DHAIRYA TIMES
A quest for Horizon

IPS Preeti Kumari
UPSC-RANK 130,2022

DHAIRYA

Civil Services Society
Bharati College

धैर्य, निष्ठा, अनुशासन

IPS Abhishek Vashistha
UPSC ,2023

DHAIRYA TIMES
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INTRODUCTION

In a world that's constantly evolving, Dhairya Times, a monthly magazine series presented by Dhairya - The Civil Services Society, seeks to be your trusted guide to navigating the crucial trends, headlines, opinions, stories and ideas shaping our lives everyday.

Our missions stands to providing a platform for peer learning, holistic development and an analytical point of views that push our horizons beyond to build a crucial analysis of ongoing issues.

From in-depth features and peer analysis to all the technical information, we dive deep into the topics that are transforming the global landscape, while also forging in as your go-to resource for understanding the forces shaping the world we are a part of.

As a Society , we thrive to assist students in their academic and professional pursuits. To achieve this, we have come across monthly Current Affairs magazine series, starting from October.

We hope the standpoint of Dhairya and Dhairya Times as a whole brings about the desired change in boosting your understanding of facts along with opinions so stated.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

As we reflect on the journey of completing Magazine - *Dhairya Times* for the month of October, we are reminded that every step was made possible by the unwavering support and expertise of our esteemed Principal Ma'am , Prof. Saloni Gupta, whose vision has shaped our society's mission.

Followed by the significant encouragement of our mentor, IRS Rajesh Gupta sir, for his invaluable insights and expertise, inspiring our students to strive for excellence. Our gratitude also extends to our guest speakers, IPS Preeti Kumari and IPS Abhishek Vashishtha, for sharing their experiences and motivating our students.

We thank our Convenor Mr. Vimlok Tiwari, our Associate Teacher's of Dhairya, and Dhairya's Editorial Board Members for their tireless efforts in making our monthly magazine a reality. The due contribution has enabled in shaping this endeavour in ways that words can scarcely capture, providing a valuable resource for Civil Services Aspirants

Sincerely
Prerna Bhute
President
.   Dhairya: The Civil Services Society

Words That Matter

Prof. Saloni Gupta
Principal
Bharati College, University of Delhi

Hello my dear students.

I have always believed that your College is a place where three things are made viz. your career, your personality and your friends for life. Each one of these is very important and each one of you must explore all the avenues and opportunities available, towards each one of these payoffs from the college life.

Societies and clubs are platforms that often provide you with the wonderful confluence, if not congruence, of all three of these goals. They connect you to people with similar interests, they create opportunities for you to work in teams, they put you in positions of responsibility and leadership, they help you evolve as individuals and shape your personalities and, in their own intangible ways, they pave career paths for you by doing some or all of the above.

The Dhairya Society of our college is one such society that brings civil services aspirants of our college together and works towards supporting their goal of cracking this hallowed exam, conducted by the prestigious UPSC. Its a matter of great pride and satisfaction that the Dhairya society is bringing the first ever edition of its monthly magazine, aimed at sharing the vital information, tips and strategic advice for fellow aspirants.

I congratulate the office bearers and foot soldiers of this society and extend my best wishes to all our civil services aspirants.

Best wishes and best of luck.

Words That Matter

IRS Rajesh Gupta

Greetings to the students of Bharati College in general and to the civil services aspirants connected via the platform of the Dhairya Society (Bharati College) in particular. It gives me immense pleasure to note that Dhairya society is doing commendable work in the field of peer learning, information dissemination and mutual self-help. Dhairya Times, its monthly magazine, is another step in that direction. I am glad to convey my congratulations and best wishes to all those who relate to the Dhairya Society and its meaningful endeavours.

I take this opportunity to give my perspective on the Role of Civil Servants, as a kind of a pep-talk to all you aspirants. As I see it, you as civil servants can help in bringing The Change that the society needs and probably the change that you also wish to see in your country, in the governance around you. This is a great platform that allows you to B the change you want to C. It is also an opportunity and a platform to serve the underprivileged masses and under-served sections. So, Being the Voice of the Voiceless is another role that can and should inspire the youth in our colleges towards this exam/job. This job also allows you to become Self-made and Empowered. ANYONE CAN BECOME a civil servant with the right combo of intelligence, diligence, motivation and strategy. So, if you come from humble backgrounds or from a weaker section/gender/class - this is The Job that can empower you and you, in-turn, can empower thousands and lakhs of common people. Be driven by that, be fired by that!

Make no mistakes though, this is a tough exam and so it should be too, for it gets you THE TOP JOBS in the country. But hey, when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. So, tell yourself "I'm willing to suffer today, for a better tomorrow". They say those who sweat in peace, don't have to bleed in war. So, prepare yourselves adequately for this war - with the right arsenal, the right strategy, the right work ethics and the right attitude. This exam is tough, but not as tough as it is often made out to be. Dream big, create commensurate processes, believe in your processes and believe in yourself! If your processes are right, the results are bound to be right - sooner or later, in fact sooner rather than later!

Finally, I'll tell you what a teacher of mine at SRCC, my alma mater, had told everyone in our passing out batch - make sure you get what you like, else you'll have to like what you get.

Best of luck.

Jai Hind!

Words That Matter

IPS Preeti Kumari

In J. R. R. Tolkein's The Lord Of The Rings, when the protagonist Frodo Baggins sets out for Mount Doom, he whispers, "But I do not know the way." He has taken up a monumental goal, unaware of how he can achieve it. He doesn't know the way, yet he steps forward, embracing a journey brimming with challenges he can scarcely foresee.

When I began college at the University of Delhi, I, too, glimpsed my own "Mount Doom," yet I also knew that "I do not know the way." Through the wrong turns and the right ones, along paths crowded or deserted, I navigated my own adventure with the UPSC Civil Services Exam. And an adventure it has been—filled with trials and triumphs, persistence and satisfaction. If you choose Civil Services, I invite you to see it as I have: a challenging adventure, both arduous and exhilarating.

The journey truly begins when you hear that inner voice, that unmistakable call telling you why this goal matters to you. For if your "why" is clear, the "how" will gradually appear, guiding you step by step. That's how it is in life.

College is a time to tune into this inner voice, to find your inner compass. As you navigate independence and adulthood, you'll begin to ask: Are my dreams truly mine, or the echoes of others' expectations? Here, where your interests, talents, and ambitions converge, you'll start discerning what you're truly drawn to. This self-discovery is the most vital gift college can offer.

To fully unravel this path, don't limit yourself to textbooks or UPSC guides alone—that would be a disservice to yourself. You have the intellect to master what's in these books when you will write the exam, but life will demand more from you than academic knowledge. It will call for resilience when the journey gets tough. This is where life skills, patience, and emotional fortitude are essential; they keep you from faltering on steep climbs.

So, as you pursue this dream, equip yourself with skills that will help you excel: think critically, write persuasively, see issues from multiple angles, and learn to engage with people from a space of respect and humility. Let your values align with the Constitution of India, respecting laws and principles that shape our society. You'll need persistence, patience, dedication, and a singular focus to give this journey your best.

College is the perfect arena to build these skills—through extracurriculars, leadership roles, and creative pursuits. Academics alone won't cut it. In every field, what's needed is dynamism, adaptability, and creativity.

Specifically for the exam, I spent my college days reading newspapers, studying the UPSC CSE syllabus, past year questions, and polishing my thinking and writing skills for the exam. I never limited myself to mere academics and was active in extracurriculars as well. Whenever I could, I also participated in essay competitions, honing my writing skills until I began to win. You can do the same; start by summarizing editorials or articles, sharpening both language and thought.

When choosing electives in every semester, consider those connected to the UPSC syllabus—they'll deepen your knowledge. And if certain subjects seem daunting, approach them creatively. If history feels intimidating, pick up one of William Dalrymple's books and discover the wonder within. Remember, this exam demands a grasp of every subject's role in the larger world. A civil servant must know the basics of space technology as well as the richness of ancient Indian history. Embrace the syllabus as a doorway to knowledge, and soon you'll be captivated by the world's it opens for you.

Once you've set foot in this world, there's no turning back. Until then, dream boldly, for college will be among the most transformative years of your life. Pursue your passions, read widely, explore new places with friends, and grow into the best version of yourself.

If you can dream it, you can achieve it. But it will require you to seize each day, or as John Keating urges in Dead Poets Society: "Carpe Diem!"

Words That Matter

IPS Abhishek Vashishtha

Dear Aspirants of Bharti College,

This is Abhishek Vashishtha, IPS, reaching out to commend your dedication to the noble journey of civil services preparation. Remember, success in this path demands discipline, consistency, and a vision to serve our nation. Every challenge you face is an opportunity to grow stronger, and every failure a step closer to success. Stay focused, make your preparation holistic, and never underestimate the power of self-belief. The nation awaits leaders like you to bring about positive change. Wishing you all the very best for your future endeavors. Keep striving and shine bright!

Warm regards,
Abhishek Vashishtha, IPS

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER

SUNDAY
OF INDIA

The Real Day-Night

SURGICAL STRIKE AT DAWN;
BOTH SIDES CLAIM MAJORITY

The Sunday
EXPRESS

EXPRESS NETWORK
POLITICAL DETAINEES PROTEST
IN SRINAGAR MLA HOSTEL
11 CELLPHONES SEIZED IN RAID
PAGE 9

GOVT & POLITICS
200 FLEEING
'HARASSMENT' IN INDIA
HELD IN BANGLADESH:
REPORTS

DRAMATIC TWIST TO GO

HINDU

THE SUND

ASK
PRABHU

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 1, 2024

- **Conflict Spotlight:** Russia's use of thermobaric weapons in Ukraine highlights its powerful military technology.
  (GS Paper II - International Relations)

- **New Schizophrenia Drug:** FDA approves Cobenfy by Bristol Myers Squibb, a breakthrough in mental health treatment.
  (GS Paper II - Health)

- **Evolutionary Insight:** Sea robins' unique "walking" ability sheds light on evolutionary adaptations.
  (GS Paper III - Science and Technology)

- **Tiger Conservation:** Ratapani Sanctuary announced as a new tiger reserve.
  (GS Paper III - Environment and Biodiversity)

October 2, 2024

- **Public Health Achievement:** WHO declares Jordan free of leprosy, marking a significant health milestone.
  (GS Paper II - International Relations & Health)

October 1:
International Day of the Older People, International Coffee Day and World Vegetarian Day

ACHIEVEMENT
Wildlife and Conservation: India's tiger population saw a substantial increase, reported at 3,682 in 2022 from 2,967 in 2018, reflecting successful conservation efforts.

October 2:
Gandhi Jayanti, International Day of Non-Violence and Lal Bahadur Shastri Jayanti.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 2, 2024

- Geological Mystery Unveiled: Lake Michigan's unusual circular formations identified as craters.
  (GS Paper III - Environment)

- Ethanol Milestone: India becomes the world's third-largest ethanol producer and consumer, boosting green energy efforts.
  (GS Paper III - Science and Technology & Environment)

October 3, 2024

- Defense Support: U.S. supplies Taiwan with Harpoon anti-ship missiles, strengthening its coastal defenses.
  (GS Paper II - International Relations)

- Antarctic Wonder: Mount Erebus in Antarctica releases traces of gold dust, sparking scientific curiosity.
  (GS Paper III - Environment)

- Manufacturing Push: DPIIT urges white goods manufacturers to join the PLI scheme to expand domestic production.
  (GS Paper III - Economic Development)

ACHIEVEMENT

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched on 2 October 2014 On October 2, 2024, this initiative has completed 10 years.

October 3: German Unity Day and Navratri

ACHIEVEMENT

Naval and Defense Milestones: Commander Prerna Deosthalee was announced as the first woman officer set to command an Indian naval warship, symbolizing a progressive move towards gender inclusivity within the armed forces.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 4, 2024

- Trade Sanctions: U.S. expands bans on Chinese goods, citing forced labor concerns, heightening trade tensions.
  (GS Paper II - International Relations)

October 5, 2024

- Diplomatic Invitation: Pakistan invites PM Modi to the SCO summit in Islamabad, a significant outreach for regional diplomacy.
  (GS Paper II - International Relations)

October 6, 2024

- Defense Modernization: India plans to replace its aging AN-32 and IL-76 fleets with Medium Transport Aircraft, marking progress in defense capabilities.
  (GS Paper III - Internal Security and Defense)

- Presidential Tour: The President's visit to an island earmarked for multi-million-dollar investments highlights government efforts to boost regional development.
  (GS Paper II - Governance)

**October 4:
World Animal Welfare Day**

**October 5:
World Teachers' Day.
theme of World Teachers' Day 2024 is "Valuing Teacher Voices: Towards a New Social Contract for Education.**

**October 6:
GermanAmerican Day and World Cerebral Palsy Day**

ACHIEVEMENT

Defense Research and Development:
The Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) continued its work on advancing India's defense capabilities, focusing on projects like the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, which is a step toward India becoming self-reliant in defense technology. The DRDO also worked on enhancing missile systems such as Pinaka and Akash, which are crucial for strengthening India's defense infrastructure.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 7, 2024

- **Diplomatic Tensions:** Maldives suspends officials over derogatory comments about PM Modi, reflecting diplomatic sensitivity in South Asia
  (GS Paper II - International Relations)

- **UN Dispute:** Israel's decision to bar the UN Chief raises international diplomatic concerns.
  (GS Paper II - International Relations)

October 8, 2024

- **Health Alert:** The rise in ultra-processed foods is linked to India's growing diabetes crisis, sparking public health concerns.
  (GS Paper II - Health)

- **Power Regulation:** CERC steps in to manage unexpected surges in power demand, underscoring energy regulation challenges.
  (GS Paper III - Economy)

October 9, 2024

- **Industry Challenge:** India's textile industry faces performance issues, highlighting structural challenges within the sector
  (GS Paper III - Economy)

October 7:
World Cotton Day and World Habitat Day
THEME - Cotton for good

October 8,2024:
92nd Raising Day of the Indian Air Force celebrated at Tambaram Air Force Station near Chennai.

