

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## WEEKLY

**WEEK-1**  
**AUGUST**  
**2020**

### MAINS

#### ➤ EIA Notification, 2020

ENVIRONMENT

#### ➤ India's Foreign Policy

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### ➤ Contempt of Court

#### ➤ National Education Policy 2020

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

#### ➤ EU Cyber Sanctions

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### ➤ South Asian Migrant Crises

SOCIAL ISSUES

### PRELIMS

#### ➤ Mata Chintpurni Temple

ART & CULTURE

#### ➤ World Tiger Day

ENVIRONMENT

#### ➤ Seismicity study of Arunachal Himalaya

GEOGRAPHY

#### ➤ Affordability of balanced diet

HEALTH

#### ➤ 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Air India

#### ➤ Confederation of Indian Industries

#### ➤ Divestment of 23 PSUs

INDIAN ECONOMY

#### ➤ India Report on Digital Education, 2020

POLITY & GOVERNANCE

#### ➤ AJO-Neo

#### ➤ Spyware, stalkerware apps gaining traction during lockdown

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

➤ e-Uparjan: Re-inventing the procurement system through digitisation in Madhya Pradesh.

**GOOD GOVERNANCE**

**GS SCORE**

An Institute for Civil Services

[www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)

## — **NOTE** —

The current affairs articles are segregated from prelims and mains perspective, such separation is maintained in terms of structure of articles. Mains articles have more focus on analysis and prelims articles have more focus on facts.

However, this doesn't mean that Mains articles don't cover facts and PT articles can't have analysis. You are suggested to read all of them for all stages of examination.

# CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYST

## WEEK- 1 (AUGUST, 2020)

# CONTENTS

Section - A: MAINS CURRENT AFFAIRS		
Area of GS	Topics in News	Page No.
ECONOMY	• EIA Notification 2020	2
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	• India's Foreign Policy	4
POLITY & GOVERNANCE	• Contempt of Court	6
	• National Education Policy 2020	8
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY	• EU Cyber Sanctions	12
SOCIAL ISSUES	• South Asian Migrant Crisis	14
Section - B: PRELIMS CURRENT AFFAIRS		
Area of GS	Topics in News	Page No.
ART & CULTURE	• Mata Chintpurni Temple	18
ENVIRONMENT	• World Tiger Day	18
GEOGRAPHY	• Seismicity study of Arunachal Himalaya	19
HEALTH	• Affordability of Balanced Diet	20
INDIAN ECONOMY	• 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Air India	21
	• Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)	23
	• Divestment of 23 PSUs	24
POLITY & GOVERNANCE	• India Report on Digital Education, 2020	25
SCIENCE & TECH	• AJO-Neo	26
	• Spyware, stalkerware apps gaining traction during lockdown	27
Section - C: GOOD GOVERNANCE		
Topic in News		Page No.
• e-Uparjan: Re-inventing the procurement system through digitisation in Madhya Pradesh		30

\*\*\*\*\*

# GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

# IAS 2021-22

## LIVE & INTERACTIVE CLASSES

## LEARNING NEVER STOPS!

Due to the current situation of COVID Pandemic,  
we continue to put our efforts for IAS Aspirants  
exclusively through

**Online Live & Interactive Classes** for:

01

**GS  
FOUNDATION**

02

**OPTIONAL  
SUBJECTS**

03

**MAINS  
COURSES**

04

**TEST  
SERIES**

Visit:  [www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)

📍 1B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Pusa Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005, (Adjacent to Karol Bagh Metro Gate No. 8)

☎ 91 8448496262    ✉ [info@iasscore.in](mailto:info@iasscore.in)    🌐 [/iasscore](https://www.facebook.com/iasscore)

**SECTION: A**  
**(MAINS)**

---

**CURRENT AFFAIRS**

---

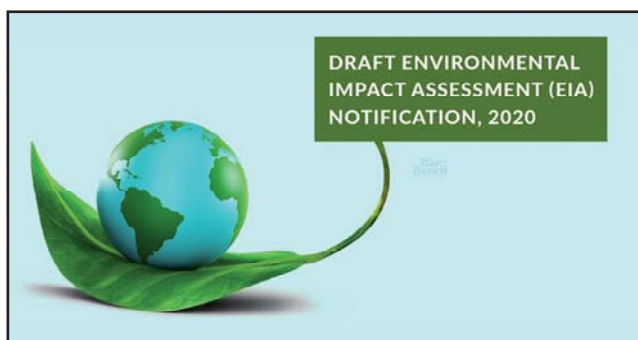
# EIA NOTIFICATION 2020

## CONTEXT

Environmental activist censored for encouraging public participation in consultation process of Drafting of Environment Impact Assessment Notification 2020.

### ◎ BACKGROUND

- The Union Ministry of Environment has been in the spotlight on more than one occasion during the pandemic, as it worked to push through retrograde environmental decisions in an atmosphere of general paralysis.
- In April, Environment Minister ensures that the National Board for Wildlife's Standing Committee stamped its approval on several projects, with serious implications for conservation.
- Now the Minister wants to make some fundamental change to the process of project approvals, by introducing a new Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification.



since 2006, and to make the EIA “**process more transparent and expedient.**”

### How much Important EIA is?

- EIA links environment with development for environmentally safe and sustainable development.
- EIA provides a cost-effective method to eliminate or minimize the adverse impact of developmental projects.
- EIA enables the decision makers to analyse the effect of developmental activities on the environment well before the developmental project is implemented.
- EIA encourages the adaptation of mitigation strategies in the developmental plan.
- EIA makes sure that the developmental plan is environmentally sound and within the limits of the capacity of assimilation and regeneration of the ecosystem.
- EIA does not give decisions but its findings should be considered in policy- and decision-making and should be reflected in final choices. Thus it should be part of the decision-making process.
- The findings of EIA should be focused on the significant and essential issues. It is also required to provide a sufficient explanation on why they are important, and study its validity in order to facilitate a basis for policy decisions.
- Government has time and again appointed committees to look into environmental protection. Example- Gadgil and Kasturirangan Committees on Western Ghats ecology.

### ◎ ANALYSIS

#### What is Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)?

- **Environmental Impact Assessment or EIA** is the process or study which predicts the effect of a proposed industrial/infrastructural project on the environment.
- It prevents the **proposed activity/project** from being approved without proper oversight or taking adverse consequences into account.
- **Under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**, India notified **its first EIA norms in 1994**, setting in place a legal framework for regulating activities that access, utilise, and affect (pollute) natural resources.
- The **1994 EIA notification was replaced with a modified draft in 2006**. Earlier this year, the government redrafted it again to incorporate the amendments and relevant court orders issued

#### Why this new draft of EIA is being criticized?

- India's new EIA draft has been widely criticised for its several provisions due to which the **new draft of EIA prove to be a regressive departure from its earlier version.**
- The 2020 draft **offers no remedy for the political and bureaucratic stronghold on the EIA process**, and thereby on industries.
- Instead, it proposes to **bolster the government's discretionary power while limiting public engagement** in safeguarding the environment.

- While projects concerning national defence and security are naturally considered strategic, the **government gets to decide on the "strategic" tag** for other projects.
- The 2020 draft says **no information on "such projects shall be placed in the public domain"**. This opens a window for summary clearance for any project deemed strategic without having to explain why.
- Additionally, the new draft **exempts a long list of projects from public consultation**.
- For example, linear projects such as roads and pipelines in border areas will not require any public hearing. The **'border area' is defined as "area falling within 100 kilometres aerial distance from the Line of Actual Control with bordering countries of India."**
- That would cover much of the Northeast, the repository of the country's richest biodiversity.

### What are the Main issues in this new draft of EIA?

- The most devastating blow to the **EIA regime is the creation of an ex-post-facto clearance route**.

#### Ex-post-facto clearance route

- It applies to on-going or completed project for which an EIA clearance was **never sought or granted**, and the construction of the project took place regardless.
  - The project now can be slapped with **minor fines** for the violations and get cleared.
  - Where such ex-post-facto clearances were being granted previously, the **courts cracked down on them as illegal**.
  - Therefore, what could not be **ratified will now find itself notified**.
  - The legality of **sidestepping the courts** is questionable and will have to be tested.
- The proposed provisions show that the Ministry has gone to great lengths to reduce or even remove public participation, and by extension independent expert opinion, from the process of granting environmental clearances; public reporting of violations may also not be taken cognisance of.
  - According to Section 26** there are projects that would not attract environmental clearance or permission, including coal mining and seismic

surveys for oil, methane and shale gas on some lands.

