

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



**Date: 27-28 September 2023**

## **Important News Articles**

1. Cheetahs may be flown in from new countries-The Hindu
2. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah chairs 31st meeting of the Northern Zonal Council at Amritsar in Punjab -PIB
3. The Judiciary is losing talent as the government sits on names: SC-The Hindu
4. Indo-Pacific region a web of interdependencies: Army chief-The Hindu
5. Taliban seek recognition, monetary aid from India-The Hindu
6. AFSPA to stay in Nagaland, Arunachal-The Hindu
7. Humans of Bombay vs People of India: What is copyright infringement and when does it apply?- Indian Express
8. NHRC seeks action taken report on welfare of transpersons from govt.
9. India ageing, elderly to make up 20% of population by 2050: UNFPA report -The Hindu
10. FATF reports used to target NGOs, says Amnesty -The Hindu
11. STs trail non-STs in 81 health measures: 2021 study-The Hindu
12. NIA holds searches in six States, detains several over 'terror links' -The Hindu
13. Bihar's second tiger reserve to come up in Kaimur sanctuary- The Hindu
14. Why are tigers dying in Nilgiris district? -The Hindu
15. US Trade Commission's Lawsuit Against Amazon Inc- The Hindu
16. High level of military tension with China over past three years: Minister -The Hindu

## **Editorials, Gists and Explainers**

1. With climate change, tackling new disease scenarios- The Hindu
2. India is running out of phosphorus; does the answer lie in our sewage? - The Hindu
3. On ASEAN's plate - Indian Express
4. Cancer's gender problem - Indian Express

## **Quick Look**

1. The UIDAI
2. Paris Climate Accord
3. Vibrio vulnificus
4. Artificial Insemination
5. Chincholi Wildlife Sanctuary

## Important News Articles

### GS I

#### 1. Cheetahs may be flown in from new countries-The Hindu

**Relevance:** Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).

**News:**

- Wildlife experts associated with **Project Cheetah** are considering **options of importing the next batch of big cats** from countries other than South Africa and Namibia.

**Project Cheetah**

- It is **India's cheetah relocation programme**.
- This is the first **intercontinental reintroduction of a wild, large carnivore species**.
- The project is **to bring in 5-10 animals every year**, over the next decade, until a self-sustaining population of cheetahs is established.
- Asiatic Cheetahs were once abundant in India but the **last cheetah in the country died in 1952**.
- The animals brought from Namibia and South Africa** are the Southeast African cheetahs.
- Under Project Cheetah, the animals are translocated from the forests of South Africa and Namibia **to the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh**.
- Since last year, **Kuno National Park has received 20 cheetahs with the aim of establishing a free-ranging population**.
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) is the apex body** entrusted with the implementation of Project Cheetah.
- NTCA comes under the Ministry of forest, environment and climate change**.
- The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) is also assisting** the Indian government in reintroducing cheetahs in India.

**National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)**

- It is a **statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change**.
- It was **established in 2005 following the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force**.
- It was **constituted under enabling provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, as amended in 2006, for strengthening tiger conservation, as per powers and functions assigned to it.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)
- Project Cheetah

India

### GS II

#### 2. Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah chairs 31st meeting of the Northern Zonal Council at Amritsar in Punjab -PIB

**Relevance:** Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security; money-laundering and its prevention.

**News:**

- While chairing **31st Northern Zonal conference in Amritsar**, Union Home Minister said **an anti-drone system will be deployed along the international border** for strengthening security.

**Zonal Council**

- The **idea of creation of Zonal Councils was mooted by the first PM Nehru in 1956**.
- This was **suggested during the course of debate on the report of the States Re-organisation Commission**
- It was suggested that a **high-level advisory forum should be set up:**

**Prelims Takeaway**

- Map based question
- Zonal council

- to minimise the impact of linguistic hostilities prevailed at that time;
- to create healthy inter-State and Centre-State environment.
- Zonal Councils **are the statutory** and not the constitutional bodies.
- The five councils are:
  - The Northern Zonal Council
  - The Central Zonal Council
  - The Eastern Zonal Council
  - the Western Zonal Council
  - The Southern Zonal Council.
- **The North Eastern States are not included in the Zonal Councils.**



### 3. The Judiciary is losing talent as the government sits on names: SC - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Structure, organisation and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government; pressure groups and formal/informal associations and their role in the Polity.

**News:**

- The Supreme Court said the judiciary is losing fresh talent like never before as prospective candidates shortlisted for judgeships in High Courts give up as months tick by without a decision from the government.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- A High Court collegium
- First Judges Case

**Collegium System**

- It is the system of appointment and transfer of judges that has evolved through judgments of the SC, and not by an Act of Parliament or by a provision of the Constitution.

**Background**

- **First Judges Case (1981)** declared that the “primacy” of the CJI’s (Chief Justice of India) recommendation on judicial appointments and transfers can be refused for “cogent reasons”.
- The ruling gave the **Executive primacy over the Judiciary in judicial appointments**.
- **In Second Judges Case (1993)**, SC 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 consultation with the two senior-most judges in the SC**.
- **In Third Judges Case (1998)**, SC on the **President’s reference (Article 143)** expanded the Collegium to a **five-member body**, comprising the CJI and four of his senior-most colleagues.

**A High Court collegium**

- It is led by the **incumbent Chief Justice and two other senior most judges of that court.**
- Judges of the higher judiciary are appointed only through the **collegium system and the government has a role only after names have been decided by the collegium.**

**4. Indo-Pacific region a web of interdependencies: Army chief-The Hindu**

**Relevance:** Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organised crime with terrorism.

**News:**

- Recently, **Army Chief Gen said The Indo-Pacific region** is not merely a collection of nations but a “**web of interdependencies.**”
- **India is hosting it for the first time 13th Indo-Pacific Army Chiefs Conference (IPACC)** along with the US and involves 30 countries with 20 Chiefs present.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- Malabar Exercise
- Yudh Abhyas

**Key Points**

- **Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army and army chief gen Chiefs** were addressing a press conference on the **13th Indo-Pacific Army Chiefs Conference (IPACC)**
- **India is hosting it for the first time along with the US** and involves 30 countries with 20 Chiefs present.
- **The 47th Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar (IPAMS) and 9th Senior Enlisted Leaders Forum (SELF) are also** being held alongside the IPACC.
- **The IPACC has been a biennial convention since 1999**, while IPAMS and SELF have been an annual event since 1978 and 2013, respectively.
- In a parallel development, **the 19th edition of India-US bilateral Army exercise Yudh Abhyas commenced** recently, at Fort Wainwright, Alaska in the US
  - the theme ‘**employment of an integrated battle group in mountain/extreme climatic conditions**’ under Chapter VII of United Nations mandate.
  - The **previous edition was hosted by India at Auli** in Uttarakhand, India last November.

**Yudh Abhyas**

- It is the **largest running joint military training** and defence cooperation endeavour between **India and the US.**
- The exercise **was started in 2004 under the US Army Pacific Partnership Program.** The exercise is hosted alternately between both countries.
- The exercise **aims at enhancing understanding, cooperation and interoperability between two Armies.**
- This will **help them in undertaking joint operations at battalion level in mountainous** terrain with cold climatic conditions under the ambit of the United Nations.

**Other Exercises**

- **Tiger Triumph** (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief exercise)
- **Vajra Prahar** (Special Forces’ Exercise)
- **Cope India** (Air Force).
- **Malabar Exercise** (Quadrilateral naval exercise of India, USA, Japan and Australia).
- **Red Flag** (US’ multilateral air exercise).

**GS III****5. Taliban seek recognition, monetary aid from India-The Hindu**

**Relevance:** Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India’s interests, Indian diaspora.

**News:**

- Ahead of the Moscow format discussion at Kazan in Russia, **the Taliban have called upon India to help in the economic recovery of Afghanistan.**

**Prelims Takeaway**

- The Taliban
- Moscow format

### Key Highlights

- A Taliban **delegation led by 'Foreign Minister'** had reached **Moscow** where they were holding discussion with Kremlin officials.
- The delegation **will then head to Kazan.**
- The upcoming meeting is significant as it is being **held in the backdrop of growing engagement between Kabul under the Taliban and Moscow and Beijing.**
- The Taliban had **refused to participate in the previous round of Moscow format talks in November 2022.**
- India has **refused to recognise the Taliban's "Islamic Emirate"** urging its leaders to respect human rights, and ensure protection of minority communities.
- During the same time, **the Taliban's diplomatic engagement has deepened with Russia, China, Pakistan and Turkmenistan**
  - though no country has so far accepted a full-fledged Ambassador from Kabul under the current circumstances.
- **It was earlier reported that India will send representatives for the Kazan meeting.**

### The Moscow format

- **It is one of the several dialogue platforms started to attain reconciliation in Afghanistan** where the Taliban clashed against the U.S.-supported government of President Ashraf Ghani.
- **It consisted of six member countries** — Russia, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Iran and India. The first round of consultations took place on April 14, 2017
  - It included 11 countries Russia, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, India, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- Since the **Taliban takeover of Kabul in August 2021**, the Moscow format consultations were held in October that year and in November 2022.
- The Taliban however **did not participate in the November 2022 meeting.**
- India **evacuated its embassy in Kabul in August 2021** and has maintained a "technical team" in the mission to assist its large-scale humanitarian assistance to Afghan people.

