despite having more than 400 TV channels, 1000 newspapers and 3000 radio stations, the reports challenging the states narrative on J&K has come from non Indian source.

PROOF

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

First video of protests, firing: BBC, 'Al Jazeera', Reuters; Number of arrested: AFP, AP, Time, The New York Times; Minors among those detained: The Washington Post; Detenus flown out of overcrowded jails: AFP; First pellet injury death: 'Huffington Post'; Soura, epicentre of resistance: Reuters; First bullet injury death: France 24; Beatings, torture: BBC, The Independent; Harassment, sexual abuse of women: Deutsche Welle; Civilians forced to chant 'Vande Mataram': Foreign Policy; Doctor detained for speaking of shortage of medicines: BBC; Hospitals turning into 'graveyards': The Wall Street Journal; Emerging medical emergency: The Lancet editorial.

National media is busy in drumming up the support for government thinking it to be its patriotic duty.

Kashmiri media has been completely gagged. Out of 174 dailies 10 are being published. Journalists are forced to delete photos, videos and harassed at security check points.

Indian Media has completely capitulated to the whims and fancies of the government.

For the last few years Indian media has changed the motto of media from "comfort the afflicted" to "comfort the government".

To make media pliant many strategies are being used:

1. Those who do not confirm to the government's view are called anti nationals
2. Government advertisement is suspended to those dailies who publish reports critical of government
3. Arrest and interrogation of editors

Media which was supposed to be independent and hold government accountable for its omissions is hand in glove with government.

ISSUE: SUBTITLING BEING MADE MANDATORY

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) recently mandated captioning for TV programming in order to make it accessible to the Deaf or Hard of Hearing population.

India's phase-wise implementation plan requires all 800 plus channels to start this on at least one programme a week, beginning August 15, 2019, Independence Day. By 2020, 10% of all programming must have captions; the figure is to grow by 10% every year, covering up to 50% of all programming by 2025.

If implemented as mandated, is poised to make a massive contribution to SDG-4 on quality education; this is because quality education, foundationally, depends on good reading skills.

Scientific evidence suggests that SLS on TV would serve three goals: daily and automatic reading literacy practice for one billion viewers, including 500 million weak-readers who would benefit the most; Indian language improvement for one billion viewers, and, finally, media access for 65 million aurally challenged people.

India is in a unique position to scale up SLS on TV for both goals: media access and reading literacy.

For more than a decade, the Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER) have found that, nationally, half the rural children in standard 5 cannot read standard 2-level text.

ISSUE: NEED FOR STRONGER WORKER SAFETY LAW

BACKGROUND: Death of nearly 23 workers in the cracker factory in Punjab.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

India's record in promoting occupational and industrial safety remains weak even with years of robust economic growth. Making work environments safer is a low priority,

The consequences are frequently seen in the form of a large number of fatalities and injuries, but in a market that has a steady supply of labour, policymakers tend to ignore the wider impact of such losses.

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2019, introduced in the Lok Sabha in July to combine 13 existing laws relating to mines, factories, dock workers, building and construction, transport workers, inter-State migrant labour and so on, pays little attention to the sector-specific requirements of workers.

One of its major shortcomings is that formation of safety committees and appointment of safety officers, the latter in the case of establishments with 500 workers, is left to the discretion of State governments.

SOLUTION

Industries that use hazardous processes and chemicals deserve particular attention, and the Code must have clear definitions, specifying limits of exposure for workers. Compromising on safety can lead to extreme consequences that go beyond factories, and leave something that is etched in the nation's memory as in the case of the Bhopal gas disaster.

ISSUE: ISRO ALTERING THE NARRATIVE ON CHANDRAYAAN 2 AFTER UNSUCCESSFUL LANDING OF VIKRAM

Author has highlighted from the memoirs of various ISRO Chairman's how ISRO was not trusted in its initial days

SLV: Sea Loving Vehicle

ASLV: Always Sea Loving Vehicle

Why ISRO feels the need to airbrush setbacks by retrospectively altering the narrative. Less than 24 hours after ISRO Chairman K. Sivan made it apparent that the Vikram lander had ceased to touch down on predicted lines, Vikram went from being the heart of the mission to being only 5% of the mission's objectives. "We have already done 90%-95% of the technology demonstration," Mr. Sivan said.

It's hard to understand how such an iconic module that shows India's ability to design a space vehicle suddenly became only 5% of the overall mission objective. Remember, it was Vikram's camera that sent "beautiful images of earth" as viewed from space on August 4.

ISRO provides four reasons on its website for what made the Chandrayaan-2 mission "special": This would be the first space mission to conduct a soft landing on the moon's south pole, the first Indian expedition to attempt a landing on lunar surface using home-grown technology, the first Indian mission to explore lunar terrain with home-grown technology, and would make India only the fourth country to soft land on the moon.

Chandrayaan 2 proved that ISRO had mastered the nuances of the cryogenic engine, which allows rockets capable of carrying heavier payloads to be designed. This is going to be what truly propels India into the league of space powers.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

It needs to be underlined that India for decades has been part of a rarefied space club that consists of only a handful of countries capable of launching home-made satellites aboard home-grown rockets. Therefore the only real ‘pressure’ that ISRO faced with Chandrayaan-2 was to conform to social media-fuelled national pride.

ISRO’s founding Chairman Vikram Sarabhai had once said, “We do not have the fantasy of competing with the economically advanced nations in the exploration of the moon or the planets or manned space-flight... We must be second to none in the application of advanced technologies to the real problems of man and society.”

While getting the world to share in its success is important, ISRO only needs to explain its setbacks, not hide them with the cellophane of national pride.

ISSUE: ONE YEAR OF NAVTEJ JOHRA CASE

Decriminalisation of Section 377

We have moved from a society where transgender, intersex, lesbian, gay, bisexual and gender non-confirming persons were treated as criminals to the constitutional recognition of the rights to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression

It protects all our rights of self-expression, equality and autonomy.

WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE?

Transgender persons still face a number of legal barriers and LGBTI people continue to face discrimination, exclusion, abuse and harassment at work, school, health care settings and in public places.

To handle this we need to bring in an equality and anti-discrimination statute that would protect persons from discrimination on different protected grounds.

The need of the hour is an overarching legislation that guarantees equality to all persons on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex, caste, religion, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, nationality and other grounds. The law should impose obligations of equality and non-discrimination on all persons, public and private, and in the areas of education, employment, healthcare, land and housing and access to public places. It should provide for civil remedies including injunctions to stop discriminatory behaviour, costs and damages, and positive action to make reparations.

ISSUE: LBSNAA

Set up in 1959 in Mussoorie.

To systematically train members of the higher civil services in order to equip them to be the change agents of a resurgent India.

The IAS motto, ‘**YOGAH KARMASU KAUSHALAM (PROFICIENCY IN ACTION IS YOGA)**’, and the Academy song, ‘**HAO DHAROMETE DHEER, HAO KAROMETE BIR (BE FIRM IN YOUR FAITH, COURAGEOUS IN ACTION)**’, symbolised the nation’s expectation from them. The majestic Himalayan peaks viewed from the campus constantly reminded the recruits to strive for strength, rectitude and excellence.

The Academy introduced in 1960 a common Foundation Course (FC) in order to “instil a shared understanding of government and build camaraderie among the civil services”. It is the professional training institution for the IAS, and continues to conduct an FC for various All-India and Central Services.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

How is the Academy coping with the changing times?

While the content and methodology of training have changed to meet the demands of time, the pattern introduced in 1969 — of district training being sandwiched between institutional exposures at the Academy — has remained broadly unaltered

On successful completion, IAS trainees are now awarded an M.A. degree in Public Management by the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Besides, the Academy also conducts mid-career training programmes for officers, in keeping with their varying job requirements from policy implementation towards policy formulation.