ACHIEVEMENT

Diplomatic Achievements: India hosted the 7th Inter-Governmental Consultations with Germany, deepening bilateral cooperation on issues like trade, technology, and climate. This event included signing key agreements, showcasing India's increasing influence in global diplomacy. Throughout October, significant partnerships were strengthened, with highlights like the 7th Inter-Governmental Consultations with Germany .

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 10, 2024

- ASEAN Summit: PM Modi's participation at the ASEAN-India Summit aims to deepen ties with Southeast Asia, boosting regional cooperation
(GS Paper II - International Relation)

- Defense Boost: India clears deals for MQ-9B drones and submarines, strengthening its defense capabilities
(GS Paper III - Internal Security and Defense)

October 11, 2024

- CAA Discussions: MHA evaluates the CAA's impact on minority communities, raising key policy implications
(GS Paper II - Polity)

- Equity Debate: The OBC non-creamy layer income limit ignites discussions on social justice
(GS Paper II - Social Justice)

- Rights Review: Bangladesh explores reforms to improve tribal rights and governance inclusivity.
(GS Paper II - International Relations)

10 October
India celebrates National Postal Day on theme "150 years of enabling communication and empowering peoples across nations."

10 October
World Mental Health The theme of the World Mental Health Day 2024 is "Mental Health at Work."

ACHIEVEMENT

Under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, 'Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card' has been launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 12, 2024

- **Cultural Celebration: Kolkata's Pujo festival showcases India's vibrant cultural identity and heritage.**
  (GS Paper I - Art & Culture)

- **Civil Service Update: Changes in civil service rules prompt debate on enhancing governance efficiency**
  (GS Paper II - Governance)

- **Law and Order Concerns: Case withdrawals spark worries about the impact on public safety and justice.**
  (GS Paper II - Polity)

October 13, 2024

- **J&K Autonomy Debate: Legal discussions address the future of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood.**
  (GS Paper II - Polity)

- **Economic Growth Boost: Maharatna status for PSUs evaluated for its impact on national economic growth**
  (GS Paper III - Economic Development)

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11 October :
International day of girl child
THEME of the year 2024 - 'Girls vision for the future'

ACHIEVEMENT

Cultural Diplomacy at G20: India leveraged its hosting of the G20 to project its cultural richness and leadership on a global stage. Key cultural highlights included showcasing traditional arts and performances, such as Manish Malhotra's fashion display and A.R. Rahman's musical presentation. This diplomacy aimed to strengthen India's global image and foster cooperative ties among G20 nations

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13 October International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction' The theme of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2024 is "Empowering the next generation for a resilient future".

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 13, 2024

- **Space Technology Leap: India advances its space exploration with new research and missions**
  (GS Paper III - Science & Technology)

October 14, 2024

- **Infrastructure Expansion: Gati Shakti Plan aims to accelerate India's infrastructure development across sectors**
  (GS Paper III - Economic Development)

- **Constitutional Tribute: India honors the significance of its Constitution, underscoring democratic values**
  (GS Paper III - Polity)

- **Governance in J&K: Updates in governance structures mark key changes in Jammu and Kashmir's administration**
  (GS Paper III - Governance)

October 15, 2024

- **Water Sustainability: New policies emphasize effective water management for long-term sustainability.**
  (GS Paper III - Environment and Ecology)

ACHIEVEMENT

On October 14, NASA launched its Europa Clipper mission, a major step in exploring Jupiter's icy moon, Europa. This mission, which aims to investigate the potential for life on Europa, will fly by the moon 49 times by 2030. It will study the moon's icy shell, its ocean beneath, and its potential to support life, marking a milestone in planetary exploration

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ACHIEVEMENT

Bilateral Naval Exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr Maritime Exercise (Naseem Al Bahr) between Indian Navy and Royal Navy of Oman was conducted with Royal Navy of Oman Ship Al Seeb off the coast of Goa from 13 to 18 Oct 24.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 15,2024

- **Science Advancements:** Launch of research initiatives bolsters India's scientific progress.
  (GS Paper III - Science and technology)

- **Education Reform Priority:** Education policy recognized as essential for driving national growth and development
  (GS Paper III - Education)

October 16,2024

- **World Food Day Theme Highlights "Right to Food":** Advocates for affordable and nutritious food as essential for a better life.
  (GS Paper II - Social Justice)

- **Groundwater Depletion Worries:** The rising demand for water stresses the need for sustainable water management practices
  (GS Paper III - Environmental conservation)

October 17,2024

- **Chennai Sees Reduced Rainfall:** Changing weather patterns impact the city's water resources.
  (GS Paper 3: Environment)

October 16
'World Anaesthesia Day' 2024: To highlight the vital role of anaesthesia in modern medicine. The theme for World Anaesthesia Day 2024 - Workforce Well-Being

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World Food Day' 2024: October 16.
This day was established by FAO in 1979.
This year World Food Day has been observed under the theme "Right to Foods for a Better Life and a Better Future"

Know More:

India ranked 176th out of 180 countries in the Global Nature Conservation Index (NCI) with a score of 45.5/100.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 17,2024

- G7 Defense Talks: Focus on strengthening regional diplomacy amid global tensions.
(GS Paper 2: International relations)

October 18,2024

- Universal Basic Income Debate in India: Limited support for UBI as a solution to inequality.
(GS paper 2: Social justice)

- Supreme Court Upholds Citizenship for Assam Immigrants: Section 6A of the Citizenship Act confirmed by SC, securing citizenship for eligible immigrants in Assam.
(GS paper 2: Governance)

October 19,2024

- Mission Mausam Launched: Aims to boost climate resilience and improve weather forecasting across India.
(GS Paper 1: Geography and GS Paper II : Governance)

- Char Dham Highway Project Under Scrutiny: Environmental concerns raised about its impact on the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.
(GS paper 3: Environment)

Know More:

Sudarshan Corps of Indian Army is conducting "Swavalamban Shakti Exercise" at Babina Field Firing Range near Jhansi.

ACHIEVEMENT

Space-Based Surveillance (SBS) Mission: India entered the third phase of the SBS Mission, aimed at enhancing space security by monitoring and protecting space assets. The mission's focus is on improving satellite capabilities to track space debris and other threats, ensuring the protection of national and global space assets

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 20,2024

- PM Modi Inaugurates Development Projects in Varanasi: Lays foundation for projects worth ₹6,100 crores, focusing on regional development.
  (GS paper 2: Governance)

October 21,2024

- New 'Lady Justice' Statue Unveiled: Symbolizes equality, inclusivity, and fairness in the justice system.
  (GS paper 2: Social Justice)

- Lighthouse Tourism Initiative: India plans to convert iconic lighthouses into tourist attractions.
  (GS paper 1: Indian heritage and culture)

October 22,2024

- India-China Border Agreement: India finalizes a deal to ease LAC tensions.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

- Slow Progress on 2030 Nature Goals: COP16 begins amid concerns over unmet biodiversity targets.
  (GS paper 3: Economic development)

- RBI Bulletin: India's growth outlook is strong, driven by domestic demand.
  (GS paper 2: Economic Development)

ACHIEVEMENT

Indian Coast Guard has simultaneously launched two Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) ships 'Adamya' and 'Akshar' built by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).

ACHIEVEMENT

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh has laid the foundation stone of the Indian Navy's second Very Low Frequency (VLF) naval station in Vikarabad district of Telangana.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 23,2024

- Modi-Xi Meeting: First in five years, following the LAC agreement.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

- Mission Mausam 'Cloud Chamber': India to build an atmospheric research tool under Mission Mausam.
  (GS paper 3: Environment, Security and Disaster Management)

October 24,2024

- India and China Celebrate Border Pact: Leaders seek to rebuild bilateral ties.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

- Sourcing Kenyan Cheetahs: India to procure cheetahs better suited for local environments.
  (GS paper 3: Environment

October 25,2024

- India-China Final Disengagement Begins: Last friction points at LAC addressed.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

- Cyclone Makes Landfall: Authorities on high alert for disaster management.
  (GS paper 3: Environment)

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24 October
The theme for World Polio Day 2024, "A Global Mission to Reach Every Child,"

ACHIEVEMENT

India-Maldives FinTech Cooperation Prime Minister Modi and President of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu met on 7 October 2024 and comprehensively reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties.

Know More:

Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy launched the PM E-DRIVE Scheme in New Delhi. T

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 25, 2024

- BRICS Supports India on Carbon Tax: Bloc backs India's stance and promotes local currency trade.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

October 26,2024

- •Right to Die with Dignity: SC rulings clarify legal stance on euthanasia.
  (GS paper 2: Social justice and Constitutional law)

- ISRO-DBT Space Research: Agreement to conduct biotech experiments in space.
  (GS paper 3: Science and technology)

- Biodiversity Decline in Protected Areas: Reports show rapid biodiversity loss.
  (GS paper 3: Environment and biodiversity)

October 26,2024

- Pandemic Fund Targets Zoonotic Disease: $25M allocated for zoonotic disease control.
  (GS paper 3: Security and disaster management)

- H5N1 Virus Concerns: Potential threats to humans and cattle.
  (GS paper 3: Environment)

ACHIEVEMENT

Nasa launched the Europa Clipper to search for life on Jupiter and its moon, Europa.

ACHIEVEMENT

India-Germany Ties: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's visit to India from October 24 to 26 marked a significant milestone. This visit, his third in two years, reinforced Germany's focus on India as a strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific and emphasized strong economic ties amid Germany's shifting economic and geopolitical strategies, including distancing from China. Discussions included enhancing military and trade partnerships

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 27,2024

- Cargo Movement Resumes at Bangladesh Border: Trade fully restored.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

October 28,2024

- PM Warns Against 'Digital Arrest' Scam: Rising cyber scam targeting citizens.
  (GS paper 2: Governance and cybersecurity)

- India Ranks Low on Conservation: Criticism as India's conservation index ranks 176.
  (GS paper 3: Environment)

October 29,2024

- MGNREGS Funding Freeze in West Bengal: Rural employment scheme halted.
  (GS paper 3: Economic development)

- Gender Imbalance in Judiciary: Calls for more women representation in courts.
  (GS paper 2: Social justice and judiciary)

- BRICS Summit Success: BRICS adapts to current global realities.
  (GS paper 2: International relations)

Know More:

1. India's first-ever Underwater Metro Tunnel inaugurated in Kolkata (Oct 10, 2024)

2. Ayodhya Airport renamed as Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram Airport (Oct 5, 2024)

3. National Logistics Policy launched (Oct 12, 2024)

4. PM Gati Shakti Master Plan updated (Oct 15, 2024)

Octerber 29,2024: 9th aryuveda day has been celebrated. THEME -Ayurveda innovation for global health.

Monthly News Highlight

Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

October 29,2024

- Soaring Election Costs in India and the U.S.: New data highlights the escalating expenses associated with elections, comparing trends in India and the United States.
  (GS Paper 2: Polity)

October 30,2024

- Health Scheme Expanded for Elderly: Coverage now includes those 70+ without income restrictions.
  (GS Paper 2: Governance and social justice)

- Myanmar Peace Efforts: India joins regional efforts for stability.
  (GS Paper 2: Governance)

- Israel Restricts UNRWA Operations: Ban on UNRWA draws international attention.
  (GS Paper 2: International relations)

October 31,2024

- Core Sector Output Falls: Economic growth concerns intensify.
  (GS Paper 3: Economic development)

- •States Advised on Heat Wave Prep: Assistance recommended for vulnerable populations.
  (GS Paper 3: Disaster management and Climate change adaption)

October 31st Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day): celebrated each year to honor the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the country's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister. Government will run Two-year-long nationwide programme on 150th Anniversary

ACHIEVEMENT

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) has approved the establishment of a new missile testing range in Nagayalanka, Andhra Pradesh.

OCTOBER

WEEKLY DISCUSSION

DHAIRYA

ETHICS OF WAR

INTRODUCTION

"There is nothing that war has ever achieved that we could not better achieve without it. All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding on"
– H. Havelock Ellis

The contemporary time period of ongoing war between Israel and Hamas , Russia and Ukraine, and the civil strife in Sudan highlights the ethical concern of war. Human beings are fighting war since the prehistoric times but after the two major World War everyone understood the consequence and war had taken a set back.
Eventually, the war period began again concerning the ethical and moral perspective of the society.

The Ethics of War the study of what is right or wrong in war, and how to conduct war in a moral way . The Ethics of War starts by assuming that war is a bad thing, and should be avoided if possible, but it recognises that there can be situations when war may be the lesser evil of several bad choices. War ethics also leads to the creation of formal codes of war (e.g. the Hague and Geneva conventions), the drafting and implementation of rules of engagement for soldiers, and in the punishment of soldiers and others for war crimes. It's a complex topic that has been debated by philosophers for centuries.

The Ethical concerns that arise in war :
- Reduction to Right side vs. wrong side
- Punishment and revenge
- Degradation of Human beings
- Individual vs. collective identity

The Ethical Concern to resolve this war:
Western Christianity has three approaches to war in its ethics tool belt:
Pacifism, Just War Theory, and Just Peace-making. Pacifism and Just War Theory are the oldest, most established, and most widely held theories of violence/war. Just Peace-making Theory, which is an extension of pacifism, is a newer approach developed in the late 20th century.

1) Pacifism

Pacifism is a commitment to peace and opposition to war. Pacifism, the principled opposition to war and violence as a means of settling disputes. Pacifism may entail the belief that the waging of war by a state and the participation in war by an individual are absolutely wrong, under any circumstances.

2) Just War of Theory

The most famous way of ethically assessing war is to use 'Just War Theory'; a tradition going back to St. Augustine in the 5th Century and St. Thomas in the 13th Century. Just War theory considers the reasons for going to war (Jus ad bellum) and the conduct of war (Jus in bello). This distinction is important. A war might be ethical but the means unethical, for instance, using landmines, torture, chemicals and current debate is concerned with drones.

ETHICS OF WAR

Just War theory sets out principles for a war to be ethical. The war must :

- Be waged by a legitimate authority (usually interpreted as states)
- Be in a just cause
- Be waged with right intention
- Have a strong probability of success
- Be a last resort
- Be proportional

3) Just Peacemaking Theory

The Just Peacemaking Theory is a framework for resolving conflicts without violence. It was developed by American ethicist and Baptist theologian Glen H. Stassen. Stassen's theory is based on the idea that peace is not a natural state, but rather something that needs to be constructed. He believed that effective practices can reduce and resolve conflicts without violence.