- Section 14 provides exemption and also limiting the scope of public involvement** to the districts concerned, in the case of national parks and sanctuaries where pipeline infrastructure will pass. Roads and highways get liberal concessions.
- If a public agency or authority considers the local situation not conducive to participation by citizens, the public consultation need not include a public hearing.
- In spite of the far-reaching nature of its proposed actions, the Centre has displayed unseemly haste to get them in place and government has not aided credibility by trying to shut down public responses to the draft early. It took a Delhi High Court order to extend the deadline to August 11.
- The exercise has been further muddled by the **mysterious blocking of some activist websites calling for the EIA proposal to be dropped**, and demanding a new approach towards conserving natural resources for future generations.

### What should be the Way Forward in this case?

- The 2020 draft notification** may be beneficial in the sense that **it consolidates the EIA rules and has the potential of alleviating some ambiguity in the present law**.
- The ministry **should focus on ensuring access to information as well as awareness** about the public hearing and its impact upon the whole EIA process.
- In order to improve ease of doing business, the government **should bring down the average delay of 238 days in granting environmental clearance** that emanates from bureaucratic delays and complex laws.
- Grow now, sustain later should not be the policy, as the notion is dangerously tilted against the concept of sustainable development.
- COVID-19 has powerfully demonstrated the value of nature for well-being: of lost forests and captured wildlife bringing virus reservoirs closer to humans and foul air destroying their health.
- While there might be a case for some changes, much of the proposed EIA system can only make things worse, and should not be pushed through.

However Environmental regulation must balance damage to the environment with sustainable development and possible benefits but the new notification lays more emphasis on the benefits and so must be reconsidered.

\*\*\*\*\*



# INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

## CONTEXT

In the backdrop of setbacks, especially in the neighbourhood, India has to reconsider its diplomacy's trajectory.

### ◎ BACKGROUND

- The foreign policy of India or any country is shaped by two factors i.e. domestic and international factors.
- Domestically, India's history, culture, geography, and economy have played an important role in determining the objectives and principles of India's foreign policy whereas international factor is characterized by cold war in which there was the rivalry between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.
- Thus the establishment of the United Nations, arms race, particularly nuclear arms race, anti-colonialism, and anti-imperialism, etc. have also influenced the priorities and objectives of our foreign policy.
- The first Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, gave due consideration to these factors and played a leading role in shaping the country's foreign policy.

### ◎ ANALYSIS

#### Where India stands to date as the outcome of his foreign policies?

- India was seen as a natural rising power in South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region. It was the de-facto leader of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).
- It has historical and cultural ties with Nepal. It enjoyed traditional goodwill and influence in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- It had made investments worth billions of dollars in Afghanistan and cultivated vibrant ties with the post-Taliban stakeholders in Kabul.
- It had committed itself to multilateralism and the Central Asian connectivity project, with Iran being its gateway.
- It was competing and cooperating with China at the same time, while the long border between the two countries remained largely peaceful.

#### What is the Present scenario?

- India is perhaps facing its gravest national security crisis in 20 years, with China having changed the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the western sector in its favour.

- SAARC is out of the joint. Nepal has turned hostile having adopted a new map and revived border disputes with India.
- Sri Lanka has tilted towards China, which is undertaking massive infrastructure projects in the Indian Ocean island.
- Bangladesh is miffed at the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.
- When Afghanistan is undergoing a major transition, India is out of the multiparty talks.
- Iran has inaugurated a railway link project connecting the Chabahar port, on the Gulf of Oman, to Zahedan (which India was to have constructed) without India.
- There is a relative decline in India's smart power, especially in the neighbourhood and the extended neighbourhood, which demands a deeper perusal of the foreign policy trajectory itself.
- Three problems can be found which are more or less linked to this decline a **closer alignment of policy with the U.S. line, coupling of foreign policy with domestic politics and hubris.**

#### Is there any India- US Closer alignment in India's foreign policy?

- There has been steady erosion in India's strategic autonomy, which pre-dates the current government. When India started deepening its partnership with the United States, India began steadily aligning its policies with U.S. interests.
- The case of Iran is the best example. The agreement to develop the Chabahar port was signed in 2003. But India, under pressure from the U.S., was moving slowly, even though the project offered India an alternative route to Central Asia bypassing Pakistan.
- India voted against Iran at the United Nations; scuttled an ambitious gas pipeline project and cut down trade ties drastically.
- When U.S. pulled out of the Iran deal in 2018 and re-imposed sanctions on Iran, India toed the U.S. line, bringing down its oil imports to zero.
- These policy changes coexisted with India's deepening defense and military ties with the U.S. U.S. wants India to play a bigger role in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific region to contain China's rise. While India has steadily deepened military-military cooperation in the recent past — the



Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) is one example.

- These developments probably altered Beijing's assessment of India. The border aggression at different points on the LAC could not be a localized conflict; it is part of a larger strategic move.
- One of the reasons for the shift could be Beijing's assessment that India has already become a de-facto ally of the U.S.

### What is the status of India's domestic politics?

- At least two decisions taken by the government mainly keeping its citizens in mind have had foreign policy consequences.
- First, the passing of the CAA. The official narrative has been that India is offering citizenship to the persecuted minorities of select countries in its neighbourhood. There were two problems.
  - One, this is regionalisation of the domestic problems of the countries in India's neighbourhood.
  - Two, Muslims, including those subjects persecuted in neighbouring countries, were by design excluded from the citizenship programme.
- Second, the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. It led to the suspension of fundamental rights in the Kashmir Valley for a prolonged period that damaged India's reputation as a responsible democratic power.
  - The change of status quo in Jammu and Kashmir, including the bifurcation and

reduction of the erstwhile State into Union Territories, could be another factor that prompted the Chinese to move aggressively towards the border in Ladakh.

### The perils of hubris

- Great powers wait to establish their standing before declaring that they have arrived. The Soviet Union started acting like a superpower after it won (with allies), the Second World War. China bided its time for four decades before it started taking on the mighty U.S. Since the 1970s, its focus has almost entirely been on its economic rise. India should learn from at least these modern examples.

### What India should learn from past experiences?

- **Need for greater realism in policy:** India needs to change the image of a reluctant power. India should realize that soft power diplomacy is not sufficient for protecting the country.
- **Need for Strong economy:** An expansionary foreign policy cannot be built on the margins of the global economy. There is a need for India to build a strong economic foundation to fulfill the aspiration of global power.
- In the backdrop of setbacks, especially in the neighbourhood, India has to reconsider its diplomacy's trajectory as India's official policy is that it is committed to multilateralism. Even after India started moving away from non-alignment, which it calls irrelevant in the post-Cold War world order, India should maintain the strategic autonomy as the bedrock of its policy thinking.

\*\*\*\*\*

# CONTEMPT OF COURT

## CONTEXT

The initiation of proceedings for criminal contempt of court against lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan has once again brought under focus the necessity for retaining the law of contempt as it stands today.

### ◎ BACKGROUND

- Prashant Bhushan, senior lawyer, an indefatigable campaigner for the public had tweeted a photograph where he criticized Mr. Justice S.A. Bobde, the current Chief Justice of India (CJI), for riding an expensive motorcycle at a time when the Court is under lockdown.
- A three-Judge Bench, headed by Justice Arun Mishra, took suo motu notice of it and issued a notice of contempt of Court to Mr. Bhushan "for undermining the dignity and authority of the Institution of Supreme Court in general, and the office of the Chief Justice of India in particular".
- The Bench coupled to another tweet of Mr. Bhushan in which he says that in the last 6 years, democracy has been destroyed in India and that historians will mark the role of the Supreme Court in this, especially the last 4 CJIs.
- It followed it up by listing yet another citation of contempt against Mr. Bhushan, this time in an 11-year-old case where he allegedly said in 2009 that half of India's last 16 Chief Justices were corrupt.

