

**WEEKLY MAGAZINE**

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**UPSC-MPSC-CDS-NDA**

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**PUNE-THANE-DADAR-ANDHERI**

## Topic 1: Population Day

### *Importance for Prelims: IR*

The United Nations marks **World Population Day every year on 11 July**, with the aim of spreading awareness on overpopulation, under population, family planning and birth control.

- This day was **first observed in 1989**, after the United Nations Development Program found that the global population had already crossed the five billion mark.
- The UNDP anticipated that overpopulation would become a matter of major concern in the future and with the world's population currently touching 7.8 billion and expected to reach 8.5 billion by 2030, concerns regarding overpopulation aren't unfounded.
- In light of the alarming data about women in the pandemic, the United Nations **decided that this year, World Population Day will platform awareness of the sexual and reproductive needs and rights of women**, particularly during the Covid-19 crisis.
- These rights are inextricably linked to **education, awareness, physical safety and financial independence for women**.
- A recent **study conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** in April 2020 revealed that if the lockdown continues for another six months, 47 million women in low and middle-income countries **run the risk of not being able to access modern contraceptives, which could result in seven million unintended pregnancies**.

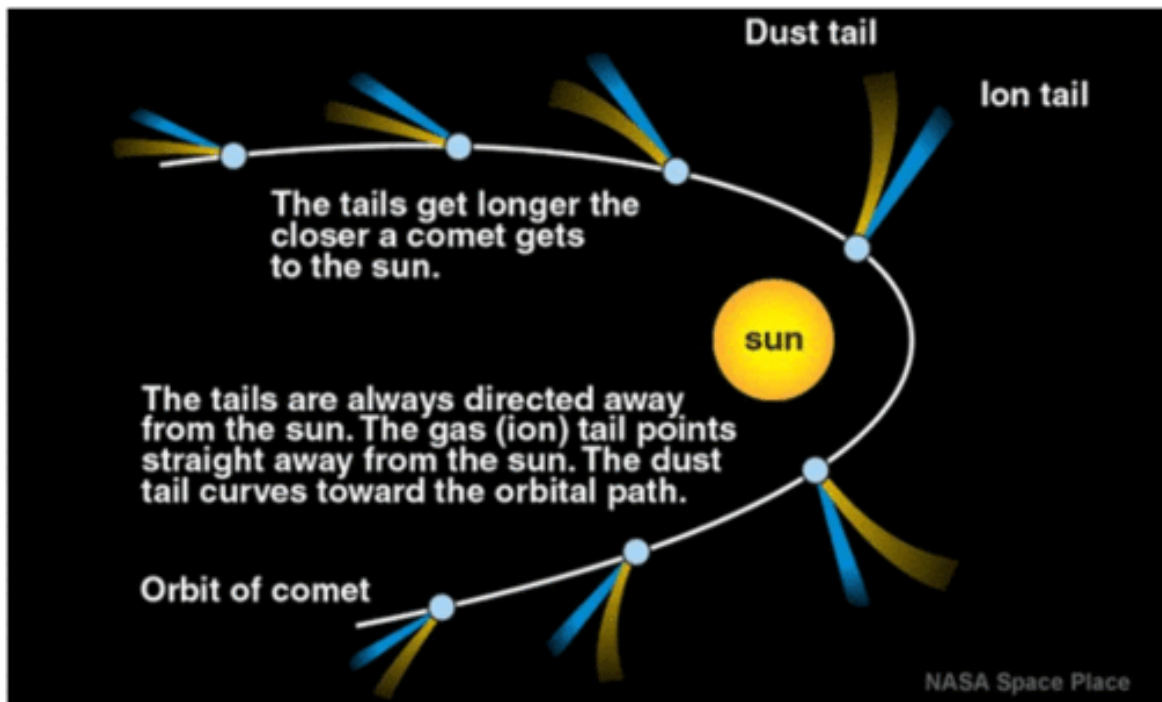
Moreover, 31 million cases of gender-based violence can be expected in the coming months.

## Topic 2: NEWOISE

### *Importance for Prelims: Science and technology*

**Comet C/2020 F3 Neowise** which is one of the brightest comets in decades is passing Earth this month.

- Comets are mostly **made of dust, rocks and ice, the remnants from time the solar system was formed** over 4.6 billion years ago.
- Comets can range in their width from a few miles to tens of miles wide. As they orbit closer to the sun, like in the case of C/2020 F3, **they heat up and release debris of dust and gases** that forms into a “glowing head” that can often be larger than a planet.
- Astronomers study comets because they **hold important clues about the formation of the solar system** and it is possible that comets brought water and other organic compounds, which are **the building blocks of life to Earth.**
- Further, NASA tracks all Near Earth Objects (NEOs) that includes comets and asteroids using telescopes placed all around the Earth, as part of its NEO Observation Program.



### Topic 3: Fish Cryobank

*Importance for Prelims: Economy*

*Importance for Mains: GS paper III- Economy*

**National Fish Farmers Day is celebrated on 10th July every year** which aims to draw attention to changing the way the country manages fisheries resources to ensure sustainable stocks and healthy ecosystems.

- On the occasion of ‘National Fish Farmers Day’ that NFDB in collaboration with the NBFGR will take up the **work to establish “Fish Cryobanks”** in different parts of the country.
- It will facilitate all time **availability of ‘fish sperms’ of desired species to fish farmers.**
- This would be **the first time in the world** when “Fish Cryobank” will be established, which can bring a **revolutionary change in the fisheries sector** in the country for enhancing fish production and productivity and thereby increasing prosperity among the fish farmers.

### Topic 4: Hagia Sophia

*Importance for Prelims: IR*

Turkey’s highest court allowed for the conversion of the nearly 1,500 year-old Hagia Sophia from a museum into a mosque.