## 6. AFSPA to stay in Nagaland, Arunachal-The Hindu

**Relevance:** Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

### News:

- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in parts of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh** for another six months, beginning October 1.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Map based question

### Key Points

- On April 1, 2022, the **MHA had considerably reduced "disturbed areas" in Assam, Manipur and Nagaland.**
- The **AFSPA has been applicable in the whole of Nagaland since 1995.**
- Both **the State and Central governments can issue notification regarding the AFSPA.**
- The MHA issues **periodic "disturbed area" notification to extend the AFSPA only for Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.**
- The notification for **Manipur and Assam is issued by the State governments.**
- Tripura revoked the **Act in 2015 and Meghalaya was under the AFSPA for 27 years, until it was revoked by the Ministry from April 1, 2018.**

### Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)

- **Started during British-era legislation** that was enacted to quell the protests during the Quit India movement
- After independence, the **AFSPA was issued by way of four ordinances in 1947.**
- The ordinances were replaced by an Act in 1948 and **the present law effective in the Northeast was introduced in Parliament in 1958** by the then Home Minister, G.B. Pant.
- It was **known initially as the Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958.**

- After the **States of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland came into being, the Act was adapted to apply to these States as well.**
- The Act **gives unbridled power to the armed forces and the Central Armed Police Forces** deployed in “disturbed areas” to:
  - kill anyone acting in contravention of law
  - arrest and search any premises without a warrant
  - protection from prosecution
  - legal suits without the Central government’s sanction.
- The law **first came into effect in 1958 to deal with the uprising in the Naga**
- The Act **was amended in 1972 and the powers to declare an area as “disturbed”** were conferred concurrently upon the Central government along with the States.
- Tripura **revoked the Act in 2015 and Meghalaya was under AFSPA for 27 years, until it was revoked by the MHA from 1st April 2018.**

## 7. Humans of Bombay vs People of India: What is copyright infringement and when does it apply? - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology and issues relating to intellectual property rights.

### News:

- The **Delhi High Court has issued summons to an Instagram account called People of India (POI)**, in a copyright infringement suit filed by the storytelling platform Humans of Bombay (HOB).
- Besides copyright infringement, **HOB’s plea said that the similarities between the infringing content and its own amounted to “passing off and unfair competition.**

### Prelims Takeaway

- The Trade Marks Act 1999
- The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)

### Copyright

- it **refers to the right given by the law to creators of literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works and producers of cinematograph films and sound recordings.**
- **The Copyright Act 1957 aims to safeguard creative works**, which are considered to be the creator’s intellectual property (IP).
- A copyrighted work will be **considered “infringed” only if a substantial part is made use of without authorisation.**
- In cases of infringement, the **copyright owner can take legal action against any person who infringes on or violates their copyright** and is entitled to remedies such as injunctions, damages, etc.
- An **injunction is an official order given by a law court**, usually to stop someone from doing something.

### Passing Off

- Passing off is a **common law tort which can be used to enforce unregistered trade mark rights.**
- The **tort of passing off protects the goodwill of a trader from misrepresentation.**
- The court also said that **passing-off is a species of unfair trade competition or of actionable unfair trading.**
- By **passing-off one person, through deception, attempts to obtain an economic benefit of the reputation which another has established for himself in a particular trade or business.**

### Governing regulations:

- **The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)**
- **IP rights in India are governed under the:**
  - The Trade Marks Act 1999
  - The Patents Act 1970 (amended in 2005)
  - The Copyright Act 1957
  - The Designs Act 2000
  - The GI of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999, etc.

## 8. NHRC seeks action taken report on welfare of transpersons from govt.

**Relevance:** Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

### News:

- Recently, The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** issued an advisory to the Centre, State governments and Union Territory administrations **to ensure the welfare of transgender persons.**
- The **welfare measures include provision of separate toilets, free sex reassignment surgery, pension rights and inheritance rights.**

### Prelims Takeaway

- National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
- Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019

### Key points of recommendation

- A **single transchild of a deceased government employee or pensioner may be treated as an unmarried daughter for the family pension and other benefits.**
- It also recommended that **transgender persons be allowed to inherit ancestral agricultural land.**
- A **multi-purpose identity card may be provided to the people** of this community to help them access government schemes and other benefits.
- **Insurance companies may be advised to consider and accept the Transgender Certificate** issued by the appropriate authority for document verification purposes.
- The **Ministry concerned should ensure the timely release of the funds** allocated to Garima Greh [shelter scheme].
- The **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019**, aims to safeguard and uphold their rights.

### Garima Greh

- In November 2020, the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurated Garima Greh**, a shelter home for transgender persons.
- The **Scheme of 'Shelter Home for Transgender Persons'** includes shelter facility, food, clothing, recreational facilities, skill development opportunities, yoga, physical fitness, library facilities.
- The **scheme will rehabilitate a minimum of 25 transgender persons** in each home identified by the Ministry.
- 10 cities have been identified **to set up the 13 Shelter Homes.**

## GS I

## 9. India ageing, elderly to make up 20% of population by 2050: UNFPA report - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India.

### News:

- The **India Ageing Report 2023** was released recently by the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** and the **International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS).**
- The report projects that **the number of people aged 60 and above in India will double from 149 million in 2022 to 347 million in 2050.**

### Prelims Takeaway

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

### Key highlights of the report

- The **decadal growth rate of the elderly population of India** currently estimated to be at 41%.
- With this rate, **the percentage of elderly population in the country projected to double to over 20% of total population by 2050.**
- By 2046, it is likely that **elderly population will have surpassed the population of children (aged 0 to 15 years)** in the country.
- The **report projected that the population of people aged 80+ years** will grow at a rate of around 279% between 2022 and 2050 with a predominance of widowed and highly dependent very old women.



- **More than 40% of the elderly in India are in the poorest wealth quintile**, with about 18.7% of them living without an income.
- **Such levels of poverty may affect their quality** of life and healthcare utilisation.
- **The data showed that women, on average, had higher life expectancy** at the age of 60 and at the 80, when compared to men — with variations across States and Union Territories.
- The **sex ratio (females per 1,000 males) among the elderly** has been climbing steadily since 1991, with the ratio in the general population stagnating.
- **Significant inter-State variation in absolute levels** and growth of the elderly population
- **Most States in the southern region and some northern States** such as Himachal Pradesh and Punjab reported a higher share of the elderly population than the national average in 2021.
- **States reporting higher fertility rates and lagging in demographic transition**, including Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, expect to see an increase in the share of the elderly population between 2021 and 2036.
- **Compared with southern and western India, central and northeastern regions** have the younger group of States as indicated by the ageing index.
- **Challenges: Poverty is inherently gendered in old age**
- **The report suggested that poverty in old age is not a uniform or gender-neutral phenomenon.**
- **Older women are more likely to be widowed, living alone, with no income and with fewer assets of their own, and fully dependent on family for support.**
- The report pointed out that the major challenges facing India's ageing population are the **feminisation and ruralisation of this older population.**
- The report also highlighted that there is a lack of credible data on various issues related to the elderly in India.

#### Suggestions

- Called for a special **focus on older persons in disaster-preparedness plans**
- The government **must work on increasing awareness about schemes for older persons,**
- This can be **done by creating short-term care facilities like creches or day-care facilities.**
- The government **should encourage the creation and running of elderly self-help groups,**
- Ensure that elderly people live in **multigenerational households.**

## GS II

### 10. FATF reports used to target NGOs, says Amnesty - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies.

#### News:

- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) recently amended rules** pertaining to the filing of annual returns by **Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA),**

#### Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

- It is a **law enacted by Parliament to regulate foreign contributions (especially monetary donations)** provided by certain individuals or associations to NGOs and others within India.
- The Act, **in its consolidating form, was originally passed in 1976 and majorly modified in 2010.**
- The Act **aims to prevent foreign organisations from influencing electoral politics, social, political, economic, or religious discussions in** India for wrong purposes and activities detrimental to the public interest.
- The Act **falls under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).**
- **'Foreign Contribution' means the donation, delivery or transfer** made by any foreign source of any security.
- Contributions **made by a citizen of India living in another country (e.g. a Non-Resident Indian (NRI)) from his/her personal savings** through the normal banking channels, will not be treated as foreign contributions.
- **Any person can receive foreign contribution provided:**

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

- The person has a definite cultural, economic, educational, religious, or social programme;
- The person must have obtained FCRA registration/prior permission from the Central Government and
- Person includes
  - an individual;
  - a Hindu Undivided Family;
  - an association;
- It is **mandatory for all such NGOs to register themselves under the FCRA.**
- The **applicant should not be fictitious or benami and should not have been prosecuted or convicted for indulging in activities aimed at conversion through inducement or force,**
- The ministry also **has the power to suspend an NGO's registration for 180 days pending inquiry and can freeze its funds.**
- All orders of **the government can be challenged in the High Court.**

## 11. STs trail non-STs in 81 health measures: 2021 study-The Hindu

**Relevance:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

### News:

- In a recent study published in 'The Lancet Regional Health — Southeast Asia,' researchers provide a **detailed analysis of the health, nutrition, and population trends of Scheduled Tribes (STs) from 2016 to 2021.**
- It Draws its **data from the National Family Health Surveys** from 2016 and 2021.