In defending and expanding the constitutional values and in adhering to the spirit of various progressive legislation, the IAS and other Services have played a significant role in nation-building. Despite our ‘uncertain glory’, if one looks at the trajectory of independent India and compares it with that of our immediate neighbours, our higher bureaucracy appears to be a defining difference. The Academy in Mussoorie deserves some credit for that.

ISSUE: DEVELOPMENT versus IDENTITY

BACKGROUND: Thinking among the policy makers that giving Kashmiris an economic package, prospects of more jobs, better healthcare, high-quality consumption goods and they will forget their specific identity and assimilate peacefully with the rest of India. ‘Development’ shall trump identity.

Identity-endowing, cultural and ethical framework is so crucial to each one of us is important and it could hardly be satisfied by just economic demands.

Modern socio-economic conditions require states to take care not only of people’s material welfare but also their identities

Is there a viable modern political system that protects the complexity of human identities and mitigates their rough, violent edges? There is. A decent federal system that allows a great deal of political autonomy to distinct cultural groups, protects important common (national) interests and enables fruitful encounter of regional cultures does that. Disturbing this federal arrangement for the sake of a simplistic idea of unity is not a smart thing to do. At worse, it paves the way for prolonged conflict that endangers development. Paradoxically, then, we might well be undercutting development in the very name of development.

ISSUE: RUSSIA INDIA RELATIONS

Two things highlighted in the Article

1. Area of Cooperation
2. Why they need to cooperate

AREA OF COOPERATION

1. TRADE: In 2017, the bilateral economic turnout grew by almost 22% and by more than 17% last year; trade is projected to touch \$30 billion by 2025.
2. OIL: A few years ago, Russia’s oil giant, Rosneft, invested \$12.9 billion in India’s second largest private oil refiner, Essar Oil, marking one of the biggest foreign investments in years.

3. PETROCHEMICALS: is another area that Russian companies are looking at. India is now the world's fastest growing market for butyl rubber and halogenated butyl rubber thanks to its rapidly expanding car manufacturing industry which is pushing for electric vehicles.
4. DEFENCE: Russia, nonetheless, continues to serve as the largest arms supplier and just recently signed an agreement to carry payments through national currencies to circumvent the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act norms of the U.S.
5. In October last, Moscow and New Delhi signed a \$5-billion S-400 air-defence system deal that is among the agreements cumulatively worth \$10-billion. The list includes joint production of Kamov Ka-226T helicopters, four Admiral Grigorovich-class frigates and a joint venture in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, producing 750,000 Kalashnikov AK-203 rifles. More deals are under way, including acquiring additional Su-30 MKI and about 21 mig-29 fighters, as well as possible participation in the multi-billion 'Project 75' of the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force's contract for 114 fighter jets.

WHY THEY NEED TO COOPERATE

1. To balance China
2. To balance US
3. Support in UNSC

ISSUE: FIRE IN THE AMAZON FOREST

CENTRAL ARGUMENT: It is wrong to make such a hue and cry about deforestation and fires in amazon forest. They are essential but their cutting and other fires will not make much impact on global warming.

Author highlights that major cause of global warming is FOSSIL FUEL EMISSIONS and not DEFORESTATION AND LAND USE CHANGE.

EVIDENCES:

Though cumulative emissions from land-use change since 1750 amounted to almost 180 Gt, driven largely by the more than six-fold expansion of cropland, they were compensated by the 160 Gt of absorption by existing vegetation not subject to land use change.

Fossil fuel use, in contrast, contributed 375 Gt since 1750, that is more than 12 times that of the net cumulative emissions from terrestrial ecosystems.

Fossil fuel emissions currently pump about 9.9 Gt of carbon annually into the atmosphere, while land-use change accounts for 1.5 Gt. But terrestrial ecosystems absorbed 3.8 Gt. Taking sources and sinks together, they are a net sink.

While preservation of the Amazon as a carbon pool is essential, such preservation clearly is not the magic bullet that would counteract the impact of fossil fuel emissions.

Fossil fuel emissions have a lasting impact of a kind that deforestation and land use change do not. The effect of the latter can be partially repaired over time

Fossil fuel emissions from coal, oil, and gas cannot however be put back in to where they came from

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Author has defended the Brazilian government by quoting several data.

The year's tally, till August 25, was 80,626, a 78% increase year-on-year. However, in Peru it is 105% higher, and in Bolivia 107%, both part of the Amazon basin. There are forest fires elsewhere, extensive in Africa, particularly in Angola, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (attributed to slash-and-burn agriculture), in Siberia (three million hectares) and in Canada, both attributed to unusually high summer temperatures (this July being the warmest month ever).

Brazil is by no means a high emissions country, and a model of renewable energy use from hydro power and biofuels.

Q.1 Afforestation is not the magic bullet for solving the problem of climate change. Comment

Q.2 Developed countries should be more inward looking on the issue of Climate change. Discuss

Q.3 Amazon forest fires will not have much impact on the climate change. Elaborate.

ISSUE: FUNCTIONING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S

Constitutional Provisions Related to Local Government: 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments.

The Constitution mandates that panchayats and municipalities shall be elected every five years and enjoins States to devolve functions and responsibilities to them through law.

AIM OF THESE CAA: Devolution of power to the local level and deepening of democracy

REALITY: Local governments remain hamstrung and ineffective; mere agents to do the bidding of higher level governments.

WHY THEY HAVE FAILED?

1. Lack of law to formally assign functions to local governments
2. Lack of Finances
3. Lack of staff
4. Reporting to higher level departments not to the voters
5. In violation of the constitutional mandate of five yearly elections to local governments, States have often postponed them. In Tamil Nadu, panchayat elections have not been held for over two years now, resulting in the State losing finance commission grants from the Union government.

FINANCIAL PROBLEM

First, the volume of money set apart for them is inadequate to meet their basic requirements.

Second, much of the money given is inflexible; even in the case of untied grants mandated by the Union and State Finance Commissions, their use is constrained through the imposition of several conditions.

Third, there is little investment in enabling and strengthening local governments to raise their own taxes and user charges.

In the last few years there have been centralization of power and marginalization of the local bodies.

WAY AHEAD

1. To curb these tendencies, first, gram sabhas and wards committees in urban areas have to be

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

revitalised. New systems of Short Message Services, or social media groups could be used for facilitating discussions between members of a grama sabha.

2. Local government organisational structures have to be strengthened. Panchayats are burdened with a huge amount of work that other departments thrust on them, without being compensated for the extra administrative costs. Local governments must be enabled to hold State departments accountable and to provide quality, corruption free service to them, through service-level agreements.
3. Third, we cannot have accountable gps, without local taxation. The connection between tax payment and higher accountability is well known, but we wish to ignore these lessons.

ISSUE: TRUMP , EUROPE AND IRAN

The division between the European Union (EU) and the U.S. over Iran has been one of the most pressing security challenges since Mr. Trump decided last year to abandon the deal that was struck in 2015.

European leaders, and France in particular, have highlighted the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" plan in regard to Iran being a way with no end.

Iran has deliberately violated its terms by producing more low-enriched uranium than the agreement permits.

WHY EUROPEAN LEADERS ARE SCEPTIC?

First and foremost, the major reason is that Europe needs to keep the Persian Gulf open to guarantee the flow of oil and ensure its economic security

Second, the Europeans are fearful of getting involved in another war in West Asia which they do not want. The truth is that they do not trust that Mr. Trump will keep his word: that he will not attack Iran.\

France, Germany and the United Kingdom have developed a mechanism to trade with Iran legally using a trading system known as INSTEX, short for

Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges. It has been designed to permit countries to trade with Iran without the use of American dollars, so as to avoid the U.S. financial system.

ISSUE: CHANDRAYAAN2

ISRO was attempting powered landing for the first time.

To put it in perspective, there have been 38 attempts so far by other countries to land a rover on the moon and have succeeded only a little more than half the time.