- The centuries-old structure is a **UNESCO World Heritage site.**



- It was **originally a cathedral in the Byzantine Empire** before it was turned into a mosque in 1453, when Constantinople fell to Sultan Mehmet II's Ottoman forces.
- In the 1930s, however, **Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, shut down the mosque and turned it into a museum** in an attempt to make the country more secular.
- Council of State had **unanimously cancelled a 1934 cabinet decision concerning the status of the monument** and stated that the Hagia Sophia had been registered as a mosque in its property deeds.



## Topic 5: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC )

### *Importance for Prelims: IR*

Kuwait is planning to reduce the share of foreigners in the country's population thereby benefitting locals in employment.

- **Around 8 million Indians work in the GCC countries.**
- **Of them, around 2.1 million of them are from Kerala.**
- Other major contributors to the Indian expatriate communities in GCC countries are Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, West Bengal, Punjab and Rajasthan.

### **GCC**

- The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is a **political and economic alliance of six countries** in the Arabian Peninsula: **Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.**
- **Established in 1981**, the GCC **promotes economic, security, cultural and social cooperation** between the six states and holds a summit every year to discuss cooperation and regional affairs.



## Topic 6: Aerosol

### *Importance for Prelims: Environment*

WHO has formally acknowledged the **possibility that the novel coronavirus can remain in the air** in crowded indoor spaces, where short-range aerosol transmission cannot be ruled out.

- Aerosols are defined as a **combination of liquid or solid particles suspended in a gaseous or liquid environment.**
- **“Primary” aerosols, like dust, soot, or sea salt, come directly from the planet’s surface.** They get lifted into the atmosphere by gusty winds, shot high into the air by exploding volcanoes, or they waft away from smokestacks or flames.
- **“Secondary” aerosols form when different things floating in the atmosphere** like organic compounds released by plants, liquid acid droplets, or other materials—crash together, culminating in a chemical or physical reaction.
- Aerosols come **from both natural and human sources.**
- Natural sources of aerosols include sea salt generated from breaking waves, mineral dust blown from the surface by wind, and volcanoes.
- Anthropogenic aerosols include sulfate, nitrate, and carbonaceous aerosols, and are mainly from fossil fuel combustion sources.



## Topic 7: UGC

### *Importance for Prelims: Government Organization-Education*

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has said that states are not permissible to cancel university exams and commission does have the power to take action if states do so.

- As per the UGC Act, State governments cannot take this decision.
- Unlike school education, which is on the State list, **higher education is on the concurrent list.** UGC and AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) directives have to be implemented by states.

### **UGC**

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) came into **existence on 28th December, 1953** and became a **statutory organization of the Government of India by an Act of Parliament in 1956.**
- The UGC has the unique distinction of being the **only grant-giving agency** in the country which has been vested with two responsibilities: that of **providing funds** and that of **coordination, determination and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education.**
- The UGC's mandate includes:
  - o Promoting and coordinating university education.
  - o Determining and maintaining standards of teaching, examination

and research in universities.

- o Framing regulations on minimum standards of education.
- o Monitoring developments in the field of collegiate and university education; disbursing grants to the universities and colleges.
- o Serving as a vital link between the Union and state governments and institutions of higher learning.
- o Advising the Central and State governments on the measures necessary for improvement of university education.

## **Topic 8: Forest Rights Act (FRA)**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Acts and policies***

Fourteen states rejected over 5 lakhs claims under the Scheduled Tribes and Other traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, in suo motu review.

### **History of forest laws**

- In the colonial era, the **British diverted abundant forest wealth of the nation to meet their economic needs**. While procedure for settlement of rights was provided under statutes such as the **Indian Forest Act, 1927**, these were hardly followed. As a result, tribal and forest-dwelling communities, who had been living within the forests in harmony with the environment and the ecosystem, continued to live inside the forests in tenurial insecurity, a situation which continued even after independence as they were marginalized.
- The symbiotic relationship between forests and forest-dwelling**

**communities found recognition in the National Forest Policy, 1988.**

□ The policy called for the need to associate tribal people in the protection, regeneration and development of forests.

□ The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, was **enacted to protect the marginalised socio-economic class of citizens and balance the right to environment with their right to life and livelihood.**

**Preamble:** The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) was enacted to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded.

**Provisions:**

□ The act **recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in Forest land in forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes (FDST) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFD)** who have been residing in such forests for generations.

□ The act also establishes **the responsibilities and authority for sustainable use, conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecological balance** of FDST and OTFD.

□ It strengthens the conservation regime of the forests while ensuring livelihood and food security of the FDST and OTFD.

□ The act identify **four types of rights:**

- o **Title rights:** It gives FDST and OTFD the **right to ownership to land farmed** by tribals or forest dwellers subject to a maximum of 4 hectares. Ownership is only for land that is actually being cultivated by the concerned family and no new lands will be granted.
- o **Use rights:** The rights of the dwellers extend to **extracting Minor Forest Produce, grazing areas**, to pastoralist routes, etc.
- o **Relief and development rights:** To rehabilitation in case of illegal eviction or forced displacement and to basic amenities, subject to restrictions for forest protection
- o **Forest management rights:** It includes **the right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource** which they have been traditionally protecting and conserving for sustainable use.

## **Topic 9: Atoll Nation and Air bubble**

### ***Importance for Prelims: IR***

Maldives has asked Indian government to establish an air bubble or air travel bridge with India as it goes to reopen tourism sector from July 15

- Maldives is located to the southwest of India in the Indian Ocean
- The economy of the Maldives is **almost entirely driven by tourism, which makes up 70 per cent of its GDP.**
- The air bubble would be a special gesture to a country with

which India has had traditionally warm ties, but where in recent years, it has had to contend with growing Chinese influence.

### **Air bubble**

- Air bubbles” or “air bridges” are **joining jurisdictions that have largely eliminated the coronavirus, and trust in each other’s testing and case numbers.**
- **Australia and New Zealand have leaded the way with a proposed “Covidsafe travel zone”, or the trans-Tasman bubble.**

## **Topic 10: NHRC and SHRC**

*Importance for Prelims: Polity*

*Importance for Mains: GS paper II- Polity*

Recent Custodial deaths in Tamil Nadu and encounter in Uttar Pradesh has brought into focus the role of human rights watchdogs.