Some practices of Just Peacemaking Theory include:

- Supporting nonviolent direct action.
- Encouraging churches and governments to push for peacemaking initiatives.

Challenges in the implementation of these ethical ideas:

Involvement of Non-State Actors

Terrorist organisations or insurgent groups, are frequently not subject to the same moral and legal restrictions as state actors, and their activities may regularly transgress just war norms.

Ignorance of Distinction principle

Contrary to the concept of discrimination, which calls for a definite separation between combatants and non-combatants, civilians frequently end up as unintentional victims of armed conflicts.

Technological Advancements and the principle of proportionality

The employment of cutting-edge military technology, such precision-guided missiles and drones, presents concerns of discrimination and proportionality.

Limited Global Governance

Treaties, agreements, and international organizations are frequently necessary for the application of just war principles. These mechanisms' efficacy is frequently questioned.

To resolve these challenges:

Strengthening International Cooperation and Institutions

Strengthen and enforce international agreements that govern the conduct of war, such as the Geneva Conventions.

Advocacy for stricter Arms control and disarmament

Limiting the use of weapons that can cause disproportionate harm to civilians.

Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution

Investing in diplomatic and peacebuilding efforts such as addressing the root causes of conflicts, promoting dialogue, and facilitating negotiations

Code of Conduct

On the basis of agreement on war ethics, state armies may be subject to an enforceable code of conduct.

Human rights monitoring

Boost the capacity of human rights monitoring systems to record and communicate abuses that occur during armed situations

ETHICS OF WAR

Write up

The **ethics of war** refers to the moral principles governing the justification and conduct of war. It explores when, why, and how wars can be fought ethically. People have different views on this issue. For **political realists**, war is often about protecting a country's interests and gaining power. As the ancient historian **Thucydides** said, **"The strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must."** This highlights the tough reality that powerful countries may act in their own interest, even if it harms others. On the other hand, **pacifists**, who believe in peace above all, strongly oppose war. **Martin Luther King Jr.** once said, **"Wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows."** meaning that war rarely creates lasting peace and often leads to suffering.

The field is primarily grounded in **just war theory**, which assesses the reasons for war, conduct during war, and post-war responsibilities. It is Rooted in **normative ethics** and it explores how ethical principles guide human behavior in conflict. All the philosophical theories on this topic can more or less fit into three categories:

1. Political Realism
2. Just War Theory
3. Pacifism

Political realism generally known as realism is a school of thinking in the international realtions. Political realism attempts to define and prescribe national interest as the main motive in political relations. The advocates of realism lays a great emphasis on power and security and believe that the international arena is a sort of anarchy in which the main task of the state it to protect the nation and acquire power. According the the realist thinkers the main motive to go for a war is national interest and the huger to acquire more power.

Example: Example of Political realism in the current scenario is **Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.** From a realist perspective, Russia's actions were driven by national interests, such as maintaining control over its region and preventing Ukraine from getting too close to the West, especially NATO. Russia sees NATO's expansion as a threat to its security.

Just War Theory:

Just war theory is a very famous perspective of ethics of war. According to this theory, a war is only justified if it meets certain ethical criteria, such as a just cause (e.g., self-defense), legitimate authority, and proportionality (the damage caused must be balanced by the benefits). **Example:** In the **Israel-Hamas conflict,** Israel's military response to Hamas's attacks can be justified as **self-defense,** However, concerns about **proportionality** and **discrimination** between military and civilian targets have raised ethical questions, especially regarding civilian casualties in Gaza.

Pacifism is a school of thought that argues for peace over violence in international relations. Pacifists believe that conflicts should be resolved through non-violent means like diplomacy, dialogue, and negotiation, rather than through war or force. The central idea is that war only leads to unnecessary sufferings and destructions, and that peaceful solutions are not only morally superior but also more effective in creating lasting stability and cooperation between nations.

Example: The ongoing **peace advocacy in the Israel-Hamas conflict,** where international humanitarian groups and peace activists are calling for a ceasefire and urging both sides to seek diplomatic solutions rather than continued violence. These efforts reflect the pacifist belief that peaceful dialogue is a better approach than warfare for resolving deep-rooted conflicts.

In **Conclusion,** the ethics of war reminds us to not only consider power and national interests during the time of war, but also the impact on humanity and justice. Realists recognizes the moral reality of war by emphasizing on state security and independence as the most important factors for the protection of citizens and the continuity of the political community, while Pacifists urge to find peaceful ways to resolve conflicts. Just war theory offers a middle path, suggesting fair and moral rules for war. As we continue to witness conflicts around the world, it becomes ever more critical to reflect on these ethical perspectives, recognizing that a thoughtful approach to war and peace is essential for creating a more just and secure world.

By Shivya Khanna
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SUO MOTO COGNIZANCE AND WOMEN SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Suo Moto Cognizance is the judiciary's authority to take action on its own in matters of public interest, as empowered by <u>Articles 32 and 226</u> of the Indian Constitution. This allows the Supreme Court and High Courts to address urgent issues impacting fundamental rights and public safety without a formal complaint, a power that is crucial for upholding justice in gender-related cases that may otherwise go unreported.

Importance of Women's Safety:

This judicial power is essential for protecting women's rights, as it enables courts to address cases of gender violence and discrimination proactively, reinforcing public confidence and deterring crime.

Illustrative Cases:

1) Nirbhaya (2012) case, where brutal assault led to public outrage and legal reforms.

2) Kolkata Rape Case where the judiciary took Suo Moto action based on media reports.

3) Kathua Case (2018), which showcased both the positive and negative influence of media, all underscore the impact of Suo Moto actions in transforming public safety and judicial response to women's issues.

Need for Women's Safety:

Women's safety remains a societal priority due to underreporting of violence, delayed justice, media sensationalism, and disparities between urban and rural areas. These issues demonstrate why proactive judicial intervention is essential.

Role of Judiciary in taking Suo Moto Cognizance:

The judiciary exercises Suo Moto powers to ensure justice where systemic failures might prevent it. In cases related to women's safety, where delays or neglect could have life-altering impacts, Suo Moto action becomes crucial. The judiciary's intervention can restore public faith and act as a protective barrier for the vulnerable.

Solutions include fast-track courts for expedited justice, victim assistance programs like "One Stop Centers" for safe reporting, responsible journalism to avoid sensationalism, and awareness campaigns by NGOs and the government to empower women to report incidents.

Conclusion:

Suo Moto Cognizance plays a pivotal role in safeguarding women by allowing the judiciary to act as a vigilant protector of justice. When supported by reforms and public awareness, this approach strengthens society's commitment to ensuring women's safety.

SUO MOTO COGNIZANCE AND WOMEN SAFETY

Write up

Women's safety refers to the protection of women from all forms of harm, violence, and discrimination in various aspects of their lives. It includes safeguarding women from physical, emotional, sexual, and psychological abuse, whether it occurs in the home, in public spaces, or in the workplace.

Suo motu cognizance is a **Latin** term that means **"on its own motion."** It refers to a legal action taken by a court or a judge independently, without a formal complaint or petition being filed by any party. o motu cognizance allows the judiciary to take action Suo incidents or issues related to the rights of women even if no victim or complainant comes forward. This is particularly important in cases where the victim may be unable or unwilling to file a case, either due to fear, societal pressures, or a lack of awareness of their legal rights.

According to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, about 1 in 3 women globally have experienced physical or sexual violence, mostly by an intimate partner, during their lifetime.

Challenges and Limitations:

While suo motu cognizance has been a crucial tool in advancing women's safety, several challenges remain:

- **Limited Awareness:**

Despite the legal provisions, many women are unaware of their rights or the fact that the judiciary can take suo motu cognizance in their cases. This ignorance often leads to underreporting and delays in justice.

- **Judicial Overload:**

Courts in India, particularly at the lower levels, are often overwhelmed with cases, leading to delays in proceedings. Even when the judiciary takes suo motu cognizance, the efficiency of the judicial system can be hampered by the sheer volume of cases.

- **Cultural and Social Barriers:**

In many regions, cultural and social norms prevent women from reporting crimes. Courts taking suo motu cognizance cannot overcome the deeply ingrained societal attitudes that inhibit women from coming forward with their experiences of abuse.

- **Implementation Gaps:**

While judicial intervention may lead to orders or directives, the real challenge lies in the implementation of these orders. Without robust enforcement mechanisms, the effectiveness of suo motu cognizance remains limited.

Way forward:

Laws aimed at enhancing women's security should include provisions for comprehensive anti-violence measures, such as stricter penalties for domestic violence, sexual harassment, and human trafficking, alongside preventive and protective measures like mandatory restraining orders and immediate access to shelters for survivors. Additionally, laws should mandate specialized training for law enforcement to handle gender-based violence sensitively, ensure accessible and anonymous reporting channels, and enforce stricter penalties for offenders. Legal frameworks should also include provisions for workplace safety, education institutions' responsibility to prevent harassment, and public safety initiatives like safe public transport and surveillance in high-risk areas. Lastly, laws should support economic independence for women, ensuring access to legal and financial resources for survivors of violence.

By Tanuja
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BANGLADESH CRISIS

INTRODUCTION

On August 5, the former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, was ousted from her country and power, ending her rule since January 2009. This event was seen as a massive escalation, with what initially started as student's protest and resulted in a major crisis in Bangladesh.

The recent developments which led to the coup in Bangladesh :-

- **Erosion of Democracy:**

The Parliamentary elections in 2014, 2018, and 2024 were controversial and non-participative as they were marred by low turnout, violence, and boycotts by opposition parties.

- **Student protest:**

The peaceful student protest against the freedom fighter reservation of 30% in civil services, galvanized into a nationwide movement due to the Government's heavy-handed approach.Around 130 people have been killed in the student protest clashes against quotas for government jobs in Bangladesh.

The anti-quota protests have come at a time when Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was settling down to power after winning a controversial election in January that gave her an unprecedented fourth consecutive term.

- **Government reaction to protest:**

Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina had termed the protesters who opposed quotas for freedom fighters' families as 'razakars' or traitors who supported the Pakistani military in carrying out large-scale atrocities against men and women in 1971.

This enraged the students who demanded an apology from her and occupied public squares

- **2024 Elections:**

The 2024 elections in Bangladesh were marked by the Opposition's boycott, limited democratic space, erosion of human rights, economic downturn, and high youth unemployment.

- **Rise in Islamic fundamentalism:**

Religious outfits like Hefazat-e-Islam and Jamaat-e-Islami have openly opposed the secular judicial system, calling for a revolution and creation of an Islamic State in Bangladesh under Sharia Law.

The resignation of Sheikh Hasina as Prime Minister of Bangladesh marks a significant turning point in South Asian geopolitics. As she fled the country amid protests and sought refuge in India, the stability of Bangladesh and its relationship with India have come into question.

BANGLADESH CRISIS

Implications of the Bangladesh crisis on India:-

- **Security Challenge**

The Bangladesh crisis comes just three years after President Ashraf Ghani's government fell in Kabul and the Taliban regained control over Afghanistan after about two decades, giving an advantage to Pakistan and causing unease for India.

- **Border management:**

India shares around 4096 km of land border with Bangladesh which is still not completely fenced. This might lead to increase in the incidents of Drug and Arms trafficking,cattle smuggling,cross border terrorism.

- **Rise in Radicalisation and Terrorism:**

India is worried about the possibility of rise in extremism in Bangladesh with Hasina and her Awami League party out of power. Some of the radical organizations in Bangladesh have links with the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT),other terrorist outfits based in Pakistan as well as with the Pakistan Army's spy agency InterServices Intelligence (ISI), which might like to expand its activities in the eastern neighbor of its arch-enemy India.

- **India's access to North East:**

India has extended three lines of credit to Bangladesh since 2016 amounting to $8 billion for the development of road, rail, shipping and port infrastructure. Any disruption in Indo-Bangladesh ties could restrict India's access to northeast, which is connected to mainland India through 'Chicken's Neck' between West Bengal and Assam.

- **Loss of a Trusted Ally:**

India has lost a key partner in Sheikh Hasina, who has been instrumental in countering terrorism and strengthening bilateral relations.

- **Refugee Crisis:**

Due to attacks on minority communities India will be facing a refugee influx from Bangladesh similar to the situation in 1971.

BSF had to send back 1,000 men, mostly Hindus gathered at India-Bangladesh border in Cooch Behar district to enter India.

India's approach to deal with the Bangladesh Crisis:-

- **Support Democracy**

India's explicit support to Muhammad Yunus and the interim government can help restore law & order and protect citizens' rights, including minorities, in Bangladesh

- **Support to Minorities**

India should continue advocating for minority rights but avoid focusing exclusively on the Hindu minority.

- **Enhancing Security Measures**

India should bolster its security measures along the border and in areas with significant Bangladeshi expatriate populations to address potential spillover effects and maintain stability.

- **Long-Term Strategy**

Long-Term Strategy of India should include patient and empathetic approach.India should reaffirm with its Act East Policy.

BANGLADESH CRISIS AND IT'S IMPLICATIONS ON INDIA

Write up

Why In News?A Glance -

From death of 130 students protesting to a Coup and a rule of the longest era.

Initially started with a student's protest and gradually escalated into a crisis, here is a glance at why the issue stands where it does.

On August 5, 2024, the former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina who has remained in the office ever since January 2009 followed by consecutive terms in 2014 and 2018, was banished from Bangladesh. The protest turned into a major 'Civil Movement.'

Historical Backdrop -

Bangladesh which was formerly East Pakistan, sought to seek independence as a sovereign state from Pakistan due to the political domination from West Pakistan. Their stagnation and marginalisation despite greater population of their region compelled the taken step in December 1971. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the face of Awami league, was a popular leader who rose to public support in 1970 elections,was also the protestant against West Pakistan domination and the voice of atrocities faced, managed to be the first Prime Minister of the independent state (later assassinated in 1975).