Early January this year, China's Chang'e-4 touched down on the lunar far side and deployed the Yutu-2 rover to explore the South Pole-Aitken basin.

While the powered landing of Vikram and exploration of the moon's surface for 14 earth days by the Pragyan rover were one of the main objectives of Chandrayaan-2, it is wrong to think that the mission itself has failed.

On the contrary, 90-95% of the mission objectives have already been "accomplished". The orbiter is safe in the intended orbit around the moon. And with the "precise launch and mission management", its life span will extend to almost seven years.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The Chandrayaan-2 orbiter will now possibly reconfirm the presence of water on the moon. Water on the moon would, in principle, be used for life support and manufacturing rocket fuel.

ISSUE: TRANSFER OF MADRAS HC CJ TO MEGHALAYA

The transfer of Chief Justice Vijaya K. Tahliramani from the Madras High Court to Meghalaya is shocking and disconcerting. She had presided over a court of 75 judges and administered a subordinate judiciary in 32 districts in addition to the Union Territory of Puducherry. In contrast, the Meghalaya High Court has only three judges and a subordinate judiciary in just seven districts.

The transfer of a Chief Justice from one of the bigger High Courts to one of the smallest High Courts in the country is an obvious case of downgrading and amounts to public humiliation of the highest judicial officer in a State. Her response to this humiliation has been graceful but resolute — resignation.

The Supreme Court can order a judge's transfer to improve the functioning of either of the High Courts or if there are close relatives of the judge practising in the same Court. The apex court can also do so if the judge has litigation or property interest in the State or has become controversial and so her continuance in the same High Court is not conducive.

The Supreme Court cannot function as a sentinel of justice unless it puts its own house in order. Its functions, both judicial and administrative, have to be transparent and accountable. Courts have in the past held illegal executive orders passed without reason. The same should apply to the administrative actions of the apex court's collegium.

The media has reported that the transfer is a reaction to her judgment in the Bilkis Bano case that concerned the Gujarat riots of 2002. It is also speculated by some that personal prejudices of some Supreme Court judges resulted in the transfer. One would like to believe that these rumours are false.

The resignation of a judge with 17 years of judicial service, just a year before her retirement, has to raise alarm bells about the health of the system. Judges of High Courts enjoy constitutional tenure and protection and cannot be subjected to public shame for undisclosed reasons. Any arbitrary transfer by the Supreme Court collegium reduces the High Court judges to a subordinate status. Further, the collegium system, by its opacity, has failed to build a fearless and strong judiciary and serve the public interest. *Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes* (Who will guard the guards themselves)?

ISSUE: IMPACT OF MERGER ON PUBLIC BANKS

BACKGROUND: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently announced that 10 banks owned by the Government of India will be merged into four larger banks; thus the total number of state-owned banks in the country will have come down from 27 (in 2017) to 12.

Punjab National Bank will be merged with Oriental Bank of Commerce and United Bank of India;

Canara Bank with Syndicate Bank; Union Bank of India with Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank;

Indian Bank will amalgamate with Allahabad Bank .

The government also announced an infusion of ₹55,250 crore to help these newly merged banks extend more loans to their customers and meet crucial regulatory norms.

Last year, the government proposed the merger of three banks — Vijaya Bank and Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda — to create a larger bank.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

Earlier in 2017, State Bank of India, the country's largest lender, was merged with five of its associate banks.

WHY CONSOLIDATION?

1. Large banks will be able to lend more money and help revive the slowing economy.
2. Increased credit growth is essential in order to achieve its target of growing India into a \$5-trillion economy in the next few years.
3. Merger will lead to increased operational efficiency that will help these banks lower their costs, thus enabling them to lower their lending rates.

CHALLENGES

1. Scepticism about banks becoming stronger
2. Lack of synergies
3. Overstaffing not addressed
4. Impact the long term managerial culture of the banks
5. Structural issues like political interference in the management of banks not addressed.

ISSUE: INDIA RUSSIA RELATIONS

BACKGROUND: PM visit to Valdivostok to attend the Eastern Economic Forum summit and announcements made there.

Eastern Economic Forum set up by Russian President Vladimir Putin to attract investment to the farthest outlying East Siberian and Arctic-pole areas of the country.

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged on Thursday to extend a \$1 billion Line of Credit to Russia's Far East region (RFE).

Chief among the 50 agreements signed this week were those on energy exploration and procurement, including a specific mou on cooperation on LNG supplies to India, and a maritime route from Vladivostok to Chennai which will be used for energy trade as well.

The two sides also agreed on a five-year 'roadmap' for cooperation on prospecting for hydrocarbons and LNG in the Far East and the Arctic, building on a history of Indian investment in oilfields in the region.

WHY INDIAN INTEREST IN FAR EAST

The investment in the Far East, which is often neglected given that Russia is seen as a European power in the post-Soviet era, also underlines India's desire to draw Russia into its strategic forays in the Indo-Pacific.

The emphasis on energy from this region is as much a bid to benefit from explorations and trade routes in the Arctic that are becoming accessible due to global warming, as it is reflective of India's desire to diversify its energy sources away from an unstable West Asia.

China's cross-border investment in RFE accounts for 71% of the total direct foreign investment of \$33 billion. Ensure some space in the current clinch between Russia and China.

Reassuring its traditional partner that in an increasingly polarised world, India is confident of working with multiple alignments, even if they are at cross purposes with each other.

ISSUE: TRADE WAR BETWEEN US AND CHINA

Over the past few weeks, the trade war between the U.S. and China has seen a significant escalation. On August 20, the U.S. administration notified its decision to impose 15% tariffs, in two phases, on imports valued at \$300 billion.

Earlier, the U.S. administration had targeted China primarily for what it perceived to be violations by the latter of intellectual property rights (iprs) of American companies. The administration's argument was that Beijing was forcing these companies to transfer their proprietary technologies.

The latest action by the Trump administration raises at least two sets of issues.

The first concerns its pursuit of unilateralism, an anathema in the post-War economic governance framework underlined by the principles of multilateralism.

The country has challenged the framework of multilaterally agreed rules in two ways — first by not allowing WTO members to conduct negotiations so that the rules respond to the needs of the members, especially the lesser developed countries; and second, by making the dispute settlement mechanism non-functional. A critical component of the dispute settlement mechanism is the Appellate Body, which needs seven members to function effectively. But the U.S. administration has refused to allow retiring members of the Appellate Body to be replaced by new members, and this has brought the dispute settlement mechanism to the brink.

Have the American people gained anything from the exertions of the administration?

In 2018, almost nine months of which saw the trade war playing out, the U.S.'s trade deficit vis-à-vis China reached a record high of over \$419 billion, nearly 12% higher than that in the previous year and the steepest increase since 2010.

The timing of the latest escalation could not have been worse; it could bring the global economy closer to an economic slowdown, much earlier than its predicted onset in 2020.

ISSUE: FOCUS ON PRIMARY HEALTH CARE PRACTITIONERS

Colossal health insurance schemes like Ayushman Bharat that harp on providing insurance to the poor largely for private hospitalisation — when the most impoverishing expenses are incurred on basic medical care — are at least partly influenced by the passionate popular demand for the so-called high-quality medical care and bespeak the deformity in the health-care system today.

The current opposition to training mid-level providers under the NMC Act 2019 is another example of how the present power structure is inimical to primary health care. Despite the presence of evidence proving that practitioners of modern medicine (say medical assistants) trained through short-term courses, like those of a 2-3 year duration, can greatly help in providing primary health care to the rural population, any such proposal in India gets robustly opposed by the orthodox allopathic community. Proposals to train practitioners of indigenous systems of medicine, like Ayurveda, in modern medicine are also met with similar opposition.

Such criticism ignores the fact that nations like the U.K. and the U.S. are consistently training paramedics and nurses to become physician assistants or associates through two-year courses in modern medicine.