### **NHRC**

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India was **established on 12 October, 1993.** The statute under which it is established is the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993

It is in **conformity with the Paris Principles.**

The NHRC is an embodiment of India’s concern for the promotion and protection of human rights.

The Commission consists of a **Chairperson, full-time Members and seven deemed Members.** The statute lays down qualifications for the



appointment of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission. Constitution of NHRC **Judge of the Supreme Court is eligible to be appointed as Chairperson** of the Commission in addition to the person who has been the Chief Justice of India; Term of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission is **three years or 70 years** whichever is earlier and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

The chairman and members are **appointed by the president** on the recommendations of a **six-member committee consisting of the prime minister as its head, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, leaders of the Opposition in both the Houses of Parliament and the Central home minister.**

The president can remove the chairman or any member from the office under the following circumstances:

- (a) If he is adjudged an insolvent; or
- (b) If he engages, during his term of office, in any paid employment outside the duties of his office; or
- (c) If he is unfit to continue in office by reason of infirmity of mind or body; or
- (d) If he is of unsound mind and stand so declared by a competent court; or
- (e) If he is convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for an offence.

In addition to these, the president can also remove the chairman or any member on the ground of **proved misbehaviour or incapacity.** However, in these cases, the president has to refer the matter to the Supreme Court for an inquiry. If the Supreme Court, after the inquiry,

upholds the cause of removal and advises so, then the president can remove the chairman or a member.

The salaries, allowances and other conditions of service of the chairman or a member are **determined by the Central government.**

## **SHRC**

SHRC derives its mandate from Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993 The Commission consists of a **Chairperson and two Members.** The statute lays down qualifications for the appointment of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission. Constitution of NHRC Person who has been Chief Justice or Judge of a High Court will be chairperson of a SHRC.

Term of the Chairperson and Members of the Commission is **three years or 70 years** whichever is earlier and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

The chairperson and members are **appointed by the Governor** on the recommendations of a committee consisting of the chief minister as its head, the speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the state home minister and the leader of the opposition in the Legislative Assembly.

Although the chairperson and members of a State Human Rights Commission are appointed by the governor, **they can be removed only by the President** (and not by the governor). The President can remove them on the **same grounds and in the same manner as he can remove the chairperson or a member of the National Human Rights Commission.**

## Topic 11: NATGRID

### *Importance for Prelims: Government bodies*

National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) has signed a MOU with the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) to access the centralized online database on FIRs and stolen vehicles.

National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID) is an **attached office of Ministry of Home Affairs**

It has been created as **an IT platform to assist the intelligence and law enforcement agencies in ensuring national and internal security**, with the ultimate aim to counter terror.

NATGRID, **an integrated intelligence grid** which will connect databases of core security agencies, gathered pace in 2016

NATGRID will **have data related to all immigration entry and exit, banking and financial transactions**, credit card purchases, telecom, individual taxpayers, air flyers, **train travellers** besides others to generate intelligence inputs.

The **10 agencies which will be able to access the NATGRID data** on realtime basis are: Intelligence Bureau (IB), Research & Analysis Wing (R&AW), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate (ED), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), Directorate General of Central Excise and Intelligence (DGCEI) and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

Initially, no state agencies will be given direct access to the NATGRID data.

However, whenever any relevant information is required, they can approach the NATGRID through any of the 10 user agencies.

## **Topic 12: Socially backward**

*Importance for Prelims: Polity*

*Importance for Mains: GS paper II- Polity*

The Supreme Court, in a significant decision, confirmed that **persons suffering from disabilities are also socially backward** and entitled to the same benefits of relaxation as Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe candidates in public employment and education.

**Article 15 (4)** of Indian states that nothing in article 15 or in article 29(2) shall prevent the state from making any **provisions for the advancement of any socially and economically backward classes of citizens** or for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

This clause started the era of reservations in India.

Caste is not the only criterion for backwardness and other criteria must also be considered.

## **Topic 13: 26th constitutional amendment**

*Importance for Prelims: Polity*

*Importance for Mains: GS paper II- Polity*

The Supreme Court has ruled that the **Travancore royal family has rights to maintain and manage** the Sri Padmanabhaswamy temple in Kerala.

### **Rulings:**

A two-judge bench held that the **royal family's Shebaitship — the right to maintain and manage the temple and the deity does not come to an end** with the death of the ruler, who signed the **instrument of accession** with the Indian government in 1949 by which the erstwhile princely state of Travancore merged with the Indian union.

And also **Shebait rights of the royal family will continue** and abolition of the rights and privileges of the royal family by the 26th amendment of the Constitution will not impact it.

### **26 amendment of 1971**

It **abolished the privy purses and privileges of the former rulers of princely states** in India in order to establish egalitarian society.

In return for surrendering their powers, **Articles 291 and 362 guaranteed royal families a tax-free privy purse** which was approximately one-fourth of what they had earlier earned.

Most Congressmen were opposed to payment of privy purses. But Sardar Patel made a stirring speech in the Constituent Assembly on October 12, 1949. He asked members to realise that this was a **small price to pay for the integration of India**.

### **Shree Padmanabhaswamy Temple**

Dedicated to **Lord Padmanabhaya, an avatar of Lord Vishnu**, the



famous Shree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram is one of the most popular shrines in India.

It has been described in several Hindu scriptures like the Brahma Purana, MatsyaPurana, VarahaPurana, SkandaPurana, Padma Purana, Vayu Purana and BhagavataPurana.

The Shree Padmanabhaswamy Temple **dates back to 8th century CE**, say historians.

The temple, **built in the Chera style of architecture, is unique to Kerala** and the neighbouring states, as the construction was done keeping the local weather and wind direction in mind.