Analysis of the crisis!

To analyse the juncture of the crisis, we need to first delve deep into the quota system which is the reason for the said agitation. There have been reforms in Quota System of Bangladesh, ever since 2018 due to widespread criticism among the masses regarding the basis of employment as Merit and not quotas as the latter stands beneficiary particularly for the lineage of freedom fighters.

The quota reforms were made to counter the issue time and again and in the ruling of Supreme Court in 2024, the decisions made earlier on increasing quotas stands reversed. The merit basis stands at 93%. Ruling curtailed number of reserved jobs from 56% to all positions to 7% but fell short of meeting the demand of protestants.

The "freedom fighter" category in particular is a point of resentment for young graduates, with critics saying it is used to stack public jobs with loyalists to Ms. Hasina's ruling Awami League and she has been blamed for manipulating the judiciary.

It's impact on Indo - Bangla relations -

What are its implications on India? The coup which brought an interim government to say, does have an impact on Indo - Bangla relations. The political flux in our neighbourhood might have costed us to lose a trusted ally. EAM S. Jaishankar, spoke in the Rajya Sabha 'request made by Sheikh Hasina to come to India on a short notice.' Such a conditions might create western criticism and agitation of hostility among Bangladeshi public for India.

India shares a border of 4096. 7 km long with Bangladesh which could be a concern incase of the crisis situation intriguing Internal Security of India. Humanitarian concerns regarding the minority 'hindu population' of Bangladesh stands firm.

The management of 54 shared rivers between Bangladesh and India could turn the tables with the situation worsening the Treaty bounds made so far. Political ties that keep the two nations bound for a long time ever since 1971 might restrain with the coming of new government.

Way forward and Critical Analysis -

Henceforth, the crisis in any of our neighbours certainly has it's severe implications on India. India which is the Big Brother in South Asia has to strike its balance among its neighbours to serve the position right while upkeeping it's dominance in the South Asian Region.

Policies like Look East Policy, Ganga Waters Treaty, The Kushiyara River Treaty, Neighbourhood first policy, Gujral Doctrine have been some of the major efforts to maintain as a political ally to Bangladesh which seems as endangered due to the crisis.

India must restore the required trust, political ties with least intervention. India's critics, Pakistan and China, might eye escalate disputes with our neighbour following the situation as of now and flee of former PM Sheikh Hasina to India. The diplomatic stand of India is one such aspect that could help deal in better ways with the ongoing trend of change in government.

Regardless, India needs to quickly accept and adapt to the fluid situation that continues to emerge in the neighborhood. As C. Raja Mohan says, 'India will need enormous strategic patience, faith in the logic of geography, belief in the centrality of commerce, and a strong political commitment to transcend the partition pathologies in building relations with a changing Bangladesh.' (citation)

AT a glance -

- India - Pakistan war of 1971 (in the wake of Bangladesh Liberation forces by India)
- India at first recognised Bangladesh - sovereign state
- Gujral Doctrine - 1996-97

By Aryama Sharma
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CLIMATE CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

Definition of Climate Change:

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns, primarily driven by human activities, especially fossil fuel burning, which increases greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere.

Major Event of Climate Change in 2024:

In 2024, various regions faced extreme climate events, including wildfires in Canada and droughts in parts of Africa, both fueled by rising global temperatures and changing weather patterns.

Effects of Climate Change on Society:

•Overall Society: Impacts include more frequent natural disasters, economic losses due to extreme weather, and increased strain on resources like water and food.
•Men: Job insecurity in sectors like agriculture and construction, where work is often affected by unpredictable weather and temperature rises.
•Women: Increased health and safety risks, especially in low-income regions where resources are limited and climate impacts strain already stretched family roles.
•Children: Health vulnerabilities from malnutrition and respiratory diseases linked to pollution and climate-induced food shortages.

Important Agreements on Climate Change (List):

•Paris Agreement
•Kyoto Protocol
•European Union's Green Deal
•National Action Plan on Climate Change (India)
•Global Climate Justice Movement (Inclusive development-focused)

Solutions to Climate Change:

•International Level: Global initiatives like the European Union's Green Deal aim for carbon neutrality through renewable energy and ecosystem preservation. COP meetings encourage nations to limit global warming to 1.5°C.
•National Level: Countries such as India implement National Action Plans promoting sustainable practices, including agriculture and water conservation.
•Individual Level: Individuals contribute through lifestyle changes, such as reducing energy use, supporting renewable sources, and minimizing waste.

Positive Impacts of Climate Change:

•Longer growing seasons in cooler regions, benefitting agriculture.
•Increased investments in green technologies, creating jobs.
•Economic opportunities in renewable energy sectors, fostering sustainable development.

Way Forward/Conclusion:

•Strengthen global cooperation to address climate change collectively.
•Implement robust policies at national and international levels for meaningful action.
•Encourage individual responsibility through lifestyle changes and awareness.
•Foster inclusive strategies to ensure that all societal groups, especially vulnerable ones, benefit.
•Promote sustainable development that balances growth with environmental preservation.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Write up

Fossil fuel emissions have increased to an all-time high, the 3 hottest days ever occurred in July of 2024. Summer was the hottest ever , with an enormous amount of 'plastic pollution' . Human activities are causing world temperatures to rise, with more intense heatwaves and rising sea-levels among the consequences.

Things are likely to worsen in the coming decades, but scientists argue urgent action can still limit the worst effects of climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is affecting everyone everywhere. Extreme weather events are more frequent and intense, sea levels are rising and many species are being driven to extinction.

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Such shifts can be natural, due to changes in the sun's activity or large volcanic eruptions. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

Burning fossil fuels generate greenhouse gas emissions that act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth, trapping the sun's heat and raising temperatures.

Fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas – are by far the largest contributors to global climate change, accounting for over 75 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions and nearly 90 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions.

Causes of Climate Change

- Generating electricity and heat by burning fossil fuels causes a large chunk of global emissions.

- Manufacturing and industry produce emissions, mostly from burning fossil fuels to produce energy.

- Cutting down forests to create farms or pastures, or for other reasons, causes emissions, since trees, when they are cut, release the carbon they have been storing.

- Transportation a major contributor of greenhouse gases, especially carbon-dioxide emissions.

- Producing food causes emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and other greenhouse gases in various ways, including through deforestation , etc.

IThe wealthiest bear the greatest responsibility: the richest 1 per cent of the global population combined ,account for more greenhouse gas emissions than the poorest 50 per cent.

Effects of Climate Change

Hotter temperatures
- As greenhouse gas concentrations rise, so does the global surface temperature. The last decade, 2011-2020, is the warmest on record.

More severe storms
- Destructive storms have become more intense and more frequent in many regions.

Increased drought
- Climate change is changing water availability, making it scarcer in more regions.

A warming, rising ocean

The ocean soaks up most of the heat from global warming.As the ocean warms, its volume increases since water expands as it gets warmer. The ocean absorbs carbon dioxide, keeping it from the atmosphere. But more carbon dioxide makes the ocean more acidic, which endangers marine life and coral reefs.

Loss of species

Climate change poses risks to the survival of species on land and in the ocean. These risks increase as temperatures climb.

Not enough food

Changes in the climate and increase in extreme weather events are among the reasons behind a global rise in hunger and poor nutrition.

More health risks

Climate change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity. Climate impacts are already harming health, through air pollution, disease, extreme weather events, forced displacement, pressures on mental health, and increased hunger and poor nutrition.

Poverty and displacement

Climate change increases the factors that put and keep people in poverty. Floods may sweep away urban slums, destroying homes and livelihoods.

Way forward - To mitigate climate change

Initiatives for Action
The United Nations, governments, businesses and civil society are connecting in climate initiatives to speed up the pace of climate action.

Sustainable Development Goals
The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 is "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts". It's linked to all 16 other goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Climate change is happening faster than expected and threatens life on Earth. We must act now to limit warming and avoid the worst impacts.

By Prerna Bhute
President
Dhairya - **The Civil Services Society**

Focus of the month

ELECTORAL SHOWDOWN IN HARYANA AND J&K

Haryana State Election

The election in Haryana took place in October 2024, and the results were announced shortly after. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) formed the government in the state, with Manohar Lal Khattar being sworn in as the Chief Minister for a third consecutive term.

Jammu & Kashmir's first State Election post abrogation of Article 370

The Jammu & Kashmir election was a significant event, given the region's complex history and politics. The election was held in multiple phases, with the results being announced in November 2024. The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) won the majority of the seats, and Omar Abdullah was sworn in as the Chief Minister.

Why J&K Election Need to be Discussed?

The Jammu & Kashmir elections were crucial for several reasons, one of which is abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, which abrogated the special status given to Jammu & Kashmir. The election was seen as a test of the BJP's decision to revoke Article 370 and its impact on the region's politics.

Article 370 and Citizen Participation Rate

Article 370 was a constitutional provision that granted special status to Jammu & Kashmir, allowing the state to have its own constitution, flag, and laws. The revocation of Article 370 was a highly contentious issue, with some arguing that it was necessary to integrate Jammu & Kashmir into the rest of India, while others saw it as an attack on the region's autonomy.

Voter Turnout

The citizen participation rate in the Jammu & Kashmir election was significant, with over 60% of the eligible voters casting their ballots. This was seen as a positive sign for democracy in the region, despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the security situation in the region .

In nutshell:
Jammu & Kashmir and Haryana will depend on the policies and actions of the newly elected governments. In Jammu & Kashmir, the PAGD government will need to address the challenges posed by the revocation of Article 370, as well as the region's economic and security concerns. In Haryana, the BJP government will need to build on its previous achievements and address the state's development challenges.

GS Paper II
- **Governance**
- **Constitution**
- **Polity**
- **International Relations**

Focus of the month

MIDDLE EAST CRISIS ESCALATES: TENSIONS SOAR AS CONFLICT INTENSIFIES ACROSS THE REGION

Middle East Historical Background

The Middle East has a complex history, with various empires and civilizations rising and falling over the centuries. The region has been shaped by Islamic conquests, Ottoman rule, and colonialism, leading to the modern-day geopolitical landscape.

Middle East countries-

The term "Middle East" generally refers to a region that spans parts of Western Asia and Northern Africa. The countries commonly included are:

Western Asia: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, and Yemen.
North Africa: Egypt is often included as part of the Middle East due to its geographical and cultural ties.

Conflict between countries

Israel and Gaza (Palestine): Fighting between Israel and Hamas in Gaza has flared up multiple times, with recent escalations resulting in significant casualties and international concern.

Reason for Current Tensions

The current tensions in the Middle East stem from a combination of factors, including regional rivalries, sectarian divisions, and external interventions. The conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated these tensions, with the region's countries taking varying positions on the issue.

October Highlight

In October 2024, the United Nations General Assembly convened for its 78th session, focusing on rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity. The assembly addressed pressing issues, including the Ukraine conflict, climate change, and sustainable development.

Key Outcomes:

- Reaffirmation of commitment to the UN Charter and multilateralism
- Renewed focus on sustainable development and climate action
- Enhanced cooperation on counter-terrorism and peacekeeping.

Role of UN

The United Nations plays a vital role in promoting peace, security, and cooperation in the Middle East. The organization:

Key Initiatives:

- Promoting dialogue among regional stakeholders
- Supporting peace processes in countries like Syria and Yemen
- Providing humanitarian aid to affected populations

Role of India

India has been actively engaged in Middle Eastern affairs, pursuing diplomatic and economic ties with regional countries. India's priorities include:

- Enhancing energy security through diversified imports
- Promoting trade and investment opportunities
- Fostering people-to-people exchanges through cultural initiatives

GS Paper II

- International relations and diplomacy
- Global governance and multilateralism
- India's foreign policy and national interests

Focus of the month

SC UPHOLDS ASSAM ACCORD'S 1971 CITIZENSHIP CUT-OFF :-

Why in the News?

The Assam Accord has been making headlines recently due to the Supreme Court's ruling on Section 6A of the Citizenship Act. This section grants citizenship to Bangladeshi immigrants who entered Assam before 1971, a significant aspect of the Accord's provisions.

What is the Assam Accord?

The Assam Accord is a landmark agreement signed in 1985 between the Indian government and the All Assam Students' Union (AASU). It aimed to address the concerns of Assamese people regarding the influx of Bangladeshi migrants and to protect the cultural, social, and linguistic identity of Assam.

Historical Significance:

The Assam Accord is historically significant as it marked the end of a six-year-long anti-foreigner movement in Assam. The agitation, primarily led by AASU and other Assamese groups.

Contemporary Relevance:

The Accord remains relevant today, as issues around citizenship, immigration, and identity continue to shape Assam's political and social landscape.

Assam Government's Stance:

The Assam government, in line with the recommendations of the Justice Biplab Sharma Committee, has adopted 1951 as the cut-off year for defining "Assamese" under the Assam Accord. This stance reflects the government's effort to prioritize the cultural protection of indigenous Assamese communities. The shift aims to implement certain provisions of the Accord that restrict access to benefits and rights exclusively to those who can prove Assamese identity prior to 1951, while still following the Accord's 1971 cut-off for citizenship.

Supreme Court's Ruling:

The Supreme Court has upheld the validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, thereby recognizing the Assam Accord and allowing citizenship for Bangladeshi immigrants who entered Assam before 1971.

Conclusion:

The Assam Accord remains a central issue in Indian politics, reflecting both the challenges of migration and the efforts to protect indigenous rights in Assam. The recent Supreme Court ruling and Assam government's decisions will likely shape the future of citizenship and identity policies in the region.

GS Paper II
- Governance
- Constitution
- Polity
- Social Justice
- International Relations

Focus of the month

SCO: A NEW ERA OF EURASIAN COOPERATION

What is SCO?
The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional organization comprising eight member states: China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Purpose
The primary purpose of SCO is to promote economic cooperation, regional security, and multilateralism among its member states, fostering a stable and secure Eurasian region.