### Prelims Takeaway

- National Family Health Surveys

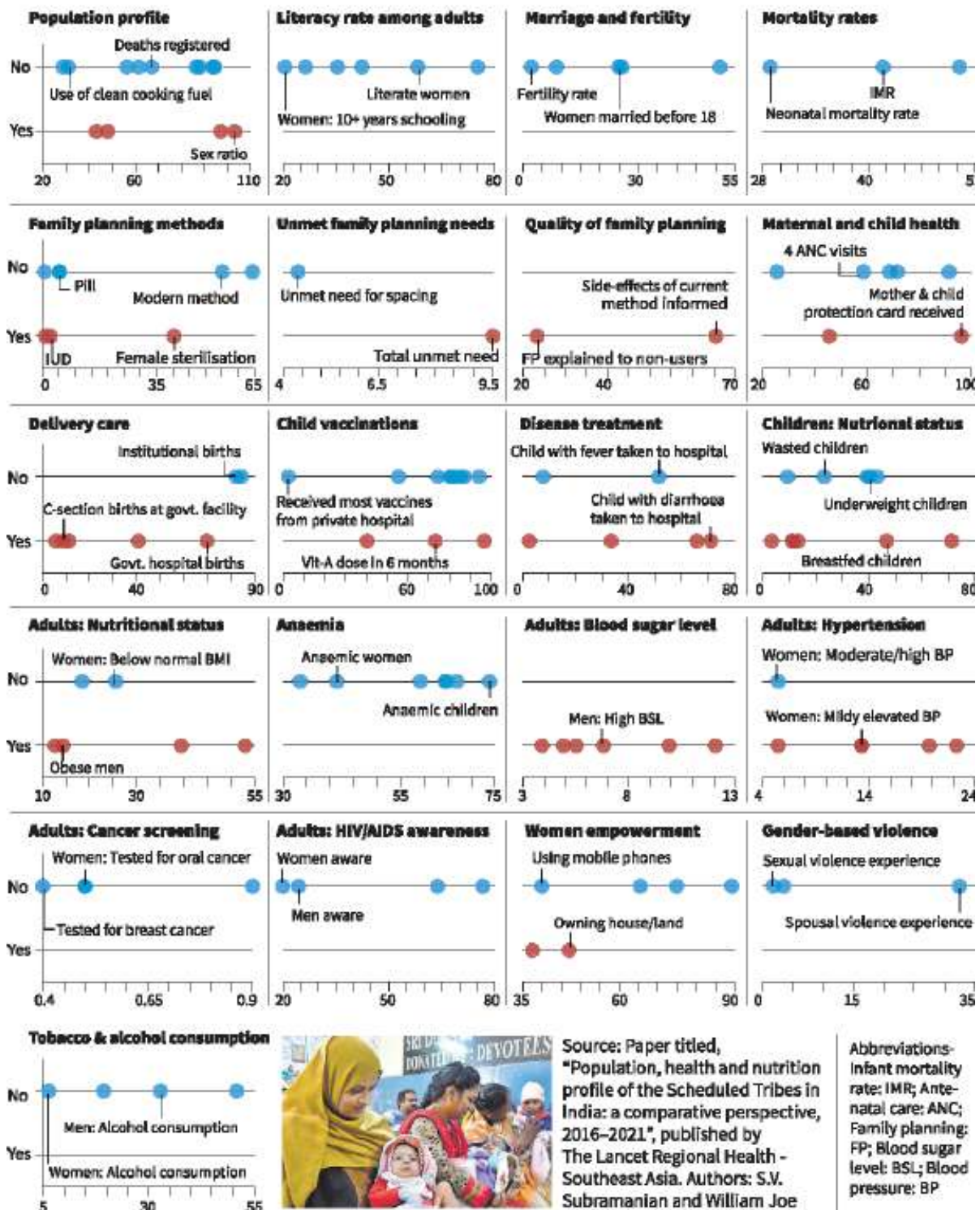
### Key Highlights of the report

- there is a **noticeable improvement in the health and welfare metrics of STs,**
- There are **persistent disparities between the metrics of ST and non-ST populations,** which demand urgent and consistent policy efforts.
- The **2011 Census recorded over 104 million STs** spread across 705 recognised ethnic groups.
- Even with targeted policies in place, STs, who make up 8.6% of India's population, **face health and socioeconomic challenges.**
- The **study offers an overview of the performance metrics** for STs, non-STs, and the overall population based on 129 parameters in 2021.
- It also **highlights the contrast in the performance metrics of STs between 2016 and 2021,** spotlighting areas of both progress and decline.
- In 2021, the **non-ST population outperformed the ST population in 81 out of 129 indicators.**
- STs continued to face challenges, particularly **concerning women's status and major public health issues such as child malnutrition, anemia,** insufficient vaccination coverage, and disparities in fertility and mortality rates.
- The 48 indicators on which **STs surpassed non-STs include:**
  - overall gender balance
  - gender balance at birth
  - use of family planning methods
  - consistent treatment during pregnancy
  - adherence to recommended breastfeeding practices.
- Moreover, **STs showed a reduced occurrence of diabetes and hypertension compared to non-STs.**
- The study says that **the areas where they face greater vulnerability need dedicated policy efforts.**
- The **mortality rate for children under five in the ST community was alarmingly high,** with 50 out of every 1,000 children not reaching their fifth birthday.
- **child malnutrition was a pressing issue,** as more than 40% of ST children under five were stunted, with a similar percentage being underweight.

- STs experienced **major improvements in access to improved sanitation facilities** (an increase of 30.4 percentage points between 2015–2016 and 2019–2021).
- **more births were being attended to by skilled health personnel** (an increase of 13 points) and full vaccination coverage among children aged 12–23 months (an increase of 18.6 points).
- **The civil registration of births among STs also increased from 76% in 2016 to 88% in 2021.**

## Comparing health metrics

Under each indicator, the circles labelled as 'yes' ● in the chart are indicators where STs outperformed non-STs and those labelled 'no' ● indicate the opposite. All figures are in percentage



Source: Paper titled, "Population, health and nutrition profile of the Scheduled Tribes in India: a comparative perspective, 2016–2021", published by The Lancet Regional Health - Southeast Asia. Authors: S.V. Subramanian and William Joe

Abbreviations- Infant mortality rate: IMR; Antenatal care: ANC; Family planning: FP; Blood sugar level: BSL; Blood pressure: BP

## 12. NIA holds searches in six States, detains several over 'terror links' -The Hindu

**Relevance:** Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies.

**News:**

- The **National Investigation Agency** detained several suspects during searches across six States and one Union Territory
- **Detention was part of a crackdown** on the alleged nexus among terrorists, gangsters and drug smugglers linked to a Canada-based "listed terrorist".

**National Investigation Agency**

- The **NIA is a federal agency of the Indian government** responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes related to Terrorism, Insurgency, and other national security matters.
- Federal agencies in a country typically have **jurisdiction over matters that affect the country as a whole, rather than just individual states or provinces.**
- It was **established in 2009** following the Mumbai terrorist attacks in 2008, under the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act, 2008
- It **operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- The **National Investigation Agency (Amendment) Act, 2019** was passed in July 2019, amending the NIA Act, 2008.
- The **NIA has the power to take over investigations** of terrorism-related cases from state police forces and other agencies.
- It also has the **authority to investigate cases across state boundaries without obtaining prior permission from state governments.**

### Prelims Takeaway

- National Investigation Agency

## GS III

## 13. Bihar's second tiger reserve to come up in Kaimur sanctuary- The Hindu

**Relevance:** Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).

**News:**

- After the **Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR) in West Champaran** district, **Bihar is set to get a second tiger reserve in Kaimur district (Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary)** by the end of the year
- The **State Forest Department officials said they were working to obtain the National Tiger Reserve Conservation Authority's (NTCA) approval** for declaring it a tiger reserve.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Valmiki Tiger Reserve
- National Tiger Reserve Conservation Authority'

**Geographical location**

- The **Kaimur district is divided into two parts:**
  - hilly area which is also known as Kaimur plateau
  - the plain area on the western side which is flanked by the rivers Karmnasa and Durgavati.
- The district has a **large forest cover and is home to tigers, leopards and chinkaras.**
- The district **shares its boundary with neighboring States of Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.**
- Earlier, the **district was considered a safe haven for Maoists** and also a safe passage for them to enter into the neighboring States.