ISSUE: CONDITION OF TEACHING AND TEACHERS IN COUNTRY

BACKGROUND: 5th September Teachers Day

PROBLEMS

1. Talented people not attracted towards profession. In school you ask anyone who wants to be teacher
2. Those in the teacher training course they also say it was not their first preference.
3. Pressure from officialdom
4. Too much criticism from the parents who see the education as investment and wants maximum value in return.
5. Lack of proper training institutions for the teachers
6. Lack of finance with NCTE to improve the teachers training institutions
7. Faculty shortage at the training institutions
8. Teachers being insulted and social position diminishing.

STEPS TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION

1. Government has introduced the TET (Teacher Eligibility Test). But very few are able to pass it and this has created huge backlog in the recruitment.

Q. After achieving the quantitative targets Indian education system needs to achieve the qualitative targets. Elaborate.

ISSUE: HOW TO REVIVE THE AUTOMOBILE SECTOR

WHY SO MUCH FOCUSED UP ON?

Automobile sector is considered as the indicator for economic growth

WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

Automobile sector is facing slowdown since March 2019.

Every segment of the auto industry, beginning from two-wheelers to passenger cars, light commercial vehicles and heavy commercial vehicles, and even tractors, has been hit. The downturn this time is all-encompassing.

REASONS

1. Government push towards electric vehicles
2. Over production of commercial vehicles and cars
3. Government revised axle load norms aimed at legalizing the over loading
4. Transition to BS VI norms
5. Operators are waiting for steep discount
6. No new launches by the Maruti and Hyundai in the car segments. These two companies control two third of the Indian market.

WHAT COULD BE DONE

1. Reduction of GST rate from 28% to 18% in some segments

ISSUE: CONTROL OF HEPATITIS B VIRUS

BACKGROUND: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and Thailand have become the first four countries in the WHO South East Asia region to successfully control hepatitis B.

CONDITION FOR SAYING THAT HEPATITIS VIRUS IS CONTROLLED?

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

When prevalence of disease is reduced to less than 1% among the children less than 5 years of age.

SITUATION IN INDIA

Every year about one million people become chronically infected with the virus.

Causes over 1,00,00 premature deaths.

WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE IN CASE OF INDIA?

Hepatitis B dose should be given in the first 24 hours of birth and this will prevent vertical transmission from the mother to child.

Increase public awareness about the merits of the birth dose.

ISSUE: RBI's STEP TO IMPROVE LENDING

RBI issued a circular asking the banks to link all their new floating rate loans given to borrowers in the personal, retail and micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) categories to external benchmarks, including the repo rate, with effect from October 1.

Banks could also choose the yields on the 3-month and 6-month Treasury Bills published by the Financial Benchmarks India Pvt. Ltd. As their external benchmark rate.

In October 2017, an internal study group of the RBI recommended the adoption of external benchmarks to ensure effective policy transmission, after observing that the MCLR too had failed to deliver.

Though the latest move will surely lower the interest cost on new floating rate loans availed by borrowers to buy cars or homes, it may force banks to start cutting the interest rate they pay deposit holders or risk seeing their margins shrink.

ISSUE: WILL THE MERGER OF BANKS SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF BANKING SECTOR?

BACKGROUND: Last week, the Centre announced a sweeping consolidation that would see 10 public sector banks being merged into four.

Advantages being cited

1. Will help the banks compete globally
2. Good from administrative perspective
3. Will solve the coordination problem while recovering the NPA's
4. Merger makes it easier for the Finance Ministry to keep watch on banks
5. Bigger entities enables people to make bigger loans
6. Speedier decision making process

CRITICISM OF THE MOVE

1. Even after merger largest of these merged entities PNB will be one third of the size of the 50th largest bank.

2. Size and efficiency have limited correlation. Smaller private sector banks are performing better than larger public sector banks.
3. Timing is not right as economy is slowing down. So now what will happen is that top executives of these 10 banks will be focussed on who will get what in the merged entity instead of focussing upon how to lend and other commercial decisions.
4. Managerial ability not focussed upon and one of the two entities stronger condition not fulfilled.

ISSUE: ONE MONTH AFTER J&K REORGANIZATION

Exactly a month ago, Jammu and Kashmir lost its special constitutional status, and its status as a State, through a dubious and hurried process.

Kashmir Valley was put under a lockdown with all communication cut and movement of people severely restricted. One month on, the Valley continues to be under severe restrictions;

Communication networks in the Jammu region of the newly created Union Territory have been substantially restored and the Ladakh UT, carved out of the erstwhile State, has not seen disruptions. Prominent newspapers published from Srinagar, discontinued for several days, have resumed publication.

Mobile phones and the Internet are not back in operation and schools, though reopened, have sparse attendance in Kashmir.

A mood of triumphalism is evident across the country, which is resistant to an informed and tempered national discussion on the changed status of J&K.

Reports of protests and police action from the Valley have largely been dismissed by the Centre.

The government and other supporters of the move continue to argue that the people in Kashmir have been freed from the political families that held power at their cost, that investments will flow in, jobs will multiply, women will get equal status as men in terms of inheritance and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will benefit from nationally mandated reservation.

That they were not taken into confidence before the decision was made was bad enough, but what is worse is the continuing restrictions on free speech.

The elected Mayor of Srinagar and a doctor who spoke out about the risk to lives due to restrictions were promptly detained.

Increasing alienation among the residents. Ironically, the most disappointed are those who believed that Kashmir's future would be secure within India.

The Centre needs to reassure them that the change of status is not to the detriment of the people of Kashmir.

ISSUE: CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES

BACKGROUND: Prospective Urban Rural Epidemiology (PURE) study published in The Lancet this week.

Studying the situation in 21 countries across five continents, categorised by income levels, researchers showed that while cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause for death overall, there have been some transitions, particularly in the high-income countries, which have managed to reduce the number of deaths from CVD.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

In low-income countries, including India, however, CVD is still the top killer, with death three times more frequent than that due to cancer.

PURE's analysis concluded that the higher mortality in poorer countries was likely due to other factors, including 'lower quality and less health care'.

Access to affordable, quality health care is still a dream in many pockets in India. A great amount of out-of-pocket expenditure (according to Health Ministry data for 2014-15, nearly 62.6 % of India's total health expenditure) often frustrates continuation of treatment, or adherence to drug regimens.

SUGGESTIONS:-

1. Centre's Ayushman Bharat Yojana will have to take much of the burden of hospitalisation for complications of non-communicable diseases.
2. National and State schemes running on mission mode, including the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, CVD and Stroke will have to step up efforts to target people at risk with life-saving interventions.
3. Governments will have to muscle up to tackle a rather startling finding — ambient air pollution and indoor air pollution have an impact on CVD and mortality.
4. Household air pollution is the third top risk factor in low-income countries, according to the study.

ISSUE:CRITICISM OF THE AMENDMENT IN UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES PREVENTION ACT

BACKGROUND: Last month, amendments to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act ("UAPA"), India's signature anti-terrorism legislation, allowed the Central government to designate individuals as "terrorists"

CENTRAL ARGUMENT: This provision could be misused and even the UAPA tribunals which are meant to hear the appeal against the government allows the government vast amounts of leeway in proving its case.

Tribunals depart from some of the most fundamental principles of fair procedure, and act as little more than judicial rubber stamps. And this is made starkly evident by a recent UAPA Tribunal Order (issued on August 23, 2019) confirming the government's ban on the Jamaat-e-Islami, Jammu and Kashmir ("jei, J&K").

The government's ban on the jei, J&K was based on its opinion that the association was "supporting extremism and militancy", "indulging in anti national and subversive activities", and activities to "disrupt the territorial integrity of the nation"

In support of this opinion, the government said that there existed a large number of First Information Reports ("firs") against various members of the association.