SCO 2024
The 2024 SCO Summit was held in:
- July – Astana, Kazakhstan
- October – Islamabad, Pakistan

Outcomes of SCO 2024
- Belarus becoming a full member
- Adoption of the Economic Development Strategy of the SCO region until 2030
- Launch of cooperation programs in 15 economic sectors
- Strengthened partnerships with the UN and international organizations

Role in International Relations
- Security cooperation, combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism
- Economic integration, fostering trade and investment among member states
- Multilateralism, promoting cooperation on global issues

Recent Developments
The 2024 SCO Summit in Astana marked the organization's expansion, with Belarus becoming a full member. SCO has also:

- Adopted the Economic Development Strategy of the SCO region until 2030
- Launched cooperation programs in 15 economic sectors
- Strengthened partnerships with the UN and international organizations

India's Stand on SCO
- Regional security, addressing terrorism and instability
- Economic growth, through increased trade and investment
- Global governance reform, promoting Indian interests and perspectives

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

Challenges Ahead
- Internal conflicts, particularly between India and Pakistan
- External pressures, including US sanctions and trade tensions
- Economic competition, among member states

Conclusion
As SCO continues to evolve, its role in international relations will remain significant. By addressing internal challenges and leveraging collective strengths, SCO can emerge as a powerful force for Eurasian cooperation and global governance.

GS Paper III
- International organizations and their roles
- Global governance and economic development
- India's foreign policy and international relations

Focus of the month

WORLD FOOD DAY AND THE GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX: UNDERSTANDING INDIA'S PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

World Food Day

- October 16th _ marks World Food Day, a global awareness campaign to combat hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity. The theme for this year's World Food Day was "Right to Food," highlighting the importance of ensuring access to nutritious food for all. In this context, the Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a critical tool that measures and tracks hunger globally.
- World Food Day and the Global Hunger Index are closely interconnected, with both focusing on the critical issue of hunger and malnutrition worldwide.

Why World Food Day?

World Food Day is celebrated on October 16th every year to promote global awareness and action against hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity. The day was designated by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1979 to highlight the need for healthy diets for all.

What is the Global Hunger Index?

The GHI is a peer-reviewed annual publication that ranks countries based on their hunger levels, using indicators such as undernourishment, child wasting, child stunting, and child mortality. The index scores range from 0 (low hunger) to 100 (extremely alarming hunger).

Why Celebrate on an International Level?

World Food Day is celebrated internationally to raise awareness about the pressing issue of hunger and malnutrition, which affects millions of people worldwide. The day serves as a call to action, encouraging governments, organizations, and individuals to work together to ensure everyone has access to nutritious food

India's Rank in the Global Hunger Index

Unfortunately, India ranks poorly in the GHI, with a score of 29.1, placing it in the "serious" hunger category. This is due to high levels of child wasting and stunting, as well as undernourishment

Challenges

- Child Malnutrition: High levels of child wasting and stunting persist, particularly in rural areas.
- Food Insecurity: Limited access to nutritious food, exacerbated by poverty and inequality.
- Climate Change: Rising temperatures and changing weather patterns impact agricultural productivity.

India's Policies for combating the hunger

- **National Food Security Act:** Implemented in 2013 to ensure access to food for vulnerable populations.
- **Mid-Day Meal Scheme:** Provides nutritious meals to school-going children.
- **Agricultural Reforms:** Aimed at improving agricultural productivity and farmers' income

Policy Recommendations

- Sustainable Agriculture: Promote climate-resilient agriculture practices.
- Food Distribution: Improve food distribution networks to reduce waste.
- Social Protection: Implement policies ensuring food access for vulnerable populations.
- Nutrition Education: Educate people on nutritious food choices

GS Paper III

- **Disaster Management**
- **Environmental Conservation**

Focus of the month

INDIA-CHINA DISENGAGEMENT: PROGRESS ON THE GROUND, DOUBTS IN THE AIR

India–China Relations

India and China, two major Asian powers, share a complex relationship marked by cooperation and competition. Geographically, they share a 3,488 km-long border, which has been a persistent source of tension. Economically, both are significant global players and share a robust trade relationship, but imbalances often cause disputes. Politically, they hold influence in various international forums but frequently have opposing interests, impacting bilateral ties.

Historical Background

The roots of the India–China conflict trace back to the 1962 war, which erupted over disputed border territories. The unresolved demarcation of boundaries, particularly in the Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh regions, has fueled distrust. The war left a legacy of mutual suspicion, deepening hostilities that have shaped their geopolitical narratives.

Contemporary Period

In recent decades, both nations have pursued a pragmatic relationship characterized by trade and high-level dialogues. However, tensions flared significantly during the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, where 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops lost their lives. This marked the most severe confrontation in decades. Since then, repeated military standoffs in Ladakh and other border regions have underscored the fragile peace.

Factors Responsible for Hostile Relationship

- Border Disputes: Unresolved Line of Actual Control (LAC) issues lead to recurring military standoffs.

- Geopolitical Rivalry: Competing interests in South Asia and the Indian Ocean, where China's influence via the Belt and Road Initiative challenges India's strategic positioning.

- Economic Competition: China's trade practices have led to significant deficits for India, creating economic friction.

- Alliances and Global Standing: India's participation in groups like the Quad (with the U.S., Japan, and Australia) is perceived by China as an attempt to contain its regional power.

- Recent developments on India - China Disengagement along the line of LAC

- Verified Disengagement: Both India and China have mutually agreed on and verified disengagement from five friction points, including Galwan Valley, Pangong Tso, and Gogra–Hot Springs.

Why Disengagement Was Important?

- Avoiding Escalation: Continued military build-up could lead to unintended conflict, detrimental for both countries, especially considering their nuclear capabilities.

- Regional Stability: Sustained tension impacts not just bilateral relations but also the security architecture of South Asia.

- Economic Ramifications: Persistent hostilities could hinder trade ties, further straining economic growth amid global uncertainties.

- Diplomatic Image: Peaceful disengagement enhances both nations' credibility as responsible global actors committed to dialogue and stability.

Conclusion

To maintain peace, India and China must enhance engagement rules, establish stronger buffer zones, and improve communication between top brass. Strategic competition complicates a comprehensive border agreement, making high-level dialogue essential.

GS Paper II
- Governance
- Constitution
- Polity
- Social Justice
- International relations

Focus of the month

CYCLONE DANA THREATENS COASTAL REGIONS: WARNINGS ISSUED AS STORM INTENSIFIES

What Exactly is a Cyclone?

A cyclone is a powerful storm that rotates around a low-pressure center, fueled by warm ocean water. These systems are marked by strong winds and heavy rains, forming over warm seas near the equator.

Cyclonic Storm Dana

Cyclonic Storm Dana was a tropical cyclone that formed in the Bay of Bengal in October 2024. Due to favorable atmospheric and oceanic conditions, the storm rapidly intensified and moved towards the northeastern coast of India, affecting states like Odisha and West Bengal. Cyclone Dana was closely monitored by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) and international meteorological agencies.

How Did Cyclonic Storm Dana Form and Where Did It Travel?

- Formation Location: Cyclone Dana developed in the central Bay of Bengal, a region highly conducive to cyclone formation.
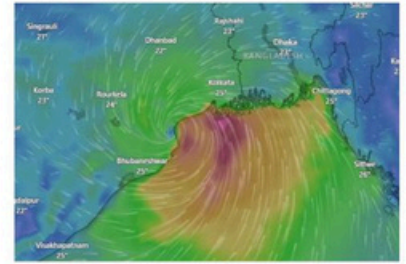
Key Factors Leading to Formation:

- Warm Sea Temperatures: With water temperatures above 28°C, the Bay provided significant heat energy.
- Low Atmospheric Pressure: Low pressure allowed moist air to rise and condense, building storm clouds.
- Favorable Wind Shear: Consistent wind speed and direction at different heights helped the cyclone organize.
- Pre-existing Disturbances: Atmospheric instability set the stage for Dana's development
- Path: Cyclone Dana moved northeast, making landfall in Odisha and West Bengal, bringing heavy rains, floods, and strong winds.

What are the Impacts of Cyclonic Storm Dana?

- Social: Mass evacuations, property loss, and service disruptions like water, power, and transportation affected thousands.
- Geographical: Coastal erosion and alterations to local water bodies.
- Economic: Damaged crops, infrastructure, and livelihoods, especially in agriculture and fishing.
- Environmental: Uprooted trees, water contamination, and stress on coastal ecosystems like mangroves.

How is India Preparing for Future Cyclones?

- Improved Early Warning Systems: Utilizing advanced meteorological technology to offer timely, accurate alerts.
- Resilient Infrastructure: Constructing cyclone-resistant buildings, reinforcing infrastructure, and ensuring critical facilities can withstand extreme weather.
- Efficient Evacuation Routes: Developing better evacuation plans, more shelters, and faster transportation to safer areas during emergencies.
- Community Awareness and Education: Conducting widespread disaster preparedness programs to ensure communities know how to respond in emergencies

GS Paper III
- **Disaster Management**
- **Environmental Conservation**
- **Economic Development**

Focus of the month

16TH BRICS SUMMIT: GLOBAL LEADERS CONVENE TO STRENGTHEN MULTILATERAL COOPERATION AND ADDRESS KEY CHALLENGES

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) is a game-changer in global economics and politics. Formed to promote economic cooperation, global governance reform, and multipolarity, BRICS represents 30% of the world's land surface and 45% of the global population, making it a significant economic force.

KAZAN BRICS SUMMIT

- The 2024 BRICS Summit welcomed Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, United Arab Emirates, and invited Saudi Arabia.
- The 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, focused on:

1. Strengthening Multilateralism
2. BRICS Pay payment system
3. Economic Cooperation and trade
4. Sustainable Development and climate action
5. Regional and Global Security Challenges

Key Reasons for BRICS' Importance

- Global Economic Influence: Collective economic strength
- Multipolar World Order: Reducing dependence on Western-dominated institutions
- South-South Cooperation: Fostering cooperation among developing countries

Outcome of BRICS Summit

- The summit resulted in the Kazan Declaration.
- Establishment of the BRICS Development Bank's regional office
- Agreements on energy, agriculture, and technology cooperation.

BRICS plays a crucial role in:

- Global Governance Reform
- South-South Cooperation
- Counterbalancing Western Influence

India's Stand and Challenges Ahead

India emphasized enhanced cooperation in trade, investment, people-to-people exchanges, counter-terrorism, and cybersecurity. BRICS faces internal divisions, external pressures, and economic disparities.

Conclusion

The 2024 BRICS Summit marked significant expansion and renewed commitment to global cooperation, with India playing a key role in shaping the organization's future.

GS Paper II
- International Relations and Diplomacy

GS Paper III
- Economic Development and Global Governance

EDITORIAL SECTION »»»»»»»

Regional Economic Disparities in India

General Studies-3; Topic: Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment.

Introduction:
- The report 'Relative Economic Performance of Indian States (1960-61 to 2023-24)', published by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), examines the economic contributions of Indian states, focusing on their share in national income and per capita income relative to the all-India average.
- Findings highlight significant regional disparities, with wealthier western and southern states outperforming northern and eastern states.

Key Insights
- Contribution and Inequality:
  - States like Maharashtra, which are major economic contributors, display sharp internal inequalities.
  - For instance, while Mumbai contributes substantial tax revenue, the Vidarbha region grapples with rural poverty and agricultural distress.
  - The disparity within states reflects larger nationwide economic divides and hints at policy and resource allocation imbalances.
- Regional Differentials:
  - Southern and western states consistently outperformed the rest of India, driven by higher private investment and better infrastructure.
  - Eastern states lag behind due to lower investment rates, weaker infrastructure, and limited access to international markets.
  - Northern states, with a few exceptions (Haryana, Delhi), also show weak economic performance.
- Impact of Liberalization:
  - The report suggests that the 1991 economic liberalization marked a shift, particularly benefiting southern states, which adapted quickly to market-oriented reforms.
  - Coastal and urbanized regions gained due to easier access to export markets and higher private sector investment, leaving hinterland states with fewer resources.
- Investment Disparities:
  - Investment disparities are pronounced; wealthier states attract more private investments, driven by better infrastructure and governance.
  - Private investment, being profit-oriented, gravitates towards developed states with established markets and urban centers (e.g., Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai).
  - Underdeveloped states face a shortfall in investment, both public and private, due to unfavorable infrastructure and perceived higher risks, leading to a widening economic gap.
  - The public sector's diminishing role in driving investments post-liberalization has accentuated these divides, with resource allocation favoring economically viable states and urban centers.
- Urban Agglomerations and Economic Magnetism
  - Metropolitan hubs like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad have become magnets for investment, technology, and talent, resulting in concentrated wealth and infrastructure development.
  - Proximity to these urban hubs influences neighboring states (e.g., Haryana, Tamil Nadu) with economic spillover effects, whereas states without such agglomerations experience slower growth.

- Infrastructure and Governance:
  - The availability of quality infrastructure and good governance significantly impacts investment attraction. Developed states offer better governance, contributing to sustained economic growth.
  - In contrast, underdeveloped states with weaker governance and limited infrastructure struggle to attract meaningful investments, limiting economic opportunities.
- Policy Bias and Regional Imbalances:
  - The report hints at policy biases favoring already developed regions, with the market-driven economy after 1991 accelerating investment in profitable areas.
  - Cronyism, along with black economy activities, hampers investment in underdeveloped states, affecting the overall investment climate and growth potential.

Threats to Federalism
- Growing economic divides are raising tensions within India's federal structure, with wealthier states questioning their share of resources from the Centre.
- Federalism faces challenges as states with higher contributions to the national economy demand fairer resource allocations, arguing against the disproportionate return they receive from central tax redistribution.

Recommendations for Reducing Disparities
- Improving Governance and Infrastructure in underdeveloped States:
  - States must enhance governance quality and reduce corruption, which affects public perception and attracts private investment.
  - Investment in social infrastructure, such as education, health, and basic amenities, is essential to improve productivity and attract business ventures.
- Focusing on Unorganized Sectors:
  - The unorganized sector, especially significant in underdeveloped states, needs support through policies that encourage income growth, improving local demand.
  - By stimulating demand in these regions, private investment may naturally flow into underserved states, thereby reducing disparities.
- Shifting Economic Focus:
  - A shift in economic focus from solely market-driven organized sector growth to include the unorganized sector could help raise incomes for marginalized groups.
  - By fostering development from below, India could reduce disparities without hampering the growth of wealthier states.
- Balanced Development for Federal Stability:
  - Addressing regional economic disparities is crucial for a balanced federal structure and long-term unity.
  - Policies should ensure that the developed states continue growing while the underdeveloped states catch up, thereby strengthening India's federal fabric and fostering national cohesion.