**The Valmiki Tiger Reserve**

- It is the **only tiger reserve in Bihar**, which forms the easternmost extent of the Himalayan Terai forests in India.
- Situated in the Gangetic plains bio-geographic region, **the vegetation of this Tiger Reserve is a combination of Bhabar and Terai regions.**

- According to the **Tiger Census, 2018, the number of tigers in Valmiki Tiger Reserve is 32.**
- According to the **Forest Survey of India Report 2021, 85.71% of its total area is covered by forest cover.**
- **Wild mammals found in the forests of Valmiki Tiger Reserve** include tiger, sloth bear, leopard, wild dog, bison, wild boar etc.

#### 14. Why are tigers dying in Nilgiris district? -The Hindu

**Relevance:** Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian sub-continent); factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India).

**News:**

- A total of **10 tigers (six cubs and four adults) have died in the Nilgiris** since the middle of August.
- The **inability of the state forest department to trace the whereabouts** of the two mother tigresses has raised **concerns among conservationists about the welfare of the animals.**

**Prelims Takeaway**

- Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve

**Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve**

- It harbours a **wide spectrum of ecosystem** types such as tropical evergreen forests, Montane sholas and grasslands, semi-evergreen forests, moist deciduous forests, dry deciduous forests and thorn forests.
- The **major part of the core areas spread over Kerala and Tamil Nadu States.**
- This range of ecosystem occurs from **hilly terrain to the meadows extending from 300 to 2670 m constituting an excellent habitat for the flora, fauna and other microbial forms.**
- The **varied habitats of the NBR house a sizeable number of species of animals and plants** including a large number of endemics having special relevance to conservation.
- **Animals like Nilgiri tahr, Nilgiri langur, slender loris, blackbuck, tiger, gaur, Indian elephant and marten** are found here.
- Tribal groups like the **Todas, Kotas, Irullas, Kurumbas, Paniyas, Adiyans, Edanadan Chettis, Cholanaickens, Allar, Malayan, etc.,** are native to the reserve.
- **Protected Areas** within the **Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve** are
  - The Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary
  - Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary
  - Bandipur National Park
  - Nagarhole National Park
  - Mukurthi National Park
  - Silent Valley.

#### 15. US Trade Commission's Lawsuit Against Amazon Inc- The Hindu

**Relevance:** Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth

**News:**

- The **United States' Federal Trade Commission (FTC),** along with other regulators, **has filed a lawsuit against online retail giant Amazon.**
- The lawsuit alleges that the company uses punitive and coercive tactics to unlawfully maintain its monopoly.
- The United States' Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and 17 state attorneys general **have sued Amazon Inc.**
- The lawsuit alleges that the company's actions allow it to stop rivals and sellers from lowering **prices,** degrade quality for shoppers, overcharge sellers, stifle innovation, and prevent rivals from fairly competing against Amazon.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- Quasi-judicial body
- Competition Commission of India (CCI)

- It also **alleges that the company engages in a course of “exclusionary conduct” that prevents current competitors from growing and new competitors from emerging.**
- They **said that Amazon’s anticompetitive conduct occurs in two markets:**
  - online superstore market that serves shoppers and
  - market for online marketplace services purchased by sellers.

### india's Laws on Competition

#### Competition Act, 2002

- The **Competition Act, 2002, as amended by the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2007**, follows the philosophy of modern competition laws.
- The Act **prohibits anti-competitive agreements, abuse of dominant position** by enterprises and regulates combinations (acquisition, acquiring of control and M&A),
- The **objectives of the Act are sought to be achieved through the Competition Commission of India.**

#### Competition Commission of India (CCI)

- It is a **statutory body of the Government of India** responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002, it was duly constituted in March 2009.
- The **Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 (MRTP Act)** was repealed and replaced by the Competition Act, 2002, on the recommendations of the Raghavan committee.
- The **Commission consists of one Chairperson and six Members** who shall be appointed by the Central Government.
- The **commission is a quasi-judicial body** which gives opinions to statutory authorities and also deals with other cases.
- The Chairperson and other Members shall be whole-time Members.

## 16.High level of military tension with China over past three years: Minister - The Hindu

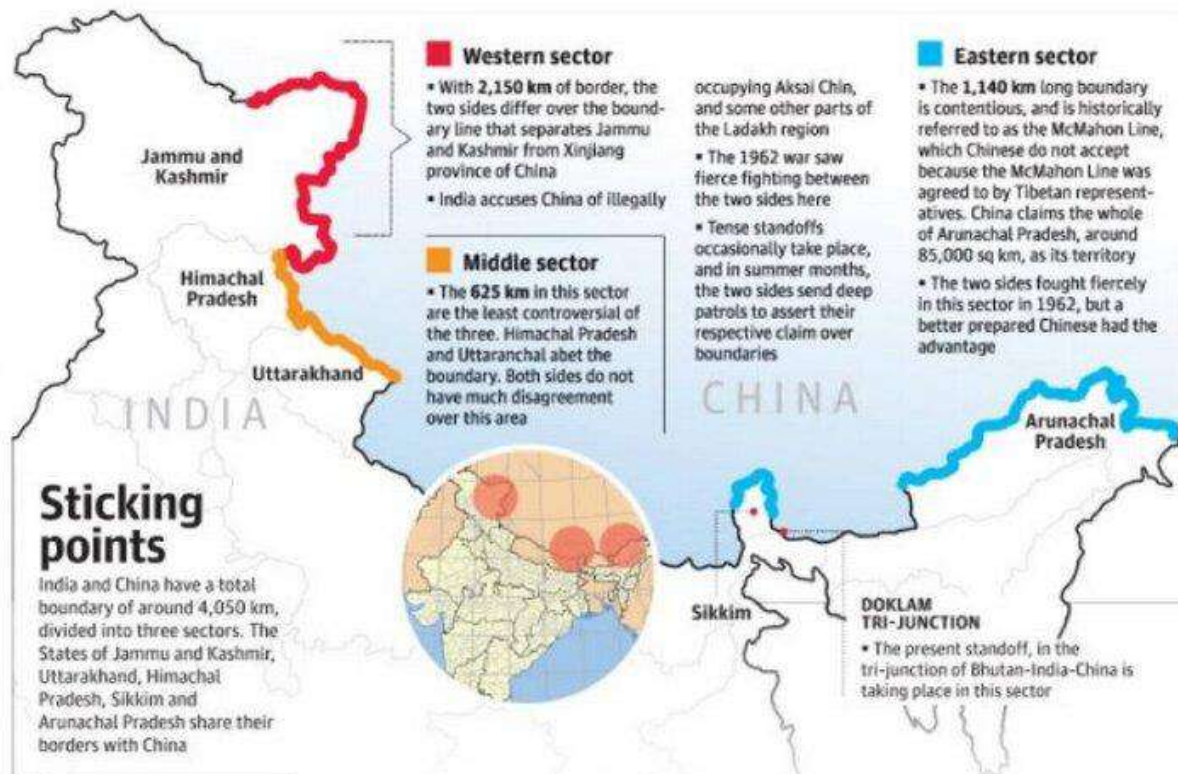
**Relevance:** Security challenges and their management in border areas – linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

#### News:

- There has been a **“high level of military tension” with China over the last three years**, External Affairs Minister has said.
- He emphasized **on the overall state of “very abnormal” relations** between New Delhi and Beijing since the border clashes of 2020.

#### India-China border dispute

- India-China relations have gone **through cycles of conflict and cooperation over nearly 75 years.**
- The most serious recent episodes of **conflict were in Galwan Valley in Ladakh in 2020 and in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh in 2022.**
- Observers on both sides of the border—**the Line of Actual Control (LAC)—agree that the number of serious military confrontations has increased since 2013.**
- The **border between India and China is not clearly demarcated** throughout and there is **no mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC)** along certain stretches.
- **LAC came into existence after the 1962 Indo China war.**
- **India-China border is divided into three sectors.**
  - Western Sector : Ladakh
  - Middle Sector : Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand
  - Eastern Sector: Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim



- Partnerships with each other's main enemies, including the Soviet Union/Russia and the United States, have prevented them from becoming strategic partners and cooperating on strategic matters.
- The growing power gap between China and India, with China's GDP being five times that of India's, has made it difficult for India to be accommodative without appearing to surrender.
- Infrastructure build-up, particularly in Tibet, has led to a security dilemma in which military relations go into a spiral that could tempt one side or both to go to war.