### ◎ ANALYSIS

#### Provisions in India regarding Contempt of Court

- The expression 'contempt of court' has **not been defined by the Constitution**.
- As per the **Contempt of Courts Act 1971**, contempt refers to the offense of showing disrespect to the dignity or authority of a court. The act divides contempt into:
  - Civil contempt:** It is 'wilful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a Court or willful breach of an undertaking given to the court'.
  - Criminal contempt:** It is 'the publication (whether by words, spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise) of any matter or the doing of any other act whatsoever which:
    - Scandalises or tends to scandalise, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of, any court.
    - Prejudices, or interferes or tends to interfere with the due course of any judicial proceeding.
    - Interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to obstruct, the administration of justice in any other manner.'
- According to the **Indian Penal Code Section 12 of Contempt of Court Act, 1971**, contempt of court can be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to two thousand rupees, or with both.
- Bar Association vs. Union of India case**, the Supreme Court dwelled into the constitutional powers vested in it under Article 129 read with Article 142(2) of the Constitution of India and the power of the High Court under Article 215 of the Constitution to punish for contempt.
  - Article 129:** Grants Supreme Court the power to punish for contempt of itself.
  - Article 142(2):** Enables the Supreme Court to investigate and punish any person for its contempt.
  - Article 215:** Grants every High Court the power to punish for contempt of itself.
- According to Supreme Court, no act of Parliament can take away the inherent jurisdiction of the Court of Record to punish for contempt and the Parliament's power of legislation on the subject cannot, therefore, be so exercised as to stultify the status and dignity of the Supreme Court.
- The Contempt of Court Act, 1971 was amended in 2006 to **include the defense of truth under Section 13 of the original legislation**. Implying that the court must permit justification by truth as a valid defense if it is satisfied that it is in the public interest.

#### Contempt of Court Scenario in other countries

- In England, from where India has inherited the legacy of contempt law, the legal position has evolved, as adjudicatory role now having been handed over to judges; showing extreme deference to judges does not sit well with the idea of a democracy.

- The U.K. Law Commission in a 2012 report recommended the abolition of the law of contempt.
- "Contempt" has practically become obsolete in foreign democracies, with jurisdictions recognizing that it is an archaic law, designed for use in a bygone era, whose utility and necessity has long vanished.
- Canada ties its test for contempt to real, substantial, and immediate dangers to the administration, whereas American courts also no longer use the law of contempt in response to comments on judges or legal matters.

fundamental right.

- The excessively loose use of the test of 'loss of public confidence combined with a liberal exercise of suo motu powers, can be dangerous, for it can amount to the Court signaling that it will not suffer any kind of critical commentary about the institution at all, regardless of how problematic its actions may be.
- Judges believe that silencing criticism will harbour respect for the judiciary. On the contrary, surely, any efforts to artificially prevent free speech will only exacerbate the situation further.

### The broad perspective of the concept in India

- The objective for contempt is stated to be to safeguard the interests of the public if the authority of the Court is denigrated and public confidence in the administration of justice is weakened or eroded.
- But the definition of criminal contempt in India is extremely wide and can be easily invoked. Suo Motu powers of the Court to initiate such proceedings only serve to complicate matters. And truth and good faith were not recognized as valid defenses until 2006 when the Contempt of Courts Act was amended.
- A law for criminal contempt is completely asynchronous with our democratic system which recognizes freedom of speech and expression as a

### © WAY FORWARD

- In an era in which social media are full of critics, commentators and observers who deem it necessary to air their views in many unrestrained and uninhibited ways, the higher judiciary should not be expending its time and energy invoking its power to punish for contempt of itself.
- The judiciary should identify priorities on constitutional cases that need to be desperately addressed, such as the constitutionality of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the electoral bonds matter, or the issue of habeas corpus petitions from Jammu and Kashmir.
- There is a need to revisit the need for a law on criminal contempt, also the test for contempt needs to be evaluated.

\*\*\*\*\*

# NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

## CONTEXT

Union Cabinet approved the National Education Policy 2020, paving way for transformational reforms in the school and higher education sector in the country.

### ◎ BACKGROUND

- The National Education Policy was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. More than three decades have passed since previous Policy.
- During this period significant changes have taken place in our country, society economy, and the world at large.
- The Government had initiated the process of formulating a New Education Policy through the consultation process for an inclusive, participatory and holistic approach, which takes into consideration expert opinions, field experiences, empirical research, stakeholder feedback, as well as lessons learned from best practices.

### ◎ ANALYSIS

#### Need for new education policy in India

- Despite the stated priority and the launch of a plethora of programs, the state of education in the country remains a weak spot in society. Most objectives and goals have not been realised, even partially, largely due to the absence of a workable roadmap and continuing operational guidance.
- More significantly, heavy politicisation at every level of operation from the village/block level, accompanied by ever-increasing corruption, permeating every aspect of educational administration, has been the prominent developments in the past three decades or so.
- While gross enrolment in schools as also in higher education institutions has gone up sharply, these have been accompanied by many undesirable new factors.
- The failure of government schools to provide education of minimal quality has triggered the large-scale entry of private or 'aided' schools, even in rural areas, but even these have not produced significantly better outcomes.
- While the Right to Education (RTE) Act has led to a significant increase in enrolment, as also emphasis on infrastructure, new issues in the implementation phase have now arisen, which need to be addressed. In particular, the 'No Detention Policy' needs to be revisited, to ensure that it is optimally and judiciously implemented.

- There is no clearly laid out policy in respect of private participation in the education system, both at the school and higher education levels. The exponential growth of higher education institutions in the past two decades has been fuelled by the 'capitation fee' phenomenon, which thrives on black money and shadowy financial transactions.
- In an aspirational society, parents naturally desire that their children get a 'good education'. However, formally linking the development of skills in vocational fields, and bringing in an academic equivalence to vocational accomplishments, has not been seriously attempted.
- A major new dimension is the advent of information and communication technology. New technologies are now available for information dissemination, enhancement of skills and so many other end-uses, but they are not yet suitably adopted or adapted to the needs of the education sector.
- There is immense scope for harnessing technology to improve quality, teacher preparation, aid to teachers in classrooms, remedial coaching-possibilities that have not yet been seriously addressed.

#### Objectives of NEP 2020:

##### • Equitable and Inclusive Education:

- ▶ NEP 2020 aims to ensure that no child loses any opportunity to learn and excel because of the circumstances of birth or background. Special emphasis will be given on Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs) which include gender, socio-cultural, and geographical identities, and disabilities.
- ▶ This includes setting up of **Gender Inclusion Fund** and also **Special Education Zones** for disadvantaged regions and groups. Children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the foundational stage to higher education, with support of educators with cross-disability training, resource centers, accommodations, assistive devices, appropriate technology-based tools, and other support mechanisms tailored to suit their needs.

# Learning plan

A look at the key features of the new education policy:

• R.V.S. PRASAD



- Public spending on education by States, Centre to be raised to 6% of GDP
- Ministry of Human Resource Development to be renamed Ministry of Education
- Separate technology unit to develop digital education resources



## SCHOOL EDUCATION

- Universalisation from age 3 to Class 10 by 2030
- Mission to ensure literacy and numeracy skills by 2025
- Mother tongue as medium of instruction till Class 5 wherever possible
- New curriculum to include 21st century skills like coding and vocational integration from Class 6
- Board exams to be easier, redesigned



## HIGHER EDUCATION

- New umbrella regulator for all higher education except medical, legal courses
- Flexible, holistic, multi-disciplinary UG degrees of 3-4 years' duration
- 1 to 2 year PG programmes, no M.Phil
- College affiliation system to be phased out in 15 years

- ▶ Every state/district will be encouraged to establish "**BalBhavans**" as a special daytime boarding school, to participate in art-related, career-related, and play-related activities. Free school infrastructure can be used as **SamajikChetnaKendras**
- **Robust Teacher Recruitment and Career Path:**
  - ▶ Teachers will be recruited through robust, transparent processes. Promotions will be merit-based, with a mechanism for multi-source periodic performance appraisals and available progression paths to becoming educational administrators or teacher educators.
  - ▶ A common **National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST)** will be developed by the National Council for Teacher Education by 2022, in consultation with NCERT, SCERTs, teachers and expert organizations from across levels and regions.
- **School Governance:**
  - ▶ Schools can be organized into complexes or clusters which will be the basic unit of governance and ensure availability of all resources including infrastructure, academic libraries, and a strong professional teacher community.

## Standard-setting and Accreditation for School Education:

- NEP 2020 envisages clear, separate systems for policymaking, regulation, operations, and academic matters. States/UTs will set up an independent **State School Standards Authority (SSSA)**.
- Transparent public self-disclosure of all the basic regulatory information, as laid down by the SSSA, will be used extensively for public oversight and accountability. The SCERT will develop a **School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework (SQAACF)** through consultations with all stakeholders.
- **Increase GER to 50 % by 2035:**
  - ▶ NEP 2020 aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. 3.5 Crore new seats will be added to Higher education institutions.
- **Holistic Multidisciplinary Education:**
  - ▶ The policy envisages broad-based, multi-disciplinary, holistic Under Graduate education with **flexible curricula, creative combinations of subjects, integration of vocational education**, and multiple **entries and exit points with appropriate certification**.