**Temples made in the Chera style are usually square, rectangular, octagonal or star-shaped.**

Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple is **one of 108 DivyaDesams** (holy abodes of Vishnu) – principal centres of worship of the deity in Vaishnavism.

The main deity in the Shree Padmanabhaswamy Temple is of Lord Vishnu in the ‘**AnanthaShayana**’ post

## **Topic 14: Bharatmala Pariyojna**

***Importance for Prelims: Economy***

***Importance for Mains: GS paper III- Economy***

The Expert Appraisal Committee of the Environment Ministry has recommended the grant of Environmental Clearance for the

development of an economic corridor between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka under Bharatmala Pariyojna

-It is a **new umbrella program for the highways sector** that focuses on **optimizing efficiency of freight and passenger movement** across the country by bridging critical infrastructure gaps through effective interventions like development of Economic Corridors, Inter Corridors and Feeder Routes, National Corridor Efficiency Improvement, Border and International connectivity roads, Coastal and Port connectivity roads and Green-field expressways.

### **Highlights:**

Improvement in efficiency of existing corridors through development of Multimodal Logistics Parks and elimination of choke point

Enhance focus on improving connectivity in North East and leveraging synergies with Inland Waterways

Emphasis on use of technology & scientific planning for Project Preparation and Asset Monitoring

Delegation of powers to expedite project delivery – Phase I to complete by 2022 -Improving connectivity in the North East

### **Topic 15: Digital India**

*Importance for Prelims: Government schemes*

*Importance for Mains: GS paper III- Economy*

Google announces \$10billion investment in ‘digital India’

-Digital India is a **flagship programme of the Government of India** with a vision to transform **India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy.**

-The Digital India programme is centred on three key vision areas:

**Digital Infrastructure as a Core Utility to Every Citizen:**

Availability of high speed internet as a core utility for delivery of services to citizens, Cradle to grave digital identity that is unique, lifelong, online and authenticable to every citizen, Mobile phone & bank account enabling citizen participation in digital & financial space, Easy access to a Common Service Centre, Shareable private space on a public cloud, Safe and secure cyber-space

**Governance & Services on Demand:** Seamlessly integrated services across departments or jurisdictions, Availability of services in real time from online & mobile platforms, All citizen entitlements to be portable and available on the cloud, Digitally transformed services for improving ease of doing business, Making financial transactions electronic & cashless and Leveraging Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) for decision support systems & development

**Digital Empowerment of Citizens:** Universal digital literacy, Universally accessible digital resources, Availability of digital resources / services in Indian languages, Collaborative digital platforms for participative governance and Citizens not required to physically submit Govt. documents / certificates.

**Topic 16: Global Distance Learning Fund**

### *Importance for Prelims: Schemes*

After Facebook, Google partners with CBSE to promote online education in India. It will provide a \$1 million grant to the Kaivalya Education Foundation through the Global Distance Learning Fund. It is **part of Google.org, aimed at helping teachers deliver virtual education** to students in the country.

The initiative empowers 700,000 teachers over the next year to deliver virtual education and learning from home.

It will partner public broadcasting agency, Prasar Bharti, for an edutainment series meant for small and medium-sized businesses in the country.

### **Topic 17: Bharat Net**

#### *Importance for Prelims: Economy*

The **consumption of mobile and broadband data in rural India** under the BharatNet scheme **more than doubled** in last three months compared to the preceding three months from January to March 2020.

#### **Concept:**

BharatNet is **planned to connect all the 2,50,000 Gram Panchayats** in the country for providing broadband connectivity in the Gram Panchayats.

The project has been approved by Union Cabinet on 2011. The project is being **executed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)**

namely **Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL)**, which has been incorporated on 25.02.2012 under Indian Companies Act 1956.

In 2016, Telecom Commission approved to implement the project in phases:

Phase I: The **target of completing 1,00,000 GPs** under phase-I of BharatNet was achieved in December 2017.

Phase II: BharatNet Phase-II is **planned to connect the remaining 1,50,000GPs**, using an optimal mix of media, by 31 Mar, 2019.

Phase II is being implemented through three models – state-led model, CPSU model, and private sector model.

Further, provision has been made for Last Mile Connectivity in all 2,50,000 GPs through viability gap funding.

Every GP shall have on an average five WiFi Access Points (APs), including 3 Aps (on average) for public institutions such as educational centres, health centres, post offices, police stations, etc. A tender for provisioning of WiFi services has been floated by BBNL, after consultation with TSPs and ISPs, for wider participation.

A lump sum amount is allocated and disbursed from **Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF)** to BBNL for implementation of BharatNet.

USOF's task is to make sure that people in rural areas have access to telecom connectivity at an affordable and reasonable rate. It was **established in 2002.**

### **Topic 18: World Youth Skills Day**



## ***Importance for Prelims: Economy/IR***

15 July is celebrated as World Youth Skills Day.

-The United Nations invented day **aims at spreading awareness of the importance that technical and vocational education, training, and the development of new skills holds in our lives and is relevant to both local and global economies.**

-The day highlights the opportunities and challenges that young people face in employment, and **this year's theme is 'Skills for a Resilient Youth'.**

-The **Skill India Mission was launched 5 years ago on this day.** Therefore, the day marks the 5th anniversary of the launch of Skill India Mission.

## **Demographic dividend**

-A demographic dividend is the **accelerated economic growth** that can **result from improved reproductive health, a rapid decline in fertility, and the subsequent shift in population age structure.**

Since 2018, India's working-age population (people between 15 and 64 years of age) has grown larger than the dependant population — children aged 14 or below as well as people above 65 years of age. This bulge in the working-age population is going to last till 2055, or 37 years from its beginning.

## **National Youth Policy**

The National Youth Policy, 2014 (NYP-2014) seeks to **define the Vision of the Government of India** for the Youth of the Country and

identify the key areas in which action is required, where not enough is being done, to enable youth development and to provide a framework for action for all stakeholders.