## Editorials, Gists and Explainers

### 1. With climate change, tackling new disease scenarios- The Hindu

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.

**Context**

- In its latest report released this March, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) delivers a stark warning: climate change heightens the global risk of infectious diseases.

#### Climate change, more infections

- Habitat loss forces disease-carrying animals to encroach upon human territory, increasing the risk of human-animal interaction and the transfer of pathogens from wildlife to humans.
- Viruses which do not harm animals can be fatal for humans.
- Nipah virus, which has been causing outbreaks in Kerala for many years now, is a good example.
- Over half of all-known infectious diseases threatening humans worsen with changing climate patterns.
- Diseases often find new transmission routes, including environmental sources, medical tourism, and contaminated food and water from once-reliable sources.
- This dynamic introduces invasive species and extends the range of existing life forms.
- Both these trigger upheavals in ecosystems that are complex and confound ecologists and epidemiologists to predict outbreaks.
- Human-induced climate change is unleashing an unprecedented health vulnerability crisis.
- India, in particular, has felt the ominous impact, with early summers and erratic monsoons causing water scarcity across the Gangetic plains and Kerala.
- These climatic shifts are manifesting in severe health crises, including a dengue epidemic in Dhaka (Bangladesh) and Kolkata and the Nipah outbreak in Kerala.

#### Surveillance and reporting

- Changed disease scenarios require a revision of strategies to detect and deal with them.
- The Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) was rolled out in a few States in 2007.
- From reporting 553 outbreaks in 2008, it last reported 1,714 in 2017.
- It was phased out in favour of a new, a web-enabled, near-real-time electronic information system called Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP).
- The current design of surveillance is not adequate for the emerging disease scenario.
- Mitigating the spread of climate change-induced diseases requires safeguarding ecosystems, curbing greenhouse gas emissions, and implementing active pathogen surveillance.
- A unified approach, termed One Health which integrates monitoring human, animal, plant, and environmental health, recognises this interconnectedness.
- This approach is pivotal in preventing outbreaks, especially those that originate from animals.
- It encompasses zoonotic diseases, neglected tropical diseases, vector-borne diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and environmental contamination.
- India must launch One Health and infectious disease control programmes by building greater synergies between the Centre and States and their varied specialised agencies.
- Animal husbandry, forest and wildlife, municipal corporations, and public health departments need to converge and set up robust surveillance systems.
- More importantly, they will need to build trust and confidence, share data, and devise logical lines of responsibility and work with a coordinating agency.
- So far, the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Prime Minister has been taking this lead but with new World Bank and other large funding in place, this will need greater coordination and management.

#### ‘Disease x’ and beyond

- Globally, there is an obsession with the enigmatic “disease X,” but it is the familiar annual cycles of known agents such as influenza, measles, Japanese encephalitis, dengue, diarrhoea among others that will continue to test the public health system.
- Climate change is not limited to infectious diseases. It also exacerbates injuries and deaths from extreme weather events, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and mental health issues.

**Conclusion**

- The **re-emergence** of Nipah in Kerala is a **wake-up call**, that mere **biomedical response** to diseases is inadequate.
- In the face of a **changing climate** and the growing **threat of infectious diseases**, protecting **ecosystems**, fostering **collaboration**, and **embracing the One Health paradigm** are our best defences.



## 2. India is running out of phosphorus; does the answer lie in our sewage? - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment.  
**Context**

- The **problem** with the **fertilisation of land** is as old as **agriculture itself**.
- When **early humans** first **began to engage** in **settled agriculture**, they quickly **realised** that while **crops require nutrients** for their growth, **repeated cycles** of **cultivation** and **harvest depleted** these nutrients, reducing yield over time.

### The change in practices

- This observation led to practices to restore essential nutrients in the soil necessary for plant and crop growth.
- Indigenous communities around the world developed methods of fertilisation, for example, using fish remnants and bird droppings (guano) as fertilisers.
- This changed in the 19th century, which saw significant advancements in chemistry, leading to the creation of synthetic fertilisers as well as the identification of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium.
- The Green Revolution of the mid-20th century accelerated the adoption of high-yield crop varieties and intensive use of these fertilisers, and today these substances are crucial to sustain global food production.

### The issues with Phosphorus

- Phosphorus is scarce and exists only in limited quantities, in certain geological formations.
- Not only are we running out of it, it also pollutes the environment.
- It doesn't exist as a gas, which means it can only move from land to water, where it leads to algal blooms and eutrophication.

### Geopolitics and phosphorus

- The history of phosphorus spans its discovery in guano to current global supply chains.
- The world's largest reserves are in Morocco and the Western Sahara region.
- But here, phosphorus coexists with cadmium, a heavy metal that can accumulate in animal and human kidneys when ingested.
- Removing cadmium is also an expensive process.
- As a result, cadmium-laden fertilisers are often applied to the soil, absorbed by crops, and consumed, bioaccumulating in our bodies.
- Studies have found that this accelerates heart disease.
- Only six countries have substantial cadmium-free phosphorous reserves.
- Of them, China restricted exports in 2020 and many EU countries no longer buy from Russia. So the market for safe phosphorus has suddenly exploded.
- This is one reason why Sri Lanka banned the import of synthetic fertilisers and went organic in 2021, later experiencing a sudden drop in crop yield that precipitated a political crisis.
- Today, India is the world's largest importer of phosphorus, most of it from the cadmium-laden deposits of West Africa.
- Not all crops absorb cadmium at the same rate, but paddy, a staple crop in India, is particularly susceptible; Indian farmers also apply a lot of fertilisers to paddy.
- Other grains, such as wheat, barley, and maize also absorb cadmium, just less.

### The phosphorus disposal problem

- First, only about a fifth of the phosphorus mined is actually consumed through food. Much of it is lost directly to water bodies as agricultural run-off, due to the excessive application of fertilisers.
- Second, most of the phosphorus that people consume ends up in the sewage. Most sewage in India is still not treated or treated only up to the secondary level.
- So even if the organic matter is digested, the effluent discharged from STPs still contains nitrates and phosphates.
- Of these, nitrates can be digested by denitrifying bacteria and released safely as nitrogen gas into the atmosphere, while phosphorus remains trapped in the sediments and water column.
- It is then absorbed by the algal blooms that grow in response to the high nutrient supply, and when they decompose, the bacteria that feed on them consume the dissolved oxygen.
- The result: water bodies become oxygen-starved, leading to fish deaths. The algal blooms are also toxic, causing respiratory issues, nausea, and other ailments to people exposed to them.

### Finding phosphorus elsewhere

- Since much of the phosphorus is not actually taken up by crops, one way to ameliorate the phosphorus paucity is to reduce the use of chemical fertilisers through precision agriculture.
- Low-input agro-ecological approaches are increasingly proving to be a viable alternative.
- But there is increasing interest in closing the phosphorous loop by mining urban sewage to produce high quality phosphorus.
- Interest in 'circular water economies' has in fact prompted the European Union – which has almost no phosphorus reserves of its own – to rethink the urban water cycle.
- First, source separating toilets – almost two thirds of the phosphorus we consume leaves in our urine and the rest in faeces.
- Urine also contains large amounts of nitrogen and potassium. If we can collect this safe and concentrated waste stream, we could generate a local fertiliser source.
- Second, recycling wastewater and sludge – Sewage recycling already occurs in some form in India today.

**Way forward**

- The best way is to create a **circular water economy**. If the **technology is cheap enough**, can we **give a concession to set up STPs with phosphorus mining plants** and allow them to sell the fertiliser.
- And such changes, India can become less dependent on uncertain geopolitical crises; farmers can procure fertilisers at affordable rates; water bodies will have some hope of becoming swimmable and public health can gain from the consumption of food grown in cadmium-free soils.

