

CURRENT AFFAIRS

UPSC CSE 2026



LECTURE - 2 (MCQ)
CURRENT AFFAIRS (PRELIMS + MAINS)
[MAY + JUNE 2025]

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Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Nipah Virus (NiV):

1. It is a zoonotic pathogen.
2. It is a double-stranded, negative-sense RNA virus.
3. Human-to-human transmission is not possible through close contact and body fluids.
4. There is no approved vaccine or specific antiviral treatment available for Nipah virus infection.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only three
- d) All four

Explanation

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Nipah virus (NiV) is a highly fatal zoonotic pathogen with repeated outbreaks in India, especially Kerala.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** NiV is a single-stranded, negative-sense RNA virus of the Henipavirus genus, Paramyxoviridae family.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Human-to-human transmission is possible through close contact and body fluids.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** There are no approved Nipah virus vaccines or treatments, but several candidates are in human trials, including the PHV02 candidate and the ChAdOx1 NipahB vaccine.

Q2. Consider the following:

Assertion (A): Section 79 of the Information Technology Act, 2000 provides "safe harbour protection" to intermediaries.

Reason (R): Intermediaries are not liable for user-generated content if they follow due diligence guidelines prescribed by the government.

Which one of the following is correct?

- a) Both A and R are correct, and R is the correct explanation of A
- b) Both A and R are correct, but R is not the correct explanation of A
- c) A is correct, but R is incorrect
- d) A is incorrect, but R is correct

Explanation:

- Section 79 of the IT Act, 2000 grants safe harbour to intermediaries such as social media platforms, shielding them from liability for third-party content. This protection applies only if they observe due diligence and comply with government-prescribed rules, such as the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. Hence, both statements are correct, and the reason correctly explains the assertion.

Q3. Consider the following statements about the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:

1. NEP 2020 plans to replace the University Grants Commission (UGC) and AICTE with a new system.
2. It introduced a four-year multidisciplinary undergraduate programme with multiple exit options.
3. It mandates Hindi as one of the three languages to be taught in schools.
4. It recommends teaching in the mother tongue or regional language at least till Class 5.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only three
- d) All

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions replacing the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) with a single regulatory body called the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** NEP introduced a flexible 3 or 4 year multidisciplinary undergraduate programme with multiple exit options, including certificate after 1 year, advanced diploma after 2 years, bachelor's degree after 3 years, and a bachelor's with research after 4 years.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** NEP 2020 recommends a three-language formula, but it does not mandate Hindi specifically as one of the three languages to be taught. It respects linguistic diversity, emphasizes mother tongue/local language instruction, and leaves language choice to states and regions.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** NEP 2020 recommends that wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, should be the mother tongue or local/regional language.

Q4. With reference to Samagra Shiksha Scheme, consider the following:

1. It is an integrated scheme covering education from pre-school to class XII.
2. It subsumes Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, RMSA and Teacher Education.
3. It is a Central Sector Scheme.
4. It supports implementation of both RTE Act and NEP 2020.

How many of the above statements are incorrect?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only three
- d) All

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Samagra Shiksha Scheme is an integrated scheme covering education from pre-school to class XII. This is correct, as the scheme treats school education as a continuum from pre-school to senior secondary levels.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** It subsumes Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), and Teacher Education (TE) schemes.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (not a Central Sector Scheme). This means it is funded by the central government but implemented with state governments.
- **Statement 4 is correct:** It supports the implementation of the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and is aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Q5. Which of the following statements regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Index is incorrect?

- a) The SDG India Index is released by NITI Aayog in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.
- b) Kerala has consistently ranked among the top-performing States in the SDG India Index in recent years.
- c) Bhutan and Nepal are ahead of India in 2025 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) rankings.
- d) The Index assigns equal weightage to all 17 SDG's while calculating composite scores for States and UT's.

Explanation:

- NITI Aayog is the nodal agency for the SDG India Index, and the reports mention collaboration (or technical support) from UNDP. In recent editions, Kerala has indeed been one of the top performers in India's SDG rankings. Among neighbours: Bhutan ranked 74th (70.5), Nepal 85th (68.6), Bangladesh 114th (63.9), Pakistan 140th (57), Maldives 53rd, and Sri Lanka 93rd. The SDG India Index **does not** assign equal weight to all 17 goals. The weightage depends on the number of indicators under each goal, availability of data, and the methodological framework adopted by NITI Aayog.