Conclusion
- The report calls for a policy overhaul that supports the unorganized sector, improves infrastructure, and promotes inclusive development across all states.
- Addressing these disparities would not only boost economic growth nationwide but also strengthen the spirit of federalism, ensuring equitable development and fostering unity in diversity.

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION >>>>>>>>

India's Nuclear Energy Expansion: Multiple Dimensions

General Studies-3; Topic: Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

Introduction
- In July 2024, the Government of India, while presenting the Union Budget FY 2024–25, announced plans to expand India's nuclear energy sector.
- Proposed partnerships with the private sector for the development of Bharat Small Reactors (BSR) and Bharat Small Modular Reactors (BSMR).
- This move is part of India's broader goal of achieving 500 Gigawatts (GW) of non-fossil fuel-based energy by 2030, pledged at the COP26 Summit.
- Strengthening nuclear energy infrastructure is critical for India's commitment to decarbonization, ensuring reliable energy supply while reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Existing Legal Framework:
- Atomic Energy Act (AEA), 1962:
  - Governs nuclear energy in India, amended in 1987.
  - Section 3(a) grants the central government sole control over nuclear energy production, development, and disposal.
- Private Sector Limitations:
  - The Act restricts private involvement in critical nuclear activities, particularly in research and development (R&D), confining private roles to infrastructure development.
- Supreme Court Verdict (Sept 2024):
  - In the case of Sandeep T.S. vs Union of India, the court upheld the AEA provisions, emphasizing stringent safeguards due to the risks of nuclear accidents and misuse.

Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA), 2010:
- Civil Liability Framework:
  - The CLNDA provides for no-fault liability of nuclear operators for nuclear incidents and ensures compensation to victims.
- Pending Legal Challenge:
  - The constitutionality of the CLNDA is being contested, citing violations of the absolute liability principle and the polluter pays principle.
  - The litigation introduces uncertainty, potentially deterring private sector investment.

The absolute liability principle is a legal doctrine that imposes liability on an entity for causing harm, regardless of intent or negligence. This principle holds that if a person or organization engages in hazardous or inherently dangerous activities (such as handling toxic substances, nuclear energy, or chemicals), they are liable for any damage caused, even if all necessary precautions were taken.
- Judicial Precedent:
  - In G. Sundarrajan vs Union of India (2013), the Supreme Court referenced nuclear disasters (Chernobyl and Fukushima) and mandated safety inspections for projects like the Kundankulam Nuclear Plant, reflecting the balance between development and safety.

Role of Private Sector and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)
- Current Role:
  - Historically, private sector involvement has been limited to engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) for nuclear infrastructure.
- New Prospects:
  - The government aims to attract $26 billion in private investment through partnerships, particularly in developing Small Modular Reactors (SMRs).
- Challenges in R&D:
  - The AEA currently restricts private involvement in nuclear R&D, a significant barrier to innovation in the nuclear energy sector.
- PPP Model:
  - A potential solution could be government-majority ownership (e.g., NPCIL retaining 51% stake), allowing private capital infusion while maintaining state control.

Regulatory Reforms and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)
- Regulatory Oversight:
  - The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) oversees nuclear safety. Concerns about its lack of independence persist.
- Proposed Reforms:
  - The Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority Bill, 2011 aimed to enhance AERB's autonomy but remains unenacted.
  - Strengthening AERB's regulatory role is critical for private investment.
- Future Needs:
  - A revamped AERB structure and legal clarity are essential for creating a conducive environment for private sector participation, ensuring safety, and minimizing regulatory risks.

Liability and Safety Concerns
- High Liability Standards:
  - Nuclear infrastructure inherently carries high-risk factors, and liability concerns are a significant deterrent for private sector involvement.
- Past Disasters:
  - Historical nuclear accidents, such as Chernobyl (1986) and Fukushima Daiichi (2011), underscore the grave risks of nuclear energy near human settlements.
- CLNDA Concerns:
  - Critics argue that the CLNDA does not align with the absolute liability principle, raising concerns about adequate compensation for nuclear incidents.
- Public Safety and Transparency:
  - Ensuring regular inspections, transparency under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, and public accountability is essential in minimizing risks and gaining public trust.

Economic and Environmental Dimensions
- Capital-Intensive Expansion:
  - Nuclear energy is highly capital-intensive, requiring significant investment in skilled labor and advanced technology.
- Ambitious Nuclear Capacity Growth:
  - India aims to increase its nuclear energy production capacity by 32 GWe, as per the World Nuclear Association (September 2024).
- Decarbonization Commitment:
  - Nuclear energy plays a crucial role in meeting India's net-zero carbon emissions target by 2070, offering a reliable, low-carbon energy source.

Way Forward
- Balancing Private Participation and Regulation:
  - The road ahead requires balancing private sector participation with stringent regulatory oversight, including legislative reforms to the Atomic Energy Act (AEA) and clarity on the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA).
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPP):
  - Structuring PPPs to allow private investment while retaining government control could provide a sustainable model for nuclear energy expansion.
- Regulatory Strengthening:
  - Strengthening the AERB, improving transparency, and ensuring high safety standards will be crucial for public acceptance and investor confidence.
- Achieving Energy Goals:
  - Nuclear energy is vital to India's decarbonization and energy security goals.
  - How the government navigates legal, regulatory, and safety challenges will determine the sector's success in contributing to India's long-term energy goals.

Conclusion
India's ambitious expansion of its nuclear energy sector, presents both opportunities and challenges. Strengthening regulatory oversight, addressing liability concerns, and ensuring public safety will be essential for the sustainable growth of nuclear energy in India

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION >>>>>>>>

Restoring the Integrity of India's Civil Services and Selection Systems

General Studies-2; Topic: Role of civil services in a democracy.

Introduction:
- The UPSC and IAS have come under scrutiny following the Puja Khedkar episode, exposing significant flaws in the system, particularly in reservation policies and national-level selection processes.
- Similar controversies have emerged around the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET), revealing widespread issues that threaten the credibility of India's key institutions.

Challenges in the Reservation System
- Creamy Layer in OBC Reservations:
  - The controversy highlights issues in identifying and applying the concept of the creamy layer for OBC and EWS reservations.
- Income Criteria Ambiguity:
  - There is confusion over whether the candidate's income or the parent's income is considered for OBC/EWS reservations, creating loopholes that can be exploited.
- Verification Issues:
  - The lack of robust systems to verify income, assets, or social status contributes to misuse of the quota system.
  - For example, Tehsildars are often ill-equipped to verify the financial standing of applicants.

Exploitation of the System
- Multiple Attempts:
  - Instances such as Ms. Khedkar's 12 attempts in the UPSC exam expose weaknesses in the regulatory oversight.
- Certificate Misuse:
  - Candidates manipulate the system by obtaining EWS certificates or falsely claiming disability without proper verification.
- Administrative Gaps:
  - There has been no substantial effort to revise outdated rules regarding income, disability, and verification procedures.
  - Furthermore, institutional indifference to scrutiny only aggravates the issue.

Weaknesses in Institutional Scrutiny
- Reactive Approach:
  - India's system of scrutiny is largely complaint-based, leading to gaps in detecting fraudulent behavior until it becomes a visible issue.
- Sifarish Culture:
  - The culture of recommendations (sifarish) within the bureaucracy further undermines meritocracy, allowing manipulation of the system for personal gain.

The Need for Technological and Procedural Reforms
- Leveraging Technology:
  - Implementing advanced technologies, such as real-time verification and monitoring systems, could reduce opportunities for fraud. However, even secure systems like Aadhaar have shown vulnerabilities.
- Systematic Clarifications:
  - Clear guidelines regarding income and disability must be issued uniformly across the country, ensuring consistency regardless of State, Ministry, or sector.

Recommendations for Structural Reforms
- Reforming the Verification Process: A robust system of verification is essential to eliminate fraudulent claims. This requires:
  - Income and Asset Verification: Using tax records, property records, and digital databases for accurate and dynamic verification of income and assets.
  - Disability Certification: Revising protocols for disability verification to ensure that certificates are issued based on genuine assessments.
- Creating Expert Bodies:
  - TThe government should establish committees with eminent persons to reach consensus on contentious issues such as the creamy layer, income criteria, and disability quotas

Ethical and Legal Implications
- Penalizing Misconduct:
  - Imposing strict penalties on officials (e.g., Tehsildars, doctors) for wrongfully certifying candidates without due diligence is necessary to deter fraud.
- Court Interventions:
  - The judiciary plays a vital role in ensuring accountability. Clear rulings can help correct systemic issues where meritorious candidates are denied opportunities due to fraudulent claims.

Public Perception and Rebuilding Trust
- Integrity of the Civil Services:
  - Restoring the credibility of civil services is crucial to public confidence in government institutions.
- Deterring Self-Seeking Candidates:
  - The civil services should attract those with a genuine interest in serving the nation, not individuals seeking personal benefits such as perks and privileges.

International Best Practices in Civil Service Examinations and Selection Systems
- In the UK, income-based scholarships or support schemes require comprehensive financial checks through tax records and bank statements, verified by an independent agency.
- In the UK civil services, performance-based reviews are conducted regularly, ensuring that only those who continue to meet high standards remain in their roles.
- In the U.S., social security and tax systems are integrated into national databases to verify the eligibility of applicants for various government programs.
- The U.S. civil services encourage a culture of whistleblowing, where employees are protected by law if they report fraudulent activities or unethical practices.
- In Canada, income and asset assessments for benefits are done using real-time tax data to ensure that applicants qualify under changing financial conditions.
- Singapore's civil service selection process is widely regarded as one of the most meritocratic in the world. Only the highest scorers on multiple competitive exams are selected, and performance is continuously monitored.

The Way Forward
- Holistic Reforms:
  - The UPSC and other national-level selection processes require procedural and structural reforms to restore integrity and public trust.
- Ensuring Meritocracy:
  - Transparency, real-time monitoring, and robust verification will be essential in ensuring that only deserving candidates enter civil services and higher education institutions.
- Institutional Accountability:
  - The government, along with judicial and administrative bodies, must work towards creating a system that promotes fairness, equity, and accountability at every level.

Conclusion
Through the above multi-dimensional reforms, India can rebuild the credibility of its premier institutions and ensure a more equitable and just selection process for the future.

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION ⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫

India-Italy Relations in the Indo-Mediterranean Region

General Studies-2; Topic: Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests..

Introduction:

- In the current era of interconnected crises India and Italy share mutual interests and face joint challenges in the Indo-Mediterranean region, a vital hub for global trade and digital connectivity.
- India and Italy are strengthening their cooperation, particularly in security, defence, and economic corridors, to ensure stability and shared prosperity in this strategically important region.

Geopolitical Significance of the Indo-Mediterranean Region:

- **Vital for Global Trade:**
- The Indo-Mediterranean Sea serves as a key trade route, especially for Italy, the sixth-largest exporter globally.
- **Digital Connectivity:**
- The region is crucial for digital infrastructure as well, exemplified by the upcoming Blue-Raman submarine data cables connecting Genoa with Mumbai.
- **Strategic Concerns:**
- The region faces security threats, including piracy in the Red Sea, the conflict in Gaza and Lebanon, and disruptions in agricultural and oil trade due to Russia's aggression in Ukraine, demanding joint efforts from both India and Italy to ensure stability.

Italy's Increased Commitment in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR):
- **Security Initiatives:**
- Italy has ramped up its presence in the Indian Ocean and West Asia, joining the Group of Friends of UNCLOS and contributing to European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) Atalanta and the European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASoH) for maritime security.
- **Naval Engagements:**
- Italy's presence in India is growing, as seen with patrol ship visits, including the ITS Francesco Morosini, and ITS Cavour (aircraft carrier) visiting Goa in 2023.
- **Military Cooperation:**
- Italy has played a key role in EUNAVFOR ASPIDES since 2024, aimed at safeguarding freedom of navigation in critical areas like the Red Sea and Gulf, which underscores its commitment to Indo-Mediterranean security.

Bilateral Defence Cooperation:
- **Defence Agreement (2023):**
- A comprehensive defence agreement signed in October 2023 lays the foundation for expanding India-Italy ties in areas like maritime domain awareness, information sharing, industrial cooperation, and defence research.
- **Joint Ventures in Defence Production:**
- Italian defence companies like Leonardo and Fincantieri are significant players in global defence markets, with ongoing collaboration with Indian companies (e.g., Fincantieri's partnership with Cochin Shipyard and Elettronica's MoU with Bharat Electronics Limited). This aligns with India's 'Make in India' initiative.

Strategic Focus on Africa:
- **Italy's Mattei Plan:**
- Italy's strategic focus extends to the Indian Ocean Region, with Italy launching the Mattei Plan in January 2024 to foster cooperation with Africa through €5.5 billion in public investments.
- Key countries in this plan include Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Mozambique, all located near the Indo-Mediterranean region.
- **Joint Support for Africa:**
- Both India and Italy are proponents of Africa's inclusion in international forums like the G20, underscoring their joint vision for promoting African development.

Support for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):
- Italy supports the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), which can foster long-term peace and prosperity, especially amid tensions in Gaza and West Asia.
- This corridor holds potential for improved railway connectivity, port logistics, and custom systems, crucial for both India and Italy's trade interests.

People-to-People Ties:
- The Indian community is the second largest diaspora in the EU, highlighting strong socio-cultural links.
- Italy's role as a reliable partner in both economic and defence cooperation, coupled with shared values between the two ancient civilizations, continues to deepen ties between the two nations.

Cultural Diplomacy:
- Italy aims to strengthen cultural bonds by building an 'Italy village' in Mumbai, featuring cultural, fashion, and culinary events.
- Italy's rich naval heritage is also on display with the ITS Amerigo Vespucci visiting India, showcasing Italy's enduring naval tradition.