It is intended to serve as a guiding document, and should be reviewed in 5 years, so that GoI may **re-focus its priorities for youth development, as may be necessary.**

NYP-2014 provides a holistic Vision for the youth of India which is **“to empower the youth of the country to achieve their full potential, and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community of nations”.**

In order to achieve this Vision, all stakeholders must work towards meeting 5 key objectives. This requires specific action in one or more of **11 priority areas, identified as important for youth development.**

### **National Skill development mission**

The National Skill Development Mission was approved by the Union Cabinet on 2015, and officially launched on 15.07.2015 on the occasion of World Youth Skills Day.

The Mission has been developed **to create convergence across sectors and States in terms of skill training activities.**

Further, to achieve the vision of ‘Skilled India’, the National Skill Development Mission would not only consolidate and coordinate skilling efforts, but also **expedite decision making across sectors to achieve skilling** at scale with speed and standards.

It will be implemented through a streamlined institutional mechanism

driven by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).

**Key institutional mechanisms** for achieving the objectives of the Mission have been divided into **three tiers**, which will consist of a Governing Council for policy guidance at apex level, a Steering Committee and a Mission Directorate (along with an Executive Committee) as the executive arm of the Mission.

Mission Directorate will be supported by three other institutions : **National Skill Development Agency (NSDA), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), and Directorate General of Training (DGT)** – all of which will have horizontal linkages with Mission Directorate to facilitate smooth functioning of the national institutional mechanism. Seven sub-missions have been proposed initially to act as building blocks for achieving overall objectives of the Mission.

They are: (i) Institutional Training, (ii) Infrastructure, (iii) Convergence, (iv) Trainers, (v) Overseas Employment, (vi) Sustainable Livelihoods, (vii) Leveraging Public Infrastructure.

## **Topic 19: Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights), 2020 Rules**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Polity***

Central government has published an updated draft of ‘Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Rules, 2020’

- It envisages that every establishment **shall implement all**

**measures to ensure non-discrimination against any transgender person in any**

- matter relating to employment including, but not limited to, infrastructure adjustments, recruitment, promotion and other related issues. The government has sought comments from stakeholders within the next 30 days.
- The draft rules **mandate every establishment to publish an equal opportunity** policy for transgender persons which will be displayed on its website or at visible places within its premises.

The policy will contain **details of infrastructural facilities** (such as unisex toilets), **measures put in for safety and security** (transportation and guards) and amenities (such as hygiene products) to be provided to the transgender persons to enable them to effectively discharge their duties.

It also talks about adequate steps to be taken by the government to prohibit discrimination against transgender in any government or private organisation or establishment, including in the areas of education, employment, healthcare, public transportation, participation in public life, sports, leisure and recreation and opportunity to hold public or private office.

## **Topic 20: Pragyata Guideline**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Polity***

Human resource and Development Minister has released **guidelines**

## for online education 'Pragyata'

### Concept:

The guidelines have been issued to **ensure the safety and academic welfare of the students**. The guidelines issued by MHRD entail suggestions for administrators, school heads, teachers, parents and students on the following areas:

### Need assessment

Concerns while planning online and digital education like duration, screen time, inclusiveness, balanced online and offline activities, etc level-wise Modalities of intervention including resource curation, level-wise delivery, etc.

Physical, mental health and well being during digital education

Cyber safety and ethical practices including precautions and measures for maintaining cyber safety

### Collaboration and convergence with various initiatives

These guidelines, prepared by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), are only advisory in nature, and State governments have been asked to build on them and formulate their own rules, based on local needs.

The ministry has recommended a cap on the screen time for students. As per the guidelines, online classes for pre-primary students should not be for more than 30 minutes. It further mentions that two online sessions of up to 30-45 minutes each should be conducted for classes 1 to 8 and four sessions for classes 9 to 12.



## Topic 21: F1 and M1 visa

### *Importance for Prelims: IR*

US State Department has announced that it **would not issue visas to students** enrolled in schools that are fully online in the upcoming semester.

### **Concept:**

- F1 visas are issued to students attending an academic program in the United States and M1 visas are for students enrolled in vocational studies.
- All students with active **F1 and M1 non-immigrant visas will not be allowed in the US** and those already present in the country **may be asked to depart** if they are not receiving a minimum amount of in person instruction.
- The move is likely to impact 2 lakh Indian students in the United States.

## Topic 22: Strategic Forces Command (SFC)

### *Importance for Prelims: Government organization*

Standoff between China and India last month has brought focus on India's nuclear capability.

### **Concept:**

- Strategic Forced Command (SFC), also sometimes known as Strategic Nuclear Command, forms **part of India's nuclear National Command Authority** (NCA which is responsible for command and

control decisions regarding India's nuclear weapons program).

- It was created on January 4, 2003 **by an executive order** of Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).
- It is **responsible for the management and administration of the country's tactical and strategic nuclear weapons stockpile.**
- It is the responsibility of the Strategic Forces Command to operationalize the orders of the NCA **under the leadership of a Commander-in-Chief who is a Senior Officer.**
- It has the sole responsibility of initiating the process of delivering nuclear weapons and warheads, after acquiring clear approval from the NCA.