**3. On ASEAN's plate - Indian Express**

**Relevance:** Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

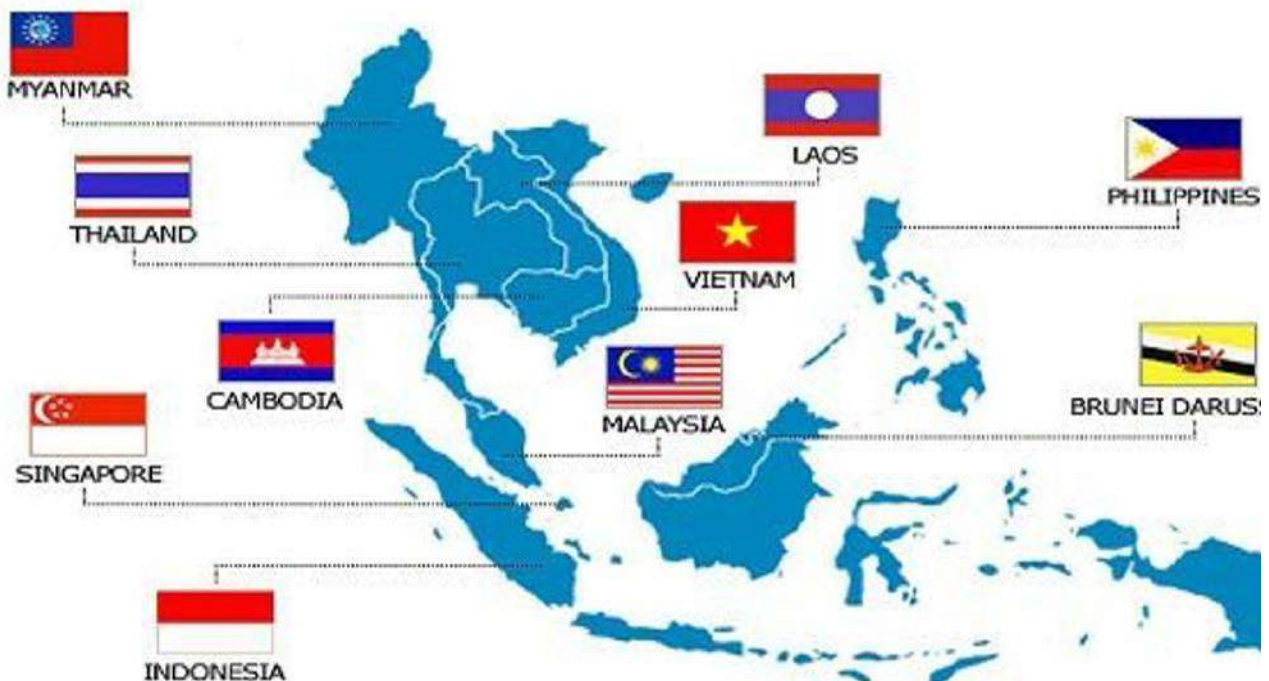
**Context:**

- At the **ASEAN meet** earlier this month, **Indonesia succeeded** in putting **new nuances** into often **contentious ASEAN positions**.
- Eight **ASEAN countries** came together at the **highest level**. As is usual now, **Myanmar was not invited** at the **political level** for the **Jakarta Summit**; **Thailand** is in the throes of **constituting a new government**.

**ASEAN**

- The Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or **ASEAN**, was **established on 8 August 1967** in Bangkok, **Thailand**, with the **signing** of the **ASEAN Declaration** (Bangkok Declaration) by the **Founding Fathers** of **ASEAN**: Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.
- **Brunei Darussalam** joined **ASEAN** on 7 January 1984, followed by **Vietnam** on 28 July 1995, **Lao PDR** and **Myanmar** on 23 July 1997, and **Cambodia** on 30 April 1999, making up what is today the **ten Member States of ASEAN**

## ASEAN Member Countries



### ASEAN Indo-Pacific Forum (AIPF)

- At the meet, Indonesia's plan included an initiative to embrace the Indo-Pacific. It arranged the first ASEAN Indo-Pacific Forum (AIPF), which had government leaders from ASEAN, some of its partners and a large number of participants from the business sector.
- It shows that global economic growth was now centred in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Indonesian interlocutors took pains to emphasise that not only did they embrace the Indo-Pacific without worrying too much about what China may say, they also adopted a functional approach to the Indo-Pacific.
- This is akin to the Quad's soft approach to the Indo-Pacific — seeing it more as a cooperative venture than a strategic concept.

### Concern over consensus on AIPF

- However, as ASEAN asserts its centrality, its unity has question marks. Myanmar was unrepresented. Thailand's slow transition after an election led to an official-level representation.
- In this light, there is a movement under Indonesia's chairmanship of coordinated rules on how ASEAN should act in the absence of a consensus.
- Emergent situations cannot wait for a time-consuming 10-country consensus. This means that decision making could move away from a full consensus into a coalition of the willing.

### China as a major challenge for ASEAN

- China remains the major challenge for ASEAN, in particular, with regard to big-power rivalry in the region.
- Its call for peace and prosperity is a muted way of saying that the US and China will not exhibit their rivalry in the region.
- The progress on the code of conduct is slow and repeated emphasis on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea appears as a sticking point between the ASEAN's and China's views on the South China Sea (SCS).
- The matter was complicated by the issue of what China calls its new standard map, which annoys many countries whose territories are shown as part of China.
- Besides India and Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia raised it bilaterally with China. Indonesia played it quiet mainly because it was the host of the ASEAN and East Asia Summit (EAS), which the Chinese Premier attended.
- The closer embrace of the ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP), the willingness to have more ASEAN coordination among their coast guards and to have a common exercise among their defence forces have been a robust response to the lack of achievement on the code of conduct.

### Conclusion

- The **Indonesian presidency** must be **complimented** for **keeping ASEAN** on an even keel, **despite** its many **challenges**.
- In a **dynamic world**, the **stability of ASEAN** remains **important**. **Indonesia** has formed a **troika** with the next **chairs Laos** and **Malaysia** to **steer the course ahead**.

## 4. Cancer's gender problem - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

### Context:

- As per recent, **Lancet Commission report** on **gender inequity in cancer care**, Titled '**Women, Power and Cancer**', highlighted that around **6.9 million cancer deaths** among women in **India** were **preventable** and **4.03 million** were **treatable**.
- Around **63% premature deaths** due to **cancers** in **Indian women** could have been **prevented** by **reducing risk factors, screening, and diagnosis** while 37% could have been averted with timely and optimal treatment

### Women are more vulnerable to cancer-based mortality

- The report highlighted that even though men are at a higher risk of cancers that affect both genders, cancer incidence and mortality in women remains high.
- Globally, women account for 48% of the new cancer cases and 44% of cancer deaths. This happens even though some of the cancers in women, such as breast and cervical cancers, are highly preventable and treatable.

### Reasons behind the poorer outcomes for women?

- The report said women face challenges in accessing timely and appropriate care in the absence of knowledge, decision-making and financial powers and availability of services at the primary level closer to home.
- Irrespective of which part of the world they live in and which strata of the society they belong to, women are more likely than men to lack the knowledge and power to make informed decisions. It added that they are also much more likely to experience financial catastrophe due to cancer.
- Report highlighted that when it comes to providing cancer care, women are under-represented as leaders, are likely to face gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, and also constitute the largest unpaid workforce.
- The report estimated that the value of unpaid cancer care-giving by women is about 3.66% of India's national health expenditure.

### Expert's view over gender-based vulnerability"

- There is of course a gendered aspect to cancer care. The healthcare-seeking behaviour is very less among women, especially in the poor sections of the society.
- While the risk of certain cancers, such as the ones related to exposure to smoke or tobacco, may be similar in men and women, treatment of women is not the priority. This is the reason they are likely to fare worse than men."
- There is a need for societal changes as well. As the most common cancers in women are breast and cervical cancer. However, women hesitate to approach male doctors with these problems or even let a female doctor check the genital area, leading to delays in diagnosis and treatment
- The need for travel to district hospitals, state capitals, or to big tertiary hospitals in other states for screening, diagnostic tests, and treatment also leads to delays in treatment, resulting in poorer outcomes

### The role of Government

- One of the most important interventions needed is creating awareness among people, especially women, so they come forward for screening and seek care.
- As it was observed during the information campaign by government to tell people that Covid-19 vaccines can prevent deaths due to the infection, people turned up in large numbers to get the shot. The same is needed for cancer prevention."
- The vaccine for HPV that causes cervical cancer is already available in the country and an indigenous one has also been developed.
- The government need to include the vaccine in the universal immunisation programme for young girls. The vaccine has to be administered in women below the age of 25 years before sexual activity. It prevents the virus from entering the body

### What are the recommendations of the report? (Way forward)

- The report said that there is a **need to regularly collect data on gender and social demographics for cancer health statistics.**
- It called for **developing, strengthening, and enforcing laws and policies that reduce exposures to known cancer risks.**
- **Stating that cancer care and research is dominated by men** who decide what is prioritised, funded, or studied, it **called for equitable access to cancer research resources, leadership, and funding opportunities** for women.

## Quick Look

### 1. The UIDAI

- It is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 (“Aadhaar Act 2016”).
- It issues a unique 12-digit identification number to each individual in India.
- It serves as proof of identity and proof of address for residents of India.
- Nodal Ministry : The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)
- Function
- UIDAI is responsible for Aadhaar enrolment and authentication.

### 2. Paris Climate Accord

- It is a legally binding international treaty on climate change.
- It was adopted by 196 countries at the Conference of the Parties COP 21 in Paris in December 2015.
- To limit global warming to well below 2° Celsius, and preferably limit it to 1.5° Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.
- To achieve the long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate-neutral world by mid-century.
- India is a signatory to the Paris Agreement. India reaffirmed its commitment to the agreement in August 2022 by submitting an updated NDC to the UNFCCC.
- The NDC outlines India's goals for 2021–2030.