Government then fell back on the increasingly convenient "sealed cover jurisprudence", submitting material that it claimed was too sensitive to be disclosed. Notably, the evidence was not disclosed even to the association and its lawyers, who were contesting the ban.

To take a decision on the legality of a ban by looking at secret material that is withheld even from the association itself is exactly akin to condemning a man unheard. It is kangaroo-court style justice, which has no place in a modern democracy. However, this is exactly what the Tribunal did.

THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

UAPA allows for departures from the “strict rules of evidence”, in order to serve larger goals. These “departures” have been made boundless, and boundlessly manipulable to the extent that they have swallowed up the most basic rules of procedural justice and fairness.

ISSUE: RUSSIA'S INCREASING ROLE IN THE INDO PACIFIC

Author has mainly analyzed the Russia, China and US triangle in the Indo Pacific.

The U.S.-Russia-China triangle still contains complex and counter-intuitive dynamics that often get obscured or distorted in India's strategic debates.

The Russia-China relationship is presently guided by, as Dmitri Trenin suggests, the principle of “never being against each other, but not necessarily always with each other”. This formula “puts a premium on a solid partnership between Moscow and Beijing where their interests meet, eschews conflicts where they don't, and allows a lot of flexibility where interests overlap only partially”. For instance, we saw this nimbleness at the UN Security Council when Russia and China were on opposite sides in reacting to India's new Kashmir policy.

Asia's multipolar age has arrived; that the Indo-Pacific is not restricted to one conception: he distinguished India's independent approach that includes stable ties with Beijing from the U.S. concept that some interpret as “Chinese containment on the cheap”; and most importantly, Russia being a Pacific power with interests in the Indian Ocean should join the debate.

Russia is already shaping the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific. It has managed the rare feat of deep cooperation with rival parties in the South China Sea disputes.

“Russia-Vietnam partnership should not be underestimated, because it has been growing despite and independently of Russia-China relations”. Indeed, once Russia's advanced military and naval modernisation assistance towards Indo-Pacific states such as India, Vietnam and Indonesia, along with Russia's own underrated Pacific Fleet whose area of responsibility extends to the Persian Gulf is accounted for, Moscow is already a player in Eurasia's Rimland areas.

Having been reassured that India is not bandwagoning with the U.S. and genuinely believes in open and inclusive security and order building ideas, Russia could now begin the process of imagining a role in the Indo-Pacific that brings its vast diplomatic experience and strategic heft into the open.

ISSUE: NRC UPDATION

The National Register of Citizens (NRC), which was expected to land with a bang in Assam, seems to some as having landed with a mere whoosh

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders are particularly upset as it has belied their hopes of netting a huge number of immigrant Muslims in a dragnet — reportedly, a majority of those left out are Hindus.

The previous figures cited by the government in earlier times were not based on any systematic procedure.

The Muslims' swelling numbers are the result of widespread poverty, illiteracy, early marriage and lack of birth-control measures rather than migration. However, this is not to deny that some migration did take place.

The process was impersonal and its strict machine-like operation pre-empted the targeting of any particular community. While there may have been errors and lapses, there is no truth to the allegation of bias.

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Author has highlighted the violence caused by the movement against migrants in Assam in 1970's and mid 80's.

Now that the NRC has ended, what are we to do with the 19 lakh people left out? The problem is that their fate will be decided by Foreigners' Tribunals which are short of mature and judicially trained members and which have so far leaned on reports of the Border Police. An option of appeal to the higher echelons of the judiciary does exist for those excluded but that is likely to be expensive and sometimes unaffordable. The government has promised legal aid but we have to wait and watch if it is dispensed impartially.

Deporting them is not an option. However, many of the Assamese people, living in a State that is still under-developed, are not willing to bear their burden at a time when their own lot is facing difficult times due to the annual floods, a drying up of natural resources and the cut-throat competition.

They are scared of losing whatever political power they have enjoyed. It is the Centre's responsibility to rehabilitate and look after those who are left out after the exercise. In the meantime, patience and a refusal to take the bait of rumours and inflammatory rhetoric may see the Assamese through.

ISSUE: MOTOR VEHICLES (AMENDMENT) ACT 2019

Focusses on penalties rather than accident victims.

India is one of the most accident-prone countries in the world, accounting for nearly 1,50,000 deaths — 10% of all motor vehicles-related fatalities worldwide.

The fact that the National Crime Records Bureau does not collate data pertaining to the socio-economic and demographic profile of victims of traffic accidents is a testament to the relative apathy shown by the state machinery.

The amended Act gives the victims some respite as it provides for an enhanced insurance compensation of ₹5 lakh in case of death of a person in a traffic accident and ₹2.5 lakh where there is "grievous hurt". The compensation to be awarded following hit-and-run accidents has also been raised to ₹2 lakh when a victim dies and ₹50,000 when he/she suffers a grievous injury.

The Act now requires insurance companies and the government to notify schemes relating to cashless treatment during the 'Golden Hour' — the period of first 60 minutes from the occurrence of an accident when the risk of fatality can be minimised to the greatest extent.

Further, it mandates compulsory insurance of all road users, including pedestrians, who will be covered through a 'Motor Vehicle Accident Fund'. Lastly, it also provides for interim relief to be provided to the claimants.

WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

First, closer attention needs to be paid to the formula used to calculate the quantum of compensation. The time has come for the Parliament to have a rethink on properly assessing homemakers' and householders' work and suitably amending the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act... for giving compensation when the victims are women and homemakers." The amended Act, however, does not account for such nuances.

Another problem highlighted by the apex court for which the new Act does not provide any remedy is that of procedural delays on the part of tribunals in claims settlement

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An absence of in-built safeguards in the compensation mechanism allows for the money to be frittered away by unscrupulous relatives, touts and agents, especially in cases where the victim or his nearest kin are poor and illiterate. It is to address this concern that the Supreme Court in Jai Prakash suggested payment in the form of monthly disbursements of smaller amounts over a longer period of time to victims or their kin, as against a lump-sum award. This has been overlooked by the new Act.

ISSUE: SLOW DOWN IN GDP

BACKGROUND: The latest estimates for GDP show year-on-year growth in the April-June period slid for a fifth straight quarter to 5%, the slowest pace in more than six years

The mainstay of demand — PRIVATE CONSUMPTION SPENDING — slumped to an 18-quarter low, with the expansion decelerating sharply to 3.1%, from 7.2% in the preceding quarter and 7.3% a year earlier.

GROSS FIXED CAPITAL FORMATION (GFCF), a proxy for investment activity, grew a meagre 4%, less than a third of the 13.3% growth it posted 12 months earlier.

Manufacturing GVA growth plunged to an eight-quarter low of 0.6%

Demand for manufactured products ranging from cars and consumer durables to even biscuits having sharply diminished,

Government has announced several new initiatives in the last few weeks to revive the economy.

Any beneficial impact from these measures will, however, take time to feed into the economy and time is a luxury that the faltering economy can ill afford, especially given the global headwinds

With the farm sector still stuck in a low income trap and this year's mercurial monsoon rains, leaving some parts flooded and others still facing deficits and engendering a shortfall in kharif sowing, rural demand is unlikely to return any time soon.

With the RBI's four interest rate reductions since the start of 2019 having, so far, failed to incentivise credit-fuelled consumer spending and business investment to any significant degree and with limited fiscal headroom to try and prime the pump with increased expenditure, big, bold structural reforms may be the only way out

ISSUE: IMPACT OF POPULISM ON DEMOCRACY

IMPORTANCE OF DEMOCRACY

1. It enables the peaceful transfer of power through free and fair elections
2. Those who lose out do not 'reach for the gun'
3. Provides civil liberties, political, social and economic rights.
4. Democracy ensures justice.

Author highlights that in the last few decades democracy has been hollowed out due to rise of populism.