- ▶ UG education can be of 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period. For example, a Certificate after 1 year, Advanced Diploma after 2 years, Bachelor's Degree after 3 years and Bachelor's with Research after 4 years.

### Criticism

- While the NEP 2020 has been hailed by most as a progressive shift in the government's approach to school education, certain changes regarding the three-language formula have been criticized as the new policy states the regional mother tongue to be the medium of instruction till 5th grade.
- The document also emphasises on mathematics and computational thinking, besides mainstreaming Sanskrit to increase "knowledge on ancient India and its contributions to modern India".
- The policy brings in major changes in the governance and academic structure of school and higher education. The Delhi University Teachers Association (DUTA) has criticized the concentration of powers within a board of governors in universities.

- The DUTA's opposition to the draft NEP rested, among other things, on its proposal to dismember universities and handover every higher educational institution to a Board of Governors, which is to enjoy all powers hitherto vested in the governing authorities of colleges and universities as well as the UGC and other regulating bodies.
- Some other groups criticized the government's passing of NEP without "extensive discussion" despite protests against the policy.

### CONCLUSION:

Education and public health are possibly the two most important development vectors in a democracy. The reality over the past decades is that these have not received a fraction of the importance and focus they deserve. The ground reality today, depressingly, is quite different from what was envisaged in the policy pronouncement. It is hoped that the ministry's move will give a new direction to the education sector, halt the precipitous decline in standards, and pave the way for much better quality standards.

\*\*\*\*\*



# GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

## IAS 2021 LIVE & INTERACTIVE CLASSES



### IAS 2021-22 GS FOUNDATION

BATCH STARTS

**10**  
AUGUST  
2020

OPTIONAL  
FOUNDATION

**BATCH -2  
POLITICAL SCIENCE  
FOUNDATION**

by: **Dr. Piyush Choubey**

**STARTS: 30 JULY, 2020**

**HISTORY  
FOUNDATION**

By: **Piyush Kumar**

**BATCH STARTS: 20 JULY, 2020**

**IAS 2021  
INTEGRATED  
TEST SERIES**  
PRELIMS CUM MAINS

**BATCH STARTS**

**25 JULY  
2020**

**IAS 2021  
PRELIMS  
TEST SERIES**

**BATCH STARTS**

**30 AUGUST  
2020**

**IAS 2021  
MAINS TEST SERIES  
GS MAINS  
Q & A**

**BATCH STARTS**

**23 AUGUST  
2020**

**IAS 2021  
MAINS  
ADVANCE**

**BATCH STARTS**

**16 AUGUST  
2020**

📍 1B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Pusa Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005,  
(Adjacent to Karol Bagh Metro Gate No. 8)

✉ [info@iasscore.in](mailto:info@iasscore.in) 📱 [/iasscore](https://www.facebook.com/iasscore)

**Visit: [www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)**

**☎ 8448496262**

# EU CYBER SANCTIONS

## CONTEXT

The European Union has imposed 'first-ever' cyber sanctions to protect itself from increasing cyber-attacks.

### More on news

- Taking a firm geopolitical stand, the European Union imposed sanctions on targeted individuals and entities from Russia, China, and North Korea in a sign that it was tackling cyber warfare head-on.
- The European Union has imposed today its first-ever cyber-sanctions against six individuals and three entities involved in significant cyber-attacks or attempted cyber-attacks against the EU or its Member States.
- The sanctions include travel bans and the freezing of assets. It is also forbidden for EU persons and entities to make funds available to those individuals and entities listed.

### © BACKGROUND

- Since 2017, the EU has put in place a comprehensive cyber diplomacy toolbox, including an autonomous horizontal cyber sanctions regime adopted in May 2019, to prevent, deter and respond to malicious behavior in cyberspace.
- This regime allows the EU to impose sanctions on persons or entities involved in cyber-attacks threatening the EU or its member states, or attempted cyber-attacks, regardless of the nationality or location of the perpetrator. Sanctions are also possible for cyber-attacks against third States or international organisations.
- The EU and its Member States are concerned by the rise of malicious behaviour in cyberspace by both state and non-state actors, including the abuse of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) for malicious purposes, including cyber-enabled theft of intellectual property.
- Malicious cyber activities threaten the integrity, security, and economic competitiveness of the EU and undermine international security and stability potentially leading to destabilising and cascading effects with enhanced risks of conflict.

### Cyberattacks by and against countries:

- Within cyberwarfare, the individual must recognize the state actors involved in committing these cyber-attacks against one another.

- There are many other state and non-state actors involved in cyberwarfare, such as Russia, Iran, Iraq, and Al Qaeda.
- **China:** China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) has developed a strategy called "**Integrated Network Electronic Warfare**" which guides computer network operations and cyberwarfare tools. This strategy helps link together network warfare tools and electronic warfare weapons against an opponent's information systems during the conflict.
- **Ethiopia:** In an extension of a bilateral dispute between Ethiopia and Egypt over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Ethiopian government websites have been hacked by the Egypt-based hackers in June 2020.
- **Iran:** In February 2020, the telecommunication network of Iran witnessed extensive disruptions. The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology of Iran confirmed it as a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack. The Iranian authorities activated the "Digital Fortress" cyber-defense mechanism to repel. Also known as DZHAFA, it led to a drop of 75 percent in the national internet connectivity.
- **Israel:** In April 2020, there were attempts to hack into Israel's water infrastructure of the Sharon central region by Iran, which was thwarted by Israeli cyber defenses. The cyberattack intended to introduce dangerous levels of chlorine into the Israeli water supply. In June 2010, Iran was the victim of a cyber-attack when its nuclear facility in Natanz was infiltrated by the cyber-worm '**Stuxnet**'. Reportedly a combined effort by the United States and Israel
- **India:** Recently, there were cyber-attacks on Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP), India. This spyware identified as '**Dtrack**' is programmed to steal data and give the hacker or the 'threat actor' complete control over all the infected devices by exposing its credentials and passwords.

### The Need for Cyber Security in India's context

- **For Individuals:** Photos, videos, and other personal information shared by an individual on social networking sites can be inappropriately used by others, leading to serious and even life-threatening incidents.

- **For Business Organizations:** Companies have a lot of data and information on their systems. A cyber attack may lead to loss of competitive information (such as patents or original work), loss of employees/customers' private data resulting in complete loss of public trust on the integrity of the organization.
- **For Government:** A local, state or central government maintains a huge amount of confidential data related to country (geographical, military-strategic assets, etc.) and citizens. Unauthorized access to the data can lead to serious threats to a country.
- Various programs of government such as Aadhaar, MyGov, Government eMarket, DigiLocker, Bharat Net, etc. are promoting a larger number of citizens, companies, and government agencies to transact online.
- India is the third-largest hub for technology-driven startups in the world and its ICT sector is estimated to reach \$225 billion landmark by 2020.
- **Increasing vulnerability:** India the fifth-most vulnerable country in the world in terms of cybersecurity breaches. India saw at least one cybercrime every 10 minutes during the first half of 2017, including more sophisticated cyber threats, such as the WannaCry and Petyransomware.
- **Increasing internet users:** India ranks 3rd in terms of the number of internet users after USA and China. By 2020, India is expected to have 730 million internet users with 75% of new users from rural areas.
- **Increasing online transactions:** E.g., by 2020, 50% of travel transactions will be online, and 70% of e-commerce transactions will be via mobile.
- **Government's digital push:** Various programs of government such as Aadhaar, MyGov, Government

e-Market, DigiLocker, Bharat Net, etc. are promoting a larger number of citizens, companies, and government agencies to transact online.

- **vhjStart-ups digital push:** India is the third-largest hub for technology-driven startups in the world and its ICT sector is estimated to reach \$225 billion landmark by 2020.
- India accounted for 5.09 percent of all cyber-attacks such as malware, spam, and phishing attacks detected globally in 2017.
- **Prevent economic loss:** The estimated cost of cyber-attacks in India stands at four billion dollars which are expected to reach \$20 billion in the next 10 years.

### The need of Digital Armed Force

- To safeguard against Digital enemies, India needs to put in place a high-level Artificial Intelligence security system along with other digital security mechanisms to protect the digital borders.
- **Digital enemies** are very powerful and to safeguard our systems, we need to put in place a high-level Artificial Intelligence system along with other digital security mechanisms. We may be sitting at a time bomb and we must take every measure to defuse it.