### 3. Vibrio vulnificus

- is a bacterium that can cause severe infections in humans. It can result from eating undercooked seafood, especially oysters, which may contain the bacteria.
- Carriers:
- It is typically contracted through two main routes: consuming infected raw shellfish and exposing wounds to contaminated waters.
- It spreads through marine organisms like fish like eel, derbio, tilapia, trout, and shrimp.
- In 2018, India documented an outbreak of V vulnificus in a tilapia farm in Kerala.
- Originally from Africa and West Asia, tilapia is one of the most traded food fish globally.

### 4. Artificial Insemination

- Artificial insemination is a novel method of bringing about impregnation in female breeds.
- It prevents the spread of certain diseases which are genital in nature, thereby enhancing the efficiency of the breed.
- Shortcomings:
- Bypassing and preventing natural mating, and artificially reproducing as a principle/policy is cruel, not to mention the cruelty or pain inflicted by the artificial insemination process.

## 5. Chincholi Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is located around the Chandrampalli Dam in the Kalaburagi district of Karnataka.
- It was declared a sanctuary in 2011.
- It is the first dry land Wildlife Sanctuary in South India.
- This is the only area in the Hyderabad Karnataka Region with rich floristic diversity
- The Sanctuary has good dry deciduous and Moist deciduous forest in the core with Acacia and Teak plantations on the fringes.
- Apart from medicinal herbs and trees, species like Red Sanders and Sandalwood are found abundantly.
- It is home Black Buck, Common Fox, Four-horned Antelope, Fruit bat, Hyena, Indian Wolf etc. Over 35 species of birds, including Black Drongo, Black-winged Kite, Blossom – headed Parakeet, Blue pigeon, Black-headed Oriole and Grey partridge are also found in this Sanctuary.
- Chincholi is also home to Lambani Tandas, a protected tribal community that lives in the forests in harmony with nature.



**Mentorship**  
India

## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef system, is situated in**

- A. Philippines
- B. Guatemala
- C. Australia
- D. Mexico

**Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2023**

1. It has provisions for harsher punishment for film piracy
2. The Bill also introduces three age ratings for films requiring adult supervision.
3. It empowers the Government to have revisional powers over the CBFC's decisions
4. The validity of the certificate of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) is only for 10 years.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q3. Consider the following pairs**

1. Gwadar Port: Iran
2. Odessa Port: France
3. Busan Port: North Korea

**How many of the pairs given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q4. Which of the following statements describe the term "Deep Technology" seen in the news recently, most aptly?**

- A. Deep technology refers to advanced technological systems that are used for deep-sea exploration.
- B. Deep technology refers to cutting-edge innovations in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data science.
- C. Deep technology encompasses all technologies that are developed for space exploration and research.

D. Deep technology is a term used to describe advanced medical technologies used for complex surgeries.

**Q5. With reference to the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), consider the following statements**

1. It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
2. The Commission was the outcome of Indra Sawhney & Others v. Union of India.
3. It recommends inclusions and exclusions from the list of communities notified as backward for the purpose of job reservations.
4. The Commission consists of ten members appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.

**How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q6. Consider the following statements about Index of Industrial Production**

1. It measures the changes in the volume of production of industrial products during a given period.
2. It is published yearly by the Indian Statistical Institute of India.
3. The Eight Core Sectors comprise more than 50% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q7. Consider the following statements regarding the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)**

1. It guarantees 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every BPL household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
2. It mandates that at least one-third of the beneficiaries must be women, ensuring their active participation in rural development.
3. It is formulated under the Ministry of Rural Development.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q8. Consider the following statements about Graphene**

1. It is made up of pure carbon.
2. It is almost perfectly transparent as it absorbs only 2% of light.
3. It is impermeable to gases, even those as light as hydrogen and helium.
4. It is the world's thinnest and most conductive material of both electricity and heat.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three

D. All four

**Q9. Consider the following statements regarding the Rashtriya Gokul Mission**

1. It is a government initiative aimed at conserving and developing indigenous breeds of cattle.
2. It facilitates the establishment of Gokul Grams to create state-of-the-art facilities for the housing and upkeep of cattle.
3. It operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

**How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q10. Matti Banana that has been recently awarded the GI Tag belongs to**

- A. West Bengal
- B. Odisha
- C. Nagaland
- D. Tamil Nadu



## Prelims Track Answer

### Ans.1 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- Great Barrier Reef is the world's most extensive and spectacular coral reef ecosystem composed of over 2,900 individual reefs and 900 islands.
- Location: Coral Sea (North-East Coast), off the coast of Queensland, Australia.
- Much of the Great Barrier Reef is a marine protected area, managed by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority of Australia.
- It is estimated that the reef is home to around 1,500 species of fish and around 600 different coral species.
- It was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981.

### Ans.2 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- The Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2023 seeks to amend the Cinematograph Act 1952.
- It has provisions for harsher punishment for film piracy
  - The Bill proposes a jail term of up to three years and a fine up to 5% of a film's production cost.
- The Bill also introduces three age ratings for films requiring adult supervision viz. U/A 7+, U/A 13+ and U/A 16+.
- The 10 year validity of certificate of Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has been removed and perpetuated.
- Change of Category of Film for Television has been formalised
- However, the Government will still not have revisional powers over the CBFC's decisions.

### Ans. 3 Option D is correct

#### Explanation

- Gwadar Port: Pakistan
- Odessa Port: Ukraine
- Busan Port: South Korea

### Ans.4 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- Deep tech or deep technology refers to a class of startup businesses that develop new offerings based on tangible engineering innovation or scientific discoveries and advances.
- Usually, such startups operate on, but are not limited to, agriculture, life sciences, chemistry, aerospace and green energy.

- The deep tech innovations are very radical and disrupt an existing market or develop a new one.
- The time required for deep technology to develop the technology and reach the market-ready maturity is more than shallow technology development (like mobile apps and websites).
- It often requires a lot of early-stage funding for research and development, prototyping, validating hypotheses and technology development.

### Ans. 5 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- The NCBC was established through the National Commission for Backward Classes Act of 1993 under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- But in 2018, through the 102nd Constitutional Amendment Act, it was made a Constitutional body under article 338B.
- The Commission was the outcome of Indra Sawhney & Others v. Union of India.
- It has the authority to examine complaints and welfare measures regarding socially and educationally backward classes.
- It recommends inclusions and exclusions from the list of communities notified as backward for the purpose of job reservations.
- The Commission consists of five members including a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and three other Members appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.
- The conditions of service and tenure of office of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and other Members is determined by the President.

### Ans. 6 Option A is correct

#### Explanation

- IIP is an indicator that measures the changes in the volume of production of industrial products during a given period.
- It is compiled and published monthly by the National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- Base Year for IIP is 2011-2012.
- The Eight Core Sectors comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
- The eight core sector industries in decreasing order of their weightage: Refinery Products >

Electricity> Steel> Coal> Crude Oil> Natural Gas> Cement> Fertilisers.

**Ans. 7 Option B is correct**

**Explanation**

- MGNREGA is one of the largest work guarantee programmes in the world launched in 2005 by the Ministry of Rural development.
- It aims to guarantee 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do unskilled manual work.
- The act aims at addressing the causes of chronic poverty through a rights-based framework.
- If any rural adult fails to get work within 15 days of demanding it, an 'unemployment allowance' is given.
- The act mandates Gram sabhas to recommend the works that are to be undertaken and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them.
- At least one-third of beneficiaries need to be women.
- The Centre bears 60% of the cost of the materials used for MGNREGS work and the remaining 40% is provided by the State governments.
- Ministry: Ministry of Rural Development

**Ans. 8 Option D is correct**

**Explanation**

- Graphene is a material that is extracted from graphite and is made up of pure carbon.
- It is one of the most important elements in nature which we find in daily objects like the lead of a pencil.
- It is the world's thinnest, strongest and most conductive material of both electricity and heat.
- It conducts electricity better than copper.

- It is 200 times stronger than steel but six times lighter.
- It is almost perfectly transparent as it absorbs only 2% of light.
- It is impermeable to gases, even those as light as hydrogen and helium.

**Ans. 9 Option A is correct**

**Explanation**

- Rashtriya Gokul Mission is being implemented for development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds since December 2014.
- The scheme is also continued under umbrella scheme Rashtriya Pashudhan Vikas Yojna from 2021 to 2026 with a budget outlay of Rs.2400 crore.
- It envisages the establishment of integrated cattle development centres, 'Gokul Grams' to develop indigenous breeds including up to 40% nondescript breeds
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying

**Ans. 10 Option D is correct**

**Explanation**

- The Matti banana variety, native to Kanniyakumari district, was recently granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- There are six known types of the Matti banana and they are indigenous to Kanniyakumari, where it thrives in the unique climate and soil.
- They are known as 'Baby Banana' which flourishes mainly in Kalkulam and Vilavancode taluks.
- Unlike typical banana bunches that grow straight, the Matti's fingers exhibit a distinct wind-blown appearance.
- Its low total soluble solids content (TSSC) recommends it as a baby food.

## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. Consider the following statements**

1. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights is a statutory body.
2. App 'MASI' enables unified inspections by several organisations as laid down under the JJ Act, 2015.

**Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q2. Consider the following statements about Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)**

1. The Act falls under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
2. Contributions made by a citizen of India living in another country from his/her personal savings through the normal banking channels, will not be treated as foreign contributions.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q3. Which of the following article related with Scheduled Tribes**

1. Article 15
2. Article 16
3. Article 17
4. Article 19

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q4. With reference to Cheetah, consider the following statements**

1. Cheetah reintroduction project aims to reintroduce cheetah in Madhav National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
2. Cheetah is the only large carnivore to have become extinct in Independent India.
3. The cheetah hunts by chasing its prey and thereby ensures the survival of the

fittest and keeping the prey population healthy.

**How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q5. Consider the following statements on the Biological Diversity Act, 2002**

1. It aims at the conservation of biological resources, managing its sustainable use and enabling fair and equitable sharing benefits with the local communities.
2. The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was established to implement India's Biological Diversity Act.
3. There are no State Biodiversity Boards constituted for Union territories.
4. The act stipulates all offences under it as cognizable and non-bailable.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q6. Consider the following statements**

- |                         |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Bandipur National Park  | : Karnataka      |
| Nagarhole National Park | : Kerala         |
| Mukurthi National Park  | : Andhra Pradesh |
| Silent Valley           | : Kerala         |

**How many of the pairs given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q7. Consider the following statements about Competition Commission of India (CCI)**

1. It is a statutory body of the Government of India responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002
2. The commission is a quasi-judicial body which gives opinions to statutory authorities and also deals with other cases.

**Which of the statements given above is/are incorrect?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2

- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q 8 India-China border is divided into three sectors.**

1. Western Sector: Ladakh
2. Middle Sector: Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and west bengal
3. Eastern Sector: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam

**How many of the codes given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q9. Which one of the following statements regarding the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is not correct?**

1. ASEAN was established in the year 1967 in Bangkok by five member countries.
2. Singapore is one of the founder members of ASEAN.
3. India is sectoral dialogue partner of ASEAN.

**How many of the above given statements is/are Incorrect?**

- A. One Only
- B. Two Only
- C. All Three
- D. None of the above

**Q10. Which of the following statement(s) regarding cervical cancer is/are correct?**

1. Almost all cervical cancer cases are linked to certain strains of human papilloma virus (HPV).
2. Despite being largely preventable, cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer among women globally.

**Select the correct option using the code given below:**

- A. 1 only
- B. 2 only
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

## Prelims Track Answer

### Ans.1 Option D is correct

#### Explanation

- Monitoring App for Seamless Inspection or MASI aims real time monitoring of the Child Care Institutions (CCIs) and their inspection mechanisms across the country.
- 'MASI' enables unified inspections by several organisations as laid down under the JJ Act, 2015.
- The app is linked to the monitoring Portal where the automatic reports are generated.
- Regular follow-up is done before and after the completion of the cycle of inspection.
- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) has developed the 'MASI' application.
- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights is a statutory body established by the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005.
- It aims 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.

### Ans. 2 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- It is a law enacted by Parliament to regulate foreign contributions (especially monetary donations) provided by certain individuals or associations to NGOs and others within India.
- The Act falls under the purview of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- Contributions made by a citizen of India living in another country (e.g. a Non-Resident Indian (NRI)) from his/her personal savings through the normal banking channels, will not be treated as foreign contributions.
- It is mandatory for all such NGOs to register themselves under the FCRA.
- The applicant should not be fictitious or benami and should not have been prosecuted or convicted for indulging in activities aimed at conversion through inducement or force,

### Ans. 3 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- Article 15(4) -The state is empowered to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the scheduled castes

or the scheduled tribes regarding their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the state, except the minority educational institutions.

- Article 16- Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment
- Article 17- The article abolishes 'untouchability' and forbids its practice in any form.
- Article 19 of the Constitution provides freedom of speech which is the right to express one's opinion freely without any fear through oral/written/electronic/broadcasting/press.

### Ans. 4 Option A is correct

#### Explanation

- Cheetah reintroduction project aims to reintroduce cheetah in Kuno National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
- Cheetah is the only large carnivore to have become extinct in Independent India.
- The cheetah served as an evolutionary force and was responsible for the fast speed of the blackbuck, its major prey.
- Unlike the ambush predators, the cheetah hunts by chasing its prey and thereby ensures the survival of the fittest and keeping the prey population healthy.

### Ans. 5 Option D is correct

#### Explanation

- The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 was born out of India's attempt to realise the objectives enshrined in the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) 1992.
- It aims at the conservation of biological resources, managing its sustainable use and enabling fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use and knowledge of biological resources with the local communities.
- The act envisaged a three-tier structure to regulate the access to biological resources:
  - The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA)
  - The State Biodiversity Boards (SBBs)
  - The Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) (at local level)
  - There are no State Biodiversity Boards constituted for Union territories.
- The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was established in 2003 by the Central

Government to implement India's Biological Diversity Act (2002).

- The Act prohibits the following activities without the prior approval from the National Biodiversity Authority.
- The act stipulates all offences under it as cognizable and non-bailable.
- Any grievances related to the determination of benefit sharing or order of the National Biodiversity Authority or a State Biodiversity Board under this Act, shall be taken to the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

**Ans. 6 Option B is correct**

#### Explanation

Protected Areas within the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve are

- The Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary- Tamil nadu
- Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary- Kerala
- Bandipur National Park- Karnataka
- Nagarhole National Park- Karnataka
- Mukurthi National Park -Kerala
- Silent Valley- Kerala

**Ans. 7 Option D is correct**

#### Explanation

- It is a statutory body of the Government of India responsible for enforcing the Competition Act, 2002, it was duly constituted in March 2009.
- The Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 (MRTP Act) was repealed and replaced by the Competition Act, 2002, on the recommendations of the Raghavan committee.
- The Commission consists of one Chairperson and six Members who shall be appointed by the Central Government.
- The commission is a quasi-judicial body which gives opinions to statutory authorities and also deals with other cases.
- The Chairperson and other Members shall be whole-time Members.

**Ans. 8 Option A is correct**

#### Explanation

- The border between India and China is not clearly demarcated throughout and there is no mutually agreed Line of Actual Control (LAC) along certain stretches.
- LAC came into existence after the 1962 Indo China war.

- India-China border is divided into three sectors.
- Western Sector : Ladakh
- Middle Sector : Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand
- Eastern Sector: Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim

**Ans:9 Option A is Correct**

#### Explanation

- 1967, five countries signed the "Bangkok Declaration" to form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, later another 5 joined.

#### List of 10 ASEAN nations

- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Brunei
- Cambodia
- Laos
- Vietnam
- Myanmar
- The ASEAN fundamental principles, as contained in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) of 1976.
- Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity of all nations.
  - India had signed a TAC treaty with ASEAN in 2003.

**Ans:10 Option C is Correct**

#### Explanation

- Cervavac, India's first indigenously developed quadrivalent human papillomavirus (qHPV) vaccine for the prevention of cervical cancer has been developed.
- Despite being largely preventable, cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer among women globally, according to the WHO.
- India accounts for about a fifth of the global burden of cervical cancer.
- Almost all cervical cancer cases are linked to certain strains of human papillomavirus (HPV), a common virus that is transmitted through sexual contact.
- While the body's immune system usually gets rid of the HPV infection naturally within two years, in a small percentage of people the virus can linger over time and turn some normal cells into abnormal cells and then cancer.

# Mentorship India

Our mission is crystal clear – to provide the finest UPSC mentorship and guidance available in India. We recognize that the path to success in the UPSC examination is both demanding and multifaceted. This is precisely why we have developed a comprehensive approach that goes beyond conventional coaching. Our commitment lies in fostering excellence by equipping aspirants with the necessary tools, knowledge, and unwavering support to not only excel in the examination but also in life itself.

Mentorship India represents more than just an organization; it is a community of ambitious individuals bound together by the shared objective of conquering the UPSC examination. We warmly invite you to embark on this transformative journey alongside us. Whether you are a novice taking your initial steps or a seasoned aspirant aiming for the pinnacle, Mentorship India is your dependable companion in the relentless pursuit of excellence.

+91 9999 057869  
www.mentorshipindia.com

A-92, Third Floor, Hari Nagar  
Delhi - 110064

 @mentorship.india