Democracy has been hollowed out by two tools

1. Attacking the elite
2. Attack on institutions

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Democratic theory holds that power should be vested in institutions and exercised according to procedures. But populist leaders see institutions as obstacle to further their agenda.

Such leaders interpret criticism of their policies as anti-national.

Populists do not tolerate criticism either from individuals, or from forums of deliberation, such as Parliaments. Parliaments are not only law-making bodies. They are forums that enable deliberation, encourage mediation, facilitate criticism of government policies, and make possible the hammering out of compromises and the offering of alternatives. Today, powerful populists hold representative institutions hostage to their own projects of power.

Take the United States. A Republican-controlled Senate has succeeded in blocking progressive legislation debated and adopted by the House of Representatives. The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, referred to the federal chamber as a grave of progressive legislation. Repeated stand-offs between the two Houses has led to legislative paralysis.

On August 28, 2019, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson made a determined bid to curtail the debating powers of the British Parliament. He announced that Parliament will shut down for five weeks, from September 9 to October 14 of this year.

Another constitutional outrage was committed by the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government on August 5, 2019 in India. On that day the Home Minister asked the Rajya Sabha to approve of a fait accompli, the dismemberment of Jammu and Kashmir which is a constituent State of the Indian federation. No one seems to remember that J&K existed several decades before India became independent and proceeded to integrate over 500 princely states into its territory. Every protocol that the territorial boundaries of an existing State in the federation cannot be altered without the assent of the representatives of the people has been infringed.

Parliament, which in its majesty represents the Indian people, has been reduced to a handmaiden of the ruling party

We are back to the days of personalised power and suppression of democratic institutions. The person of the executive replaces representative government.

ISSUE: REPERCUSSIONS OF INDIA PAKISTAN TUSSLE

In February 2019, in the wake of the Pulwama attack, India decided to withdraw the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan; subsequently, it imposed 200% customs duty on all Pakistani goods coming into India.

After the Balakot airstrikes, again in February, India and Pakistan closed their airspace, with Pakistan keeping the ban in place for nearly five months.

In April, India suspended trade across the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir citing misuse of the trade route by Pakistan-based elements.

Post the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, Pakistan cut off diplomatic and economic ties with India — expelling the Indian envoy, partially shutting airspace and suspending bilateral trade.

In 2018-19, bilateral trade between India and Pakistan was valued at \$2.5 billion — India's exports to Pakistan accounted for \$2.06 billion and India's imports from Pakistan were at \$495 million. India's decision vis-à-vis withdrawal of MFN status and imposition of 200% duty has hurt Pakistan's exports to India, falling from an average of \$45 million per month in 2018 to \$2.5 million per month in the last four months.

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All these decisions have adversely impacted the border economies.

Amritsar is land-locked, is not a metropolis and traditionally has no significant industry. Hence, any decision on India-Pakistan trade has a direct impact on the local economy and the people of Amritsar. Since February, according to estimates on ground, 5,000 families have been directly affected in Amritsar because of breadwinner dependence on bilateral trade. Traders and their staff members, customs house agents (chas), freight forwarders, labour force, truck operators, dhaba owners, fuel stations, and other service providers are closing shop and going out of business. Of the nearly ₹25-30 crore that was being added to the local economy of Amritsar every month, the estimate now is that three-quarters has been lost in the last six months.

With Pakistan deciding to completely suspend bilateral trade, exports of cotton from India to Pakistan are expected to be affected the most, eventually hurting Pakistan's textiles; the lawn industry which will now have to source pricier cotton from alternative markets in the United States, Australia, Egypt or Central Asia; or there is a high possibility that Indian cotton, along with other products, will be routed through third countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Singapore, thereby increasing the share of indirect trade which is estimated to be more than double the direct trade between India and Pakistan.

In the spirit of nationalism, the trade fraternity on both sides, by and large, has stood by their respective governments. But locals in border economies on both sides have mouths to feed, which calls for a solution. What are the alternative sources of livelihood that can be generated to keep border economies afloat?

ISSUE: MINORITY PROBLEM OF PAKISTAN

BACKGROUND: Tweet of Pakistani PM on NRC process that it is ethnic cleansing by India.

On March 25, 1971, the Pakistani military had embarked on 'Operation Searchlight' to curb the elements of the separatist Bengali nationalist movement in erstwhile East Pakistan. It was this crackdown that had resulted in the massive influx of refugees into India.

Every nation has a sovereign right to check claims of citizenship. What is happening in India is merely an updation of the NRC, which is taking place under the watchful eyes of the Supreme Court.

Whether in Assam or in J&K, the Constitution is the ultimate guardian for all citizens of India. The internal processes of India brook no external interference. India's own credentials as a secular democracy need no certification. In India, unlike in most other countries, minorities have occupied the highest offices of the land.

Instead of vilifying India, Mr. Khan should be more concerned about the treatment of the minorities in his own country, where the minority population has plunged since 1947. The discriminatory treatment meted out to Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Ahmadiyyas, the Baloch, Pashtuns and the Kalash people in Pakistan is well documented.

When Mr. Khan speaks of "ethnic cleansing", he is choosing to ignore Pakistan's abysmal track record in this respect. In 1971, as many as three million Bengalis were killed by the Pakistani military, according to independent researchers. Pakistan is said to be among the worst places in the world for Shia Muslims. In 2012, gunmen pulled out at least 20 Shia Muslims from a bus and killed them in northern Pakistan.

Hindu women are routinely forced to convert to Islam, especially in rural Sindh.

In 2014, a Christian couple was burnt alive in Kasur, some 60 km from Lahore. Recently, a teenage Sikh girl was allegedly abducted and converted to Islam in Pakistan's Punjab province. Given this depressing state of affairs, Mr. Khan should first ensure that the minorities in his country are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve before making reckless statements.

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ISSUE: NRC LIST:

CENTRAL ARGUMENT: This entire NRC exercise has solved nothing and everyone is disappointed.

Assam Agitation supporters are disappointed as they expected final figure of five to 10 million. The final figure of less than two million has sorely disappointed, and enraged, them.

More than half of the 1.9 million people excluded are Hindu and hence BJP is disappointed.

For the BJP, on the other hand, disenfranchising or deporting Bengali Hindus would be political suicide, sacrificing its core constituency. Therefore, BJP leaders in Assam and Delhi are today disingenuously rejecting the process their own government drove as ‘biased’. The only way in which the NRC could work for them would be if they could pass the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, giving citizenship to undocumented immigrants if they are Hindu, but not if they are Muslim

FLAWED PROCESS OF NRC:-

The burden of proof was shifted to the residents to prove that they were citizens, based on documents such as those linked to birth, schooling and land ownership which impoverished and unlettered rural residents anywhere would find hard to muster.

Even when residents succeeded in producing these documents, they were often rejected for small discrepancies, such as in the English-language spelling of Bengali names or in the age even though it is well-known that most rural people do not know their dates of birth.

Foreigners’ Tribunals (fts) have operated in openly hostile and arbitrary ways. The presiding officers of fts are often lawyers with no judicial experience and appointed with no security of tenure by the State government, follow no due process, and are reportedly driven by informal targets to maximise the numbers of persons who they deem to be ‘foreigners’.

There are today 100 fts. An average case in one FT might take one year or longer to dispose. I did a back-of-the-envelope calculation that even if there are 1,000 fts which decide one case every working day, it would take more than six years for them to decide 19 lakh cases. Given their actual rate of disposal, it could take three or four times this period.

The biggest question relates to what would be the fate of the people who, at the end of this process, are declared ‘illegal immigrants’. There is no question of Bangladesh accepting them: the Indian government is not even negotiating this with Dhaka. The Assam agitation was clear in its demand of ‘detection, deletion (from electoral rolls) and deportation’.

The realistic probability is that, in the end, they would be allowed to live in India, but stripped of all citizenship rights. They would be a ‘marked people’, powerless and susceptible to social violence and intense state scrutiny.