### ◎ CONCLUSION:

India is among the top few countries facing cyber-attacks. Globally, it is estimated that the cost of cyber-attacks for 2017 added up to around \$600 Billion. The number mounts up every year, and by 2021 experts are suggesting a figure of \$6 Trillion per year. Hence, proper coordination is needed between the countries, coordinators and respective regulators to negate this menace.

\*\*\*\*\*

# SOUTH ASIAN MIGRANT CRISIS

## CONTEXT

Recent, a petition filed in the Kerala High Court to set up a mechanism to assist NRIs who had lost their jobs abroad and had returned to India, to seek due compensation, exposes the precarious conditions of migrant workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

### ◎ BACKGROUND

- In early July, the Kerala High Court had issued notice to the Central and State governments on a petition seeking to set up a mechanism to assist NRIs who had lost their jobs abroad and had returned to India, to seek due compensation. The petition exposes the precarious conditions of migrant workers in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.
- Employers, particularly construction companies, have used the crisis as an opportunity to retrench masses of migrant labourers without paying them wages or allowances.

### Insights on the situation

- The South Asia-Gulf migration corridor is among the largest in the world. South Asians account for nearly 15 million in the Gulf. The South Asian labour force forms the backbone of the Gulf economies.
- Indians constitute the largest segment of the South Asian workforce. Gulf migration is predominantly a male-driven phenomenon.
- The pandemic, the shutdown of companies, the tightening of borders, and the exploitative nature of the Kafala sponsorship system have all aggravated the miseries of South Asian migrant workers. They have no safety net, social security protection, welfare mechanisms, or labour rights.

#### Kafala System

- The Kafala (Sponsorship) System emerged in the 1950's to regulate the relationship between employers and migrant workers in many countries in West Asia.
- Under the Kafala system a migrant worker's immigration status is legally bound to an individual employer or sponsor (kafeel) for their contract period.
- The migrant worker cannot enter the country, transfer employment nor leave the country for any reason without first obtaining explicit written permission from the kafeel.

- Often the kafeel exerts further control over the migrant worker by confiscating their passport and travel documents, despite legislation in some destination countries that declares this practice illegal.
- The power that the Kafala system delegates to the sponsor over the migrant worker, has been likened to a contemporary form of slavery.

### Impact of CoVID-19

- In the initial days of the lockdown, the Kerala government was requested to send regular medicines for lifestyle diseases. Since medicines are expensive in the GCC countries. However, the suspension of flights caused an acute shortage of medicines and exposed the frail medical insurance system in the GCC for these workers.
- A majority of the migrants are single men living in congested labour camps. The COVID19 spike in these labour camps has mainly been due to overcrowded and unsanitary living conditions.
- However, as the COVID19 crisis and response unfolded in the Gulf countries, the most neglected segment turned out to be the migrant women domestic workers, whose untold miseries have increased in the present volatile situation.
- The Indian missions, with their inadequate administrative personnel, could not adequately cater to the needs of the migrants. The situation forced the Indian government to repatriate the NRIs through the Vande Bharat Mission. The Indian government has repatriated over 7.88 lakh NRIs from various destinations.

### Challenges and Steps taken by various countries

- The countries of origin are now faced with the challenge of rehabilitating, reintegrating, and resettling these migrant workers.
- To facilitate this, the Indian government has announced 'SWADES' for skill mapping of citizens returning from abroad, but the implementation seems uncertain. Kerala the largest beneficiary of international migration has announced 'Dream Kerala' to utilise the multifaceted resources of the migrants.
- Bangladesh has announced a special package

for the resettlement of return migrants which includes money on arrival, money to launch self-employment projects, and compensation for the families of those who died abroad from COVID19.

- The Overseas Employment Corporation in Pakistan has come out with special programs to upgrade the skills of returnees.
- Meanwhile, in the GCC countries, the movements for the nationalisation of labour and the anti-migrant sentiment have peaked.
- Countries like Oman and Saudi Arabia have provided subsidies to private companies to prevent native layoffs. However, the nationalisation process is not going to be smooth given the stigma attached to certain jobs and the influence of 'royal sheikh culture'.

- Paradoxically, countries that are sending migrant workers abroad are caught between the promotion of migration, on the one hand, and the protection of migrant rights in increasingly hostile countries receiving migrants, on the other.

### ◎ **WAY FORWARD**

The need of the hour is a comprehensive migration management system for countries that send workers as well as those that receive them. No South Asian country except Sri Lanka has an adequate migration policy. The pandemic has given the countries an opportunity to voice the rights of South Asian migrants and to bring the South AsiaGulf migration corridor within the ambit of SAARC, the ILO, and UN conventions.

\*\*\*\*\*





An Institute for Civil Services

**IAS 2021**

# GS MAINS ADVANCE

GS Paper 1, 2, 3, 4 + Essay + Mains Test Series

**A Solution for 1250 Marks**

**Online Live Interactive Classes**

**BATCH STARTS**

**16 AUGUST**

6:00 PM to 8:30 PM

**Fee ₹ 42,000 + GST**

Off. 1B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Pusa Road  
Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005,  
(Adjacent to Karol Bagh Metro Gate No. 8)

+91 8448496262

info@iasscore.in

/iasscore



[www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)

5 Months Course to cover Key concepts  
of GS Mains paper 1, 2, 3 & 4

Complete coverage of contemporary  
issues of last two years

Detailed Answer Writing session on  
each subject

Mains Test Series including 25 Tests  
(10 Sectional + 3 Contemporary Issues  
+ 8 Full Mock + 4 Essay Mock )

Essay Classes + Essay Practice  
Workbook

Study Material of Contemporary Issues



**SECTION: B**  
**(PRELIMS)**  

---

**CURRENT AFFAIRS**

————— To Attempt —————  
Weekly Current Affairs Test, Visit

**[www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)**

## MATA CHINTPURNI TEMPLE

- ◎ **CONTEXT:** With temples closed amid the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, the Mata Chintpurni temple in Himachal Pradesh's Una has started the facility of home delivery of 'prasad' to its devotees through online request.
- ◎ **ABOUT:**
- According to Hindu mythology, **Chintpurni temple is one of the five Shakti Peeths in Himachal Pradesh** (HP) and 51 Shakti Peethas in India.
  - The other four Shakti Peeths in HP are Jwalamukhi, Vajreshwari and Chamunda Devi temples in Kangra district, and Naina Devi temple in Bilaspur district.
  - A huge number of devotees pay their obeisance at Chintpurni temple during fairs held thrice a year in the month of Chait (March-April), Sawan (July-August) and Asanji (September-October).
    - In Chait and Asanji, the fair is held in Navratras, whereas in Sawan, it takes place during the first 10 days of shuklapaksha that is the bright half of the lunar month.
    - The fair lasts for nine days during the navratras and 10 days in Sawan. It gets maximum visitors on the eighth day.

## WORLD TIGER DAY

- ◎ **CONTEXT:** The government has released a detailed report of Tiger Census on the eve of Global Tiger Day.
- ◎ **ABOUT:**
- Global Tiger Day is an annual celebration to raise awareness for tiger conservation, held annually on 29 July. It was created in 2010 at the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit.
  - **Name of the report:** 'Status of Tigers, Co-predators and Prey in India Report'.
  - The detailed report assesses the status of tigers in terms of spatial occupancy and density of individual populations across India.
  - In addition to the summary report released by the Prime Minister of India on the "Status of Tigers in India" in July 2019, this detailed report compares information obtained from the earlier three surveys (2006, 2010, and 2014) with data obtained from the 2018-19 survey to estimate population trends at country and landscape scales, patch colonization and extinction rates along with information on likely factors responsible for changes in tiger status at the fine spatial resolution of 100 km.
  - The report evaluates the status of habitat corridors connecting major tiger populations and highlights vulnerable areas that require conservation attention for each landscape.

### St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation

- The Heads of the Governments of Tiger Range countries at St. Petersburg, Russia, had resolved to double tiger numbers across their global range by 2022 by signing the St. Petersburg declaration on tiger conservation.
- It was also decided to celebrate July 29 as Global Tiger Day across the world, which is since, being celebrated to spread and generate awareness on tiger conservation.

### 13 tiger range countries

- India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam.