### **Topic 23: Rising Forex Reserves**

#### ***Importance for Prelims: Economy***

India's forex reserve has crossed \$500-billion mark recently

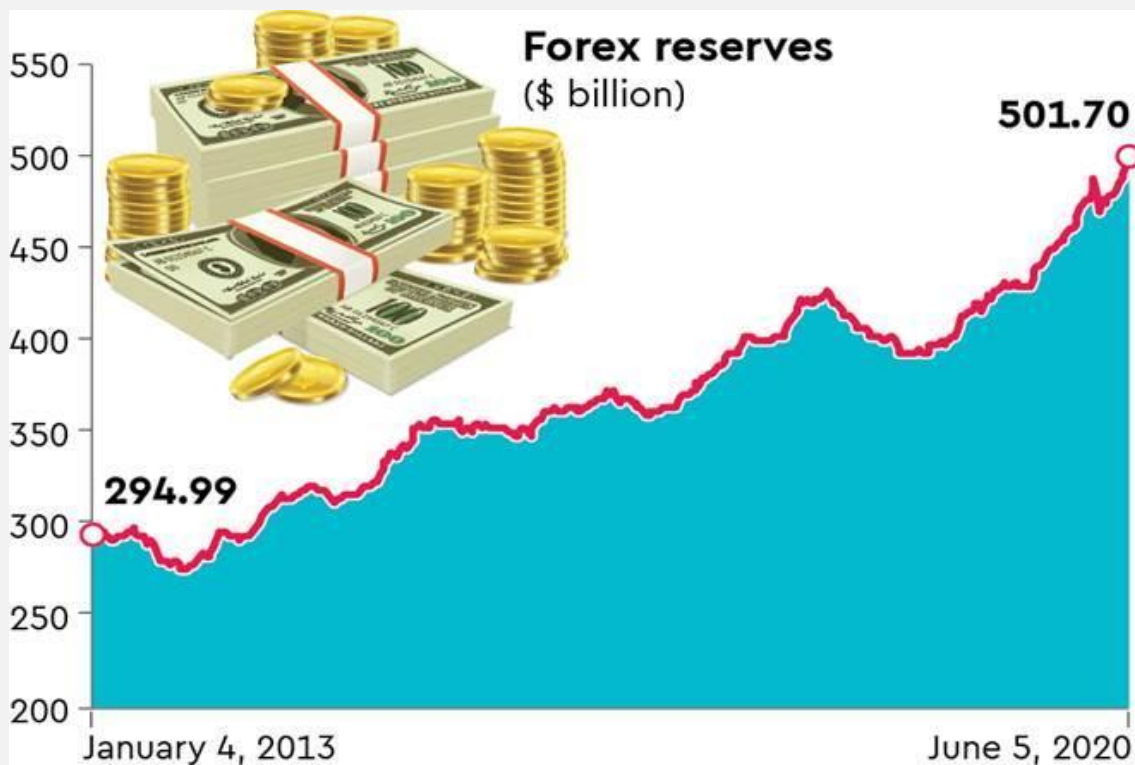
#### **Concept:**

- RBI was able to **increase its reserves by \$79 billion over the past year and by \$29 billion since the beginning of this fiscal year.**
- While the **dollar-rupee swap auctions conducted** in March and April this year have helped increase reserves to some extent.
- Other unplanned developments behind the increasing reserves are **raising external commercial borrowings and an unexpected trade surplus.**
- With global central banks pumping in enormous amount of money

into the global economy and moving interest rates lower, **Indian companies have found it easier to raise funds overseas at cheaper cost.**

### Concerns:

- **Increased overseas borrowing has downsides** — corporates can struggle to roll over the loans if the rupee continues depreciating or if the interest rate cycle overseas turns adverse.
- The **favourable trade balance** is also not something to cheer about as it has been **caused mainly by declining demand**. Merchandise imports were sharply lower in April and May this year, in line with contraction in global trade.
- Once domestic demand revives with the economy unlocking, **demand for petroleum and other products are likely to revive, causing pressure on the trade balance once again.**



## **Topic 24: Agriculture Infrastructure fund**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Economy***

Cabinet has approved for setting up an agri-infra fund with a **corpus of Rs 1 lakh crore**

□ The scheme shall provide a **medium - long term debt financing facility for investment** in viable projects for **post-harvest management Infrastructure and community farming assets** through interest subvention and financial support.

□ This new agri-infra fund has **duration of 10 years till 2029**.

□ Under the scheme, Rs. One Lakh Crore will be **provided by banks and financial institutions** as loans to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, Marketing Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producers Organizations, Self Help Group, Farmers, Joint Liability Groups, Multipurpose Cooperative Societies, Agri-entrepreneurs, Startups, Aggregation Infrastructure Providers and Central/State agency or Local Body sponsored Public Private Partnership Project

□ **All loans under this financing facility will have interest subvention of 3% per annum** up to a limit of Rs. 2 crore. This subvention will be available for a maximum period of seven years.

□ Further, **credit guarantee coverage will be available for eligible borrowers** from this financing facility under Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) scheme for a loan up to Rs. 2 crore.

- Agri Infra fund will be managed and monitored through an online Management Information System (MIS) platform. It will enable all the qualified entities to apply for loan under the fund.
- The **National, State and District level Monitoring Committees** will be set up to ensure real-time monitoring and effective feed-back.

### **Benefits:**

- The Project by way of facilitating **formal credit to farm and farm processing-based activities** is expected to create **numerous job opportunities in rural areas.**

## **Topic 25: Anti-Defection**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Polity***

Supreme Court has issued notice to Tamil Nadu Assembly Speaker on a plea against him for **allegedly delaying a decision on the anti-defection proceedings** against 11 AIADMK MLAs who voted against the government's confidence motion in 2017.

- The Tenth Schedule was inserted in the Constitution **in 1985 by 52nd amendment**. It lays down the process by which **legislators may be disqualified on grounds of defection by the Presiding Officer of a legislature** based on a petition by any other member of the House.

- Disqualification:

- o If a member of a house belonging to a political party voluntarily gives up the membership of his political party, or Votes, or does not vote in the legislature, contrary to the directions of his political party.

However, if the member has taken prior permission, or is condoned by the party within 15 days from such voting or abstention, the member shall not be disqualified.

- o If an independent candidate joins a political party after the election.
- o If a nominated member joins a party six months after he becomes a member of the legislature.

### **91st amendment act of 2003**

□ The total number of ministers including the Prime minister in the central council of ministers shall not exceed 15% of the total strength of the Lok sabha/State legislative assembly. (Article 75,164).

However in states number of ministers shall not be less than 12.

□ A member disqualified under defection is also disqualified for being a minister in house.

□ The member disqualified on the grounds of defection shall also be disqualified for any remunerative political post, office wholly or partially under the government .