Concerns and Challenges:
- The Indo-Mediterranean region faces persistent threats from piracy and illicit maritime activities. Ensuring freedom of navigation in these waters is a major challenge for both India and Italy.
- Ongoing conflicts in West Asia, particularly in Gaza and Lebanon, pose risks to regional security and threaten the stability of trade routes and diplomatic relations.
- Rising sea levels, increased frequency of natural disasters, and climate-related disruptions in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) pose significant risks to coastal economies, infrastructure, and local populations.
- Both India and Italy aim to promote sustainable development in Africa, but the region faces deep economic disparities, political instability, and infrastructure challenges.

Way Forward:
- India and Italy should continue to expand their naval cooperation through joint exercises like PASSEX and initiatives such as EUNAVFOR ASPIDES.
- Both nations should increase their participation in intelligence-sharing platforms like the Information Fusion Centre for the Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR).
- Italy and India can collaborate on diplomatic efforts to mediate and resolve conflicts in Gaza, Lebanon, and West Asia.
- Both countries can work together in international fora like the United Nations, G20, and EU-India summits to push for diplomatic solutions to conflicts in the Indo-Mediterranean region.
- Fostering joint ventures, co-production, and technology transfer in sectors like defence, renewable energy, and infrastructure will boost both countries' economies.

Conclusion:
- India and Italy, amid the evolving dynamics of the Indo-Mediterranean region, share both common interests and challenges.
- Italy's growing commitment to the Indian Ocean Region and its support for IMEC reflect its strategic interests in working closely with India to ensure peace, stability, and prosperity across the Indo-Mediterranean region.

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION >>>>>>>

Landslides in Wayanad and the Broader Implications for Kerala

General Studies-3; Topic: Disaster and disaster management

Introduction:
- On July 30, 2024, landslides hit Mundakkai and Chooralmala villages in Wayanad, Kerala.
- The disaster is considered one of the deadliest in India, exposing vulnerabilities in disaster management.

Changing Disaster Profile of Kerala:
- Historically, Kerala was considered a relatively disaster-free zone, protected by its geography (Western Ghats to the east and the sea to the west).
- Over the years, development activities, deforestation, and increasing population density in hilly areas have led to frequent disasters, including floods, landslides, and coastal erosion.
- The 2018 floods were termed the "floods of the century," attributed to climate change by the World Meteorological Organization.
- Increased coastal erosion and rising sea levels further aggravate the state's vulnerability.

Vulnerability of Wayanad:
- Wayanad is situated on the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats and is geologically prone to landslides due to deep gorges and tectonic factors.
- Tremors often accompany landslides in this region, as evidenced during the July 2024 landslides.
- Recurring landslides call for a more comprehensive understanding and mapping of the region's geological characteristics.

Need for Scientific Reappraisal:
- Current assessments of landslides in Wayanad are oversimplified, focusing on slope, soil thickness, and rainfall.
- A nuanced, scientific approach is required that includes mapping geological setups, soil characteristics, drainage patterns, human activities like mining, and land use changes.
- Landslide inventory maps, along with susceptibility maps, are crucial for identifying at-risk zones and issuing timely warnings.

Impact of Climate Change:
- The warming of the Arabian Sea and rising sea surface temperatures have increased the risk of extreme weather events in Kerala, including cyclones and heavy monsoons.
- The heat content of the Indian Ocean has rapidly risen, contributing to cyclogenesis in the Arabian Sea.
- Cyclone Ockhi in 2017 was one of the most severe cyclones to hit Kerala in recent memory, underscoring the growing climate-related risks.

Paradigm Shift in Disaster Management:
- The current disaster management system in Kerala is reactive, focusing on rescue and rehabilitation, which is insufficient given the growing frequency of disasters.
- There is a need to adopt the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which advocates for a proactive approach encompassing preparedness, resilience, and mitigation.
- Disaster risk management should be decentralized, involving local governments, communities, and other stakeholders.

Concerns and Challenges in Addressing Landslides and Disasters in Kerala
- The average population density in the Western Ghats region of Kerala is above the national average, leading to greater human exposure to natural disasters.

- There is a gap in scientific understanding of the geological and environmental factors contributing to landslides in Kerala.
- Local communities, who are often the first responders in disasters, are not adequately engaged in disaster risk management planning.
- TAlthough technologies like remote sensing, GIS, and early warning systems are available, their implementation is limited, especially in rural and remote areas.
- Investments in disaster risk reduction, particularly in enhancing infrastructure resilience and scientific research, remain inadequate.
- Development projects, including large-scale infrastructure and mining, are often prioritized over environmental sustainability, leading to environmental degradation and increased disaster risk.

International Best Practices for Disaster Management and Landslide Mitigation
- Japan has one of the most advanced early warning systems for landslides, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The Japan Meteorological Agency uses real-time weather data, geological assessments, and seismic information to issue early warnings to the public.
- Switzerland implements a range of structural measures to prevent landslides, including constructing retaining walls, afforestation, terracing, and installing drainage systems to reduce water seepage into slopes.
- In California, various agencies, including the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), work together to monitor landslides. They use geospatial data, satellite imagery, and advanced hydrological models to predict and monitor landslide events.
- New Zealand has a strong emphasis on community-led disaster risk assessments, where local communities actively participate in mapping hazards and vulnerabilities.

Key Recommendations:
- Disaster Risk Zones: Kerala should create detailed disaster risk zones based on multiple physical and social criteria within a socio-ecological framework.
- Community Involvement: A community-based disaster risk management model should be implemented, engaging local communities in disaster planning and response.
- Collaborative Approach: A quadruple helix model involving community organizations, academia, government, and business is suggested to create a robust disaster management framework.
- Integration in Development: Disaster risk management should be integrated into local development plans to build resilience and reduce long-term risks.

Conclusion:
- The increasing frequency and intensity of disasters in Kerala necessitate a shift from reactive disaster management to a more comprehensive, proactive, and community-driven approach.
- By adopting scientifically informed practices and engaging local communities, Kerala can better mitigate the risks of future disasters and improve overall resilience.

EDITORIAL SECTION ⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫

India's Monsoon Crisis and "Mission Mausam"

General Studies-1; Topic: Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.,

Introduction:

- India faced one of the worst monsoon seasons in recent years, with recurrent flooding affecting most states.
- According to a 2021 study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), approximately 40% of districts in India experience alternating climatic hazards—flood-prone areas also face droughts in the dry season.
- A separate analysis of 40 years of rainfall data by CEEW shows a 64% increase in heavy rainfall days during the monsoons over the past decade, exacerbating climate risks

Introduction to 'Mission Mausam':

- Mission Mausam, approved in September 2024, is aimed at addressing weather risks by:
  - Expanding India's weather observation network.
  - Improving weather forecasting models using modern physics and machine learning.
  - Exploring weather modification techniques to mitigate weather impacts.
- The mission is driven by three primary institutions under the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES):
  - India Meteorological Department (IMD)
  - National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF)
  - Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM)
- The initiative has a budget of ₹2,000 crore and aims to improve forecasting capabilities in climate risk areas and make weather data widely available for sectors such as energy, agriculture, and water.
  - The pressure of community expectations and loyalty versus the need to maintain administrative neutrality presents a significant ethical challenge.

Need for Better Weather Forecasting:

- In this scenario, nearly two-thirds of India's population is exposed to flood risks, but only a third of these people are covered by early warning systems.
- India's cyclone warning systems are more comprehensive, covering all cyclone-prone areas. In contrast, flood-prone regions lack sufficient coverage. There is an urgent need for India to invest in weather forecasting, using technological innovations to tackle increasing extreme weather events.

Key Areas for 'Mission Mausam' Focus:

- Gaps in Radar Coverage:39 Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs) monitor rainfall across India, but there are significant gaps, especially along the western coast and in urban centres.
- While the Himalayan states and eastern coast have substantial radar coverage, the western coastline (with only five radars) is under-monitored.
- Urban centres like Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, and Jodhpur, which have faced recurrent flooding, also lack radar coverage.

- Mission Mausam should focus on making data from new instruments like DWRs, wind profilers, and radiometers freely available to foster innovation and better decision-making.

Improving Communication and User Capacity:

- The IMD currently disseminates weather warnings via multiple channels, including web and mobile apps.
- The district-wise weather warning system provides short-term forecasts, but user experience can be further improved.
- There is a need to enhance user capacity by providing guidance on how to interpret warnings and take action. This can be done through:
  - Informative videos
  - User guides
  - Media outreach
- This will empower citizens to better understand and respond to weather warnings, reducing the impact of extreme weather events.

Way Forward

- Mission Mausam is a timely initiative aimed at making India climate-resilient by expanding the observational network and enhancing forecasting capabilities.
- With a focus on installing more weather radars in vulnerable regions, improving data accessibility, and enhancing public awareness, the mission has the potential to transform India's preparedness for extreme weather events.
- As climate risks grow, Mission Mausam can play a crucial role in safeguarding lives, livelihoods, and infrastructure by providing reliable and timely weather forecasts.
- Public awareness campaigns and educational tools are essential for ensuring that citizens in flood-prone and high-risk areas are equipped with the necessary information to act effectively during extreme weather events.
- Develop a robust open data policy that allows researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs easy access to detailed, real-time weather data, similar to practices in the United States and the European Union.
- Focus on weather modification techniques, such as cloud seeding, to mitigate extreme weather conditions like droughts or intense rainfall in vulnerable areas.
- Promote public-private partnerships (PPPs) in weather forecasting technology to leverage private sector innovation and expertise.

Conclusion

- At a time when extreme weather events are increasing in frequency and intensity, Mission Mausam is a critical step towards making India weather-ready and climate-smart.
- By focusing on closing gaps in weather observation, improving forecasting accuracy, and empowering citizens with better information, the mission has the potential to significantly reduce the human and economic toll of extreme weather events.

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION >>>>>>>>

Manipur Ethnic Violence and Its Impact on the Indian Administrative Services (IAS)

General Studies-2; Topic: Role of civil services in a democracy..

Introduction:
- The ethnic violence in Manipur between the Meitei and Kuki communities erupted on May 3, 2023. The conflict has resulted in over 200 deaths and displaced 60,000 people

Historical and Ethnic Context of the Conflict:
- Ethnic Composition of Manipur:
  - The conflict between the Meitei and Kuki communities is deeply rooted in the ethnic and historical context of Manipur.
  - The Meiteis, predominantly in the valley regions, and the Kukis, largely inhabiting the hill districts, have longstanding socio-political and land-related disputes
- Competition for Resources:
  - The competition for political power, land, and government resources has fueled tensions between these communities.
  - Policies related to reservation, land ownership, and autonomy are central to this friction
- Colonial Legacy:
  - The British-era policies of categorizing tribal and non-tribal groups created divisions that still resonate today.

Ethical and Moral Dilemmas for Civil Servants:
- Dual Loyalty:
  - Civil servants from different ethnic backgrounds face dilemmas in balancing their professional duties with their ethnic identity
  - The pressure of community expectations and loyalty versus the need to maintain administrative neutrality presents a significant ethical challenge
- Safety Concerns vs. Duty:
  - Many officers face personal safety threats due to their ethnicity
  - Reports of government officials being targeted by mobs and the need for protection underscore the severe risks they face.
  - This has led to psychological stress and has hampered their ability to carry out their duties

Immediate Impact on Administration:
- The law-and-order situation deteriorated rapidly, with communal tensions escalating and violent incidents being reported.
- The communal divide deeply affected the functioning of the All India Services (AIS) officers, creating geographical and psychological barriers among them, with hill and valley districts becoming inaccessible due to the conflict

Impact on the "Steel Frame" of the Nation:
- The current situation threatens the "steel frame" envisioned by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, wherein the All India Services are the backbone of India's administrative machinery.
- The esprit de corps (unity and mutual respect among officers) is under strain due to the violence and ethnic divide, weakening collaboration and trust among officers.
- The conflict has deeply impacted interpersonal relationships among AIS officers, with social exchanges and collaborations becoming rare.

Hate speech, propaganda, and the polarization of public discourse, both online and offline, have further strained relationships, making it difficult for officers from different ethnic backgrounds to work together.

The Role of Non-Kinetic Warfare:
- Non-kinetic elements such as psychological warfare, disinformation, and economic disruption have played a crucial role in exacerbating the tensions in Manipur.
- These tactics, as part of hybrid warfare, have led to a deterioration of public morale and confidence in governance, posing a significant challenge for the IAS and other services responsible for maintaining law and order

Potential for Reform and Capacity Building:
- Despite the challenges, the Manipur conflict can be seen as an opportunity for research and documentation by institutions like the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) and the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA).
- Training modules and capacity-building workshops on conflict management, reconciliation, and administrative neutrality can be developed based on this case.
- Such case studies will offer practical insights into handling ethnocentric conflicts within a democratic framework, contributing to the academic and practical understanding of governance in conflict zones.

Opportunity for AIS Officers to Restore Normalcy:
- The impersonal nature of bureaucracy, as theorized by Weber, can be leveraged to restore normalcy in the conflict-ridden state.
- The professional team spirit among batchmates and the neutral role of AIS officers as agents of national integration offer a resilient framework for resolving conflicts.

Policy Recommendations for Conflict Zones
- Implementation of innovative personnel management policies to involve officers in peace-building efforts.
- Regular virtual meetings between officers from different ethnic communities could foster better relationships and reduce the psychological isolation created by the conflict.
- Such measures could help break the administrative silos that have emerged in Manipur, facilitating better cooperation within the civil services and contributing to the peacemaking process.
- The conflict also underscores the importance of federal unity in India. Strengthening communication channels and fostering a sense of shared responsibility between the state and central governments can help mitigate future crises.

Conclusion
- The ethnic violence in Manipur has exposed the fragility of India's administrative system in handling deep-rooted communal conflicts.
- While the situation presents serious challenges to the integrity of the All India Services, it also offers a unique opportunity to rethink and reform the approach to governance in conflict-ridden areas.
- By focusing on capacity building, research, and innovative policy measures, the IAS and other services can turn the crisis into a learning experience that strengthens the resilience of the "steel frame" in future conflicts.