- The report provides information on major carnivores and ungulates regarding their distribution and relative abundance.
- The detailed report of the 4<sup>th</sup> All India Tiger Estimation is unique in the following ways;
  - Abundance index of co-predators and other species has been carried out which hitherto was restricted only to occupancy
  - Sex ratio of tigers in all camera trap sites has been carried out for the first time.
  - Anthropogenic effects on tiger population have been elaborated in a detailed manner.
  - Tiger abundance within pockets in tiger reserves has been demonstrated for the first time.
- India's tiger population now stands at 2967 which is 70 percent of the global tiger population.
- Efforts are being made to provide water and fodder to animals in the forest itself to deal with the challenge of human-animal conflict which is causing deaths of animals.
  - For this LIDAR based survey technology will be used for the first time. (Lidar is a method for measuring distances by illuminating the target with laser light and measuring the reflection with a sensor.)

## SEISMICITY STUDY OF ARUNACHAL HIMALAYA

### ◎ **CONTEXT:**

Seismicity study of Arunachal Himalaya reveals low to moderate earthquakes at 2 crustal depths

### ◎ **ABOUT:**

- A study by the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) an autonomous institute of the Department of Science & Technology (DST), Government of India, exploring the elastic properties of rocks and seismicity in this easternmost part of India revealed that the area is generating moderate earthquakes at two different depths.
- The team of scientists installed 11 broadband seismic stations along the Lohit River Valley of Arunachal Himalaya to understand the elastic properties of rocks and seismicity in this easternmost part of India, a study that has been published in the 'Journal of Asian Earth Sciences'.
- In the present study, the WIHG team used both teleseismic (earthquakes that occur more than 1000 km from the measurement site) and local earthquake data with the help of seismometers having a flat velocity response for the frequency range of 0.004-35 Hz.
- Data were continuously recorded at 20 samples per second, and the Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers were used for time synchronization.
- The study which used teleseismic and local earthquake data procured during January 2007-June 2008 has helped map under-thrusting in this easternmost part of the country and can not only help plan construction but also improve earthquake preparedness in the area.

### Latest Findings and its significance

- Low magnitude earthquakes are concentrated at 1-15 km depth, and slightly higher greater than 4.0 magnitude earthquakes are mostly generated from 25-35 km depth. The intermediate-depth is devoid of seismicity and coincides with the zone of fluid/partial melts.
- The Tuting-Tidding Suture Zone (TTSZ) is a major part of the Eastern Himalaya, where the Himalaya takes a sharp southward bend and connects with the Indo-Burma Range.

- This part of the Arunachal Himalaya has gained significant importance in recent times due to the growing need of constructing roads and hydropower projects, making the need for understanding the pattern of seismicity in this region critical.
- The crustal thickness in this area varies from 46.7 km beneath the Brahmaputra Valley to about 55 km in the higher elevations of Arunachal, with a marginal uplift of the contact that defines the boundary between crust and the mantle technically called the Moho discontinuity.
- This, in turn, reveals the under-thrusting mechanism of Indian plate in the Tuting-Tidding Suture Zone.
- Extremely high Poisson's ratio was also obtained in the higher parts of the Lohit Valley, indicating the presence of fluid or partial melt at crustal depths.
- This detailed assessment of seismicity in this region will be helpful for planning any large-scale construction in this region in the future.

## AFFORDABILITY OF BALANCED DIET

### ◎ CONTEXT:

New analysis from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows that hundreds of millions of people in India above the international poverty line of \$1.90 purchasing power parity (PPP) per person per day cannot afford a 'healthy or nutritious diet'.

### ◎ ABOUT:

- Every year, the FAO, in partnership with other United Nations organisations, publishes a report on food security across the world.
- This year, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020 (SOFI 2020) had a new feature of detailed analysis of the "cost and affordability of healthy diets around the world".
- The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World is an annual flagship report jointly prepared by:
  - Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
  - International Fund for Agricultural Development
  - United Nations Children's Fund
  - World Food Programme
  - World Health Organization (WHO)

### Insights of the Analysis

- **Unaffordability of good diets:** The analysis confirms the fact that the problem of poor nutrition in India is largely on account of the unaffordability of good diets, and not on account of lack of information on nutrition or tastes or cultural preferences.
- The SOFI Report estimates that 18% of South Asians (numbering 586 million people) cannot afford the nutrient adequate diet and 58% of South Asians (1,337 million people) cannot afford the healthy diet.
- The study defined three types of diets:
  - **Basic energy sufficient diet:** This takes into consideration only the basic calorie requirements of a person and the required calorie intake is met by consuming only the cheapest starchy cereal available. 2,329 Kcal for a healthy young woman of 30 years is taken as the standard reference.
  - **Nutrient adequate diet:** This involves meeting the required calorie norms and also the stipulated requirement of **23 macro- and micro-nutrients**. This diet includes the least-cost items from different food groups.

- **Healthy diet:** This type of diet, apart from meeting the calorie norm and the macro- and micro-nutrient norm, also allows for the **consumption of a diverse diet**, from several food groups.
- The Indian recommendation for a healthy diet includes consumption of items from six groups: starchy staples, protein-rich food (legumes, meat and eggs), dairy, vegetables, fruits, and fats.

### Indian Scenario

- The Indian poverty line of 2011, as defined by the Tendulkar Committee, amounted to ₹33 per day in urban areas and ₹27 per day in rural areas, and corresponded roughly to \$1 a day at international PPP prices. The Indian poverty line is thus lower than the international poverty line used in the SOFI Report.
  - As per the SOFI report:
    - Firstly, those people who are officially counted as poor in India – with a cutoff that is lower than the international norm of \$1.9 a day – cannot afford a nutrient adequate diet let alone a healthy diet. This result is completely contrary to the view of scholars such as Arvind Panagariya that the poverty line in India.
    - Second, even those with incomes of twice the international poverty line cannot afford a healthy diet.
- ◎ **WAY FORWARD**
- The government has to address the problem of affordability of healthy diets in order to reduce malnutrition and food insecurity. The Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana is a welcome step in this direction but inadequate to address the massive and growing problem of malnutrition. Hence the government has to take more initiatives to overcome the problem.

---

## 100% FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) IN AIR INDIA

---

- ◎ **CONTEXT:** Recently, the government has notified amendments to Foreign Exchange Management rules and allowed NRIs 100% foreign direct investment (FDI) in Air India. The new rules are known as Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) (Third Amendment) Rules, 2020.
- ◎ **ABOUT:**
- Earlier in March, the Union Cabinet approved a proposal to permit foreign investment up to 100% by those NRIs, who are Indian Nationals, in case of Air India through the automatic route.
  - Foreign investments in Air India Limited, including that of foreign airlines shall not exceed 49% either directly or indirectly except in case of those NRIs, who are Indian nationals.
  - The amendment removes the exception which permitted Overseas Citizens of India 100% FDI in air transport, but not Air India. This category of citizens has been replaced with NRIs, now allowed to commit 100% FDI in air transport, including Air India, through automatic route.
  - Substantial ownership and effective control of Air India Limited shall continue to be vested in Indian Nationals as stipulated in Aircraft Rules, 1937.
  - As per the present FDI Policy, 100% FDI is permitted in scheduled Air Transport Service/ Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline (Automatic up to 49% and Government route beyond 49%).
  - However, for NRIs 100% FDI is permitted under automatic route in Scheduled Air Transport Service/Domestic Scheduled Passenger Airline.

# GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

**IAS 2021  
MAINS TEST SERIES**

# GS MAINS

## Q & A

**COMPLETE GS & Essay *through* TEST SERIES**

**1500<sup>+</sup> Topics of GS Paper 1, 2, 3 & 4 covered**



Classroom



Online



Flexi Format

**Total 32 Tests**



**DETAILED CONCEPT CLASSES**

**after Every Test (4-5 Hrs.)**



**Study Material**



Supplementary  
Notes with  
Answers

500+ Applied  
GS Topical  
Notes

Ethics  
Case Study  
Workbook

Essay Practice  
Workbook

1200<sup>+</sup> Question  
Answer Practice  
Workbook

**Batch-1  
Starts**

**23 August,  
2020**

**₹ FEE**

Sectional + Mock: ₹ 27,000/- (+GST)  
Sectional: ₹ 22,000/- (+GST)

+91 8448496262

info@iasscore.in /iasscore



www.iasscore.in



- The government permits 100% FDI under automatic route in helicopter services/seaplane services requiring Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) approval.
- Foreign airlines are allowed to invest in the capital of Indian companies, operating scheduled and non-scheduled air transport services, up to the limit of 49% of their paid-up capital, subject to certain conditions.
- The conditions includes that inflow must be made under the government approval route and the 49% limit will subsume FDI and FII/FPI investment.
- The investments made would need to comply with the relevant regulations of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

## CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRIES (CII)

### ◎ CONTEXT:

Confederation of Indian Industries recently said that rural lending reviving, agri given hope of recovery.