□ The provision regarding one third was also deleted by this amendment.

□ Exceptions under the law: Legislators may change their party without the risk of disqualification in certain circumstances. The law allows a **party to merge with or into another party provided that at least two-thirds of its legislators** are in favour of the merger. In such a scenario, neither the members who decide to merge, nor the ones who stay with the original party will face disqualification.

□ The law initially stated that the decision of the Presiding Officer is



not subject to judicial review. This condition was struck down by the Supreme Court in **Kihoto Hollohan case in 1992**, thereby **allowing appeals against the Presiding Officer's decision in the High Court and Supreme Court.**

## **Topic 26: Bharat Stage Emission norms**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Environment***

The Supreme Court recalled its **March 27 order** which allowed **automobile dealers 10 days time**, immediately after lockdown is lifted, **to sell 10 per cent of their stock of BS-IV emission norm-compliant vehicles.**

- ❑ The Bharat Stage emission standards are **standards instituted by the government to regulate the output of air pollutants** from motor vehicles from internal combustion engine equipment, including motor vehicles.
- ❑ India has been **following European (Euro) emission norms, although with a time lag of five years.**
- ❑ The **BS IV norms had been enforced across the country since April 2017.**
- ❑ In 2016, the Centre had announced that the **country would skip the BS-V norms altogether and adopt BS-VI norms by 2020.**
- ❑ Implementation of the intermediate BS-V standard was originally scheduled for 2019.
- ❑ The **main difference in standards between the existing BS-IV**

and the new BS-VI auto fuel norms is the presence of sulphur.

□ The BS-VI fuel is estimated to bring around an 80 per cent reduction of sulphur, from 50 parts per million to 10 ppm. According to analysts, the emission of NO<sub>x</sub> (nitrogen oxides) from diesel cars is also expected to come down by nearly 70 per cent and 25 per cent from cars with petrol engines.

## **Topic 27: State Development Loans and Ways & Means Advance**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Economy***

According to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Tamil Nadu government has so far raised ₹30,500 crore in fiscal 2020-21 and has topped market borrowings among all the States. Tamil Nadu accounted for 17% of the borrowings done through state development loans

The State has issued more long-tenure bonds when compared to other States, and has not tapped short-terms funding avenues like Ways and Means Advances.

### **State development loans**

- State Development Loans (SDLs) are dated securities issued by states for meeting their market borrowings requirements.
- In effect, the SDL are similar to the dated securities issued by the central government.
- Purpose of issuing State Development Loans is to meet the budgetary needs of state governments. Each state can borrow upto a

set limit through State Development Loans.

□ The SDL securities issued by states are **credible collateral for meeting the SLR requirements** of banks as well as **collateral for availing liquidity under the RBI's LAF** including the repo.

### **Ways & means advance**

□ The WMA facility **enables the government to take a temporary short term loan from the central bank**, mainly to address the mismatch between its inflow of revenues and outflow of expenditure.

□ Under **Section 17(5) of RBI Act, 1934**, the RBI provides Ways and Means Advances (WMA) to the States banking with it to help them to **tide over temporary mismatches in the cash flow of their receipts and payments**. Such advances are **repayable in each case not later than three months from the date of making that advance**.

□ There are two types of WMA – normal and special.

□ While **normal WMA are clean advances**, **special WMA are secured advances** provided against the pledge of Government of India dated securities

## **Topic 28: Mongolian Kanjur Manuscripts**

### ***Importance for Prelims: Arts and culture***

The **first set of five volumes of Mongolian Kanjur** published under the **National Mission for Manuscripts** was presented to the

President of India on the occasion of Guru Purnima, also known as Dharma Chakra Day, on 4th July 2020

□ **Mongolian Kanjur, the Buddhist canonical text in 108 volumes** is considered to be the most important religious text in Mongolia.

□ In the Mongolian language '**Kanjur**' means '**Concise Orders**'- the words of Lord Buddha in particular. It is held in **high esteem by the Mongolian Buddhists and they worship the Kanjur** at temples and recite the lines of Kanjur in daily life as a sacred ritual.

□ The Kanjur are kept almost in every monastery in Mongolia. Mongolian Kanjur has been translated from Tibetan. The language of the Kanjur is Classical Mongolian. The Mongolian Kanjur is a **source of providing a cultural identity to Mongolia.**

### **National Mission for Manuscripts**

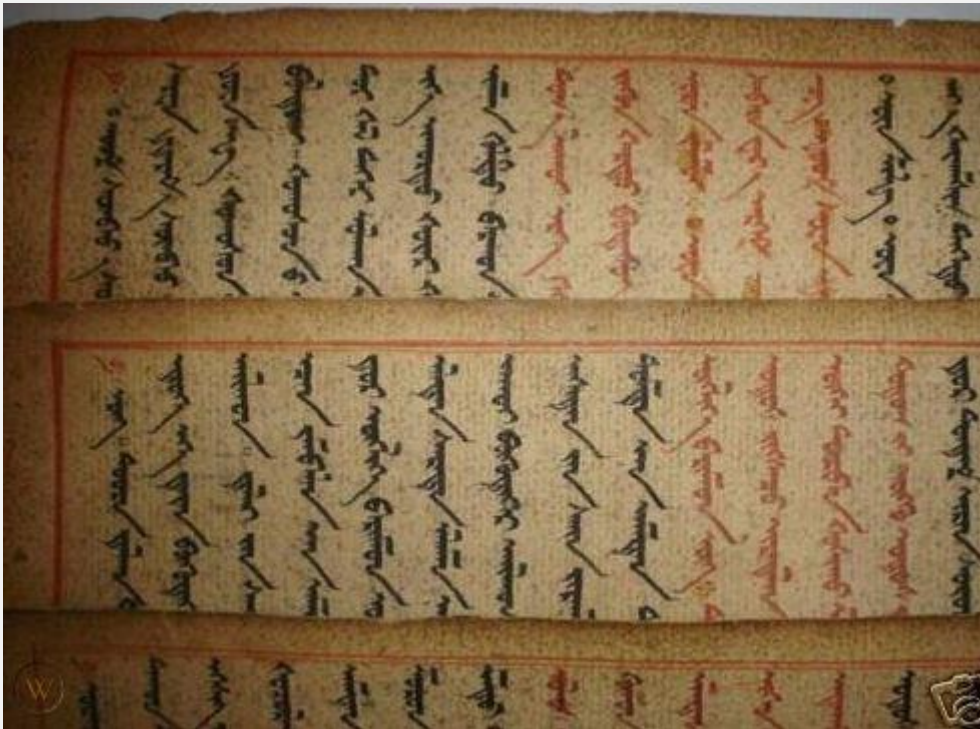
□ The National Mission for Manuscripts was **launched in February 2003** by the Government of India, under the **Ministry of Tourism and Culture**, with the mandate of documenting, conserving and disseminating the knowledge preserved in the manuscripts.