ISSUE: NRC PUBLICATION

Final list published on 31st August. 19 lakh people left out.

Those left out are not foreigners until the tribunals set up to determine their fate pronounce them so. The process could go all the way to the Supreme Court. The Home Ministry has also extended the time to file appeals against exclusion in the Foreigners Tribunal from 60 to 120 days.

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There have been glaring omissions, in NRC like a serving lawmaker, a former legislator, and retired Army man Mohammad Sanaullah.

The State government and many political parties have promised to offer legal help to those excluded, but such assistance should have been forthcoming from the time the updating exercise was rolled out on the ground in 2015. Instead, it was mostly left to sundry organisations and concerned activists to come to the aid of hundreds of thousands oblivious of documentation novelties such as legacy data.

The question of what to do with those declared illegal aliens once the quasi-judicial process is done and dusted. The administration is readying detention centres, but only a veritable 'prison state' can house such numbers.

Options being bandied about include instituting a system of work permits, a renewed attempt to nudge Dhaka to take in some of the declared foreigners with appropriate deal sweeteners or 'friendly' State governments volunteering to share some of the burden.

ISSUE: IRRESPONSIBLE STATEMENTS BY PAKISTAN

Statements by senior functionaries of Pakistan including Prime Minister Imran Khan threatening war and violence against India and in Jammu and Kashmir are irresponsible, escalatory and dangerous.

Minister went to the extent of announcing a time frame for starting a war.

Several diplomats have called for jihad.

Pakistan's reputation as a reckless nuclear power is reinforced in all this, and its continuing support for Islamist terrorist outfits is not doing any good for the people of J&K

Pursuit of military parity with India has ruined Pakistan economically, though the compact of generals and clerics that controls it has flourished.

Pakistan is trying to catch the world's attention and assuage the perilous passions its state policies have created in its society.

India calculates, probably rightly, that global powers caught up in their own crises have no inclination to be involved in any India-Pakistan dispute. Indian leaders have expressed willingness to talk to Pakistan on the one hand, and on the other hand made menacing statements primarily meant to sustain nationalist passions back home. Ambiguity may be a good tactic in diplomacy at times, but this occasion warrants stated clarity that India does not seek conflict.

India must now work harder to restore the equilibrium in Jammu and Kashmir and reaching out to Pakistan may be well worth it. At any rate, the government functionaries must resist the temptation to match the Pakistan leadership in irresponsible rhetoric.

ISSUE: ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

Growth has been declining for close to two-and-a-half years by now. To counter this Finance Minister announced a slew of measures through her press conference to revive the economy.

Three sets of announcements pertain to

1. Concessions impacting upon the automobile sector,

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2. Proposals for the banking sector and
3. A change in a practice of the Income-Tax Department.

Author highlights that when many sectors are facing the problem focussing on one sector is not fair governance.

There have been reports of severe stress in the packaged foods industry for instance and we have long been aware that the agricultural sector has been troubled after demonetisation.

Industrialists are under pressure to not speak out against high-handedness, and the compulsory retirement of income tax personnel for malpractice recently point to not everything being well within that department.

Banking sector reforms are in the right direction but they cannot revive the growth in economy.

Most significant among the measures related to banking is the infusion of capital upto ₹70,000 crore into the public sector banks. This is expected to contribute to a potential ₹5 lakh crore expansion of credit.

There is also a proposal to ensure that loan decisions taken by bankers are treated as economic decisions and not as instances of corruption when a loan goes awry.

For making banking sector strong author has suggested two things

1. Remove the fear of investigative agencies
2. Stop putting political pressure on banks

Overall, the move towards having commercial bank rates move in tandem with the repo rate by fiat is not advisable. The decision should be left to the banks.

SUGGESTIONS BY AUTHOR FOR HIGH GROWTH:-

1. Private investment: which will come only when there is more profit.
2. Agricultural Growth
3. Record levels of public investment
4. Exports

ISSUE: HOW GLOBAL LEADERS ARE IGNORING THE CLIMATE CHANGE

Brazil's Amazon forests are ablaze with dozens of fires, most of them set intentionally by loggers and others seeking greater access to forest land.

These forests are paving the way for a global climate catastrophe.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has stated that they are an internal matter and that they were actually started by the very non-governmental organisations who are now shouting "fire".

The American President Donald Trump has withdrawn from the Paris Climate Agreement stating that it is against the national interests of the U.S.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, has spoken from both sides of his mouth on climate change, receiving funding from climate science denial groups while saying that he would lobby the U.S. to take climate change more seriously.

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Meanwhile, many cities in Europe and elsewhere have seen high temperatures never before experienced. Heat waves have also accelerated melting of glaciers in Greenland at a rate that was not anticipated by scientific models until much later this century.

Author highlights that climate change transcend national boundaries and impact all creatures that share life on the planet.

CAUSES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Energy and transport are mainly responsible for the accumulation of greenhouse gases (ghgs) in the atmosphere
2. Changes in land use patterns
3. Deforestation,
4. Industrial agricultural systems and
5. Desertification

SOLUTION

1. Better land management
2. Reducing chemical input drastically, and taking the practice of food production closer to natural methods of agroecology
3. Avoid conversion of grassland to cropland, bringing in equitable management of water in agriculture, crop diversification, agroforestry and investment in local and indigenous seed varieties that can withstand higher temperatures. It also recommends practices that increase soil carbon and reduce salinisation.
4. Cultivates the growth of ecological sensibilities,

Some international campaigns for environment protection:- La Via Campesina, The Transition Network, and Ecoregionalism, Fridays for Future and Fossil Fuel Divestment

ISSUE: ARE ELECTRIC VEHICLES ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE

NEWS: NITI Aayog, in May this year, proposed to ban the sale of all internal combustion engine (ICE) powered three-wheelers post March 2023. It also suggested that all new two-wheelers below 150cc sold after March 2025 should be electric.

Union Budget presented on July 5 announced tax incentives for early adopters.

PROBLEMS WITH ELECTRIC VEHICLES

There has been the worry that evs are still not financially viable because of various costs associated with their manufacture and use.

For any meaningful reduction in the physical value of evs, the cost of battery packs needs to reduce significantly.

The predominant battery chemistry used in evs is lithium-ion batteries (Li-ion). No new technologies are on the horizon for immediate commercial usage.

The cost of the materials or key-components of the battery, namely the cathode, anode, electrolyte, separator, among others, contribute the most (60%) to the total cost. Labour charges, overheads and profit margins account for the rest.

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Any reduction in the cost of the battery pack will have to come from a reduction in materials cost or the manufacturing overhead.

How has the cost of the Li-ion battery pack cost evolved in the last decade?

The price of these battery packs has consistently fallen over the past few years. This decrease is in part due to technological improvements, economies of scale and increased demand for lithium-ion batteries. Fierce competition between major manufacturers has also been instrumental in bringing down prices.

WAY AHEAD FOR INDIA IN THE CASE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

In India, EV adoption will be driven by two-wheelers rather than cars in high numbers on because India's mobility market is driven more by two wheelers.

Two-wheelers will also need smaller batteries when compared to cars and hence the overall affordable cost. India needs to manufacture Li-ion cells in-house.

ISSUE: RBI FUND TRANSFER

BACKGROUND: On August 26, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) central board decided to transfer ₹1.76 lakh crore to the government (including a sum of ₹52,637 crore from its contingency reserve), a move that is likely to address the Central government's precarious fiscal situation.

The RBI had formed a committee chaired by former RBI Governor Bimal Jalan to review its ECF last year.

The RBI transfers to the government any money in its balance sheet that it deems to be beyond its operational and contingency needs.

The amount of funds being transferred by the central bank to the government this year is much higher than earlier — 146.8% more than what it had paid out last year

The massive payout has raised concerns that the government may be confiscating money from the RBI to meet its urgent spending needs, thus effectively turning the central bank into a banker for the government.