Q6. With reference to Universal Immunization Programme (UIP), consider the following:

1. It provides free vaccines against 12 diseases including Human Papillomavirus (HPV).
2. India was declared polio-free in 2014.
3. It is implemented by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- a) Only one
 - b) Only two
 - c) All three
 - d) None
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Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** UIP provides free immunization against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases including Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Rubella, Childhood Tuberculosis, Rotavirus diarrhoea, Hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenzae type B (meningitis and pneumonia), Pneumococcal Pneumonia, and Japanese Encephalitis (sub-nationally in endemic districts).
- **Statement 2 is correct:** WHO declared India polio-free in 2014 as a part of the South-East Asia Region certification.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** UIP is implemented by the Government of India, specifically the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. While Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, supports immunization globally including India, UIP is a government program, not implemented by Gavi.

Q7. Which of the following statements regarding the Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) is incorrect?

- a) The IHDI "discounts" each dimension (health, education, income) of the Human Development Index based on inequality in that dimension.
 - b) When there is perfect equality in all dimensions, the IHDI equals the HDI.
 - c) The IHDI is computed as an arithmetic mean of the inequality-adjusted dimension indices.
 - d) The methodology for IHDI draws on a distribution-sensitive class of composite indices, inspired by the Atkinson inequality measure.
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Explanation:

- The IHDI adjusts each HDI dimension (life expectancy / health, education, and standard of living/income) by applying a penalty or "discount" depending on the inequality in that dimension. In other words, greater inequality in a dimension reduces the effective contribution of that dimension in the IHDI. In the ideal case where no inequality exists across health, education, and income, there is no discounting, so IHDI = HDI. The IHDI is **not** computed via a simple arithmetic mean; rather, it uses the **geometric mean** of the inequality-adjusted dimension indices. The IHDI methodology is based on a distribution-sensitive class of composite indices as proposed by Foster, Lopez-Calva, and Szekely (2005), and draws on the Atkinson (1970) family of inequality measures.

Q8. With reference to sex ratio at birth (SRB), consider the following statements:

1. Bihar's SRB has declined consistently since 2020.
2. Kerala has reported the highest SRB.
3. Sample Registration System (SRS) is a complete census of India's entire population conducted every five years by the Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) 3 Only
- d) 2 and 3 Only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Bihar's SRB has declined consistently since 2020, from 964 in 2020, to 908 in 2021, and 891 in 2022.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Nagaland reported the highest SRB at 1,068, followed by Arunachal Pradesh (1,036), Ladakh (1,027), Meghalaya (972), and Kerala (971). Assam, which had the lowest SRB in 2021 (863), improved to 933 in 2022.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** The SRS is a large-scale demographic survey, not a complete census, that provides annual estimates of birth, death, and infant mortality rates in India, rather than a complete headcount every five years. It is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, using a dual record system in a sample of villages and urban blocks.

Q9. The “3 by 35 Initiative”, which was recently seen in the news, is related to:

- a) Increasing renewable energy share in global electricity generation by 2035.
- b) Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the top three industrial sectors by 35% by 2035.
- c) Raising health taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks to curb non-communicable diseases.
- d) Expanding vaccination coverage for three major diseases to 35 countries by 2035.

Explanation:

- The “3 by 35” Initiative was launched by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2025. It urges countries to increase the real prices of tobacco, alcohol, and sugary drinks by at least 50% by 2035 through higher health taxes. The initiative aims to save lives, reduce the global burden of non-communicable diseases, and generate nearly US \$1 trillion in additional public revenue over the next decade. It promotes country-specific fiscal policies rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Q10. With reference to Sickle Cell Anaemia (SCA) in India, consider the following statements:

1. India bears the world’s second largest burden of Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) after Nigeria.
2. Sickle Cell Anaemia is not currently included in the list of 21 disabilities under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
3. Odisha has the highest burden of Sickle Cell Anaemia cases in India.
4. The National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission aims to eliminate Sickle Cell Disease by 2030.

How many of the above statements are *incorrect*?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) Only three
- d) All four

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** India bears the world’s second largest burden of SCD (Nigeria 1st)
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** SCD is included in the 21 disabilities under Disabilities Act, 2016.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** MP has the highest tribal population and also has the highest burden of sickle cell anaemia.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission launched in 2023 to eliminate Sickle Cell Disease by 2047.

ANSWERS:

- Q1.** Answer: b)
- Q2.** Answer: a)
- Q3.** Answer: c)
- Q4.** Answer: a)
- Q5.** Answer: d)
- Q6.** Answer: a)
- Q7.** Answer: c)
- Q8.** Answer: a)
- Q9.** Answer: c)
- Q10.** Answer: c)

MAINS QUESTION

Distinguish between the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI) with special reference to India. Why is the IHDI considered a better indicator of inclusive growth? (UPSC GS-3 2025).

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