□ A unique project in its programme and mandate, the Mission **seeks to unearth and preserve the vast manuscript wealth of India.** India possesses an estimate of ten million manuscripts, probably the largest collection in the world. These cover a variety of themes, textures and aesthetics, scripts, languages, calligraphies, illuminations and illustrations.

□ The Mission has the mandate of **identifying, documenting, conserving and making accessible the manuscript heritage of**

## India.

□ National Mission for Manuscripts is a National level comprehensive initiative which caters to the need of conserving manuscripts and disseminating knowledge contained therein. NMM is working towards fulfilling its motto, ‘**conserving the past for the future**’.





## Topic 29: Quorum

### *Importance for Prelims: Polity*

Rajya Sabha secretariat has clarified that **quorum was essential only when the committees are taking decisions or adopting reports** and not during routine deliberations.

-Quorum is the minimum number of member required to be present in the House before it can transact any business. It is **One tenth** of total members in each House including **the presiding officer**

## Topic 30: Sessions of Parliament

### *Importance for Prelims: Polity*

The fate of the Monsoon session of Parliament is still uncertain which usually happen in third week of July.

□ The president from time to time summons each House of Parliament to meet. But, the maximum gap between two sessions of Parliament cannot be more than six months. In other words, the **Parliament should meet at least twice a year.**

□ There are usually **three sessions in a year**, viz,

o the Budget Session (February to May)

o the Monsoon Session (July to September)

o the Winter Session (November to December)

□ A session of Parliament is the period spanning between the first



sitting of a House and its prorogation (or dissolution in the case of the Lok Sabha).

- During a session, the House meets every day to transact business. The period spanning between the prorogation of a House and its reassembly in a new session is called recess.

### **Topic 31: Rewa Solar Power Project**

#### ***Importance for Prelims: Environment***

Prime Minister has inaugurated **Asia's largest solar energy plant in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh.**

- India is among the top 5 nations of the world in renewable energy utilization process and this scheme will help farmers become partners in the nation's energy sufficiency project.
- The **750-megawatt ultra-mega solar power plant** touted to reduce the country's emission drastically, by an amount equivalent to 15 lakh tonne of carbon dioxide annually.
- Rewa Solar Project reaffirms India's commitment towards achieving the **target of 175 Gigawatt (GW) installed renewable energy capacity by 2022.**

#### **SOLAR HOTSPOTS IN INDIA**

Top 5 states in terms of capacity

State	Total capacity (in Mw)	Locations
Rajasthan	<b>3,180</b>	Bhadla, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur
Madhya Pradesh	<b>2,750</b>	Rewa, Neemuch, Agar, Mandasaur, Shajapur, Rajgarh, Chhatarpur, Morena
Andhra Pradesh	<b>2,500</b>	Anantpuramu, Kurnool
Karnataka	<b>2,000</b>	Pavagada (Tumakuru)
Telangana	<b>1,000</b>	Gattu (Mehboob Nagar)
Himachal Pradesh	<b>1,000</b>	Spiti Valley

Source: Solar Energy Corporation of India

## Topic 32: ASEEM portal

### *Importance for Prelims: Economy*

Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has launched Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM) portal

□ It will **help skilled people find sustainable livelihood opportunities.**

□ Apart from recruiting a skilled workforce that spurs business competitiveness and economic growth, **the Artificial Intelligence-based platform has been envisioned to strengthen their career pathways** by handholding them through their journeys to attain industryrelevant skills and explore emerging job opportunities especially in the post COVID era.

□ Besides identifying major skills gap in the sectors and providing review of global best practices, ASEEM will provide employers a platform to **assess the availability of skilled workforce and formulate their hiring plans.**

□ Atamanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping (ASEEM) refers to all the data, trends and analytics which describe the workforce market and map demand of skilled workforce to supply. It will provide **real-time granular information** by identifying relevant skilling requirements and employment prospects.

## Topic 33: GOAL initiative

### *Importance for Prelims: Schemes*

Ministry of Tribal Affairs hosted a Webinar along with Facebook India for sensitization of Members of Parliament (MPs) from Scheduled Tribe (ST) Constituencies of India on “Going Online As Leaders (GOAL) Project”

□ **GOAL (Going Online as Leaders)** is an **initiative launched by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA)** in partnership with Facebook India to **digitally skill and empower 5000 youth from tribal communities** to become leaders of tomorrow by leveraging the power of digital technology.

□ GOAL Project is aimed at **identifying and mobilizing 2500 renowned people from industry** (policy makers and influencers), teachers, artists, entrepreneurs, social workers etc. known for their achievements in their domain areas, **to personally mentor tribal youths across India.**

□ Experts in the field of business, education, health, politics, arts and entrepreneurship among others and can **inspire, guide and encourage the tribal youth to become village-level digital young leaders** for their communities.

□ Ministry of Tribal Affairs has partnered with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for leveraging strong network of its Common Service Centres (CSCs).