### ◎ ABOUT:

- According to the Confederation of Indian Industries there are early signs of a V-shaped recovery in the economy in the immediate aftermath of the lockdown, driven mostly by agriculture and rural lending, as well as positive trends in FMCG, pharma and even construction.
- However, the uncertainty of mini lockdowns and unnecessarily wide containment zones continue to affect business operations.
- Terming the agriculture sector a "beacon of hope", CII noted that rural lending by non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) is at about 80% of the usual levels.
- Stressed sectors include aviation, hotels and commercial vehicles, which show no signs of recovery yet.
- However, the information technology and health sectors are likely to hold steady even if they do not show much growth.
- An increase in people eating at home and a greater demand for sanitation and hygiene products is likely to drive 15-20% growth in the FMCG sector.
- With most construction sites resuming operations, CII is predicting a bounce-back in the sector which employs the largest number of people outside farming.
- CII also added that commercial real estate is holding up on lease renewals, though new leases are not being signed.

### Reasons for the recovery

- Positive indicators include GST collections, railway freight traffic, petrol consumption, peak power demand and electronic toll collections, as well as expectations of a bumper harvest in the wake of a normal monsoon.

### Suggestions

- In order to nurture the nascent signs of recovery, it is important to mitigate the uncertainties that are currently prevailing regarding restrictions. Corporates are unable to plan beyond a horizon of a few weeks, which is in turn affecting all operations.
- Given that it was not possible to predict the course of the pandemic, it recommended a dashboard approach, where the progression of infections would trigger predictable responses in a way that would reduce uncertainty and boost consumer and industry confidence.
- Containment zones need to be limited to micro areas to ensure that supply chains function seamlessly; and business activities must be allowed to function by removing the uncertainty associated with imposing mini lockdowns.

**Confederation of Indian Industries (CII)**

- It is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organization.
- It was founded in 1895, its headquarters is in New Delhi.
- It works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, Government and civil society, through advisory and consultative processes.

**DIVESTMENT OF 23 PSUS****◎ CONTEXT:**

Recently, the Ministry of Finance announced that the government is working on completing the stake sale process of about 23 public sector companies whose divestment had already been cleared by the Cabinet.

**◎ ABOUT:****What is disinvestment?**

- Disinvestment means sale or liquidation of assets by the government, usually Central and state public sector enterprises, projects, or other fixed assets.
- The government undertakes disinvestment to reduce the fiscal burden on the exchequer, or to raise money for meeting specific needs, such as to bridge the revenue shortfall from other regular sources.
- In some cases, disinvestment may be done to privatise assets. However, not all disinvestment is privatisation.

**Key-highlights**

- The government, as part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat package, had announced opening up of all sectors for private participation.
- The final call as to the sectors which are going to be called 'strategic' has not been made yet, that has to be announced yet.
- This would lead to a consolidation of public sector undertakings (PSUs).
- About disinvestment plans, the Minister said the government wanted to sell stakes in PSUs when they fetch the right price.
- There are already nearly 2223 such PSUs which have been cleared by the Cabinet for disinvestment. The intent is clear that at least for those which had already been cleared by the Cabinet, we will have to disinvest.
- For the 2020-21 fiscal, the Union government has set a disinvestment target of ₹ 2.10 lakh crore.

**Main objectives of Disinvestment in India:**

- Reducing the fiscal burden on the exchequer
- Improving public finances
- Encouraging private ownership
- Funding growth and development programmes
- Maintaining and promoting competition in the market

**Benefits of Disinvestment**

- It can be helpful in the long-term growth of the country
- It allows the government and even the company to reduce debt.

- Disinvestment allows a larger share of PSU ownership in the open market, which in turn allows for the development of a strong capital market in India.

## INDIA REPORT ON DIGITAL EDUCATION, 2020

### ◎ CONTEXT:

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has launched India Report on Digital Education, 2020.

### ◎ ABOUT:

- The report has been prepared by **Digital Education Division of MHRD in consultation with Education Departments of States and UTs.**
- The report elaborates on the innovative methods adopted by Ministry of HRD, Education Departments of States and Union Territories for ensuring accessible and inclusive education to children at home and reducing learning gaps.
- The report will serve the purpose of cross-learning, adapting and adopting best practices across the country.
- Ministry of Human Resource Development has initiated many projects to assist teachers, scholars and students in their pursuit of learning like DIKSHA platform, SwayamPrabha TV Channel, Online MOOC courses, On Air – ShikshaVani, DAISY by NIOS for differently-abled, e-PathShala, National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) to develop e-content and energized books, telecast through TV channels, E-learning portals, webinars, chat groups, distribution of books and other digital initiatives along with State/ UT Governments.

### Digital initiatives by States governments

- Some of the major digital initiatives by State Governments are:
  - SMILE (Social Media Interface for Learning Engagement) in Rajasthan
  - Project Home Classes in Jammu
  - PadhaiTunharduvaar (Education at your doorstep) in Chhattisgarh
  - Unnayan Initiatives in Bihar through portal and mobile application
  - Mission Buniyaad in NCT of Delhi
  - Kerala's own educational TV channel (Hi-Tech school programme)
  - E-scholar portal as well as free online courses for teachers in Meghalaya.
  - Telangana has online certificate programs for teachers on 'Management of mental well-being during COVID'.
- Some states have launched innovative mobile apps and portals as means to facilitate remote learning.
  - Madhya Pradesh has launched Top Parent App, a free mobile app that empowers parents of young children (3-8 years) with knowledge and strategies around child development to help them meaningfully engage with their children.
  - KHEL(Knowledge Hub for Electronic Learning), a Game Based Application has also been started, that covers class 1-3.
  - Uttarakhand is making use of SamparkBaithak App through which primary school students can access animated videos, audios, worksheet, puzzles, etc.
  - Assam has launched the BiswaVidya Assam Mobile Application for class 6 to 10.
  - Bihar has launched Vidyavahini App with e-books for class 1 to 12.
  - Under Unnayan Bihar Initiative, Bihar has also launched Mera Mobile MeraVidyalaya for students, and Unnayan Bihar Teacher App.

- Chandigarh has launched Phoenix Mobile application to assess the learning outcome for the students of class 1 to 8.
- Maharashtra has launched the Learning Outcomes Smart Q Mobile App to facilitate learning for students in the state.
- Punjab has launched iSuela Learn Mobile Application for class 1 to 10.
- Sikkim Edutech App connects all the schools of Sikkim under the State Education Department; Parents also have login access along with students, teachers and administrative units.
- Tripura has an application titled 'EmpowerUShikshaDarpan' in order to facilitate student's appraisal.
- Uttar Pradesh launches 'Top Parent' app targeting children from 3-8years age. The application currently houses three high-quality EdTech apps for children – Chimple, Maths Masti and Google Bolo.
- Digital education initiatives are also enabling enhanced support for students preparing for competitive exams. Goa has partnered with Embibe, an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered online platform for learning, practicing, and testing, for students preparing for entrance exams in the State. Karnataka has launched ParikshaVani, an exam preparation program through Doordarshan, and an SSLC Exam Readiness Program. Online Practice tests with detailed analysis are available for Government and Government Aided Students of Tamil Nadu preparing for NEET exam.

## AJO-NEO

### ◎ CONTEXT:

Recently, the device called "AJO-Neo" is developed by researchers from S.N. Bose National Centre For Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS), Kolkata for non-invasive screening of bilirubin level in new-borns.

### ◎ ABOUT:

- SNBNCBS developed a "No-touch" & "Painless" device for non-invasive screening of bilirubin level in new-borns.
- The operation of the device is based on **non-contact and non-invasive spectrometry-based techniques** for **measurement of neonatal bilirubin level as an alternative of total serum bilirubin (TSB)** test without limitations of other available bilirubin meters.
- The newly developed device (AJO-Neo) is reliable in measuring bilirubin levels in preterm, and term neonates irrespective of gestational or postnatal age, sex, risk factors, feeding behavior or skin color.
- The device is found to deliver an almost instantaneous report (about 10 seconds) to a concerned doctor, who is sitting 10000 km away from the point of care.