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION ⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫⟫

Supreme Court Judgment against Online Child Sexual Abuse

General Studies-1; Topic: Salient features of Indian Society.

Introduction:
- The Supreme Court's historic judgment against online child sexual abuse marks a significant milestone in combating child exploitation.
- It expands the scope of criminal liability for downloading and storing Child Sexual Exploitative and Abuse Material (CSEAM), which addresses the core issue of demand for such content.

Background:
- In January 2024, the Madras High Court ruled that merely downloading or watching child pornography was not a crime, sparking widespread concern.
- The ruling undermined the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and could normalize the consumption of child sexual abuse material.
- The Supreme Court reversed this decision in September 2024, expanding the legal definition of child abuse and reframing the issue as a grave crime.

Key Takeaways from the Supreme Court Judgment:
Reframing the issue:
- The court shifted the language from "child porn" to Child Sexual Exploitative and Abuse Material (CSEAM), emphasizing the crime's severe nature.

Criminalization of Downloading and Storing:
- The judgment holds that merely downloading or storing such material constitutes an offense, creating a strong deterrent against the demand for child abuse content.

Accountability of Social Media Intermediaries:
- The court mandated social media platforms to report CSEAM in real-time to law enforcement authorities, holding them accountable for content on their platforms.

Long-term impact:
- The judgment highlighted the perpetuity of online abuse, where victims continue to suffer re-victimization as images remain available online.
- The recent Supreme Court judgment aligns with India's commitment under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to protect children from harm, including online sexual abuse.

Constitutional Provisions
- Article 21 (Right to Life and Personal Liberty):
- The Constitution of India guarantees the Right to Life under Article 21, which has been interpreted to include the right to live with dignity, protection from exploitation, and personal safety.
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation directly violate this fundamental right.
- Article 15(3):
- This article empowers the State to make special provisions for the protection and welfare of children.
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and other child protection laws derive their legitimacy from this constitutional mandate.
- Article 39(e) and (f) (Directive Principles of State Policy):
- The State is directed to ensure that children are not abused and are provided opportunities to grow in a healthy manner.
- Article 39 emphasizes the responsibility of the State to protect children from exploitation, ensuring their rights are safeguarded.

Legal Provisions
- POCSO Act, 2012 is the cornerstone legislation that addresses child sexual abuse in India. It criminalizes various forms of sexual exploitation of children, including the use of children in pornographic content.
- The Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000 governs cybercrimes and electronic offenses, including child pornography. It complements POCSO by targeting online sexual exploitation and content distribution over digital platforms.
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 emphasizes child-friendly approaches and includes special provisions for children involved in or victims of crimes such as trafficking and sexual exploitation.

ThConcerns / Challenges
- Many social media platforms and messaging apps use end-to-end encryption, making it difficult for law enforcement agencies to monitor or intercept harmful content, including CSEAM.
- The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create synthetic child abuse material (deepfakes) complicates detection. Distinguishing between real and AI-generated images presents significant challenges for law enforcement and forensic experts.
- CSEAM can spread quickly across multiple platforms and jurisdictions, making it challenging to track, remove, and prevent further dissemination.
- Many social media platforms are headquartered outside India, making cross-border cooperation difficult.
- The shortage of skilled personnel, including forensic experts and cybercrime investigators, hampers the effective implementation of the judgment.
- Most legal frameworks focus on prosecuting offenders, but there is insufficient attention given to the rehabilitation and psychological support of child victims.

Way Forward:
- Defining Cybercrime:
- Indian laws must explicitly define cybercrime and include CSEAM under its scope as an organized crime.
- Emerging crimes such as AI-generated child abuse material should also be criminalized.
- Accountability of Social Media Platforms:
- Social media companies must be held responsible for flagging and reporting CSEAM to law enforcement in real-time.
- Forensic Lab for CSEAM:
- India should establish a forensic lab equipped with the latest technology to analyze CSEAM data and provide timely intervention.
- National Database on Sexual Offenders:
- Individuals prosecuted for downloading CSEAM should be added to the National Database on Sexual Offenders, barring them from jobs involving children.

Global Impact and Border-less Response:
- CSEAM as a Global Industry:
- The global CSEAM industry is worth billions, fueled by technological advancements, and requires international cooperation for dismantling.
- Global Convention:
- A legally binding international convention is needed to streamline cooperation between governments, law enforcement, and stakeholders to combat CSEAM.
- International Database of Sex Offenders:
- Establishing a global database would ensure better tracking and cross-border action against offenders.

Conclusion:
- This judgment sets a precedent not only for India but for global efforts in combating child exploitation.
- A coordinated, multi-layered approach involving legal reforms, technological advancements, and international cooperation is necessary to dismantle the CSEAM industry and protect vulnerable children worldwide.

Source : THE HINDU

75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India

General Studies-2; Topic: Indian Constitution– historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

Introduction:
- November 26 marks the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India, a cornerstone of Indian democracy.
- This milestone serves as a reminder of the values enshrined in the Constitution, promoting awareness among citizens and stakeholders of democracy.

Constitutional Governance Beyond Laws
- Constitutional governance encompasses not just laws but a deep-rooted constitutional culture, reflecting the collective consciousness of diverse Indian societies.
- The celebration of Constitution Day encourages reflection on the principles that unite citizens across cultures and faiths

Core Constitutional Values
- Five core constitutional values have shaped India's governance and are crucial to its democratic ethos:
  - Respect for Democratic Institutions: The significant increase in life expectancy from 32 years in 1949 to approximately 70 years today symbolizes enhanced quality of life, fostering respect for democratic institutions.
  - Smooth Transition of Power: The commitment to a peaceful transfer of power after elections is fundamental to India's political stability and maturity, demonstrating the electorate's engagement in democratic processes.
- Protection of Rights and Freedoms:
  - The Constitution emphasizes safeguarding individual rights against state power, reflecting the foresight of the framers who were acutely aware of the historical struggle for freedom
- Federalism:
  - The Constitution accommodates India's diversity by ensuring states have autonomy while promoting national unity, exemplified by the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments establishing local self-governance
- Role of Media and Civil Society:
  - A vibrant media landscape and active civil society contribute to the democratic process by fostering transparency and accountability

Historical Context and Evolution
- The framers of the Constitution recognized India's complex socio-political fabric and designed a document that would facilitate unity in diversity.
- The successful navigation of regional disparities and demands for autonomy showcases the resilience and robustness of India's constitutional framework.
- By balancing local needs with national interests, fostering dialogue, and adapting to changing circumstances, the Constitution has played a pivotal role in maintaining India's unity and integrity as a diverse nation.
- This resilience is a testament to the Constitution's foundational principles, which continue to guide the country in its quest for justice, equality, and fraternity
- Adaptation and Amendments: The Constitution has been amended numerous times to reflect changing societal norms and values, such as gender equality, reservation for marginalized communities, and environmental protection.

Cultural Integration:
- Unity in Diversity: The Constitution reflects India's commitment to uphold its diverse cultures, languages, and religions, promoting inclusivity and harmony among various communities.
- Constitutional Culture: It fosters a sense of shared identity and belonging, encouraging citizens to participate actively in democratic processes while respecting others' rights and beliefs

Strengthening Democratic Institutions:
- Independent Judiciary: The judiciary, as an independent body, plays a crucial role in interpreting the Constitution and upholding the rule of law, serving as a guardian of fundamental rights.
- Judicial Activism: The role of the judiciary in expanding the interpretation of fundamental rights through Public Interest Litigations (PILs) has strengthened the protection of rights and freedoms.
- Electoral Processes: The establishment of the Election Commission has ensured free and fair elections, fostering public trust in electoral processes and institutions

Challenges to Democratic Ideals
- Despite the progress, challenges remain, including issues related to media freedom, political representation, and social equity.
- Increasing political polarization can undermine the democratic fabric, leading to divisive politics that challenge the principles of secularism and pluralism enshrined in the Constitution.
- Concerns about violations of fundamental rights, particularly for marginalized communities, highlight the ongoing need for vigilance and reform to protect these rights.
- Continuous engagement of citizens with constitutional values is essential for addressing these challenges and ensuring the Constitution remains a living document.

Way Forward
- As the nation celebrates its constitutional legacy, there is a call to reaffirm commitment to democratic principles and engage in continuous improvement of governance.
- The Constitution should remain a tool for fostering social conscience and political awareness, encouraging active participation from all sections of society.
- There is a pressing need to engage the youth in constitutional discourse, ensuring that the principles of democracy and constitutional governance resonate with future generations.
- Strengthening civic education in schools and communities can promote awareness of constitutional rights and responsibilities, fostering a more informed citizenry.
- Engaging with international communities to share best practices in constitutional governance, drawing lessons from other democracies to improve India's own systems

CONCLUSION
- The commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Constitution of India is not only a celebration of legal frameworks but a recognition of the collective journey of the Indian people towards justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.
- It highlights the importance of ongoing dialogue and engagement with constitutional values to ensure that democracy thrives in an ever-evolving society

Source : THE HINDU

EDITORIAL SECTION »»»»»»»

Under-representation of Women in Judiciary

General Studies-1; Topic: Role of women and women's organization

Introduction:
- The Indian judiciary lacks substantial representation of women, especially at higher levels. Although entry-level recruitment has improved, higher courts, particularly High Courts and the Supreme Court, still see minimal female representation.
- As per the Supreme Court's "State of the Judiciary" report (2023), only 13.4% of High Court judges and 9.3% of Supreme Court judges are women, with some States having none or only one woman judge.
- In lower courts, 36.3% of district-level judges are women, showing improvement in entry-level but not at higher judicial echelons.

Policy Gaps and Systemic Hurdles
- Entry-Level Challenges:
  - State Judicial Service Rules requiring continuous practice as advocates impact women who may face career breaks due to family responsibilities
- Retention Issues:
  - Retention of women in the judiciary is hindered by transfer policies and limited support structures, discouraging career growth and exacerbating gender imbalance in higher judiciary
- Infrastructural Shortcomings:
  - Many district courts lack basic amenities like dedicated washrooms for women judges and lawyers, let alone crèches or feeding rooms, which are essential for family balance
- Cultural and Social Expectations:
  - In Indian society, women are often seen as primary caretakers, which impacts their ability to pursue demanding careers like law and judiciary, especially where flexible work options are minimal
  -
- Economic Barriers:
  - Many women lawyers start with lower income, which can deter them from pursuing higher studies or taking up the financial burden of establishing a law practice.
  - In the absence of institutional support like maternity benefits or minimum stipends, women are financially disadvantaged in establishing their careers.

Challenges in the Legal Profession
- Women face significant barriers in establishing themselves as advocates and advancing within the legal profession.
- Approximately 15.31% of advocates are women, with limited representation as senior advocates or Bar Council members, creating a "funnel effect" that narrows the pool of female candidates available for higher judicial appointments

The Public–Private Divide and Gender-Specific Needs
- The theory of public–private divide by Carole Pateman explains the challenge women face in male-dominated fields like the judiciary.
- As women transition from private to public spheres, the absence of gender-sensitive policies in the public domain makes adaptation challenging.
- Existing policies often overlook the specific needs of women, reinforcing gendered impacts and perpetuating barriers in the judiciary

- Gendered Perspective in Judgments:
  - A judiciary with few women misses out on gender perspectives in judgments, particularly in cases involving women's rights, family laws, and sexual harassment, impacting the delivery of justice
- Public Trust in Judiciary:
  - Greater diversity, including gender diversity, in the judiciary enhances public trust by showcasing a representative justice system, which resonates with a larger segment of society
- Role-Model Effect
  - Increased female representation creates role models for young female law aspirants, inspiring more women to pursue judicial careers, creating a ripple effect in gender inclusivity.

The Female Gaze in Judiciary Policies
- A female-centric approach to policy-making could counter indirect discrimination and accommodate women's unique needs. This approach advocates for a feminist lens that acknowledges the distinct needs of women in male-dominant structures.
- Implementing a "female gaze" involves recognizing and removing biases in infrastructure and policy, creating an inclusive environment that supports women's career advancement.

Global Comparison and Best Practices
- Global Benchmarking:
  - Countries like the U.K. and Canada have implemented gender-inclusive policies, such as flexible work hours, gender-sensitization training, and balanced gender representation mandates, which India can benchmark to improve female representation
- Adopting Best Practices
  - Best practices include creating gender-balanced judicial committees, offering mentorship programs, and establishing women's legal associations, all of which can provide structural support for women in India's judiciary

Prioritizing Women-Centric Needs in Judiciary
- Infrastructural Support:
  - The lack of female representation in judicial building committees results in infrastructure needs of women often being deprioritized.
  - Ensuring women's input in such committees can lead to more comprehensive planning for women-friendly amenities
- Policy Reforms
  - Legislative and regulatory reforms can be tailored specifically to remove hurdles faced by women in the judiciary, such as reducing minimum practice requirements for women advocates, or introducing female-centric evaluation criteria for promotions.
  - Gender-sensitive transfer policies and inclusive recruitment criteria could mitigate the challenges women face in judicial careers, providing them with a supportive environment.

Conclusion
- For true gender parity in the judiciary, entry and retention policies must be reformed to address the distinct challenges women face. This requires recognizing the dual burden of professional and domestic responsibilities that women carry and building infrastructure and policies to ease this burden.
- A judiciary that is inclusive and sensitive to gender-specific needs will empower more women to enter, remain, and rise within the judicial system, ensuring diversity, fairness, and enhanced perspectives in judicial decision-making.

Source : THE HINDU

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As we conclude this edition of Dhairya Times, I extend my sincere appreciation to Editorial Board Members of Dhairya : The Civil Services Society for their unwavering commitment and excellence in bringing this magazine to life. Your dedication to fostering a culture of learning and collaboration is truly commendable.

To our aspirants, this magazine represents more than just a publication; it is a resource and a companion in your journey towards the Civil Services Examination. We hope it inspires, informs, and motivates you to pursue your goals with unwavering determination and strategic preparation.

Together, let us continue to build a community driven by knowledge, resilience, and purpose. Wishing you all success in your endeavors.

Best regards,

Vimlok Tiwari
Convenor, Dhairya: The Civil Service Society