Central banks such as the RBI, however, are supposed to be independent from all forms of government influence.

Many also view the move to get the RBI to let go of a portion of its accumulated reserve as part of a wider campaign by the government to strip the powers of various independent regulatory bodies.

In July, the government amended the Finance Bill to ensure that the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) transferred surplus funds in its custody over to the government.

Some economists argue that the government has the right to make use of funds in the custody of public institutions such as the RBI to meet its fiscal needs. Critics, however, argue that stripping the financial assets of regulatory institutions such as the RBI and SEBI can compromise their independence.

How does the RBI earn money?

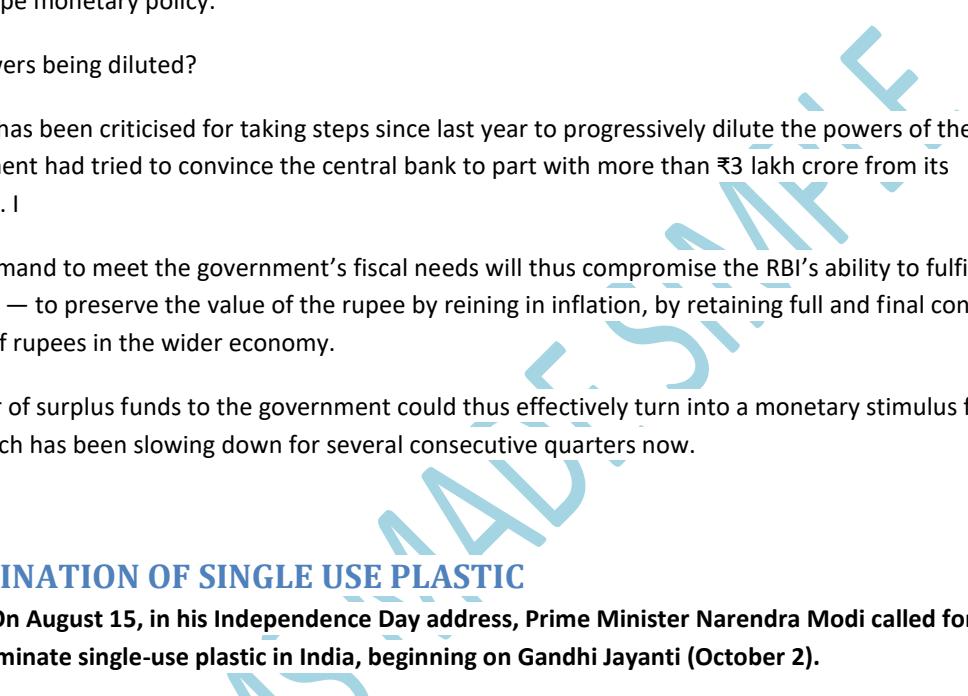
THE HINDU ANALYSIS BY THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

The RBI earns money in a variety of ways. Open market operations, wherein a central bank purchases or sells bonds in the open market in order to regulate money supply in the economy, are a major source of income for the RBI.

Apart from the interest received from these bonds, the RBI may also profit from favourable changes in bond prices. Dealings in the foreign exchange market that the RBI engages in may also contribute to the bank's profits.

It should be noted, however, that unlike commercial banks, the primary mandate of the RBI is not to earn profits but to preserve the value of the rupee. Profit and loss are thus merely a side effect of its regular operations to shape monetary policy.

Are the RBI's powers being diluted?

The government has been criticised for taking steps since last year to progressively dilute the powers of the RBI. The government had tried to convince the central bank to part with more than ₹3 lakh crore from its reserves last year. 

The increased demand to meet the government's fiscal needs will thus compromise the RBI's ability to fulfil its primary mandate — to preserve the value of the rupee by reining in inflation, by retaining full and final control over the supply of rupees in the wider economy.

The RBI's transfer of surplus funds to the government could thus effectively turn into a monetary stimulus for the economy which has been slowing down for several consecutive quarters now.

ISSUE: ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC

BACKGROUND: On August 15, in his Independence Day address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for a movement to eliminate single-use plastic in India, beginning on Gandhi Jayanti (October 2).

Where does India stand on plastic waste?

In spite of the notification of the Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules, 2016, and amendments made two years later, most cities and towns are not prepared to implement its provisions.

Per capita consumption of plastic is projected to go up from 11 kg in 2014-15 to 20 kg by 2022

An amendment to the PWM Rules in 2018, by which a six-month deadline was fixed for producers to arrange for recovery of waste in partnership with State Urban Development departments, has made little progress.

Neither is plastic marked with numerical symbols (such as 1 for PET, 4 for Low Density Polyethylene, 5 for Polypropylene and so on) to facilitate recycling using the correct industrial process.

Are alternatives such as compostable or biodegradable plastics viable?

Although compostable, biodegradable or even edible plastics made from various materials such as bagasse (the residue after extracting juice from sugarcane), corn starch, and grain flour are promoted as alternatives, these currently have limitations of scale and cost.

Seaweed is also emerging as a choice to make edible containers.

SUGGESTIONS TO REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE:-

A movement against plastic waste would have to prioritise the reduction of single-use plastic such as multi-layer packaging, bread bags, food wrap, and protective packaging.

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Other parts of the campaign must focus on tested biodegradable and compostable alternatives for plates, cutlery and cups, rigorous segregation of waste and scaled up recycling.

THE EXAMS MADE SIMPLE

FACT BASED QUESTIONS

Q. International Astronomical Union named an asteroid after which famous classical singer?

PANDIT JASRAJ

Q. China's National Day is celebrated on

OCTOBER 1

Q. Umbrella Revolution is associated with which country

HONG KONG

Q. States covered under the sixth schedule are:

ASSAM, MEGHALAYA, MIZORAM AND TRIPURA

Q. Operation Trident and Operation Python are related to

1971 WAR

Q. Top crude supplier to India is

IRAQ

Q. Which country has issued the tourist visa for the first time?

SAUDI ARABIA

Q. World Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index is released by

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

Q. Name the first women President of BCCI state association

RUPA GURUNATH

Q. SAAB is the company of

SWEDEN

Q. Daewoo is the company of

SOUTH KOREA

Q. Number of Legislative assembly seats in Maharashtra are

288

Q. Number of Legislative assembly seats in Haryana are

90

Q. Chief Election Commissioner of India is

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SUNIL ARORA

Q. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staffs Committee?

BIPIN RAWAT

Q. Name the world's largest oil processing facility.

ABQAIQ

Q. Name the Air Force Chief

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL R K S BHADAURIA

Q. Name the first defence minister to fly Tejas, indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft

RAJNATH SINGH

Q. Name the National Security Advisor of United States of America

ROBERT O BRIEN

Q. The Emperor of All Maladies is a book by

SIDDHARTHA MUKHERJEE

Q. Which country has won the U-19 Asia Cup defeating Bangladesh

INDIA

Q. Permanent Record is the memoir of

EDWARD SNOWDEN

Q. September 21 Revolution is associated with

YEMEN

Q. Name the world's most profitable company

ARAMCO

Q. The Hindu Way is a book by

SHASHI THAROOR

Q. Sentinelese are the tribes of

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLAND

Q. Central Leather Research Institute is located in

CHENNAI

Q. Headquarter of United Bank of India is located in

KOLKATTA

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Q.Headquarter of Allahabad Bank

KOLKATTA

Q.Headquarter of Indian Bank

CHENNAI

Q.Name the PTI Chairman

VIJAY KUMAR CHOPRA

Q. Name the first state to have an electric bus for the intercity routes

MAHARASHTRA

Q. Amchang wildlife sanctuary is located in

ASSAM

Q. Dada Saheb Falke Award ?

Amitabh Bacchan

Q.First Dadasaheb phalke award?

Devika Rani (1969)

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