### Significance of the achievement

- This is a significant achievement compared to the conventional "blood test" method, which may take more than 4 hours to generate the report.
- It has to be noted that detection of neonatal blood bilirubin (Hyperbilirubinemia) faster is extremely important for therapeutic management in order to avoid Kernicterus leading to Neuro-psychiatry problems in neonatal subjects.
- Careful screening of bilirubin level in new-borns is mandatory as per American Academy of Paediatrics (2004), to reduce incidents of a type of brain damage called kernicterus that can result from high levels of bilirubin in a baby's blood.
- Although invasive capillary collection of blood and the subsequent biochemical test is considered a gold standard for jaundice detection in neonates, transcutaneous bilirubin measurement using non-invasive instruments has obvious added advantages.

- AJO-Neo also shows several advantages compared to other similar imported devices in the market.

**Bilirubin**

- It is a yellowish substance in the blood. It forms after red blood cells break down, and it travels through liver, gallbladder, and digestive tract before being excreted. It is a necessary process in the body's clearance of waste products that arise from the destruction of aged or abnormal red blood cells.

**S.N. Bose National Centre For Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS)**

- It is an autonomous research Institute under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India.
- The institute is also hosting one of the Technical Research Centres (TRC) funded by DST and in scientific collaboration with Nil-RatanSircar (NRS) Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata.

## SPYWARE, STALKERWARE APPS GAINING TRACTION DURING LOCKDOWN

**◎ CONTEXT:**

Global Cyber-security leader Avast has warned in a note that there was a 51-percent increase in the use of spy- and stalkerware since the lockdown in March until June.

**◎ ABOUT:****What are spy and stalkerware apps?**

- Spyware or stalkerware refers to tools - apps, software programs, and devices - that let another person (such as an abuser) secretly monitor and record information about your phone activity.
- Spy and stalkerware apps, like viruses and other malware, infect devices that are connected to the internet.
- While viruses and malware can be detected by antivirus software, spyware and stalkerware apps disguise themselves as useful and send-out stolen data to central servers without the users' knowledge.
- A spyware app can also be installed remotely while a stalkerware app can be installed only when someone has physical access to the digitally connected device.

**How do such apps work?**

- **Spyware:** For spyware apps, the easiest method is to disguise the spying code inside the unauthorised versions of other apps and then try and market such premium apps.
- **Stalkerware:** Stalkerware apps on the other hand, seek explicit permissions at the time of their installation.
  - Once the app is installed in the phone, it can be hidden from the apps menu into the background, from where they continue functioning.

**Reason for increased usage**

- Increased usage of internet by everyone due to various lockdown measures in place. This provides enough opportunities for cyber criminals.

\*\*\*\*\*

# IAS 2021 INTEGRATED TEST SERIES for MAINS & PRELIMS

Single Source for Integrated Preparation

TOTAL NO OF  
**93**  
TESTS:

## MAINS

TOTAL NO OF TESTS: **49**

<b>30</b>	GS Mains Topical Tests
<b>08</b>	GS Sectional Revision Tests
<b>03</b>	Essay Mock Tests
<b>08</b>	GS Mock Tests after Prelims

## PRELIMS

TOTAL NO OF TESTS: **44**

<b>18</b>	Subsectional Tests
<b>06</b>	Current Affairs Tests
<b>05</b>	Revision Tests
<b>06</b>	Sectional Tests
<b>03</b>	CSAT Tests
<b>06</b>	Mock Tests

**BATCH - 2 Starts:**

**30 AUGUST, 2020**

**Programme Fee**

**₹ 30,000 + GST**

**8448496262**



**www.iasscore.in**

**“Some Practice Improves Result”**



**SECTION: C**  
**(GOOD GOVERNANCE)**  

---

**CURRENT AFFAIRS**  

---

# E-UPARJAN: RE-INVENTING THE PROCUREMENT SYSTEM THROUGH DIGITISATION IN MADHYA PRADESH.

The e-Uparjan initiative strengthens procurement operations, develops a near real-time reporting mechanism and a decision support system for enhancing the forecasting, monitoring and tracking capabilities of the Madhya Pradesh Government.

## Need for this initiative

- Madhya Pradesh has seen significant improvement in the production of wheat and paddy since 2009. This has had a direct impact on the procurement mechanism in the state.
- The increase in production also led to an increase in the number of farmers who want to sell their produce at the MSP offered by the Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP). This increase in service seekers has adversely impacted the quality of service delivery of the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Protection (DFCS & CP).
- Inefficient monitoring and management of procurement processes made it difficult for the authorities to check and curb malpractices. Finally, manual payments to farmers through cheques led to delays, losses, and corruption.

## Objectives

- The primary objective was to enable a smooth, regulated, and efficient process of procurement at the centers.
- The initiative also sought to enable better planning, monitoring, and management. A significant objective of this initiative was to protect small and vulnerable farmers from being shortchanged by middlemen.

## Key Stakeholders

- The main stakeholders of the programme include DFCS & CP, Madhya Pradesh State Civil Supply Corporation (MPSCSC), Madhya Pradesh Warehouse and Logistics Corporation (MPWLC), Madhya Pradesh State Cooperative Marketing Federation Limited (MARKFED), Mandi Board, District Central Co-operative Banks, Food Corporation of India (FCI), National Informatics Centre (NIC), cooperative societies and farmers.

## Implementation Strategy

- e-Uparjandigitises the entire process of procurement. NIC conceptualised, designed, and developed applications, both online and offline, in Hindi for MPSCSC. The offline application included eight features:
  - Processes related to the buying and selling of crops

- Corrections in the farmer's registration details
- SMS scheduling according to the daily storage capacity and daily wheat procurement status
- Payment report generation for direct money transfer to the farmer's account
- Gunny bag management
- Transport management
- Storage management
- Agriculture loans recovery option
- Similarly, an online application was developed to register farmers, and subsequent MIS reports fed into the offline module.
- Apart from the above-mentioned features, the second phase included verification of details provided by farmers, making online changes after verification, SMS scheduling for procurement date area-wise, approving new procurement centers, entering farmer data for crop loss due to natural disasters

## Key Challenges

- The sheer extent of the operation was a major challenge with Rabi procurement undertaken in 40 districts and Kharif procurement undertaken in all the 50 districts of the state.
- Apart from this, the implementation was hampered by challenges such as difficult terrain in some regions, limited train connectivity, limited internet connectivity, deployment of IT operators in interior areas, and limited power supply in many areas.

## CONCLUSION

The impact of real-time data that it has generated has helped in making more informed decisions. With an efficient database of information on procurement, the DFCS & CP is now able to plan for silo storage bags and steel silos in advance. Robust planning and the mechanism for real-time data reporting enhance the forecasting, monitoring, and tracking capabilities of the Madhya Pradesh Government and these are the qualities that make this initiative unique and significant.



An Institute for Civil Services

IAS  
2021

# PRELIMS 2021 PRACTICE PROGRAMME

**BATCH-1 Starts**

Test Timings:  
9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

**30**  
AUGUST  
2020

**TOTAL 65 TESTS**

<b>33</b> SUB SECTIONAL	<b>6</b> SECTIONAL	<b>7</b> CURRENT AFFAIRS
<b>16</b> MOCK TESTS	<b>3</b> CSAT	

4000<sup>+</sup> Topics Covered through  
Smart Solution

**PROGRAMME FEE: ₹ 8,500 + GST**

📍 1B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Pusa Road Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005,  
(Adjacent to Karol Bagh Metro Gate No. 8)

✉ info@gsscore.com 🌐 /iasscore

📞 8448496262

🌐 [www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)



**An Institute for Civil Services**

# **IAS PRELIMS 2020**

## **ONLINE**

**01**

### **TARGET PT 2020**

45 Days Online Prelims Classes through 4000+ MCQ

**02**

### **PRELIMS Test Series**

PRELIMS PRACTICE PROGRAMME | TOTAL: 65 TESTS

**03**

### **CSAT Online Classes**

4 WEEKS CSAT ONLINE CLASSES

**04**

### **PRELIMS MOCK TEST**

TOTAL: 20 TESTS

**05**

### **PRELIMS Test Series**

COMPLETE REVISION TESTS | TOTAL: 38 TESTS

**06**

### **Current Affairs Classes**

Complete Revision of Prelims Current Affairs in 60 Hrs.

📍 1B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Pusa Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005,  
(Adjacent to Karol Bagh Metro Gate No. 8)

✉ [info@iasscore.in](mailto:info@iasscore.in)    [f /iasscore](https://www.facebook.com/iasscore)

Visit: [www.iasscore.in](http://www.iasscore.in)

☎ **